

Territorial imbalances in the department of Cauca

Desequilibrios territoriales en el Cauca

Desequilíbrios territoriais em Cauca

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21803/penamer.17.34.724>

Carlos Enrique Osorio Garcés

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5416-2959>

Doctor en Ciencias Ambientales. Profesor del Departamento de Geografía de la Universidad del Cauca. Popayan (Colombia). cosoriogarcés@gmail.com

Tulio Andrés Clavijo Gallego

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3737-0542>

Doctor en Antropología. Profesor e investigador de la Universidad del Cauca. Popayán (Colombia). t.clavijo@unicauca.edu.co

Verenice Sánchez Castillo

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3669-3123>

Doctora en Antropología. Profesora e Investigadora de la Universidad de la Amazonia. Florencia (Colombia). E-mail: ve.sanchez@udla.edu.co

Abstract

Introduction: The complex historical evolution of the department of Cauca, the transitions of power, the geographical and social disparities, as well as the current state of the territory, come together and configure a complex scenario for understanding its future. In a context severely affected by social, economic, ethnic and land tenure conflicts, which present a greater intensity than in the majority of the territorial spaces that make up the country, it is necessary to examine the indicators with which the government defines the levels of regional development. **Objective:** The study was aimed at taking a look at the realities that configure material spaces, based on spatialization, the theory of uneven geographical development and analysis of the main historical categories. **Reflection:** The text reflects on the processes of resistance to traditional economic modeling under the support of social organizations of an ethnic-territorial nature, proposes and explores new frameworks of analysis that allow a comprehensive approach to what Cauca is and calls for, as well as points out critical points to transform. **Conclusions:** The research conducted shows the need for a call for new interdisciplinary studies, which give voice to social, economic and regional actors who have been made invisible by the centers of power and decision-making that is foreign to them.

Keywords: Cultural anthropology; Economic and social development; Ethnic groups; Human geography; Latin America.

Resumen

Introducción: La compleja evolución histórica del Cauca, las transiciones de poder, las disparidades geográficas y sociales, así como el estado actual del territorio, confluyen y configuran un complejo escenario para la comprensión de su futuro. En un contexto gravemente afectado por los conflictos sociales, económicos, étnicos y de tenencia de tierra, que presentan una intensidad mayor que en la mayoría de los espacios territoriales que conforman el país, es preciso examinar los indicadores con los cuales el Gobierno define los niveles de desarrollo regional. **Objetivo:** El estudio estuvo encaminado a efectuar una mirada a las realidades que configuran los espacios materiales, basados en la espacialización, la teoría del desarrollo geográfico desigual y el análisis de las principales categorías históricas. **Reflexión:** Se reflexiona sobre los procesos de resistencia al modelamiento económico tradicional bajo el soporte de organizaciones sociales de carácter étnico-territorial, se plantean y exploran nuevos marcos de análisis que permitan un acercamiento comprensivo a lo que el Cauca es y convoca, así como señala puntos críticos a transformar. **Conclusiones:** La pesquisa conducida hace patente la necesidad de una convocatoria a nuevos estudios interdisciplinarios, que den voz a actores sociales, económicos y regionales que han sido invisibilizados por los centros de poder y una toma de decisiones que les es ajena.

Palabras clave: América latina; Antropología cultural; Desarrollo económico y social; Geografía humana; Grupo étnico¹.

¹ Extraídas del Tesauro de la Unesco.

¿Cómo citar este artículo?

Osorio; C., Clavijo; T. y Sánchez; V. (2024). Los procesos de configuración del Estado moderno territorial: elementos para repensar la concepción de comunidades negras en Colombia. *Pensamiento Americano*, e#:724 17(34), 1-18. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21803/penamer.17.33.724>



Resumo

Introdução: A complexa evolução histórica do Cauca, as transições de poder, as disparidades geográficas e sociais, bem como a situação atual do território, convergem e configuram um cenário complexo para a compreensão de seu futuro. Em um contexto seriamente afetado por conflitos sociais, econômicos, étnicos e pela posse da terra, mais intensos do que na maioria dos espaços territoriais do país, é necessário examinar os indicadores com os quais o governo define os níveis de desenvolvimento regional.

Objetivo: O estudo teve como objetivo dar uma olhada nas realidades que moldam os espaços materiais, com base na espacialização, na teoria do desenvolvimento geográfico desigual e na análise das principais categorias históricas. **Reflexão:** Reflete sobre os processos de resistência à modelagem econômica tradicional sob o apoio de organizações sociais de caráter étnico-territorial, levantando e explorando novos marcos de análise que permitem uma abordagem abrangente do que o Cauca é e convoca, além de apontar pontos críticos a serem transformados. **Conclusões:** A pesquisa realizada deixa clara a necessidade de uma convocação para novos estudos interdisciplinares que deem voz aos atores sociais, econômicos e regionais que foram invisibilizados pelos centros de poder e de tomada de decisões que lhes são estranhos.

Palavras-chave: América Latina; Antropologia cultural; Desenvolvimento econômico e social; Geografia humana; Etnia.



