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EXPLORING VARIOUS APPROACHES OF SOCIAL INNOVATION: A FRANCOPHONE LITERATURE REVIEW AND A PROPOSAL OF INNOVATION TYPOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to clarify the multiple different approaches of social innovation, focusing on francophone literature.
Originality/gap/relevance/implications: We propose an in-depth literature review that questions the meaning of the adjective "social" when used by authors to qualify an innovation, that highlights the different approaches of the concept, their relations to each other and their limits, and that illustrates these approaches with concrete examples. Finally, we build on these materials to propose a new innovation typology that wholly integrates social innovation.
Key methodological aspects: The literature review is based on a selection of 25 papers in French – the mother language of the author – which were collected and analyzed using the "theoretical saturation point" method: we stopped the review when we felt there was no new crucial element in the next articles read, that is, when it seemed that a "saturation point" of information had been reached about theories on social innovation.
Summary of key results: The definition of social innovation as new answers provided to unsatisfied or badly-satisfied social demands seems to prevail in the literature. It can be divided into three sub-approaches: the public policies, the social entrepreneurship, and the participatory dynamics, which strikes us as the most interesting, without excluding the others.
Key considerations/conclusions: We propose a new innovation typology, which presents social innovation's relations to other types of innovation. We conclude with some considerations about social innovation context of emergence, and about its ambiguous position in the neoliberal system.

KEYWORDS

Social innovation. Social entrepreneurship. Non-technological innovation. Service innovation Social and solidarity economy.

1 INTRODUCTION

The meaning of social innovation is far from reaching consensus among the international literature (Richez-Battesti, Vallade, & Petrella, 2012). What does the term "social" refer to when it qualifies an innovation?

This paper proposes an in-depth study of various visions of social innovation, concentrating on francophone literature, mainly from France and Quebec. It starts with a few reminders about innovation in general, highlighting some key aspects to understand social innovation: firstly, innovation is part of an innovation cluster and more broadly of an institutional context in evolution; secondly, it is unpredictable; and thirdly, it is at odds with the idea of an organization and is a bottom-up process (Alter, 2002; Lévesque, 2006; Lebeaupin, 2010). Then, we explore the different meanings of the adjective "social" when it qualifies social innovation. This leads to identify several theories: social innovation as the social counterpart of any "standard" innovation (Fontan, 2008); social innovation as societal change; social innovation as innovation of service; social innovation as the answer provided to meet social demands (Alter, 2002; Hillier, Moulaert, & Nussbaumer, 2004; Bouchard, 2006; Fontan, 2008; Djellal & Gallouj, 2012; Chauvière, 2012). This last approach can be divided into several sub-approaches, focusing either on public policies, on social businesses, or on participatory dynamics at play in the innovation's implementation process (Durance, 2010 and 2011b; Marival, Petrella, & Richez-Battesti, 2012; Richez-Battesti *et al.*, 2012).

The exploration of these theories leads us, in a third part, to propose our social innovation's typology, drawing from those built up by Hochgerner (2009) and Djellal and Gallouj (2012). The main contribution of this typology is to highlight social innovation's major distinction element: the centrality of its social dimension, its ambition of social transformation. This allows straight away to distinguish it from economic innovation, which primary purpose is profit maximization or costs reduction. Moreover, the table takes into account the need to distinguish social innovation inside and outside the enterprise.

We conclude with some considerations on the context of emergence of social innovation (has it always existed or does it emerge with recent economic crises?) and on its ambiguous position in the neoliberal system (does it serve the system and does it question it?).

2 METHODOLOGY

The major part of the literature review was carried out in 2014 during a field research about the French social innovation incubator Alter'Incub, located in Montpellier (South of France). Alter'Incub is a particularly interesting research

subject for two reasons. Firstly, it was created in 2007 and is one of the first organizations – public and private – dedicated to social innovation in the country. It precedes major French policies on social innovation, at the national and regional levels (Durance, 2009b, pp. 43-48). As such, it provides great insights on the rise, vision and practice of social innovation in France.

Secondly, researchers Richez-Battesti and Vallade (2012) have been studying it since its creation. They have analyzed its emergence and have kept working on social innovation since then. The field research carried out in 2014 continued their analysis. Their work on social innovation is the point of departure of the literature review.

This literature review is based on a selection of 25 papers, which were collected and analyzed using the "theoretical saturation point" method (Thiétart, 2003, p. 216). Materials from each paper were reported using a frame with different items to fill:

- Definition(s) of social innovation outlined by the authors;
- The meaning of the adjective "social" when it qualifies an innovation according to the authors;
- Social innovation (SI) main characteristics (e.g., SI as a process or a goal; SI as a top-down or bottom-up process, SI and governance issues, etc.);
- Links between social innovation, including: technological innovation, public policies, social entrepreneurship; and social and solidarity economy sector;
- Examples of social innovations.

We stopped the review when we felt there was no new crucial element in the next articles read, that is, when it seemed that a "saturation point" of information had been reached about theories on social innovation. We started with papers written by Richez-Battesti and Vallade (2009a) on social innovation and Alter'Incub, and from their literature reviews, we selected the next papers to analyze, using two criteria. The first (objective) criterion what that the paper explicitly talked about social innovation: the term was used and questioned (at least quickly) by the author; the second (more subjective) criterion was that the paper rose a new point about social innovation, according to the previous paper analyzed.

All papers selected dealing with social innovation were written as of 2000s onwards, which reflect the fact that the notion of social innovation is very recent (Paulré, 2016, p. 7). This does imply that social innovation did not exist prior, but probably that it was not considered as a field of study in itself or that it was not the subject of European and national innovation strategies (Dandurand, 2005, p. 379): either initiatives were not labeled "social innovations", and not analyzed as such, or they were only seen as the "social counterpart" of other types of inno-

vations (we will retake to this idea later). Older publications mentioned in the bibliography provide complementary information on topics related to social innovation and, in particular, on innovation in general.

