

Development in Latin America: political economies as a matter of culture

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Abstract: The growing unrest regarding the social, political, economic and environmental state of affairs in Latin America suggests a deep challenge of the development model. Ideas about development matter because they seek to bring about social states by solving what are regarded as social ills. However, its definition is being increasingly disputed. This article makes sense of that plurality. Applying grid group cultural theory to this debate produces four irreducible ideal-typical worldviews and notions of development: market-led, state-led, multiple community-led, and a mirage.

Keywords: Varieties of development. Cultural theory. Development models. Political economy. Latin America.

Desenvolvimento na América Latina: economias políticas uma questão de cultura

Resumo: A crescente inquietação em relação à situação social, política, econômica e ambiental na América Latina sugere um profundo desafio do modelo de desenvolvimento. Idéias sobre desenvolvimento importam porque buscam criar estados sociais resolvendo o que são considerados males sociais. No entanto, sua definição está sendo cada vez mais contestada. Este artigo dá sentido a essa pluralidade. A aplicação da teoria cultural de grupos de grade a esse debate produz quatro visões de mundo e noções de desenvolvimento típico-ideal irredutíveis: liderada pelo mercado, liderada pelo Estado, liderada pela comunidade múltipla e uma miragem.

Palavras-chave: Variedades de desenvolvimento. Teoria cultural. Modelos de desenvolvimento. Economia política. América Latina.

Introduction

In the last decades, social unrest regarding the social, political, economic and environmental state of affairs has increased. Many states around the world have shown growing dissatisfaction and polarization, leading to frequent large-scale protest, (e.g. Thailand 2020, France 2018, United States 2011, Greece 2010). Of late, in many places, this has been exacerbated by

the COVID-19 pandemic and the response to it. No region, however, has experienced as much turmoil as Latin America (e.g. Argentina 2022, Panama 2022, Ecuador 2022 and 2019, Colombia 2021, Chile 2019). Despite the specificities of each case, they seem to share a concern with who-is-owed-what-and-why (Garcés-Velástegui, forthcoming). Therefore, at their heart, there seems to be a challenge of each country's development model. Moreover, given the global character of the environmental and inequality crises, there is also growing interest in a global development agreement.

Being an inherently descriptive and normative concept, the very notion of development is contended. Not only does it denote change but "good change" (Chambers, 2004). Ideas about development, thus, are inherently value-laden and point to what is valued within a polity.

Hence, development prompts action aiming at producing that change. It is essentially purposive, seeking to bring about a state of affairs. Different theories and approaches advocate different valuable aspects. Because these ideas compete for adherents and execution into practice at any one time, it is necessary to understand their plurality. Research and practice, nonetheless, have mainly focused on advancing each individual development model or program. Different approaches have seemingly been mutually skeptical at best or talking past each other at worst.

Because descriptive and normative aspects cannot be separated from one another, it not only is a polysemic term but can be regarded as a necessarily disputed one (Garcés Velástegui, 2019; 2022). That being so, no one agreed-upon definition can be reached or expected. Therefore, rather than arguing for a definitive definition, it is more fruitful to elucidate the current landscape. Given the increasing plurality of notions and practices of development, it seems urgent to bring some order to that complexity. Grid group cultural theory is proposed for that endeavor. The product of Mary Douglas' and her followers' efforts to account for socio-cultural viability, it proposes a typology of four ideal-typical, irreducible, mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive worldviews (Hoppe, 2007; Mamadouh, 1999). Since each way of life holds a distinct perspective on contested issues, applying this framework to the development debate can shed some light on the political discursive space and indicate the plausible narratives, identifying who promotes and who adheres to them. That is, what is valued by each worldview can be identified, classified, compared, and explained.

To elaborate that argument, this paper is organized in four sections. The first introduces the grid group cultural theory. The framework's four worldviews are pre-

sented in the second. Next, the four outlooks of development are fleshed out comparatively. The final section offers a brief discussion of the implications for future research avenues as concluding remarks.

Grid group cultural theory

Originated in anthropology (see e.g. Douglas, 1992a; 1992b) and elaborated in multiple other disciplines (see e.g. Schwarz & Thompson, 1990; Hood, 1998; Wildavsky, 2006; Verweij, 2011; Swedlow, 2014), grid group cultural theory (CT) proposes a functionalist account of the emergence, survival, and decay of ways of life (Thompson et al., 1990). It follows an interpretivist philosophy of science (Hoppe, 2007) and, as such, it posits that people's beliefs, preferences and even imaginations make up worldviews that guide their interpretation of the world, construct their meanings of it, and contribute to their making sense of it (Bell, 1997). By so doing, they constitute the world as well.

