In-NOvation in protected and touristic territories

Isabelle Falardeau[1]

[1] Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Québec, Canada.
isabelle.falardeau2@uqtr.ca iD

ABSTRACT

Protected areas are tourist destinations where, contrary to popular imaginaries, communities live. In and around those territories, actors implement solutions that meet the needs of their community (Soubirou & Jacob, 2019); they demonstrate social innovation. In doing so, they contribute to new compromises and new forms of regulation or governance (Klein et al., 2014). Sometimes, out of attachment to the territory, they choose alternative paths (Crosetti & Joye, 2021) such as NOvation (Godin & Vinck, 2017). The objective of this study is to analyze how mountain touristic territories articulated around protected areas generate innovation in order to face the challenges they encounter. In the form of a multiple case study, three territories are studied: Mont-Orford (Canada), Banff (Canada) and Aspen (United States). Contemporary issues are discussed in the continuity of their historical roots (see Crosetti & Joye, 2021). The results highlight the specificity of mountain tourism territories where protected areas are found, and the resulting double valuation they are subjected to (by tourism and conservation), that sometimes constrain but also foster (social) in-NOvation (in-NOvation [sociale] in French), a term introduced to name a broadened conception of innovation. It manifests itself in unsuspected spheres: the past, nature, within government institutions, through governance and dynamics of the territories. Touristic and protected mountain territories are not "on the fringes" of innovation, rather, their characteristics (rugged relief, relative eccentricity, exceptional character) make them the breeding ground for a distinction between (social) in-NOvation and the leitmotif of innovation "at any cost" (Everett Rogers, 1963 in Godin & Vinck, 2017). Considering recurring or acute issues, this study contributes to the scientific study of innovation, which is imbued with the prevailing pro-innovation bias (Boutroy et al., 2015; Godin & Vinck, 2017).

INTRODUCTION

Banff, Mount Everest, Yosemite… These powerful mountain icons also have in common that they are protected areas. The links between mountains and protected areas are multiple and intrinsic. Yosemite, with its famous El Capitan, is the world's first natural park, created in 1864 to "be held for public use, resort, and recreation" (Library of Congress, n.d.). Mountains host a third of terrestrial protected areas worldwide (IUCN, 2021).

Protected areas, and their emblem, national parks, are destinations that have long attracted tourists. They are also places in and around which communities live. Touristic and protected territories in the mountains, by their characteristics and contexts, are the theatre of contradictions, dynamics and issues. In some cases, the actors of these communities seek and implement solutions that meet their needs (Soubirou & Jacob, 2019), which corresponds to social innovation (Duret & Angué, 2015). Sometimes, out of attachment to their territory they resort to alternative paths such as NOvation (Crosetti & Joye, 2021; Godin & Vinck, 2017). True to their history, they put their creativity towards renewing their territorial functions through a range of strategies ranging from strategic territorial envisioning to resisting to some forms of development (Crosetti & Joye, 2021).

This article aims to analyze the innovation and governance innovation that mountain touristic territories articulated around protected areas generate in order to mitigate the challenges they face. After painting a theoretical portrait of protected areas, innovation and governance, a multiple case study is presented. Aspen (United States), Mont-Orford (Canada) and Banff (Canada) are retained because all three are mountainous destinations that developed around protected areas. The results and discussion highlight how the double valuation (through conservation and tourism) of mountain protected areas contributes to issues prompting communities to mobilize innovation. This innovation manifests itself in addition to and beyond technological innovation. It can be found in unsuspected spheres: the past, nature, within governance or governmental institutions. For mountain protected area, the dual *mise en valeur* both constrains and contributes to dynamics. Finally, the idea of (social) in-NOvation is introduced.

CONTEXT

Protected areas and tourism

Protected areas are defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as a: "clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values" (Dudley, 2008). From the end of the 19th century, with industrialization and difficult living conditions in urban areas, the idea of preserving "untouched" nature appeared as a solution to counter the disturbing impact of humans (Cronon, 1996; Vidon, *et al.*, 2018). Thus, emerged an emblematic type of protected area: national parks (Sandlos, 2011). But national parks were not solely created for the intrinsic value of nature, accessibility and belonging were also central. Sites have often been chosen not only for their biodiversity and landscapes, but also according to their geographical location accessible to city dwellers (Campbell, 2011). The potential for tourism had a key influence in the creation of the first national parks (Sandlos, 2011; Cronon, 2011), and their development potential through tertiarization of the economy continues to be put forward (Lapointe & Gagnon, 2011).

The dichotomy between conservation and tourism in protected areas created a somewhat «insoluble paradox» (Héritier & Moumaneix, 2007) and led to issues related to changes in the traditional use of natural resources, the local economic structure, way of life and culture or in the mode of territorial governance, etc. (Lapointe and Gagnon, 2011). The socio-territorial dynamics associated with these issues call for adaptation strategies by the communities.

(Social) In-NOvation

Innovation has been a fashionable concept for decades (Gaglio *et al.*, 2019). Technological innovation, also named Schumpeterian innovation, although only one of its forms, has gradually become synonymous with innovation (Gaglio *et al.*, 2019). Faced with this hegemony, social innovation has (re)appeared as an alternative (Gaglio *et al.*, 2019; Godin, 2017) as a way of cutting short criticism and legitimizing innovation (Richez-Battesti *et al.*, 2012). In the broad sense, social innovation can be defined as an action aimed at meeting a social need by strengthening social ties (Duret & Angué, 2015). The *Centre de Recherche sur les Innovations Sociales* (CRISES) defines it as:
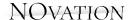
> New social, organizational or institutional arrangements or even new products or services with an explicit social purpose resulting, voluntarily or not, from an action initiated by an individual or a group of individuals to respond to an aspiration, meet a need, provide a solution to a problem or take advantage of an opportunity for action in order to modify social relations, to transform a framework of action or to propose new cultural orientations (CRISES, 2021, n.p.).