2 "INNOVATION"

In order to explore the concept in depth, we begin with defining the term "innovation", before examining what can be "social" in an innovation.

Innovation seems to have always been closely linked to the private economic sector (Dandurand, 2005, p. 378; Richez-Battesti & Vallade, 2009b, p. 46-47; Marival *et al.*, 2012, p. 2; Paulré, 2016, p. 6): it would emerge from private enterprises producing goods and services which are sold on markets.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development & Eurostat – OECD (2005) defines innovation as "the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organizational method in business practices, workplace organization or external relations". This definition can be related to three key ideas. First, innovation can take the form of either a total novelty, or of the improvement of an already-existing solution. Then, the term "implementation" implies that innovation is a change carried out *in practice*, which differentiates it from the concept of invention. Invention is an original *idea*, whereas innovation refers to its *materialization*, its acceptance by actors and its institutionalization in their practices (Lebeaupin, 2010, Paulré, 2016). Innovation transforms the idea in real change (Durance, 2010; Fontan, 2008. Finally, the OECD's definition builds on Schumpeter's typology (1934) to distinguish four types of innovations:

Chart 1

OECD'S INNOVATION TYPOLOGY

PRODUCT INNOVATION	PROCESS INNOVATION	MARKETING INNOVATION	ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION
A good or service that is significantly improved	A new or significantly improved production or delivery method. This includes significant changes in techniques, equipment and/or software	A new marketing method involving significant changes in product design or packaging, product placement, product promotion or pricing	A new organizational method in business practices, workplace organization or external relations

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development & Eurostat, 2005, p. 30; p. 49-53.

Some authors ad institutional innovations to this typology, which can be defined as the new rules regulating organizations' activities (Lévesque, 2006).

This typology can be applied to social innovation. Social innovation, *when generated by an organization having a productive activity*, necessarily concerns either a product, or a process, or a marketing method, or an organizational method (or several of them at the same time). We will come back later on this typology of social innovation.

To complete this definition, we can highlight three other assumptions that emerge from the literature and that are the keys to understand social innovation. Here again, these ideas apply to social innovation generated by an organization having a productive activity.

First assumption: innovation is part of an innovation cluster and more broadly of an institutional context in evolution.

The general idea we develop here is that innovation is not a unique and isolated change within an organization, but is linked to a more general phenomenon of change within the socioeconomic environment.

Schumpeter explains that an innovation primarily emerges from marginal and inspired creators and is quickly recuperated by imitators appealed by its potential (particularly in terms of profits), who spread it by adapting it to other contexts (Alter, 2002, p. 16-26). Therefore, innovation relates to a "cluster" of novelties, composed of an original innovation and of its multiple adaptations which allow its diffusion in the productive system. As Lévesque outlines, "it is not the product in itself that constitutes the innovation, but the cluster from which it derives" (2006, p. 14).

Moreover and more broadly, innovation, when spreading, transforms its institutional context. Indeed, it is produced by an individual with a deviant behavior, who transgresses established norms and rules (Alter, 2002; Bouchard, 2006, p. 1-2). This transgression is generalized when imitators recover the innovation, which ends up questioning the whole way environment is organized (relations between actors, social representations, regulation mechanisms). Innovation sets up a new dominant paradigm, a new normality, which will be later overthrown by another innovation (Alter, 2002). This is the obsolescence phenomenon described by Schumpeter (Fontan, 2008).

To sum up, an innovation cannot be studied individually; it must always be seen as part of an innovation cluster and more broadly of a changing institutional system. For example, we can consider information technologies as an innovation cluster which covers a multitude of "sub-innovations" such as the Internet, virtual reality, or e-books.

Second assumption: innovation is unpredictable

A second point to outline is the uncertainty which surrounds the emergence of innovation.

On the one hand, the "creator" is embedded in an environment where information is limited because his innovation is not part of the range of possibilities (Fontan, 2008, p. 5). He acts in a context of "bounded rationality" (Simon, 1991). Consequently, it is not possible to predict neither what the final result of his project will be, nor its consequences.

On the other hand, the adaptation of innovation from imitators to other sectors implies a distortion of the original creation. This appropriation by actors on the ground – those Alter names "everyday innovators" or "facilitators" (2002. p. 20-22) – is necessarily unpredictable.

As a result, innovation cannot be known *a priori*. It only emerges at the end of a trial-and-error and adjustment process in which multiple actors are involved (Lévesque, 2006; Lebeaupin, 2010). It happens to be an innovation only when it effectively takes place.

Third assumption: innovation is "at odds with the idea of an organization" and it is a bottom-up process

We can deduct from what has been said previously that "the very concept of innovation is at odds with the idea of an organization" (Alter, 2002, p. 29). Whereas innovation is unpredictable, the organization, as its names presupposes, implies *organizing* action, planning and anticipating, in order to reduce uncertainty. Organizations are constantly torn between the need to control and the need to leave space of freedom necessary to innovations' emergence (Alter, 2002). These spaces often take the form of research and development departments in enterprises, but they face some limits. On the one hand, the organization's strategy orientates research in certain directions. On the other hand, if researchers can produce the "original creation" at the source of innovation, it remains that it must be recovered by "everyday innovators". If it is not appropriated by actors on the ground, it rather looks like change management (Alter, quoted by Lebeaupin, 2010, p. 4). This is why R&D departments have a limited role in the production of innovations.

Consequently, innovation is a bottom-up process, not a top-down one, due to the necessary appropriation and deformation of the original creation by actors on the ground (Alter, 2002, p. 22-23).

