1. Introduction: shifting resources, multifaceted well-being

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1.1 THE BOOK: SHORT TAKE

Issues related to well-being and quality of life, as well as the factors that foster them, are central to debates about regional attractiveness and dynamics, residential location choices (from moving to a different neighbourhood within the same city to migrating between regions), firm location, segregation and socio-spatial inequalities.

The view that growth is the sole determinant of quality of life has been challenged so much that analysts now focus on the multidimensional character of well-being, its constitutive components and the methods used to assess it (for comparative or benchmarking purposes; at a single point in time or over time; based on quantitative and qualitative approaches).

Against this background, local resources and amenities (locally specific features that enhance the attractiveness of a given location) are receiving particular attention. From a public policy perspective, their diversity (built or intangible heritage, natural or cultural resources, among others), their generally lasting and systematically local character and their often public use make them especially interesting. Elected officials can seize upon these concepts and adjust local action according to various objectives that range from making living together easier to promoting their district, for example.

This book presents empirical evidence of both the diversity of local resources and the interrelated issues surrounding the concept of well-being. The chapters are based on diverse research settings and methods and have both empirical and theoretical perspectives. Moreover, the chapters pay particular attention to policy recommendations that will help public or collective action on these issues. Furthermore, findings are drawn from cases located in different regions of France, Britain, Germany and the United States of America, which brings an international

perspective to the central topic of the book. Lastly, the book uses a multidisciplinary perspective by associating spatial planners, economists, sociologists, architects, historians, geographers and computer scientists, which makes the case for a more comprehensive view of local resources and well-being from a territory perspective.

1.2 POSITIONING WITHIN THE LITERATURE

This book is rooted in multidisciplinary work on the same topic of interest: territories (in short: regions shaped by their relations with sets of actors). Definitions of territories abound – see Paquot (2011) for different perspectives according to various disciplines (geography, ethology, law and urban planning, among others). A simple definition that fits our purpose in this book is the following: a portion of physical space that has been appropriated, not in the sense of legal ownership by an individual or an organisation but because shared history, acknowledged ways of functioning, privileged relations among actors, collective heritage recognised by its residents and so forth make that portion of space specific and different from other territories. As such, it is not necessarily aligned with political or administrative borders. From an empirical perspective, it is a multi-scalar concept and, in France in particular, it ranges from portions of communes (the lowest level of administrative division, totalling over 36000, more than the rest of the European Union combined) to groupings of communes based on different criteria.

Research on territories has greatly expanded over the past three decades as scholars and practitioners alike have put into question the importance – or even the relevance – of focusing on nation-states in the era of globalisation (Agnew, 2013). Faced with the limits of state sovereignty and national-level austerity budgets, territories have taken centre stage as the adequate level at which an array of social, economic and governance problems could be addressed and potential solutions found.

More specifically, this book focuses on two timely and important topics from a theoretical, empirical and policy perspective: local resources and well-being. There is no lack of publications on these topics, and literature reviews or empirical pieces providing introductions to and overviews of the concepts include work by Blair and Premus (1987), Colletis-Wahl and Pecqueur (2001), Gottlieb (1994), Schaeffer and Dissart (2018) and Wong (1998) on local resources and shifting factors of local development; and Diener and Suh (1997), Dissart and Deller (2000), Romney et al. (1994) and Szalai (1980) on well-being and quality of life.

Basically, these references describe a shift in the processes and objectives of territorial development. Historically, local and regional development

was perceived as based on extracting a raw material (e.g. farming produce or iron ore) or transforming it (e.g. canned food or steel) to ship it to a market (typically a city, where demand was concentrated), while trying to minimise costs for the firms involved in the process whose ultimate goal was growth (traditionally in population, employment or income). However, this has changed over the years, with communities shifting from a commodity- to a service-based economy, as illustrated by the famous FIRE (Finance, Insurance, Real Estate) acronym. Also, as growth has not delivered on its promise of happiness for everyone but has been accompanied by rising inequality among households (illustrated spatially for example by gentrification), and its materialistic stance is increasingly at odds with a growing host of environmental issues (e.g. resource depletion or biodiversity loss), there has also been a shift in what should be pursued and how to measure it. This is where well-being or quality-of-life issues come into play, as multidimensional aspects of development are considered.

Therefore, the notion of what constitutes a resource and how it could be used by local stakeholders has evolved, just as the notion of why territorial development is sought and how it should be assessed has changed. As described below in section 1.3, the chapters included in this book explore these changes and shed light on a few examples of such changes.

