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Métropoles alpines. Vers une nouvelle alliance entre villes et montagnes ?

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Territorial Reforms and Changing Relationships Between Urban and Mountainous Regions in the Alpes-Maritimes *département*

Lauranne Jacob

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- 1 As its name suggests, the Alpes-Maritimes *département* of France is an area where coastline and mountains co-exist. The area is also characterised by major contrasts between highly urban coastal regions¹, relatively populated inland regions and very sparsely populated mountainous² regions with little infrastructure. The most recent territorial reforms³ to take place within the framework of the third wave of decentralisation led to new territorial divisions aimed particularly at cantons (territorial subdivisions of a district) and intermunicipal authorities. Mountain municipalities were grouped within large urban and metropolitan intermunicipal authorities to which new responsibilities were transferred. These new divisions raise two key questions:
 - What are the immediate consequences of territorial reforms in the Alpes-Maritimes *département*, in terms of territorial division and governance?
 - In which ways do they impact relationships between urban and mountainous regions?
- 2 Territorial restructuring and metropolisation processes in particular - understood here as geographical processes affecting a city's forms and functions ⁴- are also considered from a legal perspective, in terms of territorial governance. The issue of 'institutional metropolisation' arises within the context of cooperation between various levels and is a source of many conflicts in which problems concerning identity, resources, and political competition intertwine (Jouve and Négrier 2009). Territorial restructuring processes observed at *département* level can lead to greater solidarity between urban and mountainous regions, but they can also cause mountainous regions to become more marginalised. Clearly, the objective is to achieve better solidarity, as evidenced by one of

Nice Côte d'Azur's slogans: "Metropolitan solidarity. Binding our metropolis together via solidarity"⁵.

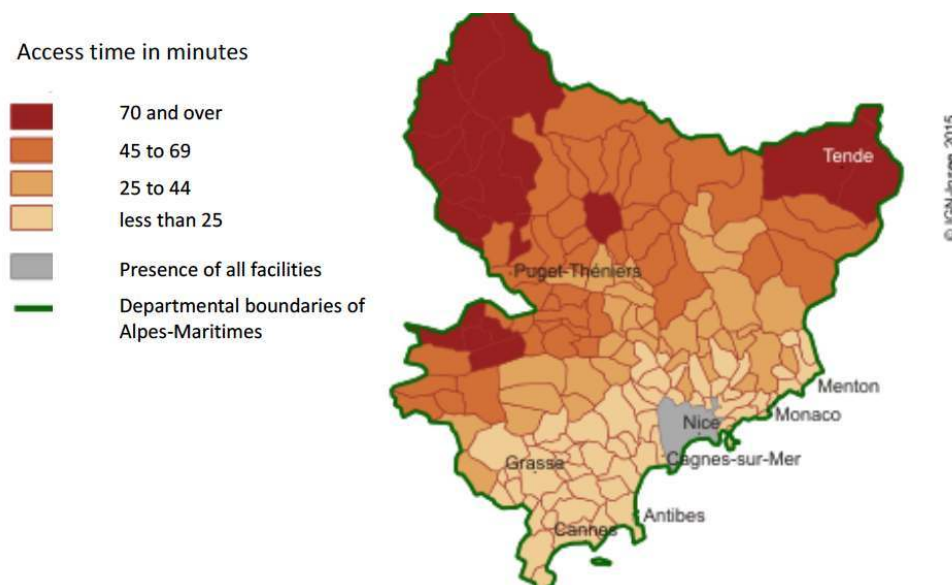
- 3 The primary hypothesis concerns political and economic domination of mountainous regions by metropolitan coastal regions, emphasised by recent territorial divisions. The second hypothesis concerns the risk that mountainous regions could be transformed into vast amusement parks, along the lines of 'alpine disneyfication' (Crettaz 1993).

Construction of a systemic territory characterised by multilocality

Alpes-Maritimes: land of contrasts

- 4 The *département*'s population is very unequally distributed considering that, in 2012⁶, the total population was 1,082,010, whilst the urban community of Nice (including the *département*'s principal cities of Cannes, Antibes and Grasse) had a population of 1,005,000. The total number of inhabitants in the *département*'s second cross-border urban area, Menton-Monaco, was close to 73,000.
- 5 From a topographical point of view, the *département* is divided by six river valleys⁷ which restrict traffic, particularly in winter months when mountain passes are closed. Valley floors become landlocked (Mestre-Gonguet 2002) and face challenges remaining connected to urban networks, in turn making access to extended-range facilities⁸ difficult, as shown in the map below. Approximately a quarter of the area is located over 45 minutes away by transport, and another quarter more than 75 minutes away. There is almost perfect correlation between population density and facilities.

Map 1 : Average time taken to access extended-range facilities in the Alpes-Maritimes region in 2014



Source: INSEE, BPE 2014, metric distances.