We can cite as an example the case of computing (Alter, 2002, p. 21-22), which illustrates well the uncertainty that surrounds innovation, as well as the "bottom-up" process. When computing has been invented, its use cases were widely unknown: there was no development program for this invention. During the two or three years that followed, this innovation remained latent, until some managers and technicians end up seizing it and imagining its possible uses. It is only when actors appropriated the invention that the computing innovation really took place.

We have seen three main ideas necessary to understand innovation in general and more specifically social innovation. To sum up, we can mention the close links that exist between innovation and economic cycles. Schumpeter (1942), in particular, explains that every new period of economic growth is generated by the emergence of an innovation cluster that fosters growth, whereas every economic crisis is due to these innovations' obsolescence.

3 THE "SOCIAL" SIDE OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

In the literature, the concept of innovation is mainly associated to the field of economics. So what is the place for the "social" within innovation? What does "social innovation" mean?

In traditional French dictionaries (such as *Le Larousse*), "social" refers to "a society", to "relations between individuals within a society" and to their "conditions of living". Hence, this is a very broad concept, which can be applied to innovation in multiple different ways, as we are going to see now.

3.1 THREE FIRST APPROACHES

3.1.1 *First approach: social innovation = social change associated to a "standard" innovation*

A first approach considers social innovation as the social change that accompanies any innovation in the productive system (Bouchard, 2006, p. 1). Social innovation is not understood as an independent phenomenon, as an end in itself, but as the social counterpart of another innovation (Dandurand, 2005, p. 278; Fontan, 2008, p. 5). It refers either to the social change which is *necessary* for the functioning of the innovation, or the social change *generated* by this innovation: it is either a condition or a consequence (or both at the same time).

From this perspective, according to Schumpeter and other management researchers in the 1990s, social innovation is the condition of technological innovation' efficiency, because it allows the reconfiguration of organizational methods and work relations, so that they adapt to production evolution (Lévesque, 2006; Hillier *et al.*, 2004). Social innovation is therefore synonymous of organizational innovation and of internal change *within* enterprises.

For other authors, innovation means societal change *generated* by an innovation: innovation would not only bring change within innovating organizations,

but would also transform social relations, ways of living and social representations shared by its environment's actors. Social innovation thus refers to new social models generated by the productive system's mutations (Bouchard, 2006; Alter, 2002). For example, innovation in the information technology field has deeply transformed our ways of living, now based on social networks online, continuous information and ultra-connectivity.

3.1.2 *Second approach: social innovation = societal change*

A second approach understands social innovation as societal change, in other words as the major evolutions that transform society as a whole, including those which are not directly linked to the productive system (Hillier *et al.*, 2004, p. 6-7). It is particularly Coleman's vision (1970), who considers the corporation, the nation state and bureaucracy as three main evolutions that have shaped the way our society functions (however, he talks about social *invention* and not about social innovation). Fontan (2008) considers that social innovation can relate to a cluster of "ordinary or common behaviors" without any direct link to economics, which transform society when they are cumulated. For example, eco-friendly practices (such as, recycling, energy savings) remodel citizens' relation to their environment and to consumption society. Lévesque (2012), finally, studies social movements which emerged by the end of the 1960s (feminist, ecologist, anti-nuclear, pacifist movements). According to him, they can be considered as social innovations because they called into question mass consumption society and because they adopted democratic and self-management practices.

We are far from the traditional literature's economic vision of innovation, emerging from private enterprises and taking the form of products, processes, marketing methods and organizational methods. Fontan considers that social innovation "would not stop at entrepreneurship's doorstep" (2008, p. 6). However, this is a minority approach in the literature, which mainly tends to link social innovation to economic activities in the public and/or in the private sector.

3.1.3 *Third approach: social innovation = innovation of service*

A third approach links social innovation to a particular business sector: the tertiary sector. In this perspective, the term "social" refers to relationships between individuals. Indeed, services are mainly based on relational aspects, because they are immaterial and imply coproduction between client and provider (Djellal & Gallouj, 2012, p. 38). Social innovation thus includes new tools which contribute to improve the service and the social relationships between individuals involved in a service. It is synonymous of innovation of service.

Other authors go further and consider that social innovation does not concern the whole tertiary sector, but a specific activity within this sector: the sociomedical field. Here, "social" does not only refer to the relational dimension which is key in this activity, but also to these workers and organizations whose work is called "social", in other words, which concern people's place in society, relations they have with each other, and their conditions of living. Social innovation covers any innovation in that sector (such as poverty, exclusion, disability, disease, dependence) (Chauvière, 2012).

The French enterprise Websourd is an example of innovation of service because it offers an online solution which mutualizes services offered by sign language translators: it is an original service which promotes deaf and hearing-impaired people's access to information and helps fighting against their exclusion. Equiphoria is an example of a company which innovates in the sociomedical field: it proposes a pioneering therapy model in France, aimed at disabled people, through contact with horses.

3.2 THE APPROACH BASED ON SOCIAL DEMANDS OR NEEDS

A frequent definition of social innovation is the one based on social demands or needs: here, "social" is understood in its wider meaning, that is, as anything that refers to life in society and to relationships between individuals who are part of it. This social life implies the satisfaction of a certain number of social needs. We can therefore say that social innovation refers to new answers provided to unsatisfied or badly-satisfied social demands.

This approach seems to prevail in the francophone literature: among the fifteen authors who clearly took a stand on the definition of social innovation, nine of them (more than a half) used this one as the basis of their analysis. Other authors' stands were distributed among the other approaches. Additionally, two papers (Dandurand, 2005; Besançon, 2015) explain that there is a consensus on this definition in Quebec. Marival *et al.* (2012) and Hilier *et al.* (2004) also conclude from their literature reviews that this approach is shared by most of the authors.