1.3 STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

In addition to a foreword by Benoît Parent, Director of the Grenoble Regional Planning Agency (*Agence d'Urbanisme de la Région Grenobloise*), this introduction and a general conclusion, the book consists of two parts.

In Part I, 'Diversity of local resources', six chapters address the issue of the contrasting nature of local resources. This means considering resources that are not commonly identified as such: territorial resources in relation to concepts of proximity and urban governance, the ground (in shrinking cities), the past (in tangible and intangible forms in rural areas), outstanding cultural heritage sites (as drivers of community development), the snow (in a changing relation with mountain regions) and energy (from a transition perspective).

More specifically, in Chapter 2, Pecqueur and Koop conduct a critical review of the concept of a territorial resource and its application to the city of Grenoble, France. As the authors explain, the use of the term "resource" in relation to territory not only refers to material resources but also includes immaterial ones (e.g. know-how). They further explain that territorial resources may exist in the actual or potential state and be

either generic or specific. The authors discuss the process of revealing and constructing territory-specific resources. They apply it to Grenoble, a medium-sized European city that is clearly part of globalisation as it has developed a strategy of resource specification in the field of technologies (e.g. nano-technologies). Overall, a territory should be seen as the result of a particular form of coordination between various (territorial) actors, whereby specific resources and assets are created out of latent (i.e. not yet revealed) resources. Far from being a static network of actors, territorial coordination is actually a discriminating process that takes place over time, thus providing a method to reconstruct the development paths of territories around the world. Likewise, the case of Grenoble is indicative of the situation of many medium-sized cities in the world economy that are situated below the metropolis in the urban hierarchy and whose position and prosperity are constantly being questioned.

In Chapter 3, Sowa posits that, since the 2000s, research on urban shrinkage has tended to focus on defining the concept, understanding the process and analysing the economic, political and urban strategies that address the situation. Her chapter presents the issue of the urban fabric in the early 21st century by exploring urban remodelling practices in particular and focusing on the ground as a territorial resource. She hypothesises that neglected urban spaces offer fresh perspectives to restructure the city, a reassessment of open spaces in the urban setting and a definition of new ecosystems to improve the urban environment for the remaining population. To test her hypothesis, Sowa analyses two urban projects in Germany – in Halle and Dessau – and a combination of data including urban planning documents and development plans, aerial views of the cities before and after their transformation, photographs and interviews with actors. Two major results are found: on the one hand, abandoned areas should be seen no longer as land reserves but as a territorial resource with a high social and ecological value; on the other hand, we need to think about urban space in its entirety and return to a ground project. In this way, an updated view of the city emerges, as inscribed in multiple urban cycles, having to adapt to the dynamics of both shrinkage and growth, each of which has advantages, potentials, constraints and threats.

Chapter 4 addresses the issue of heritagisation and enhancing resources from the past by focusing on the case of mountain areas. As historians, Basset, Darroux and Judet take account of the dual nature of a territorial resource, that is, as both a symbolic entity and an objectifiable (tangible or intangible) entity that may generate economic value. Drawing on a diverse array of data (oral and written archives, historical monographs, press articles, institutional documents, scholarly speeches etc.), the analysis shows the narratives, the events and the context that enable a reconstitution

of the historical trajectory of heritagisation for the two cases at hand: industrial activity (steel cutting) in an urbanised alpine valley (the Arve Valley), and the archaeological and landscape history (Gallic vestiges) of a depopulated rural area in Burgundy (Bibracte/Mount Beuvray). In particular, the authors find a case of “permanent heritagisation” in the Arve Valley, whereas in the case of Bibracte/Mount Beuvray, the question of heritagisation is more open, with tensions surrounding the issue of defining and exploiting the heritage value of the place, drawing an alternative path to considering the local resource as exogenous or a source of enrichment. By using methods based on history and anthropology, the chapter reconstitutes historical paths of heritagisation for the two cases, each of which has its own specificity, to challenge the classical analysis of enhancing the past and, thereby, call into question the economy of enrichment.

