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國際學碩士學位論文

***Buen Vivir* (Good Conviviality):
Political and Social Reform
in Latin America from 2000 to 2010
(The Cases of Bolivia and Ecuador)**

부엔 비비르 (공생):
2000-2010년 라틴아메리카 정치적 사회적 개혁
(볼리비아와 에콰도르 사례)

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서울대학교 國際大學院
國際學科 國際地域學 專攻
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***Buen Vivir* (Good Conviviality):
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(The Cases of Bolivia and Ecuador)**

Thesis Presented

By

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Political and Social Reform
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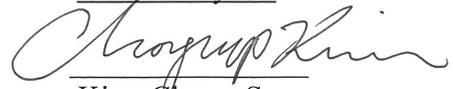
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Abstract

***Buen Vivir* (Good Conviviality):**

Political and Social Reform in Latin America from 2000 to 2010 (The Cases of Bolivia and Ecuador)

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The aim of this thesis is to investigate the evolution of the concept *buen vivir* since its appearance in the discourse of development in early 2000s. As an idea it originated first from the cosmology of the indigenous people of the Andes region, it is an everyday concept that depicts the manner in which indigenous peoples live and understand the world. Some of the values of *buen vivir* include coexistence, community, plurality, reciprocity, and equilibrium. It is these same values and notions that have pushed and inspired different actors to speak out against the national economic policies and the neoliberal development strategy implemented in the region.

In two particular cases, *buen vivir* evolved into a concrete political ideology that has become the foundation of the constitutions and the national development plan policies for both Bolivia and Ecuador. Taking these two countries as the prototype models of the implementation of *buen vivir*, the research aims at evaluating the historical process in which *buen vivir* has been placed as political and developmental stage in Latin America. One of the major criticisms of this concept by past scholars has been the fact that *buen vivir* is idealized and a concept that cannot be applied to modern times. The fact that two countries, Bolivia and Ecuador have implemented this concept in their national public policies proves otherwise. Therefore, by understanding the process of establishment and change, this study tries to understand the rationale and the nature of the concept in terms of the philosophy and the history of indigenous communities in Latin America. In order to accomplish this, an analysis of the etymological roots of the word *buen vivir* and its Quechuan and Aymaran origins is first done.

The research shows how Bolivia and Ecuador represent two different methods by which *buen vivir* has been implemented by the respective national governments. Although at first hand it seems that Ecuador and Bolivia have taken similar steps and borrowed from each other in order to reform the constitution and the national plans, the fact is that *buen vivir* as Eduardo Gudynas (2011) defines it, is a “concept under construction,” characterized by its plurality. This means that at a closer look, there exist several differences in how it is concretized in the constitutions and development models of Bolivia and Ecuador. The main purpose is to understand how and why this concept was able to position itself in the core

foundation of the political ideology and development of Bolivia and Ecuador. Furthermore, it seeks to analyze in what different ways *buen vivir* is creating political and social changes in Bolivia and Ecuador. *Buen vivir* has a great influence on different local communities, not because it is a concept that is prescribed or taught, but because it is naturally embedded in the traditions and cosmovision of the local Andean people. Through the implementation in political, social, and economic sectors in Bolivia and Ecuador, other regions in Latin America have felt the influence and singularity of the concept, and are applying it in their own communities and societies. This paper highlights the implications and innovations *buen vivir* could bring for the entire Latin American region. Taking this notion into account, the final part of the thesis focuses on the implications of *buen vivir*'s future both in the academic field as well as in practice through different policies and laws. Using the core principle of *buen vivir*, the proposition 'to change the approach towards development,' this thesis focuses on the characteristics of *buen vivir* as a complementary tool, a hybrid alternate for social and political reform. It is a comparative assessment of its positioning and the changes it has brought to Bolivia and Ecuador.

Keywords: Buen vivir, Latin America, social movements, decoloniality, indigenous peoples

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1. Introduction

John Rapley wrote “development studies may now have entered a revolutionary phase. Neoclassical theory, though still dominant, is finding a lot of anomalies it cannot easily accommodate. Alternative paradigms, in particular socialist thought, have fallen as well” (Rapley 1996: 170) Explaining the crisis of development, Rapley also talks about the need to find new angles and perspectives for development. In the 1980s “the discursive of development” started with the talk about alternatives and deconstruction of post-development discourse (Escobar, 1995). Most of the discourse about development relied on the so-called ‘western knowledge system’ and it was minority groups like indigenous groups and women that were excluded as principal factors in development and economic growth of nations. For women, it was in the 1970s when there was creation of a field called Women in Development (WID) and the consideration of equality factors in economic growth and development indicators which later evolved into the gender and development (GAD) approach (Agrawal & Aggarwal, 1996). However, the attention given to indigenous groups and the need for tools and projects for inclusive development has been recent. In October of 2014, the first World Conference on Indigenous People was held in New York. The purpose of such gathering was to find ways in which the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples, which was ratified in 2007 during the 61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly, could be realized (UNDP, 2007). The need for the integration of Indigenous Rights

in development agendas and discourse was part of this conference. Although it was in 1986 when the United Nations General Assembly convened a declaration about the rights to development, it took around 20 years, for the same international body to ratify a declaration that was targeted towards minority groups like the indigenous groups.

The declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 23 declares that “Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development” (UNDP, 2007). However, an approach that is directed specifically towards indigenous peoples is not easy to synthesize. In the past, considerations towards multiculturalism and particularity were not central to the idea of development or national policy. It is only that recently, with the renewal of development vision, that indigenous groups have been taken a center stage in some regions. Putting a special focus on indigenous peoples and their rights does not mean that other sectors of the population are ignored. It means that by looking at different alternatives and new ways of tackling issues of development, economic growth, justice, the ultimate goal is to achieve sustainability for all. The discourse on the need of a different perspective and paradigm for development, one that is focused also on indigenous peoples and minority has obtained world-wide interest only recently. In Latin America and other places denominated as “the Third World,” there has long been the need to search for not only development alternatives, but altogether an alternative to development. Due to the desire to push out conventional paradigms of development, like the Washington Consensus, different groups have seek new solutions to the economic, social, and political instability in the region.

Scholars like Acosta, Gudynas talk about alternatives to development emerging out of cultural difference, pushing away from the established western notions of development to more localized alternatives (Acosta & Gudynas, 2011). “Out of hybrid or minority cultural situations might emerge other ways of building economies, of dealing with basic needs, of coming together into social groups” (Escobar, 1995). It is in Latin America that a possible alternative to development discourse has taken precedence. In a region where the voices of minority groups has been ignored for centuries, emerges the concept of *Buen vivir*; presented as a possible alternative to the traditional ideas that have shaped development and growth.

Buen vivir is a concept that was concretized in the Andean countries, but finds its roots in Ecuador and Bolivia. The positioning of the concept in these two countries will be explored more later on, but it is important to first take into consideration the internal and external factors that have pushed this concept and its evolution into both a political ideology and a development platform. The impact of such an accomplishment is important in the current discourse of development. It is important to consider whether *buen vivir* can create impact for other indigenous groups in Latin America and other regions as well. As the proposition of a new perspective or alternative, it offers diverse reflection on the value of *buen vivir* as both a concept and a political policy. The next section will focus on explaining and identifying the roots and the evolution of the concept of *buen vivir*. Then the bases and fundamentals of the cosmology and the indigenous traditions that brought forth such an idea will be analyzed as well as the theoretical value of such a concept.

2. Background

2.1 Etymological roots and origins of *buen vivir*

The word *buen vivir* is the Spanish translation of a word that can be found in Aymara, Quechua or Guarani. Huanacuni Mamani (2010) explains that the Aymaran equivalent of *buen vivir* comes from the language structure that is known as *jaya maru aru* or *jaqui arui* which in English it can be translated as the “voice or the word from the beginning of times” and the Quechuan equivalent derives from *runa simi* which is known as the “people’s language.” The ideas of *suma kawsay* and *suma qamaña* are very old, and although they have recently surfaced, the origins are part of the culture and the way of life of the indigenous societies that have been around before 1492, the year of the ‘discovery’ of the American continent.

Table 1 shows the translation of *buen vivir* into two languages and shows the roots and origins of the term. Although the Spanish translation for *suma qamaña*, *sumak kawsay* is universally known as *buen vivir* and in English it is known as good conviviality or good life, there exists no literal translation that can epitomize the true deepness of the meaning of the terms. Table 1 shows that *suma qamaña* can be expressed as ‘whole co-existence;’ *sumak kawsay* on the other hand can be defined as the ‘whole existence.’¹ The Quechuan form of *sumak kawsay* expresses a life that is not better, or better than others, but good in the whole existence. On the other hand, *suma qamaña* introduces a communitary component, in the sense that the

¹ These translations are personal constructions based on the definitions obtained from Katari Dictionaries.

word ‘co-existence’ denotes the creation of a good society of living for everyone. Although in past works *suma qamaña* and *sumak kawsay* have been translated to good life or good conviviality, these concepts should not be confused with that of well being, because the concept denotes community and plurality of lives, rather than individualism.

