Transformative Social Innovation: Insights from the TRANSIT project

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@FlorAvelino @TransitSI #L4CSI

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3.5 Years of TRANSIT in 30 minutes..

- Theorising transformative social innovation (TSI)
- Case-studies & methods
- Hybrid & political nature of TSI
Social innovation

Change in social relations

New Knowing
knowledge competence learning

New Doing
technologies practices materiality

New Framing
meanings visions images

New Organising
modes of organisation governance

Haxeltine et al. 2016
Chilvers & Longhurst 2016
Example Community Energy

Knowing
de-central
energy
learning

Doing
local
energy
production

“prosumer”
Framing

New relations
neighbours,
consumers -
producers

Organising
coop-eratives

Haxeltine et al. 2016
Chilvers & Longhurst 2016
‘Reinventing’ cooperatives
Complementary currencies
time/bank

Local Energy Tableland LETS Trading System

Global Eco-village Network

Ecopower cvba

THE TRANSITION HANDBOOK
From oil dependency to local resilience

Rob Hopkins
Founder of the Transition movement

SECURE

2012 International Year of Co-operatives

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/westlothianlets/
High Expectations of Social Innovation

Former EU commission president José Manuel Barroso:

“If encouraged and valued, social innovation can bring immediate solutions to the pressing social issues that citizens are confronted with.”

BEPA:

“At a time of major budgetary constraints, social innovation is an effective way of responding to social challenges, by mobilising people’s creativity to develop solutions and make better use of scarce resources”.

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High Expectations of Social Innovation

Social Innovations are new ideas that meet social needs, create social relationships and form new collaborations. These innovations can be products, services or models addressing unmet needs more effectively. The European Commission’s objective is to encourage market uptake of innovative solutions and stimulate employment.

Objectives
The Commission’s actions on social innovation stem from the Innovation Union initiative (2010) and of the Social Investment Package (2013). These actions facilitate the inducement, uptake and scaling-up of social innovation solutions. The main objectives are:

- promoting social innovation as a source of growth and jobs
- sharing information about social innovation in Europe
- supporting innovative entrepreneurs and mobilising investors and public organisations.

What the Commission does on social innovation
Transformative social innovation?

Haxeltine et al. 2016
Wittmayer et al. 2015
Avelino et al. 2014
Agency for transformative social innovation

AGENCY (dis)empowerment

Haxeltine et al. 2015
Wittmayer et al. 2015
Avelino et al. 2014
Integrating dimensions & theoretical perspectives

- Institutional theory
- Relational theory
- Structuration theory
- Transition research
- Science & Technology studies
- Innovation studies
- Political theory
- Political psychology
A middle-range theory of TSI
Conceptual framework & 20 theoretical propositions on TSI

http://www.transitsocialinnovation.eu/deliverables
Brazil
Doing things differently

Participatory democracy in Porto Alegre

The first of a new series: this Brazilian city’s municipal assembly challenges conventional systems of government – and it works
Sintomer et al. 2012
A NETWORK OF 547 TOWNS AND CITIES IN 52 COUNTRIES

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, France, Guatemala, Haiti, Holland, Honduras, Italy, Lebanon, Liberia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Senegal, Spain, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Togo, Turkey, United Kingdom, Uruguay and Venezuela.

310 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
237 UNIVERSITIES, RESEARCH CENTRES AND ASSOCIATIONS

A NETWORK OF SHARED COMMITMENTS
TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT
BARCELONA
LATIN AMERICA REGIONAL OFFICE
PORTO ALEGRE
ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
12 CITY ORGANISERS

WEB
www.oidp.net

https://oidp.net/en/
IMPACT HUB

Where change goes to work

entrepreneurial ideas

Sustainable impact

Welcome to Impact Hub
#HelloImpact
Embedded case-study approach

20 translocal networks

100+ local manifestations

25+ countries

EU, Latin-America, other

interviews, participant observation, document reviews, comparative meta-analysis

A repository of Critical Turning Points: making sense of TSI timelines

On breakthroughs, setbacks and surprises in processes of Transformative Social Innovation.

By Ronno Pel (ULB), Linda Zuijderwijk (IHS) and Adina Dimitru (UDC).

Through this blog we’d like to introduce you to our database project on Critical Turning Points in transformative social innovation. In the following we will explain how these Critical Turning Points help to make sense of social innovation processes, how we describe them, and how we seek to collect a diversity of those experiences from about 80 social innovation initiatives in various countries.

http://www.transitsocialinnovation.eu/sii
The Critical Turning Points database; concept, methodology and dataset of an international Transformative Social Innovation comparison

TRANSIT Working Paper #10, July 12th 2017


http://www.transitsocialinnovation.eu/sii
Comparative analysis

Transitions towards New Economies? A Transformative Social Innovation Perspective

TRANSIT Working Paper #3, September 2015

By Flor Avelino, Julia Wittmayer, Adina Dumitru, Noel Longhurst, Sabine Hielscher, Paul Weaver, Carla Cipolla, Rita Alonso, Iris Kunze, Jens Dorland, Morten Elle, Bonno Pel, Tim Strasser, René Kemp and Alex Hochezine

Narratives of change: How Social Innovation Initiatives engage with their transformative ambitions

TRANSIT Working Paper #4, October 2015

By Julia M. Wittmayer, Julia Backhaus, Flor Avelino, Bonno Pel, Tim Strasser, Iris Kunze

http://www.transitsocialinnovation.eu/downloads
4 clusters of narratives on alternative economies

- **“incubating social entrepreneurs”**
  - Social entrepreneurship & social economy

- **“living in local, resilient communities”**
  - Degrowth & relocalisation

- **“sharing & redesigning goods”**
  - Collaborative economy

- **“political institutional reform”**
  - Solidarity economy
Translocal empowerment

- **Empowerment** in terms of intrinsic motivation and self-determination: human need & longing for *relatedness, competence, autonomy*

- **Translocal** networks: local embeddedness (deepening) as well global connectedness (expansion)

- Access to socio-material **resources**: human, mental, monetary, technological, natural
Experimenting with social relations

• Physical and mental space for **learning** and experimentation.

