

Regiony v čase a prostoru Regions through Space and Time

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Regions have always played a significant role in our perception of how the world around us is organized and in human life in general. The region is one of the key concepts not only in geography and regional history, but also in other scientific disciplines. The way in which it is understood has changed over the last hundred years, just like the importance of regions has changed. The so-called new regional geography today is in its middle age. In the last four decades, we have witnessed an intense discussion in Western geography on the (re)conceptualization of the region and place and their identities and heritage. Within the context of the dynamic transformation of regions, these discussions have taken place not only in the fields of regional, cultural, or historical geography, but also in regional development and related social sciences (e.g. sociology, political science, economy, historiography).

At the center of the change in the research's subject orientation is the understanding of the region as a social construct and socio-spatial process. The analyses of the afore-mentioned process are focused on discussions of the significance of people's sense of belonging to the territory in which they live, on the territory's external and internal image, and above all on revealing the dependency and wider connections of the formation, construction, reproduction, and decline of regions (the mechanisms and impetuses of socio-spatial changes, transformation of the borders, the role of actors/subjects in the formation of regions and territorial communities, their purpose, the transformation of power relations within the territory, symbolism, etc.). One of the most influential theories that contributed to researchers' increased interest in regions is the theory of the institutionalization of the region by the Finnish geographer Anssi Paasi (1986).

Czech geography reflected the ideas of new regional geography with a delay of over a decade, but in the last decade there has been a dynamic development in the research on socially constructed regions, territorial identities, and heritage.

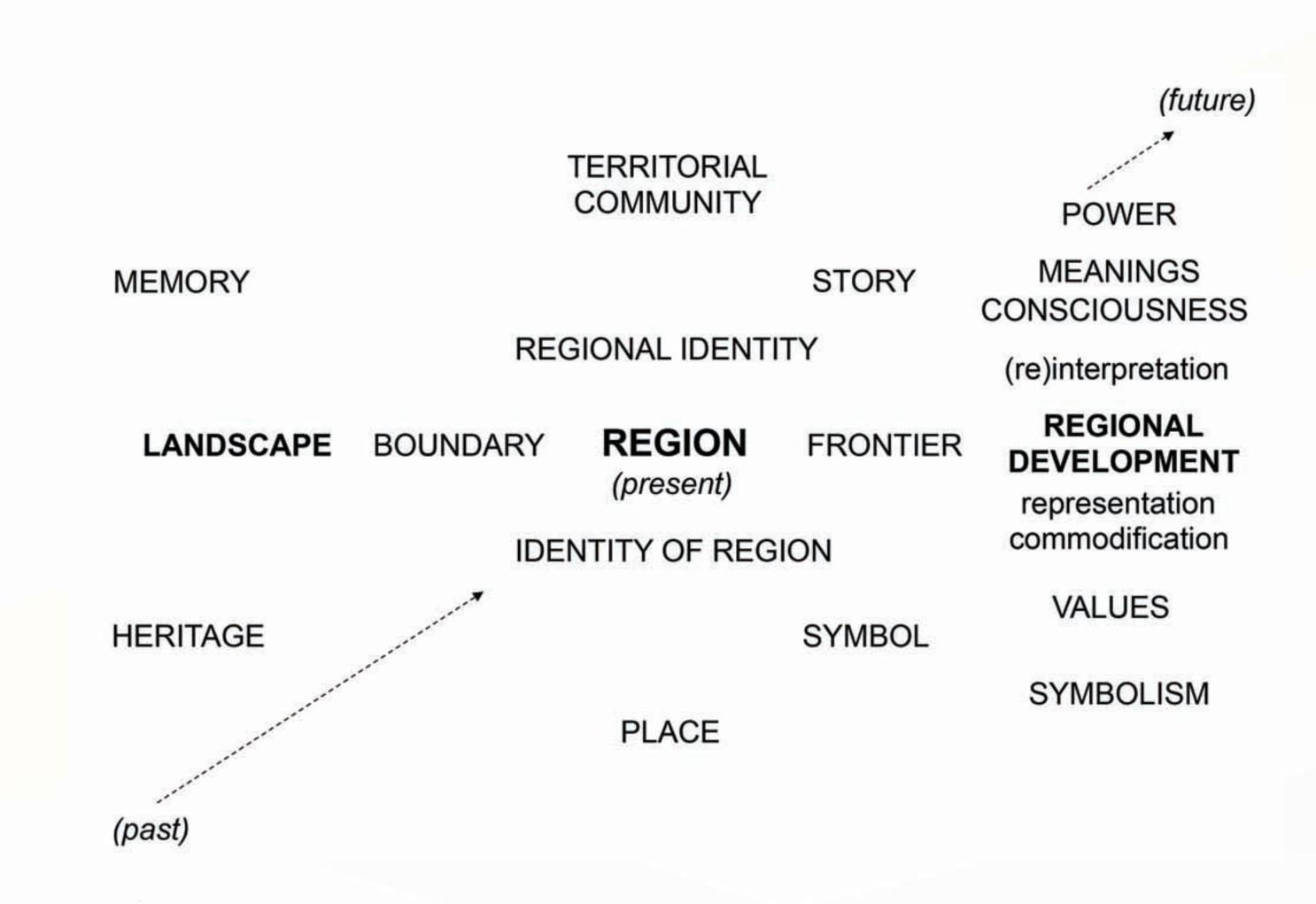
The goal of the exhibition is to introduce the current research of the historical geographers and historians attached to the Historical Geography Research Centre on the formation and transformation of regions. The exhibition presents the current understanding of the region, its various shapes and meanings, with a particular emphasis on connecting traditional topics with new ones. It focuses on the process by which regions were formed and the transformations in the construction and reproduction of regional identities, symbolic meanings and images, the transformations of administrative regions, the possibilities of measuring the intensity of changes, etc. The researchers are primarily interested in problematic and intensively transformed areas; they are focusing on the changing space-time and cultural-historical context.

