

CHRONICLE

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International Geographical Conference in Berehove (Ukraine)

It had become a tradition to hold “Rákóczi days” during the last week of March at II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola (Francis II. Rákóczi Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute) in the town of Berehove (Hung. *Beregszász*). On 29–30 March 2012 the Geographical Department of the Institute organized an international geographical conference entitled „Social-geographical challenges in the 21st century East and Central Europe”. 150 researchers coming from 7 countries (Ukraine, Hungary, Russia, Slovakia, Romania, Serbia and Bulgaria) and representing 45 educational and scientific establishments held scientific discussions in Hungarian, Ukrainian and English languages which were the official working languages at the conference.

The materials of the lectures (776 pages) that had been sent by the participants to the organizing committee were published in two volumes and handed in to the lecturers during the registration process together with the Berehove Institute’s scientific herald “Acta Beregsasiensis”.

The conference was opened in the Esztergom auditorium by Ildikó OROSZ, who is the president of the Institute, then István Tóth, Hungary’s consul general at Berehove Consulate, greeted the participants. They were followed by plenary sessions where Prof.



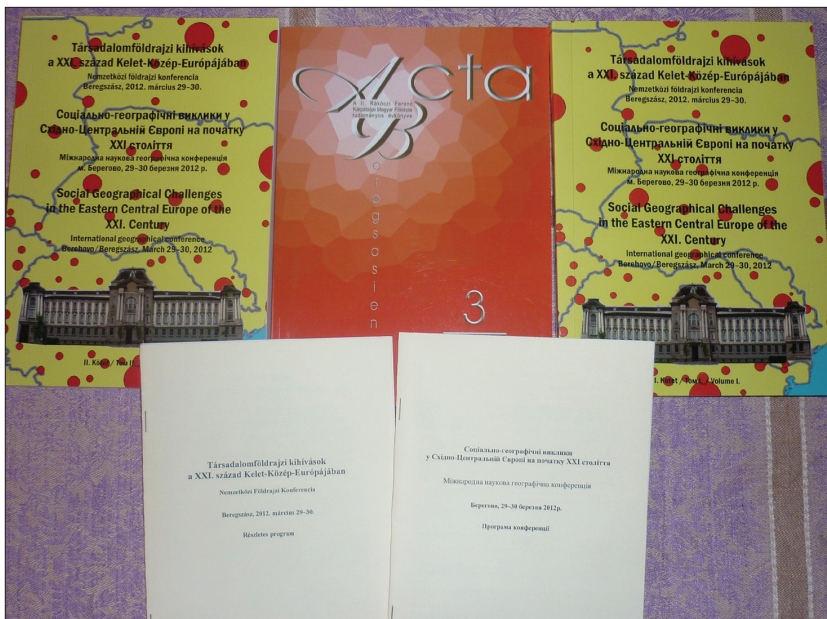
Opening of the conference



Participants of the plenary session



Participants of the professional excursion to Uzhhorod



Publications for the conference

Miroslav DNISTRANSKY, the Head of the Department, dwelt on the language assimilation trends of ethnic Russians and Ukrainians in Ukraine's regions; Prof. József NEMES NAGY outlined the changes in Hungary's territorial researches; Prof. István SÜLLI-ZAKAR conducted a lecture on the demographic explosion and migration of the Romas in East and Central Europe as one of the biggest challenges in 21st century Europe. The plenary session was closed by Sándor FEGYR who elucidated the problems of Transcarpathia's tourism before the 2012 European Football Championship.

In the afternoon section meetings were held. Due to the great interest shown by the participants, four sections (population- and social geography, economic geography, regions and borders, tourism) were organized where the researchers presented the results of their investigations on 21st century social geography in Europe. The speeches were delivered in several languages – each speaker's presentation was supplemented with the summary of his speech in another language. The summaries were translated into Hungarian, Ukrainian and English by the members of the organizing committee of the Institute.

Next day a professional excursion was scheduled. The participants were taken to Mukacheve (Hung. *Munkács*) Castle and Dobó Cellar in the village of Serednie (Hung: *Szerednye*), as well as Uzhhorod (Hung. *Ungvár*) which is a regional centre. The excursion was organised by the staff of the Geographical Department, a professional tourist guide who presented Transcarpathia's sights.

The conference and the publication were sponsored by Gábor Bethlen Foundation and the Berehove Institute. We thank the sponsors for the support and the participants for their contribution to the conference's success and its high scientific level.

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