Social Innovation : a territorial process
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Introduction

In a keynote speech in Brussels in 2011 launching the Pilot Initiative 'Social Innovation Europe', José Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission, referred to familiar discussions that define social innovation as new ways to address unmet social needs. After that, president Barroso linked social innovation to sustainable resource management; to creating behavioural changes towards more responsibility of individuals; and concluded with linking social innovation to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (Barroso 2011). The speech is in no way exceptional or surprising but is interesting however, for the way it illustrates how social innovation has recently become embedded in a discourse that approaches development issues as de-territorialised management questions. Social innovation is addressed as something that can be 'done'; as if social innovation becomes a 'thing', a process in the best case, that can be separated from its context.

In this chapter, in contrast, we argue that social innovation, as a way to foster social cohesion, is an inherently territorialised process. Its study, therefore, is necessarily territorialised as well. To demonstrate this argument, we explore the origins of different social innovation strands and explore how territory has been addressed in different social innovation approaches, to compare and contrast them.

The prominence of the concept of social innovation in itself reflects a change in research approach and strategy in critical social science. Sayer (1997) observed that debates on politics in critical social sciences partly shifted away from attacking the established powers, to a politics in which debates about desirable and existing alternatives come more frequently to the fore. In contrast to other political economy approaches that focus on the identification of false beliefs, the social innovation approach, as deployed in this handbook, is a needs-based explanatory critique, which underlines the identification of unsatisfied social needs and ways to address them (see also the introduction of this volume). It focuses on empowering innovation in social relations (Gerometta et al. 2005) as well as on how shifting spatial arrangements create the conditions for different types of social innovation (Novy et al. 2009).

Evidence of as well as a belief in the power of targeted spatial strategies in creating the conditions for socially cohesive development, partly explain the centrality of territory as a field of action in the social innovation literature (see for example Moulaert 2000, Hillier et al. 2004, Moulaert and Nussbaumer 2008, MacCallum et al. 2009, Fontan et al. 2005, Moulaert et al. 2005). Equally, territory gained importance as an analytical concept in this literature, including studies on spatial innovation systems (Moulaert and Sekia 2003), area-based development (Fontan et al. 2005, Drewe et al. 2008, MacCallum et al. 2009, Oosterlynck et al. 2011) and integrated area development (Moulaert 2000). Other social innovation approaches have developed analytical tools based on management based approaches which relate social innovation mainly to innovation in services through processes of good governance and social entrepreneurship (Wolk 2007, BEPA 2011, Mulgan and Pulford 2010, Murray et al. 2010).

This chapter reviews the literature, to inquire into the dimensions and features of territory that are analysed in the different social innovation strands. Drawing on insights from the fields of planning, geography and regional economics, the chapter emphasizes that it is important to further develop analytical frames in social innovation studies that take territory[i] seriously.

Management based approaches to social innovation

Recently a larger number of social innovation studies have emerged, mainly oriented towards policy advice, in Europe and the US (Wolk 2007, BEPA 2011, Mulgan and Pulford 2010, Murray et al. 2010). In the Six and Young Foundation 'Study on social innovation', social innovations are defined as :

> 'innovations that are social both in their ends and in their means. Specifically, we define social innovations as new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations. In other words they are innovations that are both good for society and enhance society's capacity to act' (Mulgan and Pulford 2010, p. 16).

This multi-dimensional definition is at first sight quite similar to the ways in which social innovation is defined in this handbook and developed in the European Framework projects 'Integrated Area Development', SINGOCOM, KATARSIS and SOCIAL POLIS (see introduction of this volume, Moulaert et al. 2010, MacCallum et al. 2009, Gonzalez and Healey 2005). This involves innovations in social relationships, in ways to meet social needs, and a dimension of empowerment. Different approaches also agree that social innovations can emerge from different actors or sectors. When looked at more carefully, the analytical frameworks and ethical perspectives deployed in this handbook are nevertheless quite different from the ones in management based approaches to social innovation.

Indeed, the latter approaches remain close to economic innovation studies, both in approach and goals. In reports of the Six and Young Foundation (Mulgan and Pulford 2010), BEPA (2011) and Murray et al. (2009, 2010) it is argued that social agendas should be tied more closely to 'the' economic agenda and that addressing societal challenges is, as stated in Mulgan and Pulford (2010), in the first place considered a way to fight crisis by aiming to unleash new sources of growth. Social innovation in services and other fields with high impact with respect to goals of better health, education, employment or the environment is identified to open cheap possibilities for growth.

