BOOK CHAPTER
Battaglini E. (2019), "Making Sense of Place. Beyond Sustainability in Regional Development". In L. Florit et al, *Social-Environmental Ethics*, Barueri, SP, Manole, pp. 501-521.

Dr Elena Battaglini
MSc PhD
Senior Scientist
Research Area on Urban&Regional Economics - Head of Unit
Fondazione Di Vittorio - ex IRES Economic&Social Research Institute
Rome - IT

ABSTRACT

Sustainable development has become a catchy, policy-oriented term if not understood as a wicked problem (Rittel and Webber, 1973). In fact, some policies promoted in the name of sustainable development (where 'development' essentially refers to 'growth') have shown only minimal efficacy. Paralleling these failed policies, scholars observed inappropriate analytical operationalisations; inaccurate insofar as they suggest that each specific time or space relates to the specific goals of sustainability (Peattie 2011). The difficulties found in the operativity of this concept can be traced back to the difficulties of grasping and analysing the complex interactions residing among the social, cultural, economic, and environmental dimensions of the development of an area on each of these different scales.

This chapter is therefore challenging the normativity inherent in the conceptual nature of sustainable development and its globalising logic, which could be located in any time and any place. Here, the attempt is to root it in real spaces and real timeframes entering the debate on the 'territoriality' and 'territorialisation' of regional development because of its conceptual strength in framing community-led trajectories while still remaining grounded in the enduring features of the human experience and life-trajectory.

Within this perspective, maim of this contribution is reframing resilience and sustainable development as territorialisation grasping into the empirical evidence of a case study led in Western Serbia. Beyond the normativity of these catchy concepts, what matters are the relationships that the settled communities build and normalise over time and in the selected places where to live, with respect to resources and local assets. The territorialisation can reveal the existence of a sense of belonging and community identification with the living space, according to to tangible signs of recognition or difference, harmony or distance to the morphological and organisational conformation of places. Hence, the concept of 'territorialisation' may direct, address opportunities also in terms of intra-generational equity and inter-generational use of resources.

Introduction

Places as relational spaces (see Massey 1991, 1993, 2004, 2005; Cresswell, 2004; Amin 2004; Jones, 2009; Woods, 2011) are shaped by and thrives on the dense, complex network of relations established between society, economy and their natural environments. In this perspective, they have their own specific story and elaborate fabric requiring appropriate tools for the management, conservation and protection of resources which refer to the specific local characterisation and thus to the particular implicit problems and opportunities.

The underlying idea of this approach could be linked to what has been widely analysed in the Italian scientific debate on local development models (Becattini, 1987; Bagnasco, 1988; Brusco, 1989; Becattini, Sengeberger, 1991; Pyke et al., 1996) in which even the presence of small and medium enterprises can represent a driving force in development processes when they are tightly interwoven with environmental, social and economic features of the local context and supported by a broader participation of the socio-economic actors.

Despite a body of studies that, until the first half of the twentieth century, had not taken into account the variables of time and space in their analysis of development, places are taken in their specificity as the founding element for describing (and for some authors, interpreting) constraints and opportunities of regions for their historical, cultural, and socioeconomic conditions. The neoclassical theory of growth, based on the model of the Nobel laureate Robert Solow, expunges the spatial variable and it has been gradually questioned in favour of the so-called endogenous regional development approach (Stimson et al. 2011). This concept is echoed in *place-based* devolopment, recently introduced in the European regional policies where policies and strategies refer to a 'participatory', 'community-led' vision of development and thus sticking to an interpretation of the territory and its resources (Commission of the European Communities, 2009; Barca, 2009).

Over time, places take on the role of a favourable (or unfavourable) environment for business, making possible the creation of external economies (or diseconomies), and giving rise to specific forms of cooperation between companies and developmental actors. At least to some authors, what produces development and innovation in certain successful regions is, in this sense, not the assertion of a single company, but the competitiveness of the entire territory, expressed through the synergies between institutions and socioeconomic actors. These synergies are considered underlying the processes of accumulation of knowledge and the dissemination of informations and opportunities useful to support sustainable development in the context of effective policy strategies (Battaglini, 2014).

As is common knowledge, the 1992 Environment and Development Summit in Rio de Janeiro, has addressed the concept of sustainable development insofar. This concept has become a 'catchy', policy-oriented term if not understood as a wicked problem (Rittel and Webber, 1973). In fact, some policies promoted in the name of sustainable development (where 'development' essentially refers

to 'growth') have shown only minimal efficacy. Paralleling these failed policies, scholars observed inappropriate analytical operationalisations; inaccurate insofar as they suggest that each specific time or space relates to the specific goals of sustainability (Peattie 2011). The difficulties found in the operativity of this concept can be traced back to the difficulties of grasping and analysing the complex interactions residing among the social, cultural, economic, and environmental dimensions of the development of an area on each of these different scales.

Therefore, in this chapter, the author is challenging the normativity inherent in the conceptual nature of sustainable development and its globalising logic, which could be located in any time and any place. Instead, the attempt is to root it in real spaces and real timeframes. Therefore, the author enters the debate on the 'territoriality' and 'territorialisation' of regional development because of its conceptual strength in framing place-based trajectories while still remaining grounded in the enduring features of the human experience and life-trajectory.

