**Münchener Beiträge
zur Politikwissenschaft**

2015

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**The role of norms in foreign
policy: the influence of the
concept of Buen Vivir ("good
living") in Ecuador's foreign
policy**

Bachelorarbeit bei
Dr. Lars C. Colschen
SoSe 2015

"Good Living cannot be improvised, it must be planned. Good Living is the style of life that enables happiness and the permanency of cultural and environmental diversity; it is harmony, equality, equity and solidarity. It is not the quest for opulence or infinite economic growth."

Buen Vivir Plan Nacional 2013-2017

Structure

1. Presentation of the topic and research question

The questions about how to reach happiness and the meaning of *good living* have been discussed since ancient times. Philosophers such as Aristotle dealt with these questions and came to ideas like *Eudemonia*, which according to Aristotle, is the highest good that a human being could reach.[1] On the other hand, Adam Smith mentioned in his book "The Wealth of Nations" that the desire and struggle for material accumulation is part of human nature, but he remarked that material wealth does not necessarily bring happiness.[2] An interesting observation could be that none of these visions took into consideration the connection between humans and nature.

In modern times, these questions remain open and the debate evolved around welfare state achievement. The main indicators to measure welfare are economic growth and GDP, both are directly tied to monetary and economic parameters. In 2007, during the Istanbul World Forum- "Measuring and Fostering the Progress of Societies" from the OECD, its members agreed on the need for new welfare indicators beyond GDP[3]. Nonetheless, the search for new ways of welfare began already several years before.

Since the 80's, Latin American countries have been struggling to reach that desired welfare state. Nevertheless, through the application of classical neoliberal policies, the socio-economic standards of the majority of the Latin American countries did not seem to improve, on the contrary, poverty worsened and many natural reserves were damaged due to extractivism, which means getting hold of national natural resources and sell them to international companies. Several social protests coming primarily from minority and vulnerable groups took place in different cities among the region. In the case of Ecuador, ancestral indigenous values reappeared through the concept of Sumak Kawsay or Buen Vivir ("good living"). Minority groups raised their voices against the capitalist system and proposed the paradigm of Sumak Kawsay as an alternative way of development, changing the world anthropocentric vision and giving nature a higher meaning among others. In 2008 the country approved a new constitution based on the norms of Buen Vivir, since then, Ecuador has experienced fundamental changes on its internal but also external policies.

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[1] Nicomachean ethics
[2] Smith 1991
[3] Jurado 2015

Norms represent a standard of appropriate behavior and function as guideline for all kind of actions and interactions. As the situation described above indicates, there can be several reasons whereby certain norms become more relevant and more "socially accepted" than others. Norms are present in multiple areas, if we see them from a political perspective, it is possible to recognize domestic norms within a country and external norms for interaction in international scenarios. Once a country defines its domestic norms, depending on different factors, the relationship between them and external norms can vary. To get a better image and comprehend which factors have an influence on how norms are assimilated, implemented and traced by a country, the research question of this thesis is: how do norms act as a constitutive element for the shaping of foreign policies?

Considering that domestic norms can be seen as a symbol for national identity because they guide political decisions and the behavior of the population, it is possible to think that a country will reflect these behavioral patterns also outside of its territory when it comes to the international arena. Using Ecuador as my case study I will analyze the following hypothesis: *if the norms within a country´s internal policies are cohesive and strong, then these same norms will shape the foreign policy of this country.*

At first, I will try to prove the first part of the hypothesis, analyzing the process by which Sumak Kawsay reemerged in the Ecuadorian society and became an essential part of the Ecuadorian Constitution of 2008.

To observe the influence of Buen Vivir in the Ecuadorian foreign policies, I will analyze if Buen Vivir is legally present in issues related to external policies and then I will observe the role of Ecuador in the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), more precisely at the Sustainable Development International Conference.

The theory of social constructivism is a good tool for analyzing the case study of Ecuador because the concept of Buen Vivir is a social construction, reinforced by many discourses from different society groups but principally, or at least during its emergence, from minority groups that were commonly marginalized like the indigenous people and the afroecuadorian community.

As theoretical framework, I will use theories from social constructivists like Friedrich Kratochwil. His analysis of the influence and impact of norms on decision-making and also his categorization and definition of norms and rules types will be considered for

the empirical analysis. Additionally, Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink theory of norm "life cycle" and their model of norm assimilation stages will be useful to comprehend the process of norm emergence, the actors that play an important role on the creation of new norms, the process of norm socialization, institutionalization and finally the internalization of norms within the society. I will apply this model of norm stages both in the domestic and international assimilation process of Buen Vivir.

2. <u>Theoretical Background</u>

2.1 Socialconstructivism

2.1.1 The role of norms

In his book *"*Rules, Norms and Decisions: on the conditions of practical and legal reasoning in international relations and domestic affairs*"*, Friedrich V. Kratochwil analyzes the impact of norms on decision making. Kratochwil observes the concept of norms and rules and distinguishes different kinds of norms and their influence on actor's choices. For the aim of this thesis, chapters 1, 2 and 3 will be taken as theoretical references for the forthcoming empirical analysis.

In the first chapter, Kratochwil presents some conceptual foundations and tries to answer the question of how do we understand human actions and which role play norms in this process. He remarks the complexity of the question because an answer depends on the personal concept of knowledge. This concept is constituted by the individual worldview, which, at the same time, is based on the sum of personal experiences and individual vision of reality. As a reference the author considers as a reference different concepts of knowledge that correspond to three world images: the world of observational facts, the world of mental facts (or intention & meaning), and the world of institutional facts. Through this three worlds, Kratochwil tries to point out that human action is rule-governed and that everyday language has a great importance on the process of understanding human action[4].

The concept of knowledge presented on the world of observational facts is a concept in which facts are theory dependent. In this world-image, measurements have a decisive importance and causes are expressible in mathematical functions, here exists

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[4] Kratochwil 1989, p.43

an ordinal scale or ordinal measurement of theoretical terms. From a social science perspective, there is a conflict for the operalization of combined objects. Unlike observing scientists, investigators of social sciences need a consensual validation of their procedures for comparisons and combinational operations.[5]

The second world-image, the world of mental facts, focuses on the reconstruction of the parameters of action. This means the comprehension of an actor choice and the subjective intentions and motives behind it. Kratochwil mentions Weber statements about meaningful actions: "Social action, in turn, is a subcategory of meaningful action requiring that an "individual's conduct is meaningfully oriented toward that of others." There are specific motives preceding an action. Interactions among social subjects are norm governed and each action is placed within an intersubjective understood context.[6]

Finally, the characteristics of the world of institutional facts suggest that rules are intrinsically involved in speech acts. After this vision, actions own more than intentionality and the speech behind these actions must have a conventional coherence. "Furthermore, insofar as the system is based on alliances and strategic calculations, the moves have to be conceptualized even more, so within the framework of a game rather than within that of observational facts. Since promising and contracting are part of the game, it is the third world of institutional facts rather than the first of observational facts which provides the appropriate framework."[7]

Norms and rules shape decisions in deliberation processes. It is precisely in this kind of communicative interactions where language occupies a transcendental role. "Common understandings can be arrived at through the stabilization and evocation of certain generally shared expectations among actors in specific situation."[8]

Friedrich Kratochwil presents some corollaries deduced from various considerations of the communication process[9]:

1) *"Consensus, after all does not simply emerge out of various debates but is dependent on the availability of cultural, historical, and philosophical*

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[5] Ibid. p.23
[6] Kratochwil 1989, p. 24-25
[7] Ibid. p. 28
[8] Ibid. p.31
[9] Ibid. p. 33-34

experiences by which members of a society share meanings and find solutions to their problems."

2) *"Norms (…) are dependent upon the success of communicative actions, i.e., their perlocutionary effect. However, this perlocutionary effect is not independent of the norms ability to provide easily recognized templates for solving the problems of social interaction"*

3) *"(…) most question need to be settled by authoritative decision. In this context, choice procedures, such as majority rule, cloture of debate, quorums, etc. are important means of arriving at a decision. [N]orms that institutionalize such procedures rely basically upon the effectiveness of communication, upon the semiotic system by which users indicate to each other in what speech acts they are involved"*

4) *"[P]olitical deliberations are bounded by norms, insofar as norms determine the persons who can participate in such discussion (citizens, deputies, etc.), and by the procedures that determine when and under what circumstances as a particular "speech act", such as, for example "aye" in a parliamentary vote, shall count as an authoritative decision."*

Kratochwil declares that language is a norm-governed activity. To observe this, the author analyses the "three-party-context", suggested by Thomas Franck, where rules and norms are used principally to persuade.

