


BOOK REVIEW ESSAY

Extraction and Its Others

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This essay reviews the following works:

Limits to Decolonization: Indigeneity, Territory, and Hydrocarbon Politics in the Bolivian Chaco. By Penelope Anthias. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018. Pp. 312. \$27.95 paperback. ISBN: 9781501714368.

The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives. By Macarena Gómez-Barris. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017. Pp. xii + 208. \$24.95 paperback. ISBN: 9780822368977.

Oil, Revolution, and Indigenous Citizenship in Ecuadorian Amazonia. By Flora Lu, Gabriela Valdivia, and Néstor L. Silva. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. Pp. 313. \$119.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9781137564627.

Undoing Multiculturalism: Resource Extraction and Indigenous Rights in Ecuador. By Carmen Martínez Novo. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2021. Pp. 280. \$50.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9780822946632.

Landscapes of Inequity: Environmental Justice in the Andes-Amazon Region. Edited by Nicholas A. Robins and Barbara J. Fraser. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2020. Pp. xxxiv + 347. \$65.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9781496208026.

La lucha por los comunes y las alternativas al desarrollo frente al extractivismo. Compiled by Denisse Roca-Servat and Jenni Perdomo-Sánchez. Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2020. Pp. 430. E-book. ISBN: 9789877228137.

Shifting Livelihoods: Gold Mining and Subsistence in the Chocó, Colombia. By Daniel Tubb. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2020. Pp. xxviii + 217. \$95.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9780295747521.

Latin America's extractive economy has waxed and waned over the centuries. Extraction of metals and hydrocarbons has repeatedly expanded with global demand and rising commodity prices, as well as with technological advances such as cyanide heap leach processing and hydraulic fracturing, which made it profitable to exploit resource reserves previously considered technically unavailable or economically nonviable. Following an expansion in production and export, extraction inevitably declines yet again, as global demand for commodities slows, in the typical "boom and bust" economic cycles that characterize extractive capitalism. Latin America's most recent boom period was the so-called commodities supercycle, which lasted from roughly 2000 to 2010 (fueled largely by China's

growing demand for commodities and slowed by the Great Recession of 2008–2010). This period of expanding extraction brought with it an array of political, economic, and territorial transformations, including a massive increase in the number of concessions granted for mining and hydrocarbons development, the sheer scale of which is astounding. Roughly 72 percent of the Peruvian Amazon and 65 percent of the Ecuadorian Amazon are currently under concession for hydrocarbons exploration, and by some estimates 55 percent of Bolivia's entire national territory is considered to have potential for hydrocarbons production. Such concessions represent a geography of uncertainty, risk, and social vulnerability for the people living within or downstream from these areas.¹

The supercycle was also characterized by a widespread (though far from universal) political shift, as Left-populist governments were elected in Nicaragua, Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Argentina. The so-called Pink Tide has now decisively receded, with Evo Morales's ouster in 2020 closing that chapter of history.² The Left remains in power in many countries, of course, although much transformed both by political transition (e.g., Bolivia, Argentina) and ongoing political and economic crisis (e.g., Venezuela, Nicaragua), owing in part to the precipitous drop in commodities prices in recent years. The election of Pedro Castillo in Peru and Gabriel Boric in Chile signal leftward shifts in those previously center-right countries. One of the most consequential and seemingly paradoxical outcomes of some Pink Tide governments was the systematic repression of Indigenous groups and the dismantling of multicultural policies put in place in the 1990s. This was particularly the case in Ecuador and to a lesser extent in Bolivia, where Left-populist and putatively pro-Indigenous governments sought to dismantle Indigenous rights to territorial recognition and bilingual education while actively repressing—at times violently—Indigenous protests that they saw as a threat to resource extraction and other government policies. As detailed in the books by Anthias and Martínez Novo reviewed here, the steady growth of authoritarian governance on both the right and the left, coupled with the exhaustion of the neoliberal model, have given rise to new political-cultural alignments, which have largely replaced the neoliberal multiculturalism of the 1990s.

