

Citizens' creative strategies facing social exclusion: towards innovation in local governance?

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Abstract:

The paper examines the relation between socially creative strategies in the face of social exclusion and governance dynamics. The main research question is “to what extent can existing local governance mechanisms and practices be influenced by social innovation in European cities?”. This question has been addressed in the frame of the KATARSIS, a Coordination Action (CA) under the European Commission's Framework-6 Programme. The first part of the paper conceptually addresses social innovation and governance from an institutional perspective, whereas the second develops an analytical framework emerging from the study of particular cases of socially creative strategies in European cities. The paper concludes: (i) there is an ambivalence between universalistic assumptions and pragmatism within social organisations and their resulting experiences; (ii) there is a dialectical tension between innovation and institutionalisation of socially creative strategies; (iii) the ways in which civil society organisations create socially innovative strategies is embedded in the specific institutional contexts and closely related to welfare mix models; (iv) innovation in governance takes place in different forms.

1 Introduction

Creative practices by citizens and the emergence of social innovation to face hegemonic consensus on territorial development are issues of increasing interest in the urban research agenda. Following this line of research, this article analyses the emergence of Socially Creative Strategies (SCS) taking into consideration the institutional context in which these strategies take place. Our aim is to examine the relationship between existing governance mechanisms and social innovation through the analysis of the role of actors involved in governance and the ways they interact. The final aim of the article is to describe how social innovation is being produced in different ‘governance regimes’ which are strongly determined by the welfare regime. To do this we depart from an analysis of governance and social innovation to study four European case studies of socially innovative experiences in four different institutional contexts.

In the first place, an institutional approach to governance dynamics is presented. Governance dynamics are understood as the framework of opportunities in which socially creative strategies can take place. In the literature review presented, local scale is analysed as intimately linked to national and supranational regulation contexts. Thus, we develop the concept of governance regime to describe concrete governance arrangements at local level that are embedded in a national welfare context. Following this line, the connection between governance and social innovation is twofold: governance can be understood as a *framework* allowing or hindering innovation or as a *field* for innovation itself. In the latter case, innovation happens when some innovative actors define new types of collective dynamics dealing with democratic complexity in policy-making. These kinds of processes can be led by formal institutions, civil society organisations promoting innovative practices inside public administrations, or by autonomous social movements opposing some kind of existing governance mechanisms.

Questions arising in this regard are how socially creative strategies can achieve some kind of impact on governance, how these SCS can be sustained in time, and why and how these practices provide social innovation. To respond at this last point we depart from the definition of Social Innovation provided by Frank Moulaert. For him, social innovation is defined as practices responding to human needs not covered by market mechanisms, trying to change unfair power relations and producing empowerment to individuals in citizenship denial situations (Moulaert et al. 2007). In this article we try to bring some empirical data on the ways social innovation takes place, analysing the multi-scalar relationships that occur in four different case studies on social innovation. The resulting observations stress how each initiative is linked to the institutional context in which it operates, as well as which actors are relevant to the decision-making and the implementation of each strategy.

The analysis of different SCS provides information on different modes of participation, distinctive contexts of strategic funding, and different types of impact on the governance regimes. The eight case studies were selected taking into consideration the urban regimes in which they operated. The case of Community Center Gallerup, in Aarhus (Denmark) presents a case of innovation within the Public Sector. The experiences of Olinda (Milan) and Ateneu Popular de 9 Barris (Barcelona) are cases of bottom-up innovation embedded in the territory with strong grassroots movements. The British experiences of Pedestrian (Leicester) and Promo Cymru (Cardiff) are examples of social innovation oriented towards market inclusion. Finally, the experiences of ARSIS (Greece), AFIP (France) and City mine(d) (UK-Spain-Belgium) are examples of socially innovative experiences that have undertaken their actions in a multi-scalar framework. Through a comparative approach we present a transversal reading of the case studies, analysing their impact on governance regimes. As we shall see, the impact on governance has been measured taking into consideration different dimensions: changes in policies, changes in the ways of approaching the problem, and changes oriented towards more transparent and participatory processes of decision-making. In addition, this comparative analysis puts emphasis on the embeddedness of SCS in the territory, the relevance of social networks at different scales and the provision of empowerment through the provision of resources in each socially creative strategy. With this analysis we want to stress that Civil Society Organisations need to balance between their universalistic and pragmatic assumptions to transform governance dynamics and their need to be sustainable as institutions. Hence, they develop different strategies of collaboration with –or resistance against– public administration and policy-makers.

In fact, there is a dialectical tension between innovation and institutionalisation of SCS. The research presented shows that Socially Creative Strategies play different roles depending on the institutional context in which they take place. For instance, where market oriented organisations are salient, Civil Society Organisations tend to become providers of services substituting or complementing the public provision. In other contexts, such as corporatist and family-type regimes, CSOs tend to play a relevant role in the redefinition of policies and values.

2 An institutional approach towards governance dynamics and civil society

The term ‘governance’ is used to refer to a change in processes and ways of governing. It encompasses the social relations that reproduce or disavow ‘government’ as one (collective) actor, mostly state leadership. One of the main features of this shift is the reshaping of the state with an increasing complexity of decision-making processes involving new kinds of relationship between state, market and civil society. In this way theoretical approaches to governance are applied to rethink the role of the state and other forms or logics of collective action. Therefore, these new perspectives on governance reveal a shift in the conceptualisation of state and power (Leubolt, 2007).

