



Thea
Riofrancos

Resource Rantals

From
Petro-Nationalism
to Post-Extractivism
in Ecuador

Resource Radicals

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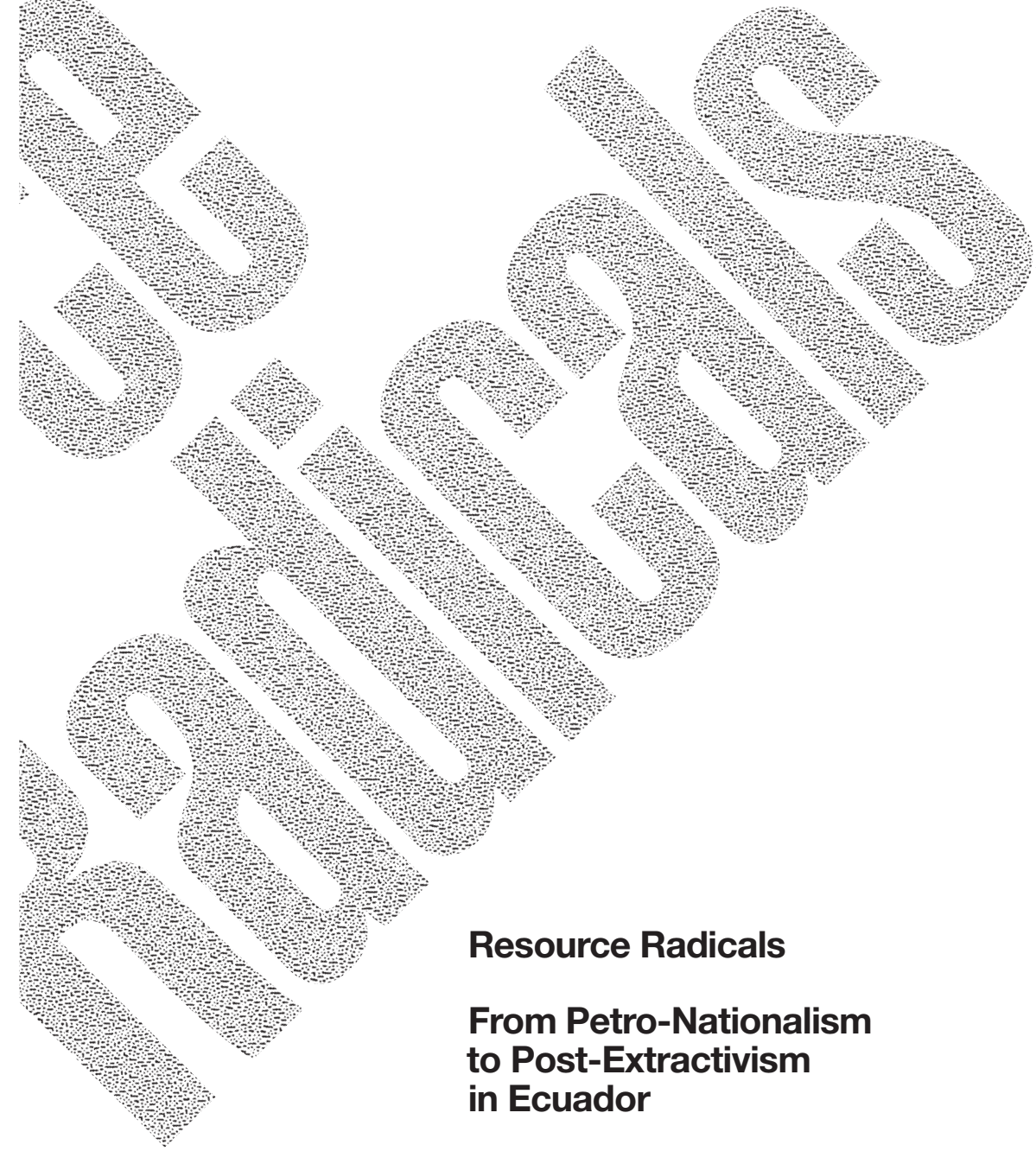


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Radical Américas

*A series edited by Bruno Bosteels
and George Ciccariello-Maher*



Resource Radicals

**From Petro-Nationalism
to Post-Extractivism
in Ecuador**

Thea Riofrancos

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book began before I knew it would be a book, before I knew I would be admitted into a PhD program, and before I knew I was conducting what would in hindsight constitute the preliminary fieldwork for my dissertation. It was born in late 2007 with a decision that was equal parts spontaneous and deliberate to move to Ecuador with Daniel Denvir, my partner and co-adventurer then and since. We were drawn by the country's natural landscapes, rebellious uprisings, and by what we understood was the beginning of a momentous political transformation: after decades of social mobilization, the country's first democratically elected leftist president had been inaugurated, and had promised a constituent assembly to rewrite the constitution, an end to the long night of neoliberalism, and sovereignty from US hegemony. Over the three years prior to this decision, Daniel and I had been active in PCASC, a Portland-based Latin American solidarity organization, and had lived and traveled elsewhere in the region where the Left had already come to power. We knew that the Left's electoral ascent was marked by both heady optimism and fraught relationships with the wide array of movements that had long struggled for social justice and popular power. We wanted to see how this process would unfold in Ecuador. Right away, we learned that resource extraction and indigenous rights would form the intertwined sites of contestation between the leftist government and the social movements that were still, at that moment but not for much longer, its allies. I knew that these two issues had long been central to radical politics in the region, but had never before witnessed a Left so internally riven by disagreements over the model of development, the relationship between society and nature, and the territorial self-determination of indigenous nations and peoples. It was an immersive educational experience, and I found myself challenged by political questions I had never thought to pose. It was in this moment that this book was born.

As is already apparent from this brief autobiographical narrative, I am in no sense the sole author of the pages that follow. My arguments and observations were articulated in constant conversation with Daniel and with the many people we met and formed long relationships with in Ecuador. They drew on a prior set of analyses developed in my undergraduate thesis on social

movements and economic policy in Bolivia, written under the guidance of my adviser Casiano Hacker-Cordón at Reed College. I am forever indebted to Casiano's intellectual mentorship. He encouraged me to unsettle the boundaries between academic subfields and disciplines, and between political commitments and scholarly research. His criticism—of my work and of the world—was always equal parts ruthless and generous; I aspire to emulate his example in my relationships with my own students.

From before I even officially matriculated at the University of Pennsylvania, Tulia Falleti was a constant source of support, encouragement, and intellectual rigor. She was a model of a dissertation adviser: with the knowledge that an ethnographic study of conflict over mining in Ecuador represented a triply marginalized topic in the discipline (on methodological, substantive topic, and case selection grounds), she simultaneously pushed me to articulate my ideas in terms intelligible to other scholars, believed that I could do it, and valued my work as a necessary challenge to hegemonic approaches in political science. She read and carefully commented on every chapter of my dissertation more than once. She also taught me how to structure my writing on a demanding but achievable timeline, and how to graciously receive critique while always giving me the space to push back against her own authority. And she inspired my interest in the fundamental territoriality of politics and in the myriad institutional arrangements for linking geographic scale and democratic governance.

The other members of my dissertation committee also went beyond the call of duty. Anne Norton helped me draw out the deeper questions at stake in my work: What is a community, and what practices and identities bind it together or tear it apart? What is the content of sovereignty? How do the seemingly neutral realms of the law and science become politicized? What are the complex subjectivities and temporalities at play in a fight against an extractive sector still in its early stages? Who speaks for the land, the water, and the resources we hold in common? I still wrestle with these questions, and to the extent that this book sketches the outlines of how one might answer them, I am indebted to her. Robert Vitalis taught me to distrust just about everything already written on resource politics and the rentier state, to dispense with pre-packaged concepts, to listen to the actors on the ground, and to trace the history that emerged from my encounters with people, events, and archives. He encouraged me to search out the fissures within the state and to pay close attention to the everyday practices of bureaucracy. And he always brought his expansive insight on oil politics in the Middle East to bear on my research in Ecuador, helping me specify both what was shared across contexts and what

was unique to my fieldwork sites. From Erica Simmons, I learned both how to work against the grain of political science and still participate in and enrich the debates within the field. Her work on social movements and the politics of subsistence broadened my conceptual horizons: disputes over the management or ownership of natural resources are always disputes over the meanings we ascribe to them, and the contested ways that political communities are built through and around extraction, production, and consumption.

In addition to my committee, I want to note the support and intellectual influence of other members of the department, especially Jeffrey Green, Ian Lustick, Julia Lynch, Rudra Sil, and Rogers Smith. And lastly, outside political science, my fieldwork experience, dissertation, and book benefited immeasurably from the courses I took and the mentorship I received from Asif Agha, professor of linguistic anthropology and social theory polymath. It is not an overstatement to say that Asif taught me how language works, how—through the words we speak, write, and read—we reflexively constitute social life, linking, in webs of interaction, a casual conversation to the assembly of macropolitical orders. My analysis of *extractivismo* discourse is unthinkable without the lessons I learned in his seminars.

Throughout graduate school, I participated in intellectual communities both on and off campus, and made what would be deep and lasting friendships. I survived intimidating seminars, impossible reading loads, comprehensive exams, dissertation proposals, and fieldwork with the companionship of Begüm Adalet, Osman Balkan, Laura Finch, Kathryn Hardy, Ian Hartshorn, Adam Leeds, Shy Oakes, and, from a distance, Isabel Gabel. I would never, ever have written a dissertation without the camaraderie of my writing crew (Adam, Laura, Kathryn, and Shy). These four and many more were also involved in a rotating series of off-campus social theory reading groups, held in the living rooms and finished late in the night on the front porches of West Philly, and which included undergrads, grad students, and unaffiliated scholars. They are the closest thing I have experienced to something like a salon, unencumbered by the sometimes stifling norms of the classroom.

My year and a half of fieldwork was enabled by yet another community of generous individuals and groups. I am grateful for the institutional home FLACSO provided (coordinated by Santiago Basabe), and for the opportunity to present my research and work with graduate students. I appreciate the many conversations I had with Veronica Albuja, Abel Arpi, Juan Auz, Chela Calle, Kléver Calle, David Chavez, Paul Cisneros, Luis Corral, Pablo Iturralde, Carlos Larrea, Patricio Matute, Nayana Román, and William Sacher—several of whom also invited me into their political and intellectual worlds, resulting in bonds

of friendship and solidarity that I hope this book reflects and honors. I also benefited from the fieldwork companionship of Nicholas Limerick, Taylor Nelms, and Karolien van Teijlingen, as well as that of Elisa Levy and Sander Otten, with whom I experienced the 2012 march and 2011 *consulta*, respectively, and who were generous enough to give me permission to use their photographs of these processes. My life in Ecuador was enriched tremendously by Robin Fink, with whom I shared an apartment and many formative life experiences. And, finally, Marcelo Torres (Lino): dear friend, confidante, and wise beyond his years. Together we explored the many marvelous worlds of Quito and beyond—both more deeply understanding and transforming ourselves in the process.

The chapters that comprise this book went through countless revisions and reframings. My first attempts to think through converting my dissertation to a book occurred during my year as a Visiting Fellow at the Kellogg Institute of Notre Dame. Robert Fishman, Evan Harris, Sandra Ley Gutiérrez, Jamie Loxton, Ann Mische, and Antina von Schnitzler all provided invaluable feedback on the project as it developed. Over the past few years, Santiago Anria, Hannah Appel, Osman Balkan, Alyssa Battistoni, Guzman Castro, Daniel Aldana Cohen, Daniel Denvir, Gabriel Fonseca, Janice Gallagher, Kathryn Hardy, Evan Harris, Adam Leeds, Ian Hartshorn, Jeffrey Isaac, Joshua Simon, Dawn Teele, and Sarah Thomas all read drafts of one or more chapters, and provided rigorous commentary. Of all of these, Adam Leeds read the most drafts. I am deeply indebted to him, not only for his editorial genius, but for our decade-long close friendship, stimulating conversations, and shared intellectual development; it is hard to imagine writing this book without all I have learned from—and with—him. From book prospectus to final manuscript and all the late-night anxious queries in between, George Ciccariello-Maher has been much more than a series editor: a wise mentor and a dear friend, he believed in my work and in its relevance to the vibrant field of radical politics in the Americas. Courtney Berger was an exemplary editor, providing patient and constructive guidance throughout the entire process. And I benefited from the feedback of two anonymous reviewers, whose comments pushed me to broaden the manuscript's analytic scope and zoom out to the dilemmas marking the Pink Tide writ large.

