

# REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY: PAST AND PRESENT

## (A REVIEW OF IDEAS/CONCEPTS, APPROACHES AND GOALS)

PAUL CLAVAL

UFR de Géographie et Aménagement,

Université Paris Sorbonne (Paris IV)

191, rue St.Jacques; 75005 Paris

E-mail : p.claval@wanadoo.fr

**ABSTRACT** Geography always relies on regional approaches since it deals with areas. However, in the last two centuries, the concept of region underwent profound changes. For long, geographers aimed at the delimitation and description of objective units on the Earth's surface. In contrast, in the last forty years, they mainly focused on the significance of places, the meaning of territories and the role the regional approaches played in the building of identities. This paper tends to follow the changing role of the regional concept in geography and reveal its kinship/links with other scientific disciplines (e.g. natural sciences, sociology, economy and history). In conclusion, the author expresses an opinion about today's coexistence of these two approaches. Although stressing different factors in shaping terrestrial reality and applying different concepts to express it, these approaches seem rather complementary in explaining the social texture of space. In addition, the role of the regional approach has changed in the scientific study of human societies: it no longer constitutes a stage which would come after all the others, it has to be used from the very beginning.

**KEY WORDS:** region, regional geography, home country, *pays*, territory, identity, regional organization, symbol.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper offers an overview of the changing role of the idea of region in geography. It relies on the reflections the author has developed during forty years (Claval, 1968; 1989; 1992; 1998; 2000 ; 2006).

The regional idea is a commonplace one. Its analysis was deepened by geographers from the 18th century, specially in Germany, and led to the regional revolution which occurred at the end of the nineteenth century and was best exemplified by the works of Paul Vidal de la Blache and the French School of geography. It is the reason for which the references in the first part of this paper are mainly German and French.

The economic region was the main focus of regional research from the 1930s to the 1970s. Quite substantial results were reached in that field. During the last forty years, regional geography has ceased to appear central to most geographers. In fact, the new interest in place

and territory shows a renewal in this field much more than a decline. Some geographers are, however, very critical of the regional idea per se. Their arguments have to be assessed.

This paper is divided into two parts; the first dealing with the region as an objective reality, the second analyzing its role as a key component of life in society and the building of identities.

## **THE REGION AS AN OBJECTIVE DIVISION ON THE EARTH'S SURFACE: SPATIAL ORGANIZATION**

### **A COMMONSENSE IDEA**

The idea of region is a commonsense one. In daily life, everybody relies on regional categories in order to classify spatial information: people speak of downtown and suburbs in an urban area, of Bavaria in Germany, of the Yorkshire Moors in England or of the Mid West in the United States. Regions are useful since they provide pigeonholes where to sort spatial informations. They are equally useful for rulers to manage territories, control their population, plan their development or conceive military operations. Kingdoms and Empires early discovered the benefit they could earn from a thorough knowledge of the regional structure of their possessions. Strabo's geography was conceived as a tool for the Emperor Augustus, who developed at the same time a geographic policy (Nicolet, 1988). Historical geographers know well the value of the censuses or directories drawn up in the Chinese, Moghul or Turkish Empires. The idea of region predated the birth of scientific geography.

### **A VERTICAL PERSPECTIVE**

For most people, regions were substantial realities. The problem was to draw their boundaries. This was not an easy task, since the view people normally had of the Earth was a horizontal or oblique one. To perceive a region involved a change of perspective: the observer had to be mentally able to move above the area under scrutiny, or to draw a map of it. Air travel, aerial photographs and remote sensing have transformed these conditions: what was in the past a true intellectual challenge is now easy, within everyone's capability.

The necessity of developing a vertical vision of space explains the role of cartography in the delimitation of regions and, as a consequence, of geographers. When it comes to conceiving a region, the vertical vision provided by modern maps is a great help. However, even in primitive societies there were always people able to draw on the sand of a beach a plan of the coast, a person's village or the inland area, without any knowledge of the principles of cartography.

## A TOOL CENTRAL TO GEOGRAPHY

From the 18th to the mid-20th century, the region appeared as the most central intellectual tool needed by geographers. Today the notions of place and territory have partly displaced that of region, but its function is not so different and is still important. A traveller describes the places he visits and the itineraries he follows. The author of a guide works in a similar way. However, these are not geographers, since they deal only with points or lines. In order to write geography, people have to deal with areas, i.e. regions. The map makes the work of the geographer easier, since it shows him the Earth as composed of set of more or less homogeneous areas. Describing regions requires precise areal data. When such information is lacking, geographers try to establish systematic correspondance between the points and lines they know, and the areas in which they are located. A first solution is offered by physical geography: a river system defines a catchment area precisely, for example. A similar possibility exists in human geography: in an urban network, each city attracts a specific sphere of influence. However, it is more satisfactory to obtain information allowing for the characterization of homogeneous areas. The aim of thematic cartography is to offer a synthetic image of various data (Palsky 1996). It is possible to imagine graphical representations of many kinds of information, e.g. topographical forms, the nature of vegetation, climate or soils, and more generally, the environment; geological outcrops, ethnic, linguistic, religious or administrative affiliations, historical territorial constructs, forms of sociability, economic activities.

Until the 18th century, the only available spatial information related to topographical units and ethnic, religious or administrative affiliations. This explained the poor quality of most of the regional descriptions which were then written. At the beginning of the 18th century, the German school of pure geography (*reine Geographie*) demanded that geographers cease rely in their analyses on more or less arbitrary administrative divisions (Farinelli 1999). Modern geography sprang from this new requirement. Attention rapidly focused on the natural region, which was clearly identified in France by Jean-Louis Giraud-Soulavie (1780-1784). In Germany, Alexander Humboldt certainly knew Kant's conception of geography as a science of the regional division of the Earth and drew on Giraud-Soulavie. In Britain, William Marshall showed at the same time that agricultural regions coincided with rock outcrops (Grigg 1969), but his work had not the same posterity than that of Giraud-Soulavie in France (Gallois 1908) or Humboldt in Germany (Hartshorne 1939).

Geographers were not interested in the territorial divisions which sounded really significant for local people: they considered that the popular categories used by ordinary people fitted perfectly their needs and had not to be improved. However, as administrative divisions were not built on scientific foundations, the ambitions of most geographers from the 18th century were to provide rulers with systems of regional division more efficient for public action, allowing for better expression of cultural realities, and offering better opportunities for fulfilment for the various social or ethnic groups.

