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Preface

This is the scientific part of the Month 18 intermediary report of SINGOCOM, a TSER project under Framework V. It accompanies the administrative report that will be delivered independently.

This report covers the second part of survey materials needed for the construction of ALMOLIN, an Alternative Model for Local Innovation in urban communities. ALMOLIN will be the structuring device for the in-depth case study work on local innovation experiences that will basically be undertaken in the third year of the SINGOCOM project. Between now and then, a databank of experiences in social innovation at the local level will be constructed. Some test cases have been run and proved satisfactory. The databank will be completed at the end of September 2003. Its presentation will form a main part of the Month 24 report.

This report covers the philosophical and socio-political traditions of social innovation and empowerment in the 6 case-study countries: Italy, UK, France, Germany, Austria and Belgium. It also contains case studies of social innovation, which will also serve as a documentary basis for the construction of ALMOLIN. The scientific work was effectuated as indicated by chapter; the final editing kept the coordinator and Oana Ailenei busy for many long days.

Enjoy reading and send your reactions to frank.moulaert@ncl.ac.uk

Frank Moulaert
SINGOCOM coordinator

April 5 2003
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I. THE LEGACY OF HISTORY IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: IN SEARCH OF SOCIALLY INNOVATIVE MECHANISMS?

by Flavia Martinelli, Frank Moulaert and Erik Swyngedouw

Foreword

The objectives of D2.2 are to trace the historical roots, if any, of contemporary social movements and to identify the elements and mechanisms of social innovation in the evolution of social movements, across the countries under observation. In other words, the report seeks to identify the philosophical models, cultural matrixes, and/or social visions of the past which may have inspired or influenced current social movements, as well as the elements of social innovations that characterised past social movement practices, as a way to understand current processes. In this exercise, veritable trajectories – at times nation and metropolitan area-specific, but often common to several countries – can be found; in other cases the link is less linear and/or innovation occurs by contrast and rupture, rather than continuity.

This said, the report is organised in 7 chapters. The first chapter is a “transversal” assessment of the 6 country reports, which in turn constitute the subsequent chapters. The first chapter acts, thus, as an introduction to the others. It is made of five sections: first, some considerations about the meaning and general characteristics of social movements are laid out, as a sort of analytical framework. Secondly, a rough sketch of the historical matrixes (and philosophical trajectories) of contemporary social movements is presented. Thirdly, a synthesis of each country paper is reported. Fourthly, the main “invariants”, i.e. common traits, as well as the main “variants”, i.e. differences, among countries, are highlighted. Finally, the main tensions and questions in the reviewed social movements are pointed out.
1. Social movements: analytical tips

Social movements are not a clear-cut category/concept. Nonetheless, a number of aspects can be stressed, in the form of “provisional statements”, which appear transversal to all country reports, i.e. seem to represent invariant or constant attributes across countries.

1. **Social movements** are aggregations of people (on the basis of trade, class, gender, residency, race, generation, etc. and/or combinations of these) sharing more or less formalised ideas/visions/issues and organising around these, in a more or less formalised way, with the purpose of carrying out some actions aiming at some common/collective interest/goals.

2. *The innovative force* of social movements is inherently short-term: there is some sort of a life cycle of social movements. They give way to at least three types of outcome:

   - they are repressed;
   - they are integrated/institutionalised (either within the State or the Market or as a formalised civil society organization), i.e. become permanent features;
   - they evaporate, i.e. are ephemeral experiences which do not leave visible/durable traces (sometimes by choice – they do not aim at changing the system)

3. There is a constant tension between spontaneity and institutionalisation of innovations brought about by social movements, i.e. between creative, changing, ephemeral or evolving experiences and their translation into more permanent structures/organisations.

4. There is also a tension between social movements with a community character/focus – either in terms of issues and/or in terms of solving them – and movements with a society character, i.e. a wider reach – national or international. E.g. community-oriented actions or utopian experiments vs. workers movement, or Welfare state reforms. (This tension is important also in another respect: even if social movements respond to problems that manifest at the local level, this does not necessarily mean that the answer/solution to the problems must be provided at the local level.)

5. All social movements share an ambivalent relationship with respect to both the market and the State, yet they operate within conditions set by both market processes and state interventions.

6. We can provisionally assume that social movements are socially innovative when they: i) fill a void and/or ii) react to something (protest against some form of injustice, iniquity, etc.) and/or iii) change something. Alternatively, even if we want to stay away from normative
statements, we can assume that social movements are *socially innovative* when they: i) satisfy human needs (through collective action, as opposed to individualism); ii) enhance capabilities (empowering previously excluded groups, achieving greater democracy); iii) grant access (rights of access, political inclusiveness, redistributive concern).

7. Also, there are two major *dimensions* in social innovations: *product* innovations (i.e. the issue addressed and/or the service provided) and *process* innovations (the way things are done, i.e. governance form).

8. Although they may get inspiration from common philosophical sources (see next section), social movements cannot be understood outside their *geographic and historical context*, i.e. their institutional context. In other words, innovation in social movements – *social innovation* – is a *relative* concept/phenomenon. From this point of view: i) social movements are *not inherently democratic, inclusive, progressive, participatory*, etc.; ii) social movements are *not inherently innovative*. Something given for granted thirty years ago might become a socially innovative action in this millennium and vice versa.

**Elements for an analytical framework**

In our transversal reading of the historical sources of social movements in the countries under investigation we have made a conceptual distinction between the following *components* of what we have loosely called “social movements; these components are not necessarily of immediate use, but may come handy in a subsequent discussion about lessons for contemporary social movements and innovation.

*Ideas*: this refers to traditions, principles, theories, philosophies, utopias, etc. that constitute the starting points, the inspiring or leading motives of movements and experiences, whether they are developed by individual leaders and/or by collective action (in this reading the actual *leadership* is not a main focus).

*Social movements*: this means aggregations of people sharing ideas and organising around these, in a more or less formalised way, with the aim of pursuing some common interest.

*Social action*, i.e. the actual implementation of ideas, whether through violent/destructive action, alternative/niche experiences, institutionalised compromises or reforms.

*Organisations*, i.e. more or less formal operational structures. It is the form in which social movements carry out action, with various degrees of institutionalisation/recognition (associations, foundations, co-operatives, etc., but also state agencies, etc.).

We have also considered a number of *categories*, the characteristics of which are crucial in
assessing the social movements investigated and in tracing their matrixes.

Aims/content/product: these refer to the actual issues addressed by social actions and organisations, which can be very narrow (cheap housing, low interest credit, higher wages) or quite wide (greater civil rights, social services for all, improvement of environmental quality, etc.). These aims can be divided into two broad “spheres”: a) production; b) reproduction.

Recipients, i.e. the beneficiaries of actions, which, again, can be more or less narrowly defined (members of a trade, factory, community or population at large).

Scale, i.e. the territorial dimension of movements and actions (community, city, regional, national, international or a combination of several).

Organisational form, i.e. the more or less structured organisational form, as well as the more or less hierarchical vs. democratic form of organisation established.

Approach, i.e. top-down, paternalistic, from-outside action vs. bottom-up, participatory, from-within initiatives. This distinction, however, is more conceptual than of practical utility: sometimes action is initiated from the top and is then appropriated/carried out from the bottom; other times they are initiated from below and continue because of top-down financial support.

2. Philosophical matrixes and historical trajectories of contemporary practices

At least four main matrixes (or visions) can be identified in the history of European social movement, starting as of the second half of the 19th Century: a) liberal-bourgeois philanthropy and reformism; b) church-initiated charity initiatives; c) self-help and mutual aid associationism; d) socialist workers movements. Obviously, these main trajectories are not clear-cut: they overlap, interact, contaminate each other quite a bit, especially in specific historical/regional contexts, often giving rise to interesting hybrids. Moreover, over time they further split into diverse trajectories, some times re-converging and re-combining into new variants. As we shall see, they stem from two basic approaches to social action.

In the assumption that we consider historical all visions/movements up to the end of the 1970s, i.e. to the end of Fordism and the beginning of the post-Fordist course (neoliberal government discourse and practice), we will add to the above four main matrixes, two more post-WWII typologies: e) mass movements and f) niche, alternative, self-standing experiments, often community oriented, but not necessarily. As we shall see, the latter belong in many ways to earlier philosophical trajectories, but have quite distinct characteristics, mostly related to a
completely different historical context.

2.1. Antecedents

*First roots.* The philosophical or practical background to the 19th century matrixes sometimes has deeper roots in history.

First of all, we must keep in mind the pre-capitalist, pre-enlightenment, late *Middle Age* and *Renaissance* (especially in city-states) tradition of craft corporations, merchant guilds and civic associations.

Secondly, we must obviously consider the pre-industrial contribution of the *Enlightenment’s* scientific and rational approach to the definition of *revolutionary concepts* such as freedom, equality, brotherhood, human rights, social contract, etc. This philosophical contribution evolved then in different ways: Jacobinism, liberalism, Utopianism, etc.

Finally, within the Christian doctrine, must be mentioned the important role that was played by the *Reform* – either directly or because of the reaction it engendered – and the subsequent development of autonomous, strongly community-oriented confessions, set against the authoritarian, hierarchical structure of the Roman Catholic Church.

*The industrial revolution.* But, of course, as of the second half of the XIX Century and the full deployment of the industrial revolution, major inspiring philosophies of social change were born *within* the new capitalist relations of production: *Liberalism* on the one hand, and its critical counterparts *Utopian(ism,)* *Socialism* and *Marxism,*, on the other hand. Together with the profound transformation of the economy and society of large portions of Europe brought about by industrialisation – and, in particular, the urban concentration of large masses of industrial workers, as well as the proletarianization of rural populations – the issues of poverty became a major concern, within and outside the proletariat. Starting around 1840 a number of surveys, as well as novels, began to denounce the conditions of the workers in the major industrial regions: Villerme (1840) on the French textile workers “material and moral” conditions; Engels’ famous survey of housing conditions in England (1872); Blanqui (1847) on Lille; but also the novels of Dickens and Balzac. They all pointed out that capitalism was not such a good and just system, beyond the progresses in technology and production.

The movements and actions undertaken to tackle poverty and human exploitation from that period until World War I can be grouped into two main *approaches: 1) top-down philanthropic initiatives*, to which belong both the bourgeois-liberal (including most utopian experiments) and
the church actions, which were engineered from “outside/above” the recipients’ environment and were aimed at “helping” the poor and/or improving the living conditions of workers, out of “charitable”, “moralising”, or sheer “social control” concerns; 2) the bottom-up, self-organised initiatives, to which belongs a wide constellation of mutual aid associations and collective experiments, later joined by co-operative organisations and trade unions, with a strong “trade”, “community”, or “class” base. As already mentioned, however, this distinction is more of a conceptual nature than of empirical value. Moreover, movements evolve over time. As shown in some country reports, many initiatives started by the church or bourgeois philanthropists transformed into quite powerful self-organising structure and, vice versa, many “bottom up” initiatives evolved into quite authoritarian structures.

2.2. Main 19th century philosophical matrixes and practice trajectories

a) Bourgeois philanthropy and reformism

The bourgeois-liberal ideology, based on individualism, did not allow for collective actions, especially from the lower classes. However, in the face of increasing poverty and urban degradation consequent to the full deployment of industrialisation, many initiatives were launched by wealthy people to ease the living and working conditions of the poor. Their ultimate aim was that of enabling individuals to act as individuals, with the collective optimum as the final outcome. They ranged from reformist pressures for social legislation, to community initiative, to utopian experiments, with philanthropic, charity and/or “moralising” aims. Such action sometimes had strong paternalistic overtones, and in many cases had a straightforward “social control” function, in anti-socialist terms (see the industrial patronage initiatives in the French report). In a way, the utopian experiments all belong to this philosophical model, although some had a more lasting and revolutionary impact. Some experiments also relied on existing traditions of self-help and mutual aid.

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1 The bourgeois liberal ideology emerged during the Napoleonic and subsequent Restauration periods, as a Romantic reassessment of Enlightenment and French Revolution principles. It strongly refused the experience of the French Revolution itself, especially its Jacobinist turn, as well as Rousseau’s notion of popular sovereignty. According to the liberal vision, the task of safeguarding freedom belonged to the Parliamentary Assembly, which was to be elected by wealthy people (landed gentry, capitalists). Thus the principle of “equality” of 1789 was interpreted in a most restrictive way: citizens were equal in front of the law, but the law was enacted by a very restricted group of bourgeois and aristocratic people, who had political power. Thus, liberal equality did not include political rights, but only rights in front of the law. The liberal ideology was strongly supported, from the theoretical point of view, by developments in economic theory: the so-called “classical” political economy (Smith and Ricardo), which fully legitimised Capitalism, free enterprise and trade liberalisation. Within this free system, those individuals who had initiative and capabilities could achieve success. Bourgeois liberalism was, thus, fiercely opposed to any conception of democracy, which presumed equal political rights. The masses were condemned to poverty because of their lack of capabilities and initiatives; their task and place in society was that of working in the fields or in the factory and behave. Even the views of more democratic liberals such as John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) and Alexis De Tocqueville (1805-1859), who suggested a gradual evolution towards greater democracy, began to be
**Aims.** Charitable aim (providing structures and help to satisfy the poor’s basic needs); moralising aim (keeping the poor out of crime, men out of alcoholism and women out of prostitution); social control aims (keeping the workers happy and busy and away from unions). In its most advanced form: human rights aims and social reforms (enabling the poor to improve their individual potential within a society of free people; improving legislation for fairer treatment of the poor and the workers). Did not challenge the system; attempted to preserve it, to improve it, or to compensate for its inevitable shortcomings.

**Content.** Wide range of poverty relief actions, from housing, to food, to work insertion, to education/work training, to health. In its more advanced form all of these, integrated into self-sufficient communities. In its more reductive/paternalistic form just housing schemes geared to increase control over workers life.

**Organisation.** Foundations, associations, voluntary (community) work; utopian/paternalistic communities, company communities. Such structures generally operated outside both the market and the state.

**Approach.** Mostly paternalistic and top-down; most often authoritarian; sometimes geared to develop self-help.

**b) Church-initiated movements**

They range from centralised Roman Catholic organisations to decentralised Parish/community initiatives, whether protestant, Anglican, or militant catholic.

Historically speaking, there was a strong influence by Reformist movements and following autonomous congregations in the development of self-help and mutual aid community experiences (e.g. the Methodist sect in the U.K., preached by John Wesley (1705-1791), which was revived in the 19th century). But actions were developed also within the more hierarchical Roman Catholic Church, especially after the radical turn in its social doctrine achieved with the encyclical “Rerum Novarum” of 1891 by pope Leo XIII, as an attempt to avoid the spreading of socialist associationism. Today, the various Christian churches are very active in social politics. The Catholic Church, in particular, has a powerful organisation – Caritas, with thousands of staff members and hundred thousands of volunteers – and effectively supports numberless community actions, which cannot be ignored in the area of social policy and social initiatives. In the UK, local church-based initiatives are often the engines for local community action and organisation. In all cases, their foundational politics can be either ethically and socio-economically considered only towards the end of the 19th century. By then, however, the enemy was no longer democracy, but socialism (Villari
conservative or progressive. Yet, they all share a basically organic view of an ideal social order.

Frame I.1. Social Christianism

Social Christianism

The first germs of liberalism within the very conservative doctrine of the Church appeared during the Restoration period, when the renewed alliance between the conservative classes and the Catholic Church after the blood bath of the Revolution was not wholly successful. Parts of the Catholic Church, as well as the Protestant world, were more inclined to share some of the liberal principles. Among the former, Lammenais (1782-1854) refused the “natural” alliance between monarchy and the Church and supported liberal regimes as more receptive to authentic faith. Among the latter, Pietism in Germany opposed Lutheranism and supported a humanitarian view of society, e.g. condemned slavery and torture. Overall, however, the Church remained strongly anti-liberal.

The development of the socialist movements in the second half of the 19th century forced the Roman Catholic Church to tackle the social question. Among the first to address the issue was the Bishop of Mainz Whilelm Emmanuel von Ketteler (1811-1877), which supported social legislation to improve the conditions of workers, but also a “moral” notion of economic life, in opposition to both socialism and liberalism. Other influential Catholics in Austria, Belgium and Italy followed him. Several Catholic associations developed in these countries in order to organise and indoctrinate industrial and agricultural workers. The movement was officially sanctioned with Pope Leo XIII Encyclical Rerum Novarum in 1891, which condemned socialism and class struggle, confirmed property rights, but also supported social legislation. In this organic vision, capital and labour were to collaborate in harmonious co-operation: workers should not strike, but employers should pay the right salary. The Encyclical marked the end of the identification of Church authority with the most conservative and repressive forces of society and the beginning of an intense involvement of Catholic structures and groups in social work.

Aims: In the most authoritarian form the main aims were moralisation (preserving the poor from sin and perdition) and Christian charity (providing satisfaction for basic human needs). In the most advanced/militant form, greater rights and better living/working conditions, with a strong community basis and “empowering” aim.

Content: shelter, food, work, education, health.

Organisation: foundations, religious orders, voluntary (parish, community) work; but also self-help associations and co-operatives. Explicitly geared to become an “intermediate” (later “third”) level, between the individual and the state.

Approach: in its more authoritarian and paternalistic form it is top-down, often hierarchical; in its most militant form it converges with bottom-up, self-organised movements.

c) Mutual aid associations, utopianism and co-operativism

The roots of 19th century mutual-aid networks and associations, whether trade- or community-oriented, must be traced in the Medieval/Renaissance guilds, brotherhoods, and civic associations. But they were strongly influenced and revived by the visions and experiments of Utopian socialists, especially Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen, and later Proudhon. These visions
spurred a wealth of experiments not only in the liberal-bourgeois and the Christian camps, but also among workers in the newly developing workers unions and movements (see Owen’s role in the U.K. in particular). The most structured and durable outcome of this trajectory has been the very rich, diversified and still operational realm of co-operative organisations. Whether production co-operatives, consumer co-operatives, credit co-operatives or housing co-operatives, these organisations had a profound impact, political if not structural, in many countries. In some countries (Italy and to a less extent in Belgium) they are the current backbone of the Third sector.

Frame I.2. Utopian Socialists

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| Utopian socialists, not surprisingly intellectually formed during the years of the French Revolution, developed their “visions” in the first part of the 19th century. Starting from an analysis of the Industrial Revolution and the social problems it engendered they proposed a new moral order, alternative to the utilitarian and individualistic ethics of liberalism. Their “Utopias” had a tremendous and “transversal” philosophical, as well as practical impact. They inspired both paternalistic and bottom-up experiments and movements. This ambiguous role is mostly due to the fact that utopias did not challenge directly the established order, but only envisioned “alternative” forms of social organisation, often reminiscent of an ideal pre-capitalist “community”.

Claude de Saint Simon (1760-1825), in his work on New Christianism published in 1825, argued for the necessity of solidarity between workers and employers, in order to bypass the anarchy of competition and the exploitation of man by man in industrial production, although he did not condemn private property. Such an alliance was also necessary in order to strengthen industrial production against the landed aristocracy. Saint Simon’ utopian community was implemented, after his death, by Owen (see below).

Charles Fourier (1772-1837) envisaged a world of social harmony in which the natural attitudes of man could be valorised. This could be achieved through the Phalanstère, communities of life and work based on solidarity principles.

Charles Owen, (1771-1858) a rich textile entrepreneur, was the one to implement Saint Simon’s utopia and founded the community of New Harmony in the United States in 1825. The community failed soon thereafter. But Owen’s most important historical contribution is in the area of workers mobilisation, and specifically in the UK, through the organisation of both trade unions and consumer co-operatives. In particular, he worked for the unification of the trade unions and the co-operative movement into a national organisation.

Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865) is often associated with the utopian socialists, although he belongs to a subsequent generation. He inspired a large part of the French socialist movement. He had a libertarian conception of society and the state and was strongly opposed to any form of centralisation of authority. He was also strongly against collectivism and the seizure of power. His economic reformism was based on mutualism and democratisation: credit for all, craft production, workers associations.

With the exception of Owen and, later Proudhon, utopian visions had little immediate impact on the workers masses, neither did their propositions particularly appeal to the majority of industrial capitalists. Only few experiments were carried out, mostly bound to fail. Their propositions were naive and based on an idealistic view of humans. Moreover, although we are dealing with a wide amalgam of different ideologies, practices, and perspectives, they all shared the view of a possible ideal alternative world that could be achieved via the proliferation of like-minded initiatives, which would emerge locally and, through replication, become exemplary experiments. In the most optimistic/reformist visions, these would gradually spread and replace the existing unethical, unsocial, dystopian practices. In other words, they all shared the belief in the perfectibility of society through social engineering.

However, their analysis of the industrial revolution and their attempt to define a solution to the class

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2 Although in 1840 he published a pamphlet with the famous statement “Property is thief”.
conflicts that were maturing within industrial society, as well as the search for new social and productive organisational forms, was to leave a lasting trace in the form of co-operative and mutual aid organisations. A number of their principles were taken up again, towards the end of the 19th century, by the organised socialist workers movement and provided the background for the further development of the syndicalist left, anarchist and radical-democratic visions of self-help, small associations, and self-organisation, besides or outside state aid.

Aims. Improve human (workers’) living and working conditions, through collective self-help (mutualism), production co-operation and community organisation. Initiatives are critical of the system (industrial capitalism), but do not directly challenge the system: by setting exemplary communities/associations/co-operatives, whether to provide housing, services, credit, insurance or cheaper goods, they show the way towards a more equitable and harmonious – ultimately superior – society.

Content. From issue-oriented mutual help associations and co-operatives (collective childcare, sickness and accident insurance, credit, housing) to comprehensive alternative arrangements around production, reproduction, exchange, occasionally presenting radically alternative or different living arrangements.

Organisation. Associations, co-operatives, formal or informal community organisations.

Approach. In its paternalistic form (utopian experiments) it is top-down, although with strong bottom-up involvement; in its most advanced form it is fully bottom-up, although often with strong (financial or organisational) support from some sponsoring organisation (bourgeois, Christian, workers’).

d) Workers movement

The workers movement went through various historical phases and eventually evolved into different strands. This broad trajectory initially developed between utopian socialism and trade unionism, until it found its doctrinal legitimisation in Marxism (“scientific socialism”). Subsequently it split into several currents. The main characteristics of the movements grouped under this trajectory, perhaps with the exception of anarchism, are their strong “political” dimension, their “class” rather than community base, and, therefore, their much broader scale of action (regional, national, even international). These characteristics also set this trajectory quite apart from the others previously reviewed. The range of aims and achievements is quite wide: from reformism to revolution, from co-operative organization to welfare state legislation. It is beyond the scope of this introductory chapter to review the different currents of socialism and their historical evolution. Suffice it to say that, between the end of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, the workers movement split into three major trajectorisms: the anarchist, the communists, and the social-democratic movements, each with its own
political/national sub-currents and, most importantly, each with its own aims, political strategies, and practices. The anarchists and communists aimed at a revolutionary transformation of society, the former without and outside the state, the latter through the state and state control. The social-democratic reformist movement aimed at democratising society via state institutions, at redistributing social wealth by building an inclusive welfare state, to lessen social risks for dependent employees and integrate the proletariat into society. Each of these movements, although sharing a critique of capitalism, had different aims and organisational forms.

Frame I.3. Trade unions and socialist movements; Trade unions and socialist movements; Social legislation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade unions and socialist movements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initially, the worker's organisations were rather scattered and organised on a local and factory basis, with a self-help aim. Some of these nascent socialist/workers movements participated in the activities of secret societies (democratic, republican, etc.). However, the growth of class-consciousness within the proletariat was enhanced by the very nature and conditions of the factory, which bred cohesion and solidarity. The first revolts, at the factory or local level, were spontaneous and little organised events; therefore easily repressed. Slowly, however, the associative pattern diffused. After the revolutions of 1830, the workers organisations started to emerge as an autonomous political movement alongside the liberal and the democratic/radical political forces, in several countries. Between 1830 and 1848 socialism, from a utopian doctrine evolved into a class-based political movement in all those regions where the industrial revolution was deeply transforming the social structure. After the revolutions of 1848, the socialist movement found its &quot;scientific&quot; legitimisation in the works by Marx and Engels and became a national and international organisation. Between 1870 and 1890 the modern socialist parties were formed.</td>
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</table>

The UK were the most advanced in unionisation: these were based on sectors (trade unions) and on a local/factory basis, but between 1829 and 1834 Owen, together with the textile workers leader John Doherty and a former textile worker then entrepreneur and eventually MP John Fielden, attempted to organise a national association of all unions (trades union). The national association did not last, because of the employers counterattack, but the unions’ strength allowed the UK working class to gain substantial improvements in the bargaining at factory level, as well as in terms of social legislation. The workers organisations promoted by Owen and Co. allied with the radicals in supporting the Chartist movement (which asked for universal suffrage). Although the movement did not succeed and was repressed, it represented the first national alliance of a political movement with workers forces, which gave Chartism a definite socialist and class-based approach³. |

In France, a number of workers revolts in the textile factories of Lion in the early 1830s determined the prohibition of any collective bargaining process, as an attempt from the government to break workers associations. Many workers associations had to work on a clandestine basis. In those years Gustave Blanqui founded a socialist secret society of workers. Blanqui was influential in spreading a "revolutionary" brand of socialism (abolition of private property, insurrection, establishment of a dictatorship of the revolutionary forces, and collective ownership of the means of production, i.e. "communism"). Similarly revolutionary were Etienne Cabet’s secret associations founded in several provinces of France. In this clandestine context, socialist newspapers had a relevant role in spreading discussion and consciousness. An important secret society, affiliated with Blanqui’s, was the League of Justs. Created in Paris by a group of German refugees, it changed its name into League of Communists in 1847 and published its Manifesto, written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848. The League was discovered and its members dispersed or condemned in 1852. The organisation was later re-established as the first International Association of Workers (1864-1876). |

In Germany the initiator of the first socialist movement was Ferdinand Lassalle (1825-1864), who founded the General Association of German Workers. The two pillars of the German workers movement were political rights and co-operativism. Through direct political representation the workers would be able to establish workers-controlled state enterprises. |
In Italy, still working on its unification, workers associations were limited and clandestine, mostly under the influence of the republican movement led by Giuseppe Mazzini, who was against class struggle. Only when they detached from the republican movement the workers gained autonomy.

**The international workers association and socialist parties**

The workers associations that merged into the *First International* (1864-1876) had been formed within different national trajectories and were, therefore, very diverse. Marx and Engels tried to unify differences into a political party and around a program based on the principle of class struggle, the refusal of conspiratorial methods, and the aim of power seizure. A fierce opponent of Marx’s position was the Russian anarchist Michail Alexandrovic Bakunin (1814-1876). Bakunin’s social anarchism refused any organised struggle and aimed at dismantling the existing social order through the violent action of individuals and groups. The new society would be without a State and naturally organised around small production groups, free of authority and hierarchy. Such a vision was clearly more in tune with a rural society than with the highly organised social structures of industrial economies. The clash between Bakunin and Marx, which led to the exit of the Anarchist movement in 1872, as well as the failure of the Paris Commune thereafter, eventually brought the First International to its end in 1876.

However, the bases for the formation of true socialist parties had been laid. Between 1875 and the end of the 19th century socialist parties were established in most industrialised European countries: in 1875 the Lassallian socialists and Marxists joined into the German Social Democratic Party; in 1879 a French Socialist Party of Marxist inspiration was formed, soon followed by a Belgian Socialist Party and a Spanish Socialist Party. After 1880 three political groups were formed in the UK: the Social Democratic Federation, the Socialist League and the Fabian Society. In newly unified Italy an Independent Workers Party was formed in 1882, which evolved ten years later into the Italian Socialist Party. In 1898 the Russian Social Democratic Party was formed.

In 1889 the *Second International* (1889-1914) was formed, which would last until WWI. It succeeded in providing an effective steering of the international workers movement, despite the repression most of its constituent parties had to suffer from their respective government. Central discussion issues were: social legislation, political rights and democracy, the alliance between industrial workers and peasants.

**Social legislation**

Partly as a result of reformist pressures by enlightened political forces and public opinion, also supported by surveys and literature denouncing the living and working conditions of the proletariat, partly as a consequence of trade unionism and workers mobilisation, some forms of social legislation aimed at controlling the most extreme forms of exploitation began to be established after 1830.

In England, a 1831 law prohibited employers to assign night shifts to workers below 18 years of age and to hire children below 9. In 1844 another law reduced to 6 and 1/2 hours the working day for children and 12 hours that of women and youth. It was further reduced to 10 in 1847 and a vast movement attempted to extend the 10 hours working day also to adult men.

In France social legislation was slower to be established: in 1841 a law prohibited to employ children below 8 years of age and set to 8 hours the working day of children between 8 and 12.

Germany, although starting later than other countries, reached a very advanced level of social legislation, especially in the Bismarck years, also to compensate for a number of very repressive measures taken against workers and socialist movements.

**Anarchism**

The original anarchist doctrine and practice is of particular relevance here, because it resurfaced again and again over the years. In its purest forms it theorised and experimented *organisation without hierarchy and without centralisation of decision-making*, in strong opposition with the

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3 The main principles of Chartism expounded the view that wealth is produced exclusively though labour and that the working class has a right to the entire product of labour. Already Chartists were divided with regard to the methods of workers struggle between “gradualists” and supporters of “physical force”.

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approach of the socialist movements and, later, parties. Ranging from utopian experiments to “direct actions”, the social practice of anarchist groups, although they progressively lost ground to the socialist organisations, proved to be a mould for quite innovative subsequent organisational experimentations – ad hoc association, non hierarchical structure, decision-making by consensus, etc. – which are an important legacy and can be witnessed in many contemporary initiatives.

**Aims:** structural reforms through the proliferation of alternative experiments; revolutionary changes achieved via targeted action and alternative life-style arrangements, based on non-hierarchical and network-based ‘free’ associations. This trajectory will merge with post-modern ideology of creative individualism.

**Content:** a variety of actions, ranging from experimental alternative social arrangements to violent and subversive actions.

**Organisation:** fragmented, unstructured, “niche” initiatives, with non-formalised and non-hierarchical arrangements, completely outside and alternative to the State.

**Approach:** bottom-up, collective, but by small groups. From demonstrative to destructive.

**Communism**

**Aims:** revolutionary change through political and economic class struggle aimed at seizing power and implementing a planned and collectivist organisation of society.

**Content:** militant political action (general strike, political pressures). Carried out by economic, cultural, and social organisations aimed at a variety of social objectives, clustered around the party to help achieve its political aims.

**Organization:** highly organised around the communist party as the political vanguard for revolutionary transformation.

**Approach:** in principle bottom-up within a strong, hierarchical organisational structure; very often top-down and technocratic, because of an increasing gap between top political leaders and technocrats, and the local base.

**Social democracy (reformism)**

**Aims:** reforms of the existing system, i.e. change through political action aimed at welfare and economic planning measures in order to correct for the unjust redistribution structures associated

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4 Until WWI the term Social Democracy generally indicated Socialist Parties of Marxist inspiration. After the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the change of the name of the Russian Social Democratic Party into Communist Party, the term only applied to
with liberal capitalism.

**Content:** electoral democratic struggles and political action through the state: social legislation, redistributive policies, economic planning.

**Organization:** fundamentally organised around the party, that functions as an umbrella for local and sectoral organizations.

**Approach:** in theory bottom-up within a strong organisational structure; most often top-down and technocratic, because of an increasing gap between top political leaders and technocrats and the local base.

### 2.3. Post-WWII social movements

In the first decades of the 20th century social movements strongly coincided with workers movements and became highly politicised and institutionalised, i.e. channelled into organised political action, in most industrialised countries. Action, in a variety of forms, was polarised in two main camps: organisations and initiatives under the umbrella of the socialist and/or communist parties on the one hand, and organisations and initiatives promoted by the social Christians (especially within the Catholic Church) often with a clear anti-socialist aim, on the other hand. Christian unions – and especially Christian “leagues” among agricultural workers – diffused alongside socialist unions. Up to WWII, with few exceptions, social legislation was gradually enacted in most industrialised countries and the working conditions of workers slowly improved.

Between the two wars, notable experiments of social democratic governance were implemented in Germany with the Weimar Republic and in Austria (“Red” Vienna). Among other things, these experiences gave impetus to important institutionalised housing co-operative programmes (see German country paper). In Germany and Italy the establishment of the fascist and Nazi regimes interrupted the further evolution of social forces, trading some corporatist social legislation for very repressive and authoritarian governance systems.

Social movements unfold again after WWII, and particularly at the end of the 1960s, throughout Europe. They have strong roots in the 19th century philosophical matrixes, but they occur in an **entirely new context** of growing affluence, social change and “cultural” revolution. Two major trajectories can be detected, which partly overlap in terms of timing and aims, but radically differ in terms of approach and organisational forms: the organised (mass) movements for social

“revisionist” movements and parties.
reforms and the “alternative”, more “libertarian” forms of social protest and experimentation. But before sketching the characteristics of these two major types of social movements, it is necessary to highlight the very different social and economic context in which these movements developed, compared to their historical predecessors.

**A new context**

The thirty years that stretch from the end of WWII till the mid-1970s economic crisis are often called the “trentes glorieuses” or the years of the “great transformation” (Hobsbawm 1994). Indeed, a first major difference between post-WWII movements and their predecessors lies in the fact that these movements occurred in a context of economic affluence. Against all odds, between 1945 and 1973 Western Europe experienced an unexpected and unprecedented wave of economic growth. The Fordist model of production and consumption be it in a different form already deployed in the U.S., diffused also in Europe and, starting with the 1960s, brought unprecedented levels of affluence for large portions of the population – and especially the working class – as well as close to full employment. Corollaries to this widespread affluence were major changes in society – especially in the family structure – and in culture.

Secondly, while in the 1950s most European countries were led by conservative governments and the workers organisations and left-wing political parties were somewhat marginalised and/or co-opted in the effort to rebuild the national economies, in the 1960s the reformist and left-wing political parties gained greater consensus. During the 1960s there was a shift towards the left in most national governments of Europe and in many countries the moderate left was in power or joined the government coalition. It is in this decade that the so-called “corporatist” state formula was established in many countries, i.e. the state acting as centralised intermediary between employers and unions. It is starting in the 1960s and throughout the 1970s that reforms were carried out and the welfare state established in most Western countries: at the end of the 1970s in Italy, Belgium, France and West Germany more than 60% of all public expenditures was devoted for welfare services and the largest part of civil service employment was in social services (Hobsbawm 1994).

Against this background of affluence and reformist government it is apparently difficult to understand the wave of renewed social movements of the late 1960s and 1970s. The 19th century social movements had come about in times of severe hardship and exploitation; the late 1960s movements began at the top of the post-war boom. But it is precisely in this context of economic affluence and reformist governance that a silent social and cultural revolution had taken place, which exploded towards the end of the 1960s. The detonating – and totally new – social force
behind this explosion were the youth (Hobsbawm 1994).

Indeed, several important changes were silently brought about by Fordism, with profound social and cultural implications. Among these we can mention: further industrialisation and inurbation (which meant, on the one hand, the end of peasantry and traditional rural communities, and, on the other hand, the further growth of industrial workers); significant improvements in communication technology and media; increased women participation to the labour market and public life; disappearance of the traditional family; cultural “modernisation”, in terms of a generalisation of affluent consumption models; “secularisation” of values, i.e. a decrease in religious faith.

Particularly important social changes were brought about by the growing consciousness of women. After the struggles for political rights around the beginning of the 20th century, women had been dormant, although increasingly participating in the economy. In the 1960s a new feminist wave unfolded, fuelled by the greatest participation of women to the labour market and public life and by the disintegration of the patriarchal family within the Fordist model of industrialisation. This was not only a social revolution, but also a cultural one, with women holding new expectations and a new perception of their role in society and their rights.

But most importantly, affluence, full employment and the welfare state contributed to create a new, very numerous, autonomous social force: young people, many of whom were students. The reasons explaining the emergence of this new social force are at least three. First of all, in the 1960s there were many more students than in any other historical period, not only because of the baby boom, but because many more families, including the working class, could send their children to secondary school and to the university. This longer and more diffused “status” of students allowed them time and opportunities to think, analyse, discuss and gain “identity”. Moreover, opposite to their parents and grandparents, the 1960s students had no memory of hardship, neither of great depressions nor wars. They were familiar just with the affluent world they had grown up in – which was not that perfect – and had no sense or reason for “sacrifice” and/or conformity to rules. Therefore, they were much more projected towards “change”. Finally, affluent students and young people in general had become a big “market” within the Fordist production and consumption system, for fashion and culture commodities (from clothing to musical records), which provided them not only with “visibility” and “identity”, but also with a national and international resonance arena.

Youth “culture” became the vanguard for youth “protest”. As pointed out by Hobsbawm (1994), the latter was demotic (inspired by “people”, i.e. lower classes and folk culture) and antinomian
(i.e. against rules). Starting first with music, clothing and personal behaviour (e.g. the sexual liberation), the rupture with established rules and conventions went further. Personal liberation became social liberation and political struggle. In many instances youth protest spread to other social groups, women, workers, minorities, etc. Opposite to pre-WWII movements, social claims were not for “bread” or basic needs conceived in traditional material or economic terms, but for broader ethical and/or societal changes. Also opposite to 19th century and early 20th century these movements were mostly urban movements, mainly because the social forces involved were urbanised groups, but also because the city was the central “stage” of both state action and social forces.

The youth “protests” of the late 1960s and 1970s were a generalised social phenomenon. They started in the mid-1960s in U.S. university campuses with the anti-Vietnam War protests and the “hippies” movement and spread into Europe with the 1968 and 1969 French “May” and Italian student movements. But they were felt also in many industrialising countries of the Third World, especially in Latin America. As already mentioned, they gave way to two main trajectories: organised (mass) mobilisation, on the one hand and “niche”, libertarian social experiments, on the other.

*e) Organised mass movements*

In many places and instances youth protest movements contributed to revive the workers movement and/or to aggregate other social forces (women, middle class, minorities) into organised mass movements, i.e. broad urban, regional, national or international movements, struggling for a variety of social and political aims. This is the case of France and Italy, where the student protest merged with workers mobilisation (the “Hot Autumn” of 1969 in Italy) and brought about significant improvements in labour legislation. But everywhere in Europe, broad social movements fought for, and in many instances obtained, social change – from better housing provision to divorce legislation, from antinuclear energy policy to greater social security coverage, from different urban planning to better schools.

This type of trajectory, thus, can be considered in some sort of continuity with the workers movements of the 19th century, as sketched in the previous section. Even in their diversity, in fact, these movements shared a number of distinctive characteristics: they were based on large, often inter-class social groups (students, workers, women, parents, residents, etc.); they generally had a broad scope, i.e. raised an urban, regional, or national issue; they often had a highly organised structure, under a newspaper, association, party or union leadership; they *sought to achieve changes within and through the institutional system*; they used typical political tools of
mass mobilisation and protest: demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins, occupations, etc. However, opposite to 19th century movements, and more in tune with the new context of relative affluence and political democracy, attention shifted away from the production sphere and the political representation issue, which had been the pre-eminent areas of social action for the early workers movements, and moved in the direction of collective consumption, reproduction and political participation, i.e. domains like housing and social services, family legislation, the environment, social capital building, culture, and the like. Indeed, they succeeded in bringing about significant changes in legislation and policy, either through straightforward antagonism with the State or within a more co-operative type of relationship. Because many were essentially urban in character, these movements have also been called “urban movements” in the sociological literature. But they were not exclusively urban. In fact, the last great mass movements belonging to this trajectory include the peace, antinuclear and environmental upheavals of the late 1970s and early 1980s, in connection with the last phase of the cold war and the emergence of the environmental concern.

f) “Niche”, alternative, and community initiatives

Youth culture and protest took also another turn, more reminiscent of the 19th century self-help organizations, utopian experiments, or community initiatives, on the one hand, and more in tune with the anarchist doctrine on the other hand. In fact, a large part of the social protest did not join in any form of organised mass movements but attempted experiments of more “libertarian”, alternative lifestyles, consumption, production and/or community organisation. From communal housing in abandoned or empty apartments (the “squatters” movement), to co-operative organization of production and services, to artistic reinterpretation/re-appropriation of objects and places. Alongside organised protest movements, – and not necessarily in an antagonistic position – these alternative experiments of social organisation in production and/or reproduction proliferated from the later 1960s onwards.

Despite the great diversity of these experiences, they had something in common with mass movements and they also had some distinctive characteristics. In common with organised protest movements their action mostly concerned the reproduction sphere and domains such as housing, social services, public spaces, the environment, culture and art, etc. Opposite to that trajectory however, these experiments did not seek to make structural changes in the system, although – quite importantly, as we shall see – they found “interstitial” spaces of existence within the system. Moreover, these movements were sceptical of both traditional party-based left politics

5 The American decision to display nuclear missiles in Europe.
and welfarist state intervention. They did not wish to be part of a greater movement or organisation and were suspicious of any large organisation, seen as hierarchical and authoritarian. Their experiments were alternative to both the state and the market, and were targeted only to the involved individuals. They had a highly creative, spontaneous, often ephemeral character. From this point of view they were more akin to the anarchist doctrine, on the one hand, and the utopian experiments, on the other. Because of these loose characteristics, among other things, this trajectory of social movements has survived the end of Fordism.

2.4. The post-Fordist course

The late 1970s and the 1980s are a period of transition. It is now evident that the so-called oil crisis and related economic downturn marked an epochal turning point, i.e. the end of the Fordist accumulation regime and its modes of regulation, including the Keynesian/developmental/welfare state. In the fifteen years that followed the mid 1970s downturn, the neo-liberal paradigm (re)established itself in most European countries, together with its flexibility, deregulation, privatisation corollaries: earlier in some places, like the U.K. with Ms. Thatcher, later in other places, e.g. Italy. The completion of the Single European Market and the enforcement of Community competition policies in the late 1980s (only partially compensated by cohesion policies through the Structural Funds) completed the ideological and institutional revolution. By the early 1990s a decided turn to right-wing governance, tight budget management, welfare state contraction, privatisation of public ventures – in a word to a basic demise of central state intervention – had been achieved in most European countries.

In this period of transition the organised mass social movements of the late 1960s and 1970s, after reaching a peak in action and achievements, slowly disintegrated. The links between traditional political organisations and an increasingly fragmented society progressively broke down. The workers movement matrix and its post-WWII mass organisation version came under severe pressure. In the 19th century and still in the first three quarters of the 20th century “collective” action – through unions and political parties – had been the only way for a growing working class to gain rights and improvements in their working and living conditions. In the post-Fordist course not only the industrial workers dramatically decline in numbers, but there is also a breakdown in the working class “consciousness” (Hobsbawm 1994). Despite the reappearance of mass unemployment, the solidarity that was characteristic of industrial workers disappears. Workers are not anymore a “class”: they are fragmented and divided between skilled and unskilled, native and immigrants, tenured and temporary, protected and unprotected types of
contract. Labour market deregulation further enhances these divisions.

On the other hand, the trajectory of social movements of a more anarchist, experimental, libertarian, grassroots type, outside traditional organisations, continued and took new momentum. It is precisely in the period of transition between the end of the Fordist/Keynesian/Corporatist national states and the full establishment of the EU and the neo-liberal paradigm that many of the most innovative social movements and experiences took place in most European countries: new basic needs emerged, less bread and butter oriented (advanced social services, environment, peace, arts and culture); alternative ways of organising housing, production, distribution, services, credit; decentralized grassroots, bottom-up, community, more participatory initiatives, i.e. outside established institution, parties and/or organisations. Most interesting, in many countries, including those were the political “divides” between the “red” and “Christian democratic” camps had been very strong (Italy, Austria) and initiatives bypassed traditional party cleavages. Church as well as anarchist, feminist or minority initiatives co-existed and even merged. New political and social currents, such as the “green” developed and were integrated into new urban governance/social policy practice.

Generally speaking, what comes to its full establishment in the last twenty years of the 20th century is the individualistic dimension of the post-WWII cultural revolution. A large part of the youth protest of the 1960s and 1970s contested the established social order without having in mind any alternative societal organisation, but just as an expression of individual freedom from societal rule, perceived as authoritarian and coercive. Pushed to its extreme limits it meant the triumph of hedonistic and egotistic individualism. Paradoxically, the Fordism model had been a powerful medium for the diffusion of egalitarianism. In Fordist industrialisation the old community and family values and solidarity had somewhat survived within the social and cultural revolution. In the post-Fordist – post-modern – culture these values disintegrate and individualism prevails, paving the way to neo-liberalism.

The 1990s are, thus, the decade in which the neo-liberal course firmly established itself. According to most country reports it is a period of relevant institutional innovations, not necessarily for the best. The “safety net” of the welfare state that had somewhat compensated for social disintegration, especially in large metropolitan areas (unemployment compensations, single parents allowances, education and health services, social services for handicapped, elderly, immigrants, etc.) began to falter. It is in this period that terms such as “underclass”, “socially excluded”, on the one hand, and “identity”, “community”, on the other hand, began to diffuse in public discourse: society appeared increasingly disintegrated, family and community
links were lost, the welfare state could not compensate anymore and, therefore, a solution was to be sought outside the state and the market, through grassroots, self-help, community- and identity-building initiatives. This is, indeed, the ambiguous rationale, which supports the institutionalisation of the Third sector in many countries (e.g. Italy, Austria).

In fact, the social movements of the late 1980s and 1990s, together with Third sector initiatives, all aim at recuperating a “local”, “community” dimension in social initiatives. According to the authors of the German country report, these contemporary movements are very much in line with 18th century civic associations and self-help traditions. Both carry a vision of active citizenship, involving civic engagement in associations and the building of a critical public consciousness. On the other hand, their “institutionalisation” and “professionalisation”, as occurring in Italy and Austria, seem to be “hollowing” them precisely of their “innovative” character and to bend their mission to economic imperatives.

3. Country profiles

Against the above interpretive background we can now briefly review the country papers. Each country report (Chapters 2 to 7) is organised in two parts. In Part A the historical roots of contemporary social movements are traced; in Part B a number of case studies are presented. Some contributions expand significantly on the historical roots of social movements (19th century); others only with post World War II social movements. Some embrace a wide range of social actions; others focus on more narrow issues or initiatives. Nevertheless, as we shall see, the countries under observation share a number of experiences and even trajectories.

3.1. Italy

The Italian country report is strongly centred on the Third Sector. This focus is explained by at least two national specificities. First, the third sector – as opposed to both private and public initiatives – experienced a strong, very recent, growth in this country, also because of the late enactment of specific legislation. Secondly, initiatives belonging to the third sector, although with strong roots in older philosophical matrices, represent some sort of a “rupture” with previous dominant social movements, i.e. with the highly structured tradition of both “white” and “red” mass mobilisation organisations, as well as with the latter strong reformist dimension: contemporary non profit, third sector initiatives substitute for absent, authoritarian, and/or inadequate public services.
In the first part of the paper, the authors trace the main philosophical “matrices” of contemporary Italian social movements and action. They identify at least four distinct traditions: 1) the secular matrix; 2) the political parties; 3) the Catholic matrix; 4) the area of social movements and libertarian left. While some of these matrices belong to what could be considered the “Western European” cultural/philosophical heritage, a number of specifically Italian features also emerge. One major national specificity is the mobilising capacity of political parties after WWII, especially the antagonistic “white” Christian Democratic Party and “red” Communist Party with their respective mass organisations. The latter, in particular, which fully belongs to the reformist tradition of many European workers movements, strongly contributed, together with the unions and other political organisations, to the establishment of the Italian Welfare State, also in quite innovative forms. Another national specificity –shared with Belgium and, to a lesser extent Austria– is the progressive and innovative role played, especially starting in the 1970s, after the Second Vatican Council, by some sectors of the Roman Catholic Church, which opposed the traditional top-down and hierarchical approach of the Church itself. Quite in tune with trends observed in other countries is the transitional character of the 1970s in Italy: this decade marked the highest point of organised, nation-wide social mobilisation within or with the backing of mass political parties, while, at the same time, it reflected the end of this form of social action and the beginning of more dispersed, less structured and more “libertarian” social initiatives. The latter owe much to the former, but are more antagonistic vis-à-vis state institutions and hierarchies. In a way they relate to the anarchist tradition that was never very strong in Italy after World War II. Actions of diverse origins and with various focuses loosely converge in this philosophical approach: from militant Catholic parish initiatives to neighbourhood participatory experiments, from women liberation actions to environmental initiatives. It is in the latter group of social initiatives that contemporary social action and innovation find their primary roots.

Subsequently, the authors sketch the genesis and recent evolution of the Italian Third sector, as the contemporary arrival point of previous trajectories. Three national specificities are pointed out: a) the strong presence of voluntary associations and workers; b) the legacy of the Catholic Church and political party organisational tradition, as stressed earlier, although significantly transformed; c) the important presence of initiatives geared to the provision of social service, often in the form of “social co-operatives”, which have the added social mission of creating employment among disadvantaged groups. The latter aspect can be considered a quite innovative feature, since these non-profit, often community-based “bottom-up” organisations in responding to basic social needs fill a void or compensate for the inadequacy of the traditional welfare state. On the other hand, and precisely for the above reasons, such an innovation also has an
ambiguous character, since the self-help provision of social services can become instrumental in justifying a demise of the state in this welfare area. The authors also stress the recent legislative recognition of non-profit enterprises in Italy as a possible explanation for the exponential growth of the Third sector during the 1990s.

Finally, the authors highlight the main phases in the evolution of non-profit enterprises, with particular attention spent to the Milan metropolitan area. This periodization further endorses the thesis that the 1970s were a decade of transition. It is the highest point of social mobilisation within traditional left-wing mass organisations (unions, Communist Party) but also the beginning of innovative social movements of a more experimental, libertarian and/or grassroots type, both within and outside traditional organisations. The 1970s in Italy thus represented some sort of a watershed: the end of one form of social mobilisation and the beginning of another. What the authors call the experience of “social movements” continues throughout the subsequent two phases, the 1980s and 1990s, undergoing a process of diversification at first and formalisation/professionalization afterwards. In the 1990s, the enactment of specific legislation allows many of these “movements” to reorganise as formal initiatives, in the form of foundations, associations or co-operatives, according to their origin and aims.

In the last part of the chapter, the authors provide examples of contemporary socially innovative initiatives in the Milan and Naples metropolitan areas, to illustrate the trajectories described above. Cases are grouped into three major types, based on the content of their dominant activity: a) “expressive” initiatives, i.e. initiatives based on cultural and/or artistic expression as a way to mobilise and finalise resources (both financial and human); b) urban regeneration initiatives, i.e. initiatives geared to appropriate urban public spaces and/or reformulated planning projects; c) social services provision, i.e. initiatives geared to provide assistance to deprived or marginalised social groups.

3.2. Austria

The country report for Austria strongly focuses on social innovation in urban governance and social policy, within a historical perspective. The authors distinguish between the product- and process-oriented dimensions of social innovation, which, among other things, help understanding the evolution of urban governance. Four major phases are identified in Post-WWII Vienna: a more outcome-oriented approach dominated in the 1970s and 1980s, whereas a greater stress on procedural innovation was characteristic of the 1990s. Only in the early 1980s both dimensions were integrated, providing the richest lessons in social innovation.
In the first phase, covering the 1950s-1970s, the governance model was that of the typical Fordist/Keynesian state, i.e. a centralised, top-down conception of policy formulation and implementation. The prevailing dimension of social innovation was outcome oriented, i.e. in the form of social policy and reforms obtained via the institutionalised bargaining process between employers and employees organizations at the central “corporatist” State level. Similar to Italy, socio-political organizations and actions follow a “red/black” divide, i.e. between the social democrats and the conservative.

The second phase covers the 1980s, especially the first part of the decade. These were the most innovative years in terms of social action. In Austria the Keynesian state had not yet been dismantled but more decentralised, bottom-up initiatives were accommodated. Process-, as well as outcome-oriented innovations were experimented with, within a community development approach and more participatory practices. A different “project culture” developed, which also bypassed the traditional “red/black” divide: new political and social instances, such as the “green”, emerged and were integrated into this new urban governance/social policy practice.

The third phase, which covers the 1990s, was marked by the return to power of the conservatives and the full establishment of the neo-liberal paradigm in economics. It meant also a return to a corporatist type of governance. The social democrats were given some room in social policy, but within the limits of budgetary efficiency. The joining of the EU in 1995 further strengthened the neo-liberal discourse, while weakening the central state sovereignty. It was the end of experimentation in urban governance and social policy. Similar to Italy, a process of “economisation of the social” began, in which procedures were institutionalised and social workers professionalised. Cultural initiatives, e.g., were marginalised in favour of initiatives more accountable in terms of economic returns.

The fourth phase covers the 2000s and is marked by a right-wing government, which further enforces the 1990s trends. Only market-oriented initiatives and services are considered, within a very strict budgetary approach (“social liberalism”). The “patrimonial” state, i.e. a government that considers the state as its private domain, takes over and replaces the “corporatist” state.

Although it only focuses on the second half of the 20th century and mostly on urban governance in the metropolitan area of Vienna, the Austrian case is very useful in highlighting the important role of the Keynesian/Fordist/Corporatist central state in steering for quite an important period of time (thirty years) emerging social demands. As was the case in Italy, in the late 1960s and 1970s, for the good or for the bad, centralised bargaining procedures (among political parties, trade unions, capitalist interest groups and their organisations) conveyed, structured, and
rendered explicit most civil society needs and demands. They contributed to the establishment in these countries of the modern welfare state. *This governance model is also the one that allowed, within its somewhat rigid organisational structure, the development of seeds of social innovation, by evolution and/or reaction.*

In Austria, the positive role played by the social democratic government of the early 1980s in allowing and even promoting these initiatives is especially witnessed in the *funding* dimension. Monies came from the central state, but were freely used at the local level, by civil society organizations that were no longer the traditional interest groups of the “corporatist state”. Financial resources contributed to the empowerment of these civil society organizations. The central state was truly considered “res publica”, i.e. as accessible to all groups of society. A successful, but short-lived formula was experimented with: centralised funding coupled with local/self-help organization. This was possible because of the enlightened vision of social democratic policy-makers and administrators.

Austria is also a good case, as is Italy, to illustrate the *involution* of the 1990s. The institutionalisation into a structured Third Sector of many social economy initiatives that started in the 1980s meant the end of social innovation. These initiatives, which were managed on a local or community basis with high levels of civil society participation, and which were subsidised by the central state without strings attached, are now formalised into organizations that are often for-profit and with professionalised staff, with little autonomy and community control. With regard to the institutionalisation of the social economy, quite interesting, in Austria, is the birth of a niche market for “Third sector consulting” (application and evaluation procedures) within the new economic accountability framework of financing. In this new context, “social innovation is channelled into predefined directions”. Every initiative funded has to prove in line with defined objectives and standards (employment, product, etc.).

Finally, Austria is an interesting case to illustrate the role of the EU. Having joined later than others, the impact of the EU neo-liberal discourse and practices on the country’s institutions is more evident. It is also interesting to note how non-profit organisation and the more libertarian social movements initially welcomed the EU rules of the game; as they broke the traditional mechanisms of “corporatist” funding allocation, they allowed for more competition among diversified actors, and they introduced precise standards for funding applications. On the other hand, and in a different way than Italy, the standardisation/institutionalisation of procedures within this economist/productivist perspective takes away attention from the product-dimension of social innovation, which “remains subordinated to the necessities of an apparently natural
economic order”. In other words, only initiatives that have some evident economic return are funded. More importantly, within the new “patrimonial” state only initiatives that are not critical or antagonistic to the central government, get funds; innovation and experimentation are allowed only if the expected outcome is in the interest of the power holders.

3.3. France

The French report focuses on the historical roots of its social economy, the latter being defined as the set of organised activities whose primary objective is not a return to invested capital. Such roots are mostly found in 19th century philosophical visions and social initiatives. Civic and trade associationism in France originated in the late Middle Age and Renaissance period (guilds, fraternities, etc.) and were already based on notions of community, brotherhood and solidarity. The French revolution contributed to further affirm the principles of freedom, equality and brotherhood, although its relationship with associationism (especially trade guilds) was ambiguous, because guilds were considered a medieval institution and, as such, conservative. It is in the second half of the 19th century that the most interesting French practices related to the social economy can be found. The 19th century was indeed a period of very rich and diversified social experimentation in France, linked to the unfolding of the industrial revolution, but also to the various revolutionary episodes. The former, with its corollaries of social problems (proletarianisation, urbanisation, impoverishment, etc.), is a major factor in explaining the search for alternative solutions, within the generalised authoritarian, exploitative and repressive regime of the time.

Two major approaches are reviewed, which have left lasting traces and/or are resurfacing in contemporary French social economy: a) utopian socialism and b) industrial patronage. Marxism and organised socialist workers movements are deliberately left out, although they did play an important role in shaping French governance at the municipal level throughout the 19th century and in the French welfare state later.

With regard to utopian socialism, France gave birth to the founding fathers of this visionary line of thinking: Saint-Simon and Fourier. Out of their basic principles, many further philosophical developments and social experiments were made, in France and abroad. Particularly relevant for their implications to the French social economy were Godin’s “Familistère”, Proudhon’s mutualism initiatives and Derrion’s consumer co-operatives.

With regard to industrial patronage, France hosted a number of quite interesting experiences,
especially in the Northern regions, those most rapidly industrialising (Nord-Pas de Calais, Alsace). They are very good examples of the bourgeois-liberal trajectory sketched in section 2. Many French industrial capitalists, in fact, implemented a variety of initiatives to improve the working and living conditions of their workers, mostly in a bigot, paternalistic way (although not exclusively), with the aim of limiting social disorder and controlling workers, by tightly organising their life (home, Church, work). They are also interesting examples of how trajectories overlap, since in many cases the utopian vision cannot be clearly distinguished from religious fundamentalism and capitalist social control.

These social experiments, all geared towards improving the material and moral wellbeing of workers, were quite innovative – revolutionary – in many of their organisational principles, but they did not attempt, in any way, to overthrow the established order. The utopian initiatives had a more idealistic, visionary dimension: although structurally paternalistic, they were genuinely oriented to the wellbeing of workers and to promote their organisational capacities from below. They were to set the “example” for the diffusion and generalisation of the model. The industrial patronage initiatives, although “enlightened”, were quite more authoritarian and repressive in character, often with a Christian “moralisation” hat. The improvement of workers’ living conditions was instrumental to greater productivity in the factory, and to workers’ social control (with a clear anti-socialist aim).

The authors point out that, whether utopian or paternalistic, several social innovations and organisational principles of these early initiatives have been progressively institutionalised and/or are re-emerging today in the French social economy sphere: a number of social service (education, health) and the social security system (pensions, sick-leaves, accident insurance, unemployment compensations) have become a permanent (maybe not…) feature of the modern welfare state; producer and consumer co-ops have become in many countries a significant component of the economy; credit co-ops and new (micro) credit institutions are taking new momentum; Local Exchange Trade systems are spreading anew.

Quite relevant is the issue of housing, which was a major element of both utopian and patronage experiments. Housing was certainly a crucial stake in the industrial revolution – and in workers mobilisation – as witnessed by Engels analysis of the housing question. In the French case, a number of the 19th century historical experiences were forerunners of the 20th century cheap housing schemes.