This represents an acceptance that includes action within institutions. Another conception of social innovation focuses on the non-institutional or the alternative, finding its source in the community (Godin, 2017). In this sense, it responds to the insufficiencies of the modern institutions in providing solutions to social problems (Klein *et al.*, 2014). Social actors are therefore implementing compromises and new forms of regulation or governance (Klein *et al.*, 2014). Social innovation reflects the decisions of the territories and actors involved who seek to improve their social and ecological conditions (Mehmood & Parra 2013; Moulaert 2009; van Dyck & van den Broek, 2013).

Social innovation contributed to widening the scope of innovation beyond technological innovation (Gaglio *et al.*, 2019). In order to be mindful of neglected aspects of innovation, some authors invite to innovate in innovation research (Godin & Vinck, 2017), a call also heard in the field of tourism (Sørensen & Hjalager, 2020). NOvation appeared as the critical approach in the study of innovation. NOvation takes various forms: resistance (e.g. to sociotechnological solutions [Thomas *et al.*, 2017]), non-adoption (e.g. innovations that are rejected or whose adoption is discontinued [Rogers, 1983]), slow innovation (e.g. business strategies slowing down innovation [Leinter, 2017]), innovation by withdrawal (the reduction or elimination of a practice [Goulet & Vinck, 2012] or a succession of withdrawals [Borgnet, 2019]), exnovation (departing from a previously adopted innovation [Kimberly & Evanisko 1981]), illicit innovation (resulting illegal practices [Söderberg, 2017)].

In this article, we propose the expression (social) in-NOvation to name an encompassing understanding of innovation that combines innovation in the Schumpeterian sense, that is to say centered on business and technology (Godin, 2004), with innovation critical approaches aimed at building a better representation of innovation for society (Godin & Vinck, 2017).

(Social) innovation, protected areas and governance

The links between social innovation and tourism have received little attention in the academic literature (Torres *et al.* 2017; Mosedale & Voll, 2017) although they offer a field of possibilities for research (Peterlin & Dimovski, 2015). Social innovation is also scant in the literature on protected areas (Castro-Arce *et al.*, 2019). Although tourism governance, on the other hand, is an established research subject, few contributions have been made at the meeting point of social innovation, tourism and governance (see Jacob, 2017).

Governance, a polysemic notion used in various disciplines and contexts including tourism, can be defined as formal and informal arrangements between private and public actors, from which decisions are taken and implemented (Le Galès in Gerbaux *et al.*, 2004), divided into two streams: the corporate (businesses control system) and the political (power and decision-making) (Bichler, 2021). In the case of protected areas and tourism destinations, the francophone notion of territorial governance (*gouvernance territoriale*) seems insightful. It refers to non-hierarchical community cooperation in the construction of territories (Pasquier *et al.*, 2013, in Jacob, 2017).

Governance highlights the plurality of actors involved in decision-making (Gerbaux *et al.*, 2004) and the importance of the local community as an agent of development and change in our societies (Tremblay *et al.*, 2009). Protected areas are coveted by different actors with divergent objectives, which creates governance challenges. The governance system of a protected area must therefore be adaptive and capture the various human-nature relationships (Castro-Arce *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, innovation can differ according to the nature of a territory in terms of governance (Favre-Bonté *et al.*, 2020). For protected areas, social innovation can mediate between bottom-up initiatives and official bodies, thus contributing to governance systems embracing community (Pradel-Miquel *et al.*, 2013; Spijker & Parra 2018 in Castro-Arce *et al.*, 2019). Protected areas governance is sometimes transformed from a top-down model towards a more collaborative approach (e.g. through volunteering) (Kwiatkowski *et al.*, 2020). Some authors have researched how the duality between conservation and use can be transcended through governance innovation (Kwiatkowski *et al.*, 2020). In tourism, governance innovations, "rework existing and bring into use new collaborative modes and mechanisms", and have been conceptualized on a spectrum ranging between a neoliberal perspective and a broader multiple stakeholder, collaborative format (Hjalager, 2020).

RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES

Protected areas are subject to a double valuation, by conservation and by tourism development. This duality manifests itself through contradictions and challenges experienced within these territories. This study focuses on certain forms of (social) innovation or NOvation mobilized by the communities, and the interlinkages with their governance.

The main objective of this research is to analyze how touristic territories articulated around protected areas generate (social) innovation or NOvation in order to mitigate the challenges they face. Three specific objectives derive from it:

1) Circumscribe the influence of the duality between conservation and development on (social) innovation in protected areas.

2) Explore how the territories' characteristics contribute to or constrain (social) innovation through illustrations of how (social) innovation contributes to territorial dynamics.

3) Determine the participation of different social actors and governance of (social) innovation.

METHODOLOGY

Following Héritier and Moumaneix (2007) and Crosetti and Joye (2021), a critical approach putting into perspective the influence of historical elements on the current challenges experienced in mountain territories is adopted. These issues relate to social and environmental considerations at stake around competing activities in and around protected areas (Héritier & Moumaneix, 2007). How these territories have dealt with such issues sheds light on the contemporary phase of a development continuum (Crosetti & Joye, 2021). This research is based on a multiple case study methodology used to describe and obtain an in-depth understanding of a social phenomenon (Yin, 2003; De Urioste-Stone *et al.*, 2018) and to shed light on a general problem through the examination of specific examples (Urioste-Stone *et al.*, 2018).

Three mountain destinations in the vicinity of protected areas are studied: Mont-Orford (Canada), Banff (Canada) and Aspen (United States). They share certain characteristics (presence of major infrastructure such as a ski centre in protected areas; are overvalued, one or more crises have exposed pre-existing issues), but differ in other respects (e.g. types of protected areas, geophysical characteristics). Three issues other than these characteristics, one for each of these territories, are addressed. In the Mont Orford region, accessibility has been a source of citizen mobilization since the creation of the national park. In Banff, the (over)visitation of a national park, which encompasses a small town within its borders, gives rise to urban-type issues within a natural site. In Aspen, the high cost of living in a location popular for tourism and amenity migration represents an "impossible math" (Stuber, 2020) for the middle class. The juxtaposition of the cases allows exploring their challenges and the (social) innovation they mobilize, which are interwoven to governance. The territories were also selected due to the intellectual interest and background of the author (De Urioste-Stone *et al.*, 2018) who has lived and worked for several years in mountain destinations. This in-depth knowledge and experience of the researcher about the phenomenon studied contributes to analysis (Yin, 2003).

