

**Making Sense of a Pluralist World: Sixth Pan-European Conference on
International Relations**

University of Turin, Italy 12-15 September 2007

Session 1-10 Development and the Third World Theoretical Insights

IPE, Developing Countries, and Development

The global/local nexus in local development strategies in developing countries

Elisa Bignante, Egidio Dansero*, Cristina Scarpocchi***

* University of Turin

** University of Valle d'Aosta – Université de la Vallée d'Aoste

1. Introduction

Theoretically as well as on the level of development cooperation policies and strategies, a reconfiguration of the reference scales at which the very idea of development is conceptualized has been taking place since the Seventies. The context is that of the process of reorganization of the international politico-economic system that began in those years, which also encouraged the social sciences to adopt new viewpoints in analyzing and interpreting social phenomena and economic processes. Alongside the essentially aspatial and macroeconomic approaches which remain dominant to this day, an attention to the local dimensions of development has gradually gained ground, moving from somewhat subterranean beginnings to its current prominence (Hettne, 1990). This reconfiguration is very much a part of the considerations that have matured since the early Eighties regarding the crisis that swept through the field of development studies and the post-impasse debate that has enlivened the subsequent decades. In this context, local development has steadily become more and more central to development policies, starting with a number of Northern countries in the Eighties, and emerging more recently in the developing countries since the second half of the Nineties.

In this paper, we will discuss how local development is approached in the development cooperation strategies (DCs), focusing on two case-studies that are in many ways emblematic: Egypt and Senegal. These case-studies were selected for a number of reasons: first, each of these two countries is the keystone of its own geographic, cultural and macro-regional contexts, one influenced by the US and the English-speaking world; the other by its French antecedents. In addition, they are both countries that attract significant flows of local development funding, ranking high on the list of beneficiaries of the major donors (OECD, 2006). In particular, as highlighted by a number of authors (Degnbol-Martinussen, Engberg-Pedersen, 2003; Browne, 2006), the influence exerted by these flows is not exclusively financial, but is also, and above all, cultural and political.

Local development's rise to prominence in the South raises a number of questions. First, we must ask ourselves what relationships exist between this attention to local development in the DCs and in Europe. Are we dealing here with yet another transfer of development "technologies" - technologies that are basically theoretical and operating approaches - from North to South? And how appropriate are these technologies? Can we

speak of a “discovery of local development” in DCs, or is what we are seeing more of a top-down approach, where the impetus descends through the long networks of international development, with the latter’s own rhetoric and priorities? How does the attention to local development in DCs link up with the debate surrounding endogenous development, the informal economy and the activism of civil society on the one hand, and the processes of political and administrative decentralization on the other? And, above all, where does local development stand in a context that would appear to be dominated by the processes of globalization and deterritorialization?

One of the hypotheses underlying this investigation is that the growing international stress given to local development must be interpreted from a multi- and trans-scalar standpoint, through an approach capable of encompassing local dynamics, national cultural and politico-social contexts, and processes that operate on the supranational and global scales. In this perspective, dealing with local development means considering a complex sequence of global-local interactions, between economic trends and processes of redefining political space, between local discoveries in the framework of global conditions, conceptualizing them through multiple decontextualizations and subsequent reconceptualization practices at different scales and in different contexts.

We will first examine the patterns that, in a context marked by increasing globalization and the weakening of traditional territorial structures that were chiefly rooted in the nation-state, have led to a renewed attention to the local dimension of development. We will then turn to how local development has become a prime concern, first in the policies fielded by Northern countries, and later cropping up in the South. After laying the groundwork for a comparative interpretation of the national contexts for local development, we will discuss local development in Egypt and Senegal: its character, its content, and the questions it inspires.

2. Economic globalization and local development: the theoretical debate

In an ever-more globalized world, where long-distance interactions grow stronger every day and the barriers that once restricted the circulation of tangible and intangible goods are being broken down, we are assailed by phrases like “the end of geography”, “the death of distance” and “the world is flat”, both in the media and in the scientific debate (Badie, 1995; O’Brien, 1992; Friedmann, 2005). What is most striking is how capital, goods and people have become mobile, freeing them of all the spatial fetters that tied them to a specific place and uprooting economic activities from the regions where they germinated. In this connection, the sociologist Manuel Castells (1997) maintains that the forces of globalization, and especially those guided by the new ICTs, are replacing a “space of place” with a “space of flows” (Gottman, 1973). Everything can be located anywhere and, if it fails to work, can be moved to some other place.

At the same time, an array of theoretical and empirical studies, in which geographically-oriented investigations are but a single part of a broader based debate, has discussed and analyzed the persistence, alongside marked phenomena of *space-time compression* (Harvey, 1989) of specific *territorial anchorages* (Storper, 1999) which continue to link certain phenomena, economic and otherwise, to concrete geographical areas. This literature does not deny a tendency towards hyperlinking between places (Castells, 1997),

meaning that in an increasingly globalized world, each territorial context can all the more readily establish relationships with distant contexts, but geographical contiguity no longer necessarily creates “affinities” and similarities (Dematteis, 1997). What this literature shows, however, is that if on the one hand this entails phenomena of territorial fragmentation - to the extent that contiguous areas find themselves caught up development processes that are linked to different and distant contexts - on the other hand we are seeing phenomena of “territorial adhesion and embeddedness” (Giddens, 1986; Hess, 2004). The latter take place inasmuch as the long networks of the economy and politics must, in order to pursue their goals, anchor themselves to specific places, using their resources and strengthening their competitive advantages. In this process, territories are deterritorialized and fragmented, while at the same time becoming the protagonists of new territorial cohesions that engender processes of selective reterritorialization that ride on the shoulders of economic globalization (Harvey, 1989). These processes thus lead to phenomena of redefinition, re-scaling, and rearticulation of the territorial scales (Brenner, 1999) whose end result is a weakened capacity for control on the part of the nation-state and its partial hollowing-out (Jessop, 1994), to the benefit of the global networks that operate independently of national borders (Sassen, 1996). And this is the case both of the supranational levels like the European Union, and of infra-national levels such as the city and the regional systems whose interfacing with the system of international relations transcends national boundaries (and national control).

In this light, Pierre Veltz (1996) traces globalization to the increase in territorial interdependencies. Specifically, Veltz emphasizes that long-distance relationships count just as much as proximity: viewing economic space as a mosaic of national economies that can be split up into regional and local economies is more misleading than ever. The world economy is an archipelago that connects areas of activity linked by functional relationships and flows. In this sense, development springs increasingly from a local-global dialectic: local systems, actors and undertakings are immersed both in relationships of proximity and in supralocal relationships of various kinds. The latter do not cancel out the importance of local relationships and, more generally, of territorial embeddedness: the territory as a socioeconomic actor continues to be the basis and foundation of any competitive edge (Veltz, 1996 and Camagni, 2002; Porter, 1989). Here, the international literature (specifically Storper, 1999) speaks of territorial anchorages tied to those competitive factors that cannot be acquired on the market (untraded interdependencies) which characterize different geographic areas. The concentration of economic actors and businesses in specific places, as underscored by the so-called New Economic Geography (Fujita *et al*, 1999.), often burdened by a high cost of labor, bears witness to this phenomenon, as does the different capacity for learning and generating knowledge that sets certain places apart (citare qualcuno della letteratura sulla innovazione territoriale tacita e contestuale).

In this sense, a new centrality can be assigned to *location-specific* conditions and resources, or in other words to those factors that can be considered as “fixed” not only because they are embedded in certain places and thus cannot be transferred elsewhere, but also because they are in many cases non-fungible, inasmuch as they are difficult or impossible to find somewhere else with the same quality and features (Pecqueur, 2005). Now that competition (at least in the more sophisticated, high value-added segments of

the market) is based to a greater extent on flexibility, variety, quality and innovation than on costs, the importance of “fixed” resources and factors, and hence of the local areas that are home to them, has grown in direct proportion to the worldwide movement of “mobile” resources and factors, which can combine with their homegrown counterparts and transform them into competitive advantages. Local capacity for self-organization is seen as a resource, as is the fact that many location-specific resources become location-specific only through the recognition, the contextual knowledge, the ability to learn and get things done shown by the local actors themselves.