It is well known that since the end of the Second World War the categories whereby to understand “the political” have been the state and the national dimension, and also that the structural changes of capitalist societies from fordism to flexible economies in the last third of the 20th century have demanded new instruments and analytical tools. The emergence of the concept of governance is linked to these socio-economic dynamics. Recent developments of the concept have been based to a great extent on a historical global perspective. These approaches have described in depth the general trend towards a governance system based on the neo-liberal agenda. For instance, Brenner’s approach describes four configurations of urban governance that have crystallised since the era of high fordism, passing from the Keynesian governance of the 1960s to the globally framed metropolitan regionalism of the 1990s¹.

An in-depth analysis of the last stages of this development reveals the growing predominance of certain mechanisms of public-private participation where civil society plays a key role. A first stage of privatisation based on the Washington Consensus took place during the eighties and reinforced the then already growing social exclusion of sectors of society. In the nineties a new perspective based on the idea of competing, disciplining and caring emerged. That idea appears as a response to growing

¹ Brenner distinguishes the following historical phases in the evolution of the states: Keynesian governance (1960s), crisis of fordism (1970s), entrepreneurial governance and the first wave of glocalisation (1980s) and metropolitan regionalism with a second wave of glocalisation strategies (1990s)

inequalities in western societies. It was a strategy based on more inclusion without rejecting neo-liberalism. In this sense, governance can be considered a conceptual reaction, reintroducing agents and organisations other than markets after a long period of market self-regulation that led to social exclusion. This process embraced a decentralisation of the state, with more autonomy for cities and regions (nevertheless, as shall be seen later, this process was not homogeneous and there were different degrees of decentralisation). Adopting this perspective, Neil Brenner understands governance as “the broad constellation of social, political, and economic forces that mould the process of urban development within modern capitalism” (Brenner, 2004: 455-56). Urban governance—that is, the mechanisms and networks of actors of management of society—as well as the whole state itself, is under continuous change. In this sense, urban governance is an arena and a medium for state spatial restructuring.

This approach allows a historical analysis of the birth and consolidation of a normative view of governance based on “good governance” as a new management paradigm, and how the urban practices in accordance with this paradigm interact with a hierarchy of European cities. Political elites are using this normative discourse to encourage these new forms of management. In this discourse on ‘good governance’, favoured by key international institutions such as the World Bank, the OECD², the United Nations or the European Union, governance is seen as the mechanism whereby society, as a whole, can participate in economic development. As a consequence, it is argued, economic development under these conditions will be socially inclusive. In this view “the local” plays a key role not only in terms of economic development, but also in the sphere of social and political participation. However, as we shall see later, this discourse, although containing useful principles that could contribute to more democratic government in a less uneven society, is not consistent with the autocratic practices that have appeared through its application. Hence, normative discourses on governance can hinder this concept’s potential as an analytical tool of contemporary processes of change in the forms of public decision-making and administration.

From an analytical point of view, the concept of governance is still on a trajectory (Jessop, 2004; Leubolt et al., 2007; Le Galès, 2002; Pierre, 2005). From this perspective, the main aim of the concept is to analyse relationships amongst actors in a changing regulatory system. Different academic traditions guide different analytical approaches to governance. According to structuralist perspectives, governance is the answer of states and supra-national institutions intended to ameliorate conditions for capitalist growth and accumulation. Hence, this view envisages a perspective in which capitalism and the state develop together and co-ordinately according to the logic of capital. Structuralist approaches are useful to understand the impact of normative discourses on good governance in policy-making and in the restructuring of states. Thus, in this theoretical approach, multi-scalar coordination mechanisms – that is the balancing relations between local, regional, national and supra-national processes of decision-making – are of foremost importance. Jessop stresses the relevance of a triple trend involving statehood. Firstly there is a general trend towards de-nationalisation of territorial statehood, which brings a re-articulation of territorial organisation of power within or above the State³. The second trend refers to a de-statification of the political system, that is, a shift from government to governance on various territorial scales. That shift allows for new non-political actors but also for a new style of political actors (Moulaert, 1988). At the same time, government plays a major role in the definition of the ground rules for governance through its involvement in supranational institutions. Jessop denominates this definition of rules for governance as ‘metagovernance’. The third and last trend is related to the internationalisation of policy regimes, which means that national policies incorporate the transnational factors that become relevant. Jessop understands the state apparatus as formed by government structures and governance mechanisms. The change in the balance between those two elements has brought about an increasing role for the local scale in the global context, which has been conceptualised as ‘glocalization’ (Swyngedouw, 1992). This term is intended to summarise the idea that the local scale is gaining autonomy from the national States, and cities and regions are starting to appear as key actors in the global arena⁴.

² See OECD (2007): *Competitive Cities: A New Entrepreneurial Paradigm in Spatial Development*.

³ The latter is certainly true for many Global South countries where WTO, IMF, G8 etc. are the regulatory agents with the greatest impact – in the absence of powerful sub-national authorities)

⁴ Again this trend is not homogeneous: it does not apply in many local or regional territories in the Global South or even in some European territories (for example Calabria or Sicily, which have their own global governance dynamics in which international crime organisations play a significant part).

Although useful for understanding general trends of the transformation of states and the growing relevance of different scales in the policy-making, this approach is not useful for understanding how and why different governance mechanisms appear in different countries. In that sense, this proposal does not develop the wide array of forms that governance mechanisms take in different parts of the world, especially in Western Europe. Hence, the approach adopted in this report tries to integrate this general perspective with an institutional approach.

