

Call for papers
The Extractive Industries and Society

This special issue entitled “Lithium dynamics: Global trends and local spatializations” aims at gathering academic work from different perspectives in the humanities and social sciences on lithium dynamics all over the world. Due to the interdisciplinary scope of the planned issue, we welcome all theoretical approaches, empirical and creative proposals. Locally grounded analyses from across the world, especially from territories as yet undisclosed in current literature, as well as analyses of global dynamics can find their place in this special issue. Also encouraged are collaborative proposals co-authored by local actors showcasing horizontal perspectives of knowledge building and sharing.

Proposals and accepted papers should be submitted in English. For further information, guidelines for authors can be found on the following webpage: <https://www.elsevier.com/journals/the-extractive-industries-and-society/2214-790X/guide-for-authors>

The following deadlines will apply:

- * Submission of abstracts (300 - 500 words including the research question, methodology and main results): **5th of September 2022**
- * Responses to submissions will be given at the end of September;
- * Submission of articles by **15th of December** for double-blind peer review;
- * Feedback to authors is expected by **March 2023**
- * Publication anticipated by **September 2023**;

Abstracts and articles must be sent to the four co-editors: marie.forget@univ-smb.fr , bosvincent@yahoo.fr , mprieto@academicos.uta.cl , ana.carballo@unimelb.edu.au

Lithium dynamics
Global trends and local spatializations

Global energy transition constitutes both a paradigm and a process consisting in moving from a carbon system based on the consumption of fossil fuels to a less contaminating and carbon-free system. The phenomenon relies on the development of renewable sources of energy and new technologies; including energy storage systems. Among the bifurcations globally accepted/proposed, lithium takes a central role. Indeed, lithium constitutes a strategic resource due to its global uses for the production of the Lithium-Ion Batteries (LIBs), energy storage devices that experience a high demand due to their global spread in the Information and Communication Technologies and the automotive sectors, the latter supposed to experience a global shift/revolution based on the electrification of mobility based on LIBs.

Because of these global trends, lithium demand and production have been experiencing high growth since the 2010s. The effects are multi-scalar whether we consider the Global Production Networks of the resource, its reorganization (Bos, Forget, 2021), and the local effects of the production on territories and local populations, with direct impacts on local communities and indigenous people (Bustos-Gallardo *et al.*, 2021; Jerez *et al.*, 2021; Göbel, 2013; Sérandour, 2020).

Key works have been conducted on the ongoing dynamics of lithium. This call would like to extend the discussion engaged and develop genuine analysis of yet unexplored experiences by crossing disciplines and focusing not only on the main visible dynamics of the core producers of the Global South but by interrogating less discussed experiences from both the Global South and the Global North. The benefit of the issue is to propose a synthetic panorama of the world's lithium economy today with its different issues identified from different interpretations based on diverse readings of the process, according to a multi-scalar perspective on the territories selected.

More precisely, this call for papers identifies 3 major axes that the authors would like to discuss and engage with.

1. Local and global geopolitics of lithium

The aim of this section is to question the effects of the “global race” for lithium based on a geopolitical and/or an international relations’ approach applied to States’ strategies and diplomacies for extraction. Several stakeholders develop an identified global strategy: the production of the resource and its refining (Australia, Chile, Bolivia, Argentina, China), others specialize in its transformation for the production or recycle of technological or storage devices (Bolivia, China, Japan, Korea, United States, Canada, European Union) to ensure energy independence, security and technological advantages (European Union, USA, Canada). The phenomenon is also questioned through both State and entrepreneurial stakeholders applying the Global Production Networks (Bos, Forget, 2021; Bridge, 2008; Bridge, Bradshaw, 2017) and the Global Value Chain approaches (e.g Baglioni *et al.*, 2017). Key strategies are identified such as forward and backward attempts to corner the market and ensure the access to the resource.

A core interrogation this call would like to explore concerns the “invisible places” of lithium (places we do not speak about. *What really happens in the territories where the production seems to occur quietly (Australia, USA)? What are the local dynamics, forms and relations of power in these territories? What happened to the countries and territories of production where the resource was globally extracted and constituted the top of the list of the producers before the “extractive boom” of the 2010s which have now been relegated to the bottom of the global producers (Zimbabwe, USA)?*

On the contrary, *why does lithium production seem to be so visible and loud in other places?* One hypothesis is that the activity is part of a broader historical and spatial development scheme where it is spatially, materially, socially, economically and culturally integrated within a cohort of intricate mining and infrastructural networks (Australia). On the other hand, the **expansion of the extractive frontier in peripheral territories** and the associated commodification of the environment for extra-local purposes, reactivate historical schemes

of integration to globalization relying on processes of land grabbing and dispossession (Latin America, Portugal).

