Transitions towards landscape- and heritage-centred local development strategies: A Multi-Level Perspective

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Abstract: At the beginning of the new century, the European Landscape Convention (ELC) marked a paradigm shift in the conception of landscape, which is now conceived of as a common good and of crucial importance to people's everyday lives. A challenge is thus to find new approaches and tools to make the new concept translated into practice. The paper employs the Multi Level Perspective (MLP) to analyse transition pathways towards innovative forms of landscape management. In contrast with a linear conception of innovation, the use of this framework enables the authors to show nested and bi-directional dynamics of change across multiple levels and the interactions between different sectors/actors: governance and policy, professionals and public administration, grassroots organizations, citizens, market, industry. The paper focuses on the way new concepts and tools for landscape protection and improvement have been spread into planning practice in the Apulia region through the development of the new Territorial Landscape Plan (TLP). In the analysis, a particular attention is paid to the way innovative forms of management of landscape are actually mobilized, supported and given long-term perspectives, while resistance to change is lowered throughout the development and the implementation of the plan.

Keywords: transition, spatial planning system, landscape, heritage, multi-level perspective

Introduction

The European Landscape Convention (ELC), signed in Florence in 2000, marks a turning point in the way landscapes are or should be regarded by decision-makers, professionals, academics, and the people at large. The general aims of the ELC are to promote European landscape protection, management and planning as a key element of individual and social well-being. Among other things, it requires a crucial shift from an exclusive focus on the identification, valorisation and protection of 'special' landscapes towards the acknowledgement of the importance of the qualities of the ordinary, the everyday, even the degraded or stigmatized places. According to the ELC, landscape "is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in urban areas and in the countryside, in degraded areas as well as in areas of high quality, in areas recognised as being of outstanding beauty as well as everyday areas" (Council of Europe, 2000, Preamble).

This implies the need of a radical change from the way landscape planning practices have been developed across Europe and in Italy in particular, where heritage and landscape issues have been traditionally tackled through the development of ad-hoc legislation, which imposed the statutory protection of places of exceptional beauty. In Italy the first law of this type was passed in 1939, then followed by the so-called Galasso law in 1985, which enlarged

the range of areas to be protected by law to environmental features, while keeping the same approach to protection through binding rules and regulatory plans. These plans were mostly sectorial and focused on single protected areas, i.e. extra-urban areas of 'extraordinary beauty' or high environmental value, detached from the complex and conflictual transformations of the territory.

The elitist conception of landscape and the regulatory focus of plans nevertheless proved to be largely ineffective to contrast widespread practices of landscape disruption, as strategies for economic growth and local development kept being made without any consideration for landscape and heritage. Laws and rules for landscape protection as well as any plan trying to enforce them were largely regarded as constraints that might limit pro-growth interventions, thus poorly tolerated or opposed by local governments and communities. This happened despite in most cases pro-growth plans not only betrayed the promised solutions to economic and social problems, but also produced huge environmental and territorial damages.

Partly in line with the innovations introduced by the ELC, the new Italian Cultural Heritage and Landscape Code (2004, amended in 2006 and 2008) combines some innovations of the ELC with the Italian legal system of landscape protection. It distinguishes between protection and enhancement of the landscape, preserving the former in the State's jurisdiction and devolving the latter to the Regions (Degrassi, 2012) together with the responsibility to approve a spatial (territorial) plan for the entire regional territory aimed at improving landscape quality. The Code states that the regional landscape plan must contain prescriptions (binding rules) aiming to preserve protected areas, but it does not prevent regions from introducing other planning measures, tools and devices in order to achieve these objectives.

A wide opportunity space is thus opened up for regions, requiring deep changes in planning approaches and tools (Marson, 2016). How to take up this challenge? How to foster and support a transition in the spatial planning system leading to landscape- and heritage-centred local development strategies in the place of old fashion pro-growth land use planning? This will be the research focus of this paper.

In order to tackle this issue a first question to be answered is what we mean by spatial planning system and how we conceptualize transitions in those systems. The issue is anything but simple as there are very divergent positions. On one side there are advocates of a regulatory vision of planning, centred on what has been defined 'project plan' (Albrechts, 2004, quoting Faludi and Van der Valk, 1994), who maintain change to be the result of normative, top-down command-and-control measures. Their idea is that through the enforcement of laws, regulation, standards, etc., change would trickle-down and spread in due course at the level of planning practice and territorial development projects. This approach has been widely followed in planning practice in Italy as elsewhere, while being hardly criticized for its ineffectiveness in contrasting dominant interests and in "making urban life more beautiful, exciting, and creative, and more just" (Davidoff, 1965, p. 432).