In such a setting, local and global are not antithetical concepts: it is not true that whatever is global must feed on and assimilate whatever is local, nor must the local surrender everything it has that is place-specific in order to become global. The local, in fact, is indispensable to the global, and local systems are entirely complementary to globalization, or rather, to glocalization (Swingedow, 2000).

What we are seeing here is the *coexistence* of the space of places and that of flows (Dicken, 2003), or that paradox that Anne Markusen (1996) has so tellingly described as “sticky places in slippery spaces”, essentially a new spatiality of globalization where the global level and the local level share pride of place (Amin, 2002).

3. The North’s “discovery” of local development

As the picture we have just outlined would suggest, international debate in the Eighties and Nineties focused increasing attention - though how and when this attention was expressed differed from country to country - to a form of development that starts from the local, and is thus capable of leveraging potential resources and conditions that are *specific* to a particular location (Pecqueur, 1989). Here, local development is interpreted as a process of interaction between local actors (public, private, and the various types of public/private partnership) who, implicitly or explicitly, share a vision of how the territorial resources and “riches” available to them, be they material or otherwise, can be developed. These actors, precisely because of their knowledge of the local area, and the involvement and ties that bind them to it (their sense of belonging, the confidence they inspire in the area), all of which, again, are forms of untraded interdependency that do not spring from market relationships, are able to initiate and manage positive changes in a relatively independent and location-specific fashion. In approaches of this kind, local society and local resources can be deployed much more effectively and lastingly than would be possible with programs directed from outside the local context. In Northern countries as in their Southern counterparts, local development is in this sense closely associated with the frequent failure of “top-down” development models and policies, as well as with the issues of territorial decentralization and participation.

Nevertheless, a distinction can be made between the different ways of seeing the relationship between the processes of globalization and local development. Such a distinction was proposed by Magnaghi (2005), who posits three models that overlap and intertwine in different contexts: the first is the *competitiveness model*, where the local is instrumental to the processes of globalization that must appropriate certain territorial resources. In this case, local development would appear to be something contingent,

something entailing a weak link with the territory and a stronger link with the space of flows. Next is the *glocal model*, where local development is the outcome of a compenetration of global dynamics and local processes that succeed in casting the former into a mold more compatible with the local. The third is the bottom-up *globalization model* (citare i due autori di riferimento, dell'economia lillipuziana ...), where deploying different approaches to local development is a strategic alternative to top-down globalizing processes.

Whether it be a new paradigm or strategic alternative, as some authors would have it (Magnaghi, 2005), or, as others see it, a working approach that makes efforts to promote development more effective, local development has become increasingly central to theoretical thought (*cf.* Cox, 1997, 1988; Amin, 1999; Agnew, 2000; Lipietz, 1987) and development policies (OECD, 2001; World Bank, 2003) both internationally and in a number of national contexts, accompanying, integrating and replacing other lines of development (bottom-up development, endogeneous development) and linking up in various ways with the debate surrounding sustainable development, mostly as part of the theoretical mainstream, or at least in its more watered-down versions, those oriented more towards sustainable growth rather than sustainability in the strictest sense of the term.

The attention towards local development, whether seen as a fully-fledged development paradigm or simply as a working approach, initially emerged in several of the more industrialized nations such as Italy, France and the United Kingdom. In each of these areas, this attention took different forms, in some cases associated with the “discovery” of industrial districts (Pyke, Sengerberger, 1992), in others being specific to a particular country or region. To take the case of Italy, for example (*cf.* Dematteis, 1997; Becattini, *et. al.*, 2003), we can speak of a true discovery, in the sense of a new viewpoint and a new paradigmatic approach that shed light on local trends that are relatively endogenous and, above all, were not and could not be foreseen by economic orthodoxy. The history of local development in Italy is largely, though not exclusively, the history of industrial districts and SME production systems. This discovery then passed through several stages, from critical reinterpretation to an extension of its scope (from the industrial conditions in the so-called Third Italy, to the other industrial areas of Italy, and then to the country’s rural and tourism-oriented areas), gradually becoming institutionalized in the process. Local development, in fact, to some extent as a result of the impetus provided by Community programs, has steady become the key approach in development policies, and not just in the South of Italy, as it has over time been applied both in other depressed areas and in the more dynamic parts of the country (Governa, Salone, 2004). Partly following Italy’s lead and partly through their own homegrown approaches, France (Mengin, 1989; D’Aquino, 2002; Pecquer, 1989, 2005), the United Kingdom (Storper, 1997; Amin, 1999;) and, later, Spain (Jordi, 2004; Rodríguez Gutiérrez, 1999; Vázquez Barquero, 2001) have assigned an increasingly central role to local development on both the theoretical and the policy levels. If all this has intensified in the last decade, when it has again taken different forms, these countries are now rethinking their initial policies, not least as a result of the changes in EU programs that have led academics, experts and politicians, or at least the more forward-looking of them, to question what lies “beyond local development” (Hadjimichalis, 2006).

4. Local development in the economies of the DCs

4.1 The global context of local development in DCs

With a certain delay with respect to the North's debate concerning local development theory and practice, the latter concept began to appear in the policies of the developing world during the Nineties (Pecqueur, 2005; Dubresson, Fauré, 2002,). At this point, it was closely connected with the shifting strategies for international cooperation in its various forms (bilateral, decentralized, nongovernmental), both in Eastern Europe - those portions affected by the UE's expansion in particular (Sykora, 1999) - and in many developing countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. A glance at the list of the programs and projects spearheaded by the organizations involved in international cooperation (the World Bank, various United Nations agencies such as UNIDO, the ILO, FENU and the European Union itself) (Helling, Serrano, Warren, 2005) is sufficient to provide an idea of how local development has become one of the buzzwords of international cooperation in the last decade.

This espousal of local development and all its trappings by the major supranational organizations is something of a watershed in our view, as it was in some respects the seed and source of the ambiguities that have beset local development initiatives in the developing countries. While in the literature discussed in these pages, local development proceeds chiefly from below and from the solid empirical evidence provided by observed economic trends - often openly at odds with the orthodox narratives of economic development - the interpretation that the international organizations proffer is heavily influenced by the ideological/normative context in which these institutions live. The break between the concerns of local development - like those of participation and gender differences - and the neo laissez-faire orthodoxy of groups such as the World Bank - is, in fact, more apparent than real. As we will see above all in the case of Egypt, heterodox theories are often introduced in the mainstream - intellectual and operative - of these supranational actors as a means of highlighting the need to revamp the relationship between the State and the market. If it is true that abandoning the rigid monetarist orthodoxy goes hand in hand with acknowledging the regulatory role of the State, it is equally true that most of the criticisms target the State's disorganization, the corrupt, elephantine bureaucracy of the developing countries that amplify rather than restrain the markets' flaws.

In particular, in order to clarify the context from which this investigation springs, it is advisable to dwell for a moment on the fact that the neo laissez-faire approach taken in the strategies of the major exponents of development cooperation was virtually the only alternative to the development crisis and the debate it fueled, so much so, indeed, that the international literature refers to it as a mainstream approach. Starting from the early Eighties, with the so-called Washington Consensus, this approach found adherents in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, spreading thence to permeate the thinking and policy-making of many development agencies, including those of the United Nations, other international bodies and a large proportion of national governments worldwide.

In the early Nineties, following the failure of the Structural Adjustment Programs, development cooperation policies were heavily impacted by the change of course embodied in the Post-Washington Consensus, which was explicitly influenced by the neo-institutionalist approach. In this connection, it is now widely acknowledged that the local scale's new role in development cooperation policies and strategies resulted from the considerations triggered in the second half of the Seventies by the attempt to create a view of development that could constitute an alternative to the aspatial approaches of the macroeconomic school, as well as from the influence that the New Institutional Economics (North, 1990) exerted on the work of the major players in development cooperation. This approach is based in identifying, at the national, subnational and local scales, those institutions that are not directly linked to the market as actors capable of correcting the market's shortcomings.

