

Diections for discussion

This week, we will be discussing alternative ways to build an empathetic pluriverse. We will be looking at initiatives around the globe to address the crisis of the developmentist approach.

Choose **ONE** of the following readings from the "[Pluriverse a post-development dictionary](#)" book before the seminar:

- Pages 108-111: Buddhism and wisdom-based compassion
- Pages 111-114: Buen Vivir
- Pages 182-185: Environmental Justice
- Pages 194-197: Gross National Happiness in Bhutan
- Pages 228-231: Latin-American and Caribbean Feminisms
- Pages 243-247: Nature rights
- Pages 335-339: Zapatista Autonomy

You can also read, if you have time, the "*Foreword: The Development Dictionary Revisited*" section for more information. We will have a presentation on this section, so don't worry if you have no time to read it.

Bring to Class:

- Your mobile device and/or notebook to record and edit a short-video
- In your mobile device or notebook, have TikTok, Instagram, Canva editor, or any other video editor software downloaded. I advise you to use the "[edits](#)" app from Instagram. It is an easy-to-use platform

Deliverable:

- During class, we will have around 40min to record and edit a short-format video (ranging up to 1min) using your face and voice, or a slide-deck with your voiceover edit, or any format you find feasible (please see examples below) in social media format (Instagram reels or Tik Tok, vertical) to **describe the initiative you've read to a broader audience.**

Video instructions:

- Please consider your audience to be adults aged between 18–34 (60% of Instagram users in 2025 in the U.S. are set in this demography).
- You may want to follow this structure to create your video:
 - **1. Hook (0–3 seconds):** Use a bold, relatable question or relevant statement
 - **2. Context in 1 Sentence (10 seconds):** Give a simple, concrete example
 - **3. The Bridge (10 seconds):** Explain your context in a mini-story format.
 - **4. The Tension (10 seconds):** Briefly show the challenge or gap
 - **5. The Insight (10-20 seconds):** Offer a takeaway that makes the viewer feel smarter and more aware.
 - **6. CTA (10-20 seconds):** End with a simple, non-salesy call to action.
 - Provide a written disclaimer, if you feel like doing so, in the video or in the legend
- Videos examples:

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- Video showing your face and arguments (in PT-BR, use AI translation to watch):
https://www.instagram.com/reel/DTznWu_DzWH/?igsh=MTRqdmF1b3BkN3ZoZg==
- Slide deck post:
<https://www.instagram.com/p/DURGMZvCMjd/?igsh=MWRqM2Z3ZTQybXRieg==>
- Video that may show your image, but no discourse, the legend shows the script:
<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DQsVJsxAbxz/?igsh=MTh1cmFudnM2ZGNnZg==>
- Video using videos available online, with captions showing the argument:
https://www.instagram.com/reel/DNknJ_dPcwd/?igsh=djh4b3o1eHFiMThl
- BE CREATIVE! You do not have to adhere to these formats 😊
- Here is a link to a free video/image repository if you need images or videos for your deliverable: <https://stock.adobe.com/>

Scripts

Arina

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“Who is your community?”

Where are you from? Wait.. What if I ask you instead, *who is your community?*

Or maybe...Tell me your story, and I will tell you who your community is.

In Silko’s novel *Gardens in the Dunes*, Grandma Fleet, a Sand Lizards’ elder, offered her granddaughters a story as a teaching that explains why their actions to break “into the pack rat’s nest to raid the stores of seeds and mesquite beans” will rob people’s emergency “seed bank” that rats gather and store. Greg Cajete described this connection between the land and its inhabitants, including seeds, animals, humans, and plants, as “We are all kernels in the same basket!” To describe your community, you should start with the place and its significance to you. Cheryl Charles and Gregory Cajete translated the connection between Indigenous people and the land using the term “ensoulment” meaning the space that holds their collective memories. My story is about a journey through different knowledges and worldviews, from various lands and diverse collective memories to the “middle place” – the justification of the operating principles, values, and ethical ways we all live with the planet Earth.

My community is you who are looking for “the middle place”, and you, who are accepting “responsibility for the communities or for the surrounding environments”, and you who are bringing divided communities together through the restoration of their relationships with the non-human inhabitants of the places.

How do you imagine the “middle place”? and who is **your** community?

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Nancy

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Is a river a person?

Does that sound crazy to you?

Well, it is consistent with a world view that holds that the Earth, Mother Earth, is a community of beings with diverse interrelationships.

And all have rights.

Some international laws have recognized personhood of rivers (New Zealand/Aotearoa) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Mother Earth codifies the idea that all of nature has rights.

This is antithetical to the idea of development in a western sense, which holds that humans are apart from nature and nature is a collection of resources for human to exploit and extract.

If we want to transform our society to care for the Earth- and its rivers- we must adopt this view that personhood and associated rights extend to our non-human relations.

If you’d like to explore this idea more, come to the panel on Rights of the River (info).

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Lisley:

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What if 'living well' isn't about having more... but needing less?

In the Andes—especially in Ecuador and Bolivia—Indigenous communities like the Quechua and Aymara practice *Buen Vivir*, a way of life built on balance with nature and collective well-being.

Imagine a place where success isn't measured by your bank account, but by how healthy your community is—where people, land, and non-human beings are all seen as **interconnected**.

But today, most of us live inside a **system** that says growth is everything—more money, more stuff, more speed—while burnout, inequality, and **environmental collapse** keep rising.

Buen Vivir flips that **script**.

It says well-being comes from relationships—community ties, reciprocity, and respecting the **living world**.

It's not anti-technology—it's anti-**extraction**.

Not 'go back in time'—but 'go forward differently.'

It reminds us that multiple ways of living can **co-exist**... a pluriverse, not a one-path world.

If this idea made something click... try it for a day:

Slow down. Share something. Notice your environment.

Ask yourself: What does living well look like—beyond consumption?

If you want more ideas like this, hit save, share, or drop a in the comments.

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Edauri

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The reality that you experience is not the only reality that exists.

- The pluriverse is the concept of alternative realities that co-exist and challenge the globalized idea of modernization and development.
- This is not actually just an idea; these are lived experiences.
- Movements like Buen Vivir, Zapatistas, and Buddhism are some examples of the pluriverse.
- However, these are not widely known or accepted because our economic system and ways of living lead us to believe there is only one way to live and be happy.
- The pluriverse invites us to use our imagination or get out of our bubble to explore different possibilities and worlds that do not involve causing harm to others, including humans and non-humans.
- So now that you know it is possible to create new ways of living, what are you going to do about it?