Several complementary sources were consulted: scientific and professional writing, legislative and administrative documents, press articles, documentary film, audio and internet content, and field visits. The data generated produced a rich description of each of the cases and their context (De Urioste-Stone *et al.*, 2018). The analysis is carried out by cross-case synthesis (Yin, 2003). Each case is treated individually, then the results are aggregated in order to draw cross-conclusions (Yin, 2003).

RESULTS

Aspen: amenity migration, cost of living and mitigation

The modern roots of Aspen date back to the 1940s, when business people and intellectuals reinvented the then-devitalized former mining town (Aspen Historical Society, 2017a). Skiing and recreational practices replaced extractive uses, in a new boom, that of "white gold" (meaning snow) (Aspen Historical Society, 2017b; Stuber, 2020). The "Aspen Idea" is attributed to Walter Paepcke, a wealthy businessman inspired by the splendour of the mountains, who imagined a community identity combining spirit, body and soul (Sieg, 2019). This represented a (business) opportunity to attract "great minds" who could "help find solutions to the great problems of humanity" (Aspen Historical Society in Sieg, 2019).

Paepcke founded Aspen Skiing Company to finance the Aspen Institute and the Aspen Music Festival (Sieg, 2019), three institutions which are still active. A (social) innovation if there is one, this influence of business people, sportsmen, intellectuals, celebrities, etc. (Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke, Friedl Pfeifer, Frederic "Fritz" Benedict, etc.) explains the abundance of cultural life that still characterizes the city (Aspen Historical Society, 2017b; Stuber, 2020) as well as the diverse actors involved in the community (Stuber, 2020).

Aspen can be considered a "high-natural-amenity based community" (Pavelka, 2008). Indeed, certain geographical characteristics are intrinsically linked to the creation of the city, the development of its community and tourism. Aspen is nestled at the base of Aspen Mountain, in the Roaring Fork River Valley in the American Rocky Mountains. The high-altitude alpine climate provides conditions sought after by skiers (e.g. sunshine and powdery snow).

Aspen's location can be described as "relatively isolated" (Browning Wilson, 2008). Compared to other destinations in the region (e.g. Vail), Aspen is farthest from Denver, the regional centre and tourist gateway (RRC Associates, 2019). It is also relatively isolated, butting itself on both sides with the mountains of the Roaring Fork Valley and the limits of the White River National Forest surrounding it. These geographical constraints have "naturally" limited the inhabited footprint, creating scarcity (Blevins, 2021).

National forests are a type of protected area administered by the United States Forest Service responsible to sustainably manage reserved territories hosting multiple use, including extractive activities (agriculture, forestry, mining), hunting, fishing, recreation and tourism (Briggs, 2000; United States Forest Service, n.d; Featherman, 2013). Superimposed on the territory of the White River National Forest are also areas of wilderness "untrammeled" by humans, enjoying the highest protection status through the National Wilderness Preservation System (United States of America Congress, 1964). Consequently, portions of the national forests with almost diametrically opposed protection statuses cohabit.

Due to its attractiveness, Aspen receives an influx of various amenity migrations, from ski bums to global stardom. In the 1980s, the influx of privileged new residents, famous or wealthy, began to change the socio-economic portrait (Bob Braudis, retired sheriff, in Sieg, 2019). In destinations such as Aspen, the privileged classes fuel labour needs through their consumption patterns (Moore *et al.*, 2006). This led to tensions, difficulties, even exclusions, particularly with regard to the high cost of living, the precarious-

ness of many residents, and a recurring shortage of affordable housing.[1] "The cost of housing here went from fairly expensive to unreachable for the working person" (Bob Braudis, retired sheriff, in Sieg, 2019: n.p.). This appears an "impossible math" (Stuber, 2020).

To resolve this social discontinuity, a form of territorial governance (Jacob, 2007) through a yearlong cooperation process between local stake holders including citizens, government, developers, and vacationers emerged (Stuber, 2020). Mitigation measures have been put in place, mainly aimed at regulating real estate development (Stuber, 2020). For example, due to the very high cost of housing and residential properties, local authorities have instituted mechanisms for more affordable housing for workers (APCHA, n.d.). Aspen Pitkin County Housing Authority (APCHA) is the non-profit organization, officially created in 1982 by an intergovernmental agreement between the City of Aspen and Pitkin County (Intergovernmental Agreement 66-82, 1982). Other measures exist, including urban planning and zoning regulations, special real estate fees, dedicated taxes on real estate transactions or the obligation to build an affordable housing on the property of an opulent residence (Stuber, 2020). As in other tourism destinations, private organizations also offer affordable accommodation for their employees. For example, Aspen Skiing Company operates 800 beds in affordable units (Aspen Skiing Company Housing, 2003-2020).

The scale of the mitigation measures in Aspen has the middle class nicknamed "subsidy class" (Stuber, 2020) by some critics. Even so, much of Aspen's workforce chooses or is forced to reside in nearby towns (Basalt, El Jebel, Glenwood Springs) and beyond. The daily commute can easily represent 2 to 3 hours, entailing significant expense and inconvenience. This situation is not unlike that of workers in large cities, but appears singular in a place like Aspen, with its small population and its "natural" context.

Certain contradictions have recently been highlighted by COVID-19. In ski resort destinations, the crisis of March 2020 hit at the height of the tourist season: spring break. In the Aspen region, unemployment rose from an historical low[2] (The Aspen Times, 2020; Wyrick, 2020). Considering that 40% of Americans do not have an emergency reserve, the community rallied together to support those in need (Schendler, 2020). For example, Aspen Skiing Company committed human and material resources through its sustainability enga-

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[1] In the Aspen vicinity, it is estimated that 28% of the residents spend more than 30% of their income on housing, the threshold targeted by authorities to avoid excessive burden (Navigate et al., 2016; Larrimore & Schuetz, 2017). This is without considering the rise in the value of single-family homes, which although subject to significant fluctuations, is increasing impressively. For example, it rose from $7,400,000 in 2017 (The Aspen Times, 2018) to $12,600,000 in 2021 (Hager, 2021).

