

*THE PRINCIPLES OF THE TERRITORIAL INTELLIGENCE.
PROPOSALS FOR EXPLORATORY OPERATIONALISATION
AND RESEARCHES IN
THE LIVEZILE-RIMETEA MICRO-REGION (ROMANIA)*

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Abstract: The notion of territorial intelligence has known much development lately (Bertacchini, 2007; Dumas, 2003; Girardot, 2005; Girardot, 2007; Herbeaux, 2007; Pascaru, 2006). In this study we have shown a few operationalisation attempts of some principles this notion is associated to: the partnership principle, the project development principle and the fundamental principle of participation.

Key words: territorial intelligence principles, operationalisation, partnership, participation



1. INTRODUCTION

The current work proposes an attempt at operationalising some of the territorial intelligence principles, as they are defined by Jean-Jacques Girardot in his works from the later years (Girardot, 2005; Girardot, 2007). We place a high heuristic value on the identification of the (territorial intelligence) ethical principles out of the principles of sustainable development. Sustainable development, as Girardot writes, is placed on three principles recognized in many moral and political forums, on a planetary scale: 1) the participation of all actors in the development - first of all, that of the citizens; 2) a global approach of the situations, characterized through an adequate balance between the economic, social and environmental considerations and 3) the actors' partnership. To the three ethical principles there are three associated methodological principles guaranteeing their observance: 1) approaching the territory as an action space; 2) generalization of the management through projects and a culture of evaluation; 3) the development of the information society technologies' accessibility.

Among the principles for which we make proposals of operationalisation, we mention first of all the partnership principle. The openness of the citizens from the micro-region of study is described through the measure to which they are rejecting the dependence on state's intervention, accepting instead (i.e. value in a positive manner) the establishment of partnerships.

The project development principle is looked at from the point of view of some factors that could influence common action at the community level.

The participation principle is described from the perspective of the inhabitants' opportunities for involvement into the collection of the type of information that lays the foundation for development through projects. The queried inhabitants were put in the situation of participating in the activity of a *local observer*, by providing information regarding the following aspects of the local life: a) the family problems of villagers, b) the social problems of the persons from the village, c) the interrelationships between the village families, d) the evolution of the animals from every homestead, e) the changes in demographics from every homestead (births, deaths, marriages, movements in and out of the village), f) violent behaviour in the village, g) church attendance, h) land transfers in the village (through inheritance, sales and purchases, donation, exchange), i) problems regarding environmental pollution, j) the business dealings in the village. Through exploratory research, we came to the conclusion that there is some openness for the information support of a local observer, except in some areas as the one regarding family problems, relationships between families and the business matters in the village. A series of predictors, such as the gender, age and ethnical affiliation are taken into account for a more profound analysis in this chapter.

The methodology of the research was structured around the sociological ad-hoc inquiry and around the result return interviews. Both methodological approaches set the stage for project-based return, employing for the first time in a Romanian rural context, the scenarios method.

2. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE TERRITORIAL INTELLIGENCE

In 2005, Jean-Jacques Girardot presented an ample study under the title "Territorial intelligence and participation". Girardot confesses in his study that he himself proposed the term of territorial intelligence in 1999, in tight relation with that of *territorial engineering (ingénierie territoriale)*, territorial intelligence meaning "putting the management of projects and technologies of information society in the service of sustainable development". Along the development of several projects coordinated by Girardot, a new methodology suitable for the development of territorial intelligence is shaping, a methodology named Catalyse. Catalyse means "methods and instruments which allow the great involvement of territorial actors in the accomplishment of the territorial diagnoses or in the local laboratories in order to elaborate more efficient and pertinent action projects for development (Girardot, 2005). The main characteristic of the Catalyse methodology, according to Girardot, is *participation*. Actors represent first an informal partnership for the making of a data-collecting guide in order to proceed to a social or territorial diagnosis. Each of the actors collects the data at the level of his or her users (*ses usagers*). The data is enhanced for analysis, and then the actors participate to the interpretation of data as well.

For Girardot, the concept of territorial intelligence means "the set of inter-disciplinary knowledge which, on the one hand, contribute to the understanding of the structures and dynamics of the territories, and, on the other hand, intends to be an instrument in the service of the actors of the sustainable territorial development" (Girardot, 2005).



Territorial intelligence, according to Girardot, relies on six ethical and methodological principles, among which the first is *the principle of participation*.

We consider the identification of the ethical principles of territorial intelligence in the principles of sustainable development of special heuristic value. According to Girardot, sustainable development relies on three principles validated by numerous moral and political instances at world scale: 1) the participation of all actors to development, mainly of the villagers; 2) the global approach of the situations, characterized by a proper balance among the economic, social and environmental considerations; 3) the partnership of the actors. These ethical principles associate with three methodological principles able to guarantee their observance 1) the approach of the territory as action space; 2) the dissemination of the culture of evaluation and the administration through projects; 3) the development of the accessibility of the technologies of the information society.

