The Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living (*sumak kawsay*)

We are like the moorland straw,
that you tear and it grows again...
and from the moorland straw
we will cover the world.
Dolores Cacuango (1881–1971)

Introduction

Good living is a relatively new concept in the social sciences that can be defined as a political proposal of social transformation that seeks to achieve a way of life in harmony with oneself, with other human beings and with other beings of nature (Cubillo-Guevara et al., 2016).In this sense, good living can also be considered a theoretical model or paradigm of welfare (Cubillo-Guevara and Hidalgo-Capitán, 2015b).

As a political proposal of social transformation and as a paradigm of welfare, this concept originated in the early 1990s in the Ecuadorian Amazon (Cubillo-Guevara and Hidalgo-Capitán, 2015a) with the Pastaza Indigenous Peoples' Organization, under the designation *sumak kawsay*, translated as 'good living'. This concept was part of the *Amazanga Plan* (Viteri et al., 1992), a document in which, for the first time, the wisdom of the people of the jungle (*sacha runa yachai*), the philosophical framework that guided the Kichwa-Amazonian way of life, was revealed. This philosophical framework is based on three concepts: a land free of evil (*sumac allpa*), a clear and harmonious life (*sumac kawsay*) and the art of understanding-knowing-convincing-being sure-seeing (*sacha kawsay riksina*) (Silva, 2003). Based on these origins, the Kichwa-Amazonian anthropologist Carlos Viteri (1993, 2000, 2003) of the Sarayaku people, after an ethnographic study of this people, systematized this concept until it became a theoretical model of welfare and a proposal for social transformation.

There are previous uses of the expression *sumak kawsay* by the Andean-Ecuadorian indigenous movement (e.g. Ecuadorian Federation of Indians, FEI; National Council for the Coordination of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador, CONACNIE; Confederation of Peoples of the Kichwa Nationality of Ecuador, ECUARUNARI; Federation of Communes Union Natives of the Ecuadorian Amazon, FCUNAE) that are translated as ‘virtue’ or ‘good life’ (Inuca, 2017b). However, in these cases, the expression does not refer to a concept systematized as a paradigm of well-being or a political proposal for social transformation.

French and German anthropologists have also conducted ethnographic studies of the way of life of the Achuar peoples of the Ecuadorian Amazon – *shiir waras* – (Descola, 1986) and the way of life of the Shuar peoples of the Ecuadorian Amazon – *pénkerpujustin* – (Mader, 1999) of the Ecuadorian Amazon. *Shiir waras* is translated as ‘good living’ and *pénker pujustin* is translated as ‘live well’ or ‘well-being’. However, these works do not provide a systematization of these concepts as political proposals for social transformation, although some of these concepts could be interpreted as a theoretical model of welfare.

Therefore, the main virtue of Viteri’s systematization of the *sumak kawsay* concept, incorporated into the *Amazanga Plan*, is that it transformed the concept into a theoretical model of welfare that represents an alternative to Western development and into a political proposal for social transformation of indigenous origin. This theoretical model was progressively adopted as their own by the Ecuadorian indigenous movement and by intellectuals close to it. Additionally, the *sumak kawsay* concept was incorporated into some of the movement’s documents (Strategic Plan of the Development Council of the Nations and

Peoples of the Ecuador, CODENPE, in 2003, self-definition of the Amawtay Wasi Intercultural University in 2004, Proposal of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities and Peoples of Ecuador,CONAIE,before the National Constituent Assembly in 2007) until it was also incorporated into the Constitution of Ecuador in 2008 (Cubillo-Guevara and Hidalgo-Capitán, 2015a).

Since that moment, there has been an explosion of Ecuadorian literature on good living that has included not only indigenist intellectuals (Dávalos, 2008a, 2008b; Macas, 2010a; Maldonado, 2010a; Oviedo, 2011; Pacari, 2013, etc.)[1]; we use the term 'indigenist', and not 'indigenous', because not all of these intellectuals are indigenous although all are linked to indigenism – the political ideology that defends the claims of indigenous peoples within the framework of nation-states. Intellectuals of socialist and statist orientation (e.g. Ramírez, 2010) and of ecologist and postdevelopmentalist orientation (e.g. Acosta, 2012) also participated in this explosion of Ecuadorian literature on good living.This literature has been organized by various scholars into three currents of thought: indigenist, socialist and postdevelopmentalist (Cubillo-Guevara et al., 2014; Domínguez et al., 2017; Le Quang and Vercoutère, 2013; Vanhulst, 2015).

On the other hand, during the 1990s and 2000s, the Ecuadorian indigenous movement maintained intense contacts with the rest of the Latin American indigenous movements, especially the Bolivian indigenous movement and the Peruvian indigenous movement (Cubillo-Guevara and Hidalgo-Capitán, 2015a). These contacts made it possible to disseminate the Kichwa concept of *sumak kawsay*, which was assimilated to the Aymara concept of *suma qamaña* or 'living well' in Bolivia (Medina, 2001; Yampara, 2001), and the Quechua concept of *allin kawsay* or 'sweet life' in Peru (Rengifo, 2002). However, there are also other concepts analogous to the *sumak kawsay* used by many other indigenous peoples of the *Abya Yala* (Latin America) and that have been revitalized in recent decades as a result of the popularity of *sumak kawsay*. Among these concepts, we can mention the Guaraní *ñande reko*; the Achuar *shiir waras*; the Shuar *pénker pujustin*; the Mapuche *kyme mogen*; the Awajún *shin pujut*; the Wayuu *anaa akuaipa*; the Tseltals *lekil kuxlejal*; the Quiche Mayan *utz kaslemal*; the Miskitu *yamni iwanka*; the Mayangna *yaksihni yalahnin*; the Garifuna *aubun amuru nu*; the Rama *naas mliika aakri*; the Kuna *balu wala*; or the Ngobe *ti núle kûin*(Cubillo-Guevara and Hidalgo-Capitán, 2015c).

Given that it is impossible for this study to address the entire intellectual spectrum of thought about good living or even that of all indigenous thought on this topic, we delimit our object of study to Ecuadorian indigenist thought about good living, always understood as a theoretical model of welfare and as a political proposal for social transformation.

This article is part of the field of study known as 'History of Political Ideas.' This is so because the purpose of the article is to determine the existence of an Ecuadorian indigenist school of political thought on good living. This is accomplished through a descriptive and synthetic analysis that aims to enact (Varela et al., 1991) the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living as a social phenomenon.

To analyze Ecuadorian indigenist thought about good living, we assume the relativistic perspective of Blaug (1962), originally proposed in the context of economic theory. Then, we acknowledge that theories evolve within epistemic communities – groups of intellectuals who share models and patterns of reasoning (Hass, 1992) – within which the validity of their postulates is determined.

However, we will partially combine this relativist perspective with the absolutist perspective of Blaug (1962), in the version proposed by Hunt (1989) for development theories. This version argues that there is no mainstream in the evolution of theories. On the

contrary, there is a set of different streams of thought derived from ideological and methodological differences and organized as epistemic communities. These communities compete with each other to convince society and policy makers that their explanation of a given phenomenon, and its political proposal in relation to it,are the best. But this conviction depends on many factors that are not necessarily related to the empirical demonstration of the theory's explanation or the actual effectiveness of its political proposals.