## THE PERMANENT WEAKNESSES OF REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

For want of adequate intellectual tools, the regional approach remained poor during most of the 19th century. Geographers lacked efficient means by which to define and describe the territorial divisions which existed in a country. In France, Italy, Spain, Portugal or Latin America, Elisée Reclus was certainly the most popular geographer during the last decades of the 19th century—partly because of his scientific work, partly because he was an anarchist. He was also well known in Russia and Germany. He had strong supporters in the U.K. (Patrick Geddes for instance), and in the USA. He wrote the 19 volumes of *Géographie Universelle* between 1875 and 1894; some of these books still offered the best description of a part of the world thirty and even fifty years later. Reclus' work relied on rich and accurate data. He had visited some of the countries about which he wrote (in Western and Central Europe, North Africa, North and South Americas). He kept in touch with informers who provided him with the best and most recent statistical data and maps of their own countries. However, a read of the *Géographie Universelle* today suggests that the way Reclus organized his descriptions was very strange. To divide countries, he relied on: catchment areas (which constituted his main principle for organization and division), the major zones of vegetation (which played a less important role than water catchments), the ethnic affiliations of groups, where they varied (in native America or Africa), and the urban network, since each city was the focus of social relations in a specific area. Reclus ignored the division into economic regions. In Brazil, he spoke obviously about sugar cane in the north-east and coffee in the State of São Paulo, but did not rely on these areas of specialized products when defining the Brazilian territorial organization (Reclus 1994). However, he insisted on the impact of railways: their networks were increasingly replacing river systems as main axes for trade and movement. Even if his descriptions were fascinating, Reclus never succeeded in building a coherent system for the regional division of the countries he studied.

## THE REGIONAL REVOLUTION OF THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY AND THE ROLE OF PAUL VIDAL DE LA BLACHE

A true regional revolution occurred during the last years of the 19th century and the first of the 20th. Vidal de la Blache played an important role in this mutation, being well aware of the research developed in both physical and human geography and relying on their results. Thanks to the progress of thematic cartography, he discovered that it was possible to draw several systems of regional differentiation in a country like France. He developed a whole set of regional conceptions during his career :

- Some areas were homogeneous thanks to their topography, vegetation, climate, geological outcrops and environments: they constituted natural regions (Vidal de la Blache 1888-1889).
- Specific forms of sociability characterized the different parts of a country : the North of France had an open and progressive society, which differed much from the self-enclosed one of the Western part of the country, and from that of the South, where relations were active, but in a more conservative atmosphere (Vidal de la Blache, 1903).

- Rural landscapes presented the same features over large expanses, as proved by August Meitzen for Germany and a good part of Europe (Vidal de la Blache 1904).
- The hierarchical organization of rail and urban networks was an essential factor in the structuring of space (Vidal de la Blache 1910).
- Ethnic, religious, and past or present administrative affiliations defined other sets of territorial divisions (Claval and Nardy, 1968, p. 91-125)).

Vidal de la Blache was the first to take advantage of all the possibilities offered by the systematic cartography of modern countries, thematic cartography, the analysis of humanized landscapes and the study of rail and urban networks (Claval 1998, pp. 104-110). As a result, several systems of regional organization might generally be brought to the fore in any country. Spatial organization had an historical dimension: at the beginning of the 20th century, urban metropolises had a more important role than fifty years before. The regional approach as conceived by Vidal de la Blache gave a complex vision of the geographical reality: different regionalities were always superimposed and intertwined in any country. Hence the possibility of defining 'geographical personality' (Vidal de la Blache 1903). Hence, also, the possibility of explaining regional organization: at the beginning of the 20th century, natural conditions, technical innovation and circulation appeared as the main factors in the differentiation of the terrestrial surface.

Until then, geography was lacking a clear focus. Hence the significance of the new forms of regional analysis : the Earth was objectively divided into sets of different areas ; according to the chosen criteria of selection and to time, partitions differed. Geography was in this way able to explain how natural, cultural, and economic factors shape our World, and why these divisions changed through history. Geography underwent in this way a deep regional (or *Landschaft* in German speaking countries) revolution. Analysing the different sets of regional divisions which existed in a country stressed the influence of various factors and their mutual interplay in the differentiation of the Earth surface: in this way, regional analysis relied on the use of general categories. Thanks to the idea of personality, it allowed to understand why each country was specific.

This regional revolution was mainly achieved in France thanks to Vidal de la Blache. In Germany, where the focus was on *Landschaft*, a confusion stemmed from the fact that the term defined at the same time a landscape and a small regional unit (Hard 1970). Britain was lagging in this respect; when writing his article on 'The natural regions' Andrew John Herbertson (1905) was perfectly aware of this situation: 'For long in our country geographical progress meant exploration mainly with a commercial or political bias, and descriptive and statistical geography was taught. It was only with the rise of an academic geography the wider conception of geography as the science of distribution developed.' The major natural regions he distinguished combined mainly climatic features and landforms. A region was 'more than an association of plants, or of animals, or of men. It [was] a symbiotic association of all these, indissolubly bound up with certain structure and form of land, possessing a definite water

circulation and subjected to a certain climatic rhythm' (Herbertson 1913-1914). These ideas were interesting, but did not go as far as Vidal's ones. They defined macroregions, when Vidal was open to a diversity of scales, and focused mainly on meso- and microregions.

#### A PERIOD OF STAGNATION

The last decade of the 19th century and the first of the 20th were a time in which the regional approach progressed greatly—as did the whole of human geography: open curiosity, the systematic use of the new methods then available to detect the existence of homogeneous or nodal areas, and the discovery of the multiplicity of territorial divisions in any country all gave many indications as to the complexity of regional organization. The conflict which then developed between French geography and sociology had important consequences for the dynamism of our discipline. Sociologists considered that geographers often moved out of their proper domain (i. e. the study of the relations between man and his environment), and invaded that of social morphology, which could be correctly analyzed only by sociology. Their critiques were harsh. One of the followers of Vidal de la Blache, Lucien Gallois, took them seriously. In his book on *Régions naturelles et noms de pays* (1908), he invited geographers to deal only with natural regions and their transformation into humanized (or 'geographical') ones. Most geographers did not conform exactly with his advice, but the curiosity for the theoretical foundations of regional analysis disappeared for almost fifty years. The result was an impoverishment of reflections on the idea of the region until the late 1950s.

Even if the conception of region used by most French geographers was poorer than Vidal's, it owed to the emphasis given to human initiative (through possibilism) and the ensuing historical dimension of analyses something which lacked in most other countries. Hence the strong influence that French regional geography had in the Netherlands, Eastern and Mediterranean Europe and Latin America. Albert Demangeon's regional geography of the British Isles appeared so new that it was translated into English and used as a textbook in secondary schools for a quarter of century (Demangeon 1927). American geographers were interested by the French way to deal with regions. 'The 1933 and 1935 meetings of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) both devoted a session to a conference on regions' (James and Martin 1979, p. 77). An issue of the *Annals of the AAG* published the results to the first meeting (Varii Auctores 1934). American geographers soon became able to write fascinating regional analyses, as shown by Preston E. James (1942) on Latin America. This aspect of American geography was clearly presented by Preston E. James and Clarence F. Jones (1954) in an overview of its main interests at mid-century. For Richard Hartshorne, geography had to be based on Kant's reflections on the regional differentiation of the Earth and the way this theme was developed by German geographers from Humboldt to Hettner. Unfortunately, the progress of regional reflection had been there hampered by the confusion between the two meanings of *Landschaft*. Hartshorne (1939) did not fully understand the significance of Vidal de la Blache's contribution.

## ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY AND SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

During the 1950s, the regional approach was renewed by spatial economics and economic geography. At that time, these disciplines offered valuable explanations of the genesis of homogeneous (i.e. alike in all its parts) and nodal (i.e. identified by movements to and from a regional core or node) regions. The conditions of agricultural and industrial location conduced to the formation of homogeneous regions, depending on local resources and market location (von Thünen 1826; Weber 1909). Urban life was responsible for the development of nodal regions which appear as their hinterland (Christaller 1933; Lösch 1938). Nodal regions were hierarchized just as the urban networks because of the diverser ranges of services. Edgar M. Hoover (1948) summarized efficiently this first phase of regional economics. New orientations appeared in the 1950s, with a criticism of the classical theory of international (and interregional) trade (Perroux 1955) and the increasing reference to general theory (Ponsard 1955) and macroeconomics (Isard 1956).

Economic geography had to do with the consequences of trade on productive activities :

(i) In self-sufficient economies, every natural region farmed crops adapted to its nature and capable of meeting people's basic food requirements involving wheat here, barley, rye, corn, etc. In this way economic geography was a reproduction of natural geography. Since self-sufficiency never was perfect, some trade developed: cities were located at the limits of different natural areas.

(ii) In open economies, every area was specialized in the production(s) for which it enjoyed the best comparative advantage. Homogeneous economic regions resulted at the same time from natural conditions and market mechanisms (von Thünen 1826; Weber 1909). Nodal regions reflected the role of cities in commercial exchange or administration (Christaller 1933). In Britain, Robert E. Dickinson (1947) developed a parallel approach to the urban region in the 1940s. Thanks to Brian L. Berry and other American geographers, these aspects of the economic organization of space were thoroughly investigated in the late 1950s and 1960s.

The assumptions of classical international theory—which were also those of interregional one—began to be criticized in the 1950s: as a result, progress did not spread all over space. Growth favoured poles (Perroux 1955). Macroeconomics provided new tools to understand the unequal dynamism of territories.

There were economies of scale and externalities. Their study lagged for a long time, even if their role was central whenever progress occurred. They conferred an advantage upon the central areas of economic units: the whole extent of the market was accessible from them; their cities had more complex economic circuits, something that was conducive to more efficient transfers of information. As a result, they offered better facilities to enterprises. Edward L. Ullman (1954; 1958) has shown that in a national economy like the U.S., industries and some types of services tend to concentrate in a central area (the industrial belt of Northeastern USA). The spatial distribution of economies of scale and external economies was responsible for the opposition between central areas with complex economies, and

specialized peripheries either on the national or global scale. A good analysis of these mechanisms was provided by Jacques Raoul Boudeville (1966). At the end of the 1960s, economic theory explained satisfactorily the forms of spatial organization and transformations that were ongoing (Claval 1968). It was only later that Paul Krugman (1980; 1991) has demonstrated how economic progress was responsible for unequal development.

## ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY AND SPATIAL ORGANIZATION AT THE TIME OF GLOBALIZATION

Over the last thirty years, the study of the objective divisions existing on the Earth's surface did not attract geographers as much as in the the past, though recent research has explained the contemporary transformations of the economic organization of space (Claval 2003). Telecommunications and the progress of rapid transport have transformed the structure of communication systems. In order to ensure the connection of anyone with faraway partners, rapid transport or telecommunications networks now require only two hierarchical levels and two levels of central place: one for local relations, the other to ensure integration into the global network. Air networks offer a good example of these new structures: local airports, whatever their activities, are gravitating towards hubs, which are linked directly together. Hence the two main tendencies of contemporary evolution: a growing metropolization (the growing significance of hubs) and counter-urbanization (since many low density areas enjoy advantages which were only offered in the past to the main cities). The central areas are losing the important advantages they enjoyed in the past: in the early 1960s, many economists thought that in a united Europe, economic activities would concentrate in the core area of the continent (from London to Milan through Belgium, the Netherlands, Western Germany, Northern and Eastern France to Switzerland). Forty years later, the metropolises of the European periphery, Dublin, Lisbon, Madrid, Athens, Helsinki or even Tallinn, appear as the most dynamic parts of United Europe. At the same time, external economies explain the multiplication of industrial districts, analyzed in Britain as early as at the end of the 19th century by Alfred Marshall (1890). Since the new market conditions favour the fragmentation of productive chains, the concentration of competing firms in the same area facilitates the exchange of information and know-how in production and marketing.

The growing attention given to the costs of information led to a new interest in the economics of knowledge : hence the formation of clusters of enterprises (*clusters*), industrial districts, local productive systems, innovative milieus (Ascheim, 1996 ; Becattini, 1987 ; Boschma and Klostermann, 2005 ; Combes *et al.*, 2006 ; Courlet, 2001 ; Pecqueur and Zimmermann, 2004 ; Porter, 1990). Besides the anchoring points offered by big metropolises, there are new forms of local regional structures, which play a central role in contemporary economic life : it is one of the paradoxal consequences of globalization.

The study of regions as objective entities allowed positive conclusions to be reached: it explained satisfactorily a good part of the spatial organization of the contemporary World. It gave a good interpretation of the economic structuring of space and its evolution during the last forty years – the transition from an economic scene gravitating around a few central and



much developed areas towards a multi-centered world dominated by a few global cities and a few hundreds of metropolitan areas. However, it suffered, from a real weakness in that it did not explore the meaning of places or regions for those who inhabit or visit them.

## **COUNTRY<sup>1</sup> (*PAYS*), PLACE, TERRITORY AND ‘LIVED SPACE’: ANOTHER WAY OF CONCEIVING THE REGIONAL APPROACH IN GEOGRAPHY**

### THE HOME COUNTRY (*PAYS*)

At the end of the 18th century, the natural scientists who tried to develop rigorous procedures for delineating regions already knew that, besides objectively defined territorial units, there were other types of regional constructs (Giraud-Soulavie 1780-1784). When people spoke about the small country in which they lived, they said: ‘It is my country (*c’est mon pays*).’ People had strong feelings for their home place, upon which were built the identity of the lower classes, i.e. farmers, craftsmen, handworkers. The *pays* pertained to the vernacular form of culture. The feeling of belonging to the same community stemmed from the use of the same dialect, the same words and the same turns of phrase. It also grew out of the frequenting of the same places (e.g. market places or fairs), and out of the participation in the same feasts. In his/her home place, a person might act spontaneously; he/she had not to appear well-mannered. The feeling of belonging to a small country (a *pays*) was not as strong for the well-to-do: their identities already relied on a wider territorial basis.

