



Theories and practices to implement circular and ecologically oriented economic systems and build a fairer society

Talks between Europe and South America



University of Ferrara



UC Chile



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



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Innovation for Sustainable Development Network



LOOKING FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT

Theories and practices to implement circular and ecologically oriented economic systems and build a fairer society

During the last 100 years, South America, despite its marginality, has given the world some of the most important lessons in integral development.

As José Mujica, President of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay from 2010 to 2015, recalled, the small country began to implement the first policies of universal public assistance at the beginning of the 20th century. In contrast to Western countries, where this kind of policy only materialized in the form of so-called Welfare after the Second World War.

In the 1940s, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), with Raúl Prebisch, brilliantly promoted reflection on the structural character of Latin American underdevelopment, and in the early 1960s, different Latin American intellectuals offered the original reflections known as Dependency theory to the economic discipline. At the dawn of the new millennium, South America presented Buen Vivir's concept, revolutionizing the traditional idea of economic development.

During the first two decades of the new millennium, it seemed that major South American countries had finally found the way to deal with some of their structural problems: a fairer Chile that was also less oriented to raw materials exportation; an Argentina capable of overcoming the convulsions caused by financial imbalance; a Brazil that was beginning to overcome its geographical, social and economic dualism; a Colombia capable of resolving the longest civil war ever known; a Peru that won the title of Latin American country with the greatest

economic growth of all the region, and countries like Ecuador and Bolivia, for the first time on their way to revolutionary self-determination based on universal messages like Buen Vivir and Pacha Mama. However, faced with fifteen years of significant changes and advances, today South America is once again the scene of severing tensions: the revolts that erupted in Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia, and Peru between 2019 and 2020 have strongly expressed the need for radical economic and social change in the region: in Brazil, the Presidency of Jair Bolsonaro has led to a profound political change, concerning both social equity and ecological issues; in Argentina, the financial crisis seems to have returned to the center of the stage, and only Uruguay maintains a satisfactory political, social and economic balance.

On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, Europe, two decades after the Union's creation, has still not shown itself capable of promoting and implementing a robust and shared foreign policy. The old continent, which still bears the enormous colonial debt to Africa and Latin America, has proved incapable of economically and commercially strengthening the strong historical ties. Portugal, Spain, and Italy, the three European countries with the greatest historical and cultural relations with Latin American countries, seem mainly indifferent to developing new and fruitful relations between the two sides of the Atlantic. The same Union model, which Europe has always considered positive and indispensable for constructing international and lasting peace, has proved to be imperfect, continually weakened

by internal contradictions and national selfishness, aggravated by the 2007 financial crisis. Few efforts have been made to defend the extraordinary system of Welfare State and universal provision of basic services (education, health, social security) that has characterized European welfare since the end of the Second World War, encouraging the affirmation of dangerous social dynamics of exclusion and marginalization of the most defenseless.

Today, as the world is called to confront an unprecedented pandemic, an ecological and social crisis, which also affects democratic systems, the principles of justice and the dynamics of civil coexistence, there are some questions that need to be answered: what role does South America play, and will it play in the international arena? What new conceptual models are emerging in that part of the continent? How could they be received and accepted by the rest of the world? What geopolitical and economic relations can be imagined between Europe and South America, given their historical links?

During these four meetings, we will try to answer these questions by moving within a framework of innovative development models that have their roots in the integral vision of the world that characterizes Latin American indigenous peoples, and in part propose conceptual models based on an idea of civil economy, on a culture of common goods and on innovative ideas such as the circular economy applied to agroecological practices as well as to pioneering experiences of ‘ciudades posibles’.

Among these models we cannot fail to mention the Buen Vivir that is based on the idea of social cohesion and the active participation of individuals and communities in decisions relevant to the construction of a shared destiny and happiness.

This concept, so deeply linked to American indigenous cultures - historically marginalized and exploited, but still living in a symbiotic relationship with Nature - seems to have the capacity to offer more balanced and environmentally friendly models of life. A model that seems suitable to both urban Latin American societies and those of other continents, in particular Europe, where the concept of wellbeing, connected to welfare, remains strongly linked to aspects of material benefit.

Today, however, in the face of increasingly dehumanizing and unjust globalization, it seems important to us to juxtapose this concept with that of integral development, an innovative system that puts at the core not only consumption, but Nature and human being who is part of it. This model is based on a coordinated set of political, social and economic actions, based on the promotion of personal dignity, solidarity and subsidiarity. This vision presents the goal of improving conditions for full individual and collective development, contributing to the creation of a human climate of mutual trust that pays special attention to the problems of those at a disadvantage, in accordance with an environmental conservation perspective.

On this basis, in the symposium, we will try to outline an articulated picture of what is meant by integral and innovative development, collecting analyses, theories and experiences carried out in different contexts of South America and Europe. The current pandemic and climate change remind us every day that the time has come to give new meaning to the terms economic and social development, reorienting national and international efforts to build a more inclusive future, which is fair and ecologically oriented.

We hope to develop together with you a stimulating space to contribute, even to a small extent, to the collective effort that awaits us as humanity.

