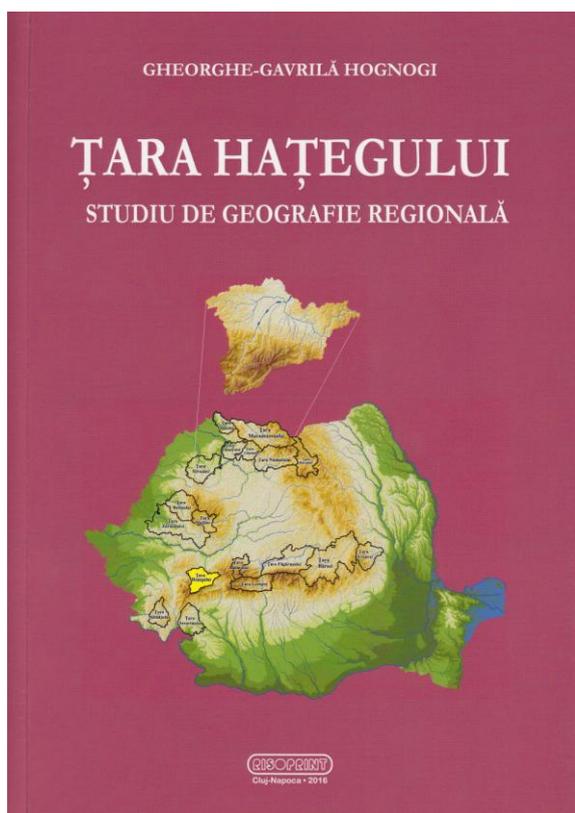


**HOGNOGI, GHEORGHE-GAVRILĂ - ȚARA HAȚEGULUI. STUDIU DE GEOGRAFIE REGIONALĂ [The Land of Hațeg. Study of Regional Geography], Risoprint, Cluj-Napoca, 2016, 270 p.** (B5 format, 77 figures, 9 tables, 1 CD)  
**ISBN 978-973-53-1721-8**



The beginning of 2016 announces the release of a new book in the geographical literature, dedicated to the most representative “land”-type unit (Rom. “țară”) in the Romanian space, namely the Land of Hațeg. As the outcome of a doctoral research, the *Land of Hațeg. Study of Regional Geography* completes the collection of works dedicated to the Romanian “țară”-type units, initiated and coordinated by Prof. Pompei Cöcean.

Adapted to the beneficiary’s needs – the local communities in the Land of Hațeg – the book manages to become a visit card to any category of stakeholders. Moreover, due to the applied features it develops, it can be a tool for any other type of spatial planning documents. And this is an aspect proposed as objective from the very preface of the book!

Multifaceted, by approaching rigorously four geographical sub-domains, apparently distinct but rejoined under the canopy of Regional Geography and illustrated in the following four chapters – *The Role of Historical Evolution in Defining the Land of Hațeg; Individualisation of the Natural Environment and Functional Interdependencies of the Land of Hațeg; Geodemographic and Habitat-Related Specificities; Economic-Geographical Characteristics of the Land of Hațeg*, the author “borrows” from the historical, economic, ethnographic, geomorphological, etc. expertise to the point of achieving practicality.

The first chapter, brief and theoretical, illustrates, throughout the 14 pages, the hypotheses, objectives, concepts and working methods used. The main strength, emerged also from the processed data, derives from the meticulous field research conducted in all the localities of the region under study, associated to graphical representation, sometimes even artistic representation of the information and data collected.

Strictly speaking, if we perceive the book as a study of Regional Geography, similar to the other “țară”-type units, of which 14 have already been published, the *Land of Hațeg. Study of Regional Geography* includes a mental approach to the concept of “țară”, on the one hand, but it also becomes a spatial-temporal initiative to interrelate the environmental elements, demography and habitat, socio-cultural and economic aspects or the historical legacy, on the other hand. Moreover, the objectives formulated at the beginning of chapters 2-5, the methodological landmarks and the primary sources used introduce the reader to the scientific journey proposed by the author. The cartographic syntheses, at regional level or, punctually, under the form of case studies, found in printed or electronic form, are in themselves independent materials, powerfully illustrated and with a number of conclusive elements (graphs, images, maps, tables). The choropleths in the final chapter structure the regional specificities, the strengths and the existing dysfunctions in a more abstract manner and, at the same time, they indirectly demand for the real, palpable situation in the field, which often ends up being reduced to a statistical, institutionalized takeover of data and information or, even worse, to an irresponsible imitation and adaptation of the territorial reality.

## BOOK REVIEW

In fact, the book has a strong architectural, pedantic style. The author puts himself in the beneficiary's shoes, identifying, quite often, numerous practical solutions for the local, punctual development of a fact, phenomenon or product. We mention in this regard the punctual specialization of some areas in the Land of Hațeg in certain types of crops (pp. 228-229), the valorisation of protected natural areas by ensuring the restrictiveness of the activities performed (pp. 230-231), the revival of the traditional activities by in situ conservation of the existing vernacular heritage (pp. 232-233) and the delimitation of some thematic areas for the valorisation of the historical legacy (pp. 233-234).

**Exceptional graphics.** One of the author's "promises", "to achieve a useful tool, primarily for the direct beneficiaries of this study, namely the local communities in the Land of Hațeg, but also for other possible stakeholders [...]" (p. 23), is translated faithfully into

cartographic materials, images taken on the spot and analogies as graphical representations of some data.

**Integrated approach.** The original elements derive from the regional approach of all analysed aspects, starting from the working methodology applied to the permanent emphasis of the correlations between various components of the Land of Hațeg.

*The Land of Hațeg. Study of Regional Geography* represents another brick to the territorial entity constructed over time by Romulus Vuia, Cornelia Grumăzescu, Nicolae Popa. The viability of the proposed solutions is the future litmus test among the community, as local stakeholder, by disseminating these solutions, by taking the responsibility for them and by implementing them.

Reviewed by ANA-MARIA POP<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Senior Researcher, PhD, Centre for Regional Geography, Faculty of Geography, Babeș-Bolyai University, 5-7 Clinicilor Street, Cluj-Napoca, 400006, Romania.  
E-mail: ana-maria.pop@geografie.ubbcluj.com