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# From 'Evolutionary Turn' to 'Territorial Resources': The New Trajectories of Innovation in Provence, France

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## 1 From "Evolutionary Turn" to "Territorial Resources"

## 2 The New Trajectories of Innovation in Provence, France

3 Sylvie Daviet, Romain Monge

## 4 Abstract

5  
6 This article provides a comparative insight of two theoretical frameworks: the "Evolutionary  
7 Turn" of Evolutionary Economic Geography (EEG) developed notably by Ron Boschma, Ron  
8 Martin and Peter Sunley, and the new works of the GREMI<sup>1</sup> group, developed notably by  
9 Roberto Camagni, Denis Maillat and Andrée Matteaccioli. EEG asserts that the economic  
10 landscape is influenced by 'path dependence' and witnesses a strong capacity of evolution  
11 and adaptation. The GREMI, on the other hand, has recently been focusing on natural and  
12 cultural resources that are able to generate new forms of local development in the long term.  
13 These "territorial resources" are exploited by an innovative 'milieu' that plays a key role in  
14 coordinating this process. By studying the competitive cluster of perfumes, aromas, flavors  
15 and fragrances in Provence (France) that enables the exploration of these new trajectories of  
16 innovation, I will argue that these two approaches are complementary. After highlighting the  
17 main contributions of both theories, I will then present the historical framework of old  
18 industries like soap of Marseilles. Next, I will focus on the ideological turn that occurred in  
19 the 70's with the emergent notion of authenticity and the capacity of the local milieu to  
20 convert latent resources into active resources. The concluding section will emphasize the role  
21 played by regional actors in setting these new trajectories in motion, without underestimating  
22 the persistent or new deadlocks, and it will also draw lessons and perspectives from this  
23 research.

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<sup>1</sup> Groupe de Recherche Européen sur les Milieux Innovateurs ; European Research Group on Innovative Milieus

## 24 Introduction

25  
26 Over the last two decades, the development of Evolutionary Economic Geography (EEG) has  
27 generated a growing interest in questions of evolution and adaptation, particularly in northern  
28 Europe and the Anglophone world (Boschma, Frenken, 2006; Boschma, Martin, 2007;  
29 Essletzbichler, Rigby, 2007; Mackinnon, 2008; Martin, Sunley, 2006). Faced by the dynamics  
30 of globalization, economic geographers have remained attracted to regional diversity rather  
31 than to standardization processes. In addition to the success of this new trend, the geographic  
32 community has also portrayed its own diversity (Martin, Sunley, 2001; Grabher, 2009) and its  
33 affinities with the urban and regional economy. The GREMI, set up during the 1980's  
34 (Aydalot, 1986), as well as a series of researchers sharing similar concepts, published a range  
35 of new works (Camagni, Maillat, Matteaccioli, 2004; Gumuchian, Pecqueur, 2007; Leriche,  
36 Daviet, Sibertin, Zuliani, 2008) that represented another trend more representative of Latin  
37 Europe. Instead of focusing, as previously, on technologies such as sources of local  
38 development, they pioneered a major interest in territorial resources. The aim therefore is to  
39 investigate these two visions that have arisen from different 'styles of scientific reasoning'  
40 (Hacking, 2002), and to demonstrate how they can complement each other for regional  
41 analysis. This will be the subject of the first section before applying this theoretical  
42 framework to the case study in sections 2 and 3. This article is consequently based on a  
43 selected review of the literature and an empirical study. In this regard, the cluster of perfumes,  
44 aromas, flavors and fragrances in Provence is interesting because, with new companies such  
45 as *L'Occitane en Provence*, we can observe firstly, the new trajectories of innovation that are  
46 based on the aspirations of today's consumer, secondly, the symbols of a past industry like the  
47 soap of Marseilles, and thirdly, landscapes such as lavender, illustrating the colors and aromas  
48 that are so characteristic of Provence. Thus it is this original mixture between tradition and  
49 modernity, rupture and parentage that we will examine.

50

51 I 'Historical anchorage', 'innovative milieu' and 'territorial resources'

52

53 The aim of this first section is to argue that several convergent concepts and theories have  
54 emerged quasi simultaneously in the geographical analysis, although they have followed  
55 different paths in different countries. I will argue here that the contribution of the past,  
56 currently called 'path dependence' could also be termed 'historical anchorage', giving the  
57 idea of history being embedded within the present territory.

