

Social inequality and environmental injustice. The effects of global consumption on the Global South

Desigualdad social e injusticia ambiental. Los efectos del consumo global en el Sur Global

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Abstract

This article focuses on analyzing the effects of Global Consumption on the territories of the Global South and how this process, the product of a global hegemonic crisis, generates inequalities and environmental injustices in the territories affected by these consumption and production patterns. For this purpose, empirical examples from the Global South are analyzed, paying attention to the socio-ecological tensions produced by this phenomenon, linking the concept of neo-extractivism as an analytical category. Through this analysis, we also intend to show socio-historical structures of global inequalities and the effects they generate in historically displaced territories. The article concludes by pointing out that inequality is a global problem, not only because of its geographical scope, but also because of its interrelationships between the North and the South, which are strengthened and modified by global production networks and power asymmetries. Finally, it was pointed out that the current economic model, the production processes and the forms of consumption have multiplied the inequalities from the North to the South, revealing processes of deepening the structural dependence of the “peripheries” of the global production networks and the division labor international. In this way, the Global North thus controls production processes in other regions of the world, reinforcing the dynamics of appropriation of income, work, resources, and capital.

Keywords: Global Consumption; Social Inequality; Environmental Injustice; Neextractivism; Global South.

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Resumen

Este artículo se centra en analizar los efectos del Consumo Global en los territorios del Sur Global y cómo este proceso, producto de una crisis hegemónica global, genera desigualdades e injusticias ambientales en los territorios afectados por estos patrones de consumo y producción. Para ello, se analizan ejemplos empíricos del Sur Global, prestando atención a las tensiones socio ecológicas que produce este fenómeno, vinculando el concepto de neoextractivismo como categoría analítica. A través de este análisis, también pretendemos mostrar las estructuras socio históricas de las desigualdades globales y los efectos que generan en los territorios históricamente desplazados. El artículo concluye señalando que la desigualdad es un problema global, no solo por su alcance geográfico, sino también por sus interrelaciones entre el Norte y el Sur, que se fortalecen y modifican a partir de redes globales de producción y asimetrías de poder. Finalmente se señalará que el actual modelo económico, los procesos de producción y las formas de consumo han multiplicado las desigualdades del Norte hacia el Sur, generando procesos de profundización de la dependencia estructural de las “periferias” de las redes globales de producción y la división internacional del trabajo. De esta manera, el Norte Global controla así los procesos productivos en otras regiones del mundo, reforzando las dinámicas de apropiación de ingresos, trabajo, recursos y capital.

Palabras claves: Consumo Global; Desigualdad Social; Injusticia Ambiental; Neoextractivismo; Sur Global.

1. Introduction

In recent years, as a result of the multiple crises affecting our society (consisting of social, environmental, economic, health and military crises) (Brand, 2010), the gap between different sectors of society has increased significantly, especially the economic gap. Thus, the constant growth of inequality has generated a process that has resulted in increased social tensions and the retardation of growth and economic progress in different countries. The statistics are overwhelming: more than two-thirds of the world's populations live in countries where inequality has become increasingly deep in recent years. Thus, regions in the Global South have been sadly affected by the effects of inequality, with Latin America as one of the regions that have unfortunately positioned itself as one with the highest rates of inequality.

These processes of inequality are also accompanied by various other phenomena impacting the social and interpersonal levels. According to numbers from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2022, there is a correlation in that unequal societies are much less effective in generating programs to reduce poverty. On the other hand, these countries also have much slower growth rates than others. They are much more susceptible to the emergence of mass protests and demonstrations linked to economic problems, inequalities, and job insecurities. An example of this is what has been experienced since 2018 in Latin America, in countries such as Ecuador, Chile, Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia, where various social demonstrations developed—the so-called “social outbursts” due to their spontaneity and magnitude—related to the social demand for improving their quality of life, leveling inequality indexes and increasing opportunities for social mobility.