On the opposite side, for a long time now, completely different approaches to the definition of planning and – consequently – to the way changes may be produced in the planning system were attempted. Although embracing a varied range of perspectives, these approaches shared a process-centred (instead of a plan-centred) vision of planning (Davidoff, 1965; Forester, 1980; Friedmann, 1987; Innes, 1995; Healey, 1996). Their vision marked a shift in the interests from the technical dimension of planning to governance processes. Experiences of innovation in urban governance promoted by active citizenship and community-based movements started receiving increasing attention in planning (Douglass and Friedmann, 1998). This also led to a diversion of research foci from large scale realities to fine-grained, micro-scale experiences together with the idea that transformative practices in planning needed to be conceived of as bottom-up, insurgent processes (Sandercock, 2003; Friedmann, 2011). "Can neighbourhoods save the city?" is the title of a quite recent book on community development and social innovation (Moulaert *et al.*, 2010), whereas social innovation is conceived of as encompassing three main dimensions – product, process and empowerment dimensions (Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2005) –, none of which is related to any technical form of planning.

But can planning really do without a plan? Despite hard criticisms on the limitations of plans, it's hard to say that planning does not need a plan (Neuman, 1998). This is even more evident in places like Italy, where the 'urbanism tradition' has long dominated and has led to the identification by law of a number of technical tools and plans, including landscape plans, which are still mandatory although innovations are needed in line with the ELC.

In between the two opposite positions outlined above, the authors of this paper adopt a perspective that consider spatial planning systems as socio-technical systems, i.e. systems whose technological dimension is closely linked and co-evolving with several other dimensions including policy, markets, scientific knowledge, changes in user practices and cultural meanings (Geels, 2004). Because of this, in the analysis of the research issue outlined in the paper, the MLP framework will be used, which has been developed within the broad field of innovation studies to analyse transitions of such systems (Geels, 2002, 2005; Rip and Kemp, 1998).

The paper will be structured as follows. Next section provides a description of the framework known as Multi-Level Perspective (MLP) together with a proposed adaptation of that framework for the research problem under scrutiny. This framework will be used in the following section for the case study analysis, which is about the ongoing transition in spatial planning strategies in the Apulia region towards landscape- and heritage-centred local development and the role played in this process by the new Territorial Landscape Plan (TLP) of the region. A particular attention in the analysis will be paid to the way innovative forms of management of landscape have been actually mobilized, supported and given long-term perspectives, while resistance to change of key powerful actors has been lowered throughout the development and the implementation of the plan. Some lessons learned will be drawn in the concluding section.

A Multi-level perspective on transitions of socio-technical systems

According to the authors of this paper, a transition in the spatial planning system leading to landscape- and heritage-centred local development strategies in the place of old fashion pro-growth land use planning may be considered a problem of transition of a socio-technical system, as several dimensions are involved and co-evolving in it. Its scientific-technological dimension includes planning tools for spatial strategies' development at different scales (including general and sectoral plans, masterplans, strategic development plans, etc.) and the evolution of disciplinary knowledge and skills owned by professionals and those involved in plan making. But in order to turn landscape and heritage in a cornerstone of planning practice, to work on the scientific/technological dimension of spatial planning is not enough.

Several dimensions need to be touched. There is a policy dimension made of policy instrument mixes framing spatial planning strategies as well as spatial policies directing territorial transformations. There is an industry dimension, linked to the many private developers and construction companies making their profits in public infrastructure and private building sectors. There is also a dimension linked to market/user preferences, in so far as private buildings and farming plots are sold on the market to consumers while public infrastructures, both in urban and rural areas, are collectively used by citizens. There is then a cultural dimension linked to the way local communities perceive their territory and develop their place consciousness and identity. There is finally an institutional/governance dimension, which is related to the institutional framework for spatial strategies development and to the role local communities have in spatial strategies' formulation and management. Any transition in the spatial planning system thus need to encompass a collective effort to re-imagine the territory and to define new priorities for development reaching the many actors dealing with landscape 'production', i.e. development companies, farmers, local inhabitants, government officials, technical professionals, etc.

Because of the intertwining of all the above mentioned dimensions in the spatial planning system evolution, we suggest the use of the framework known as Multi Level Perspective (MLP), which has been developed in the broad field of innovation studies to explain transitions in socio-technical systems (Geels, 2002, 2005; Rip and

Kemp, 1998). Nevertheless, as already done in the application of that framework to the analysis of transitions in urban regeneration policies (Barbanente and Grassini, 2019), we propose the use of a modified framework, which add an institutional/governance pillar to the original six pillars defined in the MLP literature. This is done because of the higher relevance of the institutional/governance dimension in urban studies compared to other sectors to which the MLP framework has been applied.