• Renewing **social relations & relational values**.

  trust, reciprocity, equality, collectiveness, cooperation, sharing, solidarity, inclusion, transparency, openness, connectedness etc.

• **Community-building** and transparent, cooperative and inclusive forms of decision-making.
Diverse institutional contexts
changing relations between state, market & civil society
= social innovation in itself
Challenging institutional logics

- Initiatives challenge existing **institutional logics** and (re)-**negotiate** new / adapted institutional logics

- SI-initiatives **lack an ‘institutional home’** > ‘**institutional nomadism’** = both barrier & opportunity for transformative impact.

- **Hybrid organizational forms** instead of ‘stretch & conform’.
challenges
alters
replaces

Re-negotiating TAXES

new knowing
new doing
new framing
new organising

New Social Relations

reciprocal service-exchange

service exchange through formal money transactions

TIME BANK
60 MINUTES

AGENCY
(dis)empowerment

AGENCY
The Institutionalization of Social Innovation between Transformation and Capture

TRANSIT Working Paper 2, 14/10/14

By Bonno Pel & Tom Bauler
Findhorn (UK)

Tamera (Portugal)
- WhiteWashing
- GreenWashing
- WeWashing?
- AirBnB, Uber, etc.

#WeWashing: When “Sharing” Is Renting and “Community” Is a Commodity

By Lee-Sean Huang

WeWashing is a new term that refers to the abuse of words like “sharing” and “community.” Use #WeWashing to identify and critique this abuse.

Whitewash, Greenwash, WoWash

I am usually a satisfied user of services like Airbnb and Uber, even if I don’t 100% agree with all of their corporate policies and practices. But I cringe every time I hear those companies, and others like it, described as part of the “Sharing Economy.”
A Neoliberal Takeover of Social Entrepreneurship?

A model of social entrepreneurship focused on market-based solutions and profit is threatening to crowd out more collaborative approaches.

By Jyoti Sharma | Sep. 19, 2016

I recently found an article by Maria Llona, ago, in March 2009, from the economic crisis. She warned against the perils of neoliberalism, and that policies have led to the worsening of the situation. I'm not sure if this is true, but it seems that the 90 percent of the population...

The watering down of participatory budgeting and people power in Porto Alegre, Brazil

by DANIEL CHAVEZ

Introduction

In the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre, previously known as the birthplace of the World Social Forum and the global capital of participatory democracy, the centre-left coalition that took office after the electoral defeat of the PT in 2004 has implemented a new institutional scheme in Porto Alegre. It is known as "participatory budgeting," or "budget Participatory," which allows for deeper and broader civic engagement. The scheme has been praised by numerous international organizations, but for reasons to be discussed below, it is often criticized by local NGOs, engaged researchers, and civic society organizations. This process is consistent with broader change, taking place at the international level through the sustained efforts of new waves of participatory budgeting by other non-democratic and non-participatory institutions such as the World Bank.

New Thinking for the British Economy

Universal Basic Income is a neoliberal plot to make you poorer

by Dmytri Kleiner | Uncategorised

23rd November 2016

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A large poster in a square in Geneva, Switzerland, promoting the idea of a universal basic income. Photo: Reuters
Dialectics of TSI politics

- Social innovations have a dialectic relation with established institutions - they both challenge them and reproduce them.

- To be transformative, inclusive & accessible, some sort of mainstreaming is needed (marketization, formalization, bureaucratization, normalization).

- TSI = highly political > need to be prepared for mainstreaming paradoxes.

A dialectical perspective on innovation ‘capture’ (Bonno Pel 2016)
Paradoxical political strategies

- **Translating** (new ways of doing, knowing, framing & organizing) to mainstream context, while also maintaining one’s **radical core**

- SI-initiatives need flexible **portfolio of different - often paradoxical - strategies** towards institutional change (*supplementing, lobbying, protesting, compromising, complying, circumventing, avoiding, seducing, negotiating, imitating, surprising... etc.*)

*Translation & radical core (Adrian Smith 2006, 2007)*

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NO TO OIL DRILLING

Não! Ao Furo, Sim Ao Futuro
Defend the Sacred

NO TO DRILLING, YES TO THE FUTURE

ECOLISE
EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVES ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

ECOLISE COUNCIL

SIRCle
Social Innovation for Resilient Communities

Gaia education

Launch of the European Day of Sustainable Communities
Lancement de la Journée européenne des initiatives citoyennes durables

22/09/2017
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

JDE62 | EESC/CESE | Rue Belliard, 99 | 1040 Brussels/Bruxelles
The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function. One should, for example, be able to see that things are hopeless and yet be determined to make them otherwise.

(F. Scott Fitzgerald)
Thank you.

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#L4CSI