

Summaries

Anthony Bebbington: Underground Political Ecologies. The paper argues for a political ecology of the subsoil. It explores several ways in which the extraction of mineral and hydrocarbon resources is constitutive of, and constituted by, wider capitalist political, economic and institutional arrangements. Drawing on material from El Salvador and the Andean countries, the author analyses the contemporary governance of extractive industries, and points to significant convergence among the approaches taken by neoliberal and ostensibly post-neoliberal regimes in Latin America alike. The intersections between the extractive economy, livelihoods and patterns of social protest are also explored. Through these examples, the paper also highlights the ways in which „activist political ecologists“ play important roles in counter-movements seeking to re-govern the extractive economy. These counter-movements are found in both civil society and different parts of the state. Such activist political ecologists are central to the broader enterprise of an „underground political ecology“ and are often vital to the success of scholarly interventions in such political ecologies.

M. Alejandra Ciuffolini & Candela de la Vega: Conflict and Territory. Thinking about Mining Conflicts in Argentina. Throughout the last years, the arrival of big mining projects in Argentina has sparked important conflicts and resistance in, up until now, unexplored cities and towns. This article argues that these circumstances have modified experiences of space. It suggests that not only does territory become filled with conflict, but also that conflict becomes impregnated with territory. Taking this analytical framework, the article proposes an approach in order to explain the emergence of territorial disputes from two different plot lines. The first line of inquiry refers to the particular nexus between territory, capital, and the state, which sustains a certain ideological and symbolic definition of space. The second line of inquiry recounts social struggles as instances of dispute with the nearest powers. Social struggles are frequently inscribed by the contradictions between territory, capital, and the state, but in their clear antagonism to dominant discourses, they also test and challenge the symbolic construction of space. This paper’s insights come from the authors’ empirical research in Argentina over the last four years.

Eva Kalny: Current extractivism in the context of multiple forms of resistance: the case of Guatemala. With few exceptions, the history of extractivism in Guatemala has been characterized by the violent exploitation of natural resources by a coalition of transnational companies and national oligarchies. Local communities and mining workers, on the other hand, have a long history of opposition against extraction projects; they have opposed their effects on the environment and the living conditions of surrounding communities, and have been actively trying to improve miserable working conditions. They have also been actively involved in some of the country’s most prominent demonstrations and marches. Since the end of the civil war, which amounted in several cases to genocide against the indigenous population,

transnational mining companies have increased their activities in Guatemala, and they are now applying new technologies which seriously harm the living conditions of indigenous communities. Community members have developed new forms of resistance which include public protests, international networking, and judicial procedures against the companies at the national and international level. National and international laws also provide the framework within which indigenous communities creatively develop new forms of customary law. The concept of „new extractivism“, however, falls short in describing the relevant politics of the former social democratic president Álvaro Colom, and ignores the new forms of extractivism as well as the innovative strategies of resistance.

Oliver Pye: The Contested Spaces of the Palm Oil Industry. This article uses the „Territory, Place, Scale, Network“ (TPSN) Framework developed by Jessop et al. (2008) to uncover the historically specific ensemble of TPSN that characterizes the socio-spatial dynamics of the palm oil industry. First it looks at how the dialectic between flows of capital at the global scale and fixed capital at the regional scale drives territorial expansion across Southeast Asia. A specific mill-estate-scale forms the basic unit of production along transnational production networks and accelerates the totalitarian transformation of eco-social landscapes that then produces the first category of conflicts around environmental justice. The scale of the national state is spatially at odds with the economic space, but is politically crucial for the territorialisation of palm oil expansion. Despite this, the main political dynamic in recent years has been the production of a contested transnational political space between Southeast Asia and Europe which has been defined by non-governmental organization (NGO) campaigns and networked corporate governance. The main focus of the article is on the new social spaces created by the everyday resistance of migrant palm oil workers in Malaysia to the precarious labour regime and system of political control pursued by the Malaysian national state. Workers defy systems of control by circumventing border regulations, by absconding from work in a systematic fashion (*lari*), and with wildcat strikes. The paper argues that workers' practices of migration autonomy not only produce new transnational social spaces but they also offer potential for transnational organizing strategies and alliances between workers and the environmental justice movement.