

**Social Innovation:
Utopias of Innovation
from c.1830 to the Present**

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Abstract

Over the last ten years or so, “social innovation” has become a catchword in some sociological writings and in studies of innovation. The concept is generally presented as new, at least compared to technological innovation, which dates back to the 1940s. Yet the concept of social innovation is in fact two hundred years old.

This paper documents the origins of social innovation as a category and its development over the last two centuries. It suggests that social innovation owes its origin to socialism in the nineteenth century and its resurrection in the twenty-first century to technological innovation. The paper analyzes three key moments, or different meanings of social innovation over time: socialism, then social reform, then alternatives to ‘established’ solutions to social needs. The paper concludes with reflections on the residue of these ideas in current theories of social innovation.

I am not bound to think the *Trunk Hose* of our forefathers ridiculous; because *Fashions* crosse the Seas as oft as the *Packet Boat*, into this *Island*, the *Nursery of Novelty*s; nor think the worse of these; because old Age, *over-weening* their own fashion, maketh them peevishly severe against any other: in all things of this nature, it is rather Shismaticall Novelty not to be a sociable Innovator (Richard Whitlock, *Zootomia or, Observations of the present manners of the English*, 1654).

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Introduction

Beginning in the second half of the twentieth century, technological innovation has been a much studied idea. It is discussed or acted upon everywhere by everyone: theories are developed, policies are implemented, and our everyday vocabulary makes use of the concept. Technological innovation or rather innovation *tout court* – innovation is spontaneously understood as technological innovation – has become a catchword. Innovation is the emblem of a modern society and a panacea for resolving economic problems.

In the last ten years or so, a companion concept (or competitor?) to technological innovation has appeared in the literature on innovation: “social innovation”. A search in Google Scholar will convince anyone that the concept social innovation is alive and well. Books, articles and reports on social innovation are published by the dozen. New journals entirely concerned with social innovation have appeared. Research groups and non-profit organizations have been established devoted to the study of social innovation. Several government initiatives have been launched in the name of social innovation in North America and Europe.

Where does the concept come from? From the very first theoretical thoughts on social innovation (e.g.: Drucker, 1957) to the most recent ones (e.g. Mulgan, 2007), social innovation has been presented as a new idea, or at least the interest in the idea is presented as new or relatively new. Some writers date the origins of the concept to 1970 (Cloutier, 2003) – in contrast, others suggest that Benjamin Franklin, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and Josef A. Schumpeter would have had the “notion” already (Mumford,

¹ Many thanks to Gerald Barnett, Alexandra Hausstein and Manfred Moldashl for commenting on a previous draft of this paper.

2002; Hillier et al., 2004; Nussbaumer and Moulaert, 2007). However, most often the newness is taken for granted and is not documented. In fact, social innovation is regularly contrasted to technological innovation, and presented as a remedy for or adjustment to the undesired effects of technological innovation (e.g.: Mesthene, 1969; Mulgan, 2007; Klein and Harrisson, 2007; Callon, 2007; Murray et al., 2009). In this sense, the concept of social innovation would necessarily have appeared after that of technological innovation.

The first argument of this paper is that the concept of social innovation existed long before that of technological innovation. In fact, social innovation dates back to the beginning of the nineteenth century – at a time when ‘technological innovation’ did not exist in discourses, emerging only in the 1940s (Godin, 2011b; 2011c). Social innovation entered the vocabulary of the Western world as a *reliquat* to the centuries-old pejorative use of innovation. To many writers of the time, social innovation meant socialism. To be sure, such a representation was not uncontested. To others it meant social reform. However, social innovation as socialism gave a definite pejorative orientation to social innovation, at least until the twentieth century.

Yet over time, a shift occurred in the meaning of innovation generally. After 1789, innovation gradually achieved a positive connotation (Godin, 2012c). Social innovation was witness to this shift. While perceived negatively in the beginning, social innovation was gradually seen as positive. The two connotations – positive and negative – remained for awhile, but over time, the positive meaning took preeminence in discourses due to moral uses.

If social innovation dates from the nineteenth century, the recent use or explosion of the category in the literature (its ‘newness’) is only a resurrection. This is the second argument of this paper. The category re-emerged (in a positive light) in the second half of the twentieth century as a reaction – a ‘political’ reaction – to technological innovation and to the hegemonic discourses on technological innovation. Social innovation came to mean alternatives to ‘established’ solutions to social problems or needs, namely to technological innovation and State or government-supported social reform.

This paper offers some outlines for a history and genealogy of social innovation as a concept and its representations and uses over the last two centuries. The first section gives a general overview of innovation (as distinct from but inclusive of social innovation) as a concept over the past centuries and its meaning. To avoid confusion, the reader is invited to keep the following distinction in mind. Social innovation is only one type of innovation, as are religious innovation (Godin, 2010b), political innovation (Godin, 2011a) and technological innovation (Godin, 2011c). At times, I need to discuss innovation generally or any type of innovation, or compare with and place the history of social innovation within that of innovation generally. To this end, I use the term innovation alone without the ‘social’.

The second part of the paper documents the pejorative use of social innovation as socialism, based on, among others, an influential study from 1858 entirely devoted to “social innovators”. The third part demonstrates how this pejorative meaning increasingly shared its place with a more positive connotation for social reform. The next parts document the proliferation of the concept and its meaning as “alternative” solutions, and offer some critical thoughts for understanding the recent uses (and abuses) of the term in the social sciences.

Until recently, social innovation has not been a common concept compared to innovation. Occurrences are many but isolated. Writers used the concept only once or twice in a text, with little or no discussion. Social innovation is merely a word or label, and is not theorized about. As a consequence, the study of authors or theories is inappropriate to the historiographer, at least until the recent period. The challenge is rather to dig into a voluminous number of documents, most of them of the pamphlet type, in order to unearth the representation(s) of social innovation held by peoples and thinkers. The documents used here come from a database I have constructed over the last five years, based on archival sources covering the sixteenth century onward. It includes hundreds of titles on innovation. For the period before the twentieth century, the titles collected so far cover England, France and the United States. This paper is limited to these countries.

Innovation as a Category

For most of its history the concept innovation, a word of Greek origin, carried a pejorative connotation. As “introducing change to the established order”, innovation was seen as deviant behaviour, forbidden and punished. It was through religion that the concept of innovation first entered common discourse in the Western world. This occurred from the late 1400s onward (proceedings of bishops, visitations, sermons, trials) and reached a climax in the 1630s in England, leading to one of the first controversies on innovation, between King Charles I and his protégé William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, on the one hand, and puritans like Henry Burton and William Prynne on the other (Godin, 2010b). Burton accused the bishops of “innovating” in matters of Church discipline and doctrine, and urged people “not to meddle with those that are given to change”, an expression from Solomon’s proverbs that, in the decades following Burton’s use of it, would be widely repeated against religious innovation. In seventeenth and eighteenth century England, documents by the hundreds made use of “innovation” to discuss religion, using the word explicitly. Over a hundred of these documents made use of innovation in their titles, a way to emphasize a polemical idea and get a hearing.

During the Renaissance, the concept of innovation shared a place with that of heresy in religious discourses, particularly after the Reformation. It was precisely during the Reformation that the fate of the concept was determined for the centuries to follow. In 1548, Edward VI, King of England, issued a declaration *Against Those That Doeth Innouate*. Trials and punishments followed. A century later, Charles I, while explaining to his opponents why he had dissolved the Parliament, protested against parliamentarians’ innovations and proclaimed that he had never innovated himself. Even a King did not innovate.

Later the concept came to be equated with political revolutions and revolutionaries (Godin, 2011a). The model was, of course, the English political revolution of 1649. After 1789, the emblematic example of violent political revolution was the French revolution. To many, the democrat or republican is simply a revolutionary innovator who proceeds

by “violent methods”, to subvert the monarchy and to erect a “Utopian Republic”, as the English puritan William Prynne put during the English revolution. The conclusion was direct: (every) innovation is necessarily sudden and violent. It is no surprise, then, that the term innovation was rarely used by early republican theorists to make a case for the commonwealth in seventeenth-century England. As used (very occasionally) by these authors, it was in the then-traditional pejorative sense, and more often than not in historical writings or passages or while discussing religious issues. Such would also be the case among philosophers of the Enlightenment and political writers in the eighteenth century.

Uses of Innovation as a Category Over Time

Religious → Political → Social → Economic (technology)

Next, it would be the social reformers’ turn to be accused of being innovators. Like the religious and political innovator, the “social innovator”, as some called the social reformer in the nineteenth century, was accused of overthrowing the established order, particularly property and capitalism. The social innovator was seen as being a radical, as many accused French socialists of being on the eve of the revolution of 1830 and after.

This use of innovation in social matters occurred over a century before innovation came to be applied to technology. In fact, technological innovation is only the latest development in the history of the category innovation. In the 1950s and the following decades, governments de-contested and legitimized a centuries-old and contested category – innovation. Supported by social researchers as consultants, governments made technological innovation an instrument of economic policy (Godin, 2011c). To a large extent, the recent discourses and theories on social innovation are a reaction to the dominant and hegemonic discourses on technological innovation.

Social Innovators and Their Schemes

1858: William Lucas Sargant (1809-1889), English businessman, political economist and educational reformer, published *Social Innovators and Their Schemes*, a diatribe against those “infected with socialist doctrines” or “social innovators” as he called them – the French Henri de St-Simon, Charles Fourier, Louis Blanc, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and Émile de Girardin, and the political economists including Adam Smith – to whom welfare rather than work is the solution to social problems.²

To Sargant, “the present generation is distinguished by an honourable desire to promote the well-being of the most numerous, and least fortunate, classes of society (...)”. But there is “some danger of leading men into errors”, “disorder and disappointment”. “By bettering artificially the condition of the poor, [political economy] encourage[s] an undue increase in numbers” (Sargant, 1858: iii-v). When the French socialists “jealously” exalt “the supreme rights of the labourer to the exclusion of the rights of the capitalist” (p. 2), they “aggravate the dissatisfaction that exists” (p. 4). To Sargant, “health of the body and of mind” are “obtained not by ease, not by indulgence, but by active participation” (p. 7). Work is better aid than welfare.