What remains somewhat understated in the French report is the role of workers’ self-organisational capacities. The mutual-aid associations and the co-operative movement were to a
large extent independent from the utopian and paternalistic experiments (who were always initiated from the top) and found further mobilising strength through the workers’ movements in the late 19th century and early 20th century. On the other hand, the paper highlights the fact that France exhibits quite important historical “forerunner” experiments in social innovation, setting in motion trajectories that not only have influenced other countries to a very great extent (utopian socialism, mutualism), but also resurface and still inspire contemporary social practices (micro-credit, local exchange trade systems).

3.4. Germany

The German country report focuses to a great extent on housing, as a central issue in explaining social visions, movements and policies, over a three centuries period. The impact of the cooperative movement on the birth and development of the Third Sector is also stressed. First the authors identify the main principles and the major thinkers, i.e. influential and/or charismatic characters, of three German philosophical trajectories (bourgeois-liberal, Christian, and socialist). Subsequently they trace the movements and actions following these inspiring visions, up to contemporary experiences of local mobilisation.

In the German bourgeois liberal approach of the second part of the 18th century the Enlightenment principles of freedom, equality, and brotherhood, as well as those of rational common sense (Locke) and practical reason (Kant), were developed into a community- and common interest- approach. Civic associations spread, addressing the issue of poverty as a “social” issue and supporting local self-help initiatives, professional training programs, as well as employment institutions, in substitution of the state (e.g. in Hamburg as early as 1765). As in France, 19th century German bourgeois reformism focussed especially on the housing issue. Partly drawing on Utopian socialism and on the City-garden experience, bourgeois reformism viewed decent housing as a mean to reduce social deprivation. The family remained the central pillar of society and housing ownership, as well as family privacy, the main brake to socialist movements. Cheap housing programmes were launched (e.g. in Berlin after 1848) and building co-operatives supported in the 1860s and 1870s.

Rather important in Germany was Christian social reformism. Lammenais first and Ketteler later contributed to diffuse principles of liberalism and even some elements of socialism in Catholic doctrine during the first part of the 19th century. Some of these principles were later adopted in the “Rerum Novarum” Encyclical of 1891. From then on, although strongly rejecting the liberal principles of democracy and condemning socialism, the Roman Catholic Church recognised the
“social” character of poverty and exploitation and supported a solidarity view of society, as well as the formation of “Christian” workers associations, in an anti-socialist strategy. Co-operation, self-help and subsidiarity were further endorsed by Pope Pius XI (in the Encyclical “Quadragesimo Anno”) against the totalitarian regimes of National Socialism and communism alike, and by subsequent popes. Today Christian associations, both Catholic and Protestant, contribute a very large part of the German Third Sector employment.

Within the German social reformism trajectory of the second part of the 19th century the influence of Utopian socialists such as Saint Simon, Owen and Fourier on the workers movement was quite relevant. Their vision was mainly bourgeois/liberal, but it had some revolutionary aspects in the notion of communal work and ownership, which made the basis of the co-operative movement. Ferdinand Lassalle, founder of the German workers brotherhood, was a major figure in the German production co-operative movement. Schulze-Delitzsch, founder of commercial co-operatives and Raiffeisen, founder of peasant co-operatives, were also quite influential (the latter also in Germany, Belgium and Austria). Within the socialist trajectory the split between “revolutionary” socialists and “revisionists” divided the movement. The former, following Engels’ analysis of the “Housing Question” (originally published in 1872), refused any reforms within the capitalist system and aimed at revolution. The latter embraced the idea of social reforms and co-operatives, together with the bourgeois and Christian reformists.

The above different trajectories merged in the German social democratic policies of the Bismarck period (1880s) and, later, of the Weimar Republic (1919-33), which, in turn, laid the foundation for the modern Welfare State. In such social policies housing programs and building co-operatives had a prominent role. With regard to the latter, specific legislation was enacted in 1889 and housing co-operatives experienced a boom. The authors argue that it is in the years of the Weimar Republic that the German Third Sector was born, in the area of housing particularly as an alternative to both the Market and the State. Within the Weimar Republic interesting avant-garde experiments were also carried out in the field of housing by the Bauhaus movement and the Neues Bauen.

National Socialism obviously interrupted these processes: housing policies were centralised and only the most authoritarian aspects of the social experimentation were retained, losing any connection with the local communities.

This centralisation of authority and the mass production of housing, however, were not completely abandoned at the end of the war, with the restoration of democracy in Western Germany. According to the authors, centralised and authoritarian post-WWII renovation policy
(“pull-down renovation”) explains the development of the “squatters” movement in the late 1970s and 1980s. These movements, together with Third Sector initiatives, not only in the area of housing, but also in other activities (such as LETs), all aimed at recuperating a “local”, “community” dimension in social initiatives, in contrast with the prevailing top-down planning practice. From this point of view they are, according to the authors, very much in line with 18th century civic associations and self-help traditions, whether they allow for negotiations with and support from the state, or they pursue an alternative existence.

“The liberal movement of the early 18th century brought forward something like a civil society for the first time in German history. No direct continuity is traceable to more recent movements, but there is a spiritual connection to the emancipatory social movements of the 1980s and 1990s. They too are liberal in thought and oriented towards solidarist self-help. Both carry the vision of active citizenship, involving civic engagement in associations and the building of a critical public consciousness.”

The country report concludes stressing how most trajectories have been able to sustain socially innovative practices, whether socialist, Christian, or self-help, in as much as they remained linked to the local dimension and to a participatory approach, whereas they lost any innovative momentum when they shifted towards a more centralised, authoritarian approach.

The German case shows, once again, how the 1970s and 1980s are a period of profound transformation, during which some organised mass reformist movements reach their limit and new more scattered and anarchistic social experiments emerge.

3.5. Belgium

The Belgian report focuses on the country’s social economy and its historical roots, in terms of both philosophical visions and social practices. Three main trajectories are reviewed: a) the co-operative movement; b) the anarchist movements; c) the post-WWII urban movements.

The co-operative movement has the oldest roots and has developed the strongest organisational apparatus, although it has now lost much of its former ideal dimension and has bent to capitalist rationality. As in other countries (e.g. Italy, Austria), also in Belgium this form of social organisation developed within two main camps: the Socialist and the Christian (Catholic). The associative socialism camp owed much to the early utopians, although their diversity led to different interpretations. Most influential in the socialist camp were Saint Simon and especially Owen, which opened the way to the reformist strand: co-operative organisations could achieve more democratic management and better redistribution of wealth within the capitalist system. Even if Marx’s position concerning co-operatives was more instrumental – as a financing and
propaganda tool within the workers’ struggle towards revolution – the strong link between co-operatives, trade unions, and the workers organisations gave great impetus to the socialist co-operative movement. The *social Christianism* camp had a more paternalistic and anti-socialist approach, but there were also numerous truly democratic and emancipatory initiatives, both in the rural areas (Raiffeisen-type credit co-operatives) and among industrial workers. The Catholic social doctrine saw in the co-operative organization an “intermediary” institution between the isolation of the individual preached by liberalism and the annihilation of the individual preached by socialism. The Belgian co-operative movement was active in *production* (although limited to craft and skilled manufacturing), in *credit* (although most developed among urban middleclass and catholic peasants), and especially in the *reproduction* sphere, linked to mutuality initiatives (typically Belgian is the pharmacy co-operatives experience).

The second trajectory reviewed for the Belgian case is the *Anarchist movement* that in this country had very strong support and several currents. Through subsequent splits – in the First International Congress of 1864 between the *mutualists* inspired by Proudhon and the *collectivists* following Bakunin; in the Hague congress of 1872 when the anarchists left the International; in 1880 when the *anarcho-communism* current separated and later again when *anarcho-syndicalism* was tried out – the anarchist movement theorised and experimented organisation without hierarchy and without centralisation of decision-making, in strong opposition with the approach of the socialist movements and, later, parties. Ranging from utopian experiments to “direct actions”, the social practice of anarchist groups, although they progressively lost ground to the socialist organisations, has proven a mould for quite innovative organisational experimentations – ad hoc association, non hierarchical structures, decision making by consensus, etc. – which are an important legacy and can be witnessed in many contemporary Belgian initiatives.

The third trajectory analysed in Belgium is that of post-WWII *urban movements*. As in most Western countries, the late 1960s and the 1970s are in Belgium years of renewed social mobilisation. The main characteristics of these social *urban* movements are: i) the focus on the reproduction sphere; ii) the struggle for greater political participation in political decision-making; iii) a tension between community and cosmopolitan goals. With regard to the first, in the wake of the “situationist” movement, a new dimension – that of creativity and artistic expression – is introduced in the struggle against capitalist alienation and for the “re-appropriation of everyday life”. With regard to greater democracy and political participation, there is also a new dimension, drawing on Habermas critique, which reclaims a more direct citizens’ role in the public sphere that has been appropriated by the state and by capitalism. In the 1970s this was evident in the neighbourhood movements against centralised urban (renewal)
policy; in the 1990s it expressed itself in a claim for direct democracy through the referendum tool. Finally, the latest urban movements are characterised by a tension, not always solved, between the community ideal, which may tend to be exclusionary, and the cosmopolitan ideal, which accommodates diversity. Although going back to the *gemeinschaft* vs. *gesellschaft* debate, this tension is renewed within the post-Fordist, post-modernist debate. In all these urban social movements the anarchist tradition, especially in terms of organisational forms and social practices, is quite present.

### 3.6. United Kingdom

The U.K. report focuses on the *philosophical matrices of social movements* from the 18th century to date. Six main historical matrixes/trajectories are identified, to which many contemporary social movements implicitly or explicitly refer.

Within the *utopian* matrix – which was, indeed, initiated by British philosopher Thomas More as far as the 16th century – quite influential were the actions of Owen, who was also the father of British co-operativism and trade unionism, and Ebenezer Howard, with his “Garden city” experiment. Howard was somewhat a precursor of British town planning, with his “model” city based on low-density housing, factories, farms and public services. The utopian matrix is recognisable in many post-WWII 1970s and 1980s “communes”, including “New Age” meditation, organic farming, and other types of “alternative” communitarian experiments. With historical utopianism these experiences share the fact that they do not attempt to change the system and represent “gated” – self-contained – experiments of alternative organisations.

Within the *co-operativist* matrix, Owen was, again, quite influential. He linked the co-operative movement to trade unionism, making co-operatives an element of socialist emancipation. The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers (1844) set the basic principles of the co-operative movement. In 1852 the first legislation was enacted, providing a legal structure to co-operatives. However, the *producer* co-operatives were a limited and not very successful experience in Great Britain. The idea was somewhat revived during the 1970s restructuring of British industry, more as icons of workers resistance, than effective ways to counteract closures. *Consumer* co-operatives, on the other hand, were much more successful and worked until WWII. After the war, with both the increasing affluence and the welfare state, consumer co-operatives declined as well. Today, however, the U.K., as other countries experience a revival of the co-operative organisation in the domain of *social services*. On the one hand, co-operative organizations are a way to tackle unemployment; on the other, they are an implementation of the “Third way” –
between old leftism and new right – preached by the new Labour party government of 1997. The authors argue that co-operatives, more than as economic models, should be looked at as community capacity building.

The anarchist movement was never historically strong in the U.K. as it was in other European countries, but echoes of its doctrine and inspiration can be found in several contemporary social movements, merging with utopianism and co-operativism. In particular, the anarchist matrix can be found in many 1960s and 1970s British experiences that developed outside formal politics and where characterised by a voluntary, functional and temporary organisational form, small-size and self-contained dimensions and a generally scattered and unrelated nature. On the other hand, with the development of the Internet, a whole new realm of loose networking opportunities has opened up.

The socialist matrix in the U.K. is quite important. Because of its “utopian” roots, on the one hand (Owen) and the Chartist influence, on the other hand, socialist movements in the UK took a specific “parliamentary” and “reformist” turn. This was evident in the Fabian political organization and parliamentary reform action and was embedded in the 20th century Labour party, which fought, especially after WWII for social legislation and welfare reforms.

Another relevant matrix is that of British voluntarism and self-help. This matrix was historically dominated by mostly “liberal”, top-down approaches, such as bourgeois Victorian philanthropism and Protestant Christianism. But there was also an important component of true bottom-up self-help, in the form of friendly societies, i.e. community and workers associations that pooled resources to provide relief in the case of sickness or death. These initiatives had a strong influence in building local civic society throughout the 19th century. Later in the 20th century the experience was somehow replicated with the building societies, but these involved the lower middle class rather than the working class.

A very important – and quite U.K. specific – offshoot of the voluntarism and self-help matrix is British Community action. As already mentioned, voluntary work in deprived neighbourhoods started as a philanthropic/Christian activity in the 19th century. In the 1960s, however, there was a revival of such an approach, in a completely different social and institutional context, which led to the institutionalisation of community work as a profession. The Gulbekian Report about deprived neighbourhoods opened the way for community development projects, community organising, social planning and work, quite similarly to the U.S. experiences. But opposite to the early bourgeois and Christian philanthropy, in these initiatives there was a distinct “radical” edge. Indeed, throughout the 1960s and 1970s community work in the U.K. merged with welfare
rights movements, neighbourhood resistance to authoritarian planning and redevelopment projects, the “squatters” movement, unions activism, ethnic minority organisations, feminist groups, movements for devolution, etc. Most importantly, community work was supported by government policy. In the late 1970s and early 1980s it was a major component of the New Urban Left experiences. These were coalitions of radical city councillors, party and community activists, social workers, as well as militant residents of many cities and neighbourhoods, which developed more participatory and innovative community projects within the existing institutional framework. From this point of view, British community work is a very interesting example of how the organised mass-movement approach can be bridged with the utopian- anarchist approach. In the late 1980s and 1990s community development projects, as many other socially innovative actions have been reoriented towards goals of economic accountability rather than democracy and capacity building.

4. Historical “invariants” and national “specificities”: a transversal reading of European social movements

It clearly emerges in reading the country reports that there is a “Western European” common philosophical heritage in the historical deployment of social movements. It was born in the Medieval and Renaissance urban societies, was rekindled by the principles of Enlightenment and the French revolution, took full speed with the Industrial revolution and the workers movements, and was revived in the post-WWII economic miracle. Ideas and related social practices, although born in particular countries, did spread quite rapidly in the others. Indeed, all the countries investigated have experienced social movements belonging to most of the philosophical matrices and trajectories sketched in section 2, more or less at the same time. There are, thus, a number of “invariant” features across countries. On the other hand, there are also national/regional “specificities”, i.e. differences related to specific historical/geographic/institutional conditions.

4.1. “Invariant” characters

_The influence of capitalist transformation_. A major determinant of social movements, across most of Western Europe, has been the development of capitalism in its various phases: from the early deployment of mercantile accumulation starting in the Renaissance, to the industrial revolution in the late 18th century and 19th century, till its Fordist turn in the 20th century. _Social movements stem from changes in class structures_ – in Marx’s words, from the
“development of the social forces of production”. Therefore they are historically denser in areas of most intense and rapid capitalist development. Associationism was strong in cities, which had experienced some form of bourgeois revolution and/or civic autonomy. It was stronger yet in areas of rapid industrial development and/or proletarianization of rural populations. The development of labour unions and/or socialist labour movements is observed wherever capitalist relations of production developed, whether in the agricultural Padana plain, the mining regions of Wales, the industrial cities of Lille or Newcastle. In contrast, in regions where feudal or pre-capitalist relations of production lingered, greater inertia (“viscosity”), as well as more paternalistic “from above” types of actions are historically observed. This is certainly the case, e.g. of Southern Italy or in Flanders, compared to Northern Italy or Wallonia, up to WWII.

This causality can be extended also to contemporary – Post-WWII Europe. It is where social transformations were faster and where the contradictions engendered were greater that social tensions and movements occurred. This is particularly the case of large metropolitan areas where immigration, together with urban redevelopment processes were most intense. On the other hand, effective social movements had greater chances to develop where there was some historical tradition of social organising “from below” and/or where they could be included in broader organised movements (e.g. labour unions).

Central States, parliamentary reformism and devolution. Most of the observed countries exhibited strong central states throughout the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, with some degree of liberalism and parliamentary democracy. This may explain why, on the one hand, organised “mass” social movements shifted to a large extent towards reformism, especially after WWI, in all those countries where the central state took a “corporatist” role between the two wars.

The rise and consolidation of the corporatist state after WWII contributed to institutionalise social innovations brought forward by mass mobilisation in many countries, most notably in Belgium, Germany and Austria, but also Italy, the UK and France. Many of the principles and practices pioneered by civil society organisations were taken up in party mobilisation and were incorporated into standard state functions (the welfare state). This bureaucratisation led to new social pressures for devolution on the one hand and for more “direct democracy” through local and community action on the other, starting in the 1970s, but especially in the 1980s. It also brought, as a reaction, a generalised distrust in the central state, which has in part fuelled the neo-liberal discourse.
The “urban question”. Historically, and across most countries, social movements have been strongly linked with the “housing question” and hence with urban governance, whether implicitly or explicitly. Another “transversal” feature is, thus, the prominently “urban” dimension of social movements throughout Western Europe. This is obviously related to the fact that, starting with the industrial revolution and well into the 20th century, a dramatically increasing percentage of national populations concentrated in urban areas, which became the central stage for the most massive and rapid changes.

As a major basic need, housing was a crucial stake throughout history, underlying many social movements and actions, but, paradoxically, it was also the least addressed by the central states until WWI and II (there are some differences among countries). Housing for low-income population was mostly tackled through either paternalistic or co-operative initiatives – in both instances with little relief for the truly poor. In the 19th century German bourgeois reformism and French industrial patronage focussed especially on the housing issue: partly drawing on Utopian socialism and on the City-garden experience, they viewed decent housing as a mean to reduce social depravation and social unrest. The family remained the central pillar of society and housing ownership, as well as family privacy, the main brake to socialist movements. Cheap housing programmes were launched in Berlin after 1848 and building co-operative supported in the 1860s and 1870s. But it is really after WWI that housing became a state concern, with the establishment of low-income housing development schemes of various sorts (see Germany, Austria, France), experimenting with the first forms of building “industrialisation”.

The urban governance dimension of social movements – with the exception of some explicit revolutionary municipal government experiences in a number of cities in the 19th century (Paris, Lille) and the implicit experiences of some utopian communities and cities (New Lanark, the “Garden cities”, etc.) – is a more recent phenomenon. Starting in the 1960s, but especially in the 1970s and throughout the 1980s, social movements have been strongly linked to the urban governance and planning dimension, either as a reaction to specific urban interventions, or in support of particular urban policies, across the whole range of social mobilisation tools: from local action to national legislation (welfare rights movement, resistance against planning and redevelopment, the squatting movement, strategies to form alliance with trade unions, the local organisation of ethnic minorities, the development of feminist groups, the demands for the devolution of decision-making in industry, politics and government, community work, alternative extemporaneous/expressionistic/anarchistic experiments).

In the last two decades, in fact, the two dimensions often merged in the so-called “urban
movements”. Cheap housing had been a major struggle item of the left movements in the 1960s and 1970s across Europe. Now it merged with the neighbourhood opposition to redevelopment plans, with the environmental concern of the “green” (reduction of traffic, public transport, etc.), the women struggle for neighbourhood social services (kindergarten, schools, playgrounds), etc. The issue of *unoccupied flats* (empty housing not offered on the market for speculative reason) for example, coupled with high levels of rents during the 1970s and 1980s, was a situation diffused throughout Europe (although not all the country papers report it). And the *squatting* movement was a widespread response (UK, Germany, in particular), together with some legislative measures (rent control policies, as in Italy). Here again social mobilisation ranged from creative, self-help, “niche” experiments (squatting “communes”), to organised pressures for structural reforms (rent control). In some experiences of what has been called the *New urban left* in the UK there was a rare convergence between the local content of planning issues and the broader civil rights movements, unionism, feminism, environmentalism, etc. In the UK and Belgium this was coupled with the government’s policy to professionalize community work and fund community workers across the country.

### 4.2. National specificities

**The co-operative movement.** Co-operatives are a wide-ranging category that covers a variety of initiatives. As icons of possible organisational alternatives – they have been historically quite relevant everywhere, although with different emphases and empirical outcomes. At the crossroads between utopian and socialist visions, they were never an explicit “political project” of the left, but rather a widespread practice, both in the production and reproduction spheres. Similarly, they were never a real alternative to capitalism, but only a partial solution to the small capital vs. big capital confrontation. This said, their development, evolution and strength are quite differentiated across countries, also owing to different legislative regulation.

*Production* co-operatives, although the object of innumerable experiments were historically never really successful. In post-WWII European countries they had very different political status and economic standing: the Labour party in the U.K. did not support them, whereas they were much supported by the Communist party in Italy (through the “Lega delle cooperative”). Never strong, they further declined in the U.K. and in Belgium, whereas they are still very important and successful in Italy (although no different from any capitalist company by now). *Consumption* co-operatives, in contrast, where historically more successful, especially in the UK and Belgium, as well as some *credit* co-operatives.
Co-operatives, however, have become popular again in the 1980s and especially 1990s, with the emphasis on social services and the Third sector. Blair’s Labour party explicitly emphasised the “Third way” as a possible substitute for the faltering Welfare State. Social services co-operatives or “socially useful” co-operatives are diffusing in some European countries – also with the help of specific new legislation, as in Italy – and increasingly taking on the role of the welfare state in providing a certain number of social services from which the state is withdrawing. They are also becoming a new policy in support of employment. With the alibi of community control and civil society empowerment – as opposed to the centralised authoritarian state – social co-operatives are increasingly used for substituting the state and the market.

The role of the Church. There is a quite evident divide among the observed countries, between the U.K. and France, on the one hand, and Belgium, Italy and Austria, on the other: politics in the former group appear much more “secularised” than in the latter. This does not seem to be related to the relative prominence of the Catholic vs. Protestant faiths, but rather to the historical greater autonomy of the State from the Church, that characterises both France and the U.K. But the Catholic Church appears to play a rather crucial role in all four countries of the latter group, especially after WWII.

Already important in the first part of the 20th century in terms of social action (after “Rerum Novarum”), it is in the post-WWII years that the Roman Catholic Church gets directly involved into politics, with the formation of moderate Christian democratic parties in Italy, Austria, Belgium and Germany also because of explicit US backing within an anticommunist strategy. In some of these countries, partly because of the existence of strong socialist/communist parties, the militancy of the Church has been stronger than elsewhere (e.g. Italy). A clear antagonism between social movements related to Christian parties and organisations, on the one hand, and socialist/communist parties and organisations on the other hand developed (the “red”/”white” divide in Italy; the “red”/”black” divide in Austria).

Although the Protestant churches and parishes appear quite active within the Social Christianism matrix (see Belgium), especially at the local and community level, their action is much less “politicised” at the national level.

Immigration. Another important element of geographical differentiation concerns the dimension and the timing of immigration flows. At the national level a clear cleavage exists between Italy and the other countries examined in this project. The latter began receiving important immigration flows before or right from the end of WWII, whereas the former was a country which lost population up to the 1980s, and only recently has started to experience immigration.
from less developed countries\textsuperscript{6}. At a sub-national level, the issue of immigration has been felt especially in the large metropolitan areas of each country, both in the Fordist period of industrialisation and in the later post-industrial phase. A number of contradictions related to social exclusion, ethnic conflicts, housing and social services, etc. are clearly related to such waves of immigration and the (lack) of integration of foreign people in the urban and social fabric. Although it is not explicitly dealt with in the country papers, the early existence of these problems in the metropolitan areas of countries such as the U.K., France, Belgium and Germany explains the development of a number of social movements and initiatives at the neighbourhood and “community” level.

\textit{Community work.} In some countries the status of “community workers” has been stronger and has received more institutional recognition than in others. This is certainly the case of the U.K. and, to a lesser extent, Germany and Belgium. Such specificity is observed here, but a precise explanation is difficult to provide. It is certainly linked to the existence of a stronger tradition of civic society in the form of associations of voluntary workers, either secular or church initiated, but their “institutionalisation” strongly depend on the attitude of governments, as shown in the case of the U.K.

\textbf{5. Concluding remarks and open issues}

\textbf{5.1. Social innovation}

The philosophical matrices, the historical trajectories, and the case studies reviewed in this report clearly show that \textit{social innovation} – i.e. innovation brought about by and within social movements – is a highly \textit{contextual} phenomenon: it depends on the time and place of its occurrence, as represented by specific institutional contexts. What may represent a social innovation in one place at a given time may not be such in another place or another time.

Nonetheless, as provisionally stated at the beginning of this introduction, all the country reports confirm that \textit{social innovation} – in both its \textit{product} and \textit{process} dimensions – is characterised by at least three forms of achievements, alone or in combination, accomplished through some form of \textit{collective} action, as opposed to individual action:

1. it contributes to satisfy \textit{human needs} not otherwise considered/satisfied;

2. it increases \textit{access rights} (e.g. by political inclusiveness, redistributive policies, etc.).

\textsuperscript{6} Although Italy experienced internal migration flows, from the South to the Northern industrial cities.
3. it enhances human capabilities (e.g. by empowering particular social groups, increasing social capital, etc.).

The latter form of social innovation, that which allows for “capacity building”, i.e. the creation and accumulation of social capital in marginalised places and/or within deprived social groups, is the most referred to – whether implicitly or explicitly – in most country reports. It focuses on the process rather than product dimension of innovation.

Also confirmed is the predominantly short-term character of social innovation. There is some sort of a life cycle of social movements: once incorporated into some permanent institution, social action loses its innovative momentum (by definition), until a new innovative pressure brings further change (for the good or for the bad). In other words, once social innovations establish themselves, they become norms, which can assume “automatic”, “mechanistic”, “bureaucratic”, even “authoritarian” forms – thereby spurring reactions and new social movements. In this perspective, for example, we can understand the “shift” observed in the form and aims of social movements in the 1980s: the social innovation brought about by organised “mass” movements within the reformist tradition had reached its limits and more creative, utopian-anarchist, localised initiatives emerged to meet “new” social needs. On the other hand, the latter experiences, in turn, have developed their own life cycle and their innovative dimension expires in time.

Finally, the country reports confirm that in the social innovation processes, a number of historical philosophical “matrixes” and social practices keep recurring, although in renewed forms. Moreover, these matrices keep combining and recombining, especially in the most contemporary social movements, where different visions seem to merge and traditional philosophical “cleavage” often disappears.

5.2. Tensions

This said, in order to better assess the significance, the role, and the innovative character – if any – of contemporary social movements, a number of “tensions”, as well as a few equivocal simplifications, currently found in political discourses and literature, need to be highlighted.

Reformist vs. utopian-anarchist approach. Throughout the history of social movements, from the 19th century workers movements up to very contemporary initiatives, a basic tension must be
acknowledged between what can be labelled as the *reformist* soul and the *utopian-anarchist* soul\(^7\).

The *reformist* approach, which believed in class-based membership, hierarchical organisation, and large-scale collective action, is traditionally aimed at gaining “permanent” or “lasting” improvements for the involved social group and/or for society as a whole, *within* the existing socio-political system and through *institutionalised* measures (reforms): legislation, programmes, activities. Very often it involves a *structured organisation*, with a regional, national, or international reach, which acts as pressure group through various political tools.

The *anarchist* approach was anti-authoritarian and fragmented; more related to the utopian philosophy and self-help tradition, which translated into self-reliant, fragmented, local-based (“community”-based) initiatives and actions. It is traditionally not aimed at “improving the system”, but at gaining “limited” or “temporary” goals, just for the group or community involved, *outside* and/or *despite* the system. It involves “self-contained” actions, with a utopian, “alternative”, and/or straightforwardly critical attitude vis à vis the existing socio-political system. Such actions are often *ex tempore* and ephemeral.

This tension is also evident in the 1970s and 1980s, when small scale, fragmented types of initiatives – which are alternative or in opposition to mainstream practice, very focussed “inward” and not interested in changing the system – are often in conflict with large scale, *mass* mobilisation movements – be it left movements, feminist movements, student movements, anti-nuclear, environmentalist, etc., fighting for greater democracy, participation and civil rights, and trying to achieve significant changes “through” and “within” the system (the state).

In a way this unsolved tension boils down to that between social action carried out through “politics” and social action carried out outside politics.

**Gemeinschaft vs. Gesellschaft.** Another tension, parallel, but somewhat overlapping with the former, exists between *community*- and *society*-oriented actions (in classical sociological terms: *Gemeinschaft* vs. *Gesellschaft*, “organic” vs. “contractual” type of relationships). This antagonism assumes new meanings in the *community vs. cosmopolitanism*, local vs. global debates. In fact, community-oriented social initiatives while more rooted into people’s needs and with more democratic decision-making processes, may also end up being *exclusionary and self-contained*. Society-oriented movements, while being more impersonal and giving way to some decision-making automatism (through institutionalisation), may, on the other hand, be more

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\(^7\) We will not deal with violent actions aimed at destabilising the system and/or conquer the state.
socially *inclusive*, i.e. allow for *diversity*, which is a trait of “cosmopolitanism”. This tension is explicitly referred to, e.g. in the Belgian country report.

**Local vs. central government.** Also partially overlapping with the above is the tension between the *local* level of governance and the *central* state. Especially in situations where government is heavily centralised, this tension often originated quite innovative social movements seeking greater local control over public action.

On the other hand, although all the above tensions can be found throughout history, places and cases, there are also examples where they do find some form of compromise. The Vooruit experience in Belgium, the New urban left initiatives in the UK, some 1980s experiences in Austria show how a bridge can be worked out – be it temporarily – between self-help and reformism, community and society, local governance and central government.

### 5.3. Issues to explore

**The fake antagonism between “local” and “central”(1): a dangerous simplification.** A first quite relevant issue is the way the above tensions are often combined and portrayed in an oversimplified antagonism. Indeed, there is a major bias, in some of the country papers, towards what is perceived as a clear-cut antagonistic “bi-polarity”: *local* action means grassroots, community, democratic, bottom-up, creative, socially innovative and, ultimately, *good* (e.g. many anarchist-utopian movements/experiences); conversely, *centralised* action means top-down, authoritarian, bureaucratic, ultimately bad (e.g. social democratic reforms, governance, programs). A case in point is the German paper, which concludes stressing how most of the reviewed trajectories have been able to sustain socially innovative practices, whether socialist, Christian, or self-help, in as much as they remained linked to the local dimension and to a participative approach, whereas they lost any innovative momentum once they shifted towards a more centralised, authoritarian approach.

This simplification, however, is not necessarily true. First, the mechanistic association between the various attributes is not necessarily the case. Secondly, centralised, top-down, societal approaches are not necessarily “bad”. As other country reports show, things must be looked at in a historical/contextual perspective: a lot of social innovation has occurred – in history – through top-down and centralised organisations. Socialist movements and trade union mobilization – through party and other highly structured organizations – have had a very innovative role: places
of information, discussion, diffusion of culture and identity, education, formation of “leader”.

The fake antagonism between “local” and “central”: the issue of scale. A corollary to the above simplification is the idea that administrative devolution and decentralisation means local “empowering” and, therefore, is good “per se”. But a distinction must be made between the political dimension of governance (participation to decision making) and the financial dimension (access and/or control over financial resources). Decentralisation of government and opening it up to the wider governance, but without granting access to resources can actually “de-empower” communities. Ultimately, there are different scales for different governance/government levels and actions. And one of the domains that must remain at the central state level is that of welfare. Without this basic redistributive role there are strong risks of further social and territorial imbalance. The Austrian case of centralised funding and decentralised action in the 1980s is a case in point.

The “Third way”. Closely related to the above is the issue of the Third Sector as a “Third Way”. Is it a real alternative to inefficient state and market or just an alibi for a retrenching Welfare State? Opposite to 19th century self-help and mutual aid initiatives, the current “institutionalisation” of the social economy in many countries (cf. the Italian and Austrian country reports) is not a social innovation that “fills a void”, but rather an institutional innovation that replaces an acquired right (the dismantling welfare state). Moreover, it is a process of “economisation of the social” (cf. Austrian report).

Changing political-economic conditions and the re-emergence of old basic needs. 19th century social movements developed in times of social hardship and exploitation and were related to improve access to basic material needs. Post-WWII social movements occurred in times of growing prosperity and aimed at acquiring greater social rights. The establishment of the neo-liberal paradigm in the 1980s somewhat reshuffles things: what was given for granted twenty years ago, may become the object of renewed social struggle.

In fact, none of the country reports seems to acknowledge the re-emergence of old basic needs, (bread and shelter), mainly due to: a) the re-polarisation of income distribution, after thirty years of relative convergence, i.e. the re-emergence of poverty even among old residents; b) the more or less evident reduction in welfare state coverage; c) the new wave of often illegal immigration (from Eastern Europe, but also from traditional Third World countries), which has especially

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8 Mass participation to politics has been a major social innovation by itself.
involved formerly immune Southern European member states (Italy in particular). A growing share of the national population is now socially excluded, not just particular groups in particular areas.

Can devolution, together with the retrenchment of the welfare state, bring back mass social movements and reformist actions?

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\* Fiscal autonomy is very good for rich communities (e.g. Basque Region and Cataluna), but a desaster for poor regions, which have no productive basis to tax. In Italy, for example, fiscal autonomy will further reduce the already scarce public resources of Southern regions.
II. ITALY

by Pietro Lembi and Serena Vicari Haddock

A. PHILOSOPHICAL MATRICES AND NATIONAL TRAJECTORIES OF THE THIRD SECTOR

1. Historical roots of the Italian non-profit sector

We begin by presenting the main philosophical influences in the history of the Italian non-profit sector. Characteristic cultural roots constituting veritable reservoirs of models, resources and values that can be drawn upon immediately when an organization is formed, mark the development of the non-profit sector in Italy. These models or cultural matrices represent underlying constants, which, although evolving over time, remain present throughout the historical development of the sector.

The presence of four principal cultural matrices can be identified in the Italian third sector: 1) the secular matrix; 2) the political parties; 3) the Catholic cultural matrix; 4) the area of social movements and the libertarian left.

1.1. The secular matrix

We can refer to this area as the "enlightened elite’s matrix". It is a matrix of civic values, linked to the efficient functioning of the city and to secular, liberal and bourgeois values. From a political point of view, this matrix can be traced back to liberal and republican thought. Historically this area is that of the landed nobility and rich merchants at the end of the 19th century, of the large industrial families of the 20th, particularly in the North of Italy, and of representatives of the traditionally liberal professions. Rich in social and financial resources, this matrix’s elite often deployed its capital in support of the formation of organisations considered to represent socially useful values. From the perspective of this elite, these organisations were intended to promote a more harmonious

10 The authors gratefully acknowledge the contribution of Paolo Cognetti, Francesca Cottino e Andrea Membretti regarding the gathering of information about initiatives in Milan and in Naples and the discussion on the interpretation of this material for the argument of this paper. Lucia Cavola and Paola Demartino wrote the sections on Quartieri Spagnoli and Officina 99 in chapter 4.
and civilised society and, as such, their views contained elements of both paternalism and social engineering.

In Milan, for example, rich liberal families contributed to the education of the poor through the founding of schools. In particular, in 1891 an endowment from a wealthy Jewish merchant led to the formation of the Società Umanitaria, dedicated to the provision of education and training to the poor. From the outset, members of the school’s board represented a variety of reformers from the radical to the socialist and liberal democratic traditions as well as enlightened industrialists. In the 20th century, among the most innovative examples were the initiatives promoted by Adriano Olivetti, owner of the Olivetti company, to improve working conditions and the quality of life in the Olivetti company town of Ivrea (near Torino) in the 1950s.

In more recent times a number of these initiatives have begun the process of transforming themselves into foundations. This is the case with the Fondazione Bagatti Valsecchi, formed to operate an important museum in Milan: in this case a prominent family donated to the city a substantial endowment in art and property, with the intention of making it accessible to the public at large. The foundation adopted an organisational form designed to promote this objective: it is governed by a board of directors whose members include representatives of the Municipality, Province and Region and of the Milan Chamber of Commerce. This arrangement, which follows Dutch and American models, is viewed as an ideal solution, to be emulated in the management of other museums, theatres and cultural institutions.

In other cases, when the members of the initiating elite become directly and personally involved, in order to obtain the necessary resources they continue to draw on the support of their own networks as well as that of other players and new participants. This is the case with the Fondazione Pierlombardo, formed with the immediate purpose of quickly raising the funds required for the restructuring of the Milanese theatre of the same name. Among its broader objectives we find the intention to build a multi-functional centre designed to host theatrical, musical and other events and to house a library, video library, cinema circle, restaurant, bookshop and exhibition space: a project intended "to contribute to reviving the image of Milan by mobilising the energy of citizens and promoting dialogue and exchanges between the artistic, cultural and social communities and institutions, associations and companies". This foundation is meant to function according to the English Trust model, where annual contributions by prominent members allow the preservation of artistic and cultural assets.

In contrast to the two matrices that are discussed subsequently, the secular area is less well connected to broad-based participatory networks and nourishes a wide variety of different types of
organisation that often have specific local bases and are linked to particular civil institutions; in other cases the activities can be viewed as enlightened lay responses to a range of diverse problems such as those involving people suffering from severe or terminal illnesses or others dedicated to the promotion of scientific research.

Currently one of the most interesting typologies associated with the secular cultural matrix concerns those organizations that have developed over time into significant public institutions, endowed with considerable financial assets and which function in various ways as funding bodies. Today, many of these institutions are involved in some sort of internal reorganization, but they too are moving towards a foundation model designed to give a limited group of directors the power to control and manage significant financial assets. Among these is one of particular importance for Lombardy (the region of Milan), the Fondazione Cariplo, which was formally founded in 1991 and over the last few years has become fully operational. The Cariplo Foundation funds a range of different projects concerning the environment, technology and scientific research, and social services. As the Cariplo Foundation is the fifth largest in the world in terms of the size of its endowment and has connections with the leading Italian financial institution, Banca Intesa, the amount of funding made available is significant and allows the Foundation to play a pivotal role in the development of Third sector initiatives and projects.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that until a few years ago most public – i.e. government owned or controlled – banks in Italy (about 100 savings banks and other large banks representing about 40 percent of total bank deposits in the country) were established under the legal status of incorporated foundations or associations. Most charters stressed the “social concern” and the philanthropic commitment of these institutions. Their philanthropic orientation led these banks to donate a substantial share of their profits to non-profit organisations (generally named in the charters themselves), especially those operating in the same area where the banks ran their business. In fact, public banks were a hybrid of for-profit and non-profit activities. Law 280, passed in 1990, allowed banks to change their legal status. Foundations and associations created joint stock companies for the actual bank operations, whereas the foundations retained control of the majority of the new bank shares. Dividends paid by the banks provide funding to the philanthropic foundations (Barbetta 1997: 183).
1.2. Political parties

In addition to the secular matrix, two other strong ideological traditions played significant roles: socialism and communism on the one hand, Catholic reformism on the other. Despite their reciprocal antagonism, these traditions share common values in terms of social solidarity, attention to the weaker sectors of society and an emphasis on forms of organization "from below". They also share an antagonistic view of the liberal-bourgeois form of the State. In the latter decades of the 19th century both socialist and Catholic voluntary associations were opposed by the newly formed Italian nation state as it struggled to establish itself — in opposition to the power of the Church and that of a growing socialist movement. Of particular importance in this context were the Workers Mutual Aid Societies (Società operaie di mutuo soccorso), which were established by the expanding socialist workers movement. The origin of the Italian welfare system lies in a sustained effort on the part of the State to increase its political control by driving both Catholic and socialist non-profit initiatives into public channels (Barbetta 1997).

In particular following World War II, and continuing until recently, these traditions underlay the two major popular organisations that characterized political, social and economic life in Italy: the Christian Democracy party and the Italian Communist party. The opposition between the two forces led both parties to develop robust organizational structures capable of communicating the general party orientation and establishing large areas of consensus in all spheres of civil society. The resulting enormously strong presence of these parties weakened the capacity of civil society to organize autonomous forms of associational life. This explains both the relatively late development of the non-profit sector in Italy compared to other countries in Europe and the timing of its explosive development beginning in the late 1970s, i.e. the period coinciding with the crisis of the traditional popular parties.

One such robust organizational structure is the co-operative movement, which developed an impressive presence in Italy, particularly in a number of regions in Central and Northern Italy. In the past it had not been entirely absent from the South: examples include the farm worker leagues organized by the anarcho-syndicalist movement, of particular importance in Puglia, and the Workers Mutual Aid Societies affiliated with the Socialist Party, found in many areas of the South at the end of the 19th century. During the Fascist period these organizations, along with all political parties and the freedom of association throughout the country, were abolished. The co-operative movement in the South did not revive following World War II, however, due in part to the failure of land reform in the 1950s and the resistance posed by the large landowners and the political power of the Christian Democrats representing them, and in part to the individualistic character of the peasant
culture in the South. Elsewhere the co-operative movement did begin to flourish again in the decades following the Second World War, driven in particular in Northern regions by the Socialist and Communist parties on the one hand and the Christian Democrats on the other. For the former the attention paid to the co-operative movement was a reflection of their efforts to implement Gramsci’s strategy calling for the penetration of civil society; for the Christian Democrats the co-operatives favoured inter-class relationships resulting in diminishing social conflict. Organised in two confederations, the "white" Catholic Confederazione delle co-operative italiane and the “red” Lega nazionale delle Co-operative, they were to become important components of the Italian economic system: in the 1960s each confederation numbered some 2 million members. During this period the co-operatives in the Emilia-Romagna region formed one of the pillars of Communist power, controlling a significant proportion of manufacturing and agricultural production and distribution, financial and commercial activity in the region and employing a growing number of workers, technicians and administrative personnel. Catholic co-operatives were present above all in Lombardy and the Veneto region but also in Sicily, Sardinia and Emilia-Romagna; the majority of these co-operatives were concentrated in agriculture and the construction industry.

In recent years there has been a process of transformation and concentration of co-operative companies. Over time they have lost their solidarity character and apart from the fact that they are required to re-invest or distribute profits in particular ways, they have become to all intents and purposes simply for-profit enterprises. Historically established co-operative companies, particularly the largest ones, today remain significant in economic terms and contribute to local development not only in traditional ways, providing jobs and revenues, but more importantly for our purposes here, as project-financing bodies: co-operatives are required by their legal status to set aside part of their profits in order to finance socially-oriented initiatives.

The solidarity element of the co-operative movement, however, re-emerges in the portion of the third sector composed of organizations, which have assumed the co-operative form. A large number of these new co-ops, in fact, represent a significant form of social innovation: the social co-operative, defined by National Law 381 of 1991 as non-profit associations for the production of health, social or educational services and for work integration. By law, these social co-ops carry out their activities “for the general benefit of the community and for the social integration of citizens” and are required to manage their initiatives democratically, according to the “one person, one vote” principle. Social co-operatives will be presented in greater detail in Part B, where the specific characteristics of the Italian case are discussed.
1.3. The Catholic cultural matrix

Italian Catholic culture is based on the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church, which defines the philosophical and ethical foundations underpinning the Church's actions. Since it was first formulated in the encyclical Rerum Novarum of Leo XIII (1891), the Social Doctrine of the Church has defined its ideological position with respect to the two alternative ideological systems it opposes, liberalism and socialism. These two systems were both bearers of the promise of "secularised salvation", in contrast to which the Church proposed its own vision. The first promised, in accordance with the liberal ideal, self-realisation of men in a "profession"; the socialist perspective held out the promise of equality and justice for all. In the encyclical the "workers question" holds a prominent position and is discussed in the context of:

- the condemnation of the 'false solution' of socialism, said to foster hatred and divisions among the classes of society;
- a proposed organic and harmonious model society in which individuals, families and businesses participate in the construction of the common good of civil society and in which normative values and ideals must be pursued: the primacy of man and the family vis-à-vis the State; the legitimacy of private property; the right to a just and adequate salary;
- the practice of associationism and the principle of social harmony and collaboration among social classes;
- the identification of charity as the social virtue par excellence and as the perfection of justice.

On the basis of this initial definition, subsequent encyclicals developed the Church's position further with regard to social and political problems impeding the full realisation of human potential.

Catholic culture has long been hegemonic in Italy — a reflection of the central role of the Catholic Church, its influence over one of the main parties, the Christian Democrats, and the multifaceted Church organisations and institutions pervading Italian society. Proselytism and the promotion of Catholic values and orientation are at the basis of all organisations directly or indirectly promoted by the Church. These organisations have directed their efforts toward meeting basic social needs such as "procuring education, instruction for the illiterate; procuring the start of a profession, art or trade" and " bringing assistance to the poor and destitute". In their activities they strongly promoted their vision of society.

The Church orientation towards civil society changed in the wake of Vatican Council II (1962-64), which promoted a less integralist and doctrinaire attitude of the role of the faithful in society and
opened up room for the formation of a large number of informal Catholic groups and communities which drew inspiration and ideals from the original Gospels. Enlightened priests who were critical of the Church hierarchy and were personally committed to radical, socially progressive or left-wing political and social projects led many of these groups. As we shall see later in the following section 2.2 with reference to Milan, the formation of many organisations during this period was closely tied to this development: the new social sensibility of informal Catholic communities.

In general, organisations belonging to this tradition are very rich in resources, enjoy substantial legitimacy, are present throughout the country and maintain a dense network. However, the engagement of the Catholic Church in social services is above all a Northern Italian phenomenon: in the 1990s, 56% of Church initiatives in the social services area were located in the North, 16.3% in Central Italy, 13.6% in the South and 13.9% in Sicily and Sardinia (Bazzari 1992:199).

The cultural matrix associated with the Catholic Church is today very much evident in metropolitan areas of the country. According to a survey of the third sector in the Milan metropolitan area (Barbetta e Ranci 1999), if one considers only those organisations formed with the direct involvement of ecclesiastic representatives and organisms, these represent 35.8% of the total sample, 32% of which were formed in the seven years preceding the survey. They mobilise 44.5% of volunteers, 60% of paid employees and 63% of the conscientious objectors represented in the sample as a whole (Lembi 1999).

The wealth of experience represented by this area can be traced to two different subsystems which coexist within the Church but exhibit clearly distinct characteristics: a) those organisations associated with local parishes and communities and b) national or worldwide religious institutions and orders.

a) The Church at the local level has numerous primary organisations that have branches at the parish, neighbourhood and city levels. Such primary organisations as the ACLI (Italian Catholic Workers’ Association) and Caritas, responsible for social assistance, are present throughout the country. As all report to a bishop responsible for a specific area, each bishop's approach to these organisations influences their orientation and practice. In Milan, for example, Cardinal Martini initiated a profound renewal of a large proportion of the structures and organisations active in this area. Over time he was in fact able to create a relatively innovative environment in which the activities of these organisations have a number of features in common: a cautious opening to other

11 The prevailing motivation for the formation of these organisations is of an ethical nature (56.5%, versus 41.3% in the sample as a whole); they intervene particularly in the social services sector (58% vs. 43.5%) and engage in advocacy less often than the overall sample indicates (5.8% vs. 10.7%).
networks and cultural matrices with respect to the creation of new organisations; a *partial professionalisation* of members within existing organisations; a *renewal of services offered* based on an approach less exclusively focused on extreme poverty and increasingly attentive to a broader range of problems in society, with appropriate support initiatives undertaken on behalf of social groups at risk. As we shall see when we discuss specific initiatives below, these organisations are open and collaborate with local groups on the left, to such an extent that, in terms of social practices and services provided, the organisations of the Catholic cultural matrix and those of the left-wing social movements area have become often indistinguishable.

b) The presence of the Catholic Church is also evident in the activities of various religious institutions, congregations and orders, which, despite their nominal allegiance to the bishop with respect to their activities in the latter's area of responsibility, pursue diverse logics and have their own administrative entities, linked in many cases to national or provincial administrative centres. In addition, these organisations are able to draw on financial and professional resources that are different from those of the local churches.

This submatrix is comprised, one might say, of numerous *resource islands*: each "island" is a coherent and solidarity entity comprising resources, social actors, governing organisations and services. That is, they appear to be largely self-referential entities, with their own values, charismatic personalities and even their own languages.

Different orders, Jesuits and Salesians for instance, preside over the education of the future elites through secondary schools and universities or over the training and work insertion of lower-class youth. Charitable institutions are run by Franciscans; health services by others still: in Milan, to offer just one example, the S. Pio X hospital has 550 employees. These resource islands provide organisations and services arising within them with specific cultural orientation, entrepreneurial expertise, and specific objectives and methods of identifying needs. Each organisation also adopts the “language”, decision-making mechanisms and organisational structure characteristic of the resource island with which it is associated. In point of fact, although it is evident that such islands maintain relationships with external entities, the birth of new organisations and services remains, at least at this level of analysis, completely internal to each unique universe.

Today, religious institutes and congregations of the sort outlined above are engaged in a restructuring of their internal organisations, general constitution and legal forms: the main objective is to deal with the reduction in the number of religious vocations while maintaining control over general directions and original values. The opening, in some cases forced, to the secular world thus
coincides with a marked concentration of power in the hands of religious officials and the administrative centres of these organisations.

1.4. Social movements and the libertarian left

The social movements of the 70s and 80s draw on the values of the socialist, communist and libertarian left-wing cultures, within the rhetoric of a reaction against the traditional forms of organizational intermediation, whether of the political parties or the Church. The mobilization that took place during this period drew on elements of traditional socialism such as distrust of the market and opposition to an ethic based on the pursuit of economic success; a further source was the libertarian tradition from which the movements borrowed their opposition to any control by public or private bureaucracies over individual and collective behaviors (Kitschelt 1980: 180).

Although, historically speaking, left-wing movements presented themselves as forms of aggregation and solidarity alternative to those of the Catholic matrix, beginning in the 1970s a number of left-wing non-profit organizations were formed that brought together themes and actors from the social movements with a more open approach vis-à-vis organizations linked to the Catholic Church.

Characteristic of this social movements matrix is its base in dense social networks from which over time a large number of volunteers have been recruited (often engaged temporarily and across diverse organizations) and which provide resources of various kinds. These organizations are linked to local contexts and to issues that concern urban social movements (Della Porta 1999). They are innovative in the ways they promote and practice participatory democracy, in their embeddedness in the local context and in their ties to social movements. Links to the local context have assumed at least two principal forms: the first is tied to numerous self-governed spaces, generally obtained through illegal occupation, where experiments in alternative cultures are carried out; the second form of local-context relationship is linked to the dense network of parishes distributed throughout the country. The characteristic grassroots ("from below") form applies to the latter as well, since the network is separate and alternative to traditional forms of intermediation on the part of the Catholic Church and has earned a reputation, particularly during the late 70s and early 80s, for challenging the Church hierarchy.

Common to both models is the idea of strong emotional participation and specific concrete actions generally directed toward helping those who are "excluded" from society, the "disadvantaged", and the "last"(ultimi); the concept of community has often provided a strong source of identity, binding participants in such initiatives. This orientation toward the local community remains encapsulated
within an antagonistic conception of the Liberal-bourgeois State that is rooted in both the left and the Catholic cultural matrices (Della Porta 1999).

In general we can say that many of the organizations formed from the mid-70s on trace their mission – above and beyond particular objectives and areas of involvement to roots in the social movements area. This is the source of their wealth, allowing them to persevere over time and to continue to acquire new resources, above all creative resources and new forms of legitimisation.

One of the most interesting aspects of this type of organization is the issue of how they coordinate activities among themselves. At times coordination is informal and fluid. In this case the relations between the various groups are maintained by a number of network organizations (Della Porta & Diani 1999). One may cite for example the importance of certain radio stations (in Milan these are Radio Onda d'Urto and Radio Popolare in particular). In other cases the relationships between organizations, while maintaining their typically fluid character, show a higher degree of formalization. Irrespective of the presence of particular leaders or significant personalities, these organizations often find themselves engaged in a continuous process of transformation – they are formed, transformed, merged with other organizations, or often enough simply disappear. They give the impression of being constantly on the boil.

We also note in these organizations a constant fluctuation between visibility and latency that is characteristic of social movements. They are, indeed, "based on micro-organizations that are segmented, networked and polysepalous" (the latent structure): they proceed by campaign, combining with others and "giving rise to spontaneous adherence by heterogeneous actors to objectives that are culturally defined" (Melucci 1984). It is not necessarily the case that such aggregations "develop an interest in keeping the organization alive. In other words, the loyalty of members will continue to be directed primarily to the movement, with respect to which the organization is viewed as nothing more than a temporary means of intervention" (Melucci 1984).

Finally, it is worth noting the relationships between this model and the no-global movement of today. In Italy as elsewhere, as the movement developed it brought together a broad range of sensibilities and positions that had emerged within the organizations discussed here. There are some indications that at present the movement is caught up in the broader process of transforming itself into a political project, breathing new life into the non-profit organizations under its influence and at the same time driving them to confront new challenges and to form new alliances.
2. The non-profit sector in Italy

There are significant differences in the way the Italian non-profit sector in Italy is described, interpreted and classified in the literature on the subject. What is common to these differing views, however, is the increasing recognition, since the beginning of the 90s, of the sector's importance as a basis for current and future policy-making. This developing recognition is significant, when one considers that only a few years ago the non-profit sector in Italy was considered to be of little relevance when compared to its role in other European countries. This view was due in large part to the peculiarities of this "third sector" in Italy. Among those worth mentioning are: a) the substantial presence of voluntary organisations; b) the sector's strong ties with the Catholic Church and with the country's political parties; and c) the prevalence of organisations active in the provision of social services and targeting the most disadvantaged social groups (Ranci 1999).

It is worth looking more closely at the following points:

a) The Italian third sector is composed to a much greater extent than in other countries of voluntary associations. The weight of this component is not reflected in the statistics concerning the economic and occupational dimensions of the third sector, and this is one of the main reasons the extent and importance of the sector has been underestimated in comparative analysis.

The phenomenon of voluntary associations began to emerge during the second half of the 1970s. It is from this period in particular, and continuing throughout the 1980s, that scholars have noted the appearance of hitherto unknown forms of association, i.e. organisations oriented toward the production of social assistance and services. Of particular interest in the present paper is the fact that these emerging associations presented themselves as a new model of collective action. Closely allied with the social movements of the 70s, the new associations tended to be fairly critical of existing political structures and institutions, in particular of the Church and political parties in Italy (Della Porta 1999; Della Porta e Diani 1997).

b) The strong ties with the Catholic Church and political parties serve as an additional factor setting apart the Italian third sector from its counterparts in other countries (Ranci 1999). The third sector is in this respect representative of a much broader trend in the history of Italy in the 20th century, in which the Church and political parties had enormous impact across the entire range of social and political life.

The Church and political party organizations (of the Christian-Democratic Party and of the Communist Party in particular) exercised a dominant role in mobilising citizens after World War II. This dominant role was severely shaken in the second half of the 1970s. For several concurrent
reasons, including the economic crisis of the mid 1970s and the unfolding of terrorism, the decline of the two main political parties began during this period. The crisis of traditional parties made way for new social movements of anarchist and extra parliamentary leftist orientation: the culture of these movements and of others concerned with new issues (e.g. environment) nourished the formation of a broad array of formal and informal organisations. New organisations and informal groups that revealed a new approach to social issues rejuvenated the Catholic Church, which was experiencing a decline in the same period. As a result, the Italian third sector is characterised today both by established organisations reflecting different political traditions and value orientations and by new organisations. The former are less significant than the latter, which have developed in particular over the last two decades and tend to bridge historically antagonistic divides.

c) The third aspect peculiar to the Italian third sector is the prevalence of organisations active in the production of social services. Beginning in the late 1970s, a large number of voluntary associations based on voluntary, unpaid labour were transformed into co-operatives, which employ salaried personnel. This development was eventually reflected in the passage in 1991 of two important laws under which voluntary organisations (National Law 266/1991) and social co-operatives (National Law 381/1991) were awarded specific legal recognition as: a) co-operatives providing social and educational services and b) co-operatives pursuing diverse activities aimed at integrating disadvantaged persons into the workforce. The new legal status conferred additional recognition and legitimacy to these new forms of professionalized work and specific social action, which were considered to be complementary to the traditional activity of the State in this area and had already attained de facto recognition in the form of increasing financial support from the State.

In the scholarly literature on the subject this type of organisation is considered by some to be the most innovative in the third sector; the social co-operatives in particular are said to represent a new, previously unknown form of social entrepreneurship. In this perspective the social co-operatives are necessarily the focus of a great deal of attention, to the extent that during the 1980s they "were the only entrepreneurial entities which pursued social ends" (Borzaga e Defourny 2001).

National Law 381/1991, which was approved following ten years of discussion, was considered by many observers to be an important innovation, not only in Italy but also at the international level, because it produced a tremendous increase in the number of these organizations, either as new entities or as a transformation of previous forms of non-profit organizations: "In 1991, when 381 became law, there were less than 2000 social co-operatives; by the end of 1997, according to estimates from the national register of co-operatives, their number had reached approximately 4,500, and had risen to 6,900 by the end of 2000" (Borzaga e Defourny 2001).
Considerations of this nature have led to the concept of the social enterprise, which has found increasing use in the scientific literature and public discourse. The concept is that of a modern social organisation that has assumed considerable social responsibility and frequently acts in partnership with the State in the exercise of social action. This development has occurred in a relatively short space of time and has led to renewed discussion, particularly in Italy, of the Welfare State model, increasingly conceived in terms of a welfare mix, i.e. the incorporation of non-profit forms of organisation into traditional public sector activity.

The relationship between the non-profit sector and the state came about through a series of reciprocal adjustments (Ranci 1999) and legislative steps. Although a comprehensive legislative framework for the non-profit sector does not yet exist, recent legislation regarding ONLUS (Organizzazioni Non Lucrative di Utilità Sociale – Socially oriented non-profit organisations, 1998) has reconfigured and partially unified the sector, particularly with respect to financial levies (the law foresees a series of fiscal benefits for ONLUS organisations).

It is important to keep in mind that along with those organisations in the non-profit sector that have developed over the years into professional, officially recognised organisations with several layers of management, there still exist a large number of groups and associations without legal status that have little internal organisational structure and have remained largely informal. This has been characterised as a process of polarisation within the non-profit sector itself (Ranci 1999). It is interesting to note that these informal organisations have proliferated most widely in those areas of the country that have seen the most rapid modernisation, especially metropolitan contexts such as Milan and Naples.

In the following pages we provide some 'structural' data to outline certain aspects of the non-profit sector in Italy. The information is taken from the most recent national survey data on the non-profit sector (ISTAT 2001). Although we have some reservations with respect to the selection criteria used for the survey (without a standard acceptable definition of the third sector it remains difficult to make relevant comparisons across countries), the data serve to provide an overview of the current situation of the non-profit sector in Italy.

2.1 Size and geographical distribution of the Third Sector in Italy

The survey conducted by ISTAT in 1999 reveals a total of 221,412 non-profit organisations active in that year. 51.4% were in the North of Italy, 21.2% in Central Italy, and the remaining 27.7% in the South and Islands. The northern Italian province of Lombardy has the largest number of
organisations, although their density (34.3 organisations per 10,000 inhabitants) remains somewhat below the national norm (38.4). The southern region of Campania has the lowest density of non-profit organisations (19.7).

The vast majority of third sector organisations in Italy are associations (91.3%). There are of course a great variety of types of organisation within this category. Ranci (1999) frames his description of these associations in terms of contrasts and tension between issues of identity and service, affinity and organised social action, and between small informal groups on the one hand and well-structured, highly professional organisations with a broad base of volunteers on the other.

Using taxonomy common to many international studies, the survey breaks down the third sector by primary areas of activity (Table 1). The survey results would appear to exaggerate the importance of the culture and sports category and to underestimate somewhat the relevance of social services, which nonetheless appear in second place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary activities</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture, sport, recreation</td>
<td>63.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social services</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, professional</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, research</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic, advocacy</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development, housing</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropy</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


With respect to regional distribution, the survey reveals a number of differences. At the macro level one notes that the central and northern Italian regions exhibit a larger number of organisations and that this imbalance increases with respect to the distribution of employment and economic activity.