The MLP framework has been developed based on insights from evolutionary economics (Nelson and Winter, 1982), from sociology of technology (Bijker *et al.*, 1987; Hughes, 1987) and from neo-institutional theory (Giddens, 1984). In short, it frames transitions as the result of co-evolutionary and non-linear dynamics of change taking place within and across three levels (Geels, 2002, 2005; Rip and Kemp, 1998). The lower level is the level of niches, which act as 'incubation rooms' for radical novelties (Schot, 1998); in this level three important processes happen: different actors, involved in niche-innovation experiments, learn through cycles of actions, sensemaking and adjustment of cognitive frames (Raven and Geels, 2010); expectations and visions are developed and provide direction to internal innovation activities and to learning processes; social networks are built and strengthened to increase the legitimacy of niche-innovations (Kemp *et al.*, 1998; Hoogma *et al.*, 2002). The meso level is the so-called 'socio-technical regime', which embodies the deep-structural rules, cognitive routines and beliefs that coordinate and guide – in a Giddensian manner (Giddens, 1984) – perceptions and actions of all actors involved, i.e. engineers/technicians, policy makers, public officials, civil society, scientists, private developers, funding bodies, grassroots organizations, etc. Finally, the macro-level is called 'socio-technical landscape' and represents the wider exogenous context of macro-economic trends, deep cultural patterns, macro-political development, etc, which influences niche and regime dynamics while being beyond the control of individual actors.

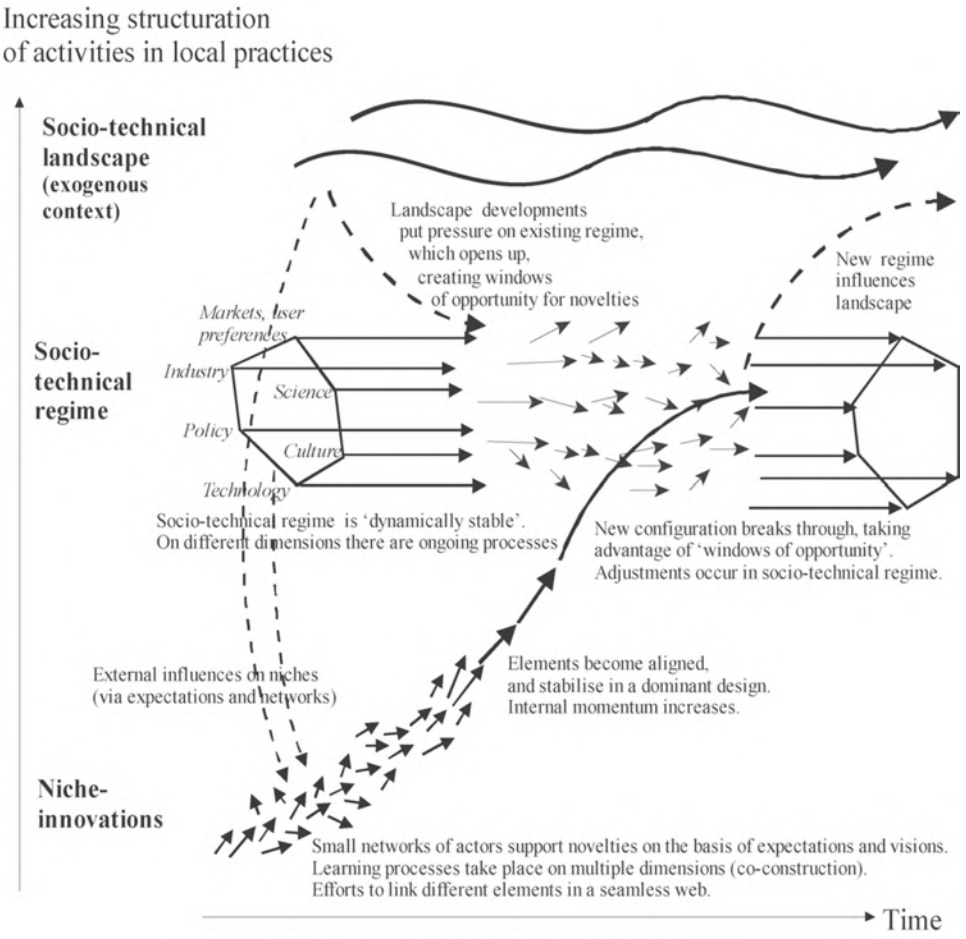

Figure 1. Dynamics of socio-technical transitions according to MLP. Source: Geels and Schot, 2007.