[2] (2.5% in February 2020) to a record high (23.1% in April 2020) (The Aspen Times, 2020; Wyrick, 2020).

gement (Schendler, 2020). In terms of social sustainability, the fact that crisis management was based on initiatives as basic as a food drive sadly illustrates the impossible math faced by Aspen workers.

Mont-Orford: accessibility to the territory and citizen mobilization

Canton d'Orford is a municipality in southern Quebec (Canada) founded in 1885. Together with some of its neighbouring communities (Magog, Eastman, Austin, Ayer's Cliff, North Hatley), it forms a tourist destination to which we refer as the Mount Orford region. Mainly forest environment, 43% of the territory is under public administration, mainly due to the presence of Parc national du Mont-Orford (PNMO). The economic activity of the region is almost exclusively related to tourism and recreational activities.

Mountain accessibility and citizen mobilization are intrinsically linked to this territory. "Between the Orford and the inhabitants of the region has developed, over the generations an admiring, poetic, picturesque bond, both physical and mythical, even fantastical" (author's translation from Kesteman, 2006). It was thanks to the dream of Dr. George Austin Bowen that the idea of conserving the territory of Mount Orford was born (Brunelle-Lavoie, 1989) accompanied by a regional mobilization. Political support, popular pressure, fundraising from 27 surrounding municipalities and donations, allowed the land to be bought out from logging companies to create the park in 1938 (Kesteman in Meunier, 2015). As such, it represents a legacy for and by the community, born from the desire to conserve nature while offering a place of recreation for all.

Due to its smaller size (15 km2) and the absence of major lakes on its territory, it was not well suited to become a hunting and fishing reserve (Brunelle-Lavoie, 1989). But the quality of the natural environment and the strategic location of Mount Orford inspired Dr. Bowen. He justified the project by the idea that the park would attract a large number of visitors and thus procure economic vitality for the region, like the pioneering national parks of the American Northeast did (Brunelle-Lavoie, 1989; Lahaye, 2007). Outdoor activities, arts and resorts were present in PNMO, along with the associated facilities and infrastructure since its creation. This has included intensive uses (alpine ski resort, golf course), markers of both its identity and its attractiveness (Lahaye, 2007). Today, this manifestation of the duality between conservation and recreation persists (Lalande, 2001).

The PNMO's governance also differs in that the government partnered with local actors, first to acquire and then to develop it. In the tradition of the community mobilization that instituted the park, local sports associations, private or voluntary, have taken on the

recreational and tourism activities (Brunelle-Lavoie, 1989; Lalande, 2001). Four distinct organizations continue to offer activities within the boundaries of PNMO. The *Société des établissements de plein air du Québec* (Sépaq), is delegated by the Government of Quebec to operate Quebec's national parks. Three other organizations operate under lease with the government (*Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs*, 2016-2022): *Corporation Ski & Golf du Mont-Orford*, *Orford Musique* and *Jouvence* (an all-inclusive resort). This governance makes PNMO a pioneer (Brunelle-Lavoie, 1989).

Accessibility to this territory, acquired by community mobilization, has been the subject of many socio-territorial conflicts. Since the 2000s, tensions regarding the development of the PNMO have come to light. A controversy escalated in the Mont Orford region following the announcement of a real estate development project. Mont-Orford Inc., the private company that was managing the ski resort, asked for zoning and legislations modifications in order to "ensure" its (financial) success. Privatization projects, zoning changes, expansion, pricing, and various decisions concerning the park and its region have not obtained social acceptability. Going against public consultation processes and several stakeholders' recommendations, the provincial government allowed the modification of the boundaries of the PNMO.

The conflict that ensued involved several protagonists revealing of the local governance: a private promoter supported by the government, regional economic actors who anticipated the benefits, territorial actors (*municipalité régionale de comté* [MRC], municipalities, associations) and users of the territory. The local community was itself divided around conflicting uses and values (Gagnon & Lahaye, 2010). Opponents questioned the potential reduction in accessibility due to the privatization of part of the territory (Gagnon & Lahaye, 2010). "Saving" the integrity of the park meant being faithful to the founding governance and agreement between the Quebec state and population (Kesteman, 2006). Coalition SOS Parc Orford was formed in 2006 to protest and influence the government's decision (SOS Parc Orford, n.d.). Following a strong mobilization that spread across the province, the government backed down and entrusted the MRC *de Memphrémagog* with the responsibility of finding a reconciling project. This is how a non-profit organization, funded by cities of the MRC, was created in 2011 to manage the mountain and golf course: Corporation Ski & Golf Mont-Orford.

The issue of accessibility rose again at the heart of COVID-19 when the Corporation Ski & Golf Mont-Orford announced the implementation of a fee for non-resident hikers to increase the summer revenues (Jacques, 2020a). Once again, profitability justified decision-

making concerning access to the protected area. Opposed citizens made themselves heard, notably through a petition titled "Mont Orford is not private property!" (author's translation). The Coalition SOS Parc Orford was brought back to life demanding the suspension of the fee (Dallaire, 2020). Other organizations (e.g. Sentiers de l'Estrie) also took position "for the maintenance of free access" to public land as "a society choice" (Gagnon, 2020). In a spirit of collaboration, opponents suggested the establishment of a work group dedicated to finding a solution respectful of the vision of Dr. Bowen that favoured accessibility to public land (Dallaire, 2020), an informal governance body.

Their demand was heard and a committee was created regrouping elected officials from different government levels, Corporation Ski & Golf Mont-Orford, citizen groups and economic organizations (Jacques, 2020b). Short after, in accordance with the committee's recommendations, the access fee was replaced by a pilot project for paid parking during events (Radio-Canada, 2020). A permanent advisory committee responsible for resolving issues regarding the accessibility of the mountain was also created. For opposition groups, this outcome "shows that citizen power is important" (…) "For us, it is good governance practice to be able to participate in the good decisions that will take place" (author's translation from Radio-Canada, 2020). The conflict demonstrated the relevance of citizens' voices and their influence on the governance of the territory.