One would be hard pressed to find an explicit definition of social innovation in Sargant’s writing. Most of the time, Sargant used the term innovation rather than social innovation.³ To Sargant, social innovation amounts to innovation of a specific kind: socialism. One of Sargant’s main arguments is that the originators of socialism and their followers are ignorant of the most basic principles of social science – although they constantly stressed, I may add, the scientific approach of their project: as the fourierist Victor Considerant put it: “L’école sociétaire n’est pas une secte, mais une école scientifique” (Considerant, 1842: 145). To Sargant (p. 463):

² On early history of socialists, see Reynaud (1840), Sargant (1868; 1870); Guthrie (1907), Wagner (1935).

³ On the polysemy of innovation, see Godin (2011c).

Of the social truths that have been investigated during the last fifty years, none has been more clearly established than this: that the dignity of the working classes is principally in their own hands, and that without industry, frugality, and self-restraint, on their part, no measures of Government, no organizations of society, can raise their condition (...); it is not to the direct action of legislation on wages and charitable relief, but to an improvement of the men themselves, that we must look for amelioration.

Sargant emphasized two characteristics of capitalism targeted by socialists, and his view was shared by every opponent of socialism. First is the socialists' hatred of capital. "There is at the bottom of many socialist systems an exaggerated notion of the evils of bodily labour" (p. 460). That "all productions, since they are the results of labour, ought to belong to the labourers" is not "a sound political economy" (p. 448-49). "Take away the profit of the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, and the retailer, and capital would soon disappear, production would cease, the workman would starve, and the whole world would relapse into barbarism (...). It is the interest even of labourers that capitalists should derive an income from their possessions" (p. 449).

The second characteristic essential to capitalism and targeted by socialists is competition. "All must agree that competition has serious evils", admitted Sargant (p. 452). "And yet without it society would languish (...). The pursuit of wealth by honest industry, though it has nothing illustrious about it, is at any rate respectable" (p. 454). It is "a stimulus necessary to overcome the tendency of men to apathy and idleness" (p. 455). "Every organization has its own ills [but] the evils of competition will be certainly, if slowly, corrected" (p. 455).

The critique of social innovators as being ignorant was a frequent one at the time. In 1859, an anonymous British writer used the pretext of reviewing five books (he didn't really review them), among them *Social Innovators and Their Schemes*, to make a case against social innovators: "The first and most universal characteristic of the social innovator is a profound ignorance, and often a violent abhorrence, of political economy". To the writer (Anonymous, 1859: 344-45):

Almost every one of the socialist writers is absolutely unable to comprehend the simplest law affecting the recompense of labour – that of demand and supply; hardly one of them is aware that competition can never force down wages below their natural level (...). They regard the savings of the capitalist as something taken from the remuneration of labour, not as something taken from the personal expenditure of the rich to give increased employment to the poor.

Briefly stated, the socialists ignore the limits imposed on social arrangements by economic laws.

Sargant and the anonymous writer are not alone,⁴ and the criticism is not limited to political economists and economic arguments.⁵ The pejorative connotation of social innovation as socialism was also shared in France. In his *Mémoires* published in 1859, the historian and politician François Guizot discussed the insurrection in Lyons in November 1831 stressing the revolutionary character of the social innovators: “Tous les partis politiques, tous les novateurs sociaux, toutes les passions, toutes les idées, tous les rêves révolutionnaires, apparurent dans cette anarchie; quelques-uns des chefs saint-simoniens ou fouriéristes étaient, peu auparavant, venus en mission à Lyon pour prêcher leurs doctrines” (Guizot, 1859: 208) Guizot is pointing here to a central characteristic of social innovation : the social innovator is a revolutionary.

⁴ To take one more example: while discussing bank notes in *A History of Prices*, Thomas Tooke and William Newmarch recommended consulting the work of economist Michel Chevalier, a professor of political economy at the Collège de France, for a “substantial” theory: “The events of 1848, and the few following years, produced schemes and theories of social innovation and danger, to which, in a country like France, it was necessary to find not merely plausible but substantial answers” (Tooke and Newmarch, 1857: 616). On Chevalier’s defence of political economy against the socialist “novateurs”, see Chevalier, 1848.

⁵ A few years later the American *Popular Magazine of Anthropology* published a paper that tried to make a place for “social innovation” experiments within the discipline of anthropology. To the anonymous author, “social innovation” meant legislation for the “elevation of the races into a permanently better condition”, for “better mental and physical states of mankind”, like morals and hygiene (Anonymous, 1866: 94-95). The author made a plea for scientific and practical anthropology, as opposed to metaphysical and “social innovators” like Fourier. “The reformers have never discriminated between political and social conditions in matter of social innovation”. “Buried” as they are “in statistics and *à priori* schemes”, they “omit the consideration of this important element”: there is “a firmness in man [a “law of repression”], independent of all forms of government” (Anonymous, 1866: 96) and which retards progress. Anthropology should investigate this “psychological characteristic” for practical purposes, contribute to “knowledge of race character, and pave the way to a better future state” (Anonymous, 1866: 97).

Sargant was the first writer to develop a whole discourse on social innovation, and he certainly contributed to the diffusion of social innovation as a category. In the years following the publication of the book, several reviews produced positive evaluations of the work, and the use of the term exploded. In fact, Sargant always produced sage and fair analyses. To be sure, Sargant did not refrain from stressing the “new religion” of St. Simon, the “rêverie” of Fourier and the failures of their followers, and he did believe that England was radically different from France as depicted by the socialists. Nevertheless, Sargant’s overall fairness was recognized by everyone whether they agreed with him or disagreed. Two years after *Social Innovators*, Sargant published a similar study on *Richard Owen and His Social Philosophy*. “Though I have no admiration for his shallow philosophy, no sympathy with his crude and mischievous schemes of social innovation”, concluded Sargant: “I must allow his claim to be regarded as great among self-educated men” (Sargant, 1860: 446).

Why are the socialists social innovators? Ignorance may be a characteristic of the doctrinaires, but it is not what makes someone a social innovator. The explanation is elsewhere. For centuries, innovation and innovator were pejorative. Labeling socialists as innovators emphasizes the negative connotation. There is more than a mere semantic or rhetorical issue here. To Sargant and others, social innovation has two characteristics that make it a pejorative term. First, social innovation relies on schemes. Scheming is an accusation that occurred regularly at the time among writers opposed to innovation. It suggests a machination, a conspiracy (Godin, 2011a). Socialism as scheme is a systematic plan of action or change. A scheme (or “plan” or “design”) is suspect because it goes hand in hand with subversion and revolution. This is the second characteristic of social innovation, already identified by Guizot.

Innovation as revolution is an association made regularly in controversies on politics (Republicanism) in the Seventeenth Century and after. Similarly, social innovation is radical and revolutionary, namely disruptive of the existing social order, privileges and institutions – “political and social innovation” are frequently used together to highlight this characteristic. Social innovation is revolutionary, and consciously so. In fact, and

unlike the innovators of the previous centuries, the social innovators were never afraid to talk openly of their innovation and its revolutionary consequences.

Among its critics, social innovation is regularly equated to revolution. It leaves no system unchallenged. As François Auguste Mignet put it in his history of the French revolution, Lyons (again) is “attached to the ancient order of things” because it is dependent on the higher classes. Therefore, “it was necessary to declare in good time against a social innovation [the Revolution] which confounded old relations, and which, in degrading the nobility and clergy, destroyed its trade” (Mignet, 1826: 257). To others, social innovation was part of a whole series of revolution against the existing order. In 1883, Golden Smith, a critic of socialism, published *False Hopes, or Fallacies, Socialistic and Semi-Socialistic*. Smith looked at the spread of “plans of innovations” – communism, socialism, nationalization, cooperative association and “financial nihilism” or attacks against money and banks – aiming to “destroy not only existing institutions but established morality – social, domestic, and personal – putting evil in place of good” (Smith, 1883: 3). To Smith, “social innovation is everywhere more or less allied and impelled by the political and religious revolution which fills the civilized world” (Smith, 1883: 4). Yet “it is plainly beyond our power to alter the fundamental conditions of our being”, as the French revolution has shown (Smith, 1883: 4-5). The “free system” is responsible for growth and wealth, but “the connection of political economy with politics is a blank page in the treatises of the great writers”, Smith concluded (Smith, 1883: 69).

What is feared in a socialist scheme is particularly the threat to capitalism and property, and this is regularly stressed by critics, as Sargant did. In the late nineteenth century, many ‘defined’ social innovation specifically as “the overthrow of private property and the abolition of an institution on which society has always rested”. One of the sources of the idea at the time is the standard representation of communism. For example, in 1888 a popular edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* included a long article on communism which begins as follows: “Communism is the name given to the schemes of social innovation which have for their starting point the attempted overthrow of the institution of private property” (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1888: 211).

Yet, among some other writers social innovation had a more positive meaning. The same socialists that Sargant had criticized were praised as “social reformers” by others – another term which exploded in the 1860s. In fact, as Gareth Stedman Jones has suggested recently, socialism was to many the “new spiritual power” in post-revolutionary France and elsewhere in the Western world (Stedman Jones, 2010). Social innovation became a popular term among the followers of Saint-Simon and Fourier, and many others. What is it in social innovation that gives rise to such disparate representations?

