UNIVERSITÀ DI PARMA

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PARMA

DOTTORATO DI RICERCA IN

"*Economia e Management dell'Innovazione e della Sostenibilità*"

CICLO XXIV

Amor Soli

Place Identity in a globalised world

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Anni Accademici 2018/2019 – 2020/2021

AMOR SOLI

Place Identity in a Globalised World

Nella pagina precedente: Raffaello Sanzio, *Poesia*, ca. 1508, Stanza della Segnatura, Palazzo Apostolico presso Città del Vaticano.
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Mi consola il fatto che il Signore

sa lavorare ed agire anche

con strumenti insufficienti

(Benedictus P.P. XVI)

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Introduction

"Le cose passate fanno lume alle future,
perché el mondo fu sempre di una medesima sorte;
e tutto quello che è e sarà, è stato in altro tempo,
e le cose medesime ritornano,
ma sotto diversi nomi e colori; però ognuno non le ricognosce,
ma solo chi è savio, e le osserva e considera diligentemente"[1].

- Francesco Guicciardini (Ricordi)

1.1 Globalization and Identity: a longstanding question

Socio-global dynamics attributable to the last two decades have led territories and the man of the third millennium to face a profound series of challenges. The globalization in its variegated facets, the galloping technological innovation and the significant re-evaluation of symbolic and intangible perspectives within social contexts led local communities to a profound change in everyday life and identity

[1] See English translation in William Mallinson, *Guicciardini, Geopolitics and Geohistory: Understanding Inter-State Relations,* Springer, 2021, p. 20. "*Past things shed light on future ones; the world was always of a kind; what is and will be was at some other time; the same things come back, but under different names and colours; not everybody recognizes them, but only he who is wise and considers them diligently*".

awareness. Consequently, a significant redefinition of the dialectic between individuals and the territory emerged (Razzoli et al., 2020).

The original source of contemporary processes redesigning the identity profiles of territories and their communities is the phenomenon characterized by important transformations in cultural, economic, social and political relations that literature has variously interpreted, described and defined as “globalization” (Dematteis and Governa, 2006). This term became integral part of the academic and political lexicon towards the end of the 1980s and at the dawn of the following decade (Robertson and White, 2007), highlighting a dimensional duality characterized by both the materiality of a world economic system increasingly rooted in the variety of capitalist forms and the immateriality of a revaluation of the planetary imaginary in its network of circulation and relations. The latter is characterized by not only people and goods, but also ideas and lifestyles (Conti et al., 2014), in a perspective that tends to undermine the traditional cultural profiles of communities and territories projecting them towards homogenization (Inda and Rosaldo, 2002; Kovacs, 2001).

The definitions provided by scholars on the phenomenon of globalization are particularly numerous and variegated (e.g. Albrow and King, 1990; Held et al., 1999; Rosenau, 1997). Among them, the best known and widely recognized is the one provided by Conley (2002) – yet echoed by many other scholars and philosophers (e.g. Benedict XVI, 2009) – who conceives it as a “process of increasing interconnection and interdependence between societies” of the world. However, in an abstraction from the perspectives typifying globalization in the various strands of literature, two common and deeply significant leitmotifs emerge: On the one hand, the manifestation conceptualized by Ohmae (1990) as "borderless world", characterized by the erosion of traditional territorial *limes* between regions and countries and, on the other hand, the “space-time compression” defined by David Harvey (1989) in which speed, technology, transience and flexibility emerge as a new paradigm in economic life and, consequently, in the social sphere of every society in which it occurs.

This context of accelerated circulation of people, goods, money, but also information and images, has jeopardised both the role and the power of the nation-state as classically conceived (Amin and Thrift, 1995a; Brenner, 1999; Castells, 2000; Crane, 2008; Hirst and Thompson, 1995; Jessop, 1993; Jones, 2001; Keating, 1998; Le Galès, 2002; Orhan, 2021; Swyngedouw, 1997), also helped by the large series of geopolitical changes that characterized the 1990s (Diener and Hagen, 2009), but it has also allowed a renewed protagonism of territorial entities (Tartaglia and Rossi, 2015). Cities and regions, nowadays called into question, rise then as key players in a new-born global context in which the role of the State, and, therefore, that of territories themselves as identity collectors is totally reassessed (Keating, 2009; Paasi, 2009; Sassen, 2006; Taylor, 2000). Indeed, a large consensus among scholars exists on the actual importance of local territories as key actors in the institutional and spatial restructuring of the contemporary State (Brenner, 2004).

Although from different points of view all these reflections put in the spotlight a completely renewed interest in local territories, which reappear as effective actors in the development processes (Cox, 1997), it is clear that the way society interacts with and relates to the territory has totally changed. A number of "territorial redefinition" mechanisms highlight a change in perception of the lived space among individuals (Berdoulay and Entrikin, 1998). This alteration of territorial perception manifests itself in four recursive processes, different but interrelated, which are summarized by the studies of Dematteis and Governa (2006) in relation to the dialectic between actors, social structures and territories as follows:

1. Tendency to fragmentation and hyper-connection between places. In other words, the redesign of the relationships of a territorial entity (and therefore its actors) with other areas (Castells, 1996), and the tendency to strengthen the connections with the more distant ones at the expenses of the closest territories.
2. Differential mobilities in which the importance of *fixed assets*[2] (Amin, 2000) as territorial development factors is increasing.

[2] Fixed assets are conceived not only as physically rooted in a place but also as non-transferable or hard to find elsewhere.

3. Re-scaling or reorganization of multi-level governance relationships and redefinition of production systems at the territorial level (Brenner, 1999).
4. The relationship between homologation and differentiation, in which the alterations produced by globalization manifest a geographical fragmentation among homologation models, seems to compete with social, cultural, and economic factors already locally rooted.

All these processes highlight the central question of considering local identity in territorial studies *a priori* to any specific research project, due to its ability in exerting impact on development processes (Raszkowski, 2014). As eloquently written by Castells (1999): "Our world and our lives are being shaped by the conflicting trends of globalization and identity". Indeed, worldwide increase of globalization phenomena led to a shift from local to global in the co-evolutionary interaction between environment and society, causing significant distortions in ancestral roots of local identities from the values of nation, community, family, and physical geography to those of global media (Scholte, 2000). Consequently, the classical mechanism of territorial differentiation of cultures and societies risks to lose its identity value, regressing to simple simulacrum of a fossil folklore, a mummified heritage for tourism or purely territorial marketing (Magnaghi, 2003), highlighting the dilemma about what means "identity" today and how it is approached.

The question around identity and territory is polysemic. The primordial concept of *identity* rose from the complex interaction of human qualities, giving to the human being a unique and univocal position (Erickson and Roberts 1997), but at the same time it is a process changing with environment and time (Hall, 1997; Lin, 2002). Starting from this point, the term "identity" highlights its double nature: being single individuals and belonging to a "collective self" (Fabietti, 2015; p. 170). But what presupposes a "me" and an "us" also presupposes the presence of a "you" and a "them", perceived as intrinsically alternative or different, and thus strengthens the concept of collective identity, in which unity, compactness and identifiability allow an internal cohesion (Tassan, 2020) that is historically linked to and rooted in a geographical area. On this line, "local identity" has been seen as a unique character shared by members of a group or belonging to a single person (Rummens, 1993), but also as a social construct linked to both local culture and global influences (Vukic, 2012), highlighting its strong association with "cultural identity". This concept arises "from formal or informal membership in groups that transmit and inculcate knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, traditions, and ways of life" (Kaul 2012, p. 342), within the nexus between culture and society conceptualized by Tylor's pioneering studies (1871). In any case, and regardless of the adopted perspective, the identity of a territory must always be seen in relation to its traditions and historical heritage (Deffner and Metaxas, 2007).

Although the territorial context and its identity are familiar themes in academic studies, both at national and regional level (Banini, 2017), related explorable topics are still wide and varied. Current literature highlights numerous associated areas in need of further studies, such as rural tourism (Racasan and Egresi, 2019), identity in urban scenarios (e.g. Shao and Liu, 2018), relations with sustainability issues (Basile and Cavallo, 2020) and multilevel institutions (Capello and Perucca, 2019). In particular, a crucial debate on whether globalization and its expressions thrives or deteriorates local identities is constantly ongoing (Islam et al., 2019). Furthermore, also the relationships between stakeholders and identity in a vertical perspective, such as the rescaling process (Antonsich and Holland, 2014), and in a horizontal one, such as the identification in local communities (Batra and Wu, 2019), are topics demanding further investigation.

In light of these aspects, deepening local identity-related factors and widening knowledge on research strands such as sustainable practices involved in territorial enhancement is central, and the role and importance of local actors and urban scenarios become particularly relevant.

1.2 Conceptualizing cities and territories

One of the key aspects of the dialectic between identity, territory and its actors lies in the precise definition of the terms with which one is confronted. Terms such as "territory", "region", "city", "place" often have polysemical meanings in common language, as well as in different varieties of literature. Therefore, it is essential to identify the semantic and cultural baggage each term carries, avoiding the opacity and the notional evanescence in which one sometimes stumbles (Cremaschi, 2002). The cornerstone of the present study, hence, is the dynamic conception of the terminologies of "territory", "city" and "place".

As Jean Gottmann (2005) argues in his studies, cities and territories manifest themselves as constantly evolving entities throughout their historical process of forming and building (and unfolding in) the becoming. Today's concept of the territory is the result of a chronological overlapping of a conceptual multiplicity. Its primitive roots lie in the Roman vision of the territory as a spatial element totally available to transformations (Ferraro, 2001); however, this vision ended with the collapse of the Empire to leave room for a less centralistic perspective of spaces. With the advent of the Middle Ages, these spaces remain strictly linked to a "finite" dimension, yet also formed by "neighboring places", where the diversifications of local history in a spatial-temporal perspective become irreducibly the creator [of these spaces] (Decandia, 2008). In this first conceptual evolution there is a shift from the attempts at cultural homologation between multiple spatial entities towards an initial emphasis on individual local identities, creating the conditions for the determination of a new settlement reality where the range of routines and habits is rooted to the place, thus creating a unique and univocal human being-local territory conjunction (Valentino, 2013). With the Renaissance and the following centuries, the territory's conceptual baggage is further enriched towards a perspective that, on the one hand, depowers its role again, relegating it to the satellite of the respective reference cities and, on the other hand, relates to it through a separation approach between subject and object that will act as a starting point towards the modern perspective (Valentino, 2013). It is with the creation and the analytical use of maps, as a result of the Enlightenment, that the territory again takes on an "aseptic", project-oriented, functional perspective destined to transform in a top-down standpoint the world and its local societies (Quaini, 2007). This kind of approach was maintained until the Fordist era, when the planning of the territory was based on making it easy to carry out the establishment of the "machine civilization" (Magnaghi, 2017), hence conceiving the territory as a metaphorical "beast of burden" (Magnaghi, 1992) which, by serving the production system, implicitly obtained benefits as well. Nowadays this perspective has been completely eradicated in most Western countries. The actual epistemological revival of the concept of territory takes on a series of perspectives of intrinsic dynamism leading to a systemic approach, which gives rise to the current academic "territorialist school". The underlying concept is the orientation towards a development that does not recognize the territory as a passive entity without stimulus (Tardivo and Quaglia, 2013), yet defines it as a stratified outcome of co-evolutive processes (Geddes, 1970) oriented to an interaction and a long-lasting dialectic between itself and society (Dematteis and Governa, 2006), to the point of borrowing from biological sciences the concepts of "life system" (Golinelli, 2002) and "high-complexity living ecosystem" (Magnaghi, 2017). In other words, the territory is conceived as a historical and cultural process in which the community settled in it interacts with an environment that includes both material assets (the environment itself) and immaterial assets (symbols, values, meanings) in an evolution that is constant, but also controlled by the identity that it brings along. Each territory thus embodies a specific aspect, a specific character, a special physiognomy which can be briefly defined as the basis of a unique and exclusive identity (Berzi, 2017).

Similarly to the evolutive path of the territory, also its main units, namely cities, acquire a plurality of meanings over time and the associated semantic baggage is today the foundation of the Western urban phenomenon. The most ancient roots of the term now universally conceived as "city" assume a necessarily dichotomous perspective. On the one hand, in this differentiation there is the proper urban complex, that is the set of buildings and roads within a delineated perimeter, originally defined as *urbs* (or similar *asty*) and, on the other hand, the city emerges in the broadest sense of the term (Pistocchi, 2008), containing the social, cultural, political and economic dimensions. If this broad vision of the city can be identified primarily in the Greek context with the *poleis*, representing a precise place where a particular lineage of men has its seat and manifests its own *ethos*, creating the perfect conception of the "place of the common good" in which the greatest manifestation of freedom gave rise to the most complete form of governance (born there), it is, however, with the Roman *civitas* that it is possible to observe a heterogeneous amalgam of people from different backgrounds who accept the same law (Cacciari, 2004, Pistocchi, 2008), which is at the basis of the current theoretical perspective of the city. With the advent of the successive eras and, in particular, the total revivals of the urban contexts operated in the Renaissance up to the radical industrial urbanization of the 19th century, the city begins to be characterized by a long and slow process of evolution, however characterized by a marked continuity (Secchi, 1999). Afterwards, the processes of industrialization and globalization characterized by a progressive decay of the local and rural have led to a phenomenon of pseudo-rivalry and the untying of what literature has widely analyzed as a dualism between city and country (Pazzagli et al., 2017), but which can be more generally seen as a dichotomy between city and "non-city", *id est* a residual territorial fabric. In this scenario of uncoupling between city and territory, as a result of the industrial age and then of the current globalization era, the urban context is moving towards a contraction of its atavic identity. In the city it is noticeable an emphasis on the difficulty of communication and harmonization of all the elements present in a specific place (i.e. the city itself in this case), that the sociologist Touraine (2002) in his studies allegorically compares to the ancient problem of the Tower of Babel[3] (chaos and multicultural confrontation). The identity problem that emerges from this shows the fundamental question of the modern city: by approaching more the perspective of the Roman *civitas* rather than the Greek *polis* and hosting ethnic, cultural and social varieties, it leads to a conflict between its many faces, namely dimensions (Rykwert, 2003), with the homologation dictated by the conditions of post-modernism and capitalism typical of globalization. In any case, far from a definition of compactness and temporal continuity that allows a totally harmonious vision with the surrounding territory and its respective identity, the city today is hard to define in its constant evolution as a physical-spatial and economic-functional engine of progress, of dimensional growth on which hangs the sword of Damocles of an infinite race towards a future that constantly wants it ephemeral and obsolete in its own being (Pistocchi, 2008). In this sense, defining the city today can neither conceive exclusively the physical-material dimension, nor its *summa* with the socio-cultural element or its history, as

[3] Cf. "*Venite igitur, descendamus, et confundamus ibi linguam eorum, ut non audiat unusquisque vocem proximi sui*" (Gen 11,7).

it must take into account those perspectives between present and future which project it into an uncertain future of renewed protagonism (Sassen, 2005; 2006).

Even the concept of "place" in international debates is no longer equated with a coherent and stable perception over time (Casey, 1997; Dematteis and Governa, 2006). In fact, "place" is perceived as an intermediate entity between man and individual (Maggioli, 2015), between a "sense of the place" and a "conception of place", the former in its subjective and symbolic identity, and the latter in its naturalistic and objective perspective (Entrikin, 1991). This concept of place declined as an intermediate entity on several fronts is also surrogated by the positions of Santos (2006), who conceives it as a perspective of the world in which human passions, urges, drives to action are born and deployed. The place is, therefore, a meeting point but also a clash point, where practices, policies and experiences are interwoven, in which the actors confront and develop links that add to the character of the place itself re-working with those already existing that are consequently molded again (Massey and Jess, 2001). Therefore, with the term "place" it is possible to express both the city and the territory, emphasizing the dynamic dimension of exchange that allows it (i.e. the place) not to be a describer of a mere geographical area, yet a "crossroads of interdependencies" (Maggioli, 2015).

1.3 Trends of Slowness and Smartness: multa paucis

In the globalized world, locally present dichotomies between cities and the rest of the territory, between cities and the countryside (Pazzagli et al., 2017), between densely urbanized areas and rural areas (Pavione et al., 2017) have led the different local realities to different approaches for the enhancement of their identities and have allowed the literature pertaining to the territorial studies to give rise to two important macro-strands that in the last decades have aimed to analyze the varieties of philosophies, strategies and practices locally implemented through a more conservation- or innovation-sensitive orientation. These literary paradigms are, in sum, the result of the combination of the globalized world and the territorial identity and are attributable and reduced respectively to two main umbrella terms: *slowness* and *smartness*.

Although recently literature is at a stage of mediation and encounter between *smartness* and *slowness* (e.g. Farelnik, 2018; Tocci, 2017), their perspective positions, as well as the elements underlying their respective studies, remain particularly marked and distinct. "Slowness" can be conceived as a conservative orientation of personal, collective and territorial identity, attentive to the sustainability and preservation (or coherent review) of the *status quo*, whereas "smartness" represents the sensitivity towards an evolving identity, full of ideas and new designs.

1.3.1 Slowness: sustainability and preservation

The search for a serene approach to everyday life free from the frenzies and tight rhythms of the contemporary world seems to be a leitmotif of philosophers and poets of the last century (Matos, 2003), the most sensitives in perceiving the profound criticisms that the industrial systems after the 19th century laid at the basis of the new-born Western societies. However, an academic approach to slow philosophy has emerged only in recent decades, once the profound identitarian criticisms of the globalized society, in which the increasing depersonalization of people and places has found its amalgam with the consumerist dynamics inherited from the Fordist period (Ritzer, 2005), have been clear-cut.

The genesis of the academic approach to slow philosophies in the territorial studies can be traced back to the food and wine sector and the visionary ideas of Carlo Petrini, the founder of the famous Slow Food movement. It was born in 1986 as a protest against the unscrupulous opening of fast-food chains on Italian soil, emblematic of the process of McDonaldization of society and consumptions, which operates a deep standardization of the methods of consumption and nutrition (Ritzer, 2013) and significantly affects individual local identities in their food and wine sector (Conti et al., 2014). In just over a decade, the pervasiveness of the conceptual paradigms at the base of Slow Food has led to the creation of its own "spinoff" with a declination and deployment in urban and territorial context: Cittaslow (e.g. Ekinci, 2014; Mayer and Knox, 2006). It is a phenomenon variously defined as an urban and social movement, but also a paradigm of local governance (Pink, 2008), based on the attempt to extend the philosophies originally conceived for Slow Food to the urban context (regardless of its size) and local politics, proposing an agenda for urban development and local distinctiveness (Heitmann et al., 2011).

If from the point of view of individuals, be they indigenous or tourists, the focal point of the slow philosophy is the endorsement of positions suitable to the slowing of life rhythms (Honoré, 2004), by learning to recalibrate their habits with greater perception of space and time (Calzati and De Salvo, 2017), in a geographical-territorial approach and in a local governance view the main principles are Identity and Sustainability (Pavione et al., 2017). On that basis is founded the whole perspective of the development of a given territory by means of a trajectory of combining development: economic growth, social cohesion and environmental protection (Pink, 2008) on the one hand, and protection of the local cultural heritage in all its forms (Heitmann et al., 2011) on the other.

The adoption of slow philosophies in the territories has over time allowed the development of an intense process of rediscovery and enhancement of local identity through shared capital, relationships of trust, traditions and, ultimately, sustainability (Pavione et al., 2017). The latter is the subject of particular emphasis in territorial policies (Di Clemente et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2006; Giaoutzi and Nijkap, 1993; Roberts and Simpson, 1999) and in the studies dealing with local actors, declining itself three-dimensionally in an economic, environmental and social view (Pistoni et al., 2019). In an environmental view, the slow philosophy is mainly oriented towards preserving the quality of natural resources as a pillar of a new well-being paradigm (Pavione et al., 2017). From an economic point of view, instead, it is the sedimentation of *savoir-faire*, i.e. tangible and intangible resources on a given territory that make it unique (Lancerini, 2005; Adeyinka-Ojo, 2013), as well as the presence of industrial (and craft) districts, the formation of phenomena of interactive learning processes (learning by interacting) typical of learning regions (Asheim, 1997) and/or technological spillovers (Conti et al., 2014). Finally, from a social point of view, slowness is the orientation towards the creation of a collaborative network of local actors oriented to the enhancement of heritage and culture of the past, present and future, in the formation of that institutional thickness (Amin and Thrift, 1995b) which will strengthen the identity of the territory itself.

A territory in which the slow philosophies are being implemented is also characterized by the ability to blend urban and rural aspects, thus developing a multisectoral perspective capable of making those areas equipped with multiple development engines (Hall, 2009; Lumsdon and McGrath, 2011; Miele, 2008), and of valorizing more identitarian aspects. In this sense, the practical applications and strategic proposals of Slow philosophy, which have emerged over time through the Slow Food and Cittaslow movements, have achieved great cross-cultural success, pervading various locations around the world and different sectors. In the social sphere, the economic sector that has most embraced the slow principles is tourism, developing the particular form categorized with the term Slow Tourism (e.g. Fullagar et al., 2012), which has sometimes been extended more generally to the concept of Slow Travel (Dickinson and Lumsdon, 2010) or focused on the individual Slow Tourist (Yurtseven and Kaya, 2011). Slow tourism is characterized by being a fundamentally sustainable form of tourism, capable of respecting and enhancing identity, culture, history, local environment and fostering social engagement, proposing an experiential approach based on the appreciation of discoveries, on learning and sharing, and on promoting interaction with local actors (Heitmann et al., 2011).

1.3.2 Smartness: technology for future

In recent decades, in the field of academic studies and of local development policies the smartness paradigm has combined with the above-mentioned slowness paradigm, achieving wide recognition. The concept of smartness arose in the United States around the 1990s during a series of local debates on urban policies (Burchell et al., 2000; Downs, 2005; Rosati and Conti, 2016) as a result of a movement called Smart Growth (Knaap and Talen, 2005). At the basis of the concept of “smartness” it is recognizable an attempt to address the issues of economic environment and social equity (Scott, 2007) from a technical and pragmatic point of view (Bulkeley and Betsill, 2005). What can therefore be included in this umbrella term encompasses a strand of studies which, despite having recently begun to deal with a wide variety of territorial contexts also thanks to the exploitation of a certain polysemy of the term “smart” (e.g. Albino et al., 2015; Navìo-Marco et al., 2020), has focused on the urban one from the beginning, developing into what is commonly called Smart City, with all its dimensions and facets.