Introduction

In recent times, the discussion on the goodness, difficulties and benefits of the hegemonic development model has occupied a wide spectrum of studies from the perspective of economic, social and political sciences (Higuera Carrillo, 2022; Ormaechea, 2021; Rodríguez, 2021). The new trends and theoretical perspectives created by academics and thinkers from the Third World have generated not only a rupture with classical development theories, but also a direct critique of the national and international institutions in charge of their agency (Aguiar de Medeiros and Trebat, 2021; Göttems and Mollo, 2020; Saad-Filho, 2020).

Parallel to the above, a significant number of social movements have appeared in these countries, openly demanding from national states principles of political and territorial autonomy and ethnic and cultural differentiation that allow for the continuity and strengthening of their living structures (Pinheiro Barbosa, 2022; Riggiorozzi, 2020; Rosset et al., 2021; Veltmeyer, 2020). In many respects, these are diametrically different from those created by the economic and development models derived from the historical construction known as modernity.

The configuration of Cauca is complex (Galindo-Urbe et al., 2022; Rodríguez-Rivero et al., 2020), so it would be a mistake to attempt a unidimensional interpretation. However, it highlights a wide range of factors that highlight the need to reintroduce and emphasize ideas about the region and the territory, even if we start from singular analyses. This reveals the importance of a geographic analysis of the distribution of the benefits of development in the interior of the Cauca and the valuation of local space. In particular, these reflective processes are intended to act as a response to the globalization processes that generate tension between the global and the local (Araque Geney, 2023; Dest, 2021; Hoyos Chavarro et al., 2022; Quintero-Ángel et al., 2021).

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to present an academic reflection on the results of the analysis of development indicators in Cauca. For this purpose, the municipalities studied were taken as the unit of analysis through the analysis of information from official databases. The results were interpreted with analytical categories of critical geography, of the colonial history of the anti-Government of Cauca and of the current state of departmental variables.

The structure of the article was divided into two sections, in order to understand the processes that gave rise to the relationships between the different social actors that inhabit the region and their influence on the territorial structuring and its characteristics. It begins with the introduction of conceptual and territorial elements of Cauca, which allows locating the place of theoretical and spatial enunciation of the study area. The second section refers to the long-term historical processes that have created the territorial, social, economic and ethnic physiognomy of the study area, with the purpose of establishing tools to understand the results of the spatialization of indicators.

Theoretical framework

Some conceptual and contextual elements

The theory of development is part of the concept that a society has about its forms of organization.



and internal social control, its model of state and government (Bresser-Pereira and Oreiro, 2023; Fritz et al., 2022). Therefore, this system of premises establishes the ideal of the forms of satisfaction of their social and individual needs, the economic organization of society and the exploitation of its productive base. Likewise, it is supported by the model of man and woman it considers ideal. This, although sometimes less visible and taken into account, makes it possible to understand the process of historical conformation and projection that gives identity and *raison d'être* to a given social group (Bresser-Pereira, 2020; Crocetti et al., 2023; Rogers et al., 2020).

The politics of development, as considered by the capitalist model, appeared with force after the Second World War (Thornton, 2023). Among its various consequences, it highlights the division of the world into two large blocs with diametrically antagonistic ideological, political and economic conceptions: the Eastern bloc led by Russia and the Western bloc consolidating the United States as a power. The latter promoted the reconstruction of Europe through the well-remembered Marshall Plan, which ultimately supported principles of capitalist intervention, the implementation of the market economy and democracy as its political expression.

The promotion of business creation, the expansion of higher education to disciplines created to develop the capitalist system, such as industrial engineering, economics, business administration, business, finance and other related areas, multiplied in response to the needs of training for development (Bresser-Pereira, 2023; Temin, 2023). Later, decentralization processes and the obligation of projects aimed at territorial development became a fundamental part of the tools for transforming local and regional realities, as well as for adjustment and modernization, for the realization of the development model (Andreoni, 2022).

The results of the application of this particular development model were not homogeneous in Latin America, a somewhat predictable fact (Tijerina, 2020). The pre-existing conditions in each country and region determined its degree of efficiency and capacity to transform the real living conditions of its inhabitants. However, the power of narratives and practices of developmentalist theory or developmentalism to disorganize and impose ways of doing things at the expense of historical and concrete reality was appreciated (Koponen, 2020).

The model that promised a messianic scenario began to generate enormous asymmetries in access to resources, goods and services in many regions, including the territory of present-day Cauca. As a result, the profound deterioration in the living conditions of its inhabitants became evident, not only due to the precariousness of the previous scenario, but also as a result of the implementation of this model of society.

The attempt at transformation and the implementation of universal patterns of development came into conflict with the cultural diversity of Cauca, which is especially expressed in the presence of indigenous and Afro-descendant communities. In this sense, the authors' research experience, daily praxis and the background studies consulted suggest that the Cauca population that recognizes itself as ethnically and culturally relevant, different from the population that shares the institutional development model, make up an important social base. This means that the divergence between the imposed/accepted model and the desired model must be understood from the point of view of both volume and extension of the territories occupied by these population strata.