According to MLP, innovations in socio-technical systems come about through the interplay between dynamics at multiple levels (see Figure 1), as far as niche innovations build internal momentum, with rules and user preferences becoming stabilized in a dominant design after a period of experimentation, and break through the regime levels thanks to 'windows of opportunity' opened up at the regime level due to pressures put by landscape development (Geels, 2002). This may create changes in the socio-technical regime, which may eventually influence landscape development.

While this framework seems particularly interesting for the analysis of transitions in spatial planning systems because of its capacity to explain changes doing away with simple causality and emphasising the importance of the interaction of multiple agencies and actors through different levels, it does not offer in depth explanations of the mechanisms through which existing regimes may be destabilized and windows of opportunities may be opened up. At the same time, there is not in-depth research on the way transitions may be intentionally supported through policy interventions, which seems a particularly relevant issue in urban studies.

In the attempt to shed more light on the influence of timing and multi-level interactions on transition pathways, Geels and Schot (2007) have identified four typologies of transitions ranging from more symbiotic patterns like transformation and reconfiguration pathways (which happen when niche innovations are added to the regime without disrupting its basic architecture), to de-alignment/re-alignment pathways (when windows of opportunities are opened while niches are still competing to find the dominant one), and to technological substitution (which happens when windows are opened at the same time when niches are ready to get momentum).

As much of the transition patterns seems to depend on the timing and wideness of the windows of opportunity and on the capacity of regime actors to resist to pressures exerted by those windows, a core question may be how to foster a widening of those windows and how to support their capacity to exert pressures on regime? Are windows opened only as a result of a 'landscape' event, which is by definition outside the control of individual actors, or that process may be somehow supported and accelerated by interventions of key actors involved in the transition of the socio-technical system?

Very recently some MLP scholars started analysing possible conditions for deliberate acceleration of socio-technical transitions (Kivimaa and Kern, 2016; Roberts, 2017; Roberts and Geels, 2019), thus recognizing the importance of planned policy interventions on transition patterns. They shed light on the way deliberate strategies and policy mixes may work: (i) to encourage the breakthrough of socio-technical systems from initial niches, and (ii) to lower the resistance to change from incumbent actors and powerful regime players (Roberts and Geels, 2019); to say in other words, their research focused on how policy mixes supporting transitions may include elements of 'creative destruction', i.e. they may involve strategies and tools aimed both at the creation of the new and at the destabilization of the old (Kivimaa and Kern, 2016). These contributions are linked to a more explicit acknowledgement of the importance of politics and power on transition pathways, which was largely under-theorized in initial conceptions of the MLP (Meadowcroft, 2011). For instance Geels (2014) recently tried to give a more nuanced picture of regimes by showing the plurality of actors embedded in it, together with the multiple types of power (instrumental, discursive, material and institutional) they use to resist to transition.

In this paper we take further these new research foci in MLP by analysing, in a MLP perspective, multi-faceted and multi-level strategies for the destabilization of existing socio-technical regimes and for nurturing niches as a pre-requisite for the transition of a specific socio-technical system. In the definition of these broader strategies we also refer to policy instrument mixes, as these were defined within policy analysis studies, in their move from a focus on single instruments toward a combination of procedural and substantive instruments for a specific policy (Howlett, 2004). Howlett *et al.* (2006, p. 8) used the well-known taxonomy proposed by Hood (1986) as an overall template for assessing the potential components of any policy instrument mix. According to the Hood's schema, government resources can be grouped under four distinct groups, depending on their reliance on nodality (information, being in the middle of a network), authority (legal or official power), treasure (financial resources),

organisation (personnel and structural resources). According to this schema, the statutory document, above defined 'project plan', is only one of the instruments that governments use to implement or give effect to public policies.

Towards a new conception of territory in planning and local development policies: the Apulia case study

The case study analysed in this section is about the transition in spatial planning strategies in the Apulia region towards landscape- and heritage-centred local development. That transition started in 2005, when an abrupt change happened in the governmental lead of the Apulia region. For the first time since the setting up of the Italian ordinary regions in 1970, a centre-left government started ruling Apulia, which so far had always been ruled by centre or right parties. It was furthermore the first time in Italy that such a centre-left government was led by a president of the Communist Refoundation Party. This abrupt change in the regional leadership brought deep changes in regional government visions, with the ambition to promote "a new development cycle based on the enhancement of tangible and intangible resources, set up by women, men, youth, and cultural and environmental heritage of the territory" (Vendola, 2005). The failure of the development models implemented or sought after in a 'less developed region' like Apulia during the entire second post-war period, aimed at supporting economic growth through imposed or exogenously inspired policies, had fed such a political change. This reflected Apulian society growing awareness of the environmental and social unsuitability and unsustainability in the long term of these models (Barbanente, 2011).