The notion of Smart City is nowadays characterized by the presence of a nebula of more or less varied definitions that make it difficult to develop a common sense that is simultaneously complete and widely accepted by the scientific community, even in the global-scale trends towards which literature reaches out (Neirotti et al., 2014). There are numerous perspectives regarding what a smart city is (Lara et al., 2016). The most well-known and shared is that proposed by Giffinger et al. (2007), in which although it is agreed that there is no unique definition, a focus on a 6-axis multidimensionality is proposed, and these are: Smart Economy, Smart Governance, Smart Environment, Smart Living, Smart People and Smart Mobility. On these axes the authors propose to analyze by means of a number of factors and indicators what degree of smartness a determined urban context possesses (Giffinger et al., 2007) in the perspective of a neoclassical theory of urban growth (Albino et al., 2015). Alongside these quantitative-pragmatic approaches to the smart cities phenomenon, other authors have opted for different or integrative viewing angles, focusing for instance on technology (e.g. Townsend, 2013), economics (e.g. Kourtit et al., 2012), organizational context (e.g. Hollands, 2015), on local society and community (e.g. Deakin and Al Waer, 2011; 2012). In all these perspectives, however, innovation, and consequently also technological development, is configured as the starting point in the process of identitarian and perspectival formation of the evolving city; what one wants to convey, in sum, to later generations (Lara et al., 2016). In this respect, the smart city, on the one hand, is a system strongly characterized by the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and of new technologies aimed at improving the well-being of citizens (De Santis et al., 2013; Neirotti et al., 2014) and, on the other hand, those instruments, in force and in progress, are directed towards the development of the unique cultural identity of a city (or more generally a territory) (Han and Hawken, 2018).

In short, the concept of smartness applied to the urban context, in the main sense of smart city, both embraces and surpasses the bond with technology and connectivity, “provid[ing] the conditions and resources” to citizens to “shape urban change and realiz[e] their ambitions” (Schaffers et al., 2012, p. II). This willingness to work between global and local scale is characterized within smart cities as a crucial point of studies aimed at a planning that has a rational and meaningful identity in the context in which those cities are inserted (Han and Hawken, 2018). An identity, hence, primarily projected towards the future but with roots consistent with the socio-cultural context on which it is based.

1.4 Thesis Design

In the light of the subjects presented in the previous sections, this paper is configured as a thesis in the collection paper format, which aims to analyze the theme of the enhancement of the territory and its identity. In particular, it has been chosen to deepen two strands of literature on smartness and slowness, exploring precise issues within them, both in urban contexts and in a wider spatial perspective, trying to fill some gaps in the respective literatures.

Following this first introductory chapter, which aims at defining the holistic framework of reference for the key themes analyzed and explaining the organic structure of the thesis, the current paper proposes two chapters dealing with research in the field of slow-philosophy and a chapter concerning smart cities. Lastly, general conclusions follow.

“The Seven Sisters of Piedmont. A Case Study of Potentially Worthwhile Cooperation" is the title of the second chapter. It is part of the slowness theme, deepening through a case study the issue of networking between territorial actors and geographical micro-areas, with a view to sustainability and to the definition of a shared identity, starting from their respective potential and their own histories and cultures. This is the case of the “Seven Sisters”, i.e. seven medium- to small-sized cities with a territory being characterized by an interesting morphological heterogeneity and tourist attractiveness. In this context, located in the Cuneo area in the north-west of Italy, there has already been a vague application of slow philosophies, but with a lack of organicity and concertation by local stakeholders in orienting towards a common direction and a networking for sustainable and coeval growth, capable of developing and communicating their identity at its best. Starting from the absence in literature of research referring to the opportunities and challenges in using slow philosophies on a network-based plan (e.g. Nonstandard region) (de la Barre, 2012), the objective has been that of exploring the availability to collaborate between institutional and non-institutional stakeholders for the creation of a network geared to a slow-oriented development of the territory. For this purpose, the following research question has been developed:

> *To what extent is cooperation among small- scale cities a valuable way to pursue slow tourism development as a mean to enhance dignity and well-being for the tourists and the local communities?*

In order to better conduct the analysis, the question has been developed into two further sub-questions:

> *What are the potential advantages of stakeholder cooperation and networking?*
>
> *What are the main obstacles to stakeholder cooperation and networking?*

The study adds to the existing literature the understanding of networking as a viable and sustainable way of emerging and enhancing local identities by exploring dynamics among local actors and showing how intra-area competition and local rivalry can be counter-productive.

The third chapter, titled "Pilgrimage Routes to Happiness: Comparing the Camino de Santiago and Via Francigena", deals with the theme of territories and pilgrimage as a typical experience of the slow philosophy and as a primordial form of slow tourism, recently rediscovered in a contemporary key. With the aim of filling the scarcity of literary studies regarding pilgrims’ travel motivations and inner experiences (Amaro et al., 2018; Blackwell, 2014; Damari and Mansfeld, 2016), the research focuses on the experience of pilgrimage, comparing those who have travelled the Way of Saint James with those who have walked on the Via Francigena. In this context, the research questions guiding the work have been:

What are the main subjective motivations to undertake a pilgrimage?

What does the pilgrimage experience provide to pilgrims in terms of emotions and personal values?

Research findings add to extant literature new insights regarding profiles of contemporary pilgrims in their intrinsic approach to pilgrimage, responding to the need to widen studies on routes other than The Way of St. James (Amaro et al., 2018) and deepening nexus among religion and tourism in a comparative perspective (Collins-Kreiner, 2020).

Chapter four, "Smart Mobility and Active Citizenship among young adults. A sustainable perspective" is inserted in the literary strand dealing with the topic of smartness, especially smart cities. Through a study carried out in Turin, a developing city with an identity characterized by a multiple historical-cultural stratifications and projected in a highly smart perspective, the research was aimed to analyze the relationship between the citizens of a smart city and the pushes for the adoption of innovative mobility systems in terms of active citizenship and sustainable development. The literature dealing with the topic of smart cities shows a paucity of studies addressing smart urban mobility, characterized by a generalistic approach (Orlowski and Romanowska, 2019) which is not much centered on the user as local actor (Ebner et al., 2019). In addition, there is a need for studies on the effective involvement of citizens in smart cities (Granier and Kudo, 2016; Li et al., 2019), in particular on the behavioral dynamics of young adults (Ferraris and Belyaeva, 2017; Holmberg and Alvinius, 2019) in relation to new forms of urban mobility. As a result of these topics, the study proposes to investigate the following research question:

Which are the main factors driving the acceptance of smart mobility technologies by young adults living, working, or studying in a smart city?

The research provides to literature new insights in factors affecting smart mobility from a citizen's perspective, particularly useful for strategic urban planning, in order to meet citizens' needs and shape the identity of the forthcoming smart city. Findings of the study evidence insights useful for urban governments to well calibrate communication policies and citizens' involvement practices in building a new way to conceive cities.

A qualitative methodology has been adopted for the two studies regarding the field of slowness (Chapters 2 and 3). In both cases, two clusters of actors have been separated through a series of semi-structured individual interviews in order to produce a first thematic analysis by means of a reading and re-reading of key themes (Boyatzis, 1998; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006) to compare and evaluate congruences and differences of approach towards the investigated topic. In the second chapter, the two groups interviewed and studied are represented by institutional actors (i.e. those who carry out public territorial management policies) and non-institutional actors (that is those who "privately" deal with culture, territory, tourism and sustainability, such as cultural associations, museums, and economic institutions). The third chapter sees the confrontation between pilgrims on the Way of Saint James and those on the Via Francigena. The results of the interviews for both studies have been developed with the analysis software T-Lab, analyzing the lemmatic co-occurrences identified in the interviewees' speeches and generating a series of graphs (called radials), that represent by form and distance the main cognitive and logical associations of the respondents (Lancia, 2012). The interpretation of these radials and the thematic analysis are the cornerstone of the following results and their discussion.

The study concerning smart cities (Chapter 4) adopts a quantitative methodology based on a technology acceptance model. Through the use of the Extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT-2) the influence of the model variables was tested, and it was integrated with a series of constructs analyzing active and sustainable citizenship regarding the intention to use smart mobility systems by young adults (18-34 years old) in the city of Turin. The administration of Google Forms digital questionnaires to users has enabled the collection of data for the analysis.

In the general conclusions, the results of the three studies conducted in the framework of their respective research strands are discussed, developing also reflections on the diversity of approach, vision and importance that every actor assumes in the enhancement of the territory, each according to their own roles and identities. In the end, the final note refers to some of the author's wishes for future studies in the field of territorial identity, emphasizing the value and the need for multidisciplinary and multi-method approaches.

1.5 Chapters overview and publication status

The present work has been developed in form of "collection papers thesis" and it consists of three studies summarized as follows:

Paper 1: Latusi, S., Fissore, M. (2021). The Seven Sisters of Piedmont. A case study of potentially worthwhile cooperation.

Status: Published after double blind review process in: M. Della Lucia, E. Giudici, (Eds.), "Humanistic Management and Sustainable Tourism: Human, Social and Environmental Challenges" (pp. 15-36). Routledge, Humanistic Management series. ISBN: 978-0-367-62333-3.

The book publisher allowed by written licence the use of the present publication as Ph.D. thesis chapter.

Paper 2: Latusi, S., Fissore, M. (2021). Pilgrimage Routes to Happiness: Comparing the Camino de Santiago and Via Francigena.

Status: Published after double blind review process in: A.R.C. Perinotto, V.F. Mayer, J.R.R. Soares (Eds.), "Rebuilding and Restructuring the Tourism Industry:

Infusion of Happiness and Quality of Life" (pp. 157-182). IGI Global. ISBN: 978-1799872399

The book publisher allowed by written licence the use of the present publication as Ph.D. thesis chapter.

Paper 3: Fissore, M., Smart Mobility and Active Citizenship among young adults. A sustainable perspective.

Status: Unpublished. Presented and discussed in an early form at the VI edition of SIM Doctoral & Research Colloquium.

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II

The Seven Sisters of Piedmont A Case Study of Potentially Worthwhile Cooperation*

Sabrina Latusi and Massimiliano Fissore

Abstract: The chapter proposes a humanistic perspective in managing destination development through stakeholder cooperation and networking. The case of the Seven Sisters (Piedmont, Italy) is analyzed through an explorative research, with the aim of understanding the advantages and difficulties of cooperation among small-scale cities in slow-tourism development. Results reveal different opinions between institutional and non-institutional stakeholders regarding the potential for local tourism development based on a slow positioning and networking. The Seven Sisters case highlights that established administrative-based borders, individualism, and parochialism weaken the political interest in a network-based project.

Keywords: well-being, quality of life, slow tourism, nonstandard region, networking, stakeholders

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* **Chapter published as:** Latusi, S., Fissore, M. (2021). The Seven Sisters of Piedmont. A case study of potentially worthwhile cooperation. In: M. Della Lucia, E. Giudici, (Eds.), *Humanistic Management and Sustainable Tourism: Human, Social and Environmental Challenges* (pp. 15-36). Routledge, Humanistic Management series. ISBN: 978-0-367-62333-3.

2.1 Introduction

In destination management debate, policy-makers and researchers are moving toward the concepts of sustainability, ethics and identity as important strategic elements in fostering and developing the well-being of stakeholders (e.g.Su, Huang, S. & Huang, J., 2018). Sustainability is based on a humanistic vision of management, whereby places with a value-based perspective can combine economic, social, and environmental goals.

This perspective is promoting interest in a slow way of life and driving the growth of slow food, slow cities and slow tourism (Heitmann, Robinson & Povey, 2011). Slow tourism is a new frontier in tourism and destination management, particularly challenging for places with a historical, cultural and environmental heritage wishing to generate well-being for their stakeholders (e.g. Fullagar, Markwell & Wilson, 2012; Lowry & Lee, 2016).

This kind of heritage and positioning usually characterizes small, underestimated, and unrecognized places. When such places act independently, their small size makes for difficulties in visibility and consumer recognition. Therefore, cooperation among places (small cities, villages, cultural and natural beauty spots, etc.) seems to be the best way to pursue sustainable growth. Indeed, cooperation would seem to make it possible to overcome difficulties in the management and development of small places.

However, the application of the slow philosophy in tourism development and destination management has been studied mostly at a city level, in relation to Cittàslow (e.g. Mayer & Knox, 2006; Nilsson, Svärd, Widarsson & Wirell, 2011; Ekinci, 2014), at a regional (de la Barre, 2012; Murayama & Parker, 2012) and national level (Serdane, 2019). Research on opportunities and challenges for using slow philosophy in tourism development at a network-based geographical scale (i.e. nonstandard region) is lacking in the academic literature. Networking can make for a viable and sustainable way of emerging in the slow tourism context by focusing strategies on cooperation (e.g. Guercini & Tunisini, 2017; Buffa, Beritelli & Martini, 2018).

The purpose of the chapter is to fill up this gap and, to this end, the following central research question is posed:

To what extent is cooperation among small-scale cities a valuable way to pursue slow tourism development as a mean to enhance dignity and well-being for the tourists and the local communities?

From this basis, specific sub-questions can be distinguished:

What are the potential advantages of stakeholder cooperation and networking?

What are the main obstacles to stakeholder cooperation and networking?

To address these issues, the study investigates an Italian local area known as 'Sette Sorelle' (Seven Sisters). These seven small cities (Alba, Bra, Cuneo, Fossano, Mondovì, Saluzzo, and Savigliano) in the province of Cuneo (in Piedmont) show a relatively low tourism demand. They have little-known natural and cultural elements that can represent great potential for a sustainable tourism development according to a slow philosophy. These municipalities share a cultural and historical common denominator that could support networking among them and their actors and facilitate the identification of common goals. These cities could grow together, improve their citizens' quality of life, and become a valid alternative to other more well-known nearby destinations (e.g. Monferrato). Therefore, the Seven Sisters case represents a suitable context to explore cooperation and networking management in slow tourism development.

The chapter is organized as follows. First, an introductory theoretical discussion regarding the main topics under consideration (cultural slow tourism, nonstandard regions, and cooperation) is undertaken. Next, the methodology is presented, including the research context of the Seven Sisters. The opinions of local stakeholders on the development of the Seven Sisters are then analyzed, highlighting potential advantages and pitfalls. The chapter concludes by summarizing the main empirical findings, underlining the contribution made to existing knowledge.

2.2 A Theoretical Humanistic Framework for Cultural Slow Tourism in Nonstandard Regions

Humanistic management is a people-oriented management, showing care for people flourishing and well-being (Melé, 2016). It is a concept of management that upholds unconditional human dignity within an economic context (Melé, 2003; Spitzeck, Amann, Pirson, Khan & Von Kimakowitz, 2009). The concept calls for a new vision of business: "serving the societies in which business operates, increasing their citizens' quality of life" (Spitzeck, 2011, p. 51). This humanistic-oriented ethics pursuing dignity and well-being should be considered not only as a trend but also as a need for management (Dierksmeier, 2011). Re-thinking economics, business, and management from a humanistic perspective is particularly relevant in the tourism industry (Cynarski & Obodynski, 2004). This orientation calls for a tourism impact that socially, culturally, and environmentally is neither permanent, nor irreversible (Beech & Chadwick, 2006), allowing citizens (tourists, local communities, workers, etc.) a healthy, productive, and pleasant life.

In recent years, quality of life and well-being have become an important area of investigation in tourism research (Jepson, Stadler & Spencer, 2019). Indeed, there has been a shift in the value of tourism toward more subjective elements, such as sustainability, wellness, well-being, and quality of life (Perdue, Tyrrell & Uysal, 2010). According to Uysal, Sirgy, Woo and Kim (2016), systematic reviews of quality of life studies in tourism, tourists' experiences and activities contribute to positive affect in a range of life domains and have a significant effect both on tourists' overall life satisfaction and on well-being of residents of host communities too.

Recently, sustainability and personal/social well-being have become driving forces underpinning new forms of tourism, among which is slow tourism (Moore, 2012; Oh, Assaf & Baloglu, 2016).

2.2.1 Cultural Slow Tourism

The phenomenon of slow tourism needs to be understood in the socio-cultural context of slow movement (Fullagar et al., 2012). The slow movement is a lifestyle revolution (Honorè, 2005), a change of mindsets and a re-evaluation of life priorities (Heitmann et al., 2011). The new priorities include a slower approach to life, that strives for simplicity, mindfulness, and embodied experiences to facilitate renewal, revitalization, and self-enrichment (Howard, 2012). In the context of tourism, these new priorities translate to engaging with local people, preserving cultural traditions and natural resources, and making meaningful connections with heritage, places, and environment (e.g. Gibson, Pratt & Movono, 2012).

Slow tourism is an umbrella term encompassing various tourism types (Serdane, 2019), such as responsible tourism (Timms & Conway, 2012) and ethical tourism (Clancy, 2015). Several authors also link slow tourism with sustainability (e.g. Sidali & de Obeso, 2018).

From a humanistic perspective, previous studies show that slow tourism has the potential to improve the quality of life for both inhabitants and tourists (Hatipoglu, 2014; Presenza, Abbate & Micera, 2015) and enhance local community's empowerment (Conway & Timms, 2012; Park & Kim, 2015). Slow tourism prioritizes social, cultural, and environmental well-being and sustainability along with quality of experiences (Mayer et al., 2006; Heitmann et al., 2011; Ekinci, 2014). According to Timms and Conway (2012, p. 398), the slow-tourism model "offers a more sustainable tourism product that is less alienated (and alienating), more culturally sensitive, authentic and a better-paced experience for hosts and tourists alike". It can foster a sense of place and assist in the forging of individuals' and groups' identities (Park & Kim, 2015).

Therefore, slow tourism has the potential to enhance dignity and well-being for the tourists but also for people involved in such industry and for local communities (Caffyn, 2012). In essence, slow tourism can be considered part of a humanistic practice.

In slow tourism, history, heritage, and culture play a significant role as drivers of local sustainable development and well-being (e.g. Santagata, 2002). These intangible assets are relevant to both internal and external stakeholders. They are the foundations of the sense of belonging and pride of the inhabitants. In the meantime, they are crucial to the narrative of the place (Jensen, 2007), contributing to the perception of the destination as unique and to the sense of authenticity experienced (Heitmann et al., 2011). Moreover, a virtuous circle may develop because local residents play an important role in creating an appealing atmosphere for tourists. In turn, tourists' feedback can lead to a stronger appreciation of local culture and heritage among local inhabitants, strengthening their sense of identity (Nilsson et al., 2007). Therefore, the interaction among culture, identity, and image is relevant (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013) in a humanistic perspective.

Culture can support the processes of place identification, that is, *identification of* the place as such, *being identified as* belonging to the place, and *identification with* the place (Kalandides, 2012; Boisen, 2015). Culture can represent a unifying element promoting place attachment, place recognition, and distinctive place positioning, combining a set of diverse resources (monument and heritage sites, cultural events, cuisine, traditions, etc.) in a complex interaction of values, stories, emotions, expectations, and experiences.

In slow tourism, the focus is on quality rather than quantity. This does not mean fewer experiences (Heitmann et al., 2011) but a valuable variety of experiences. Therefore, the development of tourism using slow philosophy requires cooperation among local stakeholders to provide a comprehensive tourism offering (Beritelli, 2011). Nevertheless, studies on slow tourism from the supply-side perspective are limited and mostly focused on a city level (Serdane, 2019). Cooperation among different places remains a topic largely unexplored in the application of the slow philosophy in tourism development and destination management.

According to Park and Kim (2015), from a tourism destination perspective, slow tourism is particularly suitable for small-scale cities. Cooperation and networking among these realities can overcome the difficulties they encounter, when acting independently, in acquiring visibility and consumer recognition. This leads to the topic of nonstandard regions.

2.2.2 Nonstandard Regions and Cooperation

It is a shared opinion that a place exists as an entity if there are people who agree on its existence (Boisen, 2015). Such recognition is relative to a spatially defined area that may, or may not, be limited by administrative-based borders. In the latter case, a new geographical entity emerges, although not institutionally acknowledged, since the recognition of the place transcends the administrative-based borders of the individual territorial units that together—sharing an identity/image—form the place itself (Metzger, 2013). This creates what is known as a nonstandard region (e.g. Terlouw, 2009), something proper to the public realm but also a matter of concern to other economic and social actors (Lucarelli, 2018). This is because a number of local stakeholders can shape the identity of a nonstandard region.

Indeed, there has been a change in the distribution of responsibilities over different scalar levels of spatial authority (from supranational to municipal) and between the public and private sectors. This can be seen as a community empowerment: local communities acquire rights and power to collect resources for their needs, and rethink management to achieve autonomy and self-reliance and to maximize their quality of life (e.g. Scheyvens, 2002). Consequently, local authorities have become increasingly responsible for, and directly involved in, their own economies (e.g. Brenner, 2004) to secure the welfare and well-being of their inhabitants. This increased responsibility is a strong incentive for local authorities to understand interactions among places and to engage in cooperation, prioritizing collaborative strategies over competitive ones. The relational and collaborative space emerging from cooperation crosses the established administrative-based borders and makes these existing borders less important (Deas & Lord, 2006).

However, since nonstandard regions are composed of distinct political and administrative units, their sustainability and evolutionary dynamics cannot be taken for granted (Pasquinelli, 2015).

According to Boisen (2015), collaboration is a valuable issue, and the resulting nonstandard region becomes a better place if the individual territorial units involved share a common denominator relevant to their internal and external stakeholders.

This common element could be socio-economic, cultural, or historical. It should strengthen the value proposition of the area, its distinctiveness, and identity, and it should support a vision for a shared future. “Although this theoretically makes sense, this is not always the case in practice” (Boisen, 2015, p. 19).

In some cases, these new regions are the result of incentives and funding schemes; in other circumstances, they are formed through coalitions of companies, institutions and public authorities in an area dominated by one or more strong business sectors. There are other cases that result from a relational and collaborative space chosen as a model to support regeneration plans. This can occur through re-positioning and re-branding strategies, according to criteria of effectiveness and efficiency. Outside these cases, since the network is not a region from an administrative perspective, political interest in the network project can be very weak (Boisen, 2015). In fact, “who wants to be a politician in a region that does not exist?” (Berg & Lofgren, 2000, p. 10 as cited by Pasquinelli, 2015).