Social inequalities have become a very present theme in the daily lives of the subjects of the Global South, territories in which processes have historically generated methods that have al-

lowed the permanence of structures and relations of inequality. However, this problem is not only a problem of peripheral countries or the Global South but rather a global problem that places us all in the game of inequality. In this way, the 17 United Nations Development Goals, adopted by all countries in 2015, are closely related to solving the inequality problem. Focusing on the different countries and governments to generate adequate policies to address this problem globally, the question here is the following: Will the generation of national and regional policies be enough to end inequality, or is it necessary a change of direction, a change in consumption patterns and relations between the Global North and South?

In this context, the following chapter aims to present an analytical reflection on the structures of social inequality, focusing on analyzing the effects that Global Consumption generates in the Global South and how this process generates inequalities and environmental injustices in the territories affected by global consumption and production patterns. For this purpose, attention is paid to the socio-ecological tensions produced by this phenomenon, linking it, especially to neo-extractivist dynamics. To this end, the chapter first defines the inequality category in the context of the Global South, presenting descriptive statistics on this phenomenon.

Subsequently, in section two, the dynamics linked to Global Interdependencies, Global Consumption, and Global Production are presented, illustrating the differences in economic inequalities at the global level and their correlation with historical processes of plundering, extractivism, productive dependence, and extractivism. For this purpose, authors such as Wallerstein are analyzed to contextualize this correlation. In this sense, the following question is posed: What social relations and structures give rise to sustained income inequality between rich and poor people? Following this line, chapter four presents the concept of neo-extractivism as an analytical category that allows us to analyze how global consumption and production patterns are drivers of social inequality. To conclude the chapter, environmental injustice is presented as a sub-concept of inequality closely linked to resource extraction, sacrifice zones, and neo-extractivism. In this sense, ecological injustice is offered as another phenomenon resulting from global consumption and production dynamics, which affects historically excluded territories as another form of inequality.

The methodology used in this article is based on *qualitative content analysis* and the *comparative method of sociology* to achieve a macro analysis of social inequality and environmental injustice. In this way, the comparative form of international phenomena (Hantrais, 2009; 2014) allows recognizing of the common elements, the differences, and those elements of inflection that arise from the Global processes of Consumption and distribution of power, to generate a broader understanding of the phenomenon of social inequality (Bergene, 2007; Berg-Schlosser et al., 2009). This macro-analysis will be carried out specifically to study the global dynamics of production and Consumption, based on the analysis of economic reports, analysis of economic relations between different global regions, and, finally, analysis of global consumption patterns.

2. Social inequality in the Global South

Social inequality can be defined as the distance between the position of different individuals or groups concerning access to socially relevant goods and services and access to and use of political power resources (Tilly, 1998; Dubet, 2001; Kreckel, 2004; Braig et al., 2015, p. 212). The phenomenon of social inequality must be understood at a global level, analyzing not only the phenomena from a local aspect but also considering its interweaving and relationships with macro-global phenomena and processes. In this sense, global inequalities are influenced or defined according to transregional dependency relationships, which are strengthened and modified based on global production networks and power asymmetries. In this context, elements such as the different axes of stratification, categories of intersectionality, international networks, and the multidimensionality of social, economic, cultural, and socio-ecological inequalities come into play (Braig et al., 2015, p. 212).

It is, therefore, necessary to take into account transregional structures as levels of analysis, moving away from the traditional analytical perspective of nation-states and adding a global perspective to the problem of inequality, including in the study other elements such as globalization, the international division of labor and global consumption. This way, social disparities, and their multidimensional and transregional dependency processes are placed globally.

On the other hand, since the world economic crisis of 2008, the dynamics of inequality have deepened extremely, increasing the financial gap even with people who had a permanent salaried job (Benanav, 2021). However, this crisis has generated an intense concentration and capital growth in the so-called “Economy 4.0” and high-tech companies, with consortiums such as Google, Apple, Meta, and Amazon. This phenomenon has increased social inequality, making the growing economic-social gap between rich and poor one of the most important and urgent social problems to be solved.

This process of deepening social inequality is also due to the generation and growth of dynamics of global labor precariousness, for example, with new forms of flexibilization of forms of contracting, work times, work processes, relocation of the production of goods and services, among others (Tricontinental, 2022, p. 9). On the other hand, with the economic crisis resulting from the coronavirus pandemic, exclusion and global inequalities also increased. The poor became poorer, the richest 1% doubled their income, many workers lost their jobs, and informal workers could not work due to mobility restrictions (Lastra-Bravo, 2021). In this regard, according to the OXFAM 2022 report (OXFAM, 2022), during the pandemic period, a new billionaire appeared every 26 hours, while on the other hand, the income of 99% of the world’s population deteriorated.

