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Abstract

The article discusses the notion of development, understood as linear progress and economic growth, which contribute to weave a politically and culturally homogenized city in most parts of the world. The paper presents the post-development as a possible alternative, with emphasis on discourses and practices of the *Buen Vivir*. Thereby, the article seeks to discuss a scheme of urban governance that incorporates, in an inseparable way, the actions of the various actors in the micro-regional scope into the planning actions. The choice of the *Buen Vivir* is justified by its feature of cultural plurality, which allows for managing the asymmetries of the actors who weave the city. The main research sources are bibliographies published outside the conventional circuit, as well as the voices of the actors committed to counter-hegemonic struggles. The results achieved are notes on the needs and possibilities of micro-regional articulation anchored in the *Buen Vivir*.

Keywords: Post-development; Urban governance; Buen vivir

1 Introduction

A type¹ of urban and territorial governance is achievable if it connects several theories, models and practices that take into consideration the notion of development, urban planning and legislation, and regional scope, as room for materializing public policies to weave the city. Repeatedly, attitudes related to sustainability, scientific planning, management through the business logic and observation of the interests of global capital – presented as heterodox and critical – are limited in several aspects. In these attitudes, the notion of development is built as a mechanism to justify the weaving of an alternative city. Nonetheless, these perspectives did not reach the conceptual core of the notion of development, understood as linear progress and economic growth. In the end, the multiple ideas of the actors who shape the city are overshadowed by the panacea-idea of "single thought" (Arantes, Vainer and Maricato, 2000).

The notion of development is adopted as a device to operate social changes in most parts of the world. Its prescription operates through the conjunction of tools based on the consolidation, in the first moment, of neoliberalism, democracy and the nation-State. Subsequently, the notion of development seeks to present mostly economic solutions to the domain of life, disseminating the universal idea of individual accumulation of financial resources. In parallel, initiatives of cultural, political and economic homogenization of different social groups take place, contrasting with the insufficient capacity of such initiatives to address the conflicts among the actors who weave the cities (Escobar, 2011). Finally, the notion of development appears as the only alternative for achieving "good" levels of "quality of life".

Such a prescription did not necessarily lead to the same results in underdeveloped countries as it was seen in developed countries. The scenario of dissatisfaction gives rise to the critical, theoretical and practical corpus of the post-development, a school which questions the conventional development built from the knowledge inherent to the West. From these questionings, alternatives to weave cities arise all over the world as, for example, the degrowth (Latouche, 2005), the social movements in favor of the right to the city (Lefebvre, 1991), the anti-development forces debating questions of cultural identity in a non-essentialist way (Escobar, 2011), as well as the *Buen Vivir*.

City weaving assumes the principle that urban scope – studied in its micro-regional scale in this research – consists of actions and processes of multiple actors. Such actors, by competing with their own worldviews, develop hybridisms that give rise to other ways of living. It is assumed that hybridisms are power to develop new types of governance, making it possible to aggregate the actors around common purposes.

This article analyzes how the concept of the *Buen Vivir* contributes to formulating alternatives to development and urban governance from the framework of debates about the post-development. For this end, the article seeks to understand how discourses oriented by the notion of development operate, or, in the same way, discourses oriented by its variations, such as underdevelopment, developmentalism, alternative development, etc. The article also aims to identify practices under implementation in the governmental context which use the *Buen Vivir* to guide the weaving of the city. It also studies the means to incorporate elements from debates around the *Buen Vivir* into the *modus operandi* of state urban planning, mainly in micro-regional scale.

The choice of discussing the *Buen Vivir* comes from the protagonism of the counter-hegemonic movements of Latin America in the world, as stated by Santos (2010, p.149). If, on the one hand, there are good references of the counter-hegemonic experiences developed in the *Abya Yala*²; on the other hand, not all experiences are close to Brazilian cultural contexts. However, the *Buen Vivir* suits multiple cultural contexts due to its main characteristic: adoption of cultural pluralities. Thus, the *Buen Vivir* reaches other Brazilian contexts, such as those of African roots, as for example, *oyó*, *ijexá*, *ketu*, *ijebu*, *egbá*, *ifé*, *oxogbô*, *fon-jejesdaomeanos* and *mahi*, as well as those of Japanese and even European roots.