Within this perspective, the aim of this chapter is twofold:

- on the one hand, it is addressing a case-study of two farming practices developed by an Italian-Serbian research team in the Sirogojno village, located 230 km from Belgrade (Serbia) in a mountainous area with high tourism potential, as well as agricultural, in Western Serbia on the border with Bosnia and Montenegro;

- on the other, it will reframe resilience and sustainable development as territorialisation, testing its possible effectiveness in the interpretation of the specific relationship between nature and culture within place-based development paths.

This contribution refers to a rural study in a crucial research-setting case, paying special attention to the contextual changes that have occurred, to the coping and adaptive practices towards climate and economic crisis and to the perception of the effects of these changes in practices.

The chapter is structured as follows: in paragraph 1, the author focuses on the concept of 'territorialisation', taken as a main reference of the theoretical background in the development of research hypotheses.

In section 2, theoretical underpinnings explicit the research questions and the project design. Therefore, key-concepts such as 'sustainable development', 'resilience' have been problematised within the current debate of regional studies to get a description of the methods and techniques used in the addressed case-study. Paragraphs 3 and 4 list the main research results and some concluding remarks.

1. Territorialisation as a new frame for understanding regional development

'Territoriality' and 'territorialisation' are crucial concepts in making sense of resilience and sustainable development because territorialisation is placed in relation to regimes of property rights that reflect complex historical and political processes. These divide the territories under state control

into economic and political zones, rearranging people and resources within such units, and regulating who can and cannot use the resources (Vandergeest and Peluso 1995; Buch-Hansen 2003; Kumar and Kerr 2013). In this chapter, territorialisation reflects the concept of 'human territoriality' that has been studied by the Swiss geographer Claude Raffestin since the 1970s. Referring to the works of Soja, Deleuze, Guattari and, above all, Lefebvre, he defines territoriality 'as the ensemble of relations that a society maintains with exteriority and alterity for the satisfaction of its needs, towards the end of attaining the greatest possible autonomy compatible with the resources of the system' (Raffestin 2012: 121).

Therefore, it deals with sustainable development as complex matter and with reference to space/time frames and to the cultural specificities of local communities in how they tackle either the endogenous potential of their local heritage or the external pressures of the market and globalisation. The main hypothesis proposed here is that place-based (sustainable) development trajectories are driven by means of perceptions and values and that – because of the different values attributed to different resources – decisions are made and farming practices implemented to make innovations based on these resources or to simply conserve, neglect or destroy them.

Building on the definition argued by Turco (1988), the concept of 'territorialisation' deals with a process in which communities settling in a place perceive its specific nature, attributing symbols to resources and to local peculiarities, and thus reifying, structuring, and organising the space. In this way, a process of co-construction and coevolution is addressed in social practices, along with a dialogic relationship in which the social configurations and the local environment in its physical characterisation both have agency (Dessein et al 2016).

The environment and society in dynamic interaction constitute the key actors of a process that is configured in time, conditioning the relationship between the settling community and the settled land with specific positions, resources, and climates. Both act and orient the quality and the direction of a territorial development that we understand substantially as the process of territorialisation, through which a 'space' becomes a 'place', a 'place to live in', and thus a 'territory':

From space to place (symbolisation stage). The possibilities of a community settling in an area are closely related to its soil conformation, watershed, morphological structure, vegetation, location, and climate—and therefore to the use of the assets available or to which the area allows access. Distancing from what Turco (1988) argued, the nature of these resources, before being socially constructed, opens up to the eyes and to the senses of other observers who perceive, first of all, their materiality and physicality. With this perspective, there is a clear reference to the so called Actor–Network Analysis (Goodman and Watts 1997), focusing on the local-level agency of the networks, in which social actors and natural hybrids (Latour 1993, 1994) are mutually and relationally coproduced, overcoming the traditional dichotomy between nature and culture. Networks here diverge in terms of dimensions, functions, and power, but all obey the same symmetric principle related to

the coevolution of nature and society. For this reason, agency is here intended to be collective and relational (Goodman 1999).

In order to grasp nature's agency a key concept is that of 'affordances'. As Gibson (1979) claimed, affordances are 'inherent properties of a natural resource which, by interacting with perceptions and values, induce a community to select and use resources for their own development paths. They, therefore, refer to the opportunities for action that the environment provides social actors through the particular characteristics the specific resource has. The affordances of the environment are what it offers to the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill. (…) An important fact about the affordances of the environment is that they are in a sense objective, real and physical, unlike values and meanings, which are often supposed to be subjective, phenomenal and mental' (Gibson 1979: 127–129).

Affordances arise, therefore, as 'means of action': they are latent in the environment and objectively measurable, regardless of an individual's ability to recognise it, but always in relation to the actors; they are intertwined with the actor's capacity to perceive and to attribute value to the natural configuration that space arises.

Through their outlets, their connotations, and via their morphological, physical, and climatic conditions, even environmental resources inform social perseptions and attributions of meaning. Therefore, they have (relational) agency in the use and consumption of resources.

Within this perspective, nature contributes to drive the relationship between what is produced and the communities settled there. Only subsequently are the natural resources disclosed to an attribution of meanings and symbols that determines their methods of use. The material and physical characteristics of the local assets constitute the signifiers to which the community ascribes some symbols in this early phase. The symbolisation of the natural meanings addresses the process of a community becoming territorially rooted. In this sense, the process of symbolisation constitutes the mould within which individual and collective behaviours are shaped and adapted, and this gives rise to the process of identification and appropriation of space. This constitutes a crucial phase in recognising the nature of the place and of its role as an independent and generative force. The process of symbolisation must neither blunt the senses nor prevent social actors from capturing the sensual presence of each natural element that is eaten, smelled, trodden upon, or observed. Nature's agency—but also the possibility of local communities adapting to its rhythms, grasping its gifts, respecting its equilibrium, and therefore sharing its fate—depends on social capacities to grasp its essence, its creative voice.

