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## The Andean Region: Sustainable Development with Inequality?

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It has become common to think of Latin America when talking about inequality. Gaps in access to public services, capital concentration and asymmetric distribution of environmental risks and costs or social exclusion based on ethnicity or gender identity are recurring themes in the discussions about development and democracy in the region. Although there was a progressive decrease of income asymmetries in the first decade of the 21st century (ECLAC, 2013), this only covered a limited aspect of inequality. At the end of the second decade of this century, Latin America continues to be the most unequal region in the world (ECLAC, 2018). This is particularly noteworthy in the Andean Region, a space with specific economic, political, social and ecological processes, which are linked to global processes. This region experienced an unprecedented economic boom in the first decade of this century, and currently holds some of the most important economies in Latin America, such as Argentina, Colombia and Chile (World Bank, 2018), while maintaining serious economic, social and political disparities.

Therefore, we consider important to resume the debate on the different

types of inequalities as presented in the first edition of CROLAR, published seven years ago. In that first volume, the articles offered a global perspective on Latin America and provoked thought about the definition of the region itself, its place in global processes and central issues such as poverty, rights and democracy (CROLAR, 2012). Problems related to social justice, inclusion, democracy and development have been addressed in other editions of CROLAR, which focused on specific issues: technology, culture, gender, among others. This new edition seeks to draw attention back to inequality as a multidimensional and persistent phenomenon in Latin American countries, mainly the Andean countries.

Analyzing these processes becomes more relevant in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development promoted by the United Nations (UN). Seven years ago, when the first edition of CROLAR was published, the achievements of Agenda 21 and the Millennium Development Goals were under discussion. By 2015, following the recognition that reducing inequalities had no significant impact and the exacerbation of the environmental crisis, the UN

promoted the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Each SDG addresses the problem of inequalities to some extent, but their relevance led to setting a specific objective about different types of inequality within and among countries (SDG 10). In the Andean Region, the political, economic and social changes in the last decade do not point to a clear direction in the fight to reduce inequalities. Meanwhile, in socioecological terms, there is increasing certainty about the problems that the region will have to face and the significant differences between those who are and are not prepared to do so.

The first five years of implementing the 2030 Agenda in the Andean Region reveals a complex scenario, in which socioeconomic, sociopolitical and socioecological inequalities coexist with the implementation of public policies and joint actions (State, NGOs, companies) that seek—or allegedly seek—sustainable development. In the sociopolitical sphere, we find the “turns” to the left and to the right that characterized the first and second decade of this century, respectively; the emergence of movements of indigenous, women and other marginalized groups that struggle to exercise their rights and achieve political representation; and the political crises at the national level (Argentina, Ecuador and Venezuela). Moreover, at the socioeconomic level, the end of the mineral price super cycle (Acquatella, Bello & Berríos, 2016) and the consequent fiscal adjustment period pose significant challenges, considering

that extractivism—a form of production extended independently of the types of regimes (Bebbington, 2013, Restrepo & Peña, 2017)—allowed the Andean countries to reduce poverty, expand access to basic services and social protection policies in the first decade of the 21st century, albeit with important limitations (ECLAC, 2018). In the socioecological field, the impact of climate change reaches global levels in terms of water supply and agricultural production conditions (CDKN, 2014).

The texts gathered in this edition of CROLAR analyze how diverse actors and the State respond to, negotiate and translate the different dimensions of inequality and how the meanings and orientation of sustainable development are disputed. The reviews describe the tensions between actors, wisdoms, productive systems and (formal and informal) institutions on different scales, revealing the interdependence of inequalities (Braig, Costa & Göbel, 2015) and the importance of power relations to understand the challenges and limitations of sustainable development (Schorr, 2018).

Elizabeth Jiménez opens our Focus section by placing ourselves in the history of extractivism with a review of Horacio Machado Araoz’s book (2018) *Potosí, el origen: genealogía de la minería contemporánea*. The book is a reflection about the origins and resurgence of extractivism as the main mode of production in the Andean Region after

the failure of the import substitution industrialization, in the late 1970s. Machado points out that the countries in the region (peripheral countries) reproduce “the Potosí principle,” which is the dependence on extractive activities as an economic engine and on the markets and technology of the countries in the center. This is the inheritance of the colonial economy of the Peruvian-Bolivian Plateau. With some qualms about the author’s reflections on the development of capitalism, Jiménez underlines the importance of the book in accounting for processes of exploitation of nature in post-colonial countries.

