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From the President

by JOANNE RAPPAPORT | Georgetown University | rappaport.lasa@gmail.com

So much has happened in Latin America during the past three months, that if I were to dedicate this column to these events I would not know where to begin. I will mention only a few of the most recent developments. The Brazilian Senate opened the impeachment trial of President Dilma Rousseff, which will have concluded by the time this column goes to press. As many of you are aware, LASA sent a fact-finding delegation to Brazil in July and we are awaiting its report, which will be published in the *LASA Forum*, posted on our website, and disseminated widely beyond our organization; a link to the results of voting on the Brazil resolution are posted on LASA's main web page. The Colombian government and the FARC guerrillas have concluded their peace negotiations and a cease-fire has begun. The process will now move from the negotiating table in Havana to a national plebiscite in Colombia, a hopeful sign after more than five decades of war, with several hundred thousand dead, over a thousand massacres, and millions displaced. We are currently working on a dossier for the next issue of *LASA Forum* that will include articles on the Colombian peace process. Finally, Donald Trump has put forward (then rescinded, then put forward—I'm losing count) yet another immigration plan. I urge those of you who didn't read the last issue of the *Forum* to go back to the excellent articles prepared by Mexican scholars in response to Trump's call for a wall at the border.

Notwithstanding these and other developments in Latin America, I will dedicate this quarter's column to another subject: why we chose Lima as the site of the 2017 LASA Congress. LASA members and the Executive Council have become increasingly aware of the need to choose Latin American locations for the Congress, especially given the fact that such a large proportion of our membership is based in

Latin American institutions. In this column I will focus on the intellectual reasons why Lima is such a good choice by very briefly summarizing some of the research going on in various institutions in the city, in order to emphasize that Lima is not just a good city to visit but a city with a long and rich scholarly tradition.

Our host institution will be the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. It was the institutional home of Alberto Flores Galindo, the author of *Buscando un inca*, recently translated into English, a wide-ranging reflection on Andean utopias, beginning in the colonial period and moving into the author's present (he died in 1990, only recently having turned 50). Among the Católica's faculty are a highly regarded set of scholars in linguistics, musicology, political science, literature, and history, many of whom are involved in the planning of LASA2017. Given space limitations, I want to point out three of the Católica faculty's most impressive contributions to recent scholarship. One of these is Gonzalo Portocarrero, the highly prolific founder of the university's master's program in cultural studies and last year's awardee of the Premio Nacional de Cultura. A public intellectual whose influence ranges far beyond the Católica campus, Portocarrero has written books and essays on the educational system, racism, Andean art and literature, and the place of intellectuals in Peru, among many other topics that demonstrate his bold transcendence of traditional disciplinary boundaries. I must also point to Scarlett O'Phelan Godoy's highly influential research into the late colonial period and the independence era, as an example of the major contributions made by historians of the Católica to our understanding of the emergence of nation-states in Latin America. Finally, the preeminence of archaeology at the Católica



led me to incorporate the field into one of the Congress tracks. Excavations at Pachacamac, a massive ceremonial center in the Lima region that was in operation for a millennium, are currently being coordinated by Católica archaeologist Krzysztof Makowski.

The other major university in Lima is the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos. Founded in 1551, it is the oldest university in the Americas. San Marcos has a long genealogy of illustrious alumni—among them, authors José María Arguedas and Mario Vargas Llosa, and ethnohistorian María Rostworowski de Diez Canseco—as well as a roster over the decades of well-known faculty members, such as sociologist Aníbal Quijano and anthropologist Julio Cotler, as well as historians Pablo Macera and Manuel Burga. Many current members of the San Marcos academic community are contributing to the success of LASA2017 as track chairs and members of prize committees. A center for Andean and Amazonian studies, San Marcos has produced outstanding studies of the Quechua language, indigenous literatures, intercultural education, and the relationship between ecology and cultural diversity. In the past few decades, San Marcos has also been a significant academic space for research into political violence and inequality.

Finally, the Instituto de Estudios Peruanos (IEP) is one of the major contributors to *limeño* intellectual life. A private institution dedicated to research, teaching, and publication, the IEP was founded in

Mexico after Ayotzinapa: A Conversation with the International Investigatory Group

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1964 as an interdisciplinary center for studies in the social sciences. Many of its most notable researchers have also taught concurrently at the Universidad Nacional de San Marcos. For example, the late Carlos Iván Degregori, who taught anthropology at the Universidad Nacional de San Marcos while participating on the IEP's research team, was a member and lead author of the report issued by the Comisión de Verdad y Reconciliación, the Peruvian truth commission. IEP researchers concentrate on three key thematic areas: democracy, governability, and decentralization; poverty and inequality; culture and diversity. To give an idea of what IEP members are working on, I will point to just three topics: a study of ethnohistorical sources to comprehend the development of a syncretic culture in the colonial Andes (a return to the original pioneering research by IEP scholar María Rostworowski); research into state-sponsored extractive industries in Peruvian Amazonia; and an evaluation of communal decision making and negotiation with the private sector in localities in Peru.

There is also a rich tradition in Lima of nonacademic research, most notably in the areas of human rights and collaborative filmmaking, and we are hoping to plan activities with some of these organizations at LASA2017. I will take these up in my next column. ■

The disappearance of 43 students from Ayotzinapa, Mexico, in September 2014 grabbed worldwide attention. During its 2016 Congress in New York at the end of May, LASA held a presidential session featuring three members of the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (Grupo Interdisciplinario de Expertos Independientes, or GIEI), appointed by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to investigate the Ayotzinapa case. Chaired by Elizabeth Oglesby (a professor of Latin American studies at the University of Arizona), the panel included opening remarks by Kate Doyle, Senior Analyst at the National Security Archive, and discussion with GIEI members Carlos Martín Beristain, Francisco Cox, and Claudia Paz y Paz Bailey. The fate of the 43 students remains unknown, but the GIEI's work, which concluded in April, lays bare the nature of impunity in Mexico and provides a road map for what can be done. The Ayotzinapa investigation is an important precedent for human rights struggles across Latin America.

For background on the GIEI and to download the results of its investigation: <http://prensagieiyotzi.wix.com/giei-ayotzinapa>. For a full transcript of the LASA session in English or Spanish, write to eoglesby@email.arizona.edu.

Kate Doyle: Impunity has many dimensions in Mexico; it is multifaceted, like a crystal held up to the light. It can be abrupt and brutal: the murder of a journalist who gets too close to the truth. It can be furtive, a quiet campaign designed to undermine the public's faith. It can be calculating, like the electric shocks applied to the soles of a detainee's feet in order to produce what will later be called a confession. It can be true incompetence—police leaving footprints in the victim's blood, evidence

lost, files misplaced. Or it can be pretend incompetence—police leaving footprints in the victim's blood, evidence lost, files misplaced. Impunity can be silence before the families of a disappeared. It can be a stonewalling, a cover-up. It can simply be “No,” a very firm no, an official no.

The experience of the experts in this case has implications that are both encouraging and troubling. On the one hand it signifies that “yes, we can”—we can create a mechanism of international cooperation that investigates even the most sensitive human rights cases to produce powerful results. But, on the other hand, the reaction of Mexico was deeply disturbing. It became clear that the Mexican government would only go so far in the Ayotzinapa case. There was a limit to Mexico's willingness to support a true investigation. When the Group approached that limit, it was terminated.

It can be said that the Mexican authorities have a genius for impunity; they hold PhDs in the art of obstruction. The government learned its lesson long ago that it could mount a simulation of justice, human rights, transparency, and international cooperation, and most of the time that would satisfy its critics. To paraphrase Nietzsche: The Group stared into the face of impunity. And impunity stared back.

Carlos Martín Beristain: The GIEI's work had three components: the criminal investigation; the search for the disappeared; and attention to the victims. These three things have to go together so that the investigation is not seen separately from working with the victims or continuing the search. In the end, the families are most interested in the search.

In our first report in September 2015, we tried to clarify the facts. The attack

was far more complex than just against the 43 students; it was an operation that lasted five hours and had 180 victims, including the 43 disappeared students and six assassinations. All of that occurred in ten different crime scenes. This gives you a sense of how vast the operational coordination was.

We were able to disprove many of the government's allegations. The students were not infiltrated by the "Los Rojos" cartel. It can't all be blamed on the municipal police from Iguala and Cocula. The area was saturated with governmental authorities: the state police was there, and the federal police had set up a roadblock at the time of the disappearance of the students. Military authorities were transmitting intelligence information at the various spots where dozens of people were being detained. All this gives you a sense of wider responsibilities.

We showed the contradictions of the official story. For example, we commissioned a study by a fire expert that demonstrated the scientific impossibility that the students had been incinerated in the Colcula garbage dump, as the government claimed.

When we interviewed the students, we discovered the existence of a fifth bus that didn't appear in the official case file. Our hypothesis is that the students had taken over buses in order to go to a protest march. This was something they routinely did, but that time they mistakenly took one that had heroin or money. We found cases of heroin trafficking between Iguala and Chicago, using passenger buses that were altered to hide drugs. That is our main hypothesis of why the attack occurred. In addition, there are elements that may have aggravated the violence against the students: the fact that even before the

attack they were stigmatized as being students in that particular teacher's college, which has a reputation as being rebellious, similar to the revolutionaries from the Lucio Cabañas School.

No investigation of this scope and type can be done without listening to the victims. We wouldn't have been able to do anything without the victims' trust, without the trust of the surviving students who were afraid to speak and had declined to speak with the authorities many times, but who gave us a lot of information. If you want to do something serious in Mexico that helps to confront the circle of violence, criminality, and human rights violations, you have to understand the victims and establish a clear alliance. That is the fundamental transformative energy of a case like this.

The first priority is to make sure that the investigation doesn't turn into another form of revictimization. In this case and many others in Mexico, the official inquiries become another way to punish victims. Part of the way to respect victims is to make sure they have access to information about the case, so that they don't have to hear about it through the press. It's important to establish a relationship with the victims, so that they, in turn, can establish a relationship of trust with the institutions.

In many cases, victims in Mexico are left to search on their own for the disappeared, doing work that the state really should do. At the same time, often the families have experience, they have contacts, they are good investigators, and all that needs to be taken into account. You have to listen to the families.

Francisco Cox: From the beginning, our goals were to write a report about what had happened in Ayotzinapa, but also to

make a series of recommendations about structural problems we encountered in the way these kinds of crimes were investigated.

The Mexican criminal system is incredibly formal; the number of duplicate, triplicate declarations and documents swells the case file and makes it unmanageable. This has serious consequences for the ability of a third party, for example, a representative of the victims, to know what's happening. So, the level of formality and bureaucracy is one of the key obstacles. If I tell you that there were 65 prosecutors working on this case, you might think, well, that's a good thing because there are 65 people leading the investigation. But the problem is that these 65 people don't talk to each other. They're doing parallel tasks, taking parallel statements, but then there's no joint analysis of the whole problem.

Another structural problem we saw is the excessive dependence on testimonial declarations. The confession is practically the only proof needed. This obviously incentivizes torturing people, as we determined happened in this case. That's why one of our recommendations is to create an independent office of technical services to help prosecutors collect other kinds of evidence beyond simply using confessions to convict people.

Claudia Paz y Paz Bailey: Is it a problem of know-how? Is it a problem of having the right skills and training? Or is it a problem of will? Is it because the Mexican authorities don't know how to solve the case? Or is it because they don't want to solve it? As Kate said, is it incompetence, or a pretend incompetence?

During our first six months, we had fairly open access to information. The only "no" we heard was when we asked to interview

the army and have access to military documents. That was a resounding no. We couldn't interview the army directly, and the military documents were considered a state secret.

At the same time, we did have access to a lot of information. We could interview the federal police directly, as well as other authorities. We could interview the people who were being accused of the crime. That opening slowly closed during the second half of our mandate in late 2015 and early 2016. If the government had wanted to, it could have worked with us in a coordinated, planned way.

In our second report in April 2016 we documented that according to official information, including the medical forensic reports in the case file, in 17 cases there is strong evidence that suspects were tortured. These cases include police from Iguala and Cocula. Very importantly, these cases of torture include five detainees who supposedly confessed that the 43 missing students ended up being incinerated in the Cocula garbage dump. Those five suspects, presumed members of the Guerreros Unidos criminal gang, suffered wounds that were inflicted after they had been jailed.

We also demonstrated that a high-level Mexican government official was present at one of the key crime scenes, the San Juan River, even though that information was not recorded in the official case file. The San Juan River was where the only DNA evidence was found: a bone fragment from one of the disappeared students, found in a bag in the river and identified as belonging to Alexander Mora. Through photographs and video, we showed that on October 28—although it's not in the file—the director of the Criminal Investigations Agency (similar to the Mexican FBI) was at the scene of the crime with one of the

detainees who had given his statement ten hours earlier and who had lesions acquired after his detention. They were there without the presence of his defense lawyer, without a judge's order authorizing that this person could be transported there. They touched forensic evidence, and no record of this visit exists in the official investigation. According to the official inquiry, the events begin on October 29 at 8:00 in the morning, and a black bag containing ossified remains is found by Navy divers in the San Juan River at 8:54. But there's no record of anything that happened on the 28th.

It's not a matter of knowledge, or resources, but will. The case could be solved. It's possible to determine the students' fate, but they didn't want us to go forward. Why do I emphasize this, here at LASA in New York? Because when political will is lacking, international monitoring—the voices from outside—can push for this will. It's vital to keep accompanying the parents who are waiting for their children, so that our departure doesn't mean greater vulnerability for them. All of us together can make sure the case stays internationally relevant.

Carlos Martín Beristain: On the role of journalism and the media, sometimes the press posed threats to our work, by defaming us personally at particular moments of the investigation. But there were also journalists who helped us.

I want to mention the role of grassroots journalism. When we saw that some things about the crime scene at the San Juan River weren't clear, we contacted local journalists. One journalist showed us photographs he had taken disproving the Mexican government's version of events at the river. That's how we started to see the big picture. So, grassroots journalism is

important. These are journalists who may not appear in the mainstream press but who do very important work, sometimes risking their own lives. They helped us make sense of a lot of things.

Claudia Paz y Paz Bailey: The media campaign against us, especially after December 2015, started with one person, the director of an organization that works on topics of security in Mexico. A media source was an echo chamber for his messages. I have to say that this had a gender bias, since the two women in the GIEI suffered the most from the campaign: Were we guerrillas, were we antimilitary, that sort of thing. . . . It was a way to attack the messengers to destroy the message. We were discrediting the official version of the case, so the media campaign tried to discredit us, so the public would think "a pox on both houses." The worst part was that the defamation campaign extended to the families.

Carlos Martín Beristain: The families have a great deal of clarity, and they are quite united, in part because of the accompaniment we've given and which their lawyers continue to give. The families have reacted very negatively to the government's proposals for reparation. People say, "No, we don't want reparations. What we want is to keep searching. For us, reparations mean getting the truth, and we want justice." They haven't backed down, and they've been consistent on that demand for justice. Obviously, like all families of disappeared people, they feel an emotional ambiguity. They are afraid of finding a grave; they want to find them alive. But the government's offers have not made a dent with the families.

Francisco Cox: I think the families show the importance of not forgetting about the case. The big fear is that the pressure

subsidies, since some people within the government only worry about international opinion. The families travel a lot; they go abroad for acts of solidarity because it is a way to keep the case alive, which is just what some people don't want, so it is very important.

We believe that the combination of local civil society with international pressure can make this case, and other cases, advance. The Ayotzinapa report establishes a methodology for how to do this type of investigation. Without a doubt there are many good organizations in Mexico, very solid, but we are contributing a road map.

Carlos Martín Beristain: One thing that stands out to us is what in psychology is called "learned helplessness." In the case of Mexico, there is a learned helplessness on the part of many people, the idea that nothing can be done; there are no alternatives. But in our experience, yes, there are things that can be done. Clearly, you need a confluence of factors: an independent investigative team; a good relationship with victims; and a process in which victims feel respected, taken into account and able to push the investigation forward. And it's also necessary to have an opening within the state to make this possible.

I don't know if this experience is replicable. But we shouldn't focus only on the obstacles to the GIEI's investigation. It would be disastrous if that were the only lesson taken from our work. That's only part of the story. The other part is that we had very significant advances, and we've shown a way of working with victims and doing this kind of investigation. We have to keep pushing those things to get even better results. Obviously, if there's no political will that's a problem. In Latin America, the families are the ones who have kept

these cases open for so many years. That transformative energy goes beyond just the specific situation of the victims; it's a motor force for democracy. ■

En Colombia hay una guerra verdadera y muchas paces artificiales

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El 26 de septiembre todo era jolgorio en Cartagena. Un gobierno colombiano de centro-derecha había logrado lo imposible: firmar un acuerdo con la organización comunista Farc que daba término a una guerra irregular de 52 años. Ningún mandatario colombiano había logrado pactar ni derrotar militarmente a esa guerrilla, ni al ELN. En el acto, cargado de simbolismo, emoción y protocolo tropical, el presidente Juan Manuel Santos entregó copia del pacto a Ban Ki-moon, habida cuenta del papel central que habría de jugar la ONU en una compleja fase de desmovilización y entrega de armas. El acuerdo se había conseguido después de cuatro años de arduas negociaciones formales en La Habana y unos dos años de acercamientos informales y conversaciones secretas que, de hecho, habían comenzado bajo el gobierno del ultraderechista Álvaro Uribe Vélez.

El domingo siguiente los colombianos, convocados a plebiscito sobre un complejo acuerdo en torno a seis grandes asuntos que formaban un todo integral expuesto en 297 páginas apretadas, dijeron “no”. Aunque el margen de mayoría fue mínimo, se creó un hecho político y jurídico contundente. El “no” ganó con un 0.4%; se abstuvo el 65% del electorado y los votos “nulos” y “no marcados” superaron, por mucho, la diferencia entre el “sí” y el “no”.

Todos sabían, y el presidente Santos el primero, que de haber ganado el “sí”, empezaría lo difícil. Y si bien el marco jurídico del pacto estaba blindado por una reforma constitucional y diversas sentencias de los más altos tribunales del país lo avalaban en su contenido, el triunfo del “no” empuja al país al reino de una desazón profunda y acaso prolongada.

La victoriosa y variopinta coalición del “no”, liderada por Uribe Vélez, no ofrece

fórmula alternativa creíble ni viable. Máxime cuando en el camino se sumaron pastores de iglesias protestantes que rechazan los elementos feministas del pacto y reafirman un patriarcalismo bíblico o “el modelo de familia.” Desde el 10 de agosto de 2010 Uribe, quien se sintió “traicionado” por Santos, se empeñó en una oposición a ultranza que encontró en la mesa de negociaciones de La Habana el blanco principal. Su objetivo era debilitar al gobierno y tomar posiciones para la campaña electoral del 2018.

El presidente cometió el error de convocar un plebiscito sobre la marcha, con gestores marchitos y mediocres, y, lo más grave, jurídicamente innecesario. Si se hubiese tratado de buscar un piso sólido de legitimidad política al proceso de paz, hubiera bastado aducir lo evidente: que la reelección del 2014 le había dado el mandato popular de pactar con las Farc. Todos saben que ese fue el meollo de esa elección. Es más, en la agenda de seis puntos convenida con las Farc en el 2012, salvo mencionar la palabra, no se dice nada sobre la “refrendación”.

Y como parece llegada la hora de los abogados, ahora se dirá que por una sentencia de la Corte Constitucional que contempla la hipótesis —cumplida— de una victoria del “no”, el resultado es de obligatorio cumplimiento solo para el presidente, aunque no para el Congreso ni el poder judicial. Llevar el pacto al bloque de constitucionalidad y otorgarle el estatuto de tratado internacional es vía política cerrada. Jurídicamente el único camino es modificar el acuerdo, lo que no se puede hacer sin las Farc y, acaso, volver a otro plebiscito. En una perspectiva optimista esto requiere un acuerdo político del gobierno, el uribismo y el asentimiento de las Farc. De producirse, tardará meses.

De lado de las Farc, los jefes instalados en La Habana deben ponderar la actitud de miles de guerrilleros de base que hace una semana fueron dejando y desmantelando sus campamentos y ahora deben retornar a los sitios de partida oyendo a Uribe pedir para ellos una amnistía especial que, de todos modos, ya está contemplada en el acuerdo. Es decir, que la unidad de mando en las Farc puede peligrar si las concesiones que hagan los comandantes guerrilleros son muchas o muy pocas. Nadie sabe cuál es la dosis adecuada. Por ahora tanto los voceros de la guerrilla como el presidente han declarado la continuación del cese al fuego, al menos hasta el 31 de octubre. Es cuestión de tiempo saber en qué condiciones se mantendrá.

Uribe pide “rectificar” varias cláusulas del pacto, precisamente las que fueron más difíciles de negociar: que los jefes paguen penas de prisión; que no puedan ser representantes en cargos de elección popular; que sus delitos de narcotráfico no sean conexos del delito de rebelión y por tanto que purguen por el narcotráfico. En una retórica del demagogo experimentado que es, Uribe dice que el pacto es “inconstitucional”. Demagogo porque en 1989 el senador Uribe fue el autor del proyecto de Ley de indulto total al M-19 y en el 2005 pactó con los paramilitares una impunidad prácticamente total a cambio de la desmovilización. Pacto que se vino abajo en el Congreso y en la Corte Suprema de Justicia que no permitieron la impunidad.