Social Reform

While the term innovation has been widely used since the seventeenth century, that of social innovation entered the vocabulary in the aftermath of the French revolution and was used regularly in the 1860s and ensuing decades, following Sargant. To be sure, there were regular uses of the term in France (and England) in the 1830-40s, but French writers made far less use of it than English writers, even during the more popular period of the term (1860-90). However, one thing is certain: to the French, social innovation was more positive than to English writers. In the nineteenth century innovation increasingly acquired a positive connotation, although pejorative uses continued (Godin, 2012c). This was the case in France and increasingly so in many other countries, but not in Sargant’s England. In England, the few positive connotations were generally used with qualifications (social innovation requires preparation or caution).

Socialism is only one of the meanings of social innovation. In this sense, social innovation and social innovator are more often than not used in the plural: a socialist is never alone. He has a “sect”, as Sargant put it, which gives a real reason to fear the scheme. In fact, the term social innovator(s) is used far more often than social innovation.

Over time, this meaning of social innovation shared its place with a more positive one. Thirteen years before Sargant, a writer (H. B.) wrote a review in the American

Universalist Quarterly titled *Fourierism and Similar Schemes*. The article was a criticism of the doctrine of Fourier. “What they propose”, wrote H. B., “is not to improve our present system of society, but to abolish it entirely, and to construct a new one in its stead” (H. B., 1845: 53). To the writer “the project, taken as a whole, is a dream of the most fantastic kind” (H. B., 1845: 55). It is a “reversal of the natural order of things” and a doctrine to “gratify fickleness in every thing”. In the following issue of the journal, a writer (Horace Greeley) answered H. B. and proposed a different meaning of socialism. He accused H. B. and others of producing imperfect summaries of Fourier’s doctrine. Greeley introduced the concept of social innovation and applied it to all those who have “vanquished Pauperism and Servitude”, among them the Shakers (Greeley, 1845).

Innovation

Origin of the Word

1297	Innovation
1500	Novateur
1529	Innovator
1803	Social innovation
1805	Social Innovator
1808	Innovation sociale
1834	Novateur social

Greeley’s article is titled *The Idea of a Social Reform*. Social reform was a second meaning of social innovation in the literature of the nineteenth century. This is exactly the distinction made by the anonymous reviewer in *The National Review* discussed above (Anonymous, 1859: 344):

It is our object in the present paper to indicate briefly, first, the most important of those radical errors into which the socialist theorists fall, and those scientific certainties against which they blindly and vainly struggle; and next, the principle of some of those experiments made by sober social *reformers*, which may

compass, to a certain moderate extent, the same ends as those which stimulate the socialist theorists to their fruitless efforts, but which would attain them by the modest and gradual means alone.

The writer was thinking here of cooperative associations and “the distribution of the profits among all who assist to create them”. Social reformers attempt to improve society “without aspiring to reconstruct it” while social innovators “propose to create society, if not human nature, anew, upon an entirely different basis (...), according to some artificial scheme from which they believe that all good may be evolved and all evil eliminated” (Anonymous, 1859: 343).

The distinction between innovation and reform or radicalism and gradualism is the topic of many writers on social reformers, like the very popular – but criticized too – study (seven editions) produced by Louis Reynaud (Reynaud, 1840). In fact, the distinction is a very old one. As I have documented elsewhere, it was used widely in debates on innovation in the previous centuries. Innovation risks leading to uncontrollable consequences. Better reform than innovate (Godin, 2011c). Many writers on social innovation thought similarly: “Great events may, and do spring from the most trifling causes”, wrote an anonymous writer in the British *New Monthly Magazine and Humorist* in 1839. “We cannot doubt that the present political and social innovation has much more in it than meets the eye, and may fairly justify fidgety uneasiness in those, who never know to what any thing that happens *may* lead” (Anonymous, 1839: 28).

While social innovation as socialism has a negative connotation, social innovation as social reform is generally seen as positive: any program, particularly if initiated by governments, for improving the social condition of mankind. France is certainly the country where social innovation in the sense of humanism has been the most prevalent, starting in the 1830s. To be sure, Saint-Simon, Fourier and Blanc, as well as Owen in England, made no use of the term, but sympathizers and writers in the fourierist journal *La Phalange* and other pamphlets did: “La Société toute entière, devant laquelle et pour laquelle se fait l’Épreuve d’une Innovation sociale quelconque”, wrote Considerant, “est juge de la valeur de l’Innovation, et c’est l’Acceptation libre du Procédé nouveau,

l'Imitation spontanée de la Combinaison nouvelle, qui expriment le Jugement de l'Humanité" (Considerant, 1842: 166-67). Social innovation is innovation for the people.

Social innovation includes any social reform, and the social reformer is a social innovator. The terms are used interchangeably. In nineteenth-century France, a social reform or social innovation was generally seen as "utile and humanitaire". Many writers praised social innovation as the outcome of the Revolution: "la marche terrible de la révolution française achevait de rendre [les partisans de l'ordre] hostile à toute innovation sociale", wrote an author in a biographical note on William Godwin (*Société de gens de lettres et de savants*, 1838: 447). The revolution itself is social innovation, as suggested by the editor in chief of *Le nécrologue universel* in the first issue of the journal: "N'est-ce pas de cette grande innovation sociale que sortirent toutes les prérogatives dont jouit actuellement le peuple, sa liberté, son égalité, son identité essentielle avec l'État, le droit de tout dire tant sur les hommes que sur les choses" (Saint-Maurice Canaby, 1845: xxxii). These thoughts are exactly opposite to those of socialists' critics, to whom the revolution is social innovation too, and social innovation is revolution. Here, social innovation served precisely to stress positively the revolutionary character of changes necessary to transform society.

Together with revolution, religion contributed to the representation of social innovation as social reform. To some Christian writers, socialism is social reform, and the socialist is the model to follow. To Reverend Moritz Kaufmann, Louis Blanc is a "literary and social innovator of superior culture and philosophical attainments" (Kaufmann, 1879: 146). Kaufmann committed several books toward rehabilitating the socialist doctrines, among them *Utopia; or Schemes of Social Improvement* (1879) and *Socialism and Communism in Their Practical Application* (1883). Kaufmann wrote on the "prejudices against socialism as nothing but idle dreams and fancies". To Kaufmann, socialism is not an irritant tending toward social disruption, but a dynamic leading to social progress. It is social reform. Kaufmann made few uses of the term social innovation (or rather social innovator) but his message is clear. Socialism and the Church's message go hand in hand, as another Christian put it, "l'évangile, lors même qu'il ne serait pas le livre définitif de la

parole divine, sera toujours le guide et le modèle du novateur social” (Lechevalier, 1834: 538).

To be sure, such a representation was not uncontested among Christian writers. To other Christians, social innovation is nothing but socialism, in a pejorative sense. “Forward as our march is, we tend strongly to the study of the past”, stated Jean-Joseph François Poujoulat in his *Histoire de Saint Augustin* (of which a chapter was translated in the *Christian Examiner* the same year) “It is evident that great questions now before our people must lead us to study anew the history of the Church, and come to a satisfactory conclusion regarding the men and the doctrines of primitive ages” (Poujoulat, 1845: 3). To Poujoulat, “while we are receiving from the principle nations of Europe every school of new philosophy and every project of social innovation [the author referred to Fourier and Owen among others], we are assured from the same quarters by other voices, that all philosophy is a sin against faith and all innovation a rebellion against authority” (Poujoulat, 1845: 2). To others, like a professor of political economy at the Université catholique de Louvain, the saint-simonians and similar “social innovators” promote a “théorie de la perfectibilité indéfinie du genre humain qui implique la négation absolue du Christianisme” (de Coux, 1837: 241-42). To still others, it is a matter of social innovation not delivering the promised results. Writing on “institutional and political change” and the socialists, a Christian writer stated, “Measures, or the defeat of measures, of social innovation, usually disappoint by the smallness of result” (Martineau, 1843: 145).

Writers include many different things under social innovation understood as social reform, but two domains are often highlighted. One is education. The French sociologist (and social reformer) Auguste Comte, who used the term innovation in several places in his writings, is one among several to whom education is social innovation. The *Cours de philosophie positive* praises Catholicism for the introduction of a system of general education for all, an “immense et heureuse innovation sociale” (Comte, 1841: 366). The other domain is legislation on labour or work conditions, like the “Caisse nationale d’assurance contre les accidents de travail” and legislation on unions (Stell, 1884: 284).

To still others, social innovation included different forms of rights and equalities, such as that of salary between men and women.

Alongside these dominant meanings, everything becomes a social innovation, above all literature – at least to the French: “La littérature considérée comme un instrument de reconstruction sociale destiné à aider les efforts du législateur, pourrait avoir une grande utilité, et cette direction, cause future de tous les progrès, est une innovation sociale que doivent désirer tous les hommes” (Vandewynckel, 1838: 268). Everyone’s favorite author or reformer is a social innovator. To the socialists, some adds philosophers and politicians. To a writer on the *History of French Literature*, it is Rousseau who held “the same position as a social innovator and reformer that Voltaire occupies as an intellectual innovator, and that Turgot and Necker occupy as political innovators” (van Laun, 1877: 90). To a reviewer of van Laun’s book, Montesquieu, whose *L’Esprit des lois* “sounded the doom of aristocracy and absolute monarchy, is considered a social innovator” (Perkins, 1877: 71). To Guizot, the emperor Napoleon, has “semé partout les germes du mouvement et d’innovation sociale” (Guizot, 1866: 25).