Collectively, the books included in this review examine these topics, with a focus on the lives transformed—for better or, more commonly, for worse—by resource extraction. The authors call our attention to the various ways that we as scholars understand extraction and extractivism and the analytical and political work these concepts are made to do. Inevitably, discussions of extraction and extractivism in Latin America invoke concepts of Indigenous rights, national sovereignty, economic development, environmental degradation, and environmental justice, themes that are woven throughout these various works. Following Eduardo Gudynas, Thea Riofrancos, and others, we may understand extractivism as resource dependency in the classic sense: economic development based on the extrac-

¹ Anthony Bebbington, "Underground Political Ecologies: The Second Annual Lecture of the Cultural and Political Ecology Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers," *Geoforum* 43, no. 6 (2012): 1152–1162.

² Following a year of right-wing government, the MAS is back in power, now with Morales's former economy and finance minister, Luis Arce, as president. After a brief period of exile in Mexico and Argentina, Morales is now back in Bolivia, although out of politics, at least for the moment. For incisive analyses, see Vladimir Díaz Cuellar, "Réquiem para el 'proceso de cambio,'" *CEDLA Boletín de Seguimiento a Políticas Públicas*, segunda época, 13, no. 32 (2019): 1–16; and Jonas Wolff, "The Turbulent End of an Era in Bolivia: Contested Elections, the Ouster of Evo Morales, and the Beginning of a Transition toward an Uncertain Future," *Revista de Ciencia Política* 40, no. 2 (2020): 163–186. For contrasting views of the "coup" narrative, see Fabrice Lehoucq, "Bolivia's Citizen Revolt," *Journal of Democracy* 31, no. 3 (2020): 130–144; and Thomas Becker and Linda Farthing, *Coup: A Story of Violence and Resistance in Bolivia* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2021).

tion and export of natural resources with little or no processing to add value.³ The Left-populist governments of the so-called Pink Tide largely retained this historic pattern but increased the state's role in extractive governance, as well as its share of rents derived from extraction. Increased state revenues, which benefited from the global commodities boom of 2000–2010, were funneled into a myriad of social programs for children, the elderly, and the poor, as well as infrastructure and other spending. Such neoextractivist policies established an inherent tension at the heart of many Pink Tide countries: while increased state spending mostly benefited the urban poor and middle classes, the extractive practices themselves—which take place almost exclusively in rural areas—remained largely unchanged. Indeed, as Lu, Valdivia, and Silva (reviewed here) point out, state-owned mining and hydrocarbons companies often have worse records of environmental protection and community outreach than do private multinational firms. As a result, urban populations that benefit from resource extraction are in many ways pitted against the rural populations that experience their negative environmental and social impacts. How these tensions unfold socially, politically, and environmentally, and how states manage them, are themes that run through the books reviewed here.

I begin this review by considering Penelope Anthias's *Limits to Decolonization*, which examines natural gas development and Indigenous rights in the Bolivian Chaco. Anthias, a geographer, is centrally concerned with questions of territory: how it is constituted and defined, demarcated, and defended. At the heart of these dynamics is a seeming paradox: that Indigenous territorial sovereignty can be compromised even in the context of expanded recognition for Indigenous rights. Anthias focuses on the conflictive processes of Indigenous political-cultural organizing and territorial mapping in Itika Guasu, a legally recognized territory of the Guaraní people, which is also home to one of Bolivia's most productive natural gas fields. Anthias's signal contribution here is captured in the concept of "hydrocarbon citizenship," which she deploys as a conceptual lens to analyze how notions of recognition, authority, and rights intersect and recombine in the context of Bolivia's extractivist policies. For Anthias, hydrocarbon citizenship frames understandings of how territory and collective belonging are understood in relation to gas extraction. She argues that neoliberal multiculturalism—Indigenous recognition in the context of, and circumscribed by, neoliberalism—had run aground in the Bolivia of Evo Morales, and in its place emerged a sort of post-neoliberal, post-multicultural, plurinational subjectivity.⁴ Understood in this way, hydrocarbon citizenship subordinates Indigenous territorial autonomy to the state's extractivist policies. Not unlike neoliberal multiculturalism, hydrocarbon citizenship serves to validate certain forms of indigeneity even as it marginalizes others, in what Anthias calls an "explosive double movement" (242).

This double movement is exemplified by the politics and practices of "counter-mapping," that is, participatory cartography that academics and Indigenous rights activists have employed to map Indigenous land rights and territorial claims.⁵ Maps can provide important documentary evidence of settlement and resource use in disputes with the state

³ Eduardo Gudynas, "Diez tesis urgentes sobre el nuevo extractivismo," in *Extractivismo, política y sociedad*, ed. Jürgen Schuldt (Quito: Centro Andino de Acción Popular, 2009), 187–225; Thea Riofrancos, *Resource Radicals: From Petro-Nationalism to Post-Extractivism in Ecuador* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020).

