PREAMBLE

The piece below was originally written for submission to a Special Issues of an academic journal, for which the call for papers opened in August 2019. The Special Issue was subsequently published in August 2021, providing a really useful and interesting collection of papers. The original version benefited from dedicated writing time made possible through the Community Economies Institute, of which I'm a Founding Director.

The original version received positive commentary about the potential contributions it could make, useful suggestions for tightening (thank you reviewers!), and an indication there was interest in including it. Revisions were undertaken and it was resubmitted in early 2020, as a 'conceptual paper' rather than a 'research paper' under the Journal's classifications. A second round of review comments departed significantly from the first, and to be honest were pretty opaque as to how they could be productively engaged with. Two very kind and esteemed colleagues associated with the Journal provided further comments, outside of the formal review process, which have been drawn on in part at least in the version offered here. But given the advancing age of the research, extreme busy-ness in a new job, and a clear decision I made around this time to 'opt out' of pursuing a traditional academic 'career' (where journal publishing is foundational), I put the piece aside assuming it would never see the light of day.

Of course, self-publishing will not and should never be considered a substitute for quality academic publishing. But the wastefulness of having invested a lot of time and not using the material somehow kept rankling me, and I also keep coming back to the core ideas developed here as early versions of content we continue to thicken and deepen in our work at GUCSI. So, this is 'just doing it' - and under the 'rules' means it can't be formally published in future, so reinforces my commitment to a non-traditional pathway I guess.

This preamble is offered to contextualise the material a little, particularly to locate it chronologically amongst other related work. And whilst it remains not fully resolved, I offer this version now thinking that perhaps it could be helpful for those grappling with how to make sense of and represent complexity and nuance to see more 'works-in-progress' that dive deep but don't fit neatly into traditional publishing channels.

23 March 2023

Associate Professor Joanne McNeill
Deputy Director & Engaged Research Lead, Griffith Centre for Systems Innovation

Published via https://medium.com/good-shift/innovating-in-nested-systems-7dc7a51d34cb
(Full thesis)

New public governance: Frameworks for supporting transformative social innovation

INTRODUCTION

Despite well over a decade of scholarly attention innovation remains a contested concept (Ayob et al. 2016), and one that also suffers from 'concept stretching' (Sinclair & Baglioni 2014, p.470). As a field, it continues to be characterised by a tug-of-war between two competing schools of thought and practice. The discussion below offers perspectives on the technocratic (or marketisation) vs. democratic (or improved social relations) narrative (Montgomery 2016), aiming to contribute to a reframing of what is often characterised as an either/or binary. This contribution is developed through a 'thick description' (Geertz 1973; Gibson-Graham 2014) exemplification of new public governance (Osborne 2006) as a policy framework sufficiently nuanced for supporting the transformative potential of social innovation initiatives. In addition to this content aim, the demonstration of 'thick description' is also offered as a contribution to the social innovation scholarly field, as a method well suited to improving understanding of social relations and cultural practices. To situate the discussion, some commentary and observations on the field and its trajectories are firstly outlined.

Despite the lack of empirical evidence, around the world policy interest in social innovation is rapidly growing, transcending national borders and political divisions (e.g. Sinclair & Baglioni, 2014; Boelman et al. 2014). Arguably, this uptake is grounded in a desire to bring about positive social change – a normative assumption of inherent goodness, if you like. This 'grand narrative' is similar to what Dey and Steyaert observe about social entrepreneurship as a field of practice and of inquiry; and is concerning as it imparts a seemingly ideology free and optimistic 'script of social change', one that is driven by values of rationalism, utility, progress and individualism (2010).

This narrative reduces the complex social processes involved in social change and masks the political tensions that surround its trajectories. Important questions arise if we reject the premise that all that is required to improve the effectiveness of public programs is to 'just add social innovation'. What constitutes 'the public interest'? How 'social' is being defined, who is involved in making these decisions, and what interests are served (TEPSIE, 2014 p.33)? These questions are fundamental, if we take the public sector as having an explicit goal to act for-the-greater-good. Once considered, these matters open up further questions, including around accountability and citizens' rights (Baglioni & Sinclair, 2014 pp.409-410), and the state devolving its social welfare responsibilities (Brandsen et al., 2016 p.4; Sinclair & Baglioni, 2014 pp.473-4). The 'promise of change' can also mask political expediencies, where existing and possibly ineffective policies and programs are re-packaged and 'sold' as innovations (Borzaga & Bodini, 2014 p.412), for example by "creating new jobs in the 'cheap' social economy" (Moulaert et al., 2013 p.17).

These issues also connect to concerns about the co-option of social innovation into 'fast policy' agendas (Klein, 2013 p.9) – where the focus is on identifying 'best practice' activity that can be 'rolled out' anywhere, offering 'silver bullet' panacea-like responses to complex issues (Moulaert et al., 2013 p.18; TEPSIE, 2014 p.6). In a climate of reducing public budgets and increasingly complex tensions, between policy priorities, all of these considerations offer good reasons for promoting critical examination of the underpinning epistemology that is shaping social innovation as it is being applied in pursuit of a range of policymaking objectives.

Nonetheless, and in the meantime, 'social innovation policies' are being presented as something of a panacea for addressing 'wicked problems' (Rittel & Webber 1973), and in a post-pandemic world it is highly likely this interest will increase. In part at least, this interest is driven by growing recognition that existing public policy approaches to tackling both the complexity and the scale

of these challenges are inadequate (Murray, 2009; Bason, 2014b). This includes 'conventional' approaches to policymaking, which tend to be instrumentalist in attempting to force "a rational problem-solving system of problem definition, administration and resolution" (Christiansen & Bunt, 2014 p.41), resulting in a significant disconnect between the sense of order and coherence these approaches convey and the realities of policymaking in a complex world (Hassan, 2014; Bason, 2014a). Conventional approaches are increasingly considered insufficient and lacking the creativity required, including by many policymakers themselves (Durose & Richardson, 2016).

However, as Dey identifies in relation to social entrepreneurship, bureaucratic agents are often assumed to be 'uninspired' and 'lethargic' and are cast as 'a simple and abstract set of negativities' populated by 'dysfunctional, outdated and inefficient leftovers' (Dey, 2006 p.129; see also Mazzucato 2013 for a 'debunking' treatise). Dey's analysis of how this type of rhetorical framing presupposes and reinforces a 'bureaucracy-social enterprise binary' highlights the prevalence of an essentialist discourse that corrals imaginaries around the roles of policy in supporting and strengthening social innovation activities.

Drawing on Gibson-Graham's argument that ". . . we can no more assume a capitalist firm is interested in maximizing profits or exploitation than we may assume that an individual woman wants to bear and raise children . . ." (2006 p.16) the discussion here rests on the assumption that policymakers are no more driven by 'uniform behaviours and aspirations' than any other taxonomically classified group. Indeed, presupposing motivations and accepting these as given, is one way that the technocratic vs. democratic divide is perpetuated. In the face of current and ongoing crises, there is a need to shift binary and reductive narratives around the motivations, aspirations, and efforts of those seeking to bring about transformative social innovation [i] in or through public policy, so as to enrol and engage more diverse and more nuanced stakeholder cohorts.

