

SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES

Author: Jan DANIEL

Title: How should we do the history of geographies during the period of state socialism? Historical period, space and expert knowledge in the post-war Czechoslovakia

pp: 150-162

Abstract: A critical reflection on the current state of research into the history of the production of geographical knowledge during the period of state socialism is presented in this report. Using the example of the Czechoslovak administrative reform from 1949, several questionable aspects of current interpretations are identified. In particular, the problematic use of three crucial concepts in the study of the history of geography: time (a politics of memory); space (spatial imaginations); and geographical knowledge. Examples of approaches to each concept are presented, which can overcome the insufficiencies and contribute to a better understanding of the mutual relations between state socialism and the production of geographical knowledge. Research into the history of geography during the period of state socialism is important both to understand the current state of 'post-socialist' national geographies, and to add to the production of an inclusive history of global geography. One necessary condition is, however, to leave the current descriptive and encyclopaedic styles, which are marked with ahistoricism and presentism. In contrast, it is essential that the history of geography during the period of the state socialism become a serious issue, which is analysed through critical and reflexive approaches.

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Authors: Krzysztof JANC, Dariusz ILNICKI, Wojciech JURKOWSKI

Title: Spatial regularities in Internet performance at a local scale: The case of Poland

pp: 163-178

Abstract: At present the digital divide has started to be considered not so much in the context of Internet access itself or the skills of Internet users, but in terms of Internet performance. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed that faster Internet made it easier to adapt to the new reality. But not all areas can benefit from good Internet connection. Therefore, the aim of this study is to identify spatial regularities in Internet performance on a local scale. This study is based on a set of data generated by Internet users, collected using the publicly available *Ookla Speedtest* measurement tool. The information about Internet speed and latency obtained in this way shows the actual Internet speed experienced. The analyses have indicated significant characteristics of the spatial differentiation of Internet performance. First, in the case of the Internet, the core-periphery dimension is not universal and obvious, as regional systems are strongly marked. Second, perceiving the digital divide mainly through the prism of Internet access is an insufficient approach.

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Authors: Katarzyna PRZYBYŁA, Marian KACHNIARZ, Maria HEŁDAK, David RAMSEY, Bogdan PRZYBYŁA

Title: The influence of administrative status on the trajectory of socio-economic changes: A case study of Polish cities

pp: 179-191

Abstract: Most of the academic literature indicates that high administrative status positively influences the development of a city, while the loss of such status leads to marginalisation. Most of these studies, however, investigated national capitals, and relatively little research has analysed the effect of a change in status at lower levels of government. Poland is an obvious subject for such research, due to the recent extensive reforms of its system of territorial government. This article presents the recent dynamics of socio-economic development in Polish cities and their relation to whether a city maintained or lost its status as a regional capital. These results enable us to identify correlations between the dynamics of socio-economic development and the status of a city. The nature of these correlations is more ambiguous than the results presented in previous studies. The findings of this study give new insight into the effect of changes in a city's administrative status.

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Author: Dorota MANTEY

Title: Local centres in post-socialist suburbs: Redefined concept and retrofitting perspectives

pp: 192-210

Abstract: Chaotically developed post-socialist suburbs need retrofitting by providing residents with a local central space. This research aims at developing a typology of suburban local centres, describing the most common central spaces according to adopted criteria, as well as identifying which type of local centre has the most potential to be perceived as such by suburbanites and how suburban municipalities plan central spaces. The research was conducted in six institutionalised Warsaw suburbs representing the most common types of local centres of a neighbourhood catchment area. The research has shown that spatial criteria differentiate local centres more than social criteria. Concentric layouts attract different non-residential functions more effectively than linear ones. When recognising some spaces as central, the legibility of the broader spatial arrangement and the presence of key objects with centre-forming functions seems to be important. Factors that distort such recognition include the excessive dispersion of buildings, shops, and service points; peripheral or random location of the main activity node; poorly designed and equipped central spaces; and the proximity to large-scale shopping centres and recreational areas/objects. When looking for a model of retrofitting post-socialist suburbs through strengthening neighbourhood centres, it is worth recalling the concept of the so-called "third places".

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Authors: Adrienne ORTMANN-AJKAI, Tamás MORVA, Ervin PIRKHOFFER, Dénes LÓCZY, Ákos HALMAI, Gergő NÉMETH, Péter GYENIZSE

Title: A GIS-based framework to determine spatially explicit priority categories for flood risk management intervention schemes

pp: 211-226

Abstract: The necessity of plural valuation of costs for flood risk management is widely acknowledged, but practical case studies are still scarce. We developed a GIS-based plural valuation framework to determine spatially explicit priority categories for flood risk management intervention schemes on the Drava River, Southern Hungary. A conventional economic evaluation, including land market prices and additional costs due to legal conservation restrictions, was complemented by an ecological valuation of vulnerability. The inclusion of ecological vulnerability significantly changed the proposed priority areas for flood risk management interventions: in this case, softwood riparian forests face far less threat, together with other Natura 2000 habitats, in comparison to unprotected wetlands and grasslands. This valuation framework also highlights priority habitats and areas for joint conservation and water management projects, utilising the synergies between several EU Directives as the Birds Directive, Habitats Directive, Flood Directive, and Water Framework Directive. Our framework is adaptable for the other floodplains along major or medium-sized European rivers, assuming that specific local settings are considered.

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