In Providence, I have had the fortune of the friendship and near constant companionship of Sarah Thomas. At Providence College, I have had the unusual luck of an extremely supportive and convivial department. In particular, I would like to thank Chairs Bill Hudson and Joseph Cammarano for doing all in their power to give me time to devote to research and writing, the college's

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I now return to where I started these acknowledgments. Daniel Denvir, you are the love of my life, a bedrock of support, and a constant inspiration. I can only aspire to match your discipline and your unwavering commitment to justice. You have accompanied me, whether physically or in spirit, on every single moment of the journey along which this book was conceived, written, rewritten, and submitted.

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Resource Radicalisms

To legitimate a supposed image of the left, the government uses a discourse that makes it appear radical, but it is a double discourse . . . The rights of nature and indigenous territories are recognized in name only, the extractivist model that the government advocates contradicts them and brutally attacks them . . . But the other reality is that of the [indigenous] peoples, the social movements and organizations that today resist this model, just as yesterday we resisted neoliberalism.

—“The Manifesto of the Meeting of Social Movements for Democracy and Life,” Quito, 2011

It is madness to say no to natural resources, which is what part of the left is proposing—no to oil, no to mining, no to gas, no to hydroelectric power, no to roads. This is an absurd novelty, but it’s as if it has become a fundamental part of left discourse. It is all the more dangerous for coming from people who supposedly speak the same language. With so many restrictions, the left will not be able to offer any viable political projects . . . We cannot lose sight of the fact that the main objective of a country such as Ecuador is to eliminate poverty. And for that we need our natural resources.

—Rafael Correa, “Ecuador’s Path,” 2012

In 2011, the fourth year of the administration of Ecuadorian leftist president Rafael Correa, more than a hundred social movement organizations and leftist political parties gathered for the “Meeting of Social Movements for Democracy and Life.” According to the manifesto written at this meeting, these organizations and parties were rooted in diverse experiences of social mobilization, including anti-mining, environmentalist, public transit worker, feminist, and sexual diversity struggles, and “the indigenous and peasant uprising for water and land.”¹ They condemned Correa’s

government for “represent[ing] an authoritarian and corrupt model of capitalist modernization.”

Popular movements had rebuked prior governments for being antidemocratic and neoliberal. But this document also deployed a new critical category: “the extractivist model,” defined as a political-economic order based on the intensive extraction and export of natural resources.² The manifesto stated that this model, with its blatant disregard for nature and indigenous communities, was all the more pernicious for being shrouded in a “supposed image of the left” and “a double discourse”—and must be as militantly resisted as neoliberalism had been in the recent past.

A year later, in an interview in the Chilean leftist magazine *Punto Final*, and during protracted political conflict with many of these same social movements, President Correa charged that rejecting the extractive model was a “colossal error” that was particularly “lethal because it utilizes our same language, proposes the same objectives and even invokes our same principles.”³ Correa grounded his arguments in appeals to the leftist canon, asking, “Where in *The Communist Manifesto* does it say no to mining?” and “What socialist theory says no to mining?” A few months later, in an interview in *New Left Review*, he expressed exasperation with what he saw as activists’ “absurd” and “dangerous” opposition to resource extraction.⁴

While Correa and the organizations that signed the manifesto vehemently disagreed over the model of development, they did agree on one thing: to each, the other represented a perversion of leftism, a perversion particularly insidious for being cloaked in the language of radical transformation. Each side accused the other of betraying the principles of socioeconomic equality, popular empowerment, and anti-imperialism that have defined the Latin American Left for over a century. Correa identified himself with a regional movement of “socialism for the twenty-first century,” named neoliberalism as the cause of myriad social, economic, and political ills, rejected US hegemony, and presided over a state that had dramatically increased social spending and that enjoyed widespread political support among the poor. His discourse resonated with a long history of popular calls for the expropriation and nationalization of natural resources. The anti-extractive social movements that opposed him traced their organizational lineage to worker, campesino, and indigenous struggles, and their critique of the extractive model was indebted to the systematic analysis of imperialism and dependency that characterizes Latin American critical thought. But they also voiced a more recent radical demand: an end to the extractive model of development.

Why did activists who had for decades resisted neoliberalism now protest against a leftist government? More generally, what accounts for the emergence of radical anti-extractive movements? And how might they reshape resource politics across the globe?

This book explores the conditions and consequences of the radical politicization of resource extraction. Dominant approaches to the study of oil or mineral-dependent states focus on how resource dependency shapes regime type or economic development.⁵ They conclude that such states tend to be authoritarian and corrupt, and rule over societies that are alternately portrayed as politically quiescent or prone to violent resource-related conflicts. Completing this picture of pathology is economic underdevelopment. Some combination of Dutch disease, boom-and-bust price cycles, profligate state spending, and a pervasive “rentier mentality” is seen to divert investment away from productive sectors—thus reproducing resource dependency and all its perverse effects.⁶

In contrast, my approach rejects such pessimistic determinism and expands the study of resource politics well beyond the halls of the petro-state.⁷ In Ecuador, grassroots activists were key protagonists in the contentious politics of oil and mining. In dynamic conflict with state and corporate elites, popular mobilization shaped the political and economic consequences of resource extraction. And the stakes of these conflicts were high. Constitutional authority, democratic sovereignty, and the possibility of a post-neoliberal state hung in the balance.

In the heat of political struggle, social movement activists craft critiques of extraction and enact processes of resistance. I call these *resource radicalisms*, and show how they shape the strategies, identities, and interests of state and movement actors alike. The concept of resource radicalism brings into relief how intellectual production is intertwined with political mobilization. From rallying cries to animated debates to everyday reflection, activists analyze the prevailing order and articulate visions of a world otherwise.

Drawing on an archival and ethnographic study of three decades of dramatic resource politics in Ecuador, I identify two such resource radicalisms, *radical resource nationalism* and *anti-extractivism*, each of which transformed the political terrain of extraction. The former demands collective ownership of oil and minerals; the latter rejects extraction entirely and envisions a post-extractive society. In the chapters that follow, I demonstrate that resource radicals forced state and corporate elites to respond—whether by accommodation, co-optation, or criminalization—and, in some cases, affected the fate of extractive projects.

Around the globe, conflict in relation to extraction, energy, and infrastructure has escalated—and it will only continue to do so in a rapidly warming and politically unstable world.⁸ Situated at the frontiers of capitalism's relentless expansion, mining and oil projects are sites of dispossession and contamination. They are structured by local, national, and global scales of political economy and ecology.⁹ As a result, they afford multiple venues of conflict. Due to their uneven geographic distribution, and that of their environmental and social impacts, natural resources are “intensely local.”¹⁰ At the same time, they are commodities in international supply chains shaped by the investment decisions of multinational firms and volatile global prices. Dangerous labor conditions and relative worker autonomy have historically made sites of extraction focal sites of class conflict. And these local conflicts also have national significance: governments around the world have taken an acute interest in regulating oil and mineral sectors since the early twentieth century, including via direct ownership of extractive firms.¹¹ As a key source of fiscal revenue, these sectors are considered “strategic”—a status justifying the deployment of physical force to protect extractive projects from protest or other disruptions. More fundamentally, in such national contexts, the processes of extraction and state-formation have reinforced each other.¹² Meanwhile, potent resource imaginaries, developed by movements and institutions, have shaped their political consequences.¹³

In Latin America, the politics of resource extraction are particularly charged. Across the region's diverse histories, resource extraction traces a long arc: colonial plunder, independence-era “enclave economies,” midcentury nationalist projects of oil-fueled modernization, subsequent privatization and deregulation of hydrocarbon and mineral sectors, and, most recently, attempts at oil-funded equitable development. Over the course of four centuries, the extraction (or harvesting) and export of primary commodities has relegated the region to “peripheral” status in the global division of labor.¹⁴ This status, rooted in colonial domination, places it on the losing end of an unequal exchange of raw goods for refined or manufactured imports. Dependency only intensified after independence, with the proliferation of mines and plantations that functioned as economic enclaves, often foreign-owned and with weak linkages to the rest of the national economy. Although the history of extraction is a history of underdevelopment, natural resource sectors have long inspired developmentalist ambitions on the part of state officials—and hopes of radical sovereignty on the part of popular movements.¹⁵ Inspired by such visions, in the mid-twentieth century, several resource-dependent

Latin American countries underwent forms of “endogenous development,” investing rents in industrial sectors. Their goal was to ultimately diversify economies and export revenues. But ensuing neoliberal reforms of deregulation and market integration reinforced the reliance on primary sectors—a trend only exacerbated by the commodity boom (between 2000 and 2014), and trade and financial dependency on the United States, Canada, Europe, and China.

Recent leftist administrations in Latin America are ideal sites to explore resource conflict because of this history, and because both policymakers and social movements have explicitly politicized—and radicalized—the relationship between development and extraction. In the process, they have raised deeper questions about the state, democracy, and the ecological foundations of global capitalism. Ecuador in particular is an especially revealing window into regional, and global, resource radicalisms. It is among the most commodity-dependent economies on the continent, and has seen intense conflict between a leftist government committed to an extraction-fueled, broad-based development model and an array of movements militantly opposed to resource extraction in all forms.

The Ecuadorian dispute over resource extraction between a self-described socialist leader and the social movement activists who helped bring him to power testifies to a unique historical moment. In Latin America, the turn of the millennium was marked by the proliferation of “counter-hegemonic processes” in the halls of state power and in the streets.¹⁶ At the height of the Pink Tide in 2009, leftist administrations governed almost two-thirds of the region’s population.¹⁷ But this moment was also marked by the intensification of an export-oriented, resource-intensive model of accumulation, highly dependent on foreign capital. In Ecuador, activists who had protested decades of neoliberal policies in tandem with the region’s leftist, critical, and decolonial intellectuals now resisted a leftist government and what they called “the extractive model” of development.¹⁸

The region is home to a variety of resource radicalisms. Depending on the context, activists’ grievances and demands center on indigenous rights, environmental contamination, labor exploitation, foreign ownership, territorial autonomy, and local self-determination—or, often, some combination thereof. In some cases, disputes over extraction pit leftists with histories of common political struggle against one another. Leftist governments in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela espoused a state-centric resource nationalism, while indigenous and popular environmental movements (*ecologismo popular*) struggling against the expanding extractive frontier envisioned a post-extractive

future.¹⁹ These movements articulated a novel critical discourse centered on the concept of extractivism that called into question the unity of state, nation, territory, and resources. Although this discourse has circulated transnationally in both activist and academic circles, in Ecuador the radicalization of resource politics was both particularly acute and historically dynamic.²⁰ It was acute because, during the presidential administration of Rafael Correa, the dispute over extraction became *the* primary source of discord between state actors and social movements—and among bureaucrats themselves. And it was historically dynamic because in the space of less than a decade, many popular sector organizations dramatically changed their position on resource extraction.²¹ In response to the social and environmental impacts of extractive projects, they abandoned their historic calls for expropriation, nationalization, and the collective ownership of the means and products of extraction—what I call *radical resource nationalism*—and embraced *anti-extractivism*: the militant opposition to all forms of resource extraction. In the streets and in the courts, in popular assemblies in affected communities and on nature walks to the sites of planned extraction, they identified and resisted the disparate nodes of extractivism. From their perspective, each of these nodes reproduced the extractive model—and furnished an opportunity to disrupt its ubiquitous development.

