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Geographical excursions and international congresses

- 1 The practice of undertaking fieldwork for research has attracted considerable critical attention among geographers in recent years, with feminist perspectives being presented in *The Professional Geographer* in 1994 and over sixty scholars contributing to a double issue of the *Geographical Review* in 2001 devoted to "Doing fieldwork". In June 2008, an international colloquium at the Université d'Artois explored the role of fieldwork in geography and the significance of personal identification with research territory. By contrast, the organization of excursions under expert guidance has passed relatively unnoticed. Researchers in the natural sciences have been long accustomed to field investigation and by the late 19th century geologists, botanists and foresters routinely incorporated field study in their teaching (Puyo, 2006). Following the scientific exploration of terrain by such pioneers as Meriwether Lewis and William Clark early in the 19th century and by John Wesley Powell in later years, geologists in North America organized excursions enabling students to observe landforms and to advance explanatory hypotheses (De Margerie, 1915, 1954).

- 2 William Morris Davis (1850-1934), who taught geology at Harvard from 1878 to 1912 and was a frequent visitor to Western Europe, enthusiastically espoused this approach. His contacts with Paul Vidal de la Blache (1845-1918) and his disciples reinforced the dual significance of fieldwork for research and of excursions for student training. During the 1890s Vidal, together with his “lieutenant” Lucien Gallois (1857-1941) and Charles Vélain (1845-1925) (professor of physical geography in the Faculté des Sciences of the University of Paris), led geographical excursions for students at the Ecole Normale Supérieure and the Faculté des Lettres of the Sorbonne (Blanchard, 1961). At a very different scale, the VIIIth International Geographical Congress of 1904 enabled field workers from both sides of the Atlantic to come into contact. The whole meeting was organized as a kind of vast excursion comprising formal paper sessions and site visits. Beginning in Washington D.C. the Congress moved to Philadelphia, New York, Niagara Falls, Chicago and then Saint-Louis, where an international exhibition was taking place (Collignon, 1996, p. 109). W.M. Davis then led a three-week post-Congress excursion that took a group of geographers, including Vidal and Emmanuel de Martonne (1873-1955), further south to the Grand Canyon of the Colorado and into Mexican territory (Broc, 1991, p. 639). The ideas and teaching methods of Davis greatly impressed Vidal who described his guide as “the most Europeanised geographer I have met here” in the United States; he proceeded to entrust one of his young students, Henri Baulig (1877-1962) to his care (Beckinsale, 1981, 118). Emulating the field sciences, the running of inter-university excursions for French geographers began in 1905 when De Martonne led a fieldtrip in Brittany for academics and students (Puyo, 2006; Wolff, 2001; Robic *et al.*, 2006, p. 104). With the exception of the wartime years, such excursions took place annually until well into the 1960s and were reported in the *Annales de Géographie*, but thereafter the size of the geographical community in France made such events unmanageable (Table 1).
- 3 The value of major fieldtrips was demonstrated in another context in 1911 when W.M. Davis organized his geomorphological “pilgrimage” from Ireland through Wales, south-west England and France to Italy, enlisting guidance from local experts *en route* (Davis, 1912). Discovering new terrain and indulging in academic “networking” was further reinforced in 1912 during the great transcontinental excursion, also headed by Davis, that took forty-three European geographers across the North American continent in the company of US geographers and scientists in cognate fields (American Geographical Society, 1915). International conferences and excursions continue to assist the transmission of geographical knowledge among scholars and national communities of geographers (Union Géographique Internationale, 1972; Robic, Briend & Rössler, 1996). Successive Congresses in the first third of the 20th century served to diffuse the “new geography” of Vidal de La Blache (Berdoulay, 1981). After important earlier meetings in the USA (1904) and Great Britain (1928), French geographers hosted the XIIIth International Geographical Congress (IGC) in Paris for nine days of September 1931. As well as organising formal delivery of academic communications, French scholars ran excursions to various parts of the “Hexagon” and beyond. These fieldtrips enabled them to display something of the spatial diversity of the nation and to demonstrate the characteristics of French geographical scholarship on the ground.
- 4 Vidal de La Blache had ensured that excursions became regular features of instruction at the Sorbonne during the first decade of the twentieth century. For example, Raoul Blanchard (1877-1965) described his first student field trip that involved three days in the Pays de Bray in 1898. Vidal, De Martonne, Gallois and Maurice Zimmermann (1869-1950)