At that time, the Apulian spatial planning system was still essentially centred on (mostly old) municipal land use plans mainly concerned with the management of future (abundant) options for urban growth; besides them, there was a regional landscape plan passed in 2000 imposing a landscape zoning on the territory and normative restrictions on the use of individual natural beauties, while neglecting the other parts of the territory. Such planning system included all the key features of the Italian 'urbanism tradition', i.e. rigid zoning and codes and ineffective development control (CEC, 1997) combined with low levels of trust and acceptance of planning intervention in society (Nadin and Stead, 2013, p. 1551). This was partly due to the fact that planning rules were generally considered an obstacle to growth especially in a 'less developed region'. On the other side, low social acceptance of planning rules was linked to the acknowledgement that main decisions in urban planning were mostly influenced by interested actors able to organize political and professional power in support of their own interests at the expense of collective interests. This, together with the entrenchment of familism, clientelism and corruption, was further undermining the foundation of the regional planning system's social legitimacy.

In this context, the new vision carried out by the new government, aiming to give rise to a new development cycle based on the enhancement of tangible and intangible resources of the territory, thus created an extraordinary opportunity for giving political centrality to urban and regional planning in a landscape- and heritage-centred direction. The new regional Territorial Landscape Plan (TLP), launched at the end of 2007 and approved in February 2015, was conceived of by the regional government as the essential instrument to face this challenge. As the ELC provided the TLP with a wider conceptual framework to shift the focus from private interests to the common good (Pedroli *et al*., 2013; Settis, 2013), the TLP interpreted the territory/landscape as a product of social processes, which in turn shape the ways in which processes are set up and evolve. This view emphasises that territory/landscape is socially produced, and implies that the plan must be able to capture a multitude of social, economic and cultural factors involved in its transformation, to increase 'place consciousness' (Magnaghi, 2010) and to guide towards an identitarian self-recognition, the recovery of cultural, economic and political ways of achieving self-determination and the valorisation of endogenous resources, among which landscape also features (Magnaghi, 2011).

This approach required a radical change in the regional spatial planning regime. How to trigger and support change in such a way that it could reach the several dimensions involved in that socio-technical transition? Replacing the old spatial planning instruments with new ones would not be enough. A much deeper process needed to take place to reach all the many actors involved in and to start the construction of a new history in the collective interpretation and production of the regional territory. This was done through the manifold actions and strategies carried out along the different pillars of the socio-technical transition.

Along the scientific and technical dimension, transition involved manifold and complex changes. On one side, new analytical tools needed to be found to describe and interpret the territory and represent regional landscapes through multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary perspectives, with an emphasis on the specific characters and identities of different regional landscapes, including the ordinary and degraded landscapes as required by the ELC (Council of Europe, 2000, II, 23-25, 36.). This entailed a complex process of social production of the plan carried out by the inter-disciplinary planning team and the local authorities/engaged citizens/society, acting together for the common good. The team was composed of 15 young experts in architecture, engineering, geology, agriculture, forestry, history and archaeology, many of which holding a PhD. They set up the TLP office in the regional planning department, with the scientific coordination of Alberto Magnaghi, an academic activist planner, founder of the so-called 'territorialist school'.

The social production process was anything but easy in a region of about 20 thousand square kilometres and 4 million inhabitants. Hundreds of informal meetings were held across the region, together with thirteen formal conferences in different cities and villages. An interactive website provided continuous information on plan-making progress and an on-line 'Landscape Observatory' was created to facilitate interaction between citizens and the planning team in order to grasp best practices in the promotion of landscape values and worst practices about landscape damages to be prevented.

On the other side, innovative tools had to be identified to pursue the strategic vision of the plan besides the traditional part, still made of a regulatory framework that used authority resources, i.e. rules which all public and private bodies are required to comply with in accordance with the provisions of the Code, in order to prevent 'special' protected landscapes from being further compromised by the usual practices of development planning (Legacy and Leshinsky, 2016).

Innovative tools, all included in the Strategic Scenario of the plan, identified by the new TLP to foster its strategy-oriented approach, encompassed seven Guidelines, five Regional Territorial Projects and a number of Experimental Integrated Projects. The latter were particularly relevant for the transition pathways undertaken through the TLP as they constituted small niches of alternative modes of description, interpretation and transformation of local territories-landscapes developed throughout the region.