58

59 I.-1. '*Path dependence*' has its own geography

60

61 Hodgson (2001) showed 'how economics forgot history'. It is not surprising therefore, that  
62 after the end of economic certainty and under the critical influence of the 'Evolutionary Turn',  
63 regional space became contextualized and re-established inside its historical depth as its social  
64 dimension. Hence, the economic landscape continues to be shaped by practices, skills and  
65 technologies inherited from the past (Mackinnon, 2008; Walker; 2000). This "apparent"  
66 discovery, however, is rather disconcerting for a French geographer, whose basic training  
67 encompasses the interaction of history and geography - since geography became an academic  
68 discipline – rather than geography and economy. For instance, the work of Fernand Braudel  
69 (1902-1985) illustrates the interaction of scales and temporalities. By embodying the famous  
70 "Annales school", he explored the *longue durée* approach in contrast to 'a history of events'.  
71 The role of large scale socio-economic factors, notably through *La Méditerranée et le Monde*  
72 *Méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, was emphasized with 'The Mediterranean' being the  
73 main focus in the book. Although French geographers incorporate historical dimensions in  
74 their research, this should be re-examined and theorized. Thus, EEG provides a substantial

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2  
3 75 contribution (Boschma and Martin, 2007; Martin and Sunley, 2007), with recently new  
4  
5 76 concepts such as 'path creation' (Raghu Garud & Peter Karnøe, 2001) and 'path  
6  
7 77 interdependence'-or co-evolution of paths-; and it is interesting to see different disciplinary  
8  
9 78 paths shaped in different places through different histories. As mentioned by Barnes (1996),  
10  
11 79 all knowledge-production is 'situated' and the best that we can do is to cross interpret.  
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17 81 *I. -2 Evolutionary Turn and the concept of "milieu" have the same chronology*  
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22 83 After the pioneering works of Veblen (1898), and despite some other major contributions  
23  
24 84 from Schumpeter (1943), Mackinnon (2008) emphasized that evolutionary approaches  
25  
26 85 became relatively marginalized over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century up until the rupture of the  
27  
28 86 1970s. This can be compared to the notion of districts, that were first explored by the  
29  
30 87 founding work of Marshall (1890, 1919), then forgotten over the course of the 20th century  
31  
32 88 until the crisis of Fordism, and finally rediscovered by Becattini (1979, 1992) who  
33  
34 89 characterized them as: "*A socio-territorial entity characterized by the presence of an active*  
35  
36 90 *community of people and a population of firms in an historical and geographic given space*".  
37  
38 91 This contribution from the Italian school emphasized not only the social and cultural  
39  
40 92 dimension of districts but also their historical dimension. In fact, districts had probably never  
41  
42 93 disappeared, but the dominant model of the big firm hid a more diverse reality, especially in  
43  
44 94 Europe where empirical studies - which remained less well known - testify to the persistence  
45  
46 95 of such business combinations (Benko, Abrantes, 2004; Daviet, 2005). During the same  
47  
48 96 period, taking advantage of these paradigm shifts, the GREMI was created and evolutionary  
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50 97 approaches experienced a revival.  
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3 99 For Aydalot (1986) and the GREMI, the key concept is the re-generation of local territories  
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5  
6 100 and their internal dynamics. The firm does not 'pre-exist' in a local environment, it is closeted  
7  
8 101 by it. The interdependencies created within the territory, the prevailing consensus,  
9  
10 102 information flows and synergies between local agents are all at the root of the innovative  
11  
12 103 process. So, the local environment can be viewed as a sort of incubator for innovation. The  
13  
14 104 debate between regional economists in many countries during the 1980`s and 90`s, finally  
15  
16 105 brought attention to the importance of non-economic factors, and thus the need to (re)  
17  
18 106 introduce cultural, social, religious and historical factors. Hence, Lacour (1996, p. 33), who  
19  
20 107 was president of the ASRDLF<sup>2</sup>, stated: "*The wish to explain the economic phenomena better*  
21  
22 108 *requires the recognition that apparently non-economic factors play a major role, but perhaps*  
23  
24 109 *not noisy, not detectable, not conceptualized in the classical sense. Cultural, political, and*  
25  
26 110 *social factors too, become fully entitled 'acting factors', about which we can theorize directly,*  
27  
28 111 *without leaving them at the door, unfit and unworthy to enter into the field of economic*  
29  
30 112 *science.*"<sup>3</sup>