From an institutional perspective, the selective withdrawal of the state – and its re-entry through the market regulatory backdoor – and the imposition of market forces after the crisis of 1973 have had a different impact on each country, which, at the same time had very different previous governance systems. If we assume that governance mechanisms can adapt to pre-existing political structures we must also consider the different contexts where neo-liberalism is being implemented, and how these contexts influence the implementation of neo-liberal agendas and practices. Hence, the transformation of governance mechanisms depends not only on the needs of capital and the spatial restructuring of the state but also on the role of institutions and collective agencies in each state. Moreover, structuralist approaches do not take seriously the role that local actors can play in the transformation of governance through social innovation. What this article shows is the influence that bottom-linked experiences and institutional initiatives can exercise on governance mechanisms and the extent to which they can open the field in a more inclusive way.

Thus, our approach requires the consideration of the existence of multi-scalar governance mechanisms and interactions between different government scales in the decision-making processes. In this sense, bottom-linked creative strategies can be understood as one of the factors of governance in a wide range of possibilities for creating social integration. Hence, here we propose an analysis of Socially Creative Strategies centred on the interaction between institutions at different levels and how innovative initiatives have an impact on the other scales (González & Healey, 2005). In accordance with this perspective, we propose an integrated approach to SCS, while being very careful to avoid a bottom-up/top-down dichotomy. Thus, the main focus of analysis will be how these systems of interaction take place between scales. Moreover, we understand social innovation as a response to material needs that can generate social exclusion. In this framework there is a link between social exclusion, governance mechanisms and social innovation (Moulaert et al., 2007).

Finally, governance analysis must distance itself not only from any vision of “good governance”, which is part of the neo-liberal discourse to justify the imposition of market discipline on European societies, but also from other normative views that create a direct link between governance and democracy. Discussion of more democracy and participation is not new. What we propose in this document is a perspective of “democratic governance” as the result of a compound of the low and high intensity democratic practices that characterise representative and participatory democracy. The two forms are not only compatible; they need each other. Recent developments in the field of governance have focused attention on the development of participatory practices in the framework of representative democracy. These approaches show that the fragmentation of the local political system (number of political parties in office) and the logic behind the participation processes entail different outcomes. One could be the institutionalisation of individuals and organisations through bureaucratic mechanisms. Another could be the instrumentalisation of participatory processes to create competition amongst groups. Avoiding normative views of participation, Beaumont and Loopmans (2008) show how extreme-right parties have used participative mechanisms as a platform. These studies stress the complexity behind these elements and the way in which they are dependent.

2.1 Participation, civil society and governance

Normative views on governance that inform urban policies in European societies promise a broad consensus of the whole society (Geddes, 2006). This approach takes into consideration community participation and organised civil society and establishes a new relationship between citizens and government in which political citizenship, articulated through statist forms of governing, is transformed into a stakeholder based polity. In this conception of civil society, the concept of social capital plays a key role as the element that connects local participation with economic growth and democratic intensity. Nevertheless, participation of civil society in governance mechanisms can present several problems of legitimacy. As Swyngedouw pointed out (2005), whilst in pluralist democracy citizenship warrants participation through codified representational democracy, networked forms of governance have not codified rules and regulations that define participation and arenas of power. This generates multiple forms of participation of civil society based on *ad hoc* structures creating problems

of legitimacy, accountability and status. Moreover networked forms of governance often superficially hide the real power relations between unequal stakeholders – paraphrasing Bourdieu, they cover up the gaps between the ‘real’ networks that are reproduced through business capital, dominant language use (symbolic capital) and established institutions (institutional capital).

By analysing governance institutions we can understand who is allowed to participate and who is not, who represent the actors involved in policy-making and at what scale they are playing. As we shall see later, Socially Creative Strategies can have a participatory dimension that can potentially modify existing governance mechanisms, allowing more participation of previously excluded individuals and collectives. Therefore, when analysing governance it is necessary to think about the changes in the relationships between state and civil society, and how civil society is included in the process of participation. The concept of civil society generates considerable confusion about its status, content and position, both analytically and empirically . From a Marxist perspective civil society constitutes a set of economic and material relations versus the state (Swyngedouw, 2005). In that direction, Gramsci defined civil society as one of the three elements that shape society, together with market and state and as the sum of private non-state and non-market actors, and the terrain of social struggle for hegemony. The conceptions utilising this Gramscian perspective understand the state as ‘the concrete form of power relations thereby differing from the widely used definition of the state as a neutral arbiter of the common good’ . From this point of view, relations of power underlying the state structure, in which different interests compete, are relevant. However, in the new governance paradigm civil society is called to play a significant role in the configuration of the state.

From a liberal perspective, one major feature of civil societies is that they are based on individual freedom. In that sense, participation and entrance to an association is possible, but not mandatory . From this perspective, that distinguishes civil society associations from associations based on family or territory in which there is no space for individual choice. As Gellner (1995) pointed out, civil society creates flexible ties and clusters of institutions and associations strong enough to prevent tyranny but with free members. Nevertheless, the existence of civil society has not eliminated community morale. Thus, it is necessary to analyse the balance between intra-group solidarity and the defence of individual rights.

In keeping with Pérez-Díaz, civil societies are hybrids formed from a combination of “civil associations” and “associations as enterprises”. Civil associations are based on universalistic values and on mutual toleration, and their objective is exclusively oriented towards insuring the general, abstract and universalistic rules that everyone could be obliged to follow while pursuing their own individual, egoistical or altruistic drives. As Leubolt *et.al.* (2007) pointed out, this conception of civil association is based on the Habermasian rationalistic exchange of opinions in an ideal situation of free speech and replicates some of the normative views on participatory governance. On the other hand, associations ‘as enterprises’ pursue goals of their own and require their members to contribute, and eventually to sacrifice themselves, to such common goals. Those associations are based on intra-solidarity practices and sometimes show hostility towards strangers and outsiders (Pérez-Díaz, 1995).