The issues of accessibility and citizen mobilization are rooted in the history and territory of PNMO. The governance of this public territory has integrated local actors through various sports and community associations. Criticism towards the park's accessibility has also being present, almost from the beginning (Brunelle-Lavoie, 1989), which has brought its share of conflicts. Will the PNMO be able to meet the challenges of the years to come and remain faithful to its founding intentions by ensuring the conservation and universal accessibility of a territory "where nature and pleasure merge" (author's translation, Brunelle-Lavoie 1989)?

Tourism and National Parks: Urban Type Issues in Banff National Park

In Europe and North America, it is often under the influence of railway companies that tourism was integrated into the creation and development of national parks. In Western Canada, the Canadian Pacific Railway was inaugurated in 1886, the year following the inauguration of Banff, the first Canadian national park around the thermal springs of Sulfur Mountain (Wynn, 2011; Parcs Canada, 2021a). The tourist destination was created to fuel the use and profitability of the railroad. A population settled in the visitor centre, a community created within the park to provide services to visitors (Héritier, 2006). This led to a permanent occupation incorporated as a town in 1990 (Draper, 2000). In addition to issues typical of protected areas (high frequentation, conflict uses, etc.), urban issues developed (pedestrian and road congestion, accessibility to housing) (Héritier & Moumaneix, 2007; MacEachern, 2016).

While North American protected areas generally include few intensely developed spaces, Banff represents a case in point since it encompasses highly developed zones, even urbanized spaces (Héritier, 2006). One of the main contemporary issues of national parks is linked to the intensity of tourist activity (Héritier & Moumaneix, 2007). Banff is Canada's most visited national park and has always received high notoriety (MacEachern, 2016). Banff is often evaluated as "crowded" by visitors (Parcs Canada, 2019). Concerns are also raised by residents about the use of the park and the city (Pavelka in Kemna, 2020). Yearly visitation grew from half a million visitors in 1950 to 4 121 062 visitors in 2019-2020 (Statistique Canada, 2020). At the time of this writing, 2020-2021 is expected to have been even busier (Town of Banff, 2021).

Continuous pressures associated with development have resulted in the presence of major infrastructure within the park itself: early elite tourism (railway, train station, luxury hotel in the 1800s, golf course in the 1930s), the ski craze in the 1960s (road and air transport networks, ski resorts), democratization and development of mass tourism (services, businesses and city population growth) (Draper, 2020). Some of these are unexpected considering the conservation mission of a national park (Héritier & Moumaneix, 2007). By the end of the 1980s, acute tensions were present between development and environmental protection (Draper, 2000), even becoming recurring elements of concern for the IUCN (Draper, 2000; UICN, 2020).

The demographics of the Town of Banff are eloquent. From its foundation in 1886 to 1901, Banff gained 211 residents, and reached 7125 in 2001 (Héritier, 2006). The population is now over 8000, reaching the "ceiling" set between 8,000 and 10,000 under existing planning documents (Town of Banff, 2007; Rocky Mountain Outlook, 2019). As a town within a national park, Banff has its own municipal government on top of being subject to federal national parks legislation (Draper, 2000; Héritier, 2006). Eligibility for residency in Banff is governed by the National Parks of Canada Leases and Licenses of Occupation Regulations which limit residential leases to people who "live and work in the community", in order to meet the "needs of the community, rather than for recreation or the construction of secondary residences" (Parc national Banff, 2021). This is distinct from comparable tourist destinations' governance.

Despite facing significant pressures associated with geographically concentrating issues (Héritier, 2006), recreational practices, tourism development and population growth, the city limits cannot be expanded (Draper, 2000; Town of Banff, 2007). In Banff, issues usually encountered in urban areas are experienced within the confines of a national park. The Town of Banff creates a "honeypot" attracting the vast majority of the visitors to the national park (Héritier & Moumaneix, 2007). To accommodate the millions of annual visitors, the town operates infrastructures (e.g. wastewater management) large enough to support tens of thousands of people daily while its permanent population is much smaller (Draper, 2000; Svatek, 2004 in Héritier, 2006).

Furthermore, the desired lifestyle based on mountain recreational activities and the possibility of working in tourism or national parks contribute to a significant amenity migration in Banff and the surroundings (Pavelka, 2008). This creates challenges and socio-economic disparities, exacerbated by the fact that the town cannot geographically expand. For example, the housing vacancy rate oscillates between 0 and 1.2%, and the ratio of the median price of a house in relation to the average family income is "severely unaffordable" (Town of Banff, 2019). Many community members live in precarious conditions (Town of Banff, 2019), choose or are forced to live elsewhere (e.g. Canmore) or leave the area (Pavelka, 2008).

The challenges encountered led the community to act in order to strive for a balance between tourism development and environmental protection (Draper, 2000). In a citizen participatory approach, a consultation process led to the adoption of the 1998 Banff Community Plan, which was revisited in 2007 (Banff Community Plan 2007). The community mobilized innovative "made in Banff" initiatives (Draper, 2000) to influence its development trajectory. For example, in order to reduce the commercial growth and promote lower resi-

dential density, the innovative principles of "no net negative environmental impact" (3NEI) and "appropriate development and use" have been incorporated into community planning (Draper, 2000).

The 3NEI approach is an environmental management integrated into national park communities (Parks Canada Agency, 2000). It aims to ensure that ecosystems remain as they are or are improved as a result of development-related decisions made by national park or community authorities (Parks Canada Agency, 2000). Although it continues to be utilized, it has suffered criticisms and had to be improved over the years (Town of Banff, 2007; Parks Canada Agency, 2000). A low level of adherence by businesses (Francis, 2003; Orr, 2014) and the lack of clarity for its implementation and accountability are still noted (Parcs Canada, 2017).

The appropriate use and development is an allocation lottery for commercial development projects which was introduced in order to regulate the commercial growth rate (Draper, 2000). This innovative approach intended to shift decision-making from an emphasis on market economy principles to the inclusion of broader social and community goals (Draper, 2000). However, given that the Town of Banff is almost completely dependent on tourism, the balance between development and conservation remains elusive.