- 6 Infrastructure and lines of communication are concentrated in coastal regions which means that people are unable to settle in mountainous regions, as can be seen in the foothills of a number of alpine cities. The term 'alpine gentrification' used by Perlik to describe enthusiasm for mountainous regions within the context of spatio-economic processes involved in metropolisation (Perlik 2011), can only be partially verified, as it seems premature to talk about an integrated metropolitan region in relation to the Alpes-Maritimes *département*. Perlik describes an integrated metropolitan area as "a combination of urban density and alpine playground" in which traditional links between central and suburban areas are called into question, making way for new social links and relationships.
- 7 In this image of an integrated alpine metropolis, clear opposition between the central metropolis and marginal or peripheral mountainous regions can no longer be seen. Assumed dependence of mountainous regions on central city areas is progressively giving way to a form of complementarity in terms of facilities. Furthermore, migration processes concerning multi-local inhabitants strengthen links between mountainous regions and the city.
- 8 Situated between coastal and mountainous regions, inland regions attract higher numbers of new inhabitants due to their proximity to coastal regions (see Map 2 below). However, it should be noted that interviewee responses highlighted strong attachments between coastal and deep inland regions, which originate from family histories of migration towards the coastline due to work-related reasons, in which homes in their native villages were also kept. As such, mountain villages are deserted during the week and outside of holiday periods, reflecting trends in multilocal home ownership at local level (*département*), which is very different to amenity migration, in which the objective is to move to a mountainous area definitively.
- 9 Multilocality is defined from an anthropological point of view as the "durable division of an individual's or a group of individuals daily interactions in several places" (Duchêne-Lacroix and Maeder 2013). It is therefore reflected by the geographical division and dispersion of activities and by spatio-temporal fragmentation of places of residence: the primary residence declared is often located deep inland, signalling strong local and political attachment, whilst the effective primary residence is located near to the coast, such as the place of work. However, leisure and sporting activities are shared between both localities. Certain elected municipal officials in mountainous regions live and work in metropolitan Nice and make regular trips back and forth to manage local business⁹.

Consequences of multilocality for 'native' residents

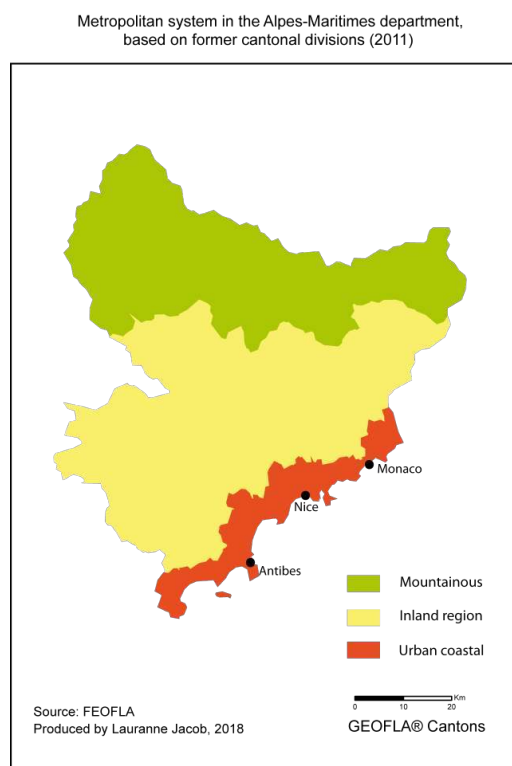
- 10 Studies carried out within the field of electoral sociology have shed light on this relatively common trend. Multilocal residents are more likely to vote in deep inland areas than in their place of daily residence. Work carried out by Bargel on 'native' residents within a political context, which refers to voters who do not vote in their places of residence but rather in their native regions, highlights one of the particularities of mountain residences as being family property to which very strong attachment is likely to modify voter behaviour (Bargel 2016). The results of Bargel's work originate from a study carried out in a mountain valley located in the Alpes-Maritimes *département*.

- 11 It is relatively common for small municipalities to have “more people registered on voter lists and more voters in the first round of elections than the number of inhabitants recorded there, including minors”¹⁰. Furthermore, local elections have a greater turn-out rate, as is the case at national level. Moreover, political loyalty also develops over time, which can have consequences on electoral activities and local politics. The percentage of non-resident elected officials is very significant but difficult to quantify across the total number of municipalities. Their presence causes political representation to be distorted due to over-representation of higher social classes, in which certain people use their *département*-level positioning and relationships in order to be elected. The impact of ‘native’ residents cannot be overlooked at local level given that they are implicated due to associative bias.