According to Franck, the first-party mode can be distinguished by the use of impositions. In this mode only the interests of one actor matter. "The success of the norm-guided action is then largely circumscribed by the conditions of effective speech acts, such as threats, warnings, etc., and the imposition of "solutions" without explicit reference to the interest of other affected parties."[10] The imposed character of a norm is characteristic for the first- party context and the "norm receiver" occupies an inferior position, defaulting the consideration of his/her claims.[11]

The second-party mode is related to the role of norms in negotiation processes. This mode is connected to coercion attempts and the existence of "mixed moves": "Rules and norms can, but need not, figure prominently in the actors' choices since the bargaining between them might include coercive moves. Thus, the resort to norms can

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[10] Kratochwil 1989, p.13
[11] Kratochwil 1989, p.35

be- and frequently is- subsidiary to the process of "breaking the other's will" in order to arrive at a decision"[12]

The last mode, the third party mode "(…) covers the cases in which a third party applies preexisting rules to a given controversy in order either to meditate or settle the submitted issues authoritatively."[13] In this mode there is a kind of "emergence of a moral point of view". All interest and petitions from the participants have equal recognition and the intention of breaking other's will is excluded. Nevertheless it is important to remark that actors which have agreed "to let their decisions be directed recognized norms can even in a bilateral bargaining situation achieve something like a "third party law".[14]

At the end of the first chapter, the author considers, that rules and norms influence on decisions made during deliberation processes, but they do not necessarily function as causes or represent logic terms, moreover they function as persuasive reasons that guide to a specific choice making.[15]

In the second chapter, "Anarchy and the state of nature: the issue of regimes in international relations", Kratochwil analyses the role of regimes in international life. "According to the "consensus-definitions" in the special issue of International Organizations, regimes are "sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations."[16]

 The author outlines that tacit rules, rather than explicit rules, are predominant in international affairs. Through the analysis of some institutions and regime aspects, the author develops an interesting vision of the function and influence of norms in decision-making in the usually considered "anarchical system" of international relations, which as the author says, does not necessarily entail the absence of norms.[17] "Markets are probably *the* social institution which are most dependent upon normative underpinnings. While markets are anarchical in the sense of lacking central decision-making institutions, it is unimaginable that they could function without the common

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[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Kratochwil 1989, p.36
[15] Ibid. p.36
[16] Ibid. p.57
[17] Ibid. p. 45

acceptance of the convention of money, without the protection of property rights, and without the institutions of promising and contracting, governed by practice-type rules."[18]

To better comprehend Kratochwil analysis it is extremely important to differentiate the principal terms used by the author. Friedrich Kratochwil considers that principles are connected to beliefs of fact, causation and rectitude. Norms, on the other hand, are standards of behavior defined in terms of rights and obligations, while rules are related to prescriptions and proscription for actions.[19]

According to Kratochwil, several academic streams in the international affairs observe norms from distinct perspectives, but two of them are especially remarkable: on the one hand "the realists", those who negate that norms are important for international relations and, on the other hand, "the idealists" who are interested in norms.[20]

When actors find difficulties in interacting with the counterparts, they convert into adversaries and it becomes necessary to clear the rules of the game. Through rational thinking and calculation, actors realize that it is necessary to find cooperation among adversaries. The function of norms is to "fortify socially optimal solutions against the temptations of individually rational defections".[21] Due to tacit or explicit rules implied in the interaction process, actors build themselves certain expectations of how the behavior and attitudes from the other.

Kratochwil commentates that it is a common mistake to identify norms and rules with commands. He makes a differentiation of both terms and the situations when they are applied. Commands, as said by Kratochwil, are situation specific, while commandments (comparable with rules) are applicable to a bigger range of situations. Rules could also be applicable to all situations.[22]

Norms and rules represent a crucial aspect on actor behavior: "Rule following is therefore not a passive process (…) it is rather intensely dynamic. Actors are not only programmed by rules and norms, but they reproduce and change by their practice the

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[18] Ibid. p.47
[19] Ibid. p.59
[20] Ibid. p.45
[21] Ibid. p.48
[22] Ibid. p.53

normative structure by which they are able to act, share meanings, communicate intentions, criticize claims, and justify choices."[23]

An interesting and at the same time controversial statement commented on this chapter is that the conventional regime theory considers that a change of regime occurs when norms and principles change, however a regime remains equal when only rules change.[24]

Not only norms and rules, but also values, contribute to the maintenance of social order. In contrast with the cognitive patterns linked to rules, through the evocation of emotional attachments, values represent an influence on decisions.[25] Kratochwil remarks that usually value consensus is principally present in a domestic arena whereas on an international level their consideration is reduced or even non-existent. "[C]ommon values by themselves are insufficient to ensure cooperation and avoid conflict escalation. On the other hand cooperation can take place in the absence of a value consensus."[26]

In the second chapter, two different models/theories of society are discussed. The one is valued based, and the other emphasize on rights and rules. Kratochwil describes values as alternative guidelines to instrumental rationality. Values are more general than norms or rules, values do not prescribe concrete actions but rather "inform the attitudes of actors". "[V]alues serve to strengthen the will and the emotional attachments to social objects, or state of affairs. Decency, justice, goodness are values in this sense (…) Values are therefore important in overcoming the "weakness of will" problem by stressing the importance of character and reputation in a society and by insisting on the importance of social solidarity and the spirit of sacrifice and self-abnegation." [27]

Kratochwil comments on the big discussion among theorist about the influence of emotional attachments on individuals. While one position argues that men can act out of solidarity and can be united to their fellow men "through an attachment to basic values and shared emotional experiences" rather than self-interest, the other position considers that thought as an utopia because that kind of social interaction was left in

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[23] Ibid. p.61
[24] Ibid. p.60
[25] Ibid. p.64
[26] Ibid. p.64
[27] Ibid.

the past as communities were smaller: "Speculations based on emotional attachments and solidarity have been opposed by those theorists who emphasize the stresses and strains which appear in societies characterized by an increasing division of labor and the break-up of those face-to-face contacts of primitive society."[28] In the coming chapter, by my empirical analysis of the reintroduction of Sumak Kawsay, the core of this debate will be retaken. Kratochwil, as mentioned at the beginning of the second chapter, despite of considering that the international arena shouldn't be seen as an anarchical state, argues that "value considerations providing the foundations for the generalized attitude towards socially recognized "others" are rather weakly articulated."[29] Nevertheless, global issues are influencing actor opinions worldwide and making them consider the adoption of more inclusive values.

In the third chapter the author examines the emergence of norms and rules, its different types and their role in social life. He observes that the main function of norms and rules is to deal as "problem solving devices" in conflictive situations, they are necessary to reach cooperation.[30] Conflicts tend to appear when individual actors encounter difficulties in reaching their own goals without interfering with pursuits from others. [31]

Whenever actors face conflicts with others because of different preferences, norms guide and direct actors actions in certain ways to find solutions to problems. It is important to notice that rules aren't imperatives, they are limited to an action-guiding function. Rules "are a type of directive that simplify choice-situations by drawing attention to factors which an actor has to take into account. Rules are therefore not situation specific, like imperatives, but delineates classes of events by specifying the set of circumstances in which they are applicable."[32]

Kratochwil comments that rules connect individual autonomy to sociality. Rules and norms enable actors to have freedom to pursue the objectives they select, but, at the same time, "they safeguard the conditions of social coexistence."[33]

One type of rules are the tacit rules or unspoken rules. This kind of rules usually emerge and are helpful when actors realize that their independent actions need to

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[28] Ibid. p.65
[29] Ibid. p.67
[30] Ibid. p.75
[31] Ibid. p.69
[32] Ibid. p.72
[33] Ibid., p.70

reach a certain coordination degree with other people actions because they are interdependent.[34] Implicit, or unspoken, rules "emerge largely through unilateral calculations which may take verbal as well as non-verbal clues into account. Although the inclusion of verbal messages seem to violate the "implicit" character of rule in question, it is important to realize that "implicitness" and "explicitness" do not necessarily refer here to the existence or absence of verbal utterances, but rather to the rule's function within communicative action."[35]

"[T]acit understandings are important devices for keeping the international game within certain bounds of mutual expectations and thus half-way predictable and "rational".[36] Friedrich Kratochwil expands the description of tacit rules by saying: "Tacit rules appear, therefore, to be dependent for their proper functioning on the back-up of social pressures generated by face-to-face relationships. Otherwise, they have to be transformed into explicit coordination norms, if the parties are to tolerate deviations oscillating within a certain range of common understandings."[37]

Tacit rules have an imprecise character. This is when a different type or rules appears, the explicit rules. Explicit rules are necessary for situations where the interacting actors don't have the same culture or share a common history, and the rules need to be explicitly formulated to be understood.[38] Ullmann-Margalit considers that: "A norm, by fixing on a unique, fitting description of the regularity, provides a unique guidance for action in normal future cases".[39]

The author mentions that there are some concepts related to norms present in the actor interaction. One example on such are customs. Customs are a practice related to coordination norms and are a common observed practice among nations. The International Court of Justice defines customs "as evidence of a general practice accepted as law". Customs arise from tacit rules and aren't binding.[40] "Pufendorf' point that a behavioral regularity based on a unilateral imputation is insufficient to establish the obligatory force of a practice. For custom to exist as a legally binding practice it must possess an ascertainable rule underlying the behavioral regularity. This rule must

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[34] Ibid., p. 74
[35] Ibid. p.55
[36] Ibid., p.82
[37] Ibid., p.81
[38] Ibid. p.81
[39] Ibid., p.79
[40] Ibid., p. 88-89

not only be articulated in order to move from the rule *of* behavior to a "standard" or guide *for* behavior."[41]

2.1.2 *Norm Assimilation Dynamic – Norm Stages*

The researchers Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, were also for a long time concerned with the analysis of norms. They studied the main aspects of norms, their origins, the mechanisms to exercise influence, and conditions for norms to become influential on bigger scenarios like the international arena and realized that the processes of social construction and strategic negotiations are deeply interlaced. The main found of their analysis was the description of norms "life cycle", through a model of norm stages they facilitate the comprehension of the norm assimilation dynamic. On their review "International Norms Dynamic and Political Change" (1998), Finnemore and Sikkink answer some questions about norms and present a detailed description of the model of norm assimilation stages. This model was principally conceived for the assimilation of norms in the field of International Relations, nevertheless for the empirical part of the thesis it will be also used later as an instrument for the internal/national analysis.