Framing policymaking

At a broad and much simplified level existing,[ii] conventional policymaking approaches - and the agents who design and implement them – can be understood as being guided and shaped by three major public sector governance discourses – classical administration, new public management, and network management. These three discourses are often conceived as having progressed in a more-or-less linear fashion over time and as distinctive frameworks. However, the reality is that in practice they overlap and co-exist, which can lead to messy, confused processes (Barraket et al. 2016, pp.90-91; Sorensen & Torfing 2015, p.164). This very messiness is increasingly recognised as characteristic of an emergent framework that is termed 'new public governance' (Osborne 2006; Barraket et al. 2016; Abbott et al. 2019).

New public governance is positioned as signalling an era where the state is both plural - with 'multiple inter-dependent actors contributing to the delivery of public services', and pluralist - with 'multiple processes informing policymaking' (Osborne, 2006 p.384). New public governance frameworks are said to be 'mixed-modes' by nature - creatively combining new public management-style tools with network-management orientations, to achieve transparency *whilst also* fostering participatory and collaborative involvement. Achieving accountability *and* flexibility is critical to navigating the realities of public sector organisational cultures (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2012; Sorensen & Torfing, 2015; Osborne, 2006; Torfing and Triantafillou, 2013).

As suggested, achieving this balance requires an ever-evolving combination of 'tight' and 'loose' arrangements; a type of 'pluralistic zone', characterised by low power distance and increasing trust and collaboration (Hazenberg et al. 2016, p.317). These hybrid practices involve "combinations of vertical and horizontal ties shaped by complex combinations of democratic and market forces" (Koppenjan & Koliba, 2013). Rather than offering the 'one-size-fits-all' type

solutions that characterise classical public administration approaches; or automatically requiring the use of competitive frameworks, as is common under new public management regimes; or using the quantity of dialogue as a gauge for the effectiveness of engagement, as can happen in network-management approaches – a new public governance framing directs focus to the specificity of the particular context, and then to jointly negotiating the 'rules of game' that will govern the arrangements between those involved (Barraket et al. 2016).

APPROACH

Aims and contribution of the paper

The discussion here explores how new public governance frameworks are well suited to governing *social innovation assemblages*. The idea of 'assemblage' is drawn on experimentally and lightly, to provide a conceptual orientation (and terminology) considered useful for furthering understanding of the unique mixtures of concepts, policy instruments, new forms of cooperation and organisation, methods, processes and regulations, and the complex relationships between diverse actors such as people, institutions and organisations, laws, documents, strategies, and technologies (Howaldt et al. 2014, pp.19-21) that social innovation theory relies on.

It does not attempt nor purport to engage with the complexities and nuances of assemblage 'theory' (itself a contested label), but draws 'lightly' on the high-level concept to focus attention on specific characteristics of social innovation, and to the transformative potentialities that perhaps become 'more possible' when a 'trajectory' (or 'nomadic assemblage') framing is engaged with (Nail 2017, p.32-33). The notion of 'assemblage' (or *agencement*, in the original French) is anti-essentialist by definition, as it has no 'eternally necessary defining features', and therefore no static 'essence' - meaning that its elements "... can be added, subtracted, and recombined with one another ad infinitum without ever creating or destroying an organic unity" (Nail 2017, p. 23). This is suggested as a particularly useful lens through which to explore social innovation, and particularly transformative social innovation.

'Always in motion' social innovation assemblages are often at odds with rigid bureaucratic structures, requiring flexible and emergent governance processes to survive and thrive. Towards improved understanding of these processes, the focus here is on an exploring how a new public governance framing to policymaking can support this type of social innovation 'trajectory'. Whilst the actors in the case example discussed below would not think of their roles, relations and actions in this way, bringing this theoretical lens to their work offers a sense-making opportunity for scholars, practitioners and policy-makers.

For some, new public governance could perhaps be interpreted as 'old wine in new bottles', but in here the 'genuinely constitutive and performative' role of language in unsettling 'settled certainties' and in producing new realities is foregrounded (Law & Urry 2004, p.404; Dey 2006, p.122-137; Gibson-Graham 2006; Gibson-Graham & Roelvink 2009). For example, naming social innovation as an assemblage activity immediately begins to reshape power relations through positioning policies and policymakers as one amongst many elements, all of which are dependent on each other to achieve the specified purpose of collaboration.

A methodological contribution to the social innovation discourse is also offered, through demonstrating use of 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973; Gibson-Graham 2014) to draw out narratives that can support re-positioning of policy framings. Ponterotto's (2006) investigation into the origins and evolution of the concept identifies anthropologist Geertz's use to characterise his approach to ethnography as a key development; however he suggests it was Denzin's detailed explication of thick description in 1989, which includes eleven different types, that popularised its use amongst qualitative researchers across disciplines. Whilst confusion around the concept

remains, Ponterotto found that definitions developed subsequently concur that 'thick description' involves much more than great detail – 'thick interpretation' is sought through assigning and interpreting the motivations and intentions within social practices, and this generates 'thick meaning' around the finding (2006, p.538-43).[iii] The thematic discussion presented below is an exploratory attempt to provide an example of this approach.

As contribution to policy and practice, through the thick description method, a new public governance lens is applied to a specific case study (Yin 1994; Stake 1994) and is offered as a vignette through which the analytic approach is demonstrated. It is suggested that new public governance offers language and processes that open up pathways for supporting policymakers to engage with social innovation activity in ways that enable its transformative potential. As discussed below, a new public governance framing can also help 'make sense' of what may otherwise be considered 'messy' processes and practices, and through this contribute to reconfiguring social relations between policymakers, social innovators, and their stakeholders.

Together, these contributions are offered as a conceptual paper, that develops four key themes. Data gathered through two different and separate research projects and the author's over-15 years professional experience in the field [at the time] are drawn on in developing these themes. A social enterprise case example provides the vehicle for the discussion, however the paper is not designed or intended as a case study analysis per se as the example is used to explore the policy framings, rather than the analysis being focused on the enterprise itself. A traditional 'methods' section, designed around one research project, is not a good fit here; but to contextualise the discussion offered, a listing of the research methods and activities involving the social enterprise is provided:

- As part of the first research project - ongoing desk-top review of publications, materials, and website (2012-2016); a day-long observation visit to the head office (2013); in-depth semi-structured interviews with representatives of three entities involved in the social innovation assemblage (2-2.5 hours each; 2013); check-in and clarifying email correspondence with interviewees (2014-2015).
- As part of the second research project, in 2017 - review and updating of desk-top research; site visit to head office (half-day); semi-structured interview with one of the original interviewees (2 hours); visit to Member organisation, with guided site tour of their multiple enterprises (half-day); semi-structured interview with Member representative (1.5 hours); and review of Member publications and materials.
- All interviews were audio-recorded, and a new public governance analysis 'lens' was applied to the research data – looking for the themes, characteristics, and 'ways of working' that are discussed in the thick description narrative below.

Reframing the technocratic vs. democratic binary

Allowing the limitations of the technocratic narrative to frame how we think about, practice, and design policy to support social innovation corrals imaginaries as to what may be possible with regards to 'new ways of working'. Marketisation imperatives are here to stay. We must find ways to work within – and despite – the constraints this ideology imposes. One way to do this is to break down 'the market' monolith, rendering it digestible through identifying and tackling its constituent parts (Gibson-Graham 1993).