Civil society organisations must find a balance between these two overlapping logics when introducing innovative practices. They need universalistic objectives but also organisational dynamics, intra-solidarity, leadership and networks with other associations and with individuals, which can be found in the logic of ‘association as enterprise’. Thus, behind Socially Creative Strategies we can find a compound of universalistic and intra-solidarity logics which may conflict with each other. The weight of each one of the logics depends on multiple elements such as institutional context, welfare provision and policy field. As we shall see in chapter four, in southern European countries some civil society organisations are based to a great extent on universalistic values. That has consequences such as less effectiveness and engagement with other institutions but it grants a wide basis of voluntary participation and engagement with other organisations with similar universalistic values. In this way, civil society organisations need to balance the two logics in a given context to obtain efficiency to achieve universalistic objectives without falling in the logic of the enterprises. In section four we analyse different organisations in their contexts. As an example southern European experiences with universalistic basis are analysed in depth: Olinda in Milano and Ateneu Popular de Nou Barris in Barcelona. In spite of this, as Margit Mayer has pointed out, socio-economic dynamics are reinforcing the role of third sector organisations under the logic “of enterprise” (that is intra-solidarity logic) through the concept of social capital, which has become a central element of anti-poverty discourses . This has resulted in the exclusion of some groups and socially innovative strategies with universalistic

purposes of the policy-making. Nevertheless there is a wide range of possibilities for the balancing of these two logics. In the field of social economy, for example, there is a whole range of social enterprise logics (Moulaert and Ailenei, 2005).

Taking into consideration these two kinds of logic followed by civil society, we can assess that, at least potentially, civil society is the terrain from which socially transformative and innovative action can emerge and where social power relations can be contested. One contestation is the pursuit of material objectives to overcome social exclusion. Moreover, associations may seek more participation in urban management. In this sense civil society can assume part of the state's functions following the governance paradigm, providing services and welfare to citizens⁵. Thus the new articulations between state, market and civil society generate new forms of governance (Swyngedouw, 2005). This approach to the relations between civil society and governance allows a focus on the dialectics between governance institutions and social innovation.

2.2 Socially creative strategies and governance regimes

Welfare regimes are not static formations; they change over time with new regulatory arrangements between different actors from market, state and civil society. From this perspective Cameron (2007) stressed the fact that welfare regimes are in transition from one kind to another, and also pointed out at the strong differences within welfare regimes according to the different policy fields (Cameron, 2007). Moreover, the transformation of welfare regimes is related also with the changing degree of centralisation of states over time and the degree of integration of the different government scales in decision-making processes. There are states with a strong centralist tradition that have timidly decentralised policy-making but maintaining strong vertical integration, like France. Others, on the contrary, have been decentralised without vertical integration (this is the case of Spain). These two variables (centralisation and vertical integration) will be used to define the wider context in which Socially Creative Strategies take place.

Moreover, political change can transform the governance framework and generate institutional innovation. For instance, in the Catalan case, a change in regional autonomous government, with a social-democrat coalition in 2003, has promoted innovation in governance transforming the relation between regional and local authorities in dealing with social exclusion. The new government coalition promoted new governance arrangements in housing and urban infrastructure in order to improve public policy for deprived areas. In this new framework, municipalities are exhorted to develop an integral intervention project with regional funding⁶. This example shows how new governing coalitions can generate new governance arrangements.

The role of power relations between actors and how different coalitions of actors create hegemonic consensus on different models of economic development is related to the features of national, regional and local contexts. In this sense, in some context civil society can institutionalise their action in order to improve socially inclusive governance dynamics and in other cases can try to construct counter-hegemonic movements against the current hegemonic consensus (Moulaert et al., 2007). In the different cases analysed in the next section, different innovative practices are presented in their multi-scalar context in order to understand the way in which they impact on governance mechanisms generating social inclusion. As seen in the previous sections, multi-scalar governance constitutes the framework in which SCS can develop both *through* governance and *in* governance. We include examples in which governance mechanisms are helping to provide sustainability to SCS. In this sense the dynamism of governance processes and their interaction with SCS are influences across the time dimension. Often projects have a short life because they are not supported institutionally. On other occasions institutions are willing to support a project, but the time frames do not coincide and, by the time the institution has decided to be supportive, the project is dying. Thus regime context and the dynamics of governance (timing is part of it) offer clues as to how and where it is possible to transform SCS into citizenship practices.

⁵ Nevertheless, it is also important to point out that, in most cases, social capital is fragmented and can therefore be less effective (Mayer, 2003).

⁶ In this case, the municipalist tradition of Catalan social-democracy influenced this policy, aimed at filling a previous gap between local and regional level. Whereas the local level was mainly dominated by social-democratic forces, the regional government was ruled by a rightwing Catalan nationalist party.

A further question to take into account is transferability. To what extent can successful SCS be emulated in different institutional contexts? For example, as Kimberlee et. al. (2007) remarked, the car-free neighbourhood initiatives in Germany or Netherlands are not necessarily transferable to other countries with more aggressive car cultures. Infrastructure investment in northern European societies influences in a direct way the success of such an initiative that would not be transferable to southern contexts. Therefore, we can identify less developed car-free environments where investment in public mobility infrastructures has been historically lower. Often what can be transferred is the logic or philosophy, and not the practices or policies, which are much more contingent on local, regional or national frameworks.