Lo deprimente de todo este espectáculo es que regresa a Colombia a lo más pernicioso de su política de los últimos treinta años: la clase política de todos los colores manipula los asuntos de guerra y paz en función de intereses electorales. El resultado del plebiscito es un poderoso insumo para que Uribe, la extrema derecha y los adláteres, tomen posiciones fuertes frente al 2018.

Ahora la retórica patriótica combina temas de reforma tributaria, “educación universal y de calidad”, “modelo cristiano de familia” y, en fin, el esbozo de un programa de gobierno de una nueva coalición electoral. Calculan que su línea dura en el fondo, suave en las palabras, desgastará a un Santos obligado a atender dos frentes: “el pacto nacional” de la clase política y el tinglado de La Habana. Quieren hacer ingobernable el país sobre la premisa de que el presente debe gobernar y tiene la responsabilidad del timón.

Aunque esta extrema derecha toma la vocería y representación de las víctimas, lo hace selectivamente. Pareciera que solo las Farc hubiesen producido víctimas. Y claro que en su guerra sucia e irregular ejecutaron asaltos feroces e indiscriminados a poblaciones inermes con gran cantidad de bajas; actos de guerra en confrontación con la fuerza pública abiertamente violatorios del derecho internacional humanitario; secuestros extorsivos y políticos, individuales y masivos, generalmente crueles y prolongados.

Todos los agentes del conflicto colombiano son responsables de una violación masiva y sistemática de los derechos humanos que ha dejado víctimas que exigen reparación, verdad, justicia y no repetición. La violencia pública implícita (y no solo las Farc) en el prolongado conflicto colombiano, produjo miles de muertos y lisiados; millones de desplazados, en su mayoría familias de campesinos pobres; miles de desaparecidos, ejecutados y torturados por la fuerza pública, a veces en alianza con grupos paramilitares de fuerte raigambre local. De estas víctimas no hablan los del “no”.

Es poco probable que el optimismo que hoy sale de las declaraciones presidenciales, de la oposición y de la guerrilla tenga

un piso y acaso alcance la dureza del diamante. Preocupa la situación de la guerrilla: ¿se mantendrá la unidad de la jefatura con las bases? Es un asunto de tiempo y de la forma como se desenvuelva “el gran pacto nacional” alrededor de Santos-Uribe.

Oí decir al expresidente Pastrana (protagonista de uno de los peores ensayos de diálogo con las Farc por su miopía, largueza, levedad y proclividad de salir siempre en la foto) que “se cayó la paz”; se refería a la “paz” de Cartagena. Pero no dijo cuál es su fórmula de “paz” salvo repetir lo que ha dicho Uribe. Así, pues, ¿cuál es “la paz” de Colombia? El acuerdo protocolizado el 26 de septiembre marcaba un camino, difícil pero bien concebido. Desde la noche del domingo 2 de octubre sabemos que el acuerdo con las Farc apenas se dibujó en la arena de las playas de Cartagena.

Nota

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Environmental Justice and Climate Change in Latin America

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Introduction: Environmental Justice and Climate Change in Latin America

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Climate change is a growing concern for populations, politics, and science in Latin America. Numerous studies report on the currently observed impacts of climate change. These include receding glaciers, altered patterns of precipitation and hydrological regime (extreme floods and droughts), cold and heat waves, and ocean acidification, affecting both the quality and quantity of water, ecosystems, and other natural resources. There is also considerable concern regarding effects on economic activities, human health, and well-being. Local people, politicians, and scientists also highlight that climate change has an uneven impact.

In part, the uneven impacts of climate change owe to its uneven biophysical manifestations across the globe. While global average temperatures are rising, some places experience cooling. While some see dryer conditions and periods of prolonged droughts, others experience more rainfall and flooding or consecutive events of extreme drought followed by flooding. Thus, it is the increased intensity and frequency of extreme events that are becoming the norm. Much scientific and political energy goes into furthering our understanding of these manifestations. In this context, a climate justice perspective highlights how the uneven distribution of detrimental effects is not simply a biophysical phenomenon but a social and political one, deeply contingent upon social and political conditions. This perspective maintains that climate change impacts do not just “fall from the sky” but are shaped by preexisting socioeconomic and politically contingent vulnerabilities

that are maintained by the current global political economy order of production, consumption, and commerce (Ribot 2010). This perspective is also reflected in the statement on regional aspects by the authors of the 2014 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, “Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerabilities,” saying: “In many [Central and South American] countries, a first step toward adaptation to future climate changes is to reduce the vulnerability to present climate” (Magrin et al. 2014). Such a perspective effectively links the uneven distribution of climate change impacts to the social and political arrangements mediating individual and collective responses. It moreover underlines the need for further study of the ties between environmental and social justice in the context of global climate change.

The linking of academic and activist perspectives holds transformational promise. It is a perspective that integrates biophysical, social, and political causes of vulnerability and suffering. Recognizing this, we aim in this introductory essay to give a brief genealogy of environmental justice as it relates to debates in the United States. We then turn to the specifics of the Latin American context before directing our attention to the articulations between environmental justice and climate change. Finally, we suggest a set of relevant questions for further scrutiny with regards to climate justice as an object of study and a field of inquiry.

Environmental Justice as a Field of Inquiry

Environmental justice highlights the nexus between environmental and social differences (Walker 2012). It is an analytical perspective that emerged out of the civil rights and environmental movements in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s. It initially focused on how Native American and black communities suffered disproportionately from the pollution of air and waterways. The Texas-based sociologist Robert Bullard (2000), who is often seen as the father of environmental justice, suggests that “environmental racism” or inequalities have direct expressions in the physical form of environmental harm. While the early environmental justice movement arose from the efforts of local advocacy and rights-based groups, it has also come to constitute an academic field that responds to a diversity of ways in which environmental inequalities arise and are maintained. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency even has an explicit environmental justice agenda and guidelines (<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>). In other words, these particular concerns voiced by activists and academics have resulted in significant policy change.

Since Bullard’s initial efforts to establish a field of study, the environmental justice framework has been broadened by other scholars to focus on a wide array of environmental “goods and bads,” moving from the extremes of chemical dump sites to conflicting interests in, for instance, urban green spaces where the question

is not so much about the geographies of hazard as the dynamics of exclusion. With this has come an expanding focus that goes beyond spatial distribution to examine procedures of decision making around the environmental phenomena that determine both where the environmental issues are and what form they take. This includes the study of knowledge production about and representations of the environment. It thereby represents a movement toward a more encompassing analytical interest in social differentiation around the environment.

From its early years, environmental justice has been a hybrid, that is, it is a situated, social, and political concept. Growing out of the civil rights movement, the concept has migrated into the worlds of NGOs and academia. It is therefore a discourse for policy making, a social movement for change, and an analytical tool for understanding the uneven distribution of socioenvironmental vulnerabilities related to environmental change.

Its hybrid nature is both a weakness and a strength, which has been discussed at length elsewhere. The partition of environmental justice into discourse, social movement, and scholarly critique reflects parallel and converging intellectual agendas. As a branch of applied philosophy, environmental justice has been tied to ideas of what constitutes social justice. A central figure in that debate has been Nancy Fraser (2008), who suggested a focus on redistribution and recognition, and eventually representation, highlighting that social justice works in different and overlapping domains: how benefits and harm are distributed among a diverse society, how institutionalized forms of affirmative action may or may not ease or exacerbate social inequalities, and how hierarchies be discursively constructed and

thereby naturalized. It also draws attention to procedures and how justice is tightly bound to political inclusion.

Latin American Perspectives

Also in Latin America, environmental justice has become an integrating and mobilizing concept (Carruthers 2008), connecting environmental, social, and ethical dimensions of sustainability and development. In Brazil, social movements since the early 1970s have articulated environmental matters in their claims for land rights as well as access and control over natural resources (Porto 2012). This was mostly stimulated by the Catholic pastoral social movement not only in Brazil but throughout the region. In this context, traditional communities—indigenous, *quilombolas* (African slaves' descendants), and other native people who live from forest gathering, agriculture, and fishing—have been central. These peoples inhabit territories that are disputed by powerful economic groups from the industries of agribusiness, mining, and hydropower.

Environmental justice in Latin America has become a unifying banner of reflection and mobilization. It has drawn together the experience of struggle of diverse individuals, communities, and entities including grassroots movements, traditional populations (indigenous), small farmers and landless workers, environmentalists, and scientists. Historical patterns of social inequality and ethnic discrimination, and environmental conflicts in Latin America are now broadly understood to have a strong relationship with the conditions produced by the region's insertion into the international economy.

Environmental justice works as a critical theoretical framework for

distinct environmental movements in Latin America. This is important when considering the distribution of conflicts arising from economic, social, and ecological phenomena and more recently global environmental change that place the burdens of development impacts on the poorest and most discriminated and excluded areas and populations of the Latin American region. There are promises but also limits of environmental justice in Latin America, both as flagship for popular mobilization and as a set of principles for analysis, interpretation, and policy. In other words, there are many ways by which Latin America's popular movements fuse environmental dimensions into community struggles for social justice, mainly as a means to access and control natural resources and to ensure land rights.

Fields of Action

Within wider environmental justice debates, climate justice is being advanced as a topic of concern. As opposed to the site-specific focus common to much environmental justice scholarship (e.g., the location of waste facilities), climate justice introduces a different scale and need to respond to more elusive cause-effect relations than many other environmental justice issues. Rather than focusing on particular sites and locations of environmental injustice, such as access and control over natural resources, climate justice connects disparate sites across the globe. Climate justice links carbon emissions and global warming to the uneven distribution of harm. Viewed thus, climate change is effectively a political matter, contrary to representations of climate change that portray it as a purely scientific matter.

Both as a field for action and a field for inquiry, climate justice is still maturing. Works such as Naomi Klein's 2014 *This Changes Everything* have further sparked popular attention to the issue, as did the widespread public protests in relation to the different iterations of the Conference of Parties under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In 2014, 300,000 people gathered on the streets of New York for the Peoples Climate March, and the same year, thousands also marched in the streets of Lima for the 2014 COP 20 meeting. This is also true for other parts of Latin America. Similar marches and campaigns have also been seen in different European cities including the capitals of Scandinavian countries, for example the climate action and climate jobs campaigns in the United Kingdom and Norway. Internationally, large environmental NGOs and networks such as Oxfam and 350.org have pushed for an agenda focusing on climate justice. Reparations ("polluter pays"), compensations, technology transfers, and so on are proposed as ways of easing the compounded impacts of industrialization. Local social movements have also appropriated and reshaped discourses on climate and social justice, for example the transition town campaigns aiming at creating sustainable cities, predominantly in the global North (see Transition Network, <https://transitionnetwork.org/>).

Climate justice has also the potential to feed into the long traditions of social movements in Latin America. It connects to a new environmental concern within the region that critiques global capitalism anew. It thereby potentially connects and recontextualizes the critique posed in Eduardo Galeano's *Open Veins of Latin America* (2009) to the Latin American debates about ecological debt from the early 1990s. The global perspective

offered by the broad scientific consensus on the causes of climate change reveals the connections between the patterns of consumption and commerce of the global economy and the unequal share of the environmental burdens. In this way, the climate justice movement has obvious links to the rich Latin American tradition of social mobilizations and capitalist critique. Persisting ecological neocolonialism, built on past patterns of plunder, attain a new environmental dimension as the lifestyle of the North spills directly into processes of environmental change, driving disadvantaged communities to change their lifestyles and livelihoods.

As suggested above, climate change transforms ideas about environmental damage by effectively having the sites of impacts physically and temporally disconnected from the sites of consumption and extraction. The spatial distribution of harm is therefore very different from traditional extraction or waste sites. "Adding insult to injury," as Fraser would point out, climate justice debates reveal the intersections between the unequal distribution of benefits and burdens, the global hierarchies of cultural politics, and the continued exclusions from political processes. It is also worth remembering that the burdens of climate change are unequally shared not only among nations of the global South and the global North, but as important, among the different socioeconomic strata of these societies, which are among the most unequal on the planet. The climate justice debate has demonstrated that climate vulnerability is not about North-South only but just as much about a small global elite whose consumption patterns drive processes that harm them but who are relatively well sheltered by their wealth. By contrast, the large poor majority that contributes only

very little to the furthering of the harms are those who suffer most.

Climate justice connects environmental concerns to a critique of global capitalism. Whether we look at climate justice as a discourse, a social movement, or as uneven impacts, we are forced to consider the links between deeper patterns of production and the lifestyle of affluent elites in both the North and the South, and the distribution of climate-induced vulnerabilities. In 2010, representatives from governments from the South, civil society, and large environmental NGOs met in Cochabamba at The Worlds People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth. A central outcome of that encounter was a statement that expresses a profound critique of the capitalist world order. Not unlike Klein, this calls for fundamental changes in the global political economy. While this is expressed in the social movements and NGO networks of climate justice within Latin America, the case studies on impacts and adaptation display the articulation of a different set of concerns that are much more grounded in quotidian dynamics of making do and getting by.

Frames of Interrogation

Environmental justice frameworks focus on distributive justice, procedural justice, justice of recognition, and capabilities. When thinking about climate justice, it can be helpful to direct our attention to four empirical and interrelated areas for interrogation that address spaces for understanding problems and spaces that may produce positive changes. First, impacts and adaptations provide an analysis of the different ways in which global climate change become rooted in particular places. While climate change is a global phenomenon, it is always

located somewhere, aptly demonstrating that climate manifests itself locally in diverse and unequal ways. Second, we are concerned with the complex relationships between environmental issues and climate change. Processes of land degradation through deforestation or desertification, for example, may be driven by logging concessions or agro-industries, but these effects can be exacerbated by changing climatic patterns. Similarly, extractive industries and small-scale mining, both intensive in water use, incur further water stress. Thus environment degradation and climate change are compound phenomena with multiple, ambiguous, and interrelated drivers. Third, we are interested in how climate change is mobilized in social struggles for justice. This is linked to the rich scholarly tradition on social movements and emphasizes how ideas about justice are mobilized to confront the adverse effects of global climate change. This is particularly relevant in the Latin American contexts of *vivir bien*. Last, we are interested in frameworks for action and how a focus on the uneven distribution of burdens and benefits may serve climate justice advocacies seeking to improve the living conditions of marginalized populations. Thereby aiming at understanding the potentials of a climate justice approach to environmental degradation and conflict in Latin America, we pose the following questions:

What contrasting expressions of climate justice exist? How is climate justice defined and articulated by different actors, and what are the results of these in the policy domain? How are the big NGOs pushing for a climate justice framework? How are ideas about climate justice linked to other issues of social justice and environmental degradation? To what extent does the attention to climate justice seep into other spheres of these highly segregated societies?

How is climate justice useful as an analytical approach to understanding the entwinement of social and environmental difference in Latin America?

The intimate relationship between environment and social difference calls attention to questions of equity and justice, or conversely, to the uneven distribution of harm and benefits and the production and maintenance (and sometimes, contestation) of injustices. Bullard's environmental racism attains a neocolonial attire within the global political economy. Whether focusing on distribution, inclusion, or procedure, questions of rights and the historical responsibility become linked to the production of uneven geographies of environmental degradation and social development. As such, they display obvious continuities between climate justice scholarship and engaged political ecology, science and technology studies, cultural studies, and environmental history.

This collection seeks to explore the potentially fertile grounds for cross-pollination between such established disciplinary traditions and the nascent analytical and empirical focus on climate justice in Latin America. We have divided this debate section in two parts: one that takes an environmental justice approach to understanding the impacts of climate change in terms of vulnerability and adaptation, and one that specifically addresses the local articulation of climate justice/injustice. Highlighting recent linkages between social movements working also outside the region, Astrid Ulloa suggests that the inequalities related to gender and ethnicity must come to the fore in analysis of climate justice. Elma Montaña and Paula Mussetta make a case for vulnerability-focused analysis for understanding uneven distribution of environmental harm. Working out of the

Brazilian Amazon, Patricia Pinho shows how representations of the region as an empty space critically shape the possible policy interventions. Astrid Stensrud turns our attention to the Peruvian Andes and the production of water scarcity at the intersections between climate change and water governance regimes. For the case of Bolivia, Nicole Fabricant and Kathryn Hicks document recent developments of the Climate Justice Platform, a grassroots initiative voicing concerns over the impacts of climate change. Finally, Jorge Daniel Taillant and Peter Collins chronicle the work towards creating a policy framework for glacier protection in Argentina, showing how this not only concerns fragile and vital ecosystems but also human well-being.

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Justicia climática y mujeres indígenas en América Latina

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En América Latina, el cambio climático ha implicado no sólo transformaciones ambientales, sino también respuestas y acciones políticas que tienen efectos desiguales de acuerdo con género, etnia y territorialidad. Las políticas globales-nacionales-locales sobre el cambio climático generan diferentes dinámicas para los procesos locales. Estos procesos unidos a las transformaciones ambientales, que se han dado históricamente desde la colonia asociados a los extractivismos (minerales, agua, hidrocarburos, monocultivos, entre otros), han contribuido al cambio ambiental global.

En estos contextos, los territorios de pueblos indígenas han sido afectados por la variabilidad climática y las diversas transformaciones ambientales. Asimismo, las políticas globales de cambio climático también han tenido efectos entre pueblos y mujeres indígenas, dado que no han sido parte de los procesos de toma de decisiones y no han participado en las propuestas globales-nacionales.

Por las anteriores razones, que vinculan al cambio climático con otros procesos ambientales, las demandas de los pueblos indígenas se han centrado en la autonomía y autodeterminación política y en el derecho de decidir sobre sus territorios. Recientemente, estas demandas se han articulado también con demandas de autodeterminación ambiental, y con demandas de justicia ambiental y climática.

Los desconocimientos y falta de participación en la toma de decisiones de los pueblos indígenas se deben a la emergencia de una ecogubernamentalidad climática, la cual se basa en políticas globales y genera unas relaciones específicas de producción de conocimientos. Asimismo, está articulada con representaciones específicas de

naturaleza bajo una racionalidad particular y una lógica económica como una nueva mercancía global, que llamo "naturaleza climatizada"¹. Por otro lado, se sustenta en la idea de un ciudadano neutral, que llamo un ciudadano cero carbono, cuyo uso de la naturaleza está mediada por las nuevas nociones de valoración dentro de los mercados de carbono del cambio climático, y a un consumo que se compensa con reducción de emisiones. Bajo estas visiones las diferencias étnicas y de género no se han considerado plenamente en los programas y políticas tanto globales como nacionales (Ulloa 2013, 2014).

Para hacer frente a estos procesos, en América latina los pueblos indígenas han exigido el reconocimiento de sus formas de pensar y sus maneras de conocer los procesos climáticos y ambientales, y de sus derechos con base en sus nociones de territorio, los no-humanos como afines, la autonomía y la autodeterminación ambiental, así como sus propuestas de justicia ambiental-climática. De igual manera, las mujeres indígenas de América Latina junto a la red de justicia climática han resaltado los efectos diferenciados del cambio climático y demandan justicia climática que reconozca sus derechos y diferencias. En particular, en Colombia, los pueblos indígenas demandan sus derechos frente a procesos extractivos y el reconocimiento como autoridades ambientales para decidir sobre sus territorios. Asimismo, las mujeres indígenas plantean, que es necesario: "Reconocer el papel de las mujeres, garantizar la equidad en la tenencia de tierras y asegurar la participación equitativa y diferencias de las mujeres en los diferentes espacios de toma de decisiones, en las políticas públicas, y, en las estrategias, planes y proyectos de adaptación y mitigación" (Censat Agua Viva 2016:11).

Para desarrollar el argumento, el texto presenta en una primera parte, los efectos en territorios indígenas de las políticas globales de cambio climático. En la segunda parte se discutirán las demandas de justicia ambiental desde los pueblos indígenas centradas en autonomía y autodeterminación ambiental. En la tercera parte se discutirán los planteamientos de las demandas de mujeres indígenas en torno a justicia climática, resaltando los ejes que han generado desigualdades de género. Finalmente, se presentarán propuestas frente al cambio climático desde una perspectiva de los pueblos y mujeres indígenas.

Políticas globales de cambio climático: Controlando bosques, territorios y culturas

Si bien hay acuerdos internacionales culturales y ambientales que reconocen los conocimientos y derechos de los pueblos indígenas y las diferencias de género, ellos no han sido centrales y menos transversales a todos los acuerdos ambientales, dado que las desigualdades de género persisten². De hecho, actualmente, las transformaciones climáticas presentan nuevos matices para los pueblos y sus territorios. El cambio climático implica tanto efectos ambientales (transformaciones en ciclos productivos y aumento de vulnerabilidad de sus territorios) como la introducción de los pueblos en escenarios de transnacionalización y globalización de la naturaleza, la incorporación en los mercados verdes y servicios ambientales (sumideros de carbono, proyectos de reforestación, y de Reducción de Emisiones por Deforestación y Degradación-REDD, por ejemplo), mediante la mercantilización del clima. El marco de incentivos económicos asociados a cambio climático y actualmente a REDD ha permitido la generación de empresas y procesos

centrados en los bosques en territorios de pueblos indígenas, en el contexto latinoamericano.

