

Scientific Conference "Geographical Research and Cross-Border Cooperation within the Lower Basin of the Danube"

(Craiova, Romania, 23–26 September, 2010)

The Department of Geography at the University of Craiova (established in the centre of Oltenia in 1966) has been organizing meetings for geographers since 1992. The conference topics are mostly general but there have been some most specialized occasions too. At the beginning, the conferences had only attracted geographers from all parts of Romania but later colleagues from Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were also involved. In 2010 the fifth such meeting was organized and within the framework of collaboration in the Lower Danubian basins, researchers from Hungary were also invited. The coordination of geographical research activities in the Lower Danubian region acquires special significance in the light of the Water Framework Directive and the Hungarian presidency of the European Union, which put great emphasis on the broadening of cooperation between the Danubian countries and on the renewal of cooperation documents relating to the Danube drainage basin. Hungary was widely represented in Craiova: by four young lecturers and two Geology students from the Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest as well as two members of the staff of the University of Szeged and one from the University of Pécs.

The papers presented covered various fields of physical and human geography and also important topics from the related disciplines (including political sciences and demography). The first plenary lecture was held by Dénes Lóczy entitled "Floodplains – links between countries and landscapes", followed by Serbian, Bulgarian and Romanian



Craiova Town Hall



Iron Gate Reservoir



Cazanele Mare Cave

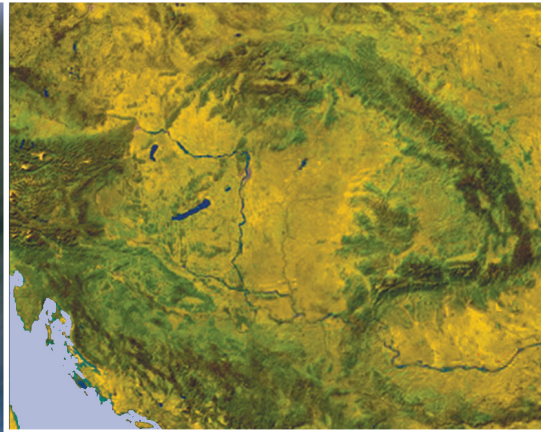
papers, one from each country. The conference continued in sections. The physical geographical section included particularly interesting presentations by researchers of the Geographical Institute of the Romanian Academy of Sciences on the application of GIS techniques to the solution of various geomorphological problems. Thanks to the publication opportunity offered by the hosting institution, the papers of the conference will appear in the forthcoming issues of *Forum Geografic*, a journal edited at the University of Craiova, in English, in 2011.

The successful conference was complemented by a field trip to the Iron Gate reservoir, including a boat trip, fish meal and some hiking (to the Great Csukár, Ciucarul Mare Plateau). The explanations during the field trip focused on problems of nature conservation in the area.

For the organization of the conference gratitude is due to Professor Sandu BOENGIU and his enthusiastic helpers, first of all, to Liliana POPESCU and Cristiana VÁLCEA. This was a very useful opportunity to revive the contacts between neighbouring countries, which used to be much more intensive decades ago, and provided young scientists an insight into research trends in participating countries as well as a chance to build new contacts between each other. We were happy to notice that the series of meetings would not be interrupted: the next meeting is planned to take place at the University of Szeged in 2012.

Dénes Lóczy

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