participated, but the excursion was led by Vélain (Blanchard, 1961, p. 199). Enthusiastic support was provided in subsequent years by De Martonne, Albert Demangeon (1872-1940) and other Vidalians. As head of the Institut de Géographie Alpine, Blanchard led regular excursions around Grenoble, with other Vidalians sharing the view that their “new geography” was a science as well as an art. In the early years, geographical excursions involved travelling by train and walking substantial distances, with discovery of landscape, economy and society combined with presentation of explanations on the ground. Availability of motor coaches after World War I enabled greater flexibility in arranging itineraries, which previously depended on railway services. Demangeon’s papers, conserved in the Bibliothèque Mazarine in Paris, reveal that excursions organised from the Sorbonne between the world wars were not simply “look-see” operations from a moving vehicle but involved visits and interviews on farms and in factories (Clout 2003). Fieldtrips led by Blanchard ranged from day-long hikes in the countryside surrounding Grenoble to week-long excursions in the Alps conducted largely on foot.

- 5 De Martonne was especially critical of the excursions offered by British geographers on the occasion of the XIIth IGC at Cambridge in 1928, since his fieldtrips in France were more serious and strenuous affairs (De Martonne, 1929). While praising the visit to Wales organised by Herbert John Fleure (1877-1969), De Martonne regretted that other excursions were confined to southeast England and had an affinity with tours arranged by Thomas Cook. He lamented that no opportunity was afforded for a visit to Scotland that would have had a very able guide in his pupil Alan Grant Ogilvie (1887-1954) (Withers, 2010). In short, the experience of the XIIth IGC convinced De Martonne, as secretary-general of the international meeting to be held in France in 1931, that his countrymen would do better.
- 6 The Paris Congress coincided with the great *Exposition Coloniale* at the Porte Dorée on the edge of the Bois de Vincennes that enabled visiting scholars to appreciate the French empire at its peak (Agéron, 1997; Lebovics, 1992; Ungar, 2003). Visits to learned societies and to collections of historic maps were arranged, but urban fieldtrips were lacking (Clout, 2005a). Instead, eight excursions were arranged, four in advance of the Paris conference and four after it (Table 2). Costs ranged from almost 4,500 francs to visit Algeria to only 600 francs for the excursion in the Ile-de-France and Upper Normandy. It was possible to combine the full array of paper sessions with detailed exposure to two regions of France. The scope of the excursions varied considerably, with some being emphatically physical in emphasis (excursions A2, B2), the visit to the Ile-de-France and Upper Normandy (B1) concentrating on economic issues, and the remainder offering holistic views of the areas being visited. As always, experience in the field was mediated by the interests of the leader and the participants as well as by their previous experiences and the “cultural baggage” that they carried with them (Livingstone, 2003, pp. 40-48).
- 7 Under the firm hand of De Martonne, the Congress secretariat ensured that every leader produced an excursion guide, with each of these booklets being printed to a standard format by Armand Colin, which also published the proceedings of the Congress (Union Géographique Internationale, 1932-34). The eight handbooks convey each itinerary and present the main features to be observed and the explanations offered. Only the field trip to the Seine Valley and the Channel coast (B2) yielded a post-excursion report (*Ibid.*, vol. II, 1933). Although the guidebooks were identical in external appearance, their length and content varied (Table 2). Some focused directly on the itinerary (e.g. B3), whilst others included scientific essays on fundamental principles as well as itemising sites to be

visited (A2). Some contained copious bibliographies and lists of maps (A3, B4), but others mentioned just a handful of sources (B1). Some leaders included detailed maps (A2), block diagrams (B4) and photographs (B3, B4), but others were content with mapping the route (B1). The guidebooks provide a rich source of information on substance but they do not elucidate methods of instruction in the field. Nor, can they report on the interaction between leaders and participants. The number of geographers on each trip is known, but the list of names is recorded for only one excursion (B2), which was attended by ever-vigilant De Martonne.