3 Analysis of the case studies

3.1 Innovation within the public sector: Community centre Gallerup, Aarhus (Denmark)

The experience of Community Centre Gallerup (CCG) in Denmark constitutes an example of social innovation in a social democratic context. In Scandinavia the social democratic welfare regime has facilitated a mode of governance based on the inheritance of the 'municipal socialism' of the beginning of the 19th century. Not only was the national class struggle decisive for building the welfare state, but municipalities also played a key role in the development of welfare systems (Esping-Andersen, 2002). In fact, the labour movement achieved power in a large number of cities, mainly in northern Europe and this has been translated in its political culture and multi-level featuring on social innovation. In this context, civil society organisations have played a marginal role in providing services until recent times. Nevertheless, the third sector and social movements are large and strong due to the rich tradition on social and political organisation of these countries (Andre and Abreu, 2007). The role of the third sector in the provision of services, in collaboration with municipalities, has increased since the nineties, but at the same time they hold a logic of 'civil association' oriented towards universalistic values and popular mass movement building (Andre and Abreu, 2007).

In this context CCG appears as a project initiated by a local library branch in the disadvantaged neighbourhood of Gellerupparken, the poorest housing estate in Denmark, in the city of Aarhus (Hedelund, 2007). The aim of the centre is to foster active citizenship and equality of the citizens of Gallerup with other Danish citizens. This objective has been translated into the provision of services such as health provision, library services, or counselling services for ethnic minorities. Various public institutions manage the centre, working within a common infrastructure and logic despite their different administrative organisations. In this sense, the centre presents an innovation in terms of internal organisation of public administrations. The public institutions collaborating in the community centre Gallerup are: The Gallerup Library, The Local Health Centre and the Public Information Centre. These three institutions work closely together with voluntary organisations, citizens' associations and individual members. The centre is managed by professional staff but the collaboration of volunteers is a key factor for the provision of some services. The combination of professionals and volunteers makes the internal structure of the centre more complex but allows a wider degree of activities (Hedelund, 2007).

This case study is an example of quality development of the public sector; it promotes the discussion of routes towards democratisation and better mobilisation of resources in a close interplay with the local civil society. It sets a new standard for holistic and user-inclusive managing and innovation of public activities; and demonstrates the promotion of relational networks as a tool against social exclusion. In terms of governance, the CCG exemplifies a process of social innovation based on fostering citizenship, equality and empowerment in which the local public institutions are the leading forces. NGOs and civil society associations are involved in the project as partners, together with the municipality of Aarhus. The project is coordinated with the general strategic vision of the municipality aiming at both the promotion of the city and social integration. As a centre of a disadvantaged neighbourhood, CCG shows a new approach to welfare provision based on empowerment as the way to equality. Nevertheless, it has had no impact at national level because it is considered to be place-specific.

3.2 Bottom-up innovation embedded in the territory: Olinda (Milano) and Ateneu Popular de Nou Barris (Barcelona)

The experiences of the social centres Olinda and Ateneu Popular de Nou Barris, both in Southern European countries, are contrasting cases in relation to the case of Gellerup. National and local contexts are strongly relevant to understanding these differences. In Southern European countries civil society has historically played a marginal role in welfare provision and has had weak engagement in governance mechanisms. Southern welfare cultures are based more on informal reciprocity and familistic alliances, which are stronger than those characteristic of the Nordic systems. This is visible in the way civil society has to deal with social exclusion (Esping-Andersen, 2002). The fragmentation in welfare programs in Southern regimes has meant that civil society has engaged itself in the management of social integration.

The cases of Olinda in Milano and Ateneu Popular de Nou Barris in Barcelona exemplify processes of collective re-appropriation of outdated spaces, enhancement of local civic life and welfare co-production. In contrast with the case of Gellerup, there has been little involvement by public administrations in the creation of the initiative. On the contrary, in these two cases organisations from civil society were the promoters of the Socially Creative Strategy with the initial opposition of the two local public administrations. However, the consolidation of the two projects has become possible after negotiations, collaboration and agreements with the city council.

Olinda is a social cooperative created in the nineties with the aim of transforming a large, closed psychiatric hospital in the northern suburbs of Milan into a more open and therapeutic environment for mental health services users. The cooperative also met the demand for alternative uses of public space by ordinary citizens of the entire metropolitan area, adding the provision of personal and cultural services. Since 1996 *Olinda*'s main feature has been the organisation of the Summer Festival *Da vicino nessuno è normale* (Up close nobody is normal), which has become the dynamo of the initiative's development. Moreover mental health care is combined and produced through the consolidation of a theatre, the running of a bar-restaurant and also offering catering services and accommodation in a hostel. These different purposes produce work opportunities for persons with mental health problems.

Ateneu Popular de Nou Barris is housed in an old asphalt plant, in a neighbourhood with a strong tradition of urban social movements linked to neighbourhood demands for collective services and more recently for urban renewal. The centre was founded in 1977 in the context of the mobilisation of civil society against the Franco regime which was based to a great extent on the neighbourhood associations. The main emblematic goals of this centre have been to become a reference for the collective life in the neighbourhood and, at the same time, a reference institution for the study and practice of circus arts. This double linkage has allowed the organisation to become a referent for social movements in Barcelona. The historic process was as follows: after the closing of the plant the neighbourhood movement squatted the building and created the centre. Behind the action there were a clear willingness for self-management⁷. Thus, the logic of organisation within the centre was based on universalistic values of culture and citizenship through a self-managed cultural centre. This strategy was possible because of the strength of social movements in the neighbourhood, which gave social support to the initiative. Nevertheless, an agreement with the City council for the economic sustainability of the centre was achieved during the eighties, which generated intense internal debates about self-management. The City council subsidises the centre and reformed the building but the management has remained independent. This kind of agreement is possible because the City council recognises the role of service provision that the centre is playing.