Most of the communities that make up this sector of the population are constituted as grassroots organizations that put pressure on the National Government to comply with the regulations that grant them cultural and territorial rights and autonomy to guide development in their areas.



of life. From this perspective, it is possible to establish that a high percentage of the departmental population neither assumes nor recognizes itself in the prevailing development model nor in the indicators that configure it. Hence the importance of achieving a better representation of the perceptions and representations of these invisible communities about their processes, needs and threats that affect them (LaRota-Aguilera and Marull, 2023; Lobo and Vélez, 2022; Mendoza Ledezma, 2023; Roncancio et al., 2020).

There are other challenges that culturally differentiated communities have to face, such as the conditions of growing internationalization and the interdependence of global economies, the difficulties inherent to interculturality between regions and legal rights, together with the processes of conflict and post-conflict with all their variables (Acero and Machuca, 2021; Koopman, 2020; Pérez Gamboa et al., 2023; Prem et al., 2020; Salazar et al., 2022). Consequently, it is a complex and naïve task to think of Cauca as a homogeneous set of communities that share a model of society and common needs as the articulating axes of their future.

Since the colonial period, the territorial configuration of the former Governorate of Popayán and the current department of Cauca have been characterized by their large size, cultural diversity and low population density. These factors, together with the limited capacity of the national and regional State, have created a great dysfunction in the control of its land space, which has shown that Cauca is more geography than economics and more territory than territoriality. Hence the importance of considering the concepts of justice and spatial justice from a social geography committed to change (Anguelovski et al., 2020; Lacey-Barnacle et al., 2020; Moroni, 2020; Svarstad and Benjaminsen, 2020).

In part, this state arises due to the international processes in which Colombia is immersed, as the neoliberal development theory continues to be implemented by planners and the institutional apparatus of the State (Dest, 2020). This occurs despite the fact that Cauca is a region that includes a considerable number of territorial spaces in the country, where government action is not forceful and there is a substantial State deficit (Jenss, 2020; Kane, 2023; Sauls et al., 2022).

It is often the case that in the territories of the Pacific, the Caribbean, the Orinoco, the Amazon, among others, models of life have been constructed that are alien to the imperatives that shape modernity. This has involved historical trajectories, economic structures and particular forms of insertion into the national context. These social and territorial conditions, from the perspective of this article, are the product of colonial and part of republican history, which treated cultural differences and their economic-territorial rationalities as obstacles to change and regional development.

The phenomena described above have created enormous social and territorial asymmetries in access to and use of development conditions. For Harvey (2007), these are understood as characteristic products of the implementation of capitalist development models, on the one hand, and of the state imposition of the transition from pre-capitalist societies to the modernity of the market economy, on the other.

As a result, the confluence of these factors acted in the consolidation of the forms of production associated with the modern western world and influenced their implementation everywhere as a condition for the improvement of living conditions and future possibilities of the populations. In this sense, if we consider the importance of this future projection, its interdependence with the shared cosmovision and the personal-social identity subject to the community itself (Noroña González et al., 2023; Pérez Gamboa et al., 2021), it is feasible to affirm that everyday lives and life projects were deconfigured in pursuit of a project



socially incompatible with the scenarios that existed prior to the importation of the model.

Harvey (1996, 2007) constructs and groups the differential results of the application of western models of development under the concept of unequal geographic development. This conceptual structure allows us to interpret the indicators used to measure development and its spatial distribution in Cauca. These indicators, together with a historical component, favor the construction of explanations on the unequal distribution and opportunities for access to development in the department.

According to Harvey (1996), this concept is oriented towards the identification of those aspects that were disseminated from a hegemonic and dominant center of power to the "backward" territories, as a sort of biblical act of salvation. In this sense, he emphasizes that the category of center is not singular, but a plural construction in which the dominant center is the power called the West, which in turn regulates and seeks to homogenize other centers of lesser hierarchy. This explains why nation-states submit to the designs of these Western models and in turn seek to subject territories to these globalizing processes.

One of the many consequences of the unequal implementation of the development model is the territorial fragmentation that this entails. In this regard, Safford and Palacios (2002) state that the scarcity of population and its very high dispersion in the territory were two of the characteristics of 19th century Colombia that made spatial fragmentation difficult for the processes of development and consolidation of a united and integrated country. Currently, the consequences can be diagnosed in the evolution of social movements (DeMeritt and Pulido, 2019; Georgi, 2022; Sachseder, 2020), the dynamics of historical conflict (Barrera et al., 2022; Díaz et al., 2021), new perspectives on gender and society (Banerjee et al., 2021; Fahlberg et al., 2023), the confrontation of illegal cultivation (Acero and Machuca, 2021), among other processes of change.

Added to this are aspects such as a difficult and rugged geography, transportation difficulties, as well as the scarcity of highways and roads that would allow the country, in general, and Cauca, in particular, to be articulated. Popayán, capital of both the former Governorate and the current department of Cauca, did not have the administrative capacity, probably combined with the lack of political interest of its ruling class, so it was not possible to articulate an adequate spatial organization and an institutional framework to govern it.