- 8 The offer of eight excursions meant that large stretches of France were not exposed to visiting scholars. In seeking to understand which areas were displayed it is necessary to examine the structure of the French academic community of the time. In 1931, the community of geographers in France was small, with fifteen geography institutes in the “Hexagon” plus an additional one in Algiers, together comprising eighteen professors and five other teaching staff (de Martonne, 1924; Cholley, 1957). At the moment of the XIIIth IGC, all French university geographers could be contained in a single department of our own time. The largest concentration was at the Sorbonne (four professors and one lecturer), with the patronage of Vidal de La Blache (and subsequently of de Martonne and Demangeon) being critical in the pattern of academic appointments in many provincial centres. Although a Vidalian by training, Blanchard operated his own system of patronage from Grenoble across southern France. He supported the Paris Congress by ensuring that his disciples organised excursions, but he did not deliver a paper, chair a session, or head a fieldtrip. The Congress sessions in Paris were essentially a Sorbonne affair under the management of his rival, de Martonne (Broc, 2001). The number of doctorates being completed continued to increase during the inter-war years but it seems that only scholars who had defended their theses were entrusted to lead an excursion in 1931 (Briend & Joseph, 1997). Additional support was enlisted from academic geologists; indeed, one of the excursions had a geologist as its co-director. The leaders of the eight excursions may be grouped into three classes: *docteurs* presenting their research findings in the field; professors with substantial experience of particular regions; and physical scientists.

Presenting the thesis in the field

- 9 Georges Chabot (1890-1975) and André Cholley (1886-1968), whose doctoral work had received patronage from professors at the Sorbonne, represented the first type of leader (Chabot, 1927; Cholley, 1925). They combined their expertise to offer a ten-day excursion that began in the Jura (A1) under the direction of Chabot and moved to the Pre-Alps of Savoy for the second part, headed by Cholley (Chabot & Cholley, 1931). The first part of the trip built on the inter-university excursion that Chabot led in 1928. Particular attention was paid to physical features in the limestone Jura and the glaciated Pre-Alps, with three climbs of not more than three hours apiece, and more relaxing visits to a vineyard, a cheese farm, and the abbey of Baume-les-Messieurs.
- 10 The seven-day visit to the south-eastern Massif Central (A2) headed by Henri Baulig was a further presentation of doctoral work by a Sorbonnard, with this scholar making a very explicit link between the excursion and his thesis (Baulig, 1928, 1931). Albeit in reverse direction, this trip included the route of the inter-university excursion led in 1906 by de Martonne, the botanist Charles Flahault (1852-1935) and geographer Léon Malavialle

(1860-1924), the latter two being experts from Montpellier. Baulig stressed that the use of a motor coach in 1931 allowed much more ground to be covered than a quarter century previously, enabling him to extend his excursion through the south-eastern fringe of the Massif to Le Puy. Participants were alerted to wear stout shoes and be prepared for rain, cold and heat. An unidentified British participant lamented two days of torrential autumnal rains in Languedoc but then rejoiced that the sun shone for the remainder of the trip (Anon, 1931, p. 550). Without doubt, “the leader’s brilliant expositions of the landscapes observed led to many useful and lively discussions, and to the conviction of the majority that he had found the true explanations” (*Ibid*). Geomorphology was the main purpose of Baulig’s excursion, however other aspects of geography were not neglected.

- 11 A third example of *docteurs* presenting their research findings was provided by Jules Blache (1893-1970) and Maurice Pardé (1893-1973) who, under the patronage of Blanchard in Grenoble, had researched respectively rural life in one *pays* of the Alps and the hydrology of the Rhône (Blache, 1931; Pardé, 1925; Blache & Pardé, 1931). Part of their excursion (A4) incorporated routes that Blanchard had taken with the inter-university group in 1910 and Daniel Faucher had used on the later excursion in 1927. Participants undertook several climbs of less than four hours each time, including the ascent of the Charmant-Som in the Grande-Chartreuse massif. Both aged 37, Blache and Pardé were remarkably young to be entrusted with running an excursion in the presence of leading international scholars.