⁴ There is a vast literature on the concept of neoliberal multiculturalism. For the original works, see Charles R. Hale, "Does Multiculturalism Menace? Governance, Cultural Rights and the Politics of Identity in Guatemala," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34, no. 3 (2002): 485–524; and Charles R. Hale, "Neoliberal Multiculturalism: The Remaking of Cultural Rights and Racial Dominance in Central America," *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 28, no. 1 (2005): 10–28.

⁵ For a recent example, see Bjørn Sletto, Alfredo Wagner, Joe Bryan, and Charles Hale, eds., *Radical Cartographies: Participatory Mapmaking from Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2020).

or other powerful outsiders. And yet, as Anthias demonstrates, the very act of mapping is itself fraught with complications, power asymmetries, incomplete knowledge, and competing interests. For these reasons, activist counter-mapping practices may end up subordinating Indigenous concerns and smoothing over social complexities in an effort to meet technical standards or appeal to international funders. A crucial insight here is that Indigenous territorial mapping, even in cases where Indigenous peoples' organizations play a leading role in the political and technical processes involved, and even in an Indigenous-majority country with an Indigenous president, is often compromised by conflicting land claims, pressure to expand commercial agriculture or extractive activities, limited state capacity, and occasional (even paradoxical) state hostility toward Indigenous interests. Far from being a panacea for resolving Indigenous territorial claims, counter-mapping can at times exacerbate long-standing forms of exclusion. Fixing territorial boundaries, it turns out, also fixes limits on territorial claims.

As with Evo's Bolivia, Ecuador under Rafael Correa pursued a policy of state-led development based on the redistribution of resource rents. To an even greater extent than Evo Morales, Correa centralized political authority and sought to diminish the influence of all rivals (within and especially outside his own government). Correa built a political apparatus founded on redistribution and demanded loyalty from those on whom he bestowed patronage. Correa's political legitimacy, and his own political ambitions, depended on the continued flow of resource rents, which in turn required the continuation and intensification of resource extraction. In Ecuador this primarily means oil development in the Amazon lowlands. But it increasingly also came to mean large-scale mining operations in the central and southern Andes, as Correa sought to open the country to transnational mining firms. As Carmen Martínez Novo examines in her brilliant new book, these policies entailed the systematic dismantling of Indigenous rights and the repression of Indigenous movements. As its title implies, *Undoing Multiculturalism* charts the rolling back of multicultural practices, rights, and institutions that were largely put in place during the 1990s, a time of Indigenous political mobilization, international investments in Indigenous rights, and very real political gains on the part of Indigenous peoples and their organizations.

As Martínez Novo recounts, these gains reached their apogee around 2000, when the political party Pachakutik (affiliated with the national Indigenous confederation, CONAIE) briefly entered into a power-sharing arrangement with the insurgent government of Colonel Lucio Gutiérrez. Once securely in the presidency, Gutiérrez proceeded to weaken the Indigenous movement that helped bring him to power. This process was continued and expanded under Correa, who was president from 2007 to 2017. Despite the book's subtitle (*Resource Extraction and Indigenous Rights in Ecuador*), *Undoing Multiculturalism* is less an examination of resource extraction per se and more an extended critique of the Correa government (and, in chapter 7, of the decolonial scholars and other intellectuals who enabled Correa's paternalistic *indigenismo*). To be sure, resource extraction and the rents it provides the state play a role in this story. But it is a supporting role only, and Martínez Novo is primarily concerned to shine a light on Correa's extensive and systematic efforts to undo the politics of multiculturalism and put in their place a form of authoritarian nationalism.

Martínez Novo uses the term "nationalist extractivism" to describe Correa's blend of redistributive policies and centralized authority. She prefers this term to the more commonly used "post-neoliberalism" as a way to signal the continuities between *correísmo* and the neoliberal governments that preceded it. In terms of its ethnic project, the parallels were clear: "the government offered limited symbolic recognition and some targeted redistribution that disciplined Indigenous peoples and separated 'permitted Indians' from the recalcitrant ones. In Ecuador, the nationalist-extractivist state expected uncritical support" (65). Here, Martínez Novo is drawing on Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's concept of the *indio permitido*, which informed Charles Hale's

notion of neoliberal multiculturalism.⁶ Indeed, the book's central project may be characterized as documenting in ethnographic detail Ecuador's political shift from a regime of neoliberal multiculturalism to one of national extractivism.