31  
32 113  
33  
34 114 Taking history into account is therefore part of a wider debate where, over several years, the  
35  
36 115 idea of embeddedness (Granovetter, 1985), the cultural dimension of regional space  
37  
38 116 (Saxenian, 1994), and the concept of territory, have emerged (Sack, 1986; Di Méo, 1998;  
39  
40 117 Daviet, 2005). More generally, different streams from 'Cultural Turn' (Barnes, 1996, 2001;  
41  
42 118 Peet, 1997; Sayer, 1994; Thrift and Olds, 1996; Thrift, 2000) towards 'Historical Turn' (Liu,  
43  
44 119 2009; McDonald, 1996; Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, 2003; Pierson, 2004) have converged  
45  
46 120 and contributed to the "deconstruction" of a dominant economic paradigm – a smooth space  
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58 <sup>2</sup> ASRDLF= Association de Science Régionale de Langue Française

59 <sup>3</sup> « L'ambition de mieux expliquer des phénomènes économiques impose la reconnaissance que des facteurs  
60 apparemment non économiques jouent un rôle essentiel, mais peut-être non bruyant, non repérable, non conceptualisé au sens classique. Le culturel, le politique, le social aussi, deviennent de plein droit des 'facteurs agissants' que l'on peut théoriser directement, sans les laisser à la porte, inaptes et indignes de rentrer dans le champ scientifique économique » (Lacour, 1996, p. 33).

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2  
3 121 without history neither culture – in favour of a more complex vision of space. Recently,  
4  
5 122 authors representatives from both the GREMI and EEG participated to a book (Boschma,  
6  
7 123 Kloosterman, Lambooy, 2005) criticizing and questioning the idealization of clusters, which,  
8  
9 124 in the meantime and for non-scientific reasons, had become the dominant model (Martin and  
10  
11 125 Sunley, 2003). This bears witness to a “trading zone” (Barnes, 2004) between countries,  
12  
13 126 disciplines and points of view.  
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20 128 *I. -3. Heritage resources and the memory of places*  
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24 130 If there is a certain consensus to recognize the role of history, much remains to be said about  
25  
26 131 how the past comes to us and how the memory of places functions. Besides a strong interest  
27  
28 132 in practices, skills and technologies inherited from the past, other studies have focused on the  
29  
30 133 product itself as a vector of communication (Baudrillard, 1968; Bourdieu, 1971 Geertz, 1973;  
31  
32 134 Lash, Urry, 1994): the product refers back to the past and its signs, conveying a history and in  
33  
34 135 some cases an imagery (Daviet, 2005, p. 80). Peet (1997, 2000), also pointed this concept of  
35  
36 136 ‘imagery’. Thus, heritage resources have become particularly exciting, and have been  
37  
38 137 acknowledged as key inputs for economic development. Consequently, the GREMI has  
39  
40 138 counterbalanced the prominent role given by EEG to technologies, opening up a new path for  
41  
42 139 reflexion. Moreover, while evolutionary views focused on processes more than consequences  
43  
44 140 (Witt, 2002; Liu, 2009), GREMI paid close attention to the consequences. Their respective  
45  
46 141 contributions can therefore be regarded as complementary.  
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142

52  
53 143 Actors of development usually enhance local resources, by transforming latent resources into  
54  
55 144 active resources (Camagni, Maillat, Matteaccioli, 2004), and many examples attest to  
56  
57 145 European inventiveness in transforming these cultural assets (Grefe, 2006). In most cases the  
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3 146 value of a place is based on heritage resources, whether they are natural or historical, and  
4  
5 147 these 'given resources' can be changed into 'constructed resources', thanks to an awareness  
6  
7  
8 148 by well-organized actors (Kebir, Crevoisier, 2004). In other words, as pointed by Pecqueur  
9  
10 149 (2005), territorial resources have to be 'revealed', before becoming marketable assets. In fact,  
11  
12 150 the three terms: 'given', 'revealed' and 'constructed' can represent three main stages that will  
13  
14 151 be developed in sections 2 and 3.  
15  
16  
17  
18 152