How do we know a norm when we see one? To this question the authors consider that there is no direct evidence of norms and neither direct evidence for most of the motivations for political actions. Because norms are composed by moral burden and function "as a standard of appropriate behavior for actors with given identity"[42] they tend to function as justification for actor actions. The study of the interaction and communication among actors facilitates the recognition of norms.[43]

The authors discuss the different academic visions and terms used to refer and to define norms: "Whereas constructivist in political science talk a language of norms, sociologists talk a language of "institutions" to refer to the same behavioral rules. (…) define "institution" as a "relatively stable collection of practices and rules defining appropriate behavior for specific groups of actors in specific situations".[44] Finnemore and Sikkink emphasize on the difference between norm and institution: a norm refers

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[41] Ibid., p. 89
[42] Several authors in Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 891
[43] Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 892
[44] March and Olsen in Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.891

to "single standards of behavior", while institutions consider the structure and interrelation of several behavioral rules.

According to the authors, there are two main types of rules: regulative and constitutive norms. To the first type belong all the norms "which order and constrain behavior", to constitutive norms belong those rules "which create new actors, interests, or categories of action".

"Because norms involve standards of "appropriate" or "proper" behavior, both the <u>intersubjective</u> and the <u>evaluative dimensions</u> are inescapable when discussing norms. We only know what is appropriate by reference to the judgments of a community or a society. We recognize <u>norm-breaking behavior</u> because it generates disapproval or stigma and <u>norm conforming behavior</u> either because it produces praise, or, in the case of highly internalized norm, because it is so taken for granted that it provokes no reaction whatsoever."[45]

As said by Finnemore and Sikkink, by definition there are no bad norms: "One logical corollary to the prescriptive quality of norms is that, by definition, there are no bad norms from the vantage point of those who promote the norm. Norms most of us would consider "bad" (…) were once powerful because some groups believed in the appropriateness of the norm, and others either accepted it as obvious or inevitable or had no choice but to accept it."[46]

The fact that a norm exist doesn't automatically mean that this norm will have an influence on the actor's behavior. For a norm to make any difference in politics it is necessary that a certain amount of actors evaluate and agree on the characteristics concerning the norm. "Norms may be regional, but not global. Even within a community, norms are "continuous, rather than dichotomous, entities… [They] come in varying strengths" with different norms commanding different levels of agreement."[47]

For the analysis of the connection between domestic and international norms, which are considered as significantly linked, the authors observe that most international norms evolved and got influenced from domestic norms, the internalization of them became possible through the struggles from different entrepreneurs.[48] Finnemore and

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[45] Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.892
[46] Ibid. p.892
[47] Legro 1997 in Finnemore 1998, p. 892
[48] Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.893

Sikkink remark though, that domestic influences are representative mostly at the first stage of norm's life cycle, later, as a norm becomes institutionalized in the international arena, the domestic influence shortens. Another aspect is that for international norms to function, their consideration among domestic structures is necessary. By doing so, a conflict due to the different interpretations of the norms could appear. The authors mention also as example that: "(…) domestic 'norms entrepreneurs' advocating a minority position use international norms to strengthen their position in domestic debates."[49]

Behavior is conducted by norms, choices and actions are limited to the ranges or structures set by norms. The constructivist vision considers that the international order and structure is shaped by the international distribution of "ideas, expectations, and beliefs about appropriate behavior."[50]

The dynamic of interactions and agreements among actors can be better understood examining the three-stage process of norms "life cycle". This allows a better vision of how norms evolve and impact on different scenarios.

Stage 1: Norm Emergence

The first stage consists on the origins and emergence of norms. For the creation of norms two elements seem necessary: norm entrepreneurs and organizational platforms from which they act.

The principal actors on the first stage, the norm entrepreneurs, are agents who have strong notions about "appropriate or desirable behavior in their community"[51] and are convinced that something needs to be changed. The attention that norm entrepreneurs generate is basic for norm emergence. It is relevant to notice that the new emergent norms enter in an already "highly contested normative space", which means that they are in competition with already existing norms and interests. Norm entrepreneurs are in charged to call attention to certain issues and give a reinterpretation to them, as the author say, this process is called "framing". "The construction of cognitive frames is an essential component of norm entrepreneurs' political strategies, since when they are

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[49] Ibid.
[50] Various authors in Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 894
[51] Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 896

successful, the new frames resonate with broader public understanding and are adopted as new ways of talking about and understanding issues (…)"[52]

The principal motives that encourage norm entrepreneurs are empathy, altruism and ideational commitment. Under empathy we can understand that it refers to the capacity of actors for participating in the ideas or feelings from others "such empathy may lead to empathetic interdependence where actors "are interested in the welfare of others for its own sake, even if this has no effect on their own material well-being or security." Altruism denotes the willingness of an actor to take the risk of harming himself to attain actions designed for the well-being of others. The last point, ideational commitment, is the main motivation to promote ideas or norms because, according to the authors, norm entrepreneurs "believe in the ideals and values embodied in the norms, even though the pursuit of the norms may have no effect on their well-being."[53]

The organizational platforms mentioned above, from where the entrepreneurs work, are in many cases international organizations with special purposes, which usually promote a specific norms in their agendas. Finnemore and Sikkink remark that "whatever their platform, norm entrepreneurs and the organizations they inhabit usually need to secure the support of state actors to endorse their norms and make norm socialization a part of their agenda, and different organizational platforms provide different kinds of tools for entrepreneurs to do this." [54]

The dominant mechanism essential on the first stage is persuasion. Norm entrepreneurs have the task to persuade and convince "a critical mass of states" or norm leaders to hold the new norms.[55]

Tipping Point

Before a norm comes to the second stage of the norm "life cycle" it should reach a "Tipping Point". This tipping point is reached when a critical mass of states adopt the new norms owing to the persuasion from norm entrepreneurs. The authors comment that because of the differences among states, it is hard to define how many (critical) states should endorse the new norm and "redefine appropriate behavior" to consider

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[52] Ibid. p. 897
[53] Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.898
[54] Ibid. p. 899-900
[55] Ibid. p.895

them as critical mass, but "empirical studies suggest that norm tipping rarely occurs before one-third of the total states in the system adopt the norm."[56]

Stage 2: Norm Cascade

At this stage norms influence state and non-state behavior. Even when cascades require backing from critical states, it is not indispensable that they reach unanimity among them. After reaching the tipping point, even when there is not domestic pressure for change, as a dynamic of imitation more states begin to accept and adopt the new norms.[57] "The exact motivation for this second stage where the norm "cascades" through the rest of the population (in this case, of states) may vary, but we argue that a combination of pressure for conformity, desire to enhance international legitimation, and the desire of state leaders to enhance their self-esteem facilitate norm cascades".[58]

The principal actors of the second stage that act as agents of socialization are states, international organizations and NGOs. These socialization agents combined with networks of norm entrepreneur influence and push certain actors to implement the new policies and laws and to ratify treaties. This agents are also in charge of monitoring the obedience of international standards. [59]

The motives for states to comply with norms, as stated by the authors, are reasons connected to their positions and identity in the international society. As members of international groups states need the appreciation of their identities, which at the same time influence on its behavior, for accomplishing recognition. "Recognition that state identity fundamentally shapes states behavior, and that state identity is, in turn, shaped by the cultural-institutional context within which states act, has been an important contribution of recent norms research". [60]

The dominant mechanisms present on this stage are socialization and institutionalization. "The concept of socialization suggests that the cumulative effect of many countries in a region adopting new norms "may be analogous to "peer pressure" among countries." According to Finnemore and Sikkink, legitimation, conformity and esteem could be the three motivations for states to adopt norms.[61]

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[56] Ibid. p.901-902
[57] Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.902
[58] Ibid. p.895
[59] Ibid. p.902
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.

To enhance domestic legitimacy, actors decide to implement new norms. Citizens constantly judge and compare, if their government is doing good or maybe better than other countries from the regional or international arena. For this they consider what other persons and states affirm about their country, which is commonly an opinion considered according to the relevance of the critical mass.[62]

Regarding to conformity and esteem, states comply with norms to show that they are adapting to the social environment with other state "peers" and that they belong there. "By conforming to the actions of those around us, we fulfill a psychological need to be part of a group."[63] Esteem on the other hand, is connected to legitimacy and conformity as well, but it expresses mostly actors' expectations of attaining positive recognition and a good image in front of other actors by getting their approval and avoiding bad criticism. According to the authors, through norm acceptance states defend their pride, reinforce their self-esteem and build a good image about themselves.[64] **"Social norms are sustained, in part, by "feelings of embarrassment, anxiety, guilt, and shame that a person suffers at the prospect of violating them.[65](…) Fearon has argued that identity is based on those aspects of the self in which an individual has special pride or from which an individual gains self-esteem."[66]

Stage 3: Norm Internalization

The third and last stage of a norm "life cycle" is the Norm Internalization Process. "Norms acquire a taken-for-granted quality and are no longer a matter of broad public debate."[67] At this stage Finnemore and Sikkink consider the end of the norm cascade and how norms get "profoundly" assimilated or internalized.