Table 1 Translation of *Buen Vivir*

Language	Roots	Spanish Translation	English Translation
Aymara	<i>Suma Qamaña</i>	Plenitud, sublime, excelente Vivir, convivir, estar siendo	Wholeness, sublimity, excellence Live, co-existence, being
Quechua	<i>Sumak Kawsay</i>	Plenitud, sublime, superior Vida, ser estando	Wholeness, sublimity, superior Life, being

(source: katari online dictionaries)

The phrase *buen vivir* is not completely adequate to express the concepts explained in Table 1. This limitedness is due to the cosmology and the way of thinking of the indigenous people of the region which is different from western thought. These concepts reflect a philosophy of life and existence of indigenous communities in Latin America. There exists an interdependence of thought about the idea of community and not about the individual. Therefore when talking about *buen vivir* or the good life, the meaning includes a symbiosis between humanity (plural), nature and society, which will be explained further in the next section.

2.2 *Buen vivir*: Philosophy and Cosmology

In anthropology cosmology is defined as ‘the system of beliefs and practices which social anthropologists commonly refer to as primitive religion’ (Leach, 1982: 229). However, when referring to cosmology of indigenous groups, it talks about the way in which they see and interact with the world not only in religious terms, but as daily way of life. It is a way to see and explain the world that surrounds different cultures. Huanacuni Mamani (2010:15) uses the term ‘multiversity’ (*multiverso*) to explain the plurality present in the lives and thoughts of many Latin American Andean people, a plurality that comes to explain how these indigenous people come to view and understand what it is referred to as development.

Everything is part of harmony, equilibrium of one and all, which is important for the community. This is that a great part of the people of the Andean region of Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Chile and Argentina, and in the ancestral people (first nations) of North America, persists the Ancestral Cosmvision or Cosmic Vision, which is a form to understand, perceive the world and express oneself in relation to life. There exist many nations and cultures in the Abya Yala, each one with their own identities, but with a common essence: the community paradigm that is based on a life of harmony and equilibrium with the surroundings. The sage of our ancestral communities affirms that recovering the ancestral cosmvision is to go back to [original] identity; a fundamental principle to learn our origins and our complementary role in life.²

The philosophy of the Aymaran and Quechuan origins of the concept of *buen vivir* is defined as an idea of harmony and the equilibrium that is established between nature and all human beings. For example, when we talk about *sumak*

² Personal translation of Fernando Huanacuni Mamani, “Buen Vivir/Vivir Bien (Filosofía, políticas, estrategias y experiencias regionales andinas),” *Coordinadora Andina de Organizaciones Indígenas*, 2010, pp. 15

kawsay, there has to be a consideration of the Quechuan order of life and the way in which the world is seen, also known as the *pacha*. It is the equilibrium and the interaction of three spaces of realms. Table 2 summarizes the realms are part of the reality of time and space for the Quechua communities. The three realms are *Hawa Pacha* (the upper world), *Kai Pacha* (the tangible world), and *Uku Pacha* (the lower or earthly world). In order to achieve *buen vivir* or the good conviviality, there has to be an equilibrium and unity among realms and humans. Fulfillment of a good conviviality is therefore created through the total harmony between earth and skies. Table 2 explains how the world of the Quechuans is composed of space, time, human beings, and values, and how it is through the interdependence and interaction of three different spaces, times, beings, and values becomes the foundation of the philosophy of life and wellbeing is created.

Table 2³

Pacha (World)			
Space	Time	Human Being	Values
Hawa Pacha or Hanan Pacha: the upper world (skies), the outside world	Nawpa-Punta Future, flow from outside inward	Huma: head, man, abstract representation	Yachay: thoughts, knowledge, reason and words
Kai Pacha: the tangible world	Kunan: today, now, this time	Shunku-Wicsa: movement, transformation, permanent	Ushay: actions, cultivate, transform
Uku Pacha: the earthly world, intraworld, hidden space	Nawpa-Jipa: past, first, origin	Chaki-Munana: female, sensible	Munay: love, feelings, cultivation of life

³ Personal translation of Luis Maldonado Ruiz, *El Sumak Kawsay o "Buen Vivir," Escuela de Gobierno y Politicas Publicas para las Nacionalidades y Pueblos del Ecuador*
<http://www.egpp.gob.bo/files/materiales/Mod4Curso3PPTMaldonado.pdf>

Similarly, when looking at the cosmovision of the Aymara people, the word *qama* is used to describe the realms of life and being (Torrez, 2008: 57). Table 3 represents the Aymaran equivalent of *pacha* and the fundamental concepts of wellbeing. There exists the juxtaposition of life/death as well as the material/spiritual. In other words the word *qama* and its derivative *qamaña* talk about wellbeing as a “complementary duality” the interaction among different elements in one network: the family the community. For the Aymarans, fulfillment of life, having wellbeing is about achieving a ‘unity of diversity,’ to understand life as part of an ecology and symbiosis between nature and society (Torrez, 2008:62).

Table 3⁴

Qama (realms of existence)			
Qama The place of life, existence (being)	Qama-sa Energy of life	Qama-wi Place of sustenance, life	Qama-ña Place of existence It is the space of harmony of well-being of the ayllu community
Jaka/Life To be integrated into life	Jaka-sa/ Our life Our power of life	Jaka-wi/ place of life Place of common sustenance, Pleasant place	Jaka- ña/ place of living Inner place where a being is developed
Jiwa/Death Transition to what is beautiful and pleasant	Jiwa-sa/ Our pleasantness Death and Birth as transition	Jiwa-wi/ Place of death	Jiwa- ña/ Place to die Pleasant place

(Source: Mario Torrez)

The cosmology or cosmovision of both Quechuans and Aymarans is based on the ideals of community, harmony, reciprocity, duality and complementarity. The reason that their views are different when it comes to development is their different

⁴ Personal translation of the chart in Mario Torrez, “El concepto de Qamaña”, en: Suma Qamaña, la comprensión indígena de la Vida Buena, Serie: Gestión Pública Intercultural (GPI), n° 8, Comunicación PADEP/GTZ, La Paz, 2008, pp. 57.

way of life and reasoning. David Choquehuanca, Minister of Foreign Relations in Bolivia says that there is no discourse of development, “for us there does not exist a pre-state, pos-state of underdevelopment and development as a condition to achieve a desirable life, like it does in the West. On the contrary, we are working towards creating both material and spiritual conditions to construct and maintain *sumak kawsay*, *suma qamaña* that is defined also as a life in harmony that remains in permanent construction.” (Choquehuanca in Huanacuni Mamani, 2010:18)

The rejection of the international discourse of development is based on the different ideology of life and interaction. The ideas of economic growth, improvement are made null in the cosmology of indigenous people. *Buen Vivir* therefore sprouts from the idea of community and reciprocity, something that cannot be achieved through material wealth alone. The emphasis of the complementary relationship between the spiritual and the material, the earth and the skies to which there has to be an equilibrium as well as co-existence. Wholeness and plenitude talk about a shared existence, where wellbeing is achieved as a community, meaning that *buen vivir* is not achieved when some live well while others live badly and suffer. In other terms, *buen vivir* relates to inclusive and equal life standards for all. Even though the cosmology of the Quechuas and Aymarans does provide insight into how the concept of the term *buen vivir* was coined and the logic behind the term, the question that is posed next is how *buen vivir* appears in modern political and development discourse.

2.2 Historical Modern roots of *buen vivir*

The etymological roots of the concept help understand the different characteristics that make up the concept of *buen vivir*. In the past, the words *buen vivir*, *suma kawsay*, and *suma qamaña* have been used interchangeably. Although the meaning of the three words is similar etymologically, when taking the concepts in social and historical context, it is important to separate the concepts into two categories, the ones that focus mainly on the cosmology of the Andean indigenous people and its way of thinking, and the ones that are related to development and modern politics. In this thesis, the focus and use will be on the term *buen vivir*. Although some of the cosmology of Andean indigenous peoples has been explained in the previous section, the aim is not to evaluate or analyze the Andean way of thinking. Until recently, *buen vivir* has been used synonymously as *sumak kawsay* in Ecuador and *Suma Qamaña* in Bolivia. However, scholars like Atawallpa Oviedo call for a clear discursive split of *buen vivir* and *sumak kawsay/suma qamaña*. Oviedo (2014) demands a “fundamental rupture” of work, with *buen vivir* on one side, and *sumak kawsay* or *suma qamaña* on the other side. The idea is that the way in which *buen vivir* has been internalized in Bolivia and Ecuador; it calls for the right to justice, development, empowerment, and inclusion. This western terms have been added to the basic characteristics of *sumak kawsay/suma qamaña* include coexistence, harmony with nature, complementarities and solidarity, the integrality of life, and equilibrium (Acosta:2008; Gudynas: 2010). Oviedo and other *indigenista* movements claim that the terms *buen vivir* is a re-framework and redefinition of the

cosmology and the ancestral way of being of the Andean people. Therefore, this thesis uses the term *buen vivir* and not *sumak kawsay/suma qamaña*, to refer to the political and social reconstruction, or the “utopia to be constructed” as Acosta (2010) refers to. This means that there is a reconstruction of a national economic and social system based on local practices of production, way of life, and philosophy. Although the ideas and the origin is Andean, the institutions, and the system created for a society of *buen vivir* are the same as those of other western nations. It is due to this hybrid nature that the Spanish translation of *sumak kawsay* and *suma qamaña* is used. Historically, the break and the evolution of *buen vivir* from the Andean cosmology occurred in the 1970s. In the next sections, this evolution will be explained for Bolivia and Ecuador.