There are important continuities between the Ecuador of Rafael Correa and the Bolivia of Evo Morales, and it is instructive to read *Undoing Multiculturalism* alongside *Limits to Decolonization*. Both Correa and Morales established Left-populist governments that pursued state-led development and redistributive policies and were heavily dependent on resource rents. In both cases Indigenous rights and environmental protections were subordinated to the politics of redistribution in what Martínez Novo refers to as the "paradoxical reversal of multiculturalism under the rule of the Left" (4). Under both Correa and Morales, the forms of recognition that had been established (mostly) in the 1990s were dismantled in favor of centralized rule and a set of redistributive policies, which necessitated continued and intensified resource extraction. In this context, Indigenous peoples (especially, but also their allies and advocates) were seen as a barrier to national development. In confronting those who opposed his plans to expand oil development into Yasuní National Park and open swaths of the central and southern Andes to open-pit mining, Correa could be brutal. Indeed, as Martínez Novo demonstrates, Correa sought not only to repress Indigenous peoples but to humiliate them and their leadership.⁷

Undoing Multiculturalism is an important book: meticulously researched and unsparing in its critique of Correa's weakening of multiculturalism, as well as his academic enablers in Ecuador and beyond. To be sure, Martínez Novo is no apologist for neoliberalism and recognizes the limits of the multicultural policies of earlier decades. But she also acknowledges the very real gains that came with intercultural bilingual education, strong and relatively autonomous Indigenous organizations, territorial demarcation, and investments in Indigenous development initiatives. Flawed as these policies were, they afforded Indigenous peoples and their organizations a measure of political, economic, and cultural opportunity that the Correa government and its policies of nationalist extractivism largely foreclosed.

Flora Lu, Gabriela Valdivia, and Néstor L. Silva cover similar ground in their book *Oil, Revolution, and Indigenous Citizenship in Ecuadorian Amazonia*. But whereas Martínez Novo provides a sweeping view of Ecuador's political transformation, Lu, Valdivia, and Silva focus more narrowly on the country's northern Amazon region, where oil was first discovered in 1967. Like Martínez Novo and Anthias, these authors are ethnographers (Lu and Silva are anthropologists, Valdivia is a geographer), and while their study focuses on a variety of actors, institutions, and processes, their analysis is firmly grounded in place. *Oil, Revolution, and Indigenous Citizenship in Ecuadorian Amazonia* is centrally concerned with the dynamics of oil extraction and its implications for the Waorani Indigenous people who inhabit remote corners of northeastern Ecuador, as well as the people in voluntary isolation who live even deeper in the forest, and who have uneasy—at times violent—relations with the Waorani.

The "revolution" in the book's title refers to the *Revolución Ciudadana*, as Correa's political program was called. As the authors acknowledge, "*Revolución Ciudadana*" is a multivalent term that can "refer to a revolution by citizens, something undertaken through the people's agency and advocacy. It can also refer to a revolution for citizens, intended to improve people's standards of living" (11). *Revolución Ciudadana* can also be interpreted as a revolution of the *ciudad*, positing a spatial and socioeconomic

⁶ Charles Hale, "Rethinking Indigenous Politics in the Era of the 'Indio Permitido,'" *NACLA Report on the Americas* 38, no. 2 (2004): 16–21.

⁷ For parallels elsewhere in the Andes, see Anthony Bebbington and Denise Humphreys Bebbington, "An Andean Avatar: Post-neoliberal and Neoliberal Strategies for Securing the Unobtainable," *New Political Economy* 16, no. 1 (2011): 131–145.

preference for the city over the countryside, and prioritizing urbanization and the processes that make it possible.

Like Anthias, Lu, Valdivia, and Silva are concerned with questions of citizenship shaped by hydrocarbons and, in the case of Ecuador, refracted through the lens of the *Revolución Ciudadana*. As the authors point out, “citizenship under the *Revolución* is . . . expressed as the responsibility to sacrifice for the collective good” (23). Unfortunately, who is asked to sacrifice what and for whose benefit has remained distressingly constant throughout the history of Ecuador’s oil economy, and the *Revolución Ciudadana* has done little to change that long-standing pattern. For the Waorani, defining and delimiting citizenship is a complicated task, and when state officials, oil workers or other outsiders misread and misinterpret Waorani needs, as often happens, the results can be conflictive, violent, and even deadly. These issues are immensely more complicated for Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation, who occupy what the authors refer to as a “shadowy fold in the fabric of citizenship” (38).