Dichos proyectos están sustentados en nociones de mercantilización de la naturaleza que implican contratos legales específicos entre empresas y representantes de los pueblos indígenas en torno a los bosques. Acuerdos contractuales se realizan basándose en la generación y venta de certificados de carbono, transferencia de títulos de las reducciones y obligaciones entre las partes, no solo en torno a los bosques, sino a sus procesos de manejo. En dichos contratos, además, se borra la relación con los indígenas como pueblos con derechos culturales y territoriales. De esta manera, se fragmenta el territorio bajo la consideración de que los bosques, en cuanto sumideros de carbono son lo importante. Se trata de procesos que generan una reconfiguración de la naturaleza bajo una lógica neoliberal, según la cual las relaciones culturales con lo no-humano son irrelevantes. Igualmente se desdibujan las diferencias étnicas y de género para dar paso a un ciudadano neutro cuyo uso de la naturaleza está mediado por el mercado, en una resignificación del sujeto moderno. La política del clima crea una nueva forma de ciudadanía global: el ciudadano cero carbono, aquel que busca mitigar o compensar sus emisiones de gases efecto invernadero (Ulloa 2013).

La producción de conocimientos en torno al cambio climático reproduce nociones occidentales sustentadas en visiones duales y en relaciones de poder que excluyen los conocimientos y prácticas locales, generan nuevas desigualdades entre hombres y mujeres y perpetúan o exacerban las ya existentes (Ulloa 2015).

Es necesario complejizar los análisis sobre la generación de las políticas globales sobre cambio climático, al igual que sobre su implementación local, y replantear una manera dominante de producción de conocimientos que desconoce relaciones de género y etnia. En la formulación de políticas y programas contra cambio climático, las mujeres solo se incluyen parcialmente, mientras que los pueblos y en particular las mujeres indígenas, tampoco aparecen representados.

De igual manera, en los programas y políticas opera una única dimensión cultural y solo un tipo de relación con la naturaleza, que desconocen otras maneras de producir conocimientos y de concebir las relaciones humanas y no-humanas. Esto se debe a que tanto las discusiones como las mediadas globales sobre el cambio climático se han basado en una visión surgida del conocimiento experto, que no consideran los diversos conocimientos, concepciones culturales ni realidades ambientales locales. De hecho, se implementan estrategias de adaptación, que no parten de las prácticas ni de los manejos locales. Y que no responden a escenarios climáticos a escalas puntuales, dado que en la mayoría de los casos no hay datos o información detallada de variables climatológicas. Tampoco concretan estrategias para afrontar las consecuencias de los acelerados cambios ambientales que viven las comunidades locales, como la disminución de sus posibilidades de acceso y manejo de recursos, lo que compromete sus territorios, su soberanía alimentaria, su autonomía y su autodeterminación. En síntesis, las políticas de cambio climático han generado desigualdades que demandan por otras visiones de justicia ambiental y climática.

Demandas de justicia climática desde la perspectiva indígena

Desde el inicio de los programas de Naciones Unidas en torno al cambio climático, los pueblos indígenas han demandado su participación. De hecho, en el 2009, se articularon al movimiento de justicia climática promoviendo un tribunal internacional, a saber:

“[...] diferentes actores de la sociedad civil, incluyendo muy especialmente los pueblos y naciones indígenas, afrodescendientes, movimientos campesinos y de pescadores de América Latina y el Caribe, de los Andes y la Amazonía en particular, hemos decidido promover un Tribunal Internacional de Justicia Climática que contribuya a identificar y juzgar a los verdaderos responsables de los crímenes contra la Madre Tierra y sus habitantes, la humanidad y el conjunto de los seres vivos, así como a controlar y exigir la no repetición de los hechos que forman parte de la acusación. Así, este tribunal se propone como un espacio donde los movimientos sociales y los pueblos promuevan la Justicia Climática llamando la atención de quienes están decidiendo en las actuales negociaciones para lograr no solo mayor firmeza en el cumplimiento de los compromisos, sino también la necesidad de promover nuevos mecanismos vinculantes que refuerzan el Convenio Marco sobre el Clima, y que permitan una verdadera justicia climática”. (CSUTCB et al. 2009)

Frente a las políticas de cambio climático, en particular, y ambientales, en general, los pueblos indígenas han demandado el reconocimiento de sus maneras de concebir los problemas ambientales y de sus derechos sobre sus territorios. En América Latina, hay diversos procesos y reconocimientos de derechos

implementados nacionalmente, tanto para los pueblos indígenas (Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, entre otros) como los derechos de la naturaleza (Ecuador, Bolivia), con particularidades y especificidades en sus alcances; sin embargo, en torno a lo ambiental se han generado múltiples acciones y demandas por el reconocimiento de sus derechos a tomar decisiones sobre la naturaleza y sus territorios. Los pueblos indígenas reunidos en la Conferencia Mundial de los Pueblos sobre el Cambio Climático y los Derechos de la Madre Tierra Cochabamba, Bolivia en abril 22 del 2010, plantearon que “Los países desarrollados, principales causantes del cambio climático, asumiendo su responsabilidad histórica y actual, deben reconocer y honrar su deuda climática en todas sus dimensiones, como base para una solución justa, efectiva y científica al cambio climático” (Acuerdo de los pueblos 2010).

En sus propuestas los pueblos indígenas articulan demandas de autodeterminación y autonomía, al igual que de gobernabilidad cultural. Las demandas y propuestas, además, se encuentran ligadas a los conocimientos y las estrategias de manejo ambiental, por ejemplo, en torno a la recuperación de semillas, la soberanía alimentaria y el control territorial, así como la producción económica propia, como estrategias de resistencia cultural. Todo ello contribuye a posicionar sus conocimientos y legitimar sus autoridades ambientales en los territorios colectivos. De esta manera, sus demandas se relacionan con territorios, lugares específicos y saberes localizados.

Si bien en las demandas de los pueblos indígenas reclaman sus derechos colectivos a la autodeterminación ambiental, las mujeres indígenas han planteado igualmente el reconocimiento diferenciado de sus derechos, frente a los efectos y

transformaciones ambientales que las afectan.

Justicia climática desde la perspectiva de las mujeres indígenas

Las políticas globales de cambio climático afectan de manera diferenciada a las mujeres indígenas, generando desigualdades, dado que género y etnicidad articulado a lo ambiental tiene implicaciones de invisibilización y exclusión no solo de los pueblos indígenas sino también de las mujeres. Por ejemplo, los conocimientos diferenciados entre hombres y mujeres no son incluidos, ni las maneras en que mujeres manejan la variabilidad climática. Estos procesos han sido cuestionados en los espacios internacionales, lo que a su vez ha permitido que las políticas de cambio climático y los resultados en torno a políticas y programas incluyan parcialmente a las mujeres, aunque no completamente a las mujeres indígenas. Sin contar que el acceso a la información es mínimo para diversos pueblos, quienes hablan otros idiomas.

Dado que las políticas globales y aún nacionales en torno al cambio climático no contuvieron las diferencias de género, organismos internacionales iniciaron programas tendientes a la inclusión de las mujeres tanto en procesos de participación como en visibilización de los impactos del cambio climático hasta la búsqueda de fondos para desarrollar programas acordes a las diferencias que implican el cambio climático para las mujeres (véase Aguilar 2009, Jungehülsing 2012, FMICA 2010, Davis, Roper y Miniszewski 2015). A partir de las críticas a la ausencia de análisis de género y cambio climático, se han desarrollado diversos enfoques que hacen un llamado para superar los

estereotipos o las inclusiones mecánicas de las mujeres, con el ánimo de compensar las desigualdades de género (Röhr 2007). No obstante, desde la perspectiva de las mujeres, continúan las demandas de su inclusión, como señala Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, Coordinadora de la Association des femmes peules et autochtones du Tchad (AFPAT) [Asociación de Mujeres Indígenas Fulani de Chad]: “La idea de que el género es un tema transversal no existe en Naciones Unidas. Las mujeres deberían estar participando activamente en las negociaciones, inclusive más allá de los grupos específicos” (Ghorbani 2015a).

Por las anteriores razones, han surgido los movimientos de mujeres que claman por una justicia climática. En los escenarios de cambio climático las mujeres indígenas tienen muy poca participación y acceso a la información, y sus demandas se han incrementado con el paso de los años frente a la falta de respuestas vinculantes y que tiendan a revertir las causas del cambio climático. Por lo tanto, en el 2015 frente a la COP 21, se incrementó el movimiento de mujeres indígenas exigiendo su inclusión en las discusiones. Las mujeres indígenas se unieron a las mujeres alrededor del mundo en la declaración “Llamamiento global de las mujeres por la justicia climática” para la COP 21, y sus demandas fueron:

- Cambiar el sistema y evitar el cambio climático.
- Evitar el aumento de 1,5 ° en la temperatura global.
- Asegurar la igualdad de género y los derechos humanos en todas las medidas contra el cambio climático.
- Mantener el petróleo y los combustibles fósiles en el suelo.
- Cambiar al uso de energía 100 % segura y renovable.

- Implementar la eficiencia energética y medidas de conservación en todos lados y por parte de todos.
- Reducir en forma urgente y drástica los patrones de producción y consumo de todas las personas, especialmente aquellas que más han contribuido a este problema en el mundo desarrollado.
- Comprometer a los países desarrollados a liderar la lucha contra la crisis climática y a brindar a los países en desarrollo los medios necesarios para mitigar el cambio climático y adaptarse a este, con un espíritu de solidaridad y justicia.³

En la COP 21 en París, la movilización de las mujeres indígenas y movimientos sociales demandaron la inclusión de la perspectiva de género; sin embargo, como plantea Ghorbani (2015b), el acuerdo final de la COP no incluyó género de manera transversal.

Propuestas desde la mirada de las mujeres indígenas

Para repensar la justicia ambiental, así como su relación con pueblos y mujeres indígenas, es necesario considerar las dimensiones económicas, ambientales, políticas, legales y culturales en contextos locales, y su articulación con las transformaciones globales-locales. De igual manera, repensar las geopolíticas ambientales: conocimientos, representaciones, y relación con lo no-humano. Paralelamente, implica una reconfiguración de las perspectivas de justicia ambiental. Por lo tanto, sus propuestas se pueden analizar en cuatro dimensiones que implican replanteamientos en torno a: revertir las desigualdades basadas en las nociones duales de cultura y naturaleza; repensar las políticas globales ambientales y climáticas; reconfigurar las

problemáticas legales y los alcances de los derechos reconocidos en contextos internacionales-nacionales locales, e incluir las demandas culturales y las múltiples perspectivas (véase Ulloa 2014, 2015). Estos procesos se plantean dado que en la toma de decisiones las mujeres no están presentes, y muchas veces sus voces no son consideradas por los tomadores de decisiones, procesos que se dan en diferentes contextos locales, regionales, nacionales y globales.

En particular sobre justicia climática, las mujeres indígenas proponen perspectivas que incluyan lo humano y lo no-humano, que evidencie las diversas articulaciones entre procesos económicos, extractivos y los cambios ambientales sustentadas en relaciones desiguales de poder. Asimismo, demandan la articulación entre diversos movimientos locales, nacionales y globales para proponer nuevas relaciones entre hombres y mujeres, y generar propuestas que transformen las políticas globales y nacionales sobre cambio climático. Estas demandas responden a la relación que hay entre género y desigualdades socioambientales, que surgieron desde las relaciones coloniales.

De esta manera, los pueblos y mujeres indígenas se enfrentan a la naturaleza climatizada, proponiendo otras concepciones de naturaleza, y del ciudadano cero carbono, proponiendo reconocimiento de las diferencias culturales, es decir confrontan la ecogubernamentalidad climática. Estas críticas a la mirada de género y cambio climático requieren reconfigurar los escenarios globales de toma de decisiones sobre cambio climático y la apertura de espacios de reconocimientos de otras visiones frente al cambio climático.

De esta manera, los pueblos y mujeres indígenas pueden posicionar los territorios como vivos, las naturalezas relacionales, y los seres humanos y no-humanos como seres políticos y como afines, y proponer alternativas para enfrentar el cambio climático basadas en conocimientos propios y en prácticas culturales. Asimismo, replantear las dinámicas de los procesos extractivistas de apropiación, globalización y desposesión, al demandar justicia ambiental en torno a los territorios y los no-humanos. En particular para América Latina, se puede plantear que las demandas de justicia ambiental y de justicia climática han movilizad las luchas territoriales y ambientales, sobre todo cuando confrontan políticas globales que afectan su autonomía y autodeterminación, evidenciando los conflictos que subyacen en dichas articulaciones, pero a la vez permitiendo la emergencia de propuestas que repiensen lo territorial y ambiental y la posibilidad de la construcción de políticas ambientales y climáticas desde perspectivas y propuestas culturales.

Notas

Este texto retoma conceptos que he elaborado y presentado en otros textos (véase Ulloa 2013, 2014, 2015).

- ¹ Utilizó en inglés el concepto “carbonized nature”, y en español opté por “naturaleza climatizada”.
- ² Convenios los cuales, por separado, tiene sus propios enfoques en temas de género, por ejemplo, el Convenio en Diversidad Biológica (CDB), el Convenio Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre Cambio Climático (CMNUCC), o herramientas para la inclusión de género como la generada por la Convención del Clima (Censat Agua Viva 2016).
- ³ The Women’s Global Call for Climate Justice, http://womenclimatejustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/The-Womens-Global-Call-for-Climate-Justice_SpanishFinal_Design.pdf.

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Vulnerabilidad al cambio ambiental global en los Andes Centrales: Enunciados para un enfoque hacia la justicia climática

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Por su impronta política, el concepto de justicia ambiental posiciona el cambio climático y todas sus variables biofísicas en pleno campo de lo social. Los asocia al respeto por los derechos humanos, incluyendo el derecho a desarrollarse o lograr el “buen vivir”, a la necesidad de distribuir equitativamente sus impactos positivos y negativos, de asegurar tomas de decisiones transparentes, responsables y participativas; de promover igualdad y equidad entre géneros, razas, clases; y de aprovechar el poder transformador de la educación para la gestión de procesos sensibles al clima.

Como ocurre con otros conceptos formulados desde la perspectiva de los derechos humanos, resulta más fácil reconocer su legitimidad de manera abstracta que aplicarlos en decisiones concretas. Ejemplo de ello es la imposibilidad de cumplir el derecho humano al agua en el marco de la Metas del Milenio. Los Estados suscriben estos tratados como miembros de un colectivo internacional, presuponiendo que ello conlleva la voluntad política necesaria para hacer cumplir esa determinación. Sin embargo, la única forma de constituir el derecho humano y universal al agua es trascender los intereses político-administrativos del recurso, las provincias Argentinas y el Estado nacional en Chile, ámbitos en los que se constituye el valor estratégico del recurso (Marín et al. 2006).

Es un desafío hoy para los académicos desarrollar marcos conceptuales para esos abordajes de derechos humanos, de modo que constituyan herramientas analíticas con valor científico a la vez que resulten operativos y útiles para el fortalecimiento de una gobernanza ambiental respetuosa de los derechos humanos.

Este artículo propone la *vulnerabilidad al cambio global* como una categoría capaz de reconocer situaciones diferenciales entre grupos sociales según raza, género, clase, ricos y pobres, hegemónicos y subordinados, etc., habilitando una perspectiva analítica ajustada a los principios de la justicia ambiental y la justicia climática.

El artículo advierte la diversidad de acepciones del concepto y enuncia 5 dimensiones necesarias para que éste consiga evidenciar esos clivajes fundamentales, ilustrándolas con situaciones relativas a productores agropecuarios de tierras secas en ambas vertientes de los Andes Centrales, en cuencas de régimen pluvio-nival en las que la sequía constituye una de las principales amenazas asociadas al cambio climático. Finalmente, se señala que un concepto de vulnerabilidad al cambio ambiental en sintonía con la noción de justicia climática devela raíces profundas de problemas socio-ecológicos en el contexto del cambio ambiental global que ponen en cuestión el sistema económico capitalista vigente.

¿Qué vulnerabilidad?

Vulnerabilidad es un fenómeno social con una nutrida trayectoria en las ciencias sociales así como en los organismos internacionales. De manera general, ha sido abordada en relación a la pobreza y a los problemas del desarrollo; pero también a partir de procesos globales, regionales o nacionales más específicos, como la desigualdad y la inequidad en los ingresos, el desempleo y la inserción laboral, la privación o restricción de derechos humanos y/o de ciudadanía, el riesgo y los desastres naturales, los flujos migratorios,

etc. El estudio de la vulnerabilidad en el contexto del cambio ambiental es una perspectiva que ha cobrado importancia en las últimas décadas y su trayectoria está marcada en gran medida por los trabajos del Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Una base común a la gran mayoría de definiciones de vulnerabilidad en este contexto es la identificación de tres grandes dimensiones: la *exposición* a la variabilidad y a los extremos climáticos, la *sensibilidad* y la *capacidad adaptativa* de los sistemas sociales a esos estresores. El enfoque presenta *a priori* un potencial crítico para promover los principios de la justicia ambiental porque tiende a explicar cómo y por qué algunos grupos están sometidos de forma dinámica y heterogénea a procesos que deterioran su bienestar. Es decir, evidencia que la situación de indefensión, riesgo o inseguridad son rasgos propios de nuestras sociedades.

Sin embargo, muchas de las conceptualizaciones de la vulnerabilidad no se apartan de una visión fiscalista, biofísica y técnica del problema, incapaz de visibilizar los vínculos entre la crisis climática y las relaciones sociales de poder (de clase, de raza, de género, de etnias) (Lampis 2012, Dietz 2013). Así, los resultados de muchos de los estudios de vulnerabilidad no constituyen un camino para promover genuinas transformaciones en las condiciones de desigualdad, simplemente porque no están diseñados para captar las diferencias entre unos actores, grupos o regiones y otros.

Una mirada que supere estas debilidades debería partir de la idea que la vulnerabilidad al cambio climático es un proceso tan configurado por privaciones existentes como por amenazas climáticas futuras, determinado por un acceso desigual a los recursos y no exclusivamente por impactos de eventos naturales. Sobre

esta base, capturar los principios de la justicia ambiental requiere considerar múltiples estresores y reconocer la espacialidad, la historicidad y las relaciones de poder subyacentes, en una mirada inherentemente política y difícilmente cuantificable.

Reconceptualizando la vulnerabilidad para instrumentar la justicia climática

Vulnerabilidad a múltiples estresores

Los abordajes de la vulnerabilidad que focalizan en un solo estresor no logran captar la realidad de la mayoría de los sistemas (Eakin y Luers, 2006). Las exposiciones vinculadas al clima y al mundo biofísico se combinan con otras exposiciones del ámbito social. Así, más que de cambio climático, hablamos de *cambio ambiental global*. Leichenko y O'Brien (2008) introdujeron la idea de las dobles exposiciones, afirmando que el cambio ambiental global se acopla con el fenómeno de la globalización para influir en los procesos sociales, económicos y ecológicos de maneras complejas, multidireccionales y potencialmente inesperadas. Hoy se habla de exposiciones múltiples en las que interactúan factores naturales y sociales. Más aún, estos autores —y muchos otros tras ellos— reconocen la incidencia de fenómenos asociados a la globalización (o sea al capitalismo actual) y de las políticas en la capacidad de hacer frente y adaptarse al cambio climático.

Por ejemplo, un pequeño productor frutihortícola de Mendoza o San Juan, en Argentina, o de las regiones de Atacama y Coquimbo en Chile puede haber desarrollado la capacidad de adaptarse a la disminución de caudal del río construyendo un pozo y optimizando su sistema de riego. Pero esta capacidad adaptativa se ve

neutralizada por pérdidas de rentabilidad asociadas a precios bajos fijados por mercados cada vez más integrados y crecientemente exigentes que desvalorizan toda producción que no cumple con altos estándares de calidad así como por mercados oligopólicos de fruta y hortalizas que operan en ausencia de políticas locales de protección de la agricultura regional.

Los ganadores y los perdedores de la globalización (Benko y Lipietz 1992 y 2000) son candidatos a convertirse en ganadores y perdedores frente al cambio climático. La consideración de dobles exposiciones y múltiples estresores pone el análisis de la vulnerabilidad en sintonía con las preocupaciones de la justicia climática y ambiental.

La espacialidad de lo global

La “geografía” de la vulnerabilidad suele ejemplificarse marcando contrastes norte-sur. Como se menciona en la introducción de Mattias Borg Rasmussen y Patricia F. Pinho, “Environmental Justice and Climate Change in Latin America”, análisis válido, pero que oblitera asimetrías y desigualdades que surgen en escalas de mayor detalle. Por ejemplo, los viticultores y productores hortícolas de las zonas distales de los oasis de riego de los ríos San Juan, Mendoza, Tunuyán, Diamante, Atuel, en la vertiente atlántica de los Andes centrales son más impactados por los eventos de sequía que los localizados en las cabeceras de esos oasis. Aguas abajo, los productores reciben menos caudales, la sequía se potencia con las altas temperaturas de las tierras bajas, y/o la salinización y el revenimiento limitan los atributos agroecológicos de sus tierras. No siempre se advierte que estas asimetrías no se explican sólo por los azares de la geografía física, el clima o la fuerza de

gravedad, sino que son reforzadas por los patrones de localización de los actores en el territorio. En ese ejemplo, los capitales de la nueva vitivinicultura globalizada tienden a migrar o expandirse sobre tierras altas, dejando a los pequeños productores y campesinos menos exitosos cautivos de localizaciones que los hacen más vulnerables; y cuanto más se extiende el oasis aguas arriba, más deterioro ambiental se produce en las colas del sistema de riego. Estos procesos de segregación socio-espacial ocurren también en ciudades y zonas periurbanas, polarizando espacialmente la vulnerabilidad y la resiliencia.

