

From the Territorialization of Public Policies to Territorial Public Policies: Engineering and Comparative Experiences

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The regional dynamics currently being spearheaded are part of a broader restructuring movement on several levels. In fact, from a mere administrative division of geographical areas, this approach is gradually evolving into harmonious and integrated territorial institutions and communities within the framework of the sovereignty due to a nation-state steeped in history and deeply rooted in geography. The implementation of advanced regionalization has historically posed a significant challenge and a major stake for both researchers and policymakers, aiming to reduce social and spatial inequalities and preserve the distinctive characteristics of each territorial area as an inherent genetic fingerprint, guaranteeing its economic take-off and comprehensive development. In this context, identifying and refining the competitive advantage of each territorial area serves as a catalyst for its development and attractiveness. This is supported by innovation and good governance in a context where entrepreneurship is expected to drive development and sustainability.

Here, the triad of "innovation, entrepreneurship, and territoriality" comes into play at the heart of the multiplicity of approaches to development and territorial creativity. This is achieved through the intersection of several dynamics linking the local to the regional, the latter to the national, and both to the international/global level. The state has its own logic, the market its mechanisms, and territoriality a blend of both, representing a level where spatial planning intersects with social innovation and the creation of material value. But what meaning should be given to each of the concepts within this triad (innovation, entrepreneurship, and territoriality)? And what is the general logic underlying it in the Moroccan context in general, and in the southern provinces of the Kingdom of Morocco in particular?

In the new investment dynamic, where economic success is no longer solely a product of natural resources or the pursuit of rent, prosperity is now based on innovation in both processes and procedures. Indeed, innovative companies thrive in a particularly dynamic and stimulating national environment. It is not isolated sectors that achieve success, but rather industrial clusters where information, knowledge, and technology are disseminated (M. Porter, 1993).

However, whether isolated or clustered, successful companies are not exclusively owned and/or managed by men. A significant number of successful businesses are built on the skills of competent women who have earned the success of their projects and careers. In this context, we have begun to emphasize a type of entrepreneurship linked to the feminine aspect, not as a tribute to women as a "gender," but in recognition of their innovative capabilities as entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the Schumpeterian entrepreneur—the one "capable of transforming an idea or invention into an innovation"—can be either a woman or a man. The essential element is the ability to "strive and innovate to paralyze the competitors" (J. E. Tarendeau). Thus, we will make entrepreneurship a genuine path of "creative and innovative destruction," which is essential for any successful project.

Investment and capital no longer treat territorial areas uniformly, and competitiveness is no longer the sole domain of corporations and states, but increasingly encompasses all regional and local entities. Market engagement is no longer conducted without regard to territorial specificities, but rather through territorial and localized applications ("strategie du zèbre," Ohmae, 1995).

Here, the fundamental question arises concerning territorial organization and responsibility: "Who does what? How? And why?" The principle of subsidiarity—provided it is applied—offers a satisfactory answer. Within the framework of dividing tasks and respecting jurisdictions, subsidiarity (Principe de subsidiarité) emphasizes that the state should be primarily responsible for essential structural projects, while regional authorities are responsible for projects based on national strategic policies. This reminder implies that we cannot discuss subsidiarity without acknowledging the importance of a kind of rationality that should—perhaps—be more human-centered, even though economic performance remains of paramount importance. Under current economic constraints, "rationalization" and innovation that make territorial areas more competitive are essential, despite forms of resistance from civil servants on the one hand, and elected officials and citizens on the other.

Then, intangible capital intervenes to transform any successful region into one whose objective transcends mere economics, aiming instead for genuine redevelopment encompassing all interconnected stakeholders. Innovation, therefore, is not the sole preserve of thriving areas like Casablanca Technopark or Rabat Technopolis, aspiring to emulate the atmosphere of Bangalore or Silicon Valley. "Innovation through entrepreneurship" and "entrepreneurship through innovation" are interconnected dynamics that drive sustainable regional development when the institutional framework frames the entire process. All regions are capable of innovation, but a key question arises, particularly in the context of developing countries: how can innovation, entrepreneurship, and territoriality be coordinated so that the latter is not simply a space for allocating/locating resources, but rather an environment that generates its own public and non-transferable resources?