

Argentina: the development will be territorial or it will not be

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We are not asking for a driver to take us anywhere; we just need a collective idea that leads us to a proactive platform of hope



Introduction

Territorial development (DT) differs from classical growth, which fluctuates between the economy and electoralism: it implies a cultural change that adds, to the relevant one, a spatio-temporal and systemic vision. It enters the local and horizontal leadership, from the bottom up, without ruling out subsidiarity. It empowers the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and makes them the central axis of structural changes. Furthermore, global thinking precedes local action, whatever the issue is at hand.

The epic of this political transition requires a *systemic sustainability* as a necessary condition (Loewy, 2021a). This paradigm leads us directly to acting on MSMEs, considered as units (systems) of promotion or transformation. On the other hand, there is consistent evidence that the production scale highly disciplines the DT profile. Consequently, the impacts are seen in sensitive factors like the social, environmental, food, energy, economic and geodemographic ones (Loewy, unpublished).

From global to local and vice versa

Due to the secular crisis in Argentina, we are faced at a crossroads with the characteristics of a great bifurcation (Laszlo, 1990). But let's try not to be mistaken, the greatest imprint is always global. The COVID pandemic showed us a transversal and planetary picture, beyond appearances and stories. This pandemic calls us to openly recognize the interdependence of all regions and countries to access an operational cosmopolitanism (Beck, 1999).

Returning to our homeland, the result of that bifurcation seems to be naturally uncertain. However, the future —after recovering this essential notion— must be left to something more than just a mere possibility. At this point, the DT methodology is displayed, always with a multiscale and multilevel coherence. Human action, with its advantages and disadvantages, has brought us here and therefore keeps the power to bring what is necessary back: with growing democracy and citizenship, everything is possible.

Social metabolism and climate

Our current relationship between society and nature, or 'social metabolism', implies an ecological footprint (both direct and indirect) that is consuming —on average— 50% more than the total available biocapacity. Climate change, in that sense, is the most dramatic symptom addressed by humanity¹.



To face this common challenge, the World Economic Forum and the McKinsey advisory advocate for what they call *natural climate solutions* (NCS). They are defined as "conservation, restoration and management actions on the land that increase carbon storage and avoid greenhouse gas emissions". They propose to emphasize cooperation at the international level and to stimulate, in business, corporate and cooperative² areas, the net zero carbon balance as a medium-term goal (McKinsey Sustainability, 2021).

This investment in nature combines the full recovery of ecosystem services with climate resilience. It seems clear that to achieve this it is necessary to abandon false dichotomies, such as Left-Right or State-Market ones, among other measures.

What to do in Argentina

Argentina has been suffering, for many decades, from a chronic and growing decline, centred on economic analysis as determining causes. Economists proliferate all the

¹ In the picture below is 16-year-old Greta Thunberg, *an ecology world symbol*.

² The last term is a personal addition.

time, and hardly anything else is talked about. Without neglecting the importance of this issue, we allow ourselves to set forth that a great part of these variables is due to structural causes. In other words, they emerge as symptoms of serious asymmetries in the country, immersed in a persistent denialism: a hyper concentration and an urban, economic, political and cultural polarization, among others.

In turn, debates and efforts are aligned with *issues and sectors*, ignoring the complex and systemic approaches inherent to the current challenges. To make things worse, politics tends to be nourished by electoralism and ideological prejudices (now obsolete), drifting from national and global fluctuations.

Realizing that nothing will be the same in the post-pandemic world, we would like to mention some important organic issues that we must creatively face. In doing so, we are thinking about state policies, which must ultimately follow a specific country project (Loewy, 2020).

About policies and equations

From a territorial and planetary approach, we will take into account three essential components to generate identity demands and visions of the future. Firstly, we place education as a basic and universal tool, but it is not exempt from certain contents. An unavoidable point of presence is the *environmental education*, which we state as the first state policy³.

Secondly, we envision *agricultural sustainability*⁴ as a foundational and multifunctional requirement. We promote agrosocial, agroecological or organic systems, with some premises of scale, good practices, tenure and residence (Loewy 2021 b). This does not exclude the agribusiness but, with certain precautions, it places it in its adequate amount of needs.

These two themes give us the context and the inputs to undertake a *territorial ordering*, as the most transformative and structuring point. As it is said that "everything has to do with everything", in order to move forward on this path of country-rehabilitation, we should also respect, at least, the following three equations of common sense: a- to put what is urgent together with what is important; b- to disambiguate the symptoms from the causes and c- not to skimp on solutions to the diagnoses.

These three policies and equations are not exclusive and are subject to public debate. They could configure a principle of identity that, together with a world-society, trigger our huge potentialities.

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³ These questions our "species awareness" and the value of biodiversity.

⁴ Agricultural, as a generic expression of the whole food production.

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