Resource Governance

A central aim of this book is to identify models of *resource governance* and show how they structure and are structured by popular mobilization. Resource governance refers to “the political and economic coordination of socio-natural relations” on the part of state and corporate elites.²² The prevailing paradigm of resource governance shapes the political consequences of, and conflicts around, dramatic shifts in commodity prices.

Such governance paradigms vary over time and across national contexts, are inflected with specific ideological commitments, and supported by distinct constituencies. From 1972 through the end of Correa’s third administration in 2017, Ecuador saw three approaches to resource governance: oil-based developmentalism, neoliberalism, and post-neoliberal resource nationalism.²³ Continuities cut across these periods: each model of governance bequeathed institutional and ideological legacies that shaped subsequent moments of policymaking and protest.

My analysis attends to these continuities as well as the conflictual junctures at which resource governance is transformed. As the two epigraphs that

open this chapter highlight, during Correa's tenure in office (2007–2017), competing visions of resource extraction split the Ecuadorian Left, and opened up a debate over the means and ends of radical transformation. These competing visions emerged in a regional context characterized by two processes: the electoral success of leftist governments, and a sustained commodity boom. The causes of each were distinct, but once set in motion they together transformed political and economic horizons.

The electoral success of leftist politicians and parties in Latin America had causes both distant and proximate.²⁴ In any given case, the timing and character of successful leftist presidential campaigns can only be understood in light of the domestic balance of forces, the history of leftist, labor, urban barrio, campesino, and indigenous organizing, and the severity and consequences of neoliberal reforms. However, shared political and economic circumstances across the region help explain the simultaneous success of leftist electoral bids. Democratization was one such factor: although the risk of repression on the part of the domestic elite, and intervention by the US, has by no means disappeared, the wave of formal re-democratizations across the region in the late 1970s and 1980s opened up more political space for leftist parties to mobilize and compete. Second, decades of austerity had deepened poverty and inequality—and created a large constituency for leftist policies of economic redistribution, social welfare, and more substantive democratization of the state. Finally, and as crucial as re-democratization and economic devastation, was the role of sustained anti-neoliberal protest in politicizing neoliberal policies and challenging the hegemony of free markets and limited formal democracy.

Overlapping with the electoral ascendancy of the Left, between 2000 and 2014, demand from China (due to rapid industrialization and related growth in domestic consumer markets) drove historically high global commodity prices.²⁵ The trend was reinforced by disruptions to Middle Eastern and North African oil supplies (and associated investor panics) during the Arab Spring. In Latin America, the boom resulted in a substantial economic reorientation, and deepening fiscal dependency on the extraction and export of oil, metals, and agricultural commodities.²⁶ Commodity booms and busts, however, do not directly determine resource policy or the broader politics surrounding resource extraction. The prior decades of neoliberal deregulation across the region had enabled this rapid expansion of oil and mining development. As a result of global market integration, the activity of resource governance increasingly encompasses both public policymakers and private corporate actors, often in explicit partnership with one another.²⁷

From Oil-Based Developmentalism to Neoliberalism

Soon after the discovery of oil in the northern Amazon in 1967 by Texaco-Gulf, oil policy in Ecuador took a nationalist and developmentalist turn. The first step toward resource nationalism began under the populist Velasco Ibarra government's fifth and final administration (1968–1972) with the 1971 Hydrocarbons Law, which declared oil the “inalienable property of the state,” eliminated the concession model, and replaced it with a contract model that stipulated taxation and royalty rates, and required investments.²⁸ However, the law was not retroactive and the new contract model was voluntary. In February 1972, a military coup deposed the Ibarra administration. One motive was the prospect of asserting firmer state control over oil and using oil rents as a basis for national development. The historical moment was auspicious for nationalist oil policies. In the early 1970s, a wave of oil sector nationalizations swept the Middle East.²⁹ At the same time, the Group of 77—the UN caucus of Third World countries—increasingly advocated the shared interests of commodity exporters and the need for national control over these sectors.³⁰ Prices were on the rise as global demand grew, and several major producers were reaching their peak production levels.³¹ In this context, the Rodríguez Lara government (1972–1976) made oil policy its central focus, and it explicitly framed its policies in terms of nationalism, developmentalism, and decolonization. Between June 1972 and March 1973, the military junta reestablished the national oil company, Corporación Estatal Petrolera Ecuatoriana (CEPE), reviewed all existing concessions and limited their size (resulting in the return of over 5 million hectares to the state), forced the renegotiation of all contracts, and, most controversially, mandated that CEPE hold 25 percent of the rights to any contract.³² In November 1973, Ecuador joined the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). With an eye to promoting broader socioeconomic development, the government reinvested oil revenues in a variety of industrial and petrochemical sectors, implemented land reform in the highlands, and promoted agricultural settlement (“colonization”) in the Amazon.³³

The nationalist policy of resource extraction and associated developmentalism was short-lived. The ensuing backlash from the domestic business class and foreign oil companies ended this brief but transformative experiment in resource nationalism and helped introduce neoliberal oil governance in 1980, which remained in place until 2006.³⁴ As I detail in Chapter 1, neoliberalism was marked by privatization and deregulation, with the aim of courting foreign investment. The proceeds from oil extraction were primarily realized as

corporate profits and foreign debt payments. Despite this radical shift in resource governance, however, the policies of the Rodríguez Lara government left an enduring ideological legacy of resource nationalism, which would later be reappropriated and radicalized by popular movements. It also bequeathed an institutional and organizational infrastructure (most importantly, the state-owned oil company) that would form the foundation of resource nationalist policies under the Correa administration.

Renewed Resource Nationalism

During the commodity boom, Ecuador became one of the most primary resource dependent economies in the region. Between 2000 and 2010, its five most important primary resources accounted for on average three-quarters of total exports, with oil alone accounting for almost half.³⁵ From Correa's inauguration in 2007 up until 2014 (and the precipitous drop in oil prices), oil revenues financed on average over one-third of the state budget.³⁶ Yet even when oil prices were high, social spending still outpaced revenues. Chinese loans, secured by future oil revenues, covered a substantial percentage of the budget shortfall.³⁷ By 2017, the government and the state-owned oil company, Petroecuador were over \$17 billion in debt to the Chinese Development and Export-Import Banks.³⁸ Searching for a broader revenue base, Correa increasingly prioritized mining Ecuador's untapped gold and copper reserves, and drilling for oil in the southeastern Amazon. His administration was not the first to attempt to develop a large-scale mining sector in Ecuador. But, unlike previous governments, it made mining a national policy priority.³⁹ Out of five strategic projects, the administration's efforts resulted in contracts for two large-scale, open-pit copper mines (the Mirador mine in Zamora Chinchipe, and San Carlos-Panantza Project in Morona Santiago) and offers from foreign firms for four out of thirteen new oil concessions. Other mining projects are now in various stages of exploration, and some are stalled due to social conflict and investors' perceptions that the contract model overly favors the state.

In Ecuador and other South American countries governed by leftist administrations, the renewed ascendancy of resource nationalism shaped the social, economic, and political effects of the commodity boom.⁴⁰ In Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela, legislative reforms and executive decrees stipulated contract models that increased state revenue from extractive projects (though often less dramatically than claimed by conservative opposition, and the US media) and/or increased the share of state ownership ("forced divestments").⁴¹ In Ecuador, there were no expropriations or nationalizations

of foreign oil firms, but the oil contract model was reformed to increase the tax rate on extraordinary profits and to channel profits to the state in the event of production above forecasted levels, thus increasing state revenues when oil prices rose.⁴² Similarly, the 2009 Mining Law increased royalty rates, and channeled a portion of revenues for investment in directly affected communities.

The combination of the commodity boom, the new contract models, and significantly increased state spending on basic needs began to chip away at what Correa called the “social debt” that had accumulated during hundreds of years of inequality and had intensified during the “lost decade” of debt crises and neoliberal policies. As a result, poverty and inequality declined significantly, and access to education, sanitation, housing, and healthcare increased.⁴³ Among Latin American countries, under the Correa administration, Ecuador spent the highest percentage of GDP on its monthly cash transfer program (*bono de desarrollo humano*).⁴⁴ And, compared to similar programs across the region, the *bono* accounted for the highest decrease in poverty and had the greatest redistributive effect.⁴⁵

However, when it came to transforming historically unequal and dependent economies, commodity-dependent leftist populism was a double-edge sword. In Ecuador, the price of improving millions of citizens’ socioeconomic well-being was further fiscal dependency on the extraction and export of natural resources, and the subjection of indigenous communities to sometimes violent displacement and of fragile ecosystems to contamination. Although during the boom years this model provided revenue for social spending, the truly “popular and solidary” economy officially promoted by the state proved elusive. In the context of an economy still dominated by oligopolistic consumer markets, state revenues were a boon to private sector firms. Substantial reductions in poverty and income inequality, and improvements across an array of health, sanitation, education, and housing indicators, coexisted with the persistent informality of work, inequality in land tenure, and, in some sectors, increasing concentration of capital.⁴⁶ In addition, the economy as a whole was vulnerable to commodity price volatility, as evidenced by the 2015 recession, which was triggered by a sharp decline in oil prices, and led to ensuing cuts in social spending. To wit, the budget for the aforementioned monthly *bono* was slashed by almost half in 2015.⁴⁷

What ties together these seemingly contradictory outcomes is the availability of historically high resource rents, which enabled the Correa government to attend to social needs without deeper transformations in class relations. So long as there was an influx of oil rents, the income of the poor could be increased without expropriating the wealth of the rich. Juan Ponce and Rob Vos refer

to this dynamic as “redistribution without structural change.”⁴⁸ Ultimately, it was the continued reliance on a primary-export model of accumulation that generated these persistent forms of precarity, inequality, and the concentration of wealth—and in part accounts for the subsequent political “retreat” of leftist governments.⁴⁹

Thus, during the Pink Tide, in Ecuador and other South American countries, the transition from neoliberalism to a new, post-neoliberal version of resource nationalism was not a total rupture with prevailing power structures. The legacy of market reforms continued to shape the parameters of state intervention and corporate investment in resource sectors. Decades of the deregulation of resource markets had encouraged the sale of vast tracts of land for exploration and extraction, often to foreign oil and mining companies, for low prices, and with scant legal, environmental, or labor oversight. In addition, the years of austerity and privatization had weakened state regulatory capacity and hollowed out formerly state-owned oil, mining, and gas companies, forcing states to partner with foreign firms in order to realize extractive projects—and sharply limiting resource sovereignty.⁵⁰ Lastly, insofar as these states still courted foreign investment, they were forced to take “business confidence” into account, bowing to the demands of large companies to avoid capital strikes or capital flight.⁵¹ In Ecuador, the power of investor leverage became apparent in June 2014, when under pressure from the mining multinational Kinross, the legislature approved reforms to the 2009 Mining Law that delayed the payment of the windfall profit tax until investment had been recouped and established a ceiling for royalty payments.⁵² Despite these reforms, contract negotiations with Kinross fell through, and the perception that Ecuadorian mining law was overly “statist” continued to circulate in trade publications.⁵³ As a result, although there have been important changes in natural resource governance, the institutional legacy of neoliberal policymaking and the power of foreign investors exercises significant constraints on leftist governments.⁵⁴