2.2.1 Bolivia

As mentioned in the previous sections, *buen vivir*'s philosophical and etymological roots can be traced to Andean indigenous peoples over thousands of years ago. However, according to scholars like Daniel Oviedo the conceptualization of *buen vivir* in Bolivia occurred through the Katarismo movement in the 1970s. As a political tendency named after Tupaj Katari, this movement was created after the agrarian reform of 1953 and a public policy that allowed some Aymaran youth to study in the universities in La Paz in the 1960s. This was the start of the political movement that was also the cradle for Aymaran intellectuals and scholars like Simon Yampara and Javier Medina. In 1973, the Kataristas issued the 1973 Tiwanaku

Manifiesto, which was the first document where accusations against capitalism and colonialism were made, claiming they were the roots of the cultural and political oppression of indigenous like Aymarans and Quechuans (Van Cott 2007: 55). Due to ideological differences, the Kataristas split into different political factions, but institutionally it was weakened. The symbols and much of the work of the Kataristas was taken over by different NGOs and other groups (Van Cott 2007: 85). One such group is the German Society for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), who started a project called *Suma Qamaña*. It is here that the meeting between the Andean cosmology and the western thinking occurred, and *buen vivir* was concretized and later included in legal and political documents. The cooperation of both intellectuals and different international bodies has helped create the public sphere in which *buen vivir* has been introduced into Bolivia's society and politics.

2.2.2 Ecuador

According to Carlos Viteri Gualinga, it was him who first introduced *buen vivir* to Ecuador as *sumak kawsay* in 1997 (Carlos Viteri Homepage). This concept has been used by the Amazonian village Sarayacu of where Viteri is from, to push for their demands to the government. It was the national indigenous movement that defined the concept of *buen vivir* better in the Constitution drafting process of 2007 and 2008 (Altmann 2013: 284). Historically, *buen vivir*'s modern historical roots can be traced to 1979 with the promulgation of the Law of Agricultural Promotion and Development. With it, the land reform efforts were put to a stop, something which

angered many indigenous communities most of whom live off the land. It is through this formal ordinance that several indigenous groups sought the need of unification and mutual cooperation. In the 1980s, groups like the CONAI (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities in Ecuador) were structured. CONAI wanted political recognition and self-determination, and for this reason in 1994, for the first time, they introduced a demand for plurinationality (Leon 1994, CONAIE 1994). Other aspects that shaped the rise and construction of *buen vivir* in Ecuador include the uprisings of Inti Raymi in 1990, a key moment in which indigenous peoples were turned into political actors in Ecuador (Moreno et al. 1992). This is important because it is through this historical contingency that changes occurred in the Ecuadorian society and through the acknowledgement of the identity and existence of these political actors, the foundation for the introduction of proposals, drafts, documents has been done. *Buen Vivir* is one of those political demands and propositions made that have shaped the fundamental changes made in Ecuador.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Buen Vivir: critics and supporters

This section will summarize the different views and perceptions of *buen vivir* as a concept that can be best described as the conceptualization of the identity and struggle of different groups to assert their demands for change. *Buen vivir* has been analyzed and studied not only by Latin American scholars. Different scholars have analyzed different aspects of *buen vivir* and the next section summarizes some of the major works.

The initial trend when *buen vivir* discourse appeared in the academic field was to label it as a reactionary or opposition to traditional development discourse, labeling the concept as an alternative to development one that presents itself as a new construction of progress and development (Gudynas 2011; Acosta 2010). Critics of *buen vivir* make good points on how the discourse of the term gives it an idealistic and a utopia like image, but fail to materialize in actual plans that have the capacity to improve the lives of all indigenous citizens in the Andean region (Stefanoni, 2012). The concern that comes with *buen vivir* in itself is also in what Eduardo Gudynas (2011) has referred to ‘banalization’ due to the monopolization of the theme by government actors, which means that the focus of the term, the non-government actors and the marginalized actors are being excluded from the discourse and the conceptualization of the idea itself. The general discourse is to present *buen vivir* as a replacement to the current models of development, but critics have pointed out the fact that *buen vivir* presents an argument similar to that of

degrowth in the sense that it talks about inclusive and sustainability, in the same way the current trends of development are headed to (Walsh 2011).

Scholars that have seen the potential of *buen vivir* have tried to implement this concept into different fields other than mainstream development. There are works on human security, justice, equality. However some renowned works are on climate change and climate justice, as seen from the *buen vivir* perspective (Cochrane, 2014). The most recent work seems to apply *buen vivir* to other areas that also touch upon the role of development in different areas of society and the environment. In South Korea, there have been studies and papers written about the Ecuadorian aspect of *buen vivir* (*sumak kawsay*) and. Table 4 summarizes some of the major contributions made to *buen vivir* studies in Spanish, English, and Korean.

Table 4- Summary of Major Works on *Buen vivir*

Studies:	Acosta & Gudynas (2011)	Catherine Walsh (2011)	Pablo Stefanoni (2012)	Kim, Dal-Kwan .Jo, Young-Hyun (2012)
Title	The Renewal of the Criticism of Development and Harmonious Coexistence as an Alternative	Development as Buen Vivir: Institutional arrangements and (de)colonial entanglements	Posneoliberalismo cuesta arriba Los modelos de Venezuela, Bolivia y Ecuador en debate	에콰도르 원주민 사상과 세계관의 복원 : 수막 카우사이(Sumak Kawsay)에 대한 이론적 고찰
Purpose	Explore <i>buen vivir</i> as a current ideas of Harmonious Coexistence, a good life that is not a new instrumental development alternative, but an alternative to the whole western idea of development	how we can understand the emergence of the concept of <i>buen vivir</i> in the Andes Region and Ecuador to see whether this really is a shift to new social and sustainable forms of development	Focus on the economic and social politics implemented with the new paradigm and cosmology implemented in these nations	Understand the historical contexts in which the concept appeared in the academic world. How to understand sumak kawsay How to understand Pachamama and the rights to nature.

Studies on *buen vivir* focus first on the concept as an alternative to/of development. Also there is a focus on understanding both the theoretical and the practical aspects of *buen vivir* focusing especially on the implementations in different national policies. Although there is a lot of work done on Ecuador, the study of Bolivia, comparing it to Ecuador is not seen in many English and Korean papers.

3.2 Limitations of past work

Although the interest of scholars in *buen vivir* have allowed for an abundant amount of academic research to arise in the past years, there exist some limitations to the work on this topic. Most of the work on this topic, both the initial research as well as the most recent papers takes one of two sides. The first is to discard the concept as just ideas that stand against mainstream development without having any weight or as a concept that is the rewrapping of other terms like sustainability and degrowth. The other is to see *buen vivir* as having the potential to be the alternative to development, yet there is no specification as to what role or what kind of paradigm it is; it lacks a clear and defined scope. The former's limitations come in trying to explain the concept without understanding the cosmology and philosophy of its origins. In other words, critics try to map *buen vivir* in western discourse, and see only shortcomings. The latter's limitations are due to the great expectations put on this concept, as one that can take over the mainstream discourse of development. However, in order to consider *buen vivir* in terms of post-development discourse, there must be long term results of the applications, and that is not possible to be

assessed at this moment. The concept is young, and as Gudynas (2011) has explained, it is still in construction. Due to the freedom of the concept, even scholars like Oviedo (2004) have expressed the need to differentiate between *buen vivir* as a political, hybrid mix of indigenous as well as contemporary aspects from *sumak kawsay*, the pure indigenous ideal, ancestral way of life. Instead of going from one extreme to the other, first there is a need to re-evaluate *buen vivir* not only in Ecuador but also Bolivia. There is a lot of work done on Ecuador, but comparative studies between the two are not abundant. Taking Kim & Jo (2012)'s methodology of tracing the historical contexts in which *buen vivir* appeared in both academic and political discourse, this paper will aim to focus not only on Ecuador, but also Bolivia. Also, similarly to Stefanoni (2012), implementation of *buen vivir* will be analyzed through different legal documents. It is important to assess the current state of the term and see what role it plays in the politics and societies of these two nations.

4. Analytical Framework

4.1 Research Questions

In the previous section, the objective of this thesis has been presented. The main premise is to evaluate and assess the role of *buen vivir* as a platform for political and social reforms. In order to do so, it is important to understand the historical path in which *buen vivir* has appeared in political and social discourse in Latin America. In order to do so, three research questions have been formulated to focus the scope of this research.

