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Introduction

HANNE WEBER AND PIRJO KRISTIINA VIRTANEN

This edited compilation offers in-depth analyses of indigenous perceptions of power and the changing forms of indigenous leadership in lowland South America. Reflecting on the relations between indigenous culture and politics, the chapters link the themes of perception of political power, forms of leadership, and the nature of indigenous incorporation into contemporary South American states. By the 1990s most of these states had recognized indigenous cultural and territorial rights in accordance with international law, and ideas of plurinationalism as a fundamental characteristic of the state and various formulations of the “good life” (*buen vivir* in Spanish, *sumak kawsay* in Quechua) as the goal of development had begun to circulate in Andean countries where indigenous population numbers are high (Gudynas and Acosta 2011). Ecuador and Bolivia subsequently incorporated wording on plurinationalism and *buen vivir* into their constitutions.¹ Nonetheless, in all cases a great distance remains between words and political reality. Indeed, in Latin America a serious chasm exists between public discourse and political practice, and contemporary governments systematically prioritize fiscal balance over social policy (Yashar 2007).

Indigenous peoples continue to be politically marginalized, even where democratic rule has been installed and general voting rights have been extended to them as citizens of the states in which they find themselves.² Hopes of change at the highest level were raised with the 2005 elections in Bolivia that brought in Evo Morales as president on a political program incorporating, in principle, an indigenist agenda

that combined his experiences as a trade union leader with the discourse of anti-imperialism, indigenous rights, and the international ideology of human rights. President Morales, who was reelected for his third term in 2014, has experienced some difficulties meeting the expectations of the country's lowland indigenous groups. Yet the fact that a person of humble Aymara background has ascended to the presidency is an indication that changes are possible even if the process is long and filled with obstacles and missed opportunities.³

A major challenge in the process of decolonizing South American states with weak democratic institutions and limited traditions of popular political participation continues to be the political articulation of the interests of populations subject to marginalizing socioeconomic conditions and discrimination related to their "race" (Van Cott 1995). At the same time, the authority and space for political maneuver by emerging democratic institutions is impeded by the effects of unending neoliberal deregulation measures. These favor global economic elites, effectively undermining the development and perception of the postcolonial state as the embodiment of national sovereignty and a source of social order and equity. The imagery, now somewhat tattered, of "progressive" states in much of South America involved the notions that economic prosperity must be accompanied by social justice and that equity is a necessary condition for democratic governance—a trend recommended by the same institutions (including the OECD, the IMF, and the World Bank) that spearheaded structural reforms from the 1980s (Christensen and Lagreid 2004).⁴ Nonetheless, after more than a decade of "progressive government" in most of South America, indigenous peoples face rather "precarious states"⁵ with fledgling capacities of governance and limited willingness to guarantee the rights of citizens, including the indigenous Amazonians. Furthermore, there is little or no provision for economic development involving sustainable use of natural resources (Gudynas 2014).

Ironically, in most South American countries the state was until recently in the hands of groups and political parties who defined themselves as progressive or new left, navigating the turbulent economic mesh of globalization where they for some time thrived on the high —albeit fluctuating—prices of raw materials. Export-oriented extractivism⁶ plays a key role in the political ecology of development in countries where the progressive state merely updates and re-presents old myths about the need to exploit the enormous natural riches to feed economic growth in a model of so-called "neo-extractivism" (Gudynas 2012). While declaring their adherence to ideologies of participatory democracy and poverty alleviation, the states assume active roles in promoting extractivism, in some cases taking over extractive companies' assets and using the revenue to finance a variety of programs including the improvement of welfare, education, health, and social services.⁷ Yet

the costs are high in terms of environmental destruction, displacement of communities, health problems in contaminated zones, destruction of traditional production systems, loss of biodiversity, and, eventually, loss of political credibility when it becomes obvious that the costs of extractivism outweigh the benefits. The population sectors benefiting from the social programs funded by extractive resource exploitation—mainly the growing urban middle classes—are seldom the same as those suffering the negative consequences—mainly indigenous peoples and rural populations in remote zones. So far this has allowed governments to ignore the negative impacts of resource extraction and suppress the protests of indigenous organizations and concerned non-indigenous citizens and environmentalists, while maintaining and justifying extractivist policies (Gudynas 2010:61).

At the same time, the South American states are generally promoting the political participation of indigenous people, and growing numbers of indigenous persons are being employed by governmental agencies at various levels, leading to increased interaction between indigenous people and state representatives. However, the structures whereby indigenous peoples may organize their communities, educate their children, voice their claims, and secure their possession of territories are still defined by the state.

The emerging forms of indigenous participation in government institutions are only beginning to receive analytical attention by social scientists and anthropologists (Belaunde et al. 2005; Espinosa 2012; de la Fuente 2012; Paredes 2015; Alza Barco and Zambrano Chávez 2014). The authors in this volume trace the ways in which dominant, state-defined standards of organizing indigenous communities and their relations to the state are taken up by indigenous groups and significantly transformed in a field of power relations that link indigenous peoples to the wider world. As a new subfield on indigenous politics is opening up in Amazonian studies, there is awareness that the subdiscipline previously known as political anthropology hardly counts as an analytical ancestor. The latter, premised on an instrumental understanding of politics and the political, saw its heyday in the 1950s and 1960s and then disappeared (Spencer 2007). The analyses of Amerindian politics presented in this volume are, basically, located at a juncture between what is sometimes called “the ontological turn” in anthropology, decolonization, resistance studies, and the concerns with participatory democracy and the postcolonial state of early twenty-first-century liberal postmodernity. The approach exemplifies a “diverse and complex trend in contemporary ethnographic research” as George Marcus has it, “which attempts to synthesize . . . major theoretical interests in the description of culture at the level of experience” and an equivalent concern with fitting studies of the local into the global, or the formation of a world-historical political economy (Marcus 1998:59).

Hence, the volume offers empirically grounded ethnographic assessments of leadership in indigenous Amazonian societies striving to manage and control their own inscription into contemporary states—for better or worse—in the vague, or pragmatic, hope of improving their lot. The questions of how indigenous groups have come to perceive the state—as an ontologically coherent entity, a disaggregated set of disparate institutions, or something entirely different—is addressed in subsequent chapters.

As indigenous leadership has changed and diversified over the past decades, it needs to be recognized that indigenous leadership does not constitute a sphere of its own, directed merely at relations to the state or other outsiders, separate from indigenous society and ways of perceiving the world. The chapters in this volume argue that indigenous politics in Amazonia form part and parcel of the production of sociality within and beyond the boundaries of indigenous, and even human, society. Alterity is constantly present in Amazonian indigenous sociocosmologies, and relations of intimacy tend to involve the inclusion of the “other.” Indeed, some indigenous communities have non-Indians as their spokespeople (Cepek 2012; Ziegler-Otero 2007) and the image of indigenous leaders needs to include this diversity. The non-indigenous individuals who become members of indigenous communities, whether through ties of marriage or other circumstances, often have a greater competence in the language and manners of the dominant society than their indigenous companions; therefore they may contribute to, or even enhance, the struggle to secure indigenous resources and livelihoods in important ways. From the perspective of indigenous ontologies the self is both open and incomplete in the sense that “others” are needed in order to empower the self. This idea of appropriating alien principles of subjectivization (Fausto 2012) has been documented in numerous ethnographies on Amazonian intergroup relations and other practices (Lévi-Strauss 1966, 1991; Erikson 1996; Viveiros de Castro 1992; Descola 1993; Vilaça 2010). Some of the chapters in this volume record observations of leadership practices that have to do with cosmologies and webs of social relations wherein entities other than humans may possess important forms of agency (see also Viveiros de Castro 1998; Santos Granero 2009; Kohn 2013).

Given the incorporation of most indigenous societies into the market economy, and the emergence of indigenous organizations as active agents in civil society, indigenous claims do not affect only state politics. Ultimately they also impact on dominant ontological and epistemological commitments, including the ideologies of *mestizaje* and *indigenismo*⁸ that are inseparable from contemporary forms of colonialism: the politico-normative heirs to the original project of European colonial conquest as seen from the perspective of international theory (Beier 2005). Ethnographically speaking, the roles of contemporary indigenous leaders in many

respects reflect the expectations attached to the warrior and/or shaman of the past who would defend the indigenous collectivity and provide for its sustenance by procuring resources from external spheres.

From the studies collected here it appears that Amerindian societies generally engage the state in ways that maintain boundaries between a Them and an Us (immediately raising questions as to how these entities are defined), while at the same time remaining open to the Other. This may reach the point of “cannibalizing” the Other, even if this includes some form of cultural contamination as part of the process of appropriating what is alien to make it their own: changing in order to remain the same, in other words (Veber 1998). At the level of politics the indigenous peoples at one and the same time actively seek greater inclusion in the national state and greater autonomy from it, as one observer has it (Yashar 2007). This mode of claiming citizenship represents a challenge to current citizenship regimes and involves reconfiguration of what it means to be a citizen. Although the dynamics of indigenous claims and practices are likely to have a long-term impact in terms of eventually organizing states differently, it remains to be seen whether the objective of collective well-being for all population sectors is accomplished (Escobar 2010).