In this sense, we assume, as a first premise, that there is a current of Ecuadorian indigenous thinking about good living that is organized as an epistemic community and that competes with other Ecuadorian schools of thought on good living to convince Ecuadorian society and the policy makers that its explanation of the phenomenon-of good living and its political proposal for the social transformation of Ecuador to achieve good living are the best. We also assume that the validity of its postulates can only be determined within the epistemic community itself.

However, we also adopt the absolutist perspective of Blaug (1962) considering, retrospectively and as a second premise, that the current Ecuadorian indigenist conception of good living as *sumak kawsay* is the backbone of the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living.

In addition, we assume as a third premise that there is an epistemic community – stream of thought or school of thought[2] – formed by Ecuadorian indigenist intellectuals who have written about *sumak kawsay*, which is also articulated around the Ecuadorian indigenous movement (e.g. CODENPE; CONAIE; Council of Evangelical Indigenous Peoples and Organizations of Ecuador, FEINE; ECUARUNARI; Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon, CONFENIAE; OPIP; Movement of Plurinational Unity Pachakutik, MUP-Pachakutik; Scientific Institute of Indigenous Cultures, ICCI; Amawtay Wasi Intercultural University of Nationalities and Indigenous Peoples).This epistemic community is different from the schools of Bolivian and Peruvian indigenist intellectuals and other Ecuadorian non-indigenist epistemic communities – socialist and postdevelopmentalist – that have also written about the same subject.

At this point, it is appropriate to ask a series of questions to guide the research about our subject as defined earlier. What factors explain the emergence and consolidation of the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living? How is the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living set up? What are the main elements that characterize the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living? What have been the main criticisms and countercriticisms formulated about the thinking of the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living?

To answer these questions about this school of good living, by analogy, given that we consider good living to be a theoretical model of well-being just as development would be, we take a synthetical and analytical-descriptive approach frequently used to study schools of thought about development. This approach is based on identifying the characteristics of the academic, social and political contexts in which a certain thought about development emerged and consolidated and the influences of those contexts on it (Bustelo, 1998); identifying the authors, institutions, publishers and journals linked to the production of a particular thought about development and the links between them (Hidalgo-Capitán, 2011); and identifying the elements that characterize a school of thought about development (Griffin, 1989; Hidalgo-Capitán, 2011; Hirschmann, 1981). In answer to the questions listed above, we intend to build the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living retrospectively based on the current Ecuadorian indigenist conception of good living as the *sumak kawsay* and summarize the criticisms addressed to it and its countercriticisms.

This analysis was performed based on interviews we conducted and a wide bibliographic archival review. Thus, we interviewed various indigenist and non-indigenist Ecuadorian intellectuals,[3] specialists in the subject who gave us an overview of its origins and of the main authors, institutions, publishers and journals involved in its development.Then, we conducted an initial bibliographical search, which we extended by means of the recursive bibliography technique and then delimited by means of the cross-reference technique. In addition, we reviewed all studies on this topic published by the authors, centers, publishers and journals identified. In this manner, we found an important list of references on Ecuadorian indigenist thought about good living. Subsequently, we extracted the answers to our research questions based on the analysis of those texts and transcribed interviews.[4] Finally, we compiled and analyzed the most relevant papers on the criticisms addressed to this school of thought and on the criticisms made by some authors within this school and by other intellectually close authors. The latter show that, despite the competition with other schools of thought about good living, the validity of the postulates of the authors of this school can only be determined within it.

Characterizing elements of the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living (*sumak kawsay*)

The Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living can be characterized using nine criteria (Hidalgo-Capitán, 2011: 284–287): the conception of good living – as good living has at least three versions: one indigenist, another socialist and another postdevelopmentalist (e.g. Cubillo-Guevara et al., 2014); the conception of the phenomenon-opposed to good living – bad living; the identification of the key factor of good living; the proposed political strategy to achieve and/or maintain good living; the definition of the process to be followed for good living; the proposal regarding how to finance good living; the role given to international relations in the attainment and/or maintenance of good living; the consideration of the utility of Western orthodox monoeconomics for good living; and the hierarchy of variables in the explanation of good living.

The Ecuadorian indigenist school understands good living as the *sumak kawsay*, which is an 'alternative to development' (e.g. Oviedo, 2011: 255; Viteri, 2003: iv), because development, with its different surnames (e.g. ethno-, eco-, autonomous, integral, community, sustainable) (e.g. Viteri, 2003: 10, 20), is nothing more than a new form of colonization that imposes the epistemic violence of a Western worldview on indigenous peoples (P Dávalos, personal communication, 12/2/2012). As an alternative to development, the *sumak kawsay* is a philosophy of life based on a harmonious relationship with nature and with other human beings – with all beings of life – (e.g. Chuji,2010) inspired by the values and ancestral forms of organization of the Andean-Amazonian indigenous peoples (e.g. Calapucha, 2012: 31–57; Inuca, 2017b; Tibán, 2000). In addition, this philosophy of life is simultaneously a vital aspiration, where it has been lost, and a daily practice, where it has been maintained or recovered (Viteri, 2003: ii–iii). That is, the indigenous peoples who have conserved *sumak kawsay* as an ancestral way of life – mostly Amazonian – should try to conserve it, while the indigenous peoples who, as a consequence of acculturation, have lost that ancestral way of life – mostly Andean – should aspire to recover it (L Maldonado, personal communication, 3/13/2014).

> The original Amazonian societies ... maintain a daily dynamic based on their own imaginaries.... [In these societies, in their] worldview, in the understanding of the meaning that life has and must have ... there is no concept of development .... There is an integrating vision about what should be the mission of human effort, which is to seek and create the material, environmental and spiritual conditions to reach and maintain the *sumak káusai*, which is the ideal of 'good living' or 'harmonious life'. (Viteri, 2003: ii–iii)

> The *Sumakawsay* is not an alternative way for development, nor a new form of development, ... it is an alter-native and alter-world path, for harmony and balance between all beings that make and reproduce life in their set. (Oviedo, 2011: 255)

The opposite conception to the *sumak kawsay* is *llaki kawsay*, understood as 'bad living' and 'miserable life.' The *llaki kawsay* arises from a lack of personal qualities and/or social values that should govern the lives of indigenous people. These deficiencies end up breaking harmony with nature and/or with the community. In most cases, these deficiencies of personal qualities and social values, which imply a loss of self-harmony within each person, occur as a result of a process of acculturation into Western values (e.g. Viteri, 2003: 78–93).

> The *llakina* is understood ... as a concept associated with suffering, the crisis, the problems and supreme difficulties. This may be due to the death of someone, to the abandonment or the orphanage, to the disability or to a life in crisis marked by the economic precariousness. To refer to conditions of this kind, which may affect people in some way and at some point, we use the expression *llaki káusai.* (Viteri, 2003: 64)

The key factor to reaching the *sumak kawsay* is identity; that is, the search for the values that make it possible to attain and maintain a way of life in harmony with nature and with other human beings, with the indigenous culture itself, and with its ancestral traditions. In addition, this maintenance requires preserving the indigenous culture from the impact of Western culture, replacing acculturation processes with an authentic interculturality (e.g. Calapucha, 2012: 91–92; Chuji, 2011).