Important actors at this stage are the different professions and state bureaucracies, which, thanks to their active socialization, work as "powerful and pervasive agents" in the process of internalizing norms among their members and stand out the value of certain things above others.[68]

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[62] Ibid. p.903
[63] Axelrod 1986 in Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.903
[64] Fearon 1997 in Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.903
[65] Elster 1989 in Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.903
[66] Fearon 1997 in Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.903
[67] Finnemore and Sikkink 1998 , p.895
[68] Ibid. p.905

Finnemore and Sikkink consider conformity as the characteristic motive on this stage. Conformity with the new norm becomes so natural, that people stop being aware of the norms presence. This happens when norms reach significant acceptance and are internalized by actors. Because behavior according to the new norm is not more interrogated and discussed, internalized norms become particularly powerful and hard to discern.[69]

As dominant mechanism for the consolidation and universalization of norms, the authors consider that habit and behavior play a significant role after the role cascade. "(…) frequent interactions among people involving joint work on technical tasks would ultimately create predictability, stability, and habits of trust.(…)routes to normative change may be similarly indirect and evolutionary: procedural changes that create new political processes can lead to gradual and inadvertent normative, ideational, and political convergence."[70]

TABLE 1. *Stages of norms*

	Stage 1 Norm emergence	Stage 2 Norm cascade	Stage 3 Internalization
Actors	Norm entrepreneurs with organizational platforms	States, international organizations, networks	Law, professions, bureaucracy
Motives	Altruism, empathy, ideational, commitment	Legitimacy, reputation, esteem	Conformity
Dominant mechanisms	Persuasion	Socialization, institutionalization, demonstration	Habit, institutionalization

(Table on Finnemore and Sikkink's review 1998, p.898)

After exposing these three stages some questions appear relevant to be answered. Questions like which norms, when and under what conditions are likely to be influential in world politics because, as the authors comment, many emergent norms fail to reach a tipping point because in some cases internalized or cascading norms compete with

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new emergent norms for support and occupy already standards of appropriateness. Finnemore and Sikkink propose some hypothesis that could be helpful to answer these questions.

The first one is legitimation. For norm assimilation at a domestic level, the achievement of international legitimation is essential for the new norm. A norm may be adopted by a state usually if their domestic legitimacy wavers. "If legitimation is a main motivation for normative shifts, we might expect states to endorse international norms during periods of domestic turmoil in which the legitimacy of elites is threatened. If states seek to enhance their reputation or esteem, we would expect states that are insecure about their international status or reputation to embrace new international norms most eagerly and thoroughly."[71]

Another considerable aspect for an emergent norm to spread is prominence. Prominence could be associated with norm quality (discussed in the next point) and with the quality of the states supporting the new norm. If the norm is supported by prominent states considered successful and with good reputation then it is easier for a norm to be noticed and to expand.[72]

As mentioned above, norm characteristics are important for its appreciation. A possible successful norm needs clarity and specificity on its formulation, norms that contain this, have a better substance and are more likely to be effective and to survive. "[N]orms making universalistic claims about what is good for all people in all places have more expansive potential than localized and particularistic normative frameworks"

John Boli and George Thomas suggest that if norms fit with this five principles they could be more successful internationally: universalism, individualism, voluntaristic authority, rational progress, and world citizenship.[73] At the same time Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink propose other claims: "norms involving (1) bodily integrity and prevention of bodily harm for vulnerable "innocent" groups, especially when a short causal chain exists between cause and effect, and (2) legal equality of opportunity are particularly effective transnationally and cross-culturally."[74]

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[71] Ibid. p.906
[72] Florini 1996 in Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.906
[73] Boli and Thomas in Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.907
[74] Kick and Sikkink 1998 in Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 907

Other aspects that Finnemore and Sikkink see as relevant for new norms, are their closeness or adjacency to claims, if a norm is like an existing norm, or somehow derivable from it. "(…) the meanings of any particular norm and the linkages between existing norms and emergent norms are often not obvious and must be actively constructed by proponents of new norms." [75] A norm can be potentially persuasive when its claims fit with the already existing claims within normative frameworks. Considering the topic of this thesis I think it is appropriate to use environmental care as example. It is possible to say that at the time when the norms related to Sumak Kawsay re-emerged, they fit with the already existing framework of reducing or avoiding environmental pollution.

Finally the "world time" or context in which a norm emerge can empower it. Generally, as said by the authors, at difficult times or times of inconformity the search for new ideas and norms increases. Globalization, because of efficient communication and transportation technologies, facilitates a faster promotion and expansion of new norms and eases more opportunities for norm entrepreneurs.[76]

2.2 The concept of Sumak Kawsay or *Buen Vivir*
2.2.1 Ancestral indigenous origin and principles of the concept

Sumak Kawsay, from where the concept of Buen Vivir ("good living") originates, is a kichwa word meaning full life. The word Sumak means plenty, beauty and lofty whereas the term Kawsay means to live, to coexist and to be.[77] The worldview of indigenous people is holistic and integrates many elements from nature. After this view, there is no separation between human beings and nature; this harmonic symbiosis is essential for the maintenance of life.[78] The Andean worldview indicates that every living being is connected and interrelated with all other beings in the universe, the global existence depends necessarily on each of this beings and every action of each of them has an impact and causes changes in the universe even when this changes are not perceived at first sight.[79] In principle, the philosophy of Sumak Kawsay gives a special sense of life and, as civilizational ethic, enables a better community and/or society life

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[75] Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 908
[76] Ibid. p.909
[77] Huanacumi 2010 in Guandinanfo and Carrillo 2012, p.8
[78] Houtart 2011, 7 ; Simbaña 2011
[79] Huanacuni 2010 in Guandinango and Carrillo 2012, p.7

organization. Originally, the philosophy of Sumak Kawsay functioned as state guideline for ancestral communities and later, despite of the colonization, the Sumak Kawsay survived in the collective memory of indigenous people and kept being practiced by families and small communities.[80] A key aspect of Sumak Kawsay is communitarianism, which is based on reciprocity, solidarity and equality and represents a life principle for most indigenous nationalities.[81]

In contrast to western concepts, traditionally, indigenous communities did not have a linear conception of an anterior or posterior state, this means there was no vision of an underdeveloped state to be overcome or of a developed state to be reached. Indigenous people did not have an image of poverty related to the lack of material goods or an image of wealth linked to its abundance.[82]

The concrete definition of the original ancestral Sumak Kawsay is debatable, but most authors agree on the main principles carried by it. Houtart 2011, for example, describes it as a communitarian space, where principles like reciprocity, peaceful and harmonious coexistence with nature, social responsibility, equity, consensus, social equality, solidarity, peace and justice exist.[83] All in all, for the empirical analysis, because the modern meaning of the concept is still "being constructed" and the purpose of this thesis will not be to redefine the concept, I will focus mostly on one definition.

3. Ecuador and the re-use and institutionalization of Buen Vivir

3.1 The modern definition and reintroduction of the concept as an alternative to neoliberalism

It was principally through the influence of indigenous groups that the Buen Vivir ("good living") re-emerged in the 90's. Buen Vivir reappeared as a norm, standard of behavior, based on ancestral values. After Houtart, the reappearance of Sumak Kawsay seems to fulfill two functions: on the one hand, it represents an alternative response to neoliberal traditional politics from the Washington Consensus, guided by the IMF; and on the other hand, it proposes a social, political and cultural reconstruction.[84]

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[80] Simbaña 2011
[81] Ibid.
[82] Acosta 2010, p.2
[83] Houtart 2011, p.2
[84] Ibid. p.5

Regarding the first function, Houtart argues that this reemergence could be seen as a "critique to modernity", to extractivism and to the neoliberal model that had been followed. This neoliberal model considered industrialization as the instrument to reach modernization and development, which is measured through the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). [85]

Some of the "recipes" that came from the Washington Consensus related to the State function proposed the adoption of restrictive fiscal policies and the adoption of restrictive monetary policies, for example, through higher interest rates. In addition to them, the State should stop promoting industrialization and development policies, instead it should liberalize labor markets, privatize public enterprises and reduce restrictions on international trade and financial flows.[86] Observing where led this system Ecuadorian people so far, an analysis of the circumstances showed that these development schemes followed since the 80's because of the crisis did not bring positive results and prosperity to the majority of the Latin-American and Ecuadorian population, on the contrary, the ecosystem and society has been enduring.[87]

The exportation of raw materials has been the base of the Ecuadorian economy but the terms for the extraction processes did not consider nature preservation. As a result, irresponsible actions led to considerable damages of natural areas with relevant biological and cultural diversity "(…) particularly oil extraction, continued to wreak havoc in the Amazon region, with pollution, deforestation, and species loss increasing substantially" [88]. Arsel 2012 mentions that the neoliberal development model has a mostly objectifying vision of nature arguing the following: "(…) nature becomes a commodity in the marketplace, bought and sold by economic agents driven by the profit motive. The dominant neoliberal approach to development policy enshrined in the Washington Consensus sees the marketing of nature and natural resources to the highest bidder while leaving the job of conservation to the price mechanism of the marketplace as not only 'natural' but also necessary."[89]

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[85] Larrea in Semplades 2010, p. 17
[86] Main in Semplades 2010
[87] Arsel 2012, Houtart 2011
[88] Sawyer 2004 and Widener 2007 in Arsel 2012, p.151
[89] Arsel 2012, p. 153

In addition to this, Arsel 2012 also remarks: "The impact of neoliberalism on the role of nature in economic development has not only led to a very narrow notion of economic value that neglects the complex interdependence between various ecosystem functions but has also sidelined other value systems, be they social, cultural or religious, which oppose representations of nature through a purely monetary perspective." [90]

Besides a sequence of environmental damages, there were other effects from the IMF suggested policies to be applied in Ecuador like: incessant economic crisis, increment of social inequality and extreme poverty etc. It is important to remark that this last point relies not precisely on a lack of national economic growth, but on a weak and almost nonexistent relation between economic growth (income/consumption) and improvement of the quality of life of the majority of the population. Main suggests that although economic growth generates more revenue for a nation, it is difficult to guarantee an equitable distribution of this income without the existence of redistribution policies.[91]