The hegemonic currents of development make the debate around the *Buen Vivir* relatively invisible, hindering advances in the densification of discourses. For this reason, the base-literature used in this article was available outside the high circuit of publications. It was accessed mainly on events dedicated to the subject, in publications of specific authors and in the speech of the actors who operate according to the logics of the *Buen Vivir*.

2 The genesis of the concept of *Buen Vivir*

The *Buen Vivir* is a plural, broad and open concept, originated from the post-development, from academic reflections and from the strength of social movements. *Buen Vivir* is a concept which also progressed in practices and has multiple origins. Its main influences are the practices of Andean knowledge expressed by *sumak kawsay* and *suma qamaña* ("Vivir Bien"), *ama qhilla*, *ama llulla* and *ama suwa* (do not be lazy, do not be a liar, and do not be a thief), *ñandereko* (harmonious life), *teko kavi* (good life), *ivi maraei* (land without evil) and *qhapaj ñina* (path to noble life) (Gamboa *et al.*, 2012). Due to the multiple origins of the concept, the article does not intend to defend a single definition to the *Buen Vivir*, as it will be seen later. In presenting the genesis of the concept, the objective is to offer a panoramic view, even when incomplete, that is germinating in several territorial and political contexts and scales in the world and from multiple social actors. It is believed that the strength of the *Buen Vivir* comes precisely from the incompleteness of its definition.

The concept of *Buen Vivir* is distant from the visions called "alternative development", in their most recent versions (ecological, sustainable, social, economic, etc.). Therefore, the concept appears as an "alternative to development". Undoubtedly, the concept varies in different governments and social contexts. Nevertheless, Gudynas and Acosta (2011) pointed a few common traits: 1) clear denial of neoliberalism; 2) reconnection with popular agents; 3) Protagonism of the State, and; 4) the strongest actions in the fight against poverty.

Like Houtart (2011), to conceptualize the *Buen Vivir*, the actors committed to counter-hegemonic struggles gain voice, as well as to those defending the dissolution of ideas of progress and development. According to Luis Macas, in saying *Buen Vivir*, the idea is the community, where reciprocity, coexistence with nature, social responsibility and answers to social conflicts exist. For Humberto Chilango, the *Buen Vivir* is a new way of living that goes beyond the needs of American indigenous people and is valid for the whole planet, for supposing harmony with Mother Earth, ecosystem conservation, and for meaning happiness for indigenous people and for all human groups. For Manuel Castro, the concept implies community coexistence with equality, equity, reciprocity, solidarity, justice and peace, thanks to the ancestors' worldview. For Evo Morales (Ayma, 2011, p. 9, our translation³), the difference between the *Vivir Bien* (to live well) and "to live better" consists of the latter being founded in increasing individual consumption, at times supported "at expenses of the other, exploiting the other, plundering natural resources, violating Mother Earth, privatizing basic services; while *Vivir Bien* is to live in solidarity, equality, harmony, complementarity, reciprocity".

Among the researchers studying the subject, Acosta (2008, p.38, our translation⁴) stands out, saying the Ecuadorian *Sumak Kawsay* "has to do with a series of social, economic, and environmental rights and guarantees". In his turn, Xavier Albó (2011, p. 137, our translation⁵), one of the main enthusiasts of *bueno convivir* (translation used by the author) says the *Buen Vivir* "implies a strong ethical component, in valuating and appreciating the distinct other, and of different spirituality. [...] The economic and material are also part of it, even if it is merely to overcome survival".