Considering the essential role of transport in the development of national parks, mobility induced by tourism is the most striking issue in Banff (Héritier & Moumaneix, 2007; MacEachern, 2016; Rocky Mountain Outlook, 2019). Banff's traffic is comparable to a larger urban centre[3] (Rocky Mountain Outlook, 2019). Several challenges are related to transport in Banff: automobile or pedestrian traffic, highway transit, congestion, parking, vehicle-wildlife conflicts, etc. (Héritier & Moumaneix, 2007; MacEachern, 2016; Pavelka, 2019b; Rocky Mountain Outlook, 2019).

Transport and congestion issues are frequent in national parks, calling for various mitigation measures: shuttle or public transport systems, encouragement to cycle, paid parking and dissuasive pricing measures for individual vehicles, dedicated vehicle zones, etc. (Héritier & Moumaneix, 2007). In Banff, these issues have given rise to local initiatives aimed at reducing dependence on the automobile (Pavelka, 2019a), for instance, improvements to public transport or subsidized transit passes based on income (Town of Banff, 2019).

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[3] Approximately 93% of visitors travel in a personal vehicle (Town of Banff, 2016). Twenty-four thousand vehicles drive through Banff daily, up to 34000 on peak summer days well over the "threshold of congestion" set at 20,000 (Pavelka, 2019a).
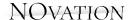
In 2020, during the COVID-19 crisis, part of downtown Banff was made pedestrian, to alleviate transportation problems and promote sanitary measures (Mertz, 2020). Incentives, such as free off-centre parking, were instigated (Town of Banff, 2021). The vast majority of visitors were favourable (Liricon Capital, 2020). Residents also supported the pedestrianization of the city centre, although more moderately (Liricon Capital, 2020). This initiative results in the acceleration of a planned pilot project, part of a grassroots initiative to "re-imagine" Banff (Pavelka, 2019a; 2019b). The pedestrian zone was renewed and expanded in 2021 and 2022 (Pearson, 2021).

The issues discussed here have been observed and reflected on for a long time and by actors from various walks within and around the Banff community (Héritier & Moumaneix, 2007). They continue to be prominent and gain attention (Pavelka 2019a; 2019b). Another indicator of the importance of these issues: Parks Canada announced in 2021 the establishment of a panel of experts on visitor mobility, a governance innovation established in preparation for its next management plan (Parcs Canada, 2021b). Have the distancing and maximum capacity measures adopted during COVID-19 accelerated decision-making in the face of congestion and overcrowding in protected areas?

DISCUSSION

Faced with challenges, and with their own geographical, historical, cultural and economic contexts (Corneloup, 2009), the social actors presented through these cases have implemented solutions for the good of their community (Soubirou & Jacob, 2019). Attached to their territory and history, they innovate and deploy strategies to improve and renew the social functions of their community, sometimes they even resist (development, growth, tourism, etc.) (Crosetti & Joye, 2021), transform the framework for action and governance, or seize opportunities (Soubirou & Jacob, 2019). In this sense, it is possible to interpret these initiatives as the expression of social innovation at the local level (Corneloup, 2009).

Protected Tourist Territories in the Mountains: Comparable Challenges and Solutions

Aspen has been influenced by the gap between an influential elite and a modest community base, becoming emblematic of destinations where the cost of living amounts to an "impossible math" for the middle class (Stuber, 2020). Affordable housing measures for workers in Aspen, which the free market cannot provide, have a long history (City of Aspen, 2018) and could be characterized as pioneer and innovative. This community support for a social issue, here through an institutional arrangement, the APCHA, embodies social innovation (see Soubirou and Jacob, 2019 and CRISES, 2021) and governance innovation (Tremblay *et al.*, 2009) which contributed to modernizing public policies in response to social crisis (Fourny, 2018), through the agency of local actors of change (Tremblay *et al.*, 2009). The initiative could also be read as an innovation by withdrawal, that is to say a form of NOvation (see Goulet & Vinck, 2002 in Borgnet, 2019), accommodation units being withdrawn from the free real estate market for social purposes (Godin & Vinck, 2017; Borgnet, 2019).

Accessibility to housing and the high cost of living contribute to exclusions in various tourism areas (Peyrache-Gadeau, 2007). Banff has also adopted measures to address the scarcity and "severely unaffordable" housing (Town of Banff, 2019), for instance through Banff Housing Corporation, the local counterpart of APCHA. Aspen and Banff, both are attractive territories where geographic constraints and isolation in or near a protected area limit the availability of building land. In this regard, Mont-Orford differs, the mountain and the protected area mostly unconstrained. While the area has its share of luxury residences, there is no affordability crisis comparable to that of Aspen or Banff. There has nevertheless been a craze for secondary residences in the region since the COVID-19 pandemic (Arel, 2020), a phenomenon also observed in Aspen (Small & Small, 2021).

Inequalities remain despite the mitigation measures. In Aspen, APCHA's affordable housing programs were already deemed insufficient pre-pandemic (City of Aspen, 2018), became crucial in overcoming the impacts of COVID-19 and must "continue to innovate" (Belin, 2021). New manifestations of social innovation and governance innovation could be stimulated by the crisis in order to relieve "social needs not or poorly resolved by institutional bodies" (Klein *et al.*, 2016 in Fourny, 2018), or bring about cultural change (Biggs *et al.*, 2010; Hager, 2021). In some mountain communities, radical actions are even mobilized: declaring a state of emergency to benefit from government funding, strikes or demonstrations in the heart of the tourist season, etc. (Blevins, 2021).

In the Mont Orford region, accessibility to the territory is intrinsically linked to citizen mobilization. Throughout its history, local actors have reaffirmed their attachment to the territory through initiatives that can be interpreted as social innovation (Cloutier, 2009). For example, PNMO is a pioneer and stands out in the Quebec context with regards to the founding and funding by "public-spirited citizens" for the purchase of the land that formed the park (Sherbrooke Daily Record, 1937 in Brunelle-Lavoie, 1989). Social innovation here directly participates in governance and territorial dynamics (Fourny, 2018; Landel *et al.*, 2018). The more recent episodes of citizen mobilization also take on social-(inNOvation) character. The constitution and reactivation of the Coalition SOS Parc Orford citizen committee speak to this (Gagnon & Lahaye, 2010; Patsias, 2011). Some see in this type of issue a tug of war between innovation and traditions (Rech & Mounet, 2015), or even a missed opportunity in terms of innovation (Clarimont & Vlès, 2016). However, conflicts and resistance represent important sources of innovation in society (Godin & Vinck, 2017). In the case of PNMO, pushing back against a real estate development project that required downgrading a portion of a protected area, illustrates social innovation and NOvation put to contribution in a societal issue concerning a touristic protected area (Godin & Vinck, 2017; Borgnet, 2019). New forms of governance appeared through the different phases, for instance Coalition SOS Parc Orford and the more recent advisory committee (Gagnon & Lahaye, 2010; Mont-Orford, 2020).

