

The regularly organised great occasions of geography science above all the IGU congresses provide a good opportunity to review the actual position and status of the discipline. This review can be completed from different aspects: considering the subdisciplines of geography, while it also offers the opportunity for both individual countries and think-tanks to evaluate their position and the scientific directions they follow.

Being a small nation, Hungary has only been able to provide an overview on the development and actual position of geography in the form of collections of papers during the past decades. Hereby we happily and proudly declare that by now the situation has somewhat changed, Hungarian geography is strong and segmented enough that the larger higher education and research centres are able to review their scientific and academic activities in separate volumes for great international occasions.

As the Institute of Geography at the University of Pécs apparently has qualified itself to the prestigious group of the best Hungarian think-tanks measured for both quality and quantity in the past years, we feel ourselves ready to present an overview of our research fields and activities. This is also important to claim as Pécs had always been present on the scientific stage of geography but has managed to reach the highest reputation only recently. Though the beginnings had been encouraging in the interwar period, university level education and research ceased after 1945 and geography was represented only in a form of a modest college department in Pécs for decades.

This situation changed remarkably in the second half of the 1990s, providing opportunities for a solid and unbroken development resulting in the foundation of the Institute of Geography. The foundation happened exactly ten years ago; therefore the present volume can be regarded as an anniversary edition. We do not wish to celebrate ourselves; this would not be worth publishing a book. We do hope, however, that the intention to introduce our work will be appreciated, to show what we have achieved and how we contributed to the progress of geography.

The current volume consists of 28 papers, hopefully providing a fair overview on the research performed in our institute. Although we did our best, it is far from being complete as the available space limited the size of the desired contents. Among others we had to leave out special Hungarian topics which might not interest the international audience but in order to express our openness to issues of the Carpathian-Balkan region we did include papers on these topics.

Spatial variety is mixed with the colourfulness concerning the presented themes, constructing a geographic kaleidoscope in which one can find substantial and interesting reading material. We do hope that our goals will be achieved and the papers meet the requirements of our readers.

Zoltán Dövényi

*Director of the Institute of
Geography
Pécs, Hungary*

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