Sharing local experience

- 12 The second category of leaders comprised geographers with long experience of particular regions but who had completed their doctorates on other parts of France. Philippe Arbos (1882-1956) had been born in the eastern Pyrenees and wrote early work on the Plain of Languedoc, however his doctoral research was on pastoral life in the Alps under the patronage of Blanchard (Arbos, 1922; Blanchard, 1963, pp. 139-50). In 1919 Arbos moved to Clermont-Ferrand and became a specialist on the Auvergne. He led the inter-university excursion in the region in 1924, published an innovative study on the urban geography of Clermont-Ferrand, and wrote a textbook on the Auvergne for a series edited by Demangeon (Arbos, 1932). With an array of different *pays* arranged around the lowland trough of the Limagnes, and economies as varied as the industries of Clermont-Ferrand and the high pastures of the Cantal, Arbos was able to offer a holistic interpretation on his excursion (A3) (Arbos, 1931). The longest walks he organized were of three hours’ duration on the Puy-de-Sancy and of two hours on the Puy-Mary.
- 13 Ernest Bénévent (1883-1967) had presented his doctoral work on the climate of the Alps under the patronage of Blanchard, however, the remainder of his career was spent at Aix-en-Provence (Bénévent, 1926). Like Arbos, he proposed to integrate a wide range of themes along his 5-day itinerary (B3) that would start at Avignon, proceed to Marseille (where he would be joined by local expert Paul Masson), and then proceed along the Côte d’Azur to Nice (Bénévent, 1931). Most of the journey would be by motor coach, with a boat trip around the port of Marseille. In fact, this excursion did not take place for a lack of subscribers, however Bénévent revived the itinerary for the annual inter-university excursion of 1935 that involved eighty participants from fifteen universities (Bénévent 1936, p. 638).

- 14 After almost twenty years teaching at the Sorbonne, Albert Demangeon was eminently qualified to lead an excursion covering western parts of the Paris Basin and the lower Seine valley (B1) (Demangeon, 1931). His doctorate had been on *La Picardie*, but he was no stranger to Upper Normandy (Demangeon, 1905). His friend Jacques Levainville (1869-1932) had been active in the Société Normande de Géographie and acted as a local guide when students from the Sorbonne visited Rouen (Demangeon, 1932). Levainville had written a remarkable monograph about the city and articles on the role of Rouen as an Allied supply base during World War I (Levainville 1913, 1919, 1926). One can detect the influence of Levainville in Demangeon's brochure, which also pays full acknowledgement to the monograph of his life-long friend Jules Sion (1879-1940), who had written about *Les paysans de la Normandie orientale* (Sion, 1909). As well as historical and contemporary themes, and an appreciation of variations in geology, Demangeon placed emphasis on sample studies. His excursion contained no fewer than nine visits to different types of agricultural holding, enabling participants to converse with farmers. A repeat visit to some of these farms would be organised on the inter-university excursion of 1957 (Pinchemel, 1957). Demangeon demonstrated the role of Paris in influencing agricultural activities (vegetables near the city, cereals and cattle on the plateaux, dairying in the damp Pays de Bray) and in stimulating the ports of Rouen and Le Havre. The most intriguing element of his excursion was the visit to areas of vegetable production that were irrigated with treated effluent from the capital's sewage works (Demangeon, 1931).
- 15 Veteran North African expert Augustin Bernard (1865-1947) led a 13-day excursion to Algeria, with the assistance of local geographers Marcel Larnaude (1886-1980) and René Lespès (1871-1944) (B4). After writing a doctorate on New Caledonia that he never visited, Bernard taught in Algiers until 1902 when he began to lecture at the Sorbonne and would eventually occupy the Chair of Colonial Geography (later, the Geography of North Africa) up to his retirement in 1933 (Bernard, 1895; Deprest, 2009). However, he had delayed submitting his formal resignation from Algiers and this may have explained why his successor, Émile-Félix Gautier (1864-1940), did not participate in the 1931 excursion. After studying under Blanchard in Grenoble, Larnaude had taught in *lycées* in Oran and then Algiers, while undertaking research on the Kabylia. In 1920, he became a lecturer on the geography of Africa in Algiers, remaining there until 1937 when he moved to the Sorbonne. Participants on the 1931 excursion were introduced to Algiers by Lespès who taught in the local *lycée*, and had just completed a doctorate on the city (Lespès, 1930). The copiously referenced and well-illustrated field guide shows that Larnaude was a competent physical geographer; it may well have been that 66-year old Bernard provided commentary on human geography. Excursionists were informed of the successes of European activity (Bernard & Larnaude, 1931, p. 10). William Herbert Hobbs (1864-1952) from Ann Arbor, Michigan, expressed his admiration for the reclamation of the Mitidja marsh, the creation of palm groves at oases thanks to artesian wells, and the installation of highways that opened up large expanses of territory (Anon, 1932, p. 136).