Los factores locacionales de la vulnerabilidad son múltiples y operan a través de las escalas espaciales, anulando o exacerbando la vulnerabilidad de unos y otros grupos, en una complejidad difícil de desentrañar. Aun así, los análisis de vulnerabilidad que integran la dimensión espacial tienen más probabilidades de develar asimetrías y diferenciaciones sociales que deben ser reconocidas para capturar los principios de la justicia ambiental.

Historicidad

Un análisis de vulnerabilidad que contemple relaciones sociedad-naturaleza del pasado visibiliza desigualdades en el acceso y el control político de recursos que, en el contexto del cambio climático, muchas veces son interpretadas como desigualdades naturalizadas y no social e históricamente construidas (Dietz 2013).

Por ejemplo, se asume como natural la escasez hídrica que afecta a los campesinos de las áreas no irrigadas de las cuencas argentinas y chilenas de los Andes Centrales. Se considera lógico que deban

Capricultores de las subcuencas tributarias del río Elqui, Región de Coquimbo, Chile. Sólo los abuelos permanecen en las tierras de la familia, que merma día a día su productividad. Hija y nietos han debido migrar al valle, en busca de trabajo asalariado que permita la subsistencia. Foto: Elma Montaña, trabajo de campo.



sufrir la escasez, puesto que viven en el desierto. Una mirada histórica muestra que los magros o inexistentes caudales que hoy les llegan son el resultado de aprovechamientos aguas arriba efectuados por actores que, si bien llegaron después que ellos, lo hicieron con el poder de capturar esos caudales. En las cuencas de Mendoza y San Juan, en Argentina, fueron vitivinicultores y desarrollos urbanos que construyeron oasis de riego sobre base de derechos de aguas que se establecieron a fin del siglo XIX ignorando los usos ancestrales de pobladores originarios en la parte baja de esas cuencas. En el caso de las cuencas de los ríos Copiapo, Huasco, Elqui, Limari en las regiones de Atacama y Coquimbo en Chile, el mercado de aguas permitió a las compañías mineras comprar los derechos.

En ambos casos, pequeños productores y campesinos, privados del acceso al agua de los ríos y arroyos, debieron renunciar a sus pequeñas economías diversificadas para contentarse con la única actividad que pueden desarrollar sin esos caudales: una capricultura extensiva de subsistencia que les deja muy escaso margen de maniobras

frente a los eventos de sequía exacerbados por el cambio climático, poniéndolos al borde de la extinción. Es la mirada histórica la que devela una injusticia que no es reconocida en el sistema de gobernanza del agua vigente.

La producción política de la vulnerabilidad

Cuando la vulnerabilidad es conceptualizada principalmente desde la sola dimensión de los impactos biofísicos sobre los sistemas sociales, éstos se presentan como fenómenos externos, objetivos y apolíticos, es decir, alejados de sus determinantes políticos y sociales o de sus consecuencias. Por el contrario, desde una perspectiva sensible a los procesos que producen desequilibrios sociales, la vulnerabilidad —así como las formas de resolverla— necesariamente tiene que ser definida como un fenómeno inherentemente político porque implica procesos de disputa por el acceso a los bienes naturales (tierra, agua) y los recursos materiales (económicos) y simbólicos (gobernanza, participación, conocimiento, etc.). La posibilidad de acceder a ellos es

la que marca la diferencia entre los grupos que logran estar mejor preparados para afrontar los cambios, y así ser menos vulnerables. Que la vulnerabilidad sea un fenómeno político significa que ella es producida por múltiples relaciones de poder (Swyngedow 2009) y por mecanismos de exclusión y de negación de derechos adquiridos (Dietz 2013).

Son estas lógicas de poder las que definen quiénes ganan y quiénes pierden, y establecen las diferencias entre quienes solamente pueden reaccionar a los impactos de los cambios, quienes pueden prevenirlos, y aquellos tienen la habilidad para sobreponerse y/o modificar las condiciones estructurales que los vuelven vulnerables. Es sobre estas relaciones y mecanismos sobre los que es necesario poner atención para que la vulnerabilidad sea un enfoque capaz de reconocer y explicar situaciones diferenciales.

Implicaciones metodológicas

Las tres dimensiones básicas de la vulnerabilidad (exposiciones, sensibilidades y capacidad adaptativa) facilitan la operacionalización del concepto y dan pie a una cantidad de estudios cuantitativos afanosos por *medir* la vulnerabilidad a partir de índices e indicadores. Para ello, cuantifican las dimensiones del problema y plantean generalizaciones y relaciones de causalidad entre eventos y dimensiones (Pahl-Wostl et al. 2013). Esto resulta útil para la comparación entre ciudades, regiones o países, clasificando las unidades de análisis en categorías discretas (por ejemplo, zonas rojas, verdes o amarillas) o continuas, ya sean numéricas o de clase. Y aunque se reconoce la pérdida de información detallada, la popularidad de los indicadores reside en que aportan el tipo de información que los decisores

de políticas demandan, especialmente los organismos internacionales que financian la política del cambio climático. Los *rankings* de vulnerabilidad son claves para quien tiene que asignar recursos para solventar acciones de mitigación y adaptación.

Pero lo que para algunos resulta información valiosa, para otros es información desvirtuada, imprecisa. Por un lado, existen debilidades metodológicas propias de la construcción de datos. Por ejemplo, los indicadores utilizan datos creados para otros fines; la información disponible es a escalas agregadas (nacional, regional) o a escalas que no coinciden con las unidades de análisis pertinentes a algunos estudios de vulnerabilidad al cambio ambiental (es difícil que existan datos a nivel de cuencas), además de las limitaciones de acceso a los datos y de confiabilidad.

Pero el punto más crítico de las mediciones de vulnerabilidad es su incapacidad para dar cuenta de las dimensiones que desarrollamos en este artículo y creemos hacen de la vulnerabilidad un concepto potencialmente crítico: las mediaciones sociales y políticas, las particularidades de su espacialidad y su historicidad. Estas dimensiones de la vulnerabilidad no admiten análisis lineales y deberían ser abordadas mediante metodologías cualitativas. En el mismo sentido, los indicadores de vulnerabilidad tornan invisibles los procesos que importan a la justicia ambiental y que enunciamos en este artículo. Desentrañar estos procesos y pensar futuros cursos de acción implica considerar análisis cualitativos con potencia explicativa para revelar las dinámicas no lineales y complejas entre actores y recursos y que aporten información para pensar futuros cursos de acción. Desde una perspectiva que advierte los vaivenes de la justicia climática, las

debilidades de los estudios cuantitativos son mayores que sus bondades.

Develar causas profundas de problemas de cambio ambiental global

Las 5 dimensiones presentadas otorgan a los análisis de vulnerabilidad al cambio global potencia explicativa de las asimetrías y situaciones sociales diferenciales relevantes para la justicia climática y ambiental. Esa base conceptual es capaz de inspirar acciones adaptativas que buscan operar integralmente sobre los problemas socio-ecológicos del cambio ambiental global.

Pero no resulta una categoría fácil de utilizar o “cómoda”, ni en la academia ni en el plano de las intervenciones, porque expone variables sociales que visibilizan poderes hegemónicos y develan la inviabilidad de los sistemas económicos y políticos vigentes, sugiriendo que los objetivos de sustentabilidad sólo pueden ser alcanzados mediante cambios de fondo y radicales. Como se los conceptualiza aquí, los análisis de vulnerabilidad al cambio global ponen al descubierto la incapacidad de los sistemas económicos, políticos y sociales para ser socialmente justos o ambientalmente sustentables y llaman la atención sobre el *driver* fundamental de los problemas de cambio global: la economía capitalista dominante. Se trata de una mirada profunda, menos tecnocrática y más política, postulada desde la academia (Hinkelammert y Mora Jiménez 2005, entre otros) pero también materia de discusión pública. Como lo expresa *The Guardian* (Hickel 2016) en una reciente editorial respecto de las soluciones energéticas al cambio climático: “El movimiento climático cometió un enorme error. Centramos toda nuestra atención en los combustibles fósiles,

cuando deberíamos haber apuntado a algo mucho más profundo: la lógica básica de nuestro sistema económico”. Un concepto de vulnerabilidad en sintonía con los principios de la justicia ambiental expone esta situación, contribuyendo a focalizar en lo que verdaderamente está en juego.

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Watching Brazil but Missing the Story: An Amazonian Inferno

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As I write this essay, hundreds of millions worldwide have their TVs tuned to the Olympics’ opening while immense forested areas of the Brazilian Amazon are laid bare. August 2016 might be remembered by the Amazonian people as foreboding events that are now unfolding; an unprecedented dry season has begun: “It’s the driest we’ve observed in the last 15 years at the onset of the dry season” (Grossman 2016).

Global circulation models have predicted an increasing drying of the Amazon region that could be severe enough to compromise forest structure, resulting in dieback (Cox et al. 2004; Lapola and Norby 2014). Climate change in Amazonia will increase tree mortality, a biomass loss that leads to carbon emissions. Regardless of the uncertainties associated with these projections, Amazonia is expected to experience rainfall reduction, an increase of 4 to 6 degrees Celsius in temperature, and an altering hydrological regime with extreme droughts expected to occur more often, increasing human suffering and economic losses. Very little is discussed both in the media and scholarly literature about the socioeconomic impact of a possible Amazon dieback (Vergara and Scholz 2010). This lack of attention may be a result of the fact that climate change impacts in the Amazon are poorly explored, despite extreme drought (and floods) affecting the region, economy, and population in recent years.

Climate change in Amazonia must consider global circulation models; land use change, its forest impact, and responses to it; local, regional, and global CO₂ balance and emissions debates; and their importance for overall global climate stability. In that list a very important component is missing: humans and their institutions, economy, infrastructure, and livelihood, which over the past decade have been severely

impacted by extreme variability in the region.

The insistence on dehumanizing Amazonia has been reproduced over centuries by science and political elites both nationally and internationally. The accounts presented in this essay set the stage to claim that inasmuch as socioenvironmental justice movements have had a long story of struggle in Amazonia, climate anomalies are bringing another formidable challenge to its population.

The concept of justice shows the disconnection between causes and impacts associated with climate change. The traditional peoples of the Amazon, the overall majority, are among those who contribute the least to global warming yet suffer significantly from climate anomalies. Squeezed between large development impacts, the implementation of different categories of protected areas (which in some cases exclude some groups over others and impose strategies that might act against local cultural ideas), and, more recently, climate adversities, those living in Amazonia experience constant struggles and confrontations. In fact, they are among the poorest and most remote in Brazilian society (Pinho et al. 2014, Pinho, Marengo, and Smith 2015).

In this essay I present some evidence as to whether there is a real increase in the potential for an Amazonia dieback because of climate change, investigating what scientists are saying on the topic. I provide evidence of socioeconomic impact using the extreme droughts of 2005, 2010, and 2016 as proxy for climate anomalies. This evidence will show the closely linked phenomena of climate change and socioenvironmental justice as the population’s ability to cope with these events in the near future is severely

compromised. It can be seen, not only in the North and the global South but in developed versus developing nations and within national domains, that impacts of climate anomalies are unevenly distributed, and disadvantaged communities bear (or fail to bear) the costs of massive global, national, and local environmental transformation. I show how scientific studies, regardless of their tremendous importance, have contributed to the idea that Amazonia is only a forested area and important in the climate change context for its ability to provide carbon sink for global benefit. The policy domain has also ignored the social experience that exists in Amazonia, thus limiting action responses from government to support local needs in times of climate adversities.

Amazon Forest: From Green to Brown by 2100?

A synthesis of the literature shows a level of uncertainty about the Amazon's future in the context of climate change. Results of global circulation models have predicted an increased precipitation level for the Amazon, while other studies suggest a drying scenario (Marengo et al. 2010). Among the most accepted results are models suggesting that rainfall reduction in Amazonia might be so severe that forest structure and dynamics are compromised. In that model, a forest dieback scenario takes place. The uncertainties are associated with land use changes such as deforestation, biomass burning, and forest fragmentation, which affect local and regional climates. These may compound the effects of global climate change on the stability of the Amazonian rain forest, accelerating dieback as it provides feedback for higher temperatures and lower humidity (Nobre, Sellers, and Shukla 1991). Recent global circulation

models suggest that the area affected by mild and severe drought will nearly triple by 2100, and the continued emissions of greenhouse gases will increase extreme events and degrade Amazonian forests (Duff et al. 2015). In fact, it is difficult to define what constitutes a catastrophic change in drought frequency and intensity for the stability of Amazonian forests, as well as in the socioeconomic effects on the population.

In any case, climatic feedback associated with an Amazon dieback suggests that the widely understood role of the Amazonia forest as the "world's lungs" would be compromised. During the extreme droughts of 2005, 2010, and 2016, both international and national media sources broadcast numerous reports about the droughts' effects on Amazonia in terms of the forest's planetary role and its carbon release into the atmosphere. As a prominent scientist stated: "Without this 'carbon sink' the world's ability to lock up carbon will be reduced, compounding the effects of global warming."¹ The social impact of these droughts are only mentioned in the context of accelerated land use change, specifically, the incidence of fire outbreaks promoted by local farmers' need to clear the land for crop plantation. "Almost all fires in the Amazon are started by landowners clearing fields and forests for cultivation and livestock" (Tollefson 2016). These views portray social factors as responsible for impacts on the forest, but still the forest is largely described as "free" from human pressure: "While the Amazon is bisected in parts by navigable waterways and roads, and is increasingly encroached by settlements and industrial agriculture much of the Amazon is still free of human pressures" (Venter et al. 2016).

If Amazonian forest is severely impacted by climate change, the implication is

that carbon sequestration is threatened, resulting in impacts beyond national borders. "The loss of biodiversity in the world's largest rainforest justifies serious concern. But even more is at stake, as the Amazon holds a staggering stockpile of carbon sequestered in tree trunks and soil" (Grossman 2016). The views are deceptive in that they portray Amazonia as an intact system, passively susceptible to accelerated pressures from land use change and recent policy changes. In fact, from a climate change perspective, it suggests a lack of human agency in Amazonia. I argue that these representations of Amazonia are limited, and when they acquire a grand narrative status within discourse, as Isabelle Stengers suggests, they can have dire results for human understanding (Davis and Turpin 2013). In the next section I show how society has been impacted by climate change on a daily basis.

Social Reverberations: Impact of Extreme Droughts in 2005, 2010, and 2016

During the years of extreme drought, scholarly and media coverage both portray Amazonia's social domain as only a destructive force. However, evidence shows that deforested areas are dominated by larger properties (greater than 500 hectares) with only a small percentage from smallholder's properties, which represent a greater proportion of people (Godar et al. 2014). Of around 30 million people living in the region, 29 percent of the population is indigenous, but there is also a rich diversity of other ethnic groups, including Afro-Brazilian communities, traditional inhabitants, and migrants from other regions of the country. Income-based poverty in Amazonia affects up to 42 percent of the population, whereas for the entire country it is 28 percent. The livelihoods of the poor residing in these

areas are highly dependent on and sensitive to changes in the provision of resources by the prevailing ecosystem, closely tuned to the hydrological cycle. The flow of the river dictates ecological patterns, human settlements, land tenure, productive systems (economy), and social organization in Amazonia, and it is central for food access and production.

Some of the severe impacts suffered by most of Amazonia's population during extreme droughts can be summarized as both environmental disruptions and disruptions in the provisions of services and infrastructure. As part of the negative feedback loop associated with extreme droughts, with river transportation interrupted, local communities could not get access to market products that otherwise would support their needs in times of adversity. Additionally, the market prices for staple crops such as manioc severely increased and were not affordable by most of the riverine population even when they could be reached. There was an increase in mortality of fish due to the low water (and dissolved oxygen) levels, and increased competition among fishermen as they anticipated a collapse given the low water; thus collective action to safeguard endangered fish species was compromised (Pinho and Orlove 2010). As an effect, fisheries' productivity will be compromised in the next dry season of the hydrological year. An impact on health is associated with an increase in fire incidents, namely respiratory diseases, especially in small children and the elderly, and incidences of diarrhea as a result of contaminated water (Smith et al. 2013). Small-scale agriculture is severely compromised, as it is difficult and or impossible to cultivate staple foods. Resource extraction (forestry, National Forest Programme or NFP, and others) also suffers a decline in productivity and impediments to transportation of the

products with low water levels. Energy availability is interrupted given the lack of fuel that is delivered by the river to most of the municipalities. It is true that the acclaimed social program for poverty reduction in Brazil, which has the largest direct cash transfer scheme in Latin America, has certainly contributed to local livelihoods in Amazonia; but it does not act as a buffer given the reasons pointed out, such as lack of physical access to markets. These facts support the idea that strategies designed for the northeast that acted as a buffer, reducing climate impacts on vulnerable populations (Eakin, Lemos, and Nelson 2014), do not translate well to Amazonia under climate adversities and risks.

No official estimates exist of the costs associated with these droughts for most of the Amazon region. In 2005, Acre registered smoke pollution that affected more than 400,000 people, and fire damaged more than 300,000 hectares of forest, with direct costs of more than US\$50 million (Brown et al. 2006). In 2010, there was slightly more data available, with 40 out of 62 municipalities of the state of Amazonas declaring a state of emergency; the government released US\$12 million for relief to support impacted communities. The majority of the people impacted by the 2010 drought that were interviewed revealed that they had no knowledge of support from the government (see Pinho, Marengo, and Smith 2015). The year 2016 will be also remembered as another dramatic drought: "In Manaus, more than 40% of the food supply depends exclusively on the river transportation. Food that would be delivered in four days is taking twice the amount of time given the low water levels—as a result, it is getting more expensive" (*Folha de S. Paulo* 2016). In the capital of Acre, Rio Branco, due to the low water level, the

government has implemented rationing of water. Throughout the basin, passenger boat trips were canceled, leading to physical isolation. Authorities anticipate a shortage in fuel delivered to major urban centers in the states of Amazonas, Acre, and Rondônia. Community leaders of the state of Amazonas say the population hasn't seen a drought like this in 30 years, and many are "praying" that government does not forget about them again, as food and water insecurity are scaling up (Souza 2016). In the context of a historical absence of governance in the region, local responses during severe droughts has increased migration to urban areas, as migrants hope municipalities will be safer in terms of climate anomalies. However, migrants' vulnerability actually tends to increase in cities, as access to food, jobs, markets, education, and health are still precarious. Additionally, migrants occupy urban margins, as in the case of Manaus, where human problems such as lack of clean drinking water, contamination, waste accumulation, crimes, and violence are on the rise.

On the topic of climate change governance for Amazonia, policy responses are still very limited in preparing society for these impacts. Civil defense is charged with giving technical and financial support, evaluating and reducing risks, and being ready for actions to reduce human suffering. The reality is a lack of individual and municipal capacity and of coordination among higher levels, delaying actions during extreme droughts. The relief support delivered in times of adversity in most cases doesn't get to the impacted communities (given interrupted access). In other instances, relief is used as currency for political campaigns during elections. Moreover, governmental bodies tend to dismiss the critical abnormal drought, attributing the need for more robust

measures of the hydrological regime for action.² At the same time, civil defense executive directors are “worried about communities’ well-being given the shortage and interrupted access to food supply” (Souza 2016). In Acre, regarding the low visibility of the impact of the extreme droughts on populations and the absence of authorities’ responses, sources claim, “People are deaf when we talk about rivers in Amazonia. Our kids will go thirsty if no action is taken” (*AcreNews* 2016).

Connecting the Dots: Seeing the Amazon but Missing the Story

Given this evidence, I argue that the narratives of Amazonia as a pristine environment relatively free from human pressure have acted against a more robust strategy to improve socioeconomic conditions in the region. In times of climate adversity, the dieback hypothesis has been shown to reverberate, impacting both forest and the socioeconomic domain given the consecutive extreme droughts.

However, as long as these narratives fail to conceive of Amazonia as a social landscape, they will fail to capture daily struggles and the detrimental importance of the population to forest stewardship. Such conspicuous disparities between the tremendous natural capital and widespread social hardship has already been described a long time ago, “so striking was the mixture of natural riches and human poverty.”³ As with environmental justice movements elsewhere, environmentalism in Latin America takes shape in the arenas most directly salient to people’s lives and livelihoods. Environmental resistance weaves into existing struggles for social justice because people face environmental threats in every corner of their daily lives. Climate change has already been more

salient in other regions of Latin America, such as glacier retreat in the Andes (Gagné, Rasmussen, and Orlove 2014). Perceiving the Amazonian region as suffering from climate change is relatively new, to the point that hydrological anomalies are still not completely linked to climate change by the prestigious national science community. “With three events in a hundred years it is difficult to do statistics” (Paulo Artaxo, interview for *Folha de S. Paulo*, 2016). In contrast to the novelty of the climate change concept for the Amazon and of attempts to prove the dieback hypothesis, it seems that social struggles in the area have persisted throughout the years.

What Would a Projected Increase of 4–6 Degrees Celsius Mean for the Amazon?

