

## WORKSHOP ON INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS Cluj-Napoca, 21 May 2010

A four-member delegation comprising academics from several universities in the USA and Canada visited Romania during 14<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> of May 2010, both as representatives of their institutions and as members of the Association of American Geographers. The 10-day visit focused on finding common interests in geographical research, on promoting the exchange of ideas and enhancing the collaboration with the Romanian geographers. For a better mutual knowledge, workshops were organized in three Romanian universities, including the University of Bucharest, “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, and Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca.

The workshop in Cluj-Napoca, hosted by the Centre for Regional Geography on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May, was entitled *Integrated Territorial Analysis* and had in view the exchange of ideas and professional experience between the members of the Association of American Geographers, the members of the Centre for Regional Geography, academics from the Faculty of Geography and representatives of the Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca Branch, Department of Geography.

The workshop was opened by **Audrey Kobayashi**, Professor at Queen’s University, Department of Geography, member of the Queen’s Research Chair, and Editor of *The Annals of the Association of the American Geographers: People, Place, and Region* section. All the participants had the opportunity to find out more about the worldwide educational and research activity conducted by the Association of American Geographers on a wide range of geographical topics.

The discussions that followed focused on the contributions the participants had to the research in Human Geography and Regional Geography, covering topics such as migrations, with emphasis on the immigration of the Romanians in Canada and the USA, a subject of interest for Professor **Audrey Kobayashi**. **Mark W. Rosenberg**, Professor at Queen’s University, Department of Geography and Department of Community Health and Epidemiology, presented his research in Medical and Health Geography and its direct link to public policy, as well as his experience in different national and international projects in the field. Aspects related to Rural Geography and human-environment relations were approached by **Lisa M.B. Harrington**, Professor at Kansas State University, Department of Geography, and Secretary of the Association of American Geographers, while **George W. White**, Professor at South Dakota State University, Head of the Department of Geography, emphasized the importance of place and territory, together with language, religion and shared history, to the process of nation building, the strong interrelation of a nation with the territory, the issue of multi-ethnicity, with case studies from the South-Eastern Europe.

The research conducted by the Centre for Regional Geography was presented by Professor **Pompei Cocean**, Head of the Department of Regional Geography and Director of the Centre for Regional Geography, who explained the researchers’ preoccupation with geographical mental spaces and their involvement into the elaboration of spatial development strategies and spatial plans at different scale and complexity levels, dealing with topics of sustainable local/regional development and territorial cohesion. The example of *Mărginimea Sibiului Spatial Plan* was given, with stress laid on the structural and functional particularities of the territory, the present dysfunctions and the major coordinates of the development strategy. As the contributions to the issue of geographical mental spaces have already become significant, the perspectives on the evolution of “land”-type units in Romania, as geographical program regions with systemic features and also typical mental spaces, were outlined during the workshop, generating a fruitful exchange of opinions.



## EVENTS

The issue of multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism proved to be a shared preoccupation, **Ana-Maria Pop**, Researcher at the Centre for Regional Geography, exemplifying the manner in which ethnic identity and multiculturalism can represent a determining factor in the individualization of a “land”-type unit, namely the Land of Bârsa. As far as the preoccupations related to functional regions are concerned, **Lelia Papp**, Teaching Assistant at the Faculty of Geography, stressed on how the linkages between the city of Cluj-Napoca and its rural periphery are reflected in the spatial and temporal characteristics of the land use and land cover changes.

The presentations delivered during the workshop and the discussions that followed raised the participants’ interest and opened new perspectives for a collaboration in the field of geographical research.