

# AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF INSTITUTIONAL CAVE EXPLORATION AND ITS PRESENT ORGANIZATION

*Péter Szablyár*

## **The beginnings**

The origins of institutional speleological research in Hungary date back to the Speleological Committee, proposed during the session of the Hungarian Geological Society on November 5th, 1909, and formed on January 28th, 1910. The first president of the Committee was Károly Siegmeth, the vice-president was Dr. Károly Jordán, and the secretary was Dr. Ottokár Kadić. The charter of the Committee summarized its scientific task in 14 points. The expansion of the Committee and the rising level of professional work called for a new form of the organization in 1913: the Speleological Section of the Society. In the same year, the bilingual journal "Barlangkutatás" was first issued.

## **Between the two world wars**

The First World War brought an interruption to the earlier upswing of this field. The territory of Hungary shrunk to one-third of its previous size and major karst regions remained outside of the new borders.

Another stage of development began in 1926 with the foundation of the Hungarian Speleological Society with Jenő Cholnoky, Professor of Geography, as executive president and Dr. Ottokár Kadić, chief geologist, as secretary general. Besides the journal "Barlangkutatás", the popular periodical "Barlangvilág" was also issued. Another successful period followed until the outbreak of the Second World War, to which a new impetus was given by the re-annexation of Hungarian areas with karst regions and by the ensuing research activities.

## **After the Second World War**

In the post-war years the former associations and other organizations were dissolved. As a consequence, the society of cave explorers in Hungary, ever growing in number, was again left without an independent organization for some years.

In 1952, a Speleological Section formed under its former parent association, the Hungarian Geological Society. Concurrently a Cave Exploration Committee was created within the Hungarian Geographical Society. In 1955 the two organizations were united as a Karst and Speleological Section of the Hungarian Geographical Society. Simultaneously, a Central Karst Hydrological and Speleological Committee was formed in the Hungarian Hydrological Society.

## **Renewal**

Following the renewal and consolidation of the country, the Hungarian Speleological Society was

reorganized on December 16th, 1958, with Dr. Endre Dudich, member of the Academy and University Professor, as president. The Society was supervised by the Ministry of Heavy Industry. In 1967 the Society was left without supervision and experienced a crisis which was solved on February 26th, 1970, at the General Assembly of the Federation of Technical and Scientific Societies which approved the enlisting of the Society as a member. It has remained a member ever since.

The objective of the reorganized Society is stated in the Basic Regulations as follows:

The objective of the Society is to explore, survey and describe karst regions and caves, to unite the community of the sciences of karst and speleological research as well as of related disciplines, to represent the interests of cave explorers and cave exploration, to organize activity on the theory and in the practice of this field, to popularize results, to discuss the initiatives and proposals from members and the forwarding of them to state and social bodies, and through all these activities to promote scientific and technical progress as well as the protection of karst areas and caves."

## **Organization of the Society**

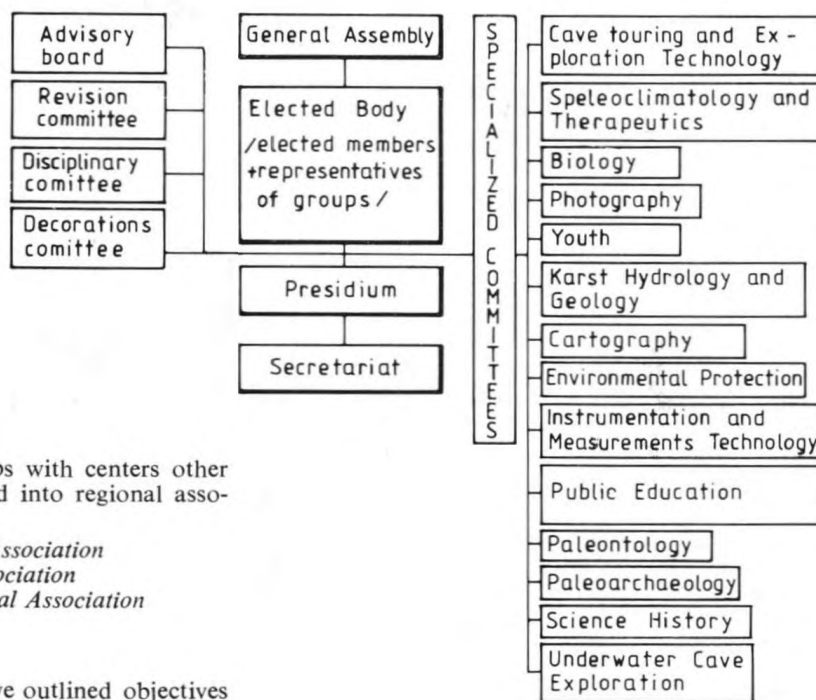
The membership of the Society exceeds one thousand, including 920 people in exploration groups and 280 individual explorers. The organization of the Society is similar to other scientific associations in Hungary:

The Officers of the Society are elected at the General Assembly.