Both experiences have developed in peripheral locations of Milan and Barcelona municipalities. Both have developed strong ties with the neighbourhoods in which they emerged, promoting enjoyment, civic life and culture. Both cases show the importance of civil society locally developed in a context where welfare provision by public institutions is fragmented. Both are examples of good practices that have gone beyond the respective neighbourhoods in their influence. Ateneu has become a relevant stakeholder, recognised by the Catalan government in the negotiation of the new regional

⁷ Furthermore, the name of *Ateneu popular* is linked to the anarchist movement prominent in the city at the beginning of the century. During and after the last decades of 19th century, the anarchist movement, as well as other socialist and leftist movements, created cultural centres for workers generating a tradition on self-education. The names of the centres were usually "Ateneos populares" or "Casas del pueblo".

framework on arts. What makes them examples of SCS in governance is the fact that they have developed themselves autonomously while receiving financial support from public institutions, influencing the way city councils see these experiences as movements towards social innovation in urban governance with a strong local sense. At the same time the two organisations have entered into specific conflicts with their respective public administrations, while maintaining negotiation mechanisms. As examples of social innovation in Southern European cities, the two cases show social innovation and path dependency, paying close attention to the importance of the activities and strategies of past social movements keeping network relationships over the years. As Vitale argued, referring to Olinda, these initiatives of ‘social entrepreneurship’ are examples of organisational processes that are capable of increasing reflexivity in dynamics of social innovation. Ateneu persuaded the Barcelona City council to create a civic-management agreement with the centre that could be an example for other organisations. This agreement not only included the reform of the former asphalt plant but also secured a public subsidy to manage the centre. This agreement has become a reference for other civil-society groups that are trying to manage similar spaces in the city.

These three cases illustrate how similar socially creative strategies articulate different answers in different social context. In the case of Community Centre Gellerup the public initiative determines the activity and the aims of the centre in a deprived neighbourhood. In the cases of Olinda and Ateneu popular, it is civil society which generates the centres and defined their aims, establishing later negotiations with the public sector. In these last two cases, the logic behind the initiative is strongly transformative but it needs to adapt to the local governance context in order to survive. However, there is also a drawback to this strategy, as leaders of both organisations explain: the danger of activists fatigue given the voluntary work involved in these practices. OLINDA and ATENEU POPULAR DE 9 BARRIS are initiatives continuously dealing with the production of reciprocity, and because of this need for local citizens’ commitment, they had to assume strong ideological debates. Participation and debates about the management and functions of these initiatives mean talking about values, professional-volunteer binomial or civil-society self-management. Then, these SCS have to achieve institutional support without losing the legitimacy given to them by civil-society as alternative mechanisms towards social innovation. Moreover, they have to prove their business ability.

3.3 Innovation towards market inclusion? Pedestrian and Promo Cymru (United Kingdom)

The Socially Creative Strategies promoted by Promo Cymru and Pedestrian in the United Kingdom mean a different approach to social innovation. Pedestrian started its activities in Leicester whereas Promo Cymru is based on Cardiff. Nevertheless, both have expanded their activities to other urban centres of the United Kingdom. This expansion is due to the logic of both initiatives and the national context in which they play a role as service providers.

The United Kingdom welfare redistribution and vertical integration of scales of decision-making have undergone considerable transformations in the last forty years. Since the 1970s the country has gone through a process of neo-liberalisation with a certain withdrawal of the state in favour of the market institutions. Moreover, the neo-liberal hegemony has also guided regional policy transformation. Non-profit organisations are called on to play a role in this framework with the provision of services not covered by the state. In this context the logic behind civil society organisations is based mainly on intra-solidarity. Leadership, networks and internal coordination are keys to success in the provision of services and to obtaining public funds.

PEDESTRIAN⁸ is a wide-ranging arts organisation, delivering education, developing creativity and providing access to urban art forms. PEDESTRIAN promotes community arts and creativity for young people by providing services such as workshops, research, products, events, mentoring, resource development, consultation and training. As a non-profit organisation PEDESTRIAN has grown linking its innovative interests with those of the *turntablist* (techno music) community, highlighting the special attention that PEDESTRIAN gives to new urban art forms.

⁸ Pedestrian has been introduced into the framework of KATARSIS by Jim Willis. See <http://www.pedestrian.info/>

PROMO CYMRU⁹ is a co-operative and Social Enterprise Agency with the objective of promoting the co-operative form of business in Wales. This social enterprise provides business support and advice to young people whilst encouraging them to engage in social and cultural entrepreneurship. The organisation promotes entrepreneurship in musical activities as well as providing an advisory service to individuals and collectives in the cultural industries about business organisation and individual careers. At the same time the organisation provides cultural products to public clients such as the BBC or county councils, as well as to the private sector. To make this possible, Promo Cymru has created its own recording studio and record company, which have become a platform for emergent artists. Moreover it has set up several areas of operation around client development, direct consultation with young people or directly with organisations developing services or facilities for young people, media services and products, and cultural enterprise incubation.