2.3 Research Method

2.3.1 The Research Context

The geographical focus of the research are seven small-scale cities in the province of Cuneo, historically known as the ‘Seven Sisters’. The province of Cuneo, also called ‘La Granda’, is located in the northwest of Italy and is characterized by the heterogeneous and varied nature of many of its attributes, notably the environment, culture, and gastronomy.

The territory is divided into three main parts, where the sister-cities are located: the Langhe and Roero hills, with Alba and Bra; the mountains area, with Cuneo (the county seat), Mondovì and Saluzzo; and the plain, with Savigliano and Fossano.

Each one of these seven cities has a unique identity and some specific quality that distinguishes it from the others. At the same time, the cities share a historical and cultural heritage and are tied by a common thread of shared values. Consequently, they are similar enough to be considered sisters.

This territory is an important gastronomic center, especially renowned for wine, meat, truffles, chocolate, and cheese. In particular, Alba and the surrounding Langhe hills have achieved international recognition. While mainly based on agriculture, the economy is also characterized by the presence of important industrial sectors, which are well spread on the local area, giving to every sister-city a business support.

Historically, the Cuneo region and its cities owe their origins to a common cultural element: the aristocratic heritage and the centuries as part of the Savoy dominion.

Nevertheless, the territory is characterized by an intrinsic heterogeneity. This element reinforces the sense of identity and reciprocal diversity of each sister-city and is even a ground for dualism inherited from the past.

There is a dualism in the origins of the cities and their historical alliances: Cuneo and Mondovì as free commons; Saluzzo, Fossano, and Bra as aristocratic feuds; Savigliano and Alba as minor centers. Central to these differences are the different alliances among families and regions (the Kingdom of France, Monferrato, the Papal State, and the Holy Roman Empire). Over time, these differences were largely reconciled when the province of Cuneo was acquired by the Sabaud State.

The characteristic territorial heterogeneity gave rise to an interesting cultural flowering that manifested itself in architectural and artistic works, dialects, local cuisine, etc., which fostered interchange among the Seven Sisters, leading to collective growth and local pride.

2.3.2 The Seven Sisters as a Potential Nonstandard Region

The Seven Sisters share a long history, but nowadays they could be seen as a dormant place. However, because a place can emerge as a result of social processes, "dormant places can be brought back to life if they are relevant enough to contemporary people" (Boisen, 2015, p. 15).

Following this approach, the Seven Sisters could become a nonstandard region if the seven municipalities were to engage in a cooperative approach to sustainable economic and social development. The cities could be partners in a network that blurs their administrative boundaries and creates a new relational and collaborative space. Therefore, the network could become a platform for imagining new strategic trajectories to conceive and implement local, sustainable development policies (Pasquinelli, 2015), fostering the well-being of the region and its inhabitants.

Moreover, this network of seven municipalities has real potential as a cultural slow-tourism destination. The area is already familiar with slow philosophy (e.g. the headquarters of Slow Food is located in Bra) and the preservation of cultural heritage.

Through promoting the symbolic associations that characterize the network, every single node of the network (i.e. each sister-city) can be enriched by new values and perceptions released by the network itself and by other nodes (Pasquinelli, 2017). The network of the Seven Sisters could, therefore, become an interesting slow-tourism alternative to more renowned destinations.

Nevertheless, networking requires a strong commitment and a vision shared by all the stakeholders involved. Usually, stakeholders (especially policy-makers) adopt a collaborative approach when it represents a real added value and possibility for growth, dealing with issues that cannot be addressed within pre-existing administrative-based borders (Boisen, Terlouw & van Gorp, 2011).

Considering the historical and cultural heritage shared by the sister-cities and their potential as a slow-tourism destination, this study selected the Seven Sisters to deepen the issue of networking in slow-tourism development. The Seven Sisters nonstandard region is in a latent stage, and this makes this case a unique opportunity to explore what can facilitate and/or hinder the blossoming of an effective network. The main topics discussed are:

1. Issues and objectives for cooperation among the sister-cities;
2. Potential advantages of a shared network perspective;
3. Obstacles to cooperation in the creation of the Seven Sisters network.

2.3.3 Research Design, Data Collection, and Analysis

The study adopted a qualitative research methodology because the interest was on deeply exploring a particular case, not still object of analysis (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2003), related to network-building in the humanistic tourism perspective and local, sustainable development.

In-depth, semi-structured interviews with local stakeholders were conducted face-to-face during April and May 2019, in separate sessions lasting 45 minutes on average. The interviews were digitally recorded. In advance of the interviews, participants were informed about the privacy policies and the confidentiality of their interviews.

Eighteen stakeholders were contacted, with a response rate of 72%. They were selected using theoretical sampling (based on the theoretical needs of the study) and snowball sampling (research participants recommended other potential participants) (Patton, 2002). Being interested in understanding the advantages and obstacles to cooperation in slow-tourism development, the respondents were recruited among actors with political and managerial decision power.

Key informants were divided into institutional and non-institutional actors (Table 2.1). The institutional informants were members of the city councils of each of the sister-cities, while the non-institutional actors were members of important local cultural and socio-economic associations, foundations, and organizations, involved in the territorial development. The division between institutional and non-institutional actors was considered useful in examining different sensitivities to topics such as sustainability, slow tourism, and networking. Each sister-city was represented by at least one institutional actor and one non-institutional actor.

Although the bottom-up approach is a viable option for implementing the slow philosophy in tourism development, private tourist operators and the local community were not considered because network-building and cooperation among municipalities requires as a preliminary condition the commitment of the political and institutional representatives (Boisen, 2015). At the same time, the non-institutional actors were considered because of the supportive and influencing role they can play in the network project.

Table 2.1 Institutional and non-institutional stakeholders interviewed

Institutional stakeholders	
Institution (municipality)	*Role/function*
Cuneo	Municipal councilor
Alba	Municipal councilor
Bra	Municipal councilor
Mondovì	Municipal councilor
Saluzzo	Municipal councilor
Savigliano	Mayor
Fossano	Mayor and municipal councilor
Non-institutional stakeholders	
Association/foundation/organization	*Role/function*
ARTEA Foundation	Director
ATL del Cuneese (Local Tourist Board)	President
Cassa di Risparmio of Cuneo Foundation	President
Cassa di Risparmio of Saluzzo Foundation	President
CATAC Association and Compral Latte Cooperative	President
FAI Fondo Ambiente Italiano – Manta Castle	Property Manager

Source: Author's own elaboration

The interviews were transcribed with a view to conducting two text analyses: the first entailed thematic analysis of data with a systematic read and reread to sum up relevant themes (Boyatzis, 1998; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006) and a subsequent rationalization of key elements; the second was conducted with T-Lab software, employing statistical and lexical methods to highlight the relevance and frequency of words and topics.

The use of T-Lab software helped to highlight the frequency of the lemmas[4] used, the keywords, and associations between them. Some grouping with an internal homogeneity and an external heterogeneity became necessary to avoid fragmentation resulting from the use of synonyms (Lancia, 2012).

The most relevant keywords related to the topics analyzed in each question are represented in radial diagrams showing, for each lemma, the grade of association with the others considered significant by the software applying a chi-square test ($p < 0.05$). The distance between keywords and other lemmas is proportional to the grade of association: the shorter the distance, the greater the correlation.

2.4 Findings

The analysis is divided into three sections that deal with themes, potentialities, and obstacles related to cooperation among the sister-cities.

2.4.1 Issues and Objectives for Cooperation Among the Sister-Cities

With reference to potential cooperation among the Seven Sisters, the majority of actors, both institutional and non-institutional, stressed the same principal topics as a focus for their policies and efforts: the outdoors, gastronomy, events, and culture. At first glance, the presence of the three pillars of tourism attraction emerges: nature, food, and culture. These elements are united by the concept of cooperation, and they are implemented according to slow tourism and local identity perspectives.

It is interesting to note that the majority of actors interviewed consider nature and landscape conservation as the main themes of a shared development among the Seven Sisters and the principal area where slow-tourism policies can be jointly implemented. The following comments exemplify this:

> *Relating to slow tourism we go after all the aspects of the outdoor because it is a part of our territory. (R3)*

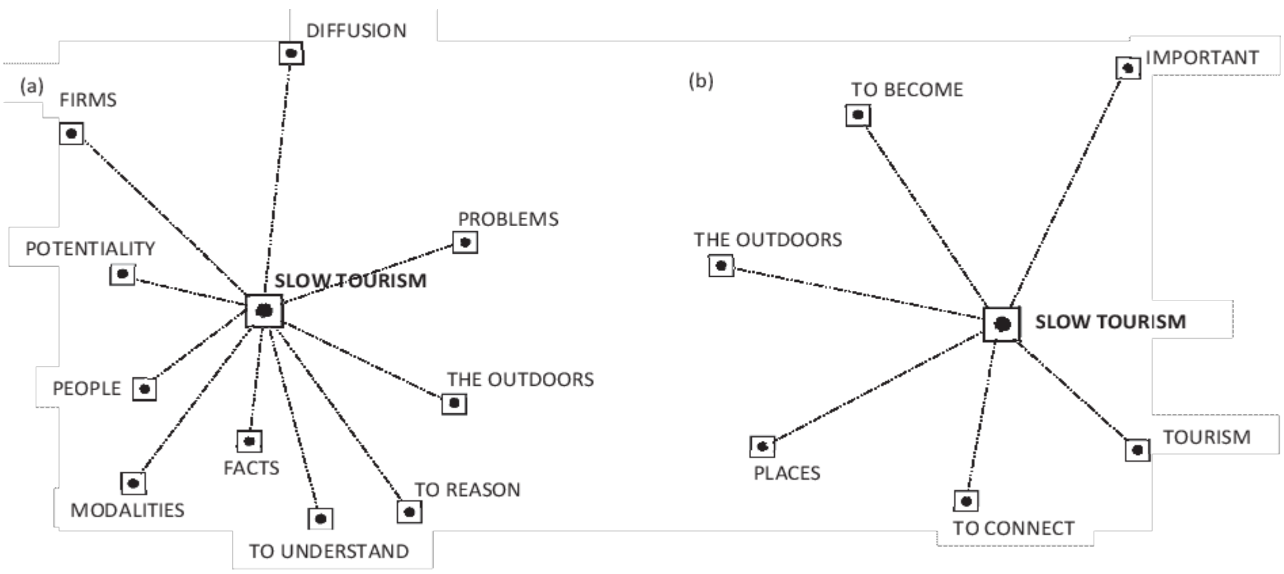
[4] Group of words with the same lexical root or belonging to the same grammatical category.

About slow tourism there is a real chance to work together with the upcoming project on bike routes of the outdoor tourism, where we are trying to work on the territory. (R6)

Looking at the radial diagrams of the keyword 'Slow Tourism' there is a confirmation of that association (Figure 2.1). The outdoor activities are always connected, both for institutional and non-institutional actors, to the words 'Slow Tourism'. Other interesting co-occurrences emerging from slow tourism are 'important' and 'potentiality', highlighting the centrality of considering economic and socio-cultural growth only if it involves a sustainable base and a humanistic perspective.

The diagram results, crossed with the text analysis, reveal that slow tourism led by outdoor aspects tend to be more important for institutional actors than non-institutional ones. The latter tend to have a broader vision rather than a specific target related to slow-tourism perspectives. The centrality of the outdoors for policy-makers probably reflects the fact that interviewees had in mind the financial support given by the European Union and other institutions to improve cycle paths and hiking trails, or other investments in sport and nature, rather than supporting culture and tradition.

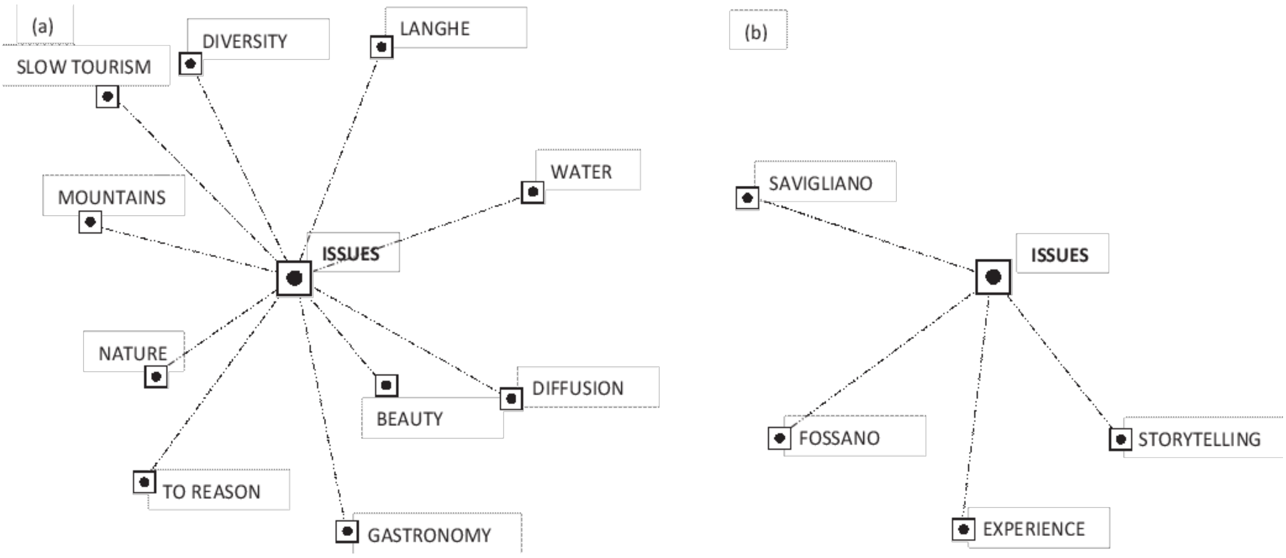
Figure 2.1 Slow tourism: radial diagrams for institutional (a) and non-institutional (b) actors



Source: Author's own elaboration

The priority given to the outdoors by institutional actors is confirmed by the 'Issues' radial diagrams (Figure 2.2). Policy-makers associate 'issues' with 'nature', 'beauty', 'mountains', and 'water', while non-institutional actors tend to be more concerned about the seemingly less distinctive lowland sister-cities of Savigliano and Fossano. Non-institutional stakeholders talk about 'storytelling' and 'experience', highlighting the importance of communication messages targeting the new frontier of experience in tourism management.

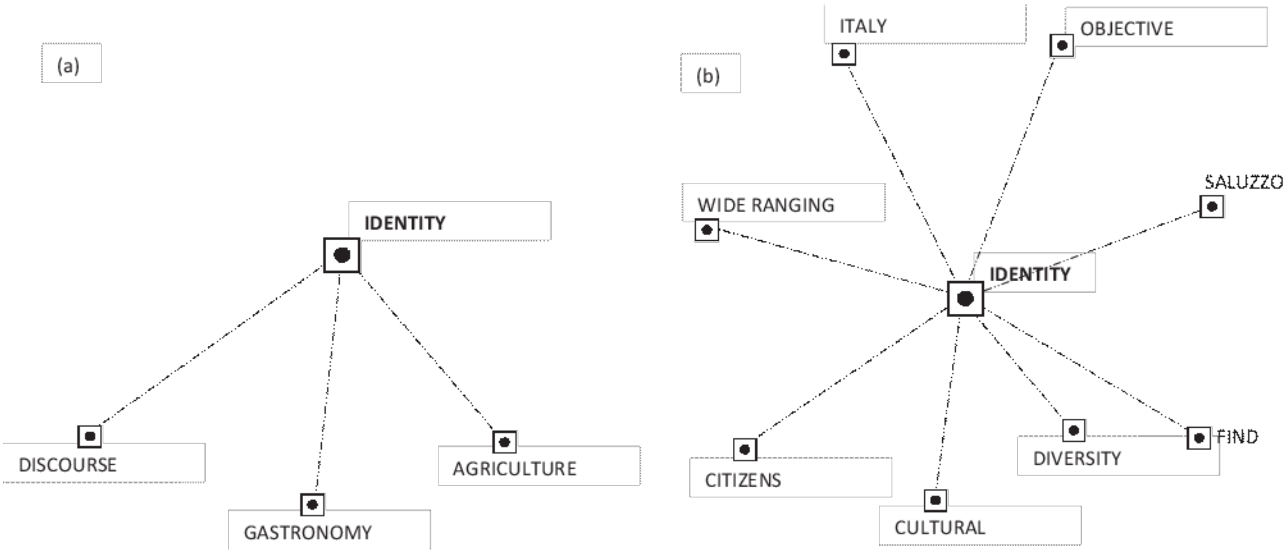
Figure 2.2 Issues: radial diagrams for institutional (a) and non-institutional (b) actors



Source: Author's own elaboration

The 'Identity' radial diagrams show the institutional actors' focused view of the Seven Sisters' identity, compared with the more holistic view of the non-institutional actors (Figure 2.3). The former underlines the importance of gastronomy and agriculture as identity elements. For non-institutional actors, 'Identity' is more strongly related to other words such as 'diversity', 'cultural', 'citizens', 'Saluzzo', 'find', and 'objective'. A search for convergence among the lemmas shows that 'citizens' are the basic social elements of the 'identity' of the Seven Sisters. This 'identity' becomes an 'objective' and is based on the 'cultural' aspects and the 'diversity' of resources, with a specific link to 'Saluzzo' as the cultural heart of the province of Cuneo.

Figure 2.3 Identity: radial diagrams for institutional (a) and non-institutional (b) actors



Source: Author's own elaboration

2.4.2 Potential Advantages of a Shared Network Perspective

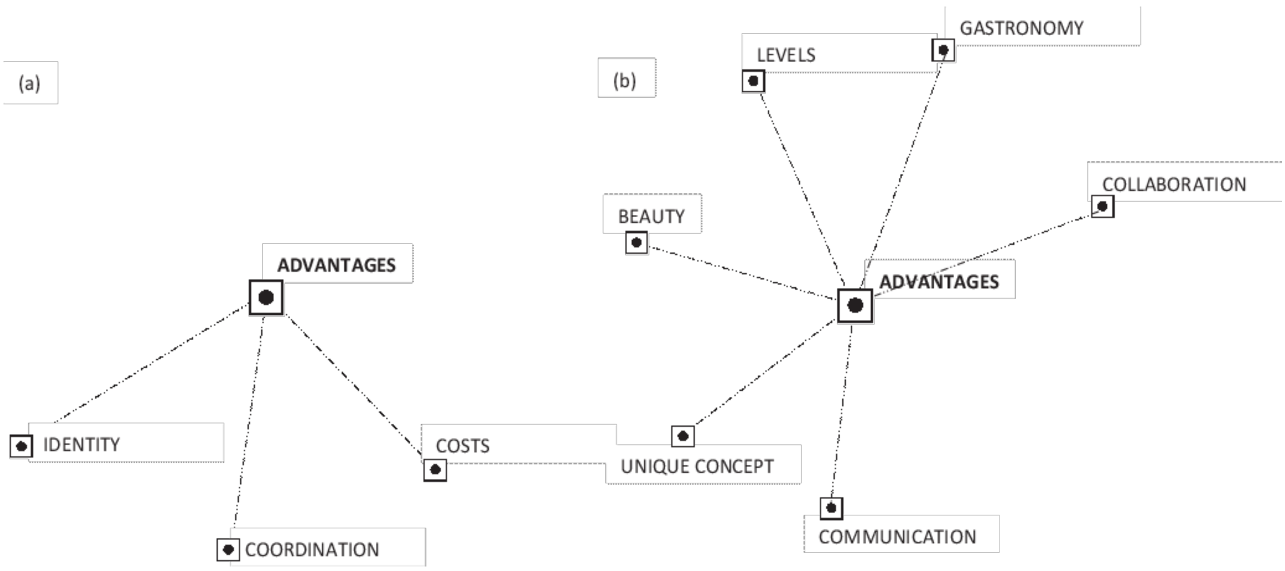
With reference to the potential advantages of cooperation and networking, text analysis results converge toward branding and communication as key elements that can advance the progress of the Seven Sisters. The majority of actors sees the benefits of working together under the 'Seven Sisters' brand, considering place branding helpful for a stronger distinctive image and more efficient communication. The creation of a distinct presence of the 'Seven Sisters' brand in the hearts and minds of people could attract new slow tourism. This would be welcomed by local inhabitants and could attract new citizens. One of the non-institutional actors clearly quoted:

> *If the sister-cities work on simplify what they want to communicate, something meaningful and significant for the local identity of each Sister,*

this will help the creation of a place brand hanging together seven 'characteristics' completing each other. (R9)

The system of statistically significant associations with the lemma 'Advantages' confirms and supports the text analysis (Figure 2.4). For city managers, 'identity', 'coordination', and 'costs' are co-occurrences, while for non-institutional actors the main words are 'unique concept', 'communication', 'collaboration', 'beauty', 'levels', and 'gastronomy'. This highlights the possibility to 'communicate' a 'unique concept' through 'collaboration' among the sister-cities, based on the 'beauty' of the places and 'gastronomy'. Policy-makers are more concerned about costs; consequently, they see coordination as a cost-sharing opportunity.

Figure 2.4 Advantages: radial diagrams for institutional (a) and non-institutional (b) actors



Source: Author's own elaboration

2.4.3 Obstacles to Cooperation in the Creation of the Seven Sisters Network

A convergence around three main problematic issues in creating a sustainable network among the seven municipalities emerges from the interviews.

The first is parochialism, meaning mental closure and the tendency to see only very local questions about one's own city. The main fear is: 'Why should I help the others to succeed, and what is in it for me?' The problem is a difficulty in seeing the big picture, in working toward cooperation with one's neighboring cities. In particular, there are two competing attractions: the mountains (near Mondovì and Cuneo) and the Langhe hills (near Alba). An institutional respondent commented:

> *There's a really strong parochialism among us, the Seven Sisters. We do not feel it among us [intending Cuneo and Mondovì], but between us and Alba. Citizens of Alba are in their own way. (R8)*

Indeed, the Langhe territory seems to converge more toward collaborations with other nearby areas such as Monferrato (having common environments and culture) and Turin (one of the strongest cultural poles in Italy).