Future projections and scenarios for the Amazonian dieback confirm that it is likely that extreme drought events will be more frequent and severe (IPCC 2014). Socioecological systems will have to adapt. But what does adaptation mean for the human population in Amazonia? It means to continue to strive for better living conditions at the murky intersection of development, ecosystem protection agendas, and climate change, where residents are still perceived as outsiders. Thus, ethical issues and challenges connected to climate change come to the fore. Justice includes broad considerations of human well-being, not limited to health, safety, access to material resources, satisfactory social and kin relationships, aspirations and opportunity, fairness, and sense of purpose in life. All these are absent in the region, growing as preexisting vulnerabilities outside climate change. Consecutive years of social hardship as a consequence of extreme droughts have shown the limits of cultural practices among the Amazonian population (Pinho,

Marengo, and Smith 2015). The extent to which these people can resist future climate adversities will depend on the strategies designed to support them in facing climate risks. Certainly it could be achieved with the active engagement of the scientific community, policy makers, and communities at different scales of governance. Nonetheless, it seems important now to step back and conceive of Amazonia as a social domain, regardless of our tendency to dehumanize it.

Notes

- ¹ T. Patterson, quoted in “Amazon: Lungs of the Planet,” BBC Future, November 18, 2014.
- ² “There is nothing abnormal about this drought. We are in the onset of the water level reduction, and we cannot confirm which phenomena are taking place, we need to continue to follow the daily measurements” (chief of Hydrological Service of Manaus, in Souza 2016).
- ³ Bates and Wallace, naturalist (1848), in Slater 2003, 116.

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“The Social Vindication of the Highlands”: Climate Change and Justice in Southern Peru

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We send water and send water, and the [people on the] coast do not even worry whether the water is drying up in these parts, whether there are no trees or whether there are filtrations, or whether a mining company comes in. [. . .] The poorest areas of the Peruvian Andes are those that provide water to the coast.

(Mayor of Caylloma province, interview, October 12, 2011)

Earlier the seasons were respected [by the rain], but the climate has changed and it affects the agriculture. The earth has transformed too much.

(Farmer and market vendor in Chivay, interview, November 13, 2013)

If we don't get the project through, we will make a water war.

(Activist from Callalli, interview, February 2, 2014)

Along with the rest of the global South, most Peruvians contribute very little of the world's carbon dioxide emissions: Peru was number 133 in the Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center (CDIAC)'s 2011 ranking of the world's countries per capita fossil fuel CO₂ emission rates.¹ Yet global warming produces changes in temperature, precipitation, seasonality, glacier retreat, and water supply. These changes have adverse effects on the livelihood of small-scale farmers in the Colca Valley and especially in the highlands of Caylloma Province in the Arequipa region of southern Peru. The farmers perceive the effects of global climate change as the loss of stability—changes in the known seasonal cycle of rain, frost, heat,

and drought. The greatest concern is the ever-decreasing water supply due to melting glaciers, drying springs, and irregular rainfall. The impact of climate change is unevenly distributed, both geographically and socially, and in the Andes, it adds to existing challenges of living in poverty and in a harsh mountain environment. While peasant farmers suffer from drought in the headwaters at more than four thousand meters of altitude, water is dammed in the Condorama Reservoir and directed into the Majes Canal and down to the irrigation project in the flat, arid lands of Majes. Some water is also transferred to the Quilca-Chili watershed, which provides water to Arequipa City, hydropower stations, and the Cerro Verde copper mine. This unequal distribution of water shows how the Peruvian state gives priority to large-scale export-oriented agriculture, mining, and energy production over small-scale farming.

Water management has become politically significant during the past decade because of climate change, urban population growth, the mining boom, and the increasing numbers of socioenvironmental conflicts related to water. As a response, the National Water Authority in Peru is introducing stricter control with permit systems. In 2009, the government passed a new law on water resources inspired by the global paradigm of integrated water resources management, which emphasizes that water has economic value. In addition to tariffs for irrigation water, farmers have to register and pay for the right to use a certain amount of water measured by litres per second (Paerregaard, Stensrud, and Anderson 2016). Seeing that the authorities prioritize the economic value of water, and that this water is transferred down to the urban and industrialized coastal lowlands while the highlands continue with poverty and environmental disasters, people in

the highlands perceive this as structural injustice (see also Stensrud 2016).

My argument in this article is threefold. First of all, I suggest that climate justice is not only about relations between the global North and the South, but that a range of actors in developing countries—for example extractive industries like agribusiness and mining companies (Bebbington 2015; Li 2015)—should be accounted for in questions of justice across local, regional, and global scales. Second, I argue that environmental inequality and injustice result from multiple structural practices: people living in the climate-sensitive areas in the Peruvian highlands are simultaneously suffering from poverty, discrimination, and the consequences of climate change, and measures of adaptation inspired by neoliberal ideas about payments for user rights to water are also imposed on them. Third, I suggest that new forms of political claims that are based on ideas of ownership, reciprocity, distributive justice, and non-anthropocentric natures are emerging and should be included in discussions about environmental and climate justice.²

Climate Change and Economic Development in Colca and Majes

“The world is upside-down,” Miriam said when she was telling me about how the seasons had changed: this year it rained in the dry season, and the frost continued into what was supposed to be the rainy season. It was November 2013 and all the farmers in Colca Valley were waiting for the rain. Like most of these farmers, she and her husband, Pedro, perceive the effects of climate change in terms of seasonal instability, belated rains, longer drought periods, melting glaciers, decreasing water supply, sudden frosts that come

at unexpected times, and more extreme shifts in temperature: “the sun seems to be closer to the earth.” Pedro complained that they must irrigate more often because the heat makes the earth dryer than usual. In 2011, Victor from Callalli told me that the glaciers and snowfields that could be seen on the mountaintops ten years earlier had disappeared: “When there used to be snow, there were water cushions [*colchones de agua*] where each mountain deposited water. So the springs were maintained all year. Today there are no snowfields, and thus there are no water cushions deposited under the mountains.”

It is getting increasingly harder to earn a living as farmers because “it is not profitable” due to climatic uncertainties and insecure product prices. Small-scale agriculture is still the main economic activity in Colca Valley, but there has been a transition from subsistence farming to market production of potatoes, quinoa, beans, barley, and maize. “We used to cultivate to consume, but now everything is money,” Miriam said. Like many others, Miriam and her husband had to find alternative income strategies in addition to farming. Miriam made embroidered clothes to sell at the market, and Pedro found odd jobs for the municipality and others.

Upriver in the headwaters above four thousand meters of altitude, the situation is even worse. The highland inhabitants are among the poorest in the region as they are struggling to make a living on alpaca pastoralism in the extremely climate-sensitive highland environment. Glaciers have disappeared, springs and pastures are dry, the rain is more irregular, and when it finally comes, it falls so hard that it erodes the soil. The incidents of strong frost periods and heavy snowfall are more common than before and harder to anticipate. The local authorities of

Caylloma Province have declared states of emergency several times since 2011, after large quantities of crops have been ruined and thousands of animals killed by extreme weather events. In April 2014 a group of mayors from the highland districts travelled to the capital, Lima, to present their complaints and demands to the government: financial compensation, insurance for camelids, and agrarian insurance. However, they were bought off with Band-Aid measures like medicines for the alpacas in the highlands and two kilos of seeds to each farmer in the valley. Responses like these only exacerbate a pervasive yet ambivalent feeling of abandonment, which is a common idiom by which relations between Andean communities and the Peruvian state are described (Rasmussen 2015). Many families see no other choice than to move away, and many end up in Majes, which is seen as a place of opportunities where everyone could get a piece of the “progress” and “modernity” that the government envisions for this place.

Starting in the 1970s, the Majes Irrigation was a state project for colonizing and cultivating the desert lowlands. The goal was to create export-oriented agriculture and agro-industry that would generate economic growth and development for the southern region of Peru. Farmers were given the opportunity to buy land in family units of five hectares at subsidized prices, and they received technical and financial support from international agencies, like the European Economic Community, to transform the desert into fertile land. Today, Majes is bustling with economic activity and the population has rapidly grown. However, because of the frequent absences of rain in the Colca headwaters in the past few years, the water levels in the Condoroma Dam had sunk to 60 percent of its maximum capacity in

2014. In January 2016, an Emergency Coordination Committee was established in Majes because of the drought-related risks, and the discharge from Condoroma was reduced from 9.5 cubic meters per second to 6 cubic meters per second from February. The farmers were encouraged to use the water more efficiently, but they also needed to reduce their areas of cultivation.

Still, in the upcoming second phase of the irrigation project Majes-Siguas II, the private Consortium Angostura Siguas, made up of Cobra Instalaciones y Servicios S.A. (Spain) and Cosapi S.A. (Peru), has been awarded the concession to build the Angostura Dam, which will have a capacity of 1,140 million cubic meters (MMC) at 4,220 meters of altitude. The amount of water running through the Majes Canal will be doubled and enable the construction of two hydropower stations, in addition to the irrigation of 38,500 hectares of land in the arid pampa of Siguas, next to the already irrigated pampa of Majes. This land will be sold in units of two hundred, five hundred, and one thousand hectares, which means that big agribusiness will dominate. The consortium will administer the infrastructure for 20 years, and the small and middle-sized farmers fear increased water tariffs. “We call this privatization,” a farmer told me. No matter how strongly the government argues that the water is still public property according to the law, the farmers know that the operator that administers the infrastructure also controls the water flow.

The Value of Water: Struggling for Compensation and Justice

The project was delayed for several years because communities in Espinar, a highland province in the neighboring Cusco region, contended that the Angostura Dam

would take water from the headwaters of Apurímac River and thus leave them without water. Their struggle has recently inspired people in Callalli, the district where the Condoroma Dam is located, to initiate a collective claim for land rights in Majes. They claim this right because they have not received any benefits from the dam, and they will no longer silently accept that agribusiness companies make profit on the water from their territory while they suffer from drought. A group of three hundred families have organized and aim to obtain the legal property rights to four hundred hectares of land and to get infrastructure and water to irrigate and produce on this land. Their goal is to grow fodder and other crops with the water that comes from their home district. If their project is not accepted, they are willing to start what they call “a water war.” The leader of the group, Victor, expressed a profound feeling of structural injustice because of the uneven distribution of climate vulnerability, economic opportunities, and access to water, agricultural land and markets between the headwaters and the Majes Project:

This is the social vindication of the highlands. The Majes Project I was a project for integration of the high part, the middle part, and the lower part [of the basin]. The project has broken this principle. . . . The high part has absolutely been abandoned from the project. . . . Therefore we as proprietors of the water, as owners of the water, owners of the earth, owners as *arequipeños* and as *cayllominos*—who we are because these lands belong to Caylloma—we have taken this democratic and legal option in order to be able to take on this project with the regional government. . . . We have not come to beg for charity from anyone; on

the contrary, we come to contribute; we want to invest here.

(Victor, interview, February 2, 2014)

Victor and the rest of the group from Callalli claim the right to own land, work, and invest in Majes because the irrigation project exists thanks to the water from Callalli. This claim is based on a sense of ownership toward the water emerging from their local springs. This water is seen as being owned by the mountains and given to them by the mountain lords (Apus). The world of the farmers and pastoralists in Caylloma is a relational world in which all human and other-than-human entities are interdependent. Water belongs to the Apus and the territories of which the Apus are guardians.

These relations of ownership to water have also in recent years been articulated in political claims for financial compensation. The water resources law, which is partly legitimized by climate change, stresses the significance of water as resource and value, especially for economic development. The law also aims to foster a new “water culture,” embedded in ideas of modernity, efficiency, and productivity, and which is connected to the payment of licences to water use rights (Paerregaard, Stensrud, and Andersen 2016). The promotion of the new “water culture” is part of the Water Resources Management Modernization program that has been financed by the World Bank.³ Referring to the principle of economic value, the mayor of Caylloma Province in the period 2011–2014 said that water is their wealth: “When the world gives value to the water, we can say that our water costs [money].” Hence, district mayors and leaders of water user committees in Caylloma Province have started to organize in order to demand financial compensation from companies

that make money on water that is born in the highlands: the Cerro Verde copper mine, the electric company EGASA, and agribusiness companies in the Majes Irrigation Project. They base their claim on the principle of valuation of water as formulated in the water resources law, but also in the principle of reciprocity that is practiced in the Andes, as explained by the mayor of the province in an interview in 2011: “I give you water, so you should give me something back. . . . They should pay us, and we will make schools and restore agricultural terraces and build dams. But the idea is that we sow water with a large percentage of that money. We will sow, for example, native plants around the water sources. In other words, this is all work to preserve and harvest the water.” With the money they will preserve the headwater environment, which consists of a particular kind of wetlands (*bofedales*) that serve as pastures for alpacas. Projects of tree planting and building microdams are called “sowing and harvesting of water.” The microdams replace the glaciers that have disappeared; they collect water when the heavy rains come in short periods, protecting the soil against erosion and enabling a more even distribution of water throughout the year (see also Stensrud 2016).

The claim for compensation for water echoes the environmental justice movements, in Latin America also called environmentalism of the poor (*ecologismo de los pobres*), which address conflicts about unequal access to nature’s services and resources, connecting economic and ecological distribution to political power (Martínez Alier 1992). The struggle for environmental justice in Peru is mainly directed against multinational mining companies (Chacón 2003). When water scarcity is caused by global warming, however, there is no local industry that can

be held directly responsible. Instead, claims for justice are addressed to the industries that make profit from water which has become a scarce resource.

Conclusion

In Peru, the urgency of climate change has grown massively the past decade and has become a matter of great concern among both governmental institutions and NGOs, and not least among the peasant farmers who are most severely affected by them. However, there are no projects concerning environmental vulnerability that seriously address the problems of structural inequality. The programs for development and modernization of water resources management in Peru are often justified by climate change, yet mostly focus on individual user rights and payments rather than the complexities of local systems for water governance, poverty, and inequity.⁴ This pattern is confirmed by dominant political arenas and media, where concerns with efficiency and growth overshadow debates on inequality and justice. An important question is whether making the peasant farmers pay for water is a solution for water scarcity and climate change.

Local initiatives of adaptation, on the other hand, can be articulated with ideas related to, or similar to, environmentalism of the poor and climate justice. When leaders of local organizations in highland Caylloma claim compensation for the water that is born in their territories and used downstream for value extraction, they address the unequal relations to the powerful others in the watershed. These demands also emerge from relational worlds where all entities are mutually connected, and can thus be seen as allied to a new kind of politics, identified as “pluriversal politics,” which is a politics

that would allow for disagreements on the definition of nature itself, and accept nature as multiplicity (De la Cadena 2010). When the highlanders adeptly appropriate the developmentalist, market-oriented way of arguing, while embedding the argument in the interrelations of earth, mountains, water, and people, multiple worlds emerge as interlinked and overlapping in new and creative ways. Hence, I argue that responses to the climate crisis must be embedded in a systemic critique with a view to justice. Furthermore, I suggest that alternative forms of environmental governance should be taken seriously in approaches to environmental justice by acknowledging that all entities and beings in the world, both human and nonhuman, are intrinsically connected and mutually dependent.

Notes

- ¹ Peru had 0.49 metric tons of carbon per capita in 2011, according to the CDIAC: <http://cdiac.ornl.gov/trends/emis/top2011.cap>.
- ² The ethnographic data referred to in this article was generated during two long-term fieldwork sessions (March–October 2011 and November 2013–April 2014) in Chivay and other villages along the Camaná-Majes-Colca watershed.
- ³ World Bank, Peru, 2016: Water Resources Management Modernization, Implementation Completion and Results Report (IBRD-77010), <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/912691467955228834/pdf/ICR3535-P107666-Box396273B-PUBLIC-disclosed-7-6-16.pdf> (accessed September 2, 2016).
- ⁴ In June 2014, Peru passed the Payments for Ecosystem Services Law (Ley de Mecanismos de Retribución Ecosistémico), and the regulations of the law were approved in July 2016. It remains to be seen what the practical implications of the law will be in Caylloma Province and the rest of Peru.

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On the Brink of Survival: The Climate Justice Movement in the Morales Era

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As part of a general leftward political turn in Latin America in the twenty-first century, Bolivia elected social democratic president Evo Morales in 2005. A former leader of the coca grower's union, Morales was seen by many early on in his presidency as advancing a social movement agenda. He sought to advance the interests of the majority indigenous peoples and trade unionists, for example, by opening up space for their participation in government. The Bolivian Platform against Climate Change, which formed in the early years of his presidency, is a civil society coalition designed to address the unjust effects of global warming. The Platform worked in creative tension with the Morales administration to demand better environmental protection within Bolivia and to put pressure on the major carbon emitters of the global North to take responsibility for their actions. This collaboration has led to strong and visible Bolivian leadership on the global stage, pushing climate change negotiators to acknowledge the rights of Mother Earth, and the climate debt owed by more powerful to less powerful nations. Recently, however, there has been a major break in this relationship due to concerns on the part of environmental activists that the Morales administration is violating its own alternative vision of sustainable development.

In this article, we explore Bolivia's role in global climate change negotiations. Morales, alongside Platform for Climate Change actors, played a critical role in focusing global conversation on the structural and systemic problems of hypercapitalism in industrialized nation states and holding them accountable for CO₂ emissions. Closer to home, the Morales administration has struggled to maintain an anticapitalist stance in its economic and social practices. Much of

the "redistributive agenda of Morales" lies upon extractive industries, which wreak havoc upon the natural environmental and have social, economic, and labor consequences for majority indigenous and rural communities. We examine some of the conflicts between members of the Morales administration and members of the climate justice movement in Bolivia based on the competing demands of mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, and efforts to push for a more ecologically sustainable development model to improve the welfare of marginalized communities. This is an important question for environmental activists throughout the global South as the world works toward finalizing a climate change agreement with no binding targets.

Global Context of Climate Change

Since the end of the Kyoto Protocol in 2012, the international community has been working slowly and painfully toward a new deal to avert the worst effects of human-induced climate change. These negotiations culminated in the Paris Agreement in the spring of 2016, which will take force only after it is ratified by at least 55 nations, collectively responsible for at least 55 percent of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). As of September 2016, both the United States and China have committed to the agreement. Social movement actors and environmentalists have been mixed on the value of the agreement, with some relieved that the need for action is finally being formally acknowledged. The agreement calls for limiting the rise in global temperature to no more than 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and expresses the desirability of aiming for 1.5 degrees. It calls on all nations to develop and regularly submit plans on how they will contribute to these efforts.

Globally, critics of the plan point out a number of potential weaknesses. The main issue for many is the vague and voluntary nature of the agreement. While the text acknowledges differentiated responsibility and capability, sustainable development, and climate justice, all concepts pushed by countries in the global South, their implementation is left open to interpretation (Robins 2016). The text makes no real mention of which countries and industries are responsible for GHG emissions and contains no legally binding targets and timelines (Morgan 2016). Further, many acknowledge that the agreement and Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) thus far submitted are insufficient for achieving the stated aims (Cléménçon 2016). Hope seems to rest on the willingness of nations to develop more ambitious targets over time, and on appeals to technological solutions that remain largely unspecified (Morgan 2016).

Representatives of Bolivia, a signatory to the Paris Agreement, have been aggressive in pushing nations in North America and Europe to recognize their responsibility for climate change and their "climate debt" to the global South. In advance of the negotiations in Paris, Evo Morales convened a second World Peoples Conference on Climate Change and the Defense of Life to discuss approaches to climate change that recognize indigenous rights and knowledge and the rights of Mother Earth, and address climate justice. The Morales administration has consistently maintained an overtly anticapitalist position. When Morales was elected in 2005, he had a two-pronged national strategy to undo the long history of neoliberal reforms by nationalizing key industries like oil and gas, and to incorporate native peoples into the new state through the rewriting of the

constitution. His administration has taken advantage of key natural resources (oil, gas, soy, minerals), in what Linda Farthing and Benjamin Kohl (2014) have called a form of “progressive extractivism,” in order to redistribute some portion of the revenue to disadvantaged populations and create a social welfare system. While Bolivia contributes minimally to GHG emissions compared to hyperindustrialized nation-states largely dependent upon nonrenewable fossil fuels, its economic policy heavily depends upon natural resource extraction, which has social and environmental consequences.

Bolivia’s Climate Change Priorities

When climate negotiations in Copenhagen failed to produce a binding agreement that could protect nations like Bolivia from radical environmental changes,¹ Morales led a stinging denunciation of the entire process. He declared, “We come from the culture of life, whereas the Western model represents the culture of death. At these summits, we have to define whether we are on the side of life or on the side of death” (Aguirre and Cooper 2010, 1). It was in response to the failure in Copenhagen to reach this binding international agreement that Morales convened the first World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth in April 2010, in which 30,000 activists, including labor organizers and NGO representatives, came together in Tiquipaya, Cochabamba, to propose an alternative legal framework drawing on indigenous knowledge and values.

The Platform for Climate Change, or La Plataforma—a loose organization comprised of international NGOs such as Oxfam International, Christian Aid (a British relief and development agency),

CAFOD (a British development agency), along with rural Bolivian social movements like CONAMAQ (National Council of Ayllus and Markas of the Qullasuyu), the Bartolina Sisa Movement (rural peasant women’s movement), CIDOB (Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia), CSUTCB (Unified Syndical Confederation of Rural Workers), and CPESC (Regional Federation of Indigenous Peoples of Santa Cruz)—were critical actors at the climate summit and helped draft the People’s Accord. They also helped organize the first Tribunal Internacional de Justicia Climática (International Tribunal on Climate Justice) in Cochabamba in 2009, and have worked on issues of adaptation to climate change within Bolivia. La Plataforma proposed seven critical development goals leading up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, known as Rio+20. The official discussion at Rio+20 focused on building a green economy to achieve sustainable development. From this perspective, the solution to the current ecological crisis is in large part tied to “green economics,” or the idea that economic policies should build environmental costs into the price of products and services. This outlook is also evident in the Paris Agreement. La Plataforma took a critical stance on the green economy, once again using indigenous worldviews and the People’s Accord to challenge market-based approaches: “Putting a price on nature is not a solution and will only benefit big capital” (Global Alliance 2012).