19  
20 153 These resources are, by definition, embedded in the physical heritage of a place (Gravari-  
21  
22 154 Barbas, Violier, 2003), forcing most consumers to travel to experience them. Many cities,  
23  
24 155 such as Florence, Amsterdam, Prague... have, for historical reasons, inherited such resources.  
25  
26 156 Museums are an expression of these immobile assets (Scott, Leriche, 2005), and the  
27  
28 157 patrimonial nature, marked by the preservation, recovery and transmissibility of a legacy  
29  
30 158 resource is also omnipresent in this case. Because of its history, urban and rural Europe is  
31  
32 159 ingrained by this heritage of great diversity, which now also includes industrial heritage.  
33  
34 160 Deshaies (2008) highlights the pioneering roles of Germany, the UK and Sweden in  
35  
36 161 highlighting the value of mining heritage; and each of these countries already has one or two  
37  
38 162 UNESCO World Heritage Sites. However, it is important to note that the value of natural and  
39  
40 163 cultural resources can also relate to mobile products such as argan oil from Morocco or  
41  
42 164 vintage wine from Bordeaux.  
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50  
51 166 This leads us to underlining the importance of labelling for both static products, such as a site  
52  
53 167 classified by UNESCO, and mobile products, such as wine. The label is a distinctive sign  
54  
55 168 assigned to a product closely associated with a territory (Santagata, 2002), establishing a  
56  
57 169 "brand" from this area. It appears as a means of identifying and distinguishing a product,  
58  
59 170 thereby emphasizing its cultural originality. The labelling strategy is often able to create a  
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3 171 dynamic, as exemplified the added value got by a product 'Controlled Origin' (AOC,  
4  
5 172 Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée) or the restoration of a village (eg "The Most Beautiful  
6  
7 173 Village of France"). These are undoubtedly factors of renewal and attractiveness, generating  
8  
9  
10 174 such dynamics (Daviet, Leriche, 2008).  
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## 14 176 II Once upon a time the soap of Marseilles...a tale of old industries

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20 178 The aim of this second section is to study a given resource buried in the past (here, the soap of  
21  
22 179 Marseilles) and examine how it is revealed and hence, re-updated. However, before exploring  
23  
24 180 the construction stage, it is necessary to deal with perception and representation.  
25  
26

27 181

### 28 182 *II-1 The history of historians: rise and fall of an old industry, a resource buried in the past*

29 183

30 184 Soap production in Marseilles was a very old industry, and was linked, at its creation, to the  
31  
32 185 well-established textile industry, focusing more on washing fabrics than personal hygiene  
33  
34 186 (Daumalin, Girard, Raveux, 2003). Its composition was notably made of olive oil that  
35  
36 187 naturally contains more stearic acid solids at room temperature than other vegetable fats. The  
37  
38 188 Edict of 1688 required that only pure olive oil was to be used, and this was imported into  
39  
40 189 Marseilles from throughout the Mediterranean. At the end of the 18th century, the soap  
41  
42 190 industry was the dominant industrial activity in the city with thirty factories, it had acquired a  
43  
44 191 quasi monopoly in France, and was exported to many countries.  
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47 192

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50 193 During the 19th century, due to the scarcity and high cost of olive oil, other vegetable oils  
51  
52 194 such as palm and groundnut oil were used more frequently, enabling the United Kingdom to  
53  
54 195 become a serious competitor. Hence, in order to compete, entrepreneurs from Marseilles  
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3 196 began producing soaps from a mix of olive oil and other oils, such as groundnut oil from  
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6 197 Senegal. At the outbreak of World War I, the Marseilles small industrial soap units were  
7  
8 198 heavily lacking investment, and were increasingly challenged by the British companies. They  
9  
10 199 could not compete against companies like the *Lever* group, which had its own plantations,  
11  
12 200 shipping companies, production of sodium carbonate, and exported worldwide.  
13  
14 201 Unfortunately, the efforts undertaken in Marseilles to modernize the production plants  
15  
16 202 between WWI and WWII were inadequate (Lambert, 1995). In the 1950s, washing powder  
17  
18 203 and chemical detergents permanently displaced the old soap of Marseilles that had never  
19  
20 204 really been adapted for washing machine usage, except by some firms such as *Persil* which  
21  
22 205 had been bought in 1921 by *Lever*.  
23  
24