In this first phase, in the process of territorialisation, the role of culture is instrumental in identifying the specific modalities with which the nature of the place and its assets are perceived and then known and used.

From a place to the place to live in (reification stage). This transition occurs when the place is structured through the occupation and use of the land and through the transformation of spaces. The

natural assets perceived and symbolised in the first phase of the process are enriched with the attribution of meanings and values, thereby becoming resources. The values attributed by the settling community, as environmental economy teaches us, are not only values of exchange or use, but also of non-use. (Turner et al., 1994).

One example that may help to clarify these concepts is represented by the choices that the local community can enact in regard to a wood: depending on the meaning, and thus the value, that is attributed to it, it may be decided to obtain timber for sale or direct use by cutting down the trees. The value of the use of a wood can also be referred to its internal viability, therefore one may opt for a paid system of access ticketing that would allow purchasers to enjoy the woodland landscape. To the same wood, communities might also ascribe values of non-use when the need to safeguard its ecosystem is recognised and shared within them. Such values stem from the waiving or postponement of a right to use it in order to increase the possibility of future generations enjoying environmental assets of their places.

Reasoning on regional development, a crucial issue stands up here: the values that a community assigns to its own resources act to orient the specific trajectories of their development relating to the use, conservation, or innovation of the local assets—as well as to their dissipation.

In essence, through the processes of symbolisation and settlement, space becomes an elective place, a place in which individuals choose to live and to experience their belonging. Accordingly, this process concretises the way in which the local communities, interpreting the physical context's affordances—the very same that participates in the definition of their identity traits—transform space with a bidirectional link: bonding and bridging nature and culture. In this process of spatial bonding, it is culture, through specific practices, that mediates the construction of a relationship between a local community and its environment.

From place to live in to territory (organisational stage). The process of the structuring of the land leads to the need to defend it by setting boundaries, organising it through signs and rules, and establishing criteria for its development, to ensure that its advantages and benefits remain for the settled people and their future generations. It is through this process that a local community, in relation to the assets, meanings, and values ascribed to the resources, attributes to the territory a set of cognitive and normative meanings: procedures and hierarchies that mark the territory so much that they become signs of the identity of the community settled there. In this process of definition of functions and rules, it is the culture of a given community that defines the frameworks presiding over the policies (Battaglini, 2014; Battaglini et alii, 2015; Battaglini and Babović, 2016;).

Therefore, these lines of reasoning lead to the following questions:

What are the variables affecting the way local communities ascribe values and meanings to their local heritage and how this is related to the process of territorialisation?

How policies (local, national, supranational) are enabling /hindering regional social economic development?

How to study (resilient) place-based development and its relation with the territorialisation process of local communities?

2. Re-framing sustainable development and its resiliency

These questions problematize and challenge two increasingly important conceptual tools in regional studies: 'resilience' and 'sustainable development'. First, the 'resilience', is here understood as the capacity of a space-territorial aggregate to adapt and self-organise facing external disturbances (variability or natural disasters, social crises, economic or political), while maintaining a satisfactory standard of living. Referring to the socio-ecological literature, resilience is referred to as the interference factor (magnitude of disturbance) that a system is able to absorb after a radical change, that is, its ability to self-organize and adapt to emerging circumstances (Adger 2006 : 268-269). Similarly, talking about 'rural resilence' Heijman et al. (2007) argue that it can be described by the 'measure' in which an area is able to simultaneously balance the ecosystem, as well as the cultural and economic functions, to meet both internal weaknesses and external threats, including ineffective policies and inadequate regulatory forms.

The question of how to address the resilience of urban and rural areas - also in order to meet the challenges of climate change and mitigating its effects - is attracting great interest among scholars and policy makers. In addition, the socio-economic literature in which there is a growing ecological line of thought, 'resilience' is closely considered in relation to the 'sustainability' of ecosystems and therefore a key component of sustainable development (Common, 1995; Folke, 2006). If resilience is the ability of an ecological and social system to adapt to external pressures, while maintaining its functions and its identity, sustainable development is the ability of this system to undertake sustainable pathways to socio-cultural, economic and environmental (Folke et al., 2002; Walker et al., 2004). In this perspective, how this overlap between resilience and sustainability can be understood?

The term resilience has a cross meaning, counting on infinite applications. In fact, it has become a 'pervasive idiom of global governance', since it is conceptually 'abstract and malleable enough to encompass the worlds of high finance, defense and urban infrastructure' (Walker and Cooper, 2011: 144). Equally, it can be argued, another fundamental concept in environmental policy as 'sustainable development' is commonly used in the sense of the need to preserve the quality of natural resources for present and future generations. However, for some authors, the concept is now so general as to be meaningless (Marshall and Toffel, 2005; Baker, 2006). Already in 1990, the economist Pearce (Pearce et al., 1990) observed, in this regard, that it is difficult to disagree with the basic assumptions of sustainable development because, like 'mom and apple pie' , they are issues on which we should all agree.