After Rio+20, according to Martin Vilela (former director of Aguas Sostentable and member of La Plataforma) and other active members of La Plataforma, climate justice activists have become increasingly uncomfortable with the contradictions between the rhetoric

of the Morales administration and its economic policy. Vilela argues that “it became ever more obvious post-TIPNIS² that Evo Morales’ party Movimiento al Socialismo (Movement toward Socialism) (MAS) was going to put everything up for sale. . . . Everything we had worked so hard for would be undermined by the overarching economic agenda of the administration.” In 2013, the government unveiled its new national development plan called La Agenda Patriótica 2025 (the Patriotic Agenda for 2025). In it, the government describes how it hopes to make Bolivia a “sovereign and dignified” country. Mining and hydrocarbons will continue to figure largely in the picture, but Bolivia will also develop new, important sources of income. First, it will become a major exporter of energy, drawing on its hydroelectric potential as well as its renewable energy capacities. Conversations have already begun about building a mega-dam similar to those in Chile. Second, it will become a producer and exporter of food products, converting its artisanal farming processes into mechanized, irrigated, and technologically advanced systems. This is part of a larger push toward food sovereignty aimed, on one hand, at ensuring food security among Bolivians, but on the other hand, at massively industrializing food, forest products, and biodiversity resources. He explains that it was in the aftermath of the TIPNIS controversy and the unveiling of this development plan that some members of La Plataforma split from Morales and from the international NGOs; some members formed international coalitions with Climate Justice Action, a network of international (mainly European) grassroots movements fighting for global climate justice. The intent was to link grassroots efforts in order to have a more powerful international presence. Other large NGOs like Oxfam

International remained aligned with the MAS government. Morales's economic policy does not necessarily contradict the Paris Agreement, as the agreement recognizes that developing countries will take longer to limit their growth in carbon emissions in order to achieve development goals. Bolivia's INDC begins with the argument that the commitment of developing countries to their targets will depend on aggressive action from more powerful nations, and that in the shorter term, economic development will take priority (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia 2015). It also credits climate change to the global capitalist system and a drive toward unlimited growth, and proposes an alternative model. It argues, "the capitalist system seeks profit without limits, strengthens the divorce between human beings and nature; establishing a logic of domination of men against nature and among human beings" (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia 2015). Thus, "Bolivia presents its intended contribution consistent with its vision of holistic development of the Rights of Mother Earth and Integral Development to Live Well. . . . Bolivia understands Living Well as the civilizational and cultural horizon alternative to capitalism, linked to a holistic and comprehensive vision that prioritizes the scope of holistic development in harmony with nature and as a structural solution to the global climate crisis" (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia 2015). It puts forward a Climate Justice Index to determine each nation's share of emissions budgets, recognizing historic responsibility for GHG emissions, and colonial and neocolonial exploitation. It proposes that non-Annex 1 countries (those least responsible for historic carbon emissions) retain 89 percent of future carbon emissions, and Annex 1 countries 11 percent.

Growing Tensions between Morales and La Plataforma

Critics (some from within La Plataforma) have pointed out that these development plans have dangerous implications for the environment and are inconsistent with this anticapitalist rhetoric. For example, in 2014, Morales declared that by 2025, the country should increase hectares of production from the current level of 3.5 million hectares to 10 million. To accomplish this, the government has recently agreed to allow people to deforest up to 20 hectares without any permission from the Forest Ministry, as long as they use the land to produce food. This represents a radical departure from previous regulations and promises a rapid deforestation of fragile Amazonian lands. This past summer (2016) when talking to lowland social movement activists like former Landless Peasant (MST-B, El Movimiento Sin Tierra) leaders, they explained this development plan as one of the great *fracasos* (failures) of this government. Silvestre Saisairi (former leader of MST-Santa Cruz) describes it as an ecological disaster waiting to happen. Some think that the combination of deforestation and the expansion of monocultures are key drivers of the drought this year. Even the big agro-industries are suffering because animals (particularly cattle) are dying from lack of water in the lowlands. Saisairi, along with others, argue that much of the "food sovereignty" plans (expansion of small-scale agriculture for peasant family consumption) of the government have been undermined by proposals to continue to deforest large parts of the Amazon and expand monocultures like soy. Places like Santa Cruz (the agro-industrial capital of Bolivia) are referred to as the epicenter of export-oriented soy production (Fabricant and Gustafson 2016). Large-

scale genetically modified soy production is wreaking havoc environmentally, on soils, waterways, and even food sovereignty.

Alongside soy expansion lie governmental plans for more oil and gas exploration, which will include more deforestation, opening up remote rural areas, making it easier to slash and burn, and polluting water basins and drinking water. As anthropologist Bret Gustafson (Fabricant and Gustafson 2016) documents, rural communities in the Chaco region bear the burden of gas extraction: rivers and streams are now tapped by industry to provide water for drilling as toxic waste increases. There is even talk of possible fracking, which will continue to exacerbate environmental inequities for rural and indigenous communities. The possibility of reconstructing the climate justice movement is challenging in a place like Bolivia today.

An Uncertain Future for Bolivia

Where does this leave us in terms of thinking about radical social movements in Bolivia, particularly a climate change or climate justice movement? Martin Vilela, former member of La Plataforma, argues that "we must rearticulate a movement that has the capacity to understand complex systemic relations, the structural causes of the climatic crisis and the limitations of the governing structure of the UN. This would be a movement capable of confronting the powerful states and businesses [fossil fuel industries], but a movement that could put into effect an alternative practice of solidarity and complementarity" (Skype interview by Nicole Fabricant, March 2016). He argues for the importance of building a climate movement more independent from the nation-state and capable of confronting the internal

inconsistencies of the MAS development strategy. Finally, he supports a strategy that brings together distinct political ideologies in order to create a broad-based climate justice movement centered on alternatives to capitalism. This anticapitalistic stance seems key, particularly in a place like Bolivia. How and in what ways can alternative agricultural and energy projects survive and thrive? What might cooperative or collective laboring relations look like in rural highland and lowland regions?

Vilela's vision comes out of his positionality as a former NGO worker and urban mestizo in La Paz; yet articulating this anticapitalistic vision and implementing it in rural regions of Santa Cruz, La Paz, or Cochabamba seems a bit more challenging. Many rural peasants are focused on daily survival. As a former MST organizer from Santa Cruz told us this past August, "Antes de usos y costumbres uno es comerciante buscando como vivir/sobrevivir" (before usos y costumbres [indigenous uses and customs] one is a merchant searching for a way to live/survive" (interview, August 2016). This seems to be the big question today in some of the poorest nation-states in the Western Hemisphere: short-term and daily survival versus reigniting a more radical climate justice movement that incorporates local and daily struggles and articulates a coherent and practical vision for more sustainable futures. While Bolivia might have represented a kind of hope for the global South in terms of proposing a radical alternative to the fossil fuel industry, they too remain tied into the tentacles of the global resource regimes; today many rural communities and indigenous peoples are teetering on the brink of survival. The Bolivian context illustrates the impossible set of choices for nations in the global South between a noninstrumental relationship with nature and protection of the rights of Mother Earth, and using

large-scale resource extraction to finance social welfare, all the while hoping that the largest carbon emitters will act in time to prevent imminent ecological disaster. As Vilela articulates, a strong climate justice movement coming out of a place like Bolivia—but expanding toward other nations in the global South—proves critical for holding highly industrialized nation-states in the North accountable for CO₂ emissions and demanding critical resources for adaptation and mitigation programs.

Notes

- ¹ Bolivia, along with other nations in the global South, has contributed negligibly to greenhouse gas emissions but is beginning to experience their effects, particularly in indigenous communities. Impacts of climate change will be complex, given the country's ecological diversity. The country is experiencing radical retreat of glaciers in the highlands and major droughts in the lowlands.
- ² In 2010 Morales announced his proposal to build a major highway from the tropics through the Amazon to the Brazilian border, right through the Isiboro Secure Indigenous Territory and National Park. Many in the lowlands feared that the road, funded by Brazilian development dollars, would create significant ecological destruction and native displacements. It is important to note that not all indigenous communities in the lowlands were opposed to the highway; however, many objected to the fact that Morales failed to carry out prior consultation with them as required by the new constitution.

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Cryoactivism

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One of the telltale signs of climate change in recent years is the rapid acceleration of the retreating of glaciers and polar ice at our planetary extremes. Most people have likely seen the image of a polar bear cornered onto a small piece of floating ice, the looming and threatening predicament of a collapsing *cryosphere*, that is, our “world of ice,” captured in a single image. Few have posed one important question, however: What are we doing about withering glaciers? Can we actually do something about it?

In this article we explore the emerging arena of what glaciologist Bernard Francou recently dubbed “cryoactivism,” that is, environmental advocacy steered toward protecting the complex dimensions of the planet’s frozen environments, including glaciers and subsurface ice of the periglacial environment (such as permafrost), as they melt away amid the rapid acceleration of global warming.

While most people are able to recognize that our cryosphere is falling victim to climate change, surprisingly little has been done to date to address the anthropogenic destruction of some of our most important top-of-the-pyramid hydrological resources. A new breed of environmentalists, emerging cryoactivists, are beginning to take up this challenge, uncovering some of the anthropogenic activity that is directly impacting glaciers and permafrost, but also coming up with creative ways to protect and even to reconstitute this critical dimension of our ecosystems.

The Endangered Cryosphere

The shrinkage of glaciers all over the world has been documented since the 1970s; a clear trend of retreating ice mass is apparent. Scientists already recognize

that currently melting glaciers will result in significant sea level rise in the coming decades. Ice stored in melting glaciers is important to humanity and to the ecosystem in part because it stores most of the world’s freshwater. This ice is in reserve for when our ecosystems need the water most. Many of the glaciers that are directly relevant to the daily existence of millions if not billions of people; that are relevant to their water consumption, their agriculture, and their industry; are not the large glaciers at the polar extremes but rather much smaller and more numerous glaciers that are much closer to home, in mountain ranges like the Swiss Alps, the Pyrenees, the Andes, the Himalayas, the Rocky Mountains, or the Sierra Nevada of California.

Additionally, periglacial areas, which contain extensive frozen swaths of earth known as permafrost (defined in this context as perennially frozen ground), like glaciers, also play a significant, if not more important, role in capturing and administering water to the environment in smaller doses than otherwise occurs during springtime snowmelt periods.

We depend on glaciers and periglacial areas much more than we realize. In addition to providing water, glaciers reflect solar rays, thereby cooling our climate; they keep climate-impacting methane gases trapped under the ice; they cool our climates because their cool mass retro-nurtures their *glaciosystems*,¹ conserving their cold environments.

Advancing climate change places these cryospheric *glaciosystems* in deep peril, particularly glaciers and permafrost in high-mountain environments, which will likely die off en masse in some populated areas in a few decades or less. From that moment on, small streams (and even

larger rivers) that flow year-round thanks to the slow cyclical melt of the perennial cryosphere will become barren during dry seasons. We will have very distinct wet and dry seasons, and once the winter snow has melted away, no more water will be available to the ecosystem until the next winter snow cycle begins. It could, and likely will be, devastating for millions if not billions of people.

So one would presume that societies around the world, especially those with glaciers and periglacial areas, would be doing something to protect this sensitive ecosystem. Ironically, this is not so. As Alejandro Iza and Marta Brunilda Rovere of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) discovered in their 2006 review of seven key Latin American legal systems (perhaps the first legal analysis of glacier protection ever written), few if any laws offer protection for glaciers. In fact, until recently, not a single country in the world had a law on the books to protect glaciers.

It is in this context that cryoactivism was born, that is, a movement of individuals, legislative representatives, scientists, academics, NGOs, and other actors, awoken to the vulnerability of our cryosphere, who are now attempting to adopt international and/or regional laws and policy to raise social awareness and to develop government and civil society programs to protect our perennially frozen world and our human right—why not?—to glaciers (Taillant 2013).

The Birth of Cryoactivism

The birth of cryoactivism can possibly be traced to a single moment in time, involving the publication of a cartoon by a multinational mining company in

the high Central Andes of Chile. It was the first time that a mining company had launched a quest to mine minerals at over 5,000 meters (over 16,000 feet) above sea level, where it's bitterly cold (usually below freezing), where the air is thin, where altitude makes human existence miserable, sometimes impossible, and also where glaciers and periglacial environments thrive.

The mining company had struck gold beneath three small glaciers on the border between Argentina and Chile in the Central Andes, the Toro 1, Toro 2 and Esperanza Glaciers.² Their plan was to remove the glaciers to get at the gold. Ironically, the company claimed the glaciers were “a threat to the environment.” Glaciers move, they're fragile, they can collapse if you chip away at them with heavy equipment, and the sort of work that mining companies do at and near the glaciers would destabilize them, putting anyone near them at risk of serious harm. Mark Carey, who could be dubbed a cryoactivist, working at the University of Oregon, has studied glacier lake outburst floods in Peru and has researched and published an account of a prolonged period of collapsing glaciers that have killed thousands when massive glacier chunks larger than large buildings calve off of cliff-hanging glaciers perched over lakes up at 4,000 meters. The waves that ensue on impact with the lake surface come rushing down mountain gorges at breathtaking speed, taking out anything and everything in their path.

The glaciers sitting over gold on the Argentine-Chilean border were in the way, and so, with little consideration of the critical value of the cryosphere, the mining company proposed to dynamite them and haul off the ice in dump trucks. They distributed brochures, with a cartoon (Figure 1) depicting how the operation

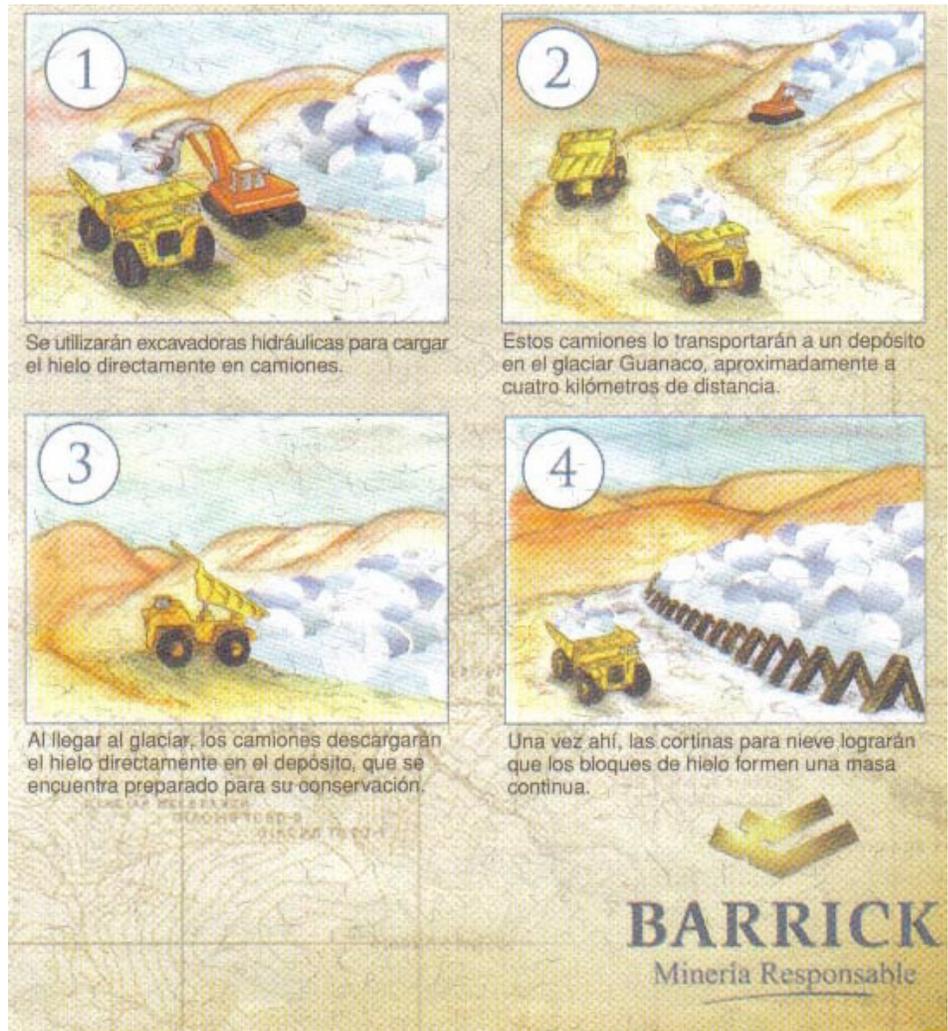


Figure 1. Cartoon depiction in brochure distributed by an international mining company to local communities showing rigs and dump trucks destroying and hauling away glacier ice spawned a global cryoactivist movement to protect glaciers. Source: Barrick Gold.

would be carried out, to downstream community stakeholders (including indigenous communities) near the operations, who were already concerned with the potential impacts to their water supply and to their delicate ecosystems due to the arrival of what would have been one of the world's largest gold mining projects ever.

While small compared to the colossal glaciers of the polar regions, these three small glaciers comprised roughly 40 city blocks of ice containing some 2 billion liters of water. To get a sense of the implications for people living downstream from the mining project, that's essentially

enough water to supply the entire 300,000-strong population of the Atacama Region of Chile—near the project site—with enough drinking water (two liters per day) for nine years!

Few people knew of the existence of such glaciers in this region of the world. But as the first steps of emerging cryoactivism would uncover, tens of thousands of similar glaciers existed in this ecologically delicate and very dry region of the world (and about 400 of them in the mining company's direct area of influence). Giving free rein to mining companies willing to blow up these dynamic and very critical water towers didn't seem to be a reasonable proposition.



Figure 2. This debris-covered glacier in Nepal is an example of how colossal deposits of ice may be entirely covered by a thick layer of rock, protecting it from the warmer environment above. Note the size of the trekkers for proportion. Photo: Jorge Garcia-Dihinx.

The fight to protect these glaciers took on monumental proportions and spilled into communities up and down the Andes on both sides of the border. The very names of the glaciers took on new meaning for this cryoactivist movement.

It was just about this time, in the first several years of the century, and largely derived from local communities mobilizing to protect local water resources from expanding mining operations in the Central Andes, that the environmentalist and activist slogan “water is worth more than gold” appeared in environmental circles and became the flag for nascent cryoactivists in Chile and Argentina set on stopping this mining project as well as others that were placing glacier resources at risk. This no doubt was the birth of cryoactivism.

Across the border in Argentina, Romina Picolotti, a young human rights lawyer turned environmentalist, and recently named to head Argentina’s federal Environment Secretariat, hearing of developments in Chile, was astounded to

learn that a mining company was willing to blow up glaciers to get at gold. But as an environmental lawyer, she was even more surprised to discover that the world had never taken up the protection of the glaciers of our cryosphere. Climate change was placing our ice at risk, and now mining companies were aggravating the situation. Jurisdictionally, there was little she could do about it despite being Argentina’s highest environmental authority.

The remoteness of our perennial cryosphere, glaciers, permafrost, high-altitude wetlands, and other cryogenic resources in high-mountain environments are simply too far removed to have come onto the radar screens of legislatures and policy makers, environmentalists, or the public consciousness. We simply don’t fight to protect what we don’t know exists. (See Figure 2.)

An Expanding Horizon for Cryoactivists

Since a mining company perforated a glacier in search of gold, lots of things have

happened to spawn a desperate attempt to save our glaciers, to protect our right to glaciers, and to protect our planet’s frozen environments from irrational industrial behavior and from a melting climate.

In Chile, with the help of leading environmental groups like Chile Sustentable, as well as forward-looking legislative representatives like Antonio Horvath, a civil engineer with a strong environmental background, an attempt to pass a glacier law was made. It would have been the world’s first, if it had not been struck down by the mining lobby. The Chilean legislative failure to protect its glaciers, however, planted a seed for innovation across the border.

A wandering Argentine legislative representative named Martha Maffei had visited Chilean communities struggling with water access at the time the debates were ongoing in the legislature over the glacier law. She met with Sara Larrain of Chile Sustentable, coauthor of perhaps the first “cryoactivist” publication, *Chilean Glaciers: Strategic Fresh Water Reserves for Society, Ecosystems and the Economy*, a book that underscored the urgent need to protect Chile’s glaciers. Maffei quickly recognized the importance of protecting cryospheric resources and sympathized with local Chilean communities fighting corporate dominance of water access, something that was also occurring in provinces like Mendoza and San Juan in Argentina.

And so, mirroring the stunted Chilean legal initiative, Maffei trekked back across the border and sought help from Argentina’s glacier experts. She found just the person to help her at Argentina’s IANIGLA (the national glacier institute). She would team up with Dario Trombotto, a geo-cryologist who helped Maffei expand on the

Chilean glacier bill adding the periglacial environment to protected territories (a significantly broader area of protection that included permafrost), and Ricardo Villalba, the IANIGLA director, who was willing to wave one of the first flags of political cryoactivism as he toured from city to city, speaking to whomever was willing to listen, calling for the creation of a national glacier protection law.