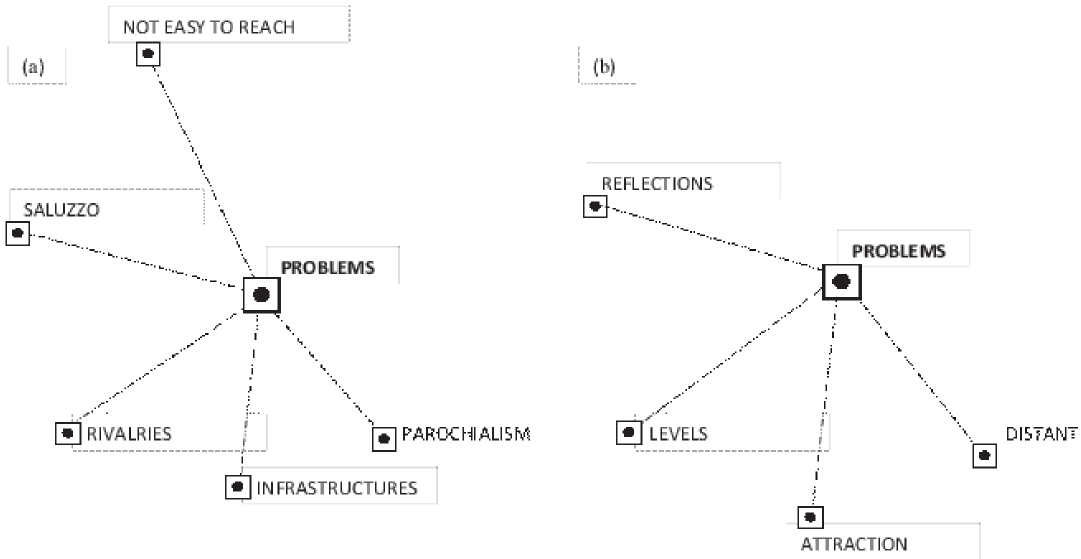
When there are two strong magnetic poles with opposite energies, it can seem difficult to foresee any kind of collaboration. This makes it difficult to see that the area's attractions could complement one another in a broader mosaic encompassing a worthwhile, sustainable horizon.

The second issue is local politics. Some of the sister-cities are in the hands of opposing political parties, and this can cause rivalry and mistrust. Different opinions and approaches to the same topic can make it difficult to build a shared vision of the future and a long-term perspective on development.

The last obstacle is logistics and infrastructure. In fact, the province of Cuneo suffers from a lack of motorways linking the eastern and western parts of the region. Railways are in need of modernization, and the tunnel connecting the area with France is blocked because of subsidence. All the stakeholders agree on this point, and the following question arises: 'Why cooperate if the infrastructure cannot support tourism?' Both institutional and non-institutional actors do not seem to understand that cooperation is the starting point to overcoming these deficiencies.

As shown in Figure 2.5, institutional actors associate the words 'parochialism', 'infrastructures', and 'rivalries' with the lemma 'Problems', confirming what emerged from critical analysis. Institutional actors also point out the words 'not easy to reach', highlighting logistics and infrastructure as major local problems. Non-institutional actors link 'Problems' with 'attraction' of customers and related revenue and investments, and with the word ‘distant’, which is again connected to the infrastructural issues. These types of problems call for ‘reflections’ at different ‘levels’, underlining the multi-scalar nature of place governance.

Figure 2.5 Problems: radial diagrams for institutional (a) and non-institutional (b) actors



Source: Author's own elaboration

2.5 Conclusion

The chapter discusses the potential for local tourism development based on a slow positioning and networking among small-scale cities. The potential nonstandard region of the Seven Sisters has been analyzed through key informant interviews. It has been highlighted that sustainable forms of tourism, such as slow tourism, fit with the humanistic management philosophy, having a common body of values. Slow tourism embraces and amplifies people flourishing and well-being, that are core values in a humanistic perspective. Nevertheless, the slow-tourism model seems not easy to be implemented at a network-based scale.

Both institutional and non-institutional interviewees agree that slow tourism makes for common ground among the sister-cities and uniqueness in tourists' perceptions (Heitmann et al., 2011). Nature, landscape, culture, and tradition are seen as areas of potential collaboration and joint policies that could favor sustainable growth and improve overall well-being. Through collaboration, it could be possible to define a unique brand (the 'Seven Sisters') and obtain a distinctive positioning. In addition, cooperation could create cost efficiencies in branding and communication.

In essence, the sister-cities share an historical and cultural common denominator relevant to their internal and external stakeholders, that could strengthen the value proposition of the area, its distinctiveness, and identity (Boisen, 2015). From a humanistic perspective, collaboration among the sister-cities in slow-tourism development is perceived as a valuable way to make the resulting nonstandard region a better place, improving the quality of life for both inhabitants and tourists.

The creation of a network requires strong commitment among participants, who must perceive the relevant advantages of sharing efforts and investments. They must share a common vision of the place and of its future positioning too. Nevertheless, network- and dialogue-based strategies among the sister-cities are limited by parochialism and power fragmentation. The interviewees agree that dialogue and relations are compulsory elements for cooperation, but there is a convergence of opinions that parochialism and individualism are the main obstacle for 'growing together, growing stronger'.

Therefore, the lack of convergent interests and the persistence of parochialism hinder the creation of the Seven Sisters network tied to a humanistic perspective for its goals (i.e. to promote slow tourism as a means to enhance the dignity and well-being of tourists, of people involved in the industry, and of local communities) and its modalities (favoring cooperation vs. competition). The existing literature supports the idea that the most relevant limitation to cooperation are financial issues and loss of political power (e.g. Boisen, 2015; Berg & Lofgren, 2000), but in the Seven Sisters case these factors do not clearly emerge as a major concern.

The research reveals different opinions between institutional and non-institutional actors. Non-institutional actors consider the Seven Sisters as a region with geographical and cultural fluidity, where differences among sub-areas are a strength rather than a limitation. They highlight the three pillars of nature, food, and culture as the basis of the Seven Sisters' value proposition, where the identity of each sister-city is maintained and reinforced as a part of an overall mosaic. Cultural and humanistic aspects, particularly stressed by non-institutional actors, seem to be less important for policy-makers, who tend to focus more on nature-oriented policies.

In conclusion, in the case of the Seven Sisters, two different visions emerge. Non-institutional actors seem ready to act and play a role in a wider context (the network), whereas institutional players are still trying to frame a position and to overcome internal rivalries. The Seven Sisters case confirms that political interest in a network project can be very weak when a cooperative strategy is not motivated by access to public incentives and funding programs, a strong business sector driving local development, and the need for territorial regeneration and requalification (Boisen, 2015).

The chapter addresses a topic so far unexplored. It is subject to limitations that provide avenues for further studies. Future research may involve other categories of stakeholders, such as members of the local business community, citizens, and tourists. Future research can build upon the findings of the present study to investigate the topic in other contexts. As suggested by Ekinci (2014), a comparative study would also be beneficial.

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III

Pilgrimage Routes to Happiness: Comparing the Camino de Santiago and Via Francigena*

Sabrina Latusi and Massimiliano Fissore

Abstract: The chapter investigates the topic of happiness and quality of life in the slow-tourism context, with specific reference to the pilgrimage tourism phenomenon. The Camino de Santiago and the Via Francigena are analysed through explorative research with the aim of understanding the effects of pilgrimage on individuals' levels of wellbeing and its implications for peoples' lives. The results reveal several differences in motivations and benefits obtained according to the pilgrimage road undertaken, with a more existential connotation tied to personal happiness in the Camino de Santiago pilgrim group and a more experiential connotation tied to wellness in the Via Francigena pilgrim group. These findings provide new insights into contemporary pilgrimages in a comparative perspective.

Keywords: Cultural Routes, Destination Management, Experiences, Life Quality, Motivations, Pilgrims, Slow Tourism, Well-being

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* **Chapter published as:** Latusi, S., Fissore, M. (2021). Pilgrimage Routes to Happiness: Comparing the Camino de Santiago and Via Francigena. In: A.R.C. Perinotto, V.F. Mayer, J.R.R. Soares (Eds.), *Rebuilding and Restructuring the Tourism Industry: Infusion of Happiness and Quality of Life* (pp. 157-182). IGI Global. ISBN: 978-1799872399.

3.1 Introduction

In recent years, quality of life and well-being have become important areas of investigation in tourism research (Jepson et al., 2019). Indeed, there has been a shift in the value of tourism towards more subjective elements, such as sustainability, wellness, well-being, and quality of life (Perdue et al., 2010). In particular, sustainability and personal/social well-being have become driving forces underpinning new forms of tourism, including slow tourism (Moore, 2012; Oh et al., 2016). Slow tourism is an umbrella term encompassing various tourism types (Serdane, 2020), such as responsible tourism (Timms & Conway, 2012) and ethical tourism (Clancy, 2015). Even pilgrimage tourism can be traced back to slow tourism (e.g. Kato & Progano, 2017; Lemmi, 2020; Olsen & Wilkinson, 2016), and this connection is promoting renewed interest in a phenomenon traditionally analysed in the stream of religious tourism (e.g. Raj et al., 2015; Terzidou et al., 2018), heritage tourism (e.g. Timothy & Boyd, 2006), or cultural tourism (e.g. Rinschede, 1992). As part of the slow-tourism model, pilgrimage tourism "offers a more sustainable tourism product that is less alienated (and alienating), more culturally sensitive, authentic and a better-paced experience for hosts and tourists alike" (Timms & Conway, 2012, p. 398). In essence, pilgrimage tourism can be considered part of a humanistic philosophy, fostering and developing the well-being of tourism destinations' stakeholders (Latusi & Fissore, 2021).

Although pilgrimage was the first form of tourism to come into existence hundreds of years ago (Timothy & Olsen, 2006), nowadays it can be considered as a relatively new phenomenon, given the changes experienced over the past decades and its ongoing process of transformation (Collins-Kreiner, 2020a). The modern idea of pilgrimage encompasses both religious and secular journeys, and since the 2000s researchers have discussed this holistic phenomenon in the context of spiritual rather than religious motivations and actions (Collins-Kreiner, 2016, 2020a, 2020b). The recent literature has pointed out that pilgrims are engaged in a quest for a variety of experiences, including enlightenment, knowledge, improved spiritual and physical well-being, challenge, and social bonds (e.g. Collins-Kreiner, 2020a, 2020b; Kim & Kim, 2019; Liutikas, 2015). Therefore, pilgrimage can be defined as a journey of becoming, a mobility for the search for deeper or higher meaning that includes an element of existential transformation and self-discovery (Collins-Kreiner, 2020a; Nilsson & Tesfahuney, 2016).

Despite these achievements, there is scarce research addressing the topic of pilgrims' travel motivations and inner experiences (Amaro et al., 2018; Blackwell, 2014; Damari & Mansfeld, 2016). The few studies that exist tend to consider a specific route (mainly the Camino de Santiago) and pilgrims as a homogenous group (Amaro et al., 2018) rather than comparing different experiences, individuals, and contexts. Above all, the relationship between pilgrimage tourism, happiness, and quality of life is still a matter of investigation. The only work that attempts to grasp this relationship is a study by Kim et al. (2016) that specifically refers to the values exhibited by travellers along the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route.

The purpose of the present chapter is to fill this gap. Specifically, it explores the effects of pilgrimage on individuals' levels of well-being and its implications for peoples' lives. The following central research questions are posed:

> *What are the main subjective motivations to undertake a pilgrimage?*
>
> *What does the pilgrimage experience provide to pilgrims in terms of emotions and personal values?*

Pilgrims' inner driving forces and pilgrims' emotions and acquired personal values are explored for different pilgrimage routes (specifically, the Camino de Santiago and the Via Francigena) and travelling companions (the relational aspect), following a phenomenological approach. The results contribute to the tourism literature by providing new insights regarding the contemporary pilgrim from the perspective of subjective motivations and inner experiences driving to different levels of happiness and well-being. The study also responds to Amaro et al.'s (2018) call for research on pilgrimage on routes other than the Camino de Santiago. In particular, it sheds light on how motivations for pilgrimage and pilgrims' inner experiences can vary from one route to another. The findings also provide insights into the religion–tourism nexus, a research field that calls for a comparative approach (Collins-Kreiner, 2020b).

Understanding motivations for pilgrimage and pilgrims' inner experiences is of paramount importance to meet the needs of pilgrims during their journey and stay, contributing to their subjective well-being and happiness. Therefore, the findings of this study provide useful prospective insights to several stakeholders (e.g. destination management organizations, accommodation owners, tour operators, etc.) to improve their value proposition. The results also identify alternatives for improvement of the Camino de Santiago and the Via Francigena, complementing the management-side analysis by Lucarno (2016).

The chapter is organised as follows. First, an introductory theoretical discussion is offered regarding the main topics under consideration. Next, the methodology is presented, including the research context of the Camino de Santiago and the Via Francigena. The opinions of pilgrims on journey motivations and inner achievements are then analysed. The chapter concludes by underlining the contribution of the main empirical findings to existing knowledge and summarising emerging trends.

3.2 Background

In the tourism and destination management fields, well-being and quality of life have become important areas of investigation (Jepson et al., 2019). Research has shown that tourists' experiences and activities contribute to positive affect in a range of life domains, having significant effects on both tourists' overall life satisfaction and the well-being of residents of host communities (e.g. Uysal et al., 2016).

Studies devoted to investigating tourists' subjective well-being have shown the influence exerted by accommodations and physical structures (Ali & Amin, 2014; Ali et al., 2018), the length of the trip (De Bloom et al., 2013), the contact with nature and the type of natural environment (Farber & Hall, 2007; Kim et al., 2015). These latter aspects mainly influence individual's emotions and psychological state (Hadavi, 2017), emphasizing the increasing centrality of the outdoor activities. Indeed, according to the psychological studies of Csikszentmihalyi (1988, 1990), people become happier and more satisfied by participating in high-engagement tasks, either intellectual or physical, characterized by an instant perception of goals and feedback. This produces the ‘flow’, an experience that is so gratifying that people are fully absorbed in the moment.

A great contribution in attaining a better understanding of the variations in tourists’ well-being comes from PERMA theory (Seligman, 2011). According to the theory, five elements may account for variations in well-being experienced by individuals: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. Therefore, people flourishing is a combination of positive emotions, such as happiness, personal commitment in activities, good relationships, finding meaningful purposes and being satisfied by reaching personal targets. In the field of tourism, the theory proved its relevance in explaining the variations in well-being during a trip. Specifically, the study by Mayer et al. (2019) revealed that tourists’ well-being can be promoted by: moments of engagement during the trip, prompted by access to new knowledge and experiencing physical recreation and amusements; positive relationships; the sense of meaning and purpose of the trip activities; the sense of personal accomplishment achieved through the trip; physical structures and natural environments, such as sites that offer aesthetic value or comfortable conditions that generate well-being, or through exposure to weather that tourists consider to be pleasant or even contact with nature in general. Therefore, according to Mayer et al., positive feelings (joy, satisfaction, excitement, etc.) can be stimulated by activities and events that promote subjective well-being (engagement, positive relationships, meaning, physical and natural environments, and accomplishment) and many of these activities and factors can be traced in new forms of tourism.

In particular, personal/social well-being and sustainability have become driving forces underpinning slow tourism (Moore, 2012; Oh et al., 2016). The search for slowness in a world with a heavily stressed daily life supports this particular concept of tourism, that promotes quality of experiences and environmental consciousness. Slow tourism is based on a concept of "tourist quality" (Ozdemir & Celebi, 2018) in opposition to the mainstream mass tourism and its negative ecological impact. While motivation linked to sustainability and environment seems to be a good point in choosing slow tourism, it is the experiential benefits dimension that mainly drives people to slow tourism (Caffyn, 2012; Dickinson et al., 2010; Lumsdon & McGrath, 2011, McGrath & Sharpley, 2016).

The slow-tourism phenomenon has its roots in the sociocultural context of slow movement (Fullagar et al., 2012), with its call for a re-evaluation of life priorities (Heitmann et al., 2011) that promotes simplicity, mindfulness, and embodied experiences to facilitate renewal, revitalization, and self-enrichment (Howard, 2012). Slow tourism is linked to the concept of being within a place and live it with a deeper sense of experience (Germann Molz, 2009). It celebrates the diversity of places (Guiver & McGrath, 2017) and promotes real and meaningful connections between the tourist and the place (Caffyn, 2012) in the attempt to make every tourist part of the local community (Robinson & Cho, 2012). At least for the time of the holiday, slow tourists and host communities try to share their identities and paths (Guiver & McGrath, 2017). Engaging with local people; preserving cultural traditions and natural resources; making meaningful connections with heritage, places, and environment; and enjoying the journey as much as the destinations are priorities that are embedded in the slow-tourism phenomenon (e.g. Gibson et al., 2012). In essence, slow tourism embraces and amplifies people flourishing and well-being along with the quality of the experiences (Mayer et al., 2006; Heitmann et al., 2011; Ekinci, 2014).

Pilgrimage tourism is then part of the slow-tourism model (e.g. Lemmi, 2020; Olsen & Wilkinson, 2016). Walking is central to the meaning of a pilgrimage journey and "the associated slowness facilitates more locally engaged, mindful and lower-impact tourism, and allows for more attention to people and place" (Kato & Progano, 2017, p. 246). At the same time, walking promotes introspection, and its pace, linked to the enjoyment of time, translates in a both physical and internal slow mobility (Lopez et al., 2017).

Despite the emerging view that pilgrim movements may have favourable impacts on subjective well-being and on societies contributing to the development of sustainable forms of tourism, pilgrimage has been traditionally analysed in the research stream of religious tourism (e.g. Raj et al., 2015; Terzidou et al., 2018), heritage tourism (e.g. Timothy & Boyd, 2006), or cultural tourism (e.g. Rinschede, 1992). There is consensus that traditional pilgrimage was conducted with a strong religious motivation (Shinde, 2007). It is one of the oldest forms of expressing worship and penance for sins, of seeking care in the face of disease and problems, and of pursuing religious enlightenment (Digance, 2003; Jackowski & Smith, 1992; Smith, 1992; Vukonic, 1996). Indeed, traditional pilgrimage was defined as "a journey resulting from religious causes, externally to a holy site, and internally for spiritual purposes and internal understanding" (Barber, 1993, p. 1).

However, more recent studies have shown that the contemporary pilgrim is not necessarily motivated by religion (Stefko et al., 2015). For instance, Oviedo et al. (2014) found that spiritual growth, sensations-seeking, and seeking life direction were more important than religious motivations. In a recent study, Amaro et al. (2018) found that pilgrims who had walked the Camino de Santiago were mostly motivated by spiritual aspects, the search for new life experiences, and the opportunity to be immersed in a natural context. These findings support Reader's (2007) argument that the growth in the number of pilgrims is due to a spiritual revolution rather than the revival of religious sentiments: pilgrims take the journey as a personal quest for a change or a better situation in life (Blom et al., 2016), for reflection and guidance (Nilsson, 2018), or for internal or mental renewal (Lopez et al., 2017). It comes to light the need to break up with the pace of daily routines and to appreciate the temporal extension typical of the slow tourism perspective, with the right of really savouring each activity (Germann Molz, 2009; Lumsdon & McGrath, 2011). These arguments echoe with the notion of flow and the theory of optimal experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988, 1990).

The recent literature has thus discussed pilgrimage as a holistic phenomenon with religious and secular foundations (Collins-Kreiner, 2016), pointing out that pilgrims are engaged in a quest for a variety of experiences, including enlightenment, knowledge, personal advancement, improved spiritual and physical well-being, challenge, and social relationships (e.g. Collins-Kreiner, 2020a, 2020b; Kim & Kim, 2019; Liutikas, 2015). In essence, contemporary pilgrimage carries a much wider connotation beyond religion, including health, wellness, and self-improvement (Kato & Progano, 2017). This connotation has translated to a renewed definition of pilgrimage as “a mobility for the search for meaning that contains an element of transformation that is often deep and enduring” (Collins-Kreiner, 2020a, p. 145).

Despite these findings, there is scarce research addressing the topic of pilgrims’ travel motivations (Blackwell, 2014; Amaro et al., 2018). The review undertaken by Amaro et al. (2018) about studies addressing pilgrims’ motivations to undertake a pilgrimage pointed out that the majority of these studies concentrated on pilgrims who had walked the Camino de Santiago and considered pilgrims as a homogenous group. Collins-Kreiner (2020b), too, has highlighted the lack of comparative research in her comprehensive review in the field of religion and tourism.

Alongside motivations, understanding the experiences of pilgrims through their perceptions is a vital focus for the comprehension of the pilgrimage phenomenon in contemporary settings (Kim et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the experiential aspects of modern pilgrimage have been largely overlooked (Damari & Mansfeld, 2016). As a consequence, the emotional dimension—an essential concept in the context of pilgrimage because emotions relate to the affective process of experience (Noy, 2004)—has been neglected. Furthermore, the inner benefits and personal values that pilgrims perceive to acquire and fulfil through the pilgrimage experience remain unexplored topics, except for the work by Kim et al. (2016). The authors examined the values acquired by pilgrims through undertaking the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route and highlighted that progressing through the pilgrimage journey benefits personal values, the most significant of which was personal happiness, followed by social bonds and cross-cultural understanding. Fun and enjoyment, together with self-satisfaction and achievement, did not emerge as salient values that pilgrims acquire through the experience of walking the Camino. Their findings are consistent with previous research that suggests that happiness could be achieved by experiencing refreshing conditions for the body, mind, and spirit (Gesler, 1996); health and wellness benefits (Devereux & Carnegie, 2006; Courtney, 2013); and various emotions, such as solidarity, reflection, and religious faith (Lopez, 2013).

Despite the contribution made by Kim et al. (2016), the inner impacts of pilgrimage experiences in terms of fulfilment of multi-dimensional personal values are still a matter of investigation and, since experiences may vary on different occasions (Kim et al., 2019), deserve to be addressed with reference to other routes. With the aim of capturing the relationship between pilgrimage tourism, happiness, and quality of life, the present study further explores pilgrims' inner driving forces and acquired personal values for different pilgrimage routes. Specifically, the two most traditional historic pilgrimage routes in Europe (i.e. the Camino de Santiago and the Via Francigena) are considered, as detailed in the following section.

