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Editorial: Third Belgian geographers' days

Christian Vandermotten

- 1 The Third Belgian geographers' days, with the general topic "Geography on the move", were organized on 24 and 25 October 2008 by the Université Libre de Bruxelles and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. The previous editions had been held at the Université de Liège and at the Universiteit Gent, so this biennial organization has once and for all become a tradition, and the next edition will take place in Louvain in the autumn of 2010.
- 2 This meeting, originally aimed at giving young researchers the opportunity to meet and to discuss their works, has now turned into a two-day event. On Friday, the meeting of the young researchers was preceded by a keynote address given by Rob Vandervaat (University of Amsterdam), "Geography and the Needs of Society at the Beginning of the 21st Century", and followed at the end of the afternoon by two great conferences, "Palaeoglaciology: Understanding the Dynamics of former Ice sheets using Landforms", by Arjen Stroeven (University of Stockholm), and "Les formations sociales dans les temps longs de la mondialisation", by Christian Grataloup (Université de Paris VII). Saturday morning was devoted to the pedagogic and popularization perspectives, with a wide participation of the general public, mainly teachers from secondary schools, members of both geography teachers' organizations, the VLA in Flanders, and the FEGEPRO in the French-speaking Community, whose collaboration was very much appreciated. Saturday afternoon many participants attended various thematic urban pedestrian fieldtrips organized throughout Brussels and the nearby Forêt de Soignes.
- 3 Globally, this new concept was a big success and altogether 312 participants attended the event.
- 4 70 papers were presented by the researchers, distributed amongst 10 topical commissions, and a specific session was devoted to a didactic panel. 25 papers were dealing with physical geography and landscapes, 8 with remote sensing, 33 with human, social, economic and political geography, 3 with theoretical geography, and one with didactics. Among those, 18 authors expressed their intention to submit their

contribution for publication in Belgeo. However, some finally did not, and some papers were rejected by the refereeing procedure.

- 5 Altogether 7 papers are published in the present issue. It is challenging, at a time when some reunification of geography seems to be on the agenda around environmental issues, that all the papers published deal with human geography. Is it so that physical geography and remote sensing definitively keep scientific channels of communication different from those used by human geographers ? It also raises the question of the possibility or not to have a common scale for evaluating the quality of the work of geographers working in the different subdisciplines. We intend to come back to this question in a next editorial, on the occasion of the end of Belgeo's tenth year of publication.
- 6 In any case, many thanks to the numerous people who contributed to make this event a great success, and my best wishes to the organizing committee of the next 4th Belgian Geographer's days.

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