It is worth mentioning that Latin America and the Caribbean is the region with the most significant social inequality since 40% of its population is considered poor and almost 20% extremely poor, showing an extremely polarized income distribution (Braig et al., 2015, p. 211). This profound process of social inequality should be analyzed, considering historically framed phenomena such as neoliberalism, which has generated a constant process of social exclusion and individualization of subjects, in addition to producing a plural set of social and economic frustrations linked

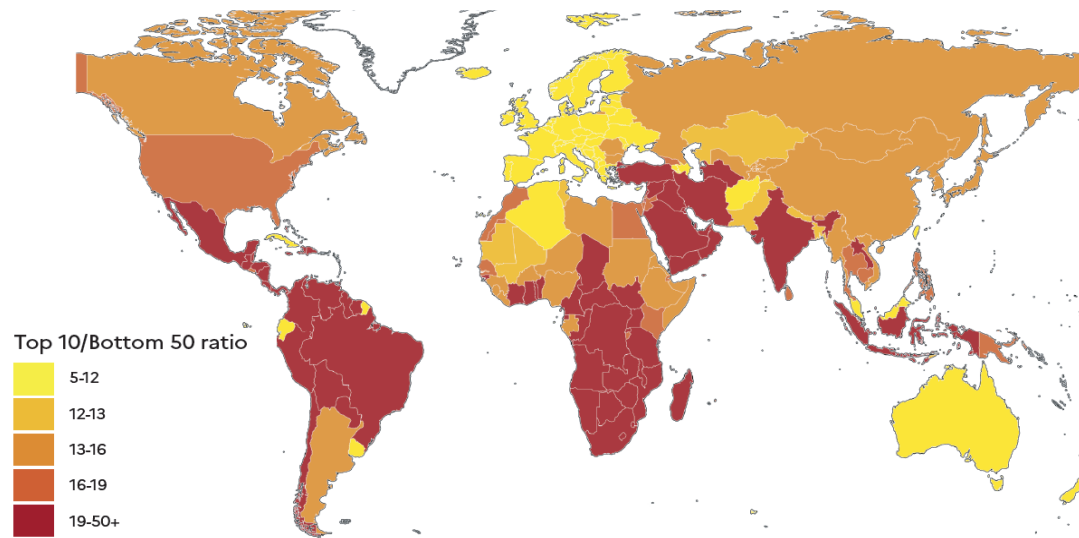
to the expectations and pressures of social mobility, consumption, and competition. In Harvey's words, neoliberalism has been constituted as a project of the dominant classes on a global scale to recompose their power and income (Harvey, 2004; 2007). An example of this is the case of Chile, where since 1973—with the establishment of the dictatorship and the neoliberal market model—the economic gaps between the different sectors of society have been widening, making Chile the second most unequal country in the OECD, where the income of the richest 20% of the population is ten times greater than that of the poorest quintile (OCDE, 2018; Mieres, 2020). Despite this, Chile has positioned itself as one of the countries of the Global South with a good quality of life index and a solid political and social stability scenario, preserving macroeconomic balances despite global shocks (Sunkel & Infante, 2009; Mieres, 2020, p. 92). This shows us the naturalization processes of the production and reproduction of inequality in societies, being even more palpable in the Global South, where inequality gaps are much more evident.

Analyzing the macro levels of social inequality, we can see an abysmal difference between the standard of living of the rich and the poor in the world scenario. According to the World Inequality Report 2022, 70% of the total wealth generated in the world is in the hands of the wealthiest 10% of the population, while on the other hand, the poorest 50% of the population receives only 2% of the total wealth (Chancel et al., 2022). Likewise, by 2022, 10 billionaires worldwide will possess the wealth of about 3.1 billion people (OXFAM, 2022).

In this sense, we must point out that social inequality manifests in a differentiated way in the different regions of the world due to historical processes, such as colonialism, extractivism, the global division of labor, and finally, the configuration of the world system. These processes have caused the Global South to be more latently affected by exclusion, inequality, and social vulnerability.