In the developing countries, following the new rules of the internationalized economy - mostly through the channels of development cooperation - has hinged on two sets of factors, one politico-economic, and the other more purely political, which refer explicitly to good governance. In this context, development cooperation has gradually incorporated local development policies as the preferred tool for combining initiatives that are intended to influence the economic as well as the political spheres by promoting processes of divestiture and decentralization, often seen as the necessary accompaniment to local development policies. There can be little doubt that the link between the new role of the local in development cooperation strategies and the gradual enlargement of the very goals of development, which in some cases extend so far as to include the political dimension by making development aid conditional upon introducing democratization processes, is emblematic of the relationship between the political and economic perspectives of local development. This overlap not only demonstrates how a focus on participatory democracy, local governance and decentralization has accompanied local development thinking in the DCs, but has also contributed to unmasking the inadequacy of approaches, concepts and models that are explicitly tied to the Western world's specific historic and cultural patterns. Here, as the controversy sparked by what has been termed the right-based approach has made clear, the legitimacy of efforts to export and impose (through military intervention in some cases) models and processes of forced democratization is very much a moot point. The criticisms inspired by these processes of standardization have been similarly skeptical of the work of the supranational political bodies that have taken it upon themselves to develop and spread a sort of "global policy" based on the universality of democratic principles.

4.2 Local development in the DCs: between top-down and bottom-up approaches

If we analyze local development in the DCs, as least as far as Senegal, the rest of French-speaking Africa (Piveteau, 2005) and Egypt are concerned, we find that two opposing visions have been at work. The first sees local development as a highly institutionalized process, marching in lock-step with political and administrative decentralization. However much it can mobilize local society through inclusive processes, it still moves from the center downwards. Local development is generally presented as the one essential

means of stimulating local agencies, and hence local society, to formulate and deploy strategies for their own areas' infrastructures, economy and welfare (Intartaglia, Correze, 2002; Sequeira, 1997)

By contrast, the other vision of local development puts greater emphasis on the community, or on relatively endogenous - and possibly even marginal - dynamics, some seen as residual, others as innovative.

In recent years, many countries in the Southern reaches of the world have discovered endogenous local dynamics that were either unpredicted or cannot be seen as issuing strictly from development aid; at the same time, they have also changed their approach to development cooperation, passing from exogenous, top-down processes, to self-reliant, bottom-up approaches that have largely been put forward by groups who are in the minority as regards their ability to wield power, like many of the NGOs in the North and an increasing number of Southern NGOs. Among the unforeseen changes, we can include a variety of interesting social movements that have taken place in different parts of the South (*cf.* Rist, 1997). These organized initiatives have striven to re-conquer and regenerate their own "local space", and have been successful in rising above the merely local and banding together in quite complex organizations involving as many as half a million people and more, as has been the case of certain initiatives in Mexico or West Africa. It should be noted that many of the efforts are far from being antagonistic to development cooperation, and indeed have prospered thanks to their ability to attract and manage sizeable amounts of international aid. At the same time, they have been able to garner grass-roots support among small farmers and villagers, while striking a happy balance between tradition and modernity. As a result, these initiatives bask in the floodlights of international cooperation, and many aid agencies and NGOs rely on their dynamism as the fulcrum of their intervention strategies.

As part of this change of tack, there is a growing critical awareness of the meaning and role of an aid agency, of the importance of the actors involved, of local values, the crucial need to strengthen and support the local area's capacity for self-organization, and of the social, relational and environmental dimensions of a type of development that cannot be rooted only in an economic sphere that has nothing to do with the social (Polanyi, 1957). In making way for an approach stemming from an idea of community-based, self-reliant and bottom-up development, the world of cooperation has also fitted itself out with a whole series of tools for analyzing the territorial, social and cultural context that leverage participation and the need to understand the local viewpoint, as exemplified by the various approaches that fall under the heading of "participatory diagnostics" (Marp, Rra, etc.), (Chambers, 1983). As mentioned earlier, this change in outlook would appear to have spread to the major international bodies, rather than being restricted to the more sensitive actors such as the NGOs.

The distinction between an institutional top-down vision and a "community-based", bottom-up vision of local development also hinges on the conceptual view of the territory in which the trends triggered by local development processes operate, where on the one hand we have a *received territory*, which precedes the process and is generally a politico-administrative division of space, and, on the other hand, a *constructed territory*, the "project" territory. As the territory is the result of a process of construction on the part of the actors, not defined beforehand but recognized *a posteriori*, the territory of local

development is not something that exists everywhere: often, in fact, we find that we are dealing with spaces dominated by the exogenous laws of localization, which are not territories. The two conceptual views must not be confused, but must both be borne in mind in the local development discourse. The territory is the container and the result of a process of elaborating content (Pecqueur, 2005, p. 299).

5. Local development in a comparative approach: several vantage points for interpretation

5.1 Between the positive and normative dimensions

To get our bearings in the maze of definitions and interpretations that have been assigned to local development, a good starting point is the framework proposed by B. Hettne in his seminal and still stimulating reflections on development theories (Hettne, 1990). In Hettne's view, later taken up by Potter (2004), local development can be interpreted from two vantage points: the positive-normative dimension, and the formal-substantial dimension.

The first is rooted in the distinction between studying development as it is presented through empirical evidence - which depends in any case on the paradigms used for interpreting it - or as it should be, as a goal to be reached. This normative dimension is clearly manifest in current development theories. Nevertheless, it is equally clear that any social theory is based on certain values which may or may not be brought to light. "Consequently, development theory should be explicitly normative and engage in a critical assessment of ways and means, rather than scrutinizing reality to find some hidden compliance with theoretical laws" (Hettne, 1990).

By contrast, the second, formal-substantial, dimension is reflected in the distinction between growth and development. Here, the formal approach, which conceives of development in universal terms and with quantifiable indicators that can be combined in a prediction model such as the Harrod-Domar model or the urban multiplier, is set against an approach where development entails social changes that are more qualitative in kind, less predictable and as such less readily modeled or formally measurable.

How, then, can we place local development in this framework? As far as the formal-substantial axis is concerned, local development thinking has favored the substantial aspect from the outset. If we look again at the lesson Italian local development has given us, we can see that the intellectual journey taken by the major protagonists (see Becattini, Sforzi, 2002) was a question of arriving at a recognition of the importance of an entire series of contextual variables capable of explaining the success of certain localities that, if economic orthodoxy had had its way, would have been wiped off the map of Italian industrial geography (Conti, Sforzi, 1997, Piore and Sabel, 1984). And these were typically qualitative variables, hard to quantify and, above all, hard to fit into highly formalized economic models. The multidisciplinary scientific debate on local development has sought to capture these variables through concepts such as those of local resources, local embeddedness, social capital, territorial capital, milieu and innovative milieus, networks of actors, sustainability and territorial added value, attempting in some cases to formulate quali-quantitative measurement methods for these conceptual tools.

Despite several interesting attempts to increase the formalization of local development, a basic element remains that gives it an eminently substantial character. And this is the fact

that development can be defined, and in some cases measured, only with reference to a specific historic and geographic context, and that development cannot be thought of in abstract and universal terms. This understanding, though not yet fully a part of the development debate, has been reinforced by the emergence and rise of an international current that underscores the limitations, as well as the potential, of a predominantly Western view of development (Rist, 1997). The world of international cooperation has been aware of these limitations for some time, largely as a result of its encounters -and clashes - with dissimilar cultures and the failure of top-down development logic (see, for example, Friedman and Weaver, 1979). And this is something that should be borne in mind, now that the local development approach is gaining ground in the DCs.

This latter consideration brings us to the positive-normative axis. Returning to the history of local development in Italy and tracing its broad outlines, we see an initial stage dominated by a positive vision of local development, with its discovery of relatively endogenous and unforeseen local dynamics and empirical evidence calling for new interpretations, followed by a stage in which a normative dimension prevailed, with local development moving to the center of the policy stage and deploying a variegated set of tools. This normative approach has had a major impact on local development's emergence in the developing world, where it has been taken as a lesson learned from good practices in the North (the example of the industrial districts and clusters) and a set of institutional engineering practices designed to create miniatures, as it were, of local society that reproduce the complexities of social relationships in all their different dimensions (political, economic, cultural, etc.) (Dansero, 2006). It is for this reason that we find the highly codified French approach in the local development practices prevailing throughout French-speaking Africa, to remain within one of the two macro-areas addressed by our investigation. And it is for this reason that local development is seen as the recipe that must necessarily accompany the processes of politico-administrative decentralization encouraged by major international cooperation bodies and by the decentralized cooperation of local agencies (Totte, Dahou, Billaz, 2003).