In terms of sustainability, a 'resilient social-ecological system in a desirable state' has a greater capacity to continue providing us with the goods and services. That support our standards of living while being subjected to a variety of shocks (Walker and Sal 2006: 32). In this sense, the concept of resilience is inevitably regulatory (Keessen et al., 2013; Duit et al., 2010), as it is the concept of sustainable development.

There is, in fact, a direct mode of application of sustainability and resilience in local development processes. Such strategies require legislative decisions concerning the distribution of public and private responsibility for the achievement of specific development targets, adaptation or mitigation of effects of climate change since they involve the search for an adjustment among individual and general interests that is configured from precise space-time configurations. In this sense, it is the local companies to decide what is a 'good' or 'bad' resilience or sustainability (Pisano, 2012), thus paralleling the integration of institutional arrangements governing its implementation.

Given their importance, both for the resilience and for sustainability, the question is now how to measure, how to observe their outcomes. The successful attempts to resilience measurements are those in which the analysis refers to the dynamics of development to be contestualised in a precise temporal and spatial scale (Walker and Salt, 2006). Resilience and sustainability have, in fact, the common denominator of the specific forms in which the local community 'reinterprets and transforms' (Battaglini, 2005) its local heritage, its development conditions over time.

In this sense, scholars has shared the idea of considering resilience as a process, rather than a stable outcome (Brown and Kulig, 1996; Peterson et al. 1998; Pelling, 2003). Therefore, it is generally used either to investigate the co-evolutionary relationship between human beings - individuals, groups or companies - and nature, or to describe the ability of communities, institutions and economic structure to withstand if not endure external shocks in the way in which they recover from such disturbances (Tinnerman, 1981; Folke, 2006). The essence of the concept of resilience in terms of process is therefore just the acceptance of change: resist or ignore it increases the vulnerability of a social-ecological system (Walker and Salt, 2006). These explanations with respect to the procedural and relational valences of resilience offer the possibility to carry out a critical reflection on innovation and on territorial development in support of specific questions that have supported research, namely:

- how a development tarjectory is socially constructed?
- when and in what way the development can be defined as 'sustainable' and 'resilient'?
- what is the specific role of nature and natural heritage of a place?
- to what extend natural / environmental characteristics are classified as affordances and therefore perceived by the community as the local heritage prerogatives?
- what values, norms and meanings underly the attribution of this quality?
- how the local milieu affects these processes?

In light of these assumptions and in relation to the guiding questions and available resources, the research design has been constructed as follows.

First, the identification of the local area being studied in the mountain village of Sirogojno in the Zlatibor region of Western Serbia. Zlatibor is one of the Serbian areas of increasing tourism and the manufacturing center of Zlatibora Company Ltd., agro-industrial firm with great commercial success, tying his identity Company and its products to the territory. As research context, Serbia has been chosen for being a crucial setting case for at least two reasons: it is a country undergoing reterritorialization patterns after the effects of Yugoslavia decostruction and the two conflicts of the Nineties; it is also a country that, especially in rural areas, by history and cultural tradition has developed endogenous trajectories.

3. Empirical underpinnings

The analysis of territorialisation provides insights into the time-space dimension of regional development and the role of communities in the use and consumption of resources. In this sense, the concept has –probably more then the catchy but normative concept of sustainable development – analytical potential to interpret how people spatially construct territories over time (Battaglini, 2014). Here the role of culture is discussed in territorialisation by two rural cases, which show interesting settings in terms of rural characteristics, cultural and institutional context. Research settings will be briefly introduced here and explored in the next sections. Drawing on empirical research the results will be described along the process of symbolisation and reification (see above). First, the rural Zlatibor region in Western Serbia is analysed, with its wide touristic and agricultural potentialities. The main focus is on the affective, cognitive, and selective dimensions of the values (Sciolla, 2012) which people attribute to resources in this area, and how processes of symbolisation and reification play a role in territorialisation. The empirical research is anchored in the subjective perception of respondents with regard to the following aspects: economic efficiency (regular and satisfactory incomes, improved living standards, innovation, greater investment in production, diversification of production, and multifunctionality of farms) and complementariness of socioecological development. The latter refers to adaptations in the use of land, soil preservation, prevention of village depopulation, and development of social capital, improvement in quality of life and in subjective and objective socioeconomic status.

In Serbia, the empirical research focused on the development of a community of small rural households in Sirogojno, a small village of 614 inhabitants located between Užice and Zlatibor. The biographical interviews of fourteen farmers, mainly devoted to raspberry cultivation and dairy production, provided insights on the structural challenges they have faced since the Socialist era. The interviews have been conducted in Serbian, in May 2013 and July 2014 and later translated into English. They have entangled other research techniques: informal conversations with local

stakeholders, visual methods (respondents were instructed to make photos of the resources or practices on their farm that are most valuable for their esistence) and participatory observations on milk chain and raspberry production.

The data showed that mechanisms employed by farmers to develop farming practices and satisfactory living standards were diverse, and they were shaped simultaneously by changes in the broader socioeconomic environment and by the internal capacities of the actors (farms, farmers, and households). Therefore, specific attention was payed to the changes in the context that have occurred, to the coping and adaptive practices of respondents and to the perception of the effects of the changes in two specific sectors: dairy and raspberry production.