Demonstrating physical science on the ground

- 16 The third type of guide came in the persons of Ernest Chaput (1880-1943) and Abel Briquet (d. 1952) (1931) who were primarily concerned with physical geography and largely viewed their excursion in the valleys of the Seine and the Somme and along the

Channel coast (B2) as exercises in field geology. Chaput, professor of geology and physical geography at Dijon, had published articles and a monograph on the terraces of the Seine and surrounding areas (Chaput, 1924). These formations were the focus of his part of the excursion that embraced site visits both upstream and downstream of the capital. Briquet, who for a quarter of a century had published articles on the coastal geography and physiography of northern France, directed the second part of the excursion. This corpus of work had been assembled for a doctorate under the patronage of De Martonne (Briquet, 1930). Despite emphasizing physical geography and having held a post with the *Service de la carte géologique de l'Alsace et de la Lorraine* under the direction of Emmanuel de Martonne (1862-1953) from 1919 to 1930, Briquet paid attention to the role of human agency in transforming wetlands in the estuaries of the Somme, Canche and Authie (Vogt, 1999). He also used historic maps and other documents cited in his subsidiary thesis to demonstrate that many coastal landscapes were both cultural and physical in origin. Influenced by de Martonne, his vision was more cohesively “geographical” and holistic than that of Chaput.

- 17 Most probably because of the presence of de Martonne, a detailed record of scientific discourse on the B2 excursion was printed in the IGC proceedings (Union Géographique Internationale, II, 1933, pp. 175-221). Vigorous on-site discussions took place on the precise identification, interpretation and nomenclature of surface deposits and physiographic features. Established scholars, including Douglas Wilson Johnson (1878-1944) from Columbia University (New York) and de Martonne, expressed views that did not always accord with those of their guide. Participants must have been instructed to submit comments for publication since the 45-page report contains lengthy quotations that could have scarcely been noted in the field. Younger scholars present included Roger Dion (1896-1981) and Marguerite Lefèvre (1894-1967), both of whom are primarily associated with work in human geography, although Dion’s doctorate on *Le Val de Loire* would include a thorough examination of physical conditions, and Mlle. Lefèvre would write on the physical geography of the river Meuse as well as on rural settlement patterns (Dion, 1934; Lefèvre, 1926, 1935). The first part of the excursion was followed by a dash across the plateaux of Upper Normandy and southern Picardy to reach Amiens and the Somme valley, where Briquet’s nuanced exposition of the geography of the Channel coastlands began.

The art of the possible

- 18 In their varying ways, these excursions introduced congress-goers to the practice of academic geography in France and to the diversity of French regions. However, with the exception of B2, there is no substantial evidence of how the leaders presented their material to participants. Some trips involved long walks and some climbing, requiring waterproof clothing and stout shoes, but others were less strenuous. Whether the preferred technique was to engage the participants in on-site debate in order “to read the landscape”, or to present known information, expound the results of recent doctoral research and then develop discussion is simply not known. The guidebooks are rich on substance but are silent on the arts of communication in the field.
- 19 Numbers on most of the seven operative excursions were capped at the high twenties (presumably the normal capacity of a motor coach), but Baulig must have had a larger vehicle since forty attended his fieldtrip (Table 1). It was possible that some academics