5.2 The political dimension of local development

In this connection, Hettne's pioneering work stresses that it is necessary to admit the inherently normative dimension of any way of looking at development, including local development: necessary if we are to avoid being trapped in potentially reductive ideologies. The approach taken by the social sciences, and by geography in particular, in fact, risks providing a falsely uniform representation of local society, forgetting the conflicts within it and purveying visions that are idyllic or ingenuous, and in any case fraught with danger (Latouche, 1993). This risk is all the greater where attention to local development concentrates on questions such as the location-specific and local identities, often interpreted as the static bequests of history rather than works in progress, projects being built up through practices that in reality can be extremely exclusive. The question of local development is a gamble, and an eminently political one, where much depends on how the conflicts between the different actors who are, or potentially could be, involved in development are regulated locally. The dynamics that unwind among the actors in relation to these conflicts have considerable importance for the world of cooperation in its approaches to local development when, in bringing together a plurality of public and

private actors in order to manage the resources of a development fund, it must come to grips with the need to reinforce weak local groups and thus put them on a more level footing with other powers, traditional or otherwise, that may enjoy considerable local power. Accordingly, even small- to medium cooperation - that of the NGOs, in other words - is obliged to make strategic choices, deciding whether to back favored portions of civil society (basic associations in the developing countries, for instance) that in reality offer no democratic guarantees, or to support the institutional reinforcement of fledgling levels of local government (D'Aquino, 2002). Here, and in the developing countries perhaps more than anywhere else, a fundamental query reemerges concerning the relationship between the political management of development, representative democracy and participatory democracy: a query that also springs to mind as we view European contexts, and Italy in particular.

5.3 An interpretative framework

For the two case-studies we analyzed, in comparing how local development progressed in different national contexts, we have attempted to draw attention to the many-sided, ambiguous nature of the conceptual categories that are normally grouped under the heading of "local development" or "local economic development".

In our analysis of these two case-studies, our intent is to present a picture of local development that conveys the complexity of the contexts - international as well as national - in which in local development discourse has evolved, taking on different, and in some cases profoundly different, forms and meanings. At the same time, we have striven to portray the dynamism of the practices centering on local development, which have also changed meaning and scope with the passage of time and the stratification of development thinking.

Attention has thus focused on identifying and analyzing the contexts in which the different narratives of local development have taken shape, along with the conditions underlying the evolution of local development thinking and the influences that, from a variety of quarters, have determined the shape this thinking has taken and the times in which new ideas have come to the fore. Our next step has been to identify the key actors who, moving at different scales and differing in their motivation and practical orientation, have woven together the fundamental threads of local development thinking in each context: academics, international bodies, public and private institutions, and associations that, in different capacities and in different stages and settings, have been chiefly responsible for expounding a more or less consistent view of local development.

Yet another aim of our analysis has been to define the sub-national scales that have played a basic role in addressing debate, whether from a positive perspective (the areas where spontaneous processes of local development took place), or from a more normative standpoint (places with serious shortcomings in terms of economic growth and/or human development, for which local development appeared to be a possible pathway to improvement).

6. Local development in Egypt

The birth of local development thinking in Egypt can be seen as paradigmatic of the relationships between the Washington/post-Washington Consensus and local development underscored in the preceding paragraph. As we will see, in fact, the emergence of issues associated with local development in Egypt's theoretical and political debate must be put in the context of the controversies and conflicts, both academic and political, that marked the passage from Nasserian political economy, socialist or at least statist in its inspiration, to a greater openness to the market economy and international economic relations. This indissoluble bond with the Nasserian past explains the relatively early date - sometime between the late Seventies and early Eighties - at which issues connected more or less directly with local development entered the economic debate in Egypt, as well as the ambiguities surrounding the lasting ties between local development policies and policies that clearly spring from a belief in state control.

6.1 Local development and the informal economy: the origins of the local development debate.

Historically, the attention to issues associated with local development in Egypt arose simultaneously on the positive/empirical plane and on the normative/political plane. As we will see in the following paragraph, these two moments are in fact indistinguishable.

From the positive standpoint, the inspiration can be traced to the early Eighties, when an interest in micro-enterprises and the informal economy spread among thinkers and leaders in the developing world after the publication of Hernando De Soto's ground-breaking work, "El otro sendero" (1989), which focused specifically on the role that the informal economy could play in these countries' economic and social development.

In reality, studies of the Egypt's informal economy produced in the early Eighties (Birks and Sinclair, 1982) and based on official census data seriously underestimated the size of the informal sector, putting it at a mere 7% of the total number of enterprises in Egypt. Only towards the end of the Eighties did new and more credible estimates appear of the role played by the informal economy in the country, which was then assessed as accounting for anywhere between 40% and 70%. The fundamental event was the large-scale launch of a new census funded by the National Centre for Social and Criminal Studies and directed by Alia El-Mahdi (2002), who together with another internationally prominent economist, Heba Andoussa, is one of the key figures in the debate on local development in Egypt.

Though putting less emphasis on the social dimension of development, De Soto's work and its reception by Egypt's academics and intellectuals played a somewhat similar role to that exerted in Italy by the "discovery" of industrial districts by Giacomo Becattini and other neo-Marshallian economists: in both cases, SMEs - clustered into districts in Italy and in the guise of the informal sector in Egypt - moved away from the outskirts of a dominant discourse that centered on modernization and the role of the State - respectively for the development policies for the backward areas of Southern Italy and for Nasserian mass industrialization - to be reconceptualized as the true drivers of growth for each country's national economy.

Gradually, the interest in the role, actual and potential, that the informal economy could have in sparking development processes shifted from its initial context - or in other words, the urban setting, and particularly that of Egypt's two metropolises, Cairo and

Alexandria - to extend to the whole of Egypt, thus grafting itself onto the broader debate about development and underdevelopment in Egypt. In this connection, a second moment was fundamental to the birth of local development in Egypt: the publication in the mid-Nineties, of the UNDP's first Human Development Report, or HDR. The function fulfilled by the HDR was essentially that of demonstrating, thanks to the presumed "objectivity" of the Human Development Index or HDI, the pervasiveness of poverty in Egypt, especially in the more marginal areas of Upper Egypt, and hence the need for *ad hoc* development policies. From this perspective, the Nineties marked the entry into the debate and to policies of a certain number of supralocal bodies who made their own contribution to hammering out the concept of local development in Egypt. For example, in 1962 Egypt was the first country in the MENA region (Middle East North Africa) where the World Bank launched a Social Fund for Development (SFD) program. Nor was this all: between 1999 and 2006, out of the 530 million dollars provided through the four SFDs active in the region, almost half (240 million) were earmarked for Egypt, covering approximately 13% of public spending for social protection. Another actor who played a fundamental role was, obviously, the International Labor Organization (ILO), which has operated in Egypt since 1959 and has worked systematically with the informal economy.

Obviously, the entry of supralocal actors paved the way towards applying other approaches to development, from rural development to its participatory counterparts, and from the role of general policies to administrative decentralization. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the attention to small and micro-enterprises - and to the informal economy in particular - is in any case a unifying element, given that this category encompasses everything from the goldsmith's shop in Cairo, with its reliance on an intangible heritage of age-old techniques, to the micro-commerce of a women's cooperative in the Nile delta.

A future aspect to be borne in mind is, as mentioned earlier, the increasing attention devoted to the issues of regional unbalances. In this connection, the Nineties also saw important initiatives for the spatial reorganization and redistribution of development processes, such as the establishment of twenty Business Research Centers (BRCs) and ten technology centers outside the strong governorates of Cairo, precisely in order to support local forms of specialization - furniture production in Damietta, for example. The other major theme to dominate the regional development debate is the problem of the backwardness of Upper Egypt, where 37% of the county's population is concentrated and, above all, a full 65% of its population living below the poverty line. As we will see in the concluding paragraph, the formulation of development policies for Southern Egypt is one of the areas where the approach to local development reveals its most obvious limitations - or at least the need to combine it with other approaches.

6.2 *The institutionalization of local development*

As we observed in the preceding paragraph, though there can be no doubt that local development thinking sprang from the "discovery" of positive processes that were already present in Egyptian society - the impact of the informal economy and the micro-enterprises first, but also the existence of large segments of the population living in poverty and severe regional unbalances in the levels of economic and regional

development - the political and normative dimension has been from the outset as a source of inspiration for the debate.