Let's see to what extent this definition defers from other approaches (without excluding them entirely).

The difference with the first approach is that social innovation is not the social counterpart of another type of innovation, but one in which the social purpose is central. Social innovation covers all types of innovations – product, process, marketing and organizational innovation –, but within these innovations, the social aspect must be predominant (Fontan, 2008).

The difference with the second approach is that these new answers to social demands refer to an offer generated by a public or private organization, in order

to meet an identified social demand. There is social transformation, but it is closely linked to the *expression of a demand*.

Finally, the difference with the third approach is that social demands do not concern only the third sector: even if this sector, and the sociomedical field, in particular, can be considered as primarily concerned by social needs. Social innovation can take place in other sectors which main activity cannot be said to be "social". Djellal and Gallouj (2012, p. 38) write that "social innovation is *quite often* an innovation of service", but it is not systematically the case.

This definition of social innovation as "new answers provided to unsatisfied or badly-satisfied social demands" needs some additional precisions:

> Precision on the term "new": as for innovation in general, novelty can come from a totally new reply, but also from a significant improvement of an already-existing solution (see OECD's definition of innovation, part 1). Concerning social innovation specifically, we can add that novelty can also come from the implementation of an already-existing solution to another context, or to the rediscovering of a solution from the past (Durance, 2011b; Hillier *et al.*, 2004; Richez-Battesti, 2012; Marival *et al.*, 2012). Social innovation is not necessarily radical, it can even appear to be ordinary: it is the innovation cluster of which it is part, and its massive diffusion, which is source of radicality and social transformation (Richez-Battesti, 2010).

> Precision on the term of "social demands": they can refer to primary needs (conditions of living, of working, wealth), but also to secondary needs which include individuals' social aspirations (solidarity, cooperation), as well as their environmental concerns (pollution, waste reduction, production sustainability) (Marival *et al.*, 2012).

After these precisions, the concept of social innovation seems to be clarified. Nevertheless, it remains quite broad and within this approach by social demands, several sub-branches of thought can be distinguished.

3.3 THE SUB-BRANCHES OF THE APPROACH BY SOCIAL DEMANDS

3.3.1 *The public policies approach*

Social innovation in public policies consists in looking for new ways of compensating the retreat of the welfare state and to reply to new social problems

(poverty, exclusion), in a context characterized by the decrease of public spending and by the push towards rationalization (New Public Management doctrine) (Dandurand, 2005; Richez-Battesti *et al.*, 2012). It is an approach by social demands as the state calls for actors' inventiveness to find solutions to social problems in its place. Social innovation is institutionalized, because the state leads these initiatives (Durance, 2011b; Marival *et al.*, 2012).

This point of view is quite important in France, with a certain number of public policies in favor of social innovation. For example, two billion of the loan program launched in 2009 (the "Big Loan") were dedicated to the "creation of innovative enterprises and [to] social innovation"; one of the five axis of the 2010 plan in favor of the social and solidarity economy sector was devoted to social innovation (Durance, 2011b, p. 43-44). Similarly, at the regional level, a certain number of projects considered as socially innovative have been developed by Regional Councils, like in the Aquitaine, Rhône-Alpes, and Nord-Pas-de-Calais regions (Durance, 2011b).

This approach is also that of the Young Foundation in the United Kingdom, and of the country's public authorities. Politics supporting social innovation started under Tony Blair and continued under David Cameron. They clearly aimed to modernizing public services (Marival *et al.*, 2012; Richez-Battesti *et al.*, 2012). The "Big Society" concept, promoted by David Cameron, refers to the idea that government must stop leading policies in a centralized way, in order to give more space to civil society from which "ideas and innovations" emerge, as stipulated in the 2010 Conservative manifesto (Durance, 2011b, p. 30-31).

For example, the Social Innovation Lab Kent (SILK) has tried to improve support to families facing relationship problems by targeting fathers, which is quite new, drawing upon in-depth exploration of their needs, with the help of anthropologists ((Durance, 2011).

Public policies approach's critique

A first critique to this approach is that social innovation tends to take the state's place in the implementation of social policies and, by doing so, it legitimates the retreat the Welfare State. Actors' creativity would be instrumentalized to serve the neoliberal doctrine. Social innovation thus appears less as a process of social transformation than as a tool to compensate deficiencies of the neoliberal system, which proves unable to reply to social demands (Durance, 2010; Richez-Battesti & Vallade, 2009b).

The second critique made to this approach is that social innovation's institutionalization within public administration can jeopardize its "bottom-up" aspect. When public administration excessively controls initiatives that emerge

from the bottom, it can affect actors' creativity, as well as their proposals' diversity and originality, and prohibit the innovation appropriation's process which is necessary to its diffusion. In that case, we are no more dealing with social innovation. For example, contrary to what some authors consider (quoted by Bouchard, 2006), the general reform of public policies in France (Réforme générale des politiques publiques – RGPP) is the complete contrary of social innovation since it consisted in the implementation of Anglo-Saxon public management methods in a totally different and inappropriate cultural and institutional context. There was very little dialogue with actors from the ground and they never appropriated changes. This explains the reform's failure, outlined in the document "RGPP evaluation and conditions of success of a new state reform's policy".

According to the public policies approach's critics, social innovation must be carried "for and by society" (Durance, 2010, p. 5), not by public authorities.

3.3.2 The social entrepreneurship approach

The social entrepreneurship approach considers that social innovation refers to social entrepreneurs' and social enterprises' initiatives, that is, to not-for-profit or limited-profit organizations with a social purpose. It is particularly important in Anglo-Saxon countries and within the European Union. It is an approach by social demands in the sense that social entrepreneurs or enterprises detect needs – the social demands – and make an offer on the market in order to satisfy them (Marival *et al.*, 2012, Tixier, 2012).