Beyond representing a critique to the neoliberal development system, the second function of Buen Vivir, according to Houtart, is the theoretical reconstruction from the aspects related to the indigenous culture and worldview.[92]

Indigenous people found important to restore a harmonic relation with nature, by recognizing its integrity, which has its own value, regardless of the perception and assessment of man. They also considered the necessity of building another economy, based on solidarity, fair distribution and respect to the natural environment. The collective thought of the Andean community implied the need for a new organization of a different plurinational and decentralized state which empowers communities, also seemed necessary to, among others, reinforce multiculturalism. (A deeper observation of all the aspects mentioned above will be given in the further sections of the thesis)

Indigenous activists and other historically excluded groups, began to emerge and to play a significant role on the political arena: "The largest federation, the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador- CONAIE, grouped the country's 14 indigenous

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[90] Arsel 2012, p. 153
[91] Main in Semplades 2010, p.100
[92] Houtart 2011, p.7

nationalities into a recognizable force for social justice."[93] Besides the socioeconomic difficulties, their fear and concerns were raised because oil companies that were threatening their land. Also the lack of state support and attention left them in an even more vulnerable situation.[94]

 "Ecuador and especially its indigenous population had fared poorly under neoliberalism and the result was a period of political turmoil, marked by large scale uprisings by the country's indigenous communities who experienced the double shock of diminished state support and increased penetration of foreign oil corporations into their territories."[95]

All in all, the crisis period and the worsening conditions built a hard panorama of political instability and social unconformity: "Between 1997 and 2007, Ecuador saw seven presidents, three of them were toppled as a result of civic unrest". [96] The growing claims in the country showed that it was necessary to consolidate a new and more inclusive state and to look for an alternative and sustainable development model. "Eighty percent of the Ecuadorian population was poor and excluded from the political process. It was necessary to refound the Ecuadorian state on the basis of their collective force so that the government would respond to their needs". [97] The vision of development had to be changed, GDP shouldn't be the main reference for growth but rather life quality. Even on the Human Development report from 1997 said that it is possible to find what is meant by life quality: the quality of life is given by having a long and healthy life, acquisition of knowledge and the access to resources needed for a decent standard of living.[98]

For years, indigenous movements and other social movements insisted for the drafting of a new constitution that integrates Sumak Kawsay as the guideline concept for development. They proposed several changes such as the reinforcement of social justice, recognition of the different indigenous nationalities and cultures, empowerment of communities, life in harmony and the protection, respect and inclusion of nature to attain a "good life". Dávalos 2008 expresses on his analysis on the indigenous proposal

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[93] Becker 2011, p.48
[94] Ibid.
[95] Valdivia 2005 in Arsel 2012, p.151
[96] Conaghan 2007 in Arsel 2012 p.154
[97] Becker 2011, p.48
[98] UNDP 1997, p.13

that the concept of Sumak Kawsay opened the possibility to link humans with nature. This link, from a perspective of respect, is an opportunity to restore ethics to human coexistence.[99] But it would be later in 2008, when their claims would be taken into account through the drafting of the 20th Ecuadorian constitution.

3.2 The new Ecuadorian constitution of 2008 based on Buen Vivir

Under the complicated political circumstances previously mentioned, Rafael Correa submitted his candidacy with the support of a new founded party, Alianza País, and entered on the presidential campaign spreading an anti-neoliberal speech: "Referring to neoliberalism, he argued that a 'perverse system (had) destroyed our democracy, our economy and our society' and promised to 'refound' the country's institutions, particularly the state." [100] The presidential election of Correa in late 2006 after two rounds of voting, represented a "left turn" of the Ecuadorian politics "(…) he promised to put an end to the `long and sad night of neoliberalism'" [101]

After taking office in 2007, and given the significant amplitude of the reforms proposed during the campaign, the regime of Rafael Correa insisted on the creation of a new constitution and called for a constituent assembly through a referendum. In this way it would be possible to change the neoliberal policies that were in force: "On April 15, 2007 over 80 percent of the Ecuadorian electorate approved a referendum to convoke a constituent assembly. In no small part, the success of the referendum was due to the support of indigenous communities." [102] This campaign counted with the support of the different social movements, the indigenous party and leftists' party.

At this point, the first stage of norm emergence became perceptible, the norm entrepreneurs, through their organized platforms formed by social movements and political parties, have a facility to campaign and persuade different social sectors to support their initiative. The Buen Vivir entrepreneurs, besides their empathy for commonly excluded social minorities, show their ideational commitment through their profound belief in the values embodied in the Buen Vivir.

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[99] Dávalos 2008 in Guandinango and Carillo 2012, p.5-6
[100] Burbach 2007 in Arsel 2012, p.154
[101] Conaghan 2008 in Arsel 2012, p.151
[102] Becker 2011, p.49

In September 30, 2007 the elections for deputies represented an important support for the Buen Vivir entrepreneurs, "Alianza Pais (AP) won almost 70 percent of the vote for the assembly, far outpacing its nearest rival, former president Lucio Gutierrez's Partido Sociedad Patriótica (Patriotic Society –PSP), with barely 7 percent. The AP was a very loose and diverse grouping of social-movement activists, academics, and nongovernmental organization leaders. For them holding the coalition together represented a challenge."[103]

Considering Finnemore and Sikkink's model of norm stages, it is possible to say that the majority of seats achieved by the deputies of the regime party for the constituent assembly could represent the reaching of the Tipping Point, and the opening of the norm cascade.

The claims for a more inclusive constitution led to a modern vision of Buen Vivir, "a new just society where individuals and life occupies the center of the public action, should be reached". Buen Vivir should strengthen social cohesion, common social values and the active participation of individuals and communities on relevant decisions.[104] It had to give them the chance to decide on their own future and destiny. "Es geht nicht darum, zu einer idealisierten Vergangenheit zurückzukehren, sondern darum, die Probleme der kontemporären Gesellschaften mit historischer Verantwortung anzugehen." [105]

For the drafting process, more society groups had the chance to participate actively. The Assembly President, Alberto Acosta, pledged that in contrast to every other past government, the representation of minority groups and the inclusion of "the concerns of indigenous peoples, Afro-Ecuadorians, and other who lacked representation"[106] would characterize the new constituent assembly.

Several aspects from the concept of Buen Vivir were incorporated in the new Ecuadorian Constitution. The Buen Vivir proposal, categorized as a plural set of rights, included rights related to health, environment, education, freedom, participation among others.[107] "(…) the Ecuadorian approach [for a development regime] requires that the

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[103] Ibid.
[104] PPT Ecuadorian Embassy slide 3
[105] Ibid.
[106] Latin American Weekly Report 2007b:2 in Becker 2011, p.48
[107] Gudynas 2011, p.443

economic, political, social, cultural and environmental areas should be arranged to guarantee the Sumak Kawsay." [108]

In regard to nature, a crucial aspect on the new constitution, the incorporation of the Rights of Nature represented a key element from the Buen Vivir concept. As Arsel mentions, the holistic and ecologic vision which acknowledges the importance and centrality of nature was accompanied with legal support. "Article 71 makes Ecuador the first state ever to grant nature explicit constitutional rights: Nature, or Pacha Mama [Mother Nature], where life is reproduced and occurs, has the right to integral respect for its existence and for the maintenance and regeneration of its life cycles, structure, functions and evolutionary processes. All persons, communities, peoples and nations can call upon public authorities to enforce the rights of nature. To enforce and interpret these rights, the principles set forth in the Constitution shall be observed, as appropriate. The State shall give incentives to natural persons and legal entities and to communities to protect nature and to promote respect for all the elements comprising an ecosystem."[109]

In addition to this, indigenous movements asked for the nationalization of natural resources. As mentioned in, "access to water was a human right, and the new constitution should declare it to be a social good and a strategic resource whose commodification and privatization would be prohibited. Water should be used first to meet human needs and to guarantee food sovereignty before being apportioned for industrial needs."[110]

Among several subjects from the indigenous agenda, an important aspect accentuated by indigenous deputes was the acknowledgment of the plurinational nature of the Ecuadorian state. As a result of this, it was necessary to rewrite the first article of the Ecuadorian constitution. [111] The indigenous intellectual Luis Maldonado Ruiz, quoted by Becker, defined plurinationalism as "the legal and political recognition of cultural diversity, reflecting people with differentiated historical entities who share common values, particular identities, forms of social and political organization, historical origin, and language." [112] Members of the CONAIE assured that the consolidation of

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[108] Ibid.
[109] Political Database of the Americas 2008 in Arsel 2012, p. 154
[110] Becker 2011, p.52
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid. p.54

plurinationalism would be useful to strengthen a unitary state by eliminating discriminatory and exclusive practices.[113] Plurinationalism would be connected to decentralization and not state reduction or weakening as some deputies feared.