However, lithium is not a curse and its extraction is not a unilateral phenomenon. As other extractive industries, it gives a new centrality to peripheral territories and their populations reconstructing hierarchies, through conflictive phases or not (Bebbington, Humphreys Bebbington, 2009), favoring new agentivities and local (dis)empowerment of inhabitants, both inside and outside communities (Göbel, 2013; Gajardo, 2020; Grieco, Jenkins, 2020).

2. Multiscalar logistics

This section aims at questioning the infrastructural moment of lithium production and circulation. Infrastructures do political work (Bridge *et al.*, 2018), ever since their design (Hecht, 1998; Bedi, 2019; Larkin 2013, 2018), regardless of their states of development (Graham, Thrift, 2007). *How is lithium moved once extracted? By whom? Where are the global hubs of lithium located? According to which specialty (roar production, industrialised production, storage platforms of new and used devices, etc.) and who controls them?* This section will pay special attention to trade and infrastructural networks which already exist and those that are expected (precisely for LIBs recycling in EU and China). By analyzing the infrastructures of lithium, the objective of the section is to question the spatial productive organization of societies and, hence, the local embedded relations of power.

A focus on public policies will favor a better comprehension of the lithium insertion in the national energy networks and landscapes (Australia, USA, UE). In parallel, focusing on the infrastructure allows one to identify the numerous stakeholders locally engaged in the infrastructure development, their types, based on their interests (beneficiaries, producers, etc.), favoring the typology of stakeholders and tactics and the imaginaries they associate to infrastructures.

The dynamics of the interoperation between lithium infrastructures and other energy networks and their associated stakeholders, specially the solar networks (Forget, Bos, 2022) can be analyzed as processes of extension of historical dynamics of land dispossession based on “eco-extractivism” and green grabbing practices (Núñez *et al.*, 2020) whilst reinforcing private and public discourses of green production and economic development. As Bedi (2019: 187) recalls “*Energy infrastructures are infused with power, and these power structures may frame and reproduce development unevenness*”. Here the attention to infrastructures helps better understanding how the logistics of extractive industries produce specific landscapes that exemplify local/global imaginaries of production and tales of development and how these dynamics are locally (re)appropriated.

3. Locally grounded approaches with special focus on local territories.

This is one of the most visible approaches developed in social sciences on the dynamics of lithium and it seems to have particularly favored the analysis of the Latin American experience, perhaps because of the global role of the region as a key resource producer and deposit holder.

Fieldwork investigation conducted with local actors, including local populations, indigenous communities, and labor unions, but also state and companies representatives at different scales, demonstrates the central contribution of a place-based perspective when analyzing the social and spatial dynamics of production. Especially it helps unveiling the relations of

power between actors and territories and the embeddedness of extractive processes that analyzes conducted at a global scale tend to mask. Several contributions have demonstrated the social effects of lithium extraction in the region. By listening carefully to those who suffer the direct consequences of the extractivism, and looking at ongoing processes through their own perspectives, these academic works have demonstrated the local effects of global energy transition on social tensions, social and territorial fractures, because of land grabbing and hydro-social pressure (Babidge; 2021; Babidge *et al.*, 2019; Göbel, 2013; Jerez *et al.*, 2021; Bustos-Gallardo *et al.*, 2021). Nonetheless, fieldwork investigation also favors the analysis of possible interstices of re/action of local actors. Local mechanisms of co-construction of new energy projects and territories tend to emerge based on the development of new alliances due to local institutional norms of relationships between actors or stakeholders agentivity (Bos, Forget, 2021; Forget, Bos, 2022). Indeed, the lithium frontier can constitute a local opportunity of empowerment, whether we consider the irruption of local actors in political areas or their capacity to activate local or global institutional mechanisms, such as the Convention 169 of the ILO to ensure their rights as the 'strategic essentialism' of their alterity demonstrates (Gajardo, 2020; Göbel, 2013; Grieco, 2020). **Therefore, this section aims at better understanding the local processes of territorialization of lithium extractive industries in different contexts to enlighten the specificities of each context observing how global politics can insert in local territories but also how local contexts inform global strategies.**

A special attention to workers and "energy elites", as works conducted on other resources (Salazar-Soler, 2002, Tausig, 1980), are highly expected as case study comparison favors a better understanding of the local forms of the local imaginaries of lithium and because, even if extractive industries do provoke tensions, they are also part of the social and intimate life of few ones who are transformed by them.

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