-Research question 1

Why was *buen vivir* able to be implemented in the constitutions and national development plans of particularly only two countries? **What are the political factors that have placed *buen vivir* at the center of the development discourse in Latin America?**

-Research question 2

It is a concept that is rooted from social movements and indigenous groups, and now institutionalized through the government actors. In the debate and discussion of *buen vivir*, we need to ask **How do the changes made to the policies, constitutions, and laws in Latin America reflect the principles of *buen vivir*?**

Buen vivir has three purposes (Gudynas & Acosta 2008):

1. Criticism of modern capitalist systems and conventional ideas of development
2. Proposition of alternative practices, challenging traditional ways of thinking of sustainability and well-being
3. Deconstruct the way in which development and growth are viewed

Therefore, the purpose of the thesis is to first examine the process of the positioning of *buen Vivir* in Latin America and later evaluate the changes seen with the implementation of policies for the creation of a “society of *buen vivir*”

4.2 Methodology

The two research questions will be answered through qualitative research based on analysis of previous works, interviews, and case studies. The first part of the methodology will focus on the theoretical framework of this thesis, which will be based on the “coloniality matrix” (Walsh 2008, Quijano 2000, Dussel 1995, Mignolo 2007 in Florentin 2011), in the notion that *buen vivir* is an attempt to decoloniality. Second, using the cases of Bolivia and Ecuador from the periods of 1970 to 2010, first the analysis of the political factors that brought about the rise of *buen vivir* will be explored. Thirdly, using the analysis of legal process, the constitutions and development plans, as well as the socioeconomic process, the public policies and their link to local practices will be done to answer research

question 2. The case studies presented will be used to show the role of *buen vivir* at a national level. The actual constitutions and the documents for the national development policy plans will be used for a comparative analysis of the implementation of *buen vivir* by government actors.

This is a qualitative research that will be done using a vast array of past literature as well as actual documents and interview materials.

4.3 Analytical Framework: Coloniality Matrix

First, in order to explain what the coloniality matrix is, we make a reference to Daniela Bressa Florentin's thesis entitled "Between Life and Policies: the Politics of Buen Vivir in Bolivia and Ecuador." Taking Catherine Walsh, Anibal Quijano, and Enrique Dussel's coinage of the different aspects of the coloniality matrix which include the coloniality of power: racial, sexual hierarchies; the coloniality of knowledge: euro centrism; the coloniality of being: creation and dehumanization of the Other; and the coloniality of nature: division between nature and culture (Florentin 2011). It is according to this matrix and framework that the life, development, and society of Latin American countries have been established. Through an alternative to development, by creating a society of *buen vivir* the framework is no longer based purely on western values and ideals, but it is established through the ideals and the principles of the part of the population that has been considered the 'other' and the inferior. Hence, the importance put on the cosmology of the Andean indigenous peoples is important in order to understand the

changes that have taken place in the region. Taking this theory of coloniality matrix, it is possible to do a comparative analysis, looking at the differences there exist with *buen vivir* and analyze the changes it has brought through the constitution as well as public policies.

Historically, *buen vivir* emerges in Latin America as a result of the failed development policies brought forth by international players. Taking path dependency theory or modernization theory, Latin America was shaped through a system of relations that included the periphery and the center. The process of development and economic growth plan brought forth first to the continent by ECLA in 1967 was that of dependency theory (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979:3). More than helping Latin America grow and develop, it created inequality. Escobar (1995) even argues that the different development theories were part of an “ideological export” and the tool used to construct “poverty.” Therefore, development is defined as a construction and a system of power relations.

Economists, demographers, educators, and experts in agriculture, public health, and nutrition elaborated their theories, made their assessments and observations, and designed their programs from these institutional sites. Problems were continually identified, and client categories brought into existence. Development proceeded by creating “abnormalities” (such as the “illiterate”, the “underdeveloped”, the “malnourished”, “small farmers”, or “landless peasants”), which it would later treat and reform. Approaches that could have positive effects in terms of easing material constraints became, linked to this type of rationality, instruments of power and control (Escobar 1995:41-42).

The theories of development that have been exported to Latin America have failed, which motivated the appearance of new social actors such as indigenous movements and political intellectuals in reaction to the effects of development

theories at a local level. *Buen Vivir* is a reaction or a challenge to the conventional notions of development. Moreover, it is an attempt to decoloniality, the deconstruction of the old society and politics, those that have been a continuation of colonial thinking and ideology. Ultimately, it is the construction of a new society and a new framework.

5. Case Studies: from concept to practice

5.1 Case of Bolivia

In this section, the aim is to understand some of the political factors that contributed to the rise of *buen vivir* in Bolivia in the 2000s. Bolivia has a large indigenous population present in the country. According to Table 5, the census for the indigenous population shows a percentage of about 68.9% in 2012. This means that the presence of this large indigenous population is meant to affect and define public policies and different aspects of society. One of the aims is to understand how the presence of a large number of indigenous peoples and their philosophies had an effect in the positioning of *buen vivir* in Bolivia. In this section, there will be an analysis of the different political factors in the 2000s that have allowed for *buen vivir* to appear and place itself in the Constitution of the nation.

Table 5- Population Census 2012

Belonging to an indigenous nation or peoples	Total
Belonging* (means if belongs to one of the 35 indigenous nations mentioned in the Constitución de la Republica del Ecuador)	2,806,592
Not Belonging	4,032,014
Not thought of as Bolivian	73,707
Total Indigenous	6,916,732
Total Non Indigenous + Indigenous	10,027,254

(Source: INE 2012)

5.1.1. Background: Actors and Political Factors

Fernando Mayorga asserts that a key of Bolivia's modern politics is shaped by "crisis with change," because with it, the civil society has been strengthened (Mayorga 2014: 28). In the case of the rise of *buen vivir*, it is the sphere of public

participation that came with the strengthening of civil society that different actors appeared and introduced the concept of *buen vivir*. Such public spaces were specifically created through the law of Popular Public Participation enacted in 1994 by the government of Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada (Hengstenber et al. 1999). What this law did, was to give relative autonomy of public policies to urban and rural municipalities and also allowed for the creation of new social organizations to give indigenous communities judicial recognition as well as participatory rights at a local level. This law was an attempt for “democratization from the top,” to create social changes (Hengstenber et al. 1999).

The part of the law that this thesis focuses on is not the social or economic effects and results, but at a micro level, it focuses on the effect the different public spaces that were opened for popular discussion. The law in the long run allowed for different governmental and international cooperation organizations like the Federation of Municipal Associations of Bolivia (FAM) and the Project of Support to the Municipal Participatory Policy of the German Organization for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) to team up to organize different forums and seminars on different topics. In 2001 a group of Aymara intellectuals from the katari movement presented a collection of works on a series of debates on how the concept of “good life” can be defined (Medina 2001). In an article titled “the Occidental Good Life and the Sweet Amerindian Life” Javier Medina shows the difference between what the western world defines as the good life and what indigenous peoples consider the good life. Medina asserts that “understanding this radical opposition between the modern western thought and Indianism is key to the design of public policies that

can work and get Bolivia out of its ‘third world’ poverty to a lifestyle of austerity, conviviality in dynamic equilibrium with its surroundings” (ibid: 13). As a concept and way of thinking, the introduction of the Indigenous good life, *buen vivir* was presented not only as a theory but as a way of eradicating poverty and improving the standard of living of all.

Table 6- Comparison between Western and Indigenous Perspective

Field	Western	Indigenous
Economy	Concept of private property Heritage, sales, exchange Earnings, economic growth, increase production Competitive production	Earth, water, air, minerals, vegetables are not private property (cannot be sold) Wealth is used for reciprocity Quality of life is important Economy is about homeostatic equilibrium Communal productivity
Politics	Hierarchy and stratification Decisions made through executive power Centralized power Written law Concept of nation-state	Politics as a network Consensual and community participation Decentralized Laws are transmitted orally Identity of ayllu, indigenous peoples
Society	Large scale societies Patrimonial lineage Nuclear families Youth is idolized History is written and recorded	Small scale society Matrimonial lineage Extensive families living together Elderly revered History is transmitted orally
Environment	Consumerism of natural resources Technology used to change surroundings Human beings are superior to nature	Way of life under a natural ecosystem Harmony with nature is the norm Low impact technology The whole world is alive (rocks, nature, animals) Humans are equal to all nature
Architecture	Constructions are designed to last more than individual human life Space is designed to separate private from public New materials used in construction Cement Doors	Biodegradable materials used Space is used for conviviality Tendency for recycling materials Soft, earthy materials Open doors, so houses camouflage with nature
Religion/Philosophy	Subject-object separation (Creator, creature) Monotheist God Lineal notion of time Death are considered to be gone Individuals get information from schools, outside of community Time is measured through machines Savings and acquisitions are good	Complementarity (dual unity) Animist notion of cosmos based on polarity Integration of past and future in the present The death live in another dimension and are in contact with the living Individuals learn from practice, nature and oral traditions Conscience measures time

(Source: Javier Medina’s *Suma Qamaña Por una convivialidad postindustrial*)