NATURAL RESOURCE EXPLOITATION ON THE RAMPAGE: A MAJOR CHALLENGE TO INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND THEIR LEADERSHIP

South America’s lowlands embody one of the world’s largest remaining frontiers of natural resource exploitation, settler colonization, and financial speculation. In addition to precious woods, minerals, and space for agro-industrial investment involving the expansion of monocrops such as soybean, oil palm, eucalyptus, and sugar cane for agro-fuels, Amazonia’s considerable reserves of fossil fuels have been targeted for exploitation and so has its potential for hydroelectric energy development. The richness of natural resources would thus seem to offer possibilities for ending poverty in countries with some of the highest rates of social inequality in the world. Indeed, when oil exploitation was initiated in the Amazonian regions of eastern Ecuador and northern Peru in the 1970s, the hopes for economic growth to which it gave rise were celebrated by both governments and local populations. Forty years later it has become obvious, however, that petroleum extraction has mainly benefited a small global elite, destroying indigenous and local livelihoods through environmental contamination while the states and the tax-payers are left with the costs of cleanup and the restitution of devastated soils and river systems. While precious little has been generated locally in terms of infrastructure, basic services, education, development projects, or skilled sustainable employment, indigenous and local populations peoples suffer serious health damage. Investigations show

that general medical problems related to environmental contamination in oil and natural gas-producing zones include increased rates of malnutrition, cancer, birth defects, developmental disorders, miscarriages, skin and respiratory ailments, and diarrhea (Kimerling 1991; South Peru Panel 2015).

In some lowland areas illegal gold mining is a major offender, destroying river systems, causing severe pollution, and posing threats to indigenous peoples' health. Driven by rising prices on gold, illegal gold mining has become rampant over the past decades in several Amazonian regions close to indigenous territories and protected areas. In Peru, more than thirty tons of mercury are dumped into rivers and lakes every year by gold miners, according to a report (Wagner 2016) published by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GIATOC). Mercury is toxic even in small quantities and is linked to birth defects, neurological disorders like Minamata disease, and even death. The mining activities are increasingly controlled by drug traffickers and organized crime, linking illegal gold mining to child labor, human trafficking, violence, land grabbing, forced labor, and other criminal activities (Joshi 2016). According to the GIATOC report, the value of illegal gold exports from Peru and Colombia alone has come to exceed the value of cocaine exports from these two countries, the main producers of cocaine in the world (Wagner 2016).

Another consequence of resource exploitation is deforestation due to the expansion of cattle ranching and oil palm plantations that are posing serious threats to Amazonian biodiversity as well as indigenous livelihoods. Whereas cattle pasture was previously the main driver of deforestation, recent analyses of high-resolution satellite imagery indicate that oil palm development is becoming a major offender. As a case in point, a recent report by a Monitoring of the Andean Amazon Project (MAAP) team indicates that Peru in 2015 alone lost an estimated 163,238 hectares of forest, 99 percent of which was driven by small- and medium-scale oil palm plantations (Jones 2016).

Indigenous Amazonians are in the front line of the battles against these forms of resource exploitation, not due to any ideological opposition to resource extraction or economic development generally, as some champions of neoliberalism claim,⁹ but due to their adverse experiences with the unregulated forms of resource extraction. Two of the more blatant examples of oil exploitation illustrate the point: one in the Corrientes zone in northern Peru, which affects local mestizo populations as well as relatively well-organized indigenous populations, including some 12,500 Achuar; and the other in eastern Ecuador, involving a small and weakly organized population of around 2,000 Huaorani. The cases testify to the struggles of contemporary indigenous leaders to secure territorial integrity and establish modes of physical, social, and cultural survival for their peoples and communities. This

entails prolonged uphill battles and dialogues with powerful multinational corporations and state authorities who at best demonstrate little awareness or knowledge of indigenous predicaments and in some cases have been explicitly hostile to indigenous peoples.

The Peruvian Example

Starting in the early 1970s in the valley of the Corrientes River in the department of Loreto, home territory of the Achuar, Kichwa, and Urarina peoples, oil exploitation in Peru has profited from both the lack of environmental legislation and a persistent willingness on the part of the Peruvian state to favor extractive activities over indigenous rights and livelihoods. This has allowed the oil companies to utilize toxic production methods that have been prohibited in the United States since the 1930s due to their damaging effects on human health and the environment. Today most of the Amazonian rainforest of northern Peru is under concession to oil companies. Series of devastating oil spills have occurred over the past decades without the government finding cause to step in. One major spill in March 1994 caused 30,000 barrels of crude oil to run into the Marañón River, a major tributary of the Amazon. Besides, until 2006 Occidental Petroleum Corporation knowingly dumped a daily average of some 85,000 barrels of production water into watersheds in the area of the Corrientes River used by the indigenous Achuar to fish, drink, and bathe. Production water contains high concentrations of chloride and heavy metals. In other parts of the world oil companies are required to reinject production water into the ground; in Peru the oil companies were free to avoid these costly procedures.

Efforts over the years by indigenous organizations (i.e., the Federation of Indigenous Communities of the Corrientes River [FECONACO]¹⁰ and the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest [AIDSESP]¹¹) to hold the company and the government responsible were met by measures of intimidation of indigenous leaders and anybody else who spoke out in their support (Bebbington et al. 2011). In 1996 the Argentine-based company, Pluspetrol Norte, took over the petroleum operations of the state-owned PetroPerú in the area, and in 2000 those of OXY, the Occidental Petroleum Corporation, the US-based company that had been operating in the region since oil exploitation was initiated. By then drillings had been extended beyond the Corrientes basin and into the valleys of the Pastaza and Tigre Rivers.

In 2001 Loreto's Regional Health Agency (*Dirección Regional de Salud de Loreto*) began to monitor the water quality of the Corrientes River, and a comprehensive study of the health of local people, mainly indigenous Achuar, was launched. The results showed that 99 percent of the people checked had highly elevated levels of

cadmium in their blood, and 66 percent of the children showed elevated levels of lead, seriously endangering their health. Similarly, high levels of lead were found in the muscles and internal organs of fish taken from the Corrientes River (Chirif and García 2007:285). Despite the alarming findings, the Peruvian government refused to recognize the existence of a problem. Subsequent health reports by the National Health Institute continue to corroborate the findings that the majority of the persons exposed to oil leaks show levels of cadmium and mercury in their blood far beyond risky levels (Fraser 2016).

Eventually, in 2006, indigenous activists occupied the oil company's installations and blocked drilling activities, momentarily halting nearly 50 percent of the country's oil production and severing road and river transport to and from production sites. This lost the company some US\$3 million per day. After renewed attempts at legal harassment of the indigenous organizations and their counsel, the government and the company finally agreed to reinject the contaminated production water into the ground. In addition, Pluspetrol agreed to pay for health care, food, and clean drinking water for the indigenous communities who had been deprived of their livelihood during the four decades of environmental contamination (Bebbington et al. 2011).

The following year, 2007, OXY faced a class-action lawsuit in a California court, filed on behalf of indigenous members of Achuar communities who had suffered the polluting effects of the extractive activities. They accused the company of engaging in irresponsible, reckless, immoral, and illegal practices in and around the territory of the Achuar, discharging millions of gallons of toxic oil byproducts into waterways in the northern Peruvian rainforest. The lawsuit is still pending.

The company is known for evading government cleanup orders. Pluspetrol produces close to 25,000 barrels of oil a day from its concessions in northern Peru. A report compiled by FECONACO and released in 2011 uncovered 90 oil spills by Pluspetrol in the area's rainforest over the preceding three years, including 18 major oil spills in just the previous year. In 2014 the company's lawyers challenged a report by Peru's Environmental Agency (OEFA) that found 92 contaminated sites in the zone of oil extraction, gaining a court order that invalidated the report's findings. Similarly, when the company was fined 20 million soles (US\$7 million) for drying up a lagoon in Kichwa territory on the Pastaza River, its lawyers managed to have a court overturn the original decision. The evasive machinations of the company notwithstanding, oil spills have poisoned rivers with dangerous levels of cadmium, lead, and other toxic materials to the extent that the Marañón, Tigre, Corrientes, and Pastaza River systems now exhibit such levels of toxicity that Peru's Ministry of the Environment has declared them environmental emergency zones over the past two years.

Production sites do not present the only source of problems. Oil from the fields in northern Peru flows via more than a thousand kilometers of pipeline—the North Peruvian Pipeline, run by state-owned PetroPerú—to a terminal on the country's Pacific coast. Built in the 1970s and inadequately maintained, the pipeline is leaking oil into the environment at alarming rates. Over five years, 2011–2016, twenty-three oil leaks have occurred, contaminating river systems and depriving the indigenous peoples of more than forty communities of their livelihood and access to drinking water. Observers have noted that the deepest concern of the state in this case appears to be the loss of oil production, not the contamination of the environment, the sanitary disaster, the health problems of the local populations, or their lack of clean water. Even though a state of emergency was finally declared after heavy pressure from the local populations, the case has revealed the nonexistence of a public authority responsible for assisting the local people, providing food, clean water, and other requirements in cases of emergency.