Some Experimental Integrated Projects were seeds of alternative development found across the region in a scattered way, then supported and coordinated within the TLP strategy thanks to special cooperative agreements signed between the regional government and local authorities and/or civil society groups, to become demonstration cases across the region that showed that 'doing things' differently was possible. In this way, those little niches gained momentum and aligned to break through thanks to the strategic vision of the new TLP.

One such niche was the Paduli case. After a brief introduction of this case, in the following sub-sections we will focus on how the regional government defended and encouraged the development of niche innovations through policy mixes aiming to produce positive interactions with each other and to break the well-established regime in the policy field at hand. Then, we will highlight how some ideas arisen from one of those niches spread throughout the region, with different characteristics and emphases depending on the specific features of the territory-landscape involved, and gave rise to different, sometimes unexpected niche innovations.

An example of niche innovations: the Paduli grassroots experimentation

An alternative, heritage- and landscape-centred, development strategy for the Paduli area had been started in 2003 as a grassroots experimentation in the extreme southern part of Apulia, southern Salento, which is called Paduli because of the geomorphological depression that characterises its core area. This area is mainly covered by olive trees and surrounded by a crown of small towns (overall 30.000 inhabitants). With its 5500 hectares it is the most continuous and extended olive grove of Salento. Ten thousand trees planted without a geometric order, one next to the other, stand among a labyrinth of rural roads, canals, sinkholes, reeds, fragments of woodland. The area is affected by enduring migratory processes and consequent abandonment of traditional activities, aging of population, impoverishment of socioeconomic structure, and depletion of infrastructures. A higher percentage of workers than the regional average are still employed in agriculture. But many of them depend on public assistance and on the ability to find other non-agricultural sources of income to sustain themselves. The fragmentation of land and the predominance of family run holdings make this economic sector incapable both to compete with productivistic agriculture and to meet the increased demand for high-quality products. These features can only worsen the abandonment and degradation processes already evident in various parts of this rural area.

A participatory and empowering process started in 2003 on the initiative of a small group of off-site architecture students, and progressively involved ten municipalities and local inhabitants. It was conceived as an open process, freely accessible to people coming from outside and in which everyone could observe, criticise and propose their ideas about the problems affecting the area and how to solve them for a better future. This process continued for some years and led local inhabitants and the young promoters themselves to (re)discover the peculiar qualities of the rural core, which had been abandoned and disregarded for decades by younger people who lived in the surrounding small towns. An identity of a place discarded and condemned to a slow degradation, which reminded the inhabitants the deprivation which previous generations succeeded to jettison, gradually turned into a new identity of mysterious and unique place which had preserved its territory from the social and environmental disasters occurred in other parts of Apulia. The close interactions between the small towns and a rural environment, easily accessible to all the inhabitants, were being progressively recognised as factors of diffuse spatial quality, relevant components of individual and collective well-being to be maintained and defended. From this collective cultural process arose the idea that such unique territory-landscape qualities had the potential to suggest new path of endogenous development for this rural area. The ‘Paduli park’ was the design concept identified to hint at the need to protect the traditional agricultural use while promoting various forms of cultural, recreational, touristic activities. These were essential to integrate the agricultural income, create new economy, attract people from abroad, and induce the local communities to re-connect with and to take care of their environmental and cultural heritage.

Supporting the development of the Paduli niche innovations

The regional planning team, which at the beginning of 2008 had just started drafting the TLP and triggering its social production, grasped the process underway in the Paduli area as an interesting experience with respect to the TLP Strategic Scenario and included it within the Experimental Integrated Projects. Thus, at the end of the same year, the ten municipalities and LUA – Laboratorio Urbano Aperto (Open Urban Laboratory) – association, which in the meantime had been founded by the young promoters of the process, signed an agreement with the regional government of Apulia. The core objective of the agreement was the joint implementation of a ‘multifunctional agricultural park’ as part of the TLP. This favoured the development of the ongoing process, since it gave it recognition and visibility, and so ensured its continuity. Moreover, it facilitated information exchange between the regional and the local level and continuous help to the weak organizational structure of the small municipal authorities involved. Furthermore, the competitive bidding processes, launched by the regional government to provide financial support for the implementation of the TLP, gave municipalities and people involved in the Paduli

process the opportunity to enlarge their experience to the different dimensions of innovation at the base of the idea of 'multifunctional agricultural park'.