The political and intellectual context from which thinking about the informal economy springs is, in fact, characterized by an “ideological” reaction to the Nasserian narratives, centered as they were on modernizing and industrializing the Egyptian economy essentially under the aegis of the state, by means of large state-run enterprises and mass hirings in the public administration. It is no coincidence that the intellectual mentor here is Hernando De Soto, author of an interpretation of the role of the informal economy in the developing countries of a clearly and explicitly neo laissez-faire stamp, as shown by the work of the Economic Research Forum, one of the main channels for the spread of neo-institutionalist thought, traditionally the main vehicle of cross-fertilization between the issues strictly associated with local development, and the neo-classic and neo laissez-faire schools.

If the neo laissez-faire, normative undercurrents for the academic and intellectual debate are clear, the same tension between the Nasserian legacy and neo laissez-faire urges is even clearer if we consider the process whereby the issues connected with local development are institutionalized. As part of the policy of *infatih* (openness) to the Western bloc and the international market economy that Sadat pursued in evident contrast with his predecessor, the first event that established the conditions under which we can in fact speak of local and regional development in Egypt was the promulgation of Presidential Decree No. 43 of 1979, the Law of Local Management System) with which Sadat introduced a form of subsidiary linkage between the different administrative levels engaged in managing the state (governorates, cities, districts and villages). And not only: even more importantly, the 1979 law introduced the principle of “economic regions”, not necessarily sharing the same boundaries as the individual governorates and provided with planning facilities that were intended to provide the Ministry of Planning (in charge of coordinating national policy) with information and input regarding the specific resources and potential of each economic region, as well as to draft local and regional development policies.

Despite these premises, the progress made by local development was by no means as smooth as could have been hoped, first because of the “cultural” resistance put up by those who should have acted on the directives outlined on the 1979 decree. It is highly significant in this connection that the first major survey of the informal economy in the late Eighties was sponsored by the National Centre for Social and Criminal Studies - or in other words, an institution whose mission was to analyze social marginalization - in the face of the indifference, not to say the hostility, of the Ministry of Industry, stronghold of Nasserian industrialist doctrine. Gradually, however, in the course of the nineties and the first years of the new millennium, the Ministries involved in the processes that local development entails began to show a certain activity. Though finding one’s way through Egypt’s complex institutional architecture is far from easy, with its continually changing names and responsibilities and its agencies that are constantly being merged together or split apart, our attention must necessarily focus on the Ministry for Local Development (MLD), set up in XXXX.

The vicissitudes of the MLD are to some extent emblematic of the ambiguity with which the ideas of local development have circulated in Egypt. First, it will be useful to consider

the aims that the Ministry was created to serve, but to do so we must first devote a modicum of attention to Egypt's institutional organization as a whole. Traditionally, the key Ministry has always been called the Ministry of Planning, bearing witness once again to the resilience of the Nasserian legacy, whose assignment was to mediate between the individual ministries' needs to ensure that the acts of the various components of Egyptian politics was consistent with available funding and, above all, with the guidelines laid down by the government, which obviously expressed the President's strategic vision. In a certain sense, the MLD was set up as an authority that, if not antagonistic, was at least complementary to that of the Ministry of Planning: in other words, the Ministry of Local Development fulfilled an analogous mediation function, not between ministries, but between the different governorates and the different regional administrative units. Though the MLD depended ultimately from the Ministry of Planning, its function was to harmonize the various local and regional development policies with the nationwide goals of central government. Even at this point, the intrinsically aporetic nature of this institution's workings are clear: more than local development *per se*, what we see here are standard regional development policies centering chiefly on building social and economic infrastructures in the more marginal areas, rather than on leveraging and deploying location-specific features. Additionally, given that the MLD asserted a principle of complementarity between the national and regional scales and, accordingly, was part of a broader trend towards reorganizing and decentralizing state power, it at the same time contributed to putting these processes under the control of the Ministry of Planning and to making regional and local planning efforts heavily dependent on the will of the government, and of the President in particular.

The ambiguity of the relationship between the Ministry of Local Development and the Ministry of Planning is even more apparent if we consider the series of reshuffles that took place during the period in question. In 2005, a presidential decree joined the two ministries together, with the Ministry of Planning obviously retaining preeminence, ostensibly to improve integration between the two planning levels, more likely in order to increase the national government's control over the governorates. The experiment lasted for around a year, until September 2006, when the Ministry of Planning was split into two different ministries, the Ministry for Economic Development and the Ministry for Local Development, a division which restored the situation that existed prior to the 2005 merger.

6.3 The Egyptian road to local development

In conclusion, the emergence and spread of the issues traditionally associated with local development in Egypt have proceeded simultaneously on two levels, the positive/economic and the normative/political. On the one hand, in fact, local development arose in Egypt as a result of the increased awareness of the role of SMEs in the country's economy. On the other hand, this "discovery", by contrast with that of the industrial districts in Italy, was not immediately retranslated into terms that were either meso-economic (considering, for example, the role of external economies and sectorial specialization) or territorial (highlighting the contribution of localized factors to the survival and competitiveness of this fabric of SMEs). Only in the new millennium do we

find any explicit mention of the proximity effect that differentiates clusters from mere agglomerations. (El-Mahdi, 2002). By contrast, the idea of the informal economy and the SMEs was immediately taken up from the macro-economic standpoint, or in other words linking the issue of local development to that of the role of the State in the economy, in a way, moreover, that was absolutely consistent with the precepts of the neo-institutionalist interpretation of economic development and the workings of the market. In other words, the interpretation of the informal economy, rather than being cast in a positive light (the factors that permit survival, and in some cases competitiveness) with the consequent discovery of the territorial dimension of development, is almost entirely defined in the negative, in terms of market failure (the macro-economic factors that hinder development).

In this sense, the local development debate was heavily “nationalized”, or radically contextualized in a strictly Egyptian debate, and one that has been going on for thirty years, on the range and scope of the Nasserian legacy, on how far and in what direction Egypt has moved away from this legacy, and on the extent to which the organization of the State - and in particular the State’s intervention in market dynamics - is still influenced by the presence of Nasserian bureaucracies. Here, the criticisms raised against local development are rooted in the same intellectual context in which local development itself took its first steps away from Nasserian state control. In other words, rather than a true critical stage, it would be more logical to speak of a reaction to local development.

This peculiar encounter between strictly national concerns (the relationship with the Nasserian legacy) and more global viewpoints (the neo-institutionalist rethinking of the relationships between State and market) thus spurred the spread in Egypt of issues that are, yes, linked to local development, but at the same time entail an ambiguous, other-directed application of it. This explains certain aporetic characteristics that are typical of local development in Egypt, such as the fact that the recognition of the proximity effect in some manufacturing clusters is accompanied by policies involving the almost forced relocation of the enterprises in the cluster, without considering that these policies disrupt the territorial embeddedness that made the cluster’s development possible (Scarpocchi, 2003).

7. The route to local development in Senegal

7.1 Local development promoted by supralocal levels

Starting from the mid-Nineties, local development became one of the central goals of development policies in Senegal, where it was closely linked to other key concepts such as decentralization, governance and participation.

Though we will again use the vantage points for interpretation presented earlier, in the cases of Senegal we cannot speak of a “discovery” of local development. Granted, there are local areas that show a measure, and often quite a large one, of dynamism, springing from the formation of production and socio-economic associations in general, from the circuits of the informal economy, from a few limited and circumscribed areas that specialize in producing handicrafts, and from certain types of agricultural produce (rice, onions, tomatoes, etc.) and the supply chains of which they are a part (Magrin, 2007).

Nevertheless, the local development debate in Senegal does not center on this local dynamism, but on top-down processes.

In Senegal, the attention to local development has its start from the state programs supported by major international cooperation initiatives, while on the theoretical level it is linked above all to the French school of local development thinking (see, among others, Piveteau 2005, Pecqueur 1989, 2005, Lévy and Lusseau 2004), the main point of reference for the Senegalese scientific and academic world.

Accordingly, the normative dimension of local development, with its institutionalization of policies, was prominent from the outset, while little theoretical and empirical reference was made to the positive dimension.