The key issue addressed in Chapter 5 is the capacity of outstanding heritage sites to serve as a local resource and drive a territorial development dynamic. Indeed, territories that have remarkable heritage sites are both highly specific (due to the presence of that attraction) and subject to significant regulatory frameworks, including the mandatory protection of their sites. Ruault and Talandier use a mixed methodology approach: quantitative (socio-economic, fiscal and environmental variables to create typologies and evaluate site impacts) for all the sites, and qualitative (survey of local managers and field research) for targeted study sites. The results show that heritage sites can boost the local economy. However, this is not always the case: their positive impact on local jobs, attractiveness and income differs according to the local context. Indeed, a remarkable heritage site entails multiple development constraints but also has huge potential for leveraging cooperation and greater profits usable for site protection. Thus, the findings question the concept of a territorial resource: its mere presence does not ensure local development, and it is necessary to rethink its role as part of a more dynamic model to extend it to the medium to long term so as to accommodate successive interactions between the asset and development. Ultimately, the aim is to turn the territory into a resource for heritage sites and vice versa by striking a balance that benefits both.

Focusing on the case of the French Alps and its ski resorts, Chapter 6 presents how a local resource – snow – has been at the centre of diversification processes over the years. Using the notion of a local resource developed in the 2000s in the field of territorial economics, George and Achin show how the diversification processes succeeded in valorising snow and snow-related resources. Winter sports first exploited the local snow resource before they needed to respond to clientele’s new expectations by widening the range of local resources used. Over time, the environmental

and landscape heritage, as well as the cultural (whether agricultural or industrial) heritage linked to the history of the area, have become the local resources to develop. This notion of a local tourism resource has clearly changed over the past few decades and raises corollary questions: at what scale should this diversification be developed, and who should be the actors? Answers to these questions are provided by focusing on the situation of the French Alps and the array of public policies of the Valley Areas (*Espaces Valléens*) conventions. The authors highlight how the diversification processes unfolded, raising questions about the type of activities promoted and the area(s) concerned in a renewed local context and, finally, the leaders of this new tourism.

Since the beginning of the 2000s, in several European cities, territorial planning strategies have included climate change adaptation objectives to bring about an economic, social and ecological transition. In Chapter 7, focusing on energy as a local resource, Novarina and Seigneuret examine the new local strategies of energy transition and the modes of governance that underpin them. The initial comparative analysis of 20 European cities leads them to focus on three cases: Bristol (England), Freiburg im Breisgau (Germany) and Grenoble (France). The in-depth study, based on document analysis and *in situ* investigations, enables them to understand the drivers of urban ecosystems that foster the emergence of social and technological innovations in order to manage energy at the local level. In particular, the analysis shows a process of cooperation aimed at reducing technological uncertainty and increasing the stakeholders' innovation skills, but with local specificities: an integrated and inclusive strategy in Freiburg; an objective-based, pragmatic approach in Bristol; and an incremental strategy, based on demonstration projects, in Grenoble. Overall, the analysis shows that the differences between territorial energy strategies do not stem primarily from a differentiated endowment of resources but rather from the diversity of actors, their degree of mobilisation and the extent to which they share the same vision of the qualities of the territory they inhabit and the potential to transform it.

In Part II, "Multifaceted well-being", the concept of well-being is addressed from multiple perspectives in five chapters that shed light on little-explored topics such as sociabilities vs. income level, accessibility for disabled and able-bodied pedestrians, health via urban design, life course trajectories as indicators of local quality of life, and the connection between amenities and social justice.

In Chapter 8, Le Roy and Ottaviani report on a collaborative project involving professionals and academics to generate local, sustainable and alternative indicators of well-being: the IBEST project. The purpose is to reveal the complexity of the various connections between monetary

resources and sociabilities. Even though social relations are a central topic of Grenoble's urban policies and are considered essential to the well-being of the city's inhabitants, they have never before been quantified. To assess the different sociabilities and the role they play in well-being, the IBEST project is based on several principles, including an approach founded on Sen's capabilities. The main data collection instrument is a questionnaire comprising 86 questions. Several variables related to people's actions, aspirations and appreciation of their situation are used to assess relational and institutional sociabilities. The authors show that while monetary wealth does not necessarily go hand in hand with a dense social network and personal satisfaction, it does influence the existence of relationships based on trust and the possibility to reach for help. Therefore, the analysis of social bonds cautions against a simplistic approach to sociabilities and the relationships between monetary and non-monetary resources. The analysis also shows the complexity of the relations between variables included in the notion of well-being, which limits the identification of clear cause-and-effect relationships between interpersonal and institutional sociability.