In 2010 the ten municipalities adopted an integrated regeneration programme developed by a coordination unit involving their urban planning offices and supported and harmonised by the LUA association. The main initiatives carried out since then, as briefly outlined below, were financed by funding derived from various regional policies. In 2010, a project aiming at recovering the ten historical centres and connecting them through the Park of Paduli was co-financed by the region using the Apulia European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Operational Programme 2007-2013. In 2011, thanks to the regional initiative 'Urban Laboratories: old buildings for young ideas' launched by the regional youth policy department and co-financed by the National Fund for Underdeveloped Areas (Fondo per le Aree Sottoutilizzate - FAS), local young people were involved in the reuse of five public buildings and of a municipal-owned olive grove of about 8000 sqm for experimental, innovative self-organizing activities. Under the name "Living the Paduli", these include different initiatives in the field of hospitality and tourism, slow mobility, food and craft, agriculture and environment, cultural heritage. Furthermore, by drawing on other priority objectives of the Apulia ERDF Operational Programme 2007-2013, slow mobility interconnections of cycle and pedestrian paths and ecological networks were implemented. Finally, a project for the integrated management of environmental and cultural heritage was developed thanks to an innovative tool launched by the regional department of cultural heritage with the aim of protecting and enhancing the cultural heritage through local development strategies based on vision and objectives of the TLP. The emphasis on the 'integrated' approach hints at an idea of joint management of cultural heritage and activities, environmental heritage and local welfare services, which actively involves a wide range of social and economic local actors. All these interventions triggered a virtuous circle of social, technical and organizational learning. In the 2014-20 ERDF-ESF (European Social Fund) programming cycle, the Paduli group of municipalities placed at the top of the regional ranking of applications for funding received under the 'Sustainable Urban Development' program.

The idea of the 'park of Paduli', originally aimed to protect the environment, to support a poor local agriculture, and to promote the local cultural heritage for leisure and tourism, has progressively become a space (territorial, but also social and institutional) that is building a new economy and a new heritage- and landscape-centred local development model. This consists of a number of different activities deeply based on the social relations between people and place, which guarantees the reproduction of the essential conditions of well-being and social cohesion.

This process gradually destabilized regime perceptions and strategies of key actors involved in this deprived area. This challenge was indeed quite easy in the Paduli case for a number of reasons. First, in that context the interests at stake are weak as well as the actors capable of resisting the penetration of innovation. Second, peripheral areas feel detached from the centres of political decision. Therefore, the appreciation of the importance of the process going on in the area by the Apulia regional government increased the self-confidence of the grassroots groups who had promoted the process, and assured them recognition and support from local government institutions.

Figure 2. "Living the Paduli": ongoing activities

Supporting the diffusion of the niche innovations

The regional government used different policy tools to trigger the transition in the spatial planning system towards landscape- and heritage-centred local development strategies.

In order to strenghten and give coherence to niche experimentations fostered through Integrated Experimental Projects, the regional government carried out several actions under the umbrella of the TLP. One of them was the development of the Five Regional Territorial Projects, which received inspiration and support from innovations experienced in niches. The Paduli case, for instance, strongly inspired the development of the Project called City-Countryside Pact, as far as this identified 5 'multifunctional agricultural parks' for the valorization of the regional countryside and some other parks for the countryside refurbishment. The implementation of Regional Territorial Projects was then supported through several tools and policy instruments.

In 2013, in order to encourage the creation of multifunctional agricultural parks, the regional government launched a call for proposals. Eight municipalities located north of the regional capital city of Bari and included in the 'Park of towers and hamlets' placed at the top of the regional ranking. They proposed a feasibility study that interprets the park as a great environmental equipment of the metropolitan city of Bari, where the multi-functional agriculture is a key source for landscape protection, enhancement and improvement, in line with the objectives of the TLP. Thus the study proposes the preservation of open spaces in urban areas and the historical alternation of open and built spaces along the coast, the enhancement of historic rural landscapes, and the halt of land consumption. According to these objectives, the municipality of Bari approved an address document to modify the old land use plan centred on an expansionary vision of spatial planning in order to adapt it to the TLP. Its main objective was to "safeguard and enhance valuable agriculture areas located around the built-up area", where the feasibility study provided for halting urban expansion and carrying out actions aimed at reconstructing a landscape in which agriculture can be developed to serve the citizens and increase biodiversity and the connectivity of the rural system. This decision was followed by a conflict with a developer who had proposed the construction of a settlement in the park area, in conformity with the land use plan. Thanks to a difficult negotiation promoted by the municipality, an agreement was reached on a development proposal that allows to limit the land consumption by redeveloping the urban margin and integrating the existing settlement, characterized by profound social and physical marginality, in a high quality ecological and landscape system.