In this setting, the spread of local development definitions and strategies was closely linked to the promotion of territorial governance, supported by the populous and highly variegated world of development cooperation in all its forms (multilateral, bilateral, nongovernmental, decentralized), which finances almost all of the Senegalese state's development programs. More specifically, both academic thinking and the international cooperation documents produced from the Nineties onwards put little emphasis on the advisability and need to "transform" the forms of state government. The priorities were considered to lie in empowering civil society and creating autonomous local spaces (Totté, Dahou, Billaz, 2003), organizing the concept of development around the ability to mobilize local actors in constructing shared territorial projects.

Almost totally devoid of any substrate of empirical observation and thought, the concept of local development thus joined the array of Senegalese policies as a guiding principle for encouraging governance and empowerment processes for local communities (Magrin, 2007). The line of thought prevailing in Senegal's academic, political and socio-cultural circles was that administrative decentralization is the way to make the local scale the probable site of an extended participation by the population, mobilizing a plurality of actors and reinforcing collective action, which is thus susceptible to flexibility and change (Roche, 2003). Here, an important part of the debate was the centrality of creating decentralized administrative levels in order to achieve a more even-handed form of development - as stressed in the documents that established a framework for assessing the Millennium Goals in Senegal - and to encourage changes that start from the local level, this being the scale at which it is necessary to identify the territorial resources that will be leveraged, the methods for organizing actors, and the type of action to be taken. This orientation, with the weight of international cooperation behind it, found favor with a central government for whom sharing responsibility with different levels of subordinate administration was an opportunity for easing a burden which had become increasingly difficult to sustain, both socially and financially (Piveteau, 2005; Magrin, 2007).

7.2 Politico-administrative decentralization as the decisive context

Local development thus arose in close connection with the process of politico-administrative decentralization that, formally, had been initiated as early as 1972, following the slow process of decolonization. During the Nineties, this process of decentralization took place in Senegal (as in most of the other countries in West Africa) in a context dominated by liberal ideologies which advocated the state's noninvolvement

in the structural adjustment policies imposed by the IMF, and under the pressure of the main international financiers, headed by the World Bank. With Law 72-25, 1972 thus saw the creation of local groupings such as Municipalities and Rural Communities, though they were to essentially remain as entities in name only, relegated to the control of a state-appointed sub-prefect, until the passage of Law 90-35 in 1990. But the process of decentralization made its most significant step forward towards regionalization in 1996, both through an institutional reform that raised the regions to the rank of local communities (Law 96-06), and through a functional reform (Law 96-07) which transferred a large number of important responsibilities to the regions and other local entities (municipalities and rural communities). The view that emerged was that through decentralization, the local dimension can be entrusted with the leading role it needs to promote and sustain the country's socio-economic development by delegating responsibilities, training specialists and local leaders, and increasing civil society's sense of responsibility in general. The context in which this process of decentralization proceeds, however, is one of extreme weakness on the part of local institutions, both technically and financially. For this reason, many programs and initiatives promoted by the various actors involved in development cooperation concentrate on institutional reinforcement, and in particular on training local leaders (municipal and rural council members), who are not infrequently illiterate and entirely unaware of the powers and responsibilities assigned to them.

7.3 Local development in the strategies of international cooperation

Among the major multilateral cooperation groups involved in promoting policies and initiatives for institutional reinforcement and local development in Senegal, a central role is played by the European Union, the World Bank and PNUD/FENU. These groups prefer a multiscale approach, supporting the process of decentralization by strengthening both the central structures (politico-administrative and technical), and the decentralized system of Regions, Municipalities and Rural Communities, as well as by taking direct action with broader sections of local civil society (e.g., by supporting basic organizations).

The axis of governance, in particular, together with those of infrastructures and security, is one of the lynchpins of the European Union's development aid in Senegal. As part of the VIII FED, where the intention is to go beyond micro-projects by including them in local joint planning efforts, three programs which are expressly designed to support decentralization and local development have been funded: the *Programme de Soutien aux Initiatives de Développement Local* (PSIDEL; 2000-2005), in which around sixty rural communities located in Casamance in the south, and in the Department of Podor in the north of Senegal's middle valley, are involved in improving access to social services and community infrastructures in rural areas through participatory approaches, the *Programme d'Appui au Développement Local Urbain* (PADELU; 2001-2006), an urban program whose specific goal is to build socio-economic development skills, and the *Programme d'Appui aux Régions* (PAR; 2002-2005), which centers on consolidating the ability of the regions to perform the functions involved in organizing regional development by supporting the decentralization process.

As part of the World Bank's efforts to promote local development in Senegal, 2000 saw the launch of two wide-ranging programs, the PNIR and the AFDS, which deal respectively with two pillars of community-driven development: local governments and the local community. The two programs were combined in a major new initiative inaugurated in 2006, the *Programme national pour le développement local* (PNDL), an active partnership between the World Bank and the Senegalese government which pursues the goal of supporting the introduction of basic socio-economic services for local communities.

The United Nations operates in Senegal chiefly through the *Fonds d'Equipement des Nations Unies* (FENU) and the *Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement* (PNUD), which have brought a number of insights into the meaning, and the method, of governance and local development, and in particular into the "Local development funds" that FENU introduced in the mid-Nineties. Among the various programs they support, FENU and PNUD launched the *Programme d'Appui à la Décentralisation en Milieu Rural* (PADMIR) late in 1999. Initially slated to last four years, this program was later extended until the end of 2007. Through a participatory planning exercise and the creation of a local development fund, PADMIR's lines of action focus on supporting the rural communities' planning, programming and budgeting process, on implementing and monitoring the Development Fund and the EU Fund, and on strengthening local actor's skills.

These macro-programs are flanked by a range of programs and projects that are less ambitious in terms of the financial commitments and organizational complexity they involve, and which are funded by other nongovernmental bilateral (NGOs from Senegal and the North) and decentralized cooperation groups.

On the whole, all of these programs, regardless of the organizations behind them, operate mostly through the creation of "Local development funds" or similar tools whose aim is to provide the local level with financial resources that it would not otherwise have, as the tiny trickle of funding transferred by the central government and the even more limited local tax base are insufficient for the tasks assigned to local communities. In most cases, however, this situation leads to conflicts and competition between municipalities, regions and local communities who vie with each other to attract financial resources from international and state agencies, local agencies, associations from the North and nongovernmental organizations through processes that are not only poorly coordinated at the three levels, but often show a marked rivalry and hostility. If on the one hand the action taken independently by the decentralized administrations is almost entirely nonexistent, both because of the financial problems mentioned earlier and as a result of the inexperience and lack of training frequently shown by local leaders and would-be specialists, on the other hand the government programs that do not depend on cooperation channels are few and far between, and for the most part are oriented towards one-off infrastructural projects. This is due to the limited bargaining and decision-making power of a state that is the beneficiary of massive amounts of aid and funding. In addition, a far from insignificant role is played by the corruption that dominates the Senegalese political scene, where rampant nepotism and pervasive special interests stand in the way of national planning.

Another problem that is closely related to the delicate question of the Senegalese government's coordination of the programs and initiatives that have been deployed in the country is that of the overlap between the activities of the various development agencies. Despite the agencies' efforts to act in a coordinated supralocal network, their programs do not seem to have achieved a real, widespread and accessible visibility for all of the actors who work on the broad panorama of cooperation. As a result, the geographical breakdown of funding often sees a disproportionate share of benefits going to certain areas again and again. Thus, the Dakar region has the highest rate of investment per inhabitant (8320 CFA francs), followed by the St. Louis region (7052 CFA francs), Louga (6369 CFA francs) and Kaolack (6163 CFA francs), as against the 2510 CFA francs per inhabitant in the Kolda region. The contexts in which the majority of initiatives is concentrated, moreover, are not areas that are more disadvantaged than others. As a number of assessment reports indicate, there are also more than a few areas of overlap in the field, even between programs promoted by the same actor (as in the case of the World Bank's PNIR and AFDS) or between different programs, though the synergies achieved between the EU's PSIDEL and the FENU/PNUD PADMIR program are encouraging. Ambiguous situations are especially frequent at the local scale, with different cooperation programs creating a plurality of steering committees to deal with the same issues. Thus, each new program often creates its own joint planning framework, essentially expressing distrust and lack of confidence in the local community, seeing it *a priori* as incapable of fulfilling this function. The result is to set up an unnecessary number of discussion groups that engender confusion rather than promoting democracy (Piveteau, 2005).