went on more than one trip (e.g. Georges Chabot led his own excursion and then went to Algeria) hence the total number of individuals involved was rather less than the total of 169 listed (Chabot, 1972). The selection of regions traversed produced an uneven range of opportunities. Foreigners wishing to be guided through Brittany, the southwest, the northeast, the industrial north, or the conurbations of Paris or Lyon were disappointed. The range of excursions on offer was a result of what was possible rather than what might have been desirable. By 1931 regional monographs had been completed or were forthcoming in many parts of France, but there were substantial lacunae in the northeast, the southwest, and eastern Brittany (Thibault, 1972). The pool of excursion guides was diminished by the death of five authors of early regional monographs: Émile Chantriot (b.1865), *La Champagne* (1905); Raoul de Félice (1879-1912), *La Basse-Normandie* (1907); Antoine Vacher (1873-1919), *Le Berry* (1908); Charles Passerat (1877-1911), *Les Plaines de Poitou* (1909); Jacques Levainville (1869-1932), *Le Morvan* (1909).

- 20 The age of the professoriat was another factor contributing to the pattern of excursions. For example, Pierre Camena d'Almeida (1865-1943) had led the inter-university excursion from Bordeaux in 1914, but had reached 66 years of age by 1931. His successor, Henri Cavailès (1870-1951) would do so again on the occasion of the inter-university excursion in 1936, but he offered nothing in 1931 having only just completed his thesis (Cavailès, 1931). Likewise, André Meynier (1901-83) had just defended his monograph on parts of the Massif Central, however Pierre Deffontaines (1894-1978) had not yet finished his research on the middle Garonne, and work was not completed over wide stretches of central and south-western France (Meynier, 1931; Deffontaines, 1934). Daniel Faucher (1882-1970), recently-appointed professor at Toulouse, had investigated the plains of the middle Rhône valley for his doctorate under Blanchard but was only starting work on the southwest (Faucher, 1927). In north-eastern France, geographical investigations remained in their infancy, with the exception of a monograph on the *Porte de Bourgogne et d'Alsace* by André Gibert (1893-1985) and work in progress on the Saar/ northern Moselle by Robert Capot-Rey (1897-1977) (Gibert, 1930; Capot-Rey, 1934). Of course, a substantial part of the latter study area had been German territory prior to 1920 before coming under French administration for fifteen years. For geopolitical reasons, it would have been unlikely that the Saar would be visited on any excursion organised from Paris. Despite a dozen years having elapsed since the end of the Great War, relations between France and Germany remained difficult, and only half a dozen Germans attended the XIIIth IGC.
- 21 Monographs on the middle Loire (Roger Dion, 1934), Seine-et-Oise (Omer Tulippe, 1934), the Limagnes (Lucien Gachon, 1939), the Causses (Paul Marres, 1935), the Bas-Rhône (Pierre George, 1935), the Western Pyrenees (Théodore Lefebvre, 1933), Saint-Etienne (Maxime Perrin, 1937), the Atlantic coastland (Louis Papy, 1941) and Corsica (Antoine Albitreccia, 1942) were in preparation but their authors had not yet completed and proved themselves before examiners. Camille Vallaux (1870-1945), author of *La Basse Bretagne*, had effectively distanced himself from academic geographers, but why René Musset (1881-1977), author of *Le Bas-Maine*, neither attended the XIIIth IGC nor offered a fieldclass remains a mystery (Vallaux, 1907; Musset, 1917). He had experience of leading fieldtrips, having organised the inter-university event in the Perche in 1920, but it may have been personal modesty that kept him away from the Congress (Journaux, 1977, p. 7).
- 22 The specific circumstances of teaching personnel must surely explain why excursions were not offered in the North, Alsace, the Languedoc, or the Lyon region. In September 1931, André Gibert was on the point of moving from Besançon to Lille to replace