The lack of environmental regulation and the absence of the state are key problems in a country where more than 80 percent of its Amazonian forest regions has been granted to private companies in territorial concessions and leases for oil, natural gas, lumber, and mineral extraction. Of these, the vast majority are located in indigenous territories. Hence, a major challenge facing indigenous leaders and representatives of other local populations lies in engineering the introduction of environmental standards and their enforcement; this goal implicates a variety of state agencies that must establish their presence in the zone and build capacities for implementing legislation and supervising extractive activities. There is, therefore, a need for strong indigenous organizations and indigenous leaders capable of pressing their claims and establishing working relationships with state authorities (see also Meentzen 2007). Ironically, Peru's successive governments, like other South American governments, continue to roll back and “flexibilize” already-existing environmental regulations (Gudynas 2014).

The trajectories of resource extraction in indigenous territories in different countries obviously possess their own characteristics in terms of national policy, the vigor of the country's civil society, and the contexts and opportunity structures that condition the nature and level of indigenous organizing. Yet some general features characterize current large-scale resource-exploitation practices across South American states: the willingness on the part of governments to favor oil companies, and the generation of oil revenues through activities that endanger the health of citizens and the environment, is found across the continent, independent of the political color of governments, whether right, left, “progressive,” democratic, authoritarian, military, neoliberal, nationalist, socialist, or other. Ecuador shows a frustrated attempt at countering the petroleum industry's grip on the state.

The Ecuadorian Example

Since 2007 Ecuador has had a democratically elected, and—initially—socialist-inclined government headed by a president who was carried into office with the support of the country's indigenous peoples. Yet this has not changed extractive policies in Ecuadorian Amazonia.

Ecuador is notable for the relative strength of its indigenous organizations but they have not had any greater success than Peru's indigenous peoples in holding the oil companies accountable or making the state assume responsibility. Ecuador's 100,000 km² of rainforest sits atop some 8.8 billion barrels of proved crude oil reserves (figures as of January 2015), the third-largest oil reserve in South America, following Venezuela and Brazil; it has allowed Ecuador, previously one of the continent's poorest countries, to become the fifth-largest oil producer in South America. In debt and dependent on petrodollars for revenue, the Ecuadorian government has put some 80 percent of its oil-rich Amazonian lands up for extractive concessions, most of which infringe on indigenous territories. Ecuador's president, Rafael Correa, has attempted to increase the share of oil revenue going to social programs for the country's poor by maintaining a legal trend toward policies of resource nationalism in the oil sector. With the state takeover of production assets, resource extraction continued and intensified. This became known as "progressive neo-extractivism" (Gudynas 2012).

A large proportion of the oil reserves in Ecuador are located within the Yasuni National Park, one of the world's most biologically diverse and fragile places, and home to the Huaorani indigenous peoples, including two groups in voluntary isolation. UNESCO designated the Yasuni a World Biosphere Reserve in 1989. This did not, however, prevent resource extraction in the park. The Huaorani had presented their land claims, and in 1990 the Ecuadorian government simply carved out more than a third of the Yasuni National Park and granted the Huaorani title to the area, the largest indigenous land title in the country. The state retained all subsurface mineral rights, and the government subsequently divided the Huaorani territory into numbered "blocks" that were auctioned off to oil companies.

President Correa later on sought to turn international concerns over climate change and loss of biodiversity related to deforestation of the Amazonian rainforest into a mechanism for capitalizing on a pledge to leave the country's oil in the ground. A substantial part of Ecuador's oil reserves¹² are in the Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini (ITT) fields in Yasuni National Park—or what remained of it after the Huaorani claim had been carved out. The fields were subjected to a moratorium on oil extraction between 2007 and the summer of 2013 in an effort by the Ecuadorean government to protect biodiversity and avoid dislocation of two indigenous

populations in voluntary isolation. President Correa, however, announced an end to the moratorium in 2013 after efforts had failed to make the international community pay Ecuador for leaving the Yasuni National Park untouched. Subsequently, he declared the development of hydrocarbon resources in the ITT fields to be in the national interest.

Four decades of drilling by foreign companies in Ecuador's oil-rich *oriente* has left behind little but an 85 percent poverty rate, cancer rates of 31 percent, and a 20-year-old class-action lawsuit against Chevron for profligate pollution that still has not been resolved. Ecuador's Ministry of the Environment has reported 539 oil spills in the country between 2000 and 2010 (Gil 2013), a rate of nearly two a month. But, according to independent reports, the rate is probably more than two a week: 779 spills between 1994 and 2002, and nearly 500 recorded spills from 2003 through 2005 alone (Bravo 2007). On top of this, access to oil fields requires that extensive systems of roads must be built through the forest. The roads open the forest to logging, legal and illegal, and an influx of immigrants who cut down even more forest to establish fields for ranching or agricultural production, causing deforestation and further environmental disasters.

INDIGENOUS RESILIENCE ON TRIAL

In the upper Amazon the pressure for intensified exploitation of fossil fuels is a recent addition to already-existing problems due to uncontrolled logging, road construction, settler colonization, and the expansion of monocrop agriculture, which threaten indigenous livelihoods. In many regions of the Amazon, indigenous hunters and fishermen must travel ever further to find game or fish, and alternative ways of making a living are being explored, such as the construction of reservoirs for fish breeding, the expansion of cash crop cultivation, or ecotourism—projects that require considerable investments and whose viability is uncertain. Many indigenous communities are trying to develop cash crop production and small-scale commercial activities of their own, such as selling handicrafts, natural oils, herbal medicines, rubber, nuts, and other forest products. Lacking alternatives, indigenous people also take employment with petroleum, logging, and farming enterprises to gain cash income, thereby establishing a sort of client alliance with the extractive companies.

Prospecting and drilling for oil and natural gas often take place in areas that until recently remained primary rainforest, natural parks, indigenous territories, protected areas or zones reserved for indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation or in the initial phases of contact. The pressures on the environment tend to cause their migration to other areas in search of living space, frequently onto the lands of other

indigenous groups, thus spreading conflicts and problems; at times this leads to massacres and armed hostilities between the different groups.

The challenges to indigenous livelihoods are difficult to cope with for populations unable or unwilling to abandon fully a subsistence economy, partly because education in indigenous zones tend to be inadequate, underfunded, and lacking qualified teachers. Consequently, educational development is high on the agenda of the indigenous organizations, in some places in the form of bilingual and intercultural education in order to ensure it is adapted to the needs of indigenous students (Chirif and García 2011). Indigenous peoples' rights to education are guaranteed by law in most South American countries, and in recent years many indigenous persons have acquired university degrees. Yet colonial thinking and paternalism linger in the educational systems and, as some indigenous scholars argue, indigenous peoples' objectives for the future cannot be realized without their own governance of education processes and politics (Gersem Baniwa 2010). Voicing indigenous concerns and exploring alternative livelihoods both require intensified interaction with different sectors of national society and with NGOs, and indigenous leaders have had to learn to understand and handle bureaucracy, legal processes, and ways of negotiating with state authorities and private companies. It is not unusual for companies to adopt politically correct rhetoric that favors the "protection of nature" and "diversity of cultures," while their eyes remain effectively fixed on their fiscal balance sheets rather than the well-being of indigenous peoples or the environment.

According to the principles established by International Human Rights legislation, including ILO Convention 169, signed by eight South American states,¹³ indigenous peoples should be consulted before any extractive activity is undertaken in their territories. These consultations, if carried out at all, are seldom carried out in good faith on the part of the states, and in many cases they have been subject to a range of manipulations and delays, designed to prevent indigenous representatives from articulating their opposition to the extractive activities (Chirif 2015). Information about the negative impacts of resource extraction is rarely provided prior to consultation, and local populations are easy victims of persuasion, happy to receive baskets of medicine, radios, and solar panels—the "beads and trinkets" of contemporary resource deals—if they go along with the company's extractive activities. Often they are in no position to imagine the effects of oil spills, leaking pipelines, wildlife destruction, polluted drinking water, malnutrition, and the range of social problems including violence, prostitution, rampant venereal diseases, and alcoholism that tend to accompany grand scale natural resource exploitation.

Some companies have developed sophisticated strategies for dividing and conquering indigenous opposition. Company representatives may offer health centers,

schools, and other things indigenous peoples need and that are not provided by the state. Such tangible “gifts,” however, do not make up for the loss of the independent livelihoods that composed the basis of indigenous existence before resource extraction devastated the forests. In some cases, the companies have even succeeded in “buying the conscience” of indigenous leaders who in turn help to discourage community protests. To put a stop to such maneuvers, an Ecuadorian court ruled in 1999 that an oil company could only negotiate with legally recognized federations of indigenous communities. Nevertheless, the practice of “buying” indigenous leaders lingers across Amazonia, facilitated by factionalisms among the indigenous organizations created or encouraged by governments and extractive companies to weaken previously strong indigenous organizations (Ortiz-T. 2011; Chirif 2013).