Looking at the employment figures, one notes that the larger organisations are found in the central and northern regions. In fact, 51.1% of the institutions are located in the North, contributing 58.5% of total employment. The percentage further increases with respect to the voluntary workers, 60.6% of whom work in the North. In particular, one notes that 14.2% of the country's voluntary organisations are active in Lombardy and that 19.8% of all voluntary non-profit sector workers work in this region. This presents a marked contrast with regions in the South, e.g. Campania where only 5.5% of all voluntary organisations and 3.7% of volunteer workers are active.
The same sort of picture emerges from data on economic activity, with some variations across the country. As a whole, organisations in the northern regions account for 53.1% of total sector revenues. Moreover, Lombardy alone accounts for 25% of overall national revenues, or one fourth of the total turnover, and more than the entire South (14.9%), which comprises regions accounting for less than 1% and others showing little more (Campania 2.6%, Puglia 3.4, Sicily 4.6).

Finally, one should note that some 60% of total revenues is concentrated in three areas: social assistance (20%), clearly focused on services of significant economic impact and indicative of substantial funding, health care (18.8%) and culture, sports and recreation (17.4%).

2.2 Historical development of the Third Sector in the Milan metropolitan area

Just prior to the start of a national conference on the phenomenon of voluntary work that took place in October 2002, Italian Minister of Welfare Roberto Maroni announced that a part of the Welfare ministry would be transferred from Rome to Milan, specifically "the part that deals with the voluntary work sector". Two thirds of the ONLUS are in the centre-north of the country," he explained. "Precisely for this reason the previous, centre-left, government, located the national Agency for voluntary work in Milan." (Corriere della Sera, October 10, 2002). These few lines from an article entitled "Welfare - il volontariato passa a Milano" (the voluntariate moves to Milan) are indicative of a social and political dynamic in the country that for several years has been reflected in the presentation of Milan as the epicentre of the "volontariato". The article reports the fact that according to the latest update from ISTAT, the Italian National Institute of Statistics, in September of 2002 the number of organisations belonging to the voluntary sector rose to approximately 30,000 (of which 61.4% are based in Northern Italy), up from 8,383 in 1995.

It also worth noting, however, that in the 1980s and 1990s there has been strong development of associations in the South, formed in response to the demand for new models of cultural consumption and to the new patterns of civic commitment. This trend has reduced the gap between the South and other areas of the country.

In the following pages we present a brief outline of the principal stages in the history of the sector, presented in terms of the obstacles and opportunities that have emerged over the years and that today remain entwined with the cultural roots of non-profit activity. We examine in particular the

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12 The word used in Italian is volontariato, a neologism coined by turning the adjective volontario into a noun, of which the equivalent in English would be "voluntariate". Used to designate the ensemble of organisations, informal groups and communities,
case of Milan, which can be considered one of the most advanced and mature areas of non-profit activity in the country and which serves to illustrate the principal characteristics of the third sector. We make extensive use of a study conducted at the end of the 1990s (Barbetta, Ranci 1999) and comment on the current state of the sector and on possible directions for its development in the future.

The present-day non-profit sector is made up of organisations that vary according to legal status, method of organisation and type of activity. Some of these differences derive from the organisations’ "dates of birth" in different periods: within the third sector today there are, alongside organisations formed relatively recently, a number of institutions whose history stretches back into the ancient world. To describe the history of these organisations thus involves a retracing of the history of social needs that were recognised as such and to which it was thought necessary to provide an organised response, unrelated to reasons of state or commercial ends, i.e. not for profit.

The following table, which refers to Milan, shows the involvement of various organisations over time in different fields of voluntary action. One notes the considerable involvement at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries of non-profit organisations in areas of primary importance such as education; the continuing importance of the social service sector, which, after a slight decline during the years in which the welfare state provided maximum benefits, has regained its primacy and represents about half the organisations founded in the 1990s; the emergence in the 1970s of the advocacy sector, which represents 13.9% of organisations founded in the 1990s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Periods</th>
<th>Culture &amp; Recreation &amp; Education &amp; Research</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Social Services</th>
<th>Advocacy</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>before 1915</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>42.8%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915-1945</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-1970</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1980</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1990</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after 1990</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Barbetta e Ranci 1999.

Five distinct historical periods can be identified in the history of this sector.

1) The first phase begins in the late 19th century, during the period in which the nation state of Italy was formed. Among the various territories merged into the single Italian state was the Papal State;
the conflictual relationship between the new elites of the Italian state and the Catholic Church dates back to this annexation. In this period the majority of health and social assistance services were administered by the *Opere Pie*, which were under the direct control of religious congregations. In 1861 there were some 18,000 such institutions, many of which were the fruit of a tradition going back to the middle ages (Barbetta 1996). The Italian state attempted to reduce their influence by means of laws aimed at the confiscation of the patrimony of various religious orders and by requiring the *Opere Pie* to submit to its authority. These organisations aimed their efforts at meeting basic social needs such as "procuring education, instruction for the illiterate; procuring the start of a profession, art or trade" and "bringing assistance to the poor and destitute". The final act in this process was the so-called “Crispi Act” of 1890, a law which required the most important and well established charities providing social services to assume the status of public institutions (the survey undertaken in preparation for the legislation counted more than six thousand in Lombardy alone). Many of these institutions still exist today, often in the form of IPAB – *Istituzioni Pubbliche di Assistenza e Beneficienza* (Charitable and Philanthropic Public Institutions), and are in general entities of some considerable financial importance, with large holdings in real estate and a substantial number of salaried employees.

2) The second phase (1945-1970), which began with the end of WWII and lasted until the 1960s, can be considered a period in which Italian civil society recovered and gained strength, after two wars and Fascism. To a great extent this recovery reflects the reconstruction of the democratic fabric of society; one proof is the fact that most of the organisations formed during this period assumed the legal form of voluntary associations, while the growth of charitable and philanthropic organisations is less evident. Many associations were formed in response to the emergencies caused by the war or left unresolved by it. In any case, the majority of the new association initiatives were formed on either side of the deep divisions existing at the time between the “red” culture of the workers' movement and the “white” of the Catholics and their respective organisations: the latter are important popular organisations which remain present throughout the country even today, i.e. the ARCI (*Associazioni Ricreative e Culturali Italiane* – Italian Cultural and Recreational Associations) based in the "red" culture, and the ACLI (*Associazione Cattolica Lavoratori Italiani* – Catholic Association of Italian Workers), based in the "white". Both deployed a broad range of local structures to establish deep roots in the social fabric of the country. The post-war period was also one in which many organisations with long and varied histories, which for various reasons had suffered a loss of visibility or autonomy during Fascism and the war, were restructured and reorganised, as was the case for certain religious orders.
In the mid-sixties new organisations related to the growth of new social needs, e.g. preventive health services appeared. Many were advisory bodies and organisations that reflected new professional and cultural sensibilities and proposed more specific and elaborate interventions than had been seen previously. Some of these organisations evidenced certain forms of activity that were to become characteristic of the subsequent phase of intense collective mobilization.

3) The third phase coincides with the decade of the 1970s, characterised by the emergence and subsequent disappearance of the so-called social movements: a phenomenon with new actors and forms of action which led to a radical change and deep restructuring of collective action in Italy.

Apart from its significant political and cultural consequences, the social movements period contributed to the birth of new organizations that broke with the patterns and traditions of their predecessors. The majority of the voluntary organisations that developed later can be traced to these new organisations, their leaders and their cultural import.

The activities proposed by these organisations were generally based on common principles deriving from the social movements, applied to specific issues in particular locations. The principles were based on greater justice, to be achieved through participatory democracy and thus through a refusal to delegate authority or representation of their interests to others.

The associations formed during this phase were active across a broad spectrum; their activities ranged from involvement in issues closely related to the movements – those of the youth counterculture, or women's liberation, to specific issues of national import (focus on the urban periphery, on housing problems and on marginal segments of the population). Assistance to the poor and needy was provided on the basis of new models of intervention.

In the case of Milan alone, one notes the numerous organisations targeting "the last", formed at the time with the intent to provide space for "sharing" (resources) with those excluded from society. Examples include communities such as Comunità Nuova, formed initially to provide a reception facility for young people released from juvenile prisons (see below section 4), and the Co-operativa Comunità del Giambellino (1979), which provided services to drug users, mentally ill and homeless persons.

A large proportion of these associations thus had their beginnings in initiatives "from below" that were linked more or less directly with the leftist non-parliamentary opposition of the time or with various closely related, loosely defined Catholic groups formed following the Second Vatican Council. This period also saw the rise of advocacy activities, directed that is not only toward the provision of assistance but also toward the representation of the needs and interests of the weakest
social groups in the political and institutional arenas. An important example in the area of legal assistance is the CAF (Centro di Assistenza alla Famiglia – Family Assistance Centre), formed at the initiative of a group of magistrates and lawyers interested in issues regarding the legal care of abandoned children.

4) "Beginning in 1985 diverse analyses of the voluntary sector consistently highlighted the transition from a pioneering phase of social experimentation to a progressive stabilisation and specialisation of the phenomenon. In general the specialisation mirrored a tendency already observed in the voluntary organisations of other countries (…) The Italian case was particularly striking due to the rapidity of the process, especially if one took into account the initially non-specialist and informal character of the voluntary organisations. To understand the reasons for this rapidity one must consider that the groups formed during the passage from the 70s to the 80s had launched services that when first constituted were profoundly innovative, not simply by virtue of the techniques employed but also because they identified social needs that had not yet been recognised in the public sector environment" (Ranci 1999: 167-168)

The development of the 1970s social movements continued throughout the 1980s, contributing to the formation of a large number of organisations whose modes of action and intentions however were profoundly different from those of the previous decade. The decidedly militant dimension appeared to lose some of its force; the organisations presented themselves as providers of services linked to the quality of life. Not only did the social component play a fully legitimate role in this idea of quality, it served as the basis for the rise of new professions. Many initiatives begun during this phase were started with the idea or inherent intention, even if not always explicit, of creating not simply an ethically motivated intervention, but innovative forms of employment. One may note a number of examples from the Milan area: MAG2-Mutua Auto Gestione (Self-Governed Assistance, 1980), which was formed as a Mutual Aid Society with the objective to provide financial support to organisations operating in sectors of high ethical value; the co-operative I Sommozzatori della Terra (Divers of the Earth, 1983) formed to assist the mentally ill in joining the work force; Agrisalus (1984), which conducted campaigns linked above all to issues of organic farming and sustainable development; the Chico Mendes co-operative (1990) formed to promote Fair and Solidary Commerce and to distribute its products through retail sales. Many of these initiatives began as co-operatives or assumed the legal form of co-operatives during this period. They were forerunners of a trend that was to receive formal and legal recognition with National Law 381/1991 concerning social co-operation: in the greater Milan area, during the decade following, social co-operatives accounted for 22% of all newly formed organisations.
Links with issues characteristic of the social movements are present in more or less direct form in all of the organisations mentioned above but are particularly evident in specific instances such as the *Legambiente* (Environmental League, 1981) which fought environmental battles against pollution stemming from economic development. Dating from this period as well are diverse organisations linked to the health sector. Examples include the *NAGA-Associazione Volontaria Assistenza Socio Sanitaria per Stranieri e Nomadi* (Voluntary Association for Social/Health Assistance to Foreigners and Migrants, 1987), formed to provide mobile assistance to immigrants not registered with the National Health Service (originally formed in 1978, with the assistance of public and private institutions it eventually received official recognition); *AIMA - Associazione Italiana Malattia di Alzheimer* (Italian Alzheimer's Disease Association, 1984), which collates and provides information about this disease based on a self-help model; *ALA - Associazione Nazionale Italiana Lotta AIDS* (Italian Association against AIDS, 1989) which provides assistance to patients at Niguarda Hospital who have tumours stemming from the HIV virus. An organisation of a different sort is *AIM - Associazione Interessi Metropolitani* (Metropolitan Interests Association, 1987), linked to new forms of urban governance and formed at the initiative of a number of representatives of the city's elites, with the intention to conduct research and draw up proposals for the Milan metropolitan area.

5) The most recent phase, which covers the *decade of the 1990s* and continues to the present, is characterised by a great deal of *diversification*. Alongside organisations active in the field of *social services* (in particular co-operatives), a number of organisations focus on taking care of the *environment*, on promoting *local communities* and on *international activities*. This phase can be considered one in which *third-sector organisations search for improved ways to manage the broad range of activities already underway*. Alongside new forms of social intervention, a series of *new legal forms* have been created that reflect increasing legislative regulation of the non-profit sector and which have reorganise existing entities. In this sense the main innovations in the sector concern the constellation of organisations formed and the inter-organisational services addressed to these rather than specific innovative activities.

This perspective is useful for an interpretation of the *San Carlo Foundation* case, formed at the initiative of the Catholic Diocese in 1994 with the immediate objective of operating a shelter for non-European Community immigrants and Italian labourers. Today the foundation deals, more generally, with finding work and places to live for the weaker segments of the population. Organisations operating in a similar manner include the Foundation and Publishing Company *S. Fedele* (1994); *ACU - Associazione Consumatori Utenti* (Consumers Association, 1993); the *Pierlombardo Foundation* (1996): all are examples of entities that have existed for some time and
have consistently sought to achieve adequate financial and operational structures in order to sustain their activities over the long term.

Behind each initiative we often find complex organisational forms reflecting the new role these organisations play as partners in the local welfare system. Having become co-participants in the welfare system, and to some extent subject to greater control, non-profit organisations make use of a series of "Chinese boxes" resulting in organisational models such as "foundation+association+social co-operative", a range of legal forms reflecting the junctures of existing legislation with the various actions and cultural models of the organisations themselves.

The foundation form, a legal structure that has existed for many decades, enables the organisation's directors to determine and maintain control over its objectives and mission as well as its capital, through the use of decision-making instruments limited to a select few; the voluntary association form facilitates fund-raising and the recruitment of volunteers, allowing the latter to participate in decision-making; the social co-operative form allows the organisation to employ salaried personnel (both disadvantaged and "normal"), to include among its members those to whom services are provided, and, most importantly, to bid for government contracts.

One might call the present stage the managerial phase of the non-profit sector. This characterisation is not meant to suggest inertia or limitation to the management of existing organisations. It refers rather to the fact that today many of the more innovative aspects appear to coincide with the search for new social alliances and forms of aggregation among different groups. Within the present phase one can identify a number of constants such as: the privatisation of numerous entities and IPAB (Charitable and Philanthropic Public Associations); the secularisation of many entities formerly strongly identified as religious organisations; a reduction in the number of large organisations directly dependent on the traditional political parties.

B. CONTEMPORARY EXPERIENCES

Looking more closely at some contemporary third sector initiatives, we focus now on those that have greater visibility in metropolitan areas and contribute in different ways to the transformation of urban space. The use of these criteria reveals a metropolitan landscape dotted with multifaceted initiatives. The majority trace their roots to two cultural matrices discussed in section 1: the Catholic cultural matrix and the social movements matrix. It is worth noting that these initiatives are often only loosely inspired by these matrices. The ideological divide, which separated the two camps in the past, has withered, and common ground has been constructed. As a result, shared
values and specific interests rather than ideology are more likely to be the motivating factors behind participation. People are more committed to practical aims and engage in activities that are meaningful in terms of their personal identity and value system. The result is that both ideological backgrounds may occasionally be found among members of the same initiative. More importantly, these initiatives tend to be highly interconnected, with people and organisations bridging the differences among them. In the following pages we present three ideal types of initiative, illustrating them with examples from Milan and Naples, followed by four detailed descriptions of initiatives of particular interest in both cities.

3. Metropolitan non-profit organisations and urban regeneration in Italy

The associations linked to social movements appear to be particularly significant in metropolitan areas, and to an even greater extent in the area of Milan. Over time these organisations have created a number of services, which represent innovative responses to needs that are typical of the cities of today. These range from services targeting drug addiction to those aimed at helping people afflicted by particular illnesses, immigrants from outside the European Union, and persons living at the margins of society. The responses offered by associations are often characterised by a high degree of emotional participation and involvement on the part of both the target population and those providing the service: roles tend to be very loosely defined and both service providers and their “customers” have much in common in terms of ideology and approach to life. Paradoxically, these organisations attempt to respond simultaneously to a growing demand for specialisation and professionalism.

Many associations have extended the range of their activities and formed effective organisations active in the areas of ethical finance, fair trade and “conscious” consumption: the latter fields of activity appears today to have become important enough to serve as a “model”, a basis on which to construct a new way of thinking about space and the general organisation of cities, or at least of parts of the city. In point of fact, the issue of urban regeneration appears to be developing into the principal and unifying theme beneath the actions of a significant proportion of the non-profit sector. It is therefore possible to suggest that the area of the social movement organisations is today particularly capable of sustaining a complex and varied discourse, precisely because of its networked character and its links to wide-ranging, global themes that have matured over the course of the last three decades. This ability to engage and support sustained discourse is perhaps greater than that of other organisations belonging to different cultural matrices; the discourse itself has multiple dimensions ranging from modes of participation to issues concerned with the integration of
fragile sectors of society, from issues related to consumer behaviour and ethical trade to the will to self-determination and appropriation of living space and work conceived as a creative act rather than alienated reality. In this sense, the movement of movements (Della Porta 1999), as the no global, new global or antiliberal constellation of movements has been labelled (Montagnini 2002), aside from its ability to revitalise a substantial group of organisations, today appears to be bringing these numerous organisations together, particularly at the inter-organisational level, and to be encouraging the development of a renewed legitimacy and greater reach of these organisations.

On the basis of a common cultural matrix and a shared attention to the transformation of cities, these associations engender collective actions and innovative social practices that are very different from earlier initiatives, in terms of how they operate, the resources they mobilise and the relationships they have established with the institutions of society. We can distinguish three ideal types of initiative according to the objectives underlying their activities. The specific features of each are presented along with brief illustrative examples of each from Milan and Naples.

3.1 Expressive communities

The first type of initiative concerns the formation and activity of what we have chosen to call expressive communities. They are based on self-government, the absence of formal roles and hierarchies of power, and on the central importance of social relations said to be "expressive, free from instrumental intentions and characterized by solidarity" (Membretti 2001). Their actions are aimed at the physical reappropriation of a space to be used for the construction of meeting places, particularly for young people, which become reference points for their "community".

The phenomenon can be studied in the representative experience of the Centri Sociali Autogestiti ("self-managed social centres"), which developed in Italy within the social movements of the 1970s, above all in the large cities of the North (five of these centres operate at present in Milan) but also in Rome and Naples (Membretti 2001; Cortesi 1998). The identity of these communities is clearly marked by the antagonistic, non-conformist character of the Centri Sociali Autogestiti, evident in their frequently conflictual relationships with the institutions of society and in tactical and informal agreements with the authorities permitting periods of reciprocal non-interference, and evident as well in their participation in a counterculture that is itself critical of mainstream values of contemporary society. Alongside these radically antagonistic centres, others exist that identify to some degree with a more anarchist tradition; these are often centres of experimentation in the area of the arts (theatre, dance, etc.) and craft-based production of goods, in the practise of “conscious” consumption and in the use of environmentally sustainable technologies.
Aside from the production and use of “social” spaces offering free or low-cost services, self-managed social centres produce a broad range of cultural events ranging from concerts and theatre productions to conferences. These events provide the financial resources necessary to support their other activities, which often extend to the production of socially useful services such as professional education and training, assistance to migrants, and so on.

Centri sociali respond to a strong need of places for people self-organisation and are a reaction to the institutionalisation of both civic centres and of local headquarters of political parties. In Milan there are several with different levels of activities. The social centre Leoncavallo was one of the first to be established (1974) and is today regarded as the “father” of all similar initiatives; the centre still maintains strong links and serves as the principal node in the social centres’ network. Despite the repeated re-claimings of its illegally occupied premises and its relocation to various parts of the city, the centre has survived for almost thirty years and is at present the most lively and productive organisation of its kind in greater Milan, and most probably in the country, as we shall see in more detail in section 4. Centro Sociale Cox 18 is a similar organisation, although on a smaller scale. Formed in the middle of the 70’s, this self-governed youth centre has been managed by a group of punks for many years, offering to the public social events, concerts, debates and a library, open also at night; inside the centre there is also a space for dancing and a bar. Cox 18 promotes cultural and political activities, with the aim to promote a counter-culture and fight “the logic of the capitalist market”. The centre occupies (illegally) a building owned by the municipality of Milan, in one of the most trendy areas of town, the Navigli: despite this location in the middle of bistros and restaurants, after a period of conflict with the residents living in the blocks around the centre, today Cox 18 is becoming a space where young professionals and people attracted by the high level performances of the centre can also be found. It should be added that aside from conflict there have been also instances of co-operation with the residents, e.g. in the making of a small street corner garden or in protesting against pollution caused by the traffic. In Naples, the most active social centre is known as Officina 99. Since 1993 it has occupied a building which had been abandoned several years previously and has transformed it into a space where young people design and organise leisure activities with the aim of opposing the decline of public social and cultural services, the privatisation of public space and the commodification of leisure. Officina 99 will be presented in more detail in section 4.
3.2 Community development initiatives

The second type of initiative concerns associations formed with the aim of requalifying/redesigning public spaces. These are locally based associations which promote relationships between the various associations and informal groups that are already present in a particular area; the purpose is to encourage participation in drawing up projects and planning and to promote activities and services, with a specific emphasis on the production of public space. They are close to community development corporations, as they are known in other countries, although in Italy they are not recognised as legal bodies.

These initiatives are thus characterised by their emphasis on the participation of city residents in the definition of projects involving the use of public space and land. They are often established in opposition to the practice of “top-down” planning and project definition carried out in the interests of dominant economic actors. Participants are engaged in these initiatives by virtue of their being citizens and residents who are knowledgeable about social needs and who represent local interests and identity in search of expression and recognition. This type of initiative is also characterised by close relationships with both public institutions of various levels and private institutions that are brought into the process of spatial transformation and engaged to provide both financial resources and expertise.

In Milan the Cantierisola initiative, a neighbourhood centre in an historical district, constitutes an interesting example of this kind of community. The association developed out of a traditional neighbourhood association ("Comitato cittadino") in 1999 and has been consolidating around the opposition to a major redevelopment project in an adjacent area. At present it is an association of several associations and groups that are active in social issues (immigrants and problematic youth), in environmental issues (e.g. the local branch of Legambiente), in politics, as well as with local shopkeepers, residents and other individuals interested in the life of this historical neighbourhood. Of particular importance is the participation of researchers and graduates from the university and other research centres, who have been active in participatory planning projects. In particular, Cantierisola has rehabilitated an old industrial building for its meetings and activities. The main outputs have been micro-regeneration projects for green areas present in the neighbourhood and the organisation of a market for organic food and produce which is held one Sunday a month. The association has thus moved from opposition to the proposal of a new model of development for the area (Cognetti e Cottino forthcoming).

In Naples the association Nesis has been working to promote a model of development based on the mobilisation of local resources and the building of a network of economic, service and social
activities in the area of Bagnoli. This area was the former location of one of the largest steel mills in Italy and is now in the process of being redeveloped. One of the initiatives of this association was to propose a project, called L’arenile (the bank), for the clearing of the beach and the development of tourist and recreational activities on the waterfront. In 1994 the association launched an appeal to local entrepreneurs and professionals to set up a development company. Today the beach is one of the most sought-after destinations in the city. Without public funds, the beach has been decontaminated from industrial toxic waste and refurbished with a bar and a restaurant along with spaces for concerts and public events.

3.3 Social service initiatives

The third type of initiative concerns the activity of associations that are involved in providing innovative services in an organised response to people's basic needs, usually in particularly disadvantaged areas, where public policies have proved unable to intervene effectively. The prevailing objective is to provide services, either through direct assistance and support for people in difficult situations, or by offering training and educational opportunities and by attempting to help them find ways to re-enter the work force. The methods through which services are provided are often based on the mobilisation of local resources and local social forces.

In Milan the social centre Barrios exemplifies this kind of initiative, as we shall see in section 4 together with a similar initiative in Naples, called Quartieri Spagnoli. In a similar vein is working the Associazione Olinda. The roots of the Olinda Association go back to the Democratic Psychiatry cultural movement of the '60s, which advocated an alternative approach to the treatment of psychiatric patients. In Italy the movement leader was Basaglia, who promoted the closing down of psychiatric hospitals and the search for ways to reintroduce patients into normal life through vocational training and assisted small communities. This cultural movement produced a new law in the '80s, which called for the closing down of all psychiatric hospitals and the provision of new services for mental patients. The President of Olinda is a Swiss psychiatrist who joined the Basaglia movement and since 1995 has worked in the Pini mental hospital, together with other doctors and operators, to organise its closure, as a “closed” institution, and a set of new social economy initiatives, aimed at work integration of people with psychological and social problems. They formed an association with the aim of transforming the hospital facilities into a public space open to the neighbourhood and to the city. The association is driven by the doctors and social workers of the former mental hospital and by different groups of people who share their concerns and vision and collaborate with them. The association is the head organisation and includes different initiatives
and projects. Five main initiatives are carried out: promotion of cultural events (in particular a Summer festival) and creative entertainment for children, a café, a bookstore, a multimedia service, a carpentry workshop. A nursery and a hostel are in the process of becoming operative. In each of these initiatives volunteers with different expertise are drawn in.

4. Four socially innovative experiences


The social centre Leoncavallo draws its inspiration from the social movements of the ’60s and ’70s and the principles of self-organization and self-determination. It was set up as a response to a need for physical space for people socialise and organise non-commercial cultural activities. Originally based on a small group of people of extreme left or anarchist orientation, the centre has evolved into a network organisation which promotes active citizenship (social and political rights) through the production of cultural and social services.

In the last ten years the centre has been restructured in accordance with a comprehensive project designed to enable its members to organise and implement social and cultural activities. Following the general rhetoric and reorganization approach of Italian non-profit organizations, the centre has restructured its activities into four associations and one ONLUS (Organizzazione non lucrativa di utilità sociale, socially oriented non-profit organisation), the latter still in the process of being formed. The establishment of a foundation is currently the subject of much debate among members. Through these organizations, the centre runs a bookstore, three coffee shops and a self-service restaurant, along with a number of different services including legal advice, training and information, directed in particular to migrants. The primary activity and source of revenue is the organization of concerts; however the centre also promotes a variety of cultural events and services of different kinds: theatre plays, conferences, structured entertainment for children, and so on. Although the centre’s activity is based mainly on volunteer labour, it provides informal jobs to approximately 36 full-time workers.

The centre is able to attract large audiences for its cultural events and to mobilise considerable resources for its cultural and political activity. In general the centre’s activities extend to the greater Milan area, but for some events and issues its reach and influence is much broader -- regional or even national.

This initiative was a reaction to the perceived lack of public services available to young people and, at the same time, a manifestation of the new social sensibility toward social exclusion of Catholic and leftist groups. The association Comunità Nuova, established in 1973 by Don Gino Rigoldi, a priest operating in the Milan juvenile correction centre, and by a group of volunteer workers and conscientious objectors collaborating with him. The initial aim was to “respond to the needs of young people leaving jail without life and work opportunities”.

At first constituted by an informal group called Amici del Beccaria (Friends of the juvenile correction centre Beccaria), it evolved into a formal association Nuova comunità (New Community) and later Comunità Nuova, which was conceived from the beginning as a community where priests, volunteers and youngsters live together, sharing space and experiences. Don Rigoldi’s approach, although viewed with surprise and scepticism by the establishment, was shared by a large number of social workers involved in promoting innovative methods of dealing with vulnerable youngsters.

Over time the association has built several “communities” and centres providing rehabilitation to drug addicts and services of drug prevention. Although it is one of the most important multi-unit organisations in this field in Milan, it has maintained some of its original aspects, such as a participatory decision-making process, the promotion of collective discussion, a non-hierarchical structure and a communitarian orientation with regard to salaries, for example.

In the middle of the 1990s Comunità Nuova was still very dependent on public funding: 74% of its income derived from public bodies (State, Region, Municipality) in the form of payment for the services it provided. But in more recent times it has opened up to private donations and sponsorships. This also signalled a profound transformation of Comunità Nuova’s approach, which shifted its focus from providing services to creating an appealing, secularly oriented public space where young people could find opportunities for their activities. This new approach toward alleviating the problems of youth first found expression in a project of urban regeneration, which Comunità Nuova presented to the European Union but which failed to secure financial support.

Later, a donation from a private family allowed a renewal of the project and a larger mobilization of public and private resources in support of it. In particular, the Municipality offered, in return for a symbolic rent payment a civic centre, which had been built in the ‘80s but had never become operational.

From 1996 on the most visible activity of Comunità Nuova has been the management of a social centre, known as Barrio’s. Located in a peripheral area of the city particularly deprived of services, Barrio’s features a cinema, a theatre, study areas for students and meeting rooms. Barrio’s differs
from the self-managed social centres described in the first group because it is much less politically oriented, and because of its roots in the local community, from other civic centres which tend to be somewhat bureaucratic and anonymous. It has become a meeting place for the neighbourhood residents, and a node in a network of different non-profit organizations and informal groups. *Barrio’s* represents a new way to deal with problematic youngsters by offering them opportunities of self-expression, empowerment, culture and education in an informal setting. Its innovative character also resides in its capacity to bring together informal Catholic groups, local groups and neighbourhood movements of varying orientations in co-operative efforts. Finally, it has a strong record of co-operation both with various levels of the public administration and with the private sector.

4.3. *Naples: Associazione Quartieri Spagnoli.*

The *Associazione Quartieri Spagnoli* (Spanish Quarter Association) was formed in response to the human, social and physical decay of the neighbourhood. Built up between 1550 and 1750 to accommodate the expansion required by the Spanish Viceroy, in part to quarter the troops, it soon showed symptoms typical of areas with a high concentration of military personnel, i.e. prostitution and smuggling.

At present about 14,000 people live in the Quartieri Spagnoli, including old people and large families; they live in generally small flats distributed over 120 city blocks and more than 300 joint-ownership apartment buildings. The Quartieri Spagnoli developed as a neighbourhood for a mix of inhabitants 'compressed' in the core of Naples, close to Via Toledo, which is still one of the main streets in the city. The predominantly residential function is tempered somewhat by the presence of about 200 craft workshops and more than 200 retail shops serving not only local inhabitants but the entire population of the city.

For a long time characterised by the simultaneous presence of diverse customs, exchanges and functions, the physical structure of the area – narrow streets, ground-floor dwellings, the lack of public space – has contributed to the deep physical and social decay of the neighbourhood. Widespread forms of hidden employment have appeared alongside the work of small firms; houses are overcrowded; street life provides fertile ground for criminal activities; public services are lacking.
Moreover, in the last few years, large numbers of immigrants from outside the European Union, attracted by affordable rents, have settled in the area. This has led to additional problems related to the integration of new members of the community.

The Spanish Quarter Association was formed at the end of ’70s, when a group of friends decided to begin sharing the burden of difficulties faced by local inhabitants attempting to cope with the incapacitating socio-economic conditions. The association was conceived in the Casa di Anna (Anna's House), the home of one of the association's founders, which soon developed into a place for local residents to meet, drink coffee and exchange stories and survival strategies. Subsequently a voluntary service was started that has progressively involved children, adolescents and adults, women in particular. The association was established in 1986, when the informal group of friends decided to provide a formal legal structure for the voluntary service.

In the beginning, the Spanish Quarter Association focused on assisting people in serious difficulties, through simple actions aimed at helping them meet basic needs such as social assistance, housing and solidarity, which public policies had been unable to address effectively. Activities were subsequently directed largely toward local young people with the aim of offering them a viable alternative to life on the streets, through new opportunities to further their education and/or organise their free time.

To this end the association organised a number of initiatives such as scholastic support, a playschool, creativity labs (photography, ceramics, circus, theatre) and sports (football, volleyball, basketball). The founders then went on to establish the Parco del Lavoro (Work Park), a site intended to enable constructive confrontation between a group of local educators and children who had left school after completing the first certificate (usually at around the age of 14).

Since 1991 the association, which has become an active partner of the Municipality of Naples, a number of government ministries and the European Union, has been able to obtain national and European funds for these projects under a model called C.Ri.S.I. (Cantiere per la Riqualificazione Sociale Integrata, Building Site for Integrated Social Requalification). Thanks to the financing the association has been strengthened and has developed well-structured activities; since 1994 it has been a member of CNCA (Coordinamento Nazionale delle Comunità di Accoglienza, National Coordination of Support Communities). At present (2003), the association is involved in prevention, protection and social re-integration activities, including a social services kiosk, several local educational projects and an experimental project to establish micro-kindergartens known as Nidi di Mamme (Mothers' Nests).
The actions carried out by the association have enabled it to develop strong roots in the community and a trusted reputation as a reliable source of assistance to people in need. The decision by the Municipality of Naples to implement the URBAN European Programme in the Quartieri Spagnoli area can also be credited to the association's activities. The association continues to participate in the URBAN Programme, leveraging some three decades of experience in the provision of services to the local community. The main actions provided daily to about 40 users are the following: a social secretarial office; an interface to social services and public bodies; psychological advice; assistance to individuals and families through the development of professional networks; tutorship; development and management of projects for social advancement targeting the weaker sectors of society.

The association's activities began with a period of experimenting in the late Seventies, followed by a more mature phase highlighted by the formal establishment of the association in 1986 and in the 1990s by a period of consolidation and relative success characterised by participation in Italian and European projects. At present, the association is attempting to open up the Quartieri Spagnoli to the city, improving access and contact by promoting the new, positive image of the neighbourhood. This is based on a renewed will to liberate the community from degrading socio-economic conditions, on an increasing trend toward planning and on a sustained effort to restore the rule of law. Adhesion to programmes for urban re-qualification, close cooperation with public bodies, European funding and university seminars all represent ways to renew public discussion of the principal issues. They also help to lift the discussion beyond the narrow confines of purely local issues and all-too traditional responses. The effort requires a re-examination of familiar models of intervention along with an attempt to establish new contacts among various initiatives and to question conventional practices. At present, this initiative is engaged in a balancing act, attempting to preserve the association's ability to operate in the local community while opening up community processes to broader external influence and participation in more comprehensive issues and decision-making processes.


Centro Sociale Occupato Autogestito Officina 99 began in the early 1990s in the neighbourhood of Gianturco, at the eastern edge of the city of Naples. It originated in the attempt on the part of young people to re-appropriate areas of the neighbourhood that had been abandoned to decay and indifference. Their goal was to build a physical and experiential space that would reflect a logic different from that which had produced the degraded environment in which they lived. They wished
to recover the power to organise and to decide how to spend their free time, and to take action to counter the lack of social services, the progressive privatisation of public services and the commodification of leisure. In this context, among the diverse activities undertaken in the social centre was a self-managed music laboratory. The purpose of the project was to denounce the lack of adequate space and facilities for musical activities in Naples, and to take action to improve the situation.

Indeed, the few rehearsal halls in town are too expensive for young people who wish to play music, since commercial interests prevail over cultural aspects. The “music clubs” in Naples do not invest in live music; rather than risk experimenting with more engaging forms of live entertainment they prefer to offer products that bring immediate financial returns. Moreover, local government generally prefers to promote large-scale musical events, i.e. commercially driven shows and performances. These events are more likely to attract large audiences but are infrequent and expensive, often beyond the reach of young people with limited financial resources.

Centro Sociale Officina 99 represents one example in which new activities and functions have been established in Naples, where the process begins with abandoned or run-down buildings which are initially designated as sites for experimental projects and which over time come to play more substantial and enduring roles in the community. The effort to address social needs that otherwise go unanswered becomes the focal point of a process through which abandoned buildings and urban sites gain renewed significance and are opened up to broader access and a range of different uses.

The music laboratory was defined in the context of a political discourse developed within the Centro Sociale Occupato Autogestito Officina 99. It has brought to the fore a number of issues regarding how music, theatre, information and culture are produced in Naples. The starting point for broader discussion is the problematic situation that has developed in recent years: although the number of locales where music can be played and heard has increased, the relationship between performers and their audiences has deteriorated, with the former having come to be perceived simply as employees who work in the entertainment sector of big business. In addition, access to live music and entertainment is limited to those able to afford the high price of tickets; the weaker sections of the population are excluded.

Following a period of protest based in the universities in 1994, a number of rooms beneath the Laboratorio SKA in Naples were occupied and transformed into a rehearsal space. Managed by the occupiers, the music laboratory soon became a point of reference for many young musicians in the city, and two benefit concerts by Neapolitan musicians held in the courtyard of the Faculty of Architecture provided sufficient funding to equip the facility. It has since been self-managed and
self-financed, covering expenses with a nominal monthly charge to users. At present the music lab is a place for people to play, develop projects, organize internships, music education courses (fee-based but nonetheless very popular), jam sessions, experiments, discussion evenings, video showings, opportunities to listen to music and so on. Audio and video recordings, texts and photocopies have also been collected for an archive documenting the experience of all who have taken part in the initiative.

According to the participants, the primary objective of Laboratorio Officina 99 is to return to authentic musical and artistic performance, free from the commodification associated with music treated as a business. At present, the laboratory is a space destined for alternative, non-commercial use. Although a physical facility, it is conceived primarily as a mental space, a place where participants may feel free to disregard all market trends and issues of personal success. Music is valued as such, as a means for personal expression and communication; those who “play” and “listen” are on the same side, as both performers and listeners contribute equally to the construction of the ground on which they meet. They also share a desire to use music, images, words, the body and the voice as instruments of sharing and knowledge, free from the need to consider the potential commercial value or relevance of the outcomes. For those who take part in the construction of this privileged space, it offers an opportunity to at least temporarily overcome limits imposed elsewhere by costs, producers, managers, production requirements, and the shortage of sites and projects. Additional benefits are seen in the opportunity to face an audience that is not viewed as a potential customer, to learn about and present a range of different “products” and to participate in a more wide-ranging and ambitious project – or simply to be an occasional “accomplice” in the process.

The music laboratory, in other words, is intended as a symbolic place, representative of a cultural rebellion against indifference and the universal levelling of experience, a rebellion that identifies the value of music in its role as an instrument of free expression, its ability to serve as a means of (counter)cultural reproduction and as a focal point for urgent social and political issues, which are transformed into concrete realities at the point where abandoned urban spaces become objects of re-appropriation initiatives.

At present, the promoters of this successful laboratory experiment are considering plans for its future. Demand far outstrips the laboratory’s ability to meet it: 16 groups currently make regular use of the facility, and there is simply not enough room for new ideas and musical projects. In addition, the heterogeneous origin of the groups - which often come from areas far from Naples - confirms the limited supply of similar sites capable of meeting the varied and significant demand.
Last year seven new musical groups, formed within (and thanks to) the self-governed musical spaces, went on a concert tour across Italy. The Utopia tour, organised by the social centres in Campania, represented the first opportunity to present the activities the lab had carried out for years. To the same end, in 2003 the Utopia tour produced a self-financed compact disk featuring contributions, under a joint “no copyright” banner, from 12 new musical groups, some formed only recently.

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III. AUSTRIA

by Andreas Novy and Elisabeth Hammer

A. REFLECTIONS ON THE HISTORICAL ROOTS AND CONTENT OF SOCIAL INNOVATION IN AUSTRIA

Our reflections on social innovation and its history in Austria are intended as a follow-up on WP 1. Whereas WP 1 focused on a critical evaluation of territorial innovation models in Austria, we now adopt a broader perspective on social innovation. Following Moulaert and Ailenei (2002), social innovation comprises two dimensions based on *procedure* on the one hand, *outcome* on the other. The procedural dimension of social innovation primarily focuses on institutional aspects in the innovation process. New planning procedures, new forms of governance and participation form the cornerstones of this dimension. The other dimension stresses the outcome of innovation processes. Social innovation as a process of organisational change has to achieve materialistic objectives in satisfying basic needs. Unfortunately, these two dimensions are often pursued independently, which turns out to be to the detriment of integral development (Novy 2002). Contrasting such practices, our approach explicitly aims at integrating the procedural and the outcome-oriented dimension of social innovation: social innovations are those forms of democratic governance that enlarge the entitlements of disadvantaged groups (Sen 1999).

The above two-dimensional definition helps to understand the peculiarities of the Austrian history of social innovation. Whereas a more outcome-oriented and materialistic definition of social innovation was prevalent in the 1970s and 1980s, increasing emphasis has been given to institutional aspects of social innovation since the 1990s. The deliberate integration of the two dimensions was limited to a short time-span at the beginning of the 1980s. It is from these experiments that the richest lessons can be drawn with a view to advance further strategies that foster social innovations.
1. Aspects of socially innovative development in a historical perspective

Social innovation has to be analysed in the context of overall societal, economic and political structures, as well as respective power relations. Thus, it has to be interpreted within the broader context of political economy. Different historical phases of socially innovative development tend to reflect aspects of somewhat broader societal and political shifts such as governance and politics of scale. Bearing this in mind, we will outline the recent history of social innovation in Austria.

It is of central importance in this respect to consider the specifics of Fordist social planning in Austria, which shaped but did not change deep-seated structures of an authoritarian, paternalist political culture created by counter-reformism. These deep hierarchical structures mould concrete historical-geographical social change in specific ways. After World War I, for example, a powerful settlers movement sprang up that constructed small-scale housing on a self-help base. The social democratic municipal government, however, preferred a more modern and centralised solution to the housing problem. Catholic grassroots initiatives, on the other hand, were instrumentalised in the cultural and political struggle against social democracy. Therefore, the description of social planning as a form of top-down politics is organised according to four main stages in the transformation of social innovation in Austria during the last 20 years.

1.1. The era of social planning: from the 1950s to the late 1970s

After World War II, Fordist regulation was implemented in Austria in a paradigmatic way. Development strategies were conceptualised “from above” and put into practice by academic experts, who generally favoured large-scale projects. The national state was identified as the dominant force of innovation, seen as the logical by-product of growth-oriented technological and industrial policies based on Keynesian ideas. The uncontested objective consisted in conciliating economic growth with social and regional equity. Development policies aimed at diminishing regional as well as social disparities. Based on a positivistic understanding of science and politics, innovation was a planned process in order to stir a rational development of society.

Due to counter-reformation and the fact that the country was a latecomer to industrialisation, civil society in Austria was always weak. It grew in strong symbiosis with the state, divided in a catholic-conservative, the “blacks”, and a social democratic camp, the “reds”. Institutionalised class struggle in the 1920s created Vienna as a red island in the black sea of the Austrian hinterland. In 1934, a short civil war resulted in an Austrofascist government and social democracy was declared
illegal. In 1938 Austrofascism was pushed out by the Nazi occupation. After the traumatic experiences of class struggle and Nazi dictatorship, the Left and the Right opted for a consensual civil society model of social partnership in the post-war period, which accommodated class struggle in democratic institutions. The social partners became the main, in economic matters the sole, representatives of civil society. In this sense, we call social partners that represent the interests of employers and employees the “traditional” forces of civil society, embodying the so-called “corporatist” state model. They were key actors in the process of planning as well as in the implementation of innovations.

In organisational terms, social innovation was structured through the governance of social planning in Austria. Social partnership was a form of societal engineering which structured not only the state, but civil society and private organisations in two antagonistic, but now co-operating blocks: the Reds and the Blacks. Every private organisation had to be linked to one of the blocks if it wanted to receive resources from the state. Strong intermediary organisations, the parties, the official and legally recognized Chambers of Labour and of Business and Trade, as well as the social partners were the main actors of civil society. Consensus-oriented policies hampered social experimentation and mainstreamed radical initiatives at the margins. To sum it up, social partnership was an efficient and successful form of governance to foster economic growth. Social innovation, however, was rather hindered by its rigidities.

| Table III.1. The governance of social innovation in Austria: corporatist social partnership |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| **LEFT** the "Reds"                        | **RIGHT** the "Blacks"                        | **SYNTHESIS** Social partnership               |
| **State (executive)**                      | Ministry of Social Affairs                     | Ministry of Trade and Commerce                |
| **Party system**                           | Social democracy                               | Popular People’ s Party                       |
| **Chambers**                              | Chamber of Labour                              | Chamber of Business and Trade                 |
| **Social partners**                        | Trade Unions                                    | Federation of Austrian Industry               |
| **Private organisations**                  | Various                                          | Various                                      |
|                                              |                                                  | Church-based civil socie                       |
|                                              |                                                  | workers’ movement-based                       |
|                                              |                                                  | civil society                                |

Source: Authors

This phase of planned societal development came to an end when the Fordist model of accumulation slid into crisis in the aftermath of the breakdown of the Bretton Woods agreement in 1973 (Swyngedouw 1992). In 1979, by means of a deliberate policy of fostering the US dollar and increasing interest rates, the US central banks dealt a blow to Keynesian regulation of the macro economy via demand management: debt became unsustainably expensive.
1.2. A national strategy of social innovation in the early 1980s: social experiments in all fields of society

The 1980s can be considered as the phase of social innovation, which meets best the two-dimensional idea of this concept as stressed in the introduction. In this period, social innovation was the by-product of the crisis of Fordism, which shook a regulation model centred on the national state. However, as the government introduced innovations in the procedure of social planning it did not yet abandon Keynesian macroeconomic management. In this phase of crisis at the beginning of the 1980s, when nationally oriented full employment politics were abandoned in many European countries, Austrian policies clearly went against the grain. The Austrian chancellor Kreisky, reminding the Great Depression, openly admitted to prefer an increase in government debt to an increase in unemployment. The limited rate of structural unemployment, which continues to be very low until today compared to the rest of Europe, owes to this decision. Regarding inequality in income and consumption, Austria’s top position is confirmed in the UNDP reports on human development: whereas the poorest 10% of the population in liberal governance regimes, such as Great Britain, earn about 2.6% of total income, Austria’s poorest population segment earns about 4.4% (UNDP 2001).

However, unemployment was combated not only by Keynesian demand management, but also by new programmes for an incipient social economy. The design of employment initiatives changed to a more “bottom up” and decentralised approach. Although resources were provided mainly by the central state, actors of civil society at the regional and local level increasingly executed programmes. A more endogenous approach to development achieved an integration of both dimensions of social innovation in a convincing way: alongside the economic objective, i.e. to secure employment in regionally disadvantaged areas, endogenous development programmes intended to stimulate self-help and self-management among broad parts of society. These attempts at implementing development from within were complemented by approaches of community work, which had already gained ground in the course of the 1968 movement. A visionary perspective of expanding freedom of agency accompanied the demand for equality for every citizen. In the early 1980s, thus, democratic and participatory governance was integrated as a crucial dimension of socially innovative development. The state was redefined as “res publica”, i.e. accessible to all groups of society with participation, empowerment and self-help as dominant catchwords.

Governance structure changed, too. During Fordism trade unions successfully aimed at containing or co-opting all initiatives that sprang up in civil society. As the latter was considered a network at the margin of the power structure, it was given little attention by the official social partners. From
the early 1980s, however, the national state encouraged and supported an emerging alternative project culture, which aimed at reducing unemployment at the regional and local level. The social democrat Alfred Dallinger, who became Minister of Social Affairs in 1980, was key in this process. Social innovation, in fact, still remained dependent to a great deal on the strategies and power of a broad range of reform-oriented individuals in politics and administration. Nonetheless, Alfred Dallinger took crucial legislative steps to implement structural incentives for social innovation. As a consequence, an amendment was enacted in 1983 in order to foster the development of small-scale socially innovative experiments in the field of the social economy (9. Novelle des Arbeitsmarktförderungsgesetzes) and further similar legislative initiatives followed.

Dallinger, although formed within the social partnership approach, facilitated the access to state resources for hitherto marginalized groups and small-scale initiatives. He tried to reform corporatist governance by broadening it. New actors of civil society, from dedicated individuals to grassroots initiatives and self-managed co-operatives, came to co-operate with the Ministry. The ecological, feminist, and peace movements, together with other citizen’s movements and urban action groups, had emerged at the end of the 1970s. This went hand in hand with an upgrading of the local dimension. Additionally, these groups put forward not only a different perspective of development, but also a non-corporatist way of conceptualising politics and the state. They formed a new and alternative segment of civil society, hitherto unrepresented in the power networks. Dallinger allowed these actors to create a public space of their own, softening the necessity of strict adherence to the “reds” or the “blacks”. On the contrary, he helped creating a cultural and political milieu that permitted the emergence of an alternative party on the left, the Greens.

In line with the broad definition of social innovation, policy makers in this period understood the social economy in an extensive way and permitted the development of project initiatives acting in the economic, social, environmental and cultural sphere at the same time. Initiatives were founded from below and were supported by an emerging political and administrative elite in the aftermath of the 1968 movement. Social innovation was then oriented towards marginalised groups of society traditionally neglected by power holders. This holistic approach was in line with an interdisciplinary approach to economic development. In the 1980s, Austrian society faced a profound process of economic restructuring, a shift that was dealt with an open, dialectical approach to social policy. Neither the social, nor the economic sphere was seen as a system a proper logic. On the contrary, the interdisciplinary definition considered society as a totality that is a unity in contradiction. Such a view foreclosed a simple positivist approach to politics, an approach that established a clear and logical relationship between means and ends. In the early 1980s diversity and plurality were seen as
the means for searching social and organisational innovations in order to handle the new situation of increasing unemployment and slow economic growth.

1.3. The 1990s: social-liberal mainstreaming of socially innovative experiments

In 1986, after 16 years of social democratic hegemony, the People’s Party returned to government. In line with post-war tradition, the Ministry of Social Affairs remained with the social democrats, while the Ministry of Trade and Commerce became conservative. The ‘great coalition’ between social democracy and conservatives abandoned national Keynesian policies of demand management. Social-liberalism became the dominant ideology. The conservatives dominated privatisation and liberalisation in economic policies; social democrats defended the breadth of the welfare state while changing its organisational form. As during the decades after World War II, Austria returned to a government of the Great Coalition, thereby strengthening the corporatist form of governance. Social democracy was forced to limit social experimentation especially in the field of alternative life-styles and policies. Fiefdoms of "red" and "black" influence were re-established. Small social initiatives could no longer stay independent, but were subsumed under the patronage of institutionalised non-profit organisations belonging to either the "red" or the "black" power blocs.

During the 1980s, the initiatives in the field of social economy had grown in importance. In some cases, for example in the field of culture, tourism and social work, this trend brought about the development of new job profiles and appropriate training facilities. In other cases, formerly subsidised social economy initiatives transformed themselves into for-profit organisations. As a consequence, the onus of social innovation shifted to those professionally employed within already existing organisations. Socially innovative ideas, thus, were no longer developed from below, but conceptualised by an emerging elite of professionals in third sector organisations. This changing structure of the non-profit sector was accompanied by the development of research institutions, such as the Department of Social Policy at the University of Economics and Business Administration (founded in 1990), whose Head of Department, Prof. Badelt, is now Rector of the university. In addition to this, consultancy to non-profit organisations developed a market niche, as social-liberal instruments of evaluation and management became further institutionalised.

The beginning of the 1990s also saw the implementation of substantial changes in the form of governance which had a severe impact on the structures and conditions of socially innovative development: social innovation in the field of social economy was no longer directly financed by the Ministry of Social Affairs, but by the Public Employment Service (Arbeitsmarktservice - AMS), which was founded in 1994. AMS is self-managed by the social partners, but mainly funded by the
Ministry of Social Affairs. It has a decentralized structure giving more voice to the social partners, regional governments and the city of Vienna. Thereby, the social economy was institutionalised as it was streamlined through standardised procedures. Social innovation, thus, was channelled into predefined directions via a reassessment of existing instruments.

Social-liberal discourse involved an increasing emphasis on entrepreneurship and innovation, seen as a decisive factor for overcoming the crisis of Fordism. Paradoxically, social-liberalism mainly streamlined initiatives, limiting the recently created space for social experiments. Various actors were allowed to participate in the programmes funded by the AMS and the Ministry of Social Affairs, but the range of diversity of social innovation was restricted. Every initiative had to prove its conformity with the uniform standards of overall employment policies. In particular, social innovation in the field of culture, which was considered subversive, was only subsidised on rigid terms aiming at a de-politicisation of these initiatives.

In 1995 Austria joined the European Union, which implied a crucial transformation of governance structures. EU regional policy strongly shaped the form of governance in all member states. Its general strategy consisted in weakening the national state to the advantage of the EU level, on the one hand, and regional and local institutions, on the other hand, as well as empowering the business sector in Public-Private-Partnerships. In the case of Austria, this implied a weakening of the corporatist form of social partnership, which lay at the basis of Austria’s political and social post-war modernisation. Legislation and procedures were increasingly adjusted to the social-liberal mainstream at EU-level. The underlying philosophy of its programmes affected social innovation in Austria. A discursive order based on market, enterprise, commodification and competition became hegemonic (Novy 2002). A number of key elements can be discerned in this new order. The single European market was a neoliberal economic project that aimed at the integration of the continent’s national economies, freeing it from national regulations. The apparently technocratic governance of the European market prevailed over apparently outdated and bureaucratized democratic institutions. In the 1990s, the market ideology received a further impetus by means of the ‘economisation of the social’ (Ökonomisierung des Sozialen, cf. Bröckling et al. 2000). Beyond “freeing” markets from corporatist and democratic interventions, it became one of the main objectives of policy makers to ‘create’ markets.

However, contrary to liberal argumentation, markets are not natural, but artificial institutions, made by women and men (Polanyi 1978). Energy and public transport, health and education were assumed to be public goods sectors, therefore following a different logic from a private market economy. The liberal counter-revolution since 1980 can be understood as a political undertaking of
creating markets in sectors hitherto organised in different ways. In order to create a market, policy makers must transform organisations in firms and reduce all social relations to market relations. First, non-profit and voluntary associations, as well as grassroots initiatives, had to reinvent themselves in a business-like structure if they wanted to be eligible for subsidies. This process was a key factor in the substitution of the organisational diversity of the 1980s with rather homogenous non-governmental organisations and firms. Second, the quality of various public services and goods was transformed into clearly delimited commodities. Performance indicators and evaluation instruments have been crucial ingredients in transforming the quality of various activities into quantities, thereby making activities comparable. Third, comparability permitted relating these activities to one another in the form of generalised competition. To sum up, the ‘economisation of the social’ consisted in a process of ‘entrepreneurialisation’ of various types of organisation, in the transformation of public into private goods, and in marketability—competitiveness—as the main benchmark. In other words, enterprise-like organisations, commodified activities and competition—the three institutions that found a market—contributed to significantly transform the social economy.

Regarding social innovation, this new EU-imposed form of governance was ambivalent. One can observe redefinitions in both of the two dimensions of social innovation. The procedural dimension was certainly emphasised, as institutionalised organisations and firms were favoured to the detriment of new experiments. EU-programmes are based on a positivist understanding of politics. A logical framework prescribes the optimal procedure *ex ante*. Contextual specifics cannot be dealt with and the participation of the target groups must not have any implications for the rules of the game, which are imposed from above. Nevertheless, EU-membership was enthusiastically welcomed by the social sector and social economy. Non-profit organisations and the alternative milieus correctly perceived that EU rules of the game challenged the rather closed national system of corporatism. Market regulation had some important advantages over corporatist regulation: first, it permitted an enlarged number of actors to participate, thereby reducing the traditional dominance of the “red” and “black” milieus. Second, in line with positivism, it put competition on an objective base, thereby de-ideologising the allocation of resources. This explains why until today actors in the social sector have evaluated EU-membership positively.

While these changes were being applauded by social initiatives, power holder started to redefine the objective of social innovations. Similar to Fordist social engineering, logical positivism has an inclination towards top-down forms of governance. These authoritarian traces are hidden in a consensus-oriented political framework, but become evident in a ‘patrimonial’ form of governance. In line with Weber, patrimonialism is a pre-rational form of state organization, which does not
allow a clear distinction between the state as a governing organisation and as a mere property of the rulers. Patrimonialism is part of the deep-rooted structure of authoritarianism in Austria and reappeared in new clothes in a new setting that seemed to offer more room for decentralised and pluralist agency.

At the beginning of the 1980s, macroeconomic objectives were still achieved by Keynesian policies at the national level. At the micro-level, where concrete projects were implemented, however, the Ministry promoted the satisfaction of economic as well as non-economic goals. At the beginning of the 1990s, the relation of economics to social objectives was turned upside down. The central strategy of the decision makers, be it the social partners or the Ministry, was to advance the marketisation of social initiatives. The supervision of professional project management and the development of efficient funding applications became the main preoccupations of the Public Employment Service AMS. At the micro level, conventional subsidies to private firms increased considerably, mainly in the form of qualification programmes and help in the implementation of innovations. Non-economic initiatives were only funded if they could prove their economic utility. Open processes and experiments could no longer pass the rigorous check of economist \textit{ex ante} appraisals.

1.4. \textbf{After 2000: embedding patrimonialism in social liberal market regulation}

In February 2000, a right-wing coalition came to power that was sanctioned by the European Union’s member states for months. This coalition definitively broke with social partnership. In the administrative structure of the Ministries, this is expressed by the partial annexation of the renamed Ministry of Social Affairs into the Ministry of Economics and Labour. Social affairs became subordinated to economic interests. Nevertheless, the government saw no difficulty in adhering to the social-liberal rules of the game described above and implemented mainly by social-liberals.

In the following pages, we will outline the new regulation of social policy and the emerging form of governance in contemporary Austria. Regarding its regulation, the field of social innovation has become increasingly market-based. The quantity of actors has increased; free-lance and illegal workers from Eastern Europe have been keen to enter the market. Goods and services are offered following the market logic in fields hitherto governed by the corporatist social partners. The traditional, consensual division between “red” and “black” no longer exists. At the same time this has not produced the hoped-for results of a prospering pluralist civil society substituting the exhausted institutions of social partnership. What can be observed is actually a reduction in the diversity of actors. Self-managed firms, the voluntary sector and co-operative-like enterprises are on
the retreat. Equally, the diversity of goods and services delivered has been reduced, be it community schools, child-care facilities or subsidies to Third World groups. Co-operation, common in this field until recently, has been reduced to price competition. In all these aspects, the market has produced fragmentation, not pluralism. To sum it up, the new right-wing government has had no problem at all in accepting market-friendly rules.

With regard to the form of governance, however, the new government has introduced radical changes compared to the de-ideologised and relatively tolerant social-liberalism. Instead of supervising the market, the new power holders used their discretion to shape the rules of the game according to their own interests. The national state has regained certain autonomy in ideologising social policy. Initiatives too radical or too politicised are no longer funded. Market pluralism has been accepted only in those fields convenient to governmental institutions, thereby excluding or marginalising the minority from access to funding or public posts. Recently (November 2002), the general secretary of AMS-Burgenland, a regional branch of the Public Employment Service, was not appointed by the social partners through a consensual process, but by the Minister of Trade, Economics and Labour himself. The imposition of a government-friendly candidate that is supported by business interests shows the new centralisation of power by the national executive.

The right wing government has transformed the onion-like concept of Austrian governance into an octopus-like one, in line with the notion of patrimonialism as described by Weber. In current Austrian patrimonialism power holders consider – within a limited time-span and a given legal framework – the state as their personal property. Patrimonialist practice consists in weakening opposition and denouncing its claims as anti-democratic since it does not respect the majority. Social partnership was a form of corporatism that divided the Austrian state and its civil society into two camps. In an onion-like form the state and private organisations were structured by this leading principle of a society divided in two antagonistic, although co-operating interests (see table 1). The octopus-like model of patrimonialism abandons consensus politics and monopolises power in the hand of central government, the head of the octopus. ‘The winner takes it all’ has become the authoritarian leitmotif. ‘Don’t bite the hand that feeds you’, has become the motto of the new patrimonial state. The legs of the octopus are at the service of the head, fragmented one from another. Their number is in inverse relation to their power.