¹ By innovative development models, we mean forms of social and community organization that transcend the market's centrality, based on the existing cultural multiplicity and more respectful interactions among human being, nature, and Buen Vivir of the communities. These principles are valid in local and rural communities as well as in urban groups or competitive enterprises.

First day (Eng/Spa) - June 16, 2021- 15:00 18:30 – Rome time

INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT AND *BUEN VIVIR*

Innovative Principles, Visions and Patterns for Reorienting National and International Policies Towards Sustainable and Fairer Development

The current pandemic has shown the importance of radically rethinking the century's dominant economic and social model. A paradigm shift is necessary, although it is difficult to imagine concrete alternatives that are valid across the board. Therefore, the objective of this meeting will be to discuss possible alternative models, some of which have emerged in Latin America, and which are based on an idea of society that places the human being and nature at the center of public and community action.

Our purpose will be to try and possibly achieve, together with you, to build a space of bi-regional dialogue between Europe and Latin America, lasting and in constant evolution, with the goal of analyzing the deep roots of innovative models such as Integral Development and Buen Vivir, and the work that the two regions could develop together to achieve possible futures of such models.

Second day (Eng) - June 23, 2021 - 15:00 18:30 – Rome time

TOWARDS INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT: KEY ACTORS AND ROUTES

Market, Institutions and Civil Society: What Tasks for the Realization of a More Equitable and Ecologically Oriented Paradigm?

At different times, many actors have set out to imagine a different and possibly better world: some of the great religions, the Renaissance or humanist utopias, parties, and political organizations during the 19th and 20th centuries. In this new millennium, it seems that every aspiration to live a full and thoroughly dignified life that is also lived with respect for nature is sacrificed and expendable in the face of economic utilitarianism and global capitalism. While it is true that the economy has its laws, it is also true that the mechanisms that govern it are modifiable, while the mechanisms that govern nature are not, unless it is at the cost of disasters and imbalances to the detriment of all living beings.

The purpose of this day of study is to begin to discuss the roles and tools that the market, the institutions - territorial, national and international - and civil society have had, and should have, in the transition towards a new idea of society. A new society that puts at the center of public, private action, and of the knowledge sector, the human being and the planet that hosts it together with all the other living species.

Third day (Es) - June 30, 2021 - 15:00-18:30 – Rome time

INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE

Agricultural and Cultural Resistance in South America Facing International Market, Institutional and Climate Crisis Pressures

Latin America has always been considered the cradle of global food biodiversity, and its natural resources have enormous potential to respond to the future demand for food of its own populations and elsewhere in the world. In fact, the region has for years been a pioneer and promoter of food and agricultural issues, whether it be agroecology, food security, food safety or food sovereignty. Interesting to note is the vision of Buen Vivir rural with a comprehensive territorial approach that recognizes the intimate link between the territory and its inhabitants.

In this third meeting, we want to focus on pioneering experiences in Latin America and Europe aimed at creating communities that live following alternative paradigms based on the harmony between production, environment, culture, and society.

The objective will be to get to know projects, undertaken and developed by various communities, that restore strength and dignity to the land, allowing those who work it to defend their right of access to food in adequate quantity and quality - as shown, among others, by the determined promotion of agroecological practices and local agri-food systems - fully respecting food sovereignty and protecting them from international interests.

CLOSING THE CIRCLE: INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT, AGROECOLOGY AND CIRCULARITY

The Latin America and Europe future challenges.

In Europe, the new Circular Economy Action plan has created a thriving environment for transforming the economy and the manufacturing sector. In the Latin American region since the year 2015, a large number of regional and national forums have been discussing the prospects and opportunities that a circular economic model can bring to the economy, mostly focusing on similar issues to those discussed in Europe and an attention to key extractive industries (e.g. mining), manufacturing and waste management.

However, the European-centred vision of circular economy may not sufficiently address the challenges of social justice, inclusiveness, poverty alleviation, resilience of the natural ecosystems. There is a need to critically review the mainstream and technocratic vision of Circular Economy and embrace behaviours and cultures learning from Latin American local communities that still live in harmony with nature, and recover traditional habits and practices which were the daily norm among the majority of European families only fifty years ago.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

- **Francisco Alburquerque Llorens:** Coordinator of the scientific committee of the Territorial Development Network of Latin America and the Caribbean
- **Fernando Diaz Lopez:** Director of Innovation for Sustainable Development Network (inno4sd.net)
- **Gianfranco Franz:** Full Professor of Policies for Sustainability and Local Development, Università di Ferrara
- **Sergio Moreira:** SEBRAE's former CEO
- **Caterina Rondoni:** Ph.D. student in Environmental Sustainability and Well-being -
- **Gonzalo Valdivieso:** Assistant Professor Campus Villarrica, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.

SOCIOS

- Ph.D. program Environmental sustainability and Wellbeing - Università di Ferrara
- International University network ROUTES Towards Sustainability
- Pontificia Universidad Católica (PUC) de Chile Campus Villarrica
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