In Chapter 9, Thomas argues that, over the past 30 years in France, access to urban public space has become a major challenge for city planning and for improving city-dwellers' quality of life. However, the current approach continues to promote a technical approach to accessibility by providing isolated technical devices for disabled individuals. The chapter presents the background and a review of assistive devices to conceptualise those urban public places that have been adapted. Developed from the field of architectural and urban ambience research, which promotes a sensitive approach to the built environment, the critical perspective in Chapter 9 adopts the opposite stance by defending two ideas: first, pedestrian access to the city is the result of a practical and perceptual process of taking root that is constructed during the walk; and secondly, urban accessibility should be conceptualised in terms of the help provided by the city's environment. Drawing on ethnomethodology, urban sociology and *in situ* examples, the chapter introduces the idea of "sensory configuration": visual, bright, sound, tactile and thermal resources afforded by the environment. In so doing, the study casts doubt on the normalisation of design rules and points to a matrix for reading space perceived in motion; it also highlights the practical dimension of situated perception, which goes beyond the mere notion of urban mobility and shapes people's relationships with others.

Chapter 10 focuses on the link between quality of life, as seen through the lenses of public health, and urban planning. In Great Britain, the National Health Service has drawn attention to the impacts of urban

and housing design on lifestyles and health, pointing out the promotion of health and well-being through “place-shaping”. This context has led Britain to take several actions regarding the environmental determinants of health. Drawing on a cross-disciplinary literature review (mainly planning, architecture and social policy), Sadoux and Di Marco reflect on the return of health to public policy. This chapter also makes use of major government publications to show some of the ways in which health-promotion objectives have been translated into urban policy (the Healthy Towns Programme, 2008; the Healthy New Towns Programme, 2015). The aims and the process underpinning these initiatives are summarised, and a case study of one of the pilot projects (Barton in Oxford) is provided. Although this programme is too recent to be evaluated, Sadoux and Di Marco argue that, regardless of the outcome of the ongoing projects, there is a reuniting of health and planning. They point to the current focus on building strong links at the local level to facilitate the pursuit of these actions once the programmes end. As the selected pilot projects are, if not all, mostly new settlements, the difficulty of retrofitting existing urban areas is also underlined.

The objective of Chapter 11 is to contribute to a finer knowledge of the reasons why households make residential choices whose sequence generates a residential trajectory. Via a study of residential trajectories, it aims to make sense of urban migration processes and to understand the underlying reasons that cause people to move, at what time in their life and to what places: family- and job-related reasons, as well as factors related to leisure or other aspects of people’s lives. Describing and understanding migrations is a major tool for urban planning to make more informed decisions regarding housing supply, among others. This multidisciplinary research makes a contribution in terms of methods and tools to observe urban and/or peri-urban migration and understand metropolitan dynamics. The preliminary findings show that this generic approach may be used to model multidimensional life course trajectories since individuals are observed from several perspectives: spatial, temporal and thematic. The other major feature of this approach is its integration of the capacity to explain the reasons behind a given choice. Villanova-Oliver, Noël, Gensel and Le Quéau also argue that this framework, which is rooted in the semantic web, is well equipped from the perspectives of methodology and software, which guarantees its relatively easy implementation. Finally, the authors discuss data collection issues in order to feed data to the model and as a precondition to analyse life course trajectories.

In Chapter 12, Dissart, Marcouiller and Schaeffer define natural amenities as place-based natural attributes that provide local benefits to people or firms. As such, they have often been central to quality-of-life debates

over the past few decades. As access to amenities and, thus, to an enhanced quality of life may be unequal among socio-economic groups and across space, this chapter addresses the question of the extent to which natural amenities and social justice are related. First, a theoretical connection is made between the two concepts. Most of the chapter, though, empirically addresses the amenity–justice relation by focusing on two different cases: rural lakefront property in the Lake States (USA), and amenity-driven migration in the metropolitan areas of Marseille and Grenoble (France). In the US case, qualitative experience-based and interview methods triangulated with parcel-level tax information show that the presence of water furthers inequality between long-time residents and relative newcomers. In the French case, a statistical analysis of individual migration data is used in combination with the amenity preferences of household types to demonstrate the heterogeneity of preferences between social groups for different amenities. Therefore, in the US and French cases, natural amenities are associated with economic inequalities, environmental gentrification and socio-spatial segregation processes, that is, social justice issues. These results suggest the need for greater consideration of the connection between amenity and justice in urban and regional plans.