Regiony vždy měly významnou roli v lidském vnímání organizace okolního světa i v lidském životě jako takovém. Region je jedním z klíčových konceptů nejen geografie a regionální historie, ale i dalších vědních oborů. Jeho chápání se v posledních více než sto letech měnilo, stejně, jako se měnily významy regionů. Tzv. nová regionální geografie je dnes dámou středního věku. Již čtvrté desetiletí jsme v západní geografii svědky intenzivní diskuze o (re)konceptualizaci regionu a místa a jejich identit či dědictví. V kontextu dynamických proměn regionů se tyto diskuze uplatňují nejen na poli regionální, kulturní či historické geografie, ale i v regionálním rozvoji a v příbuzných společenskovědních oborech (sociologie, politologie, ekonomie, historiografie ad.).

Podstatou změny předmětové orientace výzkumů je chápání regionu jako sociální konstrukce a socio-prostorového procesu. Při analýzách uvedeného procesu se pak vedle diskuze významu sounáležitosti lidí s územím, ve kterém žijí, příp. vnějšího a vnitřního image území, pozornost věnuje i odhalování podmíněností a širších souvislostí utváření, reprodukce či zániku regionů (diskutují se mechanizmy a hybné síly socio-prostorových změn, proměny hranic, role aktérů/subjektů na poli formování regionů a územních komunit, jejich zájmová orientace, proměny mocenských vztahů v území, symbolika ad.). K nejvlivnějším z teorií, které přispěly k nárůstu zájmu badatelů o regiony, bezesporu patří teorie institucionalizace regionu finského geografa Anssi Paasiho (1986).

Česká geografie reflektovala myšlenky nové regionální geografie s fázovým zpožděním více než jedné dekády, přičemž dynamický rozvoj výzkumů sociálně-konstruovaných regionů, územních identit a dědictví zaznamenáváme zejména až v posledním desetiletí.

