

Abstract

Recent years have seen increasingly aggressive expansion of the extractive economy in the Andean-Amazonian region, as both hard-rock mining and hydrocarbon frontiers move into new territories and deepen their presence in old ones. In ways reminiscent of the film *Avatar*, this expansion drives conflicts over land, territory and political control of space with populations that reside in the areas targeted by the extractive economy. This expansion is occurring as much in overtly neoliberal regimes as in self-styled, and self-consciously post-neoliberal regimes. This paper documents this convergence, as well as the convergence among the different governments' ways of governing extraction and responding to socio-environmental conflicts. The paper then explores the reasons for this apparent convergence. It identifies factors related to: long-standing resource curse effects; the need to generate resources to fund social policy instruments that are integral to the governments' overall political strategies; power and information asymmetries among companies and governments; and global divisions of labour and trade agreements, among others. We conclude that convergences among Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru regarding the governance of extraction and the conflicts that it catalyses suggest the need for great critical caution before using the terminology of post-neoliberalism.

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Keywords: post-neoliberalism; extractive industry; mining; oil and gas; social policy; resource curse; indigenous peoples; Andes; Latin America

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