3.3 Pilgrims' inner driving forces and acquired personal values: comparing the Camino de Santiago and Via Francigena

3.3.1 The Research Context

> *And it is worth noting that there are three separate terms for people who travel to honour the Supreme Being: they are called palmers if they travel to the Holy Land, where they often carry the palm; they are called pilgrims if they travel to the home of Galicia, since the tomb of Saint James was farther from his homeland than that of any other apostle; they are called romers if they travel to Rome—the place where those I am calling pilgrims were headed*.

With these words, Dante Alighieri (1265–1321), in his Vita Nova (1896/1294), wrote about the three most important pilgrimage routes in the world—the travel to Jerusalem, the Camino de Santiago, and the Via Francigena—showing that, already in the Middle Ages, these paths, known as *peregrinationes maiores*, were established, renowned, and one of the main motivations of movements of people in Europe and the Mediterranean lands.

El Camino de Santiago, known in English as the Way of Saint James, is a religious and spiritual itinerary composed of a series of routes starting from different parts of Europe. The most well-known and travelled is Camino Francés, running from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port to Roncesvalles and then to Santiago de Compostela, the pilgrims' destination where the cathedral holds the remains of Saint James the Great. This route, leading to the north-west of Spain, in Galicia, became an international attraction at the beginning of the 10th century, with its apogee during the Middle Ages. Later, it experienced several fluctuating periods, until 1985, when UNESCO declared the city of Santiago de Compostela a World Heritage site, and the landmark was extended to the whole pilgrimage route in 1993 (Amaro et al., 2018). Today's Camino has become a polysemic route in which religious purposes are flanked by cultural, spiritual, sport, and touristic dimensions. The final destination is not always as important as the walking experience undertaken by thousands of pilgrims every year. These travellers come from around the world, with high proportions of Spanish and Italian people (Correia et al., 2017; Oficina del Peregrino, 2019; Santos, 2002).

The Via Francigena, or Via Romea Francigena, as Dante Alighieri referred to it, begins at the English Canterbury Cathedral and ends in the Eternal City, siege of the Papacy and Christianity: Rome. However, it continues beyond Rome, up to Apulia, where centuries ago crusaders and pilgrims embarked for the Holy Land (D'Atti & Cinti, 2014). This pilgrimage route, crossing Europe from the north to the south, was created in the ninth century as a route for those wishing to visit the Holy See and the tombs of the apostles, Peter and Paul. As the Way of Saint James, it also includes a number of variants, but the most well-known and travelled is the Sigeric's Itinerary, inheriting its name from the Archbishop of Canterbury who went to Rome in 990 AD to receive from the Pope the pallium, a symbol of his jurisdictional authority.

The Italian Via Francigena is approximately 1,000 km, starting in Italy from the Great Saint Bernard Pass, in the Pennine Alps, and crossing through Piedmont, the Po Valley, Apennines, and Tuscany, and then heading to Rome in Lazio. Like the Camino de Santiago, the Via Francigena knew golden times during the Middle Ages, followed by a decline in popularity in later centuries when religious atonement lost its importance. Today's Via Francigena was rediscovered during the Jubilee in 2000, when the route was re-evaluated in its significance and attractiveness, focusing especially on artistic and architectonic heritage and landscapes (Lucarno, 2016). In fact, beyond its original purpose and according to the religious tourism vocation of developing accommodation facilities and maintaining the memory of religious tradition (de Souza et al., 2018), this route has been reconsidered to preserve its highly symbolic cultural value, which leads to the preservation and promotions of territorial development and local traditions (Fistola & La Rocca, 2018).

Both pilgrimage routes show annual growth—more for the Way of Saint James than for the Via Francigena (Kim et al., 2016; Gazzola et al., 2020)—despite a marked variation in pilgrims' purposes. These itineraries, historically attended mainly on foot for penitential reasons, are now integrated in slow-tourism and well-being trend proposals. While the predecessors undertook such travels to feel physical fatigue and deprivation before achieving the joy of redemption and absolution from their sins, most modern pilgrims seem uninterested in ancient and precise rules and utilise alternative modes of travel, such as bicycles, that are offered to those who opt for immersive experiences in spiritual routes enjoyed from other perspectives.

The Camino de Santiago and the Via Francigena have in common a historic, cultural, and religious importance. The two pilgrimage routes share an ancient origin as religious itineraries and a strong cultural and heritage imprint. Both received formal and institutional recognition from the Council of Europe as European Cultural Routes, and both are linear routes: they originated to connect territories and cross landscapes, and they have nodes that contain historic infrastructures to welcome travellers, for example, guesthouses and hospitals. Both highlight the material wealth of cultural heritage and the intangible items represented by the tradition of pilgrimage. Due to these similarities, the two pilgrimage routes were selected as the subjects of the present investigation. These similarities allow to shed light on how motivations for pilgrimage and pilgrims' inner experiences can vary from one route to another.

3.3.2 Research Design, Data Collection, and Analysis

The research followed a phenomenological approach, the most appropriate to understand the complex motives for contemporary pilgrimage tourism and pilgrims' inner experiences (Nilsson & Tesfahuney, 2016). Thirty in-depth, semi-structured interviews with pilgrims were conducted face-to-face during July and August 2020 in separate sessions lasting 30 minutes each, on average. The selection of interviewees considered a balance among genders, ages, geographical provenances, and presence or absence of travelling companions. An adjunctive selection criterion was the singularity and exclusivity of the pilgrimage route undertaken; this was done to avoid contamination and confusion between the narratives and experiences of different journeys. Therefore, respondents were recruited among people who had walked just one of the two pilgrimage routes: 15 travellers on the Camino de Santiago and 15 on the Via Francigena. Participants were informed about the research privacy policies and the confidentiality of their personal information and consented to participate.

The researchers proceeded by proposing the same set of open-ended questions to everyone. The interviews were digitally recorded and then transcribed with a view to conducting two text analyses: the first entailed the thematic analysis of data with a systematic read and reread to sum up core themes (Boyatzis, 1998; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006), followed by a rationalization of key elements; the second was conducted with T-Lab software, employing statistical and lexical methods to highlight the relevance and frequency of words and topics. T-Lab software was used to highlight both the frequency of lemmas used by pilgrims and the associations among them in relation to keywords concerning the main themes of motivations and inner experiences. Some grouping with internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity became necessary to avoid fragmentation resulting from the use of synonyms (Lancia, 2012).

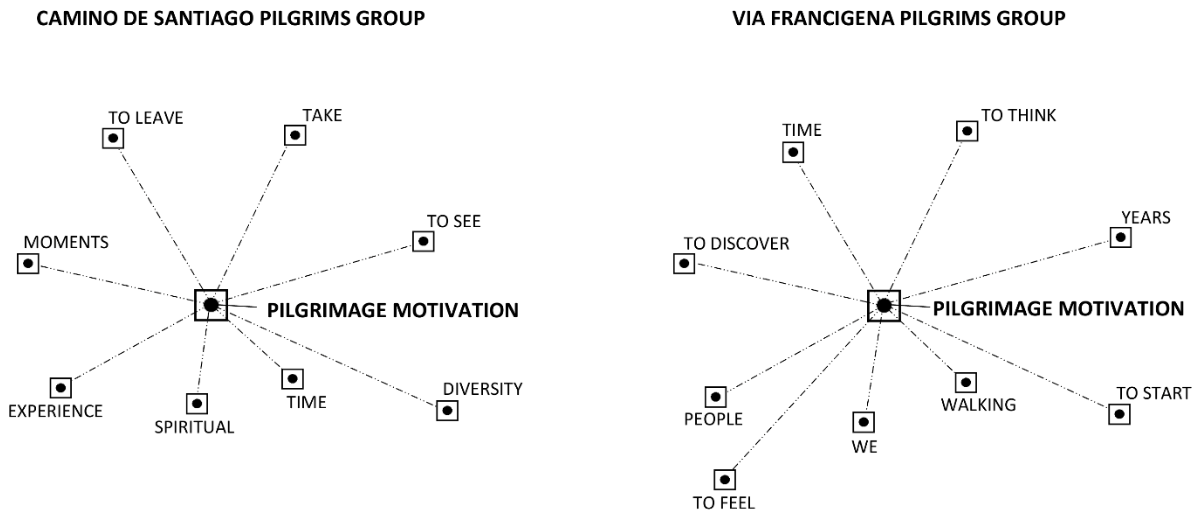
For each topic, two radial diagrams (one for each route) provided the visual representation of the degree of association among words considered significant by the software, applying an adjunctive tool of the Chi-square test ($p < .05$) to consider only statistically strong associations. The distance between keywords and other lemmas is proportional to the strength of association: the shorter the distance, the greater the correlation.

3.3.3 Findings

To answer the research questions, the analysis was carried out in three sections dealing with: the general motivations for undertaking a pilgrimage today, the ex-ante specific motives for undertaking the Camino de Santiago/Via Francigena route, and the ex-post inner experience of the pilgrims. The first two were used to answer the first research sub-question because they are focused on the inner driving forces inducing people to become pilgrims and to undertake the chosen pilgrimage route; the last fulfilled the second research sub-question highlighting the inheritance dimension brought home by pilgrims in terms of satisfaction, happiness, and well-being.

With reference to the general motivations for contemporary pilgrimage tourism, converging elements were found. As shown in Figure 3.1, both groups of respondents stressed topics related to time. In particular, lemmas, such as *time, moments*, and *years*, highlight two temporal aspects (lemmas are in italics). The first is the meditation theme: people externalized their intention to become pilgrims as something pre-meditated, or thought about (*to think*), that lasts for years. The decision to undertake a pilgrimage is something that takes time, a reflection that requires a longer decision-making process prior to engaging in this form of tourism; it is not an instinctive or spur-of-the-moment decision. The second temporal aspect is people's desire to pursue this type of tourism in order to take a breath, to depart from their normal, everyday routine. These elements emerged strongly for the Santiago pilgrims group but less so for the Francigena group. In fact, lemmas associated with the key phrase "pilgrimage motivations" are almost opposite for the two groups of pilgrims: Camino de Santiago pilgrims tend to consider pilgrimage as an element of disruption from the daily life (*to leave*), with a strong focus on internal elements (*spiritual, experience*), while Via Francigena pilgrims think about pilgrimage as something to discover, *to walk*, to perform with others (*we*) and for meeting *people*.

Figure 3.1 Motivations for contemporary pilgrimage tourism



Source: Author's own elaboration

For respondents in the Camino de Santiago group, pilgrimage is a spiritual experience, an introspection conducted by people who wish to analyse the world through new perspectives: it is about *to leave* and *to see*, where the former may be preparatory for the latter. Numerous interviewees saw pilgrimage as a way to escape from a frustrating daily life. The following comments exemplify this:

> *For some time, I was thinking my life didn't . . . that it was not my way! My girlfriend broke up with me and sports didn't give me the adrenaline of yore. (RCS1)*

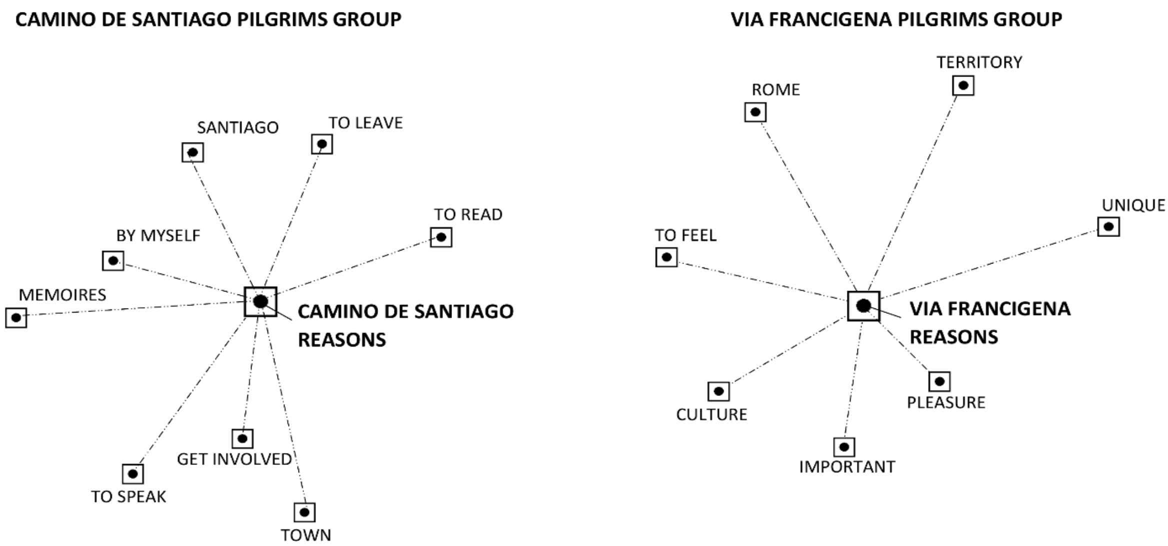
> *Why do people become pilgrims? I don't know, it happens and stops. . . . [T]o rediscover yourself, to leave delusions behind, sometimes for hope that the future can be better. . . . I suppose that the real motivation is the exigence of inner freedom. (RCS12)*

For interviewees in the Via Francigena group, contemporary pilgrimage tourism seemed to be much more oriented towards a natural but not particularly challenging adventure. They used lemmas such as *discover*, *begin*, and *walking*, in adjunction to a relational factor highlighted by *people* and *we*. A particularly eloquent comment on these two aspects was reported by one respondent:

I believe it's very important and good, the contact with nature. I also spoke about that with an environmental association, but also for meeting people. Because, often, people you meet are really beautiful inside, they tell you incredible stories. (RVF7)

To deepen the understanding of pilgrims' inner driving forces, respondents were asked to clarify the specific motives for undertaking the pilgrimage route they chose. The text analysis results highlight a strong incidence of words like *people, culture, beauty*, and *landscape*. Taking "Camino de Santiago/Via Francigena reasons" as the keyword linking all the other lemmas related to this main focus of analysis, the radial diagrams shown in Figure 3.2 illustrate another interesting difference between the two pilgrim groups in terms of conception and motivation.

Figure 3.2 Motivations for undertaking the Camino de Santiago/Via Francigena pilgrimage route



Source: Author's own elaboration

For pilgrims who decided to follow the Camino de Santiago, the mental aspect again emerged: words like *by myself* (or *alone*), *memories*, and *to leave* emphasise the urge for finding time for themselves. *Santiago*, *Town*, and *get involved* describe the final goals of the pilgrimage journey: being fully involved in the experience of walking the Camino to the final destination of Santiago de Compostela. *To speak* and *to read* are two curious reasons that were shared: they refer to the decisional phase. Many pilgrims were attracted to the Way of Saint James by speaking with other people who had travelled this road, and by reading about this path either online or in books. A specific book cited was *The Pilgrimage* (in Portuguese, *O Diário de Um Mago*) by Paulo Coelho. It was considered very inspiring by some interviewees who mentioned it, for example:

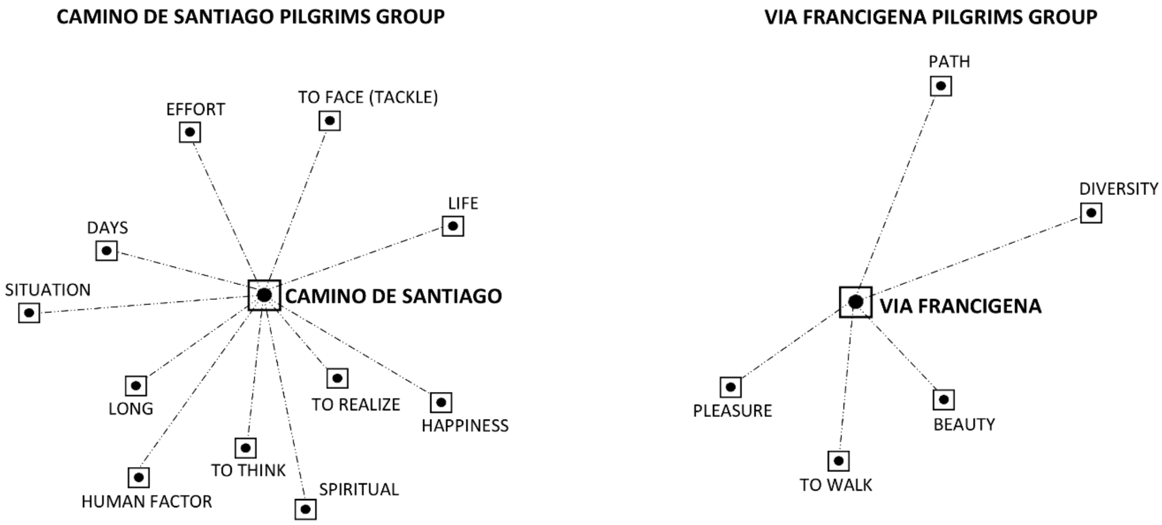
> *It was something I've always wanted to do. When I was 18, I received Paulo Coelho's book, The Pilgrimage. By reading it, the wish to undertake the Camino de Santiago arose in me. But after that, I graduated, I started working, and I got engaged. Years passed and effectively I never did this walk, but the Camino still was calling to me, from Paulo Coelho's book where he describes it as a magical path. Then, last year, in September, I planned to take a holiday with my friends, but in July, while I was cleaning the bookshelf, suddenly, the book falls into my hands. For months I felt bad and then I told myself that maybe it was the moment to undertake the Camino de Santiago! (RCS2)*

Pilgrims who decided to undertake the Via Francigena seemed to emphasise much more the environmental and cultural elements of the trip. Explaining the reasons for their choice, respondents mentioned *Rome, territory, culture, unique, pleasure, to feel*, and *important*. The inner driving forces seem to be unrelated to the internal need to break routine and the frenetic pace of life, and are instead connected to cultural and leisure elements. A true slow-tourism conception, pilgrims looked for something that merged cultural aspects—highlighted by the numerous references to churches, museums, and castles cited in the corpus analysed—and environmental ones. People also sought unique places and landscapes, highlighting the aesthetical attractions rather than the spiritual ones. They seem to have been looking for a feeling of peace more through the enjoyment of landscapes and cultural atmospheres, than through a mental or spiritual challenge, as were respondents in the Camino de Santiago group. They also looked for food, an element that does not emerge from the radials but was sometimes cited by pilgrims, showing how the Italian pilgrimage route is seen more as a cultural route rather than a religious or spiritual one. The motivations that pushed people to undertake the Via Francigena are therefore much more linked to the slow-tourism concept in which the focus is on *pleasure*, something more relaxing rather than taxing.

This orientation is likely due to two main reasons. The first is Italy itself. Italy is renowned for its significant cultural heritage, delicious food, and breath-taking landscapes. This may have become a driving force, aided also by the Italian geography that naturally converges at the heart of the Mediterranean Sea, showing the truth in the proverb, “All routes lead to Rome”, with the Via Francigena being the most famous one. The second possible explanation is related to promotion and mental associations. The Camino de Santiago is much better known around the world for pilgrimages, with an organized host system that has been built up over time. On the contrary, despite its ancient roots, the Via Francigena has only been rediscovered in the last few decades and still needs to find both a distinctive identity and a hosting system in which pilgrims are treated as such, and not as normal tourists.

The last analysis conducted on the interviews focused on the inner impacts of the pilgrimage experience. It embraces the “ex-post” feelings to examine more deeply pilgrims’ emotions and discover which positive values they gained. Using the specific pilgrimage route undertaken by respondents as a keyword, Figure 3.3 illustrates the main strong connections, presenting a discussion of the pilgrims’ inner experiences.

Figure 3.3 Pilgrims' inner experiences for the Camino de Santiago/Via Francigena pilgrimage route



Source: Author's own elaboration

The differences between the two routes immediately catch the eye. In the Camino de Santiago group there is a series of words that emphasise length and physical task, such as *to face* (or *tackle*), *days, long*, and *situation*. These terms highlight the classical conception of pilgrimage, in which people undertake the journey to purify themselves in mind and body. Though in past centuries this purification was oriented more towards a religious or Catholic perspective, today it tends to have a wider framework in terms of spiritual and meditative dimensions. This is confirmed by another series of linked lemmas: *to think, life*, and *spiritual*. People still walk the ancient roads of the Way of Saint James with the same intimate desire of leaving behind the grudges and sufferings of their predecessors despite changing times and secularism. They walk and grow mentally to become new people. They are aware of such an inner transformation, as is grasped in the *happiness* and *to realize* lemmas. Many pilgrims realise how such experiences allow them to see everything from a different point of view, with reference not only to the dimension of the self, but also to the relational aspects, as the phrase *human factor* proposes. People undertaking the Way of Saint James try to find a balance between time for themselves and socialization, considering the importance of spontaneous and genuine social relations. Two respondents underlined these elements as the base of their happiness and experienced values:

> *During the Camino de Santiago, I've also seen a strong willingness towards solidarity, and this made me happy: it gave me hope. (RCS9)*

> *In Roncesvalles I knew my travelling companions, and there I learnt my first big lesson taught by the Camino de Santiago: happiness is real only if shared. I realize that facing a pilgrimage alone, on foot, is wonderful, but at some point you need to share joy and effort with someone else. (RCS7)*

The Via Francigena shows different patterns. Lemmas associated with analysing pilgrims' inner experience are *path, diversity, beauty, to walk*, and *pleasure*. What is highlighted in terms of the personal values of respondents is quite different from the Way of Saint James. The words used are softer, less concerned with mental aspects, and more focused on a natural experience. The walking element remains as the core aspect of the pilgrimage journey, but the desire for purification and transformation is not highlighted, giving way to the beauty offered by nature, landscapes, and the diverse art and architectural works of Italy. The Via Francigena remains an authentic pilgrimage route, but it also assumes a distinct and modern touch. If the primordial form of slow tourism can be considered the classic religious pilgrimage, now in the Via Francigena a contemporary conception has been added, encompassing the experiential dimension. In fact, among the words used by pilgrims to describe their inner experiences, *pleasure* emerges, but *happiness* does not. This difference in wording between the two pilgrim groups seems at first to be slight. However, the word *happiness* is representative of an inner spiritual dimension: it is an emotion strongly related to the personal growth achieved through walking the Camino and includes the joy of overcoming the difficulties in reaching the goal. The word *pleasure* clearly falls in a wellness dimension: pilgrims undertaking the Via Francigena route experience benefits that extend to health and well-being, enjoying the spiritual, cultural, natural, and gastronomic dimensions of the journey. Some respondents commented about this topic as follows:

> *When I started Via Francigena I was overweight, and I started to go on a diet. Before, I used to drink five coffees a day; now, drinking only two and*

waking up early in the morning is no longer a problem, so the pilgrimage did a lot of miracles. (RVF3)

You walk through . . . how can I say, I've been in Tuscany at least 30 or 40 times in my life but walking there on foot is totally different; you enjoy small towns, small paths . . . This, in my opinion, is part of the Italian beauty. (RVF6)

The human dimension, landscape, finding yourself at the end of any leg, friendship, hugs, greetings, speaking with my travelling companions, small hamlets, rows of cypress trees, water that quenched me, bread I ate, the journey in my world, tears I spilled, words remembered . . . you see, they are small things we have lost. (RVF2)

Returning to the central research questions, the study shows the multifaceted complexity of pilgrims' motivations and inner experiences accompanying all the stages of the chosen pilgrimage route. Pilgrims' inner experiences are multifaceted according to the different forms of pilgrimage tourism and routes, converging more towards feelings of personal happiness, in which the emotional aspect has a strong relevance, as in the case of the Camino de Santiago, or towards feelings of wellness, in which the contemporary experiential features drive people's sensations towards a more cultural and aesthetic dimension, as in the case of the Via Francigena. Therefore, pilgrimage can contribute to people flourishing according to a specific combination of positive emotions, personal commitment in the activity, good relationships, finding meaningful purposes and reaching personal targets. Such a combination tends to vary according to the different pilgrimage route undertaken.