These elements, together with the tense intercultural relations in Cauca, define the current departmental configuration as a marked continuity of the territorial and social spaces generated during the colonial period. At the same time, this scenario becomes more complex with the reiteration of a central-unitary model that is concretized in the departmental structures, fiefdoms of political power. Therefore, it is difficult to see a scenario that would make it possible to overcome the old administrative model and give way to more efficient and closer regional territorial planning.

Reflection

Next, we examine the historical processes that have influenced the results of the spatialization of indicators. In this way, we seek to reflect on the complex historical determinations, their impact on inequalities, spatial justice and the current geography of Cauca.

From mine to non-mine

The leader of the black communities of northern Cauca, Sabas Casarán, in one of the many meetings that the authors were able to share in his house in the municipality of Villa Rica, expressed that the leaders and society of Popayán, "owners of Cauca", changed the gold mines with which they had enriched themselves through the imposition of black slave labor, to a new form of control over the land, the non-mining. This new form of property and instrument of domination materialized in a new form of control over the land and its resources, that is, the same families continued to exercise power, now from the regional state.

This metaphor of the social history of the region used by Sabas Casarán allows us to establish a timeline of more than three centuries, in which the structure of economic and political power was configured in the traditional families of Popayán. At present, it is present and contributes powerfully to confirm the social and geographic landscapes characteristic of the region, which allow explaining the imbalances of access to the development of the different regions and spatial sectors of the current department of Cauca.

In other words, the assertion that power in the Cauca has not changed substantially since the colonial period, with the transition from the economic power of the mine and the hacienda as social and economic constellations to the control of power by the State, is not unreasonable. This is explained by the fact that, openly at the beginning and then underhandedly, they involve slavery and servility, directly or through strategic alliances that allow these actors to expand their range of influence and direct public resources according to their interests.

From a historical perspective, the work of Barona Becerra (1995) explains the reasons for the territorial disarticulation of the present department of Cauca. The concept of regional archipelago expresses the spatial discontinuity of regions with strong institutional forms of control and economic exploitation. These, in turn, are surrounded by other diametrically different regions occupied with other cultural criteria, a fact that does not allow for the homogenization of territorial development processes and contributes to building asymmetries of quantitative and qualitative expressions in their different subregional spaces. These phenomena suggest that space is a product of human activities and the tensions produced within it, not a passive stage for them.

Under considerations such as these, it is possible to understand the construction and persistence of different realities in different parts of the Cauca. This has produced, since its settlement by European and African communities, which spatially joined the pre-Columbian ones, a sort of sedimentation of social and configurational processes marked by a false dominant homogeneity and a rich invisible diversity.

Thus, it can be understood that this complex configuration, with a network nature, is projected to the linear study as a kind of immovable structure, with niches of reality that coexist, but do not come into contact. Therefore, it is necessary to think of the communities themselves and their needs, as a way to promote their sustainability and true development, not only that which derives from imported concepts (Sanabria Martínez, 2022).

Despite the attempts made from the end of the colonial period to the present day, the Cauca's entry into "modernity" has always been an unfinished task. The department, like many other spaces, is



a zone of hybridization, a palimpsest where numerous scripts of many cultural origins and historical structures overlap and interact.

Spatial analysis of development indicators in the Cauca region

As we have been able to foresee up to this point, the new challenges demand the need to rethink the department. In this regard, it is necessary to examine the system of causes and their expressions, such as the insufficient achievements derived from the projects implemented, the emergence in the networks of new actors in both the political and social sectors, as well as the impact of the historical evolution of the department in a current challenging socio-environmental scenario.

The most common characteristics in the department in terms of population groups are the predominance of inhabitants under 18 years of age and mostly rural, with a high percentage of unsatisfied basic needs (UBN), incomplete primary education, low quality of life index and high prevalence of poverty, according to income indicators and data consolidated in the National Population and Housing Census of 2018. These particularities highlight the failure of the developmentalist model and call into question both the proposal and its implementation in that the promised economic, social and spatial dynamization has not been achieved.

The aforementioned aspects have been naturalized and typified in Cauca, which has generated a disarticulated territory, the perennial management of the Government from a centralized model and the limited social impact of the institutions. This changes partially in certain areas that enjoy a certain degree of independence, but the tendency is for Popayán to agglomerate in its sphere of influence the greatest share of power, which has acted to the detriment of territories "without real power".

The Pacific coast is an ideal example, since there are strong economic poles that, due to their links in trade and politics, do not suffer from the administrative dependence that makes smaller towns depend on the departmental capital. This scenario is repeated in the other cardinal points, where border relations and their own resources allow for a certain capacity for regulation external to those of Popayán.

The archipelago concept mentioned above favors a better understanding of the system of causes, at least in the examination of three dimensions. The first is the dominance exercised from Popayán, which, together with the arguments offered, explains why Popayán has indicators above the national average. This has allowed the capital to form a regional centralism and to present greater weight in the regional analysis in terms of influence.