Girardot states that these principles take into account first that the global approach relies on a both territorial and prospective vision and, second, that participation and partnership define territorial intelligence as an approach mainly focused on actors, and which relies on the accessibility of the information technologies as well as on the cooperation of the actors.

Participation. The notion of participation, according to Girardot, does not concern only the operators (*les opérateurs*) but also the beneficiaries of the action, more precisely, the citizens. Participation involves decision-making as well as the conception, administration and evaluation of action. Participation is based on communication, consequently on information in an interactive context. This means the accessibility of information, the actors' capacity of accessing the contents of the information, and thus, the technologies of information.

The global and balanced approach. This principle is based on the fact that sustainable development, according to Girardot, tends towards a harmonization of the economic, ecologic, social and cultural objectives. As compared to the centralised (*centralisée*) logic, which is globally translated through a partition of activities, sustainable development is based on an integrated approach of problems at a territorial scale. It is also global in the sense that a territory depends on the world logics. It is also global in the sense that it integrates all the dimensions of the territorial action. Thus, both the social dimension, through the priority given to the meeting of the needs of the deprived, and the ecological dimension in order to preserve the future for the generations forthcoming are taken into account. Territorial intelligence, as Girardot concludes in this chapter, involves numerous fields of knowledge and action (demography, geography, environment, economy, communication, health, patrimony and institutions) and must involve law, history and culture.

Partnership. as Girardot explains, results from the integrated approach which means not only the participation and cooperation of the actors of the territorial action, more generally, of the set of actors in a certain territory. Territorial intelligence, according to Girardot, is characterised by the need to develop the methods and instruments which would facilitate the network action of the partnerships of actors, the partition of information and cooperation.

Let us now focus on the methodological principles stated by Girardot.

The territory as space of action. The primordial role played by the territory in the governance raises a special interest for the concept of territorial intelligence. The territory is defined as interaction between a geographic space and a human community. Hence results that territorial intelligence means three complementary levels of analysis: 1) the territorial actors' game (*le jeu*), their representations and influential relations, the institutional backgrounds within which they act, as well as the projects and accomplishments which initiate them; 2) the socio-economic dynamics which result from making individual or collective decisions: demographic behaviours, the mobility of goods and individuals, the dynamics of activities etc.; 3) the spatial structures and their evolution which are concrete translations of the actors' games and of the socio-economic dynamics: sceneries and environment, exploitation (*occupation*) of the soil, the urban morphologies and the networks of settlements, equipments, infrastructures etc. As for the territory, we consider it the necessity to identify the territory *proper for action* in relation to the administrative territories, and the analysis of governing at several levels to be very important (*multi-niveaux*).

The project management and the action evaluation. Participation, according to Girardot, means the capacity to elaborate and manage projects, evaluation being the guarantee of an efficient management. The project elaboration in the context of a global and integrated approach means an important apprehension (*apprentissage*) effort on the actors' behalf. The participation to the collective accomplishment of a territorial diagnosis, then the accomplishment of the system of territorial intelligence inaugurates an apprehension process which continues with the participative evaluation of actions, this signifying the valorisation of good practice and the identification of avoidable errors.

The accessibility of the technologies of the information society and of information. The computer networks, according to Girardot, represent the infrastructure of territorial intelligence. The computer-science and telecommunication instruments are indispensable for the exchange organisation and for the exchange of collective work of the numerous, different actors, who are far away from one another and do not synchronise in time. But,



as Girardot notices, the information technologies do not necessarily ensure the information dissemination, or the automatic production of new information.

3. PROPOSALS FOR EXPLORATORY OPERATIONALISATION AND RESEARCHES IN THE LIVEZILE-RIMETEA MICRO-REGION (ROMANIA)

The micro-region Livezile-Rimetea consisting in those two communes with the same names (Livezile and Rimetea) is geographically situated in the Depression of Trascau, an area with particular landscape in the Apuseni Mountains– Romania (See Photo 1). At the last census (2002), 2739 inhabitants were registered of which, 50.97% men and 49.03% women. The micro-region's peculiarity is also given by the long-lasting cohabitation between Romanian people (60.28% in the micro-region and 98.68% in Livezile) and Hungarian people (33.8% in the micro-region and 87.30% in Rimetea).

Rimetea the commune encompasses the villages Rimetea, which is the centre village, and Colțești. Livezile commune consists in five villages: Livezile, the centre village, Izvoarele, Poiana Aiudului and Vălișoara. Our researches investigated and explored the representations and opinions of 366 inhabitants, aged over 18, from Rimetea, Colțești, Poiana Aiudului, Izvoarele and Livezile.

3.1. GIVING VALUE TO THE PARTNERSHIP

Regarding the factors that could be involved in solving local problems, 83.6% of the respondents agreed totally or partially with the foreign investors' exclusive involvement. 86% of the respondents agreed totally or partially with the exclusive involvement of the state. Regarding the town hall, as a unique potential agent of solving local problems, 81.37% agreed totally or partially and 17.2% did not agree. We also focused on businessmen or "people with a lot of money". 72% thought that only they could solve the problems of the community (they agreed totally or partially with this). The belief in the opportunity of a partnership among all the factors of the inhabitants of being unique agents for solving local issues was expressed by 57.7% of the respondents. *The partnership idea* among all the previously mentioned factors was supported by 87.6% of the respondents.