Both organisations are based on managerial organisation and are oriented towards business. Although there is strong participation of volunteers in the management, PEDESTRIAN and PROMO CYMRU have market objectives. Nevertheless, both organisations combine awareness about working on social inclusion with the provision of goods and services through market mechanisms. In the case of PEDESTRIAN there is a clear awareness of providing services not offered by public administrations. In the case of PROMO CYMRU the objective is to introduce young individuals and collectives into the cultural industries with a co-operativist and social economic vision. Both organisations show an efficient allocation of resources and are able to export their experiences to other neighbourhoods and towns in their regions, which favours sustainability. However, they do not have a particular interest in modifying governance mechanisms.

3.4 SCS in a multi-scalar context: AFIP (France), ARSIS (Greece) and City mine(d) (Belgium)

AFIP in France, ARSIS in Greece and City Mine(d) in the European context are examples of civil society organisations that have created links at multiple scales of government. In the cases of AFIP and ARSIS there is a clear governance impact of these organisations at the national level. City Mine(d) action is based on connecting citizens with different scales of government to improve their citizenship rights. For that reason the organisation is linked with multiple tiers of government.

AFIP¹⁰ is a French non-profit organisation founded in 2002 by Carole Da Silva. The organisation started to operate in Paris but became a reference at the national scale. The founder's leadership capacity and her connections within the public administration are the keys to understanding the relevance that the organisation has achieved. The objective of AFIP is to tackle racial discrimination by developing personal programmes and services for ethnic-minority graduates, developing mentoring programs, settling or lobbying in favour a policy of equal opportunity involving companies and creating a link between organisations and young graduates. AFIP strategy is based on creating networks to avoid discrimination. Through these networks different actors build a collective strategy, creating local initiatives linking civil society associations, companies and local institutions

ARSIS is a NGO established in 1992, operating in Athens, Thessalonica, Volos, Larisa, Karditsa, Polygyros and Tirana. It specialises in social assistance to children and youth that are in difficulty or danger and in the advocacy of their rights. With several modes of decision-making, the organisation is based mainly on volunteer workers, who participate in the decision-making of the organisation. All the actions are based on the volunteers' initiatives, with the coordination of professional workers in a counselling relationship. When ARSIS was founded, its members were mainly people involved as activists in left-wing parties. Nevertheless, participation has widened as the organisation has grown. However, ARSIS has not created formal long-term funding agreements with public administration, although there is a trust relation with different levels of government that facilitates public financing for specific projects and from different national ministries.

⁹ Promo Cymru has been introduced into the framework of KATARSIS by Marco Gil Cervantes. See <http://www.promo-cymru.org/> and http://katarsis.ncl.ac.uk/ws/ws5/Presentations/WP2_CYMRU2.pdf

¹⁰ Sébastien Lailheugue introduced AFIP into the framework of Katarsis. See www.afip-asso.org

Both ARSIS and AFIP are civil society organisations with the aim of including excluded minorities that have developed new strategies to help minorities in a deprived situation. Although both have had impact on the policy-making at the national level, they have followed different organisational strategies. The Greek initiative has developed a strong and large voluntary organisation in order to become nationally influential. The organisational logic behind ARSIS is linked to universalistic ideas and the transformation of society. AFIP has successfully achieved national influence mainly by basing its work on creating networks between its users, companies and other organisations at different levels. In the case of ARSIS, the key element for success has been massive voluntary participation. With a similar strategy to those of Ateneu and Olinda, in ARSIS civil society mobilisation has become a key to sustain the organisation and to spread their action. Thus, in the absence of strong institutional backing, the organisational growth of SCS, with different branches and presence in relevant places, features in some way the form of social movements, playing a role in a path-dependency scheme.

In the case of AFIP, there are some policy changes and opportunities for governance changes. Since the explosion of racial tensions in the 'banlieus' of Paris in 2005, public institutions have shown a clear interest and engagement with no-discrimination. At the same time, private companies have also demonstrated a renewed interest in a policy framework for equal opportunities involving the whole company staff. The racial tensions in Paris made evident the problem that AFIP was trying to denounce: the ethnic discrimination in the French labour market. When the traditional corporatist agents – entrepreneurs, trade unions and the state – recognised the problem, AFIP became the necessary reference and had a pool of expertise to deal with it. Despite the growing interest in the initiative, AFIP resists growth in a physical or organisational sense. Their managers declare that they prefer to disseminate their knowledge to other agents in other communities than to promote franchises of their own organisation. This is a consequence of the governance regime in which AFIP operates, a framework which better promotes networking activation than massive citizens' mobilisation.

Finally, the case of City Mine(d)¹¹ (originally from Brussels) exemplifies an autonomous way to deal with this *cross-cutting* type of multi-level functioning. City Mine(d) is a networked association for urban intervention with the objective of developing new forms of urban citizenship, the re-appropriation of public space and the creation of public artwork. City mine(d) works through the creation of different agencies in Europe (Brussels, Barcelona and London), which has allowed over 70 urban interventions in different European cities. This non-profit organisation is based on public funds, with support from regional, national, metropolitan and local authorities. In some cases City mine(d) has also worked with private partners and foundations. The diversification of funding sources becomes a vehicle for the promotion of unusual coalitions from the very local to the inter-city. This strategy enables City Mine(d) to tackle barriers to development, and empowers different participants to address their concerns regardless of the inequalities that would otherwise prevent them from doing so. Therefore, in the case of City Mine(d), empowerment is based in transforming the way the city is perceived and bringing people together across borders of geography, language and culture. It is a way that draws attention to the public sphere as a space for self-activation and public redefinition of strategies of social inclusion. However, this organisation lacks embeddedness in the local communities which means that outcomes are very unpredictable.