Daily mobility and metropolitan integration

- 12 In addition, analysis cross-referenced with daily and residential mobility (Fusco and Scarella 2013) highlights territorial restructuring processes in the Provence Alpes Côte d’Azur region. Bipolar coordination is emerging in the Alpes-Maritimes *département*, marked by two major travel sub-networks (Nice and Cannes-Grasse). Complex terrain and metropolitan structuring, focused on coastal regions, explain this coordination. Metropolisation accentuates spatial restructuring in the *département*, which can be described as territorial sub-systems that are inter-dependant from a large metropolitan system (Fusco and Scarella 2008). The highly urbanised coastal sub-system, a victim of saturation trends (shortage of land, very high population density around Cannes, Grasse, Antibes, Nice, Monaco and Menton) causes progressive development of inland sub-systems due to urban sprawl. On the other hand, the mountain sub-system is not impacted and only serves a small number of long-distance commuters¹¹. The results of these studies tend to interlink metropolitan integration in Nice and mountainous regions. Furthermore, interviews¹² with elected officials and local actors within the framework of a survey on cross-border governance, carried out by the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) Alpi Marittime-Mercantour, not only confirm the existence of systemic territorial structuring, but also the very strong attachments to municipalities in mountainous regions shown by these individuals, marked by the active presence of ‘native’ inhabitants in public life.

Map 2: territorial division into sub-systems



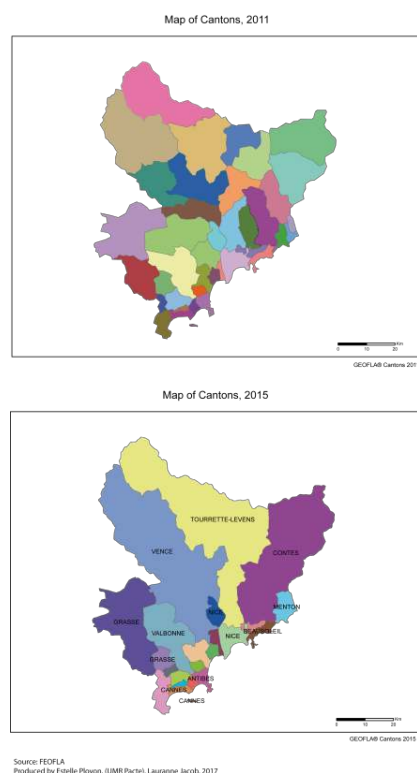
- 13 However, territorialisation into sub-systems (coastal, inland and mountainous regions) highlighted by mobility and studies on habitats does not correspond to new territorial divisions resulting from the last major territorial reforms conducted and founded upon an essentially demographic criterion. Nevertheless, incompatibility between the functional spaces in conurbation communities and political spaces is frequently seen in metropolises (Négrier 2005).

Territorial reforms: metropolisation and vertical territorialisation of the *département*

- 14 Territorial reforms are the result of a succession of laws which have resulted in strengthening at intermunicipal level, and which have led to redistribution of responsibilities between local and regional authorities. Territorial restructuring corresponds to an ongoing process concerning the regional redistribution of powers, namely the production of new public policy frameworks (Vanier 2002; Vanier 2009). Specifically, decision-making forums change, territorial representation can also change, as can territorial boundaries. This new distribution of responsibilities must facilitate the pooling of resources, as well as a form of territorial redistribution of wealth.
- 15 Territorial restructuring resulting from implementation of the last territorial reforms (metropolisation and division of cantons) is responsible for the significant development of territorial divisions in the Alpes-Maritimes *département*. The new map of cantons was defined by the Decree of 24th February 2014¹³. As such, 27 new cantons replace the former 52 cantons formed as a result of previous territorial reforms. Below, Map 3 shows 'vertical' territorialisation of cantons, i.e. correlated to altitude, with small, highly

populated cantons on the coast, and large cantons comprising of several mountainous as well as inland municipalities. As such, new cantons have between 32,300 and 46,800 inhabitants, compared with 1,500 to 46,000 inhabitants previously¹⁴.

Map 3: Development of cantonal divisions in the Alpes-Maritimes region between 2011 and 2015