3.2. PROJECT BASED DEVELOPMENT

In our research, the answer given to the help request as a possible indicator of the opportunities to participate in the community development projects was tested by the question: *When someone asks you to help them, (ideas, solutions, work or money) how much do the following matter: a)the fact that they have many diplomas, b)the fact that they come from the village/community, c)the political party they belong to, d)the fact that they are a relative or a neighbour, e)the fact that they have a household or a prosperous business, f)anything else?*

Of our respondents, 51.7% said that school mattered very much and much, 59.1% thought that belonging to a community mattered very much and much. The political party mattered very much and much for 19.9% of the respondents, while being a relative or a neighbour were very much and much appreciated when giving support by 35.2% of the respondents. Finally, what mattered very much and much was the fact that the person who asks for help has a prosperous household for 31.4% of the respondents.

3.3. PARTICIPATION AND INFORMATION

In the operational definition of *territorial intelligence* we suggested considering *the local actors' awareness towards collecting useful information at the level of a local observer in order to correctly ground some development projects*. In the research made in the micro-region Livezile-Rimetea, the awareness towards offering information at the village level aimed at the following aspects: a)the villagers' family issues; b)the villagers' social issues; c)the relationship among the villagers' families; d)the evolution of the animals in each household; e)the population changes in each household (births, deaths, marriages, in or out of the village moving); f)the violent behaviour in the village; g)attending a church by the villagers; h) transferring lands in the village (by heritage, selling-buying, donation, exchange); i) environment pollution issues; j) business evolution in the village. The main results are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

In the return-of-results interviews with different local leaders from the micro-region, we have shown the following conclusive observations, specific for this theme: *Because we wanted to find out if the citizens would contribute with useful information regarding the identification and solving of the village issues, in a local observatory, we found out that almost half or more than half of the respondents agreed to search for and offer different information*. Next came the question: *what is your comment on this?*



Our interlocutors' comments are first of all related to the fear to offer information, due to the communist period experience ("There is nothing like this because they have been afraid to offer information since the time of the deceased [Ceausescu]"), even if it is considered that: "It would be useful. It seems that man lived underground until the revolution, now he is not interested anymore, he had a schedule then, he is confused now, he does not know what tomorrow might bring." (53 years old, Livezile counsellor). There were also some records and referrals to the futility of such a step: "Who would gather the information? This is not necessary. What good would it do to the mayor thinking that I got 10 bags of concrete or a land? It would not help the community in any way." (45 years old, Livezile businessman). Even a mayor kept saying: *We are a small enough community and I identify most of the issues in the street, on my way to some work...*" (28 years old, mayor, Livezile). When information supply is supported, the information is especially related to infrastructure issues: "I agree with this. There should be a record of all the information concerning road maintenance works, such as weeding or something else ..." (45 years old, Rimetea counsellor).

4. CONCLUSIONS

First of all, our research from Livezile-Rimetea showed the fact that partnerships were positively evaluated by most of the investigated inhabitants. The idea of the exclusive involvement of the village, which had been very popular in the previous years, was now replaced (Pascaru, 2003). A certain tendency to "classify" the information seems to work in the studied communities when family and business are discussed. The ones that agreed with supplying information in general were better integrated in the local communication networks and thus they could constitute an important source of better knowledge of the communities in a territorial intelligence system or in a community development project. Nevertheless, the awareness towards supplying information also has an important ethical side. This side aims both at the relationships among the potential "informers" and the community at the level until which the researcher can get involved in the "secrets" of the community.

Regarding the relational and trust grounds on which we can build a future community development project, a more direct approach related to the different types of social capital can make the relevance of the dimensions of the community matrix clearer. Beyond this desideratum, we can notice the importance still given to the highly educated inhabitants and to their affiliation to the community, compared to the one given to the political party, for example.

Regarding participation with information, in general, we could notice that the number of those saying they would offer information, was smaller only in the case of the family issues in the village, family relationships and when it had to do with the evolution of business in the village.

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ANNEX

Table 1. *The availability to offer information (I)*

| Availability | Family issues in the village (%) | Social issues (%) | Family relationships (%) | Animal evolution (%) | Population change (%) |
|---------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Rather yes | 42.5 | 51.5 | 45.2 | 51.0 | 56.1 |
| Rather no | 56.7 | 47.7 | 53.4 | 47.4 | 43.1 |
| DK/NA | 0.8 | 0.8 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 0.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Table 2. *The availability to offer information (II)*

| Availability | Attending church (%) | Land transfer (%) | Environment pollution (%) | Business evolution in the village (%) | Violent behaviour (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Rather yes | 55.6 | 54.8 | 56.7 | 45.5 | 51.5 |
| Rather no | 42.5 | 44.7 | 42.2 | 52.9 | 47.7 |
| DK/NA | 1.9 | 0.5 | 1.1 | 1.6 | 0.8 |
| Total | 100 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

