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FOREWORD

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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 newly released issues (29-30/2020) of RHGT include new debates on **toponymy and historical geographies**.

The first part of the volume is dedicated to researches on historical geographies. Papp Sándor from Szeged University and Ilie Rădoi, doctor in Human Geography of West University of Timisoara present changes in income-related regional differences at the Romanian-Hungarian borderland, highlighting patterns of peripheralizations. This paper brings new perspectives on the spatial dimensions specific to local and regional levels, 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. By using classical inequality measures of per capita income distribution between 2007 and 2016, it documents the peripheralization that appeared along the Hungarian-Romanian border to identify effects of differing economic and spatial development strategies.

The second paper on historical geographies is written by Remus Gabriel Anghel and Laura Gheorghiu from Babes-Bolyai University. Their intervention is related to the historical stages of German migrations. The German population movement was conducted in three distinctive “waves”: during and in the aftermath of the Second World War, during communism, and in the first two years after 1990. This paper analyses the migration waves by looking at the political, social and economic causes of this mass migration of ethnic Germans, discussing the institutional arrangement that made these migratory waves possible, namely the negotiations conducted and the agreements concluded between the Romania and the West German states (also the former East Germany for a certain period of time). The findings provide a nuanced view on how both states of origin and destination influence such politically-motivated migratory waves.

Petru Laurențiu Râmpu offers an article on education. Taking an insight into a recent historical perspective on geographies of education with a practical view on Romania, the author examines the changes that have taken place in education worldwide, in terms of the way schooling is coordinated under the impulse of the standardisation of education, as an effect of globalisation and of competition between countries. Because education is conditioned both by paradigm shifts in the social sciences and by an interdisciplinary nature, the aim of this study is to describe the development of an academic sub-discipline, the geography of education, and a number of case studies connected to changes in the coordination of schooling which could pave the way for future directions in research.

The second part of the volume includes three place-naming papers. Paul Woodman introduces the issue of geographical names as brands. The author highlights the processes involved in creating toponyms, and outlines how the names of airports, airlines, urban areas, institutions as well as certain personal names have origins in geographical names. The paper discusses also country names as national brands and the issue of possession and nationalism in toponymic branding.

By using a linguistic reconstruction based on the analysis of historical maps, Francesco Perono Cacciafoco and Zheng Zhe Darwin Shia present a study on pre-colonial toponyms in Singapore. Past research on pre-colonial toponyms in Singapore has overlooked the possible explanations behind diachronic development of toponyms, but this study makes a comparative analysis of the historical maps shedding light on the development, similarities, and differences among names given in different times to the same location. The paper reconstructs pre-colonial toponyms through an analysis of maps collected from the National Archives of Singapore and the National Library Board. The findings show a total of 12 pre-colonial toponyms, some of them with

multilingual variations given by different naming subjects. The reasons for the survival of a pre-colonial toponym are mainly linked to its meaning and the continuous usage by inhabitants. The paper can serve as a guide for future research on the origins of the toponyms documented in maps drawn by pre-colonial cartographers.

The third place-naming paper in this volume investigates the influence of Abui plant names on Alor Island's toponyms. Abui is a Papuan language spoken on Alor Island, which is placed in Alor-Pantar Archipelago, south-East Indonesia, Timor area. The research contributes to current researches on how botany shapes toponymic patterns on Alor Island. By using Field Linguistics and Language Documentation methods, the authors (Shaun Lim Tyan Gin and Francesco Perono Cacciafoco) have detailed the names of ten common Abui horticultural and agricultural in order to reconstruct their etymologies. Results show that the toponyms on Alor Island derived from phytonyms are mostly transparent. Oral stories are also connected with the place naming process and are frequently used to explain how places received their names.

This volume provides thus greater space to studies in historical geographies of toponymy. We want to highlight by these papers that place naming and historical geographies are an important historical human practice which deserves more space in further researches.

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