Within this approach, two sub-approaches can be distinguished. The first one insists on the key role and on the personal qualities of the "social innovator" who mainly looks like the innovator described by Schumpeter: he is inventive, passionate and has an entrepreneurial profile with a great appetite for risk (Richez-Battesti *et al.*, 2012, p. 20; Durance, 2011b, p. 24; Tixier, 2012, p. 170-172). It is the *individual's personality* which is valued. This vision is that of the French business school ESSEC's Chair of Social Entrepreneurship (Marival *et al.*, 2012, pp. 17-19; Bouchard, 2009, p. 5).

The second sub-approach concentrates on the organization itself rather than on the individual's profile. It underlines collective dynamics at work within the social enterprise, which foster the rise of social innovation. It also insists on its limited dependence on donations and public subsidies compared to traditional charities, which ensures a greater degree of freedom and creativity (Richez-Battesti *et al.*, 2012; Marival *et al.*, 2012; Tixier, 2012). Social innovation is at the heart of the business plan, and economic viability is the condition for its success (Tixier, 2012).

In both cases, the private sector is seen as a great source of talents and this is where the forces for social renewal can be found. The idea is to "instill entrepreneurial spirit" in the social field (Durance, 2011b, p. 14).

For example, Muhammad Yunus, Grammen Bank's founder, can be considered as a social entrepreneur as he detected specific needs among poor Bangladesh' families, analyzed the obstacles they faced, and built a viable social business model by which he could offer a new service adapted to their situation: micro-credits for individuals considered as insolvent by traditional banks.

Social entrepreneurship approach's critique

A first critique to this approach is that it limits the field of emergence of social innovation as it excludes any social innovation which would not be generated by private entrepreneurs (Marival et al., 2012, p. 20).

A second critique is that this approach concentrates exclusively on the figure of the social innovator or on the dynamics *within* the innovative social enterprise, therefore ignoring the whole dynamics of appropriation, diffusion and adjustment of innovation described before. It neglects social transformation mechanisms accompanying social innovation.

Finally, a last critique is that this approach focuses on the social goals pursued by the entrepreneur or the enterprise, and not much on the means allowing the achievement of this social object – and in particular the mode of governance (Richez-Battesti *et al.*, 2012; Marival *et al.*, 2012). The evolution of work schemes and relationships between individuals is barely addressed.

4 THE PARTICIPATORY DYNAMICS AND SHAREHOLDERS' IMPLICATION APPROACH

Contrary to the social entrepreneurship approach, the participatory dynamics' approach concentrates precisely on processes at work during the implementation of social innovations. Social innovation would lie as much in the new products or services invented by the innovator as in the way there are designed (work methods, organization's governance, social and environmental impacts) (Marival *et al.*, 2012, p. 6). Many authors underline that, as regards social innovation, the way of doing (process) counts as much as the outcome (Richez-Battesti *et al.*, 2012; Paulré, 2016).

A social innovator indeed is not an isolated actor. His work takes place within an environment, on a territory, which includes various resources and actors

concerned by the innovation and which shapes the project (Chochoy, 2015). Taking into account interactions with the environment implies setting up processes of dialogue, conciliation, cooperation, and even associating shareholders to the project's governance (Chochoy, 2015) – this is what some authors call empowerment (Chochoy, 2015; Durance, 2011a). Shareholders include direct beneficiaries, employees or volunteers working on the innovation's development, local authorities, other organizations intervening in the sector or locals living on the innovation's area of implementation.

This is all the more relevant since, as we have said previously, one of social innovation's conditions of success is precisely its acceptance and appropriation by actors on the ground, and this can happen only if they are involved and listened to. According to Chochoy (2015, p. 80), studies show that the earlier beneficiaries are involved in the project, the more it carries social innovation. Recently, some authors have focused specifically on the question of social innovation diffusion (Besançon, 2015; Richez-Battesti, 2015).

These participatory dynamics are socially innovative in a hierarchical culture where "top-down" processes dominate. They encourage actors' expression and the emergence of unprecedented cooperation and organizational practices, and question balance of power (Leduc Browne, 2016). In that sense, **social innovation is source of social transformation** (Marival *et al.*, 2012). That is an important point, because this is what differentiates social innovation from innovations "at the margin" or "cosmetic" innovations, which surely have a social impact, but do not contribute to call into question the capitalist system and its modes of governance (Richez-Battesti *et al.*, 2012, p. 31).

We can cite open source software, like Framasoft, as an example of social innovation. Developers in the open source sector often adopt a non-hierarchical decision-making model: every decision comes from a member's proposal, then is discussed, adopted by consensus and implemented by several members who decide how they share work. Social innovation lies clearly in the way of doing – participatory decision-making process – and in the organization's social end – the promotion of web as a common and non-lucrative good. Another example is the development, in France, of Collective Interest Cooperative Enterprises (Sociétés Coopératives d'Intérêt Collectif – SCIC), governed by multiple shareholders (beneficiaries or clients, suppliers, local authorities, volunteers, employees) which allows territorial actors' inclusion in the project.

At this point, we outline two main elements, which complete our definition of social innovation:

- In social innovation, ways of doing (processes) count as much as the outcome.
- Social innovation is source of social transformation.