As the twentieth century progressed, Godwin, Dewey, Gandhi, Marx, Roosevelt, Ford and many lesser-known thinkers and men of action were added to the list. One finds unexpected uses of the term too: the businessman is a social innovator. Of course, such a man must share some characteristics with socialism and/or social reform to deserve the title. Already in 1871 a writer put the idea as follows: “Des industriels vont jusqu’à créer, pour les ouvriers, une vie nouvelle, une véritable innovation sociale, garantissant aux travailleurs non seulement l’existence matérielle, mais certaines jouissances telles que le spectacle, les jeux, les parties de plaisir, etc. [et] des cités ouvrières” (Fabre, 1871: 469). The idea continued to prevail in the following decades, and eventually got into a title in the twentieth century.⁶

⁶ In *The Businessman as Social Innovator* published in 1975, K. McQuaid compared Nelson O. Nelson, a (forgotten) American reformer of the late nineteenth-early twentieth century who was not in step with the trends of his time, to Richard Owen. Nelson had launched cooperative plans and shared profits with his employees; organized rurally-based answers to city problems, cooperative credit societies, industrial education projects; and launched a chain of grocery stores to serve the inhabitants of New Orleans’ poorer wards (McQuaid, 1975).

States and governments, as the privileged source of social reform, are also studied as social innovators. In fact, the view of government as social innovator has a long history. In the mid-nineteenth century, *La Phalange* reports that in Parliament, M. de la Martine replied in answer to Guizot: “Les gouvernements qui ne sont pas des machines prudentes d’innovation sociale ne méritent pas d’être honorés du nom de gouvernement” (La Phalange, 1842: 347). Like the businessman as social innovator, the idea of government as social innovator spread in the following decades and became widespread in the twentieth century⁷ and gave rise to empirical studies.⁸ Histories of public organizations regularly stressed their role as “social innovators” too: from the National Council of Social Services and the Work Projects Administration in the United States to the National Research Council in Canada.

A Catchword

As the nineteenth century ended, social innovation acquired a third meaning in many writings, and this meaning acquired increasing appeal over the next century: the introduction or adoption of a new social behaviour or practice. “This month’s award for the most original social innovation”, reported *The Living Age* magazine in March 1929, comes from Budapest, Hungary: “to scrap the conventional and commonplace salutations of ‘good morning’ and ‘good evening’, so utterly uttered without deep feeling or genuine sincerity, and substitute a newer and more expressive phrase adapted without variation, to all hours of the day or night”. Anything new or any invention in “social” matters is now called a social innovation, from the ‘social’ animals (“the eusocial species”) to the wearing of cotton gloves, from the colour of ink to the Soviet system, from advertising

⁷ “The government”, stated Willard Thorp in 1942, director of economic research, Dun & Bradstreet, “has recently taken vigorous steps in a newer type of innovation, which may be called social innovation” (Thorp, 1942: 52). “The government has become increasingly an innovator. In fact, the most important changes in our economy system during the last decade have stemmed from government” (Thorp, 1942: 53).

⁸ In 1940, Edgar McVoy of the University of Minnesota published a study using a methodology that was followed in the ensuing decades in studies of innovation in governments. McVoy looked at new laws and practices like minimum work age, juvenile court law, vocational rehabilitation, old age pensions, workman’s compensation and women’s suffrage, and measured their adoption by states “as indices of social innovation or progressivism” (McVoy, 1940).

(of coffee houses) to divorce, from the ice cream salon to the Republic. Everywhere, “man is a social innovator”, as Edward Thomas Devine, among others, put it in a survey published in 1923 for the Charity Organization Society of the City of New York.

Manners, particularly the relations between man and woman, were frequently considered social innovations. In a 1897 issue of the *Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society*, one reads that “the Western system of throwing young girls suddenly into social contact with the other sex” is “a social innovation which has been proved to be entirely unsuited to the character of the young Japanese ladies”. Novels abound with similar ideas. “Sitting down beside one’s lady and openly conversing with her before the entire crowd” is a social innovation, narrated American novelist S. N. Sheridan in *The Overland Monthly* (1886: 612). Not holding a wedding reception because of the consequences of drinking was also a social innovation; better to do the entertainment but without the wine than innovate, reported another novelist in *Arthur’s Home Magazine* (1870: 200).

Alongside these uses, one observes many new ones in the twentieth century, from education to social work, from management to governments. In fact, like innovation, the use of the terms social innovation and social innovator exploded in the second half of the century. Social innovation is no longer limited to individuals. Organizations are social innovators too. To some, the small and medium-sized enterprise, as opposed to the large firm, is the source of social innovation.⁹ The emergence of the enterprise itself in the nineteenth century is a social innovation (European Economic Community, 1963: 16). Periods or stages of history and their main “driver” are social innovators too. “Because it has been an incomparable technical innovator, industrialism has also been history’s greatest social innovator” (Alba, 1964: 202).

In the twentieth century, new ideas about what is social innovation entered the discussions. To be sure, social innovation still evoked socialism and liberalism. In this sense, it continued to be discussed as radical and revolutionary. To others, social

⁹ “On peut se demander si la petite ou moyenne entreprise dynamique n’est pas, en France au moins, le lieu de l’innovation sociale et n’a pas, mieux que la grande entreprise (trop exposée aux regards pour être audacieuse autrement qu’en formules), vocation sociale” (Sellier, 1961: 203).

innovation invokes humanism, as in the previous century. However, new ideas developed. They gave rise to an entirely new representation of social innovation and the social innovator:

- Social innovation is no longer predominantly seen as subversive of the social order, but simply opposed to traditional ways of doing things.
- The social innovator is no longer a heretic. He is simply “different from the masses” or “from his fellows”. He may be a deviant, but in a sociological sense. He is an “original”, a “marginal”, a “nonconformist”, an “unorthodox”.
- The social innovator is “ingenious” and “creative”. He is an “entrepreneur”, and he is the agent of social change.
- The social innovator is a “new professional” or “experimenter”. He plans, develops and puts new ideas and programs into practice. US psychologist George Fairweather of Stanford University is a good example of this representation – though he is not alone: one may find the idea in “social engineering” and evaluation research in the 1930s. Fairweather dedicated a whole book to *Methods for Experimental Social Innovation* in 1967. To Fairweather, social innovation means alternative solutions to social problems (new social subsystems), particularly those of the “marginals” like the unemployed, the elderly, the poor, the criminals, “with a minimum of disruption”. “This can be attained only through experimental methods”, as in the physical sciences: using models, measurements and evaluation techniques (Fairweather, 1967: v). Social innovation as social experiment is social reform conducted with the scientific method.¹⁰

Apart from the last characteristic, these elements are not new to thoughts on innovation. They had already defined “innovation”, particularly technological innovation, and the innovator for some time. The same characteristics were then applied to social innovation. However, no theory has yet been developed. Social innovator remains a label, and social

¹⁰ Already in 1917, the American sociologist F. Stuart Chapin had used “social experiment” in this sense, and made references to Owen, Fourier and others (Chapin, 1917).

innovation a word used in a text, often only once, to name a new social phenomenon or behaviour or change.

Twentieth-Century Developments

We have distinguished three different meanings and representations of social innovation. One is socialism, and this representation of social innovation is essentially pejorative. A second meaning is social reform. This meaning has both positive and negative uses, depending on the writer – and the country. A third meaning is anything new in ‘social’ matters. Such a meaning, although fuzzy, has certainly contributed to the diffusion of the term.

Until the twenty-first century, social innovation was merely a word. Single occurrences were found here and there in diverse texts, but they were few as compared to innovation. Like innovation, social innovation entered into (sociological) theories in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Two associated concepts, to which I now turn, pave the road toward “theorization”. First is that of technology or technological innovation. Second is change and theories of social change.

Social Innovation as Adjustment to Technological Innovation

From the very early occurrences of the term social innovation in the nineteenth century, a remedy is invoked, “On sent que la société est mal à l’aise”, wrote Considerant in a book whose purpose was to contribute to the diffusion of Fourier’s “grande conception”, namely the “véritable ancre de salut de l’humanité”. “On admet que [la société] a besoin d’une organisation nouvelle. L’état des choses actuelles enfante désordre sur désordre, perturbation sur perturbation, et tout cela ne peut évidemment cesser que par une innovation sociale” (Considerant, 1834: 312). Over the twentieth century, social innovation as remedy would be discussed frequently as remedy or ‘adjustment’ to

technology or technological innovation. It is through “social invention” that this connotation got into social innovation.

The concept of social invention has its origins in the late eighteenth century. For example, in 1780, in a discourse before the French Parliament, Jean-Pierre Brissot de Warville suggested, “La propriété civile, que les politiques regardent de nos jours comme un droit si sacré, si naturel, n’est qu’une invention sociale qui blesse entièrement le droit de la nature” (Bibliothèque, 1782: 328). Over the next two centuries, social invention was applied to the following ideas, in (more or less) the following sequence:

1. Human inventions like language, money, printing, justice, religion and marriage.
2. Measures of social reform (education, working conditions).
3. Adjustment to mechanical or technological invention.

It is the latter use, particularly from American sociologist William F. Ogburn, which brought about wider interest in the concept of social invention. Over the twentieth century, social invention was a counter-concept to that of technological invention: an “adjustment” to technological invention.

In 1922, Ogburn published *Social Change*, a study on the effects of technology on society. In this book, Ogburn launched a concept which became very popular in the following decades: “cultural lag” (Godin, 2010a). To Ogburn, society is maladjusted to technology. The latter grows at an exponential rate, hence the lag between discovery/invention and adoption by society. As readjustment to lags, Ogburn suggested investing in social invention – a concept originally used in sociology by I. B. Bernard (1923) and Stuart L. Chapin (1928). In 1933, *Recent Social Trends*, the first report on social indicators, of which Ogburn was director of research, stated: “Social invention has to be stimulated to keep pace with mechanical invention” (President’s Committee on Social Trends, 1933: xv); “unless there is a speeding up of social invention and a slowing

down of mechanical invention, grave maladjustments are certain to result” (President’s Committee on Social Trends, 1933: xxviii).