> Who belongs to an indigenous people, is born, lives and dies with that identity assumed from their conscience and accepted by others as an integral part of their historical-cultural and identity journey. (Pacari, 2008: 32)

> To live in diversity is to recognize the history and worldview of the other, to recognize my history from mutual respect, to fight for the same rights ... from diversity on equal terms. This is part of *sumak kawsay*. (Chancoso, 2010: 8)

To that end, this school of thought proposes the self-determination of nationalities and indigenous peoples, in a context of plurinationality (e.g. Maldonado, 2010a: 2; Simbaña 2011), as a political strategy for achieving and maintaining the *sumak kawsay*. The nation-state does not allow *sumak kawsay* because it is a colonial state that subjects nationalities and indigenous peoples to laws that are alien to them; for this reason, this colonial state must be dismantled and removed as a barrier to the self-determination of these peoples. Overcoming colonialism requires constructing a plurinational state (e.g. Chancoso, 2010: 8; Chuji, 2010) – a state composed of several nations, some of which would be indigenous nations that have the capacity to regulate their own functioning, autonomously and in coordination with other nations within the state, thus designing an institutional framework based on their own ancestral culture (Calapucha, 2012: 63–65; Masabalín, 2016: 15–16; Ortiz, 2012: 215–298).

> Plurinational states are based on the diversity of the existence of nationalities and peoples, as economic, cultural, political, legal, spiritual and linguistic entities, historically defined and differentiated. They are directed to dismantle colonialism ... . To dismantle this colonial state we must do it from the self-determination of the peoples. (Macas, 2010a: 15–16)

These intellectuals suggest that the process of attaining and maintaining the *sumak kawsay* should consist of the reindigenization of indigenous nationalities and peoples, decolonizing both history and thought. The process aims to recover the values and ancestral forms of organization of the indigenous culture and implement them again to achieve a transition toward the desirable way of life that is the *sumak kawsay*(e.g. Maldonado, 2010a: 1–3).

> The coexistence of *sumak kawsay* and the current system is not possible ... . We must think fundamentally about changing the structures of this state and building a new one ... . The objective is to recover and

> develop our systems of life, institutions and historical rights, prior to the state, to decolonize history and thought. (Macas, 2010a: 16)

> The proposal of the plurinationality necessarily involves the reconstruction and reconstitution of the original peoples. That is, ... it goes through the self-determination of the peoples and the political identity with broad social sectors, based on the criticism of the structures of the state and the questioning of the model and the current system. (Macas, 2010b: 37)

They also argue that *sumak kawsay* funding should be based on the values of solidarity, help, generosity and reciprocity and that it should not always have to adopt a monetary form (e.g. Calapucha, 2012: 46–47; Viteri, 2003: 68–70).

> The traditional economy of the Amazonian Indians is essentially an economy of the gift. That is, it is based on the deferred exchange of goods. Each society transmits to the young people the strong sense of value and the obligation to share any material good that is at hand. At the same time, each member is taught the moral imperative of receiving what is offered to them, thereby recognizing the relationship created through the debt. (Smith, 1996: 283, as quoted in Viteri, 2003: 14)

This school of thought also accepts the idea that international relations, whether commercial, financial, migratory or cooperative, can be beneficial for the *sumak kawsay* provided that their character complements the economic self-sufficiency of the territory, which would include food sovereignty, and that they never involve the imposition of Western values that conflict with the values of indigenous culture and the conception of the desirable life (e.g. Viteri, 2003: 86):

> The possibility of an effective monetary economy in the context of the *Sarayakuruna* must be conceived as complementary. That is, as a component between several activities that configures a genuine and particular economic system based on values.

Logically, these intellectual figures thus reject not only the utility of Western orthodox monoeconomics for *sumak kawsay* but also other forms of Western economic science because they are based on either the egoist *homo oeconomicus* or other variants of the rational economic agent and ignore the symbolic and spiritual dimensions of economic activity (P Dávalos, personal communication, 13/2/2012) and rationalities other than selfishness, such as those based on solidarity, generosity or reciprocity (e.g. Dávalos, 2008b; Ortiz, 2012: 123;Oviedo, 2011: 240).

> The *sumak kawsay* contradicts economic theory and the Cartesian paradigm of man as 'master of nature'... . We exist as millions of human beings, far from the figures of the consumer, of the free, competitive markets and of the merchandise. Human beings whose coordinates of life we establish them from the ethics. Human beings that belong to diverse peoples with a memory of atavistic, ancestral relationship, different from liberal reason. (Chuji, 2010: 235)

Thus, they suggest that all kinds of variables, including economic, political, social, environmental, territorial, cultural, and spiritual variables, interact with each other to explain the functioning of indigenous community life and a society governed by the principles of the *sumak kawsay* (e.g. Calapucha, 2012: 50–52, 93; Masabalín, 2016: 35), attaching a special importance to spiritual variables as a differentiating element of the indigenous worldview (e.g. Kowii, 2009: 2; Pacari, 2008: 32–33).

> The *Sumak Kawsay* ... involves several dimensions: social, cultural, economic, environmental, epistemic and political; as an interrelated and interdependent whole, where each of its elements depends on others. (Simbaña, 2011: 222)

> The community is a geographic-territorial, cultural, historical, political-organizational, economic and linguistic space, whose members share several of these common elements in their diverse processes of socio-biological interrelation and reproduction. (Guandinango, 2013: 25)

Factors for the emergence and the consolidation of the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living (*sumak kawsay*)

Among the factors that explain the emergence and subsequent consolidation of the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living, we can point to institutional factors, related to the political relevance of the indigenous movement and the indigenous Ecuadorian intelligentsia, and to intellectual factors, related to the Western influences on this intelligentsia.

Among the institutional factors, we note the key role played by the Ecuadorian Catholic Church since the 1960s, especially the sectors linked to Liberation Theology, led by the Bishop of Riobamba, Leónidas Proaño (N Pacari, personal communication, 13/3/2014) which had a major influence on Andes Ecuadorians (Tamayo and Arrobo, 2010), and by the Dominican Fathers (P Ortiz, personal communication, 18/8/2018) and Salesian Fathers, with their Salesian Polytechnic University, and its significant influence on the Ecuadorian Amazon (Vázquez et al., 2012) and lastly, the role played by evangelical missions (F Masabalín, personal communication, 29/6/2016), especially in the sierra (Guamán 2006). The 'option for the poor' of the Ecuadorian Catholic Church resulted in an 'option for the Indians' and allowed many indigenous Ecuadorians to have access to education, including university education. This support would be essential in the education of the indigenous leadership and intelligentsia of the late 20thcentury and early 21st century in a process known as the 'indigenous awakening' (Gros, 2000).