At the end of the 19th century, when regional geography took its modern form in Western and Central Europe, the feeling of belonging to a *pays* was still strong among the lower social classes, especially in rural areas, as was revealed by most regional monographs of the French school of geography until World War Two. At that time, many geographers tried to map these basic units and define their mean size precisely: the dominant idea was that they covered smaller areas than regions, from 100 to 1,000km<sup>2</sup> (exceptionally 2,000) (Foncin 1898). These small territorial units were known through a popular name which referred to a former forest (e.g. Yvelines in France), types of soil (Terrefort, i. e. heavy soil), a small gallic or germanic tribe (Vexin, from the Gallic *Veiocasses*), or a city (Beaunois, from Beaune). The *pays* did not have precise limits: it existed less through its boundaries than its centre. At a time when science tried to be positive and objective, the subjectivity of the *pays* appeared dangerous. The idea of a small country (*pays*) was criticized by Gallois (1908). He showed the great variability to their limits, their fuzziness, and the frequent transformations of their names. The coincidence of *pays* with natural regions was the exception rather than the rule. As a result, Gallois refused to consider the *pays* a scientific category. Almost any reference to the lived experience of space disappeared as a consequence— which was a pity !

---

<sup>1</sup> This word is used here with the meaning of a small region where individuals feel at home – as for the French *pays*.

With growing urbanization and the decline of the peasant cultures that characterized the first half of the 20th century, the *pays* ceased to appear as the most significant territorial entity for the lower classes in a country like France. The only mention of the lived experience of space in the regions geographers studied then was the reference they still made to their popular names (noms de *pays*): they intuitively knew that it was an essential element if the significance of space in social life was to be understood.

#### THE 1970s: THE SENSE OF PLACE

The analysis of the subjective dimension of regional organization took other forms during the 1970s. Geographers became increasingly interested in the sense of place, the lived experience of region, territoriality and Hägerstrand's 'time geography.' In anglophone countries, the 1970s brought a new curiosity for the sense of place. The theme was first explored by a group of geographers with a good training in phenomenology: Edward Relph (1970), Leonard Guelke (1974), for instance. They rediscovered the pioneer research of Eric Dardel<sup>2</sup> (1952). Other geographers followed similar orientations because of their religious faith (e.g. Buttimer). For these then young people, what was important for a geographer who chose to adopt the regional approach was not precise delimitation of regional units on a map, but rather the way individuals were sensitive to the forms, colours and smells they encountered in their lives. Tied to these impressions, the sense of place became the central theme of many research projects (Buttimer, 1976 ; Relph, 1976). This new line of enquiry tried to find antecedents in the studies relative to the personality of countries developed at the beginning of the 20th century, even if at that time, what was at stake was the characterization of whole nations. There was then no interest in the personality of places or small areas.

The new orientation opened up many perspectives: for the first time, geographers could rely on literary sources, or take their inspiration from artistic works. Novels, like Richard Llewellyn's *How Green was my Valley* or Giovanni Tomasso di Lampedusa's *Il Gattopardo* could be used as geographic evidence. Geography ceased to be the exclusive domain of geographers. It took advantage of the humanities. In France, the influence of Gaston Bachelard's *La Poétique de l'espace* (1957) was strong: hence the emphasis given to place as a shelter where individuals sought protection against the dangers which threatened them elsewhere; it appeared as a niche. The research developed on the sense of place transformed geography deeply. For the first time, the testimony of individuals, their sensitivity and their subjectivity were taken seriously. Research on the sense of place did not, however, replace the classical forms of regional geography : they did not cover the same aspects of reality.

#### THE 1970s: THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF SPACE

---

<sup>2</sup> Eric Dardel (1900-1968) taught geography and history in French secondary school. He was associated with French anthropology through Launhardt, the study of religions through Mircea Eliade and the early translations of Heidegger in French. A protestant, he thought that geography had to deal with the meaning Earth took in human life.

In francophone countries, the new orientation of regional geography took a slightly different form: the lived experience of space was its central concern. The idea came from Armand Frémont (1972; 1976). He liked fieldwork, the analysis of landscapes and direct contacts with local people. For him, the literary or artistic translation of the way geographers experienced space played a paramount role in the discipline. Frémont was interested in the reactions of geographers confronting field realities and in the experience lived by local people. For him, as for his English-speaking counterparts working on the sense of place, geographers had to rely on literary and artistic sources. However, his curiosities were not exactly similar to those present in the anglophone countries at the same time. In his interpretation of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, Frémont (1972) was not interested only in the place where Emma Bovary lived. He explored all her moves and those of her partners. He showed in this way how the mid-19th century hierarchy of central places was organized in the province of Normandy, and what Mrs Bovary sought in each one. *Vivre l'espace au Japon* by Augustin Berque (1982) was certainly the best book devoted to the study of the lived experience of space. Using philological sources, relying on the philosophy of Tetsuro Watsuji (a Japanese follower of Heidegger), he showed that the Japanese reality is structured, whatever the scale, through a fundamental opposition between what is internal and what is external. That explains the specificities of the Japanese forms of spatial organization : the attention given to homes and gardens, the indifference to public spaces.

#### THE 1970s: 'TIME GEOGRAPHY'

Thorsten Hägerstrand proposed a new methodology for geography in 1970. He was not specifically interested in the regional approach, but his ideas had important consequences for the questions we study in this paper. Hägerstrand took his inspiration from the research developed by the American statistician and demographer Alfred James Lotka in the 1930s. In seeking to study the demography of a country, he gave equal weight to time and space: instead of relying on the data provided by censuses, he was interested in the trajectories of individuals: place and time of birth, marriage, birth of child(ren), death. The originality of such an approach was great: territory ceased to appear as a global entity, being rather made up of a multitude of itineraries, each followed by an individual or group of individuals. The geography of Hägerstrand completely modified the perception of territorial realities for two reasons: it conferred a dynamic dimension upon geographical distributions, and it presented reality as resulting from a multiplicity of intersecting trajectories rooted in particular places.

#### THE 1970s: TERRITORY

Many geographers with an interest in the regional approach considered that it was not enough to study the sense of places or the lived experience of space. In the anglophone countries, the majority accepted substitution of the study of places for that of regions. The situation differed in countries speaking latin languages (Italy, France, Spain, Portugal and Latin America). There the term 'territory' became increasingly popular at the end of the 1970s. The word 'region' appeared too neutral for realities which resulted mainly from human initiatives and

activities. To speak of territory underscored the presence of social groups in the studied areas, but created a problem, since the word has so many connotations.

Territory had a political dimension. In accordance with the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, the areas upon which a State exerted full sovereignty were defined. In 1972, Jean Gottmann wrote a book on this theme entitled *The Significance of Territory*. Territory was also a central concept in ethology. For ethologists, the territory appeared to be a key-element in the life of many animal species: the demographic regulation of their populations was achieved through the division of space into territories, which allowed for the control of their reproduction. The books of the Austrian Konrad Lorenz, the American Robert Ardrey (1966) and the Dutch Nikolaas Tinbergen (1967) had a large impact on public opinion at the end of the 1960s.