A first step in developing a robust counter to the marketisation 'there is no alternative' argument (where path dependencies around particular or existing methods, strategies and policies are assumed) is identifying key decision-making points. Identifying where and how decisions are being made is prefigurative to establishing an open stance oriented towards possibilities and potentialities. As Parker et al. articulate, decision-making in any context is often a contested process and may involve significant tensions – and yet there are 'always choices about means,

ends and the relations between them'. Processes of decision-making are also ongoing, occurring at each step of policy and program design and implementation, and as each layer of decision-making is encountered there are opportunities to test assumptions and to make different choices (Parker et al., 2014 pp.34-39).

In new public governance-style relationships, 'negotiated interactions' around these decisions occur throughout the process. The sense of engagement generated as a result facilitates the 'pooling of public and private ideas and resources' and builds joint ownership over actions amongst internal and external partners and stakeholders (Torfing & Triantafillou, 2013 p.15). This creates openings for significantly altering the discourse around how complex public problems may be tackled, shifting away from conceiving them as public *sector* problems to issues that publics are involved in addressing.

To demonstrate how new public governance can contribute to reframing these public problems, in the sections below an extended discussion of one example is provided. The discussion draws on a 'reading for difference' analysis (Gibson-Graham, 2008 pp.624-5) and uses 'thick description' (Gibson-Graham 2014) to interpret the example discussed. These are methods of social inquiry that have been developed to foster productive engagement with complexity (Law & Urry, 2004 p.390). As the name suggests, these analyses are intentionally thick with detail and to unpack the richness are often best engaged with through multiple readings.

Other interpretations to that offered here are of course available - e.g. the case could be read as an example of technocratic social innovation, with the social enterprise acting as a handmaiden to neoliberal agendas (Montgomery, 2016 p.1983). Whilst critiquing in this vein is always tempting, and it could be argued in some ways is perhaps more straightforward to engage with, the intent behind a reading for difference approach is to highlight already existing examples that unsettle the hegemony of existing discourses. In this way, the reframing analysis offered here is – in the community economies tradition - explicitly performative in that the focus is on identifying openings for enrolling diverse actors in 'making other worlds possible' (St. Martin et al., 2015 p.1). A key factor in this is understanding how social relations come to be reconfigured, and the nuance that use of a 'thick description' analysis brings provides many insights into the relational embeddedness (Zafeiropoulou & Koufopoulos, 2013 p.82) that is at the heart of social innovation assemblages.

This 'reframing' method is not intended to deny or trivialise the significant issues related to the rise of austerity budget policies and the technocratic forms of social innovation that this climate is giving rise to. But rather is intended to present a hopeful stance that identifies opportunities for action from within the existing paradigm (Gibson-Graham, 2008), involving a broad range of actors and in ways that promote collaborative engagement with complex issues. This style of approach can also be characterised as a futures visioning method, designed to open up ". . . the straitjacket of the belief in a future that only holds 'more of the same'" (Wittmayer et al. 2019, p.9).

'THICK DESCRIPTION' OF KOMOSIE: A NEW-PUBLIC-GOVERNANCE-STYLE SOCIAL INNOVATION ASSEMBLAGE

Social innovation is 'processual' and highly dynamic in nature and as such requires analytical sensitivity to accommodate and reflect changing relations and broader influences (Pel et al., 2020 p.2). 'Thick description' is by definition grounded in context and therefore is well suited to capturing and interpreting shifts and turns over time (note however, that any published output, by its very nature, 'freezes' the dynamic processes at play).

Here the aim is exploratory and thick description is being used to make social relationships and cultural practices more explicit and visible. These relations and practices demonstrate the distributed agency at the heart of the assemblage, and through four key conceptual themes discussed in the following sections the interdependence between several layers is explored. For theoretical purposes, these themes could also be characterised using the four 'clusters of key socio-material relations' identified in Pel et al.'s 'relational framework' - relations within social innovation initiatives; relations in network formation; relations to institutional change; relations to the socio-material context. This framework is designed to counter approaches that specify the 'social' as relating to 'desirable purposes, designated beneficiaries and ideological programs (2020, p.3-4), and is therefore motivated by similar interests as outlined in here.

This first section below introduces the social enterprise drawn on as exemplifier, including some background on its policy context and history that is based on review of publications, website content, and other materials available through desk-top research.

Contextualising the exemplifier

KOMOSIE (Federation of Environmental Entrepreneurs in the Social Economy) is a social enterprise formally established in 1994, to act as a coordinating and support entity for its Member enterprises - 31 independent Re-use Centres located in the Flanders region of Belgium. Together these Centres own and manage over 120 re-use shops that operate under the collective De Kringwinkel brand. Through the advocacy, training and coordination work of KOMOSIE, the network of Re-use Centres and their shops have developed into robust and sustainable enterprises. In 2014 over 5 000 people were employed in 'real jobs', over 80% of whom were previously long termed unemployed; almost 66 000 tons of reusable material was diverted from landfill; over five million customers bought re-use items; and a turnover in excess of €45 million was generated across the network (OVAM, 2015). In recent years KOMOSIE has expanded its work to also include a focus on energy saving and food waste. KOMOSIE is now reportedly Europe's largest social franchise (European Social Franchising Network, n.d.), and can be characterised as facilitating a 'network of alliances' among small scale enterprises (Zafeiropoulou & Koufopoulos 2013, p.81).

KOMOSIE is based in Flanders, one of Belgium's three designated regions which has had its own Parliament and Government since 1980. OVAM (Flanders' Regional Waste Agency) is the principal authority for waste management and soil remediation in Flanders. It was established in 1981 through a Waste Decree (regional law). Flemish waste and re-use policy objectives are structured around *Lansink's Ladder*, a standard widely used in waste management policy. After reduced consumption, re-use is the first step on the ladder towards waste reduction, meaning that the potential for re-use of a waste item must be considered before any other option. Since establishment, OVAM's role has therefore evolved to include a strong focus on prevention, through sustainable resource management.

The Flemish Department for Work & Social Economy (DWSE) coordinates policy and monitors and ensures standards and compliance relating to employment across the Flanders region. At the broadest policy level, the Flemish Government recognises that the future viability of the region's effective (and relatively substantial) social security system is dependent on the generation of corresponding levels of tax revenue. With an ageing population, creating pathways and reducing barriers into employment for the highest possible number of citizens is therefore a central policy objective. To this end, through various employment programs, awards and grants DWSE promotes employment across the mainstream sector and the social economy.

Whilst in recent times there has been an increased emphasis on engaging commercial enterprises in employing people who require assistance to find and maintain work, interviewees advised that in Flanders the social economy is recognised as the primary partner in this complex area. One of

the social economy initiatives the DWSE oversees is the Social Employment Places (see endnote iv also). These are accredited workplaces that seek to improve Flanders' social inclusion objectives, and receive wage subsidies and staffing grants from DWSE. KOMOSIE Re-use Centres and De Kringwinkel shops are approved Social Employment Places under the Flemish system. [iv]

Theme One - Establishing enabling conditions: A process of negotiation

Beginning in the early 1990s OVAM and DWSE identified an opportunity to bring together policy objectives around job creation and waste re-use. Experience had identified that attempts to change behaviour around waste were most effective when people had close connection with the approaches adopted, allowing educative aspects to be integrated in practical ways and at the point of contact.