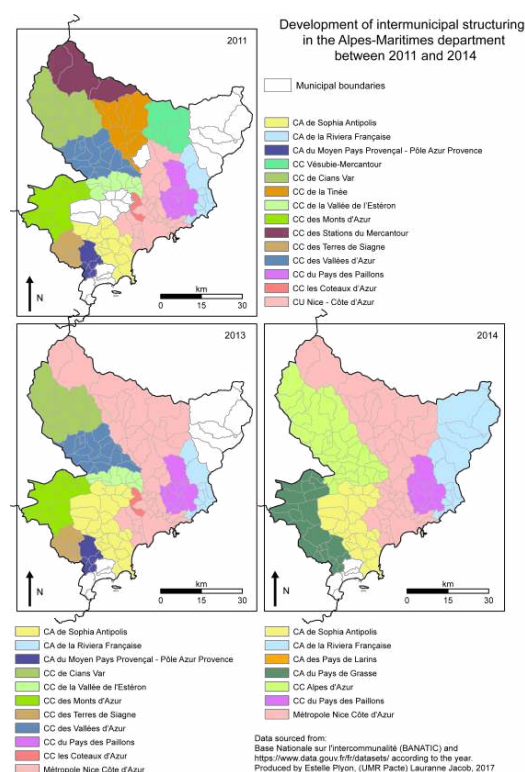


- 16 One of the main aims of territorial divisions under the Act of 2013 introducing reforms to local elections¹⁵ was to reduce demographic disparities between cantons in the same *département*, in a bid to provide greater equality to citizens in terms of universal suffrage, and to increase representation of urban citizens. Paragraph III in article L 3113-2 in the General Code on Local Authorities stipulates that each canton must be defined based on “essentially demographic foundations”, whilst the following paragraph stipulates “exceptions of limited scope, specifically justified on a case by case basis, based on geographical considerations”, terrain being one of them.
- 17 Whilst the cause seemed justified, it resulted in the dilution of mountainous development in favour of urbanisation, despite planned derogation. Previously, inhabitants of sparsely populated rural cantons in deep inland regions were substantially over-represented on *département*-level councils, compared to urban cantons which were divided into several cantons. For example, the city of Nice has nine cantons (not all are represented on the map which has been simplified for readability). Mountainous regions are under-represented in new territorial divisions compared to previous ones, (mountain municipalities are grouped into three cantons as opposed to seven), they will therefore be less heard on *département*-level committees; which themselves have been weakened by the increasing strength of intermunicipal authorities, whose responsibilities are growing and being applied to sectors such as local development. This is the case with the creation of the Nice Côte d'Azur metropolis which, as we will see, is comprised of a number of mountain municipalities.

- 18 The *département* possesses a ‘cross-border cooperation, mountain, agriculture and forestry¹⁶ commission, which covers broad themes directly aimed at inland and mountainous regions. The commission shows the importance of these regions as well as the specific issues they face. It responds to the need to consider the specificities of mountainous regions and to put in place assistance and solidarity systems, principles laid down in the ‘Mountains Act’ of 1985 and reaffirmed in the new Act of 2016¹⁷. In addition, a ‘coastal’ commission has not been set up, even though the Act also stipulates specific management for coastal regions¹⁸. The *département* also employs an officer responsible for rural policy, another sign that development issues concerning peripheral mountainous regions require addressing specifically.
- 19 Reform of cantons goes hand in hand with the communal grouping movement in various types of public intermunicipal cooperation establishments (EPCI)¹⁹, in a *département* that joined the intermunicipal authority late in the day. The Conurbation of Nice remained without intermunicipal cooperation for a long time. It was only in 2001 that the Conurbation of Nice Côte d’Azur (CANCA) was established, replaced on 1st January 2009 by the Urban Community of Nice Côte d’Azur, retaining the perimeter of the CANCA. France’s first metropolis (Nice Côte d’Azur) was established at the end of 2011 with the aim of becoming “a model for solidarity between member municipalities, fully incorporating coastal, inland and mountainous regions”, according to its president²⁰. It was composed of 49 municipalities. On 1st January 2014, the *département* grouped together seven intermunicipal structures: a *métropole* (metropolis), four *communautés d’agglomération* (conurbation communities) and two *communautés de communes* (communities of municipalities), whilst on 1st January 2011, there were 14 EPCIs and 18 isolated municipalities. Below, Map 4 shows the development of intermunicipal authorities between 2011 and 2014. First, the communities of mountainous municipalities of Mercantour and Tinée were merged before being integrated into the *Métropole de Nice*.
- 20 Unsure about merging, mountainous communities in the Roya Valley only joined an intermunicipal authority (*Communauté d’agglomération de la Riviera française*) in 2014. The most remote mountain municipalities are predominantly included in two public intermunicipal cooperation establishments (EPCI): the *Métropole Nice Côte d’Azur* and the *Communauté d’agglomération de la Riviera française* and, to a lesser extent, the *Communauté de communes du Var*. This division did not receive solid opposition, but has been criticised by *département*-level opposition on the left, who consider the metropolis as an instrument for placing “almost all power and decision-making [...] in the hands of one man”, it was supported in the economic sector (Cadiou and Grégory 2015).
- 21 As is the case for cantons, this fourth map demonstrates verticalisation of new territorial divisions. Intermunicipal authorities adapt to valley terrain, and therefore follow a certain valley logic. The example of Nice Côte d’Azur metropolis is likely the most significant. Created on 31st December 2011, it is the only French metropolis to come to fruition as a result of the Act of 2010²¹. It groups 49 municipalities and almost 540,000 inhabitants. It groups the former *communauté urbaine Nice Côte d’Azur* (urban community of Nice Côte d’Azur), which is also a legislative constituency, with the former (mountainous) communities of the municipalities of Tinée, ski resorts in Mercantour and Vésubie-Mercantour, as well as the isolated municipality of La Tour.
- 22 Paradoxically for a metropolis, approximately 80% of its territory consists of rural and mountainous areas. This metropolitan division is perfectly reflected by that of the

département, since it is vertical and includes the largest ski resorts in the *département*, access to the Mercantour National Park, and the economically vibrant city of Nice.