Among CT's most relevant concepts are 'cultural bias' and 'social relations'. While cultural bias refers to shared values and systems of beliefs, social relations denotes what can be conceived as the tapestry of interpersonal relations. Both constitute ways of life, solidarities, outlooks of the world or worldviews to which people adhere (Swedlow, 2014). Thus, a way of life depends on the dynamics between cultural bias and social arrangements, an interaction that can be mutually reinforcing (Thompson et al., 1990). In other words, those who subscribe to a way of life act according to specific shared values and beliefs, which, in turn, legitimize their social arrangements. Similarly, social relations themselves can manifest the adherence to a given set of values and rules, perpetuating them. To the extent they reinforce each other, ways of life are sustained and even expanded to new members. Insofar they do not, ways of life may wade by losing members.

CT focuses on two dimensions or axes: grid and group. This framework is concerned with accounting for the extent to which individual choices are influenced (Swedlow, 2014). Grid refers to how external prescriptions affect individual freedom. It captures to what degree guidelines and instructions external to the individual affect individual choices. The lesser the external impositions, the more agency the individual has over their life (Thompson et al., 1990; Lockhart 1998). Group, in turn, denotes how collective membership affects individual freedom. It indicates an individual's level of affiliation within bounded units. The greater the individual's embeddedness in a group, the more individual choices are determined by the collectivity (Thompson et al., 1990; Lockhart, 1998).

FIGURE 1
CT'S FOUR RATIONALITIES OR WAYS OF LIFE

		Grid	
		<i>Low Grid</i>	<i>High Grid</i>
Group	<i>High Group</i>	Equalitarianism	Hierarchy
	<i>Low Group</i>	Individualism	Fatalism

Based on: Hoppe, 2007; Mamadouh, 1999; Thompson et al., 1990.

Combining grid and group produces a typology of four ideal-typical, distinct, and irreducible worldviews, which are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive: individualism, equalitarianism, hierarchy and fatalism (Hoppe, 2007; Mamadouh, 1999) (see Figure 1). Whereas the latter is a suppressed or passive outlook, the rest are active ones (Hoppe and Peterse 1993).

Significantly, these worldviews are ideal types, in the Weberian sense (Coyle 1994; Altman & Baruch, 1998). As such, they are pure forms that neither can be found in reality nor do they reflect the true content of history (Käsler, 1988).

Further, these ways of life not only coexist but are interdependent. Their survival depends on the survival of the others (Thompson et al., 1990). As individuals revise, reconsider, and change their adherence to a way of life, some worldviews loose members and others gain them. This is explained by the notion of surprise or problem, which share the same definition: the discrepancy between expectation and reality. Whenever a way of life fails to predict reality sufficiently often, people are likely to abandon that worldview and opt for one that matches expectations and reality more consistently (Thompson et al. 1990). This process enables accounting for change.

Plural perceptions and actions on the world

The above suggests that each way of life produces a distinct notion of value-laden concepts (Garcés Velástegui, forthcoming). This is so because the latter's definitions, by their very nature, depend on the preferences of the subjects employing them. Development, as inherently normative, defies unanimous definition and is necessarily disputed (Garcés Velástegui, 2022; 2019). Consequently, CT can prove useful to account for the political discursive space and identify the valued aspects in each development narrative. This exercise requires exploring specific and relevant themes inter alia human nature, the environment, fairness, authority, time, and knowledge.

Individualism

Low grid and low group generate *individualism*. Accordingly, this rationality provides the most freedom of choice, one that seeks to be unrestricted from both imposed prescriptions and group affiliation. For this outlook, human nature is inherently self-seeking and atomistic (Thompson, 2003). People are regarded as robust and so is nature (Douglas, 1996; Douglas and Ney, 1998). Resources are abundant and time is of the essence, prioritizing the short-term (Schwarz & Thompson, 1994). The focus is on exploiting them for personal benefit, placing the individual as the ethical unit. Thus, rationality is substantive and instrumental. Others and the environment hold only instrumental value, to the extent they advance the individual's goals.

Although the individualist is free from control by others, they actively seek to influence and control others. The size of their following becomes a measure of their success (Douglas, 1982). Those who share this rationality compete for followers, who are mainly found as members of other worldviews. The lack of authority, and the anarchy this leads to, turns organizations into arenas where the only effective mechanism of control is competition (Hood, 1998). Thus, the preferred social regime is the market (Schmutzer, 1994). Although central control is rejected, coalitions can be formed with hierarchical features, since regulation is required for a well-functioning market (Lockhart, 1998), illustrating the possibility of some degree of hybridization. Institutions, thus, are valued only temporarily and insofar they enable personal gain and all boundaries and limitations are seen as temporary and always subject to negotiation (Thompson & Ellis, 1998).