Continuities between the neoliberal and Pink Tide administrations are particularly salient at the immediate sites of extraction. Bureaucrats in the Correa administration developed a range of strategies to mitigate protest and promote resource extraction at the community level. One way to convince affected communities is with concrete economic benefits. In September 2011, Correa signed Executive Decree 870, which established state-owned enterprise Ecuador Estratégico for the purpose of “the redistribution of national wealth and to bring development to citizens through the execution of programs and projects to provide infrastructure, equipment and services to the areas in

whose territory nonrenewable natural resources are located” in order to “make these [directly affected] communities the first beneficiaries of oil, mining and natural wealth in general.”⁵⁵ Another policy to fast-forward the local economic benefits of mining is “anticipated royalties.” Royalties are usually paid once extraction begins, but the contract for the Mirador mine stipulates that Chinese mining conglomerate Ecuacorrientes S.A. (ECSA) pay a total of \$100 million in royalties in advance of generating income. And, as per the 2009 Mining Law, 60 percent of royalties must be channeled to “productive projects and sustainable local development” via local governments.”⁵⁶

Although public regulation and investment can reduce and compensate for socio-environmental impacts, from the perspective of the communities directly affected by extractive projects, the increased involvement of state officials did not fundamentally alter the experience of an extractive model of accumulation and the forms of dispossession it entails.⁵⁷ Moreover, according to environmentalist and indigenous critics, such state interventions mimic the dissembling practices of “corporate social responsibility,” designed by multinational firms in order to improve their corporate image (in the eyes of shareholders and consumers) and buffer their operations from local political resistance. In this sense, anticipated royalties and investment in affected communities represent more continuity than departure from the neoliberal era.⁵⁸

Resource Radicalisms

While the ascendancy of new leftist governments may have unevenly transformed resource *policy*, it has fundamentally transformed the *politics* of extractive economies.⁵⁹

Indigenous, campesino, environmental, and labor movements, among others that had protested against neoliberalism, paved the way for the electoral success of leftist parties. In the wake of electoral victories, these movements demanded a range of deeper initiatives to reorganize the relationship between state, society, economy, and nature—from wholesale nationalization to the construction of a post-extractive economy—that leftist governments have not implemented. From the perspective of these movements’ activists, such reorganizations are vital to the project of decolonizing a continent in which the history of resource extraction is intimately tied to that of conquest and subjugation. In response to such demands, leftist governments in countries such as Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Venezuela have often reprimanded indigenous and environmental groups, framing them as obstacles to the national good of resource-funded development. Meanwhile, as the Ecuadorian

case reveals, these groups have struggled to organize an anti-extractive mass movement with the size and capacity of the earlier anti-neoliberal popular bloc—a point to which I return in the Conclusion.

What is the relationship between resource governance and the radical critique of it? In Ecuador, both neoliberal and nationalist policies have been unevenly implemented. But as ideologically inflected policy paradigms, they oriented state and corporate actors vis-à-vis resource sectors. They formed part of the political terrain that structured (and was structured by) the interactions between state actors and social movements. And these governance models were imbued with social meaning via the emic categories through which they were apprehended and analyzed—including those articulated by social movements.⁶⁰

Much scholarship on protest around resource extraction sees social movements as responding either to state policies and ideologies, or to corporate strategies. But state policy, corporate strategy, and social movement resistance cannot be studied in isolation from one another. My analysis decenters state resource policy and the official ideologies that undergird it, and locates both in a field of political struggle populated by actors with contending visions of resource extraction. Among those visions are those I have called resource radicalisms, which are articulated by popular organizations and social movements, whether oil and mine workers' unions, urban neighborhood associations, environmental groups, or indigenous federations. Their members, militants, and activists are the architects of these radical critiques of prevailing models of extraction, critiques which not only guide social movement strategy—and, in moments of confrontation, elicit repressive responses from the state—but shape the terms and stakes of political conflict. As will be seen in the chapters that follow, state actors responded to new critiques of resource extraction by redeploying the terms of critique as justifications for extraction.⁶¹

Popular movements articulated the two resource radicalisms analyzed in this book—radical resource nationalism and anti-extractivism—in the course of struggles over economic development, resource extraction, territorial rights, and democratic sovereignty. These radicalisms map onto two different political periods (1990 to 2006, and 2007 to 2017, respectively), but not neatly or discretely: prior to their bifurcation as two distinct discourses, a nascent rejection of oil-led development coexisted alongside calls to nationalize oil resources. Popular movements consolidated and deployed these resource radicalisms in opposition to the prevailing paradigm of resource governance (neoliberalism and post-neoliberal resource nationalism). And in each period, activists' critiques and processes of resistance also shaped state practices. They

forced state actors to adopt new ideological justifications for their promotion of extraction, incited ideological disputes among bureaucrats, and slowed down the development of large-scale mining as well as new oil exploration.⁶²

As a pair, the two epigraphs to this introduction reveal a historically dynamic field of debate over the governance of resource extraction, understood broadly as not only models of development but as forms of political rule. Both epigraphs bear the traces of prior conflicts, even as they adjust past radical visions and evince the unpredictable futures of political projects.

During what the social movement manifesto refers to as the “yesterday” of neoliberalism, the same organizations that now fought against extractivism had instead demanded the nationalization of resource extraction. They saw the nationalization of ownership as vital to the recuperation of national sovereignty and the redistribution of national wealth. This was a regional pattern: in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Venezuela, and elsewhere, indigenous, campesino, trade union, and environmental organizations resisted the deregulation and privatization of resources such as oil, minerals, water, and natural gas.⁶³ These groups demanded various forms of popular control over resource extraction, ranging from nationalization to worker control to local management by the indigenous peoples whose territory overlapped with hydrocarbon reserves. The hegemony of neoliberal policies allowed for this provisional alignment of social movement organizations with such distinct political trajectories and positions on extraction. I call this formation *radical resource nationalism*. As Benjamin Kohl and Linda Farthing discuss in regard to the case of Bolivia, this popular resource imaginary is firmly “anti-imperialist and proto-nationalist.”⁶⁴ It is also an emotionally charged appeal that is often “formed around grievances rather than potentialities and focus[ed] on demands to recoup what has been lost and continues to be lost through foreign-controlled extraction.”⁶⁵

In Ecuador, during that same period and alongside the crystallization of radical resource nationalism, another radical position on extraction was beginning to emerge. In the course of conflictual and sometimes violent encounters between oil companies and indigenous peoples of the Amazon, the latter articulated a militant defense of territory against oil exploration. The demands voiced by Sarayaku, Achuar, and Shuar leaders provided the discourses and shaped the political strategies that would be subsequently unified under the banner of anti-extractivism.

These intertwined critiques of extraction coexisted until the new political conjuncture of the late 2000s converted them into mutually opposed positions. In this new context—marked by Correa’s inauguration (in 2007),

a Constituent Assembly (2007–2008) that rewrote the constitution, and the Correa government’s avid promotion of large-scale mining (2009–2017)—the first position, radical resource nationalism, became an ideological resource for an administration seeking to take political and economic advantage of soaring global demand for primary commodities. But state actors reinterpreted nationalism as the *redistribution* of resource rents, rather than *expropriation* and national ownership. This was a nationalism amenable to courting foreign capital and deepening global market integration. In response, social movement activists and critical intellectuals abandoned their previous demands for nationalization, and reoriented their resistance to target what they now called the extractive model, amplifying the history of localized opposition to oil extraction in the Amazon into wholesale anti-extractivism. This model, they argued, pollutes the environment, violates collective rights, reinforces dependency on foreign capital, and undermines democracy. The gravity of the extractive model’s political, economic, and environmental consequences is matched by the *longue durée* timescale of its domination: for anti-extractive activists, extractivism originated with European conquest and was only reproduced by the recent turn to post-neoliberal resource nationalism.

Although its elements had existed in inchoate form prior to Correa’s rise to power, the reign of an avowedly post-neoliberal administration was the key historical condition for a mode of critique and resistance that zeroed in on resource extraction itself. Correa spoke of the nation, sovereignty, democracy, a “solidary” economy, equality, citizenship, participation, and, most importantly and poetically, of an end to the “long night of neoliberalism.” He emphasized paying off the social debt accumulated under decades of austerity and economic crisis. Drawing on a long-established discursive repertoire of social resistance, he identified a cast of political and economic enemies: the international financial system, foreign corporations, domestic oligarchs, and corrupt political parties. In direct response to resounding popular demands, he called for a constituent assembly to refound the state. But in part because of these clear ideological signals, Correa found himself in heated political conflict with indigenous, campesino, environmental, labor, and feminist social movements. If even a self-identified leftist government could reproduce or, worse, intensify the rapacious exploitation of nature and the subordination of indigenous communities to a homogenously defined nation, in the process violating collective rights and centralizing power, then, social movement activists concluded, the root of the problem was not the ideological stripe of elected officials but the “civilizational” model that encompassed socialism and capitalism alike. The crystallization of this discourse in turn fomented a

dispute among the Left over whether emancipation lies in an alternative form of economic development, or in alternatives to the very concept of development, seen as historically rooted in relations of coloniality.⁶⁶

The Material Practice of Situated Critique

This book traces a genealogy of the critique of extractivism, and analyzes how its crystallization inflected resource-related contention, constitutional interpretation, radical democracy, claims to knowledge and expertise, and the fraught construction of a post-neoliberal state. In doing so, I take an approach distinct from that of extant scholarship on extractivism—and, as I detail below, from the study of resource politics more broadly. Most scholarship on extractivism employs it as a descriptive or analytical term to refer to extractive activities, the policies and ideologies that promote them, their socio-environmental effects, and the forms of resistance that they provoke.⁶⁷ In contrast, this book analyzes extractivism as the central term that unifies an emic discourse articulated by situated actors reflecting on and critiquing historically specific models of resource governance. In other words, my analysis centers on the collective agency of grassroots activists who, through their intertwined activities of critique and mobilization, shape the terms and stakes of resource politics. For this reason, when referring to this discourse as a whole, I use the Spanish *extractivismo*.⁶⁸

I take methodological inspiration from Michel Foucault's archaeological and genealogical approaches: "I do not question discourses about their silently intended meanings, but about the fact and the conditions of their manifest appearance; not about the contents which they may conceal, but about the transformations which they have effected; not about the sense preserved within them like a perpetual origin, but about the field where they coexist, reside and disappear."⁶⁹

Here, I identify the conditions of appearance of *extractivismo* discourse.⁷⁰ Under what conditions did social movement activists and intellectuals begin to critique "the extractive model"? What were the political and intellectual sources of this critique, and what were the historic conditions of its crystallization? What were its regularities, its variations, and its pragmatic political effects? My analytic perspective historicizes this critical discourse, and regards social movement activists and intellectuals as protagonists in crafting its conceptual architecture. This mode of analysis does not regard discourse as ontologically distinct from or epiphenomenal of "reality," but rather takes discourse to be the linguistic mediation of

social relations and the concrete medium through which we reflect upon, make, and remake our social worlds.

Critique is a genre of discourse that endeavors to reveal the root causes and systemic nature of its object. In the case of the movements analyzed in this book, and radical politics more broadly, the practice of critique also opens up the possibility of—and the demand for—a world otherwise. Radical resource nationalism imagines a world of popular and democratic control over oil and minerals. Anti-extractivism, in contrast, aspires to a post-extractive future characterized by a harmonious relationship between humans and nature.

Critique is a form of creativity facilitated by the reflexive capacity of semiosis. As Andreas Glaeser writes, semiotic activity, and language particularly, “enable[s] human beings to escape the strictures of the immediate context of action.”⁷¹ Through symbols, “the world can be differentiated and integrated in the lofty modality of the ‘as-if.’”⁷²

The creative capacity of discourse is to an extent bounded: in order to take hold in and potentially transform a particular social context, critiques must resonate with the existing understandings of the world relevant to that social domain. For this reason, creativity often takes the form of the recombination of existing elements or the redeployment of available repertoires to ends not previously envisioned.⁷³ Radical resource nationalism echoed the developmentalist resource nationalism associated with the Rodríguez Lara military government. Anti-extractive movements, meanwhile, drew on the grievances and demands of southeastern Amazonian indigenous communities, which formed the basis for a wholesale rejection of extraction in all forms.