The present Officers are:

<i>Honorary President:</i>	Dr. Hubert Kessler
<i>President:</i>	Dr. István Fodor
<i>Co-presidents:</i>	Dr. Dénes Balázs Dr. György Dénes Tamás Hazslinszky Dr. András Juhász
<i>Secretary General:</i>	Miklós Gáboros
<i>Deputy Secretary General:</i>	Péter Szablyár
<i>Secretaries:</i>	Éva Hevér József Kárpát Ödön Vid
<i>Presidium:</i>	Péter Adamkó Dr. Ferenc Cser Sándor Kalinovits László Maucha Kinga Székely Ferenc Szolga Dr. János Tardy
<i>Executive secretary:</i>	Nóra Fleck

### Organization of the Hungarian Speleological Society



The cave exploration groups with centers other than the capital are organized into regional associations within the Society:

- North-Hungarian Regional Association*
- Transdanubian Regional Association*
- South-Transdanubian Regional Association*

### The objectives

In order to achieve the above outlined objectives the following activities are performed:

- Organization of professional activities according to the specialized committees,
- Paper sessions and discussions are held to present and discuss the results of cave explorations at home and abroad,
- Organization of nation-wide cave exploration meetings and central exploration camps,
- Operation of a competitive system, with the winner annually declared, which ensures the documentation of cave explorations and research works. Also, occasionally having professional competitions (photography, survey, legends, etc.),
- Organizing and running an education system for the training of cave explorers, in cooperation with the Association of Nature-Lovers,
- Editing and publishing of materials,
- Contracting work in order to procure the necessary funds for the Society, professional conduct, and organization,
- Maintenance of the speleological and divers library, unique in Hungary, gradual increasing volume on the basis of international exchange of publications,
- Maintenance and extension of the collection on science history.

### Publications of the Society

The annals of the Society are "Karszt- és Barlangkutatás", a collection of papers with major results in foreign languages. The first volume was issued thirty years ago, in 1959. To date, nine volumes have been published, the last (no. 9) in 1980.

Since 1961, one or two issues of the journal "Karszt és Barlang" have been published yearly. Among its permanent sections, "Studies" is signi-

ficant, including 4—6 longer papers in each issue. Under the heading "Reviews", discussions, news from abroad and journal reviews are found. The sections entitled "Our researchers abroad", "Results in karst and speleological research in Hungary" and "The Society's Life" intend to provide a complete picture of the actual situation in Hungarian cave exploration. "The book-shelf of the Speleologist" reviews books and other publications from Hungary and abroad. The researchers who died during the past period are remembered ("In memoriam"). The important papers are supplemented with summaries in foreign languages.

The Special Issue of 1977, published in English for the 7th International Speleological Congress is followed by the Special Issue for the 1989 Congress in Budapest, also in English.

The first regular periodical of speleology, reorganized after the Second World War, was the 'Karszt és Barlangkutatási Tájékoztató' (Information on Karst and Speleological Research), published by the Society between 1956 and 1974 with research reports, brief papers and news from home and abroad for the members of the Society.

For technical reasons the journal ceased and in 1975 was replaced by the volumes of the annual "Beszámoló" (Reports), summarizing the activities of groups and specialized committees of the Society, lately appearing with brief English-language summaries.

The programs of the Society are included in the brochure "Műsorfüzet" (Programs), issued (bi) monthly since 1974. Although its content is restricted, it includes increasingly more news and seems to be taking over the function of the former "Tájékoztató".



*Prominent persons of the Hungarian Speleological Society in 1989. Top from the left to the right: Sándor Kalinovits, László Maucha, Ferenc Szolga, Tamás Hazslinszky, Péter Szablyár, György Dénes, László Lénárt, Dénes Balázs, Péter Adamkó; bottom from the left to the right: Kinga Székely, István Fodor, Hubert Kessler, Miklós Gáboros, Nóra Fleck. (Photo: P. Borzsák)*

In 1981 the Society published the first leaflet in the series "Cave maps of Hungary", which was followed by additional publication. With the presentation of major caves in an atlas format (at scales of 1 : 100, 1 : 200 and 1 : 250), this is a summary of the exploration history, morphology, formations, history of mapping, important data from the survey for the base map of the atlas, and literature related to the cave.

Since 1982 the "Barlangbibliográfiai Figyelő" (Cave Bibliography Actual) has been published twice a year and presents the list of new publication acquired by the Society's library and the selected thematic annotations of papers and publications in speleology at home and abroad.

In addition to the regular publications, the Society also issues occasional publications for major international events. These have been the following:

- Symposium on Karst Morphogenesis. Papers.  
Budapest, 1973. 264 p.
- Report on the (Second) symposium of the International Speleological Union Speleotherapeutica Committee in Hungary.  
Budapest, 1975. 168 p.
- International Conference 'Baradla 150', 1975.  
Budapest, 1975. 246 p. (in Hungarian and English)
- Field-trip guide to the International Conference Baradla 150.  
Budapest, 1975. 45 p.

International Symposium on Karst Hydrology.

- I. Karst Water Budget
- II. Utilization and protection of karst water.  
Budapest, 1978. 498 p. (in English, Russian, and Hungarian)

Seventh International Speleotherapeutical Symposium

- November 2—6, 1982.  
Budapest, 1984. 364 p.

International Colloquium on Lamp Flora

- October 10—13, 1984.  
Budapest, 1985. 164 p.

In the series of occasional publications, the high quality notes for education have to be mentioned. They are of great importance in the training of members, with special regard to the included special information not available anywhere else.



Péter SZABLYÁR  
metalurgist  
ALUTERV  
Budapest  
Váralja út 15.  
H—1013