4.1 SOCIAL INNOVATION DEFINITION SUMMARY

For the reasons mentioned above, the participatory dynamics approach appears to be particularly interesting, especially as it does not exclude the two other sub-approaches. The principle of involving shareholders, which include local authorities, means that social innovation still has a place in theories on public policies' renewal – as far as it is carried out by territorial actors, and to the extent that it does not only consist in finding substitution to state intervention (Jany-Catrice & Méda, 2013). Local technicians and elected representatives' initiatives can even generate social innovation (Richez-Battesti & Vallade, 2009b). For example, in France, the project called "Convenience stores in the Gard Rhodanien", hosted by the social innovation incubator Alter'Incub, has been initiated by an elected representative from the Gard's county with the ambition to re-open small businesses and local services in rural areas.

Similarly, participatory dynamics do not exclude an entrepreneurial vision of social innovation, but underline that, even if the entrepreneur and his organization are key actors because they lead the innovation process, they cannot ignore the environment with which they interact.

From what has been said so far, we propose the following definition of social innovation: social innovation refers to new answers provided to unsatisfied or badly-satisfied social demands. Its main characteristics are the following:

- Social demands refer as much to primary needs necessary to human living as to social and environmental aspirations.
- Social innovation can be entirely new, it can consist in improving already-existing solutions, implementing them in another context, or re-discovering solutions from the past.
- Social innovation lies as much in the outcome pursued as in the methods carried out to achieve this outcome. Among these methods, shareholders' involvement through participatory dynamics is crucial.
- Social innovation (or more precisely the social innovation cluster) is source of social transformation.

5 INNOVATION TYPOLOGIES

At the beginning of this literature review, we mentioned OECD's typology of innovation (2005), which prevails in economic thought: product innovation, process innovation, marketing innovation, and organizational innovation. Are these categories applicable to social innovation?

It is possible to say that they are: if we consider that social innovation replies to a *social demand*, it necessarily implies the *production* of a good or service, which is *designed*, possibly *marketed*, within an organization having *organizational methods*. Therefore, we have here the four categories – product, process, market, organization – from which innovation can emerge.

However, this typology is only applicable if we consider social innovation as closely connected to the expression of a *demand*. Yet, we have seen before that according some authors, social innovation is synonymous of societal change and refers to major evolutions of society as a whole, even when there is no direct link with evolutions of the productive system (Hillier *et al.*, 2004; Fontan, 2008; Lévesque, 2012).

Therefore, this part proposes a typology of social innovation that includes OECD's four categories, taking into account the point of view of social innovation as societal change. It also builds on typologies proposed by Hochgerner (2009) and by Djellal and Gallouj (2012).

Hochgerner's Typology (2009)

Chart 2

HOCHGERNER'S INNOVATION TYPOLOGY

ECONOMIC INNOVATIONS				SOCIAL INNOVATIONS		
TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION WITHIN THE ENTERPRISE		NON-TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS WITHIN THE ENTERPRISE		SOCIAL INNOVATIONS WITHIN THE ENTERPRISE, THE STATE, CIVIL SOCIETY		
Product	Process	Organization	Marketing	Participation	Processes	Behaviors

Source: Hochgerner, 2009.

We can note that:

- The column "economic innovations" includes the OECD's categories: product innovation, process innovation, organizational innovation, marketing innovation.
- Social innovation concerns civil society, the enterprise and the State.
- Djellal and Gallouj's critiques of Hochgerner's typology are the following (2012):
- Non-technological product innovations – that is, innovation of service – are omitted.
- It is important to better distinguish social innovation inside the enterprise and outside the enterprise.

- Social innovation, like economic innovation, can refer to product or services, to processes, to marketing methods or organizational methods. And it is not really necessary to use different terms (participation, processes, behaviors) to describe it.

Djellal and Gallouj's Typology (2012)

Chart 3

DJELLAL AND GALLOUJ'S INNOVATION TYPOLOGY

ECONOMIC INNOVATIONS				SOCIAL INNOVATIONS						
TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION WITHIN THE ENTERPRISE		NON-TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS WITHIN THE ENTERPRISE		SOCIAL INNOVATIONS WITHIN THE ENTERPRISE			SOCIAL INNOVATIONS WITHIN THE STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY			
PRODUCT	PROCESS	ORGANIZATION	MARKETING	PARTICIPATION	PROCESS	BEHAVIORS	PARTICIPATION	PROCESSES	BEHAVIORS	
		NT Product (service)	*Process*	*Product*	*Process*					*NT Product (service)*
				Marketing	*NT Product (service)*					

NT = non technological.

Source: Djellal and Gallouj, 2012.

Djellal and Gallouj (2012) in the first part of their table (dotted frame), re-use exactly Hochgerner's typology. They just distinguish social innovation inside and outside the enterprise.

As regards the lower part of the table, we can note that:

- Concerning the column "Economic innovations": in the non-technological dimension of innovation, the authors add product innovation and process

innovation in order to include innovations in the tertiary sector (innovation of service and innovation in the conception of service)

- Concerning the column "Social innovations": the authors draw a parallel between the terms used by Hochgerner (participation, processes, behaviors) and "traditional" terms linked to innovation (product, process, marketing, organization).

This table is not entirely satisfying for several reasons.

As regards innovations taking place within an enterprise, the authors distinguish three types of innovation: technological innovations, non-technological innovations, and social innovations. Yet, a social innovation cannot be neither technological, nor non-technological! It covers some technological innovations and some non-technological innovations – those in which the social dimension, the ambition of social transformation, are central. Other innovations – technological and non-technological – which only purpose is to make profit or reduce costs are *economic* innovations.

Moreover, it does not seem entirely relevant to put the state in a separate category along with civil society. Indeed, State is composed of public *enterprises* which produce goods and services and which cost can be evaluated (they belong to the monetary non-market sector). Therefore, there is no reason why these public enterprises would not create product innovations, process innovations, marketing innovations or organizational innovations. Similarly, many not-for-profit organizations work like enterprises: they offer goods and services on the market or in the non-market sector.