Critiques exist in complex relations with broader processes of resistance. They present grievances and demands, define shared identities, select targets, inform tactics, mediate alliances, and constitute a key element of the rich symbolism that accompanies acts of protest. They are in turn shaped by the exigencies and events of mobilization. As I show in the chapters that follow, under the rubric of anti-extractivism, a multi-scalar alliance of indigenous and environmental movements enacted new forms of democratic participation, organized outings to the territories slated for extraction, produced their own knowledge regarding socio-environmental impacts, brought cases to the Constitutional Court, and physically blockaded attempts to develop mining or oil projects. The systemic object of their critique was immanent in the spatial contours of their resistance. Traversing mountains, wetlands, and rainforest, they mobilized a network of directly affected communities along the frontiers of extraction, confronting the extractive model at the roots of what they saw as its expansionary imperative.

The conditions of critique are *historically specific* and *sociologically asymmetric*: specific historical junctures and social resources facilitate the emergence and consolidation of critique.⁷⁴ In Ecuador, the proximate historical conditions of new resource radicalisms were transformations in the ideological orientation of resource policy coinciding with broader disputes over the political-economic model.⁷⁵ In response to state actors' embrace of neoliberalism, social movements coalesced around a radical resource nationalism; a decade later, with the rise of a leftist populist administration that sought to channel the economic benefits of extraction to the majority, these movements rallied under the banner of anti-extractivism.

Battling state institutions and domestic and foreign firms, those involved in labor unions, indigenous, campesino, and urban neighborhood organizations, and environmental groups found themselves on an uneven field of engagement, marked by an unequal distribution of institutional and financial resources. In the neoliberal era, state and economic elites crafted a shared vision of a "multicultural market democracy" that formally incorporated indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups while excluding more radical demands from the political agenda.⁷⁶ Subsequently, in post-neoliberal Ecuador, the diffusion of technocratic discourses through networks that encompassed both state and corporate actors facilitated elite coordination, resulting in shared strategies for responding to, and repressing, anti-extractive resistance.

Yet despite the unequal distribution of the means of discursive production and dissemination, activists did have access to their own communicational infrastructure.⁷⁷ This infrastructure was comprised of social movement organizations' physical headquarters and e-mail listservs, social media and blogs, event spaces at universities and cultural centers, informal venues for gathering and conversation, and—especially during public demonstrations—streets, highways, and plazas. During the two-week long March for Water, Life, and the Dignity of Peoples, discussed in several of the following chapters, the daily output of the blog maintained by the highland indigenous federation Ecuarrunari contributed to the production of a shared narrative about the march among both participants and supporters. The production and dissemination of the blog exemplified the imbrication of online and offline political activity, as well as the materiality of discursive production. Blog posts were produced in the heat of political practice, whenever the communications team could find an internet café or a Wi-Fi connection. It was a collaborative effort. The Ecuarrunari communications team was part of the march and built their reports via face-to-face communication with march participants, as well as by attending press conferences. The posts were then collectively authored by the blog team,

with others (including myself) providing editorial or translation assistance. Once posted and disseminated via e-mail and social media, at the next opportunity to access the internet, we marchers would subsequently read them and incorporate them into the ongoing, reflexive construction of a shared narrative about our own political activity. This process strengthened marchers' political resolve and provided a counter-narrative to the claims of state actors (for example, that the march was ineffective, a result of political manipulation, or an attempt to overthrow the government).

In contrast to political scientists' tendency to regard discourse as ideational or as disembodied meanings floating in the ether, the discursively mediated interactions I observed in closed meetings, public events, and protests, elicited in interviews, read in texts, or heard on radio or television broadcast were material acts. They consisted of "vibrating columns of air, ink on paper, pixels in electronic media."⁷⁸ It is the very materiality of linguistic communication (and of semiosis more broadly) that allows discourse to function as a mediator of social relations. The materiality of individual discursive artifacts spatiotemporally limits them, circumscribing their circulation and reception. But materiality is also what enables the reinterpretation, reanimation, and reappropriation of discursive artifacts: "burning documents turns on paper's combustibility, using paper as a toy airplane turns on its foldability, storing it turns on its perdurability."⁷⁹ Materiality can thus be conceived as "a relationship across events of semiosis."⁸⁰

The understandings of the world communicated through language therefore exist in determinate relations with the material conditions of social life.⁸¹ Although ideas are only thinkable and speakable within historically specific regimes of discourse or ideological problematics, they are not epiphenomenal or symptomatic reflections of an underlying reality.⁸² Language shapes the world, whether through its performative function or as a medium of political justification and critique, governance, and resistance.⁸³

The ongoing communicative acts that comprise radical critiques of prevailing economic models unfold on the plane of material relations and they can only be understood as articulated and deployed in concrete political struggles with adversaries. As the epigraphs suggest, in Ecuador the conflict over resource extraction took place on a terrain shaped by past struggles over resources and territory, and in the midst of a dispute over the content of leftism. The conflict over resource extraction was structured by the unequal relations between actors and unified by the problematic of *extractivismo*.⁸⁴ This problematic was the shared ground against which distinct positions were brought into relief and without which they would be mutually unintelligible.⁸⁵ At the same

time, the conflict was also characterized by innovation, unexpected outcomes, and reversals of position. Although from the perspective of any given actor the terrain was given or “objective” in the sense that it was “largely not of their own choosing,” the dynamics of conflict kept the terrain in motion.⁸⁶ Conceiving of this conflict as a field of social action—a relationally defined terrain of struggle—captures this dual nature.⁸⁷

The Double-Edge of Critique

The dynamic, conflictual, and asymmetric nature of this social field, combined with the material infrastructure of communicative activity, results in the unexpected redeployment and resignification of the discourses of one’s opponents.⁸⁸ The very same communicational infrastructure that enables discourse to travel beyond its initial moments of production and generate macro-political effects also makes it available for subsequent reanimation—as well as more strategic reappropriation by those with competing political projects.⁸⁹ Because discourses can potentially travel beyond their intended audiences, they can be redeployed for purposes other than those imagined by their authors.⁹⁰ Discourses have unpredictable and unexpected futures ahead of them. Reanimations and reappropriations of discourse are key to understanding the dynamics of conflict.

In Chapter 3, I show that indigenous activists reanimated arguments made by allied delegates during the Constituent Assembly that drafted the constitutional text. After the Constitution was ratified, they drew on those arguments to advocate for more radical provisions than the text itself contained. They reanimated proposals that had failed on the plenary floor—for example, a proposal to require the consent of affected communities prior to extractive projects—to craft an interpretation of the Constitution that exceeded its literal content. More politically strategic reappropriations by one’s opponents can elicit frustration on the part of situated actors.⁹¹ As suggested by the epigraph, for social movement activists, state actors’ use of terms like *buen vivir* and post-extractivism is a form of “double discourse,” proclaiming a commitment to a different model of development while, from the perspective of those activists, perpetuating extractivism.

Such instances of reanimation and reappropriation underline the fact that political discourse is always already collectively authored. Any attempt to stabilize social meanings comes up against the others who have spoken and will speak those same words, but to different ends and with different consequences: “That is what reclaimed words do—they retain, they insist on retaining, a sense

of the fugitive.”⁹² Or, as Mikhail Bakhtin put it, “The word in language is half someone else’s . . . Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker’s intentions; it is populated—overpopulated—with the intentions of others.”⁹³

Words arrive already overpopulated with meanings. No actor can control in advance what meanings will be crowded into their words or what political projects their words will be used to support.

The Temporality of Critique

The potential for reanimation and reappropriation of discourse is in turn grounded in the complex temporality of critique. Although activists articulated and deployed resource radicalisms in a mutually constitutive relationship with the model of resource governance that they critiqued, these critical discourses evinced a historicity distinct from the chronology of governance. First, there was a lag between the shift in governance and the mobilization against it. Although in Ecuador the transition to a neoliberal governance model began in 1980, the critique of this model—radical resource nationalism—prevailed from roughly 1990 to 2006. Meanwhile, although the shift away from the neoliberal model commenced with Correa’s inauguration in 2007, the shift to an anti-extractivist position among social movements crystallized over the course of the next three years. This is in part because social movements need time to respond to the changing political terrain, which itself is not instantly transformed but gradually remade as new policies are implemented, and in part because critical discourses developed in prior moments may continue to circulate even when the circumstances for and in which they were developed have changed.⁹⁴

Second, in addition to the lag, these critical discourses redeployed (and in the process, resignified) political demands articulated at earlier points in history. Radical resource nationalism encompassed both a statist nationalism that can be traced to the early 1970s (when it was briefly the policy orientation of the nationalist military dictatorship that inaugurated Ecuador as a “petro-state”) and the ongoing struggle for the recognition of indigenous territory, which grew out of a longer history of peasant organizing and appeared on the national political stage in the form of a unified indigenous movement in 1990. Although these two ideological strains rested on different understandings of the connection between nation, state, territory, and resources, they could co-exist in the discourse of a given organization or individual activist because they both constituted critiques of neoliberal resource governance. One framed

this governance model as an incarnation of capitalism, the other as an incarnation of (neo)colonialism. During the mid-1990s through the early 2000s, indigenous and environmental activists began to call for an end to oil extraction in the Amazon, broadening the demand for the recognition of indigenous territory into a critique of extractive activity. The narrative of neoliberalism and the radical resource nationalism it provoked built up to a critical juncture in the context of which the preexisting elements of *extractivismo* discourse could coalesce into a novel problematic.

For both these reasons—temporal lag and the (re)combination of preexisting elements—the historicity of radical critique is distinct from that of governance in ways that complicate preconceived periods and their imputed unity. Tracing the unique temporality of critique thus offers an alternative narrative logic to historical accounts organized around the ideological orientations of policymaking elites.

In addition to its distinct logic of periodization, the narrative that follows evinces the double temporality identified by Walter Benjamin in his philosophy of history: the present looks backward at the past looking forward toward the present.⁹⁵ Written in the present, my genealogy of *extractivismo* is inevitably refracted by the contemporary structure of political conflict. It looks back in time in search of this critique's source discourses, which are resignified elements dating to prior moments of contention, and injects activists' prior statements with the "presence of the now."⁹⁶ But, as much as is possible, I will elucidate the perspectives of the past on their own terms, as concrete responses to prevailing conditions that also always exceeded those conditions, pointing to a hoped for emancipatory future.

Reorienting the Study of Extractive Politics

The commodity boom of 2000 to 2014 and the related repoliticization of resource extraction in Latin America sparked a renewal of scholarly interest in the contentious politics of oil and mining.⁹⁷ Joining this scholarship, I present a distinct perspective on the relationship between resource governance and anti-extractive protest. I uncover ideological battles within and between state ministries, recount the diffusion of critiques and justifications across the borders of officialdom and resistance, and reveal society to be the historically conditioned assembly of collective subjectivities, with shifting ascriptions of interests and identity. In contrast to predominant approaches, I reject the dualistic image of the state as a monolithic dispenser of public policy, and of resistance as an external force, quasi-organically emanating

from society. Instead, I analyze resource politics as an expansive and vibrant field of contention.

The concept of the “resource curse”—the detrimental effect of natural resource wealth on development and democracy—dominates political science literature and public policy discourse on oil (and, to a lesser extent, on mining).⁹⁸ In this literature, the state is ambivalent: it is the powerful dispenser of oil policy and distributor of oil rents and at the same time it is the product of oil dependency, unable to resist the easy rents oil abundance provides or the political-economic pathologies it guarantees.⁹⁹ Meanwhile, society is portrayed as either bought off by oil money or repressed into submission.