Initially, the access to university of a growing number of indigenous intellectuals strengthened the structures of the indigenous movement (F Vega, personal communication, 8/2/2012). Subsequently, however, this movement attempted to increase its political influence on the rest of Ecuadorian society and encouraged its intellectuals to reflect and publish in Spanish about various problems that affected them so that they could be understood by the rest of society. Among these reflections and publications were those related to the topic of development, its failure as a strategy for improving the living conditions of indigenous communities and the search for an indigenous alternative to development (e.g. Tibán, 2000; Tutillo, 2002; Viteri, 2000).

Another very important institutional factor was the consolidation of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement as a national political actor in the context of resistance to neoliberalism during the 1990s (N Mancero, personal communication, 8/2/2012) and its articulation through different organizations (e.g. CONAIE, ECUARUNARI, CONFENIAE, FEINE, OPIP) in those years (Harnecker, 2011). Although the indigenous movement has a long political tradition, since the creation of the Conference of Indigenous Heads in 1934 and, later, of the Ecuadorian Federation of Indians (FEI) in 1944 (led by Dolores Cacuango, among others), its organization at different territorial levels, its relevance as a national political actor and its consolidation as the Ecuadoran indigenous movement known today occurred in the context of the regional debate on the historical and political meaning of the commemoration of the quincentenary of the 'discovery' of America in 1992 (Bernecker, 1996). This debate led to a greater recognition of collective identity and rights, including the right to political participation, of the indigenous peoples of the *Abya Yala* and, among them, of the Ecuadorian indigenous peoples (A Guillén, personal communication, 9/2/2012).

In fact, the great historic milestone that would define the Ecuadorian indigenous movement as a significant national political actor was the 'Inti Raymi Uprising' of 1990, the main leaders of which (e.g. Macas, Chancoso, Pacari, Maldonado, and Kowii) would become important national political leaders (N Mancero, personal communication, 8/2/2012). Although we must not forget the march of the indigenous people of the OPIP to Quito in 1992

(M Chuji, personal communication, 20/3/2014) coinciding with the start of the struggle of the Sarayaku Kichwa-Amazonian people against the oil companies that had invaded their territory causing serious environmental and social damage. Some of the indigenous leaders of Sarayaku would attain great national relevance years later, allowing them to place the traditional claims of the Amazonian peoples at the center of the national political debate (e.g. Viteri, Chuji), with Viteri (2000) being the key figure in the disclosure of the *sumak kawsay*.

A third relevant institutional factor was the crisis of the Ecuadorian nation-state (J Ávila, personal communication, 8/2/2012), as part of the global crisis of nation-states stemming from the neoliberal globalization process of the 1990s and the first years of the 21stcentury (Bavaresco, 2003). The main characteristic of this crisis was the reduction of the capacity of the Ecuadorian state to regulate the national economy and meet the social demands of Ecuadorians, based on the limitations imposed by the global market.

This ended up generating widespread social dissatisfaction, which materialized in several indigenous uprisings and multiple national strikes in which the Ecuadorian indigenous movement was weaving an alliance with other sectors of the Ecuadorian political left opposed to neoliberalism during the 1990s and the first half of the decade of the 2000s (P Dávalos, personal communication, 6/17/2014). In this period, some indigenous leaders came to occupy positions of high responsibility in the structures of the Ecuadorian State (Macas, Pacari, Maldonado, Tibán, etc.) as a result of strategic political alliances, some of which were questioned by the Ecuadorian left (N Mancero, personal communication, 8/2/2012). However, the widespread rejection of neoliberalism allowed for the formation of a grand coalition of alternative social movements, called Alianza PAIS, in which the indigenous movement participated –as part of the coalition and as an external political ally. This coalition came to power in 2007 and convened a Constituent Assembly (Dávalos, 2014). In addition, in this constituent process, the Ecuadorian indigenous movement, under the impulse of its advisor, Dávalos (2007), instituted the concept of good living as a constitutional precept (Cubillo-Guevara and Hidalgo-Capitán, 2015a).

A fourth institutional factor was the structuring of the movement, since 2008, as a political actor opposed to the Alianza PAIS government (Cubillo-Guevara, 2016). This opposition led indigenous and indigenist leaders and intellectuals to argue with the government about the interpretation of the concept of good living that they had managed to incorporate into the constitution (P Dávalos, personal communication, 17/6/2014) and that it had 'usurped' (Kowii et al., 2014).[5]To that end, Ecuadorian indigenous intellectuals, many of whom had not previously paid attention to the concept of good living,[6] began to publish numerous documents of a political and academic nature (Hidalgo-Capitán et al., 2014), thus forming a 'school of thought' about good living.

Among the intellectual factors that contributed to the emergence and consolidation of the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living, we first highlight the emergence of environmental problems and the concern for 'socioecological sustainability' since the late 1960s (D Encalada, personal communication, 8/2/2012). This concern led to the periodic convening of the United Nations Summits on the Environment since 1972 as well as the publication of the book *Initiation à l'écodéveloppement* by Ignacy Sachs (1981), in which the concept of 'ecodevelopment' was developed, and of the Brundtland Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), *Our Common Future*, in which the concept of 'sustainable development' was coined.

In fact, the concept of sustainable development was introduced in Ecuador in the late 1980s by actors in international development cooperation and was well received by the Andean-Ecuadorian indigenous movement (Tibán, 2000; Tutillo, 2002) but not by a segment

of the OPIP, which rejected the concept of sustainable development due to its implicit reification of nature and which opted to propose its way of life, the *sumak kawsay*, in which nature is considered a living entity of which human beings are a part (Ortiz, 2012), as an alternative to sustainable development. The *Amazanga Plan* of the OPIP, which included the *sumak kawsay* concept, was thus developed in opposition to the introduction of the concept of sustainable development in the Ecuadorian Amazon (P Ortiz, personal communication, 6/8/2018).

A second important intellectual factor was the 'cultural turn' and the consolidation of 'interculturality' as an international cultural current since the 1970s (F Masabalín, personal communication, 29/6/2016). This process was linked to the struggles of ethnic communities for recognition and for the acceptance of their cultural difference, which led to the coining of the concept of 'development with identity' or 'ethno-development' in the San José Declaration on Ethno-Development and Ethnocide in Latin America (UNESCO, 1981). Its historical milestones were the approval of ILO Convention 169 (1989) and the publication of the report *Our Creative Diversity* by the World Commission for Culture and Development (1996).

Similarly, the concept of development with identity was introduced in Ecuador during the 1980s by actors in international development cooperation and was the preferred development variant of the organizations of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement until the development of the concept of good living (Tibán, 2000; Tutillo, 2002) and considered by some indigenist authors to be the embryo of good living (Masabalín, 2017). In fact, the conception of development with identity of the Andean Kichwa (Tibán, 2000) is quite similar to the conception of the *sumak kawsay* of the Amazonian-Kichwa people (Viteri, 2000).