Table 6 summarizes some of the differences between the western way of thinking and life and that of the indigenous peoples. These were presented by Medina in a series of publications in the early 2000s. The importance of these series of public seminars and publications is that it created a new academic field on the study of the cosmology of the Andean people and it allowed for different scholars to concretize the different ideas and ideals, present in everyday indigenous peoples' lives since before the introduction of the western colonial way of thinking in 1492. Other historical events and actors like the Water War in 2000 or the Gas Wars of 2003 and the rise of different indigenous movements also contributed to the changes that helped the party MAS win elections in 2005 and put Evo Morales into power. One of the reasons that this thesis emphasizes the role of a few Aymara intellectuals, instead of social movements in general, lies in the fact that although Bolivia has a large number of indigenous peoples, as well as a large number of indigenous social movements, it is only in 2005 with the Unidad de Pacto (Unity Pact) that there is a coalition of the key social movements. Table 7 lists a few of the major social movements of Bolivia showing the date of foundation and their ethos. In the previous sections a brief explanation of the Katari movement was given as background information to show how the Aymara intellectuals that derived from this movement have made contributions to the work of *buen vivir*. Most of the groups listed in Table 7 like Assembly for the Sovereignty of Peoples or the women's peasant group, FNMCN-BS had separate agendas and interests that set them apart from other movements (Van Cott 2005). Before the Unity Pact, each of these organizations worked towards achieving its own goals. Indirectly, all movements

fight for sovereignty, justice and political acknowledgement, but the Katari Intellectuals are the only individuals in the early 2000s that have use *suma qamaña* or *buen vivir* directly in documents or publications.

Only through the unity pact that the different organizations listed in Table 7, each with its own characteristics, political independence, and diversity were united under one same direction and goal (Fernandez 2009: 44). These social movements represent the mass movements reacting against failed neoliberalist policies through manifestations and revolts. However, Aymara intellectuals like Simon Yampara and Jorge Medina concretized the ideas and the demands of the indigenous peoples in a series of academic documents and research papers. It is their definitions and their work that has allowed for non indigenous people to understand the cosmology of the Andean people as well as the notion of *buen vivir*.

This thesis argues that the series of publications done with the GTZ and the FAM set the tone of introducing *buen vivir* as an alternative to western philosophy and presented a clear difference in thinking from a variety of topics ranging from economy, politics, society, the environment, architecture, and religion (Medina 2006, 88-91). They created the platform that introduced new perspectives on how to solve many of Bolivia's political and social problems. The idea presented, which later was introduced in the Constitution was the fact that under the current laws, regulations, and framework, there was no way to create change and development. Therefore a 'meta-perspective' was needed (ibid: 119) and these publications articulated a new perspective and the arguments into the Constitution and policies of Bolivia. It is not possible to ignore the role and the presence of social movements in Bolivia and their

contributions to the different changes the nation has seen in the past ten to twenty years. However, the Pact of Unity of 2005 was the political force that centralized the different organizations and brings them together for a common purpose of supporting indigenous and agrarian rights, land reform, and the rewriting of the Constitution through the creation of a National Assembly (Ranta 2014:22).

Table 7- List of different indigenous social movements in Bolivia

Name	Date of foundation	Characteristics	Activities
CSUTCB Only Union of Peasant Workers of Bolivia	1979	Wanted to be identified through their class as peasants rather than indigenous peoples	Spoke for indigenous self-determination Recovery of national sovereignty
FNMCB-BS National Federation of Women Indigenous Peasant Workers Originating from Bolivia	1980	Wanted to be identified through their class as peasants rather than indigenous peoples	Part of a peasant-indigenous coalition that ran as a political party in 1997
CSCB	1971	Evolved to Evo Morales’ Regime Coca farming peasants	Against the entrance of neoliberal reforms Had no traces of indigenous discourse
CIDOB Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia	1982	Group of Indigenous Peoples from Chaco, Amazons, and Santa Cruz	First Bolivian organization to deploy discourses based on indigeneity Supported by anthropologists and NGOS Promote indigenous people’s political activism based on their own socio-cultural beliefs, customary law, ethnic identities
CONAMAQ Counsel of Ayllus and Markas of Qullasuyu	1997	gain support in its inventing of indigenous cultural difference by development agencies and NGOs like OXFAM América, IBIS, DANIDA, the Inter-American Foundation, and Fondo Indígena	Re-establish ayllus as the original indigenous nations demand for territorial self-governance and plural forms of traditional authority structure

(Source: Eija M. Ranta, 2014 “In the Name of Vivir Bien”)

Before 2005 and the drafting of a new constitution, there did not exist a united front among the different indigenous social movements. Also, until 2005, only the

Aymara intellectuals supported by the GTZ were the ones that tackled the concept of *buen vivir* at an academic level by making proposals on the need for qualitative thinking and the need to solve the problems of marginalization of indigenous peoples, not from a particular or individual point of view, but an integrated indigenous perspective (Medina 2006). The arguments and the language used in the different publications are seen in the Constitución de la Republica del Ecuador as the next section will show.

5.1.2 Constitutional Changes: political and legal framework

Buen vivir was conceptualized first through a series of publications supported by the GTZ and the FAM and later it is seen in the 2006 National Development Plan (Plan Nacional de Desarrollo: Bolivia digna, soberana, productiva y democrática para vivir bien) and the Constitución Política del Estado. This section is aimed at showing a connection between the concepts and ideas introduced in the series of publications by Jorge Medina and other Aymara intellectuals. This is to show that these publications were a major force in introducing *buen vivir* as a political and legal framework. This section will comprise of the analysis of the text of the Constitución Política del Estado as well as the National Development Plan.

The 2006 National Development Plan is based on the premise that the “paradigm of development will be executed under the philosophy of Good conviviality.” This means that this document is based on the “complement between access and enjoyment, of material belongings and affective realization, subjective

and spiritual, and harmony with nature and the community of humans (National Development Plan 2006: Art. 5). The word ‘complement’ as well as ‘harmony’ are some of the characteristics Medina (2006) explained as being part of the indigenous way of thinking. In the same way, the Constitución Política del Estado, the preamble say that the new Bolivian Nation would be a “nation based on respect and equality for all, with the principles of sovereignty, dignity, complementarity, solidarity, harmony and equal distribution and redistribution of social product, where predominant aspect is the search for the good conviviality” (Constitution Preamble). In Article 8, the principles, morals and the objectives of the nation are stated using the idea of *buen vivir*.

*The nation assumes and promotes the ethical moral principles of a plural society:
ama qhilla, ama llulla, ama suwa (don't be lazy, don't be a liar, don't be a thief), suma qamaña (good conviviality), ñandereko (harmonious life), teko kavi (good life), ivi maraei (earth with no evil) y qhapaj ñan (noble path or life) (Constitución Política del Estado: Art 8)*

One of the most important aspects of the new constitution is the wording that uses the Andean indigenous peoples’ cosmologies on what it means to lead a life in harmony, coexistence, and equilibrium. Also, in Article 80, the concept of *buen vivir* is again touched with the issue of education. The constitution states that the purpose of education will be “the integral formation of people and the strengthening of the critical social conscience in life and for life” (ibid: Art. 80). It means that education serves a social and collective purpose. The same article also states that

education is oriented to the individual and collective formation; the

development of competence, aptitudes and physical and intellectual abilities that links theory with productive practice, the conservation and preservation of the environment, the biodiversity and the territory of the good conviviality. (ibid)

Buen vivir is both a goal and an objective in itself to create changes within the nation. As David Choquehuanca (2010) explains, good conviviality, “is not to live better: it is different to live better, in relation to capitalism. The good conviviality (*buen vivir*) points to a simple life that maintains a balanced way of production.” This idea of balance and equilibrium is also seen in Article 306 of the Constitution. It states that the “Bolivian economic model is a plural one and is oriented to improving the quality of life and the good conviviality for all Bolivians” (Constitución Política del Estado: Art. 306). It is here that the philosophy of life of the Andean indigenous peoples, specifically the idea of communal property is complemented to the goals of poverty reduction and economic growth. Article 313 states that just distribution of wealth, banning of monopoly and oligarchy and respect of individual as well as peoples’ rights is important in order “to eliminate poverty and social and economic exclusion, to achieve the good conviviality in its multiple dimensions” (ibid: Article 313). Again, it is possible to see a hybrid mixture of ideas in the sense that although the ideals and the philosophies that have motivated the promulgation of a new constitution and development plan were rooted on the Andean cosmology, the ideas of poverty reduction and economic growth are western ideas. The only difference is that instead of individual wealth, Bolivia’s constitution focuses on communal betterment or trying to accommodate the needs of its plural society, without marginalizing any sector.

In Bolivia, looking at the different legal documents, the political and social framework that is created is one that is inspired by the life of different indigenous communities in Bolivia. Their lives are characterized by community thinking and reciprocity, and solidarity. In the documents, when the word *buen vivir* or good conviviality, it means that it is not about living better, or individual optimal wellbeing, but the meaning is set on plural well being. It means that Bolivia's new constitution and development plan is not about improving the lives of some sectors of the society, but in its entirety in order to achieve the goal of *buen vivir*.