Lu, Valdivia, and Silva document how, contrary to Correa’s claims, the shift from transnational to national control of oil development (through Petroecuador or its subsidiaries) nearly always resulted in lower environmental standards and fewer development benefits for Waorani people. In a passage that could have been written by Anthias or Martínez Novo, Lu, Valdivia, and Silva ask, “How can an administration purport to be the champions of nature and of Indigenous peoples when it has compromised their survival in favor of oil?” (60). Simply put, the answer to this question is “neextractivism,” which the authors define as the development practices of left-leaning governments funded by resource extraction. Like “post-neoliberalism,” “neextractivism” is a keyword of the Pink Tide. Both are intended to signify a departure from old ways of being and doing and the start of something new. In reality, however, these terms are analytically unhelpful; as these books demonstrate, there remain clear continuities between neoliberal and supposedly post-neoliberal governments, just as neextractivism retains many practices from past resource regimes. There are differences, to be sure, but these are more a matter of degree than of kind.

Shifting Livelihoods, by anthropologist Daniel Tubb, is a departure from the books discussed thus far, in a couple ways. To begin with, Tubb’s focus is on gold mining in Colombia, which, throughout the 1990s and first decade of the 2000s maintained its political ground far to the right of Ecuador and Bolivia. Consequently, such Pink Tide watchwords as “post-neoliberalism” and “neextractivism” do not figure into his analysis. In addition, and in contrast to the other authors, Tubb is more concerned with the immediate, material practices of resource extraction as a critical component of rural livelihoods than he is with broader questions of extractive politics and social policy. In particular, Tubb examines alluvial gold mining: the extraction of gold from riverbeds by way of panning, sluices, and other rudimentary techniques (as opposed to large-scale extraction from belowground deposits using pits or shafts). The book’s primary analytical focus is on the livelihoods derived from gold mining in the Chocó region, on Colombia’s Pacific Coast. Following the introductory chapter, the book is divided into three sections titled “Production,” “Accumulation,” and “Transformation,” which broadly trace different forms of engagement with the gold economy.

Tubb begins with a focus on artisanal mining as a livelihood practice among communities that occupy the margins of the gold economy. The chapters in this section (“Production”) follow families who live on the economy’s edge, who farm and hunt for subsistence and occasionally pan gold to earn a bit of money. For these families, gold mining is a way to participate in the cash economy, and to that extent it provides some measure of opportunity and independence and even a shot at the “good life” (40). In this way, then, mining holds meaning and promise and “offers emancipatory potential to its miners, precisely because it provides rural Black men and women with a source of cash when the

rest of the economy does not” (62–63). Here, the book’s analysis pushes back against the tendency among some scholars and journalists to read all forms of extraction through the same repressive lens. Tubb has an ethnographer’s concern for what might be thought of as the extractive imaginary: the meanings that extractive practices engender and the multiple ways that people engage with those practices.

Tubb’s focus then shifts to what he refers to as “small-scale” mining—a step up in scale and kind from artisanal mining. In this section (“Accumulation”), Tubb follows families who pool their savings to invest in small- and medium-scale alluvial mining operations, hiring *retreros* (short for *retroexcavadores*, meaning excavators and the men who operate them) to open new gold deposits. Here, Tubb examines the practice of *rebusque*, which, he explains, is one way to interpret the shifting livelihoods of the book’s title. Tubb notes: “Shifting, like rebusque, is a verb and a noun. As a verb, rebusque becomes *rebuscar*, and ‘shifting’ becomes ‘to shift’: to change between different strategies to make a living and find work; to move on the margins from one impermanent job to another . . . As a noun, rebusque becomes ‘the shift,’ be it night shift or day shift or the way mobile and precarious workers live through *el rebusque*” (22). Rebusque is, in short, a side hustle: a way of making some extra cash that may or may not be technically legal. It may also be thought of as participation in the so-called informal economy, a concept that loses meaning when nearly all a region’s economy is “informal” and rural people have few alternatives.