Escobar (1992; 1999; 2005; 2007; 2011) contributed with a panoramic view about *Buen Vivir*, associating *Buen Vivir* to the post-development. These contributions are based on Michel Foucault's formulations, "Ernest Friedrich Schumacher, Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen, Iván Illich, Arnes Naess, Herman Daly, Vandana Shiva, José Manuel Naredo, Joan Martínez Allier, Roberto

Guimarães, Eduardo Gudynas" (Acosta, 2011, p. 191), Sachs (1996) e Esteva (1987; 2006). Escobar uses the criticism to colonialism to claim that the post-development is born from the post-structuralism and from the post-colonialism, and to point three interrelated components: 1) a discursive and representative reinterpretation of the notion of development for Asia, Africa, and Latin America, shifted from perspectives that historically shaped the development in central countries of capitalism; 2) as result of this discursive and representative shift, the post-development suggests the end of development, presenting alternatives to it, instead of adopting development in its more recent clothes; 3) the true transformation of economic policy – currently understood as specialized knowledge and power of development – pointing out useful ideas for each context, based on the knowledge and practices of social movements (Escobar, 2011).

The *Buen Vivir* is a sum of the theories and practices about alternatives to development, giving protagonism to the knowledge of indigenous people. This sum rescues ideas originating from Andean traditional knowledge, with a focus on people and on defending another type of relationship with the environment. In the Bolivian context, Gamboa et al. (2012) indicate such ideas as postulates. The *Buen Vivir* as postulate gives priority to life, i.e., human beings (as in socialism) or the money (as in capitalism) are not the most important. The most important is to seek the community life. Agreements are managed as responses to conflicts, from a macro- to a micro-regional scale. Differences are respected without discrimination or any kind of submission, considering that each region has a different way of thinking, which must be respected. Life is lived in complementarity, bearing in mind all beings on the planet complement each other, among other living species and among things. Identity is defended, valued and rescued, fully enjoying the life based on community values.

Due to its plurality, the *Buen Vivir* may seem to be a diffuse concept, barely effective in finding true and objective solutions. Nevertheless, it is worth warning that essentialist and homogenizing solutions are being produced and applied for centuries, without producing results beyond the needs of a few classes. The example of *Sumak Kawsay* from *Kichwa* groups, distributed in Andean regions, especially in Chile, Argentina, Peru, and Bolivia, illustrates the *Buen Vivir* in its most practical component, on a micro-regional scale (a macro-regional scale will be debated in section 2). Among the *Kichwa*, spiritual values prevail. Hence, the *Buen Vivir* is expressed through a mythological worldview, which imbricates ways of realizing the world, speeches, and daily practices. According to Kowii (2011), daily results are the *minka*, referring to the compulsory work each individual must perform in collective improvements for the community, as in roads, irrigation systems, and collective buildings, to save, stimulate and scale up work. There is the *ayni*, i.e., solidarity between communities, expressed in short tasks of individual nature, such as in building roofs and in planting. The *maki purarina*, a hand greeting that expresses reciprocity and is used at the level of community, is a signal of knowing, recognizing and helping each other. There is also the *yanaparina*, a fundamental solidarity value to support each other and to overcome difficulties, which arises from the joint identification and implementation of objectives.

As seen, the *Kichwa* take the *Buen Vivir* in a very particular way. Therefore, in the search for the "fullness of life" (Sumak Kawsay's direct translation from the Quechuan idiom), the *Buen Vivir* must assimilate the specific cultural contents of each micro-region from its local perspective. This way, this article presents ideas which are different from those panacea-ideas, characterized by adopting a single cultural matrix. Rather, the article seeks ideas that fit into different environmental milestones, life contexts, and types of policy. In addition to suit micro-regional contexts, as will be seen further, the *Buen Vivir* is also a concept that is taking its first steps into national legislative frameworks in some countries, notably in the recent Constitutions of Bolivia and Ecuador, as well as in planning and state management.

3 The *Buen Vivir* in the Constitutions of Ecuador and Bolivia

The Constitutions of Ecuador (2008) and Bolivia (2009) formalized concepts and ideas related to the *Buen Vivir* in two different contexts. In the Ecuadorian Constitution, the *Buen Vivir* is presented as a right, interlinked with a wide variety of others rights, such as social and human security, transportation, biodiversity, natural resources, natural heritage, culture, food, healthy environment, water, communication, education, housing, health, energy, etc. The *Buen Vivir* occupies the same hierarchical position of the other rights, having a normative detailing of its legal responsibilities. In the Ecuadorian Constitution, there is a direct link between strategies of economic development and the means to ensure development promotes the materialization of the *Buen Vivir*. Thus, strategies of the conventional development must be redesigned to ensure this new right.