Meanwhile, Tania Ramírez reviews the book *Science and Environment in Chile. The Politics of Expert Advice in a Neoliberal Democracy*, in which Javiera Barandiarán explores the relationship between science and power from the State’s perspective in socioenvironmental conflicts in Chile. Among the various ideas presented in the book, two are particularly important. The first one is that scientific knowledge can be used to demobilize, when presented as an objective truth against political demands, considered subjective. The second idea is that the Chilean State is a plaintiff of scientific studies, since there are no state agencies with experts providing a knowledge base for policy-making in the southern country. Instead, there is a market used by these agencies to make decisions. Thus, the neoliberal state guides its actions by private ideas and, therefore, its role in conflicts is suspicious for social organizations.

In turn, Silvia Romio places us on the other side, that of the practices and organizations of indigenous peoples in their relationship with the State and territory. Her review of the text *Apus, caciques y presidentes: estado y política indígena en los países andinos*, by Surrallés, Espinosa and Jabin (2016), takes us into the daily indigenous dynamics, but not in the traditional analysis of the “others,” as opposed to the State and the “civilized.” This places us in the theoretical and dynamic transformations produced in a context increasingly marked by the interrelation to Western thought and practices. The review highlights the indigenous experience in urbanity, the negotiations and strategies for the incorporation of indigenous people in the state bureaucracy and the reformulation of the political and control forms exercised under the protection of the law. In the debates presented across the various articles compiled in the book, Romio points out the absence of indigenous women as actors taking part in these power relations.

The editorial team shares these concerns about the relationship between the State and indigenous women or popular sectors, as well as their political practices—which has aroused the particular interest in exploring the topic in this number. Whether in their relationship with the State, their organizations or their families, the texts indicate how social inequalities generate situations of violence and discrimination that affect women’s rights. At the same time, the texts recognize the strategies and responses of groups of women organized

in that context. Narda Carranza's critical review of *Desigualdades interseccionales, mujeres y política social en el Perú, 1990-2000* (Boesten, 2018) emphasizes the need to review theories about inequality from the point of view of women's agency in the framework of social policies. From a critical analysis, the review asks the author of the text for new theoretical questions about inequality and variables that transcend gender, class and race. In her opinion, these could be explored in the three cases studied, related to food aid, reproductive health and violence against women. Along the same lines, the question about a successful mechanism in reducing inequalities, based on "bottom-up" responses in authoritarian regimes, such as the one studied, arises instead of a quick commitment to grant a central role to the State ("top-down").

Continuing the reflection, Roxana Vergara proposes to review from a comparative perspective two texts about the emergence of indigenous women's organizations in their relationship with the State and the indigenous movements. Vergara puts Anna Barrera's book (2016) *Violence Against Women in Legally Plural Settings: Experiences and Lessons from the Andes* and Stéphanie Rousseau and Anahi Morales Hudon's book (2018) *Movimientos de Mujeres Indígenas en Latinoamérica: Género y Etnicidad en el Perú. México y Bolivia* into dialogue. With an emphasis on legal anthropology and literature on social movements, Barrera proposes to analyze the agency of indigenous women in transforming their local

institutions. Meanwhile, Rousseau and Morales propose to understand, from the intersectional approach, how identity categories of gender and ethnicity shape different forms of women's organizations at the national level.

In the Review Article section, Diego Geng provides a review of texts referring to the socioecological dimensions behind conflicts over natural resources. The reviewed texts question the relationship nature-society, which neoliberalism and extractivism take for granted: nature is a box of resources that must be used to guarantee economic growth. The articles compiled by Merlinsky (2016) about Argentina, by Bustos, Prieto and Barton (2017) about Chile, the work of Li (2017) about two mining conflicts in Peru and Yrivarren's analysis of technical documents from a mining conflict in Peru also propose to analyze the historical construction of the territories and the local practices associated with them. In this way, they show that socioecological transformations introduced by the extractive activities generate inequalities of access to resources, distribution of environmental impacts and disarticulation of social spaces. Similarly, they analyze the role of technical knowledge and its use by companies and the State as a mechanism of exclusion, but also as a tool of resistance of local communities.

