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The Institutions of Local Development (review)

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anthology with fewer but more focused and critically analytical pieces could have better accomplished his laudable objective in putting together this book on a very important issue in environment and development.

LITERATURE CITED

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The Institutions of Local Development

Fabio Sforzi (editor). Ashgate Publishing Co., Burlington, VT, 2003. x and 195 pp.
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This collection of empirical and theoretical research papers makes a valuable addition to the literature on local development, with a rich variety of case studies and numerous significant findings. Although much of the debate in development geography has been focused on the global scale, the work assembled in this volume provides an important look at competitiveness, trust, and the evolution of social capital at the local scale, while not losing sight of implications to globalization. The reader is not likely to be disappointed since there is not a single weak chapter in Sforzi's collection of papers from the Study Group on Local Development of the International Geographical Union (IGU).

The authors of Chapter 1, Hallencreutz, Lundequist, and Malberg, offer insights regarding cultural, structural, and political embeddedness of the Swedish music industry, but their choice of the music sector is perhaps less socially relevant to the critical issues often at the core of development geography, such as agricultural production (Chapter 4), industrialization (Chapter 8), or at its periphery, biotechnology (Chapter

3). Safer and Schnell's (Chapter 2) discussion of the Israeli-Arab economy is quite strong, though the reader will not find links between local networks and broader global dynamics as in other chapters. Nevertheless, their interviews pointing to failed partnerships between Jewish and Arab entrepreneurs are critically important in light of the need for synthesis in the region's economy. The third chapter of Part I, dealing with place-specificity of competitiveness, explores further networking between firms in the context of biotechnology as well as information and communication technology. Cook and Huggins have chosen the economy of Cambridge, U.K. to clearly demonstrate that not only networking, but clustering and collaboration are evident and quite pronounced in the high-technology sector.

Part II shifts the reader's attention to trust shaping collective action. In Chapter 4, Fergus Lyon provides a compelling challenge to Garrett Hardin's premise that communal sharing of resources is undermined by individual profit maximization. Lyon's case study of cooperative palm oil production in Ghana illustrates the

strength typical of relatively small-scale agricultural cooperatives. Another study of trust, though not limited to the dynamics of cooperation, appears in Chapter 5. Here one will find a fairly exhaustive regression analysis based on various trust variables and credit access data from Oaxaca and Puebla, Mexico. Giusta's statistical analysis shows that "specific domains in which individuals interact" (p. 110) are essential to understanding the range of trust among individuals. This quote is typical of the chapter in which the specifics of the spectrum of trust may have been more clearly articulated. Nevertheless, conclusions regarding the study's implications to microfinance schemes in development programs are noteworthy. Chapter 6 is an excellent theoretical discussion, on par with Nigel Thrift's prolific contributions to development theory, though the pragmatist who may be less tolerant of theoretical jargon will find no reprieve here. Analyses of Local Currency Systems (LCS) in the U.K. by Thrift et al. point to the fact that such systems are limited in their material contributions toward incorporating those individuals who are peripheralized from formal economic management. Both internal and external barriers to LCS development are addressed and applied to broader theoretical development issues. The discussion of economic geographies as social constructs is well grounded in the more applied findings related to Local Exchange and Trading Systems, but the lack of specific information on question respondents in the question and answer format of data presentation in the chapter

can be a bit frustrating in places. It appears that some of the questioned respondents are in health care professions, such as acupuncture, yet this is one of the few cases where this important information can be ferreted out.

Part III of the book focuses upon social capital in local development beginning with Chapter 7, which returns to the issue of trust. Drawing heavily upon Putnam's Theory, Bull and Frate take a careful look at the perceptions, strategies, and interactions of thirty selected entrepreneurs, politicians and other local actors in the Agro Nocerino-Sarnese area of Southern Italy. The region is shown to be in a stage of socio-economic revitalization, if not void of social deprivation or corruption. The authors' conclusions are interesting, yet curiously disjointed from their theoretical discussion of trust. The final chapter is also based on local development patterns in what has been dubbed the Third Italy, a portion of which the author identifies as Veneto and Tuscany. Regardless of the somewhat vague definition of the Third Italy region, Burrioni offers a very thorough and precise analysis of local industrial development in the two study areas. Among the more noteworthy conclusions is the confirmation that global pressures can lead to a divergence of local governance models. This last chapter is typical of the extremely well researched and, for the most part, clearly articulated works found in this essential collection for geographers seeking a clearer conception of local and global development issues.