

THE 6th ROMANIAN-TURKISH GEOGRAPHICAL SEMINAR
“PRESENT-DAY ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES IN ROMANIA AND TURKEY”

(June 5–14, 2009, Bucharest, Sibiu, Cluj-Napoca, Sighișoara)

In early 2001, an Academic Collaboration Protocol was signed between the Department of Geography, University of Dokuz Eylul (Turkey), and the Faculty of Geography of the University of Bucharest and the Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy (Romania).

Interdisciplinary environmental issues are gaining ever greater acceptance in geographical research, given the increasing human pressure on the Earth and the current sustainable development strategies. In this context the 6th Romanian-Turkish Seminar, organised in Bucharest between June 5–14, 2009, focused on significant environmental problems in the two countries, the central theme being the human-environment interactions.

The Seminar gathered together researchers from both Romania and Turkey – the Faculty of Geography - University of Bucharest; the Institute of Geography – Romanian Academy; Department of Geography – University of Dokuz Eylul; Balıkesir University; Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Burdur; Department of Geography – Diyarbakir University; Department of Geography – Uludağ University.

Proceedings were divided into two parts, the first part (6 June) was devoted to the presentation of papers grouped in three sessions. The papers presented in the first session addressed significant topics e.g. landslide susceptibility assessment in Romania, land misuse in the Bakircay basin, ecotourism management policies of protected areas in Romania, relationships between goitre affections and lithology, regional distribution of geomorphic processes in the Olănești drainage basin, soil developed on basalt in Eastern Anatolia, cryo-nival modelling system, and gully erosion. The second session dealt with industrial activities in Vâlcea County, the relationships between the natural and the human environment, the historical and cultural heritage of cultural tourism, the surveillance system – a cultural paradigm within gated communities in Bucharest, metropolitan areas in Romania, myths, beliefs and faith - possible groundwork for a new geography. The debates of the third session focused on such topics as the impact of climate change on tourism in Romania, the ecology of *Pinus nigra* in the northern part of Anatolia, diversity and individuality of environmental types in the Cerna Valley, water resources in Metropolitan Istanbul area and their protection, the effects of vegetation communities on temperature change, landscape classification along the Carasu Valley, settlement and economic geography of the lagoon of the Meriç Delta, Romanian minority in Bulgaria from an ethnogeographical perspective, and gully erosion in the Olteț Plateau.

The second part was devoted to the field trips and study cases (June 7–13). Choosing the itinerary and the places of interest had in view to acquaint the participants in the Seminar, within an available time-span, with new aspects related to the mountains, hills and tableland, and the plains of Romania. Each step presents a particular development stage and modelling dynamics of its own, posing specific problems of utilisation, management and environmental protection. The excursion had in view geomorphological, cultural, and tourist aspects connected with Sibiu, Cluj-Napoca and Sighișoara. We visited Sibiu (Hermannstadt in German), European Cultural Capital in 2007, a town that has been playing an outstanding role in the cultural development of the area. Visits were scheduled to include the most attractive tourist sites and provide the opportunity to tackle such topics as the expansion of built-up areas on unstable slopes, protection of geomorphic sites, of natural and national parks, with a special focus was the Apuseni Mountains, their diverse landscape and rich ethnographical traditions. There we discussed the main aspects of their tectonic evolution, karst features, human pressure on the environment related to gold mining, etc. In the Transylvanian Depression, beside the rich cultural heritage of the Romanian, German and Hungarian populations, we tackled some aspects connected with deep-seated landslides, floods and climate change impacts on human activities.

At the same time, it becomes ever so obvious that the range of present-day changes and their socio-economic implications require first and foremost the collaboration of all those involved in the already traditional Romanian-Turkish collaboration. The organisation of this Conference benefited by the contribution of experts from various domains interested in geomorphology, human geography and climate change-related processes.

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