> *"The historical part of bringing social and environmental policies together - that seems to be the turning point. The two departments sat together and talked about their objectives, and worked out what the goals could be together. Things like the social employment goals, the kilos of reuse, the education of the customers . . . Because they saw the value of the low skills and long-time unemployed, saw manual jobs would be better and a good thing to start people with. . . [and] so that every municipality, every inhabitant, could have access to do something with furniture and other re-usable items . . ." (OVAM interview)*

DWSE and OVAM recognised the unique public value that the integration of three objectives – around re-use, waste education, and employment – would generate. Importantly, they also realised that the combination of these meant that a market-based contracted delivery approach would be unlikely to be successful, due to the high costs of social employment and the constrained revenue potential that secondhand goods offer. The two departments therefore identified that a more strategic and long-term approach would be needed, if a stable and viable model were to be established. In particular, it needed to include features that would offset the challenges of operating in a low-revenue market, whilst also creating the maximum number of jobs for people with barriers to employment.

Research participants agreed that the key to developing an innovative model that could balance these factors hinged on working through the three interrelated objectives collaboratively and early in the process - *before* any decisions had been made about the nature of the solution. In this aspect, the new public governance framework facilitated a participatory and engaged approach, breaking down silos and improving social relations at the departmental level.

Four strategic policy tools together created the enabling conditions that made the 'KOMOSIE assemblage' model possible. In this aspect, the new public governance framework is integrating the use of market-oriented and procedurally driven policy tools. How these were developed and the form in which they exist today has evolved over time and in consultation with the fledgling projects that eventually became the KOMOSIE Members. Again, demonstrating the oscillation between the 'tight' and 'loose' governance arrangements that new public governance frameworks can facilitate - and this time broadening into partnership relationships.

The first policy tool was the creation of a **designated and exclusive zone for each Centre** to operate within. As a result, the Re-use Centres are not in competition with each other for collection of items for re-use (essentially their inventory). It also stimulates collaboration between the Centres, to exchange knowledge and practical experience (it was this that originally led to the grassroots establishment of the KOMOSIE Federation). The knowledge transfer and constant improvement made possible through the coordinated collaboration is considered critical to the success of the model.

The second policy tool involved implementing **an accreditation system** for the Re-use Centres. The accreditation requires registration as a nonprofit entity and is based on reporting against both the social and environmental objectives (which are tightened each year). KOMOSIE membership is also a requirement of accreditation, ensuring each Re-use Centre has the support needed to meet and maintain the agreed standards. It also facilitates collaboration with other Members around ongoing process and reporting improvements.

The third policy tool is a compulsory **Local Authorities agreement** - implemented through OVAM's regulatory role – which requires each Local Authority to hold an agreement with the Re-use Centre in its area. This ensures the Centres maximum access to re-usable goods, and that the Local Authority promotes re-use in general and their services in particular. The Re-use Centres are required to uphold a 'minimum obligatory service to citizens' which includes providing a free door-to-door collection service for pickup of re-usable items. Waste services are a highly sensitive area of operations for Local Authorities, and consequently those contract managers can tend to be quite risk averse. The negotiation of this standard agreement is therefore significant.

The fourth policy tool was the application of a **special sales tax rate** for re-use goods. There are two value-added tax rates in Belgium: six percent – applied to basic needs type goods (food etc.); and 21 percent - applied to all other goods. The saving on re-use goods is passed on to the customer, creating a competitive advantage in the market. It also means inventory cannot be 'topped up' by buying additional goods for popular lines (and the like), ensuring the Centres cannot 'cherry pick' for high profit margin goods and activity streams and so must be agile and innovative in how they achieve re-use targets across all waste categories.

These four inter-related policy tools are key actors in the assemblage and demonstrate a nuanced use of policy to create critical dynamics in enabling social innovation. They show how policy can collaboratively (rather than coercively) enrol an entire network of actors in working cooperatively towards public interest goals. It's worth noting here that other approaches to achieving similar objectives are being explored in tangential discourses – for example, the 'entrepreneurial state' engaging in collaborative mission-oriented market-shaping (Mazzucato 2013, 2018); and 'partner state' when public resources and functions are used to enable and empower autonomous social production (Bauwens & Kostakis 2015).

Theme Two - A purpose-built network-based assemblage

In the KOMOSIE model, through the processes of negotiated interactions described above (and further below), the enabling conditions for a policy-supported and grassroots-led approach to tackling two complex public problems were established. The model that eventually stabilised can be characterised as network-based and was made possible by a high degree of relational embeddedness amongst the actors involved. In this, this example demonstrates how new public governance frameworks can flex to accommodate another of the overarching public sector discourses – that of network management.

Network-based approaches to addressing complex challenges are gaining increasing attention in policy circles, particularly as in ever evolving contexts they are seen to be more adaptable than delivery models that rely on competitive markets, hierarchical forms of governance, and delivery by single organisations (Sorensen & Torfing, 2015 p.153). Networks that foster collective approaches to social innovation are effective when working with complexities (Moore & Westley, 2011 n.p.) – as they establish strong relational ties, value the development of long-term relationships, and direct their negotiation efforts towards achieving the best outcomes for the group as a whole (Barraket et al., 2016 p.100). As such network-based approaches are seen to mitigate some of the now widely acknowledged limitations of pure new public management-style adversarial contracting.

The KOMOSIE network model provides an example of intentional engagement with the complex 'plural and pluralist' nature of effective networks in an emerging new public governance policy context "where multiple, independent actors contribute to the delivery of public services and . . . multiple processes inform the policy-making system", and with the complex interdependent relationships that result (Barraket et al., 2016 pp.95-96). To greater and lesser extents, these approaches require genuinely distributed governance – improving social relations through encouraging engagement and influence, and sharing power over decision making.

However, network management is not an easy task in any context, and the efforts required to do it effectively are often underestimated. This can result in reverting to 'obsolete' behaviour that 'frustrates the interactive process' (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2012 p.593). Despite this, making a business case for the role of coordinating entities in networks is notoriously challenging and promising arrangements often dissolve due to a lack of resourcing in this area. For policymakers it can be difficult to determine how to offer support in a way that does not assume control and/or create dependency, and thereby limit the very characteristics the effectiveness relies on. The KOMOSIE model provides insights into how genuinely participatory governance can be achieved whilst maintaining the accountabilities required of public sector actors. These insights are useful for policymaking purposes, and the characterisation offered here – that of an assemblage enabled and governed by a new public governance framework - also contributes to theorising social innovation assemblages.

The KOMOSIE social innovation assemblage is a multi-layered entity that by its very nature demonstrates a pluralist approach to governance and engagement. Each of its layers are discussed below, separately to draw out the detail that thick description allows – in practice, these layers are working in constant collaboration and tension towards the agreed goals.

KOMOSIE the coordinating entity

The existence of KOMOSIE as a central coordinating entity across the network is a key factor in unlocking the potential of the four integrated policy tools discussed above. Without this central coordination, the network would not be a network. [v] However, coordination does not happen by chance; it requires resourcing, commitment and clear objectives. For the public sector partners, supporting KOMOSIE in this central coordinating role is recognised as important to the success of the model on a number of levels.