This multiplication of the occasions for participation produces an over-profusion of institutions in areas that are already congested in this respect (Le Meur, 2001); in the field, local actors, and especially the local communities, are hard pressed to achieve any kind of consistency from these initiatives in places where different bailleurs and development agencies overlap. At the same time, supralocal coordination is also unable to ensure consistency, and the regional level in particular - or in other words the level at which most coordination should by rights take place - is the one where efforts at decentralization have been most hesitant.

Evaluating the outcomes and territorial repercussions of these programs is far from straightforward, as assessments of the first period of work are only now becoming available. What is clear, however, is the priority assigned to supplying basic services to the local communities, along with less (and indeed, very little) attention towards promoting action of an economic nature. If initiatives in fact concentrate on supporting the territorial planning of the decentralized agencies, the active participation of civil society, and building up the country's infrastructures through close links between its institutions and cooperation groups, the private economy (small and medium enterprises, basic organizations, farmers' associations and production consortia) plays a marginal role, and action in this sector is supported in most cases through the fragmentary efforts of nongovernmental cooperation, with NGOs taking the lead. For the period between 1998 and 2003, the total funding provided to Senegalese local communities by development cooperation groups in order to prepare development plans and make priority investments amounted to 57 billion CFA francs, with 43,056,799,758 going to the urban sector and 13,925,358,244 to the rural sector. The breakdown between rural and urban initiatives

points to continued action in sectors such as waterworks and health care, administrative, commercial and road infrastructures, as well as a more general attention to supporting administrative rather than economic activities. If it is clear that the local scale is favored as the appropriate level for implementing programs, it is equally clear that promoting economic activities remains largely outside the purview of local development initiatives. The question thus arises as to whether it is possible (and desirable) to promote local development without stepping on the accelerator of local economic growth, or, conversely, whether supporting the decentralized politico-administrative action can be the first stepping-stone towards facilitating productive changes at the local scale, as well as an original approach to leveraging local resources.

8. Concluding remarks

The conclusions to this investigation cannot be other than provisional, as befits a work which is still moving towards its end. The comparison between the Egyptian and Senegalese paths to local development, both of which show a marked propensity towards institutionalizing development, and both evincing an ambiguous and complex relationship between the strategies of international cooperation, national strategies and local dynamics, highlights the need to adopt a transcalar perspective, in which political and economic perspectives intersect. Local development would appear to be a process of producing new spaces of economic and political action, of setting up short networks, networks that connect both to neighboring actors and the long networks of globalization. This calls for a shift from the idea of *passive territoriality*, defined by the simultaneous physical presence in a territory of competencies, to an *active territoriality*, as the outcome of a process of deploying territorial resources and actors in a network and sharing development scenarios. In a debate on development theories and practices which is still dominated by macro-economic and aspatial thinking, and by the as-yet unburied development illusion held out by major projects, local development suggests itself a potential space for political innovation, for building democracy and leveraging resources and skills on supralocal networks through the active mediation of local actors. Here, however, the geography of collective action is highly selective, and one which cannot be generalized and must be distinguished from processes of politico-administrative decentralization.

In this tension, risks and ambiguities abound. There is the risk of uncritically exporting, wholesale, institutional engineering produced for European contexts (and where, if the truth be known, it has not always been an unmitigated success). In this sense, local development is not necessarily an “appropriate technology” on the economic level, and may be even less so on the political level.

In conclusion, we would like to outline two aspects that have been shown to be particularly critical in applying local development approaches in DCs, both springing from the fact that “local development” has in many cases taken only the meaning and the function of adding another scale, the local, to the debate and to development practices, without making any deep-seated changes in the underlying mechanisms and concepts. The first of these aspects is associated with the question of administrative

decentralization, while the second can be traced to the sometimes rather unclear conceptualization of the meaning of development processes, and their role in the territory. For the first aspect, it should be noted in particular that strengthening the mechanisms of territorial governance and support for the development of local communities can be an effective tool for local development, in terms of both horizontal coordination (between the local actors' different projects) and vertical coordination (between initiatives by the state, by foreign financiers, by supraregional institutions, etc.) provided that it does not undercut the still marginal and as-yet undefined role of local communities (Leloup et al., 2004). In this sense, we find a certain incompatibility between decentralization and empowering local actors (Piveteau, 2005). The real effectiveness of decentralized management is called into question in the moment in which it comes face to face with local actors' inability to form new spaces for producing public goods, because local public powers are still unprepared to reinforce a larger share of their legitimacy as regards the results of the political decisions to which they can lay claim. Thus, as is clear in the case of Senegal, decentralization, once accomplished and once it has transferred new responsibilities to local communities who are still fragile and inexpert, automatically increases the power of foreign operators, who given their dissimilar goals often produce situations that are contradictory and lacking in continuity. This inevitably weakens local control, and the consistency and effectiveness of public policies (especially in terms of investments): local communities are enfeebled by the increased competition between them, misguidedly coming to prefer approaches imposed from outside (development plans drafted according to certain dictates, participatory processes set up with an eye to attracting funds), shelving any plans they may have had to model their responses on other patterns. The dominance of the project at the local scale, the unequal powers of the actors involved in aid, the weakness of the resources mobilized in many of the local communities all conspire to dash the hopes of accomplishing a decentralization process that could result in real local development.

By contrast, the adoption of development at the local scale by the major protagonists of international cooperation has entailed a certain standardization of the Western experience which, potentially, could weaken rather than reinforce the territorial dimension of development. When the local is no more than a scale that stands in for the national in order to perform certain functions more effectively and efficiently, there is a real risk of losing the contribution that the territory, with its deep silt of accumulated skills that are neither fungible nor readily reproduced, can make, pushing it into the background, behind the scale. The risk, in other words, is that of over-emphasizing the local scale, thinking that it is enough to plan and implement processes at the local and community levels, without devoting sufficient attention to the specific contributions that territorial embeddedness brings to development processes. This creates paradoxes, as in the case of Egypt, where attention to micro-enterprises and specialized clusters is accompanied by modernist, state-controlled territorial planning, in which the local authorities themselves back delocalization policies that are more or less forced, and may go so far as to expel precisely those enterprises that should be the engine of local development from the territory.

Thus, the relationship between the local and the global, especially as regards the formulation of theories and policies for economic and social development in the developing world, calls for further investigation and empirical trials.

Bibliography

- Agnew J., "From the political economy of regions to regional political economy", *Progress in Human Geography*, 24, 1, pp. 101-110, 2000.
- Browne S., *Aid and Influence: Do Donors Help or Hinder?*, London, Earthscan, 2006.
- Amin A., "An institutionalist perspective on regional economic development", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 23, 2 pp. 265-278, 1999.
- Amin A., "Spatialities of globalisation" *Environment and Planning A* **34**(3) 385 – 399, 2002.
- Badie B., *La fin des territoires. Essai sur le désordre international et sur l'utilité sociale du respect*, Fayard, Parigi, 1995.
- Bagnasco, A. *Tre Italie: la problematica territoriale dello sviluppo italiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1977.
- Banca Mondiale, *Local Economic Development*, Urban Development Unit, The World Bank, Washington, 2003.
- Becattini G., Bellandi M., Dei Ottati G., Sforzi F., (eds.), *Il Caleidoscopio dello Sviluppo Locale. Trasformazioni economiche nell'Italia contemporanea*, Rosenberg & Sellier, Torino, 2001.
- Birks J. S., Sinclair C. A., "Employment and Development in Six Poor Arab States: Syria, Jordan, Sudan, South Yemen, Egypt, and North Yemen", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1982, p. 35-51.
- Bogdanor, V., "Devolution: Decentralisation or Disintegration?", *The Political Quarterly*, 70 (2), 185–194, 1999
- Brenner N., "Beyond state-centrism? Space, territoriality, and geographical scale in globalization", *Theory and Society*, V. 28, N. 1, 1999, p. 39-78.
- Camagni U., 'On the concept of territorial competitiveness: sound or misleading', in *Urban Studies*, Volume 39, n. 13, 2002, p. 2395 - 2411.
- Castells, M., *Power of Identity: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture*, Blackwell, London, 1997.
- Chambers, R., *Rural development. Putting the last first*, Longman, London, 1983.
- Conti, S. e Sforzi, F., 'Il sistema produttivo italiano', in P. Coppola (ed.), *Geografia politica delle regioni italiane*, Torino, Einaudi, p. 278-336, 1997.
- Cox K. R., (ed.), *Spaces of globalization. Reasserting the power of the local*, The Guilford Press, London, 1997.
- Cox K., *Locality and community in the politics of local economic development*, Annals of the Association of American geographers, 78 (2) pp. 307-325, 1988.
- D'Aquino P., "Le développement local. Territoire entre espace et pouvoir: pour une planification territoriale ascendante", in *L'Espace Géographique*, n.1, pp. 3-23, 2002.