4 Concluding Remarks

This paper is a first step towards the analysis of the relationship between governance and social innovation. The proposed approach contributes to institutional analysis by helping to understand Socially Creative Strategies in their context. This means taking into consideration the role of different local public, private and civil society actors in the consolidation of Socially Creative Strategies and their interaction with other actors and institutions at different scales. We have summarised this local context as *governance regime*, taking into consideration also the multi-scalar dimension in which regulation take place and economic and social resources are distributed. Since the development of SCS is embedded in institutional contexts, we have tried to analyse the logics and internal organisation behind Socially Creative Strategies and how CSO need to adapt their actions to their respective institutional context. Our aim was to answer three main questions: how SCS can have an impact on

¹¹ City Mine(d) has been introduced into the framework of KATARSIS by Jim Segers. See <http://www.citymined.org>

governance, how these SCS can be sustained in time, and why and how these practices provide social inclusion. The analysis of the cases studies in our framework furnishes some answers to these questions.

First, in all the case studies analysed, CSOs need to balance between universalistic assumptions and pragmatism to transform governance dynamics and to be sustainable over time. In some cases, such as Olinda, Ateneu Popular de Nou Barris or ARSIS, there is a direct link with social movements and social transformation oriented ideologies leading to activism and self-organisation as a way of transforming the local governance context. In other cases the strategy employed by the leading CSO promotes engagement with the public administration and provision of services for empowerment of citizenship. In all cases the local governance regime has a clear influence on the strategies followed by CSOs. These local organisations have to put in practice socially innovative strategies in order to influence the governance regime. CSOs need this dynamism in order to sustain their practices and to transform the governance institutions in policy-making, the conceptualisation of problems and the extension of participation.

In fact, there is dialectical tension between innovation and institutionalisation of Socially Creative Strategies. To face this tension it is necessary to analyse how the institutionalisation process occurs, taking into consideration the impact in terms of values and practices of the SCS in policy-making. As we have seen, where market oriented organisations are salient, innovative practices have no room for changing policies. In that context CSOs tend to become providers of services substituting public provision. In other contexts, such as corporatist and familistic welfare regimes, CSOs tend to play a more relevant role in the redefinition of policies and values, as we have seen with the example of AFIP in France or ARSIS in Greece. Moreover, the policy field in which CSOs develop is also relevant when assessing their impact on governance mechanisms. As we have described and concluded in chapter three the constellation of actors and the ways of social exclusion differ from one policy field to another, which has consequences in terms of the participation and impact on the policy agenda.

Nevertheless, institutionalisation and innovation are not necessarily antagonistic. The impact of SCS into the governance regimes in terms of policy-making, transforming values or providing more transparent and democratic processes needs to be sustained and renewed in a dynamic context. In fact, although embedded in their institutional context, governance regimes are influenced by global logics and changes in the hegemonic discourses on urban management in the context of neo-liberalism. This influence, as well as socio-political struggles at local level, can also influence the role that political elites give to different actors in the urban regime. In this sense, CSOs need to adapt their organisational logic and their actions to develop and sustain their practices and their achievements over time. As the case studies have shown, innovative practices play a key role in the sustainability of CSOs, providing new social resources and generating opportunities for being relevant in the governance regime. Thus, the study of the role of CSOs in governance mechanisms must include a political dimension to understand how different political approaches allow new roles for civil society and market agents.

This brings us to the question of the role of public bodies in SCS. Having considered differences between governance regimes, we can understand the role of political actors in the emergence of SCS. As has been seen in the analysis of Community Centre Gellerup, in some cases public bodies lead and promote social innovation looking for involvement by the Civil Society Organisations. In other cases the public administration can adopt initiatives from civil society and transform them into public policies. Thus, there is no direct antagonism between democratic bottom-up Socially Creative Strategies of civil society and representative democracy. Moreover, there are many different kinds of participation and citizenship practices (García, 2006). Depending on the local context and the national framework, relationships between these two forms of participation can change. Given these complementarities between representative democracy and participation, the term 'bottom-linked initiatives' becomes more useful for the study of Socially Creative Strategies. In most of the cases Socially Creative Strategies against exclusion depend on the ability of coordination of different actors at different scales. In terms of governance analysis, the concept of bottom-linked initiatives shows the close relationship established between bottom-up initiatives and top-down practices and policies.

The approach presented here is useful to understand how civil society organisations try to have an impact on governance regimes through Socially Creative Strategies. In some contexts CSOs seek to have an influence as service provision agents, whereas in other contexts CSOs try to transform the institutional governance framework, changing values and social norms to generate new policies and

practices. In the first case CSOs try to put innovations in practice through existing governance mechanisms, whereas in the second case they try to transform the existing governance mechanisms. These two attempts are compatible, and in most of the SCS the two objectives can be found at the same time. Moreover, actors involved in SCS usually embrace immediate material purposes and long-term objectives of transformation of governance. As we have seen, organisational strategies of CSOs are path dependent but have also a strategic dimension. Thus, there is dynamism between governance mechanisms and organisational strategies of CSOs. The cases analysed in this report reveal another important element in this relation: the embeddedness of the CSOs in the territory.

This document presents a first step towards the analysis of social innovation and its influence in governance of cities. Further and more comprehensive comparative analysis following this analytical framework would shed some light on the effectiveness of Socially Creative Strategies development against social exclusion; the common elements of diverse local contexts that influence a successful outcome and the contributions of SCS to local governance regimes. Also further research should look at the impact these strategies can have on higher scales of governance and at how SCS can construct counter-hegemonic views in national and European public spheres.

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