3.4 Solutions and Recommendations

The present research explored happiness and quality of life in pilgrimage tourism, clarifying the differences between the Camino de Santiago and the Via Francigena both in terms of individuals' motivations and the implications for people's lives from a comparative perspective. The implications deriving from the results emerged from face-to-face interviews with pilgrims.

First, deciding to undertake a pilgrimage is a long and pre-meditated process, passing through different information channels and involving weighty decision-making. This particular aspect partially collides with other studies that blur the differences between pilgrims and tourists (e.g. Collins-Kreiner, 2010a, 2010b; Timothy & Olsen, 2006) and shows that pilgrims, at least in the early phases of the decision-making process, have their own specific identity.

Second, the pilgrimage route undertaken is not only a matter of cost-effectiveness or geographical proximity, but also varies according to pilgrims' motivations. This element suggests the presence of various clusters of pilgrims converging on different routes according to their personal motivations and attitudes. From another perspective, it emerges that the Camino de Santiago and the Via Francigena highlight a multifaceted and specific context of pilgrims' motivations. Thus, the study identifies a variety of motivations of pilgrims walking the same path, as already noted by other studies (e.g. Amaro et al., 2018). Meanwhile, comparing the two pilgrimage routes, the findings highlight different sets of motivations of pilgrims undertaking each of the two itineraries. In sum, intra-heterogeneity and inter-heterogeneity emerge.

Third, pilgrims' inner experiences differ in emotional aspects and personal values according to the chosen route, although related to the "lifestyle revolution" of slow tourism philosophy (Honoré, 2005). Happiness and pleasure clearly arise as different feelings representing different inner experiences that emerge by walking the different routes. Pilgrimage promotes very intense, unrepeatable inner experiences involving both the recalibration of life perspectives, as previous studies highlighted (e.g. Lopez et al., 2017), and unique sensations. If both pilgrimage routes exhibit signs of growing secularism in terms of experience, confirming extant studies (e.g. Kim et al., 2016), pilgrims' feelings seem to show a stronger coherence with the classical pilgrimage archetype in the Camino de Santiago case, while distinctive and contemporary experiential concerns tend to overcome spirituality and religiosity in Via Francigena. In sum, pilgrims undertaking different routes reach the goal of slow tourism, identifying the different meaning of each place and discovering their identity and soul (Shang et al., 2020).

3.5 Future research directions

This work paves the way to new and necessary comparative research projects among pilgrimage itineraries, considering the multifaceted aspects of pilgrims and pilgrimage. Broadening studies to other religious or spiritual routes even outside of Europe may be very useful, in particular, Holy Land and India routes that are highly renowned in the context of pilgrimage and tourism. Adding and confronting spiritual tourism with Train of Memory or other emotional/psychological journeys concerning Shoah or similar phenomena may also shed new light on different perspectives of happiness and well-being in terms of self-consciousness and self-enrichment deriving from particularly touching experiences.

3.6 Conclusion

Pilgrimage tourism implies a journey along a tangible and intangible road in which the slowness of walking allows more conscious engagement with life and locality (environment, culture, and people). Its growth creates opportunities for sustainable development by creating jobs, fostering infrastructure and investment, and stimulating local culture, crafts, and food. Policymakers and managers who want to promote pilgrimage tourism need to realize that pilgrims' motivations are different, just as the perceived values (end-states) acquired through undertaking a pilgrimage are different. Therefore, it is necessary to create tourism products and services that appeal to these diverse needs and experience outcomes.

There are limited studies about motivations for pilgrimage and pilgrims' inner experiences (Amaro et al., 2018; Blackwell, 2014; Damari & Mansfeld, 2016), and understanding the antecedents (motives) and consequences (benefits obtained and perceived by pilgrims) of pilgrimage experiences is of paramount importance for promotional and development purposes.

From a managerial point of view, the Camino de Santiago and Via Francigena need to be managed just like any product in the tourism context. The findings of this study offer a better understanding of contemporary pilgrims walking along these pilgrimage roads. Therefore, they provide useful insight for stakeholders to devise suitable development strategies.

Ultimately, each pilgrim who participated in the study was asked to discuss the motivations and emotions they experienced. Several differences emerged in motivations and benefits obtained according to the road they had undertaken, with a more *existential* connotation tied to personal happiness in the Camino de Santiago pilgrims group and a more *experiential* connotation tied to well-being in the Via Francigena pilgrims group. Nevertheless, each pilgrim is in search of something that surely exists, but cannot be seen: "invisible energies". Regardless of whether they derive from religious, spiritual, cultural, or eco-natural dimensions, these invisible energies become visible when the world is explored in a slow way that contributes to happiness and wellness.

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Key terms and definitions:

Cultural Route: A route that is physically determined and characterized by having its own historical dynamics, showing movements of people.

Destination Management: The coordinated management of all elements that make up a destination, including the attractions, amenities, access, marketing, and pricing.

Motivation: The process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviours. It is the driving force behind human actions.

Personal Values: The things that are important and desirable to an individual and that guide decisions.

Pilgrimage: A journey to a shrine or other location of importance to a person’s beliefs and faith.

Slow Tourism: Travel for a prolonged period of time at a slow pace, allowing the tourist to have a deep, authentic, and cultural experience.

Spiritual Tourism: Subjective and individualistic travel for spiritual betterment and self-discovery.

IV

Smart Mobility and Active Citizenship among young adults. A sustainable perspective

Massimiliano Fissore

Abstract: Citizens' mobility brings great challenges to the sustainable development of smart cities and smart communities. Relying on the adapted Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT-2) with Technological Anxiety and Active Citizenship basic assumptions, this study aims to enrich the knowledge of the main factors affecting the intention to use smart mobility technologies by young adults. The empirical research builds on an online survey with a sample of 202 respondents, aged 18-34. Results show a positive effect of Performance Expectancy, Hedonic Motivation and Sustainable Active Citizenship on the intention to use smart means of transportation. The paper offers recommendations to city governments, territorial policy makers and stakeholders in order to properly adapt urban planning and better promote smart mobility among young citizens.

Keywords: Active Citizenship, Smart City, Smart Mobility, Sustainability, Technology acceptance

4.1 Introduction

Recent decades of uninterrupted technological progress have imposed a paradigmatic revision of the concepts of urban and territorial development (MacCallum et al., 2009). Innovation has been proposed as a multi-thematic key in city planning and management dynamics, leading policy makers and stakeholders towards a smarter vision of both city hard elements, such as industrial development, new technologies and city growth, and soft ones, such as social relationships, space-people interactions, and active citizenships policies (De Falco, Angelidou and D'Addie, 2019). Cities have always been the undisputed protagonists of progress and change stimulators (Bairoch, 1991). In this context of blossoming innovation, a series of definitions have been proposed by scholars to frame the development that cities are experiencing, ranging from the post-Fordist city to the global city, cultural city and creative city (e.g. Cochrane, 2007; Grodach, 2017; Mah, 2012; Short and Kim, 1999), culminating in the latest and most current phase of academic narrative: the smart city (Angelidou, 2015).

The smart city concept is the object of numerous studies and debates. Its definitions are multiple and not yet unanimously shared (ABB & The European House - Ambrosetti, 2012; Granier and Kudo, 2016; Hollands, 2008), either embracing more technical or technological parameters or mainly oriented towards the well-being of stakeholders. Recently, an impressive number of in-course smart city projects have emerged around the world (Lee, Hancock and Hu, 2014). In Europe, thanks to the support of the European Commission and proposals such as the "Smart Cities and Communities" project[5], the attention seems to be shifting from pure technological innovation towards the construction of a territorial context oriented to optimize individuals' well-being and the creation of efficient communities sensitive to sustainable development.

In this context, one of the smart city domains currently gaining more interest from public policies and urban planning concerns people's mobility (Neirotti et al., 2014). This is due to the global need to face critical emissions generated by contemporary transport systems (Yigitcanlar and Kamruzzaman, 2019), but also to

[5] Cf. https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/horizon-2020/smart-cities-communities

the need to develop new ways of handling traffic congestion (Yigitcanlar and Kamruzzaman, 2019), rapid urbanisation (Angelidou, 2015) and new mobility trends adopted by citizens (Kopplin et al., 2021), especially younger ones. Indeed, the segment of young adult citizens seems more sensitive to sustainable development issues, as witnessed by the rise of environmental and social collective phenomena (e.g., Pride and Fridays for Future - Greta Thumberg), which is particularly embedded with younger generations. These active citizenship events encourage and sensitize youths to adopt behaviours characterized by a greater sense of responsibility for global sustainable development issues and more active participation (Beato, 2005; Pistoni et al., 2019).

In this mutated scenario, in which the perspectives and experiences of each generation become particularly relevant (Gáspár and Laurén, 2013), deepening citizens' motivation to use smart mobility technologies needs to take into account the young adult population, which seems to be characterized by a different approach to the entire community with higher sensitivity to citizenship and sustainable development issues.

Despite the growing interest in smart cities, there is scarce research investigating smart mobility issues. The few studies addressing the topic tend to be overly general (Orlowski and Romanowska, 2019) and just a minor fraction of smart-logistic research focuses on users considering them as actors (Ebner et al., 2019). Above all, the relationship of young adult citizens with smart mobility is still a matter of investigation. Furthermore, there is little research devoted to actual practices of effective citizens' involvement in smart cities (Granier and Kudo, 2016; Li et al., 2019), especially aimed at measuring behaviours of young adults (Ferraris and Belyaeva, 2017; Holmberg and Alvinius, 2019) in relation to new forms of urban mobility.

The present research aims to fill this gap by analysing the relationship between smart mobility and young adults, in order to assess the determinants influencing this segment of citizens in using innovative transport systems. Among these determinants, particular attention is given to the purpose of verifying whether active citizenship, in a sustainable development perspective, affects the intention to use smart means of transportation. Therefore, the following central research question is posed:

> *Which are the main factors driving the acceptance of smart mobility technologies by young adults living, working, or studying in a smart city?*

To address this issue, a quantitative study on technological acceptance of smart mobility is conducted by developing an adapted UTAUT-2 model (Venkatesh et al., 2012) with active citizenship constructs. The Extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (whose acronym is UTAUT-2) has been adopted since it represents one of the latest technology acceptance models, incorporating most of the main developments in consumer technology adoption literature (Gupta and Dogra, 2017; Satama, 2014). Furthermore, predictive validity of UTAUT-2 has shown to be higher than other previous models and the variance explained in behavioural intention to use the technology concerned is significant if compared with the standard UTAUT model (Venkatesh et al., 2012).

The present study aims to provide original data on the use of smart mobility within the literature (e.g. Kopplin et al., 2021) and the proposed theoretical framework offers insights for both scholars and policy makers. From a theoretical standpoint, the present research contributes to the smart city literature by providing new insights into factors affecting smart urban mobility from a citizen's perspective. The study also widens knowledge on a population cluster not yet well-explored. A better comprehension of the factors influencing the intention to use smart means of transportation is of paramount importance for strategic urban planning, in order to meet citizens' needs and adapt the proposed offer accordingly. Therefore, the findings of this study provide useful prospective insights to city governments to improve the value proposition of smart mobility systems and to calibrate communication policies and citizens' involvement practices.

The article is divided into six sections following this first introduction. Section 2 presents the latest developments on Smart City, Smart Mobility and introduces the Active Citizenship and sustainable development themes related to the chosen target of citizens. Section 3 illustrates the research model and develops the research hypothesis starting form literature review evidence. Section 4 follows with methods and section 5 with research results. In section 6, discussion of results and concluding remarks with social and practical implications are provided and, finally, in section 7 limitations of the study and suggestions for further research are stated.

4.2 Background

4.2.1 Defining Smart Cities

Defining a smart city is still an open challenge for scholars. Many factors are involved in this extensive topic, but particular attention must be paid to the geographical and political origin of the concept since it seems to have a series of ideological assumptions that may collide with the local societies in which it tries to be implemented (Vanolo, 2014).

The smart city concept has its main roots in the Smart Growth Movement originated in the USA in the late 1990s (Harrison and Donnelly, 2011), but also in a series of previous visions about the emerging information society on the urban ground, such as “wired cities”, “cybercities”, “information cities”, “virtual cities” (Angelidou, 2015) and, above of all, “intelligent cities” in which urban spaces, innovation and technologies were the core themes (Castells and Hall, 1994, Komninos, 2002). These conceptions are a typical representation of postmodern vision about how cities might be conceived in the future (Batty, 2012) and shaped the path for a broad (but rough) identification of what the term smart city is nowadays associated with.

With time, the concept blossomed into the Smart Growth Movement and its neoliberal perspective of the economy migrated to Europe and other Western countries, encountering local postmodern assumptions and creating an interesting heterogeneity about what a smart city is and which are the elements at its base. This heterogeneous and multiple composition of elements regarding the smart city concept led to a lack of clarity in its definition (AlAwadhi & Scholl, 2014; Hollands, 2008), that is not yet unanimously shared (Angelidou, 2015). Nevertheless, according to the literature, there is a wide agreement on the fact that smart cities are mainly characterized by the strong use of ICT (Information and Communication

Technologies) in the urban scenario (Neirotti et al., 2014) and by the use of new technologies for improvements in citizens' well-being and sustainability concerns (De Santis et al., 2013).

During recent years, the smart city concept has incorporated new elements, growing in both a spatial and social perspective.

From the spatial point of view, since the 2000s the term "city" (associated to "smart") started to consider not only the classical urban context, but rather a broader concept of territory in which technology, industry and innovation are intersected with private-public partnerships, society and production activities (Sandulli, Ferraris and Bresciani, 2017). Drawing its origins from industrial districts and industrial clusters (Bagnasco, 1977; Porter, 1990) and with the contiguous first efforts in lean management and dematerialisation of infrastructures allowed by virtual technologies, this geographical enlargement stimulated new approaches to innovation, leading to the concepts of intelligent regions (De Santis et al., 2013) and learning regions (Cooke et al., 2004). According to this view, overflowing classical city boundaries, progress and innovation are the result of the combination of three elements, called the 3T: Technology, Talent and Tolerance (De Santis et al., 2013; Florida, 2002). The 3T can be considered as the real base for a wider concept of smart city.

The social perspective widened the "smart" concept trying to include new meanings and the forthcoming interconnections among different life dimensions increasingly involved. The smart city conception evolved from a pure digital concept, typical of the beginning of the new millennium with a strong focus on hardware and technological elements, to a social inclusive city concept in which soft elements, such as human capital and participation, become relevant. Thus, in the last decade, the concept of smart city started to merge hard and soft features in a well-being-oriented perspective (ABB & The European House – Ambrosetti, 2012; De Santis et al., 2013).

This incorporation of elements in an urban context that is not only digital or technological, but also an organic assembly of physical, economical, intellectual and social capitals (Giffinger and Gudrun, 2010; Giffinger and Pichler-Milanović, 2007), can be framed along six principal axes:

1. Smart Economy. This concerns entrepreneurialism, flexibility in the labour market, spirit of innovation, productivity, ability to transform and better integration in the international globalised market.
2. Smart Governance. This refers to the active participation in decision making processes of local stakeholders, transparency of political and governance systems, access to public services and quality of them, awareness-raising actions and the use of new technologies in bureaucracy.
3. Smart Environment. This is the view for a place in which there is correct resources management, low pollution and traffic levels, an evolved waste-management system and all the sustainable development agenda projects.
4. Smart Living. It involves well-being and quality of life related to social cohesion, healthcare, environmental, cultural, educational and tourism services, personal safety, housing but also all the issues related to the sub-concept of *smart culture*, such as tradition enhancement and accessibility to common goods.
5. Smart People. It is linked to the human and social capital, reciprocal tolerance, cosmopolitanism and social participation in public life also considered as consciousness about the community that people belong to.
6. Smart Mobility. It is referred to accessibility, availability of ICT systems, safety of transport systems. It also concerns all the action of mobility management and infomobility in line with sustainable development principles, innovation and sharing.

The consideration of the historical, geographical and political ground in which the six dimensions have grown allows us to reflect on the potential multiplicity of the smart city concept. For instance, the smart economy dimension considers the *flexibility of the labour market* and the smart people dimension the concept of *cosmopolitanism* as aims to pursue. These two examples of elements are assumed as goals (Vanolo, 2014) and concern more the political agenda than a unique and univocal path to take for social development that takes into account local specificities. Taking then all the smart city dimensions as a rock-hard block, without a critical discussion of its components and without considering specific elements of social identity, may become over time a depoliticising driver of political and democratic choices (Vanolo, 2014) (e.g. orienting the labour market to a more deconstructed and flexible approach is strictly related to the work approach of entrepreneurs and blue/white collars, regardless of the degree of development or proficiency). For these reasons, considering the smart city and its dimensions as a continued work in progress oriented to configure the city on the basis of its particularities, including local communities, becomes relevant in the implementation of efficient smart strategies.

4.2.2 Smart Mobility: a new way to conceive transport

Transportation in urban environments experienced a sharp change during recent years, due to multiple periods of rapid urbanization (Ingrao et al., 2018). By 2050 people living in cities are expected to be 68% of the entire world's population (Arbolino et al., 2018), highlighting the importance of sustainable development taking into account both environmental (Lee et al., 2008) and social impacts (Yigitcanlar et al., 2019). For these reasons, in western and developing countries, urban mobility is moving towards a smart perspective, with changes "in favor of eco-friendly, compact and light vehicles" (Zagorskas and Burinskien, 2020, p. 273), fundamental in contrasting climate change and giving alternatives to private motor vehicles, and with changes towards better social inclusion and the reduction of transportation disadvantage (Butler et al., 2020).

Recent literature shows different perspectives of what smart mobility is. On the one hand, smart mobility is considered as the optimization in the use of the existing mobility offer with the help of innovative information technologies (Wolter, 2012), in which the difference is made by users and their interactions. On the other hand, according to a more holistic perspective, modern technologies are considered able to make technological environments act more intelligently regardless of users and their involvement (Ebner et al., 2019). On this line, Kim and colleagues conceptualize smart mobility as "integrating the sustainable and smart vehicular technologies, and the cooperative-ITS [intelligent transport systems], accelerated with the cloud-server and big-data based vehicular networks" (Kim et al., 2015, p.59).

In both the above perspectives, defining smart mobility needs to balance technological and sustainable aspects. In this regard, literature focused on six principal forms of innovation: shared mobility (e.g. Axsen and Sovacool, 2019; Illgen and Hock, 2020), intelligent transport systems (e.g. Chen et al., 2017; Melo et al., 2017), demand responsive transportation (e.g. Viergutz and Schmidt, 2019; Wang et al., 2014), alternative fuels (e.g. Hoque et al., 2020; Ortar and Ryghaug, 2019), mobility as a service (e.g. Machado et al., 2018; Mulley and Kronsell, 2018) and autonomous vehicles (e.g. Bissel et al., 2020; Milakis et al., 2018).

On this basis, smart mobility is a widespread term used for technologies applied to different scales in urban areas, and for new transportation concepts sensitive to sustainability and traffic congestion reduction (Noy and Givoni, 2018; Yigitcanlar and Kamruzzaman, 2019), in which public and private offers try to become integrated.

Traditionally, all forms of transportation see the dichotomy between goods and people. Focusing on people's movement (the focus of the present study), smart mobility is considered as a corpus of innovative and sustainable ways to allow individuals moving with both public and private transport systems in the urban area, based on environmental-friendly propulsion systems and advanced technology devices in infomobility (Neirotti et al., 2014). However, regardless of the object of a logistic system (goods or individuals), the primary goal of smart mobility policies remains the use of technology in order to modulate and develop the entire transportation network so that it can deal with societal, economic and environmental impacts related to private vehicles and traffic congestion (Yigitcanlar et al., 2020).

In the context of people's mobility, solutions adopted and offered by policy makers range from shared or autonomous vehicles structured for reducing car ownership use, to deploying sensors positioned in critical areas, collecting data useful to modulate and plan urban mobility efficiently (Appio et al., 2019), in particular to alleviate spatial and temporal dimensions of transport issues by: a) improving coverage, quality and quantity of services; b) strengthening links among major public transport nodes; c) offering flexible solutions; d) giving alternatives in transportation choices (Butler et al., 2020).