In Peru, the principles of prior informed consultation with indigenous peoples affected by extractive activities are interpreted by the government in ways that turn consultation into an information dialogue *after* contracts for resource extraction have been signed. Furthermore, the Peruvian government has sought to impose its own definition of “indigenous peoples,” narrowing the concept so as to include only groups in voluntary isolation, hence misrecognizing internationally accepted definitions of peoples entitled to indigenous rights to territory and cultural autonomy (Chirif 2015).

In Bolivia indigenous peoples’ right to receive accurate and appropriate information from the state with regard to projects affecting them was stipulated in legislation on the consultation process (Supreme Decree no. 29,033/07 on Consultation and Participation in Hydrocarbon Activities on Indigenous territories). In 2015, however, this right was removed by a new Supreme Decree (no. 2298/15). The new decree also stipulates that the mere presence of the indigenous communities at meetings is sufficient to ensure the continuation of the consultation process regardless of the participation of legitimate indigenous representatives. Furthermore, if free, prior, and informed consent of the indigenous peoples cannot be obtained, the consultation process may be terminated with an administrative resolution, turning the consultation into an administrative procedure devoid of meaning and objectives (Tamburini 2016:168). In effect, this has brought Bolivia on a par with the other South American countries in terms of rendering the consultation process inane. Such twists in implementing and interpreting legislation represent a serious political challenge that threatens trust in legal principles and undermines the established rules of negotiating according to accepted standards of political participation.

Governments all over Latin America have increasingly opted to ignore indigenous and civil rights principles laid down in their own national constitutions

since the 1990s, and have resorted to meeting legitimate and peaceful indigenous protests with violent repression, criminalizing indigenous leaders who refuse to be silenced. In Ecuador, indigenous leaders have been imprisoned on charges of “terrorism” for protesting against the government’s extractive policies (Cepek 2012:14–15; Ortiz-T. 2011). In Peru a blatant example is the court case against 52 indigenous leaders and other participants involved in a peaceful demonstration in 2009 against legislation that would facilitate resource extraction on their lands and was adopted with no prior and informed consent on the part of the indigenous peoples. The protest included a roadblock near the town of Bagua in the department of Amazonas. The demonstration ended in a brutal clash known as “the Baguazo,” when heavily armed police were ordered by the president at the time, Alan García, his minister of Interior Mercedes Cabanillas, and the general of the Peruvian National Police Luis Muguruza to suppress the protesters. This led to the death of 24 police officers and 10 civilians, with around 200 injured (Reymundo Mercado and Nájjar Kokally 2011). Subsequently the indigenous leaders, mainly Wampis and Awajún, were accused of sedition, shooting police officers, causing serious injury, and hindering development. Seven years later and after a prolonged trial, the Peruvian criminal court in September 2016 acquitted the fifty-two leaders of all charges, noting that the indigenous peoples had had legitimate reason to manifest their protests in an effort to protect their environment and their territorial integrity.

Whereas more than 350 indigenous people have been summoned to face charges related to the events in Bagua, none of the politicians involved have faced any charges. The Regional Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the Northern Amazon of Peru (ORPIAN-P) has urged the Peruvian Judiciary to open a process on former president Alan García and his ministers, declaring them as the only ones responsible for what happened during the Baguazo.

As it happens, governments continue to promulgate new legislation and decrees that seriously undermine or dismantle existing national legislation that has guaranteed indigenous rights to territory by declaring recognized indigenous lands inalienable, unmortgageable, and imprescriptible in accordance with international indigenous rights conventions. The flow of new statutes and decrees tends to reverse the inalienability and unmortgageability of indigenous lands and weaken their imprescriptibility in certain contexts (Ortiz-T. 2011). Processes of recognizing existing indigenous land claims are being stalled while the lands indigenous peoples consider their ancestral territories are being sold off or titled to outsiders for commercial development. The weakening of indigenous land rights is generally related to government plans for economic development in line with the neoliberal shifts in state policies from the late 1980s, implicating the signing of a free trade agreement with the United States or efforts directed at privatizing land to attract foreign

and domestic investments. All of these measures combine to create a situation of legal insecurity for indigenous peoples across most of South America (Yashar 2005; Chirif and García 2007; Ruiz et al. 2015).

In Brazil democratically elected president Dilma Rousseff¹⁴ has been impeached on charges that she violated a law on fiscal responsibility. Her vice president Michel Temer is now at the helm of a power coalition dominated by ultra-conservatives and members of his own populist Brazilian Democratic Movement Party. The power change signals the end of what had appeared to be a positive experience of pragmatic left leadership in Latin America aiming to promote democracy and human rights in an extremely unequal society.

Ironically, political power has passed into the hands of the ultra-right in the wake of Brazil's biggest-ever corruption scandal, involving the country's state-run oil and gas company Petrobras.¹⁵ More than half the members of Congress, directors of some of the country's largest construction companies, and other of Petrobras's contractors are being investigated for their participation in schemes of corruption and diversion of funds to line their own pockets. The bribery and kickback investigation was initiated in 2014 and has already led to the trial and conviction of some of the country's most powerful businessmen and political operators from across the political spectrum.

Investigations are still going on with Brazil now at the mercy of the ultra-conservatives, including the powerful *Ruralista* bloc that represents the country's burgeoning agribusiness sector—and with Temer, a man who is himself under investigation for corruption, at the top post. In this political scenario, the coalition of ultra-conservative and corrupt forces has achieved hegemonic control over the executive and legislative branches and is zealously pushing law reforms that will undermine existing rights in critical areas such as the defense of indigenous lands and the environment (see also Valéria Macedo, chapter 4, this volume). Likewise, the Brazilian Parliament is on the verge of concluding a stream of measures undermining the protection of workers and severely restricting mandatory expenditure in health and education. This will effectively demolish part of the legacy of the country's brief democratic experience after the end of the dictatorship in 1985.

A proposed constitutional amendment (PEC 215) has been promoted by members of parliament who represent agro-industrial, mining, infrastructure, and other business interests in the national congress. The amendment will modify Article 231 of the Brazilian constitution, eliminating the right of indigenous peoples to an exclusive and permanent usufruct to resources on their ancestral territories in cases of "significant public interest." If adopted, this would clear the way for expansion of the agribusiness industry, hydro-electric projects, mining, road building, construction of energy transmission lines, and non-indigenous settlement on indigenous lands. Another constitutional amendment moved forward by the Brazilian Senate

Commission will end the need for environmental assessment approvals for public works projects in the country, ranging from Amazon dams to roads and canals and oil infrastructure. The amendment will devastate Brazil's environment and indigenous groups, taking away legal protections until now guaranteed in the building of new infrastructure projects.

These legislative changes are the more recent steps in the concerted assaults against Brazil's indigenous peoples that have unfolded over the past few years, epitomized by the Brazilian government's zealous dam-building agenda in the Amazon (see Turner, chapter 5, this volume). The construction of the Belo Monte dam on the Xingu River and the installation of several hydro-electric dams on the neighboring Tapajós River, submerging extensive indigenous villages and territories, are among the more flagrant examples of this conduct. With the government plan to install more than a dozen additional power stations on the Tapajós River and its tributaries, the Tapajós is now the scene of a series of major environmental conflicts in Brazil. Mining for bauxite, gold, nickel, diamonds and other minerals in Brazil's Amazon region pose other serious environmental problems and illegal invasions on indigenous lands. Proposed Law 1610 would open up indigenous territories to further mining and resource exploitation, disregarding the indigenous peoples' rights to free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) as enshrined in the International Labor Organization's Convention 169 (ILO 169) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous organizations and environmentalists have strongly criticized the amendment (and its proposed legislation), and a group of indigenous leaders has occupied the congress in Brasília several times to call attention to their fight for human and indigenous rights. In the meantime, supporters of the amendment have obstructed the provision of government services for indigenous populations including demarcation of indigenous territories,¹⁶ health care, and schooling (see also Turner, chapter 5, this volume).

The systematic subversion of established indigenous rights across contemporary South America implies that the political clout developed from within indigenous organizations since the 1970s based on "the right to have rights"—that is, the right of the rightless to claim and politically enact rights for themselves, supported by international human rights and labor legislation and agreements (Dagnino 2003)—has become an insufficient platform from which to promote indigenous interests. As a result, conflicts and public mobilization of indigenous peoples and other marginalized population sectors in South American countries have been escalating over the past decades, protesting against government measures felt to attack or threaten their security, their integrity, their livelihoods, and the territorial space where indigenous communities survive (Bebbington et al. 2011).

In some parts of Amazonia, the situation has been further complicated over the years by the subversive activity of movements such as the leftist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the right-wing paramilitary United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), and the leftist Shining Path in Peru, all of whom operate in various forms of collusion with the drug trade. The latter connection has provided the pretext for the presence of, and interference by, US government agencies in support of the eradication of coca leaf cultivation. The combination has occasioned militarization of large zones with high risks to indigenous peoples of becoming involved in the operations or even caught in the crossfire (Cepek 2012; Jackson 2002).

