

Dan Bălteanu, Sorin Geacu, Monica Dumitrașcu (Editors)(2018), *Istoria Geoștiințelor în România. Științele Geografice* (The History of Geosciences in Romania. The Geographical Sciences), vol. 7 of the collection *Civilizație Românească* (Romanian Civilization), Romanian Academy Publishing House, Bucharest, 385 pages, references.

The year 2018 was an important moment in Romania's contemporary history driven by the anniversary of 100 years since the Great Union (December 1st 1918) which marked the unification of all Romanian provinces in one democratic state. With the occasion of the Great Union Centenary, the Romanian Academy had the initiative to issue a large and ambitious collection entitled "*Romanian Civilisation*" devoted to the history of Romanian thinking throughout the last century. The collection is expected to gather over 30 volumes depicting outstanding contributions of the Romanian scholars to the national cultural and scientific heritage focusing on various domains: agriculture, biology, chemistry, demography, economy, history, geophysics, geography, geology, mathematics, medicine, philosophy, psychics etc. Initially edited in the Romanian language, the collection will be further translated into English, as well as into other foreign languages.

The series entitled "*The History of Geosciences in Romania. The Geographical Sciences*" is an important part of the overall collection due to the great role of geosciences (geography in particular) in the integrated assessment of man and society, as well as the temporal and spatial evaluation of the environment. Thus, Geographical Sciences play a particular role in outlining the national identity alongside the history and Romanian language.

The volume is following up a synthesis chapter written about four decades ago by the Academician Vintila Mihăilescu in the volume "*The History of Sciences in Romania – Geology, Geodesy, Geography*" published under the patronage of the Romanian Academy. In its present form, it was jointly elaborated by a large group of researchers from the Institute of Geography, Romanian Academy, as well as by academics from University of Bucharest, "Al. I. Cuza" University Iași, "Babeș-Bolyai" University Cluj-Napoca, "Ovidius" University Constanța and "1 Decembrie 1918" University Alba Iulia.

Overall, the volume is structured into five chapters following three main domains which refer to the *history and evolution of geographical sciences*, the *identity of geography reflected in relevant fragments extracted from the scientific achievements of preeminent Romanian and foreign geographers* and the *biographical presentation of selected great personalities of geography*.

The first chapter, *The Romanian Geography – past, present and perspectives*, provides an insight into the evolution of the Romanian geographical science from the early stages, namely the first records on the Carpathian-Danube-Pontic area, the establishment of the modern geography through the contributions of great Romanian and foreign scholars (e.g. Simion Mehedinți, George Vâlsan, Emmanuel de Martonne, Vintilă Mihăilescu) to the evolution and diversification of the geographical science from the inter-war period to the post-communist period. A short presentation of the main Higher Education and Research Institution in Romania acting in the field of geographical science was done, pointing out the structure, research directions, main scientific products and dissemination methods.

The second chapter, *Spatial landmarks of the Romanian national identity*, briefly presents the geographical significance of the three major geographical landmarks of the Romanian territory: the Carpathian Mountains – "*cradle of the Romanian civilisation*", the Danube River – "*identity and European integration axis*" and the Black Sea – "*geostrategic and identity significance*".

The third chapter, *The development of the Romanian Geography*, comprehensively describes the main theoretical and applied researches carried out in Romania in the key geographical branches (Cartography, Physical Geography, Human Geography, Regional Geography and Environmental Geography) in relation to the latest international advancements (e.g. interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary approaches) and methods (e.g. GIS, Remote Sensing).

The fourth chapter, *Romanian and foreign geographers about the Great Union*, brings together, for the first time, preeminent Romanian and foreign scholars (e.g. Emmanuel de Martonne, Vintilă Mihăilescu, George Vâlsan, Simion Mehedinți, Ion Conea), contemporary to this major historical event. Complete or partial transcriptions of their work are therefore presented, focusing on the valuable scientific arguments supporting the unity and continuity of the Romanian people within the inter-war borderlines. The transcripts are structured in

three subdivisions in relation to the three main landmarks of the Romanian geographical space and identity: “Romania – a Carpathian – Danube – Pontic country”, “the unity and individuality of the Romanian people” and “the Romanian borders”.

The fifth chapter, *Personalities of Geography*, presents the life and activity of some of the greatest Romanian and foreign scholars which have significantly improved the development of geography throughout time. Romanian academics (e.g. Dimitrie Cantemir, Simion Mehedinți, Vintilă Mihailescu, Tiberiu Morariu, Mihai David, Constantin Brătescu) not only contributed to basic geographical disciplines such as geomorphology, climatology or hydrology, but they developed the theoretical background and opened new research directions that are still fundamental. Foreign geographers such as Emmanuel de Martonne, Robert Ficheux, Masatoshi Yoshino or David Turnok are also mentioned due to their commitment to the scientific issues of the Romanian territory, as well as to their attachment and support to the Romanian geography and geographers.

The volume is a reference work for the history of sciences, in general, and for the geographical sciences, in particular, however being addressed to a broader readership with interest in the history of the Romanian science and thinking. The collection brings together the work of early and contemporary scholars with significant contributions to the development of Romanian geography and straightening the national continuity and identity for over 100 years.