KOMOSIE (the coordinating entity) is a social enterprise with a team of 14 staff (at the time of interview) and was formally established by its original members in 1994. It provides support to the Membership network across four key activity areas. The functions have been refined and the interrelationship between each of the activities is considered to be crucial to the effective functioning of the network. Today, KOMOSIE's roles are:

- Advocacy, lobbying and acting as the central point of communication with government: a central point of contact with OVAM and DWSE meant increased power in negotiations and efficient communication, both ways.

- Branding and marketing of the De Kringwinkel shops' identity across the region: facilitating significant self-imposed quality improvements in the products offered, the 'look and feel' of shops and in customer service. By pooling resources, the network developed 'on trend' marketing campaigns that have been successful in changing the image of 'dusty messy' secondhand shops and securing an increasing customer base.

- Development and coordination of registration systems and processes that record and improve reporting on environmental and social objectives and quality control: ensuring the

accreditation status (social and environmental) continues to be awarded, and providing the data needed for constant improvements.

- Delivery of training programs to develop the management and business skills of key staff members across the network: establishing a level of professionalism, and building the strong business management skills that were crucial in achieving financial stability amongst Members'.

KOMOSIE describes itself as a grass-roots organisation, and one consciously positioning itself as in tension with 'state prescribed' initiatives (Finlayson & Roy 2019, p.79). It is governed by a board of directors elected by a general assembly (the Federation) involving all Members. The general assembly meets twice per year to provide input to the overall strategic directions and to specific plans.

KOMOSIE the network

How KOMOSIE was able to establish and survive in its network-facilitation role is a crucial aspect of the model, and one that offers useful insights to those interested in fostering social innovation activity through policy methods. In essence, it is a story of iterative and patient development.

As discussed, in the early stages, a number of the Centres were awarded accredited status under the designated zoning model. Initially OVAM developed agreements with individual Centres – specifying matters like minimum service levels, opening hours, products that had to be collected and reporting requirements. As they were not in competition with each other, there were strong motives for collaboration and eventually the agreements were negotiated centrally through KOMOSIE, providing enhanced bargaining power and more coordinated input on needs and issues. For example, the requirement for accredited Re-use Centres to hold KOMOSIE membership was negotiated with OVAM and DWSE, strengthening its role and also offering improvements in communication between the network and the two agencies.

The 31 KOMOSIE Members that make up the network today are independent entities operating in different geographical areas, all of which have different needs and different opportunities. As the KOMOSIE interviewee advised, the bottom-up nature of the relationships is central to how the network works together:

> *"It's important to understand we have a bottom up structure. People often think the De Kringwinkel network has a headquarters that directs 118 shops [at time of interview]. Not so. There are 31 Re-use Centres all around the Flemish region, and most of them have several shops each. KOMOSIE is made up of 31 independent organisations. They do what they want". (KOMOSIE interview)*

The common element that unites these diverse entities is that all have three components to their primary mission – the creation of social employment opportunities; improving re-use and reducing waste; and providing low cost goods to assist no-and-low-income people. KOMOSIE acts as the 'institutional glue' in the network (Park & Wilding 2014, p.120), and advises it is this underpinning commonality of purpose, together with the devised inter-relationship between the three elements, that makes the model effective:

> *"All these things are part of the strategy - all the pieces have to fit. We've made them fit, but it's not easy. We couldn't do our model with only one part, they are all dependent on each other". (KOMOSIE interview)*

The Re-use Centres are formally connected only through their collaboration as KOMOSIE members. As a result, they all go about achieving their individual objectives in different ways.

Some Members operate only a Re-use Centre and one or more De Kringwinkel shops - as the smallest and the largest Members do. Others run a variety of other social enterprises as well, for example - a low-cost restaurant, bicycle restoration, a small farm, and small building enterprises. The new public governance framework is identifiable in the level of independence each Centre retains over its own operations, whilst it also realises many of the benefits of a network approach. Maintaining this balance between independence and collaboration is key:

> *"A lot were very afraid of a top down structure . . . very afraid of losing their identity, choice and decision making. When you try to unite - we have to be very careful to make sure they understand that's not what we do. We work only on those things they tell us they want to do". (KOMOSIE interview)*

Under new public management delivery models public sector entities can have a tendency to push partners towards increasing uniformity (i.e. isomorphism), and it would be possible for OVAM and DWSE to do this through its agreements with the Centres. The two departmental interviewees recognised however, that this would affect the ability of each Centre to respond to needs and opportunities that may be unique to their particular location or beneficiary group, and so would therefore ultimately reduce the social value generated by the model as a whole.

After more than 25 years of organic development the two public sector agencies now have a relationship with KOMOSIE and its Member network that they describe as 'a kind of bilateral agreement' that acknowledges and supports both the networked and independent characteristics. As suggested previously, this combination of 'tight and loose' demonstrates what a new public governance framework can look like in action. The mature and sophisticated relationships that the KOMOSIE social innovation assemblage both creates and relies on offer insights into how strategic policymaking can foster transformative social innovation outcomes.

KOMOSIE the partner

The KOMOSIE network is now a major employer in the region and is also recognised as a key actor in the delivery of the region's waste policy, guaranteeing some level of influence in policymaking. The nature of the relationships that drive the model offer an example of a new public governance framework reconfiguring social relations. The OVAM officer describes the relationship thus:

> *"KOMOSIE is our partner. We have regular meetings with them. When we change policies or rules, or find new objectives - we sit together with them also. They represent the 31 Re-use Centres - for the needs, questions, remarks, whatever is needed to discuss. If we want to change something about the reporting to us, we work with them and they discuss it with the 31. A collaborative approach. Not law against citizen - it's a stakeholder, a partner. We need each other". (OVAM interview)*

As this indicates, KOMOSIE 'the coordinating entity' has genuine influence in shaping the direction of policy, and genuinely shares in decision making with the government agencies. This is made possible through: its independence, as it receives no direct public sector funding itself; its deep understanding of the Members' businesses, and so what policy strategies are likely to be effective and what will not; and the certainty its strong relationships with the network brings to the negotiations.

KOMOSIE acts as the conduit for its Members to also provide input to proposals and contribute to shaping policies, often through several iterations of development. The partnership also provides the channel for KOMOSIE to proactively raise issues with OVAM and DWSE on behalf of the Members, both around current operational matters but also to discuss potential new projects and developments. Genuine partnerships work both ways and KOMOSIE respects its

relationships with the public sector agencies, using its position as spokesperson and adviser judiciously – recognising that

> *"you have to find your place - you can't shout when you're too small, but never saying something won't work either. Sometimes you have to stand up, but you need to work out when is the right time . . . and where to focus your attention" (KOMOSIE interview)*

KOMOSIE's unique positionings make the social enterprise an effective facilitator of the bespoke governance arrangements (Abbott et al. 2019, p.181-90), and indicate a peer-to-peer style power-sharing with the public agencies that goes beyond engagement for simplistic instrumental reasons (Park & Wilding 2014, p.122-6).

Theme Three - Effective use of 'tight and loose' arrangements

The KOMOSIE social innovation assemblage relies on a diverse mix of agents and processes (Gibson-Graham 2006) that from new public management perspectives would likely be construed as 'messy'. But as the discussion shows, the diversity (on multiple levels) is central to the model - both the financial stability it supports for the entities involved, and also the achievement of the regional social and environmental policy objectives.