In the context of this intricate political and socioeconomic scenario, indigenous leaders situate themselves strategically in terms of their long- and short-term interests, as they locate potential allies and define goals and strategies across the scale from electoral politics to leadership in indigenous organizations and positions as local community chiefs. Today's indigenous leaders need to assume active roles in state politics at all levels, establishing political influence and demanding, at the very least, that the indigenous populations dispossessed by reckless resource exploitation receive more than mere payoffs; whenever possible they also collaborate with environmentalists and other sectors of non-indigenous civil society (Conklin and Graham 1995).

A recent initiative toward an alternative to the state's version of "development" was seen in northern Peru, where the Wampis (a Jivaroan population of some 11,000 at the headwaters of the Marañón River and its tributaries) formed their own autonomous indigenous government in November 2015, the Autonomous Territorial Government of the Wampis Nation, representing eighty-five Wampis communities. This new Wampis government covers 1.3 million hectares of rainforest considered ancestral Wampis territory. The move is not an attempt at secession from Peru. It is a strategy for territorial defense. As one of the founders and Wampis visionary Andrés Noningo Sesen explained, "We will still be Peruvians, but this unity will give us the political force we need to explain our vision to the world and to states and companies that only see gold and oil in our rivers and forests." Their Magna Carta prioritizes their well-being and food security and the promotion of economic alternatives that respect their vision for a healthy and harmonious relationship with the natural world. These include the promotion of small-scale fish farming and the production of cocoa and banana. The elected president, or Pamuk, of the Wampis nation, Wrays Pérez Ramírez, declared, "Despite the commitments of the Peruvian government to reduce deforestation and guarantee the legal security of indigenous territories, the State continues to give away our territories to companies exploiting oil and gas, timber and palm oil without any consultation and deforestation continues to grow"

(<http://www.forestpeoples.org/topics/rights-land-natural-resources/news/2015/11/press-release-wampis-nation-peruvian-amazon-declar>).

As Amazonia continues to represent over half of the planet's remaining rainforests and comprises the largest and most biodiverse tract of tropical forest in the world, some of the environmental effects of the current extractivist schemes involve not only local but regional and global repercussions in terms of climate change and loss of biodiversity. As inhabitants of these key zones, lowland indigenous peoples could have important roles to play in the development of social and economic policies that take the preservation and sustainable use of the unique rainforest environment into account—for their own sake and for the benefit of the future of Latin America and the entire world. For these reasons, current transformations in indigenous leadership practices merit analytical scrutiny aimed at understanding their nature and the directions they are taking—for better or worse.

NEW STYLES OF AND CRITERIA FOR INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP

As the work of many indigenous leaders today is linked to regional, national, and international networks involving branches of the UN, ILO, and other supranational bodies of influence (see Niezen 2010; Merlan 2009; Muehlebach 2001), knowledge of national and international legislation on indigenous rights as well as personal experience with government and administration have come to count as important qualifications for indigenous leadership, somewhat superseding previously crucial kinship ties and rainforest survival skills. Contemporary indigenous leaders, whether working in indigenous organizations or elected to positions in governmental structures, are generally required to adapt to life in urban environments far removed from their indigenous communities. In the new environment they tend to have access to public resources and project funds, and many of them receive a salary or other remuneration for their work. So both the basis for recruitment and the functions of indigenous leadership have changed profoundly since the first analyses of indigenous leadership in lowland South America emerged in the 1940s and 1950s (Lévi-Strauss 1967; Lowie 1949).

Indigenous leadership today is not about managing peaceful order in a village or maintaining friendly relations with similar neighboring communities—although these functions continue. Handling relations with the state and a variety of other powerful actors has become the *sine qua non* of contemporary indigenous leadership: a form of intercultural practice crucial to defining indigeneity, and to carving out space for indigenous existence (Muehlebach 2001). Indigenous actors and spokespersons today work with, within, and sometimes against state offices, non-governmental organizations, religious groups, and large transnational corporations,

all of whose activities have profound and extensive effects on Amazonian livelihoods. In some cases they benefit from collaboration with pro-indigenous activists and researchers. For all these reasons, the notion of egalitarian leadership in isolated small-scale societies imagined by conventional anthropology has definitely become obsolete.

During the initial phases of leadership transformation, young men were often recruited to leadership positions due to their abilities to read, write, and speak Spanish or Portuguese. They would manage the “foreign relations” of their indigenous community, while “internal affairs” remained with the traditional leaders. This division of authority became irrelevant as the young literate men grew old and local indigenous communities were incorporated more tightly into non-indigenous economic and administrative structures. Today young men and some women continue to assume leadership positions when special circumstances require innovative initiatives and policy transformations (Ziegler-Otero 2007; Caruso 2012; see also Turner, chapter 5, this volume; Espinosa, chapter 8, this volume; Collomb, chapter 11, this volume).

Effective leadership today requires skills beyond simple literacy, and a growing number of new leaders are university educated or trained specialists with a wide range of responsibilities, including bilingual education, health, forest management, economic development, legal issues, and so on. Some are skilled in the use of new social media and information technologies. The new leaders tend to take up residence in urban areas, and annoying distances are emerging between indigenous spokespeople and the communities they are supposed to represent (Cepek 2012; Chirif and García 2011; Virtanen 2009; Chaumeil, chapter 7, this volume; Virtanen, chapter 10, this volume). While these distances may appear alienating to the outsider, Cepek has argued that they may equally be understood from the indigenous perspective as predicaments of intercultural mediation, reflecting necessary differences on which the effectiveness of leaders depends (2012:96). Likewise, Ziegler-Otero characterizes Huaorani leaders’ positions and policies with respect to outsiders as “contingent, shifting and flexible” in a manner analogous to the flexibility and pliancy of roles and positions within Huaorani society (2007:160). According to Cepek, “Cofán people consider their leaders to be culturally different, morally ambivalent, and problematically oriented to alien actors, settings, and satisfactions”; these qualities are the *sine qua non* of leaders, making them resemble shamans and warriors working to “integrate constantly disrupted collectivities by participating in the very source of their disruption” (2012:94). On the other hand, seasoned observers warn that indigenous leaders who become too removed from the indigenous communities may easily end up making decisions that have no solid backing from their constituencies. This creates inconsistent processes of vindication across central, regional, and local levels of participation, seriously debilitating

the indigenous organization (Chirif and García 2011). To appreciate contemporary indigenous leadership, observers certainly need to be open to entertaining extremely complex scenarios (see also Warren and Jackson 2002).

NOVEL CONCEPTUAL TOOLS AND CHANGING ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVES

There is important work to be done in order to refine and update conceptual tools so as to better appreciate and understand the nature and the dynamics of indigenous leadership. Some authors suggest new terminology to designate the new types of leaders, including *public intellectual*, *professional leader*, *diplomatic leader*, *elected representative*, or *alternative leader*, the latter referring to indigenous employees in public institutions. The terms seek to capture some of the characteristics tied to the ways the new leaders are positioned, and their variety reflects the multiplicity of conditions under which indigenous leaders operate. The new leaders must find ways to grow from, and insert themselves into, the cracks and crevices of existing non-indigenous structures of power and influence. From there they may, at best, hope to open up a space for voicing indigenous concerns and interests in a struggle that is very much uphill most of the time.

Some of the chapters in this volume view indigenous leaders as political subjects in the context of contemporary state policies of democratization and resource exploitation. They examine, among other things, how the new forms of leadership relate to the local indigenous communities at the everyday level, how they tie in with state political agendas, and the sorts of political leverage and room for maneuver to which indigenous leaders have access. To the extent positions are opening up for the inclusion of indigenous representatives in electoral politics, they are more often than not defined by the state as positions that invite the indigenous leaders to represent the government vis-à-vis indigenous people, rather than the other way round. In some cases this requires that the indigenous leader act as a sort of corporate agent (Chirif 2013:158).

The scarcity of studies of contemporary indigenous leadership in lowland South America impedes a thorough understanding of the ongoing transformations. Following the writings of Robert H. Lowie and Claude Lévi-Strauss in the 1940s, conventional ethnography on Amerindian leadership took off from a consensus as to the weak position of Amazonian leaders associated with their lack of any means of physical coercion. The absence of formal positions of political status appeared to be a general feature in indigenous Amazonia, and political power came to be seen as either a product of exchange between the leader and his followers (Lévi-Strauss 1967; Clastres 1974) or as springing from personal qualities in the form of prestige (Lowie 1949; see also Rosengren 1987). These views, however,

have come under increasing critique (Ruedas 2004; Santos-Granero 1993). One reason for this has been that emerging studies on sociopolitical organizations in the precolumbian Americas (Drennan and Uribe 1987) have given rise to a tendency in archaeology and anthropology to focus on various modes of hierarchical social organization in ancient Amerindian societies (e.g., Redmond 1998), and on the existence of chiefdoms in Amazonia's past (e.g., Carneiro 1998, 2007; Schaan 2004; Heckenberger 2005).

By the early 1980s, some scholars had begun to address the mechanisms of social control through age-set categories, clans, and moieties. Leadership and hierarchies were examined in ethnographical studies, such as in Rivière's (1984) work on social organization, Terence Turner's (1984) work on the production of social organization, and studies of specific social roles in relation to forms of power and its production (e.g., Thomas 1982; Santos-Granero 1986; Maybury-Lewis 1989). One innovative approach included the application of psychoanalytic concepts and methods in the exploration of Amazonian leadership, from which emerged the first monograph on Amazonian leadership: Waud H. Kracke's (1978) *Force and Persuasion: Leadership in an Amazonian Society*.