The next section will assess whether the establishment of *buen vivir* as part of a political and social framework for development and the different policies of *buen vivir* have made any changes to Bolivia.

5.1.3 Challenges and accomplishments: initial results

After the introduction of *buen vivir* in academic discourse in the early 2000s and its ultimate implementation in the Constitution of Bolivia in 2009, there have been some social and political changes that have been seen. One of the biggest accomplishments of the reforms done from 2000 to 2010 is that between 2005 and 2010, the proportion of the population in moderate poverty went down from 60% to 49.6% and extreme poverty decreased from 38% to 25% (UNDP 2014). Table 8 shows the incidence of drop in extreme poverty from 1996 to 2009. Interestingly, from 2007 to 2008, after the implementation of the new Development Plan and before the ratification of the new constitution, the drop of extreme poverty is 7.8%. According to Bolivia's Minister of Economy and Public Finances Luis Arce stated

that since 2006 the income gap between the richest 10% of the population and the poorest 10% of the population was decreased. Before, the richest were 95 times richer than the poorest and in 2013, Arce states is decreased by more than half. Now, the richest 10% are only 36 times richer than the poorest 10% (Arce 2013).

Table 8- Extreme Poverty Levels 2000-2009 by percentage

Details	2000	2001	2002	2003-2004	2005	2006	2007	2008p	2009p
Total	45.2%	38.8%	39.5%	34.5%	38.2%	37.7%	37.7%	29.9%	26.1%
Men	44.6%	38.3%	39.8%	34.1%	37.7%	37.1%	36.6%	29.7%	25.4%
Women	45.7%	38.3%	39.3%	34.9%	38.6%	38.3%	38.7%	30.1%	26.8%

(Source: UDAPE with data from INE-Census Surveys to Households 2010)

Since the implementation of the new constitution, the data shows that the country is putting effort at improving the citizens' overall basic quality of life. Under UNESCO's standards Bolivia was declared an illiterate free country in 2013, which means that the objectives of the constitution to create *buen vivir* are accomplished through education, and inequality reduction (BBC News 2014). Also, in the aspect of equal distribution of wealth, the UNDP (2014) points out that Bolivia transfers 2.5% of its GNP to the most vulnerable part of the population.

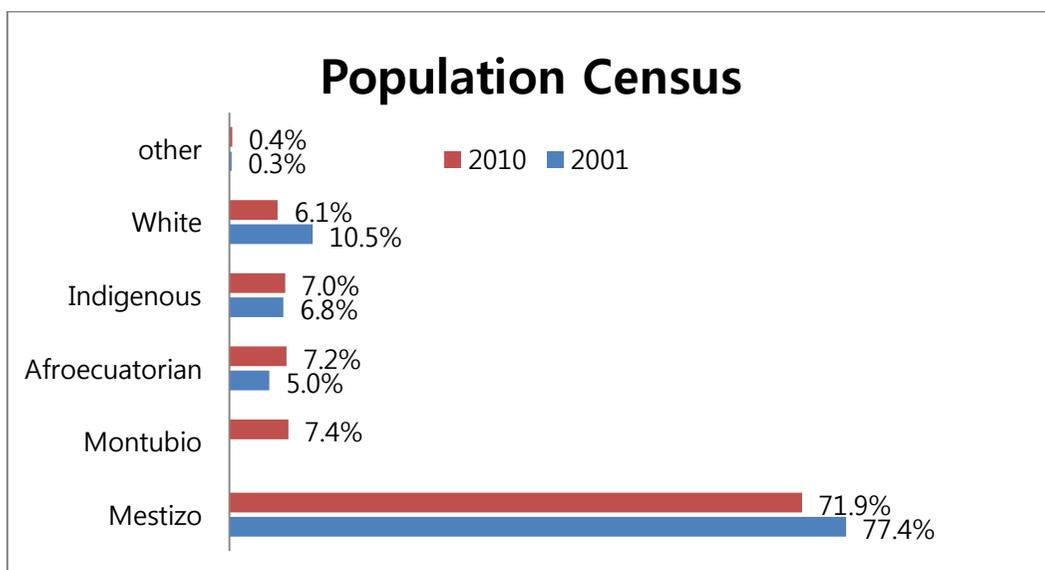
One of the challenges present is to make the changes and the establishment of *buen vivir* a sustainable model. There is no data on how well all sectors of the population, including the different indigenous communities and peoples are being integrated. In October 2010 Bolivia promulgated the law against racism and all

forms of discrimination (Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional: Law 045). Again, this law is based on the principles of *buen vivir* which include interculturality, equality, and equity (Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional: Law 045, Art 1). However, although the law is in place, at a local practice it is not kept. According to sociologist Pablo Mamani (Bolpress 2012), with the implementation of this new law, a new form of racism has surfaced, one where indigenous peoples are exalted and praised for being the foundation of the new nation. With words one praises the indigenous peoples, but with actions the racism and discrimination continues. The establishment of the *buen vivir* society is bringing about changes, but also challenges of integration and true decoloniality of power, being and knowledge. Although through laws and alternative forms of paradigms Bolivia has the capability of becoming a model for a successful *buen vivir* society, there exist new problems that have arise because of the implementation of *buen vivir* in practice at a micro level.

5.2 Case of Ecuador

In this section, the aim is to understand some of the political factors that contributed to the rise of *buen vivir* in Ecuador in the 2000s. Unlike Bolivia's population, as seen in Table 5, Ecuador's indigenous population makes up only around 7% of the entire population. Graph 1 shows the national census on population done in the years 2001 and 2010. Unlike Bolivia, with 68% of the population identifying themselves as indigenous, the majority of Ecuador's population is mestizo. It is interesting that in a nation where with only around 7% indigenous population, a philosophy like *buen vivir*, which origins from the Andean indigenous peoples' cosmology, was able to become the mainstream ideology and paradigm of the entire nation. This section is aimed at understanding the different political factors that have placed *buen vivir* in the national constitution and laws.

Graph 1- Population Census 2001 and 2010



(Source: INEC 2010 Census)

5.2.2 Background: Actors and Political Factors

In section 2.2.2 the role of the indigenous peoples was emphasized. When it comes to the notion of how *buen vivir* appeared in the main political discourse, the role of Carlos Viteri and the community of Sarayacu. Carlos Viteri wrote in 2002 a text titled, “Indigenous Vision to Development in the Amazon.”

[...] alli káusai o sumac káusay constitutes a category in permanent construction. For this reason, it is inappropriate and highly dangerous to apply in the indigenous societies the paradigm of ‘development’ how it is conceived in the western world, not even in the supposition that this concept far from being the entelechy that it is, results as a synonym of wellbeing. Because ‘Alli Káusai’ has a bigger transcendence to mere needs and access to services and possessions. In this context, the vision of life and ‘buen vivir,’ synthesized in the philosophy of Alli Káusai, cannot be understood as an analogous concept to development (Viteri 2002: 3)

This publication explains the differences between development and *Alli Káusai*, or *buen vivir*. Similarly to Bolivia, the concept of *buen vivir* was introduced through different publications and papers. However, Ecuador’s case is different from Bolivia’s in one aspect. Whereas Bolivia’s *buen vivir* was pushed forward through indigenous intellectuals who were funded by different municipal programs and NGOs in a more academic public space, Ecuador’s *buen vivir* was also promoted by indigenous communities and social movements with a clear political objective. One of the first publications made by an indigenous social movement was in 2003 in the press bulletin of the people of Sarayacu. In their proposal, they include the word *sumak kawsay* as their goal. “Based on our knowledge and principles of conviviality with the jungle, and in the permanent search for *buen vivir* (the life in harmony), we propose: The declaration of our ancestral territory as a zone of biological, cultural, and historical interest for the nation and for humanity” (Saracuya 2003:26). Not only

was this an environmental proposal, but also one that dealt with petroleum extraction, as well as economic policy. The concern for nature and the different proposals made on the preservation of the environment are some of demands and articulations made that later on became important topics of debate in the drafting of the new constitution.

The bulletin published by Saracuya was not the only proposition made by an indigenous group. In 2003, CONDENPE, the state agency for indigenous development, introduced the idea of *buen vivir* in 2003. Since the 1980s and 1990s indigenous peoples and different social movements have allied themselves to fight from a united front against neoliberal reforms and the loss of their lands, publishing their demands in different documents (CONAIE 1994). As mentioned before, in the case of Bolivia, despite the large population of indigenous peoples and nations, the alliance of different social movements came in 2005. Ecuador's alliance and union of social movements started as early as the 1980s. In the early 2000s CONAIE played an important role in synthesizing the indigenous vision of on development and *buen vivir*.