206  
207 The collapse of this industry, coupled with the end of other traditional industries, soon  
208 symbolized the industrial decline of Marseilles, which had built its reputation on non-leading  
209 industrial sectors (Chastagnaret, 1997). Although, throughout the 20th century, other research  
210 had uncovered the development of new sectors, the soap history has remained a symbol, an  
211 emblematic image for the history of the city. A legend had been born. Nowadays, while the  
212 so-called 'soap of Marseilles' is not protected by any trademark stating its place of  
213 manufacture, several new producers are using its name and image more or less legitimately.  
214

215 *II-2 The soap of Marseilles' imagery: a revealed resource*  
216

217 The end of Fordism did not only embody a transformation of the 'mode of production', but  
218 the 'mode of consumption' was also deeply contested. The idea of returning to the land has  
219 cut a path to the younger generation, and this context probably inspired Olivier Baussan, a

220 French entrepreneur and founder of *L'Occitane en Provence* - a renowned company  
221 manufacturing and selling soaps and toiletries throughout the world-.

222  
223 In the 1970s, when Baussan first began his hand-crafted production, he recovered an old  
224 alembic for essential oils, and old moulds used for shaping the soap of Marseilles. In contrast  
225 to the cutting-edge technology that Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak, the founders of *Apple*,  
226 were working with, Baussan, a literature graduate from the University of Provence, had very  
227 different ideas. He was looking for tools and technologies that were completely obsolete,  
228 abandoned, which had belonged to the history of the Marseilles industry and the Provencal  
229 countryside. His method seems the antithesis of his time, when searching for new  
230 technologies symbolized the "creative destruction" dear to Schumpeter. Yet, he had the vision  
231 of what many consumers are trying to find today, namely: the authenticity of a time when  
232 products were more "natural". As stated by Claval (1995, p. 83-84), "*The innovator is often*  
233 *the interpreter of society*". What is unique in this return to the past is that the wall of  
234 irreversibility has been broken, while the historical model is supposed to be a 'one-way  
235 traffic' (Robinson, 1962).

236  
237 Sales were successful insofar as Baussan, the designer, managed to communicate to the  
238 consumers this "Search of Lost Time", as in the work of Marcel Proust (1871–1922). Indeed,  
239 this literary merit was to reveal in part the operation of the involuntary memory, which works  
240 by flash. It is triggered by sensory experiences such as sights, sounds and smells. It proceeds  
241 from 'the world of experience' observed in the humanistic approach. Fremont (1976) showed  
242 a great interest in France for this concept of 'life space'. In addition to the objective inventory  
243 of the discipline, this approach focused on individual or collective subjects, and how, through  
244 the perception of their senses – what they saw, smelt, tasted... – a specific relation is

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3 245 established with a specific place. In the same vein, Buttimer (1976) in England brought  
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5 246 attention to the concept of 'lifeworld'.  
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8 247  
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10 248 Soaps, fragrances and other skincare products, produced by *L'Occitane en Provence*, can be  
11  
12 249 more or less considered as 'products of the soil'. The company commitment to preserving:  
13  
14 250 "*the know-how and key actions which tend to disappear, to see them back through the*  
15  
16 251 *creation of real products such as the famous soap of Marseilles*"... can be seen on its website.  
17

18 252 The soap itself, its form, colour, smell, packaging, faithfulness to the materials and to styles of  
19  
20 253 yesteryears conveys the imagery of Provence. The stores, with their typical Provençal scenes,  
21  
22 254 their floor tiles made of terracotta and old displays, reconstruct a miniature Provence, and by  
23  
24 255 using such details, help to narrate a story by placing the product within its territory, its  
25  
26 256 environment, or rather in an idealized surroundings. Such an entrepreneur, who is able to  
27  
28 257 develop such a product, communicating a Mediterranean 'art de vivre', a style of well-being,  
29  
30 258 and thereby selling a dream, is definitely an innovator and a creator. Is this just clever  
31  
32 259 marketing or an authentically true culture? Whichever, consumers seem to appreciate these  
33  
34 260 products, finding in them what they seek; another way of being and of consuming (Fig. 1-2).  
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36