For the numerous geographers, which took then their inspiration either from political geography or ethology, the fact that a territory coincided with areas in which a power was (or powers were) in action was a central element in its definition. Later, Robert Sack (1986) also underscored the way territory facilitated spatial control and was linked to the exercise of power.

For many geographers, territory was important since it offered a foundation for identities. Jean-Pierre Raison (1977) working in Eastern Africa and Madagascar observed that some groups could only define themselves through the area in which they lived and invested their sensibility. He qualified them as 'geographical societies.' Most geographers preferred to use a different term: 'territoriality.' At that time, Joël Bonnemaïson was preparing his doctoral dissertation based on his life for several years in one of the islands of Vanuatu archipelago. The identification of social groups with their territories was as strong there as in Madagascar or Eastern Africa. Bonnemaïson (1987, which presents field work done between 1972 and 1982) analyzed it in line with several perspectives: as an expression of the myths which gave a significance to the life of these groups; as a symbolic expression of the history of human settlement in those areas; as a basis for spatial organization where the opposition of sacred and profane areas was always strong, and as a form of spatial structuring wherein networks were as significant as boundaries.

## THE 1980s: PLACE AND STRUCTURATIONISM

The 1980 brought the need for restructuring of the whole field of regional studies. The first orientation then explored was centred on place, but differed much from that focused on the sense of place of the 1970s. It was a time during which many radical geographers discovered that Marxist theory had no real spatial content. Some, like David Harvey (1982), decided to inject spatial notions into the old categories used in *Das Capital*, i.e. capital, work, land, class, mode of production. Others chose another way: they developed structurationist approaches.

At the beginning, structurationism had no spatial dimension. It was born out of a reaction to the dehumanized character of structuralism. The responsibility of the individual had

completely disappeared from the varied forms this conception of the social sciences had assumed during the 1960s and 1970s. For structurationists, the individual initiative always played an essential role in society: without it, social sciences would be unable to take account of the historical dimension of the systems they studied. Between the structure, which was necessarily static, and human initiative, which was the engine of social transformations, the structurationist theory introduced an intermediate level. This level was conceived differently depending on the author. The *habitus*<sup>3</sup> of Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist, was the best known example of such a hypothesized intermediary level of reality (Bourdieu, 1980). Allan Pred, an American geographer, was well aware of Hägerstrand's time geography: individuals stood in particular places for shorter or longer periods along the trajectories they followed. They contributed to the specificities of these places, but were marked by their atmosphere, their traditions, and the persons they met there. For Pred (1984), places appeared in this way as the intermediate level that structurationists were looking for. He mobilized with much subtlety the techniques of time geography and the new structurationist themes when studying Scania, the southernmost part of Sweden (Pred 1986).

In Britain, the idea of place as the key-element of structurationism attracted soon geographers like Thrift and sociologists like Anthony Giddens. Place (or more exactly, *locale* - since it took into account the influence of information circuits), played a central role in the structurationism of the latter (Giddens 1981; 1984). The superiority of Giddens' structurationism over Bourdieu's came from this choice: the *habitus* remained too close to the idea of structure as developed in the 1960s to give a really human and historical dimension to social sciences. During the 1980s, the success of the idea of place came, in Britain, from its structurationist interpretation. Nigel Thrift (1983; 1998) was one of the first to understand clearly its possible use in the regional approach. John Agnew (1987) insisted on the significance of place in political processes. Doreen Massey (1984 ; 1993) ; showed how globalization made place more 'porous'. Ronald J. Johnston (1991) proposed a reformulation of regional geography based on the structurationist conception of place.

The interest that marxist or marxian<sup>4</sup> geographers expressed in the structurationist theory of place was quite understandable. However, the regional geography they tried to rebuild offered obvious weaknesses: it ignored the problem of identities, for instance. It was certainly for that reason that the regional perspective did not recover wholly in the anglophone countries.

## THE 1980s: THE 'IMAGINED' COMMUNITIES

---

<sup>3</sup> For Pierre Bourdieu, men received during their formation and through the influence of their social environment reflexes, world visions and ethic principles which condition their behaviour during all their life : that is their *habitus*.

<sup>4</sup> From the 60s and mainly in the anglophone world, many social scientists relied on categories they borrowed from Marx, but without accepting the orthodox interpretations that Communist parties had imposed in continental Europe : it is for them that the epithet marxian has been coined.

In 1983, Benedict Anderson published a book entitled *Imagined Communities*. As a historian, he was interested in the building of nations from the 18th century. This evolution was parallel to the industrial revolution. What was the justification of the title of his book? The fact that most nations covered so extensive an area that nobody was able to develop a direct knowledge of all the places they contained. The problem of Anderson was fundamentally a geographical one: how was such a type of representation built and diffused? He answered the question in three points:

- imagined communities were intellectual constructs, which relied on the imagination,
- these representations were then diffused through the population by way of education and propaganda,
- the building of 'imagined communities' ultimately relied on some forms of landscape planning: rulers had to localize monuments and symbolic scenery which would give material support to national feeling. Other actions also had to be planned: in order to keep a national feeling alive, it had to be maintained through rituals, ceremonies, sacrifices, etc.

The problem Anderson was the first to explore was a fundamental one: how is it possible to give a feeling of identity to social groups all across wide areas? The study of regional organization has not to focus only on objective realities and the way to detect and delimitate spatial structures in them. It has to analyze the role of informal education, school systems and the medias in passing spatial information from opinion leaders on the general public. Regional studies rely increasingly on the analysis of texts – school books, travel guides, for instance – and radio or T.V. broadcast. Claire Hancock explored in this way the construction of the French conception of London and Britain and the British perception of Paris and France through the travel guides published in the two countries between 1800 and 1870 (Hancock, 2003).

The construction of imagined communities involves moral categories: regions are ranked along scales of performance. Michelet based his early discussion of French regional organization on the opposition between the areas which had to fight for the national integrity, those which could develop peacefully their activities and the Parisian region, the *sensorium*, which had to decide for the whole country (Michelet, 1833). Recent studies have shown that Korean regions are ranked on such a system of moral valuation (Délissen, 2004; Gélézeau, 2004).

#### NEW RESEARCH ORIENTATIONS: IDENTITIES AND TERRITORIALITY

Wilbur Zelinsky (2001) showed that the problem of identities was ignored by geographers, as well as by other social sciences, until the mid-20th century. It appears today as a key-question for anyone who wishes to understand the social sphere. Such a situation reflects the role of space in the building of identities. This process is generally presented in such a simplified way that nothing is said about its spatial aspects: 'I am similar to other individuals since I believe in the same symbols and the same values. I share the same identity as they do.' The significance of symbols is ignored. A symbol is not a pure abstraction.