Map 4: Development of intermunicipal structuring of the Alpes-Maritimes *département* between 2011 and 2014.



- 23 New territorial divisions resulting from the latest territorial reforms do not correspond perfectly to territorialisation trends in the form of three sub-systems. The new cantonal divisions take into account urban sprawl in metropolitan areas, but tend to erase mountainous regions. Political divisions in the sense of electoral constituencies exist in addition to other divisions, such as those of the Mercantour National Park with two different conservation areas (central and peripheral areas), as well as territorial boundaries for initiatives and projects. The concept of interterritoriality (Vanier 2008; Vanier 2013) responds to requirements for both spatial coordination and political territorial restructuring. It summarises the need to maintain territorial boundaries for questions of power and the imperative need to be freed from them.
- 24 It goes much further than this, since it also includes the requirement to connect the various areas where inhabitants live by inventing a new form of territoriality in order to manage this complexity and respond effectively to their needs. Whilst divisions that have been imposed seem to mark a setback for interterritoriality (Béhar, Estèbe, and Vanier 2014), it is far from at risk of disappearing if we consider that new territories created are in no way homogeneous and have specific features that require appropriate public policies.
- 25 The very essence of a territory is its boundaries, and overcoming these boundaries is internalised in the form of “interterritoriality from the inside out”, i.e. overcoming conflicts between coastal and mountainous regions, which cannot be clearly seen, yet continue to heavily influence local public policies. Other conflicts exist between the city

centre of Nice and peripheral coastal municipalities that have a sense of neglect (Cadiou and Grégory 2015).

Territorialisation and political sociology

- 26 The problematic nature of territorial divisions cannot be fully understood without looking at the *département's* political framework. Sociology of elected officials in the Alpes-Maritimes *département* is complex. General councillors represent the archetypal noble figure, their recruitment falls in line with a dual territorial perspective: on the one hand, it concerns local anchorage in one of the valleys and on the other, prerequisite political resources (Gregory 2009).
- 27 As such, each elected official effectively represents a 'stronghold'²², with each official attempting to highlight their area in order to achieve maximum funding and profile. This is where interest in electing officials from outside of the municipal area originates from, as they may have contacts that could help promote the municipality. The political opposition between the current Mayor of Nice, Christian Estrosi²³ and Eric Ciotti, Member of Parliament and President of the *département*, may explain several aspects of 'mountain policy' as well as a number of the decisions made by the *département* and metropolis in promoting the area, such as the strong show of support for ski resorts.
- 28 On the one hand we have an elected representative for rural communities as well as an MP for Nice, who structures his local discourse on the development of inland and mountainous regions, and, on the other, the President of the Nice-Côte d'Azur metropolis and Mayor of Nice, who notably held office as President of the Alpes-Maritimes *département* (general councillor for the Canton of Saint-Étienne-de-Tinée) and as a former MP for several constituencies in the *département*, including mountainous regions.
- 29 Long reputed as being the primary, if not unique, source of funding for municipal projects, the Alpes-Maritimes *département* saw its financial capabilities strongly diminish and along with it its influential power. Co-funding has become essential. This former system revealed a certain amount of power in peripheral regions (Grémion 1976) which is often addressed in territorial reforms. The metropolis has swiftly imposed itself as a funding agency for projects concerning deep inland municipalities.
- 30 The 'Mountain Act' of 9th January 1985²⁴ stipulated national solidarity towards mountainous regions as well as a right to experimentation. Revision of the Act of 2016²⁵ reaffirmed this solidarity, but overlooked territorial reforms, which have been of great value to urbanisation (Kada 2017). It does not refer to any form of relationship between cities and their foothills, despite metropolises such as Nice or Grenoble raising the issue (Roux 2015).
- 31 Maintaining *département*-level leadership in the person of its President (Procureur and Grégory 2015) enabled a certain balance to be maintained with the metropolis, whose responsibilities only continued to grow. The metropolis very quickly emerged as an essential force for municipalities in mountainous regions. Via its traditional responsibilities²⁶, it takes care of tasks that municipalities in mountainous regions struggle to accomplish and therefore serves as a tool for the redistribution of wealth between the city and mountainous areas.
- 32 It also has jurisdiction over economic development and, in this respect, it is required to promote activities in mountainous and rural deep inland areas. The metropolis has also acquired four new responsibilities: highways derived from *département*-level highways,

school transport, management of areas of activity, and international promotion of the region and its economic activities. These responsibilities overlap with those of the *département* within the context of a power struggle between the two political figures who run the *département* (C. Ciotti) and the city centre of Nice (E. Estrosi).