The second dimension is the determination of regional infrastructure, marked by the presence of the Pan-American Highway and its sphere of influence, coinciding, to a certain extent, with Popayán. As the analysis shifts to "interior" territories, a stable and decreasing movement in development indicators can be observed, as well as a clear deterioration of living conditions.

Finally, the cultural dimension makes it possible to recover data that are specific to communities that have been made invisible under the pretext of attention to diversity, an approach that has obscured their origins and uniqueness. In this case, it highlights the "underdevelopment" of ethnic groups, such as indigenous and Afro-Colombians, who are relegated to marginalized and vulnerable territories.

These dimensions absorb into official discourses and practices those western concepts that signify development, narrative and statistical tools, such as well-being or quality of life. These appropriations end up resulting in efforts that do not lead to transformation and legitimize the failure of the developmentalist model in an unequal territory, but without attending to unique communities. Ultimately, masked in these concepts, complex phenomena are under-diagnosed that derive from a poverty of basic services that mark the lives of these communities, such as education, health and access to other equally necessary services.

Unlike the national trend, Cauca has a majority of population in rural contexts, especially if Popayán is not considered. The vast majority of the productive structure in the region is traditional agriculture, with interesting pockets of modern economy, especially microenterprises (99.0 % of the business fabric), but a greater predominance of agricultural production (Dorado Guzmán et al., 2023).

The paradoxical aspect of this panorama is that more than 90% of the sector is represented by industrial plantations (sugarcane, coffee and other crops) located in the north. These have a strong social and economic influence from Valle del Cauca, in an enclave-type regime. With the exception of coffee and potatoes, the rest of Cauca's agriculture can be classified as subsistence, with little or no participation in national market networks. In addition, the report reports the low survival of enterprises, which reaches 30% in a five-year period, showing a bleak scenario for micro and small enterprises, data that must be multidimensionally analyzed (González Ávila et al., 2023; Gómez Miranda, 2023).

Moreover, without the possibility of being part of an economy that guarantees the presence of infrastructure and logistics works to support the development of sectors such as education and technology, which require technical assistance and financing. However, the results of the Cauca economic study report in 2023 show that, although sectors such as agriculture and construction maintain a necessary resilience (Linares Giraldo et al., 2023; Mogrovejo Andrade, 2022), more variables were seen to be contracted to close the year, although they showed recovery compared to the covid-19 pandemic (Dorado Guzmán et al., 2023).

The remaining municipalities of Cauca generally comply with the above arguments: as they move geographically and relationally farther away from the political center, the more clearly the deterioration of the above indicators can be seen. These indicators tend to improve when the site studied is located near the Pan-American Highway and decrease considerably in territories occupied by ethnic groups. Hence, the socio-cultural and economic impacts caused by the covid-19 pandemic in an already impoverished context should be examined in detail, so that the regional system of needs can be better understood (Torres Barreto, 2023).

The relationship between the Pan-American Highway and the level of development achieved is observed in the cities that lead the municipalities, where they far exceed the departmental average in terms of quality of life. While they are favored by the geographic inequalities mentioned above, a group of populations are virtually restricted from participating in economic and socio-cultural circuits. The common element is that they are part of ethnically and culturally diverse territories.

The cultural differences inherent to the indigenous communities with the lowest quality of life challenge the classic notions of universality of the model, which shows that its implementation is not subject exclusively to replicable indicators. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of this fracture is that, beyond the westernization of the concept of development, there is an invisible social crisis acting on these communities.

Among other manifestations, they show impoverishment, poor life prospects, a high prevalence of diseases and a very limited vision of the future. Contradictorily, these expressions contrast with the supposed advances in terms of political representation, social awareness and political participation, which, at least in the discourse, places these groups as actors with some importance in the national and international public arena.

This has meant that for some of these communities, cultural traits are tinged by the influence of conditions of poverty and marginality, which makes it difficult to understand their spiritual life and the factors that need to be modified in order to make progress in terms of indicators. On the other hand, homogeneous cultural structures make it possible to achieve greater clarity with respect to indicators. It is not in vain that great similarities can be found between the municipalities with the greatest presence of ethnic communities (or those that recognize themselves as such) and those that exhibit the most complex poverty figures.

This situation can be defined as "regional disintegration" and currently conditions the thinking and actions that shape agendas and policies. The fundamental expressions are limited in the disparity between results and efforts, although there is a growing orientation towards the configuration of a regional identity based on the common good and the tendency towards reciprocal progress as the basis of the Cauca culture and the desired "Caucanidad".

Conclusions

The differential impacts of development observed in the different regions that make up Cauca are indicators not only of the levels of well-being achieved in the application of the hegemonic model and its forms of measurement, but also reveal the processes of modernization of the economy, the attempts to stimulate productivity and the growth of wealth by the State and its regional and territorial development policies.