Murray, Mulgon and Caulier-Grice (2009) identify three levels of inquiry and three areas of social innovation. The levels correspond to macro-analysis, micro-analysis and the inquiry into innovation in productive systems. The three areas are institutional conditions for social innovation, the distinct processes of social innovation and systemic innovations. The shape of the social economy, constituted of sub-economies of the public, grant, market and household economy and their interfaces (state-grant, state-market, state-household, market-grant, household-market, household-grant), forms the starting point for inquiry. Impressive lists of examples of social innovation in different economic spheres are generated, but it remains unclear how these initiatives are embedded in the broader societal logic and, therefore, how they may overcome causes of inequality and injustices. Collective dynamics or articulation between spatial scales, fundamental to explaining development (Storper and Scott 1988, Becattini 2002), remain invisible. Networks and coalitions are identified as the driving factors of development (Murray et al. 2010, Wolker 2007), but it remains vague how these networks become 'a means of stimulating a more dynamic, inclusive and sustainable social market economy' as is stated in the Mulgan and Pulford report (2010, p. 5).

In management-based approaches, space is treated as a manageable entity that is accounted for through the study of allocation and administering of public space (such as 'reclaim the streets' or 'guerrilla gardening' as examples of new forms of management and multiple uses of public space). The interaction between 'innovators' and the 'environment' they are working in (Mulgan and Pulford 2010, 27), is stressed when explaining how social change happens, yet refers merely to individuals or organizations (the 'innovators) and other groups that have more capacity to implement or promote new ideas (the 'environment'). The approach thus starts from a diversity of social innovation actors, but remains within the primacy of a classical economic logic that lacks contextuality. Such an orthodox economic view on territorial development runs the risk of reductionism by assuming linear relationships between causes of social problems and socially innovative initiatives (see introduction of this volume). From development studies we have indeed learned that it is crucial to understand how initiatives are embedded in specific socio-political and socio-economic contexts (Moulaert and Sekia 2003).

A spatialized view in studying social innovation

As outlined in the introduction of this chapter, the concept of territory is central in a considerable part of the social innovation literature, both as a field of action and as anytical concept. As a *field of action*, these writings thus seek to advance territorial strategies that exemplify place sensitive modes of policy intervention. These are strategies that, according to Bradford (2003), articulate a coherent spatial logic and are constructed with local knowledge, informed by the particular circumstances on the ground, and delivered through multi-sectorial, horizontal networks crossing functional boundaries or program silos. As a field of *analysis*, social innovation mobilises the concept of territory to understand and explain the spatial processes that obstruct or enhance the capacity of action of disfavoured social groups (Klein and Harrisson 2007, MacCallum et al. 2009). Social innovation thus does not simply happen in a spatial context, but consists of the transformation of spatial relations, which are context and spatially specific, spatially negotiated and spatially embedded (Moulaert 2009).

The centrality of territory or *territoire* is surely not unique to the social innovation literature. Next to the typical 'spatial sciences' – geography, regional economics, planning and urbanism –political sciences, policy studies, sociology and behavioural studies have also often put the territory at the heart of analysis. The spatialization of analysis and a renewed interest in spatial ontology is based on the recognition both that the outcome of social processes differ from place to place, and that space impacts on these very processes (see for example Massey 2005). The incorporation of spatial concepts in the humanities and social sciences is widely referred to as the 'spatial turn' (Thrift 2002) and is a reaction to universal single-voiced historical narratives (Warf and Arias 2009). Space is increasingly understood as a social construction relevant to the interpretation of histories and cultural phenomena. The notion of *territoire*, reflects this even more explicitly.

The following section first gives a brief overview of how territory has been an important factor in development studies, and then explores specifically how it is analysed by a variety of authors dealing with social innovation.

Opening the container of space

For a long time, territory has been recognised as a necessary element in development. This becomes especially clear in the studies of industrialization and urbanization of the late 19th century. Spatial organization appeared to be crucial in sustaining capitalist development. Work and living had to be located far enough apart to create living environments, away from the unbearable environmental conditions close to the factories, but close enough to bring workforce into the factories. Since the 1930s, territory was seen as a necessary scale of action to balance out inequalities and address the crisis. Modernity itself was based on processes of

territorialization. Through spatial interventions, directed by the nation state, growth had to be stimulated and homogenised throughout the regions. In the study of these processes in dominant urban studies, geography and economics, space was presented as a container or an 'unchanging box within which material events occur' (Smith [1984] 2008, p. 2).