- 33 Proposed creation of a metropolitan tax on second homes for the 2018 budget is likely to increase fiscal pressure on multilocals, even within the metropolis itself. Political disputes at local level between the President of the metropolis and the President of the *département* fuel and strengthen competition between *département*-level and metropolitan authorities. As a result of this, a form of dual management of the area is formed, which is harmful to small-scale elected officials in mountainous areas. The latter, often caught between a rock and a hard place²⁷, do not dare express contrasting views at risk of losing their mandate or funding for their municipality²⁸.

Disneyfication of mountainous regions

- 34 Both the *département* and the Nice Côte d'Azur metropolis have specific policies in place dedicated to mountainous regions. The metropolis has a 'mountain management board' in place. However, both lean towards a policy based on the promotion of sporting and recreational activities, particularly paying activities, rather than to a policy for local development designed to develop all territorial resources.
- 35 The landscape is notably promoted via the Mercantour National Park. However, it has been a source of conflict ever since its creation (Laslaz 2005; Jacob 2017): it is blamed for being responsible for restricting activities, specifically of an economic nature, to the same extent as it is valued. Human activities are strictly regulated in the heart of the park, and possible economic activities are very limited in a bid to protect and preserve the natural environment.
- 36 If we take into account language used on websites²⁹ belonging to the *département* and the metropolis respectively, it is clear that both present a twin-track overview of the region, with the *département* promoting the 'sea' and the 'mountains', and the Nice metropolis promoting the 'mountains/coastline'. Inland and mountainous regions are both considered as 'mountainous', despite sub-systems for inland areas being more closely linked to the metropolitan system, as we have shown. Mountainous areas are presented as tourist hotspots for the metropolis as opposed to an effective economic resource. None of the major projects planned by the metropolis concern mountainous regions.
- 37 However, the latter is almost exclusively covered when it comes to promoting amenities such as sports and activities for well-being and relaxation. This strand of the policy for mountainous regions can be found within Nice Côte d'Azur's land planning and sustainable development project dated 15th November 2015, which includes a short passage titled 'Boosting tourist activities and recreation in mountainous regions whilst preserving the environment'. Furthermore, the Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur *département* and region significantly contribute to the development of winter sport resorts, notably thanks to the '*Stations de demain*' ('Resorts of the future') contract within the framework of which the Region has committed €32.5 million for ski resorts in the Southern Alps.
- 38 The diversification of tourist attractions has made headway thanks to well-being attractions (Berthemont-les-Bains), high-thrill attractions (zipline in Colmiane) and the 'Vesubia Mountain Park', located in the municipality of Saint-Martin Vesubie³⁰ which

opened its doors on 29th October 2016. This new indoor mountain park features activities such as climbing, canyoning and swimming, and in the words of the President of the *département* was designed to form a “link between the inside and the outside of the Massif”³¹.

- 39 The park’s primary aim is to introduce city-dwellers and tourists to mountain activities, traditionally carried out outside, within a safe, indoor space, complemented by a relaxing pool area. Promotion of the park plays on its close proximity to Nice. The *département* also promotes an activity pass known as the ‘Vibrez Vésubie Valdeblore’ pass, a 3 or 6-day activity pass³² that can be used in a range of mountain locations. Hotel packages are offered featuring hotels located in Nice rather than in mountain municipalities. Sporting activities bridge the gap between the two *département*-level polarities (Bourdeau, Mao, and Corneloup 2011), fostering complementarity to the same extent as strengthening territorial duality.
- 40 Similarly, if territorial complementarity is made explicit via tourist activities offered between coastal and mountainous regions, then political choices which overlook other aspects of local development (agriculture, crafts) and fail to promote the development of individual or collective initiatives within social innovation to a sufficient extent can be called into question.
- 41 Should we fear the emergence of an ‘Alpine Disneyland’ in mountainous regions? The term is borrowed from Bernard Crettaz (Crettaz 1993) and denotes the transformation of mountainous areas via the arrival of new cultures, which in turn transform the landscape and customs, and could become synonymous with ‘folklorisation’, but without the negative connotations often associated with the term. Here, use of the term ‘Disneyland’ refers directly to the amusement park model, to standardisation of the offering and to marketing stances (Brunel 2006), but also to a certain willingness to render mountains homogenous, packaged up in the form of innovation. Whilst indoor mountain climbing is commonplace, indoor canyoning is not, as yet.
- 42 The argument of offering activities in a safe and fun environment was put forward to support construction of the Mountain Park, but are they not just as safe and fun when supervised by professionals in a natural setting? Are we targeting the same people as those who regularly visit mountain areas, particularly the Mercantour National Park? One thing is certain: the park’s tourist marketing strategy is very different from this one, since it promotes non-mechanised outdoor recreational practices based on appreciation of the park’s natural assets. Trekking in all its forms (whether on foot, horseback or by bike) reveals the park’s flora and fauna, terrain, and rich heritage (architecture, rock paintings of the *Vallée des Merveilles*).
- 43 Both approaches to tourism address two territorial visions and implicitly reflect distribution of responsibilities: that of the State via the park for the enhancement and protection of natural heritage, and of local authorities for development of the local economy. However, since the park reforms of 2006³³, local development has become a responsibility of national parks, based on the model provided by regional nature parks (Filoche 2007; Romi 2007). This division partly explains the failure of the ‘Alpes de la Mer-Alpi del Mare’³⁴ project that sought to feature the park on UNESCO’s World Heritage List, when considered alongside historical opposition to the park
- 44 Initiated by the EGTC *Alpi Marittime-Mercantour*, difficulties were experienced in preparation of the dossier on the French side, as well as recruiting the necessary public