1.4 CONTRIBUTIONS AND GENERAL FINDINGS

In a highly diverse and changing context, the general contributions of this book include the following:

- Bringing together experts from a wide range of social science disciplines: urban and regional planning, economics, sociology, geography, architecture, history and computing science.
- Addressing in a single volume the two concepts of local resources and well-being. Moreover, although other contributions have been published about classic location and growth factors (access to markets, raw materials, etc.), few have addressed the ground or energy as territorial resources. Similarly, other publications have explored quality-of-life issues (objective and subjective measures, etc.), but few have tackled them from the perspective of geomatics, disability or social justice.
- Little research has been published in English about the cases (France, Germany, Great Britain, the USA) presented in this book, all of which feature different contexts and settings. Throughout the book, these international and diverse perspectives broaden the interest beyond local or regional specificities, especially since issues of the

enhancement of local resources and quality of life are not specific to a single country or region but also because the topics addressed across the chapters (sustainable development, stakeholders and governance, regional factors and impacts, culture and heritage, characterisation/identification, ambiances in urban settings, local and regional dynamics etc.) are both cross-cutting and international in nature.

- Putting much-needed emphasis on policy recommendations. Therefore, the primary audience for this book includes researchers, academics, upper-level students and senior public servants. Professionals, practitioners and policymakers involved in the design and implementation of urban and regional development strategies, who wish to get a broader understanding of current local resource and well-being issues, are also likely to find chapters of interest to them.

More specifically, the chapters included in this book invite us to revisit the notions of resources and well-being by addressing two main questions:

1. What makes a resource a resource (what are the factors that qualify as “local resources”)?
2. What contributes to well-being (how can we characterise well-being)?

The answer to the first question is basically: time and stakeholders. The answer to the second question varies by chapter to produce a more comprehensive view of well-being. To reassess their significance, let us consider the chapters in the two parts in turn.

In Part I, Pecqueur and Koop show that, over time and with a changing set of actors, the metropolitan area of Grenoble has chosen an evolving path of technology-centred growth. Sowa demonstrates that, as cities grow and shrink, the ground is viewed from different – if not contradictory – perspectives, first as a land reserve for built use, then as an opportunity for (social and environmental) creative use given its “void” property. Basset, Darroux and Judet show the extent to which tangible and intangible entities become part of diverse heritagisation processes, depending on the local contexts and stakeholders. The findings by Ruault and Talandier demonstrate that, even in the presence of unique heritage sites, a territorial development dynamic is not guaranteed but is heavily related to stakeholder cooperation and the medium- to long-term site development vs. protection strategy. George and Achin show how snow, a local resource, has been viewed differently over time, from being key to snow-centred development to being part of a more diversified set of

resources, including environmental and landscape heritage with an evolving set of public policies and development stakeholders. Lastly, Novarina and Seigneuret show how energy transition strategies vary more on the basis of the local set of actors and their vision and degree of mobilisation than on the basis of resource endowment.

Therefore, across these chapters, one understands that the notion of a local resource is neither fixed over time nor a given because of its mere presence: it is a set of stakeholders, depending on their level of coordination or proximity, that gives it different meaning, hence potential, for growth and development over time. Also, there is an ever-increasing tendency to consider resources to be in constant interaction with their local (environmental, socio-cultural, economic) context, yielding a dynamic, dependent upon development paths and cycles, character to local resources.

In Part II, the question of what contributes to well-being varies chapter by chapter, but it does expand the range of classic factors associated with well-being. Indeed, well-being or quality of life is usually considered from a multidimensional perspective, along with fostering factors such as income level, health status, satisfaction with one's professional occupation or living in a pollution-free environment. Thus, Le Roy and Ottaviani work on classic indicators associated with well-being, that is, monetary resources and social relations, but address the complexity of their interrelation. Thomas focuses on the urban environment as it affords (visual, sound, tactile etc.) resources that enhance accessibility for different social groups (notably, the disabled). Sadoux and Di Marco also focus on the environment but from a city design and planning perspective to impact people's lifestyles and, consequently, their health. In Chapter 11, the impact of the local environment or quality of place on well-being is indirectly assessed via people's residential choices, which outline life course trajectories over time. Finally, Dissart, Marcouiller and Schaeffer explore the connection between access to the (natural) environment, hence an enhanced quality of life, and social justice.

In this way, the chapters that comprise Part II contribute to expanding the range of factors associated with well-being (various types of environments, institutional and personal sociabilities, accessibility) and to presenting alternative methods to evaluate it, such as hybrid approaches (the IBEST project) or the semantic web (Villanova-Oliver et al.).

Overall, we hope the readers understand that, from a territorial development perspective, the two concepts of resources and well-being are subject to change regarding both identification/characterisation and measurement/assessment. Also, the variety and complementary entries and cases show how the mobilisation of specific local resources can feed sustained territorial development while potentially improving well-being.

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