More broadly, we can hardly see why the terms product innovation, process innovation, marketing innovation and organizational innovation would not apply to social innovation when it consists in the production of a good or service.

6 SUGGESTION OF INNOVATION TYPOLOGY

From what has been said above, we propose a new typology:

This table highlights a major element of distinction of social innovation: the centrality of its social dimension, its ambition of social transformation. Whether technological or non-technological, whether it emerges from an enterprise or not, this characteristic is crucial because it allows straight away to distinguish it from economic innovation, which primary purpose is profit maximization or costs reduction.

Chart 4

SUGGESTION OF INNOVATION TYPOLOGY

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">INNOVATION</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Economic
Centrality of the economic dimension: making profits, reducing costs</td><td colspan="2">Social
Centrality of the social dimension: social transformation</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">In the monetary sphere: public or private enterprises and not-for-profit organizations producing goods and services</td><td rowspan="2">In the non-monetary sphere: civil society</td></tr>
<tr><td>Technological</td><td colspan="2">Non-technological</td></tr>
<tr><td>Primary and secondary sector:
- Product
- Process</td><td>Tertiary sector:
- Service (innovation of product in the tertiary sector)</td><td>All sectors:
- Marketing
- Organizational
- Process</td><td>- Civil society's organizations and social movements: innovation in organizational models and ways of thinking
- Societal change: behaviors, lifestyles</td></tr>
</table>

Source: Elaborated by the author.

The table takes into account the need, outlined by Djellal and Gallouj (2012), to distinguish social innovation inside the enterprise and outside the enterprise. However, we have included public administrations and certain not-for-profit organizations on the side of these "enterprises", because they produce good and services almost like "traditional" private enterprises. The table also takes into account the need to clearly include services into the typology: this is the "tertiary sector" category.

Additionally, in the "non-monetary sphere" category, we differentiate two types of social innovation:

- Social innovations that emerge from civil society's organizations (not-for-profit organizations, NGO, labor unions, social movements): they do not produce goods or services, but they can generate social innovations through their organizational methods and models of thinking.
- Social innovations that are not generated by any organization specifically, and which refer to global dynamics of societal change.

Finally, the double-arrow establishes a link between economic innovation and social innovation in order to underline the fact that, in reality, there is sometimes

a porous border between these two types of innovation. As we said previously, according to some authors, social innovation can refer to societal transformation generated by economic innovation (Alter, 2002; Bouchard, 2006). Similarly, some economic innovations were the point of departure of another innovation in which the social dimension was central: for example, the innovation cluster of information technologies allowed the development of open-source software, websites, articles or books aiming at the production of collective goods and the free diffusion of knowledge.

To illustrate our table, we can add some examples of social innovations (written "SI" in the text):

CHART 5

SUGGESTION OF INNOVATION TYPOLOGY, WITH EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">INNOVATION</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Economic
Centrality of the economic dimension: making profits, reducing costs</td><td colspan="2">Social
Centrality of the social dimension: social transformation</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">In the monetary sphere: public or private enterprises and not-for-profit organizations producing goods and services</td><td rowspan="2">In the non-monetary sphere: civil society</td></tr>
<tr><td>Technological</td><td colspan="2">Non-technological</td></tr>
<tr><td>Primary and secondary sector:
- Product.
Example for SI: eco-construction
- Process</td><td>Tertiary sector:
- Service
Example for SI: Equiphoria, Websourd</td><td>All sectors:
- Marketing
Example for SI: French AMAPs (not-for-profit organizations for maintaining peasant farming)*
- Organizational
Example for SI: developers' working methods in the open-source computing sector
- Process</td><td>- Civil society's organizations and social movements: innovation in organizational models and ways of thinking
Example for SI: from top-down logics of assistance to empowerment logics in charities
- Societal change: behaviors, lifestyles
Example for SI: eco-friendly behaviors</td></tr>
</table>

* AMAPs are consumer cooperatives that link consumers to a local farmer who delivers weekly fruit and vegetable boxes.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

7 CONCLUSION: SOCIAL INNOVATION'S AMBIGUOUS CONTEXT OF EMERGENCE

A complete understanding of social innovation would not be possible without having a look at its context of emergence. We outline here some elements that would need to be detailed.

Firstly, the concept emerged against the primacy of economic technological innovation (Leduc Browne, 2016). Since the Enlightenments, technological innovation has always been associated to social progress and economic prosperity (Bouchard, 2009). Yet, it mainly concerns *material* conditions of living, not individuals' social aspirations that arise when their basic needs have been fulfilled. Moreover, whereas it carries the promise of greater wealth for everyone, in reality earnings are unequally shared (Marival *et al.*, 2012). Innovation seems more and more disconnected from human needs and tends to be associated with the excesses of modernity and global capitalism (Paulré, 2016), preserving richest people's wealth without solving problems such as poverty, exclusion or climate change. Therefore, the concept of social innovation has been introduced in order to promote a kind of innovation that would really serve human beings and their social needs (Richez-Battesti *et al.*, 2012; Marival *et al.*, 2012).

Secondly, the concept's emergence can be linked to the various crises our society faced in the past fifteen years. Schumpeter (1934) explains that every crisis is followed by the rise of a new innovation cluster which would foster a new economic growth cycle. Therefore, innovation processes are closely watched in times of crisis. A first theory considers that social innovations appear during social crises, exactly as economic innovations emerge during economic crises. Lévesque (2012) identifies three social crises, associated to three social innovation clusters, since the 1960s. A second theory considers that social innovation emerged specifically with the 2008 crisis, because this crisis confirmed the retreat of the Welfare State, as well as technological innovation's failure to restore prosperity and the financial system's disconnection with human needs. In that context, social innovation would be a solution to face social challenges the Welfare State gave up, to compensate technological innovation's failure in a more sustainable way, and to promote more locally-grounded lifestyles, as well as productive methods based on local products and participatory dynamics (Richez-Battesti *et al.*, 2012; Bouchard, Frohn, & Morin, 2010).