The KOMOSIE model demonstrates that when the assumption that 'there is no alternative' is removed – i.e. that open market competition is the only and/or best way to achieve best-value – that other options become possible. The new public governance-style framework through which KOMOSIE and its public sector partners interact is achieved by combining strict performance targets and reporting, with autonomy in operational decision making, and a genuine partnership around policy directions.

Through the bottom-up membership-based KOMOSIE network each Centre is integrally involved in the governance of the delivery model and in the dialogue with government. OVAM and DWSE acknowledge the network's desire for independence and autonomy in how the agreed objectives are achieved and respect their partners' rights not to be 'interfered with' in how they go about their business. The reading of the KOMOSIE example presented here shows how the skills and expertise of all parties are drawn on in determining what constitutes best-value for the region as a whole, and in how to deliver this through the arrangement.

Accountability <u>and</u> relationality

A deeper dialogue and knowledge exchange is available as a result of the robust relationships that have developed over time. These improved social relations mean that the agreed 'rules of the game' enshrine the generation of best-value, whilst also providing the transparency needed to report openly on the outcomes. In the KOMOSIE model, the 'rules of the game' centre around complementing the high degree of relationality with extensive and strict reporting requirements on the social and environmental objectives the model is designed to deliver. In this way, the KOMOSIE model offers unique insights into how an understanding of new public governance theoretical concepts can inform the configuration of practical governance models purposefully designed to enable transformative social innovation assemblages.

On the social side, the objectives revolve around creating specified numbers of jobs for people who have been unemployed for five years or more, are low skilled, and experience barriers to gaining employment (DWSE interview). The training and other development aspects of the KOMOSIE approach are an important differentiator for them in the social employment sector. They are also an integral component of the standards that underpin the accreditation of Re-use

Centre status, making them eligible to access staffing subsidies for employees. As a result, DWSE requires ongoing and detailed reporting on the number and types of jobs created, on training courses and other support programs participants have been involved in, and on how the work processes and workplace are designed to accommodate the needs of these employees.

On the environmental side, detailed targets for re-use and waste reduction are negotiated with OVAM and these are tightened year-on-year. Examples of targets include: numbers of customers reached; numbers of individual sales of re-use items; kilos of re-used items per head of population in a given zone; kilos of particular categories of re-use items; and kilos for collection overall. Reporting against these targets is highly technical and requires intense attention to detail at the Centre level. In addition to reporting against the agreed targets, the system also assists with managing business processes, incorporating modules that track: dispatch and route planning; processing and repair of goods; stock management; customer data maintenance; time sheets; cash registers; and the flow of goods - inflow, re-use, residual waste, and recycling (OVAM, 2015 p.19).

Reporting is facilitated by a central online system which the Members collectively contribute to maintaining and improving. This ensures reports are consistent and that meaningful data can be easily extracted. The system is Cloud-based so the status of each item can be tracked individually and from collection to sale. In addition to highlighting areas where process improvements can be made at the individual Centre level, the system means all are now reporting the same way and so results can be rolled up more easily and more accurately. As a result, OVAM has reduced the time it takes to generate its overall sector performance report from 12-15 months to six months. This improvement is useful for the broader (and commercial) waste sector also, as it can access more current information on which to base its plans and projections.

The targets and reporting requirements are regularly reviewed to ensure continuous improvement. Rather than these being imposed through a conventional competitive contract renewal process, these evolutions are negotiated with the network. Coordinating the ongoing negotiations is a key role for KOMOSIE, and both sides - the Members and the two public sector agencies - recognise that centralising this aspect is a key contributing factor to the efficiency and effectiveness of the model.

> *"They have the network, they know the people, they know what's realistic. They also put the people together to overcome problems, they are a link between us. They make it happen on the spot. And because they already have the network it's very easy for us to work with them". (DWSE interview)*

Theme Four - Driving ongoing innovation: Beyond 'open-market' mechanisms

One of the key issues that new public management advocates have with not using (so-called) open-market processes is a perceived tendency towards stagnation and complacency. The introduction of competitive tendering for a wide range of public services in the 1980s and 1990s was seen as an antidote to this, and was central to the ethos of the new public management discourse dominant at the time. If there is to be promulgation and uptake of new public governance frameworks to support transformative social innovation it is therefore essential that proponents are able to respond to this issue. The KOMOSIE model offers insights into how this can be approached, through a combination of factors.

One of these factors is that the public sector support for the model comes primarily in the form of establishing the conditions that foster sustainable markets, and focuses on building capacity to generate stable revenue streams. This combination is made possible through intentionally constructed non-traditional market relationships that, according to a new public management

lens, could be labelled non-competitive and therefore likely to result in stagnation. However, there are other ways that this can be read – including in the way described by the DWSE officer:

> "... even though there are all the support programs they can access, there's still a drive to be proactive because the support is not full cost - there's a part that has to be provided from the sector themselves. I think when you do full cost they do their thing and then they just keep on doing that, because everything is paid for. Now they have to provide themselves for part of the cost, makes it a necessity to keep on innovating. Especially with these groups of people, because low cost products and low skill work is a hard area to generate revenue around". (DWSE interview)

In effect, the hybrid resourcing model creates similar incentives for remaining responsive to market conditions and continuing to innovate as those achieved through competitive models. In this, the effectiveness and ongoing evolution of the KOMOSIE network model challenges traditional new public management-style notions of best-value and demonstrates how, when working with complex policy objectives, a new public governance mixed-modes approach can generate and sustain dynamic models (Bovaird, 2006 p.82).

For example, the ongoing refinement of the re-use targets also ensures a constant focus on innovation - including an ongoing challenge around how to reduce the 50 percent of items collected that are not currently re-used. OVAM recognises that increasing the percentage of re-use gets more difficult over time, because all obvious approaches have already been implemented. This product level innovation (Nicholls & Murdock 2012, p.4) generally occurs within the individual Centres and KOMOSIE then facilitates the uptake of successful innovations across the network. Again, the non-competitive nature of the model, and the direct revenue rewards for increased sales and reduced waste kilos, mean the innovations diffuse quickly and effectively across the network.

These types of innovations improve the existing model and extend it (within some structural constraints - i.e. a limit to the Flanders region, due to being based in Flemish public policy; and a limit on the number of Centres, due to the designated zones). KOMOSIE continues to meet new challenges and opportunities. The spirit of the policy-level changes being implemented at the regional level is to ensure the continued success of the model within the changing conditions, through enabling ongoing innovation:

> "It's to stimulate them to go a little further, to collect more, to sell more, to experiment in new areas". (OVAM interview)

All the activities underway show how a successful and mature social innovation assemblage is exploring pathways that ensure it does not stagnate in its current position, and remains responsive to the changing context. This constant cycle of improving on the 'now-accepted' status quo, so as to generate further positive social and environmental impacts, is a key challenge for policymakers interested in social innovation. The enabling support OVAM and DWSE are offering the KOMOSIE assemblage as it navigates these transitions demonstrate how a focus on ongoing innovation can be built into a long-term capacity building model.