Regarding the Constitution of Bolivia (2009), there is not a specific right to the *Buen Vivir*, which appears in the section about the fundamental bases of the State. According to Gudynas and Acosta (2011), the Bolivian Constitution owns a broad cultural amplitude, since conceptions of the *Buen Vivir* from different indigenous traditions are postulated. Another particular characteristic of the Bolivian Constitution is to grant the same hierarchy to the new and to the classical principles, namely those originated from Western knowledge (equality, freedom, social justice, etc.). In the body of the text, principles are directly linked to the political and economic organization of the State and, thus, the Constitution also indicates some changes in how development is implemented, at least in the field of political discourse. At times, these changes are extensive, pointing to economic paths which are closer to the needs of small workers and adopting another attitude towards the market.

In the case of Bolivia, *suma qamaña* and other concepts are ethical-moral principles and, as such, may be expressed in several ways within the Constitution and other legislation, as well as within varied public policies. The *Buen Vivir* as a principle allows acquiescence with Bolivian plurinationality and cultural diversity. In turn, in the Ecuadorian Constitution, *sumak kawsay* is a right and, as such, it becomes a counterbalance to the regime of representation about development. Then, the *Buen Vivir* appears at a high hierarchical level among the rights of citizens and, from the *Buen Vivir*, many other rights stem. Therefore, the *Buen Vivir* is appropriate to a range of means and contexts, while, at the same time, it is quite precise and detailed.

In both constitutional codes, the experience of the *Buen Vivir* becomes an alternative to the conventional development and, as such, expresses one of the possible answers, aligned with the criticism to the post-development. As seen, the *Buen Vivir* does not add to the set of practices of alternative development. Quite the contrary, in the analyzed Constitutions, the *Buen Vivir* represents alternatives to the institutionality and legitimation of the discourse of development, to management and to politics.

The materialization of the *Buen Vivir* in Constitutions or even in infra-constitutional legislation motivates the rescue of instruments and processes similar to those of the conventional development, such as planning and urban governance, to weave the city. There is an apparent contradiction since the alternative to development accepts the means and conventional ways, typical of the *establishment*, to achieve concreteness. However, from the point of view of this article, the debates about the alternatives are not targeted at the soundness of these warnings, but rather on the approach and the balancing of the alternatives to the exit. Codes and plans are just tools and, therefore, insufficient to produce effects, either of development or of its alternative paths. The *Buen Vivir* emerges as a platform to produce concrete and urgent answers to the problems the current development does not solve. As such, the *Buen Vivir* does not intend to deny the tools already created and established. On the contrary, as a plural concept, the *Buen Vivir* is capable of appropriating the adequate tools to its materialization.

4 The *Buen Vivir* and the State

As it could be seen so far, the State plays an important role regarding the reforms the *Buen Vivir* needs. On this basis, "a great deal of caution in facing the temptation to decree the *Buen Vivir* from governmental offices, assuming the State knows everything and alone represents the citizen demands" (Gudynas, 2011, p.14) must be taken. These are fair concerns since the State has limitations intrinsic to its Constitution, many of them directly related to the western nature of its founder concept (Nunes, 2015). The *Buen Vivir* is a platform to share worldviews and perspectives of the future within a horizon of changes that incorporates more and segregates less.

For a perfect understanding of the role of the State in the transition to the *Buen Vivir*, initially, it is necessary to deny some preconceived ideas, as presented by Gudynas (2011). First, society would not be impelled to obscurantist impositions and would not return to its historical early days, when the human economy was mainly based on hunting and home-grown agriculture. The *Buen Vivir* does not assume an anti-technological attitude. On the contrary, scientific and technological advances should be used, not necessarily for the same purposes as today, but rather to meet popular demands.