Privileging freedom, the favored form of governance is *laissez faire* and exploitability is the most important feature of the system (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990). Problems are defined in terms of restrictions that hinder personal gain. Free markets are preferred over regulation as the policy instrument to address them (Hoppe, 2007). Personal responsibility accompanies the focus on freedom. Success is personal and so is failure (Douglas, 1992b). It is up to each one to forge their way to the top in an obstacle-free environment. Therefore, fairness is conceived in terms of equality of opportunity (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990).

Come what may, uncertainty included, this outlook is optimistic. The world is knowable (Douglas, 1992b) and, thus, challenges can be faced with confidence. Even if currently there are no answers for the questions posed, it is a matter of time for them to emerge. Moreover, in the market place of ideas, truth is disputed, new knowledge replacing old one, rewarding innovation and novelty (Douglas, 1992b).

Hierarchy

At the antipodes, high grid and high group produce hierarchy. Therefore, individual freedom of choice is limited the most, regulated by imposed external prescriptions and by the group to which individuals belong. Human nature is inherently flawed but redeemable by the right institutions (Thompson, 2003). As such, it is robust but also has limits and so does nature (Douglas, 1996; Douglas & Ney, 1998). That being so, resources are scarce, prompting a balance between a concern for the short and the long term (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990). Because of the influence of institutions, rationality is procedural (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990) and others as well as the environment hold instrumental value, to the extent they benefit the system.

There is no anarchy, and authority is held from above. To reduce uncertainty in human behavior, laws and norms are established. This leads to specific roles assigned to individuals, determining the actual scope of their agency (Thompson, 2003). This entails a hierarchical structure with well-defined duties and tasks. Organizations are a ladder of authority whose control mechanism is oversight (Hood, 1998). Control is exerted from above, higher ranks supervising lower ones seeking to preserve the system and status quo. The preferred social arrangement is the hierarchy (Schmutzer, 1994). The valuation of institutions and correct procedures is stable and enduring due to their intrinsic value since, by observing them, they are perpetuated (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990).

This system favors a pyramidal structure. Thus, the preferred form of governance is the Leviathan and controllability its most relevant attribute (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990), where order is privileged. In such an arrangement, problem is defined as disorder, things being misplaced or not fulfilling their roles. Thus, dissidence and deviations are problematic. The preferred policy instrument is regulation over market (Hoppe, 2007). Maintaining the system is the ultimate end of the outlook. Challenges to it and failure to preserve it are blamed on deviants (Douglas, 1992b) while law and order are the priority to tackle them. Hence, the idea of fairness is equality before the law (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990).

On the face of uncertainty, this worldview is cautiously optimistic. The world is knowable, within limits imposed by the capacities and technology available (Douglas, 1992b). That is why, at any given moment, something is either true or false and this is determined by experts, who articulate their findings with the interest of political authorities (Douglas, 1992b).

Egalitarianism

High group and low grid generate egalitarianism. This way of life is characterized by strong group affiliation and weak or no external prescriptions. Freedom of choice is, thus, influenced by the collective. Human nature is good but susceptible to influence by (inegalitarian) institutions (Thompson, 2003). People are fragile and under duress, and so is nature (Douglas, 1996; Douglas & Ney, 1998). Accordingly, resources are regarded as depleting and the concern is with the long- over the short-term (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990). The ethical unit is the collective and the environment it inhabits, both of which have intrinsic value. People care for and share with one another (Thompson, 2003) as well as with the environment. This solidarity has a critical rationality (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990) to external influences from individualist and hierarchical outlooks since they threaten that caring and sharing.

Horizontal relationships with no authority do not lead to anarchy but entail challenges. Given the lack of institutions, roles are vaguely defined (if at all) by the collective, which curtails differentiation among members hindering social relationships by making them ambiguous (Douglas, 1982). Moreover, decision-making becomes difficult since the process to make collective decisions in a horizontal setting is consensus. Therefore, groups sharing this solidarity tend to be small (Douglas, 1982), regard organizations as collegial, and use mutuality as the control mechanism (Hood, 1998). Expectedly, this outlook's preferred arrangement is the enclave or the clan (Schmutzer, 1994) and it does not value institutions. The only adherence is to a collective moral fervor and rejection of the outside (Schwarz & Thompson, 1994).