In order to gain some consistency, it has to rely on images, material signs, monuments, etc. Every material element of the environment may serve as a sign of belonging: tools, dress, houses, fields, etc. Language displays the same properties.

In primitive cultures, groups were still unable to develop abstract forms of symbolization. Myths then presented space as the mould which united groups. With the development of more abstract forms of thought, new types of symbols appeared: heavenly or subterranean gods, moral abstractions (law, justice, liberty). From that time on, identities combined the traditional rootedness in local place (pays), landscape and social groups with wider feelings of belonging, anchored into the landscape thanks to signs and symbols: the cross, the crescent, the flag, monuments, etc. Societies then offered multi-layered and multi-scalar systems of identities. The existence of other groups was fundamental in the building of identities: the delimitation of boundaries —and the resulting feeling of being locked in—favoured the emergence of a strong sense of belonging (Paasi 1991; 1996).

The contemporary period is characterized by the decline of the traditional vernacular forms of culture. These relied on the direct audio-visual transmission of practices, know-how and knowledge. These forms of culture played an essential role in the material differentiation of the Earth. The consequences of their decline are deep: as explained by Pierre Nora (1984), there was in the past a type of memory which was easily passed down from generation to generation: the memory of the vernacular aspects of culture. Everybody knew personally at least a part of the techniques upon which it was founded. Nora qualifies this form of memory as live memory (*mémoire vive*). With the disappearance of the traditional forms of vernacular cultures, the material bases of identities are rubbed out. This is the origin of the contemporary crisis of identities. A philosophical reflection on that problem was developed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1980). A Brazilian geographer, Rogerio Haesbaert (2004) has recently explored the processes of territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization thoroughly.

## THE SOCIAL AND SYMBOLIC CONSTRUCTION OF SPACE

With a view to explain the genesis of regions, today's research takes advantage of reflections: on place as a formative level of society in line with the structurationist perspective, on imagined communities and on the origins and forms of the contemporary crisis of identities and the ensuing new forms of territoriality. Until the 1960s, the main ambition of regional geographers was to understand the way space was organized objectively: they consequently stressed the economic organization of material space. Today they try to understand the social construction of regions as an element of the symbolic structuring of space (Lencioni 1999).

Like the nation, the region is an imagined community, but it presents specificities. During the industrial revolution, the building of national consciousness resulted from the voluntary action

of the ruling political and economic elites within an area whose limits, the boundaries of the State, were clear cut. For the region, the shutting down of space was never complete. Symbolic places were not planned systematically.

The idea of the imagined community assigns all its significance to the developments of the reflection on the regional approach which occurred during the last generation. This stresses the lived dimension of places, regions as areas linked to the exercise of power, regional spaces as symbolically organized constructs and regions as mental constructs. As a result, regional research is increasingly concerned with the symbolic structuration of space and the ways the feelings of belonging to imagined communities are passed down. It is as interested in the narratives relative to space as in material environments.

### THE NEW SIGNIFICANCE OF LANDSCAPE

Landscape has always been an important element in regional research: in a positivist perspective, it was considered an expression of the ecological and economic functioning of society: hence the interest in the genesis of rural landscapes, for instance. Contemporary territorialities are different. In urbanized areas, there is always a multiplicity of communities, each one built on a specific feeling of belonging. For each of these groups, the problem is to create or maintain symbolic centres and meeting places in order to keep identities alive. The problem is also to assert their presence before other communities. Hence the new significance of public spaces: they have to provide each group with the opportunity to express its identity; it is a way for them to be sure they are accepted by others. Such an evolution is conducive to conflict situations. In this connection, Donald Mitchell (2000) speaks of the 'cultural wars' of the modern World. Thanks to the new forms taken by the regional approach, it is easier to understand the very nature of modern space, with many groups coexisting within the same areas and competing symbolically for acknowledgement.

### SHOULD REGIONAL ANALYSIS DISAPPEAR IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD ?

Behind regional analysis, there is a simple idea: distance plays a key role in social life. Things which are co-present are different from those which occur far away. Progress in transport and communication facilities has evidently reduced the influence of distance: scales have changed; the advantages of central locations are lesser than in the past; identities are less tied to the sharing of a continuous territory. But the questioning of the regional approach has deeper reasons for some geographers.

For Jones III and Natter (1999, 239) 'the disciplinary processes heretofore have worked to separate as distinct objects of inquiry 'space', on the one hand, and 'texts' and 'images', on the other.' It is now possible to move beyond this dichotomy. The division between space and representation, or science and poetry, was a consequence of Enlightenment rationality. Poststructuralism is breaking down these links:



‘As various poststructuralisms have argued, no 'object', whether it be text, image, or space, is pre-given and representable in its full presence; rather, signs are contingently and multiply sutured to objects through the operation of social power’ (Jones III and Natter 1999, p.242).

The form of social power which is involved in these processes is hegemony :

‘Through the planning document that seals the geometric fate of space and the subjects within it, through the regional texts and images that make coherent the relationship between certain people and certain spaces, and through political discourses that normalize space's private and public demarcations, hegemony is complicitous in stabilizing constructions of both representations and social space.’ (Jones III and Natter 1999, p. 244).

As a result, the demarcation between geography and the humanities has to be erased and a new discipline will appear. With the rise of new sensibilities and conceptions, the separation between ‘Worlds’ and ‘Selves’, which was one of the basis of geography, has ceased to be evident. The aim of regional geography was to explore these boundaries: this subdiscipline has lost its meaning:

‘[...] the infusion of the modernist grid on social space — in our neighborhoods and streets, our maps, our technology, and our time-space routines— had increased spatiotemporal juxtapositions to the degree that correlation analysis is no longer tenable. The simultaneous fragmentations and flows set in motion by the globalization of capital and culture have so undermined previously secure definitions of space that to speak with certainty of any such grouping (such as community, region, or nation), one risks to be labeled a romantic.’ (Jones III 2001, p. 124).

Because of the strength of social power under the guise either of geo-power or hegemony, all the changes which occurred in both geography and humanities from the Enlightenment did not alter what was essential, i. e. the role of geography as a technology of power. People had to wait until the last generation for a revolutionary turn in the discipline : it was based on the rise of the postmodernist, postcolonial and poststructuralist critical attitudes. It entailed a deep change in the whole epistemology of geography.

In such a perspective, the regional approach is condemned because of its ties with forms of power which locked up people in places and classes. In a similar vein, Marston (2005) developed the idea of a human geography without scale, i.e. where distance decay ceased to play a dominant role. Does it mean that regions will disappear from the agendas of the geographers of the future. What is at stake in these reflections is much more the will to develop a purer category than the idea that regional distributions will disappear from the Earth's surface.

## CONCLUSION

Since the 1970s, reflections on the idea of a region have been characterized by the coexistence of two approaches:

- the classical one, with its emphasis on objective realities and the role of economic forces in the shaping of space,
- and the lived space one, with its interest in images, representations, signs, symbols, affectivity, and meaning.