However, these are not applied in a social and cultural vacuum; on the contrary, they encounter the dynamics of socially and culturally differentiated groups, whose historical trajectories did not allow the implementation of their strategies and whose results were frankly discouraging for the majority of the Cauca population. In this sense, it should be considered that Cauca has a social tradition that began with the Spanish conquest, a structure that contributed to the creation of a society of large landowners and slaveholders. These bases influenced the formation of a deeply divided society and the exclusion of populations considered minorities, a situation whose manifestations are still observable today.

From this perspective, Cauca is an immense and complex social laboratory, where new actors and circumstances of development and the regional future appear every day. These aspects require new frameworks of analysis in the economic, political and territorial spheres, where the vision of a backward and poor department requires new ways of being interpreted and new interpreters.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

References

- Acero, C. y Machuca, D. (2021). The substitution program on trial: Progress and setbacks of the peace agreement in the policy against illicit crops in Colombia. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 89, 103158. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2021.103158>
- Aguiar de Medeiros, C. y Trebat, N. (2021). The failures of neoliberalism in Brazil. *Journal of Economic Issues*, 55(2), 408-415. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00213624.2021.1908803>
- Andreoni, A. (2022). Compressed development and the political economy of developmentalism. *Development and Change*, 53(5), 1103-1120. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12729>
- Angelovski, I., Brand, A. L., Connolly, J. J., Corbera, E., Kotsila, P., Steil, J., ... Argüelles Ramos, L. (2020). Expanding the boundaries of justice in urban greening scholarship: Toward an emancipatory, antisubordination, intersectional, and relational approach. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 110(6), 1743-1769. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24694452.2020.1740579>
- Araque Geney, E. A. (2023). Una mirada a la realidad económica y educativa de la mujer indígena zenú: Reflexiones desde el Cabildo Menor el Campo Mirella. *Región Científica*, 2(2), 202366. <https://doi.org/10.58763/rc202366>
- Banerjee, O., Cicowiez, M., Vargas, R., Obst, C., Rojas Cala, J., Alvarez-Espinosa, A., ... Sáenz Meneses, D. (2021). Gross domestic product alone provides misleading policy guidance for post-conflict land use trajectories in Colombia. *Ecological Economics*, 182, 106929. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2020.106929>
- Barona Becerra, G. (1995). *La maldición de Midas en una región del mundo colonial: Popayán, 1730-1830*. Universidad del Valle.
- Barrera, V., López Cárdenas, M. B., Staples, H. y Kanai, M. (2022). From local turn to space-relational analysis: Participatory peacebuilding in a Colombian borderland. *Political Geography*, 98, 102729. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2022.102729>
- Bloeser, K., McCarron, K., Merker, V., Hyde, J., Bolton, R., Anastases, N., ... McAndrew, L. (2021). "Because the country, it seems though, has turned their back on me": Experiences of institutional betrayal among veterans living with Gulf War Illness. *Social Science & Medicine*, 284, 114211. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114211>
- Bresser-Pereira, L. C. (2020). A new theoretical framework: New developmentalism. *Challenge*, 63(3), 114-132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/05775132.2019.1705006>
- Bresser-Pereira, L. C. (2023). New steps in the construction of New Developmentalism. *Brazilian Journal of Political Economy*, 43, 777-788. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0101-31572023-4005>
- Bresser-Pereira, L. C. y Oreiro, J. L. (2023). A brief history of development theory: From Schumpeter and Prebisch to new developmentalism. *Brazilian Journal of Political Economy*, 44, 5-28. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0101-31572024-3604>
- Crocetti, E., Albarello, F., Meeus, W. y Rubini, M. (2023). Identities: A developmental social-psychological perspective. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 34(1), 161-201. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2022.2104987>
- DeMeritt, J. y Pulido, A. (2019). Violence, voting & peace: Explaining public support for the peace referendum in Colombia. *Electoral Studies*, 61, 102067. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2019.102067>
- Dest, A. (2020). "Disenchanted with the state": Confronting the limits of neoliberal multiculturalism in Colombia. *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies*, 15(4), 368-390. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17442222.2020.1777728>
- Dest, A. (2021). The coca enclosure: Autonomy against accumulation in Colombia. *World Development*, 137, 105166. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.105166>
- Díaz, J. M., Staples, H., Kanai, J. M. y Lombard, M. (2021). Between pacification and dialogue: Critical lessons from Colombia's territorial peace. *Geoforum*, 118, 106-116. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2021.106-116>



doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2020.12.005

Dorado Guzmán, D. M., Córdoba Hurtado, L. y Becerra Campo, C. A. (2023). *Estudios económicos de las zonas del departamento del Cauca*. Cámara de Comercio del Cauca. https://cccauca.org.co/camara-web/_lib/file/doc/gestor_contenido/modulo_2/submodulo_34/documentos/ESTUDIO%20ECONOMICO%202023.pdf

Fahlberg, A., Velasquez, M., Wise, H. y Simon, T. (2023). Tangential Movements: How feminist organizing against gender-based violence offers an alternative avenue for protesting drug violence in Latin America. *World Development*, 161, 106118. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2022.106118>