Because of egalitarians' concern with the collective and the environment, their favored governance model is Jeffersonian and the prioritized property of the system is sustainability (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990). A problem is perceived as the contamination of the group by other rationalities. The preferred policy instrument to deal with it is appealing to inner conviction over regulation over markets (Hoppe, 2007). Thus, the enclave is defined in opposition to 'the other' and those institutions that attempt to disturb equality (i.e. markets and hierarchies). Blame is placed on the outside system surrounding the group (Douglas 1992b). Contrasting with the asymmetries endorsed by other worldviews, within the clan, the idea of fairness is equality of outcome (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990).

Criticism and skepticism about the outside influences this outlook's perception of uncertainty. Knowledge claims from the outside cannot be trusted as they are inevitably infused by interests and institutions. Thus, only the practices of the group are knowable and only insights generated within it are legitimate.

Fatalism

Finally, low group and high grid bring about fatalism. Fatalists' behavior and freedom of choice is determined by the classification given to them by the system (Douglas 1982), since it has weak group affiliation and strong externally imposed prescriptions. This worldview captures the subjects of regulation, located at the bottom, not the issuers of rules, at the top. Human nature is fickle and untrustworthy (Thompson, 2003). People are unpredictable and so is the environment (Douglas 1996; Douglas & Ney, 1998). Resources are regarded as a lottery (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990) reflecting the whims of the world. Accordingly, neither others nor nature hold any particular value. Only one's own person is valuable and therein lies the ethical unit. In this context, fatalists suffer from involuntary myopia (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990).

Authority comes from above. Given the world's unpredictability, individuals are ultimately ineffectual to change the system. Any effort leads to inferior outcomes at best and counterproductive ones at worst. Organizations are seen as gaming machines and the mechanism to exert control is contrived randomness (Hood, 1998). The preferred social regime is the zero-matrix (Schmutzer, 1994). Hence, although observed, institutions are not valued since they are regarded as foreign and oppressive.

There is no preferred form of governance, vote is inconsequential, and the focus is placed on copability or managing to get by (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990). Problems are manifested in misperceptions of consistency and predictability in events. No policy instrument is favored (Hoppe, 2007) since attempts to change things are futile. Events answer to the whims of the world, so they have no standard causality. Blame, thus, is placed on fate (Douglas, 1992b). Since all agency is irrelevant, fairness is not to be achieved on this world (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990); it is a chimera.

The world is inherently uncertain and cannot be explained. It can hardly be known and, therefore, knowledge or truth claims are not to be believed (Douglas, 1992b). These are just other ways in which power is exerted from above.

Plural development

Each outlook proposes a distinct ideal-typical development model and political economy. In what follows, they are fleshed out. Additionally, a paradigmatic example is provided for each model. Because rationalities and development models are ideal types (see Figure 2), the illustrations presented neither match neatly the descriptions elaborated nor do they need to. The framework allows ordering multiple

phenomena and assessing to what extent they conform to one category or another. Importantly, since development means ‘good change’, it entails some degree of agency, in defining ends as well as means. Therefore, the three active worldviews (individualism, hierarchy, and egalitarianism) have more to say about development than the suppressed one (fatalism).

Individualist development

Development, from the individualistic outlook, is market-led. First, solely the market guarantees the pursuit of individual well-being, as defined by each individual, enjoying individual freedom or the absence of restrictions to personal choice. Second, the market, ruled by competition, provides the right incentives to generate collective welfare among self-interested individuals. Third, only the market can efficiently allocate resources, natural or otherwise, to the most profitable undertakings. Following modernity’s tradition, therefore, there is only one idea of development: linear unfettered progress (Garcés Velástegui, forthcoming). Regardless of what science may suggest, each individual shares this definition, best associated in the aggregate with economic development or growth, which is perceived as self-generated, where people in use of their rationality and liberty are responsible for materializing it since they ultimately are its beneficiaries.

As such, it can be illustrated by what may be called the developmental market. Two intertwined features are pertinent for this discussion:

- i.* policies;
- ii.* development model.

As a set of reform policies, this approach advocates what has been referred to as the DLP formula (Steger & Roy, 2010), all of the elements conveying the preference for market over state: Deregulation of the economy; Liberalization of trade and industry; and, Privatization of state-owned enterprises.

As a prescriptive development model, it resonates with neoliberal ideas, offering a comprehensive strategy with economic, social and political implications. Hence, being a model, it goes beyond a repertoire of policies, entailing instead

a set of economic theories linking disparate policies together into a coherent recipe for growth or modernization; prescriptions for the proper role of key actors such as labor unions, private enterprise, and the state; and an explicitly political project to carry out

these prescriptions and ensure that actors play by the rules of the game (Boas & Gans-Morse, 2009:144).