A third intellectual factor was the critique of the 'ideology of development' and the construction of an international agenda in search of 'alternatives to development' in the face of the cumulative evidence of chronic crises at economic, sociopolitical and environmental levels (F Vega, personal communication, 8/2/2012). The main historical milestones of this review were the publication of the report *What Now? Another Development*, edited by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (1975), which raised the need for 'alternative development' or 'another development'; the publication of *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, edited by Wolfgang Sachs (1992), which is the main reference for the concept of 'postdevelopment'; and the creation in 1998 of the informal think tank the 'Modernity/Coloniality/Decoloniality Group' (MCD) (Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2000). This think tank denounces the historical contempt that the culture of the indigenous peoples of the *Abya Yala* has suffered and proposes the recovery of indigenous ancestral practices to confront the current problems of global society (P Dávalos, personal communication, 17/6/2014), including problems of 'maldevelopment' (Tortosa, 2011) (F Vega, personal communication, 8/2/2012). In fact, some of these criticisms have led some academics to defend the 'right to non-development' (Agostino, 2004).

The concept of postdevelopment was introduced in Ecuador in the early 1990s by European anthropologists working in the Ecuadorian Amazon with funding from international development cooperation,who viewed the ways of life of Amazonian indigenous peoples as ways of resistance to development (Domínguez et al.,2017).Consequently, the first elaborations of the concept of the *sumak kawsay*, as a paradigm of well-being and a political proposal of social transformation clearly identify it as an 'alternative to development' and not as an alternative development or 'development with surnames' such as integral, with identity, autonomous, sustainable, community, and self-reliance (Viteri, 2003). In this sense, the *sumak*

kawsay is nourished by the critique of development (A Guillén, personal communication, 9/2/2012).

Configuration of the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living (*sumak kawsay*)

The Andean worldview (Estermann, 1998) has been ignored, if not disregarded, by the majority of Western intellectuals since colonial times. They have never seen 'pachasophy' as a coherent structure of thought that allows understanding and solving the problems of Andean societies. However, the Andean indigenous peoples have preserved their own philosophy throughout history and have used it to understand and solve the problems of their communities. Much of this Andean thought has been preserved and developed within the Andean communities, orally and in the Kichwa, Quechua and Aymara languages, so its translation to the Western intellectual sphere requires its compilation as well as its translation and interpretation. This task can only be approached by intellectuals trained in the Western paradigm of thought or 'modernity' as well as in the indigenous paradigm of thought or 'Andean worldview,' acting as a bridge between both epistemic frameworks. In this case, today we can capture Ecuadorian indigenous (and indigenist) thought about good living thanks to the work done by some Ecuadorian indigenist intellectuals, whose political commitment has led them to disseminate this thought among the Western intellectual sphere.

These indigenist intellectuals can be classified into four groups:[7] the intellectuals of the first generation (Luis Macas, Blanca Chancoso, Luis Maldonado, Ariruma Kowii and Nina Pacari); the intellectuals of the second generation (Carlos Viteri, Floresmilo Simbaña, Lourdes Tibán, Humberto Cholango, Silvia Tutillo and MónicaChuji); the intellectuals of the third generation (Claudio Calapucha, Yuri Guandinango, Benjamín Inuca and Francisco Masabalín); and the 'indigenized' mestizo and white intellectuals (Pablo Ortiz, Pablo Dávalos and Atawallpa Oviedo).

The first group consists of the traditional leaders and politicians of the indigenous movement, most of whom only began to take an intellectual interest in the *sumak kawsay* after the inclusion of this concept in the 2008 Ecuadorian Constitution and as an element of political opposition to the Rafael Correa government. These figures stand out for focusing their contributions on the Andean-philosophical foundations of the *sumak kawsay* (Chancoso, 2010; Kowii, 2009; Macas,2010a; Maldonado, 2010a, 2010b; Pacari, 2008, 2013). The second group involves mostly the first indigenous intellectuals to be intellectually interested in alternatives to development and the *sumak kawsay*, before or during the incorporation of this concept in the Constitution, in addition to also exercising different political functions within and outside the indigenous movement. They stand out for focusing their contributions on the *sumak kawsay* as an alternative to development (Cholango, 2010; Chuji, 2010; Tibán, 2000; Tutillo, 2002; Viteri, 2000, 2003). The third group has an eminently academic profile, its political profile being lower than that of the intellectuals of the two previous generations. These figures stand out for focusing their contributions on academic analysis of the *sumak kawsay*, mostly related to interculturality (Calapucha, 2012; Guandinango, 2013; Inuca, 2017a; Masabalín, 2016). Finally, the fourth group stands out for its process of 'indigenization,' that is, for its 'late' introduction to indigenous culture, and for the intellectual quality of its work on the *sumak kawsay* centered on its configuration as an alternative to development (Dávalos, 2008a, 2008b; Ortiz, 2009; Oviedo, 2011) and the link between the *sumak kawsay* and Andean philosophy (Oviedo, 2011).

All of these intellectuals have studied at university, in law (Macas, Pacari, Tibán, Simbaña and Oviedo), linguistics (Macas and Kowii), educational sciences (Chancoso and Calapucha), social sciences (Macas, Kowii, Tibán, Cholango, Tutillo, Chuji, and Masabalín),

anthropology (Viteri, Cholango, Tutillo, Tibán and Inuca), economics (Dávalos, Chuji and Guandinango), political science (Maldonado, Kowii, Tibán and Masabalín), philosophy (Maldonado), local management (Cholango), socio-environmental studies (Guandinango), history (Inuca) and communication (Chuji). In addition, almost all are (or have been) teachers and/or university lecturers (Macas, Chancoso, Maldonado, Kowii, Simbaña, Tibán, Viteri, Cholango, Chuji, Guandinango, Inuca, Masabalín, Ortiz, Dávalos and Oviedo) and have published on different indigenous issues.

All belong to the Kichwa nationality (except Ortiz, Dávalos and Oviedo, who, despite having strong Kichwa cultural influences, are not indigenous). Almost everyone (except Viteri, Chuji and Calapucha who are Amazonian-Kichwa, although Chuji is the daughter of a Shuar father) belongs to indigenous Andean Kichwa communities or peoples (Maldonado, Kowii and Chancoso are Otavalo, Pacari and Guandinango are Cotacachi; Tutillo, Cholango and Inuca are Kayambi; Macas is Saraguro; Tibán is Panzaleo; Simbaña is Kitu Kara; Masabalín is Tungurahua; and Oviedo, being white, is considered Puruwá).

All these intellectuals are linked to the indigenous movement (except Oviedo), and almost all have held different positions in grassroots organizations and/or at higher levels (Macas was President of the CONAIE; Chancoso was Secretary General of the ECUARUNARI and leader of the CONAIE; Pacari was an advisor and leader of the ECUARUNARI and CONAIE and National Secretary of the Council for Planning and Development of the Indigenous and Black Peoples,CONPLADEIN;[8] Maldonado was National Secretary of the CODENPE and advisor to the CONAIE; Tibán was National Secretary of the CODENPE; Simbaña was, and is, a leader of the CONAIE; Cholango was President of the ECUARUNARI and CONAIE; Chuji was advisor to the CONAIE and CODENPE and Vice President of the CONFENIAE; Dávalos was an advisor to the CONAIE; Tutillo and Inuca were grassroots leaders of the organization of the Kayambi people; Masabalín was a grassroots leader in the Kichwa community of Tungurahua and a national leader of the FEINE; and Calapucha was a grassroots leader of the Amazonian-Kichwa community of Arajuno).