It appears today that the two approaches share a common aim: how to explain the social construction of space? In the past, geographers insisted mainly on the role of ecological conditions, economic infrastructure and activities. Today, they are also interested in ideological superstructures, narratives, representations and images.

At a time when technical progress, increasing mobility and the new facilities offered by telecommunications are rubbing out most of the traditional forms of material differentiation on the terrestrial surface, the significance of identities is growing. This evolution prevents a complete uniformization of landscapes. It generates more complex structures, with superimposed textures of emerging islands and archipelagos. Submitted to strong unifying forces, people react by exalting whatever differentiates them from the others. The will to be recognized generates more conflictual territorialities.

As regards the scientific study of human societies, the regional approach no longer appears as a stage which would come after all the others and would in a way be a facultative one. It has to be used from the start. All human beings did not receive and live their culture in the same way. They did not share the same experience of what unites them with or distinguishes them from others. These differences result from the diversity of the trajectories followed by people all through their lives, from the way they receive, adapt and transform their culture, and from the role played in most cases by a deeply humanized environment. Society is never an abstract reality: it exists as much on the material as on the symbolic level; it cannot be understood if its geographic dimensions, and the representations related to them, are ignored.

## REFERENCES

- Agnew, J. (1987), *Place and Politics. The Geographical Mediation of State and Society*, London, Unwin Hyman.
- Anderson, B. (1983), *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso.
- Ardrey, R. (1966), *The Territorial Imperative. A Personal Inquiry into the Animal Origins of Property and Nations*, New York, Dell.
- Asheim, B.T. (1996), "Industrial districts as 'learning regions'. A condition for prosperity", *European Planning Studies*, vol. 4, n° 4, p. 379-400.
- Bachelard, G.(1957), *La poétique de l'espace*, Paris, PUF.
- Becattini, G. (ed.) (1987), *Mercato e forze locali : il distretto industriale*, Bologna, Il Mulino.
- Berque, A. (1982), *Vivre l'espace au Japon*, Paris, PUF.

- Bonnemaison, J. (1987), *Les fondements d'une identité : territoire, histoire et société dans l'archipel de Vanuatu*, Paris, ORSTOM, 2 vol.
- Boschma, R. et R. C. Kloosterman (eds.) (2005), *Learning from Clusters. A Critical Assessment from an Economic-Geographic Perspective*, Dordrecht, Springer.
- Boudeville, J.R. (1966), *Problems of Regional Economic Planning*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1980), *Le Sens pratique*, Paris, Editions de Minuit.
- Buttimer, A. (1976), Grasping the Dynamism of the Lifeworld, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 66: 277-292.
- Christaller, W. (1933), *Die zentralen Orte in Süddeutschland*, Iena, G. Fischer.
- Claval, P. (1968), *Régions, nations, grands espaces*, Paris, Marie-Thérèse Genin.
- Claval, P., (1972), *Principes de géographie sociale*, Paris, Marie-Thérèse Genin et Editions Techniques.
- Claval, P. (1989), *La conquête de l'espace américain. Du Mayflower au Disneyworld*, Paris, Flammarion.
- Claval, P. (1992), *Introduction à la géographie régionale*, Paris, Nathan.
- Claval, P. (1998), *Histoire de la géographie française de 1870 à nos jours*, Paris, Nathan.
- Claval, P. (2003), *La géographie du XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, L'Harmattan.
- Claval, P. (2004), *La fabrication du Brésil. Une grande puissance en devenir*, Paris, Belin.
- Claval, P. (2006), *Géographie régionale. De la région au territoire*, Paris, Armand Colin.
- Claval, P., J.-P., Nardy (1968), *Pour le cinquantenaire de la mort de Paul Vidal de la Blache*, Paris, les Belles Lettres.
- Combes, P.-Ph., T. Mayer et J.-F. Thisse (2006), *Economie géographique. L'intégration des régions et des nations*, Paris, Economica.
- Courlet, C. (2001), "Les systèmes productifs locaux : de la définition au modèle" in DATAR, *Réseaux d'entreprises et territoires. Regards sur les systèmes productifs locaux*, Paris, La Documentation Française, p. 17-61.
- Dardel, E. (1952), *L'homme sur la Terre*, Paris, PUF.
- Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1980), *Mille plateaux*, Paris, Minuit.
- Délessen, A. (2004), "Frustrations centripètes et pays cachés. Retour sur le régionalisme coréen et la question du Cheolla, 1925-1993", *Géographie et cultures*, n° 51, p. 15-31.
- Demangeon, A. (1927), *Les îles Britanniques*, Paris, Armand Colin.
- Dickinson, R.E. (1947), *City, Region and Regionalism*, London, Kegan Paul
- Farinelli, F. (1999), Text and Image in the 18th and 19th Century German Geography: the Witz of Landscape and the Astuteness of Representation, in Buttimer, A., Brunn, S.D. and Wardenga U.(eds.), Text and Image. Social Construction of Regional Knowledges, Leipzig, *Beiträge zur regionale Geographie*, pp. 38-45.
- Foncin, P. (1898), *Les Pays de France. Projet de fédéralisme administratif*, Paris, A. Colin.
- Frémont, A. (1972), La région. Essai sur l'espace vécu, in *La Pensée géographique en France*, Saint-Brieuc, Presses Universitaires de Bretagne, pp. 644-678
- Frémont, A. (1976), *La Région, espace vécu*, Paris, PUF.
- Gallois, L.(1908), *Régions naturelles et noms de pays*, Paris, A. Colin.
- Gélézeau, V. (2004), "Introduction : le pouvoir des provinces coréennes", *Géographie et cultures*, n° 51, p. 3-13.
- Giddens, A. (1981), *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, London, Macmillan.
- Giddens, A. (1984), *The Constitution of Society. Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, Cambridge, Polity Press,
- Giraud-Soulavie, A. (1780-1784), *Histoire naturelle de la France méridionale*, Paris, 7 vol.
- Gottmann, J. (1972), *The Significance of Territory*, Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press.
- Grigg, D. (1969), The Agricultural Regions of the World: Review and Reflections, *Economic Geography*, 45: 95-132.
- Guelke, L. (1974), An Idealist Alternative to Human Geography, *Annals of the Association of the American Geographers*, 64: 193-202.