3. Global interdependencies, global consumption and global production

Current geopolitics is thus a fundamental element when speaking of inequality, as it reproduces and re-generates historical conditions of exclusion and dependencies imposed by the North on the Global South. An example of this was the European Union policy for food exports to South Africa -promoted at the end of the last decade- in which food products such as chicken received an export subsidy, which generated sales prices in South Africa that were 30% below national production, thus disarticulating the national poultry industry, since it was not possible for them to compete with the prices of imported products. This is an example of how the Global North's policies continue to affect the internal processes of the countries of the Global South, often acquiring neocolonial features.

Figure 3 Top 10/Bottom 50 income gaps across the world, 2021

Source: Chancel et al., 2022, p. 12.

As we have seen in the previous graph (Illustration 1), it is possible to see how the countries of the Global South have much higher national income inequality indexes than those of the Global North. Moreover, inequality in each country of the Global South acquires unique characteristics depending on its social, political, historical, and cultural complexity, thus reaching different levels and nuances. However, studies on inequality are commonly based on analyzing levels from a national perspective, leaving aside essential categories such as the macroeconomic perspective, the unequal nature of economic distribution, and global power. In this sense, when considering from a macro perspective the per capita income of the regions of the Global South, the difference with the Global North becomes abysmal and continues to grow.

However, as already postulated by Wallerstein, (Wallerstein, 1979; 1988; 2007), there is an organic-historical link between the North and the Global South, a relationship based on processes of appropriation of resources, labor, and income. This polarized relationship has increased in recent decades, becoming a fundamental dimension of contemporary global production and consumption dynamics (Arrighi et al., 2003). The countries of the Global South are positioned as peripheral actors and dependent on the worldwide economy, acquiring a role as suppliers of natural resources or cheap labor, thus sustaining global production in the countries of the Global South. In this sense, areas such as North Africa and the Middle East generate 185% of the manufactured output that the Global North consumes, which is not reflected in their income since they only reach 15% of the per capita income of rich countries (Tricontinental, 2022, p. 13). In other words, even if the level of growth of manufacturing industries in the Global South is maintained, they will not allow industrialization in the peripheral countries to reach the living standards of the central countries or the Global North. For example, India and Bangladesh, two crucial players in global manufacturing, show extreme levels of inequality, leveling out at only 2.8% and 3.4% of the

per capita income of the countries of the North.

This paradox between production and consumption becomes more evident when analyzing and identifying the location of the industries that produce the products we consume since most of the world's factories are in the Global peripheries in countries with precarious working conditions. Thus, manufacturing, and natural resource extraction have historically remained in the Global Periphery, with the Global South being where most of the manufactures consumed by the Global North are produced. However, the retribution of production needs to be more equitable and fairer since only 20% of per capita income is received (Chancel et al., 2022). This demonstrates a distributive injustice between the center and the periphery, between the North and the South. This injustice has its roots in historical processes and dynamics of inequality.

We can see that what enables the reproduction of the forms of the daily life of the Global North is the production, extraction, and exploitation of the Global South. This phenomenon finally translates into processes in which the sovereignty of States is affected, specifically in terms of their economic dependence on markets and global production networks. In this sense, we can agree with Milanovic's (2013, p. 23) postulation that inequality in the 21st century can be explained more by geographic location than by other categories, such as class.

On the other hand, if we analyze the World Bank data, we can realize that the income per wage in the countries between 1980-2018, the countries of the Global South is below the world average, while 100% of the countries of the Global North are above the average world income. Another phenomenon that feeds these structural factors of inequality is that the current capitalist system, interdependent, globalized, and with high levels of productive delocalization, has generated the historical patterns of dependency to become much more potent. This is because the Global North controls the global processes of accumulation, reinforcing the power of the dominant classes on a global scale, thus increasing the gaps in global inequality (Arrighi, 2007).

