



TERRITORIALISATION. PLACE - BASED APPROACHES TO SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

- First call for book chapters –

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Inspired by the COST-Action IS1007 ‘Investigating cultural sustainability’ (<http://www.culturalsustainability.eu/>), a book on ‘Territorialisation. Place-based approaches to sustainable regional development’ will be published early 2015. This ‘call for book chapters’ is the first call for contributions. It’s an invitation for scholars to submit a proposal for a book chapter, that deals with the theme as outlined below. The authors do not need to have a link with the above mentioned COST-Action.

On two forthcoming occasions, discussions on the possible contributions will be organized:

- the COST-conference, “The Sense of Place. Cultural Sustainability” (Rome, April 10-12, <http://www.culturalsustainability.eu/>)
- the ESRS-conference (Florence 29 July – 1st August 2013, <http://www.florenceesrs2013.com/>), Working Group 14 ‘Place-based approaches in regional development’

Topic:

The terms place, place, locale, territory refer to different conceptualization according to different authors and languages: luogo, lieu, place, territorio, territoire, territory, regione, region, region have different meanings in Italian, French or English (Battaglini, 2012). More than a mere semantic variation, this glossary of terms designates various distinct conceptualisations of what regions really are. The debate also takes place in different disciplines, such as geography, (rural) sociology, regional science, economic geography, political science. In this respect, the divide between determinist and constructivist approaches towards regions is relevant. The former refer to approaches from a spatial perspective, considering places as geographically bounded areas, made up with their physical components; the latter refer to relational approaches, emphasizing the importance of actors, relations, networks and connectivities. The shift from the former to the latter, the so called

‘relational turn’, signifies a shift from places as merely given entities, towards places as social constructs, as varying kinds of nodes within globalization (Massey, 2004). They are “constructed through ever changing social relations, which often stretch out far beyond that particular place” (Massey, 2004, see also Massey, 1993:66).

European regions face challenges on issues such as climate, energy, food, migration and poverty. The above mentioned divide leads to different approaches about the possible or desirable trajectories for regions to deal with these challenges. These approaches have been denominated as neo-institutional, integrated, endogenous or neo-endogenous regional development's paths. As they are based on different paradigms, these approaches are often mutually exclusive.

With the concept ‘territorialisation’, we want to overcome this divide between determinist and constructivist approaches in regional development. Territorialisation is understood here as a process which aims to link physical and social cultural place-based conditions for change, transcending the urban-rural dichotomy. It creates differentiated outcomes as a result of the intertwinement of forces globalization and localization (Escobar, 2008, Woods, 2007). It is the art of balancing exogenous forces and external resources and endogenous resources and local control – reducing vulnerability and exchangeability of regions (Ray, 2006). Territorialisation encompasses sense-making and giving meaning to places which raises questions how cultural practices, place identities, narratives, values and sense of place play a role in territorialisation.

Territorialisation refers to the complex interplay of three dimensions that characterize regional development. Based on existing literature (Paasi 2010, Battaglini 2012, Turco 1988, Messely et al. 2012) we distinguish the following three dimensions: the symbolic dimension (symbolic control of space), the reification dimension (material transformation of space), and the structural dimension (organizational control of space). All these are influenced by perceptions, intentions, values (in one concept: culture) of the actors involved in the interplay with the environment.

Since the European Lisbon and Gothenburg agenda's, integrated solutions for regions to increase economic prosperity, social cohesion and environmental sustainability are a key issue for European policy makers, practitioners, scientists. It is becoming clearer that any effective adaptations to environmental and resource vulnerabilities will need to be inherently ‘place-based’. In this regard, the proposed volume has a two-fold objective.

Firstly, it wants to investigate how and to what extend place-based characteristics enhance or hamper the ‘territorialisation’ of regions.

Secondly, it wants to investigate whether the proposed notion and dimensions of ‘territorialisation’ are conceptually sound and empirically feasible.

How to submit your abstract?

To answer these two questions, we invite scholars to submit theoretical (conceptual) as well as empirical and methodological contributions, based on a wide variety of regional contexts (rural, peri-urban, urban, ...). We invite them to send a 400-words abstract to Elena Battaglini (e.battaglini@ires.it) before April 1st 2013.