Thus, market-led development entails a market place of ideas sharing, in the modern tradition of progress, the focus on economic growth (conventionally understood as the increase in Gross National Product – GNP), and confidence in the market to achieve it. Also, this means a distinct approach to state-society relations, suggesting specific roles for important sectors. Development is focused on economic growth and economic structures are not questioned. Well-being is expressed as material welfare under the assumption that higher income allows higher consumptions and this leads to higher utility (McGillivray, 2007).

‘Development’ was essentially an economic problem. Economic growth was considered a suitable yardstick for it (indeed almost a synonym). In the end, growth would mean reduced inequality, unemployment and poverty [...]. Such progress would be all the easier because the necessary technologies were already available. (Seers, 1980: 5).

To increase economic growth, the market is the right instrument. This is so because only the market provides the incentives required to produce social utility by increasing individual utility. Because all transactions are factored in the GNP, the belief held is that the higher this indicator, the more transactions presumably recorded and, thus, the more utility for all inhabitants of a polity.

The chief theoretical schools of Europe and North America promoted their own recipes for accelerating growth as universally valid. At one extreme, the Chicago school [...] argued for opening the doors to foreign trade and investment, and avoiding planning and controls. IMF economists, from the same stable, saw inflation and payments problems – already widespread, especially in Latin America – as due to lack of monetary discipline. If this were put right, the basis would be established for a fast growth of output and employment (Seers, 1980:6).

This project finds some of its most influential manifestations in Modernization and Structural Dualism. Modernization, as advanced by Rostow (1960), posited that there was (almost literally) a ladder leading towards development that all countries had to climb in order to leave underdevelopment, consisting in five rungs:

- i.* traditional societies;
- ii.* preconditions for take-off;

- iii. take-off;
- iv. the drive towards maturity; and,
- v. high mass consumption.

The goal was increasing economic growth, which characterize modern societies, and these were the historical stages of modernization, suggesting that underdevelopment was a stage that had to be overcome on the pathway to development (Peet & Hartwick, 2009).

This proposal amounted to what came to be called structural dualism (Furtado, 1974), which provided a simplified analysis of societies, dividing them in an industrial or modern sector and an agricultural or traditional one. Whereas the former was regarded as forward-looking and, thus, desirable or developed, the latter was seen as backward and unwanted or underdeveloped. The implication was that in order to modernize and increase their economic growth, which constituted the only aim all countries were to pursue as a normative imperative, they were urged to maximize their industrial expansion and minimize their traditional areas by establishing market-friendly policies.

Latin America provides a telling example of such doctrine and policy. Although it influenced virtually all countries in the region during the 1980s and 1990s, it was most notably implemented in Chile. This country served basically as a laboratory in which to run modernization and neoliberal experiments carried out by scholars educated at the University of Chicago, promoter of neoliberal ideas and policy, known as the Chicago boys (Kay, 2011). Chile's record shows the role of the state reduced to a subsidiary one in economic development as well as in social and labor policy (Riethof, 1999). Regarding labor, whereas the state was in charge of regulating employer-worker relations as well as training and social security, the market was responsible for employment and wages. This arrangement led to flexibilization of labor. Concerning social policy, focalization and privatization were the main interest. That is, policies had to be restrictive in terms of beneficiaries, and public services had to be provided by the private sector, both of which are part of the austerity program seeking the minimization of the state.

Hierarchical development

Hierarchical development can only be state-led. Only such a top-down authority can harness a polity's efforts towards a common goal. Therefore, laws and institutions issued to steer individuals in that direction are needed. In modernity's tra-

dition, development is seen as linear progress but within limits recognized by science. However, unlike individualists, for hierarchists, authorities and technocrats are in charge of defining development, from unqualified-now economic- development (Spence, 2010), to human development (Garcés Velástegui, 2020), to sustainable development (Pierri, 2000). Experts, following the latest scientific insights (be it theoretical or empirical) influence national as well as international agendas. Therefore, the locus of attention has changed over time, from exclusive attention to pecuniary indicators, to the inclusion of people's quality of life and lately environmental concerns. Regardless of the specific focus, however, the constant has been the maintenance of polity and the structure governing it (Garcés Velástegui, forthcoming).