The issue of accessibility to a protected and touristic territory is highlighted in the crisis-ridden history of Mont-Orford but is also experienced in other destinations, including Aspen and Banff. All three cases share the contiguity of protected areas with territories endowed with intensive tourism functions. This proximity leads to porosity and confusion in practices and between users, even conflicts of use, or with the type of property (public or private) (Urquhart, 2004; Auslander, 2019). In Aspen, the tradition of hiking and skiing to the top of the ski mountains, well anchored among residents, illustrates the issues of accessibility and appropriation. Arrangements and mitigation measures are required to allow safe cohabitation between hikers, other users (downhill skiers and snowboarders), operations of the ski and the requirements of the White River National Forest (Urquhart, 2004). For example, in altercations between operators of snow groomers and night hikers, the right to practice taken for granted on public land is often mobilized (Urquhart, 2004). From this issue arises innovation which, despite a social intention: "Yeah, we could deny access, but that's not what we want to do" (Hans Hohl, director of the Buttermilk mountain in Aspen, in Urquhart, 2004), sometimes takes more Schumpeterian forms (e.g. new services to hikers [Aspen Snowmass, n.d.]).

Duality between visitation and conservation in national parks gives rise to contra-dictions and issues. While national parks are among the most frequented tourism icons, in the case of Banff, tourist frequentation induces certain issues concentrated in and around the downtown area. The search for solutions to these issues often occurs by and for community members, thus can be understood through social innovation (e.g. the Banff Community Plan or traffic relief initiatives). In Aspen, where the municipal borders are constrained by the neighbourhood of the protected area and physiography, urban-type issues are also experienced, including traffic and congestion. Unlike in Banff and elsewhere in Colorado, in Aspen the cumulative effect of municipal initiatives, the public transportation system and community members participation have allowed traffic statistics to gradually decline (Bektesh, 2020). The (social) in-NOvation lies both in the social value of solving congestion issues and in the role of the community in their implantation and adoption. This highlights the links between innovation and governance.

More broadly, COVID-19 has created a "perfect storm" where socio-sanitary restrictions exacerbated an already growing enthusiasm for protected areas (Falardeau & Hersberger, 2020; Pavelka in Kemna, 2020). During the initial lockdown and subsequent phases of reopening, jurisdictions and communities have mobilized forms of NOvation and social innovation to address the crisis. Contrary to the usual approaches of seduction aimed at stimulating attendance, they urged visitors to stay home (Karen Sorensen, Mayor of Banff, in Kemna, 2020). Coming out of the crisis, efforts seem focused on a safe economic and health recovery, as embodied at the governance level by the creation of a special economic squad, the Banff & Lake Louise Economic Task Force (Karen Sorensen, Mayor of Banff, in Kemna, 2020). However, residents' sensitivity to the level of visitation was already affirmed pre-COVID (Town of Banff, 2007; Pavelka in Kemna, 2020). (Social) innovation, NOvation and governance innovation surely will be mobilized by communities as a "springboard" (Karen Sorensen, Mayor of Banff, in Kemna, 2020) towards opportunities in the future.

(Social) in-NOvation

The comparison between these cases makes it possible to generalize certain findings by forging links with theory (Yin, 2003). The following paragraphs will summarize the three cases. Here, the double valuation of mountain touristic territories where protected areas are located create issues shared to varying degrees by the three cases. Communities are finding solutions by mobilizing forms of innovation, social innovation and even NOvation, a broad understanding of innovation which we refer to under the term (social)

in-NOvation. These comparisons are also summarized in Table 1 which follows these few discussion paragraphs.

The socio-geohistorical anchoring of the issues experienced in these tourist and protected mountain territories illustrates the diverse manifestations of innovation. Creating the first protected areas has historically been the result of (social) in-NOvation. Banff is the first Canadian national park, created 7 years after its American precursor, Yellowstone National Park in 1872. Despite the imaginary of wilderness surrounding protected areas, these territories have been the object of utilitarian aims since their creation (Cronon, 2011; Wynn, 2011). In the sense of aiming to meet human needs, they were a social innovation (CRISES, 2021). This becomes obvious in the case of Mont-Orford an innovation by and for its community. Moreover, considering that protection of these territories results from nume-rous restrictions, they are an expression of NOvation (Godin & Vinck, 2017).

We have presented the territories under study as dually valued by conservation and tourism. This dichotomy creates or exacerbates issues for communities bordering or living in communities within protected areas (Lapointe & Gagnon, 2011). In this multiple case study, different types of protected areas highlighted the influence of more or less strict conservation and governance. National parks restrict more uses than other types of protected areas such as national forests. But by choosing national parks like Banff and Mont-Orford, with infrastructure and intensive uses, the weight of tourism is brought to the forefront revealing territorial dynamics contributing to (social) in-NOvation and governance innovation. Banff is exemplary, the town's *raison d'être* being to serve visitors of the national park, but also subject to federal and national park regulations. In Mont-Orford, conserva-tion and development arguments sometimes serve alternately, and concomitantly, citizen movements. These cases illustrate that communities must conciliate interests of residents, tourism businesses, tourists and nature. They attempt to find a fragile balance between the constituent functions of protected areas, they construct and renew their territory, its social functions and governance (Crosetti & Joye, 2021).