In the Classic Revisited section, Omar Pereyra invites us to read *Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique*, a text published by Frank Parkin in 1979

that received little attention in Latin America due to the predominance of Marxist perspectives in understanding stratification. Parkin criticizes them for limiting the study of stratification to production relations, which—in addition to their conceptual vagueness—do not allow for observation of the multidimensionality of stratification (by race or gender), or the mechanisms used by various groups to produce “social closure” or exclusion, either from an elite or from grassroots organizations. In sum, the book is an invitation to rethink stratification as a multidimensional and multidirectional process.

The Special Section includes two interviews about the main themes of this issue: sustainable development and agency in the face of inequality. The first interview was conducted with Edgar Isch, former Minister of Environment in Ecuador, currently a scholar and activist for the conservation of nature and defense of indigenous rights. On this occasion, Isch talks about the role of the Andean States in the expansion of extractive industries and the promotion of sustainable development. The second interview is with Stéphanie Rousseau, professor and researcher in Peru specialized in gender, citizenship and social movements. She shares her reflections about the trajectories of the indigenous women movements in the Andean region and their origins in States with diverse political tendencies, but with shared neo-liberal and economic regimes. In them, women struggle to achieve equality by means

of specific ways of making politics and organizing that imply permanent alliances and differences with indigenous and feminist movements.

In the Interventions section, we move from theory to art thanks to the article by Camila Sastre about the plays *Kay Punku* (Correa & Correa, 2005) and *Manta y Vilca* (Colectivo Trenzar, 2017), which brings to mind the structurality and depth of the inequalities that affect indigenous women. She reflects about the traces left by sexual violence that marked the lives of women and girls during the period of the internal armed conflict in Peru, and their perpetuation over time by impunity and oblivion. Art acts as a catalyst that leads us to the field of memory, where it realizes how inequalities pass through individual and social subjectivities and bodies. Thus, the text offers a perspective that complements the reviews on women’s policy and agency presented in the first part of this issue.

In the Policy section, Manuel Benavente describes the text of Ana Leyva (2018), *Consúltame de verdad: aproximación a un balance de la consulta previa en el Perú en los sectores minero e hidrocarburífero*, which, as the name implies, analyzes the experiences of implementation of the Law of Prior Consultation in Peru. The result is negative. The dissatisfaction with the limitations for participation, the inadequacy to the needs of the indigenous communities and the inconsistencies in the procedures make the results doubtful. Even when

Benavente acknowledges that the author is not completely impartial in placing herself in the line of defense of economic, social and cultural rights, he considers that her analysis is detailed and her critic to the neoliberal ministerial agenda is clear. Moreover, the recommendations offered by the text, referring to normative details, intersectoral articulation and dialogue based on the recognition of the communities provide interesting lights to improve prior consultations.

In the last section, Current Debates, Kirschner presents the book by Wiebke Beuhausen et al. (eds.) (2018) *Practices of Resistance in the Caribbean: Narratives, Aesthetics, Politics*, in which cases of symbolic violence and cultural inequalities are analyzed based on persistent colonial structures. Against them, the excluded resist by means of identity affirmation, the revaluation of folklore, among other actions. Likewise, Norma Valencio presents *Mineração, violência e resistências: um campo aberto à produção de conhecimento no Brasil*, by Andrea Zhouri (2018), a text that addresses inequality in the problem of environmental pollution and resistance of those affected in the form of alliances with scientific communities to refute the natural mining status of indigenous territories. To conclude, Andrés Gómez reviews the book by Atria, Groll and Valdés (2017) *Rethinking Taxation in Latin America*, a compilation of studies about fiscal sociology in which the phenomenon of inequality moves to the field of tax policies. In them, systematic explanations

of the origin of socioeconomic inequalities in the region can be found.

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