Paul Claval, Josefina Gomez-Mendoza and Encarnacao Beltrao Spirito, *Géographie et géographes*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2007, 384 pages, €31 paperback.

Paul Claval is well known for his breadth of erudition, remarkable memory, worldwide network of academic contacts, and unflagging productivity. The present text demonstrates all these qualities and seeks to deliver a reasoned account of the dynamism of the discipline of geography. Containing 15 chapters, it is organized into three parts: recounting the history of geography; the tensions of geography (with contributions from two other authors); and the intellectual itineraries of six scholars. The first five chapters are perhaps the most predictable, since Claval has written extensively on the development of geography in France, the USA, the UK and elsewhere. His time frame is the past hundred years and the key point of departure is the thought and writings of Paul Vidal de La Blache, although brief mention is made of earlier scholars and of the influence of German pioneers on Vidal's own work. 'Turns' of one kind or another in recent years are embraced in this account of a discipline that 'deals with a reality that never ceases to transform itself' (p. 7).

Not surprisingly, discussion is orientated largely to changes within geography but appropriate contextual references are included that display developments in the broader world of ideas. The legacy of the Vidalians to French geography before 1940 is treated at some length and is complemented by brief accounts of changes in Germany, Britain and the USA. Halford Mackinder is awarded a 'chair' at Oxford in 1887 (p. 50) rather than a readership. No mention is made of Johnston and Williams' edited collection *A Century of British Geography* (Oxford University Press, 2003). In the discussion of North American Geography the remarkable volume 69 of the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* (1979) is not listed, nor is Neil Smith's *American Empire* (University of California Press, 2003) mentioned in the discussion of the career and personality of Isaiah Bowman. We read that after World War II, 'British geographers continued to practice regional analysis; they accentuated the historical dimension already undertaken in the 1930s' (p. 82). L.D. Stamp is cited but not H.C. Darby. Then came the impact of the 'quantitative revolution', espoused in different ways and with varying speed and intensity in the several countries examined. Claval recounts his shock at the International Geographical Congress held at Montréal in 1972 when he expected to encounter practitioners of the 'new' quantitative geography, but the anglo-saxon world of geography had already moved on to social justice, and would subsequently embrace an array of adjectival forms and 'turns'. Claval, quite rightly, laments the linguistic blinkers worn by so many British and American geographers who are unable to interrogate expressions of geography not written in English, and yet who force their own introspective views on the rest of the world by virtue of the hegemony of English/American. Those who can read French will enjoy the tone of Claval's argument on 'intellectual imperialism' (pp. 113–14).

With the help of colleagues in Madrid and Sao Paulo, Claval presents the evolution of scholarly geography in Spain, where French influences have been strong, and then in Brazil, where the career and writings of Milton Santos (1926–2001), radical geographer, journalist, politician and refugee, are appraised in detail. Claval's own essay on Santos (chapter 8) serves as a link to the 'intellectual itineraries' of scholars who, in varying ways, influenced the evolution of popular and scholarly geographies. Elisée Reclus, who produced 30,000 pages of text in his lifetime, died in 1905. To commemorate this centenary, Claval (and others) has

re-examined the writings of this pioneer whose work has been overshadowed in the history of the discipline by the writings of Vidal and his entourage. Then follows a detailed account of the life and work of the historian Henri Hauser (1866–1946) who also taught geography at the University of Dijon. Claval will be interested to learn that Darby possessed a copy of Hauser and J. Fevre, *Régions et pays de France* (Alcan, 1909) that makes abundant use of the early regional monographs and articles of the Vidalians. Historian Lucien Febvre (1878–1956) studied under Vidal and was a friend of some of his pupils. Before founding the *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* with Marc Bloch in 1929, Febvre wrote *La Terre et l'évolution humaine* (1922) that underscored the importance of human activity in shaping the face of the Earth. Darby has his own copy of the English translation of that text and annotated it in places. Fernand Braudel (1902–1985) was likewise greatly influenced by Vidalian geography but was not enamoured with Emmanuel de Martonne. He rejected university geography for an eminent career in history but retained his geographical knowledge. This 'traditional' (i.e. out-dated) vision of geography that Braudel held until his dying day was at odds with the various innovations that countless French geographers espoused. Pierre Gourou (1900–1999) applied many of the ideas and methods of the Vidalians into what were then colonial contexts: the Red River delta of French Indochina, the Belgian Congo and Rwanda-Burundi, and several parts of French 'Black Africa'. His textbooks on Asia, Africa, and South America influenced a long generation of French students, and *The Tropical World* (Longman, 1953) figured on bibliographies in most British and American universities. Rejected by radical 'development geographers', Gourou's *oeuvre* has received more sympathetic treatment from cultural geographers in recent years. Paul Claval concludes with an essay on the North American writings of Jean Gottmann (1915–1996) who was trained by the Vidalians at the Sorbonne, escaped anti-semitic persecution in wartime France, and then developed a remarkable peripatetic career in the USA, Paris and ultimately at Oxford. He experimented with a French style monograph on *Virginia* (Henry Holt, 1955) and earned fame with *Megalopolis: the urbanized seaboard of the north-eastern United States* (MIT Press, 1961). In short: *Géographies et géographes* reminds me of the classic pudding served on British dining tables on Christmas Day: filled with good things but of variable consistency.

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David Delaney, *Law and Nature*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, x + 440 pages, £55.00 hardback.

I quailed a little, for Delaney's sake, when I first received this book to review. Clever as I knew him to be, two things made me worry that this work was, perhaps, overly ambitious. There was, for a start, its monolithic rather uncompromising title Law (capital L) and Nature (capital N), which boldly offered not so much as a crumb of now *de rigeur* post colon qualification. Was he going to attempt to unpick all of Law and Nature I wondered (assuming for a moment that we could even begin by arriving at a stable conception of all that each may encompass)?