Thus, it is exemplified by the developmental state. From this perspective, development is a deliberate process with clear ends and means that requires knowledge and planning. The focus on science shows the preference for innovation and modern progress. Thus, industrialization and growth become the main goals and techno-industrial policies are the way to attain them (Thurbon, 2014). Development follows science and entails a constant move forward, mostly linear, that continuously incorporates techniques, innovations, and even variables and concerns such as the environment and sustainability. Specialized scholars and technocrats sanctioned by state authorities sustain this process.

This leads to the primacy of central planning. The state ought to have an active role in the process because, left to their own devices, individuals and the networks created by them lack the incentives to pursue a larger goal. The state, therefore, "should (actively) foster economic development but avoid capture by particular groups" (Fritz & Rocha, 2007: 539). The inherent nature of markets is to create fragmentation, leading to ineffectiveness. Such regime is inefficacious since individual actors care solely about their own gain. The market is also inefficient because dispersed efforts are wasteful. Competition leads to the destruction of enterprises, small-scale production, the loss of jobs, and decreases in consumption, which ultimately affect growth and welfare. State intervention is necessary, thus, internally (e.g. public spending in multiple sectors) and externally (e.g. import substitution industrialization) (Chang, 2003; 2008).

A relevant example is the so-called Latin American school of development, which has structuralism and dependency as its main strands (Kay, 2011). Apropos of structuralism, it regards the world economic system as being composed of centers and peripheries, that are deeply intertwined and reproduced because of that interwovenness (Prebisch, 1949).

Against this backdrop, according to structuralism, development required attention to context and agency. Although there is certainly no short supply of versions of structuralism, the former are some significant common denominators. Therefore, recipes from developed countries (i.e. the center) could hardly apply to underdeveloped ones (i.e. the periphery). To overcome this state, peripheries had to purposefully plan, design programs, direct resources, and implement policies to develop. While multiple actors have been given important roles in different variants of structuralism, the state has remained the constant one.

In the more progressive versions of structuralism it is the developmentalist state which is the main agent of change as it is seen as the only institution capable of transcending sectional interests and thereby able to pursue the national interest (Kay, 2011: 19).

Dependency analysis built on these insights and others, producing two broad and distinct versions: a structuralist one and a neo-Marxist one. Put simply, whereas the structuralist posited that reforming the system would require mainly the groups non-integrated to the system, since those already incorporated (e.g. the industrial and middle classes) are unlikely to support meaningful change, the neo-Marxist argued in favor of the importance of the worker-peasant alliance in the revolution for socialism in Latin America, rather than the bourgeoisie, because of the latter's dependent nature (Kay, 2011).

Despite their differences, there are important commonalities that unite them under the dependency banner. Perhaps the most relevant coincidences are:

- i.* they maintain the focus on growth;
- ii.* they stress interdependence and the inability of peripheries to grow autonomously;
- iii.* they emphasize that underdevelopment is the expression of capitalist development in peripheries (Kay 2011).

Indeed, as Sunkel (1973:136) states representing structuralist *dependentistas*:

Development and underdevelopment can therefore be understood as partial structures, but interdependent, which form a single system. A principal characteristic which differentiates both structures is that the developed one, to a large extent by virtue of its endogenous capacity of growth, is the dominant, and the underdeveloped, due in part to the induced character of its dynamic, is dependent.

Dos Santos (1973:76, emphasis in the original), in turn, from a Marxist perspective argues:

Dependence is a conditioning situation in which the economies of one group of countries are conditioned by the development and expansion of others. A relationship of interdependence between two or more economies or between such economies and the world trading system becomes a dependent relationship when some countries can expand through self-impulsion while others, being in a dependent position, can only expand as a reflection of the expansion of the dominant countries, which may have positive or negative effects on their immediate development. In either case, the basic situation of dependence causes these countries to be both backward and exploited (Dos Santos, 1973:76, emphasis in the original).

An illustration of this model is also found in Latin America's experience, namely, import substitution industrialization (ISI). According to structuralism, because the terms of trade proved to have been detrimental to underdeveloped countries, the latter had to resort to protectionist policies, which entail state intervention. ISI sought to incentivize local infant industries by protecting them from international competition for a period of time by raising tariffs on foreign goods. Local supply, therefore, could gain maturity by meeting local demand. Hence, the state induced development, abandoning the liberal idea of having to settle for specializing in producing according to its natural endowment of resources (Chang, 2003; 2008; Chang & Grabel, 2004).