The second relevant point of this discussion relates to the progressive governments of the left which mistakenly intend to be examples of the *Buen Vivir*. Such governments follow a more or less established procedure, based on strengthening the State, on rearranging the development to address popular demands, and on projects to fight material poverty. As we have seen, these actions are typical of the *Buen Vivir*. Nonetheless, many of them use the same funding strategies of conventional programs of developmental roots. In the case of developing countries, especially Brazil, these strategies imply strengthening (even if provisionally) the extractive economy, the expansion of monoculture and the appropriation of nature.

In third place, the neo-developmentalism or the Brazilian social-developmentalism arises as an idea that would contribute to the *Buen Vivir* through practices like strengthening of the state, protection of the national economy and autonomy from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Yet, these models lack innovation in the sense of economic growth with social justice, and in general, are restricted to cash transfer to populations living historically on the edges of the national wealth.

Finally, the fourth point involves the governmental performances of Bolivia and Ecuador, already analyzed previously, which have been insufficient to face the neoliberal model. In both cases, slow initiatives have yet to produce effective results yet. According to Medina (2011b), since the beginning of the unfolding of the current Bolivian policy, started in 2009, it is not possible "to present a single project to implement the *Buen Vivir* that has already started. Currently, the government keeps a shameful silence about it [...]".

The *Buen Vivir* implies substantial transformations on the current order, but will only result in effective improvement through a relativized construction, adjustable to each cultural and environmental context. Finally, it is difficult to defend radical, broad and immediate social transformations. For the case of the *Buen Vivir*, a transition program must guide changes. "The secret is that the balance between permanence and transformation must bear a movement of real change; each new transformation must open the doors to a new step, avoiding stagnation and setting a pace of sustained change" (Medina, 2011a, p.15).

Despite these measures, it is possible that the *Buen Vivir* remains overshadowed, as it happened to other concepts, alternative to the current logic, such as initiatives of agrarian and city reform. In agreement with Dávalos (2008), even facing adversities, the concept of the *Buen Vivir* can contribute to formulate relevant criticisms and, above all, can demonstrate concrete means to alternatives of future, different from those advocated by development. The cases of Ecuadorean and Bolivian States, for example, by means of their new Constitutions, shed light to the renegade rights of nature, plurinational states, and intercultural societies. It is the first time a State assumes such constitutional commitments, which inscribes strength in the horizon of human possibilities.

5 The *Buen Vivir* and the state planning

Currently, a few instruments were developed to achieve social goals. Planning and state plans are examples of how the state can use such instruments to implement public policies that will result in effective social changes. However, two risks demand attention: first, it is necessary to escape from attempts to modernize the *Buen Vivir* and to transform it in another modern western repertoire to induce social changes. Medina (2011a) pertinently reminds that the *Buen Vivir*, when confronted with the dominant logic of capitalist co-optation, can be undesirably converted into a South-American variation of the sustainable human development. In the second place, it must be avoided to "shelve" what was planned, discussed, and agreed upon. In the last years, this practice has been effective in weakening the State and in strengthening a corporative control of natural resources and socioeconomic imbalances.

A plan aligned with the *Buen Vivir* initially should provide both the State and society with tools to manage tensions. The hypothesis behind is that tensions will not disappear only with the decree of a transition to meet the citizen demands. On the contrary, resistance from some classes, mainly the dominant class, but also from outsiders, as well as varied conflicts, is expected. The expropriation of Bolivian hydrocarbon-producing plants is an emblematic example. Although it took place before the approval of the new Bolivian Constitution, it was already within the logic of *suma qamaña*. In this case, private interests were confronted through a series of clearly planned measures put in place to balance the negotiations among government,

corporations – historically positioned above in the power hierarchy – and international banks. According to Suárez (2009), results were positive economic indicators in subsequent years, despite the little industrial growth.