More recent Amazonian studies have noted drastic changes in indigenous leadership. In the 1960s and 1970s Amazonian indigenous leaders established new indigenous organizations to give indigenous people a voice in relation to state politics (Brown 1993; Salazar 1981; Chaumeil 1990; Yashar 1998). Following increased economic integration into national society, indigenous leaders have become conscious of their rights not only as indigenous people but also as citizens of democratic states. This has given rise to new ideas and practices among indigenous leaders and communities, reflecting increased forest-urban exchange, the influence of non-indigenous allies and Protestant missions, and the new attention being paid to indigenous socio-cosmology (Warren and Jackson 2002; Cepek 2012; Greene 2009; Graham 2002). Environmental issues are addressed in political debates and "alternative development" is questioned in the regions where indigenous peoples and their livelihoods are most severely threatened by current neo-extractivism (Escobar 2010; Gudynas 2014; see also Turner, chapter 5, this volume; López, chapter 9, this volume).

Magico-religious knowledge and university training as the foundation of the authority and power of indigenous leaders has already been noted in the existing literature (Santos-Granero 1993; Hugh-Jones 1994; Rosengren 1987). Today, the knowledge required for adequate leadership is even more diverse and increasingly related to the use of social media and information technology, and to the ability for networking, lobbying, and maneuvering within state bureaucracy. Indigenous ideas of agency and of the body as fabricated in relations with others become especially interesting in the new contexts. In some indigenous societies, emerging cleavages

in terms of gender, generation, or social class call for innovative indigenous politics and new types of leaders. These include women or young people who are mobilized, not because of simple language or reading and writing proficiencies, but because they are better positioned to give voice to conflicting issues and needs for political change. New forms of politics require adoption of new forms of communication and performance (Graham and Penny 2014).

The unique contribution of this volume is its presentation of current indigenous conceptualizations of power and leadership in shifting political and economic conjunctures in the Amazon. Interpretations from the native points of view contribute to understanding Amazonian leadership as part of an indigenous sociocosmos where openness to the Other, perceptions of the human body, processes of sociality, and constructions of personhood inform how dialogue is created across boundaries (e.g., Seeger et al. 1979; Lévi-Strauss 1991; Overing and Passes 2000; Cepek 2012). The chapters display a diversity of emic and etic perspectives on indigenous leadership, and comprise an initial step toward identifying the transformations and the tools for their analysis. Much new ethnography is required in order to understand how current indigenous leaders are perceived both in their own societies and outside of them; the material presented here offers contributions on the indigenous perspectives on leadership based on knowledge acquired by anthropologists who have spent years in the field working with indigenous groups. Their methods include participant observation, that is, the standard tool of anthropology (Keesing and Strathern 1998), multisited ethnography (Marcus 1998), interviews, and comparative ethnographic analysis, sometimes supplemented by studies of historical records and research in linguistics and archaeology. Realizing the need to move beyond the local-community perspective and the ethnographic present of conventional anthropology, the studies contextualize local ethnographies in terms of wider political and historical conjunctures in order to explore the relationships of the local to the global embedded in the emerging forms of indigenous leadership.

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF RESOURCE EXPLOITATION AND THE SHIFTS OF POWER IN THE PAST

In his attempt to identify the requirements for ethnographies of late-twentieth-century modernity worldwide, George Marcus noted that “distinctive identities are created from turbulence, fragments, intercultural reference, and the localized intensification of global possibilities and associations” (Marcus 1998:62). New forms of indigenous leadership appear to be similarly created, and it is worth noting, as did Marcus, that memory is a fundamental medium relating history and identity

formation. One important past epoch to which many studies in this volume refer is the Amazonian rubber boom that reached its peak during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century (see in this volume Costa, chapter 1; Veber, chapter 2; Sarmiento Barletti, chapter 3; Pimenta, chapter 6; Chaumeil, chapter 7). It affected most indigenous groups of the Amazonian lowlands in one way or another, and it forms part of the collective memory of indigenous groups and the personal biographies of numerous indigenous leaders (Veber 2009). As some chapters demonstrate, this particular past colors indigenous perceptions of certain forms of leadership and conditions their rejection. The rubber boom had particularly devastating consequences in the upper Amazon, where it caused massive relocations and extermination of indigenous groups, creating wartime conditions in many areas.

The Amazonian lowlands have been the setting for extractivist economies that since the sixteenth century have followed cycles of boom and bust shaped by the whims of international and national markets. Rubber made from plant latex had been used for waterproof clothing since the late eighteenth century, but trade in rubber became lucrative with the advent of steamboats and the opening of the Amazon to international navigation in 1868. Charles Goodyear had discovered the vulcanization process in 1839 and, when rubber car tires began to be used in industrialized countries in 1895, rubber emerged as a major Amazonian export article. The Amazonian lowlands turned into the world's principal source of crude rubber, until production gradually shifted to plantations in Southeast Asia after 1915 (Hvalkof 2000; Santos-Granero and Barclay 2000).

The species of rubber exploited in the upper Amazon were primarily *Castilloa elastica* and *Castilloa ulei*, known as *caucho* throughout Amazonia, and *Hevea brasiliensis*, commonly referred to as *shiringa* or *seringa*. Rubber tapping required considerable mobile labor capable of constantly shifting into new territories as resources became depleted in any given region. Indigenous labor was recruited through various forms of pressure including *enganche* ("hooking"), a form of advancing payment in ways that created debts that could never be canceled (see Santos-Granero and Barclay 2000). The system of *enganche* backed by armed force was well suited to the needs of rubber extraction, and debt peonage became a permanent arrangement that allowed patrons to wield tight control over their work forces. Should workers attempt to resist, physical punishment was cruel (Weinstein 1983; Echeverri 2011). In addition, rubber patrons encouraged the capture of women and children from indigenous settlements in raiding campaigns known as *correrías*. The captives were traded among the rubber patrons and their henchmen, and the women would bear children fathered by the rubber patrons. With time these children grew up to form the core of the patron's private work force. In the upper Amazon, the Piro

(Yine), and Conibo were found to be rather advanced in this form of traffic or trade in *carne humana* (human flesh), the term used in Franciscan mission reports (Izaguirre 1925; Ortiz 1961). While it developed as a side effect of the rubber boom, it quickly became a separate business that continued to function for decades after the collapse of the rubber economy in the second decade of the twentieth century.

Infamous for the atrocities perpetrated against the indigenous populations and the genocidal practices it generated (Hvalkof 2000; see also Costa, chapter 1, and Veber, chapter 2, this volume; Pimenta, chapter 6, this volume), the rubber boom created massive profits for the handful of elite families, mainly based in Iquitos (northern Peruvian Amazonia), who controlled the trade. The indigenous peoples saw another side effect that has generally gone unnoticed. Rather than being victimized by slave-hunters, some indigenous headmen became allies of the rubber bosses and settled near their headquarters. The arrangement allowed the emergence of some very powerful indigenous leaders capable of gathering large followings of indigenous families for mutual advantage and protection. In Peru these powerful headmen became known as *curacas* (a Quechua word signifying “superior” or “principal”). Their positions were consolidated as continued raiding produced a centripetal effect favoring the more powerful among them. Indigenous memories from Peru’s Selva Central region portray these *curacas* as abusive and warlike personalities who were not tolerated in indigenous societies after the decline of the rubber boom (Fernández 1986; Veber 2009). Today the use of *curaca* as the term for an indigenous leader is considered insulting and not politically correct among the indigenous people in this region.

This raises a question as to which forms of leadership may be considered “new” or “old,” indeed whether it makes any sense at all to think in terms of these categories. Is non-coercive and weak egalitarian leadership “old” and leadership based on hierarchical principles “new” in Amazonia? Or is it the other way round? May the rubber-boom *curaca* be considered “old,” while the egalitarian leadership that followed in its wake be considered “new”? Is the *curacazgo* system imposed by the Catholic mission on seventeenth-century indigenous communities comparable to the rubber-boom *curacas* two centuries later? Furthermore, indigenous and non-indigenous terms for leadership may remain the same while their meanings change over time, and indigenous peoples may adopt new terms and give meanings to them that radically differ from those of their origin.

In the study of contemporary indigenous leadership very little should be taken for granted as research attempts to sort through a complicated landscape where influence is operative in unpredictable forms and political power is wielded in ways that are often obscure—except when exercised by openly abusive violence. As new forms of extractive activities have hit Amazonia in the form of oil and natural gas

exploitation, gold mining, extensive logging, and construction of roads and large hydroelectric dams, indigenous leadership has been challenged to find new defenses for indigenous survival. Historically, the techniques have included evasion, adaptation, and cooperation, implying shifting forms of leadership variously conceptualized as egalitarian, authoritarian, charismatic, hierarchical, or other. This may indicate that resilience, at the end of the day, rests in the ability to oscillate between varying forms.