Maximilien Sorre (1880-1962), whose doctorate had been on the eastern Pyrenees (Sorre, 1913). Raoul Blanchard, author of *La Flandre*, had long abandoned northern France in favour of the Alps (Blanchard, 1906). Henri Baulig, in post at Strasbourg since 1919, had organized a fieldtrip in the Massif Central in 1931 and had also led the inter-university excursion in Alsace and the Vosges ten years earlier, but doctoral work on Alsace did not appear until after mid-century (Baulig, 1928; Juillard, 1953). At Montpellier, Jules Sion was focusing his writing on Monsoon Asia for the *Géographie Universelle*, indeed monographs on the Languedoc were not completed until the 1960s (Galtier, 1960; Dugrand, 1963). The resident expert on Lyon, Maurice Zimmermann, had led the inter-university excursion in 1913 but did not provide a fieldtrip in 1931. His professorial colleague, André Allix (1895-1966), had researched both physical and human conditions in the high Alps and his findings were incorporated in the excursion led by Blache and Pardé, fellow disciples of Blanchard (Allix, 1929). Three years after the IGC, Allix would welcome seventy participants to an inter-university excursion centred on Lyon and Saint-Etienne, with assistance from Zimmermann and Maxime Perrin.

- 23 By contrast with the situation in Lyon, geographical enquiry on the Alps and parts of the Massif Central was flourishing thanks to the vigour of Blanchard at the Institut de Géographie Alpine in Grenoble, whose disciples made important contributions to the excursion programme in 1931, with another of his protégés having planned the fieldtrip in Provence that was cancelled. Finally, inclusion of a fortnight's excursion to Algeria made the important geopolitical point that "France" extended south of the Mediterranean, as well as demonstrating that French geographers were actively in place in Algiers (Deprest, 2009). One may only speculate why Gautier was not involved in the post-Congress excursion, whilst Bernard assumed an active role. Certainly the men had different personalities and political persuasions, adopted different approaches (with Gautier being a field worker and Bernard a *géographe du cabinet* producing reports for government), and experienced difficult inter-personal relations in the past (Larnaude, 1975). Another line of reasoning would suggest that Bernard was the obvious choice because of his immediate contacts with de Martonne at the Sorbonne.

Abiding impressions

- 24 The excursions accompanying the XIIIth IGC captured academic geography in France at an important formative phase. The Institut de Géographie at the Sorbonne and the Institut de Géographie Alpine exercised predominant roles in preparing doctoral candidates, most of whom spent much of their careers as *lycée* teachers before being elevated to university posts (Broc, 1993, 2001). Without doubt, the trauma of World War I had a profound influence on the demographic profile of the discipline by terminating the lives of some promising scholars, including Pierre Bastian, Abel Boutry, Gaston Gravier (father of Jean-François), and Joseph Vidal de La Blache (son of the eminent professor). In addition, the impact of war weakened the health of many young French geographers and slowed the academic productivity of others. Nonetheless, by 1931 a new wave of research publication was beginning and the flow of regional monographs was set to continue through that decade.
- 25 Foreign participants at the Paris IGC and on its excursions would have been struck by the contrast between the scientific methods of physiography and the more fluid status of human geography at this time. They might well have been surprised that French

geographers continued to afford pride of place to geomorphology and to the intriguing diversity of the countryside in their scholarly discourse, whatever their personal convictions may have been about growing industrial unemployment and urban poverty at this time of economic crisis. With the exception of certain geologists, scholars in cognate disciplines did not attend the XIIIth IGC or its excursions, despite the fact that French historians were making remarkable progress in the study of rural settlements and landscapes at this very time (Bloch, 1931).

- 26 Just as De Martonne had lamented the absence of a fieldtrip to Scotland in 1928, foreign visitors might have regretted that there were no excursions to many parts of France three years later. French academic geography, whose regional monographs were admired throughout the world as elegant exemplars of sustained research, was in fact unbalanced in terms of theme and space. Available evidence suggests that personality, patronage and opportunity need to be appreciated as much as the march of scholarly progress in seeking to understand how and where excursions were provided by French hosts in September 1931, at a time when German hegemony of academic geography had declined following national defeat in World War I. By contrast, the distinction of French geographers had increased as a result of the quality of work published in the *Annales de Géographie* and in the impressive array of regional monographs (Broc, 1993). Excursions associated with the XIIIth IGC contributed to that growing reputation, which would be further enhanced by papers delivered at subsequent international meetings of geographers in Warsaw (1934) and Amsterdam (1938) (Clout, 2005b).

Table 1. Inter-university excursions, 1905-1930.