Why some crops are produced in a region and others not? What influences the selection what should be produced or not? How production processes catalyse territorialisation patterns? Here we would claim that production arrays and development trajectories are a set of actions that arise from the patterns of territorialisation implemented at the local level in relation to the conformation of the soil, the watershed, the morphological structures, the vegetation, location and climate on a local level within specific political and historical frames.

The post-socialist transformation of agriculture in Serbia has brought great challenges to family farms. Trade liberalization exposed farmers, for the first time, to the global food market and global competition. At the same time, the deregulation of food prices, the reduction of state intervention in agriculture, and the decrease in budgetary support for agriculture all acted together to increase farmer's income risks, changing the overall business environment in the agricultural sector (Bogdanov et al., 2012).

In the Zlatibor region, the dismantling of traditional food supply chains and the setting up of new chains took time. Within this process, raspberries are an exogenous product that became important in the 1990s in a way that the whole region has become famous for raspberry production. The most important economic factor is the proximity of the raspberry market in the form of a large buyer of fresh raspberries a family driven company. This emerged following the privatisation of the local socialist sweater company, which oriented itself towards the production of frozen raspberries and wild berries. The company became a major exporter of frozen raspberries over time. This stimulated local producers to increase their raspberry production in order to gain immediate economic benefits. The respondents perceive the buyer as fair and reliable as he pays on time gives bonuses and provides cheaper fertilizers for producers. Therefore, many landowners with small holdings decided to start raspberry production and, as it can provide a high income from a small area, raspberry production became greatly appreciated.

The natural environment plays an important role in the development of raspberry production in various ways. First, the morphology of the terrain affords planting of raspberry yards. Descending hillsides enable good drainage during rainy seasons, which proved beneficial particularly during the severe floods and heavy and prolonged rain of spring and summer of 2014. Despite the additional effort in

cultivating this kind of terrain, respondents explained that they intentionally plant raspberry yards on such plots in order to mitigate the risks of excessive water. Second, the consecutive years of dry seasons followed by floods, sudden snows in May and mild winters, which could be the result of climate change, represent a serious challenge for raspberry producers. Their mechanisms for coping with this challenge include the choice of specific raspberry varieties, the introduction of mechanisation, and insurance. In order to reduce environmental risks, some producers plant different types of raspberry while others remain planting the old variety that is most suited to the local environment. Third, the spatial configuration of the small plots is suited for raspberry production.

Deeper insight reveals the importance of the interplay among local resource affordances' and cultural factors – the values attributed to raspberry production by the farmers. As stated by two respondents:

'In the raspberry yard, a man gets a lust for life. Of all types of work, I like most to work in the raspberry yard. It's such a nice feeling when you see how it becomes more beautiful every year. It grows, it's all in rows, orderly, green and red... beautiful.'(Male respondent, 48 years old)

'I like doing everything on the farm. But when I enter the raspberry yard, it's relaxation for me. It is not hard work, it's beautiful and the scent is nice.'(Female respondent, 69 years old)

The raspberry yard is a symbol of household prosperity, thus symbolising a successful family business. Therefore, social status values are also attributed to the raspberry production. Furthermore, the respondents attribute aesthetic values to the raspberry plant. For them, a raspberry yard is a place of beauty. They are proud when their yards are in order and tidy.

The traditional dairy products are less economically profitable than the newer crops like raspberries. One cannot deny that the income these novel crops produce is among the main reasons for their appreciation, but the background of the valuation is more complex. Dairy products are an example of a truly endogenous resource: they are strongly rooted in the farming and consuption practices as well as they are related to the unwritten know-how, stratified along the history of these places. *"Some of the traditional knowledge is still there. For example, when to let a cow into the field to eat grass, when to milk the cow, when to give it water, and how to take care of cow in general. The insemination practice is new. The vet brings the semen, which is kept at 28 degrees. However, it was best before, when the cows were inseminated naturally. We had a bull then. The livestock was healthier when the fertilisation was natural. I know that from personal experience. When I artificially inseminated the sow, because nobody had a hog in the village at the time, she delivered only two pigs. The vet told me that the natural way is the best, so if I want more pigs, I need to have a hog. Now I have one".* (Male respondent, 52 years)

The local natural environment is favourable for milk production; grasslands and pastures abound. The whole region has traditionally been famous for livestock production. However, the ongoing transition to the market economy since the 1990s has brought important changes. The previous practices of selling surplus dairy products to local cooperatives were dismissed due to the collapse of social cooperatives, altered legislation and news standards, affected by the trade in dairy products.

Furthermore, respondents were forced to find new solutions to maintain their nutritional habits and to provide stable incomes.

As they were all small producers (up to six cows), it was hard to find new buyers who would be interested in collecting the milk from the individual farms. They managed to find a retailer somewhat further away from the village and organised the milk transportation themselves. They drew up a schedule for milk collection and each morning one of them would collect milk from the farms in the hamlet and deliver it to the dairy company.