actors involved in order to support and defend it in front of bodies belonging to the International Union for Conservation of Wildlife (IUCN). The enthusiasm hoped for did not come to fruition, and as a result, the Mercantour National Park failed to assert itself as a key player for tourism amongst notably urban communities. Yet, such a ranking would lead to economic benefits for the area concerned, with a rise in visitors to the site. Tourism envisaged within the framework of the project is of a sustainable nature with limited environmental impacts, which is not the case for the ski resort development programme that also includes an artificial snow machine and is more targeted to mass tourism. In addition, the Vesubia Mountain Park, chosen as a diversification model by the *département*, barely relies (if at all) on local resources (Colletis and Pecqueur 2004; François 2008) but rather on the image portrayed by mountain sports alone.

Conclusion: difficulties overcoming traditional framework in relationships between central and suburban areas

- 45 Whilst the Nice Côte d'Azur metropolis is actually an alpine metropolis due to its location and inclusion of municipalities belonging to the *Massif de Mercantour*, much progress still needs to be made in recognising its 'alpine identity' if links between the heart of the metropolis and deep inland and mountainous areas are to be strengthened.
- 46 As such, the perimeters of territorial cooperation drawn up by institutional reform of the NOTRe act do not correspond to the three territorial sub-systems described. However, the inclusion of mountain and rural municipalities should ultimately enable objectives for solidarity to be achieved by playing on complementarities between the metropolitan centre and rural areas. In fact, this complementarity exists but has yet to be developed to a sufficient extent.
- 47 Territorial divisions resulting from the last territorial reforms have not profoundly changed territorial balance; the loss of representation of mountainous areas within the *département* is partly compensated for by improved representation within metropolitan governance. The Nice-Côte d'Azur metropolis has taken over certain *département*-level responsibilities and maintains territories within a traditional framework but has overlooked relationships between central and suburban areas.
- 48 Population, wealth, employment, and more recently, power, at *département* level are concentrated along the Mediterranean coast. Inland areas caught between coastal and mountainous areas benefit from metropolitan saturation and are becoming more densely populated. Mountainous regions have found support in their roles as tourist playgrounds and recreational centres for city-dwellers, who are in search of nature, well-being and thrills. Policies surrounding enhancement of mountainous areas accentuate duality and conflict between coastal and mountainous areas.
- 49 In addition, current political representation at various levels is not conducive to overcoming these divides despite agreements made, and the fact that they belong to the same political family.

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NOTES

1. The *département* is one of the most densely populated in France, with 252 inhabitants per square kilometre (source: INSEE 2013), whilst the French average is around 117.6 inhabitants per square kilometre (source: population data.net, 2017). Coastal regions have an average of 422 inhabitants per square kilometre.
 2. The terms “inland and mountainous regions” are used locally to distinguish between two deep inland regions.
 3. From the Act of 16th December 2010 (law no. 2010-1563 on local government reforms), to the *NOTRe* Act of 7th August 2015 (law no. 2015-991 on new territorial structure of the Republic).
 4. Définition provided by Géoconfluences <http://geoconfluences.ens-lyon.fr/glossaire/metropolisation> (last consulted in April 2018)
 5. Slogan affixed to an image depicting mountains, used by the city of Nice Côte d'Azur metropolis which had a €60m budget to promote their activities.
 6. Source INSEE *Analyses Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur* No 27 published on 17/12/2015 (<https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/1304124> last consulted in April 2018)
 7. From west to east: the Var Valley, the Cians Valley, the Tinée Valley, the Vésubie Valley up to St. Martin Vésubie, the Paillon Valley and the Roya Valley.
 8. Extended-range: INSEE category which groups 36 facilities: *pôle emploi* (French government employment agency), hypermarket, college, accident and emergency room, maternity ward, medical specialist, cinema, etc.
 9. Data collected during interviews.
 10. Results corroborated using data collected during interviews.
 11. Individuals commuting daily, or almost daily, between their place of work and their place of residence.
 12. Interviews carried out amongst mayors or deputies of municipalities within the Mercantour National Park, and with park officials, local actors (associations, professionals) and general councillors for the Alpes-Maritimes *département*, during electoral periods in 2014 (local elections in March 2014 and initial elections in municipalities with 1,000 inhabitants or over, community councillors representing the municipality within separately taxed public intermunicipal cooperation establishments (EPCI) (Act first applied on 17th May 2013) see (Jacob 2017).
 13. Law no. 2014-227 of 17th May 2013 in application of the law on the election of *département*, municipal and community councillors, and amendment of the electoral calendar: Law no. 2013-403 of 17th May 2013 published in the OJ No. 114 of 18th May 2013.
 14. Source: INSEE <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/1285449> (last consulted on: 10th March 2018)
 15. Law no. 2013-403 of 17th May 2013 on the election of *département*, municipal and community councillors, and amendment of the electoral calendar (1)
 16. Chaired by a *département* councillor for the canton of Nice 4 rather than by a councillor for a mountainous region.
 17. Law no. 85-30 of 9th January 1985 on mountain development and protection and law no. 2016-1888 of 28th December 2016 on the modernisation, development and protection of mountain territories.
 18. Law no. 86-2 of 3rd January 1986 on coastal planning, protection, and enhancement.
 19. Law no. 2010-1563 of 16th December 2010 on local government reforms.
- The three core types of EPCI are :