37 261

### 38 262 *II- 3 A theoretical debate: the product between history and representation*

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40  
41 264 The role of representation is central to economic and social life in (post) modern society, as  
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43 265 Johnston underlined (1997, p.307), whilst May (1996, p.57) spoke of an 'imaginative  
44  
45 266 geography', and showed for instance the increasing consumption of exotic products, such as  
46  
47 267 food and clothing. This involves representation of the places from where the products come  
48  
49 268 and may lead to stereotyping. Of course, it is possible to question and deconstruct the  
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51 269 discourse of authenticity, in the same way that the discourse of domestic appliances, which  
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3 270 were going to 'revolutionize' a woman's life, was examined in a critical manner. But, in the  
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5  
6 271 end, we can see that everything just comes down to business. We can therefore consider  
7  
8 272 "natural" products (if they really are) as 'a niche market tailored to suit specific socio-  
9  
10 273 economic groups' (Glennie and Thrift, 1992, p.424), and in this case we are talking about a  
11  
12 274 middle to upper class group, which is well educated, is used to traveling and is sensitive to  
13  
14 275 environmental issues.  
15  
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19  
20 277 Our worlds of consumption are thus socially constructed. Segments of society, such as those  
21  
22 278 associated with the ecology movement, are committed to particular forms of consumption  
23  
24 279 (Johnston, 1997, p.310). In short, it is possible that some 'new' cultural geographer may  
25  
26 280 consider this story, and more generally, territorial resources as fiction, "a fabrication that  
27  
28 281 depends in part upon the position of the interpreter" (Ley and Duncan, 1993, p.329). This  
29  
30 282 concern with relativism does not preclude considering territories as new ways of creating  
31  
32 283 productive resources. Neither does it disqualify the historical roots of a cultural product and  
33  
34 284 its territorial anchoring. In the classical sense, culture can be described as the sum of attitudes,  
35  
36 285 skills, techniques, knowledge and values that have been accumulated and transmitted from  
37  
38 286 generation to generation within a territory, and our territory-product corresponds rather well  
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40  
41 287 to this definition.  
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### 47 48 289 III Towards a competitive cluster of perfumes, aromas, flavors and fragrances

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53 291 This third section aims to highlight the shift from the 'revealed resource' towards the  
54  
55 292 'constructed resource', by studying a cluster that gradually formed over a period of twenty  
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57 293 five years (1980-2005), not in Marseilles, but around the city of Manosque, in the Provence  
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59  
60

294 countryside; a low mountainous area. Using this as an example will enable us to see the extent  
295 of its assets and limitations.

296

297 *III-1- The role of fragrant, aromatic, and medicinal plants*

298

299 The 70s marked the end of a secular depopulation process (Tirone, Ellerkamp, 2003, p.95) in  
300 the Alpes de Haute Provence area, and as the demographic trend reversed, towns and villages  
301 were slowly re-inhabited. In rural areas, numerous professional organizations became  
302 involved in various projects such as “The Road of Lavender” and promoting the famous local  
303 writer, Jean Giono (1895-1970). These projects were sometimes supported with EU financial  
304 subsidies.

305

306 Lavender has been recognised since Antiquity for its fragrance and its medicinal virtues.  
307 However, it cannot be regarded as an historical element of the Provençal landscape, which is  
308 traditionally composed of vineyards, wheat and olives trees. The cultivation of lavender was  
309 identified during the Middle Age and the Modern Era but was never really developed, and it  
310 is only since the early 20th century that it has become a symbol of the Provençal landscape  
311 (de Réparaz, 1978; Naviner, 2002). Today, around 15,000 hectares of fragrant, aromatic and  
312 medicinal plants are found within the Provence-Alpes-Côte-d’Azur region, and lavender,  
313 being the most important plant for cultivation, is found in the dry, middle mountain ranges.  
314 (Onippam, 2007). Among the different types of lavenders, 70% are lavandin (*lavandula*  
315 *intermedia*) growing to an altitude of 200-800 meters, and 30% true lavender (*lavandula*  
316 *angustifolia*) growing between an altitude of 800 and 1300 meters (Fig. 3-4). Whilst essential  
317 oil is used for perfumes, pharmaceutical products and cosmetics, only essential oil from true  
318 lavender can be labelled ‘AOC lavender essential oil from Haute-Provence’. *L’Occitane en*