CONCLUSION

As outlined, new public governance concepts offer a framework that can facilitate the combining of 'best-value' (technocratic, market oriented) objectives with a democratic concern for improving social relations, whilst also normalising the often 'messy' processes of social innovation assemblages, which can pose such a challenge to traditional policymaking contexts.

In the KOMOSIE example, the two Flemish public sector agencies recognised the complexity that interweaving policy objectives would create. Rather than turning away from this complexity, or attempting to control it through narrowly prescribed contract-based arrangements, they created the enabling conditions for the establishment of a long-term ever-evolving and genuinely network-based delivery model – a model that through tenacity and strong relational ties has turned the challenges of two complex public problems into opportunities. Through context-specific combinations of tight-and-loose governance arrangements the KOMOSIE assemblage is returning 'best-value' to the region in the form of a significant number of stable jobs that generate additional tax revenue, whilst also mitigating against the many costs associated with long term joblessness. At the same time, substantial reductions in landfill tonnage and waste management costs have been achieved, and citizen behaviour around waste reduction and re-use has improved.

Whilst policymaking craves 'globalising' strategies and the opportunities to scale and replicate they seem to offer, it often ignores "the stubborn reality . . . that *making policies work* very often remains a hands-on, messy, and very much 'local' affair" (Peck & Theodore 2015, p.xvii – original emphasis). The KOMOSIE story, interpreted through a thick description approach, illustrates how sufficiently nuanced new public governance frameworks could assist practitioners and policymakers with navigating the oscillating tensions between global and local issues and initiatives.

For scholars and practitioners, this discussion demonstrates how new public governance frameworks could provide a language useful for reframing the tug-of-war between technocratic vs. democratic social innovation, so as to move beyond 'speaking past each other' (Montgomery 2016, p.1981) and potentially into more nuanced and appreciative engagement between different research and practice paradigms. It also offers some small stepping-stones towards the called for development of middle-range theories (Sinclair & Baglioni, 2014; Pel et al. 2020) to support improved understanding of relational dynamics within and around social innovation assemblages, In the current climate, these are significant and useful contributions to social innovation research, policy, and practice.

---

[i] For examples of how this framing is gaining traction, see https://tsimanifesto.org/about/. This initiative is a legacy of the European TRANSIT research project, and involves a diverse range of partners and supporters.

[ii] For a comprehensive discussion on analysing public policy approaches and regimes, including their complexities, see John 2012.

[iii] Ponterotto provides a useful chronology and commentary on the origins and uses of thick description as a specific method, including some detail on definitions and debates.

[iv] Many of the Member enterprises in the example can be classified as WISEs; but please note this paper does not engage with the efficacy or otherwise of this particular model of social enterprise, but rather is focused on the policy and relational dynamics involved in the social innovation assemblage.

[v] In this function, KOMOSIE could be characterised as an intermediary organisation of sorts, albeit one with a very specific remit that works with a closed-group cohort. Of interest in this regard, recently the role of intermediaries in innovation processes is attracting attention – see Barraket, 2019 for a useful discussion on this, drawing on research into social procurement intermediation in Australia.

REFERENCES

Abbott, M., Barraket, J., Castellas, E., Hiruy, K., Suchowerska, R. & Ward-Christie, L. (2019). "Evaluating the labour productivity of social enterprises in comparison to SMEs in Australia". *Social Enterprise Journal*, 15(2), 179-194

Australian Public Service Commission. (2007). *Tackling wicked problems: A public policy perspective*. Canberra, Australia: Commonwealth Government. Retrieved from: http://desis-lab.org/tackling-wicked-problems-a-public-policy-perspective/

Ayob, N., Teasedale, S. & Fagan, K. (2016). "How social innovation 'came to be': Tracing the evolution of a contested concept". *Journal of Social Policy*, 45(4), 635-653

Baglioni, S. & Sinclair, S. (2014). "Introduction: Social innovation and social policy". *Social Policy and Society*, 13(3), 409-410

Barraket, J. (2019). "The role of intermediaries in social innovation: The case of social procurement in Australia". *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*. doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2019.1624272

Barraket, J., Keast, R. & Furneaux. C. (2016). *Social procurement and New Public Governance*. Routledge: London, UK

Bason, C. (2014a). "Introduction: The design for policy nexus". In: Bason, C. (ed.) *Design for Policy*. Gower: Farnham, UK

Bason, C. (2014b). "The frontiers of design for policy". In: Bason, C. (ed.) *Design for Policy*. Gower: Farnham, UK

Bauwens, M. & Kostakis, V. (2015, July). "Towards a new reconfiguration among the state, civil society and the market". *Journal of Peer Production*, 7. Accessed at http://peerproduction.net/issues/issue-7-policies-for-the-commons/peer-reviewed-papers/towards-a-new-reconfiguration-among-the-state-civil-society-and-the-market/ (1 December 2019)

Belgian Federal Government. (no date). "The powers of the Regions". Accessed at http://www.belgium.be/en/about_belgium/government/regions/competence (10 December 2019)

Boelman, V., Kwan, A., Lauritzen, J., Millard, J & Schon, R. (2014). *'Growing Social Innovation: A Guide for Policy Makers'.* A deliverable of the project: "The theoretical, empirical and policy foundations for building social innovation in Europe" (TEPSIE), European Commission – 7th Framework Programme, Brussels: European Commission, DG Research. Accessed at http://www.transitsocialinnovation.eu/resource-hub/growing-social-innovation--a-guide-for-policy-makers (10 December 2019)

Borzaga, C. & Bodini, R. (2014). "What to make of social innovation? Towards a framework for policy development". *Social Policy and Society*, 13(3), 411-421

Bovaird, T. (2006). "Developing new forms of partnership with the 'market' in the procurement of public services". *Public Administration*, 84(1), 81-102

Brandsen, T., Evers, A., Cattacin, S. & Zimmer, A. (2016). "Social innovation: A sympathetic and critical interpretation". In: Brandsen, T., Cattacin, S., Evers, A. & Zimmer A. (eds.) *Social innovations in the urban context.* Springer Open: Heidelberg, Switzerland

Christiansen, J. & Bunt, L. (2014). "Innovating public policy: Allowing for social complexity and uncertainty in the design of public outcomes". In: Bason, C. (ed.) *Design for Policy*. Gower: Farnham, UK

Dey. P (2006). "The rhetoric of social entrepreneurship: Paralogy and new language games in academic discourse". In: Steyaert, C. & Hjorth, D. (eds.) *Entrepreneurship as social change*. Edward Elgar: Cheltenham, UK

Dey, P. & Steyaert, C. (2010). "The politics of narrating social entrepreneurship". *Journal of Enterprising Communities*, 4(1), 85-108

Durose, C. & Richardson, L. (2016). *Designing public policy for co-production: Theory, practice and change*. The Policy Press: Bristol, UK

European Social Franchising Network. (no date). *KOMOSIE: Europe's largest social franchise*. Author: Northumberland, UK. Accessed at http://www.socialfranchising.coop /uploaded/KOMOSIE.pdf (2 November 2014)

Finlayson, E. & Roy, M. (2019). "Empowering communities? Exploring roles in facilitated social enterprises". *Social Enterprise Journal*, 15(1), 76-93

Flanders Information Agency. (no date). *Discover Flanders*. Accessed at http://www.flanders.be/en/discover-flanders (2 November 2014)

