‘Social Innovation as Institutional Innovation’

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Social Innovation Futures: beyond policy panacea and conceptual ambiguity
EU-SPRI Exploratory study

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The long story of wicked problems & narratives about our common future & the (multi) planetary crisis

\textit{(Homo-linguisticus)}

Stockholm in 1972, Rio in 1992, Johannesburg in 2002; Río+20…

Rationales to policy (state) intervention

- mission-oriented
- market failures
- systems failures

\textit{(Borras & Edler, 2015)}

Mentions both technological and social innovation (1972)
Sl...a solution to Grand Challenges of the 21st Century?

emergence of cross-sector collaborative innovation
...beyond policy panacea?

A socio-technical (and cultural) paradigm shift?

...at the shadow of normativity

...and the shadow of (institutional) governance
Overview

1. Why institutions & institutional innovation?

2. But...what does institution mean?

3. Two ways to explore institutional dimension of SI
   3.a From the ‘mainstream’ of innovation & STS studies
   3.b From a provisional definition of SI

4. Backing to any innovation process ...and outcomes

5. Conclusion
1. Why institutions & institutional innovation?

Institutions constitute a key concern as an intermediary level between the organisational and the societal levels

(Whyte & Sexton, 2011)

Institutions shape and can contribute (or not) to improve learning (and innovation) processes

(Johnson, 2010)

Institutions are at the heart of the co-evolution of socio-technical (and cultural?) change… and their governance

(Casper & Whitley, 2004)

‘Institutions are sets of common habits, routines, established practices, rules, or laws that regulate the relations and interactions between individuals, groups and organisations’

(Edquist & Johnson 1997: 46)

‘Soft’ and ‘hard’ institutions as a domain of action for the social agenda… related to new action goals, innovative intentionality and reshaping or ‘demand’ of new capabilities

(Crawford & Ostrom 1995; Canibaño et al., 2006)
3. Two ways to explore institutional dimension of SI
3.a From the mainstream of innovation & STS studies

Institutions are present in theoretical approaches and heuristic innovation models

Innovation systems (national, regional, sectorial, local)

Technological innovation systems

Triple Helix, Cuadruple Helix...

Socio-Technical Transitions

Innovation Functions

The ‘old’ economic institutionalism:

‘actors’ (players) & ‘rules of the game’

(North, 1990)
Institutions and institutional innovation are likewise largely ‘invisible’ in innovation studies

(Lundvall, 2010; Martin, 2013)

‘the 2008 financial crisis was partly caused by changes in the regulatory framework, i.e., institutional innovations’ …not still investigated

(Martin, 2013, p. 6)
Broadening Innovation & STS fields? (specially Management & Sociology)

‘Institutions comprise ‘regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life’

(Scott, 2008)

Beyond ‘bounded-rationality’ of actors, focus is on the ‘constitutive rules’ as the micro-foundations (the ‘law of formation’) of the social realm, how structures are formed and transformed
Innovation field

How institutions influence/shape learning processes?... and knowledge production

(Lundvall, 1992; Johnson, 2010)

... to improve the efficiency of innovation systems
(and more or less oriented to inclusivity and the satisfaction of social needs)
**SOCIAL INNOVATION** literature

How social practices are institutionalized?

… to understand how change in social practices produce/construct social change

‘The process dimension of social innovation concerns the creation and structuring of institutions as well as behavioural change and the empowerment of actors’

(Crozier & Friedberg, 1993, p. 19)
3b. From a provisional definition of SI

SOCIAL INNOVATION PROCESS

WHY?
WHAT?

WHO (ACTORS & AGENTS)?
WHERE? (INNOVATION 'LOCUS')
WHAT/WHICH ARE THE 'SOURCES'? HOW IS THE PROCESS ORGANISED?

WHICH ARE THE 'RESULTS' (OUTCOMES)?
Mapping co-occurrence of main terms found in narratives of SI (N=252 definitions of SI from 1950 to 2014)

2,339 documents, retrieved from Web of Science, SCOPUS & Google scholar

**Content analysis**

(combined methodology)

**A.** Aims/ends and generation of values in SI processes

**B.** The ‘outputs/outcomes’ of SI processes

**C.** The organization of SI processes: Sources, actors and interrelationships

**D.** Institutions and power in SI processes

**E.** SI processes in complex macro-systems

*Map:* Matthew L. Wallace (VoSViewer software)

Revisiting six decades of social innovation definitions
General results: Two intertwined views of SI

Transformative
‘new combination or configuration of social practices/change in social practices’

Instrumental & Normative
‘new or improved product’, ‘new service’
‘new organisation method’, ‘social inventions’ (law, norm, rule)
Examples of ‘pure’ and hybrid social innovations

- Base of Pyramid (BoP) innovation
- inclusive innovation
- Below-the-Radar Innovation (ETI)
- frugal innovation
- Jugaad innovation
- Gandhian innovation
- eco-innovation
- social technologies
- open social innovation
- responsible innovation
- sustainable innovation
- environmental innovation

...babelisation of innovation
4. Backing to *any* innovation process

Outcomes of innovation process?... normative and transformative in ‘T’, ‘S’ & ‘C’
Institutions are created through learning processes where ‘learning not only includes behavioural learning (learning-by-doing which evolutionary theories operationalize through search and performance feed-back), but also cognitive learning (which emphasizes action, reflection and sense-making)’

(Geels, 2010, p. 499)

Any Innovation process involves social action (agency)

(Hellström, 2004)
Changing beliefs and mind-sets imply ‘struggles’ against inertia & power interactions

Creating a Culture Change

The CEO of FxPro, one of the largest players in the online FX industry, pushes for a change of industry practices. Spurred by the Swiss Franc shock, Charalambos Psimolophitis believes that it is time to come up with new rules and models to rebuild the reputation of the global FX industry.

As CEOs go, FxPro’s Charalambos Psimolophitis cuts an intriguing figure. The outspoken industry critic is to be found in the office at all hours, often sporting a suit and tie.

“While regulators can do a lot more to ensure that brokers are treating their clients fairly and that we are all observing the same rules; it is the culture of the industry as a whole that is due for a change.”
5. Conclusion

All innovation is a social process ‘constructed/enacted’ by evolving shared (repertoires) of social practices involving multiple actors (academy, industry, society…and government)

(repertoires) of social practices are not independent of the creative transformation of (different types) of knowledge

(Deleuzan, cited by Moulaert et al., 2005; Edwards-Schachter & Tams, 2013)

In all innovation process institutions are created and transformed through interactive & collective learning process & social action
5. Conclusion

Many questions to ask about institutions in the Innovation & STS fields…backing to the basis of any innovation process

Open debates on the role of institutions and institutional innovation integrating Management & Sociology!
Thank you for your attention!

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