In addition, state plans aligned with the concept of the *Buen Vivir* are expected to have planning measures in line with a politicized attitude. This necessarily implies establishing a relationship between the criticism and the exercise of planning. The confrontation between the goals set by the United Nations Organization and the government of Ecuador in relation to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is a clear example of such attitude. In contrast to the MDG, when drawing up the *Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir 2013-2017*, the government of Ecuador lists three priority axes to achieve the *Buen Vivir* (Ecuador, 2013, p.80)⁶. The three axes are developed into policies, strategic lines, and goals, the first of them related to consolidating the democratic state and structuring the popular power. The first visible development is the political pillar of the citizen revolution that was planned to Ecuador. Main measures in this pillar are the decentralization of institutions and services in favor of zones, districts, and circuits with local administration, and the strengthening of the State capacities. As result, popular participation grew from 4.9% in the first Plan to 11% in the second Plan, from 2006 to 2012 (Ecuador, 2013). The Plan consists of another eleven objectives that demonstrate the efforts towards the social politicization of State planning. Unlike MDGs, the objectives of the National Plan of *Buen Vivir* seek a permanent, effective, and long-lasting social change, but above all, they seek a change without social exclusion and without homogenizing the needs from the various cultural contexts.

Finally, the planning should also become a tool to recognize and strengthen the productive diversity and the inclusive economy. By assumption, the measures to induce and (un)control the development must be reoriented to create conditions of social realization, which means, namely, the effective allocation of economic benefits to social groups directly related to the productive sector, as well as the use of surpluses to meet the needs of incomplete productive sectors in other territories. The participatory planning of strategic sectors in the economy, the constant search for food and economic security, and the equitable distribution of labor and production are paramount to achieve the inclusive economy.

6 The *Buen Vivir*: an answer to micro-regional articulation

Before continuing with the crossover between experiences of the *Buen Vivir* and the articulation at a micro-regional⁷ level, it is important to elucidate some issues: Is the *Buen Vivir* an indigenous revolution? From the point of view of this article, in Brazil, the *Buen Vivir* does not assume that the European culture is hierarchically positioned below the knowledge of indigenous people. Hence, the *Buen Vivir* is not an indigenous revolution. After all, the *Buen Vivir* is about searching for adequate solutions, independent of its origins. As has been confirmed along this work, this search involves moving away from reductionist and segregating visions that contribute very little to the desired social changes.

The answers the European culture offers show low adherence to the objectives advocated here. Does this mean surpass the European vision and replace it with the vision of the *Buen Vivir* adopted by Ecuador or Bolivia? Regarding the experiences emphasized in this article, it must be stressed that it is not a matter of transplanting an Andean vision to other sociocultural contexts of "underdeveloped" countries. When adopting a totalizing vision of reconversion, the proposition will possibly repeat the current European unhappiness. On the contrary, the *Buen Vivir* must combine primarily the transition measures needed to overcome capitalism, colonialism, racism, extermination, and cultural inferiority.

Does the transition imply the end of the State and of the nation? First, it is important to say that there is not a single concept of nation, but several concepts that do not or should not conflict with each other. The plurality derived from the *Buen Vivir* reinforces nationalism, although not the same civic nationalism from a liberal and geopolitical origin, in which all individuals born in a country (independent of their local context) can be only Brazilians, Ecuadorians or Bolivians. Quite the opposite, the nationalism derived from the *Buen Vivir* refers to the concept of an ethnic-cultural nation, organized at a regional level and going beyond imposed geopolitical limits. In this sense, once again non-European experiences are illustrative. As it is possible to observe, Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples seek and struggle for decolonialism – or "self-determination", according to Boaventura Souza Santos – that long ago stopped meaning the fight for the independence of a new nation-State (Santos, 2010).

According to Acosta (2010, p.101), another question still needs to be posed: "how to recover the role of the State, the responsiveness of the State, minimized during the neoliberal era [...] and, at the same time, how to recover markets to us [?]"⁸. In the search for a protagonism of the State and to allow other possible and better worlds to become true, one of the answers is to terminate the development based on the predatory extractive economy. It is not possible to go on with an economy based on exports of raw material, which implies a selective territorial articulation and tends to prioritize economic, but not social integration. Another answer is to weave the city through a participatory and collective society. To build this participatory collectivity, it is inevitable to think in modes of political manifestation since the micro-regional scope, so does in articulation among regions, i.e., in the sharing of experiences, struggles and transformations.