Maffei submitted the draft Glacier Protection Law to Congress in 2005, but with little priority from political circles, it was quickly filed into legislative oblivion, until Picoletti, then Argentina's environment secretary, hungry for legislation to protect glaciers, discovered it to be a perfect solution to address the mining sector's impacts to high mountain glacier systems. She began a quiet lobby in Congress to get the bill passed into law. It was supported unanimously in 2008, becoming the first glacier and periglacial environment protection act to be passed by a working Congress.³

The struggle was not over, however, as shortly after its adoption, Argentina's president, bowing to pressure from mining companies, vetoed the law. Picoletti resigned, and cryoactivists like Maffei, Trombotto and his colleagues at the IANIGLA, CHRE,⁴ and others went back to the drawing board to figure out how to get the law back.

Mounting social pressure brought the law back in 2010⁵ and it was written into the books permanently. Several local government laws followed, also establishing local protective legal frameworks to promote the sustainability of our cryosphere.

But the environmental NGO community didn't know much about glaciers, where

they were or how they worked. CHRE, an NGO based in Cordoba, Argentina, a good 500 kilometers from the nearest glacier but very much engaged in the cryoactivist fight (Picoletti, the former environment secretary, was CHRE's founder and president at the time), decided to take on the technical challenge to learn the science around glaciers and map out an advocacy strategy for their protection.

With initial help from a handful of socially minded glaciologists around the world willing to cross over into the realm of social and environmental advocacy, such as Alexander Brenning (Germany), Cedo Marangunic (Chile), Juan Pablo Milana and Juan Carlos Leiva (Argentina), Benjamin Morales Arnao (Peru), Bernard Francou (France), and lots of technical help from a young geo-cryologist at the University of Córdoba, Mateo Martini, CHRE staff learned to use GPS technology to map glaciers and published a series of reports focused on glacier and periglacial vulnerability to extractive sector operations. Other NGOs in Argentina and Chile also embarked on advocacy campaigns to highlight glacier vulnerability and bring attention to the advancement of large-scale mining into sensitive high-mountain glacier environments. With a handful of glacial and periglacial laws established in Argentina, and much interest in other countries to follow suit, by 2010 and the years immediately following, a new road was being paved, setting the stones of a nascent cryoactivism geared to make glacier vulnerability visible and promote policy to protect glacier resources.

In 2016, Chile is again considering a glacier protection law to ensure the conservation of its cryospheric resources along the Andes. Peru, a country with an important pedigree of contribution to glaciology, has added political leverage to its historic

and pioneering scientific work on glaciers by creating a national institute with the official task of studying and protecting the country's glacier resources.

The United Nations recognized the growing concern for the collapsing cryosphere in Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, and Argentina, and some countries not commonly known for possessing glaciers such as Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia. In 2010, for the first time ever, and responding to growing discussions in countries like Chile and Argentina about the deteriorating cryosphere, the UN brought together young glaciologists to discuss methodologies to study glaciers and periglacial environments. A technical training course offered to these students also exposed them to evolving public policy and laws steered to conserve the planet's cryosphere. The course was held again on two consecutive occasions. A few years later, the community fight for glacier protection in the Andes began to echo across the continents.

In 2012, James Balog, the acclaimed nature photographer, released his award-winning, must-see documentary, *Chasing Ice*, in which Balog, with relentless drive and creativity, successfully documented the daily retreat of glaciers around the world by installing automated reflex cameras at strategic viewpoints, taking thousands of pictures in mini-increments over a period of several years. He also captured some of the most incredible footage of a calving glacier ever filmed, in Greenland,⁶ with pieces of millenary ice half the size of Manhattan falling into the sea. Balog was effectively bringing the withering remote glacier environments into our living rooms, calling attention to our collapsing cryosphere.

The same year, a workshop organized by CHRE at the World Summit for Sustainable

Development in Brazil (Rio+20) extended the UN's glaciologists in harnessing their efforts to the environmental advocacy world, and brought together glaciologists and environmentalists to discuss advocacy channels and policy courses to attend to the demands of cryoactivism. One of those present that day was Kalia Moldegazieva of Kyrgyzstan, who was concerned with mining impacts to glacier resources in her own country. Following this early cryoactivism event in 2012, and seeing the experiences in Chile and Argentina, Moldegazieva and some of her cryoactivist colleagues put in motion an effort to get a glacier protection law passed in Kyrgyzstan. As in Argentina and in Chile, a presidential veto fueled by mining interests and by a mining project already advancing over massive glaciers stopped the glacier law at the parliamentary level. The Kyrgyz cryoactivists, however, are not relenting, and they are now proposing the creation of a Kyrgyz National Glacier Park and listing their glacier-rich Tian Shen mountains as UNESCO-protected terrain.

In India, another cryoactivist, Chewang Norphel, also known as the "glacier man," has actually devised a way to dam winter snow on small streams and promote its survival into the summer months, effectively "fabricating" glaciers in areas where winter snows are melting faster than usual due to climate change. Eduardo Gold, a Peruvian mountain enthusiast, is also worried about climate change. He is painting mountainsides white in hopes of increasing solar reflectivity and helping spawn perennial ice fields, which essentially is an effort to create glaciosystems. In Chile, experiments are under way by the group Geoestudios to create subsurface rock glaciers, which are basically permafrost features of the periglacial environment. In California, Connie Millar is avidly studying the

hydrological relevance of periglacial areas in climate-stricken regions of California's Sierra Nevada.

In sum, cryoactivism was born from the concern of many seeking environmental justice as advancing climate change and other anthropogenic activity place our cryosphere at risk. As climate change progresses, and as our mountain environments become more delicate, this critical natural resource will become increasingly fragile.

Cryoactivists are emerging to take on the challenges of a deteriorating cryosphere, shedding light on anthropogenic impacts that can be stopped or reduced, and putting forth ideas to recuperate this dwindling but important dimension of our global ecosystem.

We can understand the work of cryoactivists as yet another dimension of the climate justice movement, one that is tackling a little-understood but very visible concern of our deteriorating planetary climate. Cryoactivists are having to develop skills and learn quickly about the cryosphere and how this hitherto unknown dimension of our earth is suffering climate change, the reasons for the decline, and how anthropogenic forces are affecting the dynamics of the cryosphere.

We are learning that the cryosphere can be protected, that it can be repaired in some circumstances, and that efforts to build bridges between science and environmental policy advocacy can have beneficial outcomes. For now, the experience of cryoactivism is nascent, and cryoactivists are only beginning to explore the policies and laws that can, and in some cases do, govern our frozen Earth.

Notes

- ¹ See "Definition of the Glacier Ecosystem or Glaciosystem," February 1, 2012, <http://wp.cedha.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Definicion-de-Glaciosistema-version-1-febrero-2012-english.pdf>
- ² You can see the exact location on Google Earth at: 29°19'53.50" S 70°00'56.99" W
- ³ See Ley de Glaciares, <http://wp.cedha.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Proyecto-Maffei-Ley-de-Glaciares.pdf>.
- ⁴ Originally established in Argentina and now expanded to the United States, the Center for Human Rights and Environment (CHRE) is a nonprofit organization working to create a more harmonious relationship between the environment and people. Programs and activities including defending the human rights of communities affected by environmental degradation, and promoting more sustainable public policies on issues such as climate change, corporate accountability, extractive industries, the oil and gas sector, and protecting glacier and periglacial resources.
- ⁵ Argentine National Glacier Act, <http://wp.cedha.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Argentine-National-Glacier-Act-Traducción-de-CEDHA-no-oficial.pdf>.
- ⁶ See *Chasing Ice*, "Glacier Watching Day 17," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hC3VTgIPoGU>.

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2006 *Aspectos jurídicos de la conservación de los glaciares*. Gland, Switzerland: International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

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2013 "The Human Right . . . to Glaciers?" *Journal of Environmental Law and Litigation* 28: 59. ■

Las sesiones presidenciales en el congreso de Lima 2017

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Redactamos esta nota a finales de agosto de 2016, mientras los afiliados de LASA están inscribiendo sus ponencias, paneles, mesas redondas o sesiones especiales para el congreso del siguiente año en Lima. Por tanto la programación preliminar del evento no se conocerá sino hasta la publicación del próximo *LASA Forum*, en diciembre. En esta ocasión hemos decidido escribir sobre las sesiones presidenciales que estamos programando para Lima 2017.

Con el propósito de entender la situación actual de América Latina, junto con la presidenta de LASA Joanne Rappaport y un grupo de colegas de distintas disciplinas, hemos planeado seis sesiones presidenciales que en forma articulada cubren varios tópicos de la actual coyuntura del continente. Todas se inscriben en el tema central del congreso “diálogo de saberes” y son interdisciplinares.

Una primera sesión tiene que ver con el giro político reciente hacia la derecha en Argentina, Brasil y Perú, pero también con los signos de debilitamiento de las izquierdas en otros países, aun allí donde no están en el poder. Se pregunta por el significado de este giro y si éste representará un retorno crudo al neoliberalismo arrasando con los logros de los gobiernos progresistas. Pero más de fondo, esta sesión coordinada por Raúl Madrid, de la Universidad de Texas en Austin, se interroga sobre qué es ser de izquierda o de derecha hoy en América Latina. Para ello contará con la presencia de expertos como Daniela Campello (Fundación Getulio Vargas), Julio Cotler (Instituto de Estudios Peruanos), Juan Pablo Luna (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile), Gabriel Vommaro (CONICET y Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento) y Steve Stern (Universidad de Wisconsin en Madison).

En contextos similares se debaten los movimientos sociales latinoamericanos, pues si bien algunos apoyaron en el pasado a los partidos progresistas, se distanciaron de ellos en aspectos como el verticalismo y el mesianismo de muchas de las izquierdas políticas. Por esa vía clamaron por formas más simétricas y equitativas de producción de conocimientos tendientes a transformar la sociedad en mayor armonía con la naturaleza. Ese es el tema de la sesión dedicada a los movimientos sociales y el diálogo de saberes, organizada por Martha Cecilia García, investigadora del CINEP de Colombia, que contará con la participación de analistas como Raúl Zibechi (investigador independiente, Uruguay), Xochitl Leyva (CIESAS, México), Massimo Modonesi (UNAM, México) y Rosalba Velasco (Resguardo Indígena de Canoas, Cauca-Colombia). Este panel se llevará a cabo fuera de la sede del Congreso de LASA2017, buscando la amplia participación del público.

Atención especial merecen las luchas populares libradas en el país anfitrión en contra del neoliberalismo y su particular expresión autoritaria en un pasado que no es tan remoto como se vio en las pasadas elecciones. La reflexión sobre este tema la harán dirigentes populares peruanos vinculados a movimientos urbanos y rurales, indígenas y ambientalistas, quienes también son productores de conocimientos. Por ahora los organizadores de esa sesión, Jesús Cosamalón y Javier Puente, profesores de las Universidades Católicas de Perú y Chile respectivamente, proponen nombres como Máxima Acuña (campesina de Cajamarca), Guillermo Nolasco (vendedor ambulante de Lima), Alberto Pizango (indígena *shawi*) y Victoria Quispesibama (dirigente agraria de Cuzco).

El tema central del congreso Lima 2017, el diálogo de saberes, es retomado

en forma explícita en las siguientes sesiones presidenciales. Así el panel sobre Pensamiento Latinoamericano (contribuciones, desafíos y nuevas direcciones) organizado por Juliet Hooker, analiza la trayectoria del pensamiento latinoamericano y su creciente distancia de los tradicionales centros de poder intelectual. Igualmente se pregunta por los diálogos horizontales que se establecen con otras corrientes críticas del pensamiento como el africano o el feminista. Contará con la presencia de expertos como Nelson Maldonado-Torres (Rutgers University), Lewis Gordon (University of Connecticut) y Yuderlys Espinosa (investigadora independiente).

Muy relacionado con el anterior tópico está el del panel coordinado por Mauricio Archila designado “Desafíos para las ciencias sociales hoy en América Latina” que tendrá la participación de Pablo Gentili (CLACSO), Catherine Walsh (Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, Quito), Charles Hale (Universidad de Texas, Austin) y Martín Tanaka (Instituto de Estudios Peruanos). Como sugiere el título, se busca reflexionar sobre la trayectoria de las ciencias sociales en el continente desde la ruptura con el positivismo hace ya más de 50 años hasta los recientes llamados a diálogos con las voces subalternas que irrumpen en escenarios públicos para romper con la compartimentación disciplinaria y con el aislamiento académico.

Por último, pero no menos importante, habrá una sesión presidencial enfocada en el tema de las historietas o los cómics como productores de conocimiento con gran peso intelectual y ético en América Latina. El panel presidido por Felipe Gómez de la Universidad Carnegie Mellon y Silvia Kurlat Ares, investigadora independiente, convoca a reconocidos

productores de historietas para hablar de sus experiencias y de la recepción de sus trabajos en diferentes medios en la región, entre quienes están: Pablo Guerra (Colombia), Edgar Clement (México), Juan Acevedo (Perú) y PowerPaola (Colombia y Ecuador).

Esperamos que con este variado panorama de sesiones presidenciales haya suficientes temas para todos los públicos, obviamente sin contar aún con la amplia oferta de paneles y mesas redondas en las 33 líneas temáticas que cubren el congreso de 2017 y que están en proceso de inscripción y aprobación. ¡Nos vemos en Lima! ■

LASA2017 FILM FESTIVAL – SUBMISSION FORM

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PUBLISHED TITLE TRANSLATIONS:
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SYNOPSIS IN ENGLISH (up to 200 words):
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SECTION NEWS

Student Section of LASA

by Graduate Student Representatives **MARCUS ROCHA**
UFRGS | marcus.hulk@gmail.com

and **MARIA CRISTINA MONSALVE** | University of Maryland
mckmonsalve@gmail.com

We are glad to announce the creation of the Student Section of LASA (SSLASA), after an initial meeting at the 50th Congress in New York City. The SSLASA recognizes that students are an essential part of LASA and have specific needs and interests. It aims to provide a space for students to exchange experiences with one another and to contribute to the organization as a whole. At the same time, the SSLASA facilitates students' integration into the scholarly community through activities that contribute to professional and intellectual development. These activities include, but are not limited to, opening an additional space for students' presentations, mentoring, advising regarding the job market, information sharing, standards and suggestions on publications, academic contacts, timely communication on scholarship and employment offers, and so on.

We would like to invite student members of LASA to join this new section and help us to build the SSLASA together. The group is open to graduate students as well as undergraduate students. ■

NEWS FROM LASA

Brazil Resolution Is Approved

The resolution on Brazil approved by the Executive Council at its May 2016 meeting to be presented to the membership for a vote did meet the requirements specified by the LASA Bylaws and therefore passed.

As stated by the LASA by-laws, Article VI, Item #7: All proposed resolutions shall be automatically emailed for electronic voting to each individual who is a member during the year in which the Congress is held, no later than 15 days after the close of the Business Meeting. Votes must be received within sixty days of receipt of the email transmission. Twenty percent of the current LASA membership must vote regarding a proposed resolution and the majority must vote in favor of it for the resolution to pass. The results of the vote shall be posted in the subsequent issue of the LASA Forum and posted on the LASA Internet site.

Results

2016 individual members (as of August 9, 2016): 7,457

Total votes received: 2,589 or 35% of the membership

In favor: 2,263 or 87% of members voting

Against: 326 or 13% of members voting ■

Rolling Membership Dates

Effective June 1, 2016, LASA is implementing rolling membership dates (including current 2016 memberships) to facilitate the process of paper proposal submission (due in September) and Congress registration (due in March–April of the following year) under one membership cycle.

This means that an individual membership will be effective for a year after the payment is processed. If a membership is not renewed before the year ends, the new expiration date of the membership will be one year after the renewal payment is received.

The following specific examples and FAQs should explain the process.

Examples

Member A is a current LASA member. She renewed her membership for 2016 on December 15, 2015. Her membership expiration date is December 14, 2016. Provided she renews before December 15, 2016, her membership will be extended through December 15, 2017. If she forgets to renew her membership by December 15, and instead renews on January 15, 2017, her membership will be good from January 15, 2017, through January 14, 2018.

Member B is a new LASA member. He joins LASA for the first time on March 13, 2016. His membership is valid through March 12, 2017. Provided he renews before that date, his membership will be extended through March 12, 2018. If he forgets to renew his membership by March 12, 2017, and instead renews on March 31, 2017, his membership will be good from March 31, 2016, through March 30, 2017.

FAQs

How will I know when it is time to renew my membership?

Before your membership is due to expire, when you log in to a member exclusive area of the LASA website, a message will be displayed prompting you to renew your membership. LASA will also email you reminders when the time to renew your membership draws closer.

I am a current LASA member, with a membership expiration date of September 30, 2016. How can I make sure my membership will always have an expiration date of September 30?

If you renew your membership each year before September 30, your expiration date will always be September 30. You will receive renewal reminders upon logging in to the LASA website as well as via email. ■

LASA2016 Survey Report

by PILAR RODRÍGUEZ, Congress Coordinator | pir5@pitt.edu

Our 50th anniversary Congress was filled with exciting panels, stimulating debate, and wonderful networking opportunities. Overall, from our perspective, it was a successful Congress. We were honored to have among us the honorable presidents Luis Guillermo Solís, president of Costa Rica, and Ricardo Lagos, former president of Chile, as well as theorist and activist Noam Chomsky, to name a few. For the Gran Baile, LASA went all out to put together an animated dance party, inviting the famous Nuyorican salsa musician Willy Colón and Milly Quezada, the “Queen of Merengue.” Regardless of all the enthusiasm around the Congress we wanted to ensure that our most important constituents (our members) agreed on the success of LASA2016 and thus our yearly online survey was sent to collect demographic information and respondents’ feedback, and to measure the overall experience during our time in the Big Apple. We thank the 667 participants who responded, who represent 10.4 percent of all of the LASA2016 registered participants (a 6 percent drop from 2015).

The three survey categories captured were demographics, LASA2016, and future Congresses.

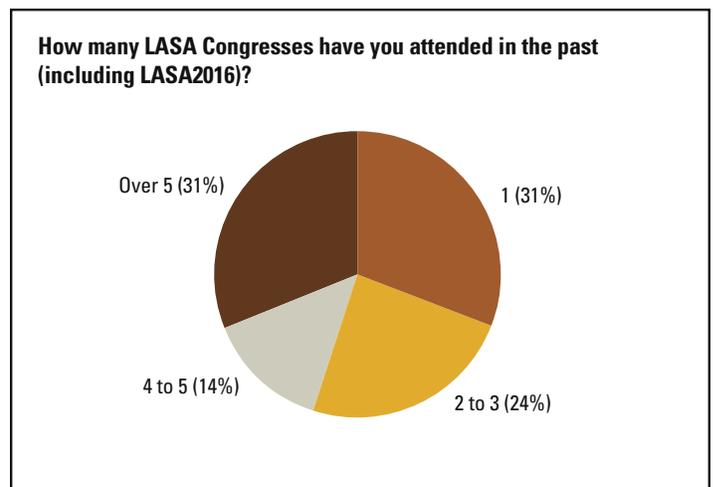
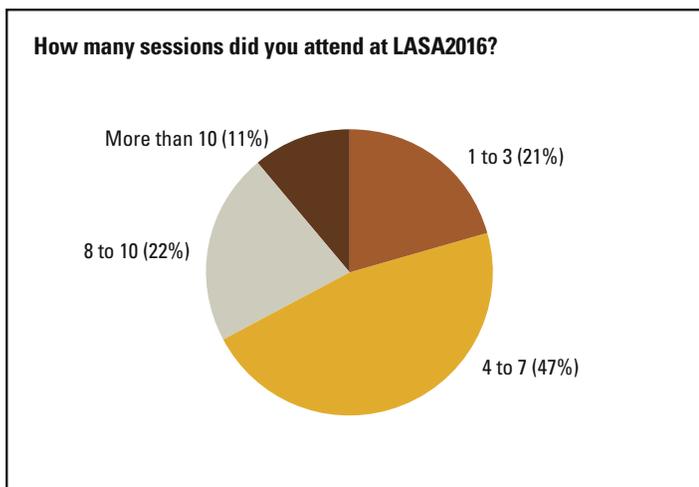
Demographics

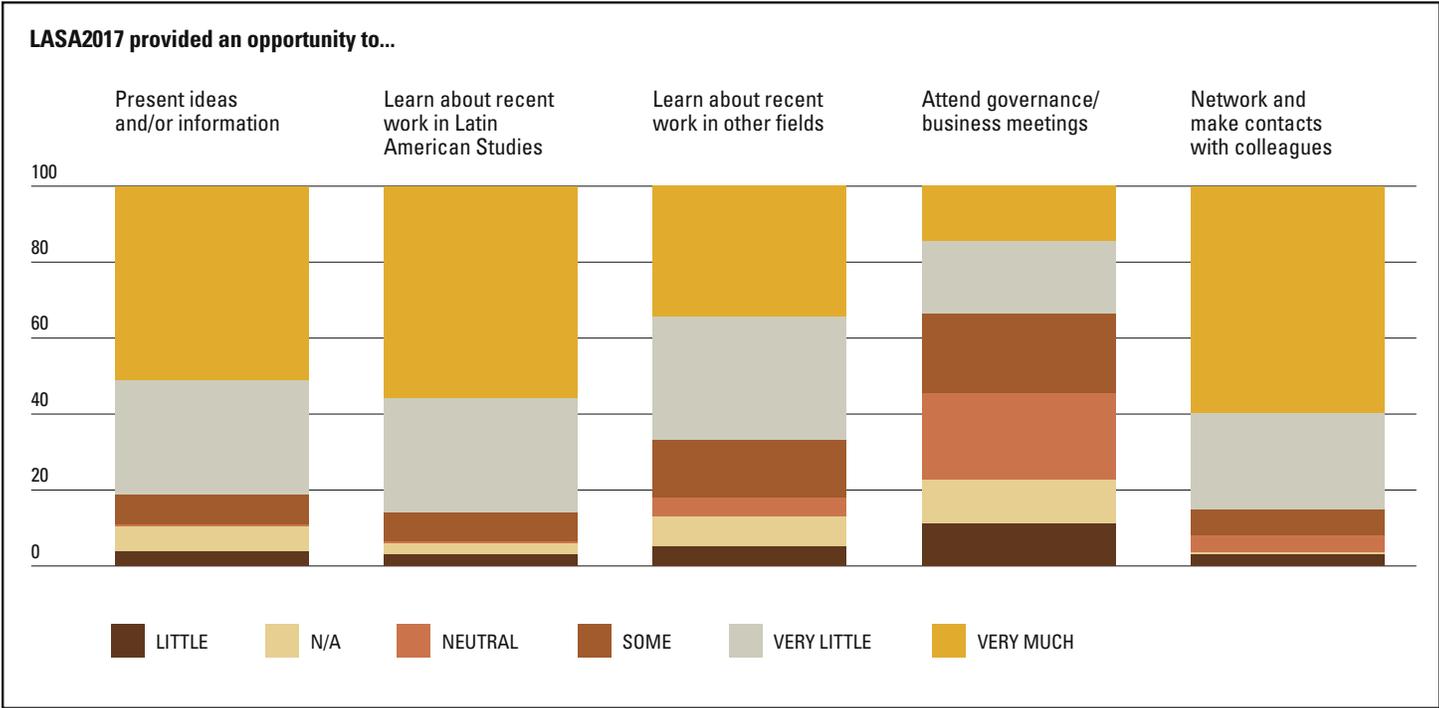
This year, there were more respondents from Latin America (46 percent) than from the United States and Canada (43 percent), this is an 8 percent increase in participation for our Latin American colleagues, which we appreciate as your feedback is very important in preparing us for Lima, Peru. Similar to previous years, our respondents focus mainly on research activities (60 percent) and 30 percent in education. However, unlike previous years, which were heavy on first-timers’ feedback, this year first-timers were tied (31 percent) with seasoned attendees (attended five or more LASA Congresses). Both groups are important to us as you evaluate the Congress with new lenses as well as with experienced ones. The trend continues to be that most participants attend between four and seven sessions during the Congress.