Ogburn is not alone in developing this argument. “Just as there has been a field for mechanical invention, so is there a field for social invention?” asked Arland Weeks, dean of the School of Education at North Dakota Agricultural College in 1932. His answer was: “social invention is miles behind mechanical advance” (Weeks, 1932: 366). But there is “no good reason to suppose that inventiveness would be less fertile for social progress than mechanical invention has been for mechanical advance” (Weeks, 1932: 367). “The possibilities of social invention are as great as were the mechanical possibilities that lay before the early inventors of machines” (Weeks, 1932: 370).

What is social invention? To Ogburn, social invention is defined negatively as “invention that is not mechanical and that is not a discovery in the natural science” (Ogburn and Nimkoff, 1940: 859-60). A positive meaning is given by way of examples, as in a list of fifty social inventions from the President’s Committee on Social Trends (see Annex 1 below). To Weeks, “mechanical invention concerns things, while social invention involves people” (Weeks, 1932: 369). Social invention aims at the “betterment of social relations and affairs”. To support this definition, Weeks gives many concrete examples. Social invention is “superseding older practices, introducing refinements of design, or of projecting the larger engines and leverages of social reconstitution” (Weeks, 1932: 368); it is “new ways, techniques, procedures, laws, arrangements, provisions and planning in education, justice, professions, economics, trade and world affairs” (Weeks, 1932: 369). Social invention affects “laws, regulation, constitutions, government, the distribution of wealth, administrative facilities, education, mental hygiene, economics, finance, penology, employment, international relations, courts” (Weeks, 1932: 367). Like Ogburn, Weeks drew up a list of many (sixty-two) areas of social invention (see Annex 1).

At first sight, social invention is just another word for social innovation.¹¹ In fact, many of the social inventions talked of by writers are exactly the same as social innovations as

¹¹ Ogburn used innovation very rarely (see Godin, 2010a). Weeks used it once (Weeks, 1932: 369).

discussed in this paper. However, the way writers talk about social invention is different. Writers usually compare social invention to nature, in many senses.¹² First, nature as inventive (in a metaphoric sense) is antithetic to man. Nature refers to that which already exists. Second, nature has a philosophical meaning: universal and immutable or fundamental, like natural rights. It is real invention. Third, it refers to what is either the state of nature, the given or the gross and primitive. In contrast, social invention means human invention – sometimes in a pejorative sense. In general, the ‘social’ of social invention refers to institutions or conventions and civilization, and is sometimes contrasted to individual invention. A recurrent contrast, particularly on the American continent, is to ‘mechanical invention’.

The representation of social invention as an alternative to mechanical invention or technology is that of social innovation too – in fact, the two concepts shared a place in the vocabulary of the twentieth century and were often used interchangeably. In one of the few titles on social innovation published before the twenty-first century, Emmanuel Mesthene, Director of the Harvard University Program on Technology and Society, suggested, “Present-day social problems are often the result of technological change and solutions to them – many of them also inherent in technology – call for modification of existing political institutions and processes”. To Mesthene, social innovation or “social technologies” “may help to break the resulting impasse” (Mesthene, 1969: iii). In fact, the 1960-70s was a time when the study of technology, according to many, needed to take the social into consideration (Staudenmaier, 1985), policies had to consider the social aspects as well as the technical (OECD, 1972) and the engineer “must become a social innovator” (Love and Childers, 1965: 338; Calvert, 1967: 274).

Social innovation as alternative or adjustment to technology is based on a contrast, as Mesthene suggested, but also on an analogy. The analogy between technological innovation and social innovation has a long history. In 1867, the physician, fourierist and financial backer of the *École sociétaire*, François Barrier, published a treatise on sociology. While discussing state intervention, he referred to Fourier and suggested, “On

¹² On nature as norm, see Lovejoy (1927), Lovejoy and Boas (1935).

ne voit pas en effet pourquoi un gouvernement libéral et progressif n’agirait pas pour une innovation sociale comme il agit pour une invention scientifique ou industrielle” (Barrier, 1867: 356). The analogy was made to support a call for action.

In the subsequent century, the same analogy and call for action were abundant in the literature. For example, in 1957 Peter Drucker published *Landmarks for Tomorrow*. The book contains one of the rare full-length discussions (I mean more than an isolated use of the word) on social innovation before the twenty-first century. Drucker begins by suggesting that social innovation is different from reform and revolution. “Unlike reform it does not aim at curing a defect; it aims at creating something new. Unlike revolution it does not aim at subverting values, beliefs and institutions; it aims at using traditional values, beliefs and habits for new achievements, or to attain old goals in new, better ways that will change habits or beliefs” (Drucker, 1957: 45). To Drucker, social innovation consists of educational methods, hospital administration, theories of organization or marketing practices ... and productivity. Most businesses are also based on social innovation (Drucker, 1957: 20, 40). Like Barrier and Ogburn, Drucker drew attention to the ‘fact’ that social innovation’s “impact on the life of our generation” has been as great as any technological innovation (Drucker, 1957: 39). Like Ogburn, to Drucker “we need social innovation more than we need technological innovation” (Drucker, 1957: 45).

Such analogies could be multiplied. They all carry the same message: “Nous avons appris au cours de ces dernières décennies”, stated a French magazine in a bibliography published in 1967, “à organiser le processus d’innovation scientifique et technique; nous devons nous efforcer d’organiser l’innovation sociale d’une manière analogue” (Analyse & Prévision, 1967: 579).¹³

¹³ Among economists concerned with technological unemployment, technological innovation has frequently been discussed as adjustment in economic growth from the 1930s onward (e.g., S. Kuznets, E. Mansfield).

Theories of Social Change

Social innovation as adjustment to technological innovation is only one theoretical use of the term in the twentieth century.¹⁴ Social innovation also entered into theories of social change. To be sure, Ogburn's is a theory of social change, as the title of his work attests. Nevertheless, over the years Ogburn was concerned mainly with technology. In fact, most theorists who talk of social innovation focus in the end on technological innovation. To Ogburn, one may add the (socially-minded) economists like Simon Kuznets (1962) and Chris Freeman (1974). However, other writers looked at social innovation from a broader perspective, namely as part of a theory of social change.

The uses made by the early French sociologists like Auguste Comte and Gabriel Tarde, or by Thorstein Veblen are with few consequences. The use of the concept is isolated. It has no effects on their theories. In his *Système de politique positive ou Traité de sociologie*, Comte uses innovation in a positive sense frequently. He suggests that only revolutionaries innovate, and added that he is writing for them (1841, volume 2, p. xxviii). Yet Comte is aware of the pejorative connotation of innovation. One needs, suggests Comte, to minimize his innovation and erect or establish one's own innovation as a "retour nécessaire vers l'ordre primitif" because of resistances to innovation (1841, volume 2, p. 428). In fact, Comte's own system on the organization of the sciences is explicitly presented as a "réforme nécessaire" rather than a "véritable innovation" (1841, volume 1, p. 473). In spite of these thoughts on innovation, Comte used social innovation only once, as mentioned above (see p. 19).

Tarde, the first theorist on innovation, uses the term innovation widely, particularly in *Les lois de l'imitation* (1890) – together with a cluster of other terms and not always in a univocal manner. However, he uses "social innovation" only a few times. In a long footnote in *La logique sociale* (1893: 220-24), Tarde makes an analogy between psychology (*associationism*) and his theory of innovation (imitation). There, he

¹⁴ On an early use of the idea of adjustment, in a psychological context, see Wolfe (1929): social innovation is the response to maladjustment of an individual to his environment.

introduces the concept of social innovation timidly. He presents no explicit definition, but one understands that Tarde uses social innovation in a broad sense to include any type of innovation (or invention that diffuses or gets imitated), a diversity that he studies later in the book, including language, religion, economy and the arts. A second use of social innovation is made in *Les lois sociales: esquisse d'une sociologie* (Tarde, 1898: 26). While he discusses the obstacles to the (geometrical) propagation of “social innovation”, Tarde adds competition with other innovations to factors such as climates and races. Tarde could have simply used the term innovation. In fact, social innovation as discussed here is not different from innovation as used elsewhere in the text (Tarde, 1898: 19, 64).

Similarly with Veblen. Veblen offers interesting views on innovation for the time and, although he uses the term social innovation only once (one would have difficulty distinguishing his meaning of social innovation from innovation *tout court*), he deserves a few lines here because his discussion of innovation remains one of the very few at the time, and is generally not included in the history of theories on innovation. In *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), Veblen argues that there is a basic distinction between the productivity of industry and the parasitism of the leisure class. The main activity of the leisure class is conspicuous consumption, which contributes nothing to productivity. Veblen devotes a whole chapter (*Industrial Exemption and Conservatism*) to innovation – and its counterpart: conservatism. To Veblen, institutions evolve and change constantly because with time a given institution is less and less in accord with the function for which it was first created. Institutions need “readjustment” (a key concept in Veblen’s thoughts on change). But men’s “habits of thought, points of view, mental attitudes and aptitudes” are conservative. Men “tend to persist indefinitely, except as circumstances enforce a change” (Veblen, 1899: 119).