Fritz, B., de Paula, L. F. y Prates, D. M. (2022). Developmentalism at the periphery: Addressing global financial asymmetries. *Third World Quarterly*, 43(4), 721-741. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2021.1989299>

Galindo-Urbe, D. M., Hoyos-Hoyos, J. M., Isaacs-Cubides, P., Corral-Gómez, N. y Urbina-Cardona, N. (2022). Classification and sensitivity of taxonomic and functional diversity indices of anurans in the Andean coffee cultural landscape. *Ecological Indicators*, 136, 108650. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolind.2022.108650>

Georgi, F. R. (2022). Peace through the lens of human rights: Mapping spaces of peace in the advocacy of Colombian human rights defenders. *Political Geography*, 99, 102780. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2022.102780>

Gómez Miranda, O. M. (2023). Factores institucionales que impactan en la actividad emprendedora de los estudiantes universitarios. *Región Científica*, 2(1), 202327. <https://doi.org/10.58763/rc202327>

González Ávila, D. I., Garzón Salazar, D. P. y Sánchez Castillo, V. (2023). Cierre de las empresas del sector turismo en el municipio de Leticia: Una caracterización de los factores implicados. *Región Científica*, 2(1), 202342. <https://doi.org/10.58763/rc202342>

Göttems, L. B. D. y Mollo, M. de L. R. (2020). Neoliberalism in Latin America: Effects on health system reforms. *Revista*

de Saúde Pública, 54, 74. <https://doi.org/10.11606/s1518-8787.2020054001806>

Harvey, D. (1996). *Justice, nature and the geography of difference*. Wiley.

Harvey, D. (2007). *A brief history of neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press.

Higuera Carrillo, E. L. (2022). Aspectos clave en agroproyectos con enfoque comercial: Una aproximación desde las concepciones epistemológicas sobre el problema rural agrario en Colombia. *Región Científica*, 1(1), 20224. <https://doi.org/10.58763/rc20224>

Hoyos Chavarro, Y. A., Melo Zamudio, J. C. y Sánchez Castillo, V. (2022). Sistematización de la experiencia de circuito corto de comercialización estudio de caso Tibasosa, Boyacá. *Región Científica*, 1(1), 20228. <https://doi.org/10.58763/rc20228>

Jenss, A. (2020). Global flows and everyday violence in urban space: The port-city of Buenaventura, Colombia. *Political Geography*, 77, 102113. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2019.102113>

Kane, P. (2023). Social movement intercultural pedagogy and the making of revolutionary subjectivities: Lessons from southwest Colombia. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 21(5), 628-644. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2023.2175645>

Koopman, S. (2020). Building an inclusive peace is an uneven socio-spatial process: Colombia's differential approach. *Political Geography*, 83, 102252. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2020.102252>

Koponen, J. (2020). Development: History and power of the concept. *Forum for Development Studies*, 47(1), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08039410.2019.1654542>

Lacey-Barnacle, M., Robison, R. y Foulds, C. (2020). Energy justice in the developing world: A review of theoretical frameworks, key research themes and policy implications. *Energy for Sustainable Development*, 55, 122-138. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esd.2020.01.010>



- LaRota-Aguilera, M. J. y Marull, J. (2023). Towards a landscape-metabolism model for the tropical Andes: Application in the metropolitan region of Cali (Colombia). *Environmental Science & Policy*, 140, 208-220. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2022.12.005>
- Linares Giraldo, M., Rozo Carvajal, K. J. y Sáenz López, J. T. (2023). Impacto de la pandemia en el comportamiento del comercio B2C en Colombia. *Región Científica*, 2(1), 202320. <https://doi.org/10.58763/rc202320>
- Lobo, I. D. y Vélez, M. A. (2022). From strong leadership to active community engagement: Effective resistance to illegal coca crops in Afro-Colombian collective territories. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 102, 103579. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2022.103579>
- Mendoza Ledezma, J. F. (2023). Rediscovering rural territories: Local perceptions and the benefits of collective mapping for sustainable development in Colombian communities. *Research in Globalization*, 7, 100153. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resglo.2023.100153>
- Mogrovejo Andrade, J. M. (2022). Estrategias resilientes y mecanismos de las organizaciones para mitigar los efectos ocasionados por la pandemia a nivel internacional. *Región Científica*, 1(1), 202211. <https://doi.org/10.58763/rc202211>
- Moroni, S. (2020). The just city: Three background issues. Institutional justice and spatial justice, social justice and distributive justice, concept of justice and conceptions of justice. *Planning Theory*, 19(3), 251-267. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095219877670>
- Noroña González, Y., Colala Troya, A. L. y Peñate Hernández, J. I. (2023). La orientación para la proyección individual y social en la educación de jóvenes y adultos: Un estudio mixto sobre los proyectos de vida. *Región Científica*, 2(2), 202389. <https://doi.org/10.58763/rc202389>
- Ormaechea, E. (2021). The failures of neoliberalism in argentina. *Journal of Economic Issues*, 55(2), 318-324. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00213624.2021.1907155>
- Pérez Gamboa, A. J., Echerri Garcés, D. y García Acevedo, Y. (2021). Proyecto de vida como categoría de la pedagogía de la Educación Superior: Aproximaciones a una teoría fundamentada. *Transformación*, 17(3), 411-427. http://scielo.sld.cu/scielo.php?script=sci_abstract&pid=S2077-29552021000300542&lng=es&nrm=iso&tln-g=es
- Pérez Gamboa, A. J., Sánchez Castillo, V. y Gómez Cano, C. A. (2023). Representaciones sociales de un grupo de ex-combatientes sobre el cumplimiento del acuerdo de paz. *Pensamiento Americano*, 16(31), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.21803/penamer.16.31.651>
- Pinheiro Barbosa, L. (2022). Onto-epistemic paradigm of the countryside and social theory: What do popular movements of Latin America and the Caribbean teach us? *Educational Studies*, 58(5-6), 620-640. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131946.2022.2132392>
- Prem, M., Saavedra, S. y Vargas, J. F. (2020). End-of-conflict deforestation: Evidence from Colombia's peace agreement. *World Development*, 129, 104852. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2019.104852>
- Quintero-Ángel, M., Coles, A. y Duque-Nivia, A. A. (2021). A historical perspective of landscape appropriation and land use transitions in the Colombian South Pacific. *Ecological Economics*, 181, 106901. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2020.106901>
- Riggirozzi, P. (2020). Social policy, inequalities and the battle of rights in Latin America. *Development and Change*, 51(2), 506-522. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12571>
- Rodríguez-Rivero, R., Ortiz-Marcos, I., Díaz-Barcos, V. y Lozano, S. A. (2020). Applying the strategic prospective approach to project management in a development project in Colombia. *International Journal of Project Management*, 38(8), 534-547. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2020.07.003>
- Rodríguez, J. P. (2021). The politics of neoliberalism in Latin America: Dynamics of resilience and contestation. *Sociology Compass*, 15(3), e12854. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12854>