Shifting Livelihoods is a valuable addition to the burgeoning literature on extraction, in large part because of its ethnographic insights into gold’s multidimensionality and the different ways that people engage with and make sense of the extractive economy. The book provides a powerful critique of neoextractivist analyses, which, in portraying Indigenous and Black peoples as victims of extractive capitalism, miss “the ways that rural peoples are both already articulated with their own resource projects into global networks of trade and how they can sometimes find their own forms of agency” (19). In his focus on livelihood and the quotidian practices of gold mining, however, Tubb glosses over the socio-environmental consequences of artisanal and small-scale alluvial gold mining in the Chocó. In a 2016 ruling, the Atrato River was granted legal personhood by Colombia’s Constitutional Court precisely because of the ecological damage done by alluvial mining and the state’s failure to stem these practices. Although Tubb acknowledges the environmental impact of mining, his discussion of it and the court’s ruling occupies just over two pages (8–11) of the book’s introductory chapter. Understandably, he is most concerned to critique popular accounts of gold mining in Colombia, which tend to demonize small-scale miners and portray artisanal miners as victims of poverty and circumstance. While Tubb’s nuanced account of mining livelihoods is indeed welcome, the author misses an opportunity to engage more fully with the court’s ruling. Alluvial gold mining is widespread in lowland tropical forests in South America, and such practices invariably attract laborers with few alternatives, looking to earn a little cash and then move on. While the environmental impact of any single miner or small-scale mining operation is relatively small, in the aggregate and over time the effects are devastating for the river and surrounding forest. For fishers and others reliant on the river, gold mining can be disastrous. In his focus on rebusque, Tubb leaves important questions of environmental justice unexamined.

Fortunately, such concerns are the subject of *Landscapes of Inequity*, edited by Nicholas A. Robins and Barbara J. Fraser. Collectively, the chapters in this edited volume consider environmental justice—broadly defined—in the Andes and Amazon. As with the book’s geographical remit, its range of topics is expansive, and include, inter alia, the toxic legacy of colonial mining (chapter 1 by Nicholas Robins), oil development (chapter 2 by Barbara Fraser), Brazilian dam projects (chapter 3 by Philip M. Fearnside), and the power relations involved in the consultative mechanism known as Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC; chapter 8 by Roger Merino). Not surprisingly, several of the chapters address Indigenous peoples’ rights to territory, political participation, and cultural recognition (e.g., chapter 4

on Bolivia's TIPNIS conflict, by Carwil Bjork-James; and chapter 9 on identity, ecopolitics, and cosmology among Indigenous peoples in Venezuela, by Jonathan D. Hill).

Some of the chapters resonate with other books discussed in this review. For instance, chapter 6, "Indigenism, Isolation, and Socioenvironmental Conflicts in the Javari River Valley," by Barbara Arisi and Felipe Milanez, examines the presence of voluntarily isolated Indigenous peoples in Brazil's far-western Amazon. This chapter nicely complements the analysis by Lu, Valdivia, and Silva of groups in voluntary isolation in Ecuador. Similarly, chapter 2 by Barbara Fraser, "When the Rivers Run Black: Oil and Inequity in the Western Amazon," is a wide-ranging discussion of oil development in the region that comprises all of eastern Ecuador and the northeastern Peruvian department of Loreto. The chapter highlights the environmental impacts of oil extraction in each country, the roles of national and transnational oil firms, and the struggles that Indigenous communities face as they seek redress from oil companies and state agencies.

Also of note is chapter 7, "We Are Here: The State of Community-Based Landscapes in Peru," by Richard Chase Smith. As with Anthias's examination of territorial mapping in the Bolivian Chaco, Smith examines land titling and the failure of the Peruvian state to map and title Indigenous lands throughout the country. This is a story of how *not* to see like a state; or, as Smith exposes, of how the Peruvian state has historically seen—and served—those whose interests it aligns with, while systematically not seeing, and not serving, Indigenous territorial claims, even though Indigenous peoples and their territories have long been formally recognized.⁸ Whereas Peru's Ministry of Energy and Mines maintains an up-to-date, digitized database of nearly 55,000 mining concessions, there is no comparable record of the country's roughly 10,000 Indigenous communities. Indigenous land and territorial claims are rendered politically invisible and legally vulnerable by states whose greater interests are in pursuing extractive policies.