From the mid 1970s the pace of secular decline and deindustrialization of the old industrial core raised important questions in terms of understanding the ongoing social and economic transformations. It was clear that to fully understand these transformations, and to pose practical questions of what might be done to reconstruct viable futures for such areas, it was critical to relate what happened to how, why and where (see e.g. Fontan et al. 2003, Hudson 2000). Moreover, spatial strategies based on the idea of equal distribution of growth were no longer functioning (Lévesque et al. 1996). Manufacture-intensive components of the industrial chain continued to relocate away from western cities. Better off classes moved out of city centres *en masse*, leaving behind urban cores that had been stripped of their economic and demographic capital. The demographic and economic crisis of the urban cores triggered the development of new organizational models, as well as the search for new spatial strategies. Ongoing global transformations of deregulation and liberalization of the economy in the 1990s increased the complexity of those questions even more. In particular, spatial strategies now stressed competitiveness and the promotion of economic development-from-below as ways of regulating uneven development (Brenner 2004). The development of decentralized administrative authorities, special agencies, and place specific strategies aimed at reconcentrating productive capacities into strategic urban and regional growth centres (Peck and Tickell 2002). These new spatial strategies were part of an attempt to rescale regulation, based on the promotion of unequal concentrations of investment and accumulation (Brenner 2004). Unlike under spatial Keynesianism, the interrelationships between successful and unsuccessful spatial economies were not at the basis of spatial policy (Raco 2007). In contrast, discourses of global competition and the promotion of supply-side competitiveness (for example through the promotion of innovation and enhancing small and medium enterprises) at various scales evolve into a major philosophy of spatial policy and practices to sustain flexible accumulation. In contrast with entrepreneurial strategies that aimed at creation of urban environments capable of attracting mobile capital (Harvey 1989), spatial strategies based on the power of local (endogenous) resource mobilization emerged. The local scale, small and medium-sized firms and the capacity of valorizing human capital was reasserted in reaction to the failure of centralized regional planning (Stöhr, 1981, Moulaert and Sekia 2003). The strength of the local, according to local development studies, is that it increases actors' capacity of action. it is through 'places' that social actors revindicate their development claims (Bellemare and Klein 2011).

In the light of these evolutions, governance and development analyses became more spatialized, focusing explicitly on governance, and the norms and conventions in the negotiation of the distribution of wealth (e.g. Painter and Goodwin 1995, Collinge 1999, Goodwin 2001, Jessop 2001, Jessop and Sum 2006). Social innovation approaches form a particular strand belonging to the literature dealing with governance and development while developing analytical frameworks that allow us to identify factors and conditions that shape regulatory practices that benefit weaker social groups. A number of social innovation researchers caved their explanations of territorial development on place's embeddedness in wider networks of relational assets and spatial proximity, and on the particular role creative actions and strategies have in transforming spatial relations in ways that empower formally excluded people and that better succeed in addressing social needs (see for example Lévesque *et al*.1996, Fontan et al. 2003, 2005, Moulaert et al. 2005, Moulaert and Sekia 2003, Moulaert and Nussbaumer 2005, Gonzalez and Healey 2005). The following discussion shows how these authors look into the ´black box´ of forces, resources, activation strategies and processes that determine development processes.

The social region, local initiatives and socio-territorial capital

In reaction to the technicist and economistic bias in the study of regional and local economic development, Moulaert and Nussbaumer (2005) link social innovation to territorial innovation models. They argue that much of the research on learning regions and innovative clusters concentrates on how to implement concepts (development models) that coincide best with the dominant growth model and market-competitive logic. This, they suggest, creates a new polarisation in the development of regional and local societies. As an alternative, it is argued, broader views of development have to be included. This leads to a strand of literature that is based on the reconversion of local economies in post-Fordism that links territorial development with social innovation (Lévesque et al.1996, Fontan et al. 2003, 2005, Moulaert et al. 2005, Moulaert and Sekia 2003, Moulaert and Nussbaumer 2005).

Moulaert and Nussbaumer (2005) propose an approach to development that is based on the reproduction of various interrelated types of 'non business' capital according to their own existential logic: ecological, human, social. Resources identified in different territorial innovation models range from traditional production factors of labour and capital, to a broad range of actors, human capital, infrastructure, institutions, culture, small firms and social capital. The capacity of activation of resources is explained as the capacity of innovation and social learning through a complex set of institutions and relations.