To Veblen, the forces which cause a readjustment of institutions are economic, and the outcome is always unequal across groups. This discrepancy leads some people to support the maintenance of old institutions and others to welcome innovation. Because the leisure class is “sheltered from the stress of economic exigencies”, it is less prompted to accept changes. This explains its conservatism. The opposition to change has nothing to do with

vested interest, but is instinctive. Revulsion to change is common to all men. In the case of the leisure class, “The members of the wealthy class do not yield to the demand for innovation as readily as other men because they are not constrained to do so” (Veblen, 1899: 123). “Innovation calls for a greater expenditure of nervous energy in making the necessary readjustment than would otherwise be the case”; it requires “some surplus of energy” (Veblen, 1899: 126). Innovation as “energy” most probably comes from the Eighteenth and Nineteenth century’s conception of imagination as force, power and energy.

It is the American sociologist Lester F. Ward who was the first to make use of social innovation to serve a theory. In *Pure Sociology*, Ward introduces the concept in his chapter concerned with social dynamics (Ward, 1903). Following Comte, Ward divides sociology into statics and dynamics. The latter he defines as “gradual change in structures”. Social dynamics or change is different from revolutions, which destroy existing structures and create artificial ones (Ward, 1903: 222). Ward deplores the fact that the sociologist “does not show how social progress takes place”, “how social structures are formed”. Sociologists treat these as “finished products”. Social progress is “a sort of prophetic ken” (Ward, 1903: 224). To Ward, change is pervasive everywhere. He identifies three principles of change: difference of potential, conation and innovation.

15

To Ward, innovation is similar to *variation* in biology. He follows biologist Hugo de Vries and defines variations as “combining and recombining in an endless series of ever changing forms” (Ward, 1903: 243). “Social innovation proceeds upon the same principle”. Ward also discusses his use of the term social innovation in a second way: innovation is distinguished from invention, which “unduly emphasizes the intellectual side” (Ward, 1903: 243). Innovation is a “surplus of energy” (like Veblen) and an exception product unfortunately “confined to favored groups” (Ward, 1903: 244). It is energy which “overflows in the direction of doing something new” and “makes the

¹⁵ Difference of potential is (unconscious) “creative fusion of unlike elements” which produces something different, new and superior like cross-fertilization of cultures. Conation is efforts (creating means) which (unconsciously again) transform the environment.

evolution or social progress”. It goes beyond mere repetition or imitation, as Tarde put it. Ward cites Veblen’s instinct of workmanship as an example of a dynamic principle of innovation (Ward, 1903: 245).

In the very last chapter of *Pure Sociology*, Ward introduced the concept of social invention too. Social invention is defined as contrasted to scientific invention: “most individual achievement has been due to invention and scientific discovery in the domain of the physical sciences. The parallel consists in the fact that social achievement consists in invention and discovery in the domain of the social forces” (Ward, 1903: 568). To Ward, “social invention consists in making *adjustments* [my italics] as will induce men to act in the manner most advantageous to society” (Ward, 1903: 569). “The social inventor has only to make sure what will constitute a greater gain or marginal advantage and to devise measures [like legislation] that will harmonize with the social good” (Ward, 1903: 570). Ward also defines social invention as contrasted to economics. “It is not so much production as distribution that calls for intelligent collective action. Science and invention under purely individual initiative have rendered production practically unlimited. It is limited only by the difficulties in the way of distribution” (Ward, 1903: 571). The social invention suggested is social appropriation of knowledge or education for all.

We had to wait sixty-five years for the next serious theoretical use of social innovation in sociology. In 1968, the French sociologist J.-W. Lapierre published *Essai sur le fondement du pouvoir politique*, a study on the foundations of politics. To Lapierre, politics is what make societies, and political changes including revolutions are the outcomes of innovations. The more important innovation is, the more political power develops. Societies develop and transform because of innovation, and in turn societies influence innovation.

The last part of the book (over 150 pages) is entirely devoted to social innovation and to developing the sketch of a theory of innovation. The latter is, according to Lapierre, entirely missing in sociology, which is concerned rather with order and stability. Lapierre identifies four kinds of innovation, acting in interrelation: technical, economic, social and

cultural (Lapierre, 1968: 663-71). The first two transform nature and the other two transform society. To Lapierre, social innovation is “la formation de rapports sociaux et de groupes qui tendent à faire éclater les cadres sociaux établis, à *transformer* l’organisation des systèmes sociaux [qui] aboutira à une transformation globale de la société” (Lapierre, 1977: 191-92; 1968: 531). As examples of social innovation, Lapierre studied social movements like the rise of the urban *bourgeoisie* in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the *proletariat* in the nineteenth century.¹⁶

Nearly ten years later, in a revised edition of the book, Lapierre had to defend his use of the concept of (social) innovation in the face of criticisms.¹⁷ We have here an indication of the contested connotation of the concept that lasted until the twentieth century. Lapierre added a long discussion on the concept (Lapierre, 1977: 291-322). He took pains to discuss how animals reproduce – he admits mutations over generations, but no innovation – and how man, because of his faculty of imagination, creates totally new social and political structures. To Lapierre, man is the only innovator among animals (Lapierre, 1977: 7), and every society, from the archaic to the modern ones, is innovative to differing degrees (Lapierre, 1977: 190-98). Then Lapierre distinguishes between social change and innovation. Social change is adaptation. It is not innovative: it maintains the existing social structures. By contrast, social innovation changes the whole system. It is revolutionary: it transforms social roles and the social structure and gives rise to new political systems (Lapierre, 1977: 185). In this edition, Lapierre defines social innovation as, “le processus de transformation des rapports sociaux par l’action collective de groupes qui mobilisent les ressources de certaines catégories, couches ou classes sociales, et qui finissent par imposer à la fois de nouveaux rapports de production, de nouveaux besoins, un nouveau discours, de nouveaux codes, un nouveau régime politique, une nouvelle organisation de l’espace social” (Lapierre, 1977: 310-11).

By Lapierre’s time, innovation had entered into diverse theories of social change, like that of E. E. Hagen, *On the Theory of Social Change* (1962), and Gilbert Moore’s *Social*

¹⁶ In the 1977 edition, Lapierre adds a third example: the English revolution of the seventeenth century.

¹⁷ A normative and qualitative concept not very amenable to empirical analysis.

Change (1963), often with references to R. K. Merton's discussion of innovation as deviant behaviour (Merton, 1949). Among the most detailed discussions of innovation are Allen (1957), Hagen (1962) and Ogburn and Nimkoff (1964) on technological innovation; and Mowrer (1942), Barnett (1953), LaPiere (1965) and Zaltman (1972; 1973; 1977) on innovation generally. Social innovation had also made its entry into theory, with a (more or less) neutral meaning. However, with few exceptions, the term is not found in the "classic" titles, but in lesser-known works. Be it as it may, the social innovator is defined as the agent of change. He introduces new ideas and develops them.

Yet, the concept of social innovation remains an isolated phrase, with little impact on the study of social change. Above all, what social innovation is remains fuzzy. For example, to Alain Birou's *Vocabulaire pratique des sciences sociales* (1969), social innovation is one form of social change. "Social change" refers to many things, either "une *modification* sociale, c'est-à-dire un changement partiel, soit une *évolution* sociale, un changement progressif, soit une *révolution*, un changement total, brusque et violent, soit une *innovation* sociale, action d'introduire quelque chose qui n'existait pas, soit un *revirement*, changement social en sens inverse de ce qui était attendu, soit une *transformation* sociale, c'est-à-dire un changement profond et tangible, soit même des *variations* sociales, c'est-à-dire des passages rapides, instables, à divers états" (Birou, 1969: 55).

Despite the fuzziness, to some it was time for sociologists to adopt the concept. Reacting to Maurice Crubellier's communication to a workshop on social history held in May 1965 at École Normale Supérieure de Saint-Cloud, France, one commentator (Pierre Vilar of La Sorbonne) suggested that the participants have a serious look at the concept of social innovation, "par analogie avec ce que les économistes appellent, en économie, une innovation": "Quand un Seigneur décide de remplacer la corvée par un droit en argent, c'est une innovation sociale. Quand des grévistes décident tout à coup d'occuper les usines, ce qui ne se faisait pas d'habitude, c'est une innovation sociale" (Labrousse, 1967: 44). Here, Vilar wanted to insist on the distinction between innovation and its implementation. While innovation is a moment (*événement*), or invention as others would

say, implementation (or social innovation) refers to diffusion and, therefore, to the social implications of an innovation (on social structures and history). The participants, including Crubellier, agreed. There are really two moments in history: invention and innovation, as the *doxa* says since J.A. Schumpeter, among others.

Optimistic Visions for a New Millennium

Before the twenty-first century, titles on social innovation are few (Table 1). It is really in the last ten years or so that social innovation began to be studied as such and theorized about – with however few if any references to a theory of change, which is relegated to context or background. A new subfield arose. Social innovation acquired an autonomous (conceptual) status.

Table 1.
Early Titles
On Social Innovation

- Noss, T.K. (1944), *Resistance to Social Innovation in the Literature Regarding Innovations Which Have Proved Successful*, Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Fairweather, G. W. (1967), *Methods for Experimental Social Innovation*, New York: John Wiley.
- Rosenbloom, R. S., and R. Marris (eds.) (1969), *Social Innovation in the City: New Enterprises for Community Development*, Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press.
- Gabor, D. (1970), *Innovations: Scientific, Technological, and Social*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pike, F. B. (1973), *Spanish America, 1900-1970: Tradition and Social Innovation*, New York: Norton.
- Lapierre, J.-W. (1977), *Vivre sans État? Essai sur le pouvoir politique et l'innovation sociale*, Paris: Seuil.
- Chambon, J.-L., A. David and J. M. Deveney (1982), *Les innovations sociales*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France.
- Geshuny, J. (1983), *Social innovation and Division of Labour*, London: Oxford University Press.
- Göran Hedén, C.-G., and A. King (eds.) (1984): *Social Innovations for Development*, Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Warmotte, G. (ed.), (1985), *Innovation sociale et entreprises*, Namur: Université de Namur.
- Bolwijn, P. T.; Boorsma, J.; van Breukelen, Q.H; Brinkman, S.; Kumpe, T. (1986), *Flexible Manufacturing. Integrating Technological and Social Innovation*, Amsterdam, New York: Elsevier.
- Niosi, J. (1994), *New Technology Policy and Social Innovations in the Firm*, London: Frances Pinter.