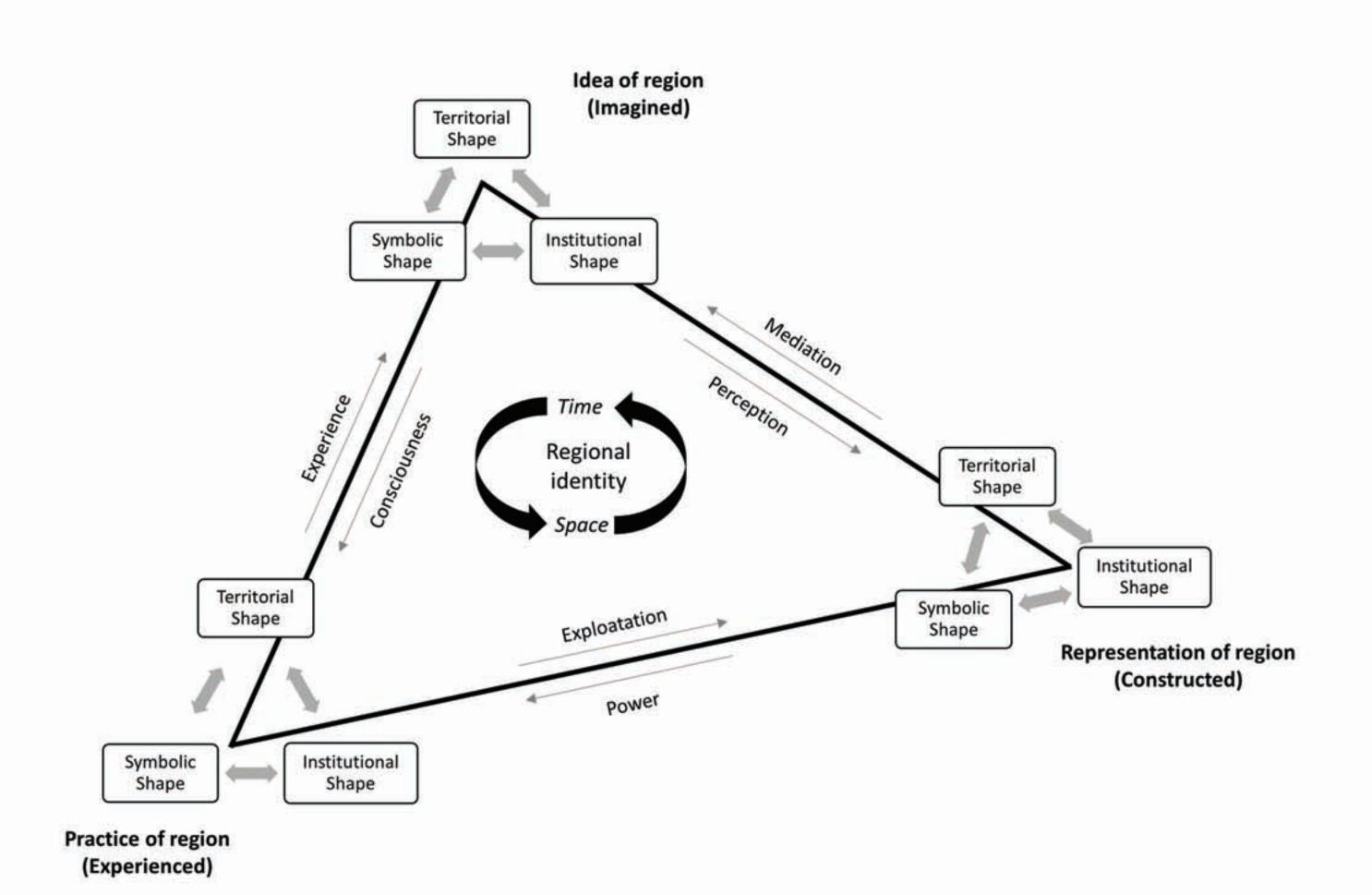
Cílem výstavy je představit aktuální výzkum historických geografů, geografů a historiků sdružených kolem Výzkumného centra historické geografie, v oblasti formování a proměn regionů. Výstava představuje současné formy uchopení regionu, jeho různých podob a významů, přičemž důraz se klade na propojení tradičních témat s tématy novými. Pozornost se věnuje procesu formování regionů a proměnám v budování a reprodukci regionální identity, symbolických významů a obrazů, proměnám správních regionů, možnostem měření intenzity změn ad. Zájem výzkumníků je pak především o oblasti problémové a intenzivně přeměňované, kdy je důraz kladen na měnící se časo-prostorové a kulturně-historické kontexty.