Tying this conceptual framework together is an analytic focus on the allocation and distribution of oil rents. In this framework, fiscal dependency on resource extraction functions as a causal force that shapes regime type or economic development, often operating via the causal mechanism of incentive structures (specifically, the effect of resource rents on the governance and investment strategies of elite actors). This approach necessarily assumes that “natural resources”—or, more precisely, the revenue streams they generate—are homogeneously deterministic and that politics is primarily an elite affair, wherein oil money facilitates rentierism, oligarchic pacts, clientelism, and state repression. The threat to democracy is seen to emanate from rentier states’ ability to minimize direct taxation of the population (relying instead on taxes on oil companies and royalties from oil sales), which provides a buffer against citizens’ demands for representation.

Other scholarship takes a more nuanced approach, emphasizing that the political effects of resource rents are not unmediated but highly contingent on the relative timing of oil or mineral discovery vis-à-vis the process of state formation or the ownership structure of oil firms.¹⁰⁰ As Benjamin Smith puts it, oil rents constitute a “highly flexible form of revenue” that, depending on features of the political and economic context, can either bolster regime durability or foment political instability.¹⁰¹ In this vein, and contra the thesis that “oil hinders democracy,” Thad Dunning argues that commodity booms can under certain conditions promote democratization. In the Latin American context, wherein the primary threat to democracy has been elites’ fear of popular power, oil rents can satisfy popular demands without requiring the redistribution or expropriation of property, thus stabilizing democracy against the threat of elite-organized coups.¹⁰²

What these approaches have in common is a shared focus on the state-centric distributional politics of resource dependency within “rentier states.” But, as Timothy Mitchell puts it, all states are “oil states,” in the sense that

modern industrialized democracies are themselves thoroughly imbricated in the production, distribution, and consumption of oil flows.¹⁰³ Further, depending on features of the historical conjuncture, the relationship between the highly compressed forms of energy made available by coal and later oil have both enabled and limited democracy. Technologies of extraction and distribution, the domestic and geopolitical problems confronting political and economic elites, and the organization of labor all shape the political consequences of hydrocarbon resources.¹⁰⁴ In Ecuador, far from undermining democracy, contention around oil extraction and the construction of a large-scale mining sector occasioned novel democratic practices. In the dispute over large-scale mining, both anti-extractive activists and the Correa administration saw the expansion of resource extraction as raising fundamental questions about the practice of democratic sovereignty, and both articulated figures of “the people” and enacted new modes of participation to defend their political positions.

This book joins work in anthropology, political ecology, and geography that takes a broader view of the politics of resource extraction than the elite-centric perspectives of the rentier state and resource curse frameworks.¹⁰⁵ I show that indigenous, labor, campesino, and radical environmental activists did not merely react to the top-down imposition of resource policy. They were central protagonists in the articulation of resource imaginaries and the construction of natural resources as a site of radical politics. They articulated these imaginaries in dynamic relation with state actors: in addition to responding to state policy, they shaped state action, both by provoking new modes of official justification and intervention, and by exacerbating ideological fractures within the state. I demonstrate that leftist presidents in Latin America have contended with resistance from inside and outside their administrations, and that the outcomes of these conflicts shape the possibilities for domestic policymaking and social mobilization. As a corollary, I reject the dichotomy of “good” leftist governments (for example, Chile, Brazil, Uruguay) versus “bad” ones (for example, Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela), which, in order to array countries in a normative hierarchy, both decontextualizes governments from the broader political field of leftist forces and constructs them as monolithic entities.¹⁰⁶

My analytic orientation, which regards resource extraction as a historically dynamic field of conflict, is reflected in my methodological approach. Empirically, this book traces the discourses and the political strategies they shape (and are shaped by) across the boundaries of state and society, within the myriad institutional and organizational locations that constitute each. Between

2010 and 2016, I conducted fifteen months of multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork and archival research. My time was primarily split between Quito, the capital (and Ecuador's second-largest city) and site of central government institutions, social movement headquarters, NGO and corporate offices, and major universities; Cuenca (Ecuador's third-largest city) and surrounding rural communities in the southern highland province of Azuay, home to several planned gold-mining projects; and Zamora Chinchipe, a southern Amazonian province that is the site of a large-scale, open-pit copper mine, and a planned underground gold mine.

In the course of my research, I conducted over 100 interviews with bureaucrats in the Correa administration, opposition politicians, corporate representatives, public intellectuals, professors, NGO personnel, and social movement activists in indigenous, environmental, human rights, student, and labor union organizations. I also observed events as they unfolded, such as: protests (including the two-week long March for Water, Life, and the Dignity of Peoples, which covered 700 kilometers), activist meetings, mining and oil conventions co-organized by private firms and state institutions, NGO-coordinated "dialogues" on resource conflict, a day-long community consultation on a mining project, public fora on mining (usually, but not always, organized by anti-extractive activists), press conferences organized by the national indigenous federation, popular assemblies, community-organized walks (*caminatas*) through mining concessions, court cases litigating the rights of nature, radical reading groups, and community meetings in indigenous territory. Lastly, I conducted archival research at the Library of the National Assembly (specifically the documentation of the 2007–2008 Constituent Assembly meetings, debates, and resolutions, and the Interim Congress debates over the 2009 Mining Law) and using the extensive collection of daily press coverage of indigenous issues curated by the annual publication *Kipu* (published between 1985 and 2014).

Each of these three categories of data—interview, event, archive—provided distinct vantage points on the social processes under analysis. Observing events unfold in real time gave me insights into the granular dynamics of the discursive activity that mediates political practice—and into the interplay between the contingency of strategic decisions and the structured organizational contexts of their articulation.¹⁰⁷ Such seemingly "micro" interactions always draw upon available discursive formations, political ideologies, and institutionalized sources of political and economic power, as well as social status. They are also situated in an asymmetric terrain of political conflict comprising differentially situated allies and opponents. And such interactions can be carried forward in

time and outward in space via subsequent interactions, whether face-to-face or textually mediated, in the form of uptake, circulation, reanimation, documentation, dissemination, and storage. Through these socio-technical means of circulation, a given interaction can live a social life beyond its initial context of unfolding and entail consequences of a “macro” political nature. Thus, whether or not an interaction generates enduring effects cannot be determined in advance. Just as events have unpredictable futures, so too do they index pasts both distant and proximate. In this way, real-time observation, the elicitation of individual and collective memory, and the interpretation of archived documentation can be analytically interwoven to approximate the multiplex temporality of social life.

Overview of the Book

This temporally and spatially interwoven nature of my data and of the social processes upon which they offer a vantage point is reflected in the organization of the chapters that follow.

The first two chapters provide a genealogy of the critical discourse of *extractivismo*, and identify the political conditions—and consequences—of its crystallization. Chapter 1 covers a long historical arc, tracing the shift from radical resource nationalism to the critical discourse of *extractivismo*. It threads together three processes: first, the eruption of localized struggles over resources, land, and indigenous territory (from the 1930s to the 1980s); second, the development of state policy regarding the extraction and export of natural resources (1972 to 2017); and third, the articulation of resource radicalisms that critiqued those policies and envisioned alternatives (1990 to 2017).

Chapter 2 demonstrates that the crystallization of the problematic of *extractivismo* triggered a political realignment: 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 became synonymous with the expansion of extraction at any cost. In response, President Correa and high-ranking ministers claimed that opposition to oil and mineral extraction was a tactic of imperial powers acting under the guise of environmentalism. The redeployment of anti-imperialist critique highlights the degree to which this was a fight within the Left. Meanwhile, functionaries I call “critical bureaucrats” critiqued resource extraction from inside the state. Articulating a discourse that resonated with that of anti-extractive activists, they sought to

both slow down the pace of extraction and to transition to a post-extractive economic model.

The next three chapters follow the dispute over resource extraction as it reverberated through conflicts over the interpretation of the Constitution, the meaning of democracy, and the grounds of epistemic authority. Chapter 3 focuses on the politics surrounding the writing of the 2008 Constitution. This multivalent text empowers both the state and local communities with authority over resource extraction. It calls for a new model of public policy, *buen vivir* (living well), and is the first constitution in the world to recognize nature as a subject of rights. As I show, from the 2007–2008 Constituent Assembly to long after the text was ratified, the Constitution lived through the semiotic activity that cites, circulates, and interprets it. Its normative force and political salience was the product of this multi-sited interpretive process, wherein social movement activists' practices of popular jurisprudence played a particularly important role.

Chapter 4 zooms in on a particularly contentious constitutional right: prior consultation (*consulta previa*), the collective right of communities to be consulted prior to extractive projects. On October 2, 2011, two rural water systems in the southern highland province of Azuay decided to take constitutional enforcement into their own hands. They organized a consultation to enforce their constitutionally mandated right to be consulted prior to the development of a nearby large-scale mine—a right they claimed that public institutions failed to guarantee. The consultation occasioned a dispute over the collective subject of democratic authority. By shifting the struggle over extraction into the terms of democracy, this new form of social mobilization forced state actors to respond. The latter elaborated a vision of *extractive democracy* that justified the expansion of large-scale mining in democratic terms, shored up by new policies of targeted local and national investment that redistributed resource rents.

Chapter 5 reveals how bureaucrats in this leftist administration perceived and attempted to manage anti-extractive resistance. Bureaucrats and industry actors seeking to promote large-scale mining regarded what they call “information” as a panacea for anti-mining conflict. In their discourse, communities oppose mining because they are “misinformed.” This discourse resonated with Correa’s technocratic vision, which claimed that mining is a “technical” and not a “political” issue. But technocratic discourse failed to depoliticize mining. Instead, officials’ claims to technical expertise became politicized, fomenting divisions among state actors. Meanwhile, anti-mining activists challenged the epistemic authority of bureaucrats and mining corporations. They produced

counter-knowledge that figures *el territorio* (territory) as an ecological and cultural landscape.

Finally, in the Conclusion I chart the dilemmas and contradictions of resource dependency for both the Left-in-power and the Left-in-resistance, and draw out the implications for resource politics and leftist mobilization in the years and decades to come. I reflect on the tension between *extractivismo* as critique and its generative capacity to construct the conditions of effective collective action in a political context in which socialism—and the form of mass politics it names—and radical environmentalism became decoupled and mutually counterposed as political projects.

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NOTES

Introduction: Resource Radicalisms

Epigraph: In this context, peoples (*los pueblos*) refers to indigenous peoples.

- 1 “Manifiesto del encuentro de movimientos sociales del Ecuador por la democracia y la vida,” August 9, 2011 (<http://www.inesc.org.br/noticias-es/2011/agosto/manifiesto-del-encuentro-de-movimientos-sociales-del-ecuador-por-la-democracia-y-la-vida>).
- 2 Activists and allied public intellectuals use this term interchangeably with “the extractive model.” For definitions, see Albuja and Dávalos, “Extractivismo y posneoliberalismo, 89–98; Chavez, “El estado del debate sobre desarrollo, extractivismo, y acumulación en el Ecuador,” 10; Gudynas, “Diez tesis urgentes sobre el nuevo extractivismo,” 188; Svampa, *Debates latinoamericanos*, 372.
- 3 Francisca Cabieses Martinez, “Revolución ciudadana, el camino del Ecuador,” *Punto Final*, May 25, 2012 (<http://www.puntofinal.cl/758/rafael758.php>).
- 4 Correa, “Ecuador’s Path.”
- 5 For paradigmatic examples, see Karl, *The Paradox of Plenty*; Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” and *The Oil Curse*; and Weyland, “The Rise of Latin America’s Two Lefts.” For the earlier rentier state literature that the resource curse concept draws upon, see Beblawi, “The Rentier State in the Arab World”; Mahdavy, “The Patterns and Problems of Economic Development in Rentier States.”
- 6 For the phrase “rentier mentality,” see Beblawi, “Rentier State.”
- 7 As Michael Watts argues, the notion that primary commodities, abstracted from social relations, possess special economic or political powers is a form of “commodity determinism” (Watts, “Righteous Oil?”). See also, Huber, *Lifeblood*, 116.
- 8 For the proliferation of resource-related conflict in a warming world, see Parenti, *Tropic of Chaos* and Welzer, *Climate Wars*.
- 9 Bebbington et al., “Political Settlements and the Governance of Extractive Industry,” 6–8; Bridge, “Contested Terrain”; Bridge and Le Billon, *Oil*, esp. 40–76; Perreault, “Political Contradictions of Extractive Development.”
- 10 Bebbington et al., “Political Settlements,” 6.
- 11 For the term “Global South,” see Garland Mahler, “What/Where Is the Global South?” (<https://globalsouthstudies.as.virginia.edu/what-is-global-south>, accessed December 8, 2018). As she writes, while the term originated as a “post-cold war alternative to ‘Third World’ . . . in recent years and within a variety of fields, the Global South is employed in a post-national sense to address spaces and peoples negatively impacted by contemporary capitalist globalization.” While the countries to which I refer to here are located within the term’s earlier, and narrower,

geographic contours, I concur with the post-national expansion of the concept, as it better captures the territorial pattern of uneven capitalist development (and accords with the fractal structure of core/periphery and satellite/metropole in world systems theory).