To sum it up, local initiatives and social organisations are in a difficult situation today. Opposition and critique has become increasingly difficult in the field of social policies. Innovations and experiments are only allowed if the expected outcome is in the interest of patrimonial power holders. This implies a radically conservative and anti-pluralist bias and creates a culture adverse to
social innovation. The discursive order of social-liberalism as well as an octopus-like concentration of power at the national level limit the space of manoeuvre for experimentation and innovation. To be more correct, this new order is biased against all those initiatives that counter the short-term interests of dominant groups.

This radical change of the last two years has resulted in various responses. The social-liberal market-regulation of social policy implemented by the EU can still be considered hegemonic. It is challenged neither by the political parties, nor by the actors in the social sector and social economy. Regarding the re-nationalisation via patrimonialism one can nonetheless observe fierce opposition. It is at the national level, indeed, that the most interesting social innovations can be seen, ranging from creative forms of resistance against the government, to the campaign of ATTAC against GATS (General Agreement on Trade and Services) and the migrants’ initiatives in favour of universal suffrage. All these initiatives are reactive and focus on the procedural dimension of politics. The materialist or outcome-oriented dimension is hardly touched at all. This is a consequence of the social-liberal hegemony which de-ideologises capitalist market economies and purports them as the sole and natural social order. Changes in the economic order are not on the immediate political agenda. Therefore, basic needs strategies or other outcome-oriented innovations remain subordinated to the necessities of an apparently natural economic order.

Social innovations can occupy their appropriate place only when the economy is re-politicised, i.e. re-embedded in political economy. This implies allowing people to make history and geography in diverse spaces, re-appropriating political space for their “res publica”. A prerequisite for such a process in the social sector would be increased communication and co-operation between actors. Only in an open public space they can transform themselves from recipients of funding to subjects of integrated area development.

B. CASE STUDIES OF SOCIALLY INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCES

2. Four case studies in Post-WWII Vienna

In the following pages four cases studies in the metropolitan area of Vienna are described. They are good examples of the evolution in the nature of both social movements and governance patterns, as illustrated in Part A of the Austria country report.
2.1. Gentle urban renewal and the action of Local Urban Renewal Offices

For decades, after WWII, Vienna was the flagship of a corporatist form of urban planning, deeply entrenched in Fordism. This modernist project, however, was not conducive to any urban social innovation. On the one hand, neither risk capital nor local entrepreneurs pushed for a transformation of the townscape. One reason for this was the peripheral position of Vienna, near to the Iron Curtain, which was a disincentive for large investors. On the other hand, social democracy opted for a social partnership formula of the ‘corporatist’ type, to the detriment of the all-embracing type of popular experimentation common for Red Vienna during the inter war years.

Why? In response to what?

In the 1970s, however, changes became unavoidable: the post-war accumulation strategy was exhausted. Rent-control legislation had led to a degradation of the quality of housing. The growing prosperity had resulted in increasing demands of citizens for more participation as well as for high-quality housing. Squatting, although at a very moderate level, did occur in Vienna. At this point, the social democratic municipal government tried to overcome its legitimisation crisis, while the local construction industry looked for new fields of accumulation. These were found in the labour-intensive renovation of downgraded inner-city areas. In this process, small-scale construction projects favoured the small and medium sized local firms to the detriment of large-scale construction firms.

Thus, Viennese social democracy began to establish new forms of urban governance and attempted to open rigid bureaucratic structures. In conjunction with progressive architects and planners, the City of Vienna launched a pilot project of low-impact urban restoration, later on called ‘gentle urban renewal’, in the district of Ottakring in 1974. This was a controlled experiment of integrated area development, a very specific social innovation. Three social workers, inspired by the tradition of community work, started to directly involve citizens in urban renewal policies. Although the results were modest at the time, the perspective in terms of social innovation was very promising, as it pointed towards a democratisation of planning procedures and administrative logics.

How?

In 1978, the project was modified and extended to integrate several inner-city urban renewal areas. Together with subsidised housing improvement programmes, local urban renewal offices became an important instrument not only of urban renewal but also of procedural social innovation. The case of Rotterdam served as a blueprint for the organisation of participatory urban renewal processes. In contrast with the Rotterdam case, however, the urban renewal programme in Vienna did not
integrate procedural reforms, as the top-down approach of policy making and planning was largely preserved. Thus, administrative structures remained unchanged and so did decision making processes.

From 1978 until today, experts working in renewal area offices have offered free advice and assistance, for instance with improvement schemes for individual buildings and blocks, green roofs and courtyards, tenancy law questions, problem buildings and speculation objects. They have provided information on subsidies and allowances, participated in the design of zoning and land use plans and initiated and fostered new projects for re-designing the public sphere. Especially with regard to real estate speculation, the area offices were able to take rapid action through their immediate contacts to those concerned.

Gentle urban renewal served the interests of small-scale construction industry and allowed urban regeneration at very low social costs. In this respect, this social innovation, pushed through by dedicated professionals from below, is a success story. Nevertheless, elements of domination are inherent in this model of decentralisation. Empowerment from below is possible only within the limits imposed from above and sets constraints on process-oriented innovation. Local area renewal offices, therefore, operate on behalf of the City of Vienna and take on the function of municipal government’s sensors at the local level. It would seem that social innovation is supported only as long as it serves the objectives of political and administrative bodies. Thereby, local urban renewal offices often have to mediate social conflicts instead of solving them.

Which resources?

The programme of sustainable urban development is financed and executed by the Municipality of Vienna. The urban area offices do not have an autonomous sphere of action; citizen’s involvement and mobilisation depends on approval of the administrative bodies. In the case of urban renewal initiatives, the local area offices co-operate with planners and construction enterprises.

What is the object/outcome?

Regarding the outcome of social innovation, the programme of gentle urban renewal with its implementation by local urban renewal offices scores positively and is an effective instrument to prevent segregation tendencies. Nearly 400,000 inhabitants – a quarter of the entire Viennese population – live today in districts that are covered by one of the local area renewal offices. Office staff tried to adopt a participatory approach to urban renewal policies. These efforts are well described in a folder on local urban renewal offices:
“Office staff are contacts for people’s requests, proposals and problems at all times and provide information and advice free of charge and with no obligation. Their services may also be given anonymously should this be desired. This makes the local urban renewal offices independent “drop-in centres” for interested parties. They act as neutral intermediaries between tenants and landlords, between residents and city government, etc. In order to provide comprehensive information for the residents, the offices hold resident and tenant meetings. […] The local renewal offices develop proposals and projects which are implemented in co-ordination with owners or district administrations.”

However, gentle urban renewal is not a total success. The controlled top-down structure in decision-making and the dependency of the local agents of integrated area development on the central Municipal bureaucracy, result in severe shortcomings. The decentralized urban renewal offices are confronted with an unclear definition of their mission, i.e. whether they are supposed to merely inform and instruct local citizens; or moderate and mediate conflicts between tenants and landlords and/or citizens and the city administration; or/ and become involved in consultancy. Whereas the information function is uncontested, this does not necessarily hold for moderation and mediation, not to speak of advocacy. The latter largely rests on the personal initiatives of dedicated professionals. But as the monies rest with the municipal planning departments, socially or culturally oriented participatory processes in urban renewal projects are in general difficult to justify. Each socially innovative project has to be individually negotiated between open-minded administrative personnel on the one hand, and the district council on the other.

How long?

Due to deeply rooted habits, practices and ways of thinking, the transition to new forms of urban governance is a rather complicated and contradictory process. Forms of old and new urban governance, of top-down planning and bottom-up integrated area development are articulated into a hybrid ensemble. Gentle urban renewal was an urban strategy that was hegemonic as long as the historical bloc of small scale, craft-based construction firms and paternalist social democracy remained dominant. Thus, the socially innovative phase of gentle urban renewal was by and large confined to the 1970s and 1980s when the implementation of the programme not only resulted in high quality inner-city housing, but also stimulated innovation in governance procedures. In the 1990s, this historical bloc was increasingly substituted by an alliance of real estate and upper middle class interests. These increasingly internationally oriented interests are on the advance also at the municipal level. The ideology of locational competition favours these interests to the
detriments of local dwellers and citizens. The mode of regulation is changing as the increasing importance of *Grätzlmanagement* permits a more flexible form of urban governance.

### 2.2. Local Agenda 21: a platform for sustainable district development and citizen participation

As is by now widely accepted, Fordism was a regime of accumulation that achieved economic growth to the detriment of the environment. From the 1970s onwards, Fordism entered into a crisis that was not only a crisis of accumulation, but also a crisis of legitimization fostered by the critique of radical social movements and parts of the scientific community. The ecological costs of growth as well as the democratic centralism of top-down planning were challenged. Following the report of the Club of Rome, in 1987 the Brundtland-Report introduced the term “sustainable development”, and defined it as follows: “Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” The ecological problem was finally placed on the international agenda.

In 1992, a first step was taken to broaden the field of action of “sustainable development”. At the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro Nation states signed the Agenda 21 and committed themselves to pursue national strategies of sustainability. More than 170 heads of state signed the closing document to start a movement that has evolved strongly at local level. The '92 'Earth Summit' was the first major international conference to consider *environmental issues and developmental aspects* together. In forty chapters, the UN document sets out an action programme for the 21st century based on the principles of sustainable development. Furthermore, a specific “*Local Agenda 21*” was introduced in Chapter 28 of the above cited document, i.e. “*Local Authorities' initiatives in support of Agenda 21*”. Chapter 28 recognises that local authorities "as the level of governance closest to the people" play "a vital role in educating, mobilising and responding to the public to promote sustainable development". It calls upon all local authorities worldwide to devise and implement local action plans for sustainable development, to involve all members from the local community, and to regard *Local Agenda 21* as an ongoing process. Acting on behalf of local authorities, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) introduced the mandate for setting up Agenda 21 at the local level. Today over 6,400 authorities around the world are involved in some form of local action for global change. With the assignment of the Charter of Aalborg in 1994 the European Cities pledged themselves to establishing a Local Agenda 21 and orientating their politics and administration towards sustainable development.
Why?

Vienna is both a municipality and a province of the Austrian federal state. The Municipality of Vienna is a strong, centralised administration with 60,000 employees, controlled by social democrats. Due to the Austrian corporatist structure, however, social democrats co-existed with a limited form of decentralisation for most of the post-war era. Under this arrangement, the conservative party could secure certain feuds, as the city is divided in 23 districts, each one headed by a district-council and a district-mayor. They represent some sort of countervailing power to the municipal government, as they decide on local infrastructure and have their own budget. Unfortunately, this form of governance gives strong, nearly autocratic prerogatives to the district-mayor, which prevents this type of decentralisation to become a real incentive for citizen participation. At the beginning of the 1990s, left reformists within social democracy in Vienna were looking for socially innovative practices to open the existing form of governance to public participation.

How and who?

The City of Vienna committed itself to initiate a ‘Local Agenda 21’ process in November 1996. This participation process, however, strongly focussed on political marketing –municipal elections were held in October 1996 – instead of expressing a firm commitment to sustainability. As there was no political consensus at the municipal level to implement an urban process of Local Agenda 21, a pilot-project was started in Vienna’s 9th district (Alsergrund) in 1998. Vienna’s Adult Education School, a public entity with a long history of mass education, became responsible for the LA 21 project. The district council and the Department of Environment and Planning financed the project.

The pilot-project itself was directly initiated by an open-minded district-mayor, who was interested in strengthening a new democratic structure. It was this procedural, participatory dimension of Local Agenda 21 that was decisive at the beginning, whereas ecological reforms and other more clearly defined outcomes regarding sustainability were secondary. Thus, reformists tried to use a new form of area development for the democratisation of the central top-down approach, as well as the autocratic bottom-up form of governance, dominant in Vienna.

Local Agenda 21 in Alsergrund was based on a broad consensus that included local business, voluntary organizations and the Green Party. Even the conservatives were not in open opposition to LA 21. Slowly a new mode of urban governance was implemented and a new political culture flourished. The innovative process was given priority over the outcomes, which were seen as evolving out of broad public discussions and practices. An adequate definition of sustainable
development was seen as the final and not as the starting point of the process. Although initiated from above, the participatory approach resulted in the development of bottom-up structures, without aiming at predefined results.

*Which resources?*

Project groups were formed to implement citizen’s ideas for a sustainable development of the district of Alsergrund. In the pilot phase of LA 21, the project groups were free to work on the subjects they were interested in and there were no orders from above. The project groups themselves defined the content and time span for the application of their ideas and visions. Professionals offered help to get the projects started and helped to establish contacts with political and administrative bodies as well as with the local press if necessary.

The integration of new people with their ideas and concerns was seen as the basic prerequisite for motivated work. In order to bring together citizens from all areas of life, the steering body of LA 21 established the so-called "Project and Idea Workshop". This was a forum reflecting the inter-relationship between citizens and the political and administrative side of the district, where ideas were developed and projects for future district plans discussed. The participating citizens viewed this forum as the participatory committee of Vienna’s Alsergrund District. All in all, the openness and readiness to learn from all participants was crucial for generating sustainable projects for the district.

*What?*

Local Agenda 21 in Alsergrund focussed on the improvement of local living conditions and the participation of local actors. The implementation of this process at the district level seemed to suit the enhancement of social innovation very well. The pilot-project triggered the implementation of a participatory mode of governance that left a lasting mark on the district of Alsergrund. It involved new participatory forms of bargaining and created a new public space for discussion and action at the grassroots level. It became a citizens’ school for the development of political consciousness. Alsergrund became known as one of the most innovative districts in Vienna. In 2001 the district-mayor was re-elected with a broad majority.

The projects developed within the LA 21 framework are manifold. They range from the revamping of stairs that link two of Vienna's busy streets, to maintaining and improving the local services and infrastructure of the 9th district. A newly founded group is concerned with the preservation of a vast green area in contrast with real estate interests. It is this recent initiative that shows the democratic potential as well as the immanent threat to the existing power structure inherent in LA 21 activities.
The innovation in governance put forward by LA 21 is broadly recognised at the administrative and political level. As a result, all new projects put in place by the municipality are critically compared to LA 21, which has become the blueprint example of how to organise citizen’s participation in Vienna.

How long?

Municipal elections in 2001 brought about a strengthening of the social democrats and the Green Party in Vienna. Consequently, LA 21 was given broader recognition at the municipal level. The new planning director, a social democrat, pushed forward a process to export Alsergrund LA 21 to other districts. In the summer of 2002, an office was established to organise and co-ordinate the broadening of the process. Local Agenda 21, formerly an instrument at the district level, is now being transferred to the municipal level. It has been given more money and personnel. In other words, it is becoming an ‘institution’. This implies the recognition of a new approach to area development, at the same time as it opens the possibility for various forms of co-optation. Concrete experiences showed that participation and strategies for sustainable development are easier to achieve at the district level, as the latter is less confronted with corporate and business interests that prioritise economic growth. The latter interests are, in fact, more powerful at the municipal level. Therefore, it could be argued that new projects within the municipal Local Agenda 21 will have less room for experimentation and autonomous development than it was the case in the first phase in the district of Alsergrund.

The socially innovative dimension of LA 21 in Alsergrund was essentially based on its openness. Institutionalisation might therefore represent more of a threat than a success, as the dynamic and open process of communication might be substituted by formalist and standardized procedures of project management. To sum it up, LA 21 appears today at the crossroads between the deepening of participatory processes and the reintegration in a renewed top-down approach of technocratic planning.

2.3. ‘Stop GATS’ campaign by ATTAC Austria

GATS, the General Agreement on Trade in Services, will be the first international agreement for the global liberalisation of services. At present, 144 WTO member states, including Austria, are negotiating the details of the agreement, aiming at subjecting all services to the WTO principles of free market access and equal treatment of national and foreign suppliers. It is believed by a number of progressive observers that ‘successful’ GATS negotiations would lead to a ‘hollowing out’ of
national regulations in these sectors, especially in the area of public services. It is also believed that they would lead to an aggravation of social and economic inequalities, both within and between regions and countries, deterioration of working conditions and of the quality of services, as well as a general loss of democracy and accountability.

Why?

The goal of the ‘Stop GATS’ campaign is to stop GATS negotiations, make an evaluation of previous effects of trade liberalisations, improving the information and mobilisation of the public, creating a broad and active anti-GATS alliance in Austria, launching a dialogue in civil society on alternative strategies to develop public services as well as legal regulations safeguarding the existence of democratically controlled public services.

How?

The ‘Stop GATS’ campaign was founded by ATTAC Austria in 2002. In Austria, ATTAC, a network for the democratic control of financial markets, was founded in 2000 (four years after the appeal in *Le Monde Diplomatique*) by a number of people from different societal spheres (academics, trade unionists, development, peace movement, church, youth organisations). Since then it represents the most important civil society network at the national and local levels. The successful integration, for the first time, of various social movements and organizations constitutes a significant process innovation in Austrian civil society.

In the two years of its existence, ATTAC Austria has managed to bring together into a joint network the Austrian scene of civil society organisations that was previously fragmented in many ways. At present, about 1700 individuals and 70 institutions are supporting members of ATTAC, amongst them church organisations, a multitude of small environmental, social, cultural and educational initiatives, as well as organisations at the periphery of the main parties. In this broad and united social network different partners develop intense project co-operation on specific subjects.

The ‘Stop GATS’ campaign was initiated by ATTAC Austria and is supported by four other organisations next to ATTAC: the Austrian Union Confederation (*Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund*), the Austrian Student Union (*Österreichische HochschülerInnenschaft*), Greenpeace Austria as well as the Poverty Committee (*Armutskonferenz*), a network representing ‘the lobby of those who don’t have a lobby’.

ATTAC Austria has partly reversed the fragmentation process of the social movements since the 1970s and has established a new culture of political movement. Furthermore, its professional and extensive media and educational work have prevented any political disparagement as anarchist and
violent anti-globalisation movement. The support ATTAC receives from established state- or church-based civil society organisations credibly underwrites the movement’s substantial interest in creating a possible alternative world.

Which resources?

ATTAC Austria is organised as an independent, non-party and non-confessional association, financed by individual and organisation’ membership contributions. Parties, unlike their various peripheral organisations (youth, etc.), are excluded from ATTAC membership. Next to its extensive education and publicity work via panel discussions, lectures, seminars and publications ATTAC Austria’s activities also comprise creative street campaigns and cultural co-operations. Working committees (amongst others on the regulation of financial markets, justice of the taxation system, water, debt reduction, pensions) are self organised and aim at developing long-term alternatives in various areas.

What?

The ‘Stop GATS’ campaign focuses its activities on extensive information and educational work as well as the mobilisation of the public, on media and advertising work as well as the lobbying with politicians and civil servants at the Austrian and European levels. The potential of this encompassing civil society network that was stimulated by the foundation of ATTAC, became visible for the first time in the context of a large campaign project.

Even though ATTAC Austria is the only one of the five supporting organizations that does not make any financial contributions to the ‘Stop GATS’ campaign, it established itself as a substantive and strategic centre for initiatives, as it is a civil society network free from any party influence. This, in turn, initiated a process of reflection and political renewal in organizations of the civil society (such as the Austrian Trade Union Confederation) that traditionally have been close to the state. These organisations, until now often spoon-fed by their respective political lobby, have used this process of renewal for internal reforms to open up and distance themselves from the traditional interests of their clientele. In terms of process-oriented innovation, the current ‘Stop GATS’ campaign managed to create a sustainable broad social alliance, as well as to transform the rigid state and party allegiance of the trade unions.

Furthermore, the current ‘Stop GATS’ campaign has transformed the dominant conception of (political) education and culture. While a strong “schooling” historically marked the union tradition of education, an organisation like Greenpeace conceives education merely in terms of marketing campaigns. The ‘Stop GATS’ campaign, however, has attempted to organise educational work from
below. Organizations and individuals are invited to co-operate in the ‘Stop GATS’ campaign and shape it according to their capabilities and capacities. Next to encompassing media and publicity campaigns, information and education work is done on the spot in community centres, parish facilities, adult education institutions and youth centres etc. and is characterised by direct interaction with interested citizens.

The ‘Stop GATS’ campaign works with a minimal base of infrastructure which also applies to the co-ordination amongst the main supporting organizations. This allows sustaining a form of civil society engagement that is based on spontaneous mobilisation and rejects any comprehensive institutionalisation. Especially union organisations that had lost any link to social movements now see the possibility of strategic alliances between critical civil society segments and the union that was traditionally (too?) close to the state.

*How long?*

Work on the ‘Stop GATS’ campaign started in May 2002, the financial resources were sorted out by the end of 2003. Beyond the GATS negotiations the main supporting organizations aim to continue work on concrete utopias to secure public services at the international and local level. A campaign to prevent the deterioration of public services is not deemed socially innovative enough in the long term. In this sense, the ‘Stop GATS’ campaign could provide an impetus beyond its immediate goals for various initiatives of an emerging emancipated and critical public.

2.4. Communication centre Bassena

The housing estate *Am Schöpfwerk* is a council estate from the early 1980s in the south of Vienna and houses around 4700 people in 1650 flats. This large housing project was originally built for young families. It has good social infrastructure but its population faces up to a number of problems: 20% of households receive housing benefits and the fluctuation of those who – voluntarily or not – move out, reaches the Viennese record of 15%. Also, about 20% of the inhabitants are Austrian citizens of foreign origin. Thus, the potential for social conflict is considerable. Moreover, the estate has severe reconstruction problems and the current renovations are resulting in above average rents.

*Why?*

The Communication Centre ‘Bassena’ was founded in 1982 with other social and cultural institutions at *Am Schöpfwerk*. The aim was to create public or semi-public spaces to young families for their leisure activities. There were no goals and targets beyond this broad aim. The availability
of finances and infrastructure made it possible to create a space to develop various forms of social innovation.

How and what?

The Communication Centre ‘Bassena’, in fact, is one of four district centres that form part of the association of the Youth Centres of the City of Vienna. Since its foundation the District Centre ‘Bassena’ had no clear mission and therefore could independently develop its own profile. Generally speaking, the ‘Bassena’ centre pursues a community-oriented approach that developed in the 1970s within social workers initiatives and under the influence of social movements. This approach represents an alternative to the liberal social work repertoire, centred on the individual. Here, individual problems are seen as part of the social and political context of a concrete community. The goal is to develop measures to immediately improve the quality of life in a framework of collective discussion, co-determination and participation, that is, including the inhabitants as well as council politicians and civil servants. This community orientation is based on the vision of a democratisation that encompasses all areas of life. Thus, empowerment and involvement are key concepts; structural imbalances of power, e.g. between the council and the inhabitants, are not sidelined but must be transformed step by step.

This basic orientation, shared by all three social workers employed in the Bassena project, aims to develop a concrete agenda of initiatives with the inhabitants. The projects developed over the last 20 years vary, as they were linked to the specific needs of the tenants and these needs reflected the socio-economic framework of the time. At the beginning of the 1980s cultural projects (theatre, entertainment, etc.) were developed, particularly with the non-employed housewives and mothers, as the public transportation to the inner city was not very good. In the middle of the 1980s the demand for further education and labour market integration increased, reflecting dramatic increases in rent, as well as a first wave of divorces that posed problems for many families in the estate. These years saw the emergence of a socio-economic project for women. This project has now been extended from Am Schöpfwerk to the whole of Vienna. In the 1990s, advertising work was strengthened in order to improve the persistently bad image of the estate in the media. A district journal is published three times a year; equally there is the possibility to organise a radio programme once a week. Both projects are aimed at enabling the tenants to make their concerns public and to initiate a public discussion and opinion formation, as a precondition for political participation.
Which resources?

‘Bassena’ at Am Schöpfwerk is part of the association of Viennese Youth Centres. This association is directly subordinated to the municipal authorities and receives every year a financial allocation from the council. The association of Viennese Youth Centres is some sort of a peripheral organization of the Austrian social democratic party (SPÖ), most members of its board are social democratic councillors. However, in the 1980s neither the polity nor the administration exploited this network to exert any influence in terms of substance, strategy or process. This initial openness, however, progressively recedes. Since the 1990s, Bassena’s work is increasingly defined by the municipal authorities. The critique of mainstream policy and administration has become more difficult, not least because of the financial dependency.

In terms of human resources, the few employees of ‘Bassena’ at Am Schöpfwerk mostly work with the tenants and take their role as local experts serious. The success of the projects is based to a large extent on the high personal continuity of the professionals involved, who linked a participatory approach of work with the concrete utopia of a democratisation in all areas of life over two decades.

What?

All projects of the Communication Centre ‘Bassena’ reflect the same basic orientation: they focus on the one hand on a new relation between tenants, policy makers and the property management, and on the possibility of participation to shape the immediate environment on the other hand. The handing over of power and responsibilities on the part of the administration is seen as absolutely necessary. The professionals see themselves merely as mediators and coaches in this comprehensive process of empowerment. The issues that were developed and raised by the tenants concern especially questions of renovation, rent, overheads and the improvement of local infrastructure.

The project ‘Dung Beetle’, for example, constitutes a model project for the reduction of waste as well as disposal costs. An evaluation of waste disposal on the part of the tenants revealed considerable inefficiencies, which in turn helped to reduce costs. Furthermore, the tenants discovered irregularities in the invoice for bulky refuse disposal, which over the years had led to extra costs of more than 100,000 €. The tenants’ involvement and initiative, in this case, led to criminal charges against the property management – the result of which was in favour of the tenants.

Bassena offers support to tenant representatives to pursue cases, as well as physical facilities for network activities, next to other projects to reduce rent charges. The joint development of a district journal and radio programme, exchange circles as well as the organization of regular topical forums
with all the constituencies in the district are also part of the core activities of the communication centre.

*How long?*

Employees of ‘Bassena’ retrospectively see the 1980s as the time when it was easiest to develop socially innovative projects. The co-operation with the administration was productive as also the latter aimed at openness, transparency and democratisation. The outsourcing of the property management from the council administration and the increasing shift towards a business- and cost-centred logic made co-operations to develop and implement process innovations more difficult in the last years. The strong tensions between Bassena, an association financed by the City of Vienna and Wiener Wohnen, an enterprise of the City of Vienna, which emerged out of the project ‘Dung Beetle’, witness of this. ’Don’t bite the hand that feeds you’ is the main message of the end of the 1990s.

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IV. FRANCE

VISIONS AND MOVEMENTS IN THE URBAN SOCIAL ECONOMY OF FRANCE

by Oana Ailenei

A. HISTORICAL ROOTS OF FRENCH VISIONS AND MOVEMENTS

The purpose of this text is to review a number of traditions, philosophical conceptions or experiences that played a decisive role in the formation of the urban social economy in France. We will start our analysis in the 19th century, when the contemporary forms of social economy came into being as a result of the theorisation of practical experiences (Gueslin 1998) and of their institutionalisation. The institutionalisation of these forms came together with the selection of the best practices.

1. The emergence of the social economy in France

The experiences of the 19th century take place in the context of a solidarity practice coming from the late Middle Ages and Renaissance: guildes (guilds), confréries (fraternities), jurandes (charitable associations), corporations (association organised on a trade or professional basis), compagnonnages (associations of workers, securing the lodging, food, education, social protection for the “companions”\(^\text{13}\)). This “fraternal” structure inherited from the Renaissance will suffer from the trauma of the French Revolution, a key moment in the evolution of the French social economy.

The relationship between Revolution and association is indeed ambiguous. On the one hand, the Revolution contributed to disintegrate the existing associative dynamics. The Chapelier’s Act from

\(^{13}\) The Société des fourreurs de vair appeared in Paris in 1319, as a society of mutual help, providing its members support if they were sick or unable to work.
1791 prohibited any voluntary group formed on a professional basis, as they were considered to be a legacy of the ancient regime, although it did not succeed in causing a significant break with the associative traditions. On the other hand, the Revolution emphasised the need of the working class for associations, also in reply to the disastrous effects of the oncoming industrialisation. The Revolution of 1848 and the Paris Commune (1871) allowed short periods of associative freedom, but it will take till the end of the 19th century for the organisations of the then social economy (co-operatives, mutual aid organisations, associations) to gain legal recognition. The freedom of setting up professional trade unions, in fact, was granted in 1884; the founding act of mutual aid associations was voted in 1898; the act authorising the freedom of association came into force in 1901.

The 1901 law represents the end of a long process of experimentation and innovation in associative forms that characterised the 19th century: revolutionary clubs, secret societies, utopian experiences, work co-operatives etc. The 19th century was, indeed, a founding century for the modern social economy, as it was characterised by an outburst of ideas, conceptions, experiences, co-operative, associative or mutual aid practices, in reaction to the social brutalities of the Industrial Revolution (poverty and exploitation), the emergence of the liberal philosophies, and the actions taken by governments against the workers’ movements or associations.

Taking a historical perspective to the literature, in the following pages we will try to trace the roots of a number of contemporary innovative social experiences. We will first deal with the theoretical and practical influences of utopian socialism in the 19th century on the formation of co-operative organisations in France (Vienney 1994). Secondly, we will analyse the influence of the French industrial patronage in the field of workers’ dwellings (the introduction of cheap lodging in the form of HBM’s - Habitations à Bon Marché) and social innovations inside the factories14.

2. The influences of utopian socialism on the French co-operative movement in the 19th century

2.1. Early co-operative experiences

The first French co-operatives can be traced back to the 14th century. *La fruitière de Jura*, often mentioned in the literature, represents the oldest associative form that can be connected to the co-operative spirit (Mayaud 1986). The associative system of the ‘fruitière’, which made it possible to
collect the milk of animals of various producers for the joint manufacturing of cheeses (especially the ‘vacherin’, an ancestor of the ‘compté’), and divided the profits in proportion to the individual contributions, was a specificity of villages in the mountains of the Jura (France). The system then included the harvesting of grapes and making of wine.

The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers, founded by 28 weavers in 1844 in Rochdale, probably the most well-known of all the early co-operatives, would inspire the world movement of the consumers’ co-operatives (it is historically the first in importance), whereas the society Bijoutiers en doré founded in 1834 by four Parisian workers, will be among the first production co-operatives in France, stimulating the later movement of production co-operatives. At the basis of the Bijoutiers en doré was the conception of the Christian socialist Philippe Buchez (1796-1865) who, attracted by the social dimension of the Saint-Simonism, promoted the religious side of social progress. The Raiffeisen example in Germany inspired the conservative Catholic Louis Durand to found in 1893 the first French Caisse Mutuelle Rurale. The Danish co-operative for milk products founded by farmers from Hjelling in 1882, representing the beginning of the modern agricultural co-operatives inspired the first French agricultural co-operative, La Laiterie co-opérative de Chaille, created in 1888 after the Danish model. Co-operatives in housing, trading, transportation, handcraft, fishing, will add later to these forerunning experiences, forming the co-operative movement, based also nowadays on the principles of the pioneers from Rochdale: equality, liberty, justice, equity.

What these experiences have in common is that they emerged as a collective reaction of the underprivileged social classes and they manifested themselves as collective enterprises in which members had equal rights, as opposed to the liberal individualistic approach to entrepreneurial initiative.

2.2. The Utopian “Founding Fathers”

Until the emergence of Marxism, the workers’ movement in the 19th century was inspired by socialist utopias, fancy experiences of alternative societies (Desroche 1976) and by social reformist

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14 E.g. improvements in the conditions of work such as the prohibition to assign women night shifts, the introduction of a ten hour labor day, the Sunday off, the establishment of workers’ housing organizations, schools for the children, unemployment and retirement funds, etc.
15 Lancashire, England - a small town of about 25,000 people, famous for its flannels.
16 The word “utopia” come from the Greek expression ou-topos which means no-place, counter-place, alternative place (Saporta, K. 1996, “Les vertiges du regard. Pour une utopie de la representation.”, in Pour une utopie réaliste. Autour d’Edgar Morin, Rencontres de Chateaubillon.)
ideas. This is why socialism was often identified with social economy, seen as a new arena of economic activity which embraced all groups trading for a social purpose and whose primary objectives were not a return to invested capital (6th European Social Economy Conference, 3-5 June 1998, Birmingham, UK).

The history of Utopianism may be traced back to the creation of the communitarian ideal by Plato in *The City* and finds a new cornerstone with Thomas More’s *Utopia* (published in 1515) where an island without currency and without aristocracy is imagined, in which the central State guarantees the general interest. The communitarian ideal will be then taken up also by François Rabelais (*L'abbaye de Thélème*, 1534) and Francis Bacon (*The New Atlantis*, 1626). Several community practices were also developed over time, and inspired the future social economy (cf. *compagnonnages, corporations*, religious communities or congregations, etc.).

The French were extremely important, if not the initiators in the development of Utopian socialism. The father of this vision in France was indeed the Count of Saint-Simon (1760-1825). Saint-Simon and his followers believed that a team of scientists or social experts that would plan various public works as well as manage all labour in the country should head the government. His followers were the first socialists to suggest a planned society, the best chance for giving workers decent living conditions, an idea that would far outlast their small movement. The strong point of the French utopians was that of setting up the founding theories which, reinterpreted and reoriented by their disciples, would contribute, among other things, to the development of several models of social economy in France (Gueslin 1998). In their vision, the “social economy” (term that they used to replace “political economy”) designated “the whole of organisations, i.e. activities necessary for the economy, but unexplained through economic models” (Vienney 1994: 71).

Saint-Simonism is considered to be the starting point of the French co-operative movement. As a participant to the French Revolution, Saint-Simon saw the year 1789 as the end of Feudalism and the beginning of the industrial society, characterised by the emergence of the working class. The emphasis on work was perhaps the most revolutionary aspect of Saint-Simon's theory: the 19th century would see health restored as the result of work and the fruits of work organized as to improve the situation of the "poorest and most numerous class" (Carlisle 2000). Saint-Simon perceived in the new society the social, economic, moral, intellectual and doctrinal disorder, as well as the emergence of a new phenomenon: that of "economic competition". The new industrial organisation of society must secure the social welfare, the suggested means being the association of workers, the only guarantee for general harmony. The State has a redistribution role in the
framework of this new industrial system (Bidet 1997). The above powerful ideas of Saint-Simon will be applied, in various forms, throughout the 19th century.

Charles Fourier (1772-1837), another founder of the French utopian socialism and the forerunner of anarchism, brought an important theoretical contribution to the evolution of the French cooperative movement. Deeply influenced by the French Revolution, Fourier’s work focuses on two main dimensions: the critique of the existing order and the development of a new “association”-based system, combining the interest for creation and the pleasure for collaboration. Fourier invented the famous phalanster, an association of 1620 persons, set up on a hundred hectare area, enabling its members the right to work and a minimum living standard. The benefits within this community of work and life had to be distributed according to the principles of the social economy “each one according to work, capacities and needs”. According to Fourier, the numerous phalansters that would be set up around the world, would join into a big association and in this way the entire planet would become one nation, attaining Universal Harmony, the final stage of urban development. Fourier tried to demonstrate, based on the experience of the phalanster, that society is capable of self-adjusting without the intervention of political institutions. However, lacking the means, he never succeeded in putting into full practice his ideas.

Still, his followers made various attempts at applying the Fourierist theory. Victor Considérant (1808 - 1893), the leader of the Fourierist movement after Fourier's death in 1837, was largely responsible for its integration into the socialist movement in the 1840s. In the 1830s and 1840s, Victor Considérant was involved in two abortive attempts to establish phalansters, one at Conde-sur-Vesgre in France and the other, set up with state funding, near Sig in Algeria (Vanderort 2000). We should mention also the experiences set forth in 1837-1847 in France, Brazil, Algeria, United States by the American Associationist stream in keeping with Fourier’s theory.

But beyond these concrete experiments, Fourier’s utopia inspired much of the subsequent cooperative movements and experiences. In particular, the phalanster model influenced the notion of social housing (e.g. the HBM - Habitations à Bon Marché), as first implemented in Godin’s Familistère. Two other historical experiences inspired by Fourier’s phalanster, one that influenced the evolution of production co-operatives and one that formed the basis of consumers’ co-operatives are worth describing.
2.3. Godin’s “Familistère”

The first initiative we refer to is J.B. Godin’s *Familistère*\(^\text{17}\), a case in point of the relationship between the theory of social experimentation and its practice. Godin (1817-1888) is known as one of the upholders of the *participationist current*, promoting the workers’ participation in the capital of their enterprise (Bidet 1997). In 1859 Godin founded his Familistère, a forerunner of the French HBMs-*Habitations à Bon Marché* and HLMs-*Habitations à Loyer Modéré* (moderate- and low-rent housing co-operatives), but, most importantly, a prototype of production co-operative. The *Familistère de Guise*\(^\text{18}\) (Aisne, France), a social-cultural complex designed by two Fourierist architects and built by Godin for his workers, contained 500 dwellings, complete of stores, schools, gardens, a pool, a theatre, and reached a maximum population of 1500 persons in 1880. To fight individualism, Godin preferred the variant of a vast habitat to the single-family houses, creating the possibility of simultaneously living in group and respecting the family intimacy. The benefits obtained from the sales in the co-operative stores (clothing, furniture, food etc.) were used to subsidise other services secured by Godin in the field of childcare and social protection. The Familistère lasted until 1968, representing one of the most exemplary practices of paternalism belonging to the utopian tradition of the XIXth century.

Godin’s initiative remains important especially due to the innovations in the social-cultural services: nurseries for children raised by the collectivity from their birth, compulsory education until the age of 14 years, a system of social protection administered by the wage earners. Among his other achievements, Godin founded in 1860 a company that provided insurance in case of disease; in 1870 he introduced free medication and medical consultations; in 1872 he put in place a support house for work invalids, widows and orphans. Taking inspiration from the mutual help funds, Godin also suggested the creation of the "National Mutuality", based on the financial contribution of the State, an institution that anticipated the emergence of the Social Security system in France.

\(^{17}\) Godin’s enterprises were World no. 1 in the manufacture of domestic tools and heat appliances. J.-B. Godin was also the initiator of the 1\(^\text{st}\) of May holyday in France, a pioneer of experimental sociology, the promoter of the international co-operative organisation, the initiator of the Social Security system in France, and an upholder of feminism.

\(^{18}\) Called also the "Social Palace", today it is a historic monument.
2.4. Proudhon’s mutualism

Among the early experiences of social economy we must also mention Pierre-Joseph Proudhon’s contribution (1809-1865) to the development of the French mutualism. Proudhon is considered to be the father of workers’ self-management, anarchism and federalism; the initiator of French socialism; the forerunner of mutual credit, mutual insurance and trade unionism in France. Proudhon's alternative to the growing power of big capitalist firms was small-scale production linked by a network of exchange of goods and services. He opposed the idea of a planned or collectively organised society and argued instead for people to turn their backs on political action and start small business. The ideas of linking up such small units as an alternative to the rising power of big industrialists seemed attractive.

For Proudhon, the *mutual contract* represented the non-violent solution to class conflicts. Within this mutual system (where currency was replaced by “flow notes”, whose value was established on the basis of a mutual agreement between buyers and sellers), the partners guaranteed mutually to exchange one service for another, credit for credit, value for value, property for property, information for information etc. He conceived after this model an "Exchange Bank" (that anticipated the future systems of Local Exchange Trade or LET’s), suggesting a system based on the exchange of products. After this first experience failed, in 1849 Proudhon founded a *Banque Populaire* (People’s Bank) with the purpose of providing free loans. After having received 20,000 subscriptions this second initiative failed as well.

2.5. Derrion’s consumer co-operative

The last experience inspired by Fourier’s conception we referred to is the consumers’ co-operative founded by Michel Derrion (1803-1850), who Jacques Gaumont¹⁹ believes to be the founder of the consumers’ co-operative in France. Derrion borrowed from Fourier the principle of the distribution of benefits taking into account work, capital, and talent ("la répartition des biens selon le travail, le capital et le talent", Bidet 1997). Derrion opened the first co-operative food store in 1835 in Lyon, starting from the principles stated in his brochure *Commerce véridique et équitable* (fair and equitable trade): democracy, transparency, care for the quality of the sold products and fair distribution of the benefits. Seven of Derrion’s consumers’ co-operatives functioned for about three years in the crowded neighbourhoods of Lyon, but they eventually closed down, because of the economic crisis in France and especially in Lyon, of the hostility of traditional tradesmen and of the

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different repressive actions taken by the local authorities. For example, in 1840 Michel Derrion was condemned for having founded the « Commerce Véridique et Social »). According to Mimmo Pucciarelli (2000) Derrion’s initiative *commerce véridique et social* failed rapidly, but later it influenced the emergence of one of the first systems of urban Local Exchange in France (in Lyon-Croix Rousse20), that contributed significantly to the evolution of LETs (Local Exchange Trade Systems)

3. The French industrial patronage in the 19th century: examples of top-down social initiatives

The memories of the generous social patronage of the period stand witness to a long tradition of enlightened social policies, which are continued today in other forms. Mutual assistance or social security, hospitals, mutual insurance companies, salary guarantees, pension funds, these are many familiar terms to describe social organisations and protection systems for today’s blue and white-collar workers. However, in the 19th century, especially in the industrial regions, life was far more precarious.

Until the Industrial Revolution the *patronage* – or the ‘social works of the employers’ – in urban areas was attached to religious educational institutions such as *Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul* and *Frères des Ecoles Chrétiennes*, based on Christian charity and philanthropy principles. This *patronage* aimed at providing moral education and at assisting those who were unable to earn their daily living. As the sheltering structures of the *corporations* and of the monasteries no longer had enough space available to assist the needy, new collective dwellings emerged, which combined the functions carried out by the charitable institutions with those of an employment agency. For instance, the international organisation *L’Armée du Salut* (*Salvation Army*) found inspiration from these forms of urban patronage21, as did the community *EMMAÜS* founded by Abbé Pierre, a French priest and former Resistance worker, in 1949. The general term of these initial forms of patronage was "asylum". The asylums for aged persons became the *maison de retraite* or *maison du Xe age*, the asylums for ‘lunatics’ were turned into psychiatric clinics or psychotherapy centres, the reform schools evolved towards centres of social reintegration etc. The special attention given to

20 The first SEL (LET) was born in Ariège at the end of 1994 and then the experiment spread in all the Western South of France (Nicole Guilloteau, co-founder of the Local Exchange Trade system in Paris, March 2000, http://netmask.eu.org/)

21 The *Salvation Army* was founded in England, at the end of the XIXème century, by parson William Booth, shocked by the miserable living conditions of the working class during the industrial revolution.
children and family in the 19th century will determine the institutions of the patronage to provide different services: free counselling and ensuring the food for new-born children.

For a good understanding of the 'patronage' initiatives, we must stress the distinction between two terms, which designated the relationships between workers and employers in the 19th century (Noiriel 1998): *patronage* and *paternalism*. In the first case, corresponding to the traditional rural social relationships, characterised by the dominance of the notables, the action undertaken by the employers is accepted by the workers. But paternalism as a form of industrial patronage represents a more complex system, characterised by a more brutal authority that is often disputed. Both *patronage* and *paternalism* share a concern for the scarcity of work force at the beginning of the industrialisation process. As a result, the patronage’s interest was to preserve and to stabilise the work force. The paternalism can be explained through the employers’ preoccupation to develop a society free of class conflicts, as strikes and conflicts were being considered detrimental to business. An important objective of both forms was to morally and materially improve the life of the workers. Paternalism turned into practice meant the workers’ integration into a community impregnated by the family model (the family as the base model of social organisation), to render them more efficient in their work. Paternalism also materialised in local interventions (urban policies, collective infrastructure) and in managing the workers’ time at the factories, in their garden, but also in organised parties. There were, thus, two dimensions to paternalism: a positive one (the creation of an integrated system with schools, support services etc.) and a negative one: putting into practice a totalitarian system aiming to form a "healthy" human being (Noiriel 1998).

The diversity of the forms taken by the French *industrial patronage* was emphasised at the occasion of the first Universal Exhibitions (1855), in the section dedicated to the social economy. Here the patronage initiatives were represented in the same way as other forms of workers’ associations: the *Société des cités ouvrières de Mulhouse* was awarded the first medal of honour. It is also important to point out that at this first Exhibition, the idea of the patronage was closely linked to that of the “habitat”, due to the efforts made by some manufacturers to meet the needs in shelter of the workers.

But at the Universal Exhibition of 1900, it was mostly the workers’ associations, and production cooperatives, which represented the social economy, whereas the patronage initiatives seemed to be surpassed by events. The social economy at this time was a form of socialisation related to an

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22 Five of the 13 awards granted for the category "patronage" within the exhibition were awarded to France (of which three to Alsatian entreprises), the other seven countries shared the remaining eight awards.
emancipated civil society and to the collaboration with public authorities, whereas industrial patronage represented a form of socialisation related to family life.

The actions undertaken by patronage during the 19th century not only tried to stop the incipient resistance by the workers, but also to improve their ‘behaviour’, still unadjusted to the changes induced by the Industrial Revolution. Alcoholism, libertarianism and prostitution produced disorder within the working class. At that time alcoholism was a reactionary phenomenon – drinking meant to forget about the inferno of life and provided energy to the exhausted organism (Charlot et al. 1985). Alcoholism went well with the social function of the cabaret, in the 19th century a refuge for the workers living in sordid dwellings lacking comfort. Consequently, the behaviour of the working class became a problem of the employers, which found themselves in the position of financing the immoral conduct of workers and of bearing at the same time its consequences (Villerme 1918)23. The patronage’s solution to the social issue was the moral education and the training of the workers.

3.1. The paternalistic initiatives of the Alsatian Schneider family

The pioneers of the industrial patronage belonged to the East of France, represented by the Alsatian Catholic dynasties: Koechlin, Dollfus, Schlumberger, Wendel, Schneider, Lorraine. Paternalism was applied in the factories of the Schneider family (located in Creusot-Alsace, end of the 19th century), which provided training and medical care, as well as dwellings, to their workers, with a view to moral education. The Schneider employers also put into practice a social security system (support and savings houses, based on employers’ donations and on withholding taxes of 2%, in order to finance medical care, education and support in case of sickness). Furthermore, they initiated a pension system, based on savings that worked until 1910, when the law on workers ‘and farmers’ pensions came into effect. Finally, the Schneider family took care of the development of a school system in order to obtain a better-qualified work force and to provide moral education to workers.

As regards the housing policy of the Schneider family, three approaches were used to provide settlements for the workforce. A first type of dwellings was that of "barracks" (casernes), rapidly abandoned, as they favoured promiscuity. A second practice was the building of “workers’ towns” (cités), consisting of individual houses with gardens. The practice of selling land to the workers, encouraging them to build a house (by the granting of loans) would become popular. The garden fulfilled several functions: it ensured the complementary and indispensable victuals and gave the

23 Villerme, L.R. (1918), Tableau de l’état physique et moral des ouvriers, enquête de 1835 à 1837, quoted by Charlot (1985)
workers the opportunity to perform a work different from that in the plant. Also, the work in the garden "bound" the workers to their homes, keeping them from spending their incomes in favourite places of socialisation (cafés, cabarets).

The moral dimension was, indeed, essential and constantly preoccupied the Catholic employers. Among the measures taken by Catholic employers as regards the workers’ moral education we can mention: the closing of cafés and cabarets (places favouring alcoholism and the propagation of socialist ideas), the gradual abandoning of the barrack-dwellings, favouring gardens and gardening, encouraging women to take care of the household, creating the image of the ideal nuclear family. A special attention was paid to the training of the workers’ wives within household schools and in the church, as keepers of the family morality. Life outside the family was sustained also through sports associations, brass bands, debating societies, local holidays (generally organised in honour of the Schneider family). The model promoted by the Schneider Catholic employers was based on the three pillars of work, religion and family. Here, we are not only referring to the workers’ families, but also to the enterprise, seen as a big family in which the employer was the father and the workers the children. The Schneider family also built several churches in Creusot, the workers being almost obliged to attend mass and services.

The system created by the Schneiders was based on funding from savings (loans granted by the workers’ plant, consequently withdrawn from their income) and on the control of individuals from birth to death. It was aimed at creating a society protected from external influences and far from the administrative control of the State (an almost totalitarian system, a sort of "new feudalism"). By means of this isolation, the influences of socialism and trade unionism could long be avoided. Nonetheless, Creusot experienced several riots (1870, 1899); but this only led to the consolidation of paternalism, based on the control of the workers’ life throughout.

3.2. Philibert Vrau, a charismatic figure of North Christian patronage

Philibert Vrau (1829-1905), a businessman from Lille, was the first to develop an advanced social policy inside his factory (a big linen spinning plant), which would serve as a model for a long time: abolition of night-shifts for women, work-day of 10 hours, Sunday repose. An important part of his fortune was used for the organisation of a Catholic faculty, the construction of churches, the operation of workers associations, the maintaining of the local conservative press. He also established different organisations to improve the life quality of workers: savings banks, shopping centres with affordable prices, housing societies, schools for workers’ children, mutual aid societies, unemployment funds, pension funds (based only on employers contributions), and mutual aid
societies to support events such as births, baptisms, marriages and funerals. Philibert Vrau’s goals were, on the one hand, to contribute to the moral education of his workers, and, on the other hand, to stop the decline in Christian faith. His brother-in-law, Camille Féron-Vrau, who had studied medicine in Paris and became, once established in Lille, the friend of the poor and a skilful practitioner, seconded him in his aims. The two brothers, attracted by the notion of a “charitable economy”, shared the animation of numerous associative initiatives: the Association des filtiers de Lille (the first Catholic circle of Lillois workers, 1872), the Association catholique des patrons du Nord (1884), the Christian corporation Saint-Nicolas (1230 members in 1885), the mutual help society Notre-Dame, a bursar's office (économat) linked to the corporation Saint-Nicolas and to the Confrérie Notre-Dame de l'Usine. Between 1890-1892, through different interventions, the Holy Chair recommended the creation of unions in all activities. Philibert Vrau was the only patron (employer) in Lille who put the pontifical directives into practice.

4. Mutual aid, utopias, and patronage: the legacy to contemporary social economy

The 19th century – especially the second half – appears to be the cradle of the French social economy, as it was a time of intense experimentation of various forms of social actions and initiatives in defence of the weakest segments of the population – i.e. the growing numbers of industrial workers. Competing and sometimes merging visions and aims influence such diverse forms.

A first approach/form is the political and economic self-organisation of the working class (Harribey 2002). Especially in France the dynamics of the social economy was to a large extent determined by the initiatives of the exploited, but solidaristic working class, which expressed itself by means of its own institutions: co-operatives, mutual funds, associations, trade unions, workers’ parties, district clubs etc. The organisations of this form of social economy represented a form of resistance against industrial capitalism, as well as an alternative to the satisfaction of economic and social needs that were not fulfilled by public services or by the traditional private sector.

Thus the mutual aid organisations appear in the France of the 19th century as a form of resistance of the workers grouped according to their trade or profession, in order to secure protection against social risks (disease, accidents, decease), professional risks (unemployment, strikes), or basic needs (housing, etc.) (Gueslin 1998; Demoustier; 2001; Nussbaumer 2002). The consumers co-operatives, in particular, emerge as a necessity of meeting the basic needs at affordable prices (the purchasing
power is improved by establishing affordable prices for basic products), whereas the production co-operatives rise as a reaction of the working class to the massive industrialisation and the loss of control of workers over their lives, as a means of increasing incomes. In both cases the workers organise around a common interest, with the aim of suppressing the “parasite” wranglers first condemned by Fourier or Proudhon.

Within this first form of self-organised social economy, we must also take into account other dimensions signalled by the history of the social economy: the socio-political and the socio-cultural dimensions, which include the need to take part in a common project and to identify with a collectivity or community. Most initiatives were bound by a professional and/or activity domain (the same factory, the same trade or profession) or are territorially determined (the neighbourhood, the village or other historically, socially or economically defined territory). One noticed a more significant mobilisation in the lower class neighbourhoods of the industrial cities, where stores, workers’ clubs, cafés, mutual societies, production co-operatives etc. clustered together (Demoustier 2001).

A first conclusion of this preliminary historical approach is, therefore, that the social economy (co-operatives, mutual movements, associations) developed in the framework of the struggle of the working class for improving its precarious living standards, in other words as the “daughter of necessity” and with a collective identity (Desroche 1976).

Another important approach/form of 19th century social economy is that prompted by utopian visions. Indeed, Harribey (2002) stresses the twofold dimension of the social economy: the concrete dimension, aiming at satisfying real needs (insurance against diseases by means of mutual funds in a time when Social Security did not exist; cheap credit provided by special institutions; commodities at affordable prices within the consumers’ co-operatives) and the ideological dimension (socialist utopias, social Christianity). The utopian current, as a radical, but often idealistic reaction to capitalism, dominated socialist thinking of the 19th century until the emergence of Marxism. Owen’s "Village of harmony and friendship", Fourier’s "Phalanster", Cabet’s "Icaria" are all examples of such ideal communities, alternative to the brutality of capitalist industrialisation. French utopian socialism definitely had a major influence on the formation of the French social economy (especially the co-operative movement, but also mutual aid organisation and other welfare organisations), as is clearly illustrated by the numerous applications of Saint-Simon’s ideas, the reference point of the French co-operative movement and Fourier’s ideas, the upholder of the central role of associationism within society and the inventor of the “phalanster”, a true community life, where the distribution of goods is done according to work, capital and talent (Bidet 1997).
Among the utopian applications, particularly relevant were Godin’s "Familistère", which anticipated the institution of the "Social Security" with its "National Mutuality" project and Derrion’s "Commerce véridique et équitable", which laid the foundations of consumers’ co-operatives.

The utopian ideology never fully died. As of the 1980s, various practical and theoretical attempts have emerged ("concrete utopias", according to the philosopher Ernst Bloch, quoted by Martine, 2000), which aim at some sort of social transformation and reinvention of the economy, through organisations “alternative” to mainstream for-profit enterprises. One first example is the Réseau de l’Economie Alternative et Solidaire ("Network of Alternative and Solidaristic Economy"), an initiative gathering local societies that are organised according to the criteria of internal democracy and of social and ecological utility. Another interesting example is the Cigales - Clubs d'Investisseurs pour une gestion Alternative et Locale de l’Epargne, a society of approximately twenty persons that manage their savings together. Yet another case are the Systèmes d’Échanges Locaux (Local Exchange Trade systems), which reintroduced in the1990s an old utopian idea: the members of the association exchange products or services, using flow notes printed within the association. In this way the exchange or trade in kind is promoted, but at the same time the social networks within the community are revitalised. Utopian thinking can be found also within some broader political projects: this is the case of the advocates of the salaire minimum garanti (minimum guaranteed income), a claim that arouses new debates both as regards the distribution of income and the role of work and of activities apart from the work hours as a basis of the social values of the individual (Martine 2000).

Finally, even if more short-lived and with strong paternalistic, even authoritarian features, there is the legacy of industrial patronage experiences, in which bourgeois philanthropy is mixed with Christian charity and some utopian thinking, providing, nonetheless, forerunning examples of welfare state services (medical care, housing for workers, schools, etc.) and with the social measures of Philibert Vrau inside his factories, a sort of catholic application of utopian ideas and philanthropic bourgeois initiatives. This bourgeois philanthropy and reformism with strong influences from utopians will inspire much of the voluntary work and charitable initiatives.

Among the patronage initiatives particularly interesting is the housing experience developed by the Schneider family, for its more lasting influence in modern urban and habitat policies (Frey, 1995). Indeed, the origins of the HBMs (Sociétés des Habitations à Bon Marché), anonymous companies specialised in the construction of cheap dwellings, are inspired by patronage practices. Such housing schemes became autonomous once the Siegfried’s Act from 1894 was released, introducing
the term HBM - Habitations à Bon Marché. In the last decade of the 19th century, the creation of the anonymous companies HBM contributed to free the housing needs of the workers from the patronage practices of Social Christianity, Hygienism, and Solidarism etc.

The shareholders of these anonymous companies were for a long time the notables and the industrial patrons, then the representatives of financial institutions (the savings companies) and especially the local communities. The housing of workers represented an issue for the industrial patronage concerned with the moral education of the workers and with the control of promiscuity, including the danger presented by cholera and tuberculosis epidemics. On the one hand, the industrial employers faced the problem of the housing deficit, and on the other hand that of the insolvency of the workers on the real estate market. Consequently, one first measure taken by the patronage with regard to housing was to build a real estate park by purchasing existing buildings or constructing new ones, often on newly acquired land. In this way, the patronage became more involved with the urban organisation, and the construction of workers’ neighbourhoods or even whole towns. The industrial patronage also took measures in the field of urban consumption, setting up bakeries, dairy and butcher shops as well as refectories (the current enterprise restaurants). All these rapidly turned into consumers’ co-operative companies or were taken over by self-employed; consequently the patronage gradually lost its power, re-orientating preferably to symbolic charitable forms, such as the *don de pain* (“bread”), or *don de bois de chauffe* (“wood for heating”), etc.

**B. CASE STUDIES OF SOCIALLY INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCES**

We have chosen to focus on the socially innovative features of two French experiences: one more ancient (the community EMMAÜS24 Wambrechies, founded in 1954) and another one more recent (the "responsible" funding tool Cigales, created in 1984). In our analysis we hold the view of local innovation as "social innovation" adopted in the framework of the SINGOCOM project. Social innovation at the local level is based on two pillars: institutional innovation (innovation in social relations, innovation in governance) and innovation in the sense of the social economy, i.e. satisfying human needs (Schmoller 1905; Moulaert 1992; Nussbaumer 2002; Moulaert et al. 2000; Moulaert and Ailenei 2002). The aim of innovation in the sense of social economy is that of emancipating fragile populations, through their involvement in a virtuous circle of socio-economic initiatives (Nussbaumer 2002).

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24 A village in Palestine (near to Jerusalem) where the disappeared retrieve hope.
The community EMMAÜS, a local movement which is successful at the national and international levels, represents in our opinion a perfect example of an innovation in the sense of the social economy: the main objective is the immediate satisfaction of the basic needs, but only through the participation of 'companions’ in the production of goods and services. The second example, Cigales (a national movement which is most successful at the local level), belongs to the problematic of "responsible" funding, promoting proximity and reciprocity.

The main question in our analysis is: do these initiatives represent socially innovative ways to meet the needs of the neighbourhood's population? In order to answer this question, we will review the following elements: the historical roots, the networks and the socially innovative character of each experience.

5. The community EMMAÜS Wambrechies

In favour of or to promote what?

An EMMAÜS community (EMMAÜS is the name of a village in Palestine, near Jerusalem, where the rejected humans retrieve their hope) represents a place of work and life financed through its own labour. It mobilises excluded persons mainly through activities as recycling or recuperation. There are 110 Emmaüs communities in France with 4000 persons involved, collecting each year 3,500,000 m³ of objects and 16,200 tons of textiles. In 1997 these materials rendered about 77,000,000€. The greater part of the resources serves to the functioning of the community and about 10% is destined to the solidarity specific actions outside the communities. The persons who come to the communities are welcomed, whatever their religion, origin, ideas, past, success or failures are. The term ‘Companions’, as the residents of the communities are known, comes from the French word meaning “to share bread together”. ‘Companions’ can stay in the community as long as they want; their only obligation is to respect the rules of the communal life. Each companion has a defined function in accordance with his/her skills. Generally, companions are entitled to a room (for two persons) with private space for each person. All the other rooms are common and the meals are taken together at fixed hours. Who stays at EMMAÜS should follow certain regulations: when the potential companions arrive at EMMAÜS Wambrechies, they go through eight days of probation, during which they live and eat in the community. If they decide to stay, they must accept the rules of the community, and become entitled to a small remuneration. Alcohol is forbidden (however, they receive pocket money to buy cigarettes and drink something

25 At EMMAÜS Wambrechies the companions live in single rooms (at the beginning the rooms were shared among 4 persons)
outside the community). In general, the companions are men, but certain communities also welcome women.