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3 319 *Provence*, whose manufacturing plant and R & D departments are located in Manosque,  
4  
5 320 generally buys half of the ‘AOC’ production of lavender essential oil (Fig. 5-6).  
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7 321 Consequently, this agricultural production that provides a strong identity to the landscape, is  
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9 322 directly linked to three main areas of activity located within the territory, namely: hand-crafts  
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11 323 and industrial production, training and research, and tourism and heritage.  
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18 325 *III-2- Network of actors and resources under construction*  
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21  
22 327 *L'Occitane* has evolved rapidly. The traditional company, founded in 1976, (the same year as  
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24 328 *The Body Shop*) originally sold essential oils and soaps on Provençal markets, but when it was  
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26 329 taken over in 1996 by Reinold Geiger, an Austrian businessman, it expanded at an incredible  
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28 330 rate and became a globalized company. As Geiger stated: “*In 1996 there were only two stores*  
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30 331 *in France. Today we have just under 900 stores around the world. Approximately 30% of our*  
31  
32 332 *business is in Europe, 30% in the Americas and 40% in Asia*”<sup>4</sup>. The stores bearing the name  
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34 333 *L'Occitane en Provence* now sell a wide variety of toiletries, cosmetics and perfumes.  
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37  
38 335 In the wake of this pioneering company, other small and medium-sized enterprises have been  
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40 336 set up in the specialist food, soap, cosmetics and perfume sectors, e.g. *Les Distilleries et*  
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42 337 *Domaines de Provence, Terre d'Oc Créations, Les Laboratoires Bains et Arômes* (Peres,  
43  
44 338 2008). As a result, more than 70 business units (excluding farming) have become part of the  
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46 339 Local Productive System (LPS) under the name of “*Flavors and Fragrances of Haute*  
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48 340 *Provence*” (Fig. 7). Indeed, in 1998 new government regulations were launched to identify  
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50 341 and support such business combinations. In 2002 the LPS, also supported by local authorities,  
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59 <sup>4</sup> Declared by Geiger in March 2007 for INSEAD  
60 <http://www.insead.edu/alumni/newsletter/March2007/ReinoldGeigerinterview.htm>



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3 342 decided to establish the “European University of Flavors and Fragrances” in order to provide  
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5 343 professional training, animation and promotion of the sector. Its partners also include  
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8 344 ONIPPAM, a national organization dedicated to fragrant aromatic and medicinal plants,  
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10 345 COSMED, an association for cosmetics companies, and the University of Provence.  
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13 346  
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15 347 In 2005, this LPS, associated with the LPS “Aromas and Perfumes of Grasse” on the French  
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17 348 Riviera (Fig. 8-9), formed the ‘Competitive Cluster of Perfumes, Aromas, Flavors and  
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19 349 Fragrances’, as part as the French “*Pôles de compétitivité*” program. This new organization,  
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21 350 by merging the two main ‘clusters’ of Haute Provence and Grasse into one group, numbering  
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23 351 more than 10,000 jobs, was dedicated to new R&D projects, notably by working in  
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25 352 conjunction with Nice and Aix-Marseille Universities.  
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30 354 *III-3- Assets and limitations of the system*  
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34 356 Development of these territorial resources has generated viable assets and ideas that fall into  
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36 357 four categories: Firstly, a *terroir* with both a strong image and reputation can generate a  
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38 358 significant business. Secondly, challenged by globalization, this sector has the advantage of  
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40 359 relying on internal resources, of facing offshoring and bringing added value from its own  
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42 360 territory. Thirdly, it meets the needs of the consumers looking for quality, authenticity and  
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44 361 traceability. Fourthly, it stimulates the interactions between four closely associated areas,  
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46 362 namely, agriculture, crafts and industry, research and training, as well as tourism and heritage.  
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54 364 However, four limitations of the system must be emphasized: Firstly, this fiercely competitive  
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56 365 industry is faced by both the mass production of essential oils and companies or regions  
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58 366 whose top quality products have a territorial base, such as *Caudalie*, a cosmetic company  
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3 367 located in the vineyards of Bordeaux. Secondly, with the merger of the Haute Provence and  
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5 368 Grasse clusters, certain problems have been caused by the lack of co-operation. Thirdly, the  
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8 369 success observed is that of a generation (the generation of Baussan for instance) and the  
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10 370 continuity of a sustainable cluster should be considered in light of future developments.  
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12 371 Fourthly, the Provençal region continues to be threatened by high urbanization which is the  
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15 372 price of its attractiveness. It is therefore essential to ensure resource sustainability.  
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## 374 **Conclusion**

