

**TOWARD THE WIDENING OF HUNGARIAN-
SLOVENIAN COLLABORATION**

**ZA RAZŠIRITEV MADŽARSKO-SLOVENSKEGA
SODELOVANJA**

IVAN GAMS

Abstract

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Toward the widening of Hungarian–Slovenian collaboration

The paper analyzes the realization of the 1989 agreement between the Geographical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Anton Melik Geographical Institute of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts. It presents some proposals for the topical and areal widening of the collaboration, since the changes in the Central Europe are favorable for such a widening.

Izveček

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Za razširitev madžarsko–slovenskega sodelovanja

Avtor analizira uresničevanje dogovora o sodelovanju med Geografskim raziskovalnim inštitutom Madžarske akademije znanosti in Geografskim inštitutom Antona Melika ZRC SAZU iz leta 1989. Spremenjene politične razmere v Srednji Evropi so ugodne za tematsko in prostorsko razširitev sodelovanja.

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On behalf of the Scientific Board of the Anton Melik Geographic Institute and myself personally, I would like to welcome all the participants of the Hungarian-Slovenian Geographical Conference to Ljubljana. It is also my duty to express our thanks to the Organizing Committee of this conference and to its chairman mag. Karel Natek in particular.*

The cooperation between the Geographical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Anton Melik Geographical Institute of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts in recent years has been based on the agreement signed in Budapest on August 18, 1989, by Acad. Prof. Dr. Marton Pécsi, Director of the Geographical Institute of the Hungarian Academy, and myself as President of the Scientific Board of the Anton Melik Geographical Institute. In the agreement, the first Hungarian-Slovenian geographical conference was foreseen, and that conference, whose scope extended to Slovene border regions, was held in Tihany in 1990 thanks to our Hungarian colleagues.

The agreement also stated that this first conference should serve as a starting point for closer collaboration on projects in selected topics covering both countries or larger areas. Since 1990, our collaboration has resulted in the deepening of mutual cooperation and the exchange of results, members of both institutes and publications. However, not all the hopes and expectations for our collaboration have been realized, and continued cooperation is in the mutual interest of both our institutes.

In 1989 when the agreement was signed, Slovenia was still a part of the former Yugoslavia, and Hungary and Slovenia were constituent parts of the communist East European community. Scientific collaboration between Academies of Science was then encouraged by the authorities, but it was also in the interest of Slovene geographers to collaborate with their Hungarian colleagues who had gained a reputation as the best organized geographers in Europe. While the political situation has since changed and Slovenia is now an independent nation, this fact has only increased our desire for collaboration.

Slovenia is situated on the margin of the Pannonian Basin, and three quarters of Slovenian territory belongs to the Danube River Basin. The subpannonian climate prevails in one third of Slovenia, and for a geographer, climate is not merely a sky phenomenon but one of the most important factors controlling the formation of the cultural landscape. For many centuries, Slovenia and Hungary shared a common history as part of the Austrian Empire,

* He translated into Slovene language the abstracts of the Hungarian authors and elaborated in Slovene their summaries.

and Prekmurje in northwestern Slovenia was under the Hungarian administration of the Habsburg monarchy until 1919.

The new reality is that Hungary and Slovenia are now ranked among the eastern Central European countries, together with Croatia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland. We all face the difficulties of the transition from communist to free market economies. This urges us toward cooperation not only in the sphere of physical geography but also in the field of social geography. In this part of Europe and in the rest of Central Europe (Austria, Germany), we have similar conceptions of geography and of regional geography in particular. We believe that it is a synthetic science which aims at establishing regional complexes. In Central European countries, geography has always been an important branch of education and of science, another factor urging Central European geographers toward closer cooperation and the common presentation of our conception to the world. The Prague Conference can provide our first opportunity.

The 1989 Hungarian-Slovene agreement closed with a proposal for the widening of areas of cooperation. Now the time is opportune for this widening. We must discuss this proposal, and, if you agree, the means of achieving this goal. In my opinion, this cooperation should develop reciprocally. Every geographical institution has the right to invite to its meetings geographers from whichever country it wishes, depending on the topics under discussion. However, Central European geographers should be informed and invited first of all, and there are some topics relevant only to Central European geographers. To enhance this cooperation, the Geographical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Anton Melik Geographical Institute of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts should continue to promote collaboration between the geographers of their countries and among those of all Central Europe.

ZA RAZŠIRITEV MADŽARSKO-SLOVENSKEGA SODELOVANJA

Povzetek

Vse naloge, zajete v dogovoru med Geografskim raziskovalnim inštitutom Madžarske akademije znanosti in Geografskim inštitutom Antona Melika ZRC SAZU iz leta 1989, še niso opravljene, kar navaja k nadaljnjemu sodelovanju. Spremenjene politične razmere po letu 1989 dajejo možnosti poglobljenega sodelovanja geografov iz držav Vzhodne Srednje Evrope. Za to tematsko in arealno razširjeno sodelovanje naj bi imenovana inštituta še nadalje bila gibalno sodelovanja, ne le na naravnogeografskem, ampak tudi na družbenogeografskem področju.