- Haesbaert, R. (2004), *O Mito da Desterritorialização. Do 'Fim' dos Territorios a Multiterritorialidade*, Rio de Janeiro, Bertrand Brazil.
- Hägerstrand, T. (1970), What about People in Regional Science, *Papers of the Regional Science Association*, 24: 7-21.
- Hancock, C. (2003), *Paris et Londres au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Représentations dans les guides et récits de voyage*, Paris, CNRS Editions.
- Hard, G. (1970), *Die 'Landschaft' der Sprache und die 'Landschaft' der Geographen*, Bonn, Dümmlers.
- Hartshorne, R. (1939), *The Nature of Geography*, Lawrence, Association of American Geographers.
- Harvey, D. (1982), *The Limits to Capital*, Oxford, Blackwell.
- Herbertson, A. J. (1905), The Major Natural Regions, *Geographical Journal*, 25: 300-312.
- Herberson, A. J. (1913-1914), Natural Regions, *Geographical Teaching*, 7: 300-312.
- Hoover, E.M. (1948), *The Location of Economic Activities*, New York, McGraw Hill.
- Isard, W. (1956), *Spatial Economics*, New York, John Wiley, Cambridge (Mass.), the M.I.T. Press.
- James, P.E. (1942), *Latin America*, New York, John Wiley.
- James, P.E. and Jones, C.F. (eds.), (1954), *American Geography. Inventory and Prospect*, Syracuse, Syracuse University Press.
- James, P.E., Martin, G. J. (1978), *The Association of American Geographers. The First Seventy-Five Years. 1904-1979*, Washington, Association of American Geographers.
- Johnston, R. J. (1991), *A Question of Place. Exploring the Practice of Human Geography*, Oxford, Blackwell.
- Jones, J. P. III (2001), Introduction. Segmented Worlds and Selves, in Adams, P. *et al.* (eds.), *Textures of Place. Exploring Humanist Geographies*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, pp. 121-128.
- Jones, J.P. III and Natter, W. (1999), Space 'and' representation', in Buttimer, A., Brunn, S.D. and Wardenga U.(eds.), *Text and Image. Social Construction of Regional Knowledges*, Leipzig, Beiträge zur regionale Geographie, pp. 239-247.
- Krugman, P.R. (1980), Scale Economies, Product Differentiation, and the Pattern of Trade, *American Economic Review*, 70: 950-959.
- Krugman, P.R. (1991), Increasing Returns and Economic Geography, *Journal of Political Economy*, 99: 483-499.
- Lencioni, S. (1999), *Região e geografia*, São Paulo, Edusp.
- Lösch, A. (1938), The Nature of Economic Regions, *Southern Economic Journal*, 5: 171-178.
- Marshall, A. (1890), *Principles of Economy*, London, Macmillan.
- Massey, D. (1984), *Spatial Divisions of Labour, Social Structures and the Geography of Production*, London, Macmillan.
- Massey, D. (1993), Power Geometry and a Progressive Sense of Place, in Bird, J. *et al.*(eds.), *Mapping the Futures: Local Culture, Global Change, Conference Papers*, London, Routledge.
- Michelet, J. (1833), *Tableau de la France*, in *Histoire de France*, Paris, vol. 2.
- Mitchell, D. (2000), *Cultural Geography. A Critical Introduction*, Oxford, Blackwell.
- Marston, S. A., Jones III, J.P. and Woodward, K. (2005), Human geography without scale, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 30, 4: 416-432.
- Nicolet, C. (1988), *L'Inventaire du monde. Géographie et politique aux origines de l'Empire romain*, Paris, Gallimard.
- Nora, P. (1984), Entre Mémoire et Histoire, in Nora, P. (ed.), *Les Lieux de mémoire*, vol. 1, La République, pp. XXV-ILII.
- Paasi, A. (1991), Deconstructing Regions:Notes on the Scales of Spatial Life, *Environment and Planning A*, 23: 239-256.
- Paasi, A. (1996), *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness. The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border*, Chichester, John Wiley.
- Palsky, G. (1996), *Des chiffres et des cartes. La cartographie quantitative au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, CTHS.
- Pecqueur, B. and J. B. Zimmermann (eds.), 2004, *Economie de proximités*, Paris, Hermès-Lavoisier.
- Perroux, F.(1955), La notion de pôle de croissance, *Economie appliquée*, 8: 307 sqq in Perroux, F. (1961), *L'Economie du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, PUF, pp. 142-144.

- Ponsard, C. (1955), *Economie et espace*, Paris, SEDES.
- Porter, P., 1990, *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, New York, Free Press.
- Pred, A. (1984), Structuration and Place: on the Becoming of Sense of Place and Structure of Feeling, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 74, 2: 179-297.
- Pred, A. (1986), *Place, Practice and Structure*, Cambridge, Polity Press, pp. X-268.
- Raison, J.-P. (1977), Perception et réalisation de l'espace dans la société Méridienne, *Annales Economie. Societe. Culture*, 3: 412-432.
- Reclus, E. (1875-1894), *Nouvelle Géographie Universelle. La Terre et les Hommes*, Paris, Hachette, 19 vol.
- Reclus, E. (1894), *Nouvelle Géographie Universelle. La Terre et les Hommes, Tome XIX, Amérique du Sud. L'Amazonie et la Plata. Guyanes, Brésil, Paraguay, Uruguay, République argentine*, Paris, Hachette.
- Relph, E. (1970), An Enquiry into the Relations between Phenomenology and Geography, *Canadian Geographer*, 14: 193-201.
- Relph, E., 1976, *Place and Placelessness*, Londres, Pion.
- Sack, R.D. (1986), *Human Territoriality. Its Theory and History*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Thrift, N. J. (1983), On the Determination of Social Action in Space and Time, *Environment and Planning, D, Society and Space*, 1: 23-57.
- Thrift, N. J. (1998), Towards a New Regional Geography, *Berichte zur deutschen Landeskunde*, 72, 1: 37-46.
- Tinbergen, N. (1967), *La vie sociale des animaux. Introduction à la sociologie animale*, Paris, Payot, 187p.
- Tuan, Y.-F. (1974), Space and Place: Humanistic Perspectives, *Progress in Geography*, 6: 233-246.
- Ullman, E. L. (1954), Geography as Spatial Interaction, *Committee on Regional Economic Analysis, Interregional Linkages*, Berkeley, pp. 63-71.
- Ullman, E. L. (1958), Regional Development and the Geography of Concentration, *Papers and Proceedings of the Regional Science Association*, pp. 179-198.
- Varii Auctores, (1934), Conventionalizing Geographic Investigation and Presentation, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 24: 77-122.
- von Thünen, J.H. (1826), *Der isolierte Staat in Beziehung auf Landwirtschaft und Nationalökonomie*, Hamburg, Perthes.
- Vidal de la Blache, P. (1888-1889), Des divisions fondamentales du sol français, *Bulletin littéraire*, 2: 1-7 and 49-57.
- Vidal de la Blache, P.(1903), *Tableau de la géographie de la France*, Paris, Armand Colin.
- Vidal de la Blache, P.(1904), Pays de France, *Réforme sociale*, 48, 8: 333-344.
- Vidal de la Blache, P.(1910), Les régions françaises, *Revue de Paris*, 15 December, pp. 821-841.
- Weber, A.(1909), *Über den Standort der Industrien*, Tübingen,
- Zelinsky, W. (2001), The World and its Identity Crisis, in Adams, P. Hoelscher, S. And Till, K.E. (eds.), *Textures of Place*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, pp.129-149.