The companions and the employees call each other by their first name and try to maintain the solidarity (EMMAÜS Wambrechies is perceived as a community, not only as an enterprise). But the concern to assure a strict internal order is obvious – the hierarchy and the internal rules guarantee the efficiency and the existence of the big community family (if the rules are not obeyed, the employees risk to be dismissed).

How long was this socially innovative activity’ new’?

The EMMAÜS movement emerged in 1949. At the time, Abbé Pierre, Member of Parliament (Meurthe-et-Moselle), lived in a big run-down house at Neuilly-Plaisance, near Paris. It was there that he welcomed Georges, the first companion. This meeting between the priest Pierre and the first companion symbolises the values of the future EMMAÜS: welcoming without imposing conditions, respecting human dignity, recognising everybody’s ability of taking charge of himself, as well as the solidarity towards the others. The history of the foundation of the community EMMAÜS Wambrechies (1954) starts with a businessman of the North of France who travelled by train while going to ski and hears the famous “Appel de l’hiver ‘54”, launched at RTL by Abbé Pierre at a time when numerous homeless persons died in the streets of Paris; he decided to help the priest in Paris. After a month, he returns to Lille with a few companions and creates the association EMMAÜS Wambrechies (today it gathers about 30-40 persons). EMMAÜS Wambrechies was the first EMMAÜS community created in province.

The existence and flourishing of the communities and of the other organisations in the framework of the movement confirm that the concept of EMMAÜS is not an imaginary utopia but, following the philosopher Ernst Bloch, a "concrete utopia": the activities, the success and the efficiency of the EMMAÜS movement show that everybody can have his (her) place in the society while being able to live and work in diverse ways.

The resources of EMMAÜS Wambrechies have changed over time: today the association is equipped with trucks to make the collection of materials more efficient. The effect is that EMMAÜS recovers more objects, but sometimes of less quality.

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26 We observe that the term “community” appears 30 times in the interview with the responsible and the name of Abbé Pierre 29 times. We notice also the use of the words that evoke the wish to protect a convivial atmosphere in the EMMAÜS Wambrechies: ‘community’, ‘vocation’, ‘conviviality’, ‘family’, ‘rules’.
The meaning of the notions “solidarity” and “mutual help” has changed as well: today’s problem is to find a balance between the persons who request territorial asylum (emigrants) and the other companions. Numerous difficulties appear also due to cultural differences. The type of public and the mentalities of the individuals have also evolved: all social classes visit the shop and buy something, but most people call EMMAÜS Wambrechies to get rid of their old stuff rather than help people.

Despite the changes (transformation of the structures and of the mentalities), EMMAÜS Wambrechies managed to adjust to the new circumstances. An example of a project that follows new rules is the co-operation with EDF to recover the old computers of the enterprise. The social remains the principal motivation of the association (the reception in emergency situations), but the economic factor secures the functioning of the community.

In reaction to what? Sources of inspiration?

The first EMMAÜS communities appeared as a response to the huge homelessness problem in France after the second World War; but homelessness remains a serious problem of modern societies and is the outcome of multiple social problems: unemployment, social isolation, family breakdown, drug dependency, mental and physical health problems, poor education. For instance, in metropolitan France, homelessness was estimated at about 86,000 people during one week of January 2001 (according INSEE).

We identified two sources of inspiration of the EMMAÜS communities. As the international organization L’Armée du Salut, EMMAÜS has a filiation with the old forms of the urban patronage, “asylums”, as they are known: asylums for aged persons, ‘madhouses’ etc. These ‘asylums’ have emerged as new responses to the insufficiency of the reception structures of the corporations, monasteries and hospitals that have no further space available to shelter persons in need. In addition, EMMAÜS imposes the rule of participation to the community work.

The other source of inspiration for EMMAÜS communities was utopianism. The Utopian current promoted in the 19th century the communitarian ideal, at the basis of numerous community practices in the social economy: “compagnonages”, corporations, religious communities etc. As the famous phalanster of Fourier guaranteed the right to work and to a minimum living standard, EMMAÜS

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27 The notoriousness of this movement is given also by the charismatic figure of Abbé Pierre, a French Catholic priest, member of the resistance during the Second World War and Member of Parliament 1947-1951.

28 EDF – Electricité de France
communities are at the same time places of work and living, showing that everybody can have his (her) place in society, being able to live and to work differently.

Spatial and institutional scales of mobilisation and organisation, relations with the 'outside' world

For twenty years new groups were set up around the world, sometimes deliberately, sometimes spontaneously – today the EMMAÜS movement regroups about 400 communities in 44 countries and 4 continents. The EMMAÜS communities were at the basis of the EMMAÜS movement. Given the important development of the movement, more far-reaching modes of organization became necessary. EMMAÜS International is a properly constituted international non-profit and non-governmental organization founded in 1971. It is the only EMMAÜS international organization, recognized by Abbé Pierre as continuing the mission he began in 1949. EMMAÜS International and its activities are financed mainly by the work done by the member communities, whether full members or associate members. Some of its financial needs are covered through international public funding – some development projects are co-financed by the European Union e.g..

In the same way, EMMAÜS France unites the associations of the movement in France (Fédération Française du Mouvement EMMAÜS): the communities of companions and the committees of friends. (Each community is linked to a group of about 25-30 sympathisers and volunteers who participate fully to the activity of the community: they take part in the administration council, and offer their experience and competencies. EMMAUS France also includes the Fondation Abbé Pierre for the accommodation of the most impoverished, the SA HLM EMMAÜS, the committees SOS Familles EMMAÜS, EMMAÜS Alternatives, Association EMMAÜS, SOS Boîte au Lait. In addition, six federations were founded that focus only on the problems of the communities: Union Centrale des Communautés, Union des Amis et Compagnons d’EMMAÜS, EMMAÜS Liberté, EMMAÜS Fraternité, EMMAÜS Partage, Accueil et Vie. In France, the whole movement mobilises about 10,000 persons (110 communities): 4000 companions together with 5000 voluntaries and permanent employees. In the region Nord-pas-de-Calais there are seven communities: Armentieres, Dunkerque, Fontaine Notre Dame, Hainaut Odomez, Raimbeaucourt, Tourcoing, Wambrechies.

An important initiative of EMMAÜS Wambrechies was the creation in 1985 (in collaboration with the organisation L’Armée du Salut and other volunteers) of the Banque Alimentaire du Nord. The objective of the Banque Alimentaire du Nord was the free recovery of food excess supplies in order to redistribute them (also for free) to the most impoverished families. The action of the Banques alimentaires has a departmental outlook; today there are 78 of them, organised at the national level in the Fédération Française des Banques Alimentaires.
What excellent is done in socially innovative terms?

Firstly, EMMAÜS promotes innovations in the sense of the social economy. The work in the community mainly focuses on the collection, sorting, renovation, recycling and selling of unwanted household goods. These activities allow each companion to satisfy their basic needs: food, shelter, clothes and medical treatment. But the originality of the EMMAÜS model is that it offers a combined response to the complex process of contemporary social urban exclusion characterised by relationship breakdown, poverty, unemployment and homelessness. The communities propose a home, food, clothing, weekly pocket money29, but also: work for all abilities and interests, hope through self development and community support, friendship, safety, security, self-pride and a way back into society.

Secondly, this initiative contributes to the local regeneration in several ways:

- Providing a local eco-recycling resource.

The communities EMMAÜS make a significant local contribution to preserving the environment by recycling household waste that would otherwise be destined to the nearest landfill. Likewise Emmaus's today are all involved in recycling, mostly of unwanted furniture. These can be restored by the companions and sold to the public or given away to other homeless people when they move on to a place of their own.

- Providing opportunities for volunteer work and local community facilities.

The communities have also financial capacity to help persons or to support associations and projects and to engage in actions of solidarity. For example, EMMAÜS Wambrechies bought a house and financed the studies of twenty poor Colombians girls, and supported a number of teachers in Haiti. The association also paid for the travel of the handicapped sportive that participated in the Sydney Olympic plays, humanitarian voyages in Bosnia etc.

The communities are not the only response to the exclusion: EMMAÜS is also active in the field of housing, social actions and reinsertion. For instance, EMMAÜS Wambrechies has a section (EMMAÜS Famille) that helps out the families in need to pay for food, rent and electricity, and offers tax-free loans etc. Another section (EMMAÜS Logement) buys old houses and renovates them completely (central heating, sanitary installations) in order to house families who benefit from allocations to cover the rent.

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29 According to the interviews, the companions of EMMAÜS Wambrechies receive between 15 – 30 €/week.
• Providing training-for-work opportunities

The statute of companion is particular to the EMMAUS movement. Twenty years ago the companions were assisted persons (former miners, military personnel, farmers) and the average age was about 55 years. Today, they are persons that demand territorial asylum or young people coming from host families; the average age has gone down to 40 years. They earn their living exclusively from their work: generally they do not benefit from minimum income measures or other public financial support, but they are socially covered by a work contract. Each companion has a defined function in accordance with his/her skills.

Within the community, the companions benefit also from training for work opportunities. Apart from the activities of recycling, repairing, selling, they are also involved in maintenance and in securing every-day’s needs in the community (hygiene, cooking).

6. Cigales du Nord-pas-de-Calais – example of responsible finance

The second experience is Cigales, a ‘responsible finance’ instrument that combines two approaches: collecting the savings and supporting the investments in local socio-economic development. It mobilises the saving of its members (maximum twenty persons) to the service of the creation and the development of small local companies. Priority is generally given to the ethical, ecological, local development projects.

In favour of whom or to promote what?

The responsible finance represents one of the three main groups of alternative finance. Alternative finance represents a third source of funding, apart from public and private sources. Generally, it is divided in:

• Ethical investments funds. They are investment companies, credit companies and banks that collect money provided by investors to support individuals, universities, private firms that undertake ethically justified activities. They privilege firms respecting the environment and social justice, and refuse to support firms that work in tobacco, armament and alcohol production.

• Shared investments funds: are also managed by financial companies. Part or the totality of the income is transferred to associations and organizations involved in Third World development initiatives and fighting exclusion.
• **Responsible funding.** Generally, the aim of responsible finance is to improve the existential conditions of excluded people by supporting them to create or develop their associations or firms. Responsible finance exists in three institutional forms:
  
  o Associations granting loans from their own funds.
  
  o Credit institutions: banks, micro credit organisations. They function like traditional banks: collect money from private individuals or firms and grant credit. But their goals are totally different: they support one single type of activity or unemployed people.
  
  o Solidarity and proximity risk capital companies. The persons belonging to risk capital groups, collect their savings and decide together on projects in which to invest these moneys. The clubs *Cigales* are also structures of risk capital societies.

Through its structure, *Cigales* participates also in the training of members; it helps them to adjust their competencies to the new economic mechanisms and in the reconstruction of their social ties. The minimum number of members (called “cigaliers”) is five, the maximum twenty. They provide a monthly contribution of 50-300 €, depending on their financial possibilities. Normally, the club functions for five years with the possibility to continue another five years. The investments are usually carried out as shares in the capital of the firms that they finance (maximum 35%), and the “cigaliers” become shareholders of these firms (anonymous societies, private limited companies, production co-operatives etc.). Each club has the possibility to select the projects it finances. Priority is generally given to alternative, ecological and local development projects. However, it is the territorial association, which centralises the applications for funding and selects the projects.

*How long the ‘old’ was new?*

The history of the movement *Cigales* started with the *Agence de Liaison pour le développement d’une Economie Alternative (ALDEA)*, that emerged in 1981 (Daghera et al. 2001; Russo et al. 1995). *ALDEA* imagined "a world where each one finds the freedom to lead its destiny and takes part to the safeguarding of its environment" (Patrice Sauvage, founder of the ALDEA). The agency supported associations and co-operatives, supported projects or the creation of enterprises as well as the development of handicraft activities. The necessary funds had to come from individual savings. As these savings were insufficient, the members of the agency suggested the creation of *Cigales* in 1983; in 1985 the *Federation des Clubs Cigales* was set up at the national level (70 clubs in 1986). The first club in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais was set up in 1985 in Lille, at the initiative of two

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30 [http://www.cigales.asso.fr](http://www.cigales.asso.fr)
persons having relationships with the founders of Cigales at the national level (today there exist 17 clubs in the region). In 1989 the territorial association Cigales du Nord-Pas-de-Calais (Roubaix), which regroups all the clubs Cigales of the region, was created. This first agency and the movement of Cigales are inscribed in the framework of the movement for an alternative economy, inspired by utopian socially innovative values: breaking with the capitalist order and moving towards an alternative mode of functioning of society based on co-operation instead of competition.

In reaction to what?

In Western Europe, three main factors contributed to the development of responsible finance: the failure of the banking system to give credit to small borrowers, the decline of public assistance and the difficulties of the organizations belonging to the social economy. The 1980s were characterised by the increase of unemployment and the rise of liberalism in economic practice and coordination but also by the deregulation of the financial and banking systems. The consequence was the difficult access to credit for small borrowers. Consequently, small borrowers now have reduced access to credits (90% of small firms are excluded from credit through the regular banking system31). The banks also grant more easily credit to the rich, but refuse most of the time to allow loans to unemployed people (Guérin 2000).

The second factor mentioned above, that contributed to the development of responsible finance instruments was the failure of or decline in public assistance. In the case of France, the social support programme Aide aux Chomeurs Créateurs ou Repreneurs d'Entreprise (ACCRE plan) ended in 1997. In 1998 the State created the "EDEN plan" (Encouragement au Développement d'Entreprises Nouvelles), which is less adapted than the first one to provide support to unemployed people in creating their firms (Guérin et al. 1999).

The third failure refers to the organizations of the social economy. The financial organizations of social economy had developed since the 19th century in order to assist the impoverished population to set up their own collective economic initiatives (Bidet 1997, citing Moreau 1994). Starting in the 1960s, these organizations were affected by the reform of the French banking system that went through a movement of "despecialisation". In addition, in the 1960s, the French State Treasury ceased financing the organizations of the social economy. Therefore, competition became sharper, and social economy financial organizations turned into "normal" banks (Vienney 1994).
Relations with ‘outside’ world

The Cigales, positioned at the intersection of proximity saving, risk capital and local development, operate as networks (Fédération des clubs Cigales) and seek to answer in an autonomous manner to the problem of the creation of activities, and indirectly of jobs. The first club Cigales in the region Nord-pas-de-Calais was created in 1985 thanks to the relational network of two local persons; in a later stage the clubs proliferated in the region Nord-pas-de-Calais - today they are 17 clubs gathered in the Association Territoriale des Cigales du Nord-pas-de-Calais. The national network today counts 110 Cigales distributed over France with approximately 1500 active members. The cumulated investment represents approximately 2,000,000 € since the first Cigales was created.

The Cigales have relationships of proximity with the clients and compete with the traditional banks, as the clubs try to improve the access to credit for the persons and organizations excluded from the traditional banking system. The clubs Cigales co-operate also with other organizations of responsible finance, when their resources are insufficient to fund some of their initiatives (Autonomie et Solidarité created in 1986, Caisse Solidaire du Nord-pas-de-Calais created in 1997).

What excellent is done in socially innovative terms?

For some authors (Normann 1984) social innovation creates new types of social behaviour (innovation in the sociological sense) and includes the organisational and functional innovations. For other authors (Moulaert 2000) social innovation implies also innovation in terms of social economy – satisfaction of human needs of impoverished categories of population, applying different types of action related to socio-economic development.

Does responsible finance represent a socially innovative way to meet the needs of fragile populations? To answer this question, we examine the three dimensions of the social (organisational, functional and social economic) innovation as they pop up in the service literature and illustrate them giving the example of Cigales.

Organisational innovation in the case of responsible funding consists of the introduction of a monitoring service for the implementation of the funded projects. Another element of organizational innovation is the close relation between the funding organization and the clients. In the case of Cigales, the majority of the enterprises, which received backing, were advised or supported in a different way by members of Cigales (Deceuninck 2002) in the fields of finance, technical, accounting, public relations and management.

Functional innovation refers to the introduction of new functions (ex. re-socialisation), corresponding to the new tasks of responsible finance. Cigales works in order to meet the following needs: the access to the job market and the creation of enterprises by the unemployed people. Cigales started to function in the 1980s, during a phase of economic crisis causing significant unemployment. According to the principle stated in its Charter, the Cigales - positioned at the intersection of proximity saving, risk capital and local development - try, through their networks, to respond in an autonomous manner to the problem of the creation of activities, and implicitly, of jobs. The enterprises supported by Cigales and examined in the framework of the same study, created about 3-10 jobs per enterprise. The re-socialisation of the ‘new’ entrepreneurs and their workers or associates takes place through work experience, but its impact is restricted by the nature and the quality of the created jobs (certain salaries are lower than the minimum guaranteed income).

Another functional innovation consists in the support provided to projects in the field of social and ‘solidarity’ economy. In the Charter, Cigales states the priority given to the projects, which focus on social, cultural and ecological goals. Still, the results of the quoted study have shown that only three out of the eight qualified enterprises belong to the socially responsible economy. The explanation given by members of Cigales was the difficulty to find this kind of projects in the region, as well as the difficulty to define the criteria to evaluate or select these projects. Most probably, the lack of projects is a consequence of the long-time perverted relationship between the State and civil society in France, in which the State since the French revolution has systematically attempted to control domains that in many other countries are privileged for civil society.

Although the organizations of solidarity finance do not create new products they succeed in taking into account a new dimension for economic initiative: the ethical one. They try to facilitate the access to credits of the excluded persons and their organizations. Moreover, the integration of the organizations of solidarity finance in networks of actors (ex. Cigales – the members of different clubs, the territorial association, other partners, have regular meetings) should be considered as another dimension of social innovation in the (social) economy.

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INTERVIEWS with the responsible and companions of *EMMAÜS Wambrechies* realised by Gwenael Foret, Sami Masri, Sabina Lardin, Stephanie Arons in the framework of the seminar "Qualitative Methods", under the direction of Bruno Laffort, University of Lille I, Faculty of Sociology), 2000-2001.

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According to the theoretical framework of the SINGOCOM project, the resources for development that urban deprived neighbourhoods can build on, among other factors, draw from the history of the locality: What has been done historically to bring about changes in area development towards social innovation (i.e. innovation in governance arrangements involving participation of the local society) or the satisfaction of local needs? In order to find the essence of social innovation in history, the focus of our paper is on the visionary philosophies behind specific historical moments, on the charismatic figures representing those philosophies, and on the influence these traditions have had on contemporary movements and actions. Thus, we aim at reconstructing the history of visions within the metropolitan area we are researching (Berlin), as well as the country it is situated in (Germany). This will help us to identify local resources for socially innovative area developments, which will be needed for the construction of the “alternative model of local innovative development” (ALMOLIN).

When looking at socially innovative area developments, we will focus on the philosophies that influenced the German regions or Berlin localities in a socially innovative way. Using recent documentation, we have chosen philosophies and visions which seem historically outstanding and which mark turning points on the developmental path towards our focused area developments. To all these selected visions and philosophies, specific social movements are connected that make their impact on society real and, in turn, modify the philosophy. We have considered a period from the early 18th century until present day. The selection is certainly not exhaustive, but we have tried to find the most influential visions and movements, which are still discussed today.
In the following pages we will first present the visions and philosophies connected to the social movements, highlighting their socially innovative character. Secondly, the origins of the movements or visions will be sought, and in doing so the original vision will be outlined, thus giving the opportunity to reconstruct the vision. Thirdly, the movements themselves will be described. In the fourth section three Berlin case studies from within the most recent visions will be presented. Lastly, we will give an interpretation of the possible impact the visions/philosophies and attached social movements have had on the socially innovative development trajectory of Berlin and Germany as a whole.

A. PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS AND SOCIAL PRACTICES

1. Visions and thinkers

1.1. Evolving liberalism: the civic associations of the 18th century

Although historically preceding the French Revolution, the civic association movement of the 18th century described here already embodied the democratic spirit of liberty, equality, brotherhood and citizenship. In the early phase of Enlightenment, after the growth of an economically and morally independent bourgeoisie (in mercantilism and early industrialisation, later in the defeat of the states’ society) in the 17th and 18th centuries, a social sphere developed outside of the absolutist power of the state. Public communication and community orientation developed in this independent sphere of socio-liberal associations. The idea behind these movements was that of equality amongst citizens.

The English, French and German spiritual fathers of Enlightenment developed these ideas of citizenship, which peaked in the 18th century. Revolting against the traditional authorities of the time (i.e. clergy, monarchy, aristocracy), these individuals developed different philosophical approaches that questioned the nature of man and society. Morality, religion and ethics were given the authority to steer individual choices according to a rational common sense (John Locke). Immanuel Kant’s (1724 – 1804) natural law of practical reason (praktische Vernunft) informed the individual of what was right and wrong at any time. Only then were ethical choices considered moral; when they were free from personal benefit (not utilitarian) and freely chosen as categorical imperatives (kategorischer Imperativ), meaning they were valid any time and imperative in character (Kinder and Hilgemann 1987).
A liberal social movement introduced such ideas into societal organisation. Around 1730, a number of public interest and community oriented civic associations developed across Europe. Here, citizens applied action according to the principles of freedom, equality and brotherhood. Next to the development of a mutual understanding of each other’s ideas and beliefs, help for the poor was given within a new understanding of social issues. Socially integrative, this associative movement was open to anybody who was of bourgeois status and in accordance with the aims of the association. Community, respect, understanding and communication were conceived and practised as precious criteria for social organisation. Here was the nascent place for public opinion; societal innovation was discussed in these associations (for example, the social questions of inequality and poverty were discussed and fought against). In Hamburg in 1765, the „Hamburg society for the promotion of arts and useful enterprises“ (Hamburger Gesellschaft zur Foerderung der Kuenste und nuetzlichen Gewerbe) was founded. After a first engagement in economic matters in the early industrialisation period, it initiated a reform of poverty matters. In doing so, the first modern reform of its kind was introduced, thus transferring action from the private to the societal sphere, and later from societal into public hands. Rather than the mere feeding of the poor, poor people were given the means to self-help, to work opportunities, and schools were established in the „Hamburg Institution of the Poor“ (Hamburger Armenanstalt) in 1788. The Hamburg idea was, in turn, taken up and acted upon by people in England. In this way, through early civic engagement, the idea of welfare state initiatives arise (Wendt 1995).

Zimmer (1992) characterises this social movement and the philosophies behind it as the predecessor of the new social movements of our time. At the time -- when the absolutist state was no longer able to carry out its social responsibilities -- newly born citizens acted in order to tackle some of the tasks, such as the social question, and support equality, integration and citizenship by implementing communication, association, and friendship, following Kant’s categorical imperative of practical reason.

There are of course some differences to today’s civic associations. For example, one striking difference is that after the defeat of the state’s society, each individual could organise with others, as all individuals were considered free, whereas in the period described this right was restricted to the bourgeois and aristocratic classes. Nevertheless, today the organisational capacity for civic engagement is still biased to the advantage of the middle classes; there is still a bourgeois bias within civic associations and, thus, inequality regarding the power of interest groups.
1.2. The utopian early socialists

In Germany, after the French Revolution, the bourgeoisie gained power during the Restoration (especially after the revolution of 1848/49). The industrial revolution had advanced further and with it came massive urbanisation and pauperisation of large parts of the new working class. The socialist workers movements were forbidden, thus excluding the possibility of the formation of a strong collective movement. Despite this, existing social problems became a focus for debate, with social reform movements gaining power in the public discourse through the issue of social innovation in the cities, especially in the building and housing sectors. The social reformers were influenced by the early utopian ideas. These will be laid out here in brief in order to be able to better understand social reformers’ actions and motives, which are an issue in the following chapters.

Among the early utopian socialists, Robert Owen, Claude Henri de Saint-Simon and Charles Fourier were very influential in the German debate on social reform. As an example of a bourgeois movement of social reform, the garden city pioneers, as well as the Vienna settlement movement (a socialist reform movement), were influenced by early utopian socialist ideas. The central figures translated these early utopian ideas into their own historical logic and philosophy. The idea of co-operatives within the economic sphere stemmed from these utopian ideas as well as the incorporation of liberal ideals.

In early industrialisation, the social question arose in times of severe poverty amongst the emerging working class. Experiments with socialist ideas were tried in the first half of the 19th century. Their content was a new political-economic order in the direction of equality, common ownership and common work. Although less successful in the long run, the ideas of the early socialists still inspire elements of community building. Saint Simon (1760 – 1825) and Owen tried to answer the question as to how the „better man“ could be trained and disciplined in character. Owen decided that the answer was education and training throughout life, while Saint Simon’s solution was a disciplined Christian administration of all classes that were involved in the production process. Charles Fourier (1772 – 1837), like Simon and Owen, founded an „ideal“ co-operative outside the city (the ‘Phalanstères’), where the workers were meant to be free of force, misery and exploitation. Production, consumption, and administration was organised communally (Wendt 1995).
1.3. Catholic social doctrine: foundations for the Christian conservatism

Another point of reference important within the later evolving German welfare system was the Christian social doctrine, which laid the ground for the action of the Caritas, the catholic welfare corporation that in Germany is a large player within welfare corporatism.

The aim of the catholic social doctrine, which was developed within the church in a scientific manner and was used to teach clergy members, is an *ordo socialis* -- a social order -- that would secure a human existence to the members of states and societies according to general Christian principles. The direct aim of such a doctrine was the solution of the social question over the enhancement of workers’ living and working conditions as a result of early industrialisation in the 18th and 19th centuries.

According to Félicité Robert de Lamennais (1772 – 1854), the doctrine was based firstly on catholic liberalism. Lamennais envisaged the reconciliation of the Catholic Church with the French Revolution, the modern freedom rights of which the Catholic Church so far had rejected. He aimed at freedom of conscience and religion. Wilhelm Emmanuel Freiherr von Ketteler was a German thinker who built upon this doctrine. His approach combined liberalism, socialism and the catholic church, the latter being the only force able to tackle the social question. From liberalism he drew humanism, from socialism the critique of society and the affinity to productive co-operatives. Ketteler’s ideas laid the foundation for the encyclical “Rerum novarum” of Pope Leo XIII, the starting point of the Catholic Church’s social doctrine.

In the “Rerum novarum” of 1891, Leo XIII laid out the fundaments of the catholic social doctrine. The four groups that built society had the common task to solve the social problem. These four groups were the state, the church, the employers and the employees. The employees being the weakest of all the groups, it was the church’s task, besides the individual responsibility of all, to support them. In the church view, this could be achieved by the organisation of the workers interests into unions, which was regarded as a natural law of the workers by Pope Leo. The modern democratic state issued from the French Revolution was rejected, whereas the traditional monarchy ruling over the people was the preferred system. In practice, however, the Pope was tolerant towards democratic states like France.

From this period onwards the catholic social doctrine developed dynamically. Pius XI, in his encyclical “Quadragesimo anno” (renowned as a counter-statement to the totalitarian orders of fascism, communism and national socialism) spoke of the welfare state’s task of reconciling the divided society of owners and workers. He called for a mutual relationship between individuals, groups and state institutions. Subsidiarity (the taking over of higher levels of the hierarchy only
when the lower levels cannot tackle the problem) and the co-operation of the four societal columns were proclaimed, contrary to the Marxian classless society. Pope Johannes Paul II developed the doctrine even further, supporting the union movement and calling for solidarity in society. In his home country of Poland, he supported the Solidarnosc union (Lindgens 1987).

Today, both the catholic and the protestant churches are very active in social politics, a large part of which is implemented at the community-level through their welfare corporations, the Caritas (catholic church) and the Diakonie (protestant church). Together, they have over 450,000 members of staff and even more voluntary helpers, constituting an important social partner in the decision-making and implementation process of social policy.

2. Movements and policies

2.1. Social reform movements during The Restoration and the emergence of co-operatives

In Germany, socialist reforms were challenged in the second half of the 19th century through an article written by Friedrich Engels and originally published in 1872, Zur Wohnungsfrage (‘The Housing Question’) (Engels 1969). In this article Engels attempted to prove that the housing question could not be resolved within capitalism, and that therefore the workers movement should not work on reforms but concentrate on the fight against capitalism. His main argument was that the majority of workers were not able to accumulate the capital necessary for investment, which in turn led them into even greater dependence.

Because of this theoretical position, which strongly influenced the socialist and later communist movements, large parts of the workers movement remained passive with regard to the housing question. The latter was, conversely, a central aspect among conservatives and liberals regarding the solution to the social question. For the socialists the housing problems were only considered for anti-capitalist propaganda. Nonetheless, some workers associations, as well as professional associations and Christian associations took action and experimented with various new forms of self-help in housing. Among them, co-operatives were most important. Later on, parts of the social democratic movement also supported such efforts and were labelled ‘revisionist’ as they built on the assumption that capitalism could be reformed according to workers needs without awaiting revolution. Thus, the workers movement developed a ‘dualism’: while the theoretical manifestos called for revolution, locally many followers of the revisionist line worked on pragmatic reforms and experiments. As we shall see in the next section, it was this latter wing of the workers
movement which, after the establishment of a liberal democracy in 1918, became active within communal politics and founded public interest “building societies”, constituting the public building support for the workers and, alongside this, fostering co-operation foundations.

The bourgeois social reformers, who were paternalistic and charity-oriented -- and in this sense conservative – had been active in the housing field from the earlier garden city movement (part of the larger life reform movement) that built around the ideas of planned, well designed housing with community or neighbourhood orientation and the communal establishments which followed such developments. Aimed primarily at the working class, the idea, however, had proved to be too expensive and often failed. Another movement of bourgeois social reform, more relevant here, was the housing reform movement. In this case, the “housing question” was clearly formulated: housing was seen to have a deterministic impact on the behaviour of the inhabitants (i.e. dark and humid conditions was seen as leading to alcoholism and immoral behaviour). The idea was to help poor people to become ‘civilised’ and ‘moral’. Central ideological categories within bourgeois thought in Germany were home ownership and privacy within housing (“Eigenheim” - ideology). Life organised around the family was a central ideological element of the bourgeois (and later Nazi-Germany fascist) image of civilised man and the better design and quality of their housing. As poverty was associated with a lack of morality during this time, it was seen as a priority to fight the conditions leading to poverty.

Although from substantially differing political backgrounds, the bourgeois reformers, just like the socialist reformers, aimed at the reconciliation of the working class and capital. However, in bourgeois thought, this aim was secondary to the primary aim of preventing a growing labour movement that could endanger their current societal status. Thus, starting in the second half of the 19th century, the bourgeois reformers approached the housing problem in a very specific manner.

The life reformers, in particular, and among them the housing reformers, raised the housing question in public. Their explanation for poverty was a lack of morality amongst the poor, which, in turn, could stem from their housing situation, which was seen as having particular (negative) effects on the inhabitants. A pedagogic, educational approach, together with hygiene and design improvements of housing was chosen. The first practical approach in housing was made with the Berliner Gemeinnuetzige Baugesellschaft32, founded in 1848. Workers were to be disciplined by the attainment of property (“Eigenheim”) through the purchase of cheap housing and, thus, the

32 “Gemeinnuetzig” is an adjective that expresses the orientation towards “communal” values and the satisfaction of “communal” needs. “Baugesellschaft” means building society: “Berlin Communally Oriented Building Society” is an approximate translation.
introduction of low-interest mortgages. Financial shortage and technical problems, however, undermined the project.

The garden city movement drew on the ideas of Ebenezer Howard and his well-planned and community-centred garden city of Letchworth. Howard, in turn, drew some of his ideas from the early socialists. This movement contained more emancipatory characteristics, and also had liberal elements. The German Garden-city-projects, such as Hellerau near Dresden, put high demands (financial commitment over long periods) on the applicants and thus, only a small proportion of these people were working class. One central critique of this movement was that the target group of the social reform (poor workers) had not been reached.

2.2. Co-operative housing,”building societies” (gemeinnuetzige Baugesellschaften) and housing reforms during the Weimar Republic

In Germany, the idea of co-operatives developed along with the theoretical debate and empirical research on the deepening societal gap between the capitalist class and the working class from 1840 onwards. It has already been mentioned that the idea that workers should help themselves using co-operatives as an instrument was a deeply liberal idea. The first building co-operatives (aiming at the building of housing) founded in Germany since the middle of the 19th century, were financially supported by the liberal bourgeoisie. According to the liberal philosophy, workers were to become owners, and thus resistant to socialist ideas. In this manner, they were to contribute to the stability of bourgeois society. This strategy provoked Friedrich Engels to write the influential, above-mentioned manifesto Zur Wohnungsfrage.

Some actors within the bourgeois-liberal and the “revisionist” socio-liberal reform movements were particularly influential. The German workers brotherhood (Deutsche Arbeiterverbruederung) was founded in 1848 and was active in building co-operatives and unions. Ferdinand Lassalle became an important supporter of the co-operative movement. Lassalle was a workers’ leader and the founder of the predecessor of the Social Democratic Party in 1863 (Raschke 1988). Owen was the idol of the consumer associations and co-operatives - founded in the course of severe labour conflicts - which sought to guarantee lower prices by the exclusion of intermediate trade, some of which became very successful (Buckmiller 1997; Novy 1983). Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch (left-liberal and founder of commercial co-operatives, in which workers were meant to free themselves from misery by self-organisation) was Lassalle opponent, as was Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen, who initiated peasant’s co-operatives and from 1854 founded saving and credit banks to finance agricultural production (Buckmiller 1997).
Here, the idea of a ‘third way’ was born, a path of reforms in between capitalism and socialist revolution. The communally oriented (‘third’) sector was to be expanded further and further, and goods and services for the working class were to be produced without a focus on profit margins, in complex arrangements with the developing welfare state (Frank and Schubert 1983).

The participative moment entered the housing reform movement with the foundation of building co-operatives (1862 in Hamburg, 1870 in Karlsruhe). Shortage of capital was a problem, especially when high numbers of workers were involved. However, the co-operative economy gained momentum in 1889, with the enhancement of the co-operative law, which supported the foundation of co-operatives (especially of civil servants), and led to a boom in the sector. By 1914, 1400 building co-ops with 100,000 units were built. At that time, they amounted to one percent of the German housing market that, despite the large absolute number, shows their limits (Zimmermann 1997).33

Indeed, during the decade of 1880, important changes occurred in the German states with the introduction of the Social Law by the Reichs’ Chancellor Bismarck between 1883 and 1889. From this time onwards, a large societal coalition evolved around the Social Law, which united the bourgeois conservatives, who stood for the pacification of the workers from planning revolution, and the Social Democrats, who wished to see improvements in the living conditions of the working class. Further consensus evolved around this principle, with the idea that a market ordered by state measures could achieve greater productivity.

With this understanding, public interest building activity flourished during the Weimar Republic and remained a fixed element in German housing provision until fairly recently. In this housing and building policy, the state took over the role of supporter, whereas executing organisations evolved under the lead of former union activists. The Weimar Republic (1919 – 1933) was the central boom phase of co-operatives. Housing policy reform in this phase took place during severe housing shortages and poverty connected to the “big” economic crisis following World War I. In this period, significant numbers of co-operatives were founded, especially in the housing sector (Frank and Schubert 1983). The majority of the Social Democrats saw the emancipatory potential in this organisational form, run by workers and unions, which brought forward innovative projects. Out of those projects, ideas for the public interest building system were adopted. (Mueller 2002)

33 Later, at the beginning of the 20th century, these movements fragmented further into the Schreber-Movement, fostering urban gardening, the Eco-Movement, Vegetarianism, Nudism and other strands. Again, ideas mixed and encompassed diverse philosophies. They were, in turn, to be instrumentalised for fascist Germany under the Nazi regime.
One particularly innovative social vision must be mentioned, which inspired building activities and housing policy design during the Weimar Republic: the Vienna Settlement Movement. Around 1921 tens of thousands of Viennese had become homeowners through land occupation and settlement and, in doing so, had built a communitarian, grassroots housing economy that became an example for other projects. Later the movement was integrated into communal housing policy. This settlement reform example gained much attention in the Weimar times, with the introduction of new democratic practices. A similar course to Vienna was proposed in 1928 by Hugo Preuss in the course of a debate on the new German constituency, which included a co-operative base structure that should involve citizens in such matters (Novy 1983). Only some of his ideas were finally taken up to reform the market system according to the communal economy (Gemeinwirtschaft). Basic needs satisfaction was introduced into German publicly steered market economy in various sectors between 1919 and 1925, and in that phase carried by all main political and societal streams. Together with the formation of unions that were connected to one another in lose co-operation, goods were produced in producer co-operatives and consumers were organised in consumer associations. All efforts were pooled for fair conditions of production and for a moral economy based on solidarity among workers. The supply of humane housing for all was guaranteed by the constitution, following a decision of the national assembly - at that time led by a coalition of social-democrats (Sozialdemokratische Partei), conservatives (Centre Party, Zentrumspartei) and democrats (German Democratic Party, Deutsche Demokratische Partei) in a modernist spirit.

At that time the left had separated into different currents: on the one hand, the union-based and radically democratic visions of self-help, small associations and self-organisation, apart from or without state aid; on the other hand, the social-democratic reformers, who, after the reform of the right to vote, wanted to democratise society via state institutions. The social-democratic idea was to build an inclusive welfare state and to lessen social risk for dependent employees, integrating the proletariat into society. The means was the redistribution of societal wealth. The workers movement, active in building co-operative and following the concept of a third sector, stood in between the two poles. They aimed at the creation of a solidarity alternative to the market and the state bureaucracy. (Novy 1983; Frank and Schubert 1983)

After World War I, thus, the capitalist abuse in the field of housing was addressed. Better and cheaper housing provision was implemented to overcome the divide between the income of the poorest households and housing costs. Because of capital shortage, state-help was called for. Self-help in the form of out-of-town-settlement was supported, construction costs were subsidised and the distribution of flats regulated. In this phase, 1919 to 1926, the state adopted the idea of building co-operatives formed in the social reform movements of the second half of the 19th century and
publicly subsidised this type of self-help. As a result, they attracted thousands of new members (Haeussermann and Siebel 1996). Within the newly created state housing policy, building took place primarily on premises owned by the Municipality at the urban fringes, renouncing land rent (Frank and Schubert 1983). One of the conditions for the gaining of power of both state and self-help in the housing market during this period was due to private capital shortage.

During the same period, radical concepts of “new housing” for the “new man” were realised. Fordist ideas entered the thinking of the architectural avant-garde led by the Bauhaus and Walter Gropius (Hannemann 2000). They were in search of the solution to the bridging of the class divide and wanted to realise it by industrial and, thus, production rationalisation. The basic ideology of their apolitical socialism was technical rationality (utilitarianism). The designed flats and settlements were functionally elaborated.

This concept of avant-gardism was, logically, authoritarian and was, thus, criticised within the sphere of building and architecture, which saw the avant-garde as petty bourgeois and conservative. Within the „New Building“ movement (Neues Bauen), departing from the Bauhaus in Weimar/Dessau, new, industrial ways of production of flats were connected to radical aesthetic and functionalist concepts. Those concepts were realised with state subsidies which had been implemented in Germany in 1918, in model settlements. The societal concept followed the idea of Fordism and, thus, standardised houses and flats were designed that should fit for all social strata. The overcoming of class differences were expected from ‘Modernity’ on the basis of technical progress – a ‘non-Marxist socialism’. The installation of collective infrastructure, laundry houses, restaurants, kindergartens etc., and the introduction of modern technology into households should free women from housework. Emancipation and equal opportunities for both sexes were part of the program of the Neues Bauen. In reality, housework was not abolished, it was merely modernised. Family remained the centre of housing, and women remained housewives.

In conclusion, during this phase a social-democratic, reformist philosophy gained ground. The result was the creation of the basis for the modern Fordist welfare state system, including the provision of social housing. Thus, attempts were made to bridge the class divide. The sustainability of the socially innovative content of these achievements, however, can be deeply questioned, as Nazi-Germany came to power in democratic elections – democratisation and social responsibility had in fact not succeeded in that phase. The logic of the absolutist Prussian state that was deeply rooted in German society was not overcome, either in the Social Law, or in the implementation of the communal economy. Yet, emancipatory ideas that had been formulated in the 19th and early 20th
century were introduced into social policies and the premises of a strong welfare state had been built in a fordist-taylorist agreement between state, market and society.

2.3. Ruptures in housing policy from the Weimar Republic to Nazi-Germany and the legacy to Post-war Germany

The National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP - Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei) became the second strongest force in the parliamentary elections of 1932, and with the appointment of a National Socialist as the minister for Interior Affairs and another one, Goering, as minister without area of accountability, central areas of German affairs were in National Socialist hands. In 1933/4 the Nazis reached absolute power step by step, Hitler being appointed Reich’s Chancellor by Hindenburg, the success at the 1933 elections and the death of the Reich’s President in 1934 and Hitler’s taking over of the second half of state power.

The establishment of a fascist regime brought changes in housing and building policies. Whereas during the Weimar Republic, much effort had been put into infrastructural enhancements and building as well as housing for the population, the Nazis spent much more effort on propaganda aims. At the same time, organisations were concentrated and centralised and renamed with national socialist symbolic names, e.g. the Neue Heimat, a huge social housing state enterprise. Social housing was continued in that phase on a smaller scale, with less effort. Organizational restructuring led to the loss of decentralised, local structures within the communal economic institutions of German societal organization that had been built during the Weimar Republic. The organisations were re-organised in a fascist manner: centralised, national socialists appointed at the head of them, re-named with symbolic names of that phase. Ideological pluralism and organisational diversity were thus destroyed, bureaucratisation implemented.

After World War II, these structures were to a large extent taken over in the Federal Republic of Germany. Unions, who were re-appointed owners of the housing organisations, stuck to the previous authoritarian centralism. According to this development, social creativity and innovation were lost, and the housing efforts were incorporated into the welfare state (Novy 1983). At the same time, the architectural and aesthetic concepts of the Avant-garde were made the basis to the publicly subsidised building efforts for the masses. Central definition power of predominantly the state, cooperation between state and large corporations, among them more than others the unions were characteristics of post-war housing and urban politics in the Federal Republic of Germany.
On the other side of the Wall, the Avant-garde movement laid the foundation for public housing supply in the GDR, making a historical triumph with the standard flat and being constructed millions of times over. In the authoritarian socialist state any approach towards self-help and self-organisation were repressed.

3. German post-World War II urban policy and social movements

In post-war Germany, the focus of urban policy was the replacement of the housing destroyed during bombardment as well as the building of new housing for the refugees from the former Eastern areas of the German Reich. In the 1960s the aspect of urban renewal of the old inner city housing became central. The housing conditions here had become less than satisfactory; the housing stock was in parts in a bad state and the sanitary conditions not up to date (e.g. flats without bathroom and toilet, sometimes without kitchen). This argument had been used for the building of a renewal coalition with large commercial interests. This last policy over time became very controversial and in the end led into substantial changes towards social innovation. The below discussed protest movement of the Squatters played a significant role within this paradigmatic change. We will now look more closely at the urban renewal strategy of the 1960s (“Pull-down Renewal”) as an introduction to the evolving protest movement. The ideas and philosophies of the latter finally are at the centre of attention in this chapter.

3.1. Federal Republic of Germany: the new social movement of the “squatters” (Instandbesetzer)

The policy triggering the process was an urban renewal strategy that involved the demolition of large areas of old, densely built and populated inner city housing and the rebuilding of large social housing estates on their former grounds, or urban expansion at the fringe of the city. In Berlin, this policy was introduced in 1964 with the First Urban Renewal Programme of the Berlin Senate. In West-German cities, other than in Berlin, the inner city areas were re-built for commercial or office use on the basis of the growing service sector. An urban development coalition had been built around the idea that Kahlschlagsanierung\(^\text{34}\) (Pull-down Renewal) was the apt solution to social problems as well as bad housing structure within the relevant quarters. The affected population had

\(^{34}\) Historical path leading into the protest and the policy provoking the protest: After 1862, during construction following the Hobrecht-Plan for the renewal and enlargement of Berlin, the Mietkasernen, the dominant type of building – four to five-storey, dense, in parts dark and overpopulated – had been strongly criticised. The possibility of decent living in such a housing type had been denied. Moreover, this building type had high costs for the tenants due to massive speculation from a coalition of builders, banks, administration and developers, a fact which lead to overpopulation of the often poor worker families.
had no say in the process: they were “objects” of the development. After a decade of this policy, protests emerged as tenants decided to keep their current houses in their neighbourhoods and to demand renovation instead of demolition of these properties. They were, in turn, confronted by an authoritarian and paternalist governmental coalition that refused such a demand. On the other hand, the emancipatory and democratising spirit of the 1968 student protest movement supported the position of the politicising tenants. On the governmental side, the planning ideology already turned towards a more preserving renewal with the Urban Development Promotion Act (*Staedtebaufoerderungsgesetz*) of 1971. Still, planning ideology did not substantially change, it only gave way to some elements of preservation in an overall tendency to pull down old housing stock. The conflict was worsened by an over-tight housing market and thousands of flats remaining empty and waiting for demolition, falling prey to dereliction and a longer phase of de-investment. The protest movement built, involving many tenants who had become discontented, especially in the Berlin district of Charlottenburg, people on the housing market and, mostly, young people feeling they would be losers in the arising economic crisis of the 1970s and looking for alternatives. It fell on fertile ground amongst the population of Berlin and some politicians, as the immense costs of the former renewal strategy had prepared the grounds for change. (Bodenschatz 1987; Conradt 1998; Geffers 1990).

In 1981 the protest movement reached its climax. About 170 houses in West Berlin were squatted by the *Instandbesetzer*. Celebrities lent their support to prevent police clearings, the Berlin mayor Dietrich Stobbe (social democrats) was forced to resign. The movement supported small structures, self-help and community-oriented alternative life-styles in houses taken over for renovation and housing, against a background of misleading urban renewal strategies that had resulted in a high shortage on the housing market and massive empty flats at the same time, serving a minority of speculators and builders. (Laurisch 1981; Ribbe and Schmaedeke 1994)

Community orientation and self-help within the co-operative movement reminded people that co-operatives could play an important role within the alternative economy built by the squatters in the course of their protest. Standing in for grass-roots structures, it is hard to track outstanding singular central figures in the movement. Radical de-centralisation and openness to participation was part of the spirit. This is not dissimilar from the liberal associations of the 18th century, where anybody carrying the spirit of the association could participate and, thus, become a more active citizen.

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35 The name of the carriers of this movement, the “Instandbesetzer” is a very illustrative combination of the German words „besetzen“ (to squat) and „instandsetzen“ (to refurbish).
Different strands developed around the question of co-operation with state institutions, i.e. the West-Berlin Senate, being a central figure in the negotiating process about further use, rent, and sometimes purchase of the squatted houses. The discussion became polarised into two main positions: the negotiating and non-negotiating strands. The vision of the non-bargainers was that of complete autonomy, sometimes anarchy, while the others stood for reform and perspective (Laurisch 1981).

The socially innovative character of the Squatter Movement as laid out above had direct impact on the development of a participatory and thus socially innovative renewal strategy in Berlin, which became exemplary for the whole of West Germany. With the pioneer architect Hardt-Walther Haemer came a paradigmatic change within urban renewal policy: “careful renewal” (behutsame Stadterneuerung), triggered off by the Instandbesetzer movement and the tenants protests. In 1983, the 12 Principles of Careful Renewal were agreed upon by the Berlin Senate. “Careful renewal” came to flourish in the International Building Exhibition (Internationale Bauausstellung, IBA), 1984 – 1987. Here, large parts of the Berlin district of Kreuzberg were refurbished, involving institutionalised, strong co-operation between tenants, the Senate, owners and builders, and involving a mediatory institution, the Sanierungsbeauftragte, renewal agents. Thus, participation was incorporated into urban renewal policy and the claim for a say in housing matters by the tenants became institutionalised (Haemer 1990).

3.2. The new “third way” in urban economic development: the local and social economy

With the economic crisis that arose in the mid 1970s, a social and economic turn sometimes called transition from Fordism to Post-Fordism began. In these societal changes, civil society actors had been looking for methods and associative activities that could foster social innovation and be economic in nature but neither governmental nor market-regulated. Rather, the search was for agency in between these two spheres. Social economic activity, sometimes referred to as the local economy, had played a role in socially innovative urban development from the beginning of communally oriented activity. This orientation has since been at the core of the social economy concept: being non-profit, local social economy uses primarily local resources and serves local needs (Birkhoelzer et al. 1999; see also Birkhoelzer 1991).

What are the visions of the social and local economy? Their common feature is diversity, experimental nature, and the search for answers to the newly evolving social questions in a public interest perspective, that is non-profit (i.e. profits are re-invested in the aim of the initiative).
The movement described here resembles a landscape of social experiments, drawing on and sometimes modifying more traditional forms such as co-operatives, but also inventing new forms such as local exchange trading systems. In line with this diversity, individual thinkers or leaders are hard to identify. The alternative movement of the 1970s that built the background for the squatter-movement is one of the sources. Others are the welfare corporations and unions and their ideas and role models, such as social-democratic values and the catholic social doctrine. The state, represented by the labour offices, supports social economy activities through the publicly subsidised labour market for the long term unemployed. Thus, there is no central figure in this multi-faceted area of action. Furthermore, ideas are copied from other movements of similar nature among the new social movement members in the social economy, be it from Great Britain, France, Canada or the United States. All in all it is a broad field of experimentation with the situation of massive and locally concentrated social exclusion.

Who are the actors of the German social and local economy? Aspects of the alternative urban economy that have been touched upon in the section on the squatter-movement contribute to define its aims and methods. In the early 1990s, the first local exchange trading systems arise in Berlin, and later in other German cities. Economic activity, formerly used primarily for household production, becomes re-valued and exchangeable through issued time-based money for the members of the association. It is egalitarian in the way that qualification is neglected, as production time is the basis for service and goods valuation (Gerometta 1999).

More formalised elements are employment associations, founded in large numbers after German reunification and the loss of large numbers of industrial jobs due to the new situation of competition. Parts of the dismissed staff are incorporated into these associations that create employment opportunities, often with social/local economic aims. Public funding that diminishes over time gives the projects time as well as some pressure to gain economic independence and thus integrate their employees into the primary labour market. This intention often fails, but discussion and experimentation with that policy are lively among the employment associations, and shortage of public funding brings about further innovation.

Co-operatives play a role in the social economy, especially in the housing sector, aiming at the provision of affordable, good quality housing and community building, but also social co-operatives that aim at the integration of local societies (Kommunales Forum Wedding 2002). These schemes have some structural problems in implementing their aims, such as the currently saturated housing market that is only tight for marginalised groups. These marginalised groups in turn lack the social capital needed for co-operative entry. Public funds could help tackle the problem and
initiatives to promote co-operative housing are under way (Koenig 2002). There is activity towards the foundation of a supportive and consulting agency for this type of social economic activity in Berlin (BEST) involving a supportive network (NEST) (NEST 2002).

In academics, the debate on the role of civil society sets in, taking up again the emancipation theme, self-help ideas, but also the welfare state re-structuring due to the termination of the Fordist corporatist agreement. Initiatives answering to shortcomings of state and market are the basis of the social economy field. Society will be modified; new solutions to problems will be found and prone to institutionalisation. The social-democratic parts of the German government calls on a principle that is called “promoting and demanding” (Fordern und Foerdern) towards society, implying that it counts on this civic action for support, unable and unwilling to do it alone (Schroeder 2002).

3.3. Social democratic urban policy: the “Social City”

Responding to the polarised urban development and the emergence of a rising proportion of neighbourhoods with socially excluded inhabitants, the public hand introduced a new urban policy program in 1998: the “Social City” (Soziale Stadt). In Berlin, the spatial mobility, and along with it, the socio-spatial polarisation has been very strong after re-unification. Rid of its walls dividing the city and closing off West Berlin from its surroundings, suburbanisation has set in rapidly, leading into selective outwards movements of the population. Inner city districts, as well as large housing estates in the East, lost middle or high-income families in this process. Additionally, West Berlin underwent more rapid de-industrialisation after the Wall came down compared to West German cities, due to the loss of special West Berlin economic subsidies after re-unification. The situation in East Berlin is comparable to other East German cities in the industrial sector (rapid job losses and de-industrialisation), but many were laid off additionally who had formerly been employed in the GDR bureaucracy in the former centralist state capital.

Answering to socio-spatial polarisation in German cities, “Social City” is financed by the central state and the federated states. It seeks to tackle the problem through the bundling together of resources in new governance arrangements. The vision is thus to make best use of scarce resources in the field of locally concentrated social exclusion. The means is innovation within the administration towards a modern social-democratic government that “promotes and demands” its partners and of its partners in the urban neighbourhoods. The fields of action within this policy are urban development, society, economy, ecology, politics/administration and culture, investive and non-investive measures are to be combined, participation of residents as well as the local economic and civic associations aspired (Difu 1999).
What is the vision behind this policy? A new social democratic orientation stands at the centre. It is linked to the understanding of emerging trends of social exclusion as phenomena that are locally concentrated, resources and needs that articulate locally, and thus formulates a policy that is specifically area-based. The overcoming of bureaucratic inertia along the boundaries of departments is one of its visions, aiming at bringing together resources and synergy. It is an approach that traces back to the participatory turn in urban renewal. Social City is a public policy that is implemented by the administration, which holds the steering wheel in the process on one side, linking it with private and civic activity on the other (Walther 2002).

At the same time, the welfare state undergoes restructuring also on a national state level. The overall theme is the new social-democratic “promoting and demanding” in that case, too. The state sees itself more in a steering role, whereas formerly it had been also a supplier to a large extent. The large sector of labour market policy is currently being restructured towards activation of the labour force, and other sectors of welfare policy also undergo reconstruction.

Grassroots activities, social and local economy, associations and groups working in and for the locality are to be activated, co-ordinated and linked with one another and the public institutions of the municipality, also with the federal state as well as national and European agencies, economic actors and planners. Several institutions are established: an intermediate body, the neighbourhood management scheme (Quartiersmanagement or Stadtteilmanagement) is the local networking body and the link to public institutions and sources of finance. Within public administration, steering councils are implemented to horizontally and vertically co-ordinate action (Alisch 1998; Haeussermann and Kapphan 2002).

What is the effect on local society? The local society, depending on the implementation and the qualification of the neighbourhood managers, takes on the opportunity to co-ordinate action. The policy is aimed at the locality, it strengthens ties that work for the same area. It works to activate and bring new dynamics to an area-based approach. Local democracy is strengthened in cases where decision-making power is delegated, as happens in local distribution funds (Verfuegungsfonds), where varying amounts of public funds are distributed according to elected local boards. Where there has been a good local tradition of neighbourhood activities, the programme is easily seen as counter-productive, especially when it is connected to a cut in public funding for existing projects or when the neighbourhood managers as local program representatives de-value or ignore existing efforts.

The value of such programmes is, thus, still uncertain, but in principle they are of a socially innovative nature. First evaluation efforts show that the envisaged changes in the administration are
one of the real challenges within this policy instrument. Social City is an attempt to achieve a more solidary, integrative city with the least necessary resources. The administrative levels in Berlin are co-ordinated, thus resources might be re-distributed towards the formerly excluded and de-invested neighbourhoods on a spatial scale and towards social integration on a thematic scale. The policy is restricted to defined problem areas, but there are attempts to open the borders of the programme areas to the promotion of co-operation with the outside world. In the federal political organisation of Germany, key areas of integration at the local level are decided upon in other than the communal decision making institutions, for example in the federal states (education) or at the nation state (employment) level. City-wide co-ordination is not enough to integrate those political and administrative actors in the process.

**B. CASE STUDIES**

4. **Experiences of social innovation in Berlin**

Urban socially innovative development is linked to visions of change on the one hand and to actual projects and policies of change in specific localities on the other. In the following section, we wish to present and analyse three projects creating socially innovative change in urban neighbourhoods.

First, we will make reference to the project setting within visions and traditions of urban socially innovative development, as presented in chapter 3 of this paper. Then, specifics of the locality are presented. Thus, the context is laid out in order to raise understanding. Presenting the cases, we will then try to answer questions such as **why? how? and what?** in their innovative dimensions. **Why?** will refer to the cause and reason of the initiative, in order to find out, in reaction to which processes, against what forces and ideas and for what aims and motives the actors became active. **How?** will refer to the inspiration behind it, to the driving political and social forces, to the spatial scales of mobilization and organisation, to the resources for change being used, and to the counter-acting forces that are being targeted. Answering to **what?** we will lay out the excellence being created in the presented case for example in new institutions and new modes of communication among

We will focus on projects within traditions of urban socially innovative development from the 1970s onwards, as they are best documented and their context of social change has remained in the same common tradition that may be labelled by the term Post-Fordism. They belong to the
traditions of a) the squatter movement (Instandbesetzer-Bewegung); b) the social economy; and c) the “Social City” programme.

4.1. „Core House“ (Kerngehaeuse e. V.) in Berlin-Kreuzberg

The case we are presenting in this chapter is understandable only in its historical context of the Pull-down Renewal policy outlined in section 3.1. During the 1970s, protest arose against this policy and the modes of its implementation in Germany, but especially in Berlin. The protesters opposed the destruction of social neighbourhoods, the absence and denial of residence participation rights in the planning and implementation process, the cultural devaluation of inner city old housing paving the way for destruction, and, last but not least the artificial tightening of the housing market that derived from evacuating flats, accompanied by de-investment from entire neighbourhoods and subsequent dereliction of housing, formerly at least in parts in good shape. The most audible, visible and, as would show only years later, successful protesters were those of the squatter-movement, that formed in the early 1970s. This movement had a peak between 1979 and 1981, with a significant impact on public opinion building in the whole of Germany. It gained influence on public policy making. Its protest, among other factors, against the financing crisis of Pull-down Renewal, led to the revision of renewal policy towards a participatory approach: ‘Careful Renewal’. According to the new programme and planning ideology, housing stock was developed in accordance with tenants, planners and developers, involving a mediatory agency: the renewal commissioner agency. One of the projects that derived from the grassroots movement involved in this policy revision process is our case study: the “Kerngehaeuse”, in the following called “Core House”.

The spatial setting of the Core House is Berlin-Kreuzberg, a working class inner city borough with a high proportion of migrant population (guest workers) gave birth to an alternative urban social movement. Students, unemployed people and sympathizers plus activists of the 1967/68 revolts were resources for change and experimenting. Protest against Pull-down Renewal in Kreuzberg stemmed primarily from these groups. The alternative scene in Kreuzberg held large mobilising capacity. Groups and associations were plenty, networks vast. The Core House is one among a few central projects built within the squatter movement.

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36 Kerngehaeuse as a word contains different meanings. It is the German word for the inner core of a fruit, „Kern“ meaning „seed“, but being also part of the word „Bockkern“, signifying the inner part of a housing block, in Berlin often containing a mix of housing, manufacturing and workshops, a part of the house which fell prey to the strategy in those cases, where not the whole quarter was pulled down, but only the blocks were de-„cored“, hollowed out.