According to Maldonado, three key elements define a plurinational state. The first one is the recognition of cultural diversity, which includes the appreciation of different social and political organizations, as well as the respect for different visions of development. The second element, egalitarian participation, refers to the point mentioned by CONAIE, "Incorporating nationalities and peoples into the new state implies the abolition of all forms of oppression, exploitation, and exclusion," the third and last element, concerns interculturality and implies respect among different cultures and nationalities.[114]

After the approval of plurinationalism, the new Constitution of Ecuador from 2008, in contrast with the last one from 1998 (which categorized Ecuador as a multicultural and multiethnic state) described the Ecuadorian state as intercultural and multinational.[115]

In the fourth chapter the recognition of collective rights for "communities, peoples, and nationalities" went deeper. According to Article 56: "indigenous communities, peoples and nationalities, Afro-Ecuadorians, montubios, and comunas (indigenous communities) form part of the unified, indivisible Ecuadorian state." The following Article, number 57 "recognizes and guarantees indigenous comunas, communities, peoples and nationalities in conformity with the constitution and agreements, conventions, and declarations and other international human rights instruments for the protection of collective rights"[116]

Another critical theme was the construction of a "Buen Vivir economy". Acosta remarks that, as stated on the principles of Buen Vivir, solidarity should be the basis of a social economy. The economy of Buen Vivir, in contrast to the classic predominant one, should not be characterized by free markets and financial speculation but by solidarity and cooperation, focusing on collective rather than individual needs. For this the market needs a political restructuration and better regulation as much as the state needs it through more suitable legal frameworks.[117] Acosta also outlines that some

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[113] CONAIE in Becker 2011, p.54
[114] Becker 2011, p.55-56
[115] Larrea in Semplades 2010, p. 21
[116] Becker 2011, p.57
[117] Acosta 2010, p.10-11

relevant areas shouldn't work under the "market logic" of supply and demand, where economic profit is an incentive. For example there is public health insurance, public transport and areas related to nutrition and housing.[118] About the regulative functions of the State, Arsel recalls: "While the very understanding of Buen Vivir would necessitate the creation and maintenance of meaningful participatory democratic institutions, the new constitution also sees a very central role for the state. For instance, Article 277 calls upon the state (…) to guarantee the rights of people, communities and nature and *to direct, plan and regulate the development process* (…) as part of its attempt to help achieve Buen Vivir."[119]

A remarkable point added in the new Ecuadorian constitution was its integrative character regarding rights. In contrast with the three generations hierarchical vision, which categorizes rights as fundamental (first generation), economic, social and cultural rights (second generation) and collective (third generation). No hierarchy should exist among Buen Vivir rights, all of them should be equally recognized. Article 11,6 stipulates "all the principles and rights are inalienable, indivisible, interdependent and of equal ranked."[120] The position of legal entities shouldn't be only for individuals but also for communities, indigenous nations, and nature.

Related to the economic realm, the indigenous agenda evoked also the issue of extractive economy and mining: "The extractive economy was damaging to the environment and society. Mining, in particular, harmed local communities in their struggles for land, life, and biodiversity and their survival. Productions and resource extraction that did not serve a social function needed to be stopped."[121] Nevertheless this aspect brought a conflictive debate and an interest confrontation principally among government supporters. "In a May 2008 letter, the CONAIE (2008:8) demanded that indigenous communities be consulted on any mining on their lands. The indigenous organizations, of course, wished to maintain control over their territory, while Correa wanted to maintain the right to decide when and where mining operations would take place. In the end, the constitution conceded that communities had the right to consultation but extractive endeavors would not be subject to their consent or veto.

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[118] Ibid.
[119] Arsel 2012, p. 155-156
[120] Larrea in Semplades 2010, p.26
[121] Kuecker 2007 in Becker 2011, p.52

This decision was a major blow to the aspirations of indigenous and environmental activists." [122]

In addition to this controversy, another clash between the indigenous representatives and the rest of deputes occurred concerning the inclusion of the most representative indigenous languages, Kichwa and Shuar, as official national languages besides Spanish. After voting this petition did not reach the official language status, though they were categorized as "official languages for intercultural relationships". As mentioned in a newspaper article regarding the controversy: "Spanish is the official language of Ecuador; Spanish, Kichwa, and Shuar are official languages for intercultural relationships. Other ancestral languages are for official use for indigenous peoples in the areas they inhabit and on the terms that the law stipulates. The State will respect and will stimulate their conservation and use." [123]

Once the drafting process came to an end, the following step was the adoption of the new constitution through a referendum. Because of some "contradictions" as the ones mentioned above that principally indigenous movements found themselves in a complex situation, on the one hand they saw the inclusion of the new contents as a step forward whereas in other aspects it seemed as a jump backwards. Becker explains, "Furthermore, if popular movements opposed the constitution because it did not have everything they requested, they would play directly into the hands of their traditional conservative enemies, while if they supported it they would strengthen the hand of a political force that did not embody their interests. (…) Facing this conundrum, the indigenous movements decided to take what they could get rather than losing everything with a more principled stance."[124]

Campaigns for and against the approval of the new constitution began, and interestingly several individuals and social movements that were at first critical of the government joined and supported the campaign for the ratification of the constitution in the referendum. "They declared that "the new constitution is the result of decades of resistance and struggle of social movements, the indigenous movement, and diverse sectors of the Ecuadorian people; it does not belong to any one person [and] noted that the new constitution embodied very important social, cultural, political, economic,

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[122] Becker 2011, p.58
[123] El Comercio, July 25, 2008 in Becker 2011, p.56
[124] Becker 2011, p.58-59

and environmental advances, including plurinationality, interculturality, collective rights, rights of nature, defense of sovereignty, food sovereignty, Latin American integration, expansion of education and health care, water as a human right, rights of migrants, respect for diversity, solidarity economy, and access to the media. They pointed out that the text made repeated reference to Sumak Kawsay, beginning in the preamble that called for a new form of citizenship that embraced diversity and harmony with nature in order to live well. It was a strike against neoliberalism and a step toward opening up democratic participation."[125]

The adoption of the new constitution was ratified on September 28, 2008 after getting a majority of votes of the Ecuadorian citizens in the mandatory referendum.[126]

At this point, if we go back to the theoretical framework, the socialization and institutionalization mechanism presented by Finnemore and Sikkink could be represented through the debates during the constitutions drafting process as well as through the approval of the Ecuadorian Constitution 2008, which is a visible institutionalization of the Buen Vivir. The actor role is represented by the National Constituent Assembly, which was composed of different representatives from social movements and parties. Later on, though without unanimity, they agreed on the content of rights and laws. The success of this agreement, the Constitution, was achieved precisely because of some of the motives mentioned in the model of Finnemore and Sikkink like domestic legitimacy (through referendum results) and the recognition of environmental care and of the minority groups claims.

3.3 Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2007-2010 and Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir 2009- 2013

The Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2007-2010 (National Plan for Development) was the party platform and government plan of Alianza Pais, Rafael Correa's party. It contained the principal goals and planning guidelines for the so called "Citizens' Revolution" and was expected to shape Correa's regime policies. Nevertheless, the approval of the new Constitution led to new general elections. After the reelection of Correa, a new National Plan with contents closer to the constitutional framework (articles regarding rights and principles of Buen Vivir), was launched for the new regime period 2009-

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[125] Ibid.
[126] Cortez 2011, p.1

2013. Actually, it is possible to say that the National Development Plan 2007-2010 is embodied in the constitution.

The third stage of norm assimilation, the internalization process, can be better observed through instruments like the National Plans. Buen Vivir implementation in the Ecuadorian law and bureaucratic system represents an important institutionalization level. It evidences certain statewide conformity that, at the same time, is supposed to guide actions and behavior according to the Buen Vivir guidelines converting them into a habit, at least at a governmental and bureaucratic level.

Article 280 in the Ecuadorian Constitution stipulates: "The National Development Plan is the instrument which governs public programs, policies and projects, the programming and implementation of the State budget, public investment and allocation, and coordinates exclusive competences between the Central Government and the Autonomous Decentralized Governments. Its observance is mandatory for the public sector and exemplary for other sectors."[127]

Principally, the state is in charge of the Buen Vivir consolidation. The Good Living achievement has to be understood as a process based on the execution of several long and short term projects, modifications on several political, economic and social dimensions among others (contained in the 12 strategies).

Until 2013 some results related to the goals presented in the National Plan 2009-2013 were visible. In addition to these goals from the last National Plan, some new goals were enlisted in the new Buen Vivir Plan Nacional 2013-2017. For the third time Rafael Correa was reelected in the Ecuadorian general elections of 2013, leading to the prolongation of the Buen Vivir program for the coming four years mandate.

3.4 2013-2017 Buen Vivir Plan Nacional

"The 2013-2017 National Plan for Good Living is our third nationwide plan. It is enriched by the experience of the two previous plans, and we are certain that we can achieve it full. (…) The Plan is an array of goals that shows our will to continue Ecuador's historic transformation. Its aims are: To consolidate democratic governance and construct the people's power. To foster social and territorial equality, cohesion,

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[127] Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir 2009-2013 english version, p.10

inclusion and equity in diversity. To improve the quality of life of the population. To strengthen citizen capacities and potential. To build spaces for social interaction and strengthen national identity, diverse identities, plurinationality and interculturality. To consolidate transformation of the judicial system and reinforce comprehensive security, with strict respect for human rights. To guarantee the rights of Nature and promote environmental sustainability globally. To consolidate the social and solidary economic system, sustainably. To guarantee dignified work in all its forms. To promote transformation of the productive structure. To ensure the sovereignty and efficiency of the strategic sectors for industrial and technological transformation. To guarantee sovereignty and peace, enhancing strategic insertion worldwide and Latin American integration."[128]

To give some examples of the aspects reached until 2013, I will mention two attainments:

Poverty reduction: "During the first term of the Citizens' Revolution, income was redistributed and poverty was reduced (one million fifty thousand Ecuadorians ceased to be poor in terms of income between December 2006 and December 2012). According to the report "Social Panorama of Latin America 2012", published by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2012a), Ecuador is the country that made the largest reduction in inequalities in Latin America between 2007 and 2011 (by eight percentage points). Reducing income differentials is a significant achievement, in a region that has the planet's greatest social inequalities (UNDP, 2013)."[129]

Higher public investment principally in schools, hospitals and highways due to external debt renegotiation: "We have achieved one of the world's most successful debt renegotiations, saving USD 8 billion. Ecuador is the only country that dared to audit its external debt sponsored by the State. Renegotiating petroleum contracts meant USD 2.5 billion in additional revenues for public investment."[130]

According to Kratochwil, it is possible to tell that Ecuador has experienced a change of regime since 2007 because both norms and principles changed.

