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**THE PLACE OF CRIME GEOGRAPHY IN THE SCIENCE OF GEOGRAPHY**

**Keywords:** geography, geographical environment, natural geography, social geography, crime geography

**Abstract**

The author of this article is trying to find the right place of the crime geography within the science. He makes conclusions and deductions on the base of different researches made on crime and geographical situation. The article is presenting the territorial differences of the crime using the characters of crime. The crime geography can be regarded as a branch of geography of sociology which deals with the time and place aspects of the crime as a social public phenomenon. Between criminology and social geography there is a mutual connection. The crime register is a fundamental part of crime geography. The system of crime data can be completed by data deriving from data collection which helps the crime prevention and scouting.

**1. Crime geography**

The geography is dealing with the description, interpretation and scientific evaluation of eternal change of the complex geographical environment of the earth. It pays a special attention to the mutual reactions between the geographical environment and the society existing in it. The major task of geography is the scientific examination of spatial processes taking place in geographical environment.

The geography resumes and conveys those knowledges needed for the man to have a real picture of the world. To get to know the natural phenomena of geographical environment we need to use the instruments of natural science, the methods of natural science based on experiences and experiments. So we can say that natural geography belongs to natural sciences.

Social geography, which examines the relations between geographical environment and the society, is resolving its research tasks using methods and means of the social geography.

Regional geography is the unification of natural and social fields. The spacial units of the regional geography are: landscapes, micro regions, regions, countries.

The sectorial geography has to form the types of phenomena, discovering and systemizing the correlations between them (<http://ttmk.nyme.hu/>).

After this brief review of geography we can ask: what is the situation of crime geography within the science? The answer to this question is not easy at all. Several scientists have tried to define the position of crime geography. Antal Tóth (2007) provides a detailed picture of definitions and statements of previous scientists in his effort to determine where exactly the crime geography belongs to.

Klára Kerecsi's view (2003) is that crime geography is part of criminality, but the crime map is an instrument used in geography. According to Hentig (1961) crime geography is nothing else than a map deriving from comparison of climate, land, landscape, history, economy and demographical data.

Herold (1973) examined the connection between crime and geographical place on the basis of crime data from which the volume of crime could be determined. In his work in 1977 he determines the crime geography as something which helps the scouting activity.

Helmer (1972) says that crime geography is part of criminality and not of geography and the crime geography presents the territorial differences of police work on the basis of criminal characters.

Rolfes, M (2003) says that crime geography can be „drawn” without geographers.

Schwind (2000) thinks that the crime geography is one branch of criminality. To its interpretation it is necessary to use the units of time, space and attitude.

István Kobolka (2003) considers that crime geography can be united to the security geography, partial discipline of geography.

Herbert (1982) and Zoltán Kovács (1990) state that crime geography is a new direction of social geography which touches several other sciences between social geography and criminology.

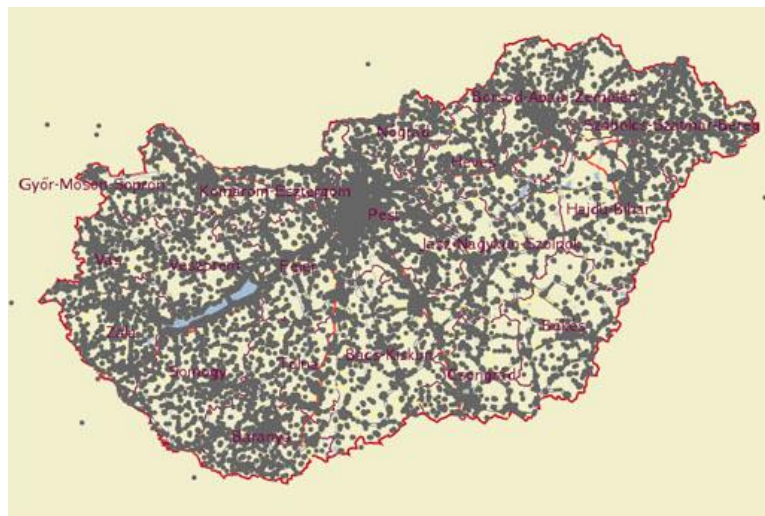
István Berényi (1992) suggests that geography of crime interpreted as a branch of the social geographical, exploring the space, the relationship between crime and social groups.

Szabolcs Mátyás (2007) declares that the crime geography is an artificially created science which uses the common knowledges of criminal sciences and the geography.

In my interpretation crime geography is a branch of social geography which examines the spacial and territorial aspects of crime as a social mass reality. Between criminology and social geography there is a mutual correlation.

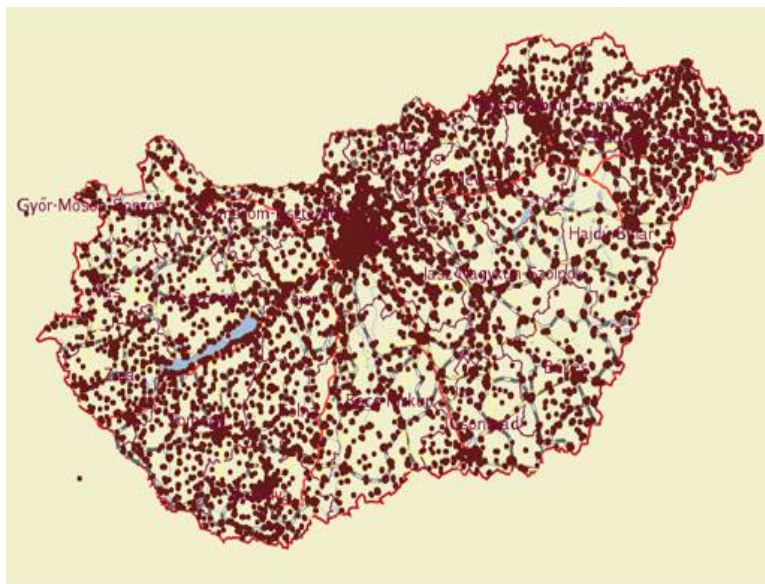
I strongly agree with those scientists who don't think that crime geography is not an independent science mainly because it uses the knowledges criminology, sociology and social geography.