Collectively, the chapters in *Livelihoods of Inequity* address questions of power relations, environmental degradation, and social justice through numerous empirically detailed case studies. What is missing, however, is a broader conceptual framework and engagement with the vast theoretical literatures on environmental justice, political ecology, and resource extraction. As a consequence, the reader learns much about specific places and problems but considerably less about the broader processes and socio-environmental relations that tie them together, or how environmental justice might be understood or enacted.

Although *The Extractive Zone* is a monograph, it covers such a range of topics and places that it makes sense to consider it alongside the edited volumes in this review. Macarena Gómez-Barris invites the reader to visit a diversity of sites in South America, in which she explores various struggles against—and efforts to create alternatives to—neoliberalism, extractivism, and colonialism. These include the YASunidos movement as it contests oil development in the Ecuadorian Amazon (chapter 1); Quechua residents of Peru's sacred valley, beset by new age tourism (chapter 2); Mapuche artists and activists in southern Chile, resisting state domination and the neocolonial timber industry (chapter 3); Colombian artists and activists with the anti-dam movement ASOQUIMBO, fighting to protect the Magdalena River (chapter 4); and the Bolivian anarcho-feminist group Mujeres Creando, who engage in an intersectional struggle against neoliberalism, neocolonialism, and patriarchy (chapter 5). Gómez-Barris's focus is on movements, intellectuals, and artists who are working to create new worlds and alternative ways of being in the face of colonial domination and extractive capitalism. This is an ambitious vision rooted in feminist decolonial critique.

⁸ Cf. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

Importantly, rather than focusing only on domination and what she terms the “death force” of extractive capitalism (3), Gómez-Barris explores the “emergent perspectives” and “forms of life that cannot be easily reduced, divided or representationally conquered or evacuated” by extractivism (4–5). The epistemological starting point here is anti-racist, feminist, queer, and decolonial critique—what the author refers to as “decolonial femme method” (10), trained on the “submerged perspectives” of those struggling to create new ways of being (11). By “extractive zone” Gómez-Barris means the “colonial paradigm, worldview, and technologies” (xvi). This, then, is an expansive view of extraction and a clear departure from the other authors discussed in this review. Whereas Anthias, Lu et al., Martínez Novo, and Tubb all use the term “extraction” and its variations in the more conventional sense of mining and hydrocarbons activities and associated policies, Gómez-Barris stretches the concept in a variety of directions. She is less interested in extraction per se (as conventionally understood), and instead uses the term as an optic to view the dynamics of resistance and cultural production in spaces that challenge various intersecting forms of domination. Understood in this way, the “extractive zone” includes oil development in Ecuador and mining in Bolivia but also logging in Chile, hydroelectric dams in Colombia, and tourism in Peru.

This raises the question of what is lost and what is gained by taking such an expansive view of extraction and extractivism.⁹ Certainly, others have applied the concept of extractivism to activities other than mining or oil and gas development, and using this lens can be an analytically productive way to highlight the colonial nature of what might be referred to as accumulation by dispossession.¹⁰ But such an expansive view of extractivism also risks a certain conceptual ambiguity. If extraction is only ever understood through the lens of colonialism, racism, patriarchy, and neoliberal capitalism, this would seem to preclude other interpretations of extractive activities. In this way, Gómez-Barris’s intellectual project is sharply at odds with that of Tubb, whose book endeavors to distinguish the shades of extractive practices among Black residents of the Chocó, as well as the array of meanings that are invested in those practices.

The new volume edited by Denisse Roca-Servat and Jenni Perdomo-Sánchez, *La lucha por los comunes y las alternativas al desarrollo frente al extractivismo*, covers similar conceptual and political ground as *The Extractive Zone*. Intellectually and politically, the book emerged out of two interrelated collaborations. The first and longer-term of these is an ongoing dialogue between academics and social movement activists in Latin America and the Caribbean, rooted in ecofeminism and a political ecology “desde Abya Yala” (16). The more proximate and short-term collaboration was a 2018 meeting organized by the political ecology working group of the Buenos Aires-based CLACSO (Centro Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales) and Colombia’s Pontifical Bolivarian University, which hosted the meeting in Medellín. As the title suggests, the volume focuses broadly on struggles for the commons in the context of neoliberal extraction and dispossession. As Catalina Toro Pérez puts it in the book’s prologue, the book’s “analytical and political purpose begins with the recognition of the importance of the collective force cultivated daily in innumerable heterogeneous practices of producing the commons, capable of generating meanings and political horizons” (16). From this starting point, the contributing authors examine two distinct but interrelated processes: on the one hand, “the collective strength and capacity to produce material wealth and the political decisions that emerge from various collective forms based on the reproduction of life,” and, on the other hand, “the ‘expropriation’ of

⁹ For a broader analysis of the uses of “extractivism,” see Imre Szeman and Jennifer Wenzel, “What Do We Talk about When We Talk about Extractivism?,” *Textual Practice* 35, no. 3 (2021): 505–523.

