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RESENHA

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The book *Agrarian Extractivism in Latin America* edited by McKay, Alonso-Fradejas and Ezquerro-Cañete and coordinated by Professors Henry Veltmeyer, Paul Bowles and Elisa van Wayenberge is part collection of the Routledge Critical Development Studies Book Series.

The collection consists of ten chapters, including the introduction, and discusses the concept of agrarian extractivism in distinct socio-ecological formations in Latin America. This book - first of its kind on agrarian extractivism - opposes the Marxist concept of industrialization of agriculture. For authors more than just removing or extracting natural resources from the ecosystem - agrarian extractivism involves a broad complex of social relations and flows of knowledge, ideas, energy, and materials behind the ever-growing expansion of commodity frontiers.

The book highlights seven key aspects for analyzing agrarian extractivism: (i) sectoral and commodity particularities; (ii) flows of capital; (iii) labour dynamics; (iv) resource access and property dynamics; (v) flows of knowledge; (vi) flows of non-human nature's energy and materials; and (vii) territorial restructuring and developmental effects. Each chapter in this presented below engages with several, but not necessarily all, of these aspects.

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**In Chapter 1, The Biotechnological Agrarian Model in Argentina: fighting against capital within Science**, Carla Poth analyses the Biotechnological Agrarian Model (BAM) in Argentina as an expression of agrarian extractivism. She highlights the role of science and what she calls “production–expropriation–appropriation of knowledge” as the root of capital’s penetration in the agriculture and where the extractivist process begins. By controlling research and development (R&D) and displacing, expropriating and appropriating traditional scientific knowledge, science and technology are anything but politically neutral. Serving the interests of capital, Poth argues, the development of biotechnologies has transformed agricultural value chains and agrarian relations of production, opening up new spaces for extractivist capital to capture value.

**In chapter 2, Extractive dynamics of agrarian change in Bolivia**, McKay e Colque highlight that despite the strong relations between the Morales administration and peasant/Indigenous social movements, there are strong contradictions between discourse and practice in Evo Morales’ Bolivia. The authors point to the state’s dependence on extractivism, not only for extractive rents but as part of a political project through forging alliances with dominant classes of agrarian capital. In this chapter McKay and Colque analyse the extractivist features of Bolivia’s soy complex and they put forth a framework to characterize agrarian extractivism in Bolivia based on four interlinked attributes: (i) significant volumes of materials extracted, primarily for exports, with little or no processing; (ii) value-chain concentration and sectoral disarticulation; (iii) high intensity of environmental degradation; and (iv) deterioration of labour opportunities and labour conditions in the area or sector.

**In Chapter 3, Agrarian extractivism in the Brazilian Cerrado**, Sérgio Sauer and Karla Oliveira present how the scheme was built on the sale of judicial rulings that would legalize the grabbing of public and communal land in the agricultural frontier region known as the Matopiba. This “sacrificed zone” is acronym derived from the states of Maranhão, Tocantins, Piauí, and Bahia, contributed to the formation of the newest agricultural frontier in Brazil. The chapter also highlight how the so-called March to the West encouraged the occupation of the central region of Brazil and guided different migration flows, focusing on the occupation of public and communal lands and exploration of areas of the Cerrado biome and the Amazon. The authors, question

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dominant discourses frame the expansion of agricultural frontiers as necessary and unavoidable consequences of the national development process.

**In Chapter 4, Social reproduction, dispossession, and the gendered workings of agrarian extractivism in Colombia**, Diana Ojeda, highlight that studies on extractivism often point to the effects in relation to shifts in land tenure, environmental deterioration, labour issues, or health impacts. The author argues that While these effects are not equally distributed along the lines of differentiation and power, few studies have focused on their gendered character. That is, your chapter it brings a contribution from a feminist political ecology perspective to the analysis of agrarian extractivism. Ojeda examines the ways in which gender relations are central to the functioning of agrarian extractivism. The land-use change associated with agrarian extractivism, resulted in a heavier burden for women in the sphere of social reproduction. As it is the men who are hired to work in oil palm plantations, the reproductive work of (mainly) women subsidizes the plantation and is thus fundamental for the maintenance of the agro-extractivist model.