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[128] Falconi in Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir 2013-2017 english version, p.19
[129] Falconi in Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir 2013-2017 english version, p.20
[130] Ibid.

4. **Interim Conclusion**

Before moving on to the next chapter, it is appropriate to recap a bit on the content of the theoretical framework and the assimilation of Buen Vivir within the Republic of Ecuador. Using the model of norm assimilation stages from Finnemore and Sikkink as reference for the analysis, the observation of the different norm stages in the Ecuadorian case resembled an "almost ideal" internalization of the concept. The reason why it can't be considered as ideal relies in several aspects that reflect that the "Good Living" paradigm has not been assimilated in all levels of the Ecuadorian society. The first example is that during the contestation process in the constituent assembly it wasn't possible to find an agreement to integrate important aspects of the indigenous agenda which were connected to the original vision of Sumak Kawsay. The new constitution evoked a new version of the ancestral concept and adapted several values to a modern society and combined them with "socialist" elements. In addition to this, we should take into account that the referendum for the approval of the new Constitution succeeded with 63.93%[131] of yes votes, which means that significant sectors of the society did not support the new constitution. If positive results continue to be obtained from the Buen Vivir policies, maybe it would be a matter of time and communication improvement among the different sectors, until the world vision conceived by the Buen Vivir becomes majoritarian. For now, I consider that as long as the government and the bureaucratic sector remain in their role of Buen Vivir representatives and keep modeling their policies according to the National Plan/Constitution, the presence and importance of Buen Vivir will remain strong. Although, as it was visible on the conflict over mining, not all policies based on the constitutional Buen Vivir are perceived as positive by some minority groups.

After this reflection, it is possible to establish that the Buen Vivir norms and set of rights have an almost ideal internalization in Ecuador. In the next chapter the influence of Buen Vivir in the shaping of Ecuadorian foreign policy as well as the role of Ecuador as entrepreneur of Buen Vivir will be analyzed. I will observe this last point through the performance of Ecuador in UNASUR.

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[131] El Universo. 21 October, 2008

5. Buen Vivir shaping the Ecuadorian foreign policies

5.1 Objective 12 of the Buen Vivir Plan Nacional 2013-2017

The objective 12: *"To guarantee sovereignty and peace, enhancing strategic insertion worldwide and Latin American integration",* is linked with the role of Ecuador in the international arena. It demonstrates that key aspects of Buen Vivir have a significant influence in the Ecuadorian foreign policies and also that Ecuador places itself in the role of entrepreneur.

Ecuador is pursuing for stronger mechanisms to reach a Latin American regional integration, principally among the South American countries. Regional organizations like the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) or mainly the Union of the South American Nations (UNASUR), represent important scenarios for integration, that aren't based only on commercial exchange but also political and social cooperation. According to this objective, integration is important to build solidarity and peaceful relations, to enhance state's capacities and also to sustain the sovereignty of Latin American States.[132] Besides this, it is important for Ecuador to diversify its destinations markets to reduce its economic dependence of northern nations. "This requires promoting fair international institutions, responding to society's interests rather than conditioned by private corporate ones or by the hegemonic interests of the principal powers. These new institutions are necessary at every dimension of the international governance, especially in regard to the rule of democratic order in the region and of human, social and collective rights for all peoples as well as the rights of Nature. Therefore, relations of cooperation are complementary to the sovereign action of the State. Ecuador's bilateral relations seek to articulate border societies into shared dynamics for the Good Living, guaranteeing full respect for their rights, laws and institutions, in the territories of the country and neighboring States through bi-national co-responsibility. It supposes constructing borders as places for complementarities with relations of peace and non-conflict."[133]

This aspects are present in Articles 7, 57 and 423 of the constitution of 2008 but the last one is the one that supports this aims stronger than the others.

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[132] Buen Vivir Plan Nacional 2013-2017 english version, p.59
[133] Ibid.

The features of these motives, like empathy and ideational commitment, fit with the ones mentioned by Finnemore and Sikkink. They should be helpful in the persuasion process.

5.2 UNASUR: origin and characterization

Before observing the role of Ecuador in UNASUR, it is important to know and understand the bases and origins of the institution, that considering Finnemore and Sikkink's model, would represent the necessary organizational platform for the first stage of the norm "life cycle".

To mention some aspects of the region's historical background, from 1960 to 1980 the Latin American region recorded an increase of 82 percent of its income per capita and significant processes of industrialization especially in the Southern Cone were achieved. It was a time of strong presence and intervention of the state in the economy. In contrast, from 1980 to 2000 the time when neoliberalism was widespread in Latin America, the region's economy grew only 8 percent (according to IMF). According to indicators this dramatic decline in GDP growth was accompanied, in most of the Southern countries, with a significant reduction of social progress especially in areas such as health and education.[134]

The first mention of the South American Community took place in December 2004 at the Declaration of Cuzco, where the South American Community, the direct predecessor of the UNASUR, was founded. Two of the largest alliances of the continent, Mercosur and the Andean Community, plus other countries outside these blocs, such as Guyana and Suriname were the supporters of the institution.[135]

During a meeting at the Margarita Island, on April 17 2007, the Presidents of South American countries decided to nominate the institution as the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and invoked as reasons for its creation their collective history, values and permanent solidarity among their nations. This aspects let them share a common "South American identity". In addition to this, they stated convergence around their political, economic, social, cultural and security interests.[136]

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[134] Main in Semplades 2010, p.195
[135] Britto Garcia in Semplades 2010, p.169
[136] Ibid. p.170

Some of the UNASUR guiding principles are: respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of States, self-determination, solidarity, cooperation, peace, democracy, freedom, participation, pluralism, diversity, universal indivisible and interdependent human rights; reduction of socio-economic asymmetries and harmony with nature to reach a sustainable development.

On 23 May 2008 at the Extraordinary Meeting of Heads of State and Government in Brasilia, Brazil, the Constitutive Treaty of UNASUR was signed and provided the organization an international legal character. "UNASUR was established to strengthen Latin American integration and reduce the overwhelming influence of the United States on politics and economics in the region."[137]

"It [the founding treaty] does not mention the usual typologies of market integration such as free trade zones and customs unions, nor does it entail the common policies associated with economic integration. In reality, it is better described as an organization of political cooperation according to the before mentioned description of „post-liberal regionalism".[138]

Some member states from the UNASUR identify their political system as "XXI Century Socialism" while others consider economic liberalization as part of their strategies.

Common history, culture and similar domestic problems should have facilitated a successful social interaction, nevertheless the ideological differences among the blocs within UNASUR, hampered consensus and decision-making regarding the organization goals and projects.

In the end, the organization members could institutionalize several values as the official goals of the organization. However, precisely because values do not prescribe concrete actions, these goals don't create any legal binding among the member states and have a "soft-law" character.

UNASUR goals could represent, until a certain point, the customs or tacit rules as mentioned by Kratochwil. "(…) For custom to exist as a legally binding practice it must possess an ascertainable rule underlying the behavioral regularity. This rule must not

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[137] „UNASUR Pledges to Promote Sustainable Development " in TelesurTV English, 30 June 2015
[138] Sanahuja 2012, p. 12

only be articulated in order to move from the rule *of* behavior to a "standard" or guide *for* behavior."[139]

The specific goals of UNASUR are divided in several categories related to the fields of politics, society, economy, culture, and infrastructure

For example, some of the goals related to the "Socialism of Buen Vivir" are: inclusive and equitable social and human development in order to eradicate poverty and overcome inequalities; to promote cultural diversity, knowledge and wisdom of the peoples of the region to strengthen their identities; to protect of biodiversity, water resources and ecosystems, as well as to cooperate in disaster prevention and fight against the causes and effects of climate change.[140]

Today UNASUR is comprised of 12 countries with a combined population of 400 million people, an economy of over US$4 trillion[141] and its headquarters are located in Quito, Ecuador.

At this point, an important aspect that needs to be explained before proceeding with the analysis is the difference between the so called "XXI Century Socialism" and "Socialism of Buen Vivir".