The need for an alliance to push forward demands and create changes is seen in the early 2000s when the party Alianza PAIS was formed. One member of this political party is Alberto Acosta, who has also been one of the most active speakers of *buen vivir*'s potential as an alternative to development (Acosta 2008). This political party, which eventually came to power through the president candidacy of Rafael Correa in 2007, includes the idea of *buen vivir* in its party's bylaws. Some of the fundamental ideals and objectives proposed are “the

construction of a new society cemented on the principles of *buen vivir*'s socialism” (Alianza País, Regimen Organico). Specifically these include, “participation; autonomy from the state; democracy; transparency and accountability; societal organization; primacy of the collective interest over the individual one; respect for diversity; concern for the self-formation of the members; non violence; collective leadership; collective sense; solidarity and reciprocity” (ibid). Interestingly, some of the qualities and objectives listed for this political party are similar to the characteristics of *buen vivir* as explained by the cosmology and philosophy of the Andean indigenous peoples. By internalizing these ideals and using them to campaign for political change, Alianza PAIS used the idea of *buen vivir* to articulate its propositions for a government plan. In the case of Ecuador, the active participation of different sectors of society and different social movements was a decisive factor in internalizing *buen vivir* in the official articulation of the demands for change. Through the victory of Alianza PAIS in 2007, *buen vivir*'s establishment as the leading political discourse was later conceptualized in the national government's new laws and public policies (Consilience: 2014).

In Ecuador the activities of indigenous social movements in promoting *buen vivir* were more pronounced in the sense that their demands actually included plans and propositions towards social and political change through the implementation of *buen vivir*. In 2007, CONAIE introduced a joint proposition for the redrafting of the constitution of the nation that is the result of the debate and discussion of different indigenous organizations like the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities for the Ecuadorian Coast (CONAICE), and the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities

of Ecuador (CONFENIAE). In their official proposition for the constitution, CONAIE states that “their objective that oriented this process is to offer all Ecuadorians a national project, because it is our firm conviction that the liberation of society demands the participation and the conjoint fight of the exploited and oppressed peoples; for this we have fortified spaces for intercultural dialogue so that the proposition will be integral and reflect the reality of the plurinationality of Ecuador” (CONAIE 2007). Through this direct action Ecuador’s indigenous peoples were demanding the creation of a constitution that would mark the true decoloniality of power, being, knowledge, and nature. The diversity in these type of social movements have allowed for the consolidation of a national political movement that tries to empower the indigenous peoples and push forward their rights, by allowing the collective participation of different movements and sectors of society. It is this joint collaboration that is reflected in the text of the Constitución de la Republica del Ecuador, which will be explored in the next section.

5.2.3 Constitutional Changes: political and legal framework

Similarly to Bolivia’s case, the articulation of *buen vivir* in the political framework occurred because of the demands of key players for a renewed constitution. However, Ecuador includes the explanation of the role of *buen vivir* in a more detailed manner than Bolivia’s constitution. The Constitución de la Republica del Ecuador’s preamble deals with the notion of *buen vivir* right away stating that the people of Ecuador “Hereby decide to build a new form of public coexistence, in diversity and in harmony with nature, to achieve *buen vivir*, the

sumak kawsay” (Constitution 2008: Preamble). In the Constitución de la Republica del Ecuador, *buen vivir* is presented as the end goal for successful government policies. In Article 3 it states that the State’s prime duties include “planning national development, eliminating poverty, and promoting sustainable development and the equitable redistribution of resources and wealth to enable access to *buen vivir*” (ibid: Art. 3).

One of the peculiar aspects of *buen vivir* present in the Ecuadorian constitution is related to Javier Medina’s comparison between the western ideals and indigenous ideals in Table 6. Although Javier Medina published these in Bolivia, *buen vivir*’s philosophy is originated from a common cosmology, therefore Medina’s analysis and explanations also apply to Ecuador and any Latin American country with a population of indigenous peoples. This idea is supported through the rhetoric of the Ecuadorian constitution. In chapter two of the constitution, under the title of “Rights of *buen vivir*,” the rights to water and food are discussed.

Article 12. The human right to water is essential and cannot be waived. Water constitutes a national strategic asset for use by the public and it is unalienable, not subject to a statute of limitations, immune from seizure and essential for life.

Article 13. Persons and community groups have the right to safe and permanent access to healthy, sufficient and nutritional food, preferably produced locally and in keeping with their various identities and cultural traditions.

The Ecuadorian State shall promote food sovereignty (ibid: Art.12, 13).

As Table 6 shows, in terms of economy indigenous peoples’ philosophy does not consider vegetables, air or water private property, therefore taxes or price cannot put into it. Article 12 and 13 of the Ecuadorian constitution reflects this notion by

declaring the promotion of food sovereignty as well as the declaration that water will be immune from seizure. These key articles in the constitution also protect indigenous peoples from economic policies and the collateral effects they could have in their lands and their territories. About the proposition of full access of water and the protection of food sovereignty, CONAIE's assortment that "all kinds of commodification of biodiversity and its functions should be prohibited" best explains the reason behind such notion (CONAIE 2007: Art 42). Again this article in the constitution best reflects the principles of *buen vivir* and the objective of conviviality among individuals, society, and nature.

Similarly to Bolivia's constitution, Ecuador also includes education in its constitution. Education as a right of *buen vivir*, and it is "the guarantee of equality and social inclusion and the indispensable condition for *buen vivir*" (ibid: Art. 26). Education becomes a tool to achieve the goals of equality and equity. However, the fact that is needed to accomplish the construction of a society of *buen vivir* also means that its values and principles can be conferred upon the future generations, so that *buen vivir* will be a sustainable political and social framework.

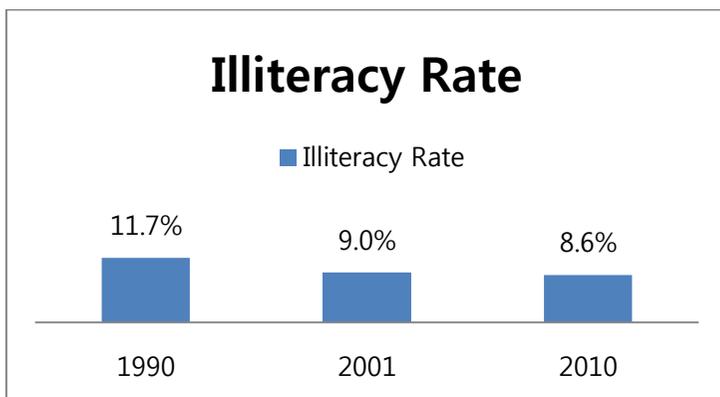
One unique aspect of Ecuador's constitution is the inclusion of the rights of nature, where it says that "nature, or Pacha Mama, [...] has the right to integral respect for its existence and for the maintenance and regeneration of its life cycles, structure, functions and evolutionary processes" (ibid: Art. 71). Giving rights to nature reflects the principle of harmony with nature and by giving it an equal standing as any human being, the decoloniality of nature, getting rid of the separation between nature and culture, society and nature is attempted. Through the

implementation of *buen vivir* in the constitution as well as the national policies in the National Development Plan for Buen Vivir, Ecuador constructs a new paradigm of change a new vision that incorporates the philosophy of the members of the nation that have been excluded for centuries. Next, the immediate results of the implementation of *buen vivir* will be explored.

5.2.4 Challenges and accomplishments

Whether the shift in paradigm in the search for an alternative will prove successful or not will be decided by time. Some of the changes that can be measurable in the period of 2000 to 2010 are quantitative data. In term of education, Ecuador has created a public policy for universal free education. Before the ratification of the constitution, families who could not cover the costs of tuition, uniforms, school material were excluded from education. According to INEC, the National Institute of Statistics and Census, the illiteracy rate has decreased as the average years of schooling have increasing from the years 1990 to 2010 (INEC 2010). Graph 2 shows the percentage of the decrease of illiteracy. Although the graph portrays a decrease of illiteracy rates, in order to measure the quality of the policies of free education, the challenge that Ecuador faces is creating new indicators that can portray the effects of free education not only on literacy but also quality of education.

Graph 2- Illiteracy Rates in Ecuador 1990, 2001, 2010



(Source: INEC)

In terms of the constitution's articles on the right to water, Ecuador's national census has measured the access to basic services for years now. Table 9 shows that there has been an overall rise in the years 2000 to 2010 of the access of water through public networks. The census however, explains in detail that the rise from 67.5% to 72% does not properly show that there is a disparity in access to basic services based on region. According to the census reports that while some areas get a total of 60% of water access there are still some regions where water access covers only 15% of households (INEC: Ecuador Census 2010). In order to keep up with the rights and services that all citizens have to obtain, Ecuador faces a grand challenge. Also, concerning the rights to nature as stated by the constitution, Ecuador's next challenge is to seek ways in which implementation of these rights can be effectively done. The changes brought by the constitution have created economic changes like the GDP growth of 4.59% between 2003 and 2013 (INEC:

Economic Statistics). However, another challenge, similarly to Bolivia, is the measurement of equity and equality in society (urban, rural). Many of the alternatives introduced for the creation of *buen vivir* need new policies, but also new indicators and new qualitative ways to record the changes and the progresses made.