I	1905	de Martonne	Rennes	Lower Brittany
II	1906	de Martonne, Malavialle, Flahault (botanist)	Lyon, Montpellier	Lower Languedoc, Cévennes, Causses
III	1907	Gallois	Sorbonne	Paris, Nivernais, Morvan, Burgundy
IV	1908	Demangeon	Lille	Flanders, Boulonnais
V	1909	Glangeaud (geologist)	Clermont-Ferrand	Auvergne
VI	1910	Blanchard	Grenoble	Dauphiné, Savoie
VII	1911	Vacher	Rennes	Northern Brittany
VIII	1912	Gallois, Davis	Sorbonne	Champagne, Burgundy
IX	1913	Zimmermann	Lyon	Lyon region
X	1914	Camena d'Almeida	Bordeaux	Aquitaine
XI	1920	Musset	Rennes	Maine, Perche
XII	1920	Larnaude	Algiers	Algeria
XIII	1921	Baulig	Strasbourg	Alsace, Vosges
XIV	1922	Sorre	(Lille)	Eastern Pyrenees
XV	1923	Musset, Bigot (geologist)	Caen	Lower Normandy
XVI	1924	Arbos	Clermont-Ferrand	Auvergne
XVII	1925	Gallois + Belgians	(Sorbonne)	Belgium
XVIII	1926	De Martonne	Sorbonne	Paris region, Upper Normandy
XIX	1927	Faucher, Blanchard	Grenoble	Alps
XX	1928	Chabot	Dijon	Jura
XXI	1929	de Martonne + Yugoslavs	(Sorbonne)	Yugoslavia
XXII	1930	Baulig	(Strasbourg)	Massif Central

Table 2. Excursions associated with the XIIIth International Geographical Congress.

	<u>Leader(s)</u>	<u>Excursion (pages in guide)</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Cost fr.</u>
A1	Chabot & Cholley	Jura, Prealps of Savoy, 44p	4-13 Sept	21	1,500
A2	Baulig	S.E. of Massif Central, 26p	7-13 Sept	40	1,200
A3	Arbos	Auvergne, 32p	8-13 Sept	24	900
A4	Blache & Pardé	Dauphiné Alps, 48p	8-13 Sept	20	1,200
B1	Demangeon	Ile-de-France, Normandy, 64p	26-30 Sept	23	600
B2	Chaput & Briquet	Seine valley, Channel Coast, 54p	26-3 Oct	22	1,000
B3	Bénévent	Provence, 36p#	26-30 Sept	0	900
B4	Bernard & Larnaude	Algeria, 48p	29 Sept-11 Oct	19	4,200*

THIS EXCURSION WAS CANCELLED FOR LACK OF PARTICIPANTS.

* PLUS 262 FR. FOR RETURN TRAVEL PARIS/ ALGIERS/ PARIS BY TRAIN AND BOAT (ACROSS THE MEDITERRANEAN FROM MARSEILLE).

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ABSTRACTS

Excursions accompanying international conferences provide important opportunities to transmit geographical knowledge. Fieldtrips associated with the International Geographical Congress in Paris are examined with respect to theme, leadership, and message. Leadership was entrusted to proven geographers holding doctorates, and to geologists working close to physical geography. Despite eight excursions being planned, opportunities were not offered to visit large sections of France. This pattern of activity reflected areas where regional monographs had been completed, and where annual inter-university excursions for French geographers had been run. Patronage by De Martonne (Sorbonne) or by Blanchard (Grenoble) was another important explanatory factor for who led excursions and where they took place.

Les excursions offertes à l'occasion des congrès internationaux donnent des possibilités importantes pour la transmission des savoirs géographiques. Dans cet article on essaie d'analyser le contenu, la direction et les communications des excursions associées avec le Congrès International de Géographie à Paris. Malgré la préparation de huit excursions, de larges sections de l'Hexagone restaient fermées aux congressistes. Cette situation s'explique par la localisation et des études monographiques achevées, et des excursions interuniversitaires. Le patronage des grands maîtres (De Martonne à la Sorbonne, Blanchard à Grenoble) fournit un autre élément d'explication.

INDEX

Keywords: excursions, France, Paris, physiography, regional monographs

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AUTHOR

HUGH CLOUT

University College London, Department of Geography, h.clout@ucl.ac.uk