In this more economically dynamic context it was much more difficult to break the regime: powerful coalitions of interest around particular issues or areas try to bend financial resources to their own benefit, preventing niche innovations from expanding and stabilizing.

Another resistance to innovation arose from planning professionals and public officials, which mostly considered the territory essentially as an abstract, static and functional space, as a mere physical support adaptable to accommodate and able to bear any kind of development. The implementation of an innovative plan such as the TLP required the development of new skills and competencies among these professionals and officials. For this purpose at the end of 2014 the regional department for vocational training, together with landscape planning department and professional associations, organised a specific training course that lasted six months and was attended by more than 1000 people thanks to the possibility of streaming connection with thirty locations around Apulia.

Interesting to note is that in 2013 another multifunctional agricultural park was promoted, explicitly on the model of the Paduli park and located in the same 'landscape area'. The signature of a specific agreement among 24 municipalities and the Province of Lecce gave rise to the project of the 'Ionian Greenhouse Agricultural Park'. This aims to promote quality agriculture and the protection of agricultural biodiversity on the one hand, and on the other hydrogeological safeguards, improvement landscape quality, ecological complexity and closure of resource cycles. Moreover, during TLP implementation, the process of niche alignment is continuing, as the

complete regime shift has not occurred yet. Other innovation niches arose after the TLP approval, during the adaptation of the municipal land use plans to the TLP. Among the others, Campi Salentina envisioned an use of the rural areas centred on quality agricultural production, and implying a shift from a productivist space to shared and multifunctional space. This vision stemmed from the Negroamaro Multifunctional Agricultural Park proposed by Campi Salentina together by with six neighbouring municipalities in the northern Salento as an Integrated Project in line with the LTP guidelines. This aimed to experiment new pathways of territorial development through the enhancement of landscape, historical and intangible heritage, focusing on quality agricultural production, greater collective well-being and new forms of welfare.

Conclusions

In this paper we have analysed the ongoing transition in the spatial planning system in the Apulia region from an existing 'regime', dominated by a pro-growth vision of planning, to a landscape- and heritage-centred development vision, in line with innovations requested by the ELC. The spatial planning system has been interpreted as a socio-technical system, thus the MLP framework has been applied for its analysis. The analysis has shown how the ongoing transition profited from an abrupt change happened at the governmental lead of the Apulia region in 2005, which brought deep changes in regional government visions, with the ambition to promote a new heritage- and people-centred development cycle for the region, based on the enhancement of its tangible and intangible resources. But the opening of this window of opportunity and the existence, at that time, of small innovation niches scattered across the region cannot explain the pace and width of ongoing transitions unless we acknowledge the importance of a wide range of purposive strategies and policy instrument mixes envisaged by the regional government under the framework of the new TLP.

Through the application of the MLP framework the paper thus has focused on the analysis of multi-faceted and multi-level strategies envisaged by the TLP in order to grasp and strengthen innovation niches while fostering a destabilization of the pre-existing regime. Transition has been shown as the result of a blend of interactive enabling, supporting and contrasting practices. On one side, innovation niches have been identified by the TLP and given longer term perspective through the development of the regional development strategies. Different tools and policy mixes were devised by the new plan throughout its development and, later on, during its implementation phase, to support the alignment of niche innovations towards the new heritage- and lanscape-vision of the plan. On the other side, the new TLP tried to challenge strong power networks and old regime perspectives owned by key powerful players like private developers, technicians and public officials, as well as perception of places own by people at large, which were deeply challenged to engage in a collective process of place-consciousness and alternative local development.

In places where the regime was particularly strong and there were no grassroots resources able to trigger processes of collective rediscovery of place quality and revitalization of local economy, Experimental Integrated Projects were the tools through which the regional government promoted niche innovations in the attempt to break through the existing monolithic regime. They were intended as 'soft infrastructures' (Vigar and Healey, 2002) leading to collective representations of tangible and intangible local heritage through community mapping, and local community involvement in landscape interpretation, preservation and enhancement through eco-museums.

The transition is still ongoing in a piecemeal path made of some accelerations, with financial supports from the 2014-20 ERDF-ESF Regional Operational Program to innovative TLP strategies, and some slowdowns, due to changes in political governance at the regional level and thr reorganization of technical structures at regional and state level. This might eventually lead to the establishment of a new socio-technical regime. But there is no guarantee of this, as the MPL analytical framework suggests by doing away with simple causality and linear explanations (Geels and Schot, 2007).

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