Table 9- Access to Basic Services in Ecuador

Characteristics	1990	2001	2010
Households with inadequate physical characteristics	23.5%	15.8%	12.5%
Water service through a public network	57.1%	67.5%	72%
Availability of electrical service	77.7%	89.7%	93.2%
Availability of sewage service	39.5%	48%	53.6%
Garbage pick up service	43.2%	62.7%	77%
Availability of phone service	15.7%	32.2%	33.4%

(Source: INEC)

6. Buen Vivir: Implications & Conclusions

This section deals with the implications of *buen vivir*. Some of the goals and the rights for the construction of *buen vivir* such as education, poverty reduction can be measured through quantitative indicators. Also, different policies and laws have been used to concretize *buen vivir* but as mentioned before, the tools used are from western ideals. The question lies in whether it is possible to measure *buen vivir* with qualitative or alternative indicators and tools.

In terms of the implications *buen vivir* has for other Latin America countries with indigenous populations like Bolivia and Ecuador, there exist several points to be made. Some of the major questions deal with the feasibility and the applicability of the *buen vivir* paradigm to other nations outside the Andean region. The reality is that multicultural and pluricultural nations deal with issues of social inclusion and discrimination in the same ways Bolivia and Ecuador have done. Gudynas (2007) has described *buen vivir* as being a concept “under construction,” meaning that the cases of Bolivia and Ecuador are not two set models that can be copied and implemented using the same parameters and recommendations. *Buen vivir* has a common root and cosmovision, but the way it is implemented and applied to different nations and communities is particular because of the plurality nature of *buen vivir*. This means that *buen vivir* is not a concept reserved only for the Andean region only. Based on this notion, Table 10 serves as evidence to prove that *buen vivir* acts as a successful tool to accomplish the realization of indigenous rights through the international standards set by the United Nations. Bolivia (68.9%),

Ecuador (7%), Mexico (7.9), Guatemala (39.7%) and Peru (15.8) represent the Latin American nations with the highest populations of indigenous people in the entire continent (CEPAL). However, in the UNDP 2013 report for intercultural citizenship, only Bolivia and Ecuador had autonomous regiment, acknowledgement of language, and bilingual education for indigenous peoples inside their territories. For example, Bolivia's 2009 constitution lists the 35 languages that will be acknowledged as official languages (Constitución Política del Estado: Art. 5). Although nations have signed the UNDRIP and different conventions for the promotion of indigenous rights, many times the clauses and the responsibilities are not implemented at a domestic level. Interestingly, the goals of Bolivia's and Ecuador's constitutions and the implementation of *buen vivir* fulfill the international standards set by the UN to promote the political and social inclusion of indigenous peoples. Because these goals represent the national goals of these two nations, without needing separate policies, indigenous interests are included in the general objectives such as national development, economic growth, and poverty reduction.

In terms of whether Bolivia's and Ecuador's cases show decoloniality of power, knowledge, being, and nature, the constitutions and the different documents show a clear attempt through discourse and the implementation of ideas. However, in order for the decoloniality process to be seen locally and put into practice, more is required than policies and ratification of new laws. The discourse of *buen vivir* has been politicized to serve a particular purpose of bringing change and alternatives to current paradigms and laws. However, the efforts of creating a society of *buen vivir*, in other words, of achieving true decoloniality, cannot only stay in the hands of

political leaders, social movements, and other political actors. *Buen vivir* is for everyone, meaning that every individual has the right to add to the construction of *buen vivir*. The danger in the long run is that *buen vivir* will be used as a political campaign and propaganda and its original purpose and meaning will be lost. *Buen vivir* after all is for everyone, not just for a few actors.

Table 10 Intercultural Citizenship UNDP 2013 Report

Indigenous Rights & Multicultural Constitutionalism in 6 countries (Intercultural Citizenship UNDP2013 Report)							
Country	OIT Covenant 169	UNDRIP (2007)	Other acknowledgements	Collective Property Rights	Acknowledgement of language	Bilingual education	Autonomous Regiments
Mexico	1990	Yes	Art. 2 Recognition as plurinational state	Yes	No	Yes	No
Guatemala	1996	Yes	Magna Carta 1988 Art. 66 recognition of diverse ethnic groups	Yes	Yes, regional	Yes, but limited	No
Ecuador	1998	Yes	CPE, 2008, Art 1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Peru	1994	Yes	Political Constitution 1993, recognition and protection of ethnic plurality	Yes	No	Yes	No
Bolivia	1991	Yes, by law	CPE, 2009, Art. 1	Yes	yes	Yes	Yes

(Source: UNDP 2013)

The implications for the results of the implementation of a society of *buen vivir* are important internationally. In the long run, if successful, *buen vivir* could take international importance to other nations in the world that have indigenous populations. The main argument is that the society of *buen vivir* is applicable to all individuals and societies, indigenous and non indigenous peoples alike. However, because it has originated from the Andean indigenous cosmology, so far its interest

has been focused, for the most part, on how indigenous peoples can be integrated to society and how the lives of indigenous peoples can improve to create sustainable development and equitable growth. Further research would be able to assess in what ways *buen vivir* is able to construct a truly inclusive society that empowers all marginalized sectors of society. Especially in Ecuador, Venezuela, and Caribbean nations, where there are large populations of African descendent communities, research on the effects and the changes for non Aymaran and non Quechuan indigenous peoples should be explored.

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국 문 초 록

이 논문의 목적은 2000년대 초반, 개발 담화 때 나타난 부엔 비비르(공생)의 개념의 진화를 조사해보기 위함이다. 안데스 지역 토착민의 우주론에서 유래된 발상으로써 토착민들이 오늘 날 살아가고 세상을 이해해 가는 방법을 묘사하는 일상적인 개념이다. 부엔 비비르 가치관의 몇 가지 예로는 공존, 공동체, 다원성, 상호주의 그리고 균형이 있다. 이러한 가치관과 관념들이 많은 행위자들이 국가 경제 정책과 신(新)자유주의 개발 계획이 이 지역에 적용되는 것을 반대하도록 격동시키고 있다. 볼리비아와 에콰도르는 부엔 비비르가 각 나라의 헌법과 국가 발전 계획 정책의 기반이 된 구체적인 정치적 이념으로 진화한 두 가지의 특별한 사례이다. 이 두 나라를 부엔 비비르가 적용된 원형모델로 삼아 부엔 비비르가 중남미의 정치적 그리고 발전의 담합으로 진화하게 된 역사적 과정을 평가하는 것이 이번 연구의 목적이다.

이 개념을 향한 과거의 학자들의 큰 비평 중 하나는 부엔 비비르는 현대시대에 적용될 수 없는 최적화된 개념이라는 것이다. 두 나라, 볼리비아와 에콰도르가 이 개념을 국가 공공 정책에 적용했다는 것은 과거 학자들이 비평의 반대를 증명해주고 있다. 그렇기에 이 연구는 첫째로 중남미 토착민 공동체의 역사와 철학적 관점으로 이 개념의 특성과 원리를 이해해보려 한다. 그러기 위해서 부엔 비비르의 어원의 뿌리와 케추아어와 아이마라어의 기원의 분석을 하였다.

조사결과, 부엔 비비르가 볼리비아와 에콰도르 각 국가정부에 적용된 두가지 방식을 보여준다. 첫 눈에는 에콰도르와 볼리비아가 헌법과 국가 정책을 개혁하기 위해 서로의 방식을 빌어 비슷한 방식으로 진행된 것처럼 보일 수 있지만, Eduardo Gudynas는 부엔 비비르를 당원성이라는 특징을 가진 “건조 중인 개념” 이라고 정의한다. 다시 정의하자면, 면밀히 살펴보면 에콰도르와 볼리비아의 헌법과 성장 모델로 구체화 되게 된 방식에 여러 차이점이 있다는 뜻이다. 주 목적은 이 개념이 어떻게 볼리비아와 에콰도르의 정치적 이념과 성장의 핵심적 기반이 되었는지 이해하는 것이다. 더 나아가, 부엔 비비르가 볼리비아와 에콰도르에 정치적, 그리고 사회적 변화를 창조해나가는 방식의 차이를 분석하고자 한다. 부엔 비비르는 짜인 규정이나 가르침이 아닌 자연스럽게 정착된 안데스 지역 민족의 전통과 세계관이기 때문이다. 비록 볼리비아와 에콰도르의 정치, 사회, 그리고 경제분야에 적용이 되었지만 중남미의 다른 나라들은 영향을 받고 이 개념의 특이성을 느껴 그들이 공동체와 사회에 적용시키고 있다. 이 논문은 부엔 비비르가 모든 중남미 지역에 가져올 수 있는 영향과 개혁을 강조하고자 한다. 이러한 관념으로, 이 논문의 마지막 부분은 향후 부엔 비비르의 학문적 그리고 여러 정책과 법을 통한 현실화의 적용법에 집중하고자 한다. 부엔 비비르의 핵심 원칙인 ‘성장을 위한 접근법의 변화’의 전치사를 인용하여 이 논문은 부엔 비비르를 사회적 그리고 정치적 개혁

을 위한 혼합된 대안, 상호 보안적인 도구로써의 특징을 집중하고자 한다.
부엔 비비르의 볼리비아와 에콰도르에서의 입지와 부엔 비비르로 인한 변화의 비교평가이다.

주요어 : 부엔비비르, 중남미, 사회운동, 탈식민성, 토착민

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