

THE FIRST CROATIAN GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS (OPATIJA, CROATIA)

The First Croatian Geological Congress was held at Opatija between October 18 and 21, 1995. This congress was undoubtedly one of the more important parts of the celebration of both the 120th anniversary of geological studies at Zagreb University and the 85th anniversary of the Croatian Geological Society.

The Congress organizers wished to gather the highest possible number of scientists and experts in geology and associated fields from Croatia and abroad, at their first congress in the Republic of Croatia. They succeeded, as in the Adriatic Hotel, where the participants stayed, more than 250 people gathered. The Karst Research Institute ZRC SAZU, Postojna contributed two active representatives. Most of the participants came from Croatia; some from Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Slovenia, Hungary, Austria, Germany and Poland.

Many well known geologists payed a part in creating this Congress, from M. Herak, to cite only one of the Honorary Committee, to D. Benček and M. Šparica, members of the Organizing Committee, and B. Biondić of the Scientific Committee.

The fact that geological scientific knowledge represents the foundation for the entire life system within a certain area was one of the main Congress's lines. Further on it was emphasised that, without detailed knowledge of geological relations, nature protection, water safeguarding, and mineral resources exploitation are practically impossible. This is why it was suggested to the participants that they demonstrate by their contributions the results of and the need for further development of the geological science.

The program of the Congress included invited lectures, lectures by the participants, and exhibition of posters. Four excursions were organized during the congress; also several exhibitions, and various meetings, and round tables. The Congress itself was divided into four sections:

1. stratigraphy, paleontology, sedimentology and tectonics;
2. mineralogy, petrology, geochemistry, and mineral resources;
3. hydrogeology, engineering geology, and informatics in geology;
4. geology of hydrocarbons, and geophysical researches.

The organizers arranged four excursions for the end of the Congress, all of them to Istria, from Rijeka in the east to Buzet in the north and Pula in the south.

A stratigraphic excursion, led by I. Velić and colleagues was in western Istria between Rovinj and Kanfanar. Participants visited the carbonate layers of shallow-sea platforms from Upper Dogger to Medium Cretaceous. Within this period span, geologists distinguish three mega-sequences separated by two distinctive emmersions (land phases).

The sedimentological excursion was organized by I. Tišljar and colleagues; it went to south-western Istria between Pazin, Rovinj and Banjole. The first part of the field visit was dedicated to cyclic shallow-sea carbonate sediments of Upper Tortonian, Beriasian and Lower Aptian lagoon limestones and Albian transgressive carbonates. The second part of the visit took place on the rocks of Upper Albian and Lower Cenomanian.

A. Gabrić and colleagues presented in the next excursion the mineral resources of Istria. Stopping points were at the bauxite deposits, in the quarries of decorative stone and quartzite sands.

The hydrogeological, engineering-geological and speleological excursion was prepared by B. Biondić and many research associates. It took place between Rijeka and Pazin. Participants met the problems related to water supply of Rijeka, to land-slides and to the road-tunnel under Učka. The final part was at the well-known cave Pazinska jama.

Beside several co-organizers, the main organizers of the Congress were the Croatian Geological Society and the Institute of Geology from Zagreb; it was sponsored by the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of Croatia.

The lectures, abstracts of papers and the texts to posters, as well as the guide-book for all four excursions, were already published in special volumes before the Congress. The publications are very well edited and well produced which, without doubt, contributed to a successful congress.

It was very pleasant to spend four days with the geologists of Croatia in an autumn Opatija and I support their wish that the Congress becomes traditional.

Martin Knez