-*métropoles* (metropolises): threshold of 400,000 inhabitants located in an urban area of over 650,000 inhabitants, either in regional capitals, or in the centre of an employment area with over 400,000 inhabitants

-*communautés d'agglomération* (conurbation communities): threshold of 50,000 inhabitants, all adjoining and without enclaves

-*communautés de municipalités*: (community of municipalities) grouping together several municipalities that are all adjoining and without enclaves

20. See the interview with Cristian Estrosi: “Nice Côte d'Azur est un modèle de solidarité” by Rémy Mario, published on 26th October 2017 in the *Journal d'annonces légales et d'informations locales, économiques et judiciaires en PACA* (<https://www.tpbm-presse.com/christian-estrosi-nice-cote-d-azur-est-un-modele-de-solidarite-2030.html> consulted April 2018)

21. Law no. 2010-1563 of 16th December 2010 on local government reforms whilst others were created based on law no. 2014-58 of 27th January 2014 on the modernisation of territorial public policy and affirmation of metropolises.

22. Each MP or Member of the Upper House has a stronghold in deep inland regions: the current Mayor of Nice and President of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region and former MP, Christian Estrosi, former general councillor for the Canton of Saint-Etienne de Tinée. Eric Ciotti, President of the *département*, elected official for the Canton of Saint Martin de Vésubie. Charles-Ange Ginésy, former MP, Vice President of the *département*, and elected official for Péone-Valberg. Plurality of offices almost verges on tradition.

23. He resigned from his post as Mayor of Nice in June 2016, preferring to take up the role of President of the Region, before resigning from this post in May 2017 in order to take up his post as Mayor, that he has held since 2008.

24. Law no. 85-30 of 9th January 1985 on mountainous development and protection.

25. Law no. 2016-1888 of 28th December 2016 on the modernisation, development and protection of mountainous regions.

26. Collection and management of waste, transport, housing, management of drinking water and sanitation systems, highways, signage and parking, land planning and urbanisation, and geographic information systems.

27. At the core of the metropolis, all municipalities are represented within the Council of Mayors where every mayor is heard equally.

28. Source: interview with an elected official of a municipality in the mountains.

29. <https://www.departement06.fr/envie-d-alpes-maritimes/terre-de-sports-2208.html>
<http://www.nicecotedazur.org/territoire> (consulted in April 2018).

30. Former canton resulting from previous divisions where Eric Ciotti was elected.

31. Phrase quoted on the day of the opening.

32. Since Valdeblore and Vesubie are two remote mountain valleys <https://www.departement06.fr/bons-plans/pass-vibrez-vesubie-valdeblore-2206.html> (Consulted August 2017).

33. Law no. 2006-436 of 14th April 2006 on national parks, natural marine parks and natural regional parks.

34. The scope of the project includes that of the cross-border park and descends down to the coast near Monaco.

ABSTRACTS

The objective of this paper is to present a case study specific to the Alpes-Maritimes *département*; a region of France characterised by its dual maritime and alpine nature, and one that has undergone significant territorial restructuring susceptible to alter relationships between urban and mountainous regions.

Almost four years after territorial reforms were implemented, analysis of new territorial divisions, informed by historical, political and sociological aspects, suggests that they have not, for the time being, resulted in radical changes to the current balance between urban and mountainous regions in the Alpes-Maritimes *département*. The creation of large coastal and alpine intermunicipal authorities signifies that links between urban and mountainous regions need to be addressed in order to ensure they complement each other.

However, development policy for mountainous regions could result in a form of 'disneyfication' (Crettaz 1993) in mountainous regions.

INDEX

Keywords: metropolis, mountainous regions, complementarity, solidarity, multilocality

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