In the same vein, Tremblay, Klein and Fontan, throughout their work (Tremblay et al. 1998, Fontan et al. 1999, Fontan et al. 2003, 2005, Fontan and Klein 2004) insist on the idea that social innovation is a necessary factor to explain vitality and success in local and regional economic renewal. On the basis of their observations in the Québec context, and adopting a multi-disciplinary approach (sociology, geography, economy), they underline the crucial role of social actors and social or cultural 'non-productive' activities in the redeployment of zones in decline (Tremblay et al. 1998). These authors' research, all based at the CRISES Centre for Research on Social Innovations, is partly based on theories and concepts which attempt to explain the existence of certain innovative environments or innovative milieus that point to the inseparability of culture and economy (Benko and Lipietz 2000, Storper and Scott 1988). In their development analysis territorial proximity is superimposed with relational, institutional and cultural forms of proximity, and territorial identity (*appartenance*) is stressed. The analytical framework is expanded with insights from 'urban regime theory' (Stone 1989), and social innovation as a way to discuss social transformation (Alter 2000, Callon 1989). Based on these strands of literature, Tremblay, Klein and Fontan, develop reflections on territorial innovation systems, with a special interest in the role of social actors in collective learning, and its sedimentation in the construction of bottom-up innovation systems.

Furthermore, social innovation is linked to a successful combination of exogenous and locally mobilized resources. According to Klein et al. (2008) and Klein and Tremblay (2009), the combination of local and extra-local resource-mobilization processes constitutes a crucial factor in the triggering of local initiatives into collective action. The resource-mobilization processes generate the dynamics necessary to create the conditions for partnerships and local empowerment that in turn stimulate a knowledge-building-cycle that is bound to repeat itself (Klein et al. 2008). This process is what, according to the authors, generates the power for changing institutional structures and thus enables social innovation. Klein (2008) indeed stresses the need to combine exogenous and endogenous resources through communities' participation in supra-local networks, mainly because deprived areas are typically characterized by deficient commercial and state service provision, which contributes to the increase of spatial injustices. As a consequence, a large market of unmet needs arises that is often taken up by social economy and community-based organizations.

Also essential in the work at CRISES is the notion of 'socio-territorial capital' and its mobilization by local communities in given geographical spaces. This concept suggests that a set of resources, a spatial dimension, a social frame and a capacity to create added value through

institutional and organizational arrangements (Klein 2008) are all crucial in the process of socio-economic area development (Fontan et al. 2005).

Integrated Area Development (IAD)

The 'Integrated Area Development' (IAD) framework seeks to create opportunities to socially redress 'disintegrated areas' (Moulaert and Leontidou, 1995) by bringing together different types of actors and their aspirations, solutions for the threats to sustainable development (economic, ecological, socio-cultural and political), restoring links with other areas in the city and rebuild a neighbourhood and community identity. To this purpose IAD aims to valorise the diversity of historical social, institutional, artistic cultures and traditions as resources for community based development. Furthermore it considers the transformation of governance relations from a local or bottom-up to a bottom-linked architecture, in which different governance scales (e.g. neighbourhood, city, region, national and international) find each other, as a necessary dimension of IAD. In terms of neighbourhood co-operation, inhabitants, organizations, movements, diverse public and private agents etc. are observed to come together and create opportunities to communicate with each other to build up a neighbourhood development strategy (Moulaert 2000). This cooperation often happens spontaneously through social mobilization initiated to overcome severe problems of deprivation.

IAD approaches thus focus on how different forms of fragmentation of urban space (socio-economic, physical, ...) may be overcome. It is suggested that different actors should grasp their relations to space to improve uses of space. Different groups, actors, agents, people with area-based development agenda's have to interactively learn how to build in the spatial dimensions, for example by integrating housing functions with public space, reorganising space in order to accommodate a diversity of social relations, establishing a park hosting different functions and actively involving people coming from inside and outside the neighbourhood in socio-political networking, etc. Spatial outcomes of social innovation are found in the consolidation and reconfiguration of networks. The creation of openings for previously excluded social groups in spatially articulated governance systems or place-making decision centers is one of such an example (see e.g. Van Dyck 2010).

Developing the territorial approach

The literature review shows that social innovation studies open new perspectives for local and regional development, both as a scale of action and analysis. It does so by stressing the use and organization of space as a new opportunity-set for change initiatives, by democratizing territorial governance dynamics and by linking local and regional bottom-up development agendas to the multi-scalar social relations that should enhance them.

