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## **FOREWORDS**



Dear Reader,

I tis an old truth that the effect a nation has on the world is not always in proportion to its size, and in many cases does not coincide with the political, linguistic or geographical borders of its homeland. We Hungarians know this feeling very well, since, despite the fact that we make up only 0.2 percent of Earth's population, we have given the world inventions such as the espresso machine, the ballpoint pen and the computer.

There was a time in America when they thought that we came from Mars, and this widespread belief was allegedly affirmed by one of the greatest Hungarian scientists, Edward Teller who sometimes signed his name as E.T. The truth is, of course, much more complicated. The source of our way of thinking, considered mildly devious by most people, is not to be found in a Martian landscape, but here in the middle of Europe, in the Carpathian Basin.

The volume of the National Atlas of Hungary titled 'Society' presents this special world, and not only gives answers to how this diverse and creative cultural milieu has emerged – of which Budapest is one of the most beautiful examples – but also shows the challenges that Hungarian society faces at the end of the second decade of the 21st century.

All in all, I wish every reader to study this volume with interest, and I hope that what you see in the book will persuade you to visit Hungary.



VIKTOR ORBÁN Prime Minister of Hungary



The Society volume of the National Atlas of Hungary seeks to present the spatial structure of society. By combining the tools of statistics and cartography, an enormous value added has been produced contributing to a deeper understanding of processes and a better understanding of the relationships between phenomena through the presentation of the spatial diversity of demographic and social processes.

Society is made up of us people, who are diverse and characterised by various lifestyles. We live our daily lives and take our holidays according to specific standards, traditions, and attachments. This takes place not in abstract space, but in geographically and culturally definable places, in the Carpathian Basin, in Hungary, in different regions and settlements of the country, in the streets and squares of the settlements, that is, in locations that can be clearly represented on maps.

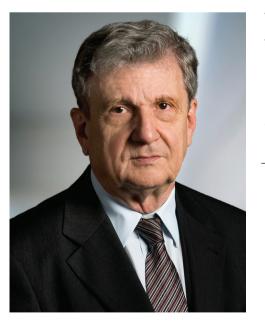
When we view the characteristics of society on a map, the landscapes, the cities, the rivers that separate us and the bridges that connect us inevitably come to life. With a little imagination we see people who, with their creativity and work, contribute to the growth of the country, work, learn, educate their children and care for their parents, relax, have fun, heal or – yes, not only live, but – also die. We see people who claim this country their own; love, build, make our shared home more beautiful, or sometimes leave it for a while. The past looms here, and it has an impact on us, and the future also comes into mind, the shaping of which is also our responsibility.

I hope that this volume will be enjoyed by readers with the same pleasure that all the outstanding professionals felt during its compilation who were part of its birth.

puocia gatiele

Gabriella Vukovich

President of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office



In the second century, Claudius Ptolemaeus (born c. 100 CE – died c. 170 CE) wrote the book titled 'Geographike Hyphegesis' contemporaneously with map references which relied on a wide variety of sources. He utilised specialised information from land surveyors, travellers and those with an interest in ethnography, including knowledge from astronomers, mathematicians and lists from the Poleis episemoi, the so-called noteworthy cities, along with other available sources. These have been summarised in the graphic representations of Oikoumene (Gr. Οἰκουμένη).

Following in his footsteps, in the East, Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī, (born c. 780 – died c. 850) created a description of his own world map al-Ma'mūn AH 199-218/AD 813-833 during the reign of the Abbasid caliphate. This eminent scholar of the Islamic world seized on the knowledge available to the Greeks along with traditional discrepancies (in ancient times rivers were often confused, with the Jaxartes – known today as Syr Darya – often being confounded with the Tanais River, i.e. Don) and expanded these with newer revisions. The material included literature from the Abbasid empire, with information on official postal routes and descriptive travelogues concerning political changes and about the emergence of new empires. In this way a verbally described map came into being, one that graphically showcased the comprehensive knowledge of the inhabited world.

This tradition has been continued by the National Atlas of Hungary, to which this current volume entitled 'Society' is a further addition, containing an abundance of graphic images pertaining to our native land in the Carpathian Basin, including present-day Hungary. This is an historically important document that will be of great benefit not only to geographers but also to historians, economists, politicians, and all other interested parties. Map enthusiasts will doubtless appreciate the extensive body of knowledge presented in this work.

Auch hills

Miklós Maróth

President of the Eötvös Loránd Research Network

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