There is no doubt that crime geography is very close to social geography and crime science that is why knowing these fields is needed to draw the crime map (Table 1.). Sociology focuses on different aspects of crime, be it at local or social level. Besides this crime geography uses demography, ethnography, psychology, achitecture, cartography and space-informatics (Figure 1. and 2.).



**Figure 1. Street crimes in Hungary**

Source: <http://www.hir24.hu>



**Figure 2. Violence against the person in Hungary**

Source: <http://www.hir24.hu>

**Table 1: Possible place of crime geography in social and economic geography 's scheme**

General social and economic geography	Regional social and economic geography	Sectoral social and economic geography	Social geography	Human geography
General human geography	Human races geography	Free-time attitude geography	Population geography	Health geography
Ethnic geography	Language geography	Cultural geography	Geography of the European institutions	Art geography
Creation geography	Religion geography	General religion geography	Bible geography	Regional geography settlement eography
City geography	General settlement geography	Village geography	City geography	City Marketing
City ecology	Political geography	Election geography	Security geography	Public administration geography
Military geography	Applied military geography	General military geography	Social geography	<b>Crime geography</b>
Perception geography	Behavior geography	Feminist geography	Economic geography	Sectoral economic geography
General economic geography	Dynamic economic geography	Regional economic geography	World economy geography	Prime sector geography
Agriculture geography	Forest adminsitration geography	Fishing geography	Geography of Viticulture and Oenology	Second sector geography
Industry geography	Mine geography	Industrial park geography	Natural resources geography	Geography of the third sector (infrastructure Geography)
Traffic geography	Telecommunication geography	Trade geography	Tourism geography	Fourt sector's geography
Innovation geography	History geography	Prospography		

Source: Vofkori, László (2003)

## 2. Extension of the crime

For the experts who examine the social processes it has been an evident fact from the results of different researches that the frequency of each process is different in time and space. This natural fact is significant in the negative, within it in the deviant behaviors.

The differences of the frequency of negative attitudes, according to age, civil state, qualification, financial and social status, are facts that the different sciences often examine. The examination of the territorial differences is justified by the fact that the differences of negative attitudes are different demographically and territorily too.

István Vavró (1985) came to the conclusion already in the 80's that behind the territorial differences of the processes are the differences of structures of the mentioned characters of the population. The major causes of the territorial differences of the phenomenon can be explained by the population structures of different territories.

Analysing the territorial datas it is important to examine the subject of the crime because behind the differences of territorial units we can perceive not only the different of crime frequency of the population but the territorial difference of the proportion of resolving the cases. We examine the territorial differences of the crime on the base of the quantity of crime and criminals.

The examination of each territorial unit is necessary because the picture of crime, its volume and frequency, is often far too general and it does not point to the considerable territorial differences. János Habony (1986), in his examination of the crime geography, characterized the extension of the crime with two indicators. According to this it can be defined, on the one hand, by the number of crime activities committed in a defined territory and time, on the other hand, by the number of those committing crime during the same period of time and in the same territory.

The datas themselves do not mean much because they can show the volume of the crime and the importance and direction of the activities dangerous to the society only in comparison with other datas.

Flórián Tremmel, Csaba Fenyvesi and Csongor Herke (2005) stated in their commonly made work that the most fundamental instrument of crime geography is the crime register. The crime register is full of systemized datas.

These datas are collected in case of helping the prevention, the scouting and data provision. It is extremely important because putting the datas into well managed structure makes it possible to make deductions and conclusions regarding to the criminals and conditions of crime activities.

### 3. Summary

Geography is a science which deals with the constant description, interpretation, change and scientific evaluation of the state on the earth. It pays special attention to the contacts between the geographical environment and the society living in it. Geography summarizes, systemizes and conveys the information necessary for the people to create their view about the world. The phenomena of the earth can be known only by the means of the natural sciences that is why the natural geography belongs to the natural sciences.

Social geography, which studies the interrelations developed between the geographical environments and the functioning of the society, resolves its research tasks by using methods of social sciences so it is part of social sciences. Some scientists say that crime geography is part of criminology but crime map is an instrument used on the scientific field of geography. Others state that crime geography is nothing else than a map deriving from the comparison of climate, terrain/soil, landscape, history, economy and demographic characters.

From the study of the relation between crime and geographical place one can conclude to the volume of the crime. Some experts say that crime geography is part of the criminology and not of geography. Others point out that criminal geography is one branch of criminology and one has to interpret it by using the units of the attitude, space and time.

Crime geography can be considered as a branch of the social geography, which studies the spatial and time aspects of the crime as social mass phenomenon. Between criminology and social geography is mutual relationship. We study the territorial differences of the crime on the base of the number of the crime and criminals/perpetrators. Studying the different territorial units is necessary because the picture about the volume and the frequency of the crime is too general and it does not provide a precise picture about the territorial differences. The data themselves do not mean much.

They can give us important information only if we compare them with other data and that is the way how we can make conclusions to the volume of the crime, the importance of the crimes and the direction of the changes. The crime register is a very important instrument of crime geography. This register can be populated by focused data-collection which is supporting the crime prevention and the intelligence.

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