Egalitarian development

Egalitarianism is fundamentally suspicious of development itself and, therefore, alternatives to it can only be community-led. Influences from the outside, whether individualist or hierarchist, threaten egalitarian values: the intrinsic importance recognized in people as well as in nature. As such, from economic to sustainable development, science, technical insights, and expert advice are regarded as ways to exploit people and the environment to benefit others' interests. Accordingly, 'development' itself is rejected since it is seen as a discourse from above seeking homogenization, reducing diversity, establishing both a single universal end as well as means (Garcés Velástegui, forthcoming). Following the post-modern tradition, multiple alternatives of 'good change' generated from below, responding to local knowledges as well as practices, and pertinent for specific contexts, are advocated.

Accordingly, it is manifested in community-led alternatives or efforts from below perhaps adequately encompassed by post-development. Egalitarians regard the

very notion of development as an exercise of power over them from outside. “The development discourse [...] has created an extremely efficient apparatus for producing knowledge about, and the exercise of power over, the Third World” (Escobar 1995: 9). This discourse is not neutral, and seeks to expand and impose the normative idea of the outlook employing it. Development’s valued aspects are seen as part of an agenda infused by Western’s values and by international organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Development Program as well as national cooperation and aid agencies.

The development discourse legitimizes only a few forms of knowledge, those of the dominant centers, which perpetuate the status quo, maintaining the power structures, and benefiting those in power (Rahnema, 1997). This has led to the exclusion of alternatives, “particularly the exclusion of the knowledges, wisdoms, voices, and concerns of those whom, paradoxically, development was supposed to serve: the poor of Asia, Africa and Latin America” (Escobar, 2007:20). Underdevelopment, therefore, is the result of the development project.

That being so, rather than alternatives of development, post-development efforts seek alternatives *to* development. Plurality lies at the heart of these efforts, fostering multiple equally legitimate discourses and representations situated within specific contexts, peoples and languages, and addressing specific issues (as defined by those undergoing them). For current purposes, suffice it to illustrate this by discussing two relevant ones in South America: Sumak Kawsay also known as *Buen Vivir* or Good Living and *Vivir Sabroso* perhaps best translated as Luscious Living.

Regarding *Buen Vivir*, it defies the idea of two states being distinguishable in terms of ‘development’, one earlier and inferior considered as underdeveloped and one later and superior seen as developed, defined by those deeming themselves in the latter (Acosta, 2012). Additionally, it also challenges anthropocentrism. Good Living implies a holistic view in which life itself lies at the centre. Thus, it includes people and their quality of life but only as one part, equally important to others, composing the larger system of nature (Gudynas, 2011). Accordingly, *Sumak Kawsay* implies a movement from an anthropocentrism to a socio-biocentrism (Acosta, 2010).

The idea of Sumak kawsay or suma qamaña: is born in the social periphery of the global periphery and does not contain the deceptive elements of conventional development. [...] the idea comes from the vocabulary of once totally marginalized peoples, excluded from respectability and whose language was considered inferior, uneducated, incapable of abstract, primitive thought (Tortosa, 2009, author’s translation).

Sumak Kawsay, therefore, challenges the very idea of ‘development’ in the modernist tradition of ‘one good change’, one destination and one pathway to it determined from without. *Buen Vivir* is the necessarily imperfect and endlessly changing idea of well-being born within the indigenous communities (Gudynas, 2011) in the Andean region.

Concerning *Vivir Sabroso*, it also challenges the idea of modern development, as single linear process with only one desirable social state. It is part of the linguistic inheritance of the pacific communities in Colombia and it “refers to a model of spiritual, social, economic, political and cultural organization, of harmony with the environment, with nature and with people (Mena & Meneses, 2019: 50, author’s translation).

The roots of Luscious Living can be found in African philosophy, particularly in the notion of *ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* itself rejects modernity’s project and entails a break with development (Garcés Velástegui, forthcoming). Based on an interdependence of all living beings, suggesting that oneness and wholeness are mutually constituting and indivisible (Ramose, 2001), it regards the welfare of one as dependent on the welfare of others and vice versa. This is summarized in the phrase ‘I am because of who we all are’ (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013). *Ubuntu* “is anchored on the ethical principle of the promotion of life through mutual concern, care and sharing between and among human beings as well as with the wider environment [...]. Ubuntu philosophy understands life in its wholeness” (Ramose, 2015: 212).

Additionally, *Vivir Sabroso* also seems to resonate with *mntu*, another important notion for some African cultures, conveying an integral vision of the universe encompassing all beings, human, non-human, cosmic and divine, intertwined in a stream that unites past, present, and future (Mena & Meneses, 2019).