Eventually, in 2005, a new retailer appeared in the local community, and offered a milk-cooling tank to the hamlet. The farmers accepted this immediately and once again reorganised the milk chain. Since the state introduced bonuses for producers that can sell at least 40 litres of milk per day, they decided to organise their milk delivery in specific way, adapting to the institutional context. One farmer (the 'key farmer') sells the milk, collected in the tank on his farm, and the group shares the bonuses. For ten years, this way of cooperation and the practices remained the same. Every morning, the dairy company collects the milk and checks the quality. Payments are made twice per month, while bonuses are paid by the state once every few months. All payments go to the key farmer, who distributes the income and bonuses to the individual famers in accordance with their contributions. He also provides them with concentrated and subsidised food for their livestock.The flexibility of the social organisation contributes to the effectiveness of this informal cooperative and their self-organisation in contrast to other milk retailers in the region and was established due to two significant factors: the geo-morphology of the village which affords these practises, and the social territorial belonging (Pollini, 2005) of the inhabitants. The village is scattered across several hills. The respondents live in a part of the village, distant from the central part and from some other hamlets closer to the centre. Their hamlet has narrow roads, and sharp ascents and descents, which are hard to access during wintertime. This puts more pressure on farmers from the hamlet to show solidarity and be cooperative and innovative in their organisation. Furthermore the social network among the farmers in the hamlet is dense, woven by double-kinship and neighbourly relations. Consequently, the levels of trust and solidarity are relatively high, enabling more successful coping and cooperative practices.

Although the most visible benefits of this informal cooperative are financial, the regular delivery of milk is also an opportunity to socialise, to exchange information, and to spend time together. The cooperation thus further strengthens feelings of social territorial belonging within the community and increases trust, solidarity and cooperation. The respondents are aware of the benefits that this cooperation brings and they affirmed that their cooperation is possible due to the loyalty, solidarity and sense of affinity that exists between them.

As a respondend claimed: *'We struggled hard during that time to maintain the production of milk. Many others in the village gave up. We succeeded due to cooperation'*. We would frame this local cooperative as an output of the institutional dimension of the territorialisation processes occurred in Zlatibor. By this organisational effort, the informal cooperative has adjusted to a changing

socioeconomic environment that also contributes to the overall resilience of the community, as it maintains an economic activity that was under-threat, protects the living standards of the individuals and families and builds new forms of social capital, which can further strengthen community development.

Embedding and balancing endogenous and exogenous factors either the case of raspberries as example of market-driven production on local family farms and milk production as traditional product catalyse territorialisation patterns.

4. Concluding remarks

Problems in the definition of 'territory' in the social sciences derive from the difficulty in 'conceptualizing the interplay between physical space and the organization of relations and functions that come along with it, [which] is in the first place an epistemological difficulty (Mubi Brighenti 2010: 59). This difficulty is essentially what can be considered part of the black box of the nature / culture dualism.

In this perspective, three aims were pursued in this study. Firstly, by reconstructing the dairy and the raspberry chains as coping and innovative adaptive responses to external pressures, this chapter attempted to give evidence to the interplay between perceptions and values attributed to local resources (namely culture) and the local characterisation and affordance of natural assets. This essay showed how adaptive capacities to the changing endowements rely on the relationship between the settling community and the settled land in relation to its specific positions, resources and climates. Secondly, the main question were elated to the factors that contribute to the resilience of farming households in the context of turbulent socioeconomic changes and environmental challenges.

In the case of milk chains, the coping mechanism included the successful reorganisation of the milk chains, which was possible due to the social territorial ties that enabled networks of trust, and solidarity in the small community. Reorganising the milk chain in the form of an informal cooperative allowed the farming households to maintain milk production, to increase their economic resilience, and to further develop new forms of social capital. The case of raspberry production was an example of innovation as a mechanism for dealing with changes and challenges. The key factors in the development of raspberry production that appeared were the natural environment, favourable economic circumstances – particularly in the form of the presence of a large raspberry exporter in the village – and non-economic drivers related to the aesthetic and symbolic values attributed to raspberry production.

Both cases represent alternative insights into farm management. The dairy practices responded to short-term efficiency needs, while the raspberry production complemented that orientation with a long-term transformability pattern, balancing, as Darnhofer (2014) puts it, exploitation and exploration – the alternative ways to build on the equilibrium that relates a farmer's agency to the environmental

specificities when navigating change. As the cases show, the local natural environment is an important factor in orienting these practices, particularly in terms of how the local hybrids afford them: altitude (a bit less than 900 m), terrain morphology (hills, sometimes with very steep slopes that are hard to access and cultivate), good quality air, rich forests, and plenty of wild herbs, berries and mushrooms.

The third objective of this contribution was to analyse local development paths occurring in Western Serbia, trying to overcome the normative and global logic of concepts such as sustainable development and resilience in order to take into account specific spatio-temporal contexts in which they are unfold. The concept of territorialisation, as it has been shown, can give substance eithr to the study of resilience and sustainability of a local system, because it highlights the space-time dimension in the use and consumption of resources. What matters, in the studies on regional development, are the relationships that the settled communities build and normalise over time and in the selected places where to live, with respect to resources and local assets. The territorialisation can reveal the existence of a sense of belonging and community identification with the living space, according to to tangible signs of recognition or difference, harmony or distance to the morphological and organisational conformation of places. Hence, it may direct, address opportunities also in terms of intra-generational equity and inter-generational use of resources.

Unlike the broader and normative concept of sustainable development (which could be located in any place and at any time), the reference to the coproduction of natures–cultures in territorialisation offers an improved understanding of the process underlying regional development, allowing scholars to better analyse the interests at stake, the stakeholders in play, the valued resources to be taken into account for development initiatives and paths, and the local efforts to challenge external pressures of the market and globalisation.