At the same time, interest in smart mobility solutions, especially electric ones, has shown remarkable growth among individuals, highlighting heterogeneity in motivations (Cordera et al., 2019; Haustein and Jensen, 2018; Schlüter and Weyer, 2019), ownership (Cui et al., 2021; James et al., 2019; Jenn et al., 2018), and contextual factors (Rezvani et al., 2015; Sang and Bekhet, 2015). In this regard, literature highlighted that the different age of citizens affects consumer and travel behaviour, showing an important effect in shaping society (Circella et al., 2016). In particular, surveys on young adults reported that, in addition to a stronger commitment to environment and a preference for living in urban areas, they tend to adopt different means of transportation, despite the fact that so far little evidence has been shown on the durability of these choices over time (Circella et al., 2016). Above all, the explanations for these new mobility trends among young adults are still under discussion among scholars (Puentes, 2013). What the literature has found as a sign of a different approach to mobility, in particular to urban mobility, by young adults is the tendency to avoid or delay acquiring a driver's licence, as well as car ownership reduction and the use of alternative transport systems (e.g. Blumenberg et al. 2012; Frandberg and Vilhelmson 2011; Hjorthol, 2016; Kuhnimhof et al. 2012; McDonald 2015; Oakil et al., 2016; Polzin et al. 2014).

These trends highlight the importance of deepening the factors underlying the acceptance of smart mobility systems among young adult citizens, in order to maximise the real contribution of the new forms of mobility in modelling the city of today and tomorrow.

4.2.3 Young adults and Active Citizenship in a sustainable perspective

Sustainable development and citizenship are themes increasingly felt nowadays. They are both at the core of recent years of studies in social research and political actions, often flanking smart city topics.

Over the last decades, United Nations have been strongly committed to issues related to sustainable development, relying mainly on the three fundamental values of human rights, equality and sustainability (Wu et al., 2018). Furthermore, in the UN 2030 Development Agenda, a series of Sustainable Development Goals have been globally defined, highlighting how sustainable development embraces not only ecological and environmental dimensions (e.g. Lim et al., 2017), but also economic and social ones. The economic dimension covers the themes of poverty reduction, broad food coverage, economic development and healthcare, while the social dimension is concerned with the reduction of gender and nation inequalities (Beato, 2005; Wu et al., 2018). At the same time, the years between 2004 and 2015 have been declared by United Nations as a Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) (Burmeister et al., 2012), while environmental education and awareness have been increasingly recognized as the main way to decrease nature degradation (Lozano et al., 2013), highlighting, on the one hand, the importance of proper behavioural conduct by earth's inhabitants and, on the other hand, the focus on new generations of citizens in the construction of a better future.

In this context, social commitment for sustainable development has become increasingly important, putting people at the forefront in facing the problems of contemporary society (Pozzi et al., 2017; Snyder and Omoto, 2007), especially young people (Marzana et al., 2012). Some examples come from the rise of environmental and social collective phenomena, such as Pride, Fridays for Future-Greta Thumberg (e.g. Han and Ahn, 2020; Pereira, 2019), in which the strong adherence of teenagers and young adults testifies to their awareness of the need to build a different world, more suited to the needs of contemporary society, and leads towards a more active participation and a greater sense of responsibility for global issues. Indeed, this population cluster implements effective social action, bringing benefits not only for themselves or their social groups, but for the entire society

(Marzana et al., 2016). Such benefits are carried on by promoting a sense of community and citizenship identity (Flanagan et al., 1998; Omoto e Snyder, 2002) with the purpose of well-being, which is one of the main goals of sustainable development (Gupta and Vegelin, 2016). According to recent literature, this behaviour is known as Active Citizenship, in which people's commitment to sustainable development means being active citizens involved in the construction of a reality where progress does not negatively affect the future for younger and elder generations (Pistoni et al., 2019; Shepherd et al., 2009).

In essence, active citizenship is a term naturally embedding sustainability and sustainable development elements. In fact, if sustainability is the corpus of human attitudes included in the sustainable development concept -i.e., "development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (UN, 1987)-, active citizenship strongly fits with it. Hoskins (2006) clearly defines this form of citizenship as "participation in civil society, community and/or political life, characterised by mutual respect and non-violence and in accordance with human rights and democracy".

Cities attract increasing numbers of new figures for new forms of services and activities (Florida, 2005) and younger age groups are more involved or born in these seething urban contexts, growing up with a different education and new sensitivities to global and social issues, able to change perspectives, values and results. These aspects are confirmed by literature, highlighting multiple benefits for society coming from youth participation, especially when empowerment and development opportunities come to light (Maconachie, 2014; Powers & Tiffany, 2006).

In such a challenging context for societies, especially with regards to the problem of urbanization (Angelidou, 2015), active citizenship behaviours in favour of a sustainable development become driving elements in the construction of smart cities with a new approach coming from younger individuals and their renewed way of acting for the benefit of the community (Pistoni et al., 2019).

4.3 Model Development and Research Hypothesis

This paper contributes towards the knowledge and understanding of the main factors driving the acceptance of smart mobility technologies by young adults living, working, or studying in a smart city. The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), describing the acceptance and the use of technology systems (Lai, 2017), was used as theoretical basis for the study (Taherdoost, 2018; Venkatesh et al., 2003). In particular, the study adopted the model UTAUT-2 developed by Venkatesh et al. (2012) that includes three new key constructs in adjunct to the original ones influencing the dependent variable that is behavioural intention to use a technology system. The choice of the adjusted model has been considered in light of the criticism related to the extensive application of UTAUT in institutional contexts and the need to be more accurate in consumer contexts (Cimperman et al., 2016; Hess et al., 2014) and therefore also in urban studies concerning citizens context. The extensions proposed with UTAUT-2 model produced, compared to classical UTAUT, a sharp improvement in the variance explained in behavioural intention, passing from 56% to 74% (Chang, 2012).

The UTAUT-2 variables are performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, hedonic motivation, price (of the service, in this case) and habit/experience. For the present research, the construct “habit” was removed according to other studies on recent introduction of technologies (e.g. Belvedere and Martinelli, 2019) and substituted with “Technological anxiety” as other extensions of UTAUT models proposed and suggested for new technologies (e.g. Celik, 2016). At the same time in order to face Sustainable Active Citizenship issues, a new sensitive driver was introduced.

The three moderators of the UTAUT-2 model (i.e. age, gender and experience), as in other recent works (e.g. Alkawsi and Baashar, 2020; Belvedere and Martinelli, 2019), were not considered in the present study since the research is already targeted on the young adult cluster, gender is not a discriminant topic of the proposed analysis and experience is linked to the removed habit driver.

The first factor in UTAUT models is called Performance Expectancy (PE). It is defined as “the degree to which an individual believes that using the system will help him/her to attain gains in job performance" (Venkatesh et al., 2003, p. 447). After UTAUT-2 extensions, Performance Expectancy has been enriched to a new interpretation, more suitable for technological systems applied to urban contexts. It has been theorized as "the degree to which using a technology will provide benefits to consumers [citizens] in performing certain activities" (Venkatesh et al., 2012, p. 159). It is commonly the strongest predictor of the behavioural intention (Chang, 2012; Venkatesh et al., 2003) in technology adoption. In a smart city context, smart mobility is linked to the performance of sustainable mobility, which in turn affects people's quality of life (Olaverri-Monreal, 2016). Hence, the following hypothesis is stated:

H1: Performance Expectancy (PE) has a positive impact on young adults' Behavioural Intention to use (IU) smart mobility systems.

Effort Expectancy (EE) is the second driver of UTAUT-2. This factor, derived from the Perceived Ease of Use of TAM – Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989; Lee et al., 2013), is the degree of ease associated with the use of the technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003). This construct is significant in both voluntary and mandatory usage when analysis is conducted in early phases of technological introduction and new behaviours, while it tends to become non-significant and overshadowed by instrumentality concerns (Davis et al. 1989; Szajna, 1996; Venkatesh, 1999; Venkatesh et al., 2003). In smart city studies, Effort Expectancy has shown a positive influence on behavioural intention (Gunawan, 2018). Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Effort Expectancy (EE) has a positive impact on young adults' Behavioural Intention to use (IU) smart mobility systems.

Social Influence (SI) is the third construct and it is defined as the degree to which a user considers the opinion of other people important for him/her in using a certain technology (Diaz and Loraas, 2010). From another perspective, it also refers to the image of a person that, using a particular technology innovation, is perceived by others and enhances a self-image or status in his/her social group (Moore and Benbasat, 1991). Past studies demonstrated that Social Influence affected the acceptance of information technologies (Kijsanayotin et al., 2009), while other research, focused on urban contexts, analysed how a present-day city environment (including its society) may influence young people's values (Vlasenko and Ivanova, 2017). When people receive positive vibes related to smart mobility systems from individuals they consider valuable, it is reasonable to expect a stronger propensity to use these systems. On the basis of this reasoning, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3: Young adults' Behavioural Intention to use (IU) smart mobility systems is positively shaped by Social Influence (SI).

The fourth driver is Facilitating Conditions (FC). These conditions refer to which resources and supports are available to behave in a certain way in consumers' perceptions (e.g., Brown and Venkatesh 2005; Venkatesh et al. 2003). For the youth population this factor is expected to be important, but weaker than other drivers since previous studies on technology acceptance showed that older users tend to give more importance to support (Hall and Mansfield, 1975) and have more difficulties in learning to use innovations (Morris et al. 2005; Plude and Hoyer 1985). Thus, the following hypothesis is stated:

H4: Facilitating Conditions (FC) have a positive impact on young adults' Behavioural Intention to use (IU) smart mobility systems.

The fifth factor in UTAUT-2 model is Hedonic Motivation (HM), that is "the fun or pleasure derived from using a technology" (Venkatesh et al., 2012, p. 161). It was found that Hedonic Motivation is a very important factor as a consumer determinant of technology adoption (Childers et al., 2001). Furthermore, younger men tend to have a greater tendency to look for innovation (e.g., Chau and Hui 1998), showing the importance of the HM factor in driving the behavioural intention to use new technologies, smart mobility systems included. Thus, the Hedonic Motivation as a predictor of young citizens' behavioural intention to use a technology has been considered. More formally, the following hypothesis is stated:

H5: Young adults' Behavioural Intention to use (IU) smart mobility systems is positively influenced by Hedonic Motivation (HM).

The UTAUT-2 model has Price (P) as the sixth driver of Behavioural Intention (BI). The previous UTAUT model focused only on time and effort concerns; adding the price element to the independent variables was assumed to be a sensitive improvement of variance explanation by the model's authors. Venkatesh et al. (2013) Considering Price as the trade-off between the perceived benefits obtained from the applications and the monetary cost for using such technologies (Dodds et al., 1991). According to Chang (2012), in technology acceptance and use, the cost and pricing structure may have a weighty impact on consumer's (citizen's) choice. In a smart cities context, offering incentives to encourage the use of shared transport systems in alternative to private cars decreases the individual costs and encourages behavioural change (Biyik, 2019). Hence, it is supposed that Price influences the intention to use smart mobility systems and the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: Price (P) has a positive impact on young adults' Behavioural Intention to use (IU) smart mobility systems.

The seventh driver used is Technological Anxiety (TA). Anxiety is a negative emotional reaction people experience in threatening situations, including computer and technology usage (Fagan et al., 2004). This factor has received increasing attention from scholars in technology adoption studies (Powell, 2013) because of its negative influence on users. It was a valuable element considered in recent studies related to smart city technologies introduction (Fitriani et al., 2016). Therefore, the following hypothesis is stated:

H7: Technological Anxiety (ANX) negatively affects young adults' Behavioural Intention to use (IU) smart mobility systems.

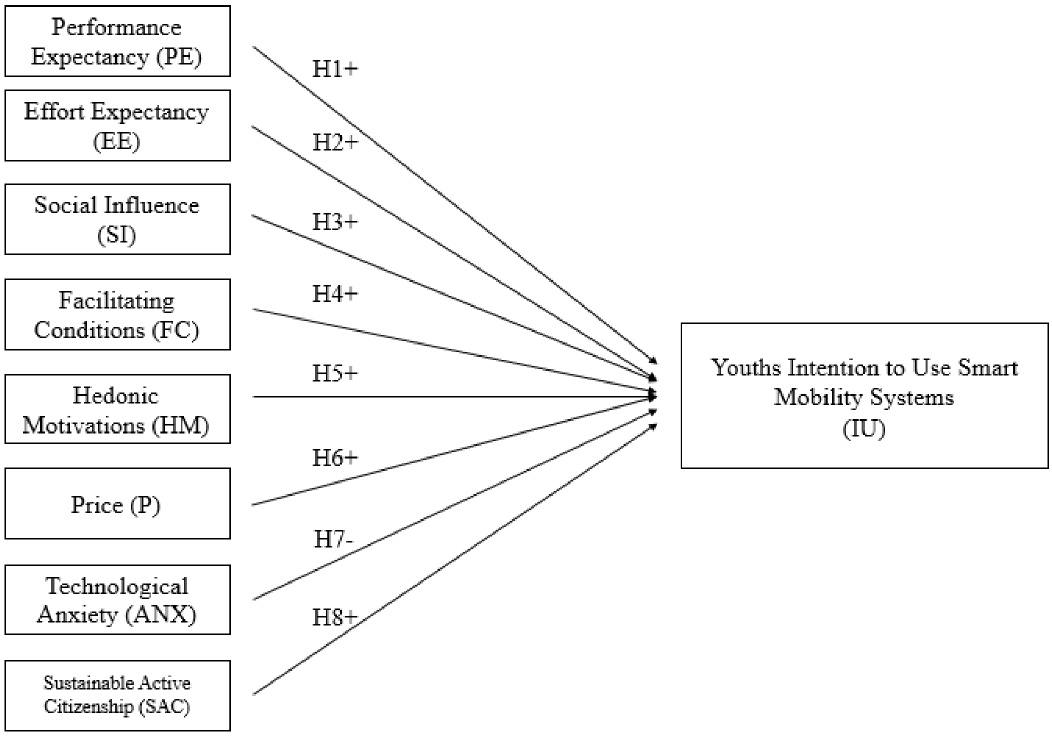
Active citizenship can support individuals' willingness to use smart mobility systems. This study considers young adults' commitment to sustainable development as a form of active citizenship (Sustainable Active Citizenship), as assumed and proposed by Pistoni et al. (2019), and measures it with a scale based on the "Environmental Citizenship" dimension of the Pro-Environmental Behaviour Scale (PEBS) suggested by Markle (2013) since it is particularly fitting to the rest of UTAUT-2 model and similar in measurement system. The resultant variable was named Sustainable Active Citizenship.

Smart mobility is often considered as one of the main elements in attempting to obtain a more sustainable transport system (Staricco, 2013). Some studies demonstrated that individuals who consider their self-image as pro-environment are more likely to have positive perceptions of electric vehicles (Schuitema et al., 2013) typical of the smart mobility offer. Consequently, people perceive them as positively affecting environmental protection (Tu et al., 2019), and thus sustainable development. It was also demonstrated that the behaviours of young adults change overtime, moving from the classical institutional approach, like adherence to political parties, to forms of protest and direct involvement in active and collective participatory activities (Bennett, 2008; Dalton, 2009). On this line, some scientific evidence highlighted that active citizenship behaviours, like lodging of environmental complaints, affect intention to buy vehicles (and consequently to use them as a service) with sustainable-friendly technologies (Zhang et al., 2018). Previous research also evidenced that individuals' environmental awareness influences not only purchase intentions of smart vehicles due to external environment considerations (Ma and Feng, 2010), but also their overall public acceptance (Sang and Bekhet, 2015). Therefore, the present study hypothesises that Sustainable Active Citizenship is predictive of young adults' intention to use innovative transport systems. More formally, the following hypothesis is stated:

H8: Sustainable Active Citizenship (SAC) positively affects youths' Behavioural Intention to use (IU) smart mobility systems.

The final model proposed in the present study is shown in Figure 4.1

Figure 4.1 Research model and hypothesis



Source: Author's own elaboration

4.4 Methods

A quantitative methodological approach to research was carried out. A self-administered questionnaire was completed by a sample of young adults studying, living or working in the city of Turin (Italy). In 2016, this city, located in Northern Italy, won the second prize in the "European Capital of Innovation" contest awarded by the European Commission (Delmastro et al., 2019) and is a smart city with one of the most developed innovative smart mobility systems. Turin is renowned for the recent introduction on a large scale of electric scooters, electric car sharing and the testing of the electric automated guided bus (Hagenzieker et al., 2020) in addition to an efficient and sustainable bike sharing network long since working. For these innovation-related reasons, as well as the presence of numerous youths due to ample job opportunities and the universities located there, the city of Turin is an ideal urban context for smart mobility and smart citizens studies. Hence, for the present study, electronic smart mobility systems available in the city of Turin were considered, in particular the following ones: electric scooters, electronic bikes, electric car sharing and the innovative electronic self-driven bus (Olli). Furthermore, by focusing on a precise metropolitan area characterized by a plurality of smart-city dimensions, researchers have a user base potentially well-aligned with the effective available technologies, reducing inter-cities gaps. Homogeneity of smart mobility devices available for citizens avoids differences in perceptions of provisions, urban perimeters of use and city regulations of such transportations.

The selection of 18-34 age group as boundaries of "young adults" cluster was made in line with the classical literature segmentation (e.g. Uva, 2014; Payne and Copp, 2013).

Data collection took place during autumn-winter 2020. With the help of a purposive sampling based on age, all respondents accessed the survey by direct link on Google Form, where the questionnaire was digitally developed.

Respondents were asked to point out on a seven-point Likert scale to which extent they agree to statements proposed, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" for classical UTAUT-2 constructs, Technological Anxiety and the dependent variable included, and from "never" to "always", "at all" to "completely" for Sustainable Active Citizenship (Appendix). The variables were measured using scales that have been well validated in the literature. UTAUT-2 basic variables were assessed through the scale developed by Venkatesh et al. (2012). Technological Anxiety was measured using the scale proposed by Celik (2016). The Environmental Citizenship dimension of the Pro-Environmental Behaviour Scale (PEBS) proposed by Markle (2013) was used and adapted to assess Sustainable Active Citizenship. Some questions were slightly modified according to the present research topic. All items were posed as positive propositions, except for Technological Anxiety which was reversed during data analysis.

Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyse the data collected. A multiple linear regression analysis was used to estimate the main effects of Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Facilitating Conditions, Hedonic Motivation, Price of the service, Technological

Anxiety, Sustainable Active Citizenship (independent variables) on young adults' Behavioural Intention to Use Smart Mobility systems (dependent variable).

4.5 Results

Out of 238 completed questionnaires, 36 were excluded as they did not provide complete data or for incongruences with the population segment of interest for the present study (young adults), thus reducing the number of usable responses to 202. The sample was represented by 39% female and 61% male, with a mean age of 23,4 (min = 18; max = 34).

The variables were measured using scales that have been well validated in the literature. However, the survey instruments were re-validated both for constructs of classical UTAUT-2 model and for new variables introduced since in these cases their reliabilities are suggested to be tested (Churchill, 1979). Such reliabilities refer to the degree to which the used instrument does not consider random error and they are concerned with consistency and stability of the measurement scales. Internal consistency is a commonly used type of reliability (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). In the present study Cronbach's Alphas based on the average inter correlations among items was used as an internal consistency measure. The threshold value for Cronbach's alpha coefficients should be higher than the suggested minimum value of 0.7 (Kannan, 2005; Nunnally et al., 1967). As shown in Table 4.1, the internal consistency reliability was very high for each construct.

Table 4.1 Cronbach Alpha reliability results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Performance Expectancy PE	.945	4
Effort Expectancy EE	.908	4
Social Influence SI	.918	3
Hedonic Motivations HM	.904	3
Technological Anxiety ANX	.849	4
Price P	.921	3
Facilitating Conditions FC	.767	4
Sustainable and Active Citizenship SAC	.866	6
Youths Intention to Use Smart Mobility Systems IU	.933	3

Source: Author's own elaboration

The impact of eight predictors on Youths' Intention to Use Smart Mobility Systems was explored by using multiple linear regression. In order to avoid critical presence of multicollinearity, which refers to an overlapping among variances of exogenous and endogenous constructs, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) analysis was conducted (O'Brien, 2007). Table 4.2 presents the analysis, showing that all VIF values are < 5 and thus indicating that no particular multicollinearity issue emerges (Irman and Purwati, 2020), also supported by Tolerance values above the minimum requested of 0.2.

Table 4.2 Multicollinearity analysis (IU dependent variable)

Independent Variables	Tolerance	VIF
Performance Expectancy PE	0.540	1.851
Effort Expectancy EE	0.496	2.017
Social Influence SI	0.757	1.321
Hedonic Motivations HM	0.612	1.633
Technological Anxiety ANX	0.710	1.408
Price P	0.672	1.487
Facilitating Conditions FC	0.563	1.776
Sustainable Active Citizenship SAC	0.903	1.108

Source: Author's own elaboration

R-square shows the proportion of endogenous variable variation that can be explained by other exogenous variables on the dependent variable. In the present study it was 0.53, a value showing a moderate (medium) path model (Hair et al., 2010; Mutaqin and Sutoyo, 2020), acceptable in social science studies, catching about half of the usage intention factors.

The full model was significant (F-statistic: 27.17 on 8 and 193 degree of freedom, *p-value*<0.001).

Results of the multiple linear regression are shown in table 4.3. Three predictors have a significant and positive effect on usage intention scores: Performance Expectancy, Hedonic Motivation and Sustainable Active Citizenship. Hence, the expected performance level of usefulness of smart mobility technologies, the fulfilment of hedonic motivations and the sensitivity to sustainable active citizenship elements have a positive relationship with young adults' behavioural intention to use smart mobility systems. Contrary to expectations, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Technological Anxiety, Price and Facilitating Condition do not have any significant impact on the dependent variable.