On the other hand, the economic fluctuations of recent years have made global accumulation spaces much more evident, reinforcing the power of the dominant classes on a worldwide scale (Stiglitz, 2015; Zizek, 2020) and consequently strengthening the position of the Global North. Specifically, these processes have been based on four fundamental pillars:

1. Transnationalization of capital and productive delocalization
2. Financialization
3. Hyperconcentration of capital
4. Increase in communications, information technology, and transportation

In this sense, the current system of capitalism, consumption habits, and the global way of life has generated inequality gaps that are becoming increasingly abysmal, with considerable differences in the quality of life of people, depending mainly on their geographical location position, that is to say. This is a reflection of the deepening of historical dependency structures, which have

generated that the countries of the Global South -most of them rich in natural resources- cannot enjoy the benefits and real profits from their sales, which generates precariousness in the quality of life of the people of the Global South. This phenomenon, in turn, classifies countries according to their importance within the modern capitalist system, differentiating into central territories (North-consumers) and peripheral regions (South-producers) (Brand & Wissen, 2017). In this sense, the global division of labor with historical roots in mercantilization, colonialism, and neocolonialism fosters a relationship of subordination of the peripheral territories to the Global Production Networks.

In the words of Klaus Dörre (Dörre, 2009; 2022), this is a phenomenon typical of Modern Capitalism, in which the appropriation of territories (*Landnahme*) becomes a fundamental element for its global expansion and growth. In this sense,

...land does not only represent territories or lands, but also populations, modes of production, ways of life and, more recently, sets of knowledge or data that are not yet fully subjected to the exchange of goods dominated by the pursuit of economic profit. (Dörre, 2022, p. 17)

Global Capitalism thus generates an asymmetrical power relationship between territories based on a precise concentration of power. The Global North directs and controls productive processes and decentralizes production towards peripheral regions in the search for new territories to control to obtain their resources and cheap labor. These are global dynamics of aid and labor appropriation. These dynamics lead to global gaps in economic, social, and political inequalities, which have been increasing in recent years (Tricontinental, 2022, p. 27).

4. Neo-extractivism in the Global South

In this context of territorial appropriation dynamics, the phenomenon of Neoextractivism appears on the scene. Neoextractivism is an economic project linked to the appropriation, overexploitation, and extraction of large volumes of natural resources, such as minerals, hydrocarbons, or foodstuffs, to generate a valuation of these resources in the global market (Gudynas, 2009; Acosta, 2011; Bebbington, 2012; Haarstad, 2012; Lander, 2012; Veltmeyer, 2013; Burchardt, 2016; Svampa, 2012; 2019). As a characteristic, in most cases, these resources are exported without processing or industrialization, with minimal aggregated value. Likewise, in this process of extraction of natural resources, various adverse socio-environmental effects are generated in parallel, involving high ecological destruction and an increase in social inequality, social exclusion, and modification of social relations (Burchardt, 2016, p. 76).

In this way, neo-extractivism is configured as a phenomenon closely linked to the demands of the international market, generating a relationship of dependence between the extractive economies of Latin America and the global market, developing, in turn, interdependence between local and national processes and global transformations (Coronado & Dietz, 2013, p. 96). In this sense, worldwide demand and intensive consumption of natural resources become the driving

force of extractivism, responding mainly to the requests of the countries of the Global North.

In this context, the regions of the Global South have historically been associated with processes linked to the exploitation of natural resources, which date back to the time of the conquest, expanding along with colonialism (Quijano, 2000; Machado, 2013; Neyra, 2018, p. 6). These processes have led to the extraction of natural resources becoming the backbone of the region's current economies. This process was consolidated in the 1980s and 1990s when structural changes based on the neoliberal model promoted exports and trade in raw materials (Gudynas, 2009; CEPAL, 2011; Svampa, 2012; Burchardt & Dietz, 2013).

In recent decades, in the Global South, there has been an exponential increase in the development of extractive activities, increasing not only the number of extractive operations but also their magnitude and expansion, developing not only in traditional extraction areas but also in other places where the extractive industry has not usually made incursions. This has generated a process of expansion on the dispossession of goods and people and territories (Harvey, 2004; Svampa, 2019). On the other hand, this expansion is closely linked to an increase and deepening of social and environmental inequalities, increasing the system's unsustainability, and finally positioning us in a civilizational crisis related to questioning the forms of development, consumption, and depredation of natural resources.