- Rogers, L. O., Kiang, L., White, L., Calzada, E. J., Umaña-Taylor, A. J., Byrd, C., ... Whitesell, N. (2020). Persistent concerns: Questions for research on ethnic-racial identity development. *Research in Human Development*, 17(2-3), 130-153. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15427609.2020.1831881>
- Roncancio, D. J., Cutter, S. L. y Nardocci, A. C. (2020). Social vulnerability in Colombia. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 50, 101872. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2020.101872>
- Rosset, P. M., Barbosa, L. P., Val, V. y McCune, N. (2021). Pensamiento Latinoamericano Agroecológico: The emergence of a critical Latin American agroecology? *Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems*, 45(1), 42-64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21683565.2020.1789908>
- Saad-Filho, A. (2020). Varieties of neoliberalism in Brazil (2003-2019). *Latin American Perspectives*, 47(1), 9-27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X19881968>
- Sachseder, J. (2020). Cleared for investment? The intersections of transnational capital, gender, and race in the production of sexual violence and internal displacement in Colombia's armed conflict. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 22(2), 162-186. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2019.1702473>
- Safford, F. y Palacios, M. (2002). *Colombia: Fragmented land, divided society*. Oxford University Press.
- Salazar, A., Sánchez, A., Dukes, J., Salazar, J., Clerici, N., Lasso, E., ... Arias, P. (2022). Peace and the environment at the crossroads: Elections in a conflict-troubled biodiversity hotspot. *Environmental Science & Policy*, 135, 77-85. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2022.04.013>
- Sanabria Martínez, M. J. (2022). Construir nuevos espacios sostenibles respetando la diversidad cultural desde el nivel local. *Región Científica*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.58763/rc20222>
- Sauls, L. A., Dest, A. y McSweeney, K. (2022). Challenging conventional wisdom on illicit economies and rural development in Latin America. *World Development*, 158, 105996. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2022.105996>
- Svarstad, H. y Benjaminsen, T. A. (2020). Reading radical environmental justice through a political ecology lens. *Geoforum*, 108, 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2019.11.007>
- Temin, D. M. (2023). Development in decolonization: Walter Rodney, third world developmentalism, and "Decolonizing Political Theory". *American Political Science Review*, 117(1), 235-248. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055422000570>
- Thornton, C. (2023). Developmentalism as Internationalism: Toward a Global Historical Sociology of the Origins of the Development Project. *Sociology of Development*, 9(1), 33-55. <https://doi.org/10.1525/sod.2022.0012>
- Tijerina, W. (2020). Developmentalism as a comparative-historical model: From Friedrich List to Bresser-Pereira. *Brazilian Journal of Political Economy*, 40, 484-492. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0101-31572020-3123>
- Torres Barreto, M. L. (2023). Estudio de casos de éxito y fracaso de emprendedores a raíz del covid-19 en Bucaramanga y su área metropolitana. *Región Científica*, 2(1), 202332. <https://doi.org/10.58763/rc202332>
- Veltmeyer, H. (2020). Latin America in the vortex of social change: Development and social movement dynamics. *World Development*, 130, 104916. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.104916>