These answers point to the need of thinking, beyond the national levels of strategic action, also in the several micro-regional contexts. The micro-regional scope is fundamental for the differential creation of the multiple alternatives to development. Very little will change if the micro-regional scope is not taken into consideration. Neoliberal forms and the leading role of the nation-State in defending these interests can overcome transitory crises without many social costs, but they will not help to build a different alternative (Acosta, 2010).

The alternatives must be considered from a perspective of regional integration, but without abandoning global perspectives, i.e., becoming aware that globalizing movements have also produced positive revolutions (Nunes, 2015). It does not mean expecting global movements to solve the problems reported here, once global movements are not capable of solving the power asymmetries observed on a global scale.

7 As a conclusion

When weaving the city from the perspective of the *Buen Vivir*, it is essential to think in the micro-region. To this end, the role of State and its instruments, especially the actions of planning and urban governance, as well as legal plans and codes, need to

be revised. Several actors weave successively the micro-regional scope, creating dynamics of hybridism that lead to structural transformations on conditions of urban segregation and marginalization. Unfortunately, the urban governance often ignores this scale when defining urban interventions, planning, and public policies.

A set of good allied ideas and the willingness of actors towards materializing policies are required to shed light on actions at the micro-regional scope. Capitalism, colonialism, and neoliberalism, even when the State is truly committed, will not be overcome by decree or even with a Constitution. Difficulties of Ecuador and Bolivia are actual proofs. The policy of neoliberalism and the culture of colonialism must be seen as civilizing options to be fought by an alternative of similar civilizational scope. Once neoliberalism and colonialism are overpowered, capitalism will not be necessarily abandoned, since capitalism is a system of values and a model of existence.

Then, the challenge of the *Buen Vivir* at the micro-regional level will be to identify which elements configure the model of accumulation, domination, and exploitation of some actors. The exploitation of labor and of social classes are not the only cases (as Marx suggests) present in the matrix of accumulation and domination. In the representative case of most Brazilian contexts, for example, other general logics are present, such as ethnic discrimination, disparities of gender, machismo, environmental disrespect, political arrogance, the prevalence of needs of the means of production over the means of life reproduction, etc. These edges frame a singular matrix for each micro-region. Some matrices result from processes displaced from other regions and produce similar consequences, regardless of the territorial context, and, hence, need specific means of combating. The processes arising from the *Buen Vivir* on the micro-regional scale recognize the differences and prioritize the action of multiple actors in the various dimensions of human life. The ultimate goal is to weave a city that associates its actions without promoting asymmetries of power.

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1The words type and model are used as indicated by Quatremère de Quincy.

2Abya Yala is the name the Kuna people (Panama) originally used to America before European colonization. Today the term is used as protest, in support of the rights of indigenous peoples.

3From original in Spanish: "[...] a costa del otro, explotando al otro, saqueando los recursos naturales, violando a la Madre Tierra, privatizando los servicios básicos; en cambio el Vivir Bien es vivir en solidaridad, en igualdad, en armonía, en complementariedad, en reciprocidad".

4From original in Spanish: "[...] tiene que ver con una serie de derechos y garantías sociales, económicas y ambientales [...]".

5From original in Spanish: "implica un fuerte componente ético, una valoración y aprecio del otro distinto, y una espiritualidad. [...] Lo económico y material es también uno de sus componentes, siquiera para superar la mera sobrevivencia".

6In the original in Spanish, the three axes are: "1) cambio en las relaciones de poder para la construcción del poder popular; 2) derechos, libertades y capacidades para el Buen Vivir; y 3) transformación económica-productiva a partir del cambio de la matriz productiva" (Ecuador, 2013, p.80).

7The micro-regional is the chosen territoriality due to its potentialities in articulating State and Society, as defended in author's previous publications, see Nunes et al. (2013); Esteves Junior, Nunes e Passos (2014); Nunes (2015).

8Original text in Spanish: "[...] cómo recuperar el papel del Estado, la capacidad de respuesta del Estado, minimizado en la época neoliberal, al menos en tanto factor de desarrollo no en tanto actor de represión – porque los Estados fueron refuncionalizados para reprimir, dejaron de ser actores de desarrollo – y, simultáneamente, cómo recuperamos los mercados para nosotros".