THEMATIC ORGANIZATION

The volume is divided into three parts. The first examines how current indigenous leadership reflects indigenous Amazonian cosmology and ways of perceiving the world. Luiz Costa (chapter 1) discusses the Kanamari's perception of state tutelage in Brazil and their submission to FUNAI, the state agency in charge of indigenous policy implementation in Brazil. Costa argues that the phenomenon may be partially understood as a historical transformation of Kanamari submission to subgroup chiefs posited as metaparents to their communities, expressed in an idiom of asymmetrical consanguinity that has great scope in Amazonian sociocosmologies. As owner-master of the community, the subgroup chief would take responsibility for the group's welfare. Yet, Costa argues, when the Kanamari say that they are "becoming Funai," they do not simply acknowledge their submission to a new owner-master; rather, they are co-opting FUNAI as a set of symbols and a vector of identity in order to differentiate their present selves from their past selves in a collective endeavor to reemerge as kin after a prolonged history of being scattered during the rubber boom.

In a similar vein, Hanne Veber (chapter 2) examines how a penchant for the "strong man" among the Asháninka conditions (and results from) the simultaneous existence of egalitarian and authoritarian leadership principles, producing a tension between democratic and authoritarian dispositions and a recurring oscillation between the two forms. This allows a high degree of resilience and adaptability to changing environmental and sociopolitical conditions. From the perspective of non-indigenous partners and potential allies it implies a measure of unpredictability in the priorities and political inclinations of Asháninka leaders.

The tension between democratic and authoritarian dispositions is further explored in association with the indigenous concept of "living well" (*buen vivir*) in Juan Pablo Sarmiento Barletti's study (chapter 3) of what he terms the "egalitarian tyrant" (egalitarian tyrant) among Asháninka people in the Bajo Urubamba River (Peruvian Amazonia). He explores the attitudes toward the power allowed to contemporary chiefs and looks further at the Asháninka conceptualization of the state

and of the state-defined model of “indigenous community” and communal leader as external to the indigenous sociocosmos. He argues that this separation allows Asháninka people to tolerate abusive authoritarian communal leaders as long as they do not intervene in the everyday pursuit of “living well.”

Valéria Macedo’s chapter (4) on Guarani Mbya leaders in Brazil looks more thoroughly at the close association of leadership and shamanism that has become perceptible after decades of being hidden from view. Today it gives rise to a new type of shamanic diplomacy that mediates different cosmological orders of alterity when negotiating Guarani Mbya relations with the Brazilian state. In consequence, a new generation of leaders have emerged who are not shamans themselves but who are often tied to shamans by kinship. Inhabiting the oldest and most densely settled regions of non-indigenous occupation in Brazil, in villages close to urban centers and major highways, the Mbya have until recently strived for “cultural invisibility” as a way of avoiding aggression from “the whites.” With changes in state policy toward Brazil’s indigenous populations, the new Guarani leaders have adopted a strategy of public political and cultural manifestations as a way of securing recognition of their rights. Since the 1990s, these new leaders, mainly young people capable of maneuvering in the contemporary world of bureaucracy, have been at the forefront of interactions with non-Indians.

The second part of the book presents new forms of indigenous representation. Terence Turner (chapter 5) offers a take on “The Young Kayapó Movement” that took shape in early 2012 in a defiant response to the demoralizing effects on many Kayapó of the stinging political defeat of their most powerful chiefs in their opposition to the construction of the Belo Monte hydroelectric dam and invasions of ranchers on Kayapó territory. For more than twenty years, their struggle had successfully delayed the projected dam through a courageous and effective combination of civil disobedience, diplomacy, and reliance on the Brazilian legal and political system. With President Dilma Rousseff’s government’s contemptuous disregard of the country’s constitutional principles, human rights, and environmental considerations, the oppositional stance of the established Kayapó chiefs had been effectively subverted. Under the leadership of young women, the Young Kayapó Movement spread along generational rather than ethnic or cultural lines, and a confluence of political resistance, cultural pastiche, and vigorous indigenous traditions was mobilized in a process of historical transformation that was facilitated by the creative use of new computerized social media employed for intercultural communication. This allowed it to reach a much wider network of indigenous Amazonian and non-indigenous supporters and contacts than was possible through more conventional Kayapó activism, and has resulted in a number of politically and culturally effective actions.

Another optimistic view of changing indigenous leadership is offered by José Pimenta (chapter 6), who shows how a small Asháninka group in Brazil has incorporated non-indigenous knowledge and forms of organization to successfully empower themselves in their interaction with the dominant society. Pimenta traces much of the success to the marriage in 1967 of the headman's son to the daughter of a former rubber tapper who had settled near the headman's family. The woman advised her husband and father-in-law on their relations with FUNAI and the region's colonists, always supporting the indigenous fight for land while finding peaceful solutions to interethnic conflicts. An indigenous cooperative was set up to supply manufactured goods to the indigenous community, gradually freeing its members from economic dependence on logging bosses, and an indigenous association was created for the management of a series of projects for sustainable development in partnership with government institutions and NGOs. Inadvertently, however, the concentration of political and economic power in the hands of the headman's sons led to growing economic inequality in the indigenous community which, over time, gave rise to insidious social and structural disparities. The current challenge faced by the leaders is to prevent the community from falling apart, meanwhile finding ways to minimize the effects of inequality and dependence on foreign project aid.

Jean-Pierre Chaumeil (chapter 7) offers a historical review of the institutions that have influenced the development of indigenous leadership in Peru, that is, the Catholic mission system, the education provided by the Adventist Mission in the Selva Central, and the bilingual teacher-training program developed by the American Protestant missionaries of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. He also notes how changing Peruvian governments have fomented internal disputes and divisions between the indigenous organizations that emerged in the 1980s, with the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rain Forest (AIDSESEP) as the main national-level indigenous organization in the defense of indigenous rights. With 72 percent of the country's Amazonian territory under lease to private companies for resource exploitation on lots that frequently overlap with indigenous territories and protected areas, AIDSESEP by 2008 took a leading role in protests against proposed legislation that would seriously weaken indigenous territorial autonomy. Facing violent repression of the protests, AIDSESEP's president at the time turned to a quest for political vision through the use of *ayahuasca* in what Chaumeil sees as an effort at cultural revitalization. Subsequently, in 2012, AIDSESEP signed a contract with Petrobrás, the Brazilian company involved in oil exploitation in northern Peru, to finance activities and prevent conflicts in and among the communities in the company's zone of impact. The agreement became the object of massive critique both from within the indigenous movement and from outside observers.

Chaumeil diagnoses these contradictory indigenous politics as reflections of an increasing disconnection between the indigenous organizations and the local indigenous communities, along with a growing fragmentation and privatization of the indigenous political universe. He notes a process of “bureaucratization,” as former indigenous leaders are “recycled” as employees in government offices, or participate as candidates in electoral politics, thus finding positions inside the state rather than in the indigenous organizations.

Finally, Oscar Espinosa (chapter 8) tells the story of how indigenous women in Peru are becoming important political actors in local communities, regional and national indigenous organizations, and government offices. Yet they continue to perceive their political engagement as marginal and many woman leaders are active primarily in indigenous women-only organizations, struggling against sexist discrimination and domestic violence. Positions for female leaders within the indigenous organizations were created in response to pressure from international financial supporters or from agencies that needed to implement programs in coordination with local women. Having gradually gained recognition and respect from their male counterparts, indigenous woman leaders nonetheless must constantly struggle and negotiate with their husbands or fathers, and with other women and men in their communities who consider the rightful place of women to be in the domestic sphere. These pressures often force indigenous women to abruptly end their political careers, observes Espinosa.

Yet, in specific contexts, the differential ideas about women’s position make woman leaders the preferred choice. In the Asháninka Federation of the Ene River (CARE), for instance, the majority of members of the board of directors are women. The Asháninka of this zone believe that male leaders lend themselves to being duped or corrupted, while woman leaders are considered to be more honest and trustworthy. Woman leaders in the Ene River region are survivors of a cruel internal war, and they have seen enough of human duplicity to resist being easily lured into compromising their goals of reestablishing proper conditions for the survival of their communities in a threatened zone.

The third part of the volume is dedicated to considerations of the recruitment and representation of indigenous perspectives in local-level participatory politics. Esther López (chapter 9) examines the position of marginalized Tacana people in the Andean piedmont of the Bolivian Amazon who have found new political spaces in local governmental structures. Such “alternative leadership positions,” as López has it, are found in municipal politics or in the local administrations of national parks, where Tacana employees may present Tacana points of view in their work and make decisions that benefit local indigenous communities.

In the Bolivian lowlands, territorial clashes emerge as conflicts of interests between highland immigrants and lowland sectors of population, both with

cross-cutting regional loyalties and adherence to the presumed pro-indigenous policies of the country's ruling political party. López draws attention to the meager concern with social class and gender in the politics of indigeneity of the ruling party, and reveals a steadfast regional affiliation expressed in the rejection of indigenous highland migrants by lowlanders and a refutation of the idea of shared indigeneity promoted by the Evo Morales administration.