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376 Thus, a strong relationship has emerged between an evolutionary and a territorial resource  
377 issue, both of which require taking history into account but via different paths. Each school  
378 focuses on its emblematic keywords such as 'path dependence', 'innovative milieu', 'cluster',  
379 'territory'..., but both seem to share a common 'trading zone' by searching for a better  
380 representation of the complexity that surrounds these issues. Concerning the study of the  
381 territory as a complex system, Moine (2006) stated: "*The territory has been the subject of*  
382 *much attention over the past twenty years, because it is central to the representations we have*  
383 *of the complexity that surrounds us.*" Also, Martin and Sunley (2007) argued for an  
384 understanding of the economic landscape as "a complex adaptive system".  
385

386 More precisely, by taking history into account, I have identified three distinctive stages. The  
387 path from the 'given resource' buried in the past to the 'revealed resource' occurs under the  
388 pressure of contemporary issues (in this case, sustainable development) that takes inspiration  
389 from the past and creates a feedback loop. This stage involves individual actors setting an  
390 action in motion. The path from the 'revealed resource' to the 'constructed resource' is a  
391 collective work that requires the sharing of common interests and a common vision of the  
392 future within a milieu and a territory. Thus, the innovative process takes place within 'a

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3 393 complex space-time' where, over time, retrospective and prospective visions are linked  
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5 394 together, and within space, several local to global scales are similarly linked.  
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10 396 This case study approximates a model of evolution associated both with major external  
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12 397 shocks (the ideological turn in consumption) and the creation of new paths, using the role of  
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14 398 human agents. At the same time, it has also opened a new window. This journey inside  
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16 399 'space-time' – similar to an embeddedness of history within the present territory – shows us  
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18 400 consequently that the relationship to the past is less a 'path dependence' phenomenon than a  
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20 401 'path of interaction', and in this case a source of renewal; in the same way that the  
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22 402 Renaissance was projected in modernity by rediscovering its antique roots.  
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Caption FIG 1 - 2: Consumption and Globalization of Provençal Symbols

Picture 1: Lavender sachets and soaps are typical products of Provence that tourists love to buy locally. They are presented here in a street of Aix-en-Provence.

Picture 2: L'Occitane en Provence has spread around the world a set of products that carry the picture of Provence. Here the store located in New York (Times Square).

483x260mm (300 x 300 DPI)

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Caption Fig 3-4 Lavender and lavendin of Haute Provence

Pictures 3 and 4 were taken in the Alpes de Haute Provence during the lavender and lavendin harvest in late August 2009.

In picture 3, the plants shown are *lavendula augustifolia*, which have a 'controlled term of origin' (AOC) label in Provence. It is the best lavender to use for top quality essential oils and all AOC lavender production is used by L'Occitane.

Picture 4 represents lavendin (*lavendula intermedia*), a natural hybrid between *lavendula augustifolia* and *lavendula latifolia*. It is less frequently used in perfume manufacturing, but more so for house-cleaning products.

715x268mm (300 x 300 DPI)



Caption Fig 5-6 Distillation

Pictures 5 and 6 show a distillation laboratory that is in many cases located close to the fields so that cut and fresh flowers can be distilled quickly.

On picture 5, raw plant material, consisting of the lavender leaves and branches is put into an alembic (distillation apparatus) over water. As the water is heated the steam passes through the plant material, vaporizing the volatile compounds.

On picture 6, the vapors flow through a coil where they condense back to liquid, which is then collected in the receiving vessel. Most oils are distilled in a single process.

700x268mm (300 x 300 DPI)

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Fig.7- The Competitive Cluster of Perfumes, Aromas, Flavors and Fragrances in Provence (France)



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Caption Fig 8-9 Rose and Jasmine of Grasse

In local folklore, Grasse is nicknamed the “Worldwide capital city of perfumes”. This city and its surrounding district provide the main production of *Jasminum Grandiflorum* (Picture 8) and *Rosa Centifolia* (Picture 9). Those flowers have an excellent reputation in fine fragrance manufacturing and are purchased by, for example, Chanel and Christian Dior, both of which have signed a deal with local growers. There are only 12 hectares in total where jasmine and rose are grown in the Maritime Alps.

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