In innovation studies, mountain territories are characterized as marginal or remote (Fourny, 2018). However, the three cases studied through the lens of (social) in-NOvation invite a more nuanced view. Their rugged relief and relative marginality have historically both represented a challenge in terms of accessibility and contributed to the fascination they have generated (Kesteman, 2006; Sandlos, 2011; Sieg, 2019). Nowadays, although constraints associated with the mountain remain (e.g. for transport or constructability), mar-ginality or remoteness seems relative (Browning Wilson, 2008). As popular destinations,

they even acquire similarities to urban areas. These territories are not "on the fringes" of innovation (Fourny, 2018) as demonstrated by the cases of Aspen, Banff and Mont-Orford, when innovation is considered broadly (Gaglio *et al.*, 2019). In the examples presented, communities do not retreat into denial or surrender to the force of inertia. Although some authors see missed opportunities (Clarimont & Vlès, 2016) or archaism (Fourny, 2018), in these territories which depend heavily on tourism, communities seek not to abandon the tourist function, but to mitigate its weight and the associated issues.

Another criterion of comparison resides in the initiators of innovation identified, found on a spectrum comprised of individuals, social groups and organizations. Many innovations come from local governments or other intermediate levels of governance. The founding intergovernmental agreement of the APCHA in Aspen is a good example. And while the impulsion for innovation sometimes comes from higher levels of government, citizens or more or less empowered or marginalized groups can also be found among the instigators of innovation. The cases therefore do not allow favouring institutionalization or marginalization of the process (e.g. CRISES, 2021 versus Godin, 2017). The study, however, shows that the processes of (social) in-NOvation seem to bring together actors from various backgrounds, which is in line with the work that depicts social innovation as a mediation between bottom-up initiatives and higher-level bodies (Pradel-Miquel *et al.*, 2013; Spijker & Parra 2018 in Castro-Arce *et al.*, 2019). For example, the Banff Community Plan and its innovative initiatives are the municipal government responsibility, but the approach is required by the federal law on national parks, and it involves citizen participation at all stages (Draper, 2000). In Mont-Orford, Dr. Bowen's sparking role was complemented by the involvement of economic players, local and provincial levels of government and social-ly involved community members. The action of the Coalition SOS Parc Orford in terms of governance innovation must also be linked to that of its counterparts at different levels, particularly when crisis resolution has gone through the establishment of multi-party work-ing groups.

Table 1. Summary and comparison between cases.

	Aspen – high cost of living	Banff – (over) frequentation	Mont-Oxford – citizen accessibility
Historical rooting of contemporary issue	• Revitalized mining town through ski, culture and tourism; • Influence intellectual and business classes.	• 1st national park, emblem; • Economic development aim from the start (increase rail traffic); • Evolving perception of park's usage; constant duality in conservation and development.	• Evolving perception of park's usage: from productive space to space invested by the community for recreation and relaxation; • Exclusions and restricted uses (e.g. expropriations).
Remoteness and urban/protected interface	• Relative distance for regional population center and tourism connecting hub (Denver); • Urban enclave restricted by valley physiography and surrounding protected area.	• Connectivity to nearby urban centers (Calgary and Vancouver); • Town of Banff enclaved in national park; • Nearby towns absorb economic and amenity migration restricted in Banff.	• Gateway community surrounding the national park; • Proximity and accessibility from Montréal; • Disputed modification to park's boundaries (reduction and enlargement).
Tourism versus conservation balance	• *National forests* allow for intensive uses; • Ski areas and *national forests* historically associated.	• Tourism development integrated from the creation of the park; • Most visited park in Canada; • Town's founding mission towards visitors' services; • Subject to federal national park regulations.	• Intensive recreation uses intrinsic to the park (alpine ski, golf); • Conservation mission has prevailed on private development projects.
Innovation actors	• Non-profit organizations; • Various government levels; • Businesses (tourism related).	• Parks Canada, federal agency; • Municipal government; • Important citizen mobilization; • University researchers; • Public sector.	• Community at impulse of the park's creation; • Citizen mobilization renewed through several crisis.

CONCLUSION

This study adopted a longitudinal approach to the issues experienced by the communities of touristic territories where protected areas are located in order to put into perspective the contemporary dynamics (Landel *et al.*, 2018). The solutions imagined and implemented by the communities have been addressed through (social) in-NOvation and governance innovation. This represents a contribution to scientific knowledge since literature about innovation is mainly interested in examples of success, contributing to a pro-innovation bias whereas innovation is always good, even a panacea (Boutroy *et al.*, 2015; Godin & Vinck, 2017). By considering recurring or acute issues in each of the cases, this study contributes to scientific work on innovation which neglects the influence of conflicts, resistance and social interests (Godin & Vinck, 2017). Social in-NOvation is not aimed to be a new type of innovation, nor the reject innovation and social innovation. It is rather a reminder that innovation comes in various shapes and contexts, and that technological innovation isn't a panacea.

More specifically, the contributions of the article can be highlighted by coming back to the three objectives. First, the article contributes to circumscribing, through studying (social) in-NOvation, the influence of a somewhat «insoluble paradox» (Héritier & Moumaneix, 2007) between conservation and development in protected areas. These territories are coveted by competing missions, activities and actors, creating dynamics that foster (social) in-NOvation from their communities. Second, the article explored how the territories' characteristics contribute to and/or constrain (social) in-NOvation and illustrated how (social) in-NOvation contributes to territorial dynamics. Rugged mountainous territories that simultaneously face a range of restrictions and regulations from different protected areas and enhanced attractiveness. Third, the article determined that different social actors and groups coexist and collaborate in the (social) in-NOvation and governance of the cases studied, though at various degrees and through motivations more or less volunteer.
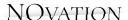
The main limitation of this study is that data collection mostly relies on secondary data. The pandemic context having hampered scientific mobility, it was not possible to travel to some of the sites studied. However, the quantity, quality and variety of sources partially compensated (Yin, 2003).

To conclude, the specificity of touristic and protected territories highlights how (social) in-NOvation represents a contribution for communities that must adapt. Although not a panacea but rather a process, the element of "responding to a social need", central to definitions of social innovation, is shared. The urgency created by crisis situations or recurring issues in the trajectories of communities and territories, as well as the citizen impulse motivated by the context, also stand out. These dynamics go beyond the local level and relevant to society as a whole (Crosetti & Joye, 2021). The emblematic figure of protected and touristic territories in the mountains offers a reading lens for (social) in-NOvation and governance innovation as society faces unprecedented challenges such as COVID-19 and climate change.

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