- 12 Karl, *Paradox of Plenty*; Smith, *Hard Times in the Lands of Plenty*.
- 13 Bebbington et al., "Political Settlements," 8–10, 16; Kohl and Farthing, "Material Constraints to Popular Imaginaries"; Perreault and Valdivia, "Hydrocarbons, Protest, and National Imaginaries."
- 14 For seminal analyses of this relationship, see Frank, *Lumpen-Bourgeoisie and Lumpen-Development*; Prebisch, "Crecimiento Desequilibrio y Disparidades." For the notion of unequal ecological exchange, see Ciptet and Roberts, "Splintering the South." For an excellent overview of classical dependency theory, as well as its recent reformulations in the context of the Pink Tide, see Svampa, *Debates latinoamericanos*, Part I, Chapter 2 and Part II, Chapter 2.
- 15 Dependency theorists use the term "underdevelopment" to describe the result of the incorporation of Latin American countries into global capitalism, first through imperial conquest and then through forms of neo-colonialism. The extraction of raw materials and the exploitation of enslaved (and otherwise extra-economically coerced) labor produced "development" for the core capitalist powers and "underdevelopment" for the periphery. Thus these theorists refute the notion that Latin America or other countries in the Global South are simply "undeveloped" or "backward"; rather, the Global North (in collusion with domestic elites) has actively "underdeveloped" the periphery via relations of domination and the extraction of surplus value. See Frank, *Lumpen-Bourgeoisie*; Stern, "Feudalism, Capitalism, and the World-System in the Perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean." For a definition of developmentalism, see the contributions to Woo-Cumings, *The Developmental State*.
- 16 Escobar, "Latin America at a Crossroads," 1.
- 17 Levitsky and Roberts, "Introduction: Latin America's 'Left Turn,'" 1.
- 18 For the term "decolonial," see Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*.
- 19 The term *ecologismo popular* was developed by Joan Martínez Alier, and refers to territorialized conflicts that arise in response to the detrimental socio-environmental effects of economic growth; these effects threaten local means of subsistence and thus provoke social conflict. The actors that mobilize in such conflicts may or may not explicitly invoke environmental discourse. See Martínez Alier, "El ecologismo popular"; Latorre, "El ecologismo popular en el Ecuador."
- 20 The concept circulates in scholarly work (e.g., Svampa, "Commodities Consensus"; Webber, "Revolution against 'Progress'"; Veltmeyer and Petras, *The New Extractivism*), and in more popular genres (e.g., Klein, *This Changes Everything*). For further analysis of Ecuador as a particularly emblematic case of contention over extraction, see Escobar, "Latin America at a Crossroads"; Svampa, "Commodities Consensus."
- 21 In Latin American scholarship and in everyday political discourse, the phrase "popular sectors" (*sectores populares*) refers to the set of social groups who have

historically been exploited or excluded, whether due to their class, race, or ethnicity (or, more commonly, some combination thereof): peasant, working class, rural and urban poor, indigenous, and Afro-descendent.

- 22 Perreault, "Tendencies in Tension," 19.
- 23 These paradigms center on the governance of oil and, more recently, large-scale mining. Ecuador has also historically depended on the export of primary agricultural resources and other food commodities: cacao, banana, shrimp, and cut flowers. See Larrea and North, "Ecuador," 915–21; Latorre, Farrell, and Martínez-Alier, "The Commodification of Nature and Socio-Environmental Resistance in Ecuador."
- 24 There is a large scholarship on the causes of the Pink Tide. Specific case studies are cited elsewhere in this introduction and in the chapters that follow. This paragraph, which focuses on region-wide causes of the electoral shift to the Left, draws on the work of Ardití, "Arguments about the Left Turns in Latin America"; Cameron, "Latin America's Left Turns"; Levitsky and Roberts, "Latin America's 'Left Turn'"; Silva, *Challenging Neoliberalism in Latin America*.
- 25 On the commodity boom, see CEPAL, *Panorama de la inserción internacional de América Latina y el Caribe*; Cypher, "South America's Commodities Boom"; Cypher and Wilson, "China and Latin America"; Ruiz Acosta and Iturralde, *La alquimia de la riqueza*; Sinnot, Nash, and de la Torre, *Natural Resources in Latin America and the Caribbean*.
- 26 Perreault, "Tendencies in Tension," 19.
- 27 Perreault, "Tendencies in Tension," 19.
- 28 In addition, the law outlined plans (eventually realized by the Rodríguez Lara government) for a national oil company, Corporación Estatal Petrolera Ecuatoriana (CEPE), later renamed Petroecuador. See Martz, *Politics and Petroleum in Ecuador*, 55–61.
- 29 Garavini, "Completing Decolonization," 479.
- 30 Garavini, "Completing Decolonization," 478–83.
- 31 Prices spiked in 1973 when the Arab–Israeli War disrupted Middle East supplies and OPEC decided to increase the price per barrel (Martz, *Politics and Petroleum*, 116). See the following for historical accounts of nationalist oil policies among Third World countries during this time period: Dietrich, *Oil Revolution*; Garavini, "Completing Decolonization."
- 32 Martz, *Politics and Petroleum*, 103–13.
- 33 These policies, and their limitations, are discussed at more length in Chapter 1.
- 34 Conaghan, Malloy, and Abugattas, "Business and the 'Boys,'" 6–7; Hey and Klak, "From Protectionism to Neoliberalism"; Martz, *Politics and Petroleum*, 105–6, 125–7; Sawyer, *Crude Chronicles*, Chapters 3, 4.
- 35 Specifically, Ecuador's five principal exports (oil, bananas, shrimp, flowers, prepared/canned fish) accounted for on average 74.8 percent of total exports (Ruiz Acosta and Iturralde, *La alquimia de la riqueza*, 29).
- 36 Banco Central del Ecuador, "Información estadística mensual," December 2012; Banco Central del Ecuador, "Información estadística mensual," April 2014.

- 37 Gallagher, Irwin, and Koleski, "New Banks in Town," 6–10; Joshua Schneyer and Nicolas Medina Mora Perez, "Special Report: How China took control of an OPEC country's oil," *Reuters*, November 26, 2013 (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-ecuador-oil-special-report/special-report-how-china-took-control-of-an-opec-countrys-oil-idUSBRE9APoHX20131126>).
- 38 Petroecuador was founded in 1989 and is the successor to CEPE. For this figure, see the China-Latin America Finance Database (http://www.thedialogue.org/map_list/).
- 39 For attempts to construct a large-scale mining sector in Ecuador, and the resistance they occasioned, see the following accounts of the plans to develop the Junín Mine in the Intag Valley: Bebbington et al., "The Glocalization of Environmental Governance"; Cisneros, *¿Cómo se construye la sustentabilidad ambiental?*; Kuecker, "Fighting for the Forests Revisited"; Carlos Zorrilla, "The Struggle to Save Intag's Forests and Communities from Mitsubishi," June 21, 1999 (<http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/41/103.html>).
- 40 Berrios, Marak, and Morgenstern, "Explaining Hydrocarbon Nationalization in Latin America"; Haslam and Heidrich, "From Neoliberalism to Resource Nationalism." Although my focus here is on leftist governments, Berrios, Marak, and Morgenstern show that during the boom, center and right-of-center governments have also increased the regulation of extractive sectors and the state "take" in terms of taxes and royalties.
- 41 Berrios, Marak, and Morgenstern, "Explaining Hydrocarbon Nationalization"; Haslam and Heidrich, "From Neoliberalism to Resource Nationalism"; Kaup, "A Neoliberal Nationalization?"; Kohl and Farthing, "Material Constraints."
- 42 As discussed in more depth in Chapter 1, in 2006, under pressure from protests, the Palacio administration terminated the contract with Occidental Petroleum for contract violations, but this was not a nationalization (despite how it has sometimes been portrayed in the literature and news reports). For changes to oil contract model, see Ghandi and Lin, "Oil and Gas Service Contracts around the World"; Mateo and García, "El sector petrolero en Ecuador, 2000–2010."
- 43 Poverty declined from 37 percent to 23 percent. Income inequality, measured by the Gini coefficient, declined from 0.55 to 0.47. See Larrea and Greene, "De la lucha contra la pobreza a la superación de la codicia"; Ordóñez et al., "Sharing the Fruits of Progress"; Weisbrot, Johnston, and Merling, "Decade of Reform."
- 44 Amarante and Brun, "Cash Transfers in Latin America." See also CEPAL, "Base de datos de programas de protección social no contributiva" (<https://dds.cepal.org/bpsnc/ptc>, accessed January 7, 2019).
- 45 Amarante and Brun, "Cash Transfers."
- 46 Larrea and Greene, "De la lucha contra la pobreza a la superación de la codicia"; Iturralde, *El negocio invisible de la salud*; Ponce and Vos, "Redistribution without Structural Change in Ecuador." It is worth noting that Ponce and Vos show that a significant portion of the reduction in income inequality was due to the recovery from the 1998–1999 economic crisis, but that this positive effect was amplified by the Correa administration's economic and fiscal policies.

- 47 Author's calculation based on the data provided in CEPAL, "Base de datos."
 48 Ponce and Vos, "Redistribution without Structural Change."
 49 I return to the topic of political retreat in the Conclusion.
 50 For an in-depth analysis of this dynamic in Bolivia, see Kaup, "A Neoliberal Nationalization?"
 51 For a helpful explanation of the various direct and indirect pressures investors exert on the state, see Block, "The Ruling Class Does Not Rule."
 52 "Ecuador Pushing Ahead with Reforms to Lure Mining Investors," *Reuters*, May 6, 2013 (http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-05-16/news/sns-rt-ecuador-miningl2nodx2h8-20130516_1_mining-law-mining-bill-mining-industry).
 53 "Canadian Gold Giant Kinross Pulls Out of Ecuador Mine Project, Will China Take Its Place?" *International Business Times*, June 6, 2013 (<http://www.ibtimes.com/canadian-gold-giant-kinross-pulls-out-ecuador-mine-project-will-china-take-its-place-1305761>).
 54 As discussed in Chapter 5, these continuities with neoliberalism were also evident at the level of ideology, especially bureaucrats' and corporate actors' emphasis on technocratic solutions to political problems.
 55 Rafael Correa Delgado, Decreto ejecutivo n. 870, September 5, 2011.
 56 Asamblea Nacional, Ley de Minería, art. 89.
 57 Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 159–65; Latorre, Farrell, and Martínez-Alier, "Commodification of Nature."
 58 Cisneros, "Corporate Social Responsibility and Mining Policy in Ecuador."
 59 Hogenboom, "Depoliticized and Repoliticized Minerals in Latin America," 151–2.
 60 By "emic," I refer to the contextually specific discursive categories employed by the actors situated in the conflict under study, and through which they understand and ascribe meaning to their social world.
 61 For a similar analysis of the relationship between critique and justification, see Boltanski and Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*.
 62 For example, as described in Chapters 2 and 5, the Correa administration embraced a variant of resource nationalism that was devoid of much of its radical content (for example, no nationalizations or expropriations) and ideologically repurposed it to delegitimize anti-extractive resistance and promote extraction at all cost.
 63 Kohl and Farthing, "Material Constraints"; Gledhill, "The Persistent Imaginary of 'the People's Oil'"; Nem Singh, "Who Owns the Minerals?"; Shever, *Resources for Reform*; Perreault and Valdivia, "Hydrocarbons." For an example of radical resource politics from earlier in the century, see Nash, *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us*.
 64 Kohl and Farthing analyze this imaginary in relation to Bolivia's history of a militant miners' union that played a key role in the 1952 national revolution, and the eruption of protests against water and gas privatization in the early 2000s. See Kohl and Farthing, "Material Constraints," 229.
 65 Kohl and Farthing, "Material Constraints," 229.