Table 4.3 Multiple linear regression model (* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$)

Predictors	**Std. error**	**Standardised Beta**	***t***	**Sign.**
Performance Expectancy PE	0,058	0,499	7,429	0,000***
Effort Expectancy EE	0,081	-0,060	-0,849	0,397
Social Influence SI	0,053	0,098	1,724	0,086
Hedonic Motivations HM	0,065	0,244	3,862	0,000***
Technological Anxiety ANX	0,056	0,069	1,185	0,237
Price P	0,067	0,005	0,078	0,938
Facilitating Conditions FC	0,090	-0,022	-0,341	0,734
Sustainable Active Citizenship SAC	0,057	0,141	2,713	0,007**

Source: Author's own elaboration

In light of the results, outcomes of the hypotheses tested in this research are summarised and displayed in Table 4.4

Table 4.4 Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	**Relationship**	**Results**
H1	**PE → IU**	**Supported**
H2	EE → IU	Not supported
H3	SI → IU	Not supported
H4	FC → IU	Not Supported
H5	**HM → IU**	**Supported**
H6	P → IU	Not supported
H7	ANX → IU	Not supported
H8	**SAC → IU**	**Supported**

Source: Author's own elaboration

4.6 Discussion

The present research applied UTAUT-2 extended model to make an in-depth examination of factors influencing young adults' intention to use smart mobility systems in a smart city context. Since literature on these issues is limited, the present study contributes to existing knowledge by providing a fresh perspective on such factors, attempting to fill gaps on citizens' involvement in smart city systems (Li et al., 2019; Granier and Kudo, 2016) and especially young adults, not yet particularly analysed.

4.6.1 Theoretical contributions

By investigating eight predictors of Intention to Use Smart Mobility by young adults, this study found that three of them significantly affect the dependent variable.

Performance Expectancy proved to be the strongest predictor of young adults' intention to use smart mobility systems. This result is consistent with previous UTAUT research findings (e.g. Chang, 2012; Venkatesh et al., 2003), particularly those related to the adoption of new mobility technologies (e.g. Erskine et al., 2020; Tran et al., 2019), confirming PE as the common strongest variable in influencing the dependent one in UTAUT-2 models. The result implies that the greater the performance expectancy of smart mobility (in terms of perceived usefulness, ability to function and dissemination), the greater the young adult citizens' intention to use such technologies, being congruent with their personal needs.

The results showed that Hedonic Motivation is a significant antecedent of behavioural intentions to use smart mobility systems among young adults, who are typically more oriented in becoming early adopters of new technologies (Chau and Hui, 1998). This result is consistent with existing literature on hedonic dimensions of technologies adoption (e.g. Childers et al., 2001) and smart mobility adoption (e.g. Madigan et al., 2017; Kopplin et al., 2021), confirming the crucial importance of elements like fun and entertainment in shaping young adults' intention to use smart transportation.

The findings highlighted that young adults' behavioural intention to use smart mobility systems is significantly affected by Sustainable Active Citizenship. The relation between active citizenship and sustainable commitments among young adults with their intention to use smart transportations is a confirmation of the right path undertaken by national and supranational institutions focused on two directions: sensitizing new generations to sustainability (Burmeister et al., 2012; Lozano et al., 2013) and orienting citizens to the construction of a new approach to urban life, in a perspective consistent with Vanolo's (2014) studies on smart citizens and smart mentality.

Furthermore, the positive relationship between SAC and the intention to use smart mobility systems suggests a link between the smart mobility dimension and the other two smart city axes, which are Smart People and Smart Living (Giffinger and Pichler-Milanović, 2007). Indeed, young adults' participation in public life, which is part of the Smart People axe, is oriented towards the search for an improvement in living conditions and the collective well-being of communities (Smart Living), which is also one of the main goals of sustainable development (Gupta and Vegelin, 2016).

The high contemporary incidence of both Hedonic Motivation and Sustainable Active Citizenship, also found by Schuitema and colleagues (2013) in relation to the use of smart mobility vehicles, suggests an interesting link between the playful aspect and the involvement in activities beneficial to the communities, that merits investigation through further studies.

The research contributes to the smart city literature by widening knowledge on a population cluster so far neglected in the smart mobility context and, to the best of the Author's knowledge, it is the first study to consider active citizenship as a determinant of smart mobility behaviours. Thus, the study diverges from prior research based on classical UTAUT-2 by proposing a more comprehensive model that incorporates active citizenship as a determinant of young adults' intention to use smart mobility systems.

In conclusion, the findings support the positive association between young adults' sensitivity to citizenship issues, like civil rights and sustainability claims, and an effective intention to act consistently, at least in mobility contexts, without excluding fun and device performance requirements in their smart mobility experience.

4.6.2 Social and practical implications

The present study is configured as an efficacy test for transversal institutional efforts towards the construction of smarter and more sustainable local communities.

Research findings have practical implications for local administrators who are in charge of logistics and transportation issues in providing citizens with the best public service. In the design and implementation of smart mobility systems for citizens, and specifically with reference to young adults, major factors to be considered as marketing criteria by public administrators (and service providers), in order to stimulate and attract people to try and use such forms of transportation, are the performance expectancy of services, the amusement component (hedonic motivation) and the emphasis on sustainability and active citizenship issues. Strategical suggestions on these variables are offered as follows.

First, considering Performance Expectancy and its strong influence on the intention to use smart mobility systems, it is suggested to enhance citizens' perceived usefulness by better highlighting related benefits, like usability, pollution containment (also in production systems) and product/service efficiency. In addition to properly communicating the associated benefits, reaching and maintaining high standards in app usability and service spread is also relevant.

Second, Hedonic Motivations seems to play a critical role in shaping the intention to use smart mobility, as also evidenced by other recent studies (e.g. Kopplin et al., 2021) highlighting the critical role of this driver in trying out smart vehicles. Consequently, emphasizing the ludic dimension in marketing strategies promoted by smart mobility service providers can play an important role in attracting new young-adult citizens in the early-stage phase adoption of these technologies.

Third, the influence of Sustainable Active Citizenship on the intention to use smart transportation suggests that policy makers should emphasize institutional communication, reinforcing in the minds of young citizens the association between their active citizenship behaviours and the use of smart mobility systems. This strategy can allow for the development of a dialectical incentive between the classical bottom up approach of active citizenship (Buijs et al., 2016) and institutions. Moreover, it can help in raising awareness of the importance of these positive behaviours among youths (Pistoni et al., 2019).

Finally, the evidence of sustainability as a concurring element in smart mobility use helps to ponder and calibrate future strategical planning related to entire new generations.

The research findings provide a basis for evaluating how and how much the actual implemented smart mobility system is efficient and appealing and how it can be optimized both in usability and in communication.

4.7 Limitations and future research directions

Despite the contribution to the literature, there are different directions in which this study could be expanded.

A general limit of the present study concerns the self-reported answers regarding the survey. Bias may occur resulting from various adverse factors like inability to provide the right responses. Qualitative studies, such as ethnographic research, may complement by giving important further insights.

From a methodological point of view, respondents were all young adult citizens of the same smart city (Turin, Italy). Thus, the extension of the analysis to other smart city contexts is worthwhile.

Furthermore, upcoming research may focus on considering moderating variables.

Lastly, deepening the link between Hedonic Motivation and Sustainable Active Citizenship through qualitative research instruments could add new insights to present literature.

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APPENDIX – Questionnaire

Variable	Nr.	Question	Translation
Performance Expectancy PE (Venkatesh et al., 2012)	PE1	I find Smart Mobility useful in my daily life.	Trovo che i sistemi di mobilità smart siano utili nella mia vita quotidiana
	PE2	Using Smart Mobility increases my chances of achieving things that are important to me.	Usare i sistemi di mobilità smart accresce le mie possibilità di fare cose importanti nella vita per me
	PE3	Using Smart Mobility helps me accomplish things more quickly.	Usare sistemi di Smart Mobility mi aiuta a svolgere le mie attività in modo più rapido
	PE4	Using Smart Mobility increases my productivity.	Usare la mobilità smart accresce la mia produttività
Effort Expectancy EE (Venkatesh et al., 2012)	EE1	Learning how to use Smart Mobility is easy for me.	Imparare come usare i sistemi di mobilità smart è tendenzialmente facile per me
	EE2	My interaction with Smart Mobility is clear and understandable.	La mia interazione con i sistemi di Smart Mobility è chiara e comprensibile
	EE3	I find Smart Mobility easy to use.	Trovo che i sistemi di Smart Mobility siano facili da usare.
	EE4	It is easy for me to become skillful at Using Smart Mobility.	Per me è facile pensare di diventare bravo nell'uso dei sistemi di mobilità smart (uso delle app, pagamenti, uso e gestione dei mezzi).
Social Influence SI (Venkatesh et al., 2012)	SI1	People who are important to me think that I should use Smart Mobility.	Le persone che sono importanti per me pensano che dovrei usare sistemi di mobilità smart.
	SI2	People who influence my behavior think that I should use Smart Mobility.	Le persone che tendenzialmente influenzano il mio comportamento ritengono che dovrei usare sistemi di mobilità smart.
	SI3	People whose opinions that I value prefer that I use Smart Mobility.	Le persone le cui opinioni sono molto importanti per me ritengono che dovrei usare sistemi di Smart Mobility.
Hedonic Motivations HM (Venkatesh et al., 2012)	HM1	Using Smart Mobility is funny.	Usare sistemi di Smart Mobility è divertente.
	HM2	Using Smart Mobility is enjoyable.	Usare sistemi di Smart Mobility è piacevole.
	HM3	Using Smart Mobility is very entertaining.	Usare sistemi di Smart Mobility è interessante.

Technological Anxiety ANX (Celik, 2016)	ANX1	I feel apprehensive about using Smart Mobility systems	Avverto un senso di apprensione nel pensare di usare sistemi di mobilità smart.
	ANX2	It scares me thinking I could lose my personnel and credit card information using the App system for Smart Mobility services	Mi spaventa pensare che potrei cedere i miei dati personali (GPS) e informazioni sulla carta di credito usando l'app per i servizi di Smart Mobility.
	ANX3	I hesitate to use Smart Mobility systems for fear of making costly mistakes I cannot correct	Tendo a esitare nell'uso dei sistemi di Smart Mobility per paura di fare errori che non posso correggere.
	ANX4	The system is somewhat intimidating to me	Il sistema mi intimidisce/spaventa in qualche modo.
Price P (Venkatesh et al., 2012)	P1	Smart Mobility is reasonably priced.	I servizi di mobilità smart hanno un prezzo ragionevole.
	P2	Smart Mobility has a good value for the money.	I servizi di mobilità smart hanno un buon "value for money" .
	P3	At the current price, Smart Mobility provides a good value.	Agli attuali prezzi, i sistemi di Smart Mobility mi danno un buon valore.
Facilitating Conditions FC (Venkatesh et al., 2012)	FC1	I have the resources necessary to use Smart Mobility.	Ho le risorse (intellettuali, fisiche, economiche ecc.) necessarie per sfruttare i servizi di Smart Mobility.
	FC2	I have the knowledge necessary to use Smart Mobility.	Ho la conoscenza necessaria per sfruttare i servizi di Smart Mobility.
	FC3	Smart Mobility is compatible with other technologies and applications I use.	I sistemi di mobilità smart sono compatibili con altre tecnologie e applicazioni che uso quotidianamente (smartphone e smartwatch ad esempio).
	FC4	I can get help from others when I have difficulties Using Smart Mobility.	Posso ottenere aiuto da altri quando ho difficoltà nell'usare sistemi di Smart Mobility.
Sustainable and Active Citizenship SAC (Markle, 2013)	SAC1	When there are events relating to active citizenship or sustainability, I take part in my city or in nearby territories.	Quando vi sono delle manifestazioni a carattere di cittadinanza attiva e di sostenibilità, vi prendo parte nella mia città o nei territori geograficamente vicini.
	SAC2	I support economically or with time and participation,	Supporto economicamente oppure con tempo e

		activities and projects for the common good.	partecipazione, attività e progetti per il bene comune.
	SAC3	I am personnally committed to spreading/sharing in my network of social relations messages to raise awareness on issues of sustainability and active citizenship.	Mi impegno a diffondere/condividere personalmente nella mia rete di relazioni sociali dei messaggi di sensibilizzazione alle tematiche di sostenibilità e cittadinanza attiva.
	SAC4	Overall, I feel I am an active citizen, sensitive to sustainability issues.	Complessivamente mi sento un cittadino attivo e sensibile alle tematiche della sostenibilità.
	SAC5	Have you increased the consumption of organic or envinronmental-friendly products in the last year?	Nell'ultimo anno hai incrementato il consumo di prodotti biologici o envinronmental-friendly?
	SAC6	How much time do you spend to get information about sustainable development and/or social solidarity issues?	Quanto tempo dedichi ad informarti in merito ai temi di sviluppo sostenibile e/o solidarietà sociale?
Youths Intention to Use Smart Mobility Systems IU (Venkatesh et al., 2012)	IU1	I want to continue Using Smart Mobility in the future.	Voglio usare i sistemi di mobilità smart in futuro o, se già ne faccio uso, voglio continuare a usarli in futuro.
	IU2	I will always try to use Smart Mobility in my daily life when it will be possible.	Tenterò sempre di usare i sistemi di mobilità smart quando nella mia giornata ne avrò l'opportunità.
	IU3	I plan to continue to use Smart Mobility frequently.	Ho intenzione di continuare a usare i sistemi di mobilità smart frequentemente in futuro.

V

Conclusions and final reflections

The present work explored the question around territorial enhancement and local identities with the aim of widening knowledge on two streams of extant literature on urban and territorial development: *slowness* and *smartness*.

The first chapter is configured as a theoretical introduction highlighting the topic of territorial identities in the contemporary and globalised world, with its definitions, key aspects and problems. It has been evidenced that territorial identities are dealt in today's local strategies and in academic research according to two different frameworks: *slowness* and *smartness*. *Slowness* focuses on sustainability, traditions, attention to the past and to the preservation of both cultural heritage and socio-cultural context, whereas *Smartness* emphasizes innovation methods to shape local identities, especially in urban areas, which are the new protagonists of an evolving and borderless world.

The second chapter aimed to explore the willingness to cooperate among institutional and non-institutional local actors in order to develop a territorial network between seven small cities (and their territories) in Piedmont. Specifically, the research aimed to understand advantages and difficulties of cooperation for the definition of a slow approach on territory and the consequent enhancement of the identities of both single local areas and the network itself. All actors involved agreed on the importance of slow tourism as springboard in giving value to local uniqueness and quality of life, with an emphasis on nature, landscape, culture and tradition, considered as areas of potential collaboration and networking. The vital aspect of cooperation has also been highlighted especially among cities and their institutional and non-institutional actors with the aim of rediscovering and developing a unique territorial identity (the Seven Sisters together) additional to the single one of each city. Results can be summarized in three main points:

1. Collaboration and networking among cities emerged as core assets for strategical planning and an organic territorial development sensitive-to-local-identity. However, such elements are still hampered by parochialism and by fragmented points of view.
2. The importance of slow tourism as a successful way to improve the quality of life and the well-being of local actors.
3. The role of public incentives and funding programs as base to attract political interest among institutional actors toward networking.

The third chapter analysed the question around identity of pilgrimage routes and inner experiences of pilgrims. It showed the differences between the Via Francigena and the Way of St. James by comparing their respective identities and the motivations of people walking them. Results evidenced that the identity of the two pilgrimage routes differs, although connoted by the same atavistic origin. The two routes are configured as differential poles of pilgrims' attraction, highlighting a distinction in motivations and benefits sought by their walkers. While the Way of St. James is much more aligned with its authentic *vocatio*, characterized by a more existential connotation and linked to the personal happiness of pilgrims, the Via Francigena seems to be lived under an experiential profile related to wellness and spare time.

The fourth chapter focused on urban scenarios, deepening the question around factors influencing citizens of smart cities in using smart means of transportation. The study was configured as an efficacy test for transversal institutional efforts towards the construction of smarter and more aware local communities. With the support of an adapted UTAUT-2 model, results showed that the intention to use smart mobility systems by young adults is mainly influenced by expected performances, the hedonistic aspect (i.e. entertainment/leisure) and the sensitivity to sustainable development in an active citizenship perspective. These elements emerge as potential base for strategies and plans carried out by local actors in reshaping urban mobility and the urban scenario. Furthermore, the city in-the-making proves to be a mirror of the citizen in-the-making, manifesting a change trajectory characterized by a city identity significantly mutated in the last decades, starting from its stakeholders.

In light of the studies carried out in the present work, it is possible to conclude proposing two author's reflections. The first one is centred on research results. After seeing the complementarity of research findings and their thematic sum, it is possible to highlight how each local actor is important for territories. This is not an obvious assertion, for it has been evidenced that in past times territorial approach to place enhancement and development regarded only top-down strategies, in which hierarchic systems of stakeholders were implemented with the exclusion of some of them, like citizens and cultural groups. In the present work, all actors involved in territorial enhancement have shown their importance and their contribute, both internal actors (e.g. citizens, local firms, institutions, etc.) and external ones (e.g. tourists, investors, etc). In Chapter 2 it is possible to see that networking among strategical and political local actors demands commitment in order to become effective. Commitment needs to be implemented in the cross relation between public and private institutions and in the collaboration among cities as general entities, in a more holistic conception. The centrality of territorial institutions, which are at the core of planning, managing and preserving local activities, however, is not the only element characterizing *genius loci* of territories and cities. Beside their importance, studies conducted on pilgrimage routes (Chapter 3) and smart cities (Chapter 4) highlight also the vital characters of individuals, in their nature of external actors (e.g. pilgrims) or internal actors (e.g. citizens) of places. In these works, it is possible to evince that their active contribute flanks that of institutions in shaping the identity of cities and territories, with their participation, their interaction and, in extreme synthesis, with their simple existence and presence *in loco*. The topic of active citizenship highlights a conscious form of involvement of citizens in designing the cities of tomorrow, and the topic of pilgrimage shows that, indirectly, a simple choice of each individual can redefine the identity of a territory, leading places towards different perceptions from the world. In this sense, it is possible to affirm that the identity of a territory, of a city, but also of a place in general, necessarily passes by the identity of all its actors. For this reason, the attention to well calibrate innovation and conservation must be taken into account before any action in and for the local territory is taken. The “butterfly effect”, according to which a minute localized change can have large consequences on a complex system, seems to be the best metaphor and the *optimus monitus* for any actor dealing with local areas and their identities, anywhere and anytime.

The second reflection is more theoretic and concerns the two literature strands which have been studied here. Recalling the nexus between territorial enhancement and biological sciences, it is possible to say that two words coming from natural sciences can effectively summarize *slowness* and *smartness* perspective. As previously said, *slowness* lays its foundations on two pillars that are the preservation of the *status quo* locally rooted and the sustainability (both temporal and material) in taking care of territories and their actors. Therefore, the intrinsic aspect of such philosophy, inserted in an ever-changing globalised world, relies on a self-protection mechanism in which any variation can be accepted only if gradual and not compromising epichoric identity. Furthermore, changes determine an acceptance-refusal mechanism that, with time, conducts to the return to an intrinsic equilibrium. In biology a very similar concept is called *homeostasis*, that is the specific ability of living organisms to maintain their inner characteristics notwithstanding the variation of conditions of the external environment through self-regulation mechanisms. A territory, and thus a society, are also conceivable as full-fledged living organisms constantly under pressions of frequent changes, and the slowness philosophies show as such homeostatic mechanism is nothing more than the strategic goal of operating for the survival of the identity of territories and their communities. However, it would be incorrect to think that slowness philosophy and homeostatic definition bound each other as a new perspective for academic literature. Such an attitude to face questions around social problems in a changing world has its roots very far in the past. In this regard, the most eloquent passage highlighting how “there’s nothing new under the sun”[6] in the slow approach can be found in Leo XIII’s encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, where he wrote:

[6] Cf. *Nihil sub sole novum* (Ec 1,10).

"*De societatibus enim dilabentibus illud rectissime praecipitur, revocari ad origines suas, cum restitui volunt, oportere"*[7]. This passage represents particularly well both slowness approach to territory and homeostatic principles, anticipating them by many decades, highlighting that society (and then territory) survival resides in the maintenance and in the return to the typical equilibrium of local elements at the base of the authentic identity. Of these roots, scholars of any discipline dealing with identity and socio-territorial studies need to be aware.

With regard to *smartness*, considering its polysemy and its intrinsic technological vocation, it has been seen that it differs from *slowness* for a strong projection in the future and a different approach to change. *Smartness* is, in brief, the philosophy of the place in-the-making, looking into the future but without forgetting its past. In its paradigm, change is not undergone, but it is wished. The past and the present shall accommodate a coherent future, by finding an organic coexistence among current local identity and innovation. From the world of natural sciences, the concept of *"resilience*" seems to fit with smartness philosophy quite well. Resilience is a term nowadays widespread and overused, but in its authentic definition it relates to the capacity of an organism inserted in a specific environment to properly process change[8]. Different from *homeostasis*, in resilience change assumes a greater importance, since with time and with the accumulation of the externally emerged mutations, inner equilibrium of local areas, and then of their identities, may significantly differ. Also this process of change-accumulation influencing individuals, local communities and territories without eradicating their identities, is not new as philosophy paradigm. "*Vetera novis augere et perficere"*[9] wrote Leo XIII in its encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, highlighting not only a sensitivity to social and identity issues, but also that tempering (and demystifing) changes, with a sane balance between past, present and future, between innovation and conservation, is a timeless topic constantly in need to be taken into account.

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[7] See English translation: *When a society is perishing, the wholesome advice to give to those who would restore it is to call it to the principles from which it sprang.* Leo PP XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 1891.

[8] Resilience is also defined as the ability of a material to absorb an impact without breaking.

[9] See English translation: *Strengthen and complete the old by aid of the new*. Leo PP XIII, *Aeterni Patris*, 1879.

Turning to conclusion, the author would like to underline the importance of maintaining the focus of academic research on place management issues from a multidisciplinary perspective[10]. *Slowness* and *smartness* are two themes with many areas awaiting to be explored with different methodologies and from various points of view, arising from Geography, Management, Urbanism, Economic History, Anthropology, Economics, Political Sciences and many others. Widening knowledge in these research strands according to a multidisciplinary outlook and being able to overflow approach boundaries when necessary is the hope and the auspice of the author. Great results occur when researchers are *numine afflatur*, not *munere afflatur*.

[10] Many authors agree on this important need. See for instance: Pazzagli, R., Bevilacqua, P., Biagioli, G., & Russo, S. (2017). La storia alla prova del territorio. *Scienze del Territorio*, 5, 12-18.; Volpe, G. (2017). Alcune brevi riflessioni su archeologia, territori, contesti, persone. *Scienze del territorio*, 5, 26-30.; Zubizarreta, I., Seravalli, A., & Arrizabalaga, S. (2016). Smart city concept: What it is and what it should be. *Journal of Urban Planning and Development*, 142(1), 04015005.