

REPORTS

Geographic seminar organised in honour of doc. RNDr. Stanislav Řehák, CSc.

On 12 September 2011 it has already been five years since significant Moravian geographer doc. RNDr. Stanislav Řehák, CSc. had passed away (1949-2006). As a commemoration of this anniversary his former colleagues and students concentrated at the Department of Geography, Palacký University in Olomouc, Institute of Geonics AS CR and Department of Regional Economy and Administration of the Faculty of Economics and Administration organised a geographical seminar that was held on 10 November 2011 in Hustopeče. The seminar was organised within grant projects *Spatio-temporal organization of daily urban systems: analysis and assessment of selected regions* (GAAV IAA301670901), *Spatial models of behaviour in transforming urban environment: time geographical approach* (GACR 403/09/0885), and *Quantitative methods and synthesizing graphic methods in approximation, projection and modelling of geographical phenomena* (GAAV KJB300860901).

Doc. Řehák graduated at the Faculty of Science, University of Jan Evangelista Purkyně in Brno (1967-1972). He became interested already during his studies, thanks to the influence of doc. Otokar Šlampa, in the geography of transportation. The issue was reflected in his master thesis “Transport facilities of settlements in the South Moravia region”. After graduation he got one-year scholarship at the Department of Geography of UJEP in Brno. In 1974 he defended his rigorous thesis “A contribution to transport geographical analysis of settlements of the South Moravia region”. In the same year he started to work at the Geographical Institute of CSAS where he stayed until 1993, when the institute was dissolved. In 1979 he defended dissertation thesis “Spatial structure of service system of mass transport”. In this work he summarised knowledge on socio-economic potential of a territory and geographical organisation with respect to transport. As his most important scientific result

in CSAS socio-geographical regionalisation of Czechoslovakia based on labour and service commuting (together with dr. Maryáš) is acknowledged. In 1993 he joined the Department of Geography of the Masaryk University, where he stayed until his death. In 1995 he was appointed the associate professor on the basis of his habilitation thesis “Mass transport in the research of spatial structure of the state”. Řehák’s scientific work after 1989 was enriched by modelling of spatial interactions, he was also interested in the consequences of the break-up of Czechoslovakia on the population in borderland and in the current issues of administration reforms in the Czech Republic. The result of his scientific activity is among others more than 350 publications.

The seminar was attended by more than 30 geographers from ten Czech and Slovak institutions. The programme of the seminar was organised in four blocks corresponding to the scientific interests of doc. Řehák:

- Spatial organisation and spatial interaction,
- Geography of borderland regions,
- Geography of transportation,
- Historical, cultural and political geography of Central Europe.

The intention of the organisers was to deepen scientific critical discussion on current state and perspective of the above mentioned issues. Therefore a “traditional” model, when a presentation follows presentation with minimal space for discussion was abandoned. The meeting was conceived as a set of moderated panel discussions. Each panel was introduced by two experts with a short theoretical summary and outline of current problems in the particular fields of research, followed by a moderated discussion.

The seminar was open by an introductory word by doc. Toušek. He remembered his former schoolmate and colleague doc. Řehák. Řehák’s scientific

and pedagogic carrier was introduced particularly to the youngest participants who did not meet this important person of Czech human geography personally. Civil commitment (successful candidature to Parliament) and high moral integrity of doc. Řehák were specially highlighted.

The programme continued in four above mentioned sections. The first discussion panel was aimed at the issue of *geography of borderland regions* and was moderated by dr. Havlíček and doc. Jeřábek. Following the introductory notes on Czech borderland they present key theses concerning the main developments of borderlands in Europe and the Czech Republic during last 20 years. Subsequent debate reflected such aspects of the borderland regions as cross-border identity, role of borderland in creation of European identity, relation between borderland identity and European identity, or diminishing importance of state and Schengen space. Assessment of instituting the cross border cooperation and its forms (euro regions, European regions of territorial cooperation, macro regions), assessment of forms of cooperation of regional and state actors was discussed as well. The debate was accompanied by a plenty of examples of research realised by moderators particularly in the euro region Silva Nortica.

The panel *Spatial organisation and spatial interaction* was moderated by doc. Halás and dr. Klapka who presented three selected discussion topics aimed particularly at the methodological problems and relevance of methods used in research of spatial organisation and spatial interaction. The first topic was concerned with the issue of methodology of delimitation of development axes used in "Strategy of regional development of the Czech Republic 2007-2013" and in "Policy of territorial development of the Czech Republic 2008". Rich and inspiring discussion presented among others the results of research of the geographers at the Faculty of economy and administration regarding this issue. The second part of the panel discussed the methodology of assessment of structural forms of urbanisation in metropolitan areas of the Czech Republic and its limits regarding particularly the value of population data (statistical and factual

population). The third part was aimed at theoretical and methodological aspects of spatial interaction models. Theoretical discussion was concerned with usability and utilisation of spatial interaction models in current geography, methodological discussion was aimed at the question of masses and distance decay functions – two primary variables entering the spatial interaction models.

The panel *Historical, cultural and political geography of Central Europe* was moderated by dr. Chromý and doc. Siwek. After short introductory personal commemoration of doc. Řehák potential thematic directions of research of the region were presented: current and future position of Central and Eastern Europe in EU and in Europe generally, mutual relation within the region (from cooperation of the V4 type, tension Slovakia-Hungary, Romania-Moldova, Balkan), historical and cultural specifics of the region (tourism, traditional minorities vs. new migrants). The rich discussion was mainly concerned with the issue of territorial identities. Regional identity of population in traditional regions, regions with disrupted development continuity, specifics of identification of populations in historical lands (especially Moravia and Silesia), current forms and possible development of European identity, possible types of regional identities in ethnically non-homogeneous areas (particularly southern Slovakia) were intensively discussed and institutional tools of regional identity genesis were analysed as well.

The last panel was concerned with current issues in the geography of transportation. Short theoretical introduction and topic for discussion were prepared by two moderators, dr. Horňák and dr. Seidenglanz. Issues solving current state and perspectives of geography of transportation were discussed in the panel. In the field of theory the position of sub-discipline in quantitative methods and technocratic approach as well as new challenges of the 21st century (for instance social aspects of transport phenomena study, cyberspace) were discussed. In the field of application the issue of position and tasks of transportation geography in the current society and the influence of sub-discipline on decision (political) practice were discussed. Last but not least

the current situation of Czech and Slovak geography of transportation, its position in “national” geographical structures and problems or limitations ensuing from the position outside Anglophone world were discussed as well.

The seminar, representing for a number of participants thanks to a new non-traditional conception new experience, was closed by an evening meeting. The event fulfilled the expectations of organisers by the overall character of moderated discussions, which are generally missing in the Czech geography for a long time.

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