Many of them belong, or have belonged, to the ICCI (Macas, Chancoso, Simbaña and Dávalos) or collaborate in the publications of the center (Macas, Dávalos, Chancoso, Simbaña, Maldonado, Tibán, Tutillo, Cholango and Chuji). Additionally, one of them has been linked to the Training School for Women Leaders 'Dolores Cacuango' (Chancoso) and another with the School of Government and Public Policies for Nationalities and Peoples of Ecuador (Maldonado). Some of them have also had links to the Amawtay Wasi Intercultural University (Macas, Maldonado, Simbaña, Cholango and Dávalos) and the Intercultural Indigenous University (Maldonado).

Several of these intellectualshave been deputies or Assembly members, either with the Pachakutik (Macas in 1996, Pacari in 1998 and Tibán in 2009 and 2013) or with Alianza PAIS (Viteri in 2013 and 2017). Some of them have been Constituent Assembly members (Pacari and Maldonado in 1997 with Pachakutik and Chuji in 2007 with Acuerdo PAIS), and one of them was Vice President of Congress (Pacari). Additionally, two of them have been presidential candidates (Macas in 2006 and Tibán in 2017, both with Pachakutik), and several have been ministers, vice ministers or secretaries in the governments of Alarcón (Pacari), Mahuad and Noboa (Maldonado), Gutiérrez (Macas, Maldonado and Pacari), Palacios (Dávalos and Tibán), Correa (Kowii, Chuji and Viteri), and Moreno (Cholango). In addition, one of them has been a judge in the Constitutional Court (Pacari).[9]

Some have been associated with international organizations (Pacari and Chancoso with the United Nations; Pacari with the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights; Viteri

with the Inter-American Development Bank; Maldonado with the Indigenous Fund; Cholango and Ortiz with the Andean Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations; Simbaña with the Indigenous Parliament of America; and Dávalos with the Latin American Council of Social Sciences), and almost all of them have spent time abroad as graduate students, teachers or representatives of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement.

The main means by which they publicize their reflections and works on good living (*sumak kawsay*) include the *Boletín ICCI – ARY Rimay* (Dávalos, 2008a, 2008b; Simbaña, 2011;Tibán, 2000) and *Revista Yackaykuna (Saberes)* (Macas, 2010b;Tutillo, 2002), both published by the ICCI. They have also published their work in the journal *América Latina en Movimiento* (Macas, 2010a; Chancoso, 2010) as well as in the journal *Aportes Andinos* (Kowii, 2009), the magazine Alteridad (Ortiz, 2009) and the journal *R, revista para un debate politico socialista* (Simbaña, 2011), all four published in Ecuador. They have, moreover, published in the journal *Polis* (Viteri, 2000), which is published in Chile, and there are some interesting editorials in *Diario Hoy* (Viteri, 2000), which is published in Ecuador. Some works have also been included in collections such as *El Buen Vivir. Una vía para el desarrollo* (Pacari, 2008), *Salud, interculturalidad y derechos. Claves para la reconstrucción del Sumak Kawsay – Buen Vivir* (Maldonado, 2010b) and *Más allá del desarrollo* (Simbaña, 2011), all three published in Ecuador; and *Convivir para perdurar: conflictos ecosociales y sabidurías ecológicas* (Dávalos, 2011), *Pueblos indígenas, derechos y desafíos: homenaje a Monseñor Leónidas Proaño* (Cholango, 2010), and *Sumak KawayYuyay. Antología del pensamiento indigenista ecuatoriano sobre el sumak kawsay* (which includes works by many of them), all three published in Spain. The only individually authored book is *Qué es el sumaKawsay* (Oviedo, 2011), published in Ecuador. Other means by which these authors have transmitted their reflections are through talks and lectures, some available online as videos or transcripts (Chuji, 2010; Maldonado, 2010a; Pacari, 2013); entries in blogs such as *Rebelión*, *La Línea de Fuego* or *ALAI*; and academic works, among which the following theses stand out: '*Súmak Káusai*. Una respuesta viable al desarrollo' (Viteri,2003); 'Los modelos de desarrollo. Su repercusión en las prácticas culturales de construcción y del manejo del espacio en la cultura kichwa amazónica. Un análisis comparativo del desarrollo lineal en relación con el *sumak kawsay*' (Calapucha, 2012); '*Sumak kawsay* – buen vivir. Comprensión teórica y práctica vivencial comunitaria. Aportes para el *ranti ranti* de conocimiento' (Guandinango, 2013); '*Yachay tinkuy* o encuentro y confrontación de saberes. Genealogía de la interculturalidad y del buen vivir en la educación de los pueblos kichwas del Ecuador desde mediados del siglo XX' (Inuca, 2017a); and 'Buen vivir / *sumak kawsay*. De las utopías a la práctica política' (Masabalín, 2016).

Criticism of the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living (*sumak kawsay*) and countercriticisms

Ecuadorian indigenist thought, in general and that referring to *sumak kawsay* in particular, has been harshly criticized by Western politicians, intellectuals and academics, who question the validity of a thought that is part of a worldview different from Western Modernity. However, other Western intellectuals, more or less close to the think tank Modernity / Coloniality / Decoloniality Group, have considered this thought as valid and as a valuable contribution to Global Studies in general and to Development Studies in particular. Thus, the validity of thought of this school is still subject to a wide and bitter debate.

Nevertheless, if we take into account the relieving perspective of Blaug (1962), this debate can be interpreted as a 'dialogue of the deaf' because the validity of the indigenist

postulates can only be determined within the epistemic community itself, as other epistemic communities have validation criteria that are alien to the indigenist episteme.

If we exclude the criticisms of the authors of this school based on their political activity, most of the criticisms of indigenist thought about *sumak kawsay* are common to the criticisms of all Latin American indigenist thought. These criticisms focus on its lack of empirical verification, its essentialism, its pachamamism, its futility and its ingenuousness and come from both Western anthropologists and intellectuals of the Ecuadorian left.

The first criticism, its lack of empirical verification (e.g. Viola, 2014), refers to the widespread idea that it is an invented tradition, a component of an idealized, oversized and reified version of the Andean worldview turned into an alternative to development, which lacks an anchor in the daily practices of the Ecuadorian indigenous peoples that could be verified by ethnographic studies. In this sense, the lack of empirical evidence makes *sumak kawsay* part of the myths of indigenism, such as the good savage, the ecological native or the hyperreal Indian.

This criticism has been refuted by some authors (e.g. Cubillo-Guevara and Hidalgo-Capitán, 2015a), who argue that, although in the Ecuadorian Andes there are no indigenous daily practices that correspond integrally to the concept of *sumak kawsay* and only some residual institutions of an extinct Andean *sumak kawsay* remain (Maldonado, 2010a), this is not the case in the Ecuadorian Amazon. In this region, the ethnographic works of Descola (1986), Mader (1999) and Viteri (2003) have confirmed the existence of good living (*shiir waras* – good living in Achuar; *pénker pujustin* – good living in Shuar; and *sumak kawsay* – good living in Kichwa) as a social phenomenon.