Ironically, members of elite Tacana families, privileged via historical ties of kinship to white landowners, have easier access to positions of leadership within the indigenous movement than fellow Tacanas of humble background. Therefore, the latter are often among those who seek alternative leadership positions outside of the indigenous organizations. Women also tend to look for alternative spaces of operation as this allows them not only to evade the restrictive conformity of the stereotyped indigenous subordinate wife and mother of many children, but also to present what they see as proper Tacana views and interests.

The last two chapters are related to indigenous leaders' adaptations to the changing conditions for acting in state and indigenous politics. Pirjo Kristiina Virtanen (chapter 10) focuses on the personal histories of Apurina and Manchineri political actors and the importance of the body in their acquisition of knowledge and capacity for agency in the urban political environment. She traces the ways indigenous perceptions of acting in positions of leadership are related to embodied learning, requiring dedication and a change of lifestyle. Learning how to operate in an unfamiliar urban environment involves the fabrication of a body suited for the new setting, but one that also incorporates traditional substances. Virtanen argues that this knowledge-making constantly produces kin, or distances them, because of exchanges with new allies, reshaping the relations between the indigenous political actors and their communities. When urbanized indigenous leaders fail to produce tangible and intangible benefits for their distant communities, they often begin to be regarded with distrust. At the same time, however, the dominant society may continue to consider them as legitimate indigenous representatives of indigenous communities.

The closing chapter (11) by Gérard Collomb looks at the push for change in customary leadership by young Kali'na leaders in French Guianean Amazonia who wish to ensure sufficient competence on the part of chiefs to act in the increasingly complex political environment of the modern French state, of which French Guiana has been a part since 1946. Collomb relates the young Kali'na leaders' struggle to general processes of transformation in Amazonian political systems in the wake of their historical articulation with modernity and the dominant outside world that has paved the way for an increasing dissociation of kinship from politics.

Focusing on the different sociocultural levels on which the Kali'na associate with figures of leadership, Collomb examines the forms of compromise they have devised

to come to terms with state institutions and at the same time match the reality of an indigenous group that continues to think of itself as specific and autonomous. The young, educated leaders and their indigenous organization find themselves obliged to administrate under rules that are generally at variance with Kali'na social ideals and mechanisms. More recently, the new indigenous leaders have turned to developing individual alliances with political actors and parties, seeking more representation in local political assemblies. In the Kali'na villages, meanwhile, the customary chiefs continue to embody an indigenous community that is vital and specific to the Kali'na, distinct from the French nation and its institutions. Through these different figures of leadership, the Kali'na seek to restore the idea of "community" to a central position as they find new ways of "doing politics" in their efforts to harmonize an indigenous social world built on kinship, locality, and alliance with a Western world in which mechanisms of abstract individualism, democracy, and the state are promoted as global social and political values.

Amazonian indigenous peoples show many similarities as well as differences in their responses to contemporary political, economic, and societal changes. A more thorough comprehension of the ways in which political practices are perceived and embodied among indigenous peoples may contribute to remedying some of the problems the vast majority of governmental and non-governmental organizations experience when working with Amerindian peoples and their leaders. More specifically, it may enhance the anthropological understanding of the ways power, leadership, and politics constitute a necessary—if insufficient—basis for (and result of) the human and non-human production of sociality and life through changing trajectories of unrest, conflicts over access to resources, and peaceful coexistence of odd classes of beings.

NOTES

1. In Ecuador the constitutional assembly drafted a new constitution in 1998 that indirectly included recognition of the country as a plurinational state, moving beyond simple recognition of cultural difference and the creation of a federated political mosaic (Macdonald 2002). When a new constitution was finally ratified in 2008 it incorporated not only the ideas of a pluricultural and plurinational state but also declared the "good life" (*buen vivir* in Spanish, *sumak kawsay* in Quechua), based on perspectives from indigenous knowledges, as the goal of development, that is, as a form of harmonious coexistence or collective well-being (Gudynas and Acosta 2011). Similar ideas were made part of Bolivia's new constitution in 2009. Whereas the "good life" was stated as a formal right in the Ecuadorian constitution, in the Bolivian constitution it remained an ethical-moral principle of a plural society (Gudynas and Acosta 2011).

2. The term *indigenous* in itself signals not only a status of prior occupancy, but identifies a category of people marked off by a common condition of poverty and marginalization attributed to historical oppression (Niezen 2010:116–17).

3. Obviously the indigenous background of a president, the ideological rhetoric of his campaign, or the amount of indigenous support carrying him into office is no guarantee that his subsequent policies will favor indigenous and marginalized sectors of population. The political trajectories of Ecuador's Rafael Correa and Peru's Ollanta Humala testify to this.

4. Scrutinizing a series of World Development Reports produced by the World Bank in the 1990s, Paul Cammack argues that the “new” states basically take on an active role in securing a neoliberal environment that is effective from the point of view of capitalist competition and accumulation. The accompanying rhetoric on poverty eradication and development serves primarily legitimizing purposes (Cammack 2002:174–78).

5. Political scientists use the term *fragmented state* to describe states that have seen a structural devolution of their capacity for central political control in the wake of neoliberal reforms. Yet “fragmentation” or “devolution” hardly describe the outcome of deregulation in developing states that did not have well-functioning, formal, rule-based, and honest public sectors in the first place (Christensen and Lægread 2004). We use the term *precarious state* to denote contemporary South American states where external public accountability is challenged partly due to the weakness of independent external control bodies linked to parliament, and internal control by the executive is weakened by motivational and capability deficits and the presence of other interests (Christensen and Lægread 2004; see also Dargent Bocanegra 2011).

6. In the Andean countries of Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and Columbia raw materials made up 92.3 percent of total exports from the region in 2006 (Gudynas 2010:54). By 2014 the figure had declined to around 75 percent of total exports from the four countries (Oxfam 2016).

7. President Evo Morales nationalized the oil and gas industry and invested the increased tax revenue in public works projects and social programs. During his presidency poverty in Bolivia has been reduced by 25 percent and extreme poverty by 43 percent. Yet, some 60 percent of the country's population still live below the national poverty line.

8. These ambiguous ideologies of ethnic/racial miscegenation, hybridity, and transformation appear to be prevalent to various degrees in most Latin American countries (de la Cadena 2000; Kelly 2016).

9. Former Peruvian president Alan García is famous for declaring the country's indigenous peoples “second-rate citizens” after they had protested against a series of laws that would seriously weaken indigenous territorial autonomy and facilitate devastating resource extraction in indigenous territories. He also launched the slogan *el perro del hortelano* (“the gardener's dog”), thereby identifying indigenous people as dogs sitting on a pile of food that they would neither eat themselves nor allow others to eat. García's government refused

to implement the rights of prior consultation—or any of the many other rights accorded to indigenous peoples in International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 169, which Peru had ratified in 1993 and signed into law in 1994.

10. *La Federación de Comunidades Nativas del Río Corrientes* (FECONACO) was formed in 1991. It is affiliated to AIDSESEP, the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rain Forest, Peru's national indigenous organization representing the Amazonian indigenous groups.

11. *Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana* (AIDSESEP) includes more than 60 indigenous peoples in Peru's Amazonia, including 96 local organizations referred to as "federations."

12. An estimated 800 million barrels of crude oil—or 20 percent of Ecuador's reserves.

13. ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries was adopted in 1989 and subsequently signed by Bolivia (1991), Colombia (1991), Paraguay (1993), Peru (1994), Ecuador (1998), Argentina (2000), Brazil (2002), and Venezuela (2002). The Convention outlines the rights of indigenous peoples and the responsibilities of multiethnic states toward them, including the duty to secure the "free, prior and informed consent" of the indigenous peoples before any development affecting their lands and resources takes place.

14. President Dilma Rousseff was ousted in late August 2016, fifteen months into her second four-year term. She was among the founders of the Democratic Labor Party (PTD). In 2000 she joined the Workers Party (PT). Until early 2015 her popularity had been high, but when the Petrobras scandal became publicly known, people started to turn against her. She has not been accused of direct involvement in kickbacks and corruption, but she was chair of Petrobras's board of directors 2003–2010, the period when much of the corruption allegedly took place.

15. Petrobras (Petróleo Brasileiro) was formed in 1953 as Brazil's national oil company. It is one of Latin America's largest companies. The government holds a majority stake, but Petrobras also counts thousands of ordinary Brazilians among its shareholders.

16. In Brazil as of 2015 a total of 28 so-called Indigenous Lands covering an area of 7,807,538 hectares and with a population of 107,203 indigenous peoples are stuck in the final stages of demarcation and legal recognition. Another 144 lands covering an area of 25,630,907 hectares with a population of 149,381 indigenous peoples are under legal review, the initial stage in the demarcation and territorial recognition process. All of these lands will be directly affected by the proposed constitutional amendment and related legislation. The proposal also includes a ban on the expansion of already demarcated Indigenous Lands. Currently thirty-five such expansions are under review. Indigenous Lands in Brazil number 698 separate units, covering a total of 115,499,953 hectares, or 13.56 percent of the national territory, mostly in the Amazon region.

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