37 The protests were dominated by the squatters, although from the early 1970s, residents protested against the policy. They reached considerable attention in a renewal area in Berlin-Charlottenburg, another inner city district of the former West-Berlin, in the
Along with further planned renewal projects in Kreuzberg, the first houses were squatted in the early 1970s; the squatting actions sprouted from a feeling of rage against the policy that mainly ignores the voices of the affected. In parts, not only hardship deriving from housing shortage was at the root of the squatting, but also aspirations for the creation of a local alternative scene, and the need for premises. The Berlin Senate, backed by police and house owners kept a strong opposition to the squatters, who continuously lived in fear of the closing down of the squatted places. The artificial housing shortage produced by the land speculation coalition of Pull-down Renewal became the central motive for the squatters from 1979 onwards. The protest coalition grew and soon involved civic action groups as well as celebrities and a wider public (Laurisch 1981). On its peak about 170 houses in Berlin were squatted. The squatter strategy was to open flats emptied in preparation of demolition, squat them, put them back into shape and live in them. Through the involvement of the media the movement raised public attention (Storck 2002).

The group of young people that gathered to plan the squatting of the former housing and manufacturing premises in Cuvrystrasse 20-23 adopted that strategy as well. On 1st November 1979, a small group, and within the following weeks and months all members moved in. In the early times, fluctuation in the squatted premises was high due to pressure from outside on the one hand – Police, Senate, landlords, and internal group dynamics in this very new and intimate way of life in a partly derelict building site and often very limited space on the other hand. Anti-Pull-down Renewal and authoritarian state action and looking for freedom, self-determined choice of the way of life, search for alternatives to petty-bourgeois housing, pacifist, ecologically oriented, pro-multiculturalism and a self-determined and self-built future, fantasy inspired resistance inspired the people who built the later Core House (Storck 2002). After a few months, the squatting stabilised when danger of expulsion got less acute with first successes of the squatter movement – contracting started in order to fix rental contracts with the landlords in co-ordination with the Berlin Senate or, as was the case with our case study, the purchase of the house could be negotiated and prepared. The project created a formal association and with financial support from a rich member of the alternative scene, the house was bought by the association Kerngehaeuse e. V., consisting of all residents. With the purchase, collectively organised enterprises started to work, flats were refurbished, public relations maintained, politics made (Storck 2002). Once the project established, its aims became materialised: solidarity, freedom, grassroots democracy, social economy, basic needs satisfaction in a quasi-utopian, but sufficiently pragmatic way (Storck 2002; Petersen 2000).

neighbourhood Klausener Platz. The residents from Klausener Platz had been supported by the later head of the International Building Exhibition from 1984/87, Prof. Haemer.
The house itself today houses over fifty inhabitants including between ten and twenty children. Furthermore, the residents and externals are active in an array of projects and enterprises on the premises. Among them are social economy projects such as a self-initiated Kindergarten (Kinderladen), a food-coop, and diverse co-operatives of taxi drivers, metal workers and carpenters.

The aims, motives and more precisely, dreams and nightmares of the Core House can be understood vividly through reading the narrative of the “Office For Unusual Measures” (Buero fuer ungewoehnliche Massnahmen) by one of its core persons, Barbara Petersen, which is now presented in short. The activities of the Office mirror elements of the philosophy of the whole scene. Installed in 1987 it was active until 1994 in order to carry out “Arty actions in public space” (p. 127). The first activity was the construction of a Berlin Wall as a symbol of separation on the line between Kreuzberg and West Berlin. The context was the declaration of the population of Berlin-Kreuzberg SO 36 (south-eastern part of the district of Kreuzberg) to “anti-Berliners” and their subsequent cordonning off by the Berlin police at the demand of the then mayor of Berlin, Eberhard Diepgen (CDU, Conservative Party) on the occasion of the visit of an American president to Berlin on 17. June 1987. The 17th of June, being the “holy remembrance day of German unity” (Petersen 2000: 128), was the perfect symbol to put this in scene and build a facsimile of the Wall. The success was outstanding: media filmed and interviewed people filling in passenger tickets, forms with ironic content, aid to fugitives taxis and more. This shows the innovative and successful actionism against authoritarian Senate politics carried out in the Core House after the peak of the squatter movement. Petersen describes the participants of an earlier organisation, the FDPOE (an ironical recourse on the FDPO, the freiheitlich-demokratische Grundordnung, free democratic basic order of the German constitution, founded in 1978), which later forms one of the groups constituting the Core House, as follows: “We were students with or without secondary education, auto-didactic or professional, and produced political posters, stickers, postcards. We were post-war generation, economic miracle kids, close to the student revolt; we knew communal living and flat-share communities, fun guerilla and Red Army Fraction including “German Autumn” (Deutscher Herbst, the authors), communist groups and professional bans, Do-Nothing and Do-Something conferences; we assisted to twin births of leftist newspapers, “Die Neue” and “die taz”, motto being “Nimm 2 ”, saw the “New Red Forum” just like the “Alternative List” and later the “Green Party”, protested against nuclear power stations and for peace, and what have you, until squats in the late 1970s and new 1980s.” (Petersen 2000: 132 f.). As to the spontaneous actionism and decision making, she writes: “We fought and we discussed and we thought till our heads buzzed, ideas were born and buried, often classically long-windedly basis-democratically, but with the declared aim, to let words be followed by action. And
action followed. Each time. And always peacefully, even in case of bans or police presence.” (Petersen 2000: 132).

The network of the squatters crossed Berlin borders. There were loose connections to other cities’ squatter movements in Frankfurt, Hamburg, Freiburg, although the exchangeability was restricted by different local assumptions and squatting cultures. The influence on policy making reached from the district and state to the national level. Intense solidarity, trust and social capital are matters of excellence within the Core House. The implementation of the “unusual measures” of the Office used all resources the Core House could offer. Manpower, thoughts and ideas, wood-workers, printers, metal workers, taxi, food and drink from the food-coop and other collectives and individuals were used. The Core House worked as an associational space, production space and machine of ideas, and also as a supply station.

Communication structures were multi-faceted and well established and represented one of the pieces of excellence the Core House has produced and reproduced. Institutions have been built within the Core House, for example decision making in plenary sessions (Fina 2000). Networking and its communication structures within and outside the project, scene, neighbourhood and city were crucial for the Office For Unusual Measures, and for the whole Core House project. Support was mobilised from the Core House to other projects and individuals and vice versa. The spatial scale of communication and mobilisation capacity ranged from local to neighbourhood to city and over the city boundaries, when squatters in Potsdam were supported in the first re-unified German winter in the preparation of the squats for cold winter times. On the other hand, experts in various disciplines centring on squatting in the scene were easily mobilised within the Berlin squatter centres, the districts of Schoeneberg, Charlottenburg and Kreuzberg (Storck 2002).

The organisational structure of the Core House was de-central, a fact that has proved critical for its success when comparing to other projects from the squatter scene (Storck 2002). From the beginning, the Core House members were made up of groups, and each group got their space within the premises. Here, the freedom-notion of the Core House played an important role and developed discursively: each group could act freely and autonomously, as long as their freedom did not exceed the border of restriction of other groups’ freedom. The de-central structure of the Core House proved successful in the way that a broad variety of projects could come together under one roof. Exchange took place on the courtyard and during the periodical plenary sessions, the decision-making organ of all Core House members (Storck 2002; Laurisch 1981; Fina 2000).

Excellent and important for the long lasting of the Core House, that has celebrated 20th birthday in 1999, were besides the plenary discussions and decisions the broad networking with supporters out
of the squatter scene and its surroundings in other parts of Kreuzberg and Berlin. The socially
innovative character of the project, both in terms of basic needs satisfaction and new social relations
was another matter of excellence within the former squat. Basic needs were satisfied through
provision of housing, tools and techniques of the maintenance of housing (diverse workshops) but
also food (food-coop), work and education (language school on premises). New social relations
have been installed in the form of vast informal and formal communication structures within a wide
network transcending spatial scales and levels of public hierarchy. Common norms were agreed
upon, among them being freedom, solidarity, self-organisation and basis-democracy.

4.2. Kreuzberg „Exchange Ring“ (Kreuzberger Tauschring)

In 1986 the first German local exchange circle was founded in Berlin-Kreuzberg under the name
“Gratis Club” (Gratisverein). It did not overcome its experimental status, though, and closed down
due to core members leaving Berlin. In 1995, the first exchange ring according to the now common
rules (the LET System$^{38}$) was founded, again in Berlin Kreuzberg (Riede 1996).

In an era of mass unemployment due to global competition in the economy, aspiration was towards
local trading free from external forces and excluding money. Out of this thought, the idea had been
brought to life first in a Canadian experiment in a mono-structured region, Comox Valley in British
Columbia shaken by unemployment and economic crisis. The founder of the idea and of the first
LETS was Michael Linton. He diffused the idea in publications and conferences, and thus it came to
Berlin. Disappointed by anti-social capitalist development and global and local change, a group of
people, in parts from the Kreuzberg lively alternative scene, got together to organise exchange
according to Linton’s means. They could build on the social economy experience and spirit in
Kreuzberg, where co-operatives were built in the 1970s and 1980s, and the self-organisational
infrastructure of the alternative scene in creating the first Berlin LET System. The motto was and
still is: Without cash – let’s start (Ohne Moos geht’s los) (Riede 1996). The German local exchange
trading systems, including the Kreuzberg Exchange Ring, agreed on the following rules: a local
central office is chosen. Here, current accounts on the exchange activity of each member are held.
The exchange activities are “paid” in a time-currency, where one hour of service equals a certain
number of units, in Kreuzberg, one hour equals 20 Kreuzer. A periodical magazine informs all
members on the current offers, they can contact each other by phone or personally on regular
meetings or exchange parties. Solidarity and self-help are common norms (Gerometta 1999;
Kreuzberger Tauschring and Netzwerk Selbsthilfe 1997).
In Kreuzberg, much professional and semi-professional input was given to the building of the organisational structure of the LETS. Among support from the alternative scene, instrumentally from “Network Self-Help”, a local Kreuzberg organization that financially supports alternative self-help projects, the locality chosen for the bureau of the Exchange Ring Kreuzberg and another important supporter was a neighbourhood centre, the “Neighbourhood House Urbanstrasse” (Nachbarschaftshaus Urbanstrasse), where professional advice and manpower for the foundation phase is given, plus the usage of rooms free of rent. Throughout the activities of the Exchange Ring Kreuzberg support through professional equipment, consulting activity and premises have been provided for the project.

Forces to be countered by the Kreuzberg Exchange Ring are of internal and organisational as well as external nature. Lazy and timid members, who lame the whole ring, create problems that are countered by intelligent and professional membership management. Here again, professional support from the Neighbourhood House team is of help. External forces to be countered were a current in the formal economy and political scene that declared exchange trading an illegal, because tax evading, activity. Here, official clarity was provided through a “Little Enquiry” by the Green Party in the German Bundestag on this matter, that delivers a detailed and clarifying answer in favour of local exchange trading. Another force to be countered was that of the chronicle shortage of money of exchange trading rings. Here, co-operation with the partner Neighbourhood House Kreuzberg brought the solution to one of the often vital problems within the German exchange scene.

The scale of mobilisation that the Exchange Ring brought forward is multi-faceted: on the local level, an activation and creation of carrying networks (over 250 members) has set in, not last created by the successful and well organised and advertised monthly exchange party “Exchange Excite”. On the regional level, Kreuzberg organises and activates Berlin as well as German meetings of exchange trading systems in order to form political opinions on one hand and to optimise communication among the projects, for example about matters of internal organisation, or inter-ring exchange, on the other. In that matter, the Kreuzberg exchange ring holds an outstanding, supportive position within the German scene. Among them are a central data base about all exchange rings held and sustained in Berlin-Kreuzberg, the first address for many a new member in order to get access to the closest project.

The excellence of the Exchange Ring Kreuzberg lay firstly within successful implementation of the LET system itself. Here, social relations that transcend social strata have been built. Economic
forces have been re-valued through the exchange system and the time-currency, including formerly unvalued household production and services into the economic sphere. The orientation is towards basic local needs, as articulated and satisfied by the network members. Local networks for organised self-help in all fields where local need and offer can meet are created and supported. Exchange activities between different social strata are enabled. A monthly exchange party, the “exchange excite” (Tauschrausch) is the central event, where contacts are made, community builds and goods and services are exchanged or exchanges are advertised. Rich communication is transported in the course of each “Exchange Excite”, which involves media relations, advertising and membership acquisition as well as internal identity making. Another point within the communication structure is internet based: the central data base on all exchange rings in Germany, having proved as a central entrance gate into the scene for many exchange ring members as well as founders throughout Germany. The Kreuzberg Exchange Ring is part of a vivid social economic sphere in Berlin-Kreuzberg.

4.3. Neighbourhood Agency Marzahn (Quartiersagentur Marzahn)

The here presented case, the Neighbourhood Agency Marzahn, is sited within a publicly financed activity in the frame of the national-federal state program “Social City” (Soziale Stadt). Its task and identity, neighbourhood management (Quartiersmanagement) is a vital part of the political program. That program was implemented in 1999 and then involved 161 urban neighbourhoods (program areas – Programmgebiete) of Germany cities. Being part of the governmental policy for promotion of urban development (Staeddtebau), it targets “urban neighbourhoods with special need for development” (Stadtteile mit besonderem Entwicklungsbedarf), which are segregated, de-favoured urban neighbourhoods in risk of further decline. The policy involves an integrated approach, meaning co-ordinated action, bundling of resources towards the program’s aims among all levels of administration and the local public. It therefore implements a new local mediating organisation, the neighbourhood management.

The problems of urban quarters with special need for development are to be targeted in the sense of a wholesome enhancement strategy in a broader context of a social and ecological infrastructure policy. Social change has called for action in urban areas, and the “Social City” targets development in socio-economically least favoured neighbourhoods. The following groups of measures are part of this strategy: amendment of housing conditions, promotion of new economic activities, securing and creating local employment, enhancing the social infrastructure, especially for the young, enhancing the offer of education and further education possibilities according to demand, measures
for a secure city, ecological improvement, public transport, enhancement of the housing environment, neighbourhood culture and leisure. Basic needs are targeted among others (Bundesrepublik Deutscheland et al. 1999). One of the central aims of policy implementation is participation of local citizens. (Argebau 1998). Financers are the national state, the federal state and the commune plus financial means that shall be acquired from the European Union, and immaterial and material resources from local citizens and initiatives. The program started in 1999 and had a targeted time horizon of six years subject to developments in project implementation. This policy stands in the tradition of the urban renewal philosophy of “careful renewal”, which included an innovative mediating agency for co-ordination of affected residents, state organs and planning and developing organisations.

The innovative integration in the approach is implemented in Berlin on different spatial scales and levels of administration: The institutions co-ordinate rounds within and between Senate, Borough administration and local actors and organisations. The Senate for Urban Development is the carrier of the program for the Berlin region. Here it is hosted in the newly created “Department for integrative urban development”. Here, monthly rounds are arranged for co-ordination and exchange with the other three involved Senate departments, Senate for School, Youth and Sport, Senate for Economy and Technology and Senate for Work, Social Matters and Women. Monthly “Jour fixe” are the co-ordination instrument for information and resource exchange between Senate, the local Neighbourhood Management, and the district representatives. Local forums serve as a place for communication within the locality and its various actors (administration, political, private, civil society and residents). In the borough administration a co-ordinator or a co-ordinating round for the program within administration is chosen from the department for urban development.

This being the organisational setting for our case, what is the spatial context of the case-study presented here? The Neighbourhood Agency Marzahn is a neighbourhood management team located in one of Berlins 17 program areas for “Social City”: Marzahn North/West. The Berlin borough of Marzahn is a large housing estate built in the former GDR, located on the north-eastern rim of Berlin. Founded in 1979, the district is the first of three new Berlin socialist housing districts. Within the “program to solve the housing question in the GDR” prefabricated housing estates were built to enable “living the socialist way of life”. The Marzahn housing estate is the largest in middle Europe, consisting of over 65,000 flats. With the occupation policy of the estate of Marzahn, different neighbourhoods evolved. “While in Southern Marzahn (Marzahn I) employees of the administration and the state services and in Marzahn II (central area) employees of the service economies were preferred, the last built neighbourhoods (Marzahn-North, -West and –Ost) were let especially to young families with children.” (Dorsch et al. 2001:12). From originally 166,000
inhabitants, the whole of Marzahn lost 16% of its population, the area of Marzahn-North/West, finished only in 1989, lost 22% (37,000 to 29,000). Infrastructural problems, concerning especially local supply with services and shopping opportunities have been critical in Marzahn-North from the beginning. The proportion of foreigners in the neighbourhood is the smallest in Berlin with only 3.7%, but there is a large minority of German-Russian migrants from the former Soviet Union (of German nationality), with an estimated population of between 3000 and 6000 in Marzahn North/West (Senatsverwaltung fuer Stadtentwicklung 2002). The social structure is diverse, due to occupation policies in the GDR, but unemployment has risen intensely after German re-unification practically from scratch, with 2780 unemployed in Marzahn-North, about one fifth long term, and about 9% of the population here receive social welfare. Youth and women are the main groups of unemployed, and especially youth unemployment is a problem in large housing estates in general. Weak socio-economic structure, a bad image of the neighbourhood, a large proportion of migrants and flat vacancy thus characterise the situation in Marzahn North.

The Neighbourhood Agency Marzahn, carrier of the neighbourhood management in Marzahn-North, sports some special features that made us choose it as a case study. But let us follow the leading questions. Why does the Neighbourhood Agency Marzahn act? It has been implemented as one part of a public strategy against the decline of de-favoured, segregated urban neighbourhoods. Marzahn-North has been identified to be among the areas in Berlin that are subject to socio-economic decline at a critical level and has thus been chosen as one among 17 program areas (Haeussermann and Kapphan 1998). The driving force in Marzahn North/West is the problem pressure imposed by the deteriorating situation of the neighbourhood with visible deficiencies of empty flats, missing investments as a result in combination with the socio-economic problems of the local society without visible resources for change. An innovative strategy had to come about. How does the Neighbourhood Agency go about the task? The planning company UrbanPlan runs the neighbourhood management. UrbanPlan had very relevant resources in the area before programme implementation that are part of the team’s success. They are first of all the public funding for the local activating, networking and moderating activities. Four employees plus infrastructure are part of the funding. The second, and the one which distinguishes the Neighbourhood Agency Marzahn from other neighbourhood management teams elsewhere, is that UrbanPlan was part of another innovative agency in Marzahn, implemented in 1991: the Platform Marzahn (“Plattform Marzahn”). This instrument has been implemented and steered by the local authority in order to raise public awareness on the local urban restructuring process taking place after re-unification: refurbishment of the housing estates, and projects for enhancement of the housing environment before a background of out-migration of inhabitants and the influx of

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German-Russian migrants. It is a co-ordinating agency of planning activity with local needs, implementing public relations work, a variety of forums to exchange ideas and reach decisions, and an instrument of establishing a local political culture of a state socialist local society without participation experience. During the eight years of successful and locally accepted and promoted work (from the administrative, planning, housing society, and residents side) a local political culture had built, which UrbanPlan could fall back upon when starting the neighbourhood management activity. This political culture has only involved a small proportion of the residents, but built practically from scratch this has been called a success. Organisational continuity helped transfer knowledge and experience gained in the Platform-process. Unlike other neighbourhood management teams, the Neighbourhood Agency has a self-image of being a preventive and strategic instrument, whereas other teams see themselves as instruments combating poverty themselves. Its aims are nonetheless integration, inter-generational and inter-ethnic cohesion, activation of local employment, and improvement of socio-cultural facilities for the young. It does not carry out own practical development action in the neighbourhood but is a true initiator and moderator, providing space for dialogue and translating for the participating groups. Political education is one of the core concepts of the Agency. Various forums are consequently installed and organised: a neighbourhood round table, neighbourhood conferences for decision making, a Russian-German migrants’ forum, and two boards of residents’ and initiatives deciding on the distribution of local funds for action and investment. The latter two are part of all Berlin neighbourhood management programs and thus not a local speciality, innovation decided upon by the administration, based on local efforts. Forces to be countered are those of a majority of residents who do not participate in the process, maybe worse, the super-local development on the labour market and on the economy, the local mono-structure of the built environment imposing the need to find work elsewhere, and the population loss leading to empty flats and the consequences for the environment (Droste et al. 2002)

What excellence has the Neighbourhood Agency Marzahn brought about? Central is its self-image of a co-ordinator, activator and mediator. Results are of civic debate and action, as well as co-ordination of action within the area. The framework is positive for this kind of action: It involves a backing strategy that has high public, political and administrational attention in Berlin even in the times of severe fiscal crisis. Moreover, the basis in local political culture among the borough and Berlin administration, the private actors and the local civil society has been laid by the precursory work of the Platform Marzahn during nearly a decade. Organisational continuity helped to maintain the spirit and local political culture that has built in the institutions the Platform and its environment had formed. Promotion of communication plus integration of formerly inactive and powerless locals into the decision making process are the key-areas of success in this innovative case of public
policy implementation. Its chance arises from a broad coalition for change, which hopefully will last on because it builds one of its most important resources.

5. Concluding remarks

In the previous pages we have sketched some of the diverse visions, leaders, and initiatives of a socially innovative nature over the past three centuries in Germany, progressively narrowing our focus in scale. Having presented a number of recent socially innovative streams in area development, what can we conclude? First we will summarise the different visions and philosophies, the connected movements and case studies as well as their sustainability. Secondly, we will sketch a trajectory of thought in socially innovative visions.

The liberal movement of the early 18th century brought forward something like a civil society for the first time in German history. No direct continuity is traceable to more recent movements, but there is a spiritual connection to the emancipatory social movements of the 1980s and 1990s. They too are liberal in thought and oriented towards solidarity self-help. Both carry the vision of active citizenship, involving civic engagement in associations and the building of a critical public consciousness.

The Christian social doctrines still plays a role in today’s welfare organisations in Germany. Christian associations and initiatives still involve considerable numbers of users and voluntary workers.

One element among the socially innovative philosophies and movements of Berlin and Germany has proved to be unsustainable in the long run, and that is the paternalistic, non-participative approach as exercised by the bourgeois social reformers in the housing reform movement. Here, community has remained undeveloped due to a lack of local participation. Although aiming at the fight against poverty and for the basic needs of the affected, the approach has failed. This legacy showed again in the policy of Pull-down Renewal in the 1960s and 1970s in both Berlin and Germany more generally.

Among all visions presented here, the co-operative idea is a constant. Referring to the utopian early socialists and liberal philosophy, there is high continuity in the organisational form and direction towards economic self-help and community orientation. The inherent problem in the model, however, is the lack of capital (social as well as financial) amongst those most in need. Recent research discusses the topic. Koenig (2002) stresses the potentially positive effect of public support
for co-operatives in the housing sector, as well as the usefulness of internal activation efforts concerning community orientation.

In conclusion, the only philosophy we identify to be counter-productive to other strands of socially innovative visions is the paternalistic, non-participative approach. The others -- be it the “real” self-help, the socialist approach, the self-initiated “grass-root” by the affected people, or the conservative effort made “for the affected” by the Christian organisations, or even the new social-democratic approach of “promoting and demanding” -- all work towards the common cause of social innovation, varying in their extent, dynamic and radicalism, and the latest developments are still open in their philosophical future.

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VI. BELGIUM

SOCIAL INNOVATION IN BELGIUM: PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS, SOCIAL PRACTICES, AND LOCAL EXPERIENCES

by Etienne Christiaens and Johan Moyersoen

Belgium is, together with the Netherlands and Ireland, one of the countries where the contribution of the social economy to the total economy is the highest in Europe. Presently, the social economy in Belgium consists of around 305,000 jobs and an equivalent of 100,000 full time jobs of volunteer work (Salamon et al. 1999). Nevertheless, contemporary Belgian academic work on the social economy is mainly limited to a quantitative descriptive approach (Christiaens 2002). A really critical approach to the phenomenon is absent, while the definition of the social economy is limited to the classical market/non-market dichotomy. Moreover, fairly traditional categories, such as co-operatives, mutual aid societies, or associations, are used to describe and analyse the sector. A pro-active explanation about the reasons for operating within the Third Sector (in terms of social entrepreneurship, endogenous development, social capital formation, civil society, governance...) is non-existent. With the exception of the studies about “proximity” services (Defourny and Nyssens 2001; Laville and Nyssens 2000; Nyssens and Petrella 1996) or about “public-private partnerships in the regeneration of distressed urban areas” (Petrella 1999, 2000), the analysis of the relationship between social economy, local development and community building is absent in the Belgian literature. Some research in cultural anthropology (Soenen 2001) and in social geography (Loopmans 2002) attempts to mobilise “social capital” theories in their analysis and promise a more creative approach.

A more in depth theoretical and critical analysis is provided in the framework of the SINGOCOM-project, directed by Belgian Professor Frank Moulaert of the University of Lille and of Newcastle, of which this paper is an intermediate product. He argues that “the analysis of the social economy today seems to be too dependent on the use of ‘old’ categories inherited from the debate on the
social economy in the 19th century and during the fordist period” (Moulaert and Ailenei 2002). He proposes a new framework for the contemporary definition of social economy in which a relationship is established with local/neighbourhood development and with new concepts such as social capital, embeddedness, governance, civil society, community development, integrated area development, basic needs, apprenticeship, networking etc. He believes in the centrality of social relations between development actors and in the importance of innovation in social relations (social innovation). “It is only by developing new forms of revealing needs, of co-operation, and of democratic management, that the basic needs of the most deprived citizens will be recognized and met.” (Moulaert and Ailenei 2002).

This paper seeks firstly to provide a brief overview of the philosophies and social practices that inspire Belgian social innovative organisations today (Part A). We focus especially on the socially innovative experiences in the urban context. We differentiate between two main philosophical traditions for social innovation in Belgium. On the one hand, there are the anarchist and co-operative movements. Their activities revolve around the production sphere. On the other hand, there are the urban movements. They focus their activities on the reproduction or consumption sphere. The first two movements originate with the industrial revolution at the end of the 19th century, whereas the latter belong to the post-WWII era. For each of these movements, we shall discuss the philosophical foundations that underpinned their activities as well as their methodology or practices.

Secondly, the paper provides in-depth analysis of three case-studies of social innovative experiences (Part B). The first case study discusses the history of the co-operative Vooruit (founded in the 19th century) as a canonical example of the co-operative movement. The second case is the Atelier de Recherche et d’Action Urbaines (ARAU) in Brussels that addresses the struggle for direct democracy in Brussels during the 1960s. The third example consists of the analysis of the contemporary cluster of Urban Glocal Interventions in Brussels. The latter case, while reminiscent of earlier anarchist traditions, is also an example of a structure that explicitly chooses an organisational form that allows for diversity without exclusion as a normative framework for urban action.
A. PHILOSOPHIES AND SOCIAL PRACTICE OF BELGIAN MOVEMENTS: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

1. The co-operative movement

In contrast to what happened in other countries, the co-operatives in Belgium did not develop as an autonomous movement, but emerged rather within broader social movements (Socialist or Christian). Born as a way for survival of small groups of skilled artisans or unskilled workers, sometimes coloured with a flavour of social utopia, they provided an important financial and material support to both the Socialist and the Christian workers movements. As part of this development, the co-operatives developed an enormous institutional apparatus within which the ideals of the co-operative have become difficult to trace and the original spirit has been lost. Only the form rather than the spirit remained. Indeed, over time, the co-operative enterprises were obliged, at least partially, to accept capitalist rationality as they were increasingly expected to produce monetary “benefits” to the workers’ movement and their political organisations.

However, it is typical for Belgium that many of the founding principles of the workers’ movement and of their co-operative organisations were gradually adopted within the whole social and political system (the democratisation of the society, the participation of workers in political, economic and socio-cultural life etc…).

1.1. Philosophical background

Even before their legal recognition, a variety of co-operative or mutualist initiatives developed in Europe. The workers and peasants associations of the 19th century were inspired by the ideology which would mark the whole itinerary of the social economy and which stressed its political and cultural pluralism from its sources to its contemporary manifestations (Defourny and Develtere 1997). Three different, yet somewhat related, perspectives underpinned the philosophical foundations of the co-operative movement: a) associative socialism, b) social christianism, and c) the liberal school.

Associative socialism

Until 1870, the perspectives of associative socialism dominated the international workers movement. They promoted the establishment of producers’ co-operatives. They operated in very different and sometimes contradictory ways. Some, such as Fourier and his followers, proposed to
develop autonomous production communities with the co-operative system, which were directed against the industrialisation process and against capitalism. Artisan forms of labour had to be rehabilitated. The "phalanstères", Fourier’s utopian forms of organisation, were conceived as self-sufficient organisations. Throughout the history of the co-operatives, these aspirations for autarchy, for a radical break with industrialisation, mechanisation and capitalist wage labour relations were prominent. Others, such as the early socialists Owen or St. Simon, did not reject capitalism and industrialisation, but rather tried to limit (and prevent) the negative effects of the system. Reforms had to be undertaken in order to generate solidarity and harmony between entrepreneurs and workers, for example by providing higher levels of participation and democracy in business.

Buchez stresses the democratic management of industry and trade, while Owen advocates an alternative “pay system”. In their conception, there is no question of a return to an agrarian or artisan mode of production. The prevailing idea is that the capitalist mode of production is unjust. Greater worker participation in the running of the system could remedy this problem. Their criticism was mainly aimed at questioning the distribution of the collectively produced richness of society. Finally, there is the thesis defended by Marx in the Workers’ International. For him, the co-operative movement could make a very useful contribution to the broader Workers Movement as a way of mobilising workers and improving their purchasing power. The co-operatives achieved their purposes in so far as they served a broader movement, which would ultimately conquer State power. Co-operatives are, from this perspective, an instrument but not an objective in itself. They can form part of a strategy to improve the conditions of the poorest and to educate them; they may even be a powerful tool to assemble resources and to organise propaganda in the service of political struggle. However, Marxists deny the importance or the role of the social economy in the process of the transformation of society as a whole.

In Belgium we have to mention two important initiatives inspired by the utopianism of Fourier, Owen, Saint-Simon, and Proudhon. First, the Familistère of Godin (manufacture of stoves) in Brussels, which was a concrete application of the “phalanstère” concept of Fourier. This was a social palace, where the boss, Jean-Baptiste Godin (1817-1888), lived among his workers in the same housing conditions (Brauman and Louis, 1980). Second, the initiative of the industrialist Henri de Gorge, founder of the Grand Hornu (1820-1832), near Mons. The Grand Hornu was build as a “temple in the middle of four hundred labourers houses” (Roelants du Vivier 1971). In order to attract a suitable labour force, de Gorge created a city with “an unprecedented well being” of material comfort and sanitary infrastructure, schools, libraries, houses with cold and hot water and an appealing architecture. Despite the respect for the labourer expressed in the project, the architecture contributed to consolidate the existing production relations (Smets 1975). In fact, “the
manufacture and not the community was dominant, the production and not the feast” (Bekaert 1975).

Social Christianism

The co-operatives developed not only in the urban agglomerations under the banner of Socialism but also in rural countries under the influence of the Raiffeisen movement from Germany where the first rural funds for credit were founded. The ethos of the movement is much more religious and inspired by an ideal of charity. It had no ambition to bring down the capitalist order. On an institutional level, the papal edict "Rerum Novarum" of 1891 encouraged the Christian community (which in Belgium is predominantly catholic) to engage in the social economy. In Flanders, it led to the foundation of the Farmers’ Guilds which formed the basis for the Farmers Alliance (Boerenbond). The important CERA bank, for example, is developed from a multitude of local autonomous Raiffeisen funds (Norman 1994; Witte and De Preter 1989).

Outside agrarian circles, catholic co-operatives also arose in the popular milieus. They stem from two main sources. One can be referred to as “paternalistic”: it is from a bourgeois origin and has an anti-socialist purpose. It aims to support the workers movement in order to temper the spirit of resistance. The second source can be called “democratic” and considers the workers association as a means to foster their social emancipation. It will lead afterwards to the formation of the Christian Workers’ Movement 39.

From a general point of view, the social Christians of the 19th century sought the birth of “intermediary bodies” to struggle against the isolation of the individuals, which is considered as a deficiency of liberalism and against the absorption of the individual by the State, the trap of the Jacobinism. The valorisation of these microstructures and at the same time the affirmation of the autonomy of the individuals is based on the idea of subsidiarity, which implies that higher-level bodies do not fulfil the functions, which the lower-level bodies can undertake.

The liberal school

The liberal school also created an opening to the social economy. By giving supremacy to economic freedom above all others and by dismissing State interference, the liberal school focused on the principle of self-help. From this perspective, it favoured the associations of mutual help amongst the workers.

39 This movement is mainly supported by the lower clergy. In Belgium, for example, Daens (1839-1907) in Aalst and Cardijn (1882-1967) in Brussels are emblematic priest-figures of the workers’ struggle and emancipation. The first formed a political party and the latter was the founder of the young Christian workers movement.
The key conclusion from the above is that the modern social economy was forged at the intersection of the great ideologies of the 19th century and that not one perspective can claim exclusive paternity.

1.2. The methodology of practices: different types of co-operatives

During the debates around the law on the trade companies approved in 1873, three types of co-operatives were distinguished: The production co-operatives, the credit co-operatives and the consumption co-operatives. Belgians had no original contribution in any of these three types. France (with the early socialists), Germany (with H. Schultze and F.W. Raiffeisen) and the United Kingdom (with Owen) were the pioneers. Yet, all three types can be found in the Belgian social landscape.

The production co-operatives

The production co-operatives were presented both by the early socialists and by the First International as the great ideal. They had to “free the worker by raising him to be the master of his production” (Dhondt 1960).

Yet, the production co-operatives were very marginal within the co-operative movement in Belgium. In fact, they never were a serious alternative to the modern capitalist production system. Most co-operative initiatives in Belgium, from 1849 onwards, were organised by highly skilled artisans, such as tailors (N. Coulon), shoemakers (J. Pellering), cigar-makers, printers, carpenters/cabinetmakers, saddle-makers, marble-workers, and mechanical workers. The question remains (even to this day) whether these co-operative were influenced by nostalgia for pre-capitalist forms of organisation rather than by a desire to construct an alternative to capitalism.

The great interest in production co-operatives disappeared during the last quarter of the 19th century. The workers movement accepted capitalism in its technological and organisational aspects and this system became dominant. The co-operative was not yet considered as a valuable alternative to capitalism. Bertrand, the socialist historian of the co-operative movement, wrote in 1902 (Bertrand, 1902): “it is evident we will not succeed to influence the conditions of big industry because of the lack of the necessary capital. But there is a whole series of activities which can be done in co-operation and with chances of success.” When the socialists from Ghent (see case study69) later under the leadership of E. Anseele founded their own textile co-operative and their own bank (Bank

69 See part B.
of the Labour/Bank van de Arbeid), they received the status of limited (liability) company and relied on a capitalist logic.

From this time onwards, the workers’ movement increased its reformist ambitions in other domains. It participated actively within the existing system to influence economic and political decisions. It strived for the conquest of state power and for a revisionist rather than a revolutionary course of action. For this reason, the importance of the workers union and the workers party as a means to gain economic and political power increased. On the socialist side, their demands increasingly centred on calls for nationalisation and socialisation. On the catholic side, this translated in a demand for participation in industrial organisation and for transfer of company stocks to the workers.

This evolution explains why the co-operatives and more especially the production co-operatives are today no longer considered by the workers movement as objectives but rather as means.

The credit co-operative

The credit co-operatives show clearly the contradictions within the co-operative movement. Initially they concerned the so-called “people’s banks” (volksbanken/banques du peuple), which were propagated in Belgium from 1864 onwards, following the German model. These mutual credit companies, which were highly valued by the liberals, were aimed at the urban middle class (Van Molle, 1986). There was no ambition of achieving social reforms – and this is the case for the whole sector of credit co-operatives. The sector was more concerned with the struggle between small and big capital. The pre-eminently liberal principle of “self-help” (Selbsthilfe) promoted by the German H. Schultze, was not aimed against capitalism, but against the danger of state Socialism.41

Much more important than the “people’s banks” were the so-called Raiffeisenkassen, also from German origin. In the framework of the catholic peasants league (Boerenbond) they had a successful development from 1892 onwards. These Raiffeisenkassen relied much more on the proper co-operative doctrine than the “people’s banks” (Van Molle 1986).42

The consumption co-operatives

The consumption co-operatives essentially followed the track of Rochdale (1844). They included people’s bakeries, shops, trade in colonial goods etc. The bakeries in particular enjoyed great success. Bread was indeed a basic ingredient of the staple diet, but it was expensive and of limited

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41 One of the only catholic ‘people’s banks’ (de ‘Volksbank van Leuven’) achieved the status of limited liability company in 1919 and became, as the Kredietbank, the pivot around which the Flemish banking system would later develop (Van Der Wec, 1985).

42 Today these banks became the CERA in Flanders.
quality. Here a successful junction between the co-operative movement and the unions and political workers movements was created\textsuperscript{43}.

The “peoples pharmacies” are of Belgian origin with the oldest being founded in 1881. In fact it was a special form of consumption co-operative in the sense that the mutual insurance companies founded them. It was a reaction against the high prices on the market for drugs (Gerard and Martens 1990). The mutual insurance company was a form of co-operative that due to its own technical and financial characteristics quickly created its own tradition in the social economy. It is interesting to note that the advantage for the members was constituted by cheap prices, but that the profits returned to the mutual insurance company. Their success was contagious and the number of “people’s pharmacies” increased dramatically, despite the resistance of the pharmacists.

2. The Anarchist movement

The divide within the First International Workingmen’s Association (1864) between the Authoritarians and the Anti-Authoritarians or the Anarchists was the onset of the anarchist movement in Belgium (Moulaert 1995). The anarchists fought tooth and nail against the tendency of the supporters of Marx, the Authoritarians, to centralise the international movement. The anarchists aimed for a federalist and non-state based form of organisation. They disagreed with Marx that the labour class should organise themselves in a labour party that, in its turn, should ‘conquer’ the state. This friction marked the anarchist movement in Belgium throughout its history.

The tactics of the Belgian anarchists were born out of a reaction against the rise and the dominance of the socialist party. The continuous re-strategizing of the anarchists against the success of the socialist party for its struggle for universal suffrage produced a wide diversity of theoretical positions: Mutualism, Collectivism, Anarcho-Communism and Anarcho-Syndicalism. Even after the International Labour Congress of The Hague (1872), where they were excluded from the International, the anarchists remained a major opposition force against the dominance of the socialist labour movement. At the same time, the diverse experiments of the anarchists to organise the movement without hierarchy and centralisation, still inspire many social-economic organisations today. Foremost, the experiments of the anarchists have influenced the organisation of the direct action movement. We will scrutinise in detail the different theoretical tendencies within the anarchist movement and emphasise – most importantly in the last part – the movements’ organisational innovation.

\textsuperscript{43} In the case study of “Vooruit” co-operative (see 5. B) we show the origins of this successful junction with the socialist party.
2.1. Philosophical background

At the first international congress in 1864, the Anti-Authoritarians did not form one block but were split in two movements: The Mutualists and the Collectivists. Mutualism aimed to maintain, through self-management, individual ownership of farmland and small-scale production. Following their approach, large-scale industry should consist of voluntary organisations of workers co-operatives. Collectivism sought to collectivise all property and industry. According to revolutionary Collectivists, this could be done by force.

The Mutualists

The idea of a “Mutualist movement” was inherited from Proudhon (Bancal 1970). Proudhon aimed to dissolve authority and the state. He was antagonistic to all forms of absolutism. He rejected also utopianism – Owen, Fourrier, etc… as the kind of thought that fails to distinguish between concrete day-by-day reality and the abstract products of the mind. This confusion, Proudhon argued, would lead again to absolutism. Anarchy did not mean a pure or absolute state of freedom, but an ideal or myth. Proudhon saw anarchism as an open-ended process.

The revolution that Proudhon envisaged was a peaceful conversion of society and not a violent upheaval or a civil war. He regarded this conversion as something “moral” in nature and required the highest ethics from those aiming for alteration. By means of providing cheap credit it was possible to alter society peacefully and avoid violent expropriations. In his view the money-society should be transformed step-by-step into a barter system. Labour time would be the standard of the system. In this way, the society would be able to keep credit out of the hands of capitalist banks. Thanks to a system of cheap credit, the farmers would buy arable land and the labourers will start up co-operatives. In general, the Mutualist movement with its barter and credit system was an important source of inspiration for the co-operatist and Mutualist movement in Belgium (Moulaert 1995).

The Collectivists

In the 1880s, the oppression of the state against anarchist movements, its clandestine and subversive character, their refusal of organisation and, above all, the dominant character of the Socialistische Werkliedenpartij (BSP – socialist party) contributed to the ‘minimalist’ organisational culture of the Belgian Anarchist movement and the use of direct violent actions as tactic for revolution. According to the followers of Bakunin – the Collectivists-, the only way for change was through actions of a conscious elite. The movement should not concentrate its efforts on the organisation of
a labour movement as such, but instead, on the idea of the propaganda of the deed – i.e. direct action. This change of tactics was, firstly, a response to the serious setback due to the failure of the communes of Paris, Lyon and Barcelona and the Europe-wide repression of the International. Secondly, it was also influenced by the Narodnik assassinations in Russia.

In 1879, the Belgian anarchists united themselves in the Ligue Collectiviste-Anarchiste\footnote{The core group of the Ligue Collectiviste-Anarchiste included Laurent Verrycken, Hubert Delsaute and, Charles Debuyger. They were all founders of the Brussels branch of the Internationale in 1865.}. The members of the League called themselves Collectivists, anarchists and revolutionaries. They identified themselves with anarchism because they opposed any form of government and, as a result, they were against the tactical choice of the Belgian Socialist Party to struggle for universal voting rights.\footnote{The Ligue Collectiviste-Anarchiste had even – for a short term – its own journal, Le Drapeau Rouge.} In their approach, the only way to eliminate the government was to overthrow it by violent revolution. Also, the Ligue Collectiviste-Anarchiste opposed – like James Guillaume, but in contrast with the socialist party – the communist doctrine. For James Guillaume as for the Belgian Collectivists, it was for the community and not for a doctrine to decide which method were appropriate to deploy for the sharing of the products of labour. The Ligue Collectiviste-Anarchiste was followed by a series of other informal organisations none of which survived for a long time\footnote{Cercle des Anarchistes Bruxellois, Club Anarchiste Revolutionnaire, Les Frères de l’ABC, Comité Exécutif Socialiste, Groupe Secret d’Action Revolutionnaire.} (Moulaert 1995).

**The Anarcho-Communists**

With the decline of the influence of James Guillaume, the militant Internationalists who supported communism and propaganda of the deed acquired a free hand. These changes directed anarchy to violence and to direct action of a small ‘conscious’ group, a far cry from Proudhon’s more sober conception. During this period, the Anarchist movement had many short-lived journals\footnote{Cercle des Anarchistes Bruxellois, Club Anarchiste Revolutionnaire, Les Frères de l’ABC, Comité Exécutif Socialiste, Groupe Secret d’Action Revolutionnaire.} and a variety of groups claimed anarchist credentials: Le Fourmi, Les Serpents, La Revendication, Les Affamés.

In a meeting in La-Chaux-de-Fonds (1880) anarchists like Peter Kropotkin, Carlo Cafiero and Élisée Reclus chose to drop collectivism in favour of Anarcho-Communism (Cahm 1989). For the Anarcho-Communists, the abolition of markets and exchange value would allow for the satisfaction of human needs and lead to the communist ideal of a classless and non-hierarchical society. They saw the revolution as a shift in production from each according to his/her ability to a production to each according to his/her needs. Also in Belgium the Collectivists started to call themselves...
Anarcho-Communists (Moulaert 1995). George Thonar and Emile Chapelier founded in 1905 the Groupement Communiste Libertaire (GCL). In contrast with the Anarchist movement’s antipathy for organisation, the GCL recognised the importance of association. Due to the hegemony of the socialist movement in Belgium, most members were also members of a ‘socialist’ trade union and/or co-operative. The GCL had as its task to protect the members of the organisation against socialist ideas, which did not conform to the anarchist principles. With the experiment to form a federation, the Belgian Anarchists were at the forefront in Europe in terms of organisation-oriented anarchism.

The Anarcho-Syndicalists

Parallel to the Anarcho-Communist movement, there was growing interest in the French experience of the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) and the belief in a revolutionary general economic strike (Pouget 1910). In 1905, the Confédération Générale du Travail was founded in Belgium. This trade union was based on two modest pillars: The Fédération Syndicale Révolutionnaire des Mineurs du Bassin de Charleroi and the Fédération du Travail, an interprofessional federation (Moulaert 1995). The CGT embraced the economic struggle of the labourers. This claim was inspired by the close relation between the Socialist trade unions and the Socialist Party. The bonding of the CGT signified a renouncement of the political emancipation of the trade unions. They also propagated direct action as a means for revolution. The CGT or the trend of revolutionary syndicalism did not exist for a long time in Belgium. It dissolved in 1907 mainly due to the dominance of the socialist trade unions.

2.2. The methodology of practices

Anarchism today

Today, the anarchist movement is quite active in Belgium and exerts its influence in the ‘anti-globalisation’, anti-fascism, anti-militarism, and anti-corporatist movements and in the squatter-movement. The most active groups are located in Brussels, Ghent, Liège and Leuven. In Gent the

47 Such as De Opstand (Antwerp), La Révolté, L’Insurgé, La Voix de l’ouvrier, Ni Dieu Ni Maître, La Guerre Sociale, L’Interdit....
48 The GCL wrote a charter where each member had to hold on, a monthly obligatory contribution of 1 BEF, the requirement of a consensus of all members to enter the organisation, it had a board and a secretary-general.
49 Moreover, in 1905 Emile Chapelier founds the anarchistic commune L’Expérience in Stokkel, Brussels. L’Experience will become the steering wheel for the GCL. Nevertheless the GCL failed –either financially and in the organisation of its redaction- in one of its initial objectives, namely the guarantee of a countrywide anarchistic journal. As a result, the GCL crumbled and submerged.
50 Originally called the “Belgische WerkliedenPartij” (BWP) or the Belgian Laborers Party.
51 In Brussels the anarchistic movement is organized around le Centre Libertaire and in Leuven they are located in different squats.
anarchists have a house, called “Het Anarchistisch Centrum” (the anarchist centre). The Anarchistisch Centrum is a meeting place for individuals and collectives active in “direct action” and actions around issues of social justice. It is for example the operation base of ‘Kokkerellen’, a cook-collective that guarantees the catering for direct actions. They are active in Belgium as well as abroad. The Anarchistisch Centrum also houses VOKO, a collective that collectively buys vegetarian and organic food from socially fair co-operatives. The anarchists have two important journals: “De Nar” and “Alternative Libertaire”.52 “De Nar” is issued every six weeks and publishes writings on basic democracy, self-management, solidarity and direct action from an anti-authoritarian approach. “Alternative Libertaire” is a monthly magazine and is released in Belgium and France.

In general, the philosophical perspective that hold sway in the Anarchist milieu might be better described as an “anarchist sensibility” rather than as anarchism per se. Anarchism in Belgium today means egalitarianism; opposition to all hierarchies, suspicion of authority, especially that of the state, and commitment to living according to one's values. In the last 10 years we observe in Brussels the mushrooming of many collectives striving for social justice in a radical way.53

*Innovation in organisation*

Besides egalitarianism, anarchism also means a non-hierarchical organisational structure, based on “affinity groups” that work together on an ad hoc basis, and decision-making by consensus. The organisational structure of affinity groups is also inspired by the difficulty of the juridical system to get a grip on such organisational structures. Faced with direct action, the juridical system is often in search of ‘the person’ who is responsible for the organisation of the action. Based on the principles of affinity groups and consensus, the responsibility for direct action never lies in one person, but in the whole action group. As the boundaries of the groups are difficult to define –the whole system is decentralised and non-hierarchical- the juridical system has difficulty to get hold of the group. The tradition of affinity groups is born out of the workers and anarchist movement that fought fascism during the Spanish Civil War. The organisational model comes from the Spanish (but also Belgian) tradition of anarchists organising in small circles of good friends. They called them “tertulias”

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53 Recent examples are “Placevelo”, a collectif which aim is to reclaim the streets in Brussels for the cyclist; “Le Boulet”, a squat against gentrification in the centre of Brussels; “Collectif Sans Ticket”, a movement who aims for free public transport; see for more complete list [http://www.collectifs.net/](http://www.collectifs.net/)
It was an organisational form based on decentralised organisation and direct democracy.

In Belgium, the anti-nuclear power and disarmament movement in the 1970’s and 1980’s adopted the non-hierarchical mode of organisation. In Brussels, affinity groups have been used in urban action, such as “Habitat Central” and “Sens Unique”. “Habitat Central” was an action that occupied for two years consecutively – each time for 10 days – the vacant hotel “Hotel Central”. The occupation called the government to take action against speculation in the central parts of Brussels. “Sens Unique” aimed for a better European neighbourhood. Nowadays, we observe the implementation of the affinity group model in urban development initiatives. The cluster of Urban Glocal Interventions in Brussels illustrates this innovation of organisation for urban development very well (see part B).

3. The Urban Movements

From the sixties onwards, there is an important change in the movements for social innovation in Belgium. The crucial difference between these new movements and the traditional co-operative and anarchist movement in Belgium is, firstly, that the latter two focused on the production sphere whereas the former tends to concentrate on the reproduction and consumption sphere. Directly or indirectly, the work of the Situationiste Internationale (Debord 1967; Vaneighem 1983) and Lefebvre (Lefebvre 1968; Lefebvre 1991) has been very influential. A second main characteristic of the urban movements is that they attach great importance to political participation of citizens in the decision-making process of the ‘city’. Although this issue was already essential for the co-operative movement, urban movements went a step further and claimed direct democracy and representation

54 http://www.spunk.org/library/writers/bookchin/sp001642/overview.html

55 Some groups and collectives who use the affinity group model are influenced by Felix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze in “A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia”, who use the term “rhizome” to describe non-hierarchical networks of all kind in the multiplicity of post-modern society. In contrast with the modern (capitalist) centred systems with hierarchical modes of communication, the rhizome is for Deleuze and Guattari an acentered, non-hierarchical, non-signifying system. An example of such experiments is “Les Bains Connective”. “Les Bains Connective” is an artistic and social laboratory that creates experimental project born from the encounter between creators in various disciplines [architecture: botany, ecology, improvisation, literature, movement, music, philosophy, science, travel, visual arts] and their interaction in the deprived Brussels neighbourhood of Vorst and a former swimming pool, which they occupy. In “Les Bains connective” the members function as individuals working independently in different fields of interest, whereas a collective operates as one single body. The connective of “les Bains” could be understood as a ‘rhizome’, having no beginning and end, but growing and interconnecting in many directions. The project lives as an organic process, permanently evolving and shifting its centres of activity. The connective members are organised in independent but interconnected research/action ‘pools’. The pools are: Visual Bath (visual arts, photography,...), the body/mind project, Musiclab, Architecture Pool (research about urban nomadism and development), animation (creation and development with the inhabitants of the neighbourhood), verdusiation (Initiation of Les Bains and the neighbourhood to the botany and ecology, façades in flower, creation of an experimental garden) and the science pool (organisation of symposiums and research in fundamental sciences). The different pools are non-hierarchical and the organisation is managed as a direct democracy. [see http://home.planetinternet.be/~oblomov/]

56 See part B
of neighbourhood groups in the political bodies of the urban fabric. Thirdly, we observe in the urban movement a fundamental divide in approach. For some, the ultimate goal is to re-create a coherent homogeneous urban community feeling, whereas others endorse focus on the importance of being cosmopolitan. We shall discuss first the three key characteristics mentioned above. Then, we shall scrutinise the different tactics used by urban movements.

3.1. Philosophical background

The motive for action: the revolution of everyday life

The post-war avant-garde group of the Lettrist Internationale, gave the initial impetus to the Situationiste Internationale. The Situationiste Internationale was a small group of avant-garde artists and intellectuals who were influenced by Dadaism, Surrealism and by its forerunner Letterism that experimented with poetry, music and the transformation of the urban landscape (Jappe 1999). Also, they found inspiration in the libertarian journal, “Socialisme ou Barbarie”. In this way, they rediscovered the anarchist movement and in particular the Anarchist thinking during the First International. But foremost, the Situationiste Internationale was influenced – via the critique of the alienation of everyday life of Henri Lefebvre – by Marxism (Lefebvre 1991).

Like the Dadaists and the Surrealists, the Situationiste Internationale sought to supersede the categorisation of art and culture as separate activities in society and aimed to integrate these issues in everyday life. From 1962 onwards, the movement broadened its scope from culture to all aspects of capitalist society. The notion of Spectacle stands central in their theory and is in many ways a reworked version of Marx’s early writings on alienation. Capitalism transforms all relations of everyday life into transactions. Due to specialisation in capitalist society, the worker is alienated from his product – the creativity of the person has been diverted. With the growth of alienated products, society has become alien. To guarantee the further accumulation of goods and consumption, capitalism has created ‘pseudo-needs’. For the Situationists, capitalism is a society of “spectacular” commodity consumption or a consumption society in which people are passive objects, not active subjects.

The Situationiste Internationale aimed for a revolution, which did not entail the seizure of power by a group of people, but was enacted through imagination. They saw revolution as a creation and construction of an eternal festival. In parallel with the Situationists, architects and political movements started to re-imagine the urban landscape. We can refer to the avant-garde architectural movement utopia with Jean Baudrillard in France and Archigram in the UK. The Situationists
exerted great influence on the student rebellion of 1968 in France. In particular, the publication of Guy Debord’s “La société du spectacle” (Debord 1967) and Raoul Vaneigem’s “The Revolution of Everyday Life” (Vaneigem 1983) were seen as the guiding literature of the revolt. Due to their ideas and action it is now possible to reclaim your public square as an act in the revolution. The action group “Reclaimthestreets” in London sums up the logic as follows: “Ultimately it is in the streets that power must be dissolved: for the streets where daily life is endured, suffered and eroded, and where power is confronted and fought, must be turned into the domain where daily life is enjoyed, created and nourished.” Party people, people from the neighbourhood, commuters, etc. join the party and by the action itself re-appropriate and re-imagine the city.”

During the 1970’s, in the wake of the social revolt started in the late 60’s – and of the ideas of the revolution of everyday life – many urban movement groups were set up in Belgium to tackle urban issues in a broader struggle for social justice. For example the “Atelier de Recherche et d’Action Urbaines” (ARAU) and the cluster of Urban Glocal Interventions are tributary namely to H. Lefebvre and the Situationists (see part B). Also, the interconnection that the Situationists made between art, politics and social justice influenced the Belgian urban movement importantly. We witness from the 1970’s onwards a tendency to integrate artistic creativity in urban struggles (see part B, Urban Glocal Interventions).

**Public Sphere and participation**

A second theoretical influence on urban movements relates to the debate on the public sphere and political participation. For Habermas, political participation of citizens is the core of a democratic society and a vital element in self-development of the individual (Calhoun 1992). The rise of state capitalism and the importance of economic corporations eroded public democracy. While citizens became primarily consumers of goods, political administration, services and spectacle, firms and governmental bodies took over the public sphere. Habermas’ public sphere consists of social spaces where citizens meet each other to discuss common public affairs and to organise themselves in collective action against oppressive forms of social and political power (Habermas 1987). Habermas’ principle of the public sphere is an open discussion of all issues of general concern in which discursive argumentation is deployed to ascertain general interests and the public good. The public sphere requires freedom of speech and assembly, non-hierarchy, a free press, and the right to freely participate

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57 http://www.reclaimthestreets.net/
58 In Belgium we witness the start up of ARAU, Jeugd and Stad, ….
59 http://www.citymined.org/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=7
in political debate and decision-making.60 During the last decades, the urban movement in Belgium has experimented intensively with participation and political participation.

First of all, in the 1970’s to react against urban functionalism and the urban corporate lobby, citizens organized themselves in neighbourhood groups. These neighbourhood groups had as goal to create a forum of discussion in the neighbourhood and to act as a catalyst for urban action to influence the political decision process directly. In Brussels, we can mention two important neighbourhood struggles against the lobby of firms and government bodies. The first was the movement in the ‘Marolles’ (De Keyser 1988; See part B, ARAU) and the second was in the ‘Noordwijk’ (Martens and Vandeneede 1994). The struggle in the Noordwijk centred around the eviction of working class people for an area around the major railway station Brussel Noord and their replacement by a large-scale project of offices, the Manhattan Project. Moreover, the neighbourhood groups formed umbrella organisations that represent them at higher governmental levels and with public administrations. The Brusselse Raad voor het Leefmilieu61 and Inter-environnement Bruxelles62 are respectively the umbrella organisations of the Flemish and French neighbourhood groups in Brussels.

Secondly, in the Urban Movement we identify the struggle for direct democracy. During the last decade, Belgium has known different referenda on local urban issues.63 For example, on the 20th April 1999, Ghent organised a referendum about the introduction of free public transport in the city. However, the referendum did not reach the required threshold of 40% of the votes and as a result the votes were not counted. Other referenda were, amongst others, organised in Boechout, about the construction of a new communal library and in Sint-Niklaas about the construction of an underground parking building right under the central market place. In Brussels we witness the formation of ARAU64, which struggles explicitly for direct democracy (See part B).

Thirdly, we observe in the urban movement the formation of groups that have explicitly the goal to create a non-hierarchical public sphere. For example Vrijstad Brussel/BXL Ville Libre was an initiative that aimed to gather citizens of Brussels for debate on urban issues and to unite them for urban action. At the peak of the movement Vrijstad Brussel/BXL Ville Libre counted 500 persons65.

60 The theoretical discussion on public sphere has been continued by Hannah Arendt, Dana Villa, Benhabib, Jodi Dean, Oskar Negt, Shmuel Eisenstadt
61 www.bralvzw.be
62 www.ieb.be
63 There exist only in Belgium a consultative referendum at the communal level. Moreover citizens have not the legal right to extort a referendum. If the initiators attain a threshold of 10% of signatures from the population, they can ask the local authority to organize a referendum. If fewer than 40% of the population participates in the referendum, the votes are not counted.
64 See part B. See also : www.arau.org.
65 See also the Cluster of Urban Glocal Interventions in Brussels. In : part 5. D : Local Experiences.
In the urban movement, we observe a split of traditions with regards to the reasons why urban groups act in the city. One group takes ‘the community’ as the normative ideal for urban development, the other ‘diversity’. We will discuss these two traditions below.

The term ‘community’ highlights a key-concern in classical sociology and urban sociology. The industrial revolution had a huge impact on urbanism and, in general, on daily life. Classical sociologists like Emile Durkheim and Ferdinand Tönnies regarded the industrial revolution and its impact on urbanism and, in general on daily life, as negative. They had a romantic approach on society and stressed the benefits of pre-capitalist existence (Giddens 1986; Mitzman 1973).

Emile Durkheim developed the term anomie to argue his viewpoint on the modern city. In his book “Suicide” (1879), Durkheim characterises anomie for individuals who live isolated in an impersonal and alienated world – i.e. the modern city (Baudelot and Establet 1999).