The territorialized perspective of social innovation particularly allows explaining the relationships between the satisfaction of human needs on the one hand and social empowerment on the other through the reproduction of community social relations. With a focus on path- and space dependency and interrelated socio-territorial capitals, the social innovation process is about transforming relationships in which actors are embedded in order to increase control over these relationships and so impact on development trajectories. The relation between social innovation and territory can therefore be defined as impacting on socio-spatial relationships in such a way that local autonomy is increased in the construction of futures. Actors tend to be involved in both local networks and external networks, but the size, direction and intensity of networks may vary. Hence, in this approach territorial development is considered as a complex mesh of networks in which resources are mobilized and in which the control of the process consists of an interplay between local and external forces (Klein et al. 2008).

Despite its richness in recognizing institutional dynamics as having a key role in development, territorialized social innovation approaches still remain extremely vague about the

importance of spatial organization as an analytical unit in explaining social innovation or the capacity for empowerment (Van Dyck 2010, Van den Broeck 2011). To overcome this gap Van den Broeck (2011) argues that spatial capital can be analysed as part of socio-territorial capital.

Analysis of urban interventions, spatial layout and design is a field still to be explored in the social innovation literature, and interesting pathways may be opened when social innovation perspectives to territorial development are cross pollinated with design-oriented approaches. The 'social innovation approach to space through social space' indeed has important assets to offer as to the analysis of the processes that have led to the physical construction and organization of space and place, as well as to the institutional and social design of participation processes (communication, decision-making) that could lead to an improved use of space in its various dimensions, including the physical.

The weak incorporation of the material dimension of territory in social innovation is also particularly striking with regard to its failure in dealing with non-human components of territory (land, water, soil, air, …). With regard to territorial development, so far the social innovation literature has mainly focused on the reconfiguration of social, and socio-spatial, relations through exploring the interaction of bottom-up formal and informal initiatives and urban policy-making. The environment, ecological degradation, and so on, make an appearance in many studies, yet few of them truly investigate the nature-society relationship. A social innovation perspective could contribute to bridging overlapping, but too often only weakly connected environmental, social justice and environmental justice movements. It holds the potential to connect governance dynamics to practices that shape environmentally less destructive and socially just situations (see for example Parra 2010, Chapter 2.3 of this handbook).

In the wake of the current socio-economic and ecological global crisis, spatial strategies that arise from situations of social and economic decline have to take the agency of non-human actors seriously. Social innovation in territorial development will necessarily imply socio-ecological innovation.

Conclusion

The literature review in this chapter pointed to differences between social innovation approaches that are grounded in local and regional development approaches and those that are based on business innovation theoretical frameworks focusing on coalitions and networks and organizational forms. In the latter, space is generally approached in a reductionist container view. Economic geography and related disciplines, however, have shown the necessity of territorial analysis to explain development. De-territorialised views of social innovation run the same risks of other flat development approaches with a tendency of universalistic histories such as those common in neoclassical regional economy models.

If the aim of social innovation studies is to foster socially innovative initiatives that tackle underlying inequalities and injustices, we argue that it has to be inscribed in a development approach that takes seriously ethics as well as territory. Such an approach has the capacity to address development in all its dimensions (social, spatial, ecological,…) while adopting an ethics of social justice. It would be shameful to loose out this richness, which allows to go beyond a containerized view of territory, by starting from the social dimension of territories, and by placing and considering innovation and networks in their spatio-historical context without loosing sight of the material territoriality. Yet this may happen if we follow business innovation models, as expressed by e.g. the Six and Young foundation (Mulgan and Pulford 2010) and president Barroso (2011). Societal challenges, such as social exclusion or climate change impacts, will then no longer be considered as problems on ethical grounds, but problematic for they 'hamper [European] competitiveness and growth' (Mulgan and Pulford 2010, p. 6).

To contribute to meaningful and positive change it thus matters how we think about social innovation. Approaching social innovation as solution to create new markets will not stimulate thinking and action in ways that support alternatives to market-driven development. As a matter of fact, no one could reasonably argue that adding up socially innovative initiatives instrumentally leads to changes able to tackle fundamental problems. Social innovation, as a way to go beyond business as usual, consequently, requires a broad understanding of initiatives as part of their multi-scalar contexts.

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[i] We understand territory in as it is popular in *latin* languages. From this viewpoint, territory is not related to national space, or top-down connection between state and territory. Instead it refers to the bottom-up spatial context for identity and cultural difference. We use to definition of Moulaert and Sekia (2003) - following Friedman and Weaver (1979) Territory and Function: The Evolution of Regional Planning. Edward Arnold, London – who define territory in terms of 'the clustering of social relations, the place where local culture and other non-transferable local features are superimposed'.