In recent social theories, social innovation has two characteristics. First, it is a corrective to technological innovation. Let's take one writer among many, certainly one of the most active researchers on social innovation – every author carries the same message or story: social innovation is a reaction to the dominant or hegemonic discourses on technological innovation.¹⁸ “There is no shortage of good writing on innovation in business and technology (...)”, reported Geoff Mulgan from the British National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) in 2007, “Yet there is a remarkable dearth of serious analysis of how social innovation is done and how it can be supported. This is mirrored by the lack of attention paid to social innovation. Vast amounts of money are spent on innovation to meet both real and imagined consumer demands (...). And no country has a serious strategy for social innovation comparable to strategies for innovation in business and technology” (Mulgan, 2007: 6-7). The story continued in 2009: technology has already revolutionized the economy; now it is the turn of social innovation. “For most of the 20th century innovation policy and practice was primarily concerned with hardware and with the market economy”. Social innovation “has only recently come to be a conscious concern of policy discussion” (Murray, Mulgan and Caulier-Grice, 2009: 2). As a consequence of such a vision, NESTA is actually involved in studying different aspects of social innovation, promoting and disseminating a definition of it and developing tools for supporting and measuring social innovation.¹⁹

NESTA is not alone (Table 2). Research groups and non-profit organizations have been set up worldwide that devote themselves to the study of social innovation. Books, articles and reports are published by the dozens every year, and new journals entirely concerned with social innovation have appeared, like the Stanford *Social Innovation Review*. Several government initiatives have been launched, like the US White House Office of Social Innovation and the European Union Program for Social Change and Innovation.

¹⁸ Early efforts to broaden the “restricted” meaning of (invention and) innovation goes back to anthropology, starting in the late nineteenth century. See Godin (2012a).

¹⁹ NESTA is also working to diffuse the concept of innovation in sectors which make no use of it because they have their own vocabulary, like the cultural or “creative” sectors. See Godin (2012b).

What does social innovation mean to contemporary writers? Definitions are many. According to Mulgan, social innovation is “new ideas that work in meeting social needs” or, more specifically, “innovative activities and services that are motivated by the goal of meeting a social need and that are predominantly developed and diffused through organisations whose primary purposes are social” (Mulgan, 2007: 8). As examples, Mulgan elected “10 World-Changing Social Innovations” (see Annex 2 below). According to the Réseau québécois sur l’innovation sociale (RQIS), which recently published a *Déclaration pour l’innovation sociale* with the explicit purpose of putting social innovation on the government agenda, social innovation is (RQIS, 2011: 10):

une nouvelle idée, approche ou intervention, un nouveau service, un nouveau produit ou une nouvelle loi, un nouveau type d’organisation qui répond plus adéquatement et plus durablement que les solutions existantes à un besoin social bien défini, une solution qui a trouvé preneur au sein d’une institution, d’une organisation ou d’une communauté et qui produit un bénéfice mesurable pour la collectivité et non seulement pour certains individus. La portée d’une innovation sociale est transformatrice et systémique. Elle constitue, dans sa créativité inhérente, une rupture avec l’existant.

These are just some examples. While launching the European Social Innovation Pilot Initiative *Social Innovation Europe* in March 2011, J. M. Barroso, President of the European Commission, stated, “social innovation is about meeting the unmet social needs and improving social outcomes”. It is tapping creativity “to find new ways of meeting pressing social needs, which are not adequately met by the market or the public sector and are directed towards vulnerable groups in society” (Barroso, 211: 2). To the US White House Office of Social Innovation, social innovation is “innovation that will help achieve faster, more lasting progress, as opposed to marginal or incremental progress on our social problems”.²⁰

²⁰ <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/sicp/initiatives/social-innovation-fund>.

Table 2.
Some Recent Books
on Social Innovation

- Martens, B., and A. G. Keul (eds.) (2005), *Designing Social Innovation: Planning, Building, Evaluation*, Gottingen: Hogrefe.
- Wheatley, M., and D. Frieze (2006), *Using Emergence to Take Social Innovation to Scale*, The Berkana Institute.
- Regalia, I. (2006), *Regulating New Forms of Employment. Local Experiments and Social Innovation in Europe*, Abingdon [England], New York: Routledge.
- Klein, J. L., and D. Harrisson (eds.) (2007), *L'innovation sociale: émergence et effets sur la transformation des sociétés*, Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec.
- Hamalainen, T. J., R. Heiskala (eds.) (2007), *Social Innovations, Institutional Change and Economic Performance: Making Sense of Structural Adjustment Processes in Industrial Sectors, Regions and Societies*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Drewe, P., J.-L. Klein and E. Hulsbergen (eds.) (2008), *The Challenge of Social Innovation in Urban Revitalization*, Amsterdam: Techne Press.
- MacCallum, D., F. Moulaert, J. Hillier and S.V. Haddock (eds.) (2009), *Social Innovation and Territorial Development*, Farnham, England, Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Bourque, R., D. Harrisson and G. Széll (eds.) (2009), *Social Innovation, the Social Economy, and World Economic Development. Democracy and Labour Rights in an Era of Globalization*, Frankfurt am Main, New York: Lang.
- Harrison, D., G. Szell and R. Bourques (eds.) (2009), *Social Innovation, the Social economy and World Economic Development*, Frankfurt: Verlag.
- MacCallum, D., F. Moulaert, J. Hiller and S. Vicari (2009), *Social Innovation and Territorial Development*, Surrey: Ashgate.
- Goldsmith, S. et al. (eds.) (2010), *The Power of Social Innovation: How Civic Entrepreneurs Ignite Community Networks for Good*, San Francisco: Jossey Boss.
- Ellis, T. (2010), *The New Pioneers: Sustainable Business Success Through Social Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship*, New York: Wiley.
- Moulaert, F. F. Martinelli, E. Swyngedouw and S. González (eds.) (2010), *Can Neighbourhoods Save the City? Community Development and Social Innovation*, London, New York: Routledge.
- Goldsmith, S., G. Gigi; Burke and T. Glynn (2010), *The Power of Social Innovation: How Civic Entrepreneurs Ignite Community Networks for Good*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bureau of European Policy Advisers (2011), *Empowering People, Driving Change. Social Innovation in the European Union*, European Communities. Luxembourg.
- Gurrutxaga, A.R. (eds.) (2011), *Implications of Current Research on Social Innovation in the Basque Country*, Reno, Nev: Center for Basque Studies University of Nevada, Reno.
- Saul, J. (2011), *Social Innovation, Inc. 5 Strategies for Driving Business Growth Through Social Change*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Nicholls, A., and A. Murdock (2012), *Social Innovation: Blurring Boundaries to Reconfigure Markets*, London: Macmillan.

From the above definitions which, I repeat, correspond to only a limited sample of existing definitions, one may observe a diversity of representations but also a certain ‘hegemony’. Social innovation is concerned with anything “social”, whatever it may be. It includes any type of innovation – including types of innovation studied under other names before (political innovation, organizational innovation)²¹ or without the word – as long as it has some “social” orientation. It is also more or less what is talked of in term of social policy and reform elsewhere.²²

This brings me to a second characteristic of social innovation. I have mentioned already that social innovation re-emerged in the twentieth century as a reaction to technological innovation in the Anglo-Saxon world. In contrast, in France social innovation owes its resurrection to a reaction to and contestation of the State and its institutions (*Autrement*, 1976; *Informations sociales*, 1976).²³ To many writers, in France but also elsewhere, the concept is placed within a left-wing ideology, either explicitly or implicitly. Social innovation privileges the non-institutional, the ‘alternative’ and the ‘marginal’. To the author of one of the very first theoretical studies, social innovation is “an innovative kind of school, a new way of dealing with poverty, a new procedure for resocializing delinquents, a new technique for rehabilitating the schizophrenic” (Taylor, 1970: 70; see also McVoy and Fairweather above, p. 20 and 22). Residues of the nineteenth century’s socialism inhere in the theories: the “community” and non-profit organizations, although not these only, are privileged sources of social innovation and the focus of most studies (e.g. Mulgan, 2007; Klein and Harrisson, 2007, particularly the chapters from J. Nussbaumer and F. Moulart, and M.J. Bouchard). Initiative, autonomy, liberty, democracy and liberation are keywords that came into use in discourses on social innovation (Chambon et al., 1982; Klein and Harrisson, 2007). “Solidarity” as concept has also made its entry into the literature (Lévesque, 2007). The representation of social innovation one gets from reading Mulgan and his colleagues and others like the Canadian

²¹ Social innovation was particularly discussed in terms of organizational innovation in the 1980-90s: new forms or structures of organization and new organization of work, generally in response to technological changes.

²² On critical thoughts on the use of ‘innovation’ in social policy, see Osborne (1998).

²³ In the mid-1970s, a series of initiatives on social innovation were launched in France, among them: the Fondation internationale pour l’innovation sociale (1975) and the Centre d’information sur l’innovation sociale (1976).