Ferdinand Tönnies regarded the rise of urban industrialism as the loss of the community ideal. In an attempt to describe the difference between pre-capitalist (rural) and capitalist society (urban and industrial), Tönnies distinguished between “Gemeinschaft” (Community) and “Gesellschaft” (Association). Tönnies stressed the difference between the impersonal, contractual bonds as found in capitalist society and the intimate relationships and collective action of pre-capitalist society. Furthermore, Tönnies defined “Gemeinschaft” as something that creates enduring and social relations, a clear understanding of an individual’s place within a fairly homogeneous social landscape. In contrast, the urban or “Gesellschaft” creates fleeting and shallow relationships, fluid social positions and heterogeneity.

Also in Christianity community life was seen as an ideal to strive for. In Christianity community was regarded as the place where needs are taken seriously. To believe is equated with belonging to a community.

Due to the influence of classical sociologists and Christian groups, many NGOs embrace the notion of community in their normative approach to urbanity. The ideas of Durkheim, Tönnies and Christianity on community had an important influence in Belgium’s urban movements. Still today,
we observe the existence of neighbourhood groups\textsuperscript{66} and many urban groups active in community building.\textsuperscript{67}

In contrast to the above, we find in Belgium also urban groups who regard urbanity as the confluence of diversity and variety. For them, the modern city is the potential arena to make people richer and more complex human beings. It is the site where we learn to live with strangers and discover experiences and interests who are unfamiliar for us (Sennett 1977).

According to Richard Sennett, urban movements are faced with new challenges. Globalisation and post-Fordism have transformed the city. Due to the influence of flexible capitalism, the city risks to become standardised and impersonal (Sennett 1990). The normative approach of Sennett is based on the potential of having an urbanity where people respect and learn from each other, where the boundary becomes a stimulator. A stimulator that brings to the surface issues as equality and resistance. Hitt (1990) summarises Sennett’s view in 6 points: (1) Cities are spaces and sites of diversity where difference is privileged. (2) The settings are dense, tightly packed; there is a critical mass of diversity; cities are characterised by the overlap of manufacturing, leisure, housing, and politics. (3) Cities contain possibilities for the uncontrolled, the unpredictable and the spontaneous. (4) Urbanity then begins as bodily experience, by seeing the other and being physically close to the other. (5) In this situation of stimulation and through difference something surprising can happen through dissonance and de-centralisation. (6) The result is an interactive order of urbanity where people who otherwise would be isolated from one another take interest in other people even if they don’t understand them. The Cluster of Urban Glocal Intervention in Brussels in part five illustrates poignantly the influence of this approach on urban movements in Belgium\textsuperscript{68}.

3.2. The methodology of practices

Urban movements are split into two distinct groups. On the one hand, we observe those movements that endorse the ‘myth of community’. They see the contemporary modern city as a sort of dystopia. On the other hand, we find urban activists who strive for diversity without exclusion. For them, the city is by definition modern and cosmopolitan. The former group aims to re-create communities in

\textsuperscript{66} Neighbourhood groups in Brussels amongst others are Buurtcomité d'Aumale, Comité Pierre d'Angle, Wielewaal, Wijkcomité Vogelenzang, Wijkcomité Het Rad, Comité ter Verdediging van de Bewoners van Brussel Centrum/Comité de Défense des Habitants de Bruxelles-Centre, Omwonenden Jourdan,....

\textsuperscript{67} Regionaal Instituut voor SamenlevingsOpbouw - Regional Institute for Community Building in Flanders and Brussels, Inter-Envirenement Bruxelles (Platform of the French speaking neighborhood groups), Brusselse Raad voor het Leefmilieu (Platform of the Flemish speaking neighbourhood groups),....

\textsuperscript{68} See case study : 5. D.
neighborhoods. They organise activities that increase the social capital within the spatial boundaries of the neighborhood. From that perspective they tend towards homogenisation and to exclude the citizens who do not belong in the spatial perimeter of the neighborhood. The other group does not wish to fall back on the spatial boundaries of a community, since its field of action is the whole urban fabric. As a result, they have developed another set of tactics to subvert dominant practices that lead to exclusion. In this respect, the work of Michel de Certeau was highly influential (Giard 1987; Ahearne 1995; Buchanan 2000).

Michel de Certeau describes the tactics deployed by the weak, the subordinated, or “consumers” in society to “succeed” in everyday life. His interest is in how to redirect dominant practices. He defines the latter as “habitus”. Bourdieu originally defined the notion “habitus” as an objective system that embeds the transmission and actualisation of practices and perception (Hillier and Rooksby 2002). To analyse the way of operation between the strong and the weak, he uses the terms ‘strategies’ and ‘tactics’. Strategies belong to a subject that has been separated from the environment. It can be a scientific institute, an enterprise or an urban regime. For de Certeau, strategy is something hegemonic in time and space. Tactics are a form of operation that works within the place of the other without reclaiming it. As a result, tactics depend on opportunities, which have to be seized when the hegemonic system weakens. At such moment, it has the opportunity to resuffle and recombine heterogeneous elements of culture. Tactics depend on time and are, as a result, characterised by a degree of uncertainty.

In parallel with the thoughts of de Certeau, we observe in Brussels the rise of spatial-temporal urban action that tries to recapture the urban regime from the ruptures and fault lines in the urban fabric. For de Certeau, tactics can be perceived as a sort of improvisation that operates on the fringes of the “habitus”. For de Certeau, due to their potentiality to improvise and to their use of heterogeneous sources of information, these tactics carry a great capacity for innovation in the social order.

An example of such tactics in Brussels is the organisation PlusTottelaat. The organisation PlusTottelaat occupies since March 1998 the small office where people receive their unemployment benefit in Sint Joost ten Noode. PlusTottelaat transformed this space of financial dependency to a free public space of production, without altering its function. The organisation PlusTottelaat uses the characteristics, the working routine, the heterogeneity of people, and the infrastructure of the office in their dynamics. At the same time, the place is a laboratory for innovative thinking on exchange, labour relations, political participation, and social justice that impacts on the city as a whole. From this perspective, the city becomes a spatial and a temporal utopia, where innovation is produced due to the social capital retrieved from heterogeneous people.
B. LOCAL EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL INNOVATION: THREE HISTORICAL CASES

In this part, we shall describe three cases that are examples of three different traditions. First, the Vooruit, a 19th century co-operative with clearly reformist origins. Secondly, the Urban Glocal Interventions pursued by contemporary urban social movements. Thirdly, ARAU, a thirty years old association that can be situated in the neo-Marxist tradition. As shown in Table 1, where a number of major characteristics of each philosophical tradition and movements, as discussed in Part A, have been summarised, each case roughly belong to at least one of such traditions/movements, although significant overlaps also exist. In the following pages, we shall scrutinise in detail each case and highlight what its contribution means in social innovative terms.

Table VI.1 Synthesis of main characteristics of Belgian philosophical traditions/movements/cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Co-operative Movement</th>
<th>Anarchist Movement</th>
<th>Urban Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Origin – Date</strong></td>
<td>19th Century</td>
<td>19th – 20th century</td>
<td>1960s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reaction against</strong></td>
<td>Conquer power</td>
<td>Subvert power</td>
<td>Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>poverty</strong></td>
<td>For the Socialist co-</td>
<td>Self-management, direct</td>
<td>Ideal of community versus ideal of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>operative: classless</td>
<td>democracy, no central</td>
<td>diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>society, communism</td>
<td>government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Philosophical</strong></td>
<td>Fourier/Owen/Proudhon</td>
<td>Bakounine/Kropotkie/</td>
<td>Marx/Lefebvre/Castells/Debord/Bourdieu/Sennett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>roots</td>
<td>(1870)</td>
<td>Proudhon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional origins</strong></td>
<td>Law on co-operatives</td>
<td>Affinity groups</td>
<td>Law on nfp (1901)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1870)</td>
<td>No juridical recognition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target group</strong></td>
<td>The workers</td>
<td>A conscious elite</td>
<td>The citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Production sphere</td>
<td>Production sphere</td>
<td>Consumption sphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geographical scale</strong></td>
<td>Aim is global revolution</td>
<td>Scale of action is not explicit. Directed to all workers</td>
<td>Aim is global revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of action</td>
<td>Scale of action is not explicit. Directed to all workers</td>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td>1. Scale is the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Scale is metropolitan level/ glocal level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sort of partnership</strong></td>
<td>Party - trade union</td>
<td>Networks of affinity groups</td>
<td>1. Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- legitimacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Networks of diverse affinity groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Co-operatives represent members</td>
<td>Action is legitimised by goals</td>
<td>1. Represents the neighbourhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Aims to represent the diversity of the city.</td>
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</tbody>
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They legitimate their action by referring to the diversity of approaches in their collective action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innovation</th>
<th>Alternative forms of exchange</th>
<th>Organisational form</th>
<th>Participation</th>
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<td></td>
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<th>Examples</th>
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<th>Cluster of Urban Glocal Interventions as example for social innovation of organisations</th>
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Source: Authors

4. Vooruit in Ghent, a model for a new “socialist” society?

4.1. The origins of “Vooruit”: a struggle against capitalism through the satisfaction of basic needs

In 1873 (the beginning of a period of recession) in Ghent, thirty workers, mostly from the milieu of weavers and cotton spinners, gathered enough capital to found a co-operative bakery called “De Vrije Bakkers” (“The Free Bakers”) (Cger 1987). Contrary to its predecessors, this co-operative remains and increases progressively its activities (Serwy 1940; Dhondt 1960; De Witte 1898). The chosen niche is of course interesting: bread and potatoes constitute the essence of the worker’s eating patterns/diet and its cost constitutes an important part of the worker’s budget (from 30 to 50% according to the regions in periods of recession or crisis). Even in Ghent, and breaking with the Anti-Authoritarian anarchist movement that dominated what remained of the worker’s movements from the International Association of Workers (Association International des Travailleurs - 1865)- the first socialist party is constituted in Belgium (1877), which was the origin of the Belgian Socialist Party (Puissant 1991).

The socialist militants of Ghent and members of the “Vrije Bakkers” require with insistence that the co-operative declares itself socialist and that a part of the (increasing) profits of the co-operative be allocated to the propaganda and the political struggle in favour of universal suffrage, to providing strike-money and for social works. The majority refused, and, a new cooperative was created in
1880 under the leadership of Edouard Anseele ⁶⁹. “Vooruit” (Forward/Avanti) was also a co-operative bakery with an initial capital of 2000 francs, borrowed from the local syndicate of the weavers. “Vooruit” is at the same time a production and consumption co-operative, but it differs from the traditional production co-operatives in the fact that it works mainly for its own members, thus avoiding the risks of the market⁷⁰.

The objective of the co-operative is to fight against the exploitation of the workers by the capitalist “textile barons” and in favour of the improvement of the material situation of the workers in a context where the State is in the hands of the bourgeoisie, where poverty and illiteracy reign and where socialist ideas gain influence. According to the words of Anseele, the co-operative has to “bombard capitalism through bread and potatoes”.

4.2. “Vooruit” a model to imitate in order to increase the power of the Socialist Party

The success is immediate. From the 150 dissident members of the “Vrije Bakkers” in 1880, their numbers grew to 1500 one and half year later and a year after their foundation, they can already pay a subsidy to the Socialist Party (Liebman1979). From 1883, the “Vooruit” moves to a bigger place: an old manufacture is converted into a bakery, a shop, a café and a meeting room. The model is established and the first People’s House (Maison du Peuple) is born. Indeed, the benefits of “Vooruit” allow the construction of village halls, the opening of public libraries, an evening school for young ladies, the creation of theatre, music and choir societies. Moreover the benefits allow also the creation of a printing house and the funding of the daily “Vooruit”. Thanks to the functioning of “Vooruit”, an important part of the workers and housewives became attached to Socialism ⁷¹.

In the heart of the Belgian Socialist Party (1879), the Ghent people convince their friends in Brussels of the efficiency of the model. In 1881 the co-operative bakery “La Maison du Peuple” (the Worker’s House) is founded in Brussels⁷². In 1885, when the Belgian Workers’ Party (P.O.B., Parti Ouvrier Belge - BWP, Belgische Werklieden Partij) is created and federates most of the existing workers organisations (trade unions, mutual assistance groups and political groups), the

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⁶⁹ Anseele, Edouard (1856-1938) was leader of the social-democratic Belgian Workers Party; identified with the right of the Second International and had, like Vandervelde, been a minister several times. He launched in 1888 the idea of a First May demonstration in all the countries where the liberty of association exists.

⁷⁰ “Each Saturday, the co-operators buy their fees/chips that they can exchange during the whole week for bread that is sold on the price of the competitors with a discount of the excess-payments” (Delsinne, in Liebman, 1979). By refusing credits, the funds were assured.

⁷¹ “Men, women and their children were educated in the worship of the Vooruit co-operative” (Serwy, in Liebman 1979)

⁷² Other important cooperations in Brussels were La Prévoyance Sociale (Insurances), Lucifer (Printer Co-operative), Le Travail Collectif (a production co-operative for Painting and decoration)
more moderate members quit the co-operative. This allowed it to become a new “citadel” of the social-democrat movement in Belgium (Bertrand 1902). At the same moment, in addition to lending symbolic support through press articles, speeches or meetings, these co-operatives supported materially with the financial help of other organisations an important strike in the Borinage (a mining region in Wallonia). Thirty tons of bread was sent by full wagons to the 26,000 strikers (Puissant 1978). The aid was minimal but symbolically of paramount importance. On the one hand, it partially explains the mobilisation of the workers of the big Walloon industry (metal, coal and glass) in the political struggle for universal suffrage in the Belgian Workers Party and, on the other hand, the co-operative model was imitated as support for workers’ solidarity. Each city, each industrial village wanted its co-operative. Fourteen co-operatives were created in the Borinage between 1885 and 1888, nineteen in the region of Liège between 1886 and 1889, and many others were created all over Belgium.

This increase in support saves the Belgian Workers’ Party in the Walloon provinces in Belgium from total disappearance because of a split between the “pragmatics” supported by the big co-operative bakeries on the one hand and the “impatient” for whom the general strike must quickly lead to a republic with social preoccupations. Between the republic and the bakery, it is the bakery that wins (PUISSANT, 1986) and this success allows the Belgian Workers Party to affirm itself as the only legitimated representation of the working class and to run the political struggle in its name. The co-operatives remained the most important organisations of the Belgian Workers Party until 1914. At that moment they represented 33% of the party’s membership (82,350 out of 48,500).

4.3. “Vooruit”: a total strategy for a new society and a model petrified in monuments

The success of the co-operatives increased after the First World War (Cger 1987). Namely through the “Belgian Bank of Labour” 73 in which “Vooruit” detained the majority of the stakes. “Vooruit” controls in 1924, and only in Ghent, the following enterprises: a cotton mill, a linen mill, two weaver workshops, a chicory manufacture, a machinery manufacture, a manufacture of stoves and central heating and a popular printing house (the “Volksdrukkerij”). It seems that the “Belgian Bank of Labour” and “Vooruit” are then well on the way to appropriate the whole of the Belgian textile industry. According to Vandervelde (1925) in 1924 one bobbin in ten of all the Belgian mills fell under their management.

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73 The Banque Belge du Travail / De Belgische Bank van de Arbeid was founded in 1913 by the Ghent socialist politician, Edouard Anseele. The architect Oscar Vande Voorde was commissioned to build it in 1920, and in 1923 the bank opened its doors. As with so many bank buildings of the early twenties, the facade needed to inspire confidence. Five groups of putti symbolise industry, trade,
The creation of a socio-cultural centre for the socialist co-operative “Vooruit” and for all the Ghent socialists was an idea of E. Anseele. Through the art he wanted to elevate and upgrade the working people. In the beginning it was a real “House of the People” with card clubs, sport clubs, a movie place, a popular library, the Multatuli theatre and other possibilities for ‘popular’ activities. Between the two wars, this “red cathedral” became a symbol of the socialist powers. Afterwards it received a commercial function with the chain store “Coop” and a café-restaurant. At the end of 1982 the association Arts Centre/Kunstencentrum “Vooruit” was created. It is now a place for music and theatre projects (with spaces for rehearsals).

J. Destrée and E. Vandervelde argue that the “world of Vooruit” serves as “base for the whole workers’ organisation of Ghent”. The life of Socialism is organised around the Palace of “Vooruit”. The co-operative is not only the material base of a movement, which is reinforcing the reformism; it is also the physical meeting point, the place of rally of the workers after they quit the mine or the manufacture. It is a centre of agitation during the days of strike when they express their anger and they prepare their riposte. It is a home where a socialist conviviality takes shape. It is a café and a place for discussions and leisure for the workers freed from the constraints, the noise, the discipline, the tiredness, and the confinements of the manufactures. The co-operatives with their “Houses of the People” (Maisons du Peuple) are the living places, the materialisation, and the embeddedness of the proletarian society. They are in the centre of a network of many organisations (in the domains of culture, sport, theatre, lecture, political propaganda) and constitute this “socialist world” in genesis, a real reply to the powerful and arrogant bourgeois institutions. Here is materialised the notion of “workers’ dignity” (Liebman1979).

4.4. Criticism and decline

However, the success of the co-operatives contains the germs of not inconsiderable dangers, not only because they pass to a capitalist financing of the enterprises (limited companies - “sociétés anonymes”) but also because the importance of the enterprises pushes the work relations and seafaring, sciences and art. Five bas-reliefs symbolise agriculture, mining, the textile industry, metal-working and the building trade. The depression of the thirties forced the bank to close. The monument then became the property of the state.

74 The new building “Vooruit” was composed by the architect F. Dierkens in an eclectical style. It was finished later than foreseen because of strikes of the workers on the site and the first world war.

75 “Long ago it was the property of an important bourgeois society in Ghent. In the gardens where in the past ladies of the high bourgeoisie were showing off, now each Sunday hundreds of girls of the manufacture are dancing. The “Marseillaise” in the concerts has replaced by the “Brabançonne”; the red flag has substituted the three-coloured (Belgian) flag and during the great socialist journeys the quiet bourgeois taking refuge after their curtains, see pass the black labour columns in their quiet street as the scouts of the revolution” (Destree and Vandervelde).

76 As said by Louis de Brouckère “the People’s House represents properly for the local organisation of the party what the town-hall is for our old urban municipalities. Each action converges there, each propaganda was issued from there”.

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organisation in a capitalist direction: the management hires non-socialist technicians, who are paid ten times more than the unskilled workers; there is piece labour and overtime is common. 77

Many socialists not agree with this evolution in the co-operative movement, but to intervene, they have to wait for their moment. In 1934, the Belgium Bank of Labour is cornered to failure because of speculative investments that finish disastrously (namely a loan of 10,000,000 dollars to Bulgaria without sufficient guarantees). The international monetary and financial crisis at that moment will play an important role in this event and many other big firms (even as the Christian agrarian co-operative Boerenbond - Peasants’ Alliance) faced severe difficulties.

The heaviest criticisms of the co-operatives in general and against the “Vooruit” in particular came from Henri de Man in an important chapter of his study of the Belgian Labour Movement published in 1911 in the German socialist revue “Die Neue Zeit” devoted to the co-operatives of the Belgian Workers’ Party and their role in the party. He considers that the co-operative movement offers only immediate (material) advantages and thus has suffocated the other forms of labour organisation such as political action or unionisation. He speaks about “co-operative cretinism” because it does not “organise neither defend the class interests of the labourers, but only the strict consumers’ interests”. In his eyes the co-operatives have to be subordinated to the objectives of the labour movement in general, while in Belgium instead the co-operatives towed the trade unions and the political organisations. The consequence is dramatic because “it is not the spirit of struggle that animates or has to animate the party and the unions, that is penetrating in the co-operatives, but on the contrary it is the conservative “petit-bourgeois” tendency nourished and developed in the co-operatives, that has rubbed off onto the other organisations” 78. Against “Vooruit” he mentioned also economic, political and cultural critics. First, the co-operative “Les Tisserands réunis” managed by E. Anseele was transformed in a stakeholders society “The Labour Bank” and this operation needed a loan of one million in exchange for which the lender would sit on the board of directors. Second, the co-operative gave a free day to its employees to allow them to go to king Leopold II’s funeral. Third, he complains of the fact that the lecture tables and the meeting rooms in the “Vooruit” café were replaced by “a noisy dance organ” and by “more profitable daily vulgar movies”. The

77 Emile Vandervelde (1925) describes his visit to the enterprises controlled by “Vooruit” and the “Belgian Bank of Labour” and mentions his discussion with the director of the “Popular printing house”: “Your factories are marvellous. The only fact to possess, to exploit them fruitfully, to succeed better than the big “bourgeois” firms, give you evidently an paramount influence and prestige. But from the strict point of view of co-operation and Socialism, what advantages do you pretend to obtain ?”. The director answers “First, there are the benefits. And the majority of these benefits (15% a year) stay in Vooruit, which needs it, and for our socialist propaganda and for our own development. But, there is more: it is the fact that through the exploitation of different industries we are effectively entitled to have a regard on/an access to these industries. We see what is going, no more from abroad, but from inside. And when the employers’ benefits let a sufficient margin, it is not to us, who are inside the firm, that the employers can try to take us in.”

78 Camille Huysmans asks himself in an article of 1906 “if the co-operatives are not evolving in vulgar trade houses” (cited by Schlepner in Liebman 1979)
autocratic personality of Ed. Anseele, the founder of “Vooruit”, considering the co-operative as “his own oeuvre” and eliminating those, who did not agree with him was also criticised. As Trotzky says in his letters to Belgium: “Doctrinal education was never the strong side of the Belgian movement. Vandervelde with his superficial eclecticism and Anseele with his cynical empiricism have influenced the older generation very unfavourably.”

Other critics state that “the efficient realisation of the administrative tasks of the co-operative becomes an absolute priority over each other mission” (Serwy, in Liebman 1979).

Another important Belgian socialist theoretician, Louis de Brouckère, attributes this degradation to “a proletarian organisation which is developed within a capitalist society and which is not supported by a powerful and constantly renewing action of the labour classes living in a permanent tendency to a return to the bourgeois ideal”. He states also that the co-operative “finished by imitating all the procedures of the ordinary commercial enterprises (the client hunt, the excessive dividends, the free provision of medical products, pensions etc.)” (Debrouckere, in Liebman 1979).

After World War I, the particularistic and multiform workers’ co-operatives were integrated in a development characterised by increase in scale and centralisation. In this way the original principles of the co-operatives receded into the background, while the instrumental character of the co-operatives went to the front. This development paralleled the tendencies inside the industrial and commercial world, where mergers, cartel formation and trusts were the order of the day.

4.5. Conclusions: “Vooruit” as an alternative model for local innovation (ALMOLIN)?

In the existence and the increasing power of the co-operatives are finally concentrated all the contradictions and all the potentialities of the workers’ struggle: the accumulated force is heavy in dangers denounced by the anxious and indignant critics and rich in promises. These institutions are the result of many efforts and struggles, the proof of outstanding talents and the witness of proletarian capacity to one day manage the society of whom they claim the direction. For this reason and in that measure, the co-operatives reproduce and resume the complex nature of the whole socialist movement, characterised by the conflicting co-existence among factors of radicalisation and germs of reformism (Liebman 1979).

The voluntarist “Vooruit” initiative is a remarkable example of a socially innovative project from the epoch of the old social economy because it is characterised by its local embeddedness and its bottom-up, endogenous, multidimensional and long-term strategic approach in which the social dimension is equally input and output.
We saw that the “Vooruit” co-operative in Ghent emerged in a period of recession in order to satisfy the most elementary and urgent needs for bread through a self financing and collective system of solidarity among its members rather than an individual approach to the (failing) private retail market and in a context where the State was nearly non existent or in the hands of the bourgeoisie. In this sense the co-operators provided an answer to the negative effects of the industrial revolution (such as famine, impoverishment, illiteracy, lack of social protection) by launching an alternative production, consumption, exchange and distribution system. Typical of the social economy this system has not only a catch up function but also an anticipation and pioneer function. First it maintains the prices of consumption goods (bread, clothes, medicines…) low without economic risk for the organisation and it contributes also heavily to improve the material situation of the workers. Secondly it generates surpluses, which are spent for political struggle (through propaganda and financial contribution to the socialist party). The objective is at first to “bombard capitalism through bread and potatoes” and later to “struggle against capitalism with its own weapons”. Translated in contemporary terms one can assume that the “Vooruit” co-operative is an example of social innovation in the sense it attempts (and succeeds) to internalise the negative externalities created elsewhere on the one hand and to produce new positive externalities on the other hand. It seems to be a source of comparative advantages in the sense that it creates social capital, in addition to human, ecological and trade capital.

“Vooruit” becomes not only a model for socialist organisation to export to other Belgian cities and abroad but also, later, a real empire controlling the whole local economy. It plays a leading role in the Belgian co-operative movement on the one hand and in the development of the socialist party as a social democratic movement on the other hand. It was not only a model for other consumer co-operatives, but it acted as promoter, granter of credit and employer and it realised a social-democratic network of associations in daily practice. On the other hand, the “Vooruit”-model shows clearly the instrumental character of the co-operative. It is well known how the socialistic party (“the Belgian Workers Party”/”de Belgische WerkliedenPartij” BWP) founded in 1885, succeeded thanks to this form of consumption co-operative. Joining the co-operative signifies joining the party.

The “Vooruit” model is locally embedded because it could answer to the local demand for material (consumption goods) and immaterial (relational, educational, cultural, political) proximity services. It is an efficient system for social protection and solidarity (funds for strikes internal and external to the city) and it contributes to a powerful class-consciousness of the labour forces. It assumes the role that the trade unions and the societies for mutual help will play later (after World War I).
Everywhere a co-operative shop is founded, a people’s house (“Volkshuis”/”Maison du Peuple”) is created and around this house the functioning of the party develops. They become centres of the socialist action and of the co-operative, which can offer its members immediate advantages and acquire more trust than the movement of the trade unions. As “bases for the whole workers’ organisation”, the houses of the people are “symbols of the socialist power” and real replies to the powerful and arrogant bourgeois institutions. The life of the constantly evolving “socialist world” is organised in these “red cathedrals or citadels” operating as centres of a network of many organisations (in the domains of culture, sport, theatre, lecture, political propaganda) and materialising the reality of class consciousness and the hope of “workers’ dignity” (community identity). Except the building of this collective equipment in the city of Ghent, “Vooruit” doesn’t seem to play an important role in the improvement of the local housing and neighbourhood conditions. It is only after World War I that housing co-operatives built new social entities (mostly “garden cities”) outside the city isolating the struggling power of the labourer.

With a real network of other socialist co-operatives the “Vooruit” co-operative does not only want to correct but also to replace the dominant economic system. Therefore it contributes to the conquest of power of the Socialist Party and also to the conquest of the so-called “social agenda” (the Suffrage Universal, the paid holidays, the eight hour workday etc.). In this sense it is an application of the growth coalition model: born with local roots the “Vooruit” model is projected to a more global and national level.

We also saw that the “Vooruit” co-operative became more and more tormented between its social and public vocation and its market and entrepreneurial characteristics. The autocratic (paternalistic) personality of its founder, Edouard Anseele, considering “Vooruit” as his own work, became during his political life the friend (or better the hostage) of capitalist entrepreneurs (and namely bankers, such as Solvay) to finance his ambitious empire and using the same capitalist strategies for the growth of the co-operative movement (creation of a stakeholders bank of Labour), and the tendency to consider the co-operative as the “milk cow” of the Socialist Party and the provider of immediate material advantages to its members, are essential elements for the comprehension of both the growth and the decline of this organisation. Once the power acquired, the commercial (efficiency and competition in a changing capitalist model) and management (hierarchical/administrative) imperatives became progressively the priorities of the co-operative rather than the worry for the workers’ emancipation and empowerment. The “Vooruit” empire appeared to be a “mammoth on clay feet” because its decline was accelerated by the failure of its Belgian Labour Bank during the crash of 1933.
The objectives of the co-operative doctrine defined by the International Co-operative Alliance in London (1895) are mutual help, democracy and exclusion of benefit and they can be reduced to one basic principle: humans and not capital are the source and the standard norm of power. Formally and during more than thirty years these principles have supported the “Vooruit” adventure. It is surprising to see that none of the consulted literature refers to these basic principles.

Referring to the co-operative principles we saw that the “Vooruit” co-operative is a joined construction of supply and demand, through the services to its members, and in which trust and reciprocity relations between user and producer or provider are essential in order to reduce uncertainties and risks (information unbalance). As shown by history, these risks increase by passing to a shareholder structure. In this construction we could state a hybridisation of non-monetary, non-market and market resources. The driving force of “Vooruit” is the appropriation of the own richness through a collective action.

We could not verify to what extent during the history of the “Vooruit” the equity and the democratic decision of the members were really guaranteed according to the principle of “one member, one vote” (instead of the shareholders primacy of capital and its principle of “one share, one vote”). The critics seem to suggest that the delegation of power to the social entrepreneurs and the managerial imperatives of efficiency and market competition undermine the co-operative objectives. Over time, the co-operative has expanded into an enormous institutional apparatus in which the rudiments of the co-operative form are difficult to recognise. Conceived originally as real spaces or arenas for a kind of plural or deliberative democracy (cultural consciousness), the Labour Palaces became ordinary leisure places for the cultural and political alienated worker (as criticised by H. de Man).

If in the beginning there was an important synergy between institutions such as the Socialist Party, the Trade Unions and the Societies for Mutual Help, we could not state what were the reasons for the weakness of one organisation in favour of another. Thanks to its close links with the Socialist Party, the “Vooruit” operates as an intermediary body between the labour force (we should now speak about civil society) and institutionalised power. And when the Socialist party became part of the State, the co-operatives became a sub-apparatus of the State.

79 We couldn’t verify if there was an internal competition inside the organisation or between among co-operatives of the same (socialist) family or other families (like Christian).
5. The Atelier de Recherche et d’Action Urbaines (ARAU) in Brussels

Quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus tractari et approbari debet (All that concerns everybody has to be debated and approved by everybody)

5.1. The origins of ARAU

As most other urban associations 80 or federation of associations 81, the “Atelier de Recherche et d’Action Urbaines” (ARAU - Workplace of Urban Research and Action) is born in reaction to the functionalist doctrine and to the urbanism of the “fait accompli” in service of capitalist requirements (De Keyser, 1988). This doctrine can be summarised as follows.

First, the urban forms are progressively modified: new constructions no longer respect the layout of the streets, avenues and places and they neglect the traditional urban tissue.

Second, under the influence of the ideas contained in the Charter of Athens a mono-functional urbanism replaces the traditional mixed city and the centre of the city is progressively invested by office spaces contributing to the exodus of numerous inhabitants to the periphery. This suburbanisation trend is reinforced by the road infrastructure favouring individual motorised movements. The new urban development does not support meeting of and communication between people but, on the contrary, isolates them.

Third, these transformations are realised in the most complete opacity and the urbanist decisions are taken in the secret silence of the ministerial and municipal cabinets and of the offices of the project developers. The authorities manage the city without any real control or eventually any support of the public opinion and they are therefore without resistance. They do not want to resist since they are convinced that this evolution goes “in the sense of history”. The North-South railway junction, the Manhattan project around the North Station, the urban disruptions due to the Universal Expo of 1958 are famous examples of this “sense of history” in the making of a “modern” city and of the origin of the term “bruxellisation”, signifying the progressive destruction of the traditional urban tissue of Brussels.

In April 1968, this situation brings together some citizens coming from different socio-professional, intellectual, philosophical and political backgrounds 82 to reflect and to act on the one hand, in order...

80 Comité Générale d’Action des Marolles (CGAM), Comité de Défense de St. Gilles (CDSG) etc.
81 Inter Environnement Bruxelles (IEB) and Brusselse Raad voor Leefmilieu (BRAL).
82 Most of these intellectuals could be considered as urban elites and are situated left in the Christian Labour Movement, in the Communist or Socialist Party and now also in ECOLO, the green party. R. Schonbrodt was the first president of ARAU. He is sociologist and was public servant on the Walloon administration. J. Van der Biest is priest in the Marolles, Ph. De Keyser is
to promote the quality of urban life, to defend an alternative urban project and to propose another image of and for the city, more respectful of its history, its mixture, its good functioning, in short its urbanity, and on the other hand, in order to obtain more transparency, to publicise Brussels’s urban issues and problems, to force more democracy in the decision making process, and to give it more sense and vitality (Laviolette 1999).

A year later, ARAU went to the front in the famous battle of the “Marolles”, a popular neighbourhood of Brussels threatened by the bureaucratic project of the expansion of the Justice Palace (construction of archives). This battle was exemplary of a context in which the future of Brussels was decided over the heads of the inhabitants and where important decisions were made ministers who had not to justify their deliberations to the Brussels’ inhabitants. Faced with expropriations and expulsions (in which local residents were replaced by the Archives of the Palace of Justice), the residents resisted by demanding and obtaining finally the right to stay there in their houses and in their neighbourhood83. This victory is the germ of a movement of peaceful insurrection of the inhabitants against the ransacking of their personal space (Cnudde 1978).

5.2. Foundations, scale, resources, alliances and counter forces

Inspired mainly by Henri Lefebvre’s work, but also that of Manuel Castells, Walter Benjamin, Antonio Gramsci, Jane Jacobs, etc., the members of ARAU defended the right to the city (Lefebvre, 1968 - Le droit à la ville) and the reconstruction of the (traditional) city through the regeneration of the urban fabric the defence of a functional mixture. ARAU attempts to promote the participation of the inhabitants in the decision-making process of the city in domains as urbanism, housing policy, economic development, mobility, health, social institutions, citizenship etc.

Concerning the spatial and institutional scale, ARAU is active in the Brussels Capital Region and more specifically on the strategic spaces of the city-centre (the places with some visibility). Until 1988, it had an important institutional contribution to the configuration of the new Brussels Capital Region (SCHOONBRODT, 1988). ARAU develops a variety of ways to promote its urban work: press conferences, press releases, lectures (“Midis de l’Urbanisme”) and annual colloquia (32 Urban Action Schools since 1970). In the 1970s, one of the paramount ways to act consisted in designing

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83 In the counter-cultural sphere of May 1968 the action was also supported by cultural (anarchic) movements such as Mass Moving.
and diffusing counter projects often in association with the Architecture School of La Cambre (La Cambre, 1975-1978).

Constituted as an “association without lucrative aim”, ARAU is directed by a “bureau” of volunteers who analyse the evolution of the city region in its whole and try to influence the decisions concerning urban planning and development. The association is managed on a daily basis by a team of six full time employees. Its tourist activity provides jobs for urban guides and car firms (for around 2 million Belgian franc a year). Since 1979, ARAU is recognised by the Ministry of French Community as an independent regional service of permanent education and since 1981 as an association without lucrative aim of tourist interest by the General Commissariat of Tourism.

ARAU was criticised for much of its work. First, its (non-) representativity; second, its “pluri-classist” composition that brought together heterogeneous social groups or individuals with often divergent and inconsistent global interests around one objective; third, its requirement for more participation was considered as a form of populism (Lagrou, 2001) and, finally, its very conservative and defensive position against contemporary architecture (Galle and Thanassekos, 1984).

5.3. ARAU, a socially innovative project?

Making sure never to lapse into superficiality or into populism, ARAU is always aware of the need to put its reflection and its action in the framework of a global and complex approach to the urban phenomenon and to the realities on the terrain.

Through this pragmatic approach, the association achieved a number of successes of which the inhabitants can measure the impact: while the idea of urban regeneration was absent in the mind and practice of the public authorities, it is today current practice. The decisions in matters of urban planning are taken by its inhabitants since the foundation of the Brussels Capital Region, public spaces are renovated, etc.…ARAU (with the other associations) has been successful in slowing down the road infrastructure program, in enabling housing regeneration, in developing a Sector Plan, and in guaranteeing improved public participation, it has not obtained the concrete realisation of the right to be re-housed and it could not slow down real estate speculation, the increasing extension of office spaces and the like.

ARAU considers it as its role to bring as much transparency as possible in the decision-making process concerning urban development, and to elaborate practical answers to problems under
conditions of intellectual independence. Vigilance, autonomy and critical spirit are essential conditions for the free exercise of the democratic process.

We saw that ARAU is constituted by a critical part of Brussels’s civil society, born in reaction to the failures of the market and of the State apparatus that was more preoccupied by the positioning of Brussels as a competitive capital than by the search for local embeddedness and the promotion of endogenous development. Clearly, ARAU plays a pioneering role in the sense that it asserts the “right to the city” for the urban residents and it has a function of mediating the negative effects of capitalist urban development. Through the promotion of new institutional issues (regionalisation of Brussels and participation inscribed in the planning process), it creates the conditions for new forms of governance (participation) and contributes to the building of a community identity. Through the recognition of the plurality of the common interest ARAU creates spaces or arenas for a plural and deliberative democracy and it enables a constant learning process for the citizens and for its members. The economic and entrepreneurial function of ARAU is very limited. It is not confronted with problems of redistribution of capital but more with the tension between intellectual independence and financial survival.

6. The cluster of Urban Glocal Interventions in Brussels

6.1. The motives of action of Urban Glocal Interventions

During the last decade, we observe in Brussels the rise of an innovative form of urban action, Urban Glocal Interventions (UGI). Those interventions are realised through symbioses of different actors in the city who contribute to the project, each with its own position, expertise and competence in the city. UGIs strive for a development coalition where the participants are able to exchange ideas and experiences on the city and which build up the expert base for creative production and innovation. In addition, they incorporate actors from different scales - from the local to the global. We can speak in Brussels of a cluster of Urban Glocal Interventions where the participants cannot be captured in one name or group, but are highly diverse (neighbourhood groups, citizens, commuters, artists, firms, governments, cultural organizations, social actors).

Urban Glocal Interventions aim to promote firstly “the beleefbaarheid van de stad”™. This motto is a play on word and makes allusion to – ‘de leefbaarheid van de stad’- the liveability of the city and – ‘de beleving van de stad’ - the city as laboratory of experiences and encounters. As a result, UGIs
subscribe to the norm or utopia that cities are about diversity. Or in Richard Sennett’s words “A city isn’t just a place to live, to shop, to go out and have kids play. It’s a place that implicates how one derives one’s ethics, how one develops a sense of justice, how one learns to talk with and learn from people who are unlike oneself, which is how a human being becomes human.” (Sennett 1989)

A second reason for Urban Glocal Interventions is that it can be a pivot for innovative production and development. In the literature we find evidence of the importance of heterogeneity in its economic sense. Jane Jacobs, a veteran urban community activist, gave evidence that Manchester, in the nineteenth century a highly specialized textile city, suffered a long-term decline, whereas the more broadly diversified city of Birmingham flourished (Jacobs 1985). Edward Glaeser in turn came to a similar conclusion in a study of a cross-section of 1020 industries in the United States (Glaeser ed. 1992). The result of his research concluded that industries grew more rapidly in local economies that are more diversified. A more diverse environment implies a rise in the new pool of information from which individuals may benefit.

A third reason is to create in the city a public sphere for discussion and debate. To attain the ambition to work in affinity groups – i.e. non-hierarchy and basic democratic - UGIs create a public sphere for open debate. For the initiators of those actions, this creation of a public sphere is also crucial for the liveability and the democracy of a city.

6.2. The methodology of Urban Glocal Interventions

As the name already suggests, Urban Glocal Interventions happen neither solely at the neighbourhood level nor exclusively on the global level. Urban Glocal Interventions target strategically a micro geographic scale - such as a square, a group of houses- in order to have a positive impact on the development at another, often larger, scale. Hotel Central is a key example of such an initiative. In 1994 and 1995, a huge vacant housing block was squatted to protest against speculative vacancy in Brussels. The choice of the housing block was strategic. It was located in front of the Brussels’ stock exchange market and 100 meters from the Grand Place. The direct action in that specific location had a metropolitan-wide impact on how the population of Brussels perceived the problem of speculative vacancy. As the example points out, acupunctural interventions produce a good or a product at the micro-level that generates positive externalities –i.e. a public good- that can be enjoyed at the larger, urban, level.

84 http://www.citymined.org/article.php3?id_article=68
Considering Urban Interventions as a provider of a public good gives us interesting insights in their methodology and their [potential] function. A public good is defined in terms of non-excludability and no-rivalry. Non-excludability is the property when all actors –without exclusion- can enjoy the positive externality produced from the relation of a group of actors with the city. Non-rivalry refers to the characteristic that the enjoyment of the externally of one actor do not detract any enjoyment for another (Stiglitz 2000). An example of spaces that are not a public good is the frontiers of a deprived neighbourhood with the wealthier places. These frontiers are in many cases spaces where actors are excluded of the benefits of urbanity and where certainly a rivalry exists to reap those benefits. The project LimiteLimite was set in the Brabantwijk of Brussels and spanned a period of about two years, from initial conceptualisation to final realisation. The objective of the project was to ameliorate the image of the locality and to engender a new, inclusive, progressive urban regime. The idea was to construct a transparent tower of 9 m height. The tower was artistically well defined, geared to attract the interest of institutions that are not necessarily located in the neighbourhood itself. At the same time, the project presented something tangible, of which citizens could keep track. The location of the transparent tower was surgically chosen to obtain the optimal effect. The tower arises in the midst of a frictional zone. The tower is located in the middle of a popular neighbourhood who has a disconnected relationship with the other functions of the locality. It is located in the proximity of the business district in the central northern part of Brussels. Secondly, the tower is located at the boundaries between the main prostitution area, an immigrant shopping street, and a residential area. Thirdly, it is set in one of the main axes used by commuters for access to the railway station, Brussels Nord.

In parallel, as we look towards the positive externalities, UGIs consider urbanity as something very positive and not problematic. As a result, spaces of urbanity are spaces where actors locate their desires, interests, dreams … for realisation in the city. Those locations are the spaces where actors opt to re-appropriate the urbanity of the city. The locational choice of the Limitelimite tower was chosen, not only because the interests of potential coalition partners situate it on a crossroad of frictions, but also. The choice of location also sought to bundle diverse institutions to act collectively. The project initiators did not chose the most deprived location, but a space that attracts interest from diverse partners (schools, local government, neighbourhood groups, firms, theatre groups…).

As already said, Urban Interventions are neither local nor metropolitan, but are products of third zones from actors belonging to those different scales. A third zone emerges from the interplay between actors operating at different scales. The result is a third space where the scale difference
becomes irrelevant and where new and innovative forms of urbanity can develop – i.e. a public sphere.

The BruXXel ‘project’ is another textbook example. On 13 October 2001, the collective BruXXel occupied the vacant Leopold train Station, located in close proximity to the European Parliament. They continued their occupation until the 1st of January 2002. The timing of the action overlapped with the Belgian Presidency of the European Union. The collective BruXXel used the media attention of the summit of Laeken as a pivot to partner the European parliament with the neighbourhood associations. During the occupation the building was transformed in a creative space of open discussion, encounters and interactions. From that perspective, the station became a hybrid zone where the two levels – the level of the European Community and the local neighbourhood level were able to experiment with new forms of interaction. The objective of this intervention was to reshuffle in the hybrid zone the hierarchy of scales in the city. Its aim was to create a new urbanity where the European Institutions and the Citizens of Brussels are operating as equivalent to each other.

Urban Glocal Interventions are concerned with the relations among actors with the city and not directly with the characteristics of the actor itself. Most importantly, a relation is inherently a property of a group of actors and not an attribute of an individual actor. The use of the term actor does not imply that they have necessarily volition or have the ability to act. Actors are for example neighbourhood groups, firms, religious groups, government bodies, public transport, the homeless people of a square, the artist in the underground, the youngsters sitting on a bank in the park, the public art in the park, a student, the commuter, the person who is looking for a job, the retired man or woman feeding the pigeons…. (Wasserman and Faust 1994) PleinOPENair is another example. PleinOPENair is a cinema project during the summer months, each time on a different spot in Brussels. The objective of the project is to sensitise citizens to the richness and potentiality of the Brussels Urban landscape. Movies are shown in difficult neighbourhoods, on symbolic places and deserted areas. The program of movies and concerts is always chosen depending on the location. PleinOPENair reaches two groups of public: Firstly, the person that lives in the proximity of the location where the projection will take place and, secondly, the ‘curious metropolitan citizen’. Nevertheless, in the midst of the project the distinction between those groups become irrelevant. The neighbourhood- and the metropolitan person sit side-by-side watching the film. Moreover, if the two persons would not sit next to each other, the complete concept of the project fails. The project falls apart. Each evening, their encounter recreates a new innovative, non-exclusive and non-rival realm of urbanity. PleinOPENair aims for an intertwined relation where one group cannot
be seen without the other. As a result, the unit of action is not one actor, but the relation of a group of actors with the locality in question.

The challenge to generate effects on another scale seems ambitious given the fragmented and multi-scaled political geography of contemporary cities. An apparent example is the failed project, “The Passerel: A bridge over troubled water”, in the European neighbourhood in Brussels. The project consisted of the construction of an innovative skywalk of 112 meters from one of the entrances of the European Parliament to a public square in the neighbourhood. The project aimed to highlight the lack of communication between the civil servants working for the European Institutions with its surrounding neighbours. At one exit of the skywalk, in the public square, there would be a sign reading ‘Welcome in Brussels’ and at the exit at the European parliament, it would read ‘Welcome in Europe’. Moreover, in the middle of the skywalk the project initiators envisioned an innovative space - a `no man’s land`-, where the relation between Europe and Brussels could be re-negotiated.

To obtain the authorisation for this short-term intervention the project initiators needed not less than 14 authorisations from different governments and private actors. The project shifted therefore from a social-artistic project to an urban regime building initiative (Judge and Stoker 1995). The task of regime building was for the project initiators at that moment a bridge too far. The project failed. To realise the micro-intervention, it needed to build an urban coalition –from neighbourhood group, to community council, to Brussels region, private partners, and French- and Flemish community to the European Institutions. The latter were actually favourable to the project as it was seen as symbolising the possibility for a better communication between the citizens of the European neighbourhood and the European institutions. As mentioned, the space in question situates on two levels of the city: the local [the location of the intervention] and the urban level.

As a result, the project, if successful, would have altered the decision modes that regulate urbanity in Brussels and would reshuffle the hierarchy between not only the very micro and macro scale, but also all scales in between. Important to mention is that we see the change in urban regime not only as the change in the group of formal actors who make decisions but also the informal constellation of the localities.

6.3. Urban Glocal Interventions: A Social Innovative tendency?

The third zone is a learning zone of innovative production and creation. Urban Interventions focuses on a diverse core group of actors, considered crucial in shaping wider processes of urban integration. By implicating them, the project is able to become the leverage for a wider
development scheme. Every actor is involved because of his/her expertise. In that way, the partnership can capitalise upon the expertise and complements that of the individual members in order to make the outcome more than just the sum of the inputs of the partners. Some groups of actors aim for a better image in the neighbourhood, others for jobs, and still others for renovation subsidies for their own house. Although the different groups do not share an overall common interest, they know if they want to achieve their goal alone the probability of success will be very low. They have self-interest to organise collectively. The negotiation process achieves an overlapping consensus between the different involved actors. As such, the product of collective action becomes a multi-layered good engaged by different expertises and perspectives. This tension provides fertile ground for innovative production, capability building and creation. The process of creation of third zones is crucial to evolve as a city and to continuously re-appropriate, re-invent and re-imagine the city itself. The juxtaposition of such action at different locations in the city makes the city dynamic, exciting, frictional and vibrant. The nature and the character of the different scales involved in the intervention define its product. As a result, we observe a rich diversity of forms of Urban Interventions along different actors, cities, localities and moments.

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VII. UNITED KINGDOM

A. VISIONS, THEORIES AND MOVEMENTS OF INNOVATIVE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE UK.

by Sara Gonzalez with Huw Thomas, and inputs from Newcastle and Cardiff SINGOCOM groups.

Introduction

This paper provides a review of key ideas, schools of thought and social movements which have influenced innovative local development in Britain, largely over the last 150 years. The historical period being drawn upon has a degree of coherence, being a period of well-established capitalism. The aim is to trace back the elements of contemporary local social innovation in the UK. In order to do this we have attempted to identify the main influences in the UK history of the social economy, democratic governance and civil society. Since it is impossible to cover all possible influences, we have restricted ourselves to the most prominent and the ones that can give us good ideas about the philosophical roots of contemporary movements and actions. We have identified 5 movements or traditions and have organized them in a systematic way, giving first a little context to each of them and then asking three main questions concerning each movement: Why did they emerge? (in reaction to what, in favour of what); how did they emerge? (inspired by what, driven by what, at what scale); what did they do? Within each historical tradition we have also attempted to make the link with contemporary social movements and experiments.

1. Utopianism

Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), a prominent figure of the English Renaissance, was the founder of utopian literature with the first edition of his book Utopia in 1516. A utopian idea or initiative is
always related to the historical context in which it takes place. “Although utopias envisage an
alternative society, they are, at the same time, conceived in relation to the material conditions of
existing society” (Hardy 1979:2). They are something like a “photographic negative” (Davis1984:4)
that shows the “black” side of the contemporary society. Therefore, utopian experiments (either
fictitious or actually attempted) open up the possibility of thinking in an alternative way. They
break with the existing rules and hegemonic discourses and in consequence a new whole range of
possibilities on how to organize social life are disclosed. Although these new modes might seem
impossible to become real in society, as a whole, they help in reflecting about the possibility of
change in society. While this could be regarded as socially innovative, utopian thinking can often be
authoritarian, paternalistic and reactionary promoting a return to the past in reaction to
contemporary social changes. In the Utopian tradition there is an element of “benevolent
despotism” or “cultural engineering” (Brinton 1965:62). In such thinking development is not
generally conceptualized as a trajectory but more as a radical change, cut off from any pathways.

Utopia can be considered a method, a channel in which certain ideas that confront the current
situation of a society are laid out. Throughout history, utopian ideas have been combined with other
radical principles. Thus, “It is useful to look at the history of how utopias have been materialized
through political-economic practices” (Harvey 2000:163). Historically, in the United Kingdom
utopian ideas have been materialized and driven by the ideals of utopian socialism, anarchism, back
to the land movement, Fabianism, anti-urbanism.

Utopian energy can be said to have acquired a particular significance in 3 periods of English and
British history:

The middle of the XVIIIth century. The conflicts arising from the English Civil war, religious
dissent and “once the prevailing belief in absolute monarchy was shaken, all kinds of other
situations became possible” (Hardy, 1979:6,7). This crystallised in the Diggers movement, a group
that claimed for the right of common ownership of the land, part of whose members in 1760s
gathered at St. George's Hill, Surrey, and began to cultivate the common land.

Mid XIXth century and beginning of XXth century. It was a moment of radical change in how
society was organized with the generalization of capitalist relations of labour. The spread of
socialist, anarchist and communist ideas mixed in the work of “Utopian socialists” such as Owen in
England and Saint-Simon in France who questioned the social inequality and the poor conditions of
workers who had no control over the labour process. Some found emigration to the New World
(United States) as the best possible way to break with existing social relations and carry out
communal experiments.
Another of the most influential utopian movements in England was the Garden City founded by Ebenezer Howard (1850-1928) who was inspired by various currents of free thought and social reformism especially emergent socialist ideas. He envisioned a movement of population from the crowded and unhealthy cities to rural locations where it would be possible to establish low density communities of around 32,000 people, with factories, agricultural land and public services. These garden cities “were merely the vehicles for a progressive reconstruction of capitalist society into infinity of co-operative commonwealths” (Hall 1996:87). In Hall’s words it was a kind of 3rd system between Victorian capitalism and bureaucratic centralized socialism. This idea of progressive expanding of a new way contrasts with the more utopian and idealistic notion of radical change.

The garden city movement was a crucial precursor to the town planning movement in Britain.

From the 1960s: the dystopia of capitalism. Since the end of the WW2 there has been a growing concern with the environmental and societal damage caused by corporate capitalism. In the 1970s and 1980s there was a revival of utopian thinking with many people establishing “communes” based on anarchist, green and communitarian principles (see Pepper 1991). This has been also related to a New Age Movement which embraces anything from meditation, to organic farming, spiritual communities, alternative medicine, etc…

Although utopian worlds were first imagined in remote and exotic places (like More’s Island or Bacon’s Atlantis) cut off from real society, hundreds of utopian communities have been set up in Britain. Because the idea is to set up a new experience, start from scratch, clean from the negative elements of society, this sometimes implies a rural setting. Although there is usually no intention of changing the actual local environment, ultimately there is a wish to reproduce the experience, leading to an ultimate overall change. However, the difficulties and intensity of communal experiences leave a very narrow space to thinking about how to spread the experience or apply the mechanisms in “real life”. The scale of utopian experiments would be better described as small, closed or even as “gated” communities, a sort of “Gemeinschaft”. The idea of small-scale development has been taken up by many other philosophies and movements as we will see throughout this paper. Generally, Kitching (1982) has called this approach Populism, and has related it to alternative development initiatives against industrialism. Like Utopian thinking, Populism also idealized countryside and rural life. Recently, some of these ideas have been taken up by recent movements such as “new urbanisms” or “area regeneration strategies” with the belief that action at the small scale is effective and sufficient to solve problems that exist at all other scales (Harvey 2000:171).
2. Co-operativism

In England the seeds of a co-operative movement were sown by Robert Owen (1771-1858), who was a cotton manufacturer in Manchester. As a utopian socialist, he believed in changing the world and achieving a “New Moral World” (the title of a magazine he launched) by creating workers co-operatives. He reacted to the social problems of capitalism, namely, excessive individualism and a profit-driven economic system. He tried out his ideas in cotton mills in New Lanark (Scotland) where he built a complex of factories, schools, stores and housing where working conditions were excellent. He inspired other people to set up communities: Orbiston in Scotland, Queenwood in Hampshire, New Harmony in America, and Rahaline in Ireland. Among these, there was the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers founded in 1844, which is known for having set up the principles and rules for cooperation. In 1852 the Industrial and Provident Society Act provided co-operatives with a legal structure, which meant the regularization of the movement and cohesion among the very different initiatives at the time.

These first co-operativists believed in the possibility of creating a “system of harmonious human relationships and a thoroughgoing reform of social and economic institutions, including property, within a framework of agriculture and manufacturing industry” (Garnet 1972:220). They shared many ideas with the communitarian principles of utopians and promoted an alternative model from capitalism in which workers would find ways of catering for all their necessities within their communities. There was a notion of endogenous development combined with paternalism and social engineering elements.

Co-operative values have also been transferred into political action, mainly within working-class movements. From Owen himself, a link was established with the Trade Union movement in particular around the 1870s (Oakeshott 1978:37), and co-operativism was especially rooted in Guild Socialism, a form of socialism that advocated a system of industrial self-government through national worker-controlled guilds and stood in opposition to state collectivism and social welfarism that dominated progressive thought before 1914 (Price 1986:154). However, Guild Socialism and Syndicalist influence was always limited within the British Labour Movement (see also Oakeshott 1978:40) but it was further reduced as the depression of the 1930s decimated trade union strength and it became clear that they could not become revolutionary agencies of the class struggle (Mellor et al. 1988:28). The basic principles of socialism in Britain (trade union national bargaining and public ownership) have left little space for co-operativism as a political project (Oakeshott 1978:36).
However, an important distinction has to be made between producer co-operatives and consumer co-operatives in terms of their success and political manifestation in Britain. Producer co-operation’s history is full of failures and disappointment. The first producer co-operatives (starting from Owen) had “world amending” goals that could hardly be achieved by working cooperatively. As the goals were reduced and lessons from previous failures were learned workers co-operatives made progress and by 1903 there were 112 producer co-operatives in England and Wales (Oakeshott 1978:59). After that, there has been a gradual decline. The Webbs, very influential socialist members of the Fabian Society, together with Marx and Engels were unconvinced of the efficacy of cooperative development under capitalism and its revolutionary power, and believed they were individualist, utopian and distracting workers from class struggle. The Labour Movement became committed to socialism based on nationalization and to cooperation based on the consumer movement, but not so much to workers co-operatives (Mellor et al. 1988:21).

In Britain, in general, the Marxist (revolutionary) version of socialism did not find fertile ground. The Chartist Movement, which gained momentum around the 1840s and campaigned for workers rights, advocated for reforms in the parliament, such as universal male suffrage, annual Parliaments, equal electoral districts and so on. Although Chartism faded away, it shows the kind of change mechanism that was defended by socialists in Britain. According to Callaghan (1990:28), in the second half of the XIXth century two significant political developments occurred: the growth of the working class associations (self-help organizations such as friendly and building (saving and lending) societies, workers consumer co-operatives…) and the institutional concessions for the above (e.g. legalization of trade unions). This meant an integration of workers within the system (and not against) and a reinforcement of reformist ideas.

However, from the end of the 1960s, with industrial restructuring and increasing levels of unemployment and a new period of trade union strength, many workers responded to plant closures by factory occupations, which were sometimes followed by conversion of the company into a cooperative. These initiatives were called Phoenix co-operatives and in Britain they followed the occupation of over a hundred factories by workers. Although they didn’t turn out to be very successful, some of them became icons of workers powers, such as the Fakenham co-operative, a company taken over by its women workers in Norfolk, which was highly supported by feminist movements. Of similar symbolic importance were the so-called “Benn co-operatives” in the mid-1970s, of which 3 companies survived for 10 years (Mellor et al. 1988:46).

In contrast, the consumer co-operativist movement has been quite successful in Britain. Overall, it has taken the form of local stores selling food and small items. “The mixture of traditional
cooperative principles, involvement of the customers in running the store and good business practice, provided the successful long term foundation of the consumer cooperative movement” (Mellor et al. 1988:16). By 1851 there were around 130 societies but the law in 1852 cleared the way to found more, with 971 in 1881. By the end of the Second World War, the consumer co-operative movement had 9 million members. The movement decreased however with the introduction of big supermarkets and mass consumerism and the relative rise in the income of working class households. The role of self-help associations in general declined with the establishment of the welfare State after 1948.

Today, co-operativism is less about pursuing ideals of changing society, than a method to tackle unemployment. Moreover, it has changed in aims: from production and distribution of goods it has moved to the production and distribution of a particular type of social service. Since the 1990s, the number of co-ops in the UK providing health and social services has grown significantly because of policy shifts in the UK aimed at reorganising the provision of these services in order to decentralise control to the community level (Wylie 2001: 31). Co-operativism has been taken over by the “3rd way” agenda, as part of their “stakeholder society” and “partnership” concepts. Described as a middle way between “Old Leftism” (social democracy) and “New Right” (neoliberalism), the “3rd way” has been used to describe a new way of doing politics, characteristic to the “New Labour” government in Britain since 1997. More than a halfway between the two modes, the 3rd way hopes to combine wealth creation and social justice; promote the market and the community; embrace private enterprise but not favour market solutions; endorse a positive role for the state but no assume that governments should lead the society; offer a communitarian rather than an individualist view of society (Driver and Martell, 2000 cited in Tiesdell and Allmendinger 2001:904).

Co-operativism has been mostly confined to the local scale and has responded to the needs of particular groups in local communities. Consumer co-operativism, such as local stores, however, has served as “community centres” in numerous localities, thus contributing to community building. Because of communities having to think about their needs and the way to resolve them with their own resources, co-operativism is a community capacity building mechanism that can lead to other local development initiatives. The idea of self-sustained communities through co-operation is also held by anti-globalist movements as well as by sustainable development approaches, with which the notion of shifting power to the community from the state is shared.
3. Anarchism

Following Woodcock (1962) we can understand this as a term that is typically applied to a number of thinkers and movements characterised by a rejection of authoritarian relationships and organisations as social forms which are, in essence, disordering, cramping human flourishing and preventing the development of natural capacities for co-operative activity. As a number of reviews have pointed out, anarchism has been less influential in the UK than it has elsewhere in Europe (Blunt and Wills 2000; Woodcock 1962), but many concerns of anarchist movements and writers (though not necessarily, shared concerns) have been echoed by strands of social thought in the UK. Colin Ward, as well as documenting the history of orderly but unplanned settlements (Hardy and Ward, 1984), has reminded all those involved with planning and development of the importance of less privileged perspectives on the city (notably, Ward 1978). He gave an interesting definition of anarchists groups which tells us about their governance and scale:

…voluntary, functional, temporary and small. They depend, not on membership cards, votes, a special leadership and a herd of inactive followers but on small, functional groups which ebb and flow, group and regroup, according to the task in hand. They are networks not pyramids (Ward quoted in Blunt and Wills, 2000).