Facing the complexities of global challenges, the sociologist Ulrich Beck stated that: 'We need new ways of seeing the world, being in the world and imagining and doing politics' (Beck 2016:181). Accordingly, territorialisation as a 'new' way of understanding regional development might describe if not interpret complex social issues, such as valuable resources, their affordances, the limits on their use, their preservation by the perspective of communities. Community-led, value-centered development problems are highly resistant to resolutions using mainstream concept like growth, expert-driven, centralized, and rational–technical approaches since they expunge time/space spans (and culture) from their frames of references. Instead, they require a transformation or a metamorphosis in the way scholars (and policy makers) conceptualise and approach them.

Especially in the poorest countries or in the interstices of European urban and rural suburbs, some communities - precisely because they have nothing more to lose – are building new forms of cohesistence with global challenges and perhaps, new models of development, community-led. Therefore, as scholars, our main task is finding new perspectives to observe and analyse them,

recognizing if not supporting local communities to live in their places and continue to invest, desire and hope.

REFERENCES

Adger N. (2006). Vulnerability. *Global Environmental Change*, 16:268-281.

Amin A. (2004). Regions unbound towards a new politics of place. *Geografiska Annaler*, 86B (1): 33–44.

Bagnasco A. (1988). *La costruzione sociale del mercato*, Bologna: Il Mulino

Baker S. (2006). *Sustainable Development*. London and New York: Routledge.

Barca F. (2009). *An Agenda for a reformed cohesion policy. A place-based approach to meeting European union challenges and expectations.* Independent Report. Prepared at the request of Danuta Hübner, Commissioner for Regional Policy

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/policy/future/pdf/report_barca_v0306.pdf (Accessed 10th February 2017)

Battaglini E. (2005). Enhancing Local Sustainability: the role of Social Capital in the value attribution of a territory. In M. Järvelä, P. Jokinen, A. Puupponen (toim.), *Kestävän kehityksen paikalliset verkostot. Local Sustainability Networks*. Jyväskylä: Jyväskyla University Press.

Battaglini E. (2014). *Sviluppo Territoriale. Dal disegno di ricerca alla valutazione dei risultati.* Milano: Franco Angeli.

Battaglini E. and Babović M. (2016). Nature and culture in the territorialisation processes. Challenges and Insights from a case study in Serbia. In J. Dessein, E. Battaglini and L. Horlings L., eds, *Cultural Sustainability and Regional Development. Theories and Practices of territorialisation.* London: Routledge: 59-72.

Battaglini E., Babović M. and Bogdanov N. (2015). Framing Resilience in relation to Territorialisation. In A. Palovita and M. Järvelä, eds, *Climate adaptation, policy and food supply chain management in Europe.* London: Routledge: 119-131.

Becattini G. ed (1987). *Mercato e forze locali: il distretto industriale*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Becattini G. and Sengeberger W. (1991). *Distretti industriali e cooperazione tra imprese in Italia.* Firenze: Banca Toscana

Beck U. (2016).*The Metamorphosis of the World*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bogdanov N., Rodić V and Vittuari M. (2012). *Structural Change in Transitional Agriculture: Evidence from Serbia*. Paper prepared for presentation at the 132nd Seminar of the EAAE "Is transition in European agriculture really over? New dimensions and challenges of transition and post-transition processes in agriculture and food sectors in the European Union and EU acceding and neighbouring countries", Skopje, October 25-27, 2012. http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/139490/2/Bogdanov.pdf (Accessed 10th February 2017)

Brown D. and Kulig J. (1996). The Concept of Resiliency. Theoretical Lessons from Community Research. *Health and Canadian Society*, 4: 29-52.

Brusco S. (1989). *Piccola impresa e distretti industriali*. Torino: Rosenberg & Sellier

Creswell T. (2004). *Place; a short introduction*. Malden (USA), Oxford (UK) and Carlton (Australia): Blackwell Publishing.

Darnhofer I. (2014). Resilience and why it matters for farm Management. *European review of agricultural economics*4, 1 (3): 461–484.

Common M. (1995). *Sustainability and Policy: Limits to Economics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dessein J., Battaglini E. and Horlings L. eds (2016). *Cultural Sustainability and Regional Development. Theories and practices of territorialisation*. London: Routledge.

Duit A., Galaz V., Eckerberg K. and Ebbesson J. (2010). Governance, complexity, and resilience. *Global Environmental Change*, 20(3): 363-368.

Commission of the European Communities (2009). Sixth Progress Report on Economic and Social Cohesion. Brussels, 25.6.2009 COM 295 final http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/interim6/com_2009_295_en.pdf (Accessed 10th February 2017)

Folke C., Carpenter S., Elmqvist T., Gunderson L., Holling C. S. and Walker B. (2002). Resilience and sustainable development: building adaptive capacity in a world of transformations. *Ambio* 31 (5): 437–440.

Folke C. (2006). Resilience: the Emergence of a Perspective for Social-Ecological Systems Analyses. *Global Environmental Change,* 16(3): 253-267.

Gibson J. (1979). *The ecological approach to visual perception*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Goodman D. (1999). Agro-Food Studies in the 'Age of Ecology': Nature, Corporeality, Bio-Politics. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 39 (1): 17–38.

Goodman D. and Watts M. eds (1997). *Globalising Food: agrarian questions and global restructuring*, London: Routledge.

Heijman W., Hagelaar G. and van der Heide M. (2007). *Rural resilience as a new development concept*. EAAE seminar Serbian Association of Agricultural Economists. Novi Sad, Serbia.