In this sense, neoextractivism can be defined as a phenomenon closely related to the creation of global inequality. This phenomenon fosters the dislocation of productive processes and generates a dependence on international markets and prices.

On the one hand, the boom in raw material exports has allowed the countries of the Global South to generate growing revenues, which has also increased the financial margin for development activities and the generation of public policies with a social dimension. This shows a relationship between neo-extractivism and the attempts of States to solve the social problems of their populations through these rents (Gudynas, 2009, p. 209; Gudynas, 2013, p. 38; Burchardt & Dietz, 2013, p. 194). On the other hand, economic dependence on the Global North has been maintained since, under the logic of neo-extractivism, the countries of the Global South remain in a position of exporting subordination, dependent on the demands of international markets and the regulation that these generate for the prices of raw materials. They also maintain a growing dependence on foreign investment and financial assistance (Gudynas, 2010, p. 43).

5. Environmental injustice

As can already be seen, neo-extractive activities are closely related to adverse social, political, economic, and environmental consequences. In this sense, the extractive industry has been predominantly characterized by provoking -as one of its associated effects- forced displacements of nearby populations, generating eco-social vulnerability, i.e., affecting their daily life. The expansion of the extractivist model in the Global South has been bred to a large extent in territories

inhabited by human groups that, in most cases, are vulnerable since the State does not have a significant presence, specifically in sectors where infrastructure and services are difficult to access (Lastra-Bravo, 2022).

Together with displacements, the extractive industry generates a restoration and new order over territorial control. It is the generation of unequal and asymmetrical power dynamics in which the inhabitants, small farmers, or indigenous communities are at a disadvantage to the extractive industries regarding territorial decisions. The extractive industry indirectly influences global policies and market demands on national and local decisions (Coronado & Dietz, 2013, p. 95).

All these processes increase the internal inequality of the countries, generating significant economic gaps in the regions where the extractive processes are carried out. But it is also a phenomenon of environmental injustice since these processes increase the vulnerability of the present populations. On the other hand, if we link our analysis to macro aspects, we can show that the consumption processes of the Global North generate adverse effects and local problems in the territories of the Global South, specifically in terms of production processes, generating structural inequalities but also generating environmental injustice.

An excellent example to explain these dynamics can be Avocado consumption. The avocado's journey to European supermarkets is a great adventure, as this fruit travels a long way before it can reach the table. Chilean avocados come from the country's central region, specifically from the region of Valparaiso, where they are cultivated in monoculture even in places that are not climatically suitable for this, making excessive use of water resources. Once the avocados are ripe, they are harvested by temporary workers in precarious working conditions. Due to the high technology of the crops, only a few workers in the territory are employed in agricultural work, generating very little development in the territory.

The avocado agro-industry is also a long-term monoculture since the useful life of this tree is around 25 to 30 years. Therefore, this activity generates changes in the territories that are transformations that last over time. This extensive and accelerated production has caused diverse costs and environmental damage in the territories where it is developed, generating, for example, soil desertification, droughts, erosion, and loss of biodiversity. This affects the quality of life of neighboring populations, preventing them from enjoying fundamental rights such as access to water or living in a safe and pollution-free environment (Rojas & Lastra-Bravo, 2019) or from ensuring their food sovereignty (Lastra-Bravo, 2019), in many cases increasing the vulnerability to which some groups, such as indigenous groups, have been historically subjected (Lastra-Bravo, 2021).

The production of avocado crops requires a high level of water, requiring up to 9,500 million liters of water (Mekonnen & Hoekstra, 2010, p. 20), which means a significant burden for the water systems, not allowing their regeneration capacity and threatening the collapse of the water services of the surrounding populations (Rojas & Barra, 2020). This situation has generated various social conflicts related to water resources, such as the case of the Petorca community and its defense of the right to water through the Movement for the Defense of Water, Land, and the

Environment (MODATIMA) (Panez-Pinto et al., 2017).

