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FOREWORD

Remus CREȚAN,

Editor in Chief

West University of Timișoara, Romania

Department of Geography

Email: remus.cretan@e-uvt.ro

Description

The *Review of Historical Geography and Toponomastics* is an international biannual publication dedicated to exploring various aspects of historical geography and toponomastics. It features original research papers that appeal to a wide international and interdisciplinary audience. The journal not only publishes these papers but also fosters discussions on new challenges encountered by researchers and engages with conceptual and methodological questions in the field. Additionally, each issue includes a section for book reviews, aiming to enrich the dialogue on historical geography and toponomastics.

The Review actively promotes high-quality scholarship across a range of topics in historical geography and toponomastics.

The themes explored in the journal include:

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

This variety of themes encourages a comprehensive examination of the relationship between geography and history, fostering a deeper understanding of how these fields interact.

The journal emphasizes the publication of high-quality papers that significantly advance the understanding of historical-geographical systems. The editors are keen to receive submissions that explore various aspects of theory, methods, and spatial analysis models. With a multidisciplinary approach, the journal welcomes contributions from diverse fields such as geography, history, economics, environmental studies, and onomastics, fostering a rich dialogue across disciplines.

The 20th RHGT volume (issues 39-40) includes six articles on **historical geography**.

The study by Dr. Sorin Pavel, Department of Geography, West University of Timișoara, addresses policies governing urban–rural relations that have largely disregarded rural spaces in favor of urban development. Both communist and post-communist agrarian laws have reinforced the disparities between urban and rural areas. Employing a methodology grounded in the interpretivist –constructivist paradigm, Dr. Pavel examines the historical context of rural predominance in Romania, the unfinished project of forced urbanisation and rural modernisation during the communist period, and the disparities between urban and rural areas following Romania’s accession to the European Union. The results reveal persistent demographic and social discrepancies between rural and urban Romania more than fifteen years after EU integration. Although Romania’s EU accession in 2007 brought substantial investment in rural development, the urban–rural divide endures.

The following study, authored by Dr. Jorge Sobota, explores the song of Amairgen Mac Míled of Brigantia through the lens of Irish, Galician, Welsh, and Breton mythology. The research is based on the medieval manuscript *Lebor Gábála Érenn* (*The Book of Invasions of Ireland*). A long-standing debate in linguistics concerns the possible historical veracity of portions of this text that may predate Christianity and remain uncontaminated by Roman and Christian interpolations. As a novel contribution to previous scholarship, Dr. Sobota offers an interpretation of the Song of Amairgen, recited by Amairgen Mac Míled, in relation to Irish, Breton, Welsh, and Galician legends and traditions.

Tehreem Zahra and Dr. Francesco Perono Cacciafoco examine the role of geographical influences in the development of Creole languages. Their study emphasizes how colonization, trade networks, migration, and inter-linguistic contact shaped the evolution of these languages. Focusing on Creole varieties in the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, and West Africa, the analysis explores how environmental and sociopolitical conditions contributed to phonological, syntactic, and lexical features. At the core of the study lies the intricate interplay of isolation, cultural exchange, and multiculturalism in the formation of Creole languages from a comparative perspective. The findings highlight that geographical determinants not only facilitated linguistic hybridization but also influenced sociolinguistic status and processes of standardization, underscoring the inseparability of spatial context and language evolution.

The study by Dr. Ilie Rădoi assesses civic participation in the cultural and tourism sectors of the Danube region. The research provides a deeper understanding of tourism development in the Iron Gates area, offering a mapping of civic participation among local communities. The analysis underscores the natural and cultural richness of the Danube Iron Gate region and its significance for sustainable tourism strategies.

Another contribution in historical geography is presented by Dr. Emilia Sarno from Pegaso Online University, Italy. The author investigates the activity of Ferdinando De Luca, beginning with a review of the attention devoted to geographical studies in Naples under the influence of Antonio Genovesi between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. De Luca, a prominent figure in Naples’ cultural life, was actively engaged in geographical scholarship during the early nineteenth century. The study examines his eclectic personality, openness to political and cultural change, and scientific training. It demonstrates that De Luca was not an outsider to the Genovesi school but a geographer who offered original contributions to the field.

The final paper in the 2025 *RHGT* volume is authored by Priyadarshini Sen from the University of Kolkata, India. The study examines the Lal Dora areas in the Delhi capital region, focusing on the specific challenges of urban planning. When Lutyens' Delhi was established in 1908–1909, old Delhi's heritage rural sites were demarcated with a red line, popularly known as *Lal Dora*. Over the past century, these sites have remained largely unmanaged, leaving long-term residents in precarious living conditions. The paper explores changes and planning issues in the Lal Dora region, characterized by mixed commercial land use and limited employment opportunities. The findings reveal that narrow lanes, inadequate sewage systems, and insufficient water supply have made the numerous urban villages within Lal Dora a source of distress for local residents. The study concludes by proposing several planning measures that could be adopted to improve living conditions in these areas.

In summary, the 2025 *RHGT* volume introduces new perspectives and discussions in the field of historical geography. The six papers presented in this collection underscore the significance of this discipline and offer insights that may inspire future research and exploration.

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

Editor in Chief
dr. Remus CREȚAN