Geertz, C. (1973). "Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture". In: *The interpretation of Cultures: Selected essays*, pp.3-30. New York: Basic

Gibson-Graham, J.K. (1993). Waiting for the revolution, or how to smash capitalism while working at home in your spare time. *Rethinking Marxism*, 6(2), 10-24

Gibson-Graham, J.K. (2006). *The end of capitalism (as we knew it): A Feminist critique of political economy*. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, USA

Gibson-Graham, J.K. (2008). "Diverse economies: Performative practices for 'other worlds'". *Progress in Human Geography*, 32(5), 613-632

Gibson-Graham, J.K. (2014). "Rethinking the economy with thick description and weak theory". *Current Anthropology*, 55(S9), S147-S153

Gibson-Graham, J.K. & Roelvink, G. (2009). "An economic ethics for the Anthropocene". *Antipode*, 41(1), 320-346

Hassan, Z. (2014). *The social labs revolution: A new approach to solving our most complex challenges*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers: San Francisco, USA

Hazenberg, R., Bajwa-Patel, M., Mazzei, M., Roy, M. & Baglioni, S. (2016). "The role of institutional and stakeholder networks in shaping social enterprise ecosystems in Europe". *Social Enterprise Journal*, 12(3)

Howaldt, J., Butzin, A., Domanski, D. & Kaletka, C. (2014). '*Theoretical approaches to social innovation – A critical literature review'*. A deliverable of the project: "Social innovation: Driving force of social change (SI-DRIVE)". Sozialforschungsstelle: Dortmund, Germany

Klein, J-L. (2013). "Introduction: Social innovation at the crossroads between science, economy and society". *In:* Moulaert, F., MacCallum, D., Mehmood, A. & Hamdouch, A. (eds.) *The international handbook on social innovation: Collective action, social learning and transdisciplinary research*. Edward Elgar: Cheltenham, UK

Klijn, E-H. & Koppenjan, J. (2012). "Governance network theory: Past, present and future". *Policy and Politics*, 40(4), 587-606

Koppenjan, J. & Koliba, C. (2013). "Transformation towards new public governance: Can the new paradigm handle complexity?" *International Review of Public Administration*, 18(2)

Law, J. & Urry, J. (2004). "Enacting the social". *Economy and Society*, 33(3), 390–410

Mazzucato, M. (2013). *The entrepreneurial state: Debunking public vs. private sector myths*. Anthem Press: London, UK

Mazzucato, M. (2018). "Mission-oriented innovation policies: Challenges and opportunities". *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 27(5), 803-815

McNeill, J. (2017). *Enabling social innovation assemblages: Strengthening public sector involvement*. (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis). Western Sydney University, Australia. Available at: https://researchdirect.westernsydney.edu.au/islandora/object/uws%3A41460

Montgomery, T. (2016). "Are Social Innovation Paradigms Incommensurable?" *Voluntas International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organisation*, 27, 1979–2000

Moore, M. & Westley, F. (2011). "Surmountable chasms: Networks and social innovation for resilient systems". *Ecology and Society*, 16(1), 5

Moulaert, F., MacCallum, D., & Hillier, J. (2013). "Social innovation: Intuition, precept, concept, theory and practice". *In:* Moulaert, F., MacCallum, D., Mehmood, A. & Hamdouch, A. (eds.) *The international handbook on social innovation: Collective action, social learning and transdisciplinary research*. Edward Elgar: Cheltenham, UK

Murray, R. (2009, September). "Danger and opportunity: Crisis and the new social economy (Provocation 09)". NESTA: London. Accessed at https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/danger-and-opportunity-crisis-and-the-new-social-economy/ (10 December 2019)

Nail, T. (2017). What is an Assemblage? *SubStance*, 46(1), Issue 142, 21-37

Nicholls, A. & Murdock, A. (2012). "The nature of social innovation". *In*: Nicholls, A. & Murdock, A. (eds.) *Social Innovation: Blurring boundaries to reconfigure market*s. Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, UK

Osborne, S. (2006). "The New Public Governance?". *Public Management Review*, 8(3), 377-387

OVAM. (2015). *How to start a Re-use Shop? An overview of more than two decades of re-use in Flanders.* Mechelen, Author: Belgium. Accessed at http://www.ovam.be/sites/ default/files/atoms/files/ 2015_Folder-Kringloop-engels_LR.pdf (2 November 2014)

Park, C. & Wilding, M. (2014). "An exploratory study on the potential of social enterprise to act as the institutional glue of network governance". *The Social Science Journal*, 51, 120-129

Parker, M., Cheney, G., Fournier, V. & Land, C., with Lightfoot, G. (2014). "Imagining alternatives". In: Parker, M., Cheney, G., Fournier, V. & Land, C. (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to alternative organization*. Routledge: London, UK

Peck, J. & Theodore, N. (2015). *Fast policy: Experimental statecraft at the thresholds of neoliberalism*. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, USA

Pel, B., Haxeltine, A., Avelino, F., Dumitru, A., Kemp, R., Bauler, T. Kunze . . . Sogaard Jorgensen, M. (2020). Towards a theory of transformative social innovation: A relational framework and 12 propositions. *Research Policy*, 49, 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2020.104080

Ponterotto, J. (2006, September). Brief note on the origins, evolution, and meaning of the qualitative research concept 'Thick Description'. *The Qualitative Report*, 11(3), 538-549

Rittel, H.W.J. & Webber, M.M. (1973). Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning. *Policy Sciences*, 4, 155-169

Sinclair, S. & Baglioni, S. (2014). "Social innovation and social policy – Promises and risks". *Social Policy and Society*, 13, 469-476

Sorensen, E. & Torfing, J. (2015). "Enhancing public innovation through collaboration, leadership and New Public Governance". In: Nicholls, A., Simon, J. & Gabriel M. (Eds.) *New frontiers in social innovation research*. Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, UK

St. Martin, K., Roelvink, G. & Gibson-Graham, J.K. (2015). "Introduction". In: Roelvink, G., St. Martin, K. & Gibson-Graham, J.K. (eds.) *Making Other Worlds Possible: Performing Diverse Economies*. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, USA

Stake, R. (1994). "Case Studies". In: Denzin, N & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. California: Sage

TEPSIE. (2014). *'Social Innovation Theory and Research: A Summary of the Findings from TEPSIE.'* A deliverable of the project: "The theoretical, empirical and policy foundations for building social innovation in Europe" (TEPSIE). European Commission – 7th Framework Programme, Brussels: European Commission, DG Research. Accessed at https://cordis.europa.eu/result/rcn/173251/en (10 December 2019)

Torfing, J. & Triantafillou, P. (2013). "What's in a name? Grasping new public governance as a political-administrative system". *International Review of Public Administration*, 18(2), 9-25

Wittmayer, J., Backhaus, J., Avelino, F., Pel, B., Strasser, T., Kunze, I., Zuijderwijk, L. (2019). Narratives of change: How social innovation initiatives construct societal transformation. *Futures*, 112, 1-12

Yin, R. (1994). *Case Study Research: Design & Methods (2nd Ed.).* California: Sage

Zafeiropoulou, F. & Koufopoulos, D. (2013). "The influence of relational embeddedness on the formation and performance of social franchising". *Journal of Marketing Channels*, 20(1-2), 73-98