The loss of land by peasants and communities has also become a significant problem because national and transnational agroindustrial companies need fertile land strategically located for avocado production to generate large-scale plantations. Along with the loss of land, a process of biodiversity loss has been developed because intensive production also requires the generation of monocultures, which means that other endemic plants and trees are eliminated from the agroindustrial zones. These processes generate the creation of sacrificial zones (Lastra-Bravo, 2022, p. 37), such as areas subjected to extensive productive extraction processes to create commodities to be exported to the world market according to global consumption patterns. Regardless of their inhabitants' quality of life, it often affects the development of their daily activities and, in the case of indigenous communities, the reproduction of traditional ways of life.

The avocados then continue their journey and are transported by truck to warehouses, where they are sorted and cooled in cold storage at 4 and 8 degrees, delaying the normal ripening of the fruit. The fruits are shipped on cargo ships, where they travel for about three weeks until they reach European ports, where they undergo a process of artificial ripening that lasts about one to two weeks. After this process, the avocados are ready to be transported to their final destinations in supermarkets for consumption.

It is worth mentioning that European and mainly Dutch international consortiums direct the purchase and sale of this fruit. The percentage of direct investments from Chilean producers is very minimal.

In this way, avocado extraction in Chile causes severe environmental problems in its production. It generates economic imbalances since most of the sales process is directed by international companies that manage their prices.

The extractive industry in the Global South is involved in a dichotomy regarding the effects it produces. On the one hand, we find significant profits in countries where the industry is developed, profits that allow the generation of critical public policies linked to improving the population's quality of life. However, as several analyses point out (Burchardt, 2016; Peters, 2016; Matthes, 2019; Svampa, 2019), these profits are only reflected at a structural level, being obtained through taxes, royalties, and specific taxes, being altogether a minimal part of the total profits that the industry generates, demonstrating an imbalance between the actual profit and the taxation to the State.

Finally, in addition to all these environmental problems -generated by the processes of Global Production and Consumption- we must mention that climate change has become a factor of great relevance when talking about the relationship between Inequalities and Environmental Injustice since the climate crisis, its effects and impacts are evidenced in a differentiated manner in the different geographical areas, being paradoxically the Global South the territory most affected by these changes.

6. Conclusions

As we have demonstrated in this chapter, inequality is a global problem, not only because of its geographic scope but also because of its interrelations between North and South, which are strengthened and modified based on global production networks and power asymmetries. They are also sustained by globalization, trade liberalization, and productive de-localization processes.

In this sense, social inequality must also be understood and analyzed based on historical phenomena that have shaped the current global structure of inequality and power asymmetries. For example, historical processes such as colonialism, the creation of the world system, and the international division of labor, through which structures and hierarchies have been created to the roles that territories and countries play on the world stage. Precisely, the Global South is thus positioned as a territory subordinated to the global processes of production and consumption so that the phenomena of inequality not only respond to poorly executed national policies, high levels of corruption, tax evasion, or unfair wages but also due to the global repercussions of geopolitics and the global macro economy.

In this sense, the South has been configured as a peripheral production space, with precarious work levels and quality of life levels much lower than other latitudes of the world, which is a reflection of global exclusion dynamics. Therefore, as we have widely argued, inequality results from the transregional dependence on the Global South.

Global capitalism thus generates an asymmetrical power relationship between territories based on a precise concentration of power. The Global North directs and controls productive processes and decentralizes production to peripheral regions in search of new parts to maintain to obtain its resources and cheap labor. These are global dynamics of appropriation of resources and work, leading to global gaps of economic, social, and political inequalities, which have been increasing in recent years. In this way, we have demonstrated that what allows the reproduction of the forms of the daily life of the Global North is the production, extraction, and exploitation of the Global South. This phenomenon ultimately translates into processes in which the sovereignty of States is affected, specifically in terms of their economic dependence on markets and global production networks.

On the other hand, although income differences have recently decreased in some countries, their basic structure in economic and social inequalities continues to be maintained and reproduced. This persistent phenomenon has historical roots in the colonial era, which has been consolidated in establishing neoliberal policies in the Global South since the 1980s.

We can conclude that the current economic model, production processes, and forms of consumption have multiplied the inequalities of the North to the South, generating processes of deepening the structural dependence of the “peripheries” on the global production networks and the international division of labor. The Global North thus controls the productive processes in other regions of the world, reinforcing the dynamics of appropriation of income, labor, resources, and capital.

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