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Geology in cities

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Geology is generally supposed to be accessible only in mountains or large wild fields. This opinion is only a part of the possibility and restricted to a very small part of the population. On the other hand, geology is, for most people, an austere discipline reachable only for some specific persons, called geologists, and disconnected from average citizens. Therefore, may be as a sort of self-protection from this supposed inaccessible science, most people are not, or declare they are not, interested by geological aspects, and abandon this mysterious topic to specialists. They are convinced that geology is definitely not a part of their daily life. This feeling is probably strengthened by the fact that nowadays half of the world population is living in conurban areas.

We are convinced that it is possible to demonstrate to a large public that a strong connexion exists between their common life and geology, and moreover, that this science is understandable for most people, even not being a specialist.

We launched a collection of small booklets entitled “*balade géologique*” (geologic walk) for localities all over France, from different towns, and even for some specific places, such as the UNESCO building in Paris [1], or a specific part of Paris, apparently totally “far from nature”, where businessmen from all over the world meet: the “La Défense” business district, where a high-rise architecture is the most visible part [2].

With these booklets, we demonstrate the relations between the stones representing the local geology, their physical properties, and their different uses accordingly: waterproof at foundations or on roof of construction, porous on the sides, easy or uneasy to sculpt, etc. Beside these technical aspects, we show how some elements reveal the environmental conditions of rock formation. Moreover, when some

historical, social or architectural peculiarities exist, we underline these elements showing that stones are associated with human life. These booklets are generally associated with guided tours and they are almost systematically acting as an eye-opener for the public.

This collection was launched in 2008. At the moment, more than 30 of them are published for different towns in France.

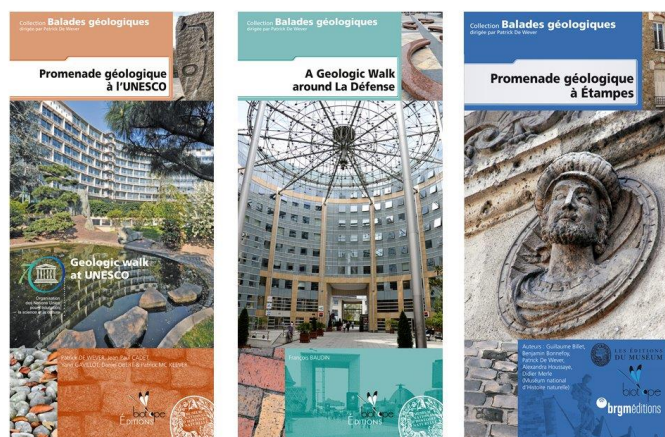


Figure 1: Three covers of geologic walk

booklets.

References:

- [1] De Wever et al. (2015) Geologic walk at UNESCO : MNHN/Biotope, 39p.
- [2] Baudin F. (2015) Geologic walk around La Défense : MNHN/Biotope, 38p.
- [3] De Wever et al. (2008) Promenade géologique à Etampes : MNHN/Biotope, 28p.