The position of the concept of region in the system of historical geographical research. The dynamic process of shaping regions of various scales is a reaction to the changes in both external frameworks (such as globalization, European integration) and internal conditionalities (the quality of an environment/milieu, the ability to activate actors/subjects and their interest groups, the application of power, the educational system). Existing regions have been transformed and brand new ones have been constructed; historic regions have been revived. This is closely related with the (re)activation of collective memory and regional consciousness.

A region is a social construct – a product of the combined effect of general and specific processes (limited in space and time), an instrument as well as a result of social practices. It is a result of: (a) changing systems of production and social processes; (b) changing networks of social and institutional relationships; and (c) people's specific cultural relationships and socio-cultural patterns of behavior. A region is a process that reflects the character of an environment as well as the consciousness of its transformations and development.

A societal production of a region is one of the new attempts to synthetically understand the region as the result of the mutual interaction of various levels of meaning. Source: Semian 2016, based on Lefebvre 1976; 1991; Paasi 1986.



THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT OF THE PROCESS
OF THE FORMATION OF REGIONS, REGIONAL IDENTITIES, AND REGIONAL/LOCAL
COMMUNITIES AND PROBLEMS IN EVALUATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGION

A | GEOGRAPHICAL SCALE (conflicts between the local, microregional identity, identity with the region, historical lands etc.)

B | DIFFERENCES IN THE "MEMORY" OF DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

C | DIFFERENCES IN THE INTERPRETATIONS OF REGIONAL HISTORY/MEMORY

D | ABSENCE OF KEY ACTORS/AUTHORITIES (reproduction of regions in time, local actors, elites, scientists, etc.)





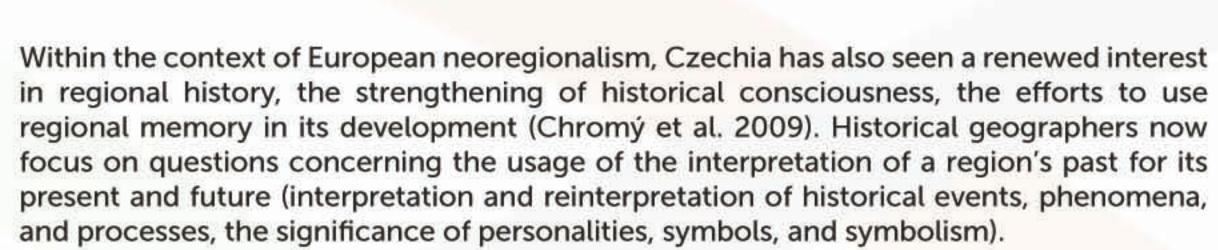




The monument of the no longer existent border of Czech historical lands. One of the problems of historical geographical research is the demarcation of regions.

Besides the current state of the borders, or the borders of administrative regions, one can see elements in the landscape that highlight or suggest the old (relict) borders.

Photos: Zdeněk Kučera, Pavel Chromý.



In the field of regional development one often encounters references to the territory's "golden age," the "traditions" of the communities living in the territory, with the usage of "heritage" (often with entirely new meanings in the new social context). In terms of the changing social values, or rather different generational lifestyle preferences, a question emerges — to what extent is the region shared (across generations, consensually accepted, accepted inside and outside the region and with the same meaning) component of a regional structure.

Communication with the inhabitants of newly created regions are crucial for the creation and reproduction of a regional identity. The administrative Vysočina Region, which includes parts of historical Bohemian and Moravian Lands, was created in the year 2000. Photo: Pavel Chromý.



The transformation of regions and their borders is connected to, among other things, the transformation of the functions of regional centers. Centers, which had lost their previous function, or had not been significantly industrialized, today are part of the regional, national, or world heritage. An example of this is the town of Telč.

Photo: Pavel Chromý.



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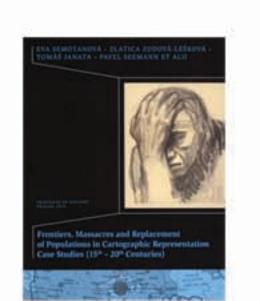
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