¹⁰ Ben M. McKay, Alberto Alonso-Fradejas, and Arturo Escobar-Cañete, eds., *Agrarian Extractivism in Latin America* (London: Routledge, 2021). On accumulation by dispossession, see David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

the collective forces that disrupted the political horizon in neoliberal Latin America at the end of the century,” which, the author suggests, were neutralized by the political forces of the “Nacional-Popular” (16). The focus, then, is on the production and reproduction of the commons as an alternative to neoliberalism, extractivism, and dispossession. This is a vision that echoes and amplifies that of Gómez-Barris, firmly rooted in a collaboration of academics and social movement activists.

Following the preface and introduction, *La lucha por los comunes* is divided into three sections: “Comunes,” “Extractivismo y desarrollo,” and “Alternativas al desarrollo.” In various ways, the sections resonate with the other books included in this review. In particular, Viviana González Moreno’s chapter in section 1 (the chapters in this volume are not numbered), “El río Atrato como un sujeto de derechos: Un aporte político de las luchas étnicas,” may be viewed as a counterpoint to Tubb’s analysis of alluvial gold mining in Colombia’s Chocó region. González Moreno focuses on the socio-ecological crises and social activism that led to the Constitutional Court’s ruling that granted personhood to the Atrato River. The author argues that the ruling was important not only for its recognition of the rights of nature, but also because it represents a political achievement of the Black communities of the Chocó, and a recognition of their rights to territory and a dignified life.

Similar themes are explored in the chapter by David Gerardo López Martínez, entitled “Extractivismo, activismo judicial y epistemologías del sur: Algunas reflexiones sobre el discurso de la Corte Constitucional colombiana” (in section 2 on extractivism and development). Whereas González Moreno’s analysis is buoyed by optimism for the judicial ruling on the Atrato River, López Martínez strikes a cautionary tone. He argues that, in spite of its environmentalist and humanitarian discourse, on balance the Constitutional Court did little to challenge the prevailing power imbalance between extractive industries and local communities. Where Tubb’s analysis is rich with place-based ethnographic detail, González Moreno and López Martínez move us beyond the mining camps and rural communities to Indigenous and Black activists and organizations, extractive industries and their functionaries, and the workings of the Colombian judiciary.

The chapters in this book are based in, and help develop, a school of political ecology from and for Latin America, which takes an explicitly critical, anticolonial stance toward extractive capitalism and the neocolonialism of Western development. This is a politically committed, even utopian, vision. Pulling together a diverse group of scholars from across the continent (mostly from Colombia but also from Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Canada), this volume is an explicit effort to advance a Latin American school of political ecology. As Toro Pérez puts it, “Alternatives to development, the great challenge of Latin American political ecology, implies deepening these struggles for the production of the commons, towards a social transformation that must address simultaneously the complex relationships between capital, class, race, coloniality, gender and nature” (24–25). Once again, the themes resonate with those of Gómez-Barris, as well as Robins and Fraser, but in my view this dense collection surpasses these other books in its expansive vision, analytical depth, and political urgency.

As a set, the books reviewed here provide rich analyses of the commodities boom, the emergence of new Left governments in many (though certainly not all) countries in the region, and the implications these had for the lives and livelihoods of Indigenous and Black populations living at the margins of national society. In particular, the books shed light on struggles over territorial and cultural rights, environmental justice, and contested understandings of development and how it is to be achieved. Now that the so-called commodities supercycle has ended, the extractive boom has gone (mostly) to bust, and the Pink Tide has receded, we can expect more books in the vein of *Undoing Multiculturalism*: retrospective analyses of Left-populist governments; the unwinding of Indigenous political, cultural, and

territorial rights; and the socio-environmental effects of the extractive boom. Of course, we can also look forward to the next generation of scholarship on post-Pink Tide Latin America, or perhaps of a newly emergent Left, with Chile's Gabriel Boric in the vanguard. I look forward to reading these analyses, which are surely in the works.

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