Ines Grigorescu

Ionel Muntele, Alexandru Ungureanu, *Geografia populației*, (The Geography of Population), Ed. SEDCOM LIBRIS, Iași, 2017, 460 p., 99 figs, 35 tables.

The second edition of the Geography of Population makes a detailed analysis of the world population as a component part of Human Geography, the population being the most dynamic element of the nature-society system. A fairly comprehensive domain, the Geography of Population became a discipline in itself in the 19th century, with four major domains: population dynamics, population structure (demographic, socio-cultural and socio-economic); population mobility and its distribution in space; all these are studied in close correlation with the other disciplines focussed on the same study-object, but also on border disciplines (Historical Geography and Medical Geography).

The present five-chapter work makes a systematic approach to the comprehensive domain of population, proceeding from *population dynamics* and the evolution of the populating process in close connection with the characteristic features of the natural environment. The analysis of the population dynamics begins with the earliest periods – the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic, when the first hearths of population appeared; next comes the Antiquity, when population numbers increased due to the gradual development of some techniques; what followed were the towns, these leaps accounting for a better quality of life. In the Middle Ages, population numbers increased, but unwonted episodes in-between (invasions, epidemics, wars) led to population decreases. The last stage, that of the present cycle of the populating process, features two distinct periods: the modern period and the contemporary period, the last one recording the highest population growth-rate.

After a detailed analysis of the population dynamics, the authors discuss the *natural population balance*, a basic element of its dynamics, influenced in its turn by the evolution of the two component elements – birth-rate and death-rate. While at global level population dynamics is the result of the natural balance, at lower scale an important part is played by the migratory balance. Besides, the determinant factors and the geographical distribution of the values of the natural population balance, one finds in this chapter the model of demographic transition, often correlated with other transitions (epidemiological, nutritional) and last but not least the analysis touches also upon the prospects of the world’s population, its future evolution according to several long-term prognoses.

Furthermore the discussion focusses on the *geographical distribution of population*, the indicators mostly used being the number of inhabitants and the general population density calculated at the whole surface-area and the categories of territory users. The general distribution of the world population highlights the inequality in the populating degree, the authors identifying seven large population foci that concentrate nearly 70% of the world’s population, the factors influencing its distribution in space being both natural (favourable and restrictive) and anthropic ones (the socio-economic system).

An important place in population geography is held by the analysis of the *population structure*, which unlike population dynamics and distribution, is by far more diversified, forming a structural mosaic which includes nine indicators grouped by three big categories: socio-demographic, socio-cultural and socio-economic, and also the rasial structure which is more difficult to classify.

The work ends up with considerations on the *territorial mobility of population*, which the authors consider as one of the definitory particularities of population, it contributing largely to the formation of the human subspecies and to ecumenism, as well as to the current geographical distribution of population, and of some structure-controlled aspects. A very old phenomenon, population mobility, has been influenced by several factors (natural, economic, social, political, demographic, racial, cultural, educational, etc.), manifest a huge variety of forms (definite, temporary, seasonal, internal, and international).

For the great many geographical representations, the authors take a look at several statistical data, the cartographic material adding to the value of this work as a whole.

Nicoleta Damian

Andrei Nacu (2018), *Atlas istoric al Bucovinei* (The Historical Atlas of Bukowina), București, Edit. Academiei Române, 58p.+bibliografie, 19h.+ 6 i., ISBN 978-973-27-2909-0.

The Historical Atlas of Bukowina was elaborated by Mr. Andrei Nacu between 2017 and 2018 at the Institute for Socio-Human Research of the Romanian Academy Sibiu branch.

Based on an original concept, this work stands out by the very complex approach to the studied problems, the complex structure and the ingenious complementarity between the text and the map.

Part One is actually an introductory study on the historical evolution of Bukowina after 1774, when the Austrian Empire annexed it. The analysis focusses on the political, administrative, economic and demographic changes produced during the Austrian administration (1774–1918) and the Romanian administration (1918–1940; 1941–1944), or after the dismemberment of this province in 1940 and 1944, respectively.

At the same time, the present study highlights the circumstances that led to Bukowina's annexation by the Habsburg Empire, and the military and political actions that affected this historical province during the two World Wars.

Part Two contains 12 historical maps elaborated after various sources (studies, scientific papers, documents, and cartographic materials), had been consulted, each map, except for the ethnical ones, integrates a smaller-scale annex map which places Bukowina within a political administrative, regional, national, or European context.

The present general map of Bukowina (scale 1: 500.000) concludes the second part of this work.

Part Three includes a selection of old maps of Moldavia, Bukowina and Romania, as well as two plans of the capital-city Chernivtsi.

Having in view its theoretical- methodological assets, the information provided and the ingenious and distinct analysis approach, the study addresses a wide range of specialists, geography students and historians. It is a cartographic synthesis for Romanians everywhere enabling them to have a better knowledge of the historical reality of the Upper Moldavian Land. A serious approach and a wealth of ideas make this Atlas a valuable landmark for the historical problems of the Bukowina Historical Province.

This is obviously an important and representative work recommendable to all those wishing to better understand the Romanian population from this Historical Province of Romania.

Dragoș Baroiu