Jones M. (2009). Phase space: geography, relational thinking, and beyond. *Progress in Human Geography*, 33: 487.

Keessen A. M., Hamer J. M., Van Rijswick H. F. M. W. and Wiering M. (2013). The concept of resilience from a normative perspective: examples from Dutch adaptation strategies. *Ecology and Society,* 18 (2): 45.

Latour B. (1993). *We have never been modern*, Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Latour B. (1994). On technical mediation – philosophy, sociology, genealogy". *Common Knowledge*, 3 (2): 29-64.

Lundvall B. Å. and Johnson B. (1994). The Learning Economy. *Journal of Industry Studies*, 1 (2): 23-42.

Marshall A. (1890). *Principles of Economics*. London: Macmillan.

Marshall J.D. and Toffel M.W. (2005). Framing the elusive concept of sustainability: a sustainability hierarchy. *Environmental Science & Technology*, 39(3): 673-682.

Massey D. (1991). A Global Sense of Place. *Marxism Today*, June: 24–29.

Massey, D. (1993). Power geometries and a progressive sense of place. In J. Bird, B. Curtis, T. Putnam, G. Robertson and L. Tickner eds. *Mapping the futures: local cultures, global changes*. London: Routledge: 59-69

Massey, D. (2004). Geographies of responsibility. *Geografiska Annaler,* 86 B (1): 5–18.

Massey, D. (2005). *For Space*. London: SAGE.

Meloni B., Farinella D. eds (2013). *Sviluppo rurale alla prova. Dal territorio alle politiche*. Torino: Rosemberg & Sellier.

Mubi Brighenti A. (2010). On Territoriology. Towards a General Science of Territory. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 27(1): 52–72.

Norgaard R. B. (1994). *Development Betrayed. The End of Progress and a Coevolutionary Revisioning of the Future.* London and New York: Routledge.

Pearce D.W., Barbier E. and Markandya A. (1990). *Sustainable Development: Economics and Environment in the Third World.* London: Edward Elgar.

Peattie K. (2011). Developing and Delivering Social Science Research for Sustainability. In A. Franklin and P. Blyton, *Researching Sustainability: A Guide to Social Science Methods, Practice and Engagement.* London, New York, Earthscan: 17–33.

Pelling M. (2003). *The Vulnerability of Cities: Natural Disasters and Social Resilience.* London: Earthscan.

Peterson G.D., Allen C.R. e Holling C.S. (1998). Ecological Resilience, Biodiversity and Scale. *Ecosystems*, 1: 6-18.

Pisano U. (2012). Resilience and sustainable development: theory of resilience, systems thinking and adaptive governance. *ESDN Quarterly Report* 26

Pyke F., Bianchi P., Miller L.M. and Bertini S. (1996). *The Italian SME Experience and Possible Lessons for Developing Countries*, Vienna, UNIDO.

Polanyi M. (1966). *The Tacit Dimension.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Pollini G. (2005). Elements of a Theory of Place Attachment and Socio-Territorial Belonging. *International Review of Sociology: Revue Internationale de Sociologie*, 15(3): 497–515.

Rittel, H.W.J., Webber, M.M., 1973. Dilemmas in a general theory of planning. *Policy Sciences*, 4: 55-169.

Raffestin C. (2012). Space, territory, and territoriality. *Environment and planning D: Society and space*, 30: 121–141.

Sciolla L. (2012). *Sociologia dei processi culturali.* Bologna: il Mulino.

Solow R. M. (1956). A Contribution to the Theory of Economic Growth. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 70 (1): 65-94.

Stimson R.J., Stough R.R. and Njikamp P.J., eds (2011). *Endogenous Regional Development: Perspectives, Measurement and Empirical Investigation.* Cheltenham, Gloucestershire: Edward Elgar.

Storper M. (1995). The Resurgence of Regional Economics, Ten Years Later: The Region as a Nexus of Untraded Interdipendencies. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 2 (3): 191-221.

Storper M. (1997). *The Regional World: Territorial Development in a Global Economy.* New York: The Guildford Press.

Timmerman P. (1981). *Vulnerability, Resilience and the Collapse of Society: A Review of Models and Possible Climatic Applications.* University of Toronto Canada: Institute for Environmental Studies.

Turco A. (1988). *Verso una teoria geografica della complessità.* Milano: Unicopli.

Turner R.K., Pearce D.W. and Bateman I. (1994). *Environmental Economics. An Elementary Introduction.* New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Vandergeest P and Peluso N L (1995). Territorialisation and state power in Thailand. *Theory and Society*, 24 (3) 385–426.

Walker B., Holling C. S., Carpenter S. R. and Kinzig A. (2004). Resilience, adaptability and transformability in social-ecological systems. *Ecology and society* 9(2): 5, <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/ vol9/iss2/art5/>.

Walker B. and Salt D. (2006). *Resilience thinking: sustaining ecosystems and people in a changing world.* Washington: Island Press.

Walker J. e Cooper M. (2011). Genealogies of resilience: from systems ecology to the political economy of crisis adaptation. *Security dialogue*, 42(2): 143-160.

WCED (1987). *Our common future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Woods, M. (2011). *Regions engaging globalization: A typology of regional responses in rural Europe.* Paper presented to the Anglo-American-Canadian Rural Geographers Quadrennial Conference.

Yin R. K. (1984). *Case Study Research. Design and Methods*. Beverly Hills CA: Sage.