We realize that many sessions occur at the same time, and some of the same topics simultaneously, but due to the high volume of sessions allowed in the Congress, to be able to honor the spirit of inclusiveness, multidisciplinary, and diversity of LASA, this overlap is bound to happen. We hope that the multiple simultaneous sessions permit a wide range of session options in which you can participate and grow.

LASA2016

Most respondents noted the slight change in session times this year. We went from an hour and forty-five minute sessions to an hour and thirty minutes. The reason for this change was to include plenaries (sessions with no other competing panels) that included VIP guests such as Alejandro Mayorkas of the Department of Homeland Security and Julia Preston of the New York Times. To avoid the sessions running too late in the day and competing with business meetings and receptions (as well as New York’s gastronomy), the sessions were





shortened by fifteen minutes. Your concern for additional discussion time was noted and Lima will have the usual allotted time.

Another common concern which was mentioned again this year is that the size of the room was inadequate for the number of attendants in a session. Unfortunately, it is impossible for us to predict the number of attendees for a particular session, thus this factor is not usually considered when assigning rooms. Additionally, since LASA2013, to further allow networking opportunities between colleagues in the same disciplines, we started assigning neighboring rooms by program tracks/similar themed tracks. Sometimes this practice risks having small meeting rooms next to each other. However, we have received very positive feedback on having track-designated rooms as it has improved networking opportunities. We hope this additional networking compensates for the sometimes crowded rooms.

As the graph illustrates, LASA Congresses continue to be first a networking opportunity and then an opportunity to learn about work in Latin America, which is directly linked to LASA’s mission.

Overall, 77 percent of the participants were satisfied with LASA2016, 13 percent were neutral, and 10 percent were dissatisfied. This was a decrease of 4 percent over last year’s satisfaction rate. The slight decrease in satisfaction from Puerto Rico, based on the feedback, may be due to the discussion time having been reduced and the fact that New York City, though a great location, was a bit expensive. Surprisingly enough, 79 percent of respondents were satisfied with the registration process and most commented on how it has been the fastest registration in years. Clearly this group was not at the registration area during the first hour of opening, when we encountered an unexpected computer glitch due to over-usage. We apologize to those who had to endure the wait and thank all for your patience and understanding.

Our LASA Congress app continues to grow in popularity: 66 percent of our respondents used the app this year (a 5 percent increase from last year). We continue to work with our vendors to make it as user-friendly as possible.

As in every Congress, LASA is very grateful to our faithful sponsors/foundations and to the Endowment Fund, which continue year

after year to provide partial travel grants to our participants. We were able to sponsor over 400 participants this year to come to LASA2016 and share their research.

Future Congresses

Around 41 percent of the survey respondents are planning to attend LASA2017 in Lima, Peru. We are looking forward to the exciting theme Diálogos de Saberes as LASA returns to Latin America. LASA2017 will be held in the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, PUCP; we are excited to partner with the PUCP as it celebrates its 100th birthday.

We thank all those who took the time to complete the survey. Your feedback helps us improve by acknowledging situations that we may have not been aware of, and thus allows us to focus on our members and their needs. As always, please feel free to reach out to us with any questions or further suggestions. We hope to see you at LASA2017! ■

LASA Membership Report 2015

LASA's 2015 individual membership increased by 27 percent from 2014 to a record-high total of 12,324 members. Individual membership has been steadily growing throughout the last years with a significant jump in 2015. The charts that follow show the growth in membership in the last few years along with a breakdown by member type, new versus renewed/lapsed members, residency, and discipline. The last chart shows institutional membership.

Individual Membership

Student representation continues to increase and is currently the highest it has ever been representing 26 percent of

the membership. The number of student members, at 3,061, represent an increase of 268 percent from just five years ago in 2010.

More than half of the members in 2015 had been members the previous year, and 32 percent (4,017) were new. The number of new members has increased significantly in the last couple of years. New members only represented 15 percent of the membership in 2005.

Based on their country of residency, 42 percent of the members in 2015 resided in the United States (compared to 61 percent in 2005) with most of the increase seen in Latin American residents which, in 2015, represent almost 47 percent.

History, political science, and literature continue to be the disciplines with highest representation followed by sociology, anthropology, Latin American studies, and to a lesser extent economics, cultural studies and international relations.

Institutional Membership

As the following chart shows, LASA institutional membership continues to decline. There were 302 institutional members in 2015, most of them (199) located in the United States and 35 in Latin America. ■

Figure 1. Individual members

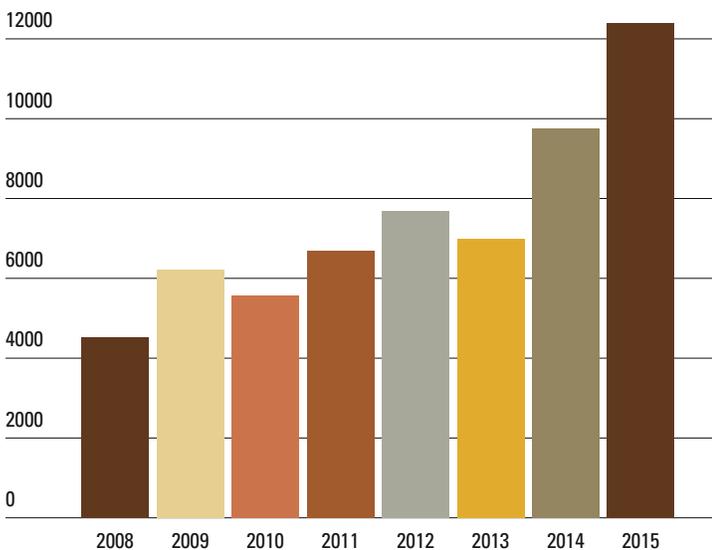


Figure 2. 2015 member composition

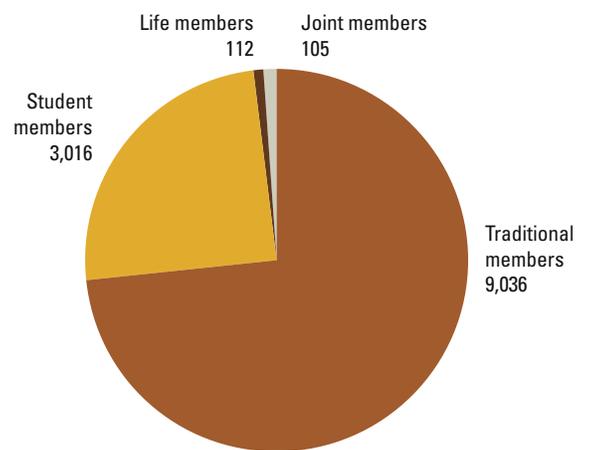


Figure 3. 2015 individual members

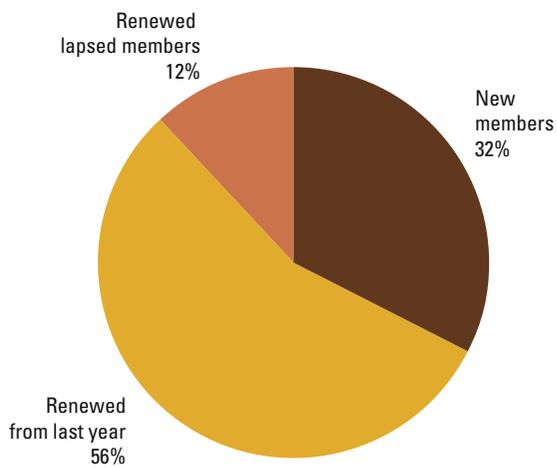


Figure 4. 2015 member residency

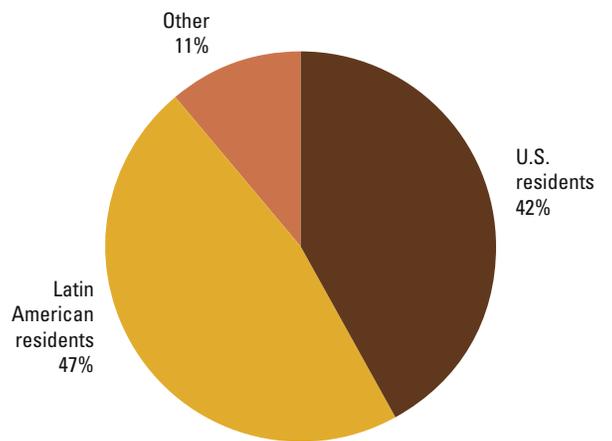


Figure 5. 2015 members by discipline

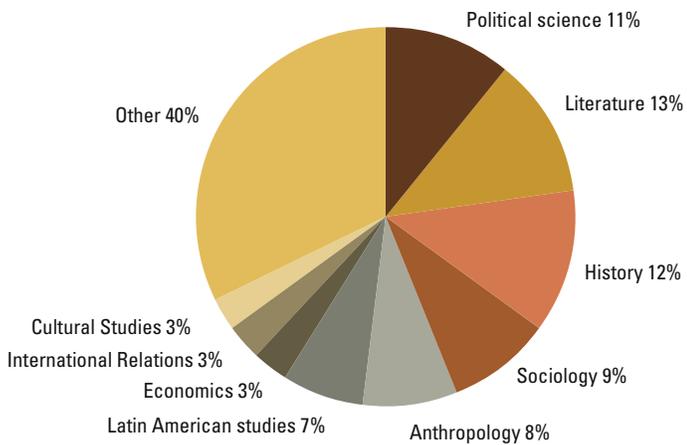
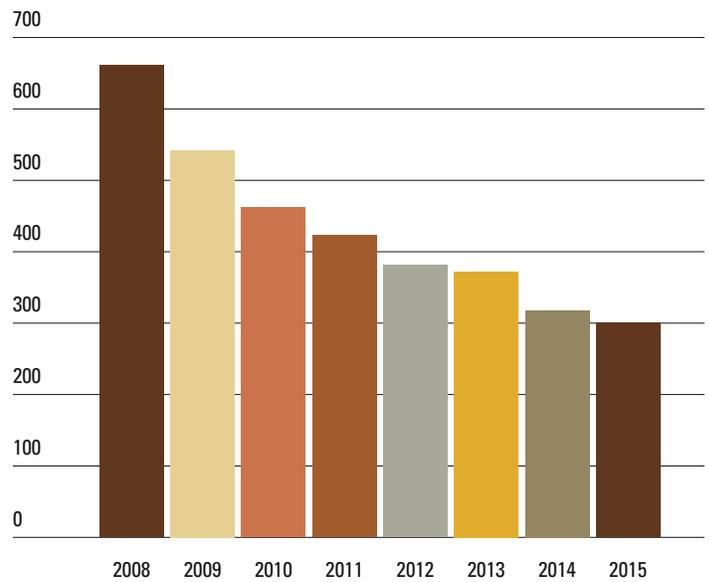


Figure 6. Institutional members



Kalman H. Silvert

by HENRY M. SILVERT, PhD

My father, Kal, was many people to me—loving father, mentor, intellectual role model, and educator. Both my dad and my mom, Frieda, instilled in me an awareness of the symbiotic connection between the health of the self (the individual) and the health of others (the society at large), or, as C. Wright Mills put it, the link between private matters and public issues. How did this happen? A lot of this awareness came from just living with them and listening to and participating in their intellectual conversations, debates, and, sometimes, even arguments.

But while I learned a great deal from them, my parents also let me develop my own intellectual authority. During the summers of my high school years in Hanover, New Hampshire, and Norwich, Vermont, Kal would make reading lists for me, and we would discuss the books I read. Many of these books became a significant part of my intellectual memory. One of the most important was Sabine's anthology of political theory. While clearly a reference book, my assignment was to read it from cover to cover, as I did with volumes by Marx, Weber, Cassirer, Bolívar, Neruda, and countless others. But the anthology's ideas that the wealth of the nation is dependent on many people working together, and that this collaboration can occur differently in diverse places, became part of my consciousness. So did the concept that this process never proceeds in a linear fashion but always does so disjunctively.

During my time reading for a bachelor of philosophy in Latin American studies at Oxford University, I had the opportunity to travel to Chile to work on my thesis. As many of you know, my father was well known in Chile, but, at the time, I had no idea how widely. He gave me a letter of introduction to use in case I needed it, but he never elaborated on the people he knew

or whom to contact once I was there. I did bring my dad's letter of introduction when I went to the Socialist Party's headquarters. When I met with the director of communications, I handed him the letter and said, "Soy yanqui, soy estudiante en la Universidad de Oxford en Inglaterra pero no soy imperialista." After looking at the letter, he gave me a smile, turned around, and took out my dad's book on the history of Chile. "Kalman es su padre, pues no puede ser imperialista," he said.

On my way back to England, I stopped in Norwich to complete the first draft of my thesis. In discussions with my father during that visit, I developed the notion, which by no means is exclusive to me, that progressives in Chile were in a constant commitment to the maximization of individual and collective liberty for all Chileans. This was the central theme of my thesis. We can, and Kal did, take this commitment to democratic thought and action and extend its applicability to the entire world. We can also logically conclude that those who are not interested in continuing to maximize individual and collective liberty are antidemocratic.

One of my father's constant concerns was the question of what environmental factors enable people to think democratically. I think that his two seminal works on the role that educational attainment plays in social and economic development and political identification provide some insight into this question. He concluded that education, especially primary and secondary education, provides the potential to develop democratic ideas and concerns for "the other," but it does not necessarily lead to the adoption of those beliefs. This answer won't please everyone, but it certainly provides food for thought for us all.

From the time I was a teenager, my father always advised me never to label myself or other people. I don't think that I ever heard him categorize anybody in a derogatory way except during my very last dinner with him before he died. I was a visiting professor at the Colegio de México and teaching a course on the comparative politics of Latin America, and he was in Mexico City on Ford Foundation business. One of his Ford Foundation contacts invited us to have dinner at his home on my father's last night in the city. A Chilean friend of Kal's colleague who taught at the Universidad Autónoma de México (UNAM) was also at the dinner. After cordial introductions, the "friend" began to grill my father about how in the world a Yankee could ever think himself capable of understanding anything about Latin American politics or culture. I could see the unease in my father's body as he began to explain his work. The aggressive tenor of the conversation continued throughout the evening. Finally, while we were having dessert, the friend declared, "Qué podemos hacer cuando las demandas de los estudiantes nos empuja más y más hacia la derecha? No soy fascista." (What can we do when students' demands push us more to the [political] right? I am not a fascist.) My father turned to her and said in an even voice, "¡Pues, Usted es fascista!" (Well, you are a fascist!) He was right! He might have said these words to someone's face before, but I had never personally heard him say anything like that before that evening.

All of my memories of my father are part of my life now and continue to help me better understand today's world. His writings are no less important to me. In one of his books—I don't remember whether it is the volume on education, class, and nation that he coauthored with Leonard Reissman or his wonderful little book on the reasons for democracy—he argues

Judith Tandler, 1938–2016

that Chile, on September 11, 1973, was an extreme case of the contradiction within capitalism between interest in developing and furthering the wealth of the nation and the desire for the individual accumulation of capital. Can the same be said about where the United States is now? I hope not.

When I was a student, most of my instructors, and especially those in political science and sociology, knew who my father was. There were a few who did not but were familiar with the last name. I remember one time when I was having a cup of coffee and a donut with one of my professors before class. Out of the blue, he remarked that there had been a professor in the politics department who had died in the mid-1970s and wondered whether I was any relation to him. On a more memorable occasion, about eight years after my father died, I ran into one of my undergraduate philosophy professors, someone I hadn't seen in many years, on the corner of Bleecker Street and LaGuardia Place in Greenwich Village. He told me that there had been a very nice person whose last name was also Silvert who taught at NYU and asked whether I knew him. When I said that I was his son, he told me that he had no idea and said that he was very sorry that he had not put both of us together. But I wasn't sorry at all, and I don't think that Dad would have been either. In fact, I thank that person for not putting us together in his mind. One of my father's goals for me was to become a worthy intellectual in my own right. He succeeded!

Thank you. ■

Judith Tandler was born December 30, 1938, in Detroit, Michigan, and passed away July 25, 2016. She was the daughter of first-generation Jewish immigrants from Ukraine and Russia. Her family was very close and she loved her parents dearly. Her father was a newspaper man who worked for the *Detroit News* in the beginning of the civil rights era, and she was deeply affected by the power of his words, his activism, and his love of language. Judith always wanted to be a good writer and to make him proud with the power of her own words. Her mother was also an activist who taught Judith the importance of connecting to people, listening to their stories, and working for the powerless. Judith's mother went to work, after her husband died very young, to teach illiterate adults to read. Judith was clearly impacted by many of these early experiences and dedicated her own life to listening, writing, and empowering the disadvantaged. Her father, Louis Tandler, mother Mollie Medow Tandler, and sister RoseAnna Tandler Worth all predeceased her.

Judith had many early academic successes. She graduated summa cum laude from the University of Michigan and then did her PhD work at Columbia on a scholarship from the Ford Foundation. She was an economist for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Brazil, worked as an economist for the Oakland Police Department, was a fellow at the Center for the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford, and taught at UC Irvine and UC Berkeley before moving to Boston to work at MIT in 1984. She taught at MIT for 30 years and influenced a large cadre of graduate students in development economics, local and regional development, and organizational theories, particularly regarding public sector performance. She was an optimist and instilled in her students an appreciation for good public

sector performance in contrast to the increasing criticism of government from both the right and left. Her legacy at MIT covers not only a broad range of academic talks, articles, and pathbreaking books, including *Good Government in the Tropics* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), but she was also known for her dedication to her students.

Excellent students came to MIT from around the world so that they might work with Judith. Many are now in highly influential positions, continuing her tradition of intellectual rigor and public service. Judith derived a deep sense of meaning from mentoring, and her devotion to her students inspired them to excellence. She was known for her insistence that her students adhere to the highest standards in their work. Her students had to know the subjects they were studying intimately. Moreover, she impressed upon them the understanding that some outcomes are unexplainable by orthodox theories of economics, and that such cases demand more of the conscientious researcher. Judith was very selective in accepting advisees, but once she took anyone under her wing, they found in her a lifelong supporter and friend.

Although Judith never had her own children, she was a dedicated aunt who provided much love and guidance to her family. She is survived by Laura Susan, Greg, and Melanie Jensenworth; Nancy Lou, Drake, Mollie Rose, and Isaac Emerson Meadow; Sarah Elizabeth Worth; William Royce Price, William Tandler Price, and Charles Rabon Price. ■

The Latin American Studies Association (LASA) is the largest professional association in the world for individuals and institutions engaged in the study of Latin America. With over 12,000 members, 60 percent of whom reside outside the United States, LASA is the one association that brings together experts on Latin America from all disciplines and diverse occupational endeavors across the globe. LASA's mission is to foster intellectual discussion, research, and teaching on Latin America, the Caribbean, and its people throughout the Americas, promote the interests of its diverse membership, and encourage civic engagement through network building and public debate.



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