- 66 In Escobar's terms, Ecuador exemplified the conflict between "neo-developmentalism and post-development" (Escobar, "Latin America at a Crossroads," 20). See also Gudynas, "Value, Growth, Development"; the contributions to Munck and Delgado Wise (eds.), *Reframing Latin American Development*; Svampa, *Debates latinoamericanos*, Part II, Chapter 2.
- 67 For existing scholarship, see Acosta, *La maldición de la abundancia*; Albuja and Dávalos, "Extractivismo y posneoliberalismo"; Bebbington and Bebbington, "An Andean Avatar"; Burchardt and Dietz, "(Neo-)Extractivism"; Gudynas, "Diez tesis"; Gudynas, "Extractivisms"; Gustafson and Guzmán Solano, "Mining Movements and Political Horizons in the Andes"; Veltmeyer, "The Political Economy of Natural Resource Extraction"; Veltmeyer and Petras, *The New Extractivism*; Webber, "Revolution against 'Progress.'" Burchardt and Dietz do initially treat "(neo)-extractivism" as a concept that emerged in critical response to Pink Tide governments, but they proceed to employ it as an analytic and descriptive label. Lastly, Svampa takes an approach closer to mine, although her focus is primarily on professional intellectuals rather than activists: she defines the concept of extractivism and situates it within a dynamic field of debate over the model of development (Svampa, *Debates latinoamericanos*, Part II, Chapter 2).
- 68 Similarly, throughout the text I use Spanish words when their meaning is context-specific and/or not directly synonymous with English words. I define such terms in English whenever I use them.
- 69 Foucault, "Politics and the Study of Discourse," 60.
- 70 Foucault, "The Order of Discourse" and "Politics and the Study of Discourse."
- 71 Glaeser, *Political Epistemics*, 12–13.
- 72 Glaeser, *Political Epistemics*, 12–13.
- 73 For a discussion of shifts in the logic of action as the redeployment of existing techniques in new combinations, see Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 22–4.
- 74 Boltanski and Chiapello, *New Spirit of Capitalism*; Wuthnow, *Communities of Discourse*.
- 75 Although, as I discuss below, no resource radicalism is wholly "new" (in that it involves the recombination or resignification of existing elements) and there is a temporal lag between the shift in governance and the modification or transformation of critique.
- 76 Bowen, "Multicultural Market Democracy."
- 77 The phrase "sociotechnical means" comes from Glaeser, *Political Epistemics*, 30: "Effects can flow from one person's action to be picked up by another without there being any reverse flow. In fact, the actions can be spatiotemporally separated, and actor and reactor need not—and very often and in highly complex societies typically do not—know each other. What makes this possible are sociotechnical means of projectively articulating actions across space and time through mediating communication, transportation, and storage." Timothy Mitchell refers to a similar set of material relationships that enable the diffusion of apparently disembodied "ideas" with the phrase "the acoustic machinery of their circulation" (Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*, 69).

- 78 Agha, *Language and Social Relations*, 3.
- 79 Nakassis, "Materiality, Materialization," 403, original emphasis.
- 80 Nakassis, "Materiality, Materialization," 402, original emphasis.
- 81 As Marx writes, "The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life" (*The German Ideology*, 47).
- 82 For regimes of discourse, see Foucault, "The Order of Discourse"; Foucault, "Politics and the Study of Discourse." For problematics, see Althusser, *For Marx*, 49–86. For an analysis of discursive regimes that draws on Foucault, see Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine*.
- 83 One way to conceptualize this capacity is as performativity: under certain felicitous conditions—statements such as "I now pronounce you man and wife" or "I nominate you candidate"—the act of utterance calls into being the reality that it describes. See Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*; see also Agha, *Language and Social Relations*, 55–60; Searle, *Speech Acts*; Silverstein, "Metapragmatic Discourse and Metapragmatic Function," 45–8. Performativity also encompasses semiotic activity that is nonlinguistic and does not explicitly describe its social effects. See, e.g., Butler's analysis of the performance of gender: Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution"; Butler, *Gender Trouble*.
- 84 My use of the concept "problematic" draws on Althusser, albeit with a few substantial modifications (Althusser, *For Marx*, 49–86). He defines a problematic as the system of internal reference, the "principle of intelligibility," that unifies an ideology. It is "the system of *questions* commanding the *answers* given by the ideology" (67, original emphasis). Disagreements take place, and are intelligible within, the shared ground of a given problematic. Althusser further argues that the analyst's interpretation of a problematic must take into account "the existing *ideological field* and . . . the *social problems and social structure* which sustain the ideology and are reflected in it" (66, original emphasis). For Althusser, the locus of change between problematics cannot be found within a given problematic but must be located in the given conjuncture of social forces. He asserts that ideologies do not transform because of their own internal contradictions, or through progress to more rational systems of thought, but rather as a result of changes in their socio-historical conditions of possibility. In contrast to Althusser, however, I do not sharply distinguish between "ideology" (or, the term I use more often, "discourse") and the "objective problems" that actors confront. In line with Wedeen's work on political domination in Syria and democratic publics in Yemen (Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination* and *Peripheral Visions*), I argue instead that there is a mutually determining relationship between how we talk about social life and the social structures that constrain and enable certain forms of political action. The task of analysis is therefore to determine under what conditions changes in public discourse alter patterns of political action, and, conversely, transformations in forms of political action reconfigure the terms of debate. Finally, I am also explicitly interested in the piecemeal ways that actors respond to new historical circumstances by retooling their political visions and identities,

and, relatedly, how new problematics almost always involve recontextualized redeployments of discursive elements from earlier periods. Thus, what follows is not a stadial or epochal history of a transition between two hermetically sealed resource radicalisms, but rather a temporally complex narrative of the shift between salient modes of understanding and enacting politics in which actors often intermingle discursive strategies that index both past and current political conjunctures.

- 85 In other words, this ideological disagreement was oriented toward some shared concern and a degree of mutual recognition (Agha, *Language and Social Relations*, 172–3, 305; Boltanski and Thévenot, *On Justification*; Rancière, *Disagreement*). Or, in Mouffe’s terms, the dispute over extractivism was “agonistic”—fought within a shared symbolic space—rather than “antagonistic” (Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox*, 13).
- 86 Steinberg, “The Talk and Back Talk of Collective Action,” 769.
- 87 For Bourdieu, a social field is a “configuration” of positions that stand in “objective” relationship to one another, in the sense that (borrowing from Marx) “they exist independently of individual consciousness or will” (Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 66–7; see also Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, 97–105). Bourdieu’s conceptualization of social fields has important drawbacks, namely his emphasis on individual (rather than collective) actors, and his difficulty accounting for change (Fligstein and McAdam, “Toward a General Theory of Strategic Action Fields,” 19–20). For my usage of the word “terrain,” see Gramsci, *The Prison Notebooks*, 172, 180–5.
- 88 See Warner’s explanation of the distinction between a “targeted public” and the actual empirical circulation of discourse in Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 72–4.
- 89 For animation and reanimation, see Goffman, *Forms of Talk*, 131–4, 144–5; Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 87–9.
- 90 Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 74.
- 91 See Arendt’s analysis of the “frustration” of political action and speech in Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 220.
- 92 Nelson, *The Argonauts*, 29.
- 93 Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 293–4.
- 94 This draws on a central insight of historical institutionalist theory, and one I argue applies to crystallized discourses, which I consider to be “institutions” in their own right. See Riofrancos, “Discursive Institutionalization.”
- 95 Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 253–64.
- 96 Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 261.
- 97 For the phrase “repoliticized” see Hogenboom, “Depoliticized and Repoliticized Minerals.” For examples of recent scholarly work on the topic, see Arce, *Resource Extraction and Protest in Peru*; Bebbington and Bury, *Subterranean Struggles*; Deonandan and Dougherty, *Mining in Latin America*; Haslam and Heidrich, *The Political Economy of Natural Resources and Development*; Haslam and Tanimoune, “The Determinants of Social Conflict in the Latin American Mining Sector”; Hindery,

- From Enron to Evo*; Humphreys Bebbington, "Consultation, Compensation and Conflict"; Mähler and Pierskallar, "Indigenous Identity, Natural Resources, and Contentious Politics in Bolivia"; Rosales, "Going Underground"; Svampa, "Commodities Consensus"; Tockman and Cameron, "Indigenous Autonomy and the Contradictions of Plurinationalism in Bolivia."
- 98 Karl, *Paradox of Plenty*; Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" and *Oil Curse*; Weyland, "The Rise of Latin America's Two Lefts." For the earlier rentier state literature that the resource curse concept draws upon, see Beblawi, "Rentier State"; Mahdavy, "Patterns and Problems."
- 99 For a discussion of the contrasting treatment of the state in the oil curse literature, see Smith, "Resource Wealth and Political Regimes" and *Hard Times*, Chapters 1, 2.
- 100 Haber and Menaldo, "Do Natural Resources Fuel Authoritarianism?"; Kurtz, "The Social Foundations of Institutional Order"; Luong and Weinthal, "Rethinking the Resource Curse" and *Oil Is Not a Curse*; Smith, *Hard Times*.
- 101 Smith, *Hard Times*, 7.
- 102 Dunning, *Crude Democracy*.
- 103 Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*.
- 104 Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*. For Mitchell's argument that coal extraction—and, specifically, militant coal-worker organization—enabled democratization, see *Carbon Democracy*, 12–42.
- 105 Bebbington and Bury, *Subterranean Struggles*; Bebbington et al., "Political Settlements"; Golub, *Leviathans at the Gold Mine*; Hindery, *From Enron to Evo*; Kohl and Farthing, "Material Constraints"; Latorre, Farrell, and Martínez-Alier, "Commodification of Nature"; Li, *Unearthing Conflict*; Perreault, "Tendencies in Tension"; Perreault and Valdivia, "Hydrocarbons"; Sawyer, *Crude Chronicles*; Shever, *Resources for Reform*; Watts, "Resource Curse?"
- 106 Most seminally, see Castañeda, "Latin America's Left Turn," but see also Flores-Macías, "Statist vs. Pro-Market," and Weyland, "The Rise of Latin America's Two Lefts."
- 107 For reflections on ethnographic approaches to the study of politics and power, see Auyero and Joseph, "Introduction"; Comaroff and Comaroff, "Ethnography on an Awkward Scale"; Ferguson and Gupta, "Spatializing States"; Glaeser, "An Ontology for the Ethnographic Analysis of Social Processes"; Schatz (ed.), *Political Ethnography*; Wedeen, "Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science."

Chapter 1: From *Neoliberalismo* to *Extractivismo*

- 1 Interview with the author, July 12, 2010.
- 2 As described in more detail below, in the 1960s and 1970s, military governments made tracts of land in the Amazon available to migrants from the highlands for human settlement and agriculture colonization. From the perspective of preexisting indigenous communities, this wave of colonization threatened their territorial autonomy, and led to conflicts between Amazonian indigenous groups and *colonos* (some of whom were members of highland indigenous communities).