The second criticism, its essentialism (e.g. Breton, 2013), refers to the idea that Ecuadorian indigenist authors consider *sumak kawsay* to be a way of life of ancestral origin, which has been preserved over the centuries in the margins of the social changes that the Ecuadorian indigenous peoples have suffered, and which maintains, therefore, an unaltered ancestral essence. The criticism of essentialism is usually addressed to any thought that defends the idea of identity as one of its components (feminist, nationalist, colonial, postcolonial, etc.).

This criticism, which could be valid with regard to certain readings of the most vehement thought of one of the Ecuadorian indigenist authors (e.g. Oviedo, 2011), cannot be extrapolated to all the authors of this school and has been refuted by some authors (e.g. Hidalgo-Capitán and Cubillo-Guevara, 2014), who maintain that most of the authors of this school are aware that *sumak kawsay* became extinct in the Andes and only its naked name remains. For this reason, many of the indigenist authors propose recreating *sumak kawsay* (Dávalos, 2011) through the combination of residual ancestral institutions that persist in the daily practices of some indigenous Ecuadorian peoples (Maldonado, 2010a) with the elements of Andean philosophy or 'pachasophy' (Estermann, 1998).

The third criticism, its pachamamism (e.g. Sánchez-Parga, 2011), refers to the idea that the *sumak kawsay* includes magical–spiritual dimensions, such as the identification of nature with the Andean divinity Pachamama, giving it a mystical character that makes it alien to scientific knowledge and places it in the field of metaphysical knowledge. This criticism is addressed to both the Ecuadorian *sumak kawsay* and the Bolivian *suma qamaña*.

This criticism has been refuted by the authors of the theory of coloniality of power, of knowledge and of being (e.g. Escobar, 2011), who maintain that the rationalist thought of modernity rejects knowledge that does not derive from the use of reason and despises, with an ethnocentric attitude and with great epistemic violence, all the epistemologies of the South,

including those of the indigenous peoples. Therefore, it is essential to undertake processes of decoloniality of knowledge, and the disclosure of the concept of *sumak kawsay* is one way to achieve this.

The fourth criticism, its futility (e.g. Sánchez-Parga, 2011), refers to the idea that the search for political strategies in an idealized past leads to futile rhetorical exercises and prevents the concentration of intellectual and political efforts on the search for effective solutions to solve the problems of the present, with an eye on the future, in service of a true social transformation.

This criticism has been refuted by the indigenist intellectuals themselves (e.g. Viteri, 2003) who argue that indigenous peoples have a circular conception of time as opposed to the Western linear conception of time, which, in a new exercise of epistemic violence of the coloniality of knowledge, rejects concepts such as that of *ñaupa*, which is both the future and the beginning of the whole, so that *ñaupana* means to both advance to the future and return to the past.

Finally, the fifth criticism, its ingenuousness (e.g. Rafael Correa, quoted by Fuertes, 2012), refers to the idea that the non-exploitation of natural resources existing in the territories where indigenous peoples live, which is implicit in the indigenous concept of *sumak kawsay*, condemns to misery those peoples in the middle of a beautiful landscape and turns poverty into part of indigenous folklore.

This criticism has been refuted by some intellectuals close to environmentalism (e.g. Joan Martínez-Alier, cited by Saint-Upéry, 2008) who note that, for modern and anthropocentric intellectuals and politicians, the biocentrism implicit in the indigenist concept of *sumak kawsay*, according to which nature possesses intrinsic value, including spiritual value, independent of the utility it may have for human beings, is unacceptable. Therefore, these intellectuals consider the exploitation of the natural resources of the territories of the indigenous peoples a practice in senile development.

Conclusion

In our analysis, we noted that the *sumak kawsay*, as a theoretical model of well-being and a proposal for social transformation, emerged from the Ecuadorian Amazon with the *Amazanga Plan*, influenced by sustainable development, ethno-development and postdevelopment. From this document, it was disseminated to the Ecuadorian Andean indigenous movement, in a social and political context of resistance to neoliberalism. It was introduced in the Ecuadorian Constitution of 2008, in a context of political alliance of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement with other alternative social movements, and it was intellectually nourished by the contributions of university-educated Ecuadorian indigenous leaders, who had been educated partly through the support of the Ecuadorian Catholic Church and evangelical missions. These leaders acted in a context of opposition to the government of Rafael Correa using the *sumak kawsay* as an element of political confrontation.

We also note that the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living (*sumak kawsay*) includes four groups of indigenist intellectuals. The first group consists of the first generation of indigenous intellectuals, the traditional leaders of the indigenous movement, who focused their contributions on the Andean-philosophical foundations of the *sumak kawsay.*The second group comprises the second generation of indigenous intellectuals, the first indigenous people who were intellectually interested in alternatives to development and in the *sumak kawsay*. The third group consists of the third generation of indigenous intellectuals, the indigenous people with eminently academic profiles, who focused their contributions on the

interculturality of the *sumak kawsay*. In addition, the fourth group includes 'indigenized' mestizo and white intellectuals, who focused their contributions on the configuration of the *sumak kawsay* as an alternative to development. Almost all these are intellectuals, politicians and indigenous Kichwa leaders who have a university education and extensive professional experience in indigenous issues as well as international reach and contacts.

Similarly, we note that the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living (*sumak kawsay*) is characterized by the consideration of good living as an alternative to development and as a philosophy of life based on a harmonious relationship with nature and with other human beings; the consideration of bad living as the situation of a loss of harmony with nature and/or with the community produced by processes of acculturation; the identification of indigenous identity as a key variable of good living; the proposal of self-determination of indigenous peoples in a context of plurinationality as a political strategy for good living; the definition of the re-education of indigenous peoples in their own culture as a process aimed at good living; the financing of good living based on the nonmonetary mechanisms of community solidarity; the complementary nature of external relations, with community self-sufficiency as the basis of good living; the rejection of the cultural paradigm of modernity for interpreting good living; and the holistic consideration of good living.

Finally, we note that Ecuadorian indigenist thought has been criticized by Western intellectuals and progressive politicians who point to its lack of ethnographic observation, its essentialism, its pachamamism, its futility and its ingenuousness. These criticisms have been refuted by authors of diverse origin, noting the existence of ethnographic studies on the good living of the Amazonian indigenous peoples, arguing for the need to recreate an extinct *sumak kawsay* in the Andes and for the consideration of *sumak kawsay* as part of a strategy of decoloniality of knowledge, and pointing to the circular conception of time and the existence of the intrinsic value of nature.