- Dansero E., *Le développement local entre le nord et le sud, théories et pratiques: réflexions à partir de quelques expériences au Sénégal*, Actes de la III Entrevue de la coopération interuniversitaire Turin-Sahel, Bamako 10-11/2/2005, 2006.
- Degnbol-Martinussen J., Engberg-Pedersen P., *Aid: Understanding International Development Cooperation*, London and New York, Zed Books, 2003.
- Dematteis, G., "Globalisation and regional integration: the case of the Italian urban system", *GeoJournal*, 43, 1997.
- de Soto, H., *El Otro Sendero: La Revolución Informal*, Bogotá, Editorial Printer Colombia, 1989.
- Dicken P., *Global shift. Reshaping the Global Economic Map*, Londra, Sage, 2003.
- Dubresson A., Fauré Y-A, "Décentralisation et développement local: un lien à repenser", *Revue Tiers Monde*, n. 181, pp. 7-19, 2002.
- El-Mahdi, *Towards Decent Work in the Informal Sector. The Case of Egypt.*, Geneva, Employment Sector, ILO, 2002
- Friedman J. and Weaver C., *The evolution of regional planning*, London, Arnold, 1979.
- Friedman, T., *The world is flat: A brief history of the globalized world in the 21st century*, London: Penguin Books, 2005.
- Fujita M, Krugman, P. and Venables A.J., *The spatial economy : cities, regions and international trade*, MIT Press, Cambridge (MA), 1999.
- Giddens, A., *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, University of California Press, 1986
- Gottmann J., *The Significance of Territory*, Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 1973.
- Governa F., Salone C., Territories in action, territories for action: the territorial dimension of Italian local development policies *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 28 (4), 796-818, 2004.
- Hadjimichalis C., "Non-economic factors in economic geography and in 'New Regionalism': a sympathetic critique", *International Journal of Urban and regional Research*, 30, 3, 2006, pp. 690-704.
- Harvey D., *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1989.
- Helling L., Serrano R., Warren D., "Linking Community Empowerment, Decentralized Governance, and Public Service Provision Through a Local Development Framework", in *Social Protection Discussion Paper*, n. 535, The World Bank, New York, 2005.
- Hess M., "'Spatial' relationships? Towards a reconceptualization of embeddedness", *Progress in Human Geography*, v. 28, n. 2, 2004, pp. 165-186.
- Hettne B., *Development Theory and the Three Worlds*, Longman, 1990.
- Intartaglia D., Correze A., 2002, "Le développement local entre décentralisation et privatisation. Réflexions à partir de cinq expériences (Afrique de l'Ouest, Bolivie)", *Traverses*, n. 11, (da sito internet: www.gret.org).
- Jessop B., "Post-fordism and the State", in A. Amin (a cura di), *Post-fordism. A reader*, Oxford, Blackweel, 1994, pp. 251-279.
- Jordi M., *La identitat territorial en els processos de desenvolupament local. Banyoles identitat lacustre i projecte de ciutat*, Memoria de investigació, Universitat de Girona, 2004.

- Latouche, S., *In the wake of the affluent society. An exploration of post-development*, Zed Books, London, 1993.
- Lévy J., et Lusseau M., *Dictionnaire de la géographie et de l'espace des sociétés*, Belin, Paris, 2004.
- Lipietz, A., *Mirages and Miracles. The Crisis of Global Fordism*, Verso, London, 1987.
- Magnaghi, *The Urban Village: A Charter for Democracy and Local Self-sustainable Development*, Zed Books, London, 2005.
- Magrin G., Le développement local introuvable : réflexions sur l'importation d'un concept au Sénégal, *Cahier de Girardel*, n. 4, 2007.
- Markusen A., "Sticky places in slippery spaces: a typology of industrial districts", *Economic Geography*, v. 72, 1996, pp.293-313.
- Mengin J., Masson G., *Guide du développement local et du développement social*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1989.
- North, D. *Institutions, institutional change and economic performance*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990.
- O'Brien R., *Global financial integration: the End of Geography?*, London, Pinter, 1992.
- OECD, *Best Practices in Local Development*, Local Economic and Employment Development Programme. OECD Publishing, 2001
- Pecqueur B. , *Le développement local: mode ou modèle*, Syros, Paris, 1989.
- Pecqueur B., Le développement territorial : une nouvelle approche des processus de développement pour les économies du Sud, in Antheaume B., Giraut F., (eds.) *Le territoire est mort. Vive les territoires!*, IRD Edition, Paris, 295-316, 2005.
- Piore, M.J. and Sabel C.F, *The Second Industrial Divide: Possibilities for Prosperity*, Basic Books, New York, 1984.
- Piveteau A., 2005, *Décentralisation et développement local au Sénégal. Chronique d'un couple hypothétique*, *Revue Tiers Monde*.
- Polanyi, K, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, Beacon Press, New York, 1957.
- Porter, M., *The competitive advantage of nations*, Macmillan, London, 1989.
- Potter R.B. et Al., *Geographies of development*, Pearson, Harlow, II ediz., 2004.
- Pyke F., Sengenberger W., *Industrial districts and local economic regeneration*, International Institute for Labour Studies Geneva, 1992.
- Rist, G., *Le développement. histoire d'une croyance occidentale*, Paris, Presses de Science-Po, 1996.
- Roche D., "Le développement local en milieu rural: de quoi parle-t-on?", *Le cahiers de Girardel*, n° 1, Groupe interdisciplinaire de recherche pour l'appui à la planification régionale et au développement local, Université Gaston Berger, St. Louis, Senegal, pp. 73-86, 2003.
- Rodríguez Gutiérrez F., *Manual de desarrollo local*, Ediciones Trea, Madrid, 1999.
- Sassen, S., *Losing control? Sovereignty in an age of globalization*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1996.
- Scarpocchi, C., "Dinamiche d'attori e configurazioni conflittuali nella patrimonializzazione del Cairo Islamico", *Terra d'Africa*, 2003/04, no. 12/13, p. 49-101.

- Scott, Allen J. and Storper, M., 'Regions, Globalization, Development', *Regional Studies*, 41:1, p. 191 -205, 2007.
- Sequeira Carvalho J. A., *La dynamisation des initiatives locales. Une force synergique de développement*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1997.
- Storper M., "The resurgence of regional economics", in T. J. Barnes e M. S. Gertler (a cura di), *The New Industrial Geography. Regions, Regulation and Institutions*, Londra, Routledge, pp. 23-53, 1999.
- Storper M., *The Regional World: Territorial development in a global economy*, New York, Guilford Press, 1997.
- Swyngedouw E, "Authoritarian governance, power, and the politics of rescaling", *Environment and Planning D*, 18(1), p. 63 – 76, 2000.
- Sykora L., *Local and regional planning and policy in East Central European transitional countries*, in HAMPL M. (a cura di), "Geography of societal transformation in the Czech Republic, 153-179, Prague, Charles University, Department of social Geography and regional Development, 1999.
- Totte M., Dahou T., Billaz R., (Eds.), *La décentralisation en Afrique de l'Ouest. Entre politique et développement*, Cota-Karthala-Enda Graf, Karthala, Paris, 2003.
- Vázquez Barquero A., "Desarrollo endógeno y globalización", en Madoery O. y Vázquez Barquero A. (Eds.), *Transformaciones globales, Instituciones y Políticas de desarrollo local*, Editorial Homo Sapiens, Rosario, 2001.
- Veltz P., *Mondialisation, villes et territoires: l'économie d'archipel*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1996.