**In Chapter 5, Agrarian extractivism and sustainable development: the politics of pineapple expansion in Costa Rica**. The starting point of the discussion of León Araya explores which the transnational forces at play behind the operation of agrarian extractivism and sustainable development in Costa Rica. The author highlights that in early 2017, a study conducted by a group of public institutions using satellite imagery and coordinated by the UNDP claimed that between 2000 and 2015, nearly 6,000 hectares of forest had been lost to the expansion of pineapple production in Costa Rica. In so doing, he interrogates current conceptions of agrarian extractivism at the same time that he links them to broader schools of thought and societal issues. For León Araya, existing literature on (agrarian) extractivism resonates strongly with the dependency theory – in terms of centre–periphery relations. In his case study of pineapple expansion, he shows how agro-extractivist frontiers are expanded through various mechanisms, while operating together with discourses of sustainable development.

**In Chapter 6, Gender inclusion in the sugarcane production of agrofuels in coastal Ecuador Illusionary promises of rural development within a new agrarian extractivism**, Natalia Landívar García explores the new extractivist dynamics of sugar cane production in coastal Ecuador, arguing that a state-sponsored agro-fuels project

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facilitates agro-extractivist expansion. The Ecuadorian state promotes the expansion of sugarcane in Guayas province while using a discourse of energy sovereignty, environmental sustainability, and rural development. According to the author, despite the integration of small-scale producer associations into the agro-fuels project, they remain subject to a corporate-controlled production model, resulting in relations of debt and dependency, unequal gender relations, and environmental destruction. For Landívar García, the inclusion of small-scale farmers coupled with discourses of energy sovereignty and sustainability represents nothing more than an illusion.

**In Chapter 7, Life purging agrarian extractivism in Guatemala Towards a renewable but unlivable future?**, Alonso-Fradejas adopt that approach blends critical and intersectional political economy, ecology, and sociology perspectives to better fit the increasingly diverse, uneven, interconnected, and fluid socio-ecological formations of today's world. This author discusses the implications of the rise of the flex (oil) palm and (sugar)cane complexes in transitions to sustainability for jobs, labour regimes, and socio-ecological reproduction in Guatemala since the mid-2000s. He uses three key sets of criteria to qualify the character and assess the intensity of the “extractiveness” production through labour: (i) the examination of the “social metabolism” of resource extraction; (ii) the analysis of labour regimes and “social-productive regimes”; and (iii) the investigation of the range, ways, and extent to which the land's ground rent, financial interest, royalties from intellectual property rights, payments for environmental services, and state subsidies are crafted, extracted, and appropriated by the owners of cane and palm companies.

**In Chapter 8, Extractive agave and tequila production in Jalisco, Mexico**, Darcy Tetreault, Cindy McCulligh, and Carlos Lucio, point out that in many parts of the state of Jalisco, the rural scenery is dominated by fields of “blue” agave. These monoculture plantations provide the raw material (*Agave tequilana* Weber var. azul) for producing Mexico's emblematic spirit: tequila. The authors challenge the notion that the concept of agrarian extractivism should be restricted to crops destined for export with little or no processing. Based on a study of agave and tequila production in Jalisco, Mexico, they argue that the domestic processing of biomass does not necessarily compensate for the negative social and environmental impacts of upstream agricultural activities – it can in fact add to them. Through this approach, the authors demonstrate the relationship among intensification of agave production, environmental degradation, the

marginalization of small-scale agave farmers. They indicate traditional mezcal production as a socially and ecologically sustainable alternative model.

Finally, in chapter 9, **Forestry extractivism in Uruguay**, Kröger and Ehrnström-Fuentes, assess how prominent definitions of (agro)extractivism are suited to explain forestry extractivism, and the shared and particular qualities of forestry extractivism as it manifests itself in large-scale tree monocultures for pulp production in Uruguay. They frame forestry extractivism as a particular kind of agro-extractivism with its own unique features, mechanisms for expansion, and relations of extraction. The authors reveal how forestry projects capture large swaths of land and other natural resources with a license to pollute, using sophisticated legitimization campaigns to expand extractivist frontiers.

In sum, the book has examined the mechanisms how capital cause the hyper-extraction of raw materials from nature and over exploration of labour, causing ecological degradation and displacing rural labors. The authors point out seven conditions for the analysis of this phenomenon therein include the flows of capital, the dynamics of labour, the flow of information and the way of natural resources appropriation. This model has been shaping the logic of a corporate-led and the external-input plantation agriculture in Latin America in the recent decades.

The book lacks a greater contribution on fisheries extractivism in Latin America. This book offers relevant analytical insights and provokes other studies to engage in the debate connecting agrarian, climate, and environmental change with the literature on extractivism of raw material exports and transnational capital.

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