We believe the present work opens the doors for the study of other schools of good living – indigenists and non-indigenists –, such as the Bolivian indigenist school of good living – *suma qamaña* or living well – where we can highlight intellectuals such as Simón Yampara, Mario Torrez, Javier Medina, Xabier Albó, Josef Estermann, Raúl Prada, Elisa Canqui, Fernando Hunacuni, David Choquehuanca or Rafael Bautista, among others; the Peruvian indigenist school of the good living – *allin kawsay* or sweet life – where we can highlight intellectuals such as Grimaldo Rengifo or Javier Lajo, among others; the Socialist school of good living where we can highlight intellectuals such as René Ramírez, Ricardo Patiño, Pedro Páez, Fander Falconí, Álvaro García-Linera, Félix Cárdenas; María Nela Prada, José Luis Coraggio, Vicente Escandell, Atilio Borón, Valter Pomar, Mariano Felix, Marta Harnecker, Rosario Murillo, Francois Houtart, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Katu Arkonada, Iosu Perales or Mattieu Le Quang, among others; or the ecologist and postdevelopmentalist school of good living where we can highlight intellectuals such as Alberto Acosta, Eduardo Gudynas, Maristella Svampa, Edgardo Lander, Arturo Escobar, Gustavo Esteva, Leonardo Boff, Aníbal Quijano, Esperanza Martínez, Dania Quirola, Patricio Carpio, Magdalena León, Fernando Vega, Margarita Aguinaga, Rafael Quintero, Elisa Vega, Dunia Mokrani, José María Tortosa, Koldo Unceta or Miriam Lang, among others.

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[1] In 2014, an anthology of Ecuadorian indigenous thought on *sumak kawsay* (Hidalgo-Capitán et al., 2014) was published.

[2] There are two ways of conceiving of schools of thought. For some authors (e.g. Whittaker, 1960), a school is a historical reality, arising from the foundational work of a teacher who maintains a hierarchical relationship with his/her disciples who recognize in him/her an authority and all of whom identify themselves as part of a school. For other authors (e.g. Hidalgo-Capitán, 2011), a school is a group of thinkers, constructed retrospectively from a series of criteria for classifying thought about a topic. In our case, the Ecuadorian indigenist school of good living would be a school of thought in its second meaning, given that it is the result of the retrospective construction carried out here, although some authors (e.g. Whittaker, 1960) prefer to use the expression 'stream of thought' for this type of construction.

[3] We conducted several kinds of interviews with different Ecuadorian intellectuals at distinct times with multiple purposes. The first five interviews – semi-structured, recorded and approximately 60 minutes – were exploratory in nature and were conducted in Cuenca in February 2012; we interviewed the academics of the University of Cuenca, Fernando Vega (8/2/2012), Nirma Mancero (8/2/2012), Javier Ávila (8/2/2012), Daniel Encalada (8/2/2012) and Alejandro Guillén (9/2/2012). From this exploration came the recommendation to interview three prominent intellectuals who had written about good living: Pablo Dávalos (13/2/2012) – an indigenist –, René

Ramírez (13/2/2012) – a socialist – and Alberto Acosta (14/2/2012) – a postdevelopmentalist –. The three interviews – semi-structured, recorded and approximately 60 minutes – were conducted in March 2012 in Quito. These interviews, especially the one with Pablo Dávalos, guided us on the most relevant texts of the Ecuadorian indigenist thought on good living and on the most outstanding authors of that stream. This led us to plan more interviews, already specifically aimed at inquiring into Ecuadorian indigenous thought about good living. Thus in March 2014 two semi-structured interviews, recorded and for approximately 60 minutes, were conducted with the indigenous intellectuals Carlos Viteri, in Quito (10/3/2014), and Mónica Chuji, in Cuenca (20/3/2014). Meanwhile, on the same dates in Quito Nina Pacari (13/3/2014) and Luis Maldonado (13/3/2014) were interviewed informally, without recording and for approximately 15 minutes. Subsequently, in June 2014 in Huelva (Spain), a new interview was conducted – semi-structured, recorded and for approximately 60 minutes – to Pablo Dávalos (6/17/2014), and in July 2014 in Cuenca an interview was conducted – semi-structured, recorded and for approximately 60 minutes – with the indigenous intellectual Atawallpa Oviedo (7/7/2014). Also in June 2016 in Salamanca (Spain) an interview was conducted – informally, without recording and for approximately 15 minutes – with Francisco Masabalín (6/6/2016). In July 2017, in Quito, three other interviews were conducted – informally, without recording and for approximately 15 minutes – with Luis Maldonado (5/6/2017), Floresmilo Simbaña (5/6/2017) and Benjamín Inuca (5/6/2017). In August of 2018, in Quito, another interview was conducted – informally, without recording and for approximately 60 minutes – with Pablo Ortiz (6/8/2018). The recorded interviews were transcribed – some partially and others completely.

[4] We performed the synthesis of texts and interviews through multiple readings, each of them focused on finding answers to the different questions posed. To identify the causes of the emergency and the consolidation of this school, as well as its configuration, the information coming from the interviews (formal and informal) was very relevant; meanwhile to identify the characterizing elements of this school, the information coming from the original texts of the authors was more relevant. However, information from the texts and interviews has been used in all sections.

[5] The Ecuadorian indigenous movement rejects the concept of good living included in the design of public policy in Ecuador, because it considers that the government has usurped the expression good living (*sumak kawsay*), stripped it of its spiritual, community and biocentric dimension and endowed it with a foreign meaning clearly identified with the modern concept of development (A Oviedo, personal communication, 7/7/2014).

[6] Before 2008 only Carlos Viteri had written political and academic papers on good living (*sumak kawsay*). Those who had meditated in their writings on the indigenous conception of development before 2008, such as Lourdes Tibán or Silvia Tutillo, did not use the concept of *sumak kawsay*. In addition, the public papers of the indigenous movement prior to 2008 show how the concept of *sumak kawsay* occupied a very marginal place in them. Only during the constituent debates and after the approval of the Ecuadorian constitution of 2008 did the indigenist authors begin to reflect and publish on it (P Dávalos, personal communication, 6/17/2014).

[7] The existence of the first two generations of indigenous intellectuals was suggested by P Dávalos (personal communication, 2/13/2012). The group of non-indigenous indigenist intellectuals was suggested by A Acosta (personal communication, 2/14/2012) and M Chuji (personal communication, 20/32014). Meanwhile the third generation of indigenist intellectuals was suggested by F Masabalín (personal communication, 6/6/2016) and B Inuca (personal communication, 5/6/2017). We carried out this internal classification because we consider that the ethnic origin (indigenous and non-indigenous) of the indigenist intellectuals determines the degree of intellectual influence that Western thought has on them, which is greater in Dávalos and Ortiz than that in the rest of the intellectuals of this school of thought (Oviedo is always an exception). We also consider that age is a determining factor in the political and academic activity of indigenist intellectuals and, therefore, influences their thought.

[8] CODENPE predecessor.

[9] Although most of these intellectuals have been linked at some point with the Pachakutik, their political trajectories have been very uneven. For reasons of political opportunity, some of them have been linked with neoliberal governments and others with progressive governments which, in most cases, have been very hostile to the population and the Ecuadorian indigenous movement. This has resulted in some of these intellectuals being the subject of harsh criticism from other authors of the same school, although these criticisms have been focused more on their political activity than on the indigenist thought they developed, most of which was elaborated at different times from those in which they had responsibilities within the State; times that vary from one author to another.