This leads to a third consideration. Social innovation is supposed to carry social transformation and to provide an alternative to the neoliberal system. Yet, because it emerges in times of crises, it rather seems to repair the dominant system's harms, thus allowing it to perpetuate. Therefore, it is not clear whether

it reinforces neoliberal capitalism, or whether it seeks alternatives to it. The theory of capitalist recovery of alternatives (such as social innovation) is detailed by Boltanski and Chiapello (1999). It can be illustrated, for example, by firms' increasing use of the social innovation concept in their communication strategy, hiding profit maximization ends behind so-called social innovations with no ambition of social transformation.

A final word can be said on social innovation's emergence. As we have just seen, it seems that social innovation appeared quite recently. Yet haven't human beings always faced unsatisfied social needs and use their creativity to solution them? When we look at the history of the social and solidarity economy sector, we can see that individuals have long been inventing new tools for a more equal and fair society. The invention of cooperatives, for example, could be considered as a social innovation. Some consider social innovation as the "lab" of the social and solidarity economy sector, because it ensures its perpetual renewal, in particular when initiatives have been recovered by the dominant system (Bouchard, 2006, p. 11).

However, the idea of perpetual social innovation is not shared by all authors. Participatory dynamics described above as an essential aspect of social innovation, thanks to shareholders' involvement, is a quite recent principle. Similarly, concern for local economy based on sustainable development emerged recently.

EXPLORAR VÁRIAS ABORDAGENS PARA A INOVAÇÃO SOCIAL: UMA ANÁLISE DA LITERATURA FRANCÓFONA E UMA PROPOSTA DE TIPOLOGIA DE INOVAÇÃO

RESUMO

Objetivo: O objetivo deste artigo é esclarecer as múltiplas abordagens de inovação social, com foco sobre a literatura francófona.
Originalidade/lacuna/relevância/implicações: Será oferecida uma revisão ampla da literatura que ponha em dúvida o significado do adjetivo "social" quando usado pelos autores para descrever uma inovação, destacando as diferentes abordagens do conceito, os relacionamentos de umas entre outras e os seus limites e ilustrando estas abordagens com exemplos concretos.
Principais aspectos metodológicos: A análise da literatura se baseia em uma seleção de vinte e cinco artigos em francês – a língua materna do autor – recolhidos e

analisados através do método do "ponto de saturação teórica". Concluímos nossa investigação quando aparecia que não havia mais elementos inéditos e cruciais para os artigos novamente lidos, ou seja, quando apareceu que um "ponto de saturação" finalmente foi atingido sobre as teorias da inovação social.
Síntese dos principais resultados: A definição da inovação social, como novas soluções para as exigências não ou mal atendidas, parece predominar na literatura. Ela pode ser subdividida em três: a abordagem pelas políticas públicas, a abordagem pelo espírito empresarial social e a abordagem pelo desenvolvimento participativo que parece ser, neste caso, a mais interessante, sem excluir as outras.
Principais considerações/conclusões: Propõe-se uma nova tipologia de inovação que mostra a relação entre a inovação social com outros tipos de inovações. A título de conclusão, algumas considerações são apresentadas sobre o contexto de emergência da inovação social e da sua posição ambígua dentro do sistema neoliberal.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Inovação social. Espírito empresarial social. Inovação tecnológica. Inovação de serviços. Economia social e solidária.

EXPLORAR DIVERSAS TEORÍAS SOBRE LA INNOVACIÓN SOCIAL: UN ANÁLISIS DE LA LITERATURA FRANCÓFONA Y UNA PROPOSICIÓN DE TIPOLOGÍA DE LA INNOVACIÓN

RESUMEN

Objetivo: El objetivo de este artículo es clarificar las diversas visiones de la innovación social, concentrándose en la literatura francófona.
Originalidad/laguna/relevancia/implicaciones: Proponemos un análisis a fondo de la literatura, que cuestiona el significado del adjetivo "social" cuando está utilizado por los autores para calificar una innovación, que destaca los diferentes enfoques del concepto, sus relaciones entre sí y sus límites, y que los ilustra con ejemplos concretos. Por fin, utilizamos este material para sugerir una nueva tipología de la innovación social, que toma plenamente en cuenta la innovación social.
Principales aspectos metodológicos: El análisis de la literatura está basado sobre 25 artículos en francés – el idioma materno de la autora – que fueron recogidos utilizando el método del "punto de saturación teorético": paramos el recogiendo

cuando nos pareció que no había ningun elemento inédito en los nuevos artículos leídos, es decir, cuando llegamos a un "punto de saturación" de información respecto a las teorías sobre la innovación social.
Síntesis de los principales resultados: La definición de la innovación social como nuevas respuestas a demandas sociales insatisfechas o no-satisfechas parece prevalecer en la literatura francófona. Puede ser divida en tres sub-visiones: la visión basada en las políticas públicas, la visión basada en el empresariado social, y la visión basada en las dinámicas participativas, que nos parece la más interesante, sin excluir las otras.
Principales consideraciones/conclusiones: Proponemos una nueva tipología de la innovación social, que presenta sus relaciones con otros tipos de innovación. Concluimos con algunas consideraciones sobre el contexto de emergencia de la innovación social y sobre su posición ambigua con el sistema neoliberal.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Innovación social. Empresa social. Innovación no tecnológica. Innovación de servicio. Economía social y solidaria.

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