



RHGT, Vol. XVI, Issue. 31-32, pp. 5-8

FOREWORD

Remus CREȚAN,

Editor in Chief

West University of Timișoara, Romania

Department of Geography

Email: remus.cretan@e-uvt.ro

Description

An international biannual, *Review of Historical Geography and Toponomastics* publishes articles on all aspects of historical geography and toponomastics. As well as publishing original research papers of interest to a wide international and interdisciplinary readership, the review encourages debates over new challenges facing researchers in the field and discussion of conceptual and methodological issues. Each issue includes a book review section.

It encourages high quality scholarship on a broad range of historical geography and toponomastics topics.

Themes covered in the Review include:

- The geographies of places in the past
- The dynamics of place, space and landscape
- The geographies of place-names
- Methodological problems in historical geography
- Landscape, history and environment

The journal publishes high quality papers that make a new contribution to the understanding of historical geographical systems. The editors invite submissions dealing with theory, methods and models of spatial analysis. The journal has a multi-disciplinary outlook and includes contributions from geography, history, economics, environment and onomastics.

The 2021 RHGT volume (issues 31-32) includes six papers on **historical geographies and place name studies**.

The first part of the volume starts with a paper on recent developments in the case of city-image-festival nexus. Dorotthya Süllý and Viktor Pál from Szeged University present the rise of music festivals as events attracting millions of tourists. Such events are important in boosting tourism as well as in shaping the image of a destination. The authors highlight that a lot of benefits can be established for the local municipality, because the festival has an impact on the municipality through its economic, socio-cultural and image effects and the tourist destination of the city provides the setting for the event. The study examines an emphasis on the image transfer between the city and the festival, the role of the actors involved in the festival process, and the potential for good cooperation. By using classical inequality measures of per capita income distribution (2007 - 2016), it documents also the issues of peripheralization that appeared along the Hungarian-Romanian border. There are several interesting results which show that festivals can be an important tool of tourism destination and a dominant image for the city. This paper brings new perspectives on the spatial dimensions specific to local and regional level, given that current regional analysis discuss polarization with reference to gross domestic product but the understanding of spatial development at the most specific local levels is challenging.

The second paper in this volume is also related to historical geographies. It is written by Emilia Sarno from Pegaso Online University, Italy. The author proposes a reflection on Arcangelo Ghisleri (1855-1938) and his *Manual of Historical Geography*. Ghisleri's work was used as a training course and has a scientific and didactic importance. His manual highlights how geography could restore a global vision of the world. The manual published in 1889 points out the close relationship between history and geography and considers that history is always connected to the surrounding environment. Ghisleri's book is of particular value for its clear and simple didactic tool.

The third paper proposed in this volume is an article on three isles and their historical toponimies chosen from the Singapore Archipelago. The authors, Shaun Tyan Gin Lim and Francesco Perono Cacciafoco from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, present the stories of St. John's Island (Pulau Sakijang Bendera), Sentosa (Pulau Blakang Mati), and Coney Island (Pulau Serangoon). By using primary and secondary sources, the paper is based on a historical reflection of these place names across time. If the toponyms reflect the broader trend of naming patterns of Singaporean toponyms, their land uses and histories are related to Singapore's history. The authors conclude that this paper is just a starting point for further research on Singapore's island names, an area that has received a relative lower attention in Singaporean toponymy so far.

Taking an insight into the ancient and mediaeval historical perspective on geographies of meteorological hazards in the Banat Plain, south-western Romania, Mihai Dudas and Petru Urdea from West University of Timisoara highlight that global warming as well as the intensifying effects of meteorological hazards on human society are topics of increasing concern nowadays and that we need also to know their evolution of global warming and hazards in specific areas over time. The authors recreate an image of the evolution of meteorological hazards and their effects on the Banat Plain until 1700, basing on a plethora of historical sources. They do not attempt to achieve a climate reconstruction in the researched area, but they raise attention to a need for

intensification of such studies, doubled by a correlation with studies conducted for neighboring areas, as well as on dendrochronological and other related studies for making a more precise diagnosis of the historical meteorological hazards in the Banat Plain.

A proposal on demographic decline in south Italy is presented by Emilia Sarno as her second contribution to this volume. The author highlights the Italian demographic crisis and the issue of Italy's South. The paper examines patterns of mobility in Italy and the gradual decrease in the population of south Italy for the last decade. By using statistical data it is revealed the emerging differences among the different Italian regions, and shows how the south Italy region has a strong population decline. It is highlighted that population decline is due to the brain drain of youngsters with high level of education. Finally, the author proposes some solutions to the demographic crises, which could be implemented by policy-makers.

Finally, the current RHGT volume includes also an interesting debate on continuity and change reflected in colonial and contemporary Singapore's offshore toponyms. Ang Yong Jia and Francesco Perono Cacciafoco expand the research on toponymy in Singapore by focusing on the many offshore islands, a component of the landscape of the Lion city, Singapore. The study adopts a critical toponymies framework, placing emphasis on the interaction between the maintenance and use of place names and the wider socio-political context from the period of British colonial rule forms the basis in which contemporary toponyms are reflected in the study. The results found out that Singapore's toponymic landscape has remained relatively stable. Authors consider that the unchanging naming practices are responses to socio-political contexts diachronically unveiled between colonial and contemporary Singapore. Positioning place naming within the wider development of Singapore as a current post-colonial land, this paper highlights how the landscape has sought to strengthen different socio-economic and political goals.

This volume provides thus greater space to studies in historical geographies and place naming practices. We further intend to emphasise by these papers that historical geographies and place naming remain important practice which deserves further attention in future studies.

Free online access to this journal is available within institutions in the developing world.

Editor in Chief
dr. Remus CREȚAN