According to Souza Santos, Socialism of Buen Vivir is a combination of two transitions, from capitalism to socialism, and from colonization to decolonization, the last point denotes to put an end to racism and exclusion. Socialism of Buen Vivir presents not only "racial justice" but historical justice, by rescuing ancestral cultures and traditions. The rights of nature (Derechos de la Pachamama), set in the Ecuadorian constitution, shouldn't be understood as an entirely indigenous practice because it is actually a combination of ancestral and modern progressive knowledge. The concept of rights doesn't exist in the indigenous worldview, they know only the concept of duty, while rights came from the occidental or Eurocentric system. [142]

Gudynas complements this differentiation: "Other related overlaps are found between Buen Vivir and some ideas of the socialist tradition. As the Buen Vivir moves in a post-

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[139] Kratochwil 1989, p. 89
[140] Objetivos Específicos Unasur, online: http://www.unasursg.org/es/objetivos-especificos
[141] „UNASUR Pledges to Promote Sustainable Development " in TelesurTV English, 30 June 2015
[142] Souza Santos 2012, online: http://servicioskoinonia.org/agenda/archivo/obra.php?ncodigo=759

capitalist direction, it is common for many people to assume that it is a new type of socialism or that there is a socialist trend towards the Buen Vivir. Nevertheless, present day formulations of the 'XXI century socialism 'are still within the modern tradition, and do not incorporate a strong environmental component, and are not intercultural.[143]

5.3 Role of Ecuador in the UNASUR: Is Ecuador a regional entrepreneur of Buen Vivir?

Not only Ecuador but also Bolivia play the role of Buen Vivir entrepreneurs at the UNASUR. The Bolivian (aymara) version of the Sumak Kawsay, is named Suma Qamaña, but in the Bolivian constitution *Suma Qamaña/Vivir Bien* is considered as a set of principles in contrast to the Ecuadorian constitution, that gives it a higher category positioning Buen Vivir as a set of rights. Another difference among the two concepts is that Bolivian *Vivir Bie*n resembles the third generation of Human Rights and focuses in aspects like dignity, social justice, and social and gender equity, whereas the Ecuadorian Buen Vivir consists on nature rights and rights related to health, education, freedom, participation etc.

How does Ecuador try to convince other countries of the region? Through discourses, proposals and initiatives, Ecuador has tried to reach and persuade other UNASUR state members.

Sustainable Development International Conference

This year on June 29 and 30, the Sustainable Development International Conference, was held at the headquarters of UNASUR in Quito. A new initiative was installed during this conference: the Andean Sustainable Development Network, an initiative meant to promote sustainable economic development throughout the region.

At this event the discourse held by the Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa reiterated Ecuador's permanent commitment and proposals for an effective transformation of economic policies around climate change.

The UNASUR general secretary Ernesto Samper praised the role of Ecuador for its role as regional promotor for sustainable development. Samper mentioned: "In recent years Ecuador has been building the base for an alternative development model for

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[143] Gudynas 2011, p.446

the region, in this model four essential elements are present: equity in social issues, governability in political issues, competitiveness in economic issues and identity in cultural issues."[144]

Through his discourse, Correa remarked several issues related to Sumak Kawsay. About poverty he said: "Poverty does not exist due to scarcity of resources but because there is inequality and exclusion." He outlined that "There is no direct relationship between happiness and economic growth."

About extraction: "The extraction of oil is not the only threat for natural reserves, the agrarian and agricultural expansion can be even more dangerous (…) there is a relationship between environmental conservation and poverty reduction. It is necessary to offer alternative employment to poor people (…) To maintain sustainability there must be a direct benefit for the poorest (...) There are people who say no to mining because it destroys water sources. They prefer to say yes to small-scale mining rather than the large-scale mining and this is wrong. In fact, the largest mining has all the necessary technology to reduce the environmental impact whereas the small-scale creates more pollution. (…) For example the mining industry reuses water (…) through small environmental impacts we could solve major environmental impacts because the money that comes from mining or oil extraction could be spent, for example, in important labors such as projects for Black- or wastewater management, an important cause for pollution of many rivers."[145]

Regarding to the Kyoto Treaty and environmental care, Correa remarked: "International organizations impose countries to take actions such as imprisonment for people who copy patents. That is considered a crime, however, when it comes to environmental damage, there are not even fines for the responsible. To damage the environment should also be a crime. (…) The Kyoto Treaty gives incentives for environmental care that are inadequate, inefficient and unfair. For example, it rewards countries that have reforested, but it doesn't recognize or rewards countries that haven't deforested and whose forests are even helpful for the carbon dioxide absorption (…) This creates perverse motivations: many forests are cut down, the

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[144] Samper at the Sustainable Development International Conference minute 12:47
[145] Correa at Sustainable Development International Conference minute 2:03:00

wood is sold and then these same countries reforest and get awarded (…) The concept of what should be encouraged and rewarded is not clear." [146]

Correa also mentioned that "According to the article "Global Environmental Change", the ecological debt is greater than the economic debt, but unlike the latter, the creditor of the first debt can't sue the borrower for it. (…) We must create the International Court of Environmental Justice, so that international institutions respond to these problems, there should be binding treaties between the countries willing to make serious progress in the fight against climate change, mainly through environmental justice." [147]

The content of this speech reflects some of the motives named by Finnemore and Sikkink such as empathy, altruism and ideational commitment.

Multiple observations can be done about the assimilation process of Buen Vivir within UNASUR.

To begin with, according to Finnemore and Sikkink, if we consider some useful aspects that emerging norms need to be more persuasive, like "Adjacency to claims" and "World Time", some paths of Buen Vivir show linkages with existing norms that were already becoming trends in western culture like: *increased popularity to austere living*: zero waste lifestyle and return to natural organic food; *environmental accounting and tax reforms*: tax benefits for energy efficiency; *sustainable "de-growth" strategies*: consumption deceleration, reduction of energy use and search for alternative energy resources [148]

Regarding "world time", it was possible to see that the Buen Vivir reappeared at a difficult social and environmental period, it was (is) a time were the world started to experience more intensively, the consequences of climate change and progressive global warming, it was also a period of poverty, high inequality and general inconformity.

This two aspects facilitated the inclusion and institutionalization of multiple values tied to Buen Vivir, as goals of the organization. Nevertheless, they haven't been adopted within their domestic laws by a majority of the member states. Since there is no critical mass adopting the norm, a real tipping point (considering a domestic scale) hasn't

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[146] Ibid. 2:10:57
[147] Ibid 2:27:13
[148] Mercado 2015 ONLINE http://www.filmsforaction.org/articles/buen-vivir-a-new-era-of-great-social-change/

been reached. Moreover, because of the norm institutionalization through an international organization, it is feasible to think that the concept is situated at the second stage of the theoretical model.

Some reasons that could explain why it hasn't been adopted by more states could rely on aspects like legitimacy, reputation and esteem.

Even when the quality and clarity of the Ecuadorian Buen Vivir can be proved, Ecuador doesn't have the same reputation as, for example, Brazil which is considered the regional hegemon. Maybe if it was Brazil instead of Ecuador, the one who promoted the norms of Buen Vivir, they would have had more prominence and more countries would assimilate them at a domestic level.

6. Conclusion:

In this thesis I worked with the question of how norms act as a constitutive element for the process of shaping of foreign policies. Through the analysis it was possible to see that institutionalized norms provide through laws and political documents some guidelines as to the behavior of a country in international scenarios. An essential aspect is the commitment that political leaders have in applying and representing these norms. This last point could be observed throughout the examination of the hypothesis: *"If norms within a country's internal policies are cohesive and strong then the same norms will shape the foreign policy of this country."*

In the case of Ecuador, the norms of Buen Vivir are present in various important instruments for political, economic and jurisdictional practices. For the "if" part of the hypothesis, as it could be seen in chapter three, the norms of Buen Vivir are mainly internalized at a bureaucratic level. They can be considered as strong but their strength relies in the hands of the ones who have the power to act in favor of them. An aspect that wasn't considered in this bachelor thesis, but needs to be taken into account to complete our image of the situation is the influence of already existing norms. An analysis of the interaction and possible clashes between old and new norms would be very useful to observe the cohesive character of the Buen Vivir norms.

Regarding the "then" part of the hypothesis, if we begin considering the strong ideational commitment visible in some articles of the constitution and the different and multiple projects presented in some objectives from the Buen Vivir National Plan then

it is feasible to say that the Buen Vivir has a big influence in the shaping of the Ecuadorian foreign policies. Moreover, the example of the role of Ecuador is given in UNASUR, where its attempts to be a Buen Vivir entrepreneur, resembled clear through Correa's speech. All in all, I consider that the presence of Buen Vivir in the Ecuadorian foreign policies go beyond the diplomatic representation of Ecuador in international organizations. According to the Ecuadorian Foreign Ministry, there are different examples where Ecuador attempts to bring the Buen Vivir to its migrants among different countries. In any case, what could be discussed and better investigated is if this actions can be considered as special representations of the Buen Vivir as such, or rather they are practiced by other governments that don't necessarily consider the norms of Buen Vivir, but still would implement them for the well-being of its citizens.

Another prospects for future research could be an investigation of the maintenance or desertion of the Buen Vivir in the future. Especially in the case that a change of government occurs, it would be interesting to see if these norms will be considered as a habit among the Ecuadorian society.

The notion of Sumak Kawsay has existed among many native societies around the world, and I consider that it is increasingly becoming a part of the western civilization as well. Nonetheless, what could be seen as conflictive or positive, depending on the point of view, is the fact that the concept is still undergoing construction and improvement.

All in all, it is a matter of time until we see if through this paradigm the expected changes and improvements can reach a bigger scale. In the end, to repair our essential relation with Mother Nature in order to ensure our planet future existence, and to arouse our social awareness, a true and profound change must start with the human conscience. Unfortunately this is the hardest part.

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Annex

Sustainable development conference in Quito.
Link to the official page: http://cids.yachay.gob.ec/?q=en/content/objectives
Inauguration to the conference: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=onTo86qjevY

8. Eigenständigkeitserklärung

Ich, Milena Vučinić Martínez, versichere, dass ich die vorgelegte Seminararbeit eigenständig und ohne fremde Hilfe verfasst, keine anderen als die angegebenen Quellen verwendet und die den benutzten Quellen entnommenen Passagen als solche kenntlich gemacht habe. Diese Seminararbeit ist in dieser oder einer ähnlichen Form in keinem anderen Kurs vorgelegt worden.

Milena Vučinić Martínez   München, den 13 Januar 2015