The first anarchists shared concerns with the socialists over the right of the workers to own their means of production and claimed that “property was theft”. These ideals triggered, as we have seen, the settlement of Diggers communes (agrarian communists) in England. Other ideas like anti-authoritarianism, co-operativism and a desire to establish small scale communities which instantiated values antithetical to those of industrialised capitalism were also supported by, and sometimes inspired by, anarchism. In the beginning of the XXth century anarcho-syndicalism gained some influence among the labour movement, but overall, the anarchist movement in the UK has opposed parliamentary action and reformism, which was more the sort of action practiced by British socialists.

From the 1960s and 1970s, a libertarian communism and anarchism current re-emerged in Britain as a response to the major defeats of both revolutionary anarchism and the working class movement as a whole (Organise!, 1996). But it remained highly disorganized, atomized and marginal in the formal aspects of British politics. Yet, as Blunt and Wills (2000) point out, in the 1990s there has been an explosion of autonomous, creative political organisations that prioritise self-activity and expression. These initiatives have been united by the attempts of the last Conservative Government in the UK to stamp them out – e.g. by legislating to curb raves and other unruly acts of self-expression.
Anarchist aversion to bureaucratic organisation has made it very difficult (prior to the widespread use of the inter-net) to create acceptable kinds of organisations able to co-ordinate action on a large scale. Consequently, anarchism has tended to engender a focus on action at the local scale, and there is a history over three centuries of ‘utopian’ communities throughout the UK which have practised all or some of: co-operative working, democratic governance, ‘free-love’, vegetarianism, shared ownership of property (Pepper, 1991; Blunt and Wills 2000). The major impact of these ‘experiments’ has been to keep certain ideas alive in some political and intellectual circles, but the experiments themselves have rarely achieved serious (as opposed to salacious) mainstream attention.

4. Socialism

Socialist thought, although present in many people and experiences before the XIXth century, emerged as an important ideology with the Industrial Revolution. In Britain, the “utopian socialist” Owen, was one of the first to put a form of socialism into practice. He was against the system where a minority of people would control the means of labour and exploit the workers. For Owenites, capital should be common and this would imply social justice and equitable division of wealth.

Owen’s ideas confronted capitalism, which was the economic development model that was being established in Western societies. The growth of the industrial sector fuelled by the capitalist mode, brought an increasing amount of people to the cities and to work in factories. This resulted in the worsening of social conditions and a social discontent among the workers. A distinction among people started to grow in connection to their relation with capital. This marked the birth of the working class and with it, the demands for an alternative mode of development in which the workers would have better conditions. Marx envisioned an alternative society in which workers would take over the control of the means of production and rule the society until the state could be abolished and a single class society would be established. This entailed revolution.

In Britain, the Marxist (revolutionary) version of socialism did not find much support. Although in the beginning of the XIXth century an outbreak of violence sprung in Nottingham and Lancashire by a group of workers known as Luddites, these were mostly working in knitting factories that belonged to an “older domestic system” (Jarman 1972:30). This violence was however an exception. In Britain a reformist more than a radical approach was preferred by socialists. The Chartist Movement, which gained momentum around the 1840s and that campaigned for workers rights, advocated for reforms in the parliament such as universal male suffrage, annual Parliaments, equal electoral districts and so on. The most influential movement within socialism in Britain, the
Fabians, had confidence in the political system and belief in a democratic reform. The Fabian society was founded in 1884, and Bernard Shaw and Sidney Webb became the most influential members of the group. They were concerned about the poverty that resulted from the appropriation of private property and considered capitalism as an unfit economic system for a modern society. They believed in the public ownership and the extension of the state that would gradually adopt socialist policies.

Since then, there has been a stark opposition between Public/state/good vs. Private/market/bad. By the end of XIXth century, the socialists were pursuing the organisation of a labour party to fight for the improvement of the condition of workers lives. Although the membership of Trade Unions was not very high, the socialist influence had spread to the established organizations of labour. In the beginning of the XXth century the Labour Party was founded but remained very dependant on the alliances with the reformist, bourgeois Liberals. Although Engels had hoped that Marxism would guide the Labour Party, in reality Fabianism and Liberal ideology were stronger influences. With the Bolshevist revolution, the distinction was finally sealed with the creation of a British Communist Party and its rejection of socialist reformism.

After the Second World War, the Labour Movement committed itself to the establishment of the Welfare State and the provision of public services. This was allowed by the Keynesian consensus of full employment and the political partnership between labourism of the Labour Party and the tradition of labour action at the work-place (Labour Party+Trade Unions).

The essence of the revisionist socialism is that the capitalist market system can be transformed into a collectivist state without recourse to violent class struggle. Since 1900 democratic socialists in Britain have looked to the Labour Party as the political force which would instigate the necessary changes through the parliamentary process. (Durbin 1985:280)

Generally, historic patterns developed during the process of industrialisation have dominated British Labour ideology. This has been characterized by a pattern that combined a paternalist representation of social class relations generally with a sphere of autonomy from capitalist authority at the workplace (Price 1986:252). This pattern has not left much space for social innovation from workers and for innovation in labour relations. On the other hand, the local scale has been traditionally not considered as the realm for political action from the labour movement until very recently with the adoption of a “3rd way agenda”.
5. Voluntarism and self-help movements in Britain

Although it is impossible to note only one date or place for the origin of such a complex movement we can go back to the early 19th century and Victorian Britain to look for the philosophical and ideological roots of it. However, extensive work has been done in the self-help movement prior to the 19th century (see Gosden 1973; Edwards and Chandler 2001). We could distinguish two different but related movements: on the one hand, philanthropist Victorians, wealthy industrialist that invested part of their benefits in improving the quality of life of the poor. On the other hand the mutual aid organisations of the poor or the working class, based on cooperation and mutual help. These two movements present however a major difference since the first is implemented by people which, from outside, organise structures to help needy people. Mutual aid organizations, on the other hand, are exercised by poor people from within.

Self-help or Mutual-aid movement basically developed through the foundation of small associations or co-operatives in which members would pool resources and help each other in specific circumstances and/or conditions. Among these Friendly Societies were the most popular. Friendly societies were voluntary associations rooted “in the need felt by working men to provide themselves with succour against the poverty and destitution resulting from sickness and death at a time when the community offered only resort to the overseer of the poor” (Gosden, 1973:2). Men would typically meet in a local pub once a month and make their contribution that was kept in a box by the landlord of the pub. The two financial benefits expected by a member from his local friendly society were a weekly allowance when he was sick and a funeral payment for his widow. Apart from this, these societies provided a social forum that was especially relevant for young immigrants from rural areas. By 1815 around 8% of the population was a member of a friendly society in England, approximately 29% of the males older than 15 (Gorsky 1998:493). Where a majority of the members of a society came from the same occupation there was a serious possibility that the society would become involved in industrial disputes (Gosden 1973:14). In the XIXth century the government promoted friendly societies through various acts. This was part of a wider strategy in the government to foster voluntarism and self-help that stemmed from a mix of paternalism and laissez faire philosophy.

Liberalism and utilitarianism in the XIXth century were also the roots of Victorian philanthropy and British voluntarism, which was also linked to the rise of evangelicalism. “British Protestants increasingly assumed that individual behaviour determined spiritual progress, a view very much in tune with the laissez faire ethos” (Prochaska 1988:24). Liberals typically distrusted the state, as well as nonconformists. Friendly societies, and voluntarism, self-help and the multiplicity of other
organisations that made up civil society, embodied the best elements of Adam Smith’s liberalism. It was an ideal of limited government that put its faith in co-operation in civil society rather than in the political sphere (Green 1999:18). In a similar vein, ‘non-conformist’ or ‘dissenting’ churches have been significant, in terms of social thought, because they have, at various times and places: provided institutional and philosophical support for opposition to, and questioning of, hierarchical and exploitative social relations, and the state’s role in upholding them and provided practical illustrations of democratic practices in social life.

Seen as "antithesis of collective or statutory authority" (Prochaska 1988:6), the voluntary impulse, seeks to provide help at the local level. Self-help organisations typically emerge as a response to the need of people linked by residential, religious, or professional bonds. Friendly societies, the parish in the XIXth century or local co-op shops, act as local development centres, where people who share problems gather to find a common solution. The local scale gives these organisations the ability to respond to local challenges and initiatives, because people who make them have an intimate knowledge of the neighbourhood as a whole and its individualities and particularities. The mechanisms that are used draw on informal traditions such as family relations repertoires, which makes these organisations flexible and reachable.

Apart from friendly societies, other similar self-help initiatives have flourished in Britain. Building societies were born alongside friendly societies but the subscription rates were higher, therefore involving members of the lower middle class, rather than the poor. The money of this subscription was destined to build or buy a home. By 1869 there were around 1,500 and 300,000 members in Britain. (Gosden 1973:152). The innovativeness of what were originally small-scale self-help initiatives has declined however as they grew into major financial institutions, severed from any community or class base, and increasingly regulated by the state. The conversion of many Building Societies into joint stock companies is merely the last small step in a long road away from innovation. Building societies were founded as common ownership organisations for the finance of house-buying, not for organising its production or management. They thereby helped extend house ownership, and differed fundamentally from housing co-operatives.

6. Community Action

Community action, i.e. initiatives that have a strong “local” basis (usually in the sense of “residence”) can be traced back to the industrialization process and the rapid growth of cities. Problems with urban planning, health or housing fostered a reaction among urban poor communities to demand for better living conditions. In 1915, for example, this crystallized in a massive rent
strike in Glasgow in which around 20,000 households, primarily concentrated in the working-class communities of Clydeside area and organized by the women’s movement, stopped paying their rents with the full support of the trade unions and left wing parties (Castells 1983). Henderson et al (1980) have noted that apart from these working class protests, community work in the UK was more of a conservative and reformist kind. For example, in 1884, a Church of England priest and his wife founded Toynbee Hall in the East End of London. It was a kind of social inclusion agency and resource centre “one of whose objects was to help the local population acquire organisational skills and resources” (Henderson et al. 1980:31). The idea behind this experience was that the privileged ought to go to live with the poor communities and assist them with their skills. From the time of Toynbee Hall until the late 1960s theories of community work have been mainly based on a moral vision of neighbourhoods characterised by inter-class co-operation.

However, during the 1960s, the publication of Gulbenkian and Seebohm reports were very influential contribution to the creation of community work as a profession as something different from charity. The term “community work” was itself coined in the Gulbenkian report, which saw this profession as consisting, of three interrelated forms of activity: community development, community organisation and social planning. These were, indeed, solutions of a professional nature. With these reports, the “catholic and almost mystical sense of community” (Mayo cited in Henderson et al. 1980:32) that had been held before, was marginalized in favour of a professionalized view of community work related to the social work profession in general. According to Baldock (1977), the fact that people in positions of influence (such as member in the Gulbenkian study Group) wished to see the development of community work was related to the strategy of cutting out the Welfare state. Professionalization of community work was seen as part of the “medical model” to approach poverty in urban areas. These ideas also connected with American experiences in which traditional casework was being expanded to group or community work.

The 1970s ideas on community work broke with the traditional conservatism of community work in Britain (as exemplified by Toynbee Hall) and opened up the door for the radicalism that would characterized community work in Britain subsequently. Several elements formed the context in which this radicalism was to flourish. First, the 1970s followed the prosperous post-war years and saw a halt in the sustained growth and the general privileges that the working class had attained during those years. According to Lees and Mayo (1984:1) “since the mid 1960s there has been a growth in community action of various forms. This has included the welfare rights movement, resistance against planning and redevelopment, the squatting movement, strategies to form alliance
with trade unions, the local organisation of ethnic minorities, the development of feminist groups and demands for the devolution of decision-making in industry, politics and government”.

This was coupled with the government’s policy to professionalize community work and fund community workers across the country especially in city councils. The new community workers were generally young people who had come to universities and colleges around 1968. A majority of them wanted to try out the revolutionary and Marxist ideas that had been taught. The impulse to urban community action among radical students was probably encouraged to some extent by the example of urban action among black people in the United States (Baldock 1977). Finally, the entry into community work of people from town planning or mass media also brought the attention to new issues and added to the radical flavour of the moment. This trend could be located within the New Urban Left, and most probably some of the councillors involved in community work were part of such a broad political alliance.

In particular, the Greater London Council (GLC) led by Ken Livingstone (now Mayor of London) put together a political coalition that crossed a number of social cleavages but managed to support an agenda calling for radical re-thinking of social and economic relations, from those around property ownership to sexuality but with a strong claim for decentralization and local development. This “coalition” was generally called “New Urban Left” and embraced socialist councillors, party and community activists and radicalised elements of government professions, such as social work, planning or housing (Boddy and Fudge 1984: 7). It was an attempt to create a new majority coalition in alliance with the traditional Labour movement but trying to broaden the scope in order to face the contracting of the working class (Gyford 1983:91). Some of these Labour -governed municipalities reacted defensively to the Thatcher Government’s strategy of cuts, controls and privatisation (Boddy and Fudge, 1984:3). As city councils grew more confident, they developed a more proactive agenda, becoming increasingly involved in local economic development. In the early 1980s, a number of local authorities, notably Sheffield, West Midlands County and the GLC set about developing radical economic strategies that broke away from the mainstream concerns in the 70s (Boddy 1984:161). They insisted that with state intervention economic restructuring could be undertaken to benefit Labour, rather than Capital; they favoured cooperatives, investing in the development of new markets rather than precipitous closures and similar initiatives.

Many of these elements were foreshadowed in the government sponsored Community Development Projects (CDPs) which were one of the British Government’s first attempts to tackle poverty and social exclusion at the level of the neighbourhood and engaging communities. They were part of a
broader unease about inner cities at the end of the 1960s and were influenced by the concern over American city centres and race riots in 1968.

The general aim of CDPs was ‘to create a more integrated community, supported by services more integrated in their concepts and practices’ (CDP 11 February 1969). The problem of poverty was located primarily in the individual and collective characteristics of the poor. The solution was seen to lie not in changes in the social structure, but in improved service delivery or in more localised changes’ (Loney 1983:49). Control of the projects was gradually decentralised to local organisations that increasingly, in line with developments in the social sciences, began to adopt increasingly Marxists modes of analysis. As Ravetz (1980:106) commented ‘their analysis of the problems in their areas led some to conclude that only a radical change in the power structure of society could begin to provide solutions. This ultimately led to the downfall of the projects ‘not surprisingly, the government was unable to subscribe to this view and decided to close down the projects in 1976’ (ibid).

In the 1990s, “the position of community development work had become a little battered and activity was reduced” (Smith 2002). According to Smith, current community work approaches appear to have been increasingly harnessed to the development of centrally planned initiatives such as community care. The emphasis has been less on fostering democracy than on facilitating enterprise (as in the U.S.). Thus, it has been orientated towards local economic development and the idea of empowerment and capacity building of communities.

With the arrival in 1997 of a New Labour government, a so-called 3rd way agenda has been pursued. Within this, the community discourse has been somewhat linked to a moral and values discourse in which individuals, as part of communities, are responsible for their behaviour (for example delinquents) with a particular emphasis on eradicating “social irresponsibility”. The idea of citizens’ rights has been combined also with that of responsibilities. In a Green Paper, published in 1998, the Government talked about a “new contract between citizens and the state” and the matching of “rights and responsibilities”. Stemming from this conception, local development has been understood as a partnership between local communities, government and private companies. This has opened up a complex matrix of layers and networks, starting from the many different government levels (local, regional, national), new figures (such as local entrepreneurs) and a whole array of governance mechanisms (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, Local Strategic Partnerships, New

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85 Thanks to Jon Coaffee who provided notes on CDPs

86 Twelve projects were established – Coventry, Liverpool Upper Afan (Glamorgan) and Southwark (1970), Bately, Newham, Paisley (announced in March 1971), Cumberland and Newcastle (August 1971), Birmingham, Oldham and Tynemouth (December 1971).
Deals for Communities, etc…). In all these programs and policy initiatives, the idea is to have an integrative approach, with cross cutting issues along the different governmental departments, and place the “community in the driving seat” (SEU 2000:5) of local development.

7. Contemporary Movements.

Among the contemporary movements we have considered two different strands that borrow ideological ideas from some of the traditions that we have already discussed. On the one hand, as part of a green-red radical movements there are groups that have been inspired by anarchism, communism and some aspects of utopianism. On the other hand, other initiatives that we have called reformist, borrow from co-operativism and self-help philosophies.

7.1. Red-green movements

Most radical environmentalist aims are probably inherently socialist by nature and certainly are not compatible with laissez faire (Pepper 1986: 115). However the type of socialism mainstream in Britain (not radical, not anarchism) makes it difficult for environmental activism to develop a significant presence in the labour movement.

In the field of radical environmentalism87, however, there are associations with localist forms of development, links to anarchism (Kropotkin in particular) and decentralised communitarianism. Some of this thinking was revived in the early 1970s, most obviously with ‘Limits to growth’ and Schumacher’s ‘Small is beautiful’. Inherent in this line of thought is a call for the decentralisation of power and authority if ecological limits are to be respected. The ‘new localism’ of the 1980s and early 1990s partly represented a rediscovery of this, driven somewhat by Local Agenda 21 activity.

Two key social movements can be identified in recent times, with one mutating into another. First, Non Violent Direct Action (NVDA) became a definable movement of its own in the early 90s in the UK, later becoming part of a wider so-called DiY (Do it Yourself) culture, an umbrella term for the (largely youth) sub-cultures associated with the rave scene, environmental direct action, and ‘happenings’ reminiscent of Situationism (McKay 1998).

These two movements represent a somewhat new/revised form of the radical environmental movement with strong links to other social movements. They are potentially very relevant for the

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87 Thanks to Geoff Vigar for the ideas on environmental radicalism. In the longer version of this paper we expand on this.
SINGOCOM project, partly because of their increasing attention to forms of intervention capable of synthesising and promoting social and environmental justice concerns through local development initiatives. There are also loose associations with the traditional Labour movement - there was much talk in the late 1980s about ‘red-green’ alliances on the fringes of formal politics. In Wales, the Green Party and leftist elements of the nationalist Plaid Cymru have formed very effective electoral alliances in some areas. Part of this environmental justice agenda has been co-opted into what is loosely and somewhat inaccurately labelled the anti-globalisation movement. In its more recent UK form, it emerged through: links to other social movements; as a response to a perceived institutionalisation of groups such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace; and, more positively, as a way of doing things such groups couldn’t legally pursue. In the UK transportation and quarrying were early foci. The UK anti-roads movement was a key mobiliser. It span out of UK Earth First! in the late 80s, labelled itself Road Alert!, and used new information communication technologies to coordinate actions (see www.schnews.org.uk for the one of the most long-standing examples). An eclectic use of new and old technologies remains a feature of many of these groups.

Some of these initiatives have elements in common with anarchist ideas, sentiment and practice: eco-villages (small settlements committed – at a minimum - to participatory governance, sustainability and experimentation with energy generation, agricultural practices and land ownership); New Age Travellers, ‘part alternative lifestyle, part youth sub-culture and part new social movement’ (Hetherington 2000:2) – nomadic, flexible, individualistic but neighbourly; and the aforementioned ‘DiY Culture’.

Alongside this, radical community action has continued to challenge power structures, but different issues have entered its agenda. Over the last fifty years class has become less commonly referred to as a collective identity and other social movements – notably, in the UK context, feminism and, lately, the disabled movement and Gay and Lesbian movements – have become significant as bases for critiques of ontological individualism, and as bases of collective action for empowerment and collective capacity building. These social movements have been especially influential in bigger cities, notably London, where they achieved (briefly) startling political success in helping to shape a new kind of Municipal Socialism in the mid 1980s based on a ‘rainbow coalition’ of identity groups, single-issue interest groups, middle class Labour Party supporters and the more left-wing working class base of Labour. On the other hand, national and regional identities appear to have been used, at least in the period since 1945, to bolster an unremarkable boosterist project (i.e. ‘unremarkable’ in the sense of not seeking to break any fresh ground politically). It as arguable that this has been, in part at least, a reaction to the heavily centralised nature of UK politics, and the need to lobby for resources. Devolution may well change that.
7.2. Reformist trends

Recently, and related to the social economy new initiatives have been flourishing in the UK, partly encouraged by the government and its “3rd way” drive, to provide financial independence to the poorest members of society. Five types of what has been called “community development finance” have recently been identified: credit unions, community loan funds, micro-finance, social banks and mutual guarantee societies. These are contemporary versions of the self-help tradition discussed earlier. In 2000, Community development finance mechanisms controlled a capital of about £500 million in the UK (New Economics Foundation, n/d).

Contemporary manifestations of voluntarism are the activities of the Anglican Church and other faith communities, which have played a role in urban regeneration in the last two decades. One of the main actions was the publication in 1985 of Faith in the City, a report produced by the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Commission of Urban Priority Areas. Local faith communities have been seen by the government as suitable arenas to mobilise participation within urban regeneration, as some kind of “containers of social capital”. Faith groups provide networks of mutual aid. Places of worship such as churches or mosques, work as community centres. They can also provide welfare services, clubs…and they have been known to initiate community resource centres, credit unions, LETS (Local Exchange Trading Systems) and training. In addition they provide a structure that can support social involvement, while discouraging overly radical questioning of the status quo (with the exception of the issue of racism, most minority ethnic faith groups tend to be conservative in outlook).

8. Concluding remarks

The over 150 of history of British development ideas have showed three general alternative approaches to mainstream socio-economic conceptualization of development. The first one has been called populism by Kitching (1982) and embraces all those thinkers who, since the beginnings of industrialization in the late XVIIIth century, have offered an alternative of small-scale individual enterprise. Some thinkers in England lambasted the ‘dark satanic mills’ of the first Industrial Revolution with a conscious rejection of industry, the city and even of scientific rationality and turned to celebration of the countryside and rural life (Kitching 1982:2). Populism did not, however, reject material progress, the increase of material prosperity or wellbeing; rather it argued that this could come about without large-scale industrialization and urbanization. This has been the approach
taken by older populists like Ricardian socialist or utopian socialists and newer versions of neopopulism like self-help, co-operativism and voluntary organizations and some recent local development policies. Some of these approaches were taken up by working class and lower middle class people and illustrated the capacity of ‘ordinary’ people, of little wealth, to organise new ways of delivering a certain degree of security and welfare. These initiatives promoted virtues and behaviour supportive of capitalism – thrift and the importance of individual responsibility, for example. In this sense they belonged or were close to a bourgeois-liberal ideology. In fact, they also removed individual welfare from the market and from the state responsibility, and pioneered new ways of thinking about how it might be guaranteed. These initiatives have challenged the assumption that development is about economic growth and have diverted the attention to more social and human issues but they haven’t questioned the basis of capitalist development.

Another general approach has been based on mass mobilisation and large-scale development and in Britain it has been promoted by socialism and the labour movement. It has promoted the improvement of the conditions of the working class as a whole through institutional reforms and public ownership of the means of production as a mechanism to achieve this. In Britain this form of reformist socialism has been more prominent than the Marxist revolutionary strands, yet it has criticised the mechanism of the unfettered market and looked for a general change in the production and distribution of goods and services. At the local level, Community development, especially in the 1970s, and the Municipal socialist experiences belonged to this approach and defended a structural change in society, through local actions.

The last strand has been a more radical-anarchic perspective on development which has elements in common with the small scale development approach but has pursued a more radical agenda bringing issues of environment, gender, identity and has explicitly challenged the capitalist mode of production.
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B. SOCIALLY INNOVATIVE EXPERIMENTS

9. Social Innovation in the Cardiff Area

by Liz Court

9.1. The Penrhys partnership, Rhondda Valley

Background

The Penrhys Housing Estate was developed in response to a high demand for municipal housing in the Rhondda Valley. Started in 1966, it was one of the biggest housing projects undertaken in the UK and the largest in Wales. The estate opened officially in September 1968 and eventually became home to 4,000 people.

A review of the history that led to this 'modern' Penrhys village reveals a complex combination of factors and aspirations which have ended a utopian dream but which provide useful insights and vital lessons for the future of such developments.

A redundant coal-mining community and a declining population in Rhondda

Prior to 1851 the Rhondda Valley was a sparsely populated farming area. With the growth of coal mining, iron working, shipping and immigration, the population exploded throughout South Wales from 951 in 1851 to 167,900 in 1924. Now less than 78,000, the last pit, at Maerdy, closed in 1990.

In the 60s some collieries were still operational and the National Coal Board requested 350 houses on Penrhys. The Estate was planned when the pits had a future. Instead the mines closed, with a stark decline in the demand for unskilled and semi-skilled labour. At the same time there was a trend towards home improvement, a buoyant private sector market for house sales and rented properties and a changing role for Housing Associations. Demand for accommodation in peripheral areas like Penrhys slumped.

Utopian Planning in the 1960s - the potential for problems

Penrhys was romantically designed on an Italian hill-village style. Located between the Rhondda Fawr and Fach valleys, with gradients of 1 in 7 and an altitude of 1107', it suffers from ferocious weather and numerous construction problems.
It has been suggested that the design of Penrhys militates against community spirit. Front-doors face in opposite directions making it hard to know even your next-door neighbour - an almost unknown phenomenon for valleys people.

In the 60s innovative housing schemes seemed to offer a solution to social problems. The first phase of Penrhys, developed to Parker Morris standards, has a ring road with pedestrian access to all dwellings. The second phase of the site included infants and junior and four nursery schools, a pub, a petrol/service station, branch library, doctors' consulting rooms and inter-denominational Church. The focal point for the estate was to be a sheltered shopping and community centre and 400-seat hall.

This next phase never materialised.

* A *distressing decline on Penrhys*

Social studies undertaken in the 1970s revealed serious problems: high rents; poor workmanship; inadequate and costly heating; noise; rubbish; crime and vandalism.

People disliked the maisonettes and flats. Community spirit never developed and residents felt isolated from friends and family. Housing demand became non-existent; dwellings were allocated to families and individuals with 'problems'. The area developed a poor reputation and applications from potentially good tenants diminished. All these factors led to a decline in estate morale.

The estate is perceived as an example of everything that is considered inappropriate with a late 1960's housing scheme where high density, architectural licence and innovative construction methods prevailed. New villages were created without heart, community spirit or the infrastructure required to stimulate and support growth in economic, commercial, education and social terms.

Penrhys does, in numerous ways reflect the errors of that generation and provide a snapshot of their consequences. Physical deficiencies can be remedied strategically; however the effects of social deprivation, unemployment, poverty, ill-health, crime and vandalism require the targeting of resources on a structured basis with a commitment from all concerned to pursue progress to mutually satisfactory solutions. It is impossible to achieve overnight success to resolve problems that have taken years to manifest themselves.' Winters T (Three editions, 1993, 1994, 1996)

*Why the Penrhys Partnership formed*

The Morgan family drove the Penrhys Partnership. John Morgan had been Provincial Moderator of the United Reformed Church in Wales from 1979-89 when he became minister of the fragile Penrhys Uniting Church. Motivated by the fall-out from the 1984-85 Mining Dispute and the
Brixton Riots, the Morgans moved from Cardiff to Penrhys to discover at first hand what seemed to be destroying Britain's social and economic fabric.

Three seminal documents underpinned the Morgan's thinking: The Christian Aid Policy Statement (July 1987); The Faith in Wales (Church in Wales Board of Mission, September 1988); a Welsh version of 'Faith in the City'; The Priority Estates Project in Wales 1984-87.

What happened

In 1986 the Morgans felt that it was essential that individuals and agencies that support disenfranchised communities must live and share their life. Bringing a wealth of experience of church and community life, the Morgans moved to Penrhys, which also required a fundamental shift in their own attitude and life-style. The Church had been on Penrhys since 1971, recognised by all major Churches-in-Wales. The aim was to create a partnership with the statutory authorities, the private sector, charities, the churches and the Penrhys residents.

Outcomes in social innovation, governance and community building

The first initiative was the Pernrhys New Perspective which co-opted 30 resident volunteers from the estate to run five community projects. This is still on going.

Quality of Life. Penrhys New Perspective (PNP) raised funds and refurbished a maisonette block, gifted by Rhondda Borough Council (RBC) in 1990. Opened in February 1992, the new Church/Community Centre is called Llanfair. A mini- bus is used for shopping, swimming, visits to libraries, nature walks etc.

Governance. The Penrhys Partnership was a vehicle, set up by John Morgans, to engage private, public and voluntary sector agencies in Penrhys on terms acceptable to residents of the area. The Action Group is a residents group, controlled entirely by them, set up to promote their views and interests in local governance processes.

Socio-economic. The volunteers run: café open four days and three evenings, averages 75 young people; boutique with nearly-new clothes donated from England and Wales; launderette, open 5 days a week; crèche, open 2 mornings and afternoons.

Social justice. In 1991 PNP was recognised by the then Secretary of State for Wales. The Penrhys Partnership formed to progress a joint vision for a Village Centre. Penrhys Community Action Group was formed by nearly 200 residents in 1997 to develop a Feasibility Study for the future of Penrhys. More than 300 families wish to remain on the estate. The Action Group has produced proposals to maintain and improve the infrastructure and community life of the estate, which are being pursued with Council. These include the creation of defensible space; the shared ownership
and management of Penrhys with the Local Authority and a Housing Association; the creation of open public spaces to be designed on sustainable environmental principles.

**Learning for Life.** Capacity building for adult members of the community. Art, music, education, youth, mature study programmes, environmental and leisure activities. Facilitate learning with schools and other community groups

**Sustainable development.** A team, with the Minister as Team Leader, lives in the community centre and work on Penrhys. There is a full-time voluntary worker; a community worker, funded by Laura Ashley for 3 years to concentrate on child and adult literacy, working alongside the Church and local schools; a youth volunteer to specialise in music, funded by the Churches; a student volunteer, training for ministry.

The ten years old Penrhys Partnership consists of a Board of residents, and representatives from support agencies and public and private sectors. The Partnership has created: an amphitheatre in 1992, built by an international work-camp entitled Youth In Mission. Y Ffynnon - the Village Centre: 6 residential flats, a doctor's surgery, chemist, food shop, Credit Union and a one-stop shop for Social services and the Housing Department of Rhondda Borough Council. Cartref - a derelict housing block, gifted by RBC, converted into high-quality, secure accommodation for vulnerable Penrhys residents. Canolfan Rhys - a recording studio, performance area, art and music workshops, dark room, computer suite and three bedsits and two flats.

**9.2. Butetown History and Arts centre. Cardiff.**

**Background**

In 1850 Cardiff was a mere village, which expanded in the 19th century to become the world's major exporter of coal. A multi-national society grew up around the associated industries of iron, steel and shipping and coal mining activities.

South Cardiff was home for this multi-national society. Designated as Butetown, after the Marquis of Bute who drove and funded Cardiff's industrial development, it became known as 'Tiger Bay'. This tiny piece of land within the capital city of Wales emerged as one of Britain's earliest intra-cultural and multi-ethnic communities.

*A socially and economically disengaged docklands area*
Cardiff's docklands became socially and economically disengaged from the rest of the city during a long decline from the 1920s. As the city's growing and diverse economy encouraged physical expansion to the north, the city's industrial south languished in physical decay.

Butetown, the multi-ethnic heartland of a few thousand people was consistently the most socially deprived area of the city and also the most stigmatised in a city blemished by racial discrimination (Commission for Racial Equality, 1991).

In the 1950s Cardiff City Council carried out a radical programme of 'slum clearance' in Butetown, pulling down traditional family homes, which could have been refurbished, saving an important architectural heritage for the future. The vast colourless estate designed with anti-social, lacklustre streets that replaced these homes, has played a key part in the decimation of the Tiger Bay community. Neil Sinclair puts forward the view of the community in his book 'The Tiger Bay Story'

"During the post World War 1 period, despite the indifference of the city at large and the negative reports frequently published in the papers of the day, the Tiger Bay community had somehow survived - more unified than ever since the First War of Tiger Bay succeeded against the race rioters.

However, the City was not content that we were happy - in spite of the adversity imposed upon us by racially discriminatory policies that forced unemployment on most coloured merchant seamen. Local seafarers of every race made sure our tables were full. As it was, when we ventured out of Tiger Bay we did not always receive the welcome that outsiders who dared to come in peace found when they came to us.

From our point of view, long before weapons of nuclear destruction existed, the City of Cardiff seemed hell bent on the destruction of Tiger Bay. Some in our community have expressed the opinion that the redevelopment was a device to rid the up and coming capital city of this 'blot' on the landscape.

The city media generally encouraged this conclusion by regularly reporting damaging descriptions of life in our community. Even today such reporting is not infrequent. However, despite the municipal ostracism, Tiger Bay has endured: our community has evolved a sturdy tradition of survival, self-sufficiency and self-discipline against the odds." (Sinclair N 1997)
The Regeneration of Cardiff Bay

In the 1980s Cardiff Bay Development Corporation (CBDC) carried out a 'property led' regeneration of the city's multi-ethnic dockland, which came be to known as Cardiff Bay.

"It was not concern about racial discrimination which prompted governmental interest in the regeneration of the docklands, with over £400 million spent from 1987 onwards on upgrading infrastructure, consolidating land, inducements to new firms and marketing campaigns.

…the welfare of the residents of Butetown played little or not part in the deliberations and was not to feature in the mission statement of CBDC, a state agency which from 1987-2000 managed what it hoped would be the process of creating a 'superlative maritime city', with 'a superb environment' and 'the very highest world-wide standards in design'.

…this physical transformation has by-passed the existing residential community, which lives largely in well-defined relatively modern social housing estates, some of which are poorly built; the poor state of these areas and their bad reputation (the result of years of racialised stigmatisation of Butetown in Cardiff's popular culture and the media) has left them as islands in a sea of rising land values and up-market development." (Thomas H 2002)

Why Butetown History & Arts Centre (BHAC) formed

Butetown History & Arts Centre began in 1987 as a community-based oral history project. Grounded in an ethos of collective work and collective responsibility, BHAC began as a serious attempt to provide a space for the production of alternative histories, identities and representations of life in Cardiff's docklands.

"We knew that we had a unique history but we hadn't realised how unique it was until someone came in and said, "You are history and if we don't do something about it, it will be lost." So in a way, for me, because that's the way I am, it became a crusade. I suddenly realised that everything around us was changing - we could actually see it - and that the elderly people were dying and lots of residents had moved away through the 'slum clearance' of the 1950s and 1960s. So the community had depleted from, I believe, about 5000 in the 1950s, to two and a half thousand … We realised that we had to start to do something about it." (Barry M 1996)

The backbone of BHAC's work is the Bay People's Archive, a living record of life in old Cardiff Docklands, including 'Tiger Bay', Britain's most famous multi-ethnic community. This unique collection consists of some 400 hours of audiotaped life histories and some 3,000 old photographs - in addition to newspaper articles, seamen's discharge books, boarding house ledgers, marriage certificates and other documents.
Outcomes in social innovation, governance and community building

Quality of Life. The Bay People's Museum & Arts Centre opened in 1987 and provides a substantial contribution to the regeneration of Cardiff docklands. A key role is to facilitate positive interaction between old and new communities of Cardiff Bay.

Governance. BHAC is run by a board of directors elected annually by a membership which is a mixture of local people and sympathetic ‘outsiders’. In practice, local people constitute a minimum of half of the board; and there are representatives of volunteers (usually local) who help with the project. BHAC struggles, generally successfully, with the need to balance outside assistance – financial and technical – with continuing local control.

Socio-economic. A key aim is to upskill the local community and provide volunteer and work opportunities through the Bay People’s archive. This has been achieved through two related projects, part-funded by a Home Office “Connecting Communities” grant and a Welsh Arts Council Lottery Grant. Together these projects support: a programme of exhibitions; radio & television - using photography, visual art & digital technology; publications - books & catalogues on Cardiff and multi-ethnic Wales; education for youth - local history, multiculturalism, photography & the arts; lifelong Learning - community education programmes for adults; performing arts - music, storytelling, drama workshops in our gallery space.

The long-term aim is to develop the Centre to include permanent galleries, changing exhibitions, multimedia displays, classrooms, a performance space, a café and a gift shop. Such a centre would be of considerable benefit, in economic, social terms to Cardiff and to Wales. It would be a leading heritage attraction and a major cultural institution benefitting diverse audiences, ranging from local communities to visitors from the rest of Britain and abroad.

Social justice. Overarching aims are to contribute to multi-cultural and multi-racial awareness.

Progress cultural democracy. For several years, programmes produced on radio or television whose subject matter includes the history of 19th & 20th century Cardiff, multiculturalism in Wales or the Cardiff Bay development have involved BHAC often in the form of a consultancy role, providing old photographs, research assistance or local contacts. In 2001, Glenn Jordan, Director of BHAC, narrated Bay People, two-half hour radio programmes broadcast on BBC Wales on the social and cultural history of Cardiff docklands. Cardiff is one of the few UK cities without a local history museum; BHAC seeks to fill this gap in an innovative and interesting way.

Learning for Life. Collect and preserve the social history of Butetown (Tiger Bay & the Docks). Help people from inner-city Cardiff acquire education & training to enable them to participate.
meaningfully in the new Cardiff docklands. Education for adults and young people - exhibitions and educational programmes explore themes such as immigration, identity, community, popular culture, urban regeneration and media representations of racial and cultural difference. Schools programme are keyed into National Curriculum requirements, which satisfies history, geography, art and multiculturalism at all Key Stages. A Walk & Talk programme of tours and site visits around Cardiff Bay, introducing groups to the history of the docks and the area's culturally diverse communities. Books, educational materials, teaching packs, booklets and CD-ROMs. The Centre hosts visits by under and postgraduate students. Help is given with dissertation research and theses are held in the archive

*Sustainable development.* Through the Bay People's Centre and its related activities and initiatives, ensure that the social and cultural history of Cardiff Docklands, one of Britain's most famous communities, is preserved for posterity. Attendance numbers at the Centre 10,039 from April 2001 – 2002.

**9.3. The Arts Factory**

*Background*

"South Wales was never a wealthy economy in relative terms. Much of the wealth generated through the coal industry was concentrated in a small number of hands, as manifested by the grand homes of coal owners and the banking buildings that dominate parts of Cardiff's docklands. It did however, have employment, based on coal and its associated industries, notably steel. As a result the men of the South Wales Coalfield had earnings which compared favourably with the rest of Britain, and it was an economy based on male working and earning.

As pit after pit closed, the powers that be responded with an 'eggs in one basket' economic development policy - almost total reliance on attracting inward investment. Announcement after announcement was made through the late 1980s of new companies investing in Wales.

…Sadly, the real picture was not so rosy. Male employment was being replaced by female employment - no bad thing, of course, in itself. But this new work was often part-time, invariably low skilled and usually low-paid. The number of new part-time jobs created matches virtually job for job the numbers of full-time jobs lost.

Low pay continues to pose a major problem for people across Wales and to the general well being of the Welsh economy. The former South Wales Coalfield is no exception. Forcing pay levels down appears to be a vindication of the government's deregulation policy. Despite protests to the
contrary, it may even form part of a marketing approach for anyone who wants to sell Wales as a berth for some of the internationally least exciting inward investments.

…For nearly two hundred years the Valleys have been plundered of natural wealth, the raw materials of British industrial and imperial supremacy, and many of those whose lives were lived in the service of this power are now without a livelihood. …It is against this background of low pay that communities in the South Wales Coalfield have begun to realise the need to take control of their future." (Jones S 1996)

Why the Arts Factory was set up

Vales Community Business was formed in 1990 with the initial intention of providing work experience and training opportunities for people with learning disabilities. At first, Vales' business activities were based around growing and selling shrubs and plants and providing a small landscaping and building service. Their services were open to all, but a point was made to reach low-income groups within the community. Throughout 1992 and 1993, Vales continued to provide its landscaping and horticultural services while considering innovative ways in which the organisation could develop.

Arts Factory was developed out of the Vales project by a group of local people who had decided that they had had enough of being labelled a 'problem' when they wanted and knew they could become part of the solution. Arts Factory broadened its remit, seeking to include all people that society has labelled disadvantaged rather than solely being an exclusive resource dealing with learning disability. The Art Factory's strategy is to build a stronger community by generating surplus income through enterprise and use it to fund facilities that members need, upskilling themselves in the process.

Outcomes in social innovation, governance and community building

Quality of Life. Arts Factory has been working to build a stronger community for ten years and has faced the challenges and changes through commitment and teamwork

Governance. Arts Factory is an independent development trust established by local people. It is a "not for profit" company owned by its members and managed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership. Membership of Arts Factory is open to anyone who shares the Company's values and costs £1 a year. All of the activities available though the "Learning for Life" programme are free of charge to Arts Factory members

Socio-economic. The Garden Centre was closed in 2001 for redevelopment and will re-open in spring 2002 at the centre of Parc 21. There are plans to develop: a café on-site selling meals made
from locally grown produce; a crèche; a small gym facility. "Ready for Work" is Art Factory's specialist job search service, offering a tailored package of support to any member of Arts Factory looking for work. A typical package might include: CV preparation; short courses to sharpen up skills; help to find vacancies; work placements and mock interviews. The service, launched in 2000, helped 24 members into work in its first year. The Environmental Design & Creation team has been involved in a number of projects commissioned by a variety of public and private sector clients, e.g. the creation of a community garden with residents at Fforch Close, Treorchy (commissioned by Rhonda Housing Association); the creation of a mural with young people at the Waun Wen Centre, Rhiwgarn as part of the National Assembly for Wales "People in Communities" programme. The Graphic Design & Website Creation team have also undertaken a wide range of projects with a variety of clients e.g. Commissioned by the National Assembly for Wales to design the "Communities First" logo. Arts Factory was awarded Investor in People status in 1997.

**Social justice.** The University of Glamorgan undertook a social audit in 2000 to find out whether Arts Factory was achieving its non-financial objectives. Arts Factory offers a comprehensive consultation service, including questionnaire design, street and door-to-door surveys, focus groups and visioning exercises.

**Learning for Life.** The Learning for Life team has increased the number of activities available to Arts Factory members to provide a really varied choice of activities within the programme. At least 500 people a week are currently using Art Factory's free facilities.

**Sustainable development.** In 2001 Arts Factory took on the ownership of Highfield Industrial Estate to begin the redevelopment of the site to create "Parc 21". The aim is to marry cutting-edge green technology with the latest broadband communication links to create the small business park of the future. The buildings will be timber-framed and energy efficient. They will be heated by an on-site biomass plant and powered by solar energy and small on-site wind turbines. The surrounding areas will be turned into ornamental gardens and outdoor meeting spaces containing pieces of public art. In 2002 Arts Factory will begin development of a wind farm on the mountain above Ferndale. This will be the first community-owned wind farm in Wales - all of the others are owned by big commercial companies. The wind farm will generate green electricity and a significant income stream for Arts Factory to enable the delivery of more free services to the members and to work in areas of the valleys that have not been reached before. This will involve taking on more staff, creating new jobs for local people. All of the Arts Factory team live in the valleys.
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10. Social innovation in Tyne and Wear

by Sara Gonzalez

10.1. Tyneside action for people and planet (TAPP)

TAPP emerged as an ensemble of people who had been active in the radical/leftist arena in Newcastle, but who found that in 1998 there were no groups that would give them the possibility to act collaboratively. The 1998 Mayday (1\textsuperscript{st} of May), however gave some of these people the justification to organize a “Reclaim Mayday” event, as a continuation of what the extinguished TAG (Tyneside Anarchist Group) had been doing. They organized an event in solidarity to Magnet Kitchen workers strike, a company in Darlington (Northeast of England), and also several other actions against the “European Agriculture” summit that was to take place in Durham and Newcastle that month, in which the group’s campaign against Genetically Modified Organisms (called Gene-No!) was quite successful (Do or Die, 1999). These actions confirmed that the group could work together in a more regular basis and they decided to meet once a week to plan more actions. In the 14\textsuperscript{th} issue of “Think Globally Act Locally” the group was described as

“It is a flexible group where people move in and out, raising and campaigning on issues of particular importance to them. TAPP is a direct action group, but this doesn't mean getting nicked all the time! TAPP action includes everything from writing letters, press releases and leaflets, to holding banners, to giving out leaflets, to staging roof top demos, and anything in between!!
Since then, the group or the “forum” as they also like being called, has conducted direct action in various fields, depending on the moment and interest of the members, but these have mainly being focused around environment, gender, the use of the city or transport. Although the group has never taken a long-term campaign as its priority, it has supported campaigns that individuals would be involved in or it has temporarily dedicated its effort to certain campaigns. For example, the group has organised several “Critical Mass” events in which people are invited to cycle around the city centre, or has organized a couple of “Reclaim Street” parties. One of the most successful initiatives was “eclectic city”, a squat in the city centre of Newcastle that protested against the corporate agenda that the city council is pursuing for the redevelopment of the city centre. The squat was set up at the end of October 2000 in an abandoned building in a central Newcastle street that was going to be demolished to become part of developed JJ Gallagher’s Electric City leisure scheme. The idea was to provide citizens with a free space in the city centre that would function as a “recycling point, environmental resource centre and library, drop-in centre, a café and performance space for local musicians and artists” (Chatterton, 2002). It also became a homeless shelter after a week. The squatters were evicted the 1st of October but managed to get into the building next door, also abandoned and part of the leisure project. In April 2001, TAPP members squatted another city centre building that was to become a lap-dancing bar and in the beginning of November they squatted another one as a base for party and protest against WTO meeting in Qatar. The squatting of these building did have a quite wide acceptance in the local media. One of their latest initiatives has been to publish one issue of a newspaper mocking the local “Evening Chronicle” newspaper called “Evening Chronic”. On Mayday 2002, 5,000 issues were given away for free in Newcastle. The newspaper criticised the joint bid of Newcastle-Gateshead to be City of Culture by 2008 with headlines such as “Council tells everyone to leave for culture bid”; “all chance in Newcastle, but for the better?” and community resistance slogans (“fight capitalism”, “we can win”), or adverts and articles against workers exploitation, environmental damage or sexism.

TAPP emerged as a reaction to the lack of any group that radically acted upon environmental, genetically modified food or authoritarism in general in Newcastle. The group does not have a single aim or objective but works as a forum or a public space in which to raise awareness among society about certain issues that concern the members. In each campaign or action, the group has been reacting to specific issues. With “Critical Mass” TAPP wanted to condemn the massive use of cars in the city centre and develop a consciousness of the possibility to use alternative means of

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These are specific type of direct actions that happen all over the world. Basically they advocate for an alternative use of the city and streets and the possibility of expressing attitude and opinions freely in public.
transport. It also protested for the City council refuse to celebrate an international car-free day in 2000. “Street Reclaim” parties or “Eclectic City” have been actions against the corporate agenda and the alternatives uses of the city centre. “Eclectic city” has also tried to create a free space for the communities to express themselves, to empower. The “Evening Chronic” is an attempt to censure with humour the local politics of urban regeneration and raise issues of community resistance. In general, TAPP advocates for a debate about current local issues and for the creation of public debate spaces.

The main ideological inspiration is action. Although the group does not have an official definition of themselves, in the different attempts to do this, action is always present. According to a member, “the whole point of TAPP is action”. Also TAPP’s attitude has been described as “deeds not words”. Against other groups, TAPP’s aim is to act and not to create meetings to discuss problems. Because members are free to have their own ideas and no ideology is seen as predominant, TAPP is inspired by many ideas: anarchism, socialism, green movement, anti-racist, animal right campaign, overall leftists and against the power of the state. The underlying assumption is not to devise a blue print for a new society but to combat what is not seem to be fair or right. This is summed in one of their member’s definition of alternative development as “shifting the focus of power and money. At the moment the power and money is within established networks, like the city council, Regional Development agencies, or Regional assembly (...) The idea is not just to let people in but to completely overhaul the network” (interview, 2002). The forces that TAPP counters are then, the institutions and networks that currently hold power: Basically corporate firms and the state in all its levels and forms. The idea is to redistribute this power down to communities.

TAPP acts at a local base but tries to engage this into global issues. They have a “glocal” attitude reflected in their monthly newsletter name “Think globally act locally”. For example, the squats were set up to coincide with global protests days such as Seattle or Gothenburg. Members of TAPP are involved in international campaigns, like support to Chiapas. As already said, they do not believe in a complete idea for change, but in everyday life actions that make a difference.

They use different resources for change, but the main one is action. However, in order to act, they engage in other skills such as organizing meetings, communication, and organization of events, editing and printing, networking with other groups, raising attention, dealing with the media. There was been a conscious attempt to share these skills and try to avoid “hierarchies of knowledge” (Do or Die, 1999). These skills have been learned by doing, by acting. A member of TAPP described how he is always inspired by acting, and by seeing others acting. According to him people learn politics in protest camps, in normal social interaction and generally in action, by talking to each

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other, by acting your ideas (interview, 2002). The driving force of the group is: “If not us, who? If not now, when?” (Interview, 2002).

As an anarchist group, there are not fixed governance structures and most organizational matters are arranged around informal structures where friendship repertoires are used. People are free to attend to meetings or to support campaigns, and they tend to be organized more like a fluid network than as a cluster. In spite of this “informality”, the group maintains a certain degree of community culture, due also to the fact that Newcastle is small and most of them participate in similar activities or socialize in similar places.

10.2. Community Development Project of North Tyneside

Community Development Projects (CDP) were designed by the British central government in the early 70s as attempt to tackle severe poverty in some inner cities that at the time was described as “urban deprivation”. We have already described in the “visions and philosophies” paper the context and story of these projects. In this paper, we want to focus our attention to one of these projects and how it unravelled in the particular context of North Tyneside\(^9\), while the project existed (1972-1977).

In the XIXth century, North Tyneside was moulded into a prominent industrial area, centre for shipbuilding, shipping and fishing. A strong labour culture was built in the area together with a tight network of union movement and labour party governance. In the 1920s and 1930s the area suffered a very severe industrial crisis, of which it never really recovered, with the 1970s crisis even increasing the levels of unemployment and social exclusion. This resulted in severe urban restructuring processes, such as slum clearance, closing down of factories, street crime, etc.

When the Community Development Project was first established in North Tyneside, it had, as the rest of the CDPs all over the country, a kind of therapeutic approach to poor communities, but soon, the North Tyneside CDP adopted a “radical reformist” approach and assumed as one of the team’s priorities to fight against unfair politics delivered both from the central and local governments, which crystallised in cuts in the budget to social policies. These cuts were interpreted by the CDP team as a deliberate worsening of working class people’s living conditions. They also fought

\(^9\) Apart for the North Tyneside CDP, in 1971 Benwell in the West End of Newcastle was selected as one of 12 Community Development Projects. The Benwell CDP became one of the most ‘radical’ in the country and produced a number of publications that were highly critical of both the local and national state. In particular *The Making of a Ruling Class* (1978) and *West Newcastle in Growth and Decline* (1981).
against the local council’s passivity about the cutbacks in local expenditure and the cutback of the privileges that the working class had gained in the post-war years. “The objective was to establish working-class locality-based collectives to ensure that resources went one way as opposed to another” (North Tyneside CDP, 1978, vol 3:11).

By the middle of the project’s life, the CDP team realised that the issues were not consequence of local misdistribution of resources that would have been resolved with a bit more of political strength of those being discriminated, but that there was a need for a response at an organisational level.

Marxist thought and the idea that the working class should be empowered inspired cDPs. Most CDPs worked with a socialist agenda and they believed in public ownership and state management. However, because the power structures were believed to be wrong the approach taken was that of “community against the state”.

The North Tyneside CDP worked at a local community scale and because of the importance of housing issues sometimes the scales were delimited down to housing estates, districts or even streets. At the same time, there was a deliberate attempt to go beyond the casework, the individual problems, and convert them into collective problems. Increasingly, the problems were not believed to lie in the local communities but in the structures of the capitalist societies and therefore “jumping scales” strategies were adopted.

In the beginning of the project, information was seen as the primary resource to work with. In order to distribute it, 3 “Information shops” were established in key areas of the town. These offices carried out mainstream “information and opinion” office tasks that soon, and following the general change in perspective in all the CPDs around the country, were changed to be threefold: “It must take up and where appropriate extend from an individual information to an advocacy role; and when necessary turn individual advocacy into collective pressure. From the beginning therefore, the information centre must be able to develop individual issues into expressions of general concern” (North Tyneside CDP, vol. 3:20).

The other main task was related to Housing and the Rehousing of the people affected by slum clearance by the council. The Information shops where used as contact points between families in “waiting lists” and homeless families. Usually this was an individualistic and competitive process between tenants and the city council but in some instances the CDP groups helped “slum clearance action groups” to get organised and act as collective negotiator with the council. Another task was redevelopment and involved advice on the character and progress of the clearance programme as well as advice on compensation, housing rights, home-loss payments, etc. Again, the Information
Shops became a good meeting point for redevelopment campaigners. The other two main tasks were modernisation of housing and repairs and it had to do with reporting problems, information about repair grants. Another important area of the Shops was Social Security. The challenge that the Shops faced was to get beyond the mere and individual claims for benefits and extend this to the organisation of “claimants unions”. According to the CDP group the system of benefit claiming was designed to “break up politically active collectives” because “once the particular individual’s own benefit difficulties have been sorted out they tend to drop out of collective activity” (Ibid: 27). The employment area was also one of the main ones in the Shops and basically had to do with arranging benefits and employment “rights”.

Apart from information another big area of the CDP and the one that took most of the project’s funds, was recreational provision for young people and the work involved around it. The project organized around a play schemes in which tenants actions groups were involved and led buy Play workers. These were temporal events for children in school holidays but apart from this a permanent facility was designed for which a full-time Play Leader was appointed. Children and play workers built the structures in the playground. The project didn’t work so well when the winter arrived and the playground became a site for vandalism. The Project’s Play programme never actually attempted to work with children or from children’s perspective and it was seen as part of a wider problem of lack of facilities in the Housing Estates. It was linked to general structural problems and grew into the concept of “the politics of play and recreation” for which the North Tyneside CDP was especially recognised nationally. Part of the group’s critique was “the rejection of the existence of working class culture shown by the regional arts association and bias towards subsidising high cost, high status, high culture, low appeal events and institutions” (Ibid: 42).

As can be seen through the tasks and approach taken by the CDP group, the underlying tactic was always to link up case and personal issues to wider and national problems and as a “jumping scale” strategy a relationship with the labour party was sought, especially to be able to influence in health and housing issues. The labour party was believed to be somewhat decadent and easy to influence.

The underlying ideology of the group was “radical reformism” described by themselves as a work which was “issue-centred, locality centred and local authority centred” (Ibid: 11). Far from a self-help approach, not only North Tyneside CDP all CDPs in Britain thought at certain extent that:

“Community action is directly about people in deprived areas looking at their own problems and seeking their own solutions. This is not what can be termed self-help approach in that it is not imagined that the solutions are to be found in the resources of the people themselves. Instead they
look to those who at present have power and try to find ways either to influence them or to take some of the power away from them” (Baine, 1975:19).

The core strategy of CDPs was to politicise local communities, empower them to change the power structures and reverse the governance mechanisms. The working class identity is seen as the best locus in which to mobilise the resources to fight against the state (but other identities such as gender, ethnicity are not problematized). This brought confusing situations within North Tyneside because it was difficult for the city council to come to terms with the idea that the team of community workers was fighting against the local government policies. As Loney (1983, p.4) asserts “the shift in the locus of power within the experiments was paralleled by the development of a more radical approach to social analysis”.

The “community against the government” brought ongoing problems to the CDPs at a national level and “not surprisingly, the government was unable to subscribe to this view and decided to close down the projects in 1976” Raventz (1980:106)

10.3. Social Enterprise Sunderland

Social Enterprise Sunderland (SES) is the last trading name for a company that has its origins in the late 60s when it was created as a building co-operative called Sunderlandia in Sunderland. The promoters of Sunderlandia Ltd came together through a small organisation called the Industrial Common Ownership Movement (ICOM) that had developed in the late 50s from the Quaker convictions of its founder. This organisation, which was a non-party organisation, had two main objectives: An enterprise should be owned and controlled by people working on it and the enterprise should progressively aim to delineate the relationships between people at work on the one hand and between people and work on the other. Following these values, Sunderlandia was a joint venture of three different characters that shared a belief in the establishment of common ownership enterprises. They got together in 1972 and in 1973 the production began. It was a building society which aim was, apart from pursuing the principle of common ownership, the creation of good, cheap housing for people and the alleviation of youth unemployment, as well as the maximum of skill training. Sunderland was found to be a suitable location because it had housing problems and unemployment. It is difficult to know why it was located in Sunderland, but it appears not to arise

from an indigenous preoccupation or problem. In the first five years, the company went through economic problems due to a general recession in the building industry but also because of planning problems and no clear strategy. In 1977 the Banks of the Wear Co-operative Housing Association was born, with the purpose of managing the grant system for repairs of council housing. Since then, this Housing Association has been recognised as the regional agency for the promotion, development and support of Housing Co-operatives in the North East (SES website).

In the 70s, a group of women called Little Women formed by the partners of the workers of Sunderlandia and their friends, set up a grocery shop that worked as a meeting place, child support and specialised in a shopping service for the elderly customers. The shop worked successfully during several years until they set up a Home Care co-operative that eventually led to the creation in 1994 of Sunderland Homecare Services Ltd. with over 70 worker members.

Out of the Housing Association and using the skills acquired by tenants-members through the collective management of their housing it emerged the interest to create a broader organisation that would promote, develop and support co-operatives and other forms of community enterprise throughout the city. With this purpose, in 1983, Sunderland Common Ownership Enterprise Resource Centre Limited (SCOERC) was created. Although initially this service was only made available to those wishing to start a co-operative, community or social enterprise, since 1993 this policy has changed and it is now open to those (particularly in deprived communities) who want to pursue other business models such as sole traders and partnerships. The first Worker co-operatives assisted by the agency emerged from the housing co-op sector. Today’s 43 trading businesses now comprise worker co-operatives, community businesses, social enterprises, share companies, sole traders or partnerships (SES website). In 2000 (?) SCOERC became Social Enterprise Sunderland (SES), a change in name that reflects the evolution of the organisation whose work is “an innovatory and proactive approach to business start-ups and the creation of employment opportunities within excluded communities and for those who are disadvantaged in the labour community” (SES website)

Since 2001, Banks of the Wear Housing Association has become a broader community regeneration organisation and it is now called BOW Community Projects. “This new company is a non-for-profit consultancy and service agency providing expert advice and services in the community development, resident participation, technical project management and training to local authorities, community groups, housing associations and regeneration organisations” (Tees Valley, 16th of July 2002). They run a wide range of projects from residents and tenants empowerment and participation to refugees housing.
Currently, SES is a big organisation with many different projects and sub-organisations. It could be argued that the original values have dissolved and got trapped into more institutional and formal regulations. They have become one of the types of organisations that the New Labour government is very keen to promote as a way of delivering services. However, it has to be recognised that the “social economy” element is still there and that has managed to tap into usually private or state-led services, thus creating an alternative space.

10.4. References for the Tyneside case studies

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