Because these are inherently community-based worldviews, their manifestations are multiple and at the local level. While Good Living is shared among peoples in the highlands, Luscious Living is mostly restricted to the Pacific coast of Northern South America. *Buen Vivir* has gained currency in countries like Ecuador and Bolivia, influencing their constitutions. *Vivir Sabroso* has recently proven compelling in Colombia, as it was part of the proposal that eventually won the 2022 presidential elections. Since plurality of views lies at their very core, it is difficult to indicate policy expressions of these ideas. Some common denominators can nevertheless be found, namely the importance of the diversity of cultures, peoples and languages, which has an impact on social, cultural and even judicial policies; the relevance of nature and its conservation, leading to the rejection of extractivism whether from neoliberals or developmentalists.

Fatalist development

Being a suppressed or passive worldview, and since development requires some degree of agency, fatalism does not have a direct illustration. Regardless of the development model, there are people neither partaking in the process, nor sharing in the purported benefits, nor agreeing with it. Indeed, any notion of ‘good change’ caused by human means is nothing but a mirage (Garcés Velástegui, forthcoming). On the contrary, being decided from above and benefitting others, for fatalists, all such ideas turn out to be oppressive against them, or ‘bad change’, regardless of the valued aspects.

The very idea of development is non-sensical or even detrimental. Change is an inherent characteristic of the world but it is random, defying explanation. Any idea of ‘good change’, implying human action, is unworkable in practice and a futile enterprise even in abstract. First, given the unpredictability of the world, it is unlikely that development policy can actually bring about development ideas. Indeed, underdevelopment is likely to be the unintended effect of development efforts. Second, since it is defined and executed from above by others, if it works at all and to the extent it does, it promotes their benefit, not that of those below.

FIGURE 2
FOUR IDEAS OF DEVELOPMENT ACCORDING TO CT’S WAYS OF LIFE

		Grid	
		Low Grid	High Grid
Group	High Group	Community-led	State-led
	Low Group	Market-led	-

Based on: Garcés Velástegui, forthcoming

Fatalists, feeling ruled and governed, focus mostly on survival. In order to achieve this, they resort to coping and getting by. That is, due to their self-perceived lack of

TABLE 1
IDEAS OF DEVELOPMENT ACCORDING TO CT’S WAYS OF LIFE

	Individualism	Hierarchy	Egalitarianism	Fatalism
The concept of Development	(Modern) Linear unfettered progress	(Modern) Linear progress within limits	Exercise of power in post-modern tradition	Mirage
(Post-) development model	Market-led development	State-ruled development	Community-led alternatives	none
Illustration	Modernization and Structural dualism	Structuralism and Dependency	Suma Kawsay and Vivir Sabroso	none

agency, there is no aspiration of bringing about a valued change but rather the concern with adapting to inevitable changes so that they not to harm them. Muddling through the system is, thus, a strategy to secure one's existence (Garcés Velástegui forthcoming).

This analysis of ideas and practices of development using cultural theory suggests four distinct approaches to development with important implications for research and practice (see Table 1 for a summary). Importantly, these four development outlooks coexist in different combinations at any given time in a polity and, as the framework admits, although some hybrids are plausible (Hoppe, 2007), no synthesis is possible (Mamadouh, 1999).

Concluding remarks

Social turmoil in Latin America in recent years has shown multiple claims regarding the desirable social ends as well as means, i.e. development. In order to grasp this landscape, it is necessary to elucidate the term and its manifestations in the region. Development suggests 'good change' and, as such, it is essentially purposive, seeking to bring about a state of affairs. Therefore, it has been constantly disputed scholarly and in policy. Lately, what that change means and how to attain it have become a central issue in the public debate, defying conventional analyses. There has been a growing number of issues, actors and vindications that adds to that complexity and prompts the search for alternative frameworks.

To make sense of this plurality, CT has been employed shedding light on the four ideal-typical irreducible views of development to which actual models, ideas and policies can be associated, namely: market-led, exemplified by modernization and structural dualism; state-led, illustrated by structuralism and dependency analysis; community-led alternatives like *Buen Vivir* or Good Living and *Vivir Sabroso* or Luscious Living; and a mirage.

The implications for research and practice are relevant. Beyond the framework's usefulness to make sense of essentially contested terms, the proposed landscape of development notions facilitates the scrutiny of specific cases and harnessing the plurality therein. Each country can be a case study of specific development expressions. CT not only enables clarifying interests and (policy) preferences of a growing diversity of actors in each country, it can also contribute to explaining the relative power held by different worldviews. By so doing, insights can be gained about the conditions that lead to different distributions of power. Finally, beyond national borders, because development is increasingly recognized as a global issue, most

notably due to its implications for the environment and multiple inequalities, calling for international commitments, the framework and the insights provided here can contribute to that wider debate, moving from talking past each other, to address the development problem.

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