Centre de recherche sur les innovations sociales (CRISES) ²⁴ is political. Social innovation is, above all, “democratic, citizen- or community-oriented and user-friendly”; it assigns significance to what is “personalized, small, holistic and sustainable”; its methods are diverse, not restricted to standard science and include “open innovation, user participation, cafés, ethnography, action research”, etc. (Murray et al., 2010). ²⁵

Such a representation is a social construction. Social innovation may be defined according to its source, its goal and/or its form/type. To many present day researchers, the source is necessarily the community, the goal is that of the *laissés pour compte* and social innovation is “alternatives” to current ways of doing things. By contrast, to early writers the ‘social’ of social innovation refers simply to (diverse) changes introduced into society by individuals, groups and organizations (Holt, 1971), or innovation *tout court*; (e.g. Lapierre’s case studies) or to changes in specific social sub-systems (e.g. Garvey and Griffith, 1966). To still others, it is solutions (whatever they may be and whatever their source) to problems of a ‘public’ nature: environmental pollution, fresh water, crime prevention, international organization, urban development, poverty, highway safety, urban transportation, arms control and disarmament (US Department of Commerce, 1967: 11). To some (but not the socialists), the market, industry or the factory is social innovation, as we have seen. In contrast, contemporary writers build an argument contrasting social innovation to technology, the market and (neo)liberalism. To others, as we have seen again, social innovation is public legislation, or social reform supported by government. In contrast, to present day writers social innovation is necessarily non-institutional. In sum, social innovation contains, as Jean-Louis Chambon and his colleagues put it in 1982, “des germes de rêve” (seeds or residues of dreams): social consensus, countercurrent, third way, democracy, ecology (Chambon et al., 1982: 9-10).

²⁴ The original meaning of CRISES is: Centre de recherche sur les innovations dans l’économie sociale, les entreprises et les syndicats.

²⁵ For a study of definitions from over 300 articles, see: Ruede and Lurtz (2012).

Conclusion

Innovation as a concept became de-contested over the last two centuries. After being contested for 2,500 years in religion, politics and social matters innovation became legitimized (Godin, 2011c). As a consequence, many people started appropriating the concept for their own ends. A concept which acquires a positive connotation in one sphere is soon used in others.²⁶ The vocabulary on technology became that on technological innovation; biologists started making use of the term ('animal innovation'); and sociologists resurrected the term social innovation.

Social innovation appeared after the French revolution. It meant many things then. It had both a positive and a negative connotation. As a writer put it on the alliance between France and Austria of 1756: the alliance is "une innovation sociale qui, par les uns fut anathématisée du nom de perturbation sociale, et, par les autres, baptisée du saint nom de progrès" (Gaillardet, 1837: 155). The two main representations of social innovation were socialism (radicalism) and social reform (humanism, egalitarianism). The association between social innovation and socialism was first made by the socialists themselves in France in the 1830s and 1840s,²⁷ then 'historians'.²⁸ But critics rapidly turned the concept into a pejorative category, above all in England (Sargant, political economists and Christian writers). This led some to contrast innovation to reform.

From the above history, one could conjecture that social innovation as social reform contributed to giving legitimacy to innovation, a damned word as Considerant put it: "On frissonne aujourd'hui au seul mot d'innovation. Pour une foule d'hommes, le nom de novateur est un nom maudit" (Considerant, 1834: 312). Yet there have been few uses of social innovation until recently, as compared, for example, to innovation itself. In this sense, social innovation is witness to innovation being perceived as positive, rather than being a causative factor in the positive connotation of innovation.

²⁶ This story is the same as that of the term revolution. See: Koselleck (1969), Reichardt (1997).

²⁷ The association was made by the followers rather than the originators.

²⁸ Historiography of politics as well as that of the working class used social innovation to refer to examples or models (Owen and Fourier) or to make analogies with innovation in politics, religion or literature.

Like innovation, social innovation (and social innovator) started as a polemical derogatory label. The purpose was to discredit someone. Then it acquired a positive and moral connotation. The purpose was to praise something and call for action: a public goal and the legislation for it. For a long time, both the positive and negative references to social innovation were simple uses of the phrase, with few occurrences in a text. Only very recently has social innovation entered theoretical writings. This started with conceptual discussions in the 1960-70s that then developed into theories in the last ten years or so.

Today, one observes the same diversity of meanings as in the nineteenth century. However, the meanings are predominantly if not exclusively positive. Social innovation is part of a semantic network of terms, all of old origin by the way, which get resurrected from time to time to put emphasis on the social – social change (early use: 1741), social economy (1767; also Sargant, 1858: 227), social invention (1782), social capital (1800), social technology (1863) ²⁹ – and add a moral connotation to it: social innovation is embedded in a ‘socialist’ or alternative ideology.

*Uses of Social Innovation as a Category
Over Time* ³⁰

Socialism → Social Reform → Alternative

Innovation (including social innovation) has become a *supercategory* in Ron Harris’ sense: it “integrates what would otherwise be separate activities and inquiries” in order to redraw the intellectual world that society adopts (Harris, 2005: xi). Social innovation is a reaction to innovation as a pejorative category for centuries. It serves to make a contrast,

²⁹ One of the first such combinations is certainly Comte’s “social physic” as a precursor term to sociology.

³⁰ A sub-step to social reform could be added: social policy → social experiment. In the 19760-70s, many argued that there is need to involve scientists and for ‘scientification’ in social policy (social experiments).

a distinction to other types of innovation. It emphasizes something. To early critics, the purpose of ‘innovation’ in “social innovation” was to equate the ‘social’ novelty (or socialism) to innovation and label it as a pejorative category. To others, the ‘social’ in “social innovation” is to contrast to other types of innovation or qualify the innovation: social innovation is innovation of a public or collaborative nature. It is distributive – and good. The distinction is moral.

The next step was the study of social innovation as a concept on its own. However, the concept remains mostly a counter-concept, contrasted to the State and its institutions or to technological innovation, which is said to be hegemonic in discourses, policies and theories – in the 1920s and 1930s (to Ogburn for example, it was technology in the world of goods which was too voluminous).³¹ Social innovation is sometimes presented as a new concept. As contrasted to technological innovation, as adjustment to a “disjunction” or “gap” (Mulgan’s terms) and with regard to the undesired effects of technological innovation, it suggests that the concept of social innovation came after that of “technological innovation”. To be sure, technological innovation is present everywhere in the literature for several decades, and it is hard to escape the effects of the hegemony. This may explain why the few ‘historiographical’ thoughts on social innovation described the concept as new. However, the concept of social innovation existed well before that of technological innovation. The latter appeared in the 1940s (with a few exceptions before that date, like Veblen in *Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution*, 1915), and exploded in the 1960s and after (Godin, 2011c; 2011c). In contrast, social innovation goes back to the very beginning of the nineteenth century. Social innovation owes its origin to socialism, and its resurrection (in the twenty-first Century) to technological innovation.

³¹ On counter-concepts, see Koselleck, 1975.

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Appendix 1.

Social Inventions

Ogburn's list of social invention	Weeks' areas of social invention
Armistice day	Tax system
Auto tourist camp	Jury trial
Australian ballot	Wearing apparel
Basketball	League of nations
Bonus to wage earners	Traveling libraries
Boycott	Accident prevention
Chain store	Capitalistic system
Charity organization society	Medicine
City manager plan	Graft
Civil service system	Legal service
Clearing house	Weights and measures
Community chest	Value of the dollar
Company union	War
Correspondence school	Minorities
Day nursery	International language
Direct primary	Distribution of wealth
Esperanto	Noise
Federal Reserve system	Health
Four-H club	Motivation of production
Group insurance	Disarmament
Holding company	Idle time
Indeterminate sentence	Worry
Intelligence tests	Personal insulation
Investment trust	Duplication
Installment selling	Advertising
Junior college	Tariff
Juvenile court	Cities
Ku Klux Klan	Wild life
League of Nations	Jobs
Legal aid society	Discovery of law breakers
Lock out	Regulation of production to need
Matrimonial bureau	Moral code
Minimum wage law	Fundamentalism
Mother's pension	Law schools
National economic council	New wants
One-step	International trade
Passport	Alumni
Patents	Crime prevention
Psychological clinics	Poverty
Proportional representation	Political platforms
Recall	Racial accord
Research institute	Court procedure
Rochdale cooperative	Work of assessors
Rotary club	Investment
Seminar	Waste of metals
Social settlement	Overcrowded professions
Summer camp	The 'funnies'

Tag day
Universal suffrage
Visiting teacher

Rackets
Simple life
Pedestrianism
Liquor control
Form of government
Red tape
Automatic referenda
Judgment test for voters
Education
Rumor damper and lie sterilizer
Conservatism
Rotation of occupation
Travel
Community buying and use
History

Appendix 2.

Mulgan's Ten World-Changing Social Innovations

The Open University - and the many models of distance learning that have opened up education across the world and are continuing to do so.

Fair trade - pioneered in the UK and USA between the 1940s and 1980s, and now growing globally.

Greenpeace - and the many movements of ecological direct action which drew on much older Quaker ideas and which have transformed how citizens can engage directly in social change.

Grameen - alongside BRAC and others whose new models of village and community-based microcredit have been emulated worldwide.

Amnesty International - and the growth of human rights.

Oxfam (originally the Oxford Committee for Relief of Famine) - and the spread of humanitarian relief.

The Women's Institute (founded in Canada in the 1890s) - and the innumerable women's organizations and innovations which have made feminism part of the mainstream.

Linux software - and other open source methods such as Wikipedia and Ohmynews that are transforming many fields.

NHS Direct - and the many organizations, ranging from Doctor Robert to the Expert Patients Programme, which have opened up access to health and knowledge about health to ordinary people.

Participatory budgeting models - of the kind pioneered in Porto Alegre and now being emulated, alongside a broad range of democratic innovations, all over the world.