



INEPS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2007

Volume 7 Number 3

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF PRODUCTIVE SCHOOLS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The site of the Annual INEPS Congress which is to be in Pécs, Hungary is set for April (see below). Our hosts have sent us some historical background on this lovely city to share with you. For more information you may visit the following web site: www.pecs2010.hu.



The main square in Pécs

PECS, HUNGARY

Pécs is the largest city of Transdanubia in Western Hungary; the seat of the South Transdanubian region, and of Baranya County, a university city and a Catholic Episcopal seat. The city is located on the southern slopes of the Mecsek Hills forty km from the rivers Danube and Drava. Although it is at a distance of five hundred kilometers from the Adriatic sea, maybe it is the nearby sea that gives the city and its immediate region a Mediterranean character. The natural environment of Pécs is marked by the Mecsek Hills; the city extends well into the forests of the hills. The once famous viticulture on the southern slopes, to which the name of the indigenous people of Pécs, the word "tüke" (vine) refers, has been driven into the background by now. It has been recorded that Sultan Suliman II called Pécs an earthly paradise, perhaps because at least a dozen streams abounding in water ran across the city. The valleys of these streams shape the basic structure of the city even today. The Orf Lakes and the drip stone cave of Abaliget are some eight-ten kilometers from Pécs, while twenty-five kilometers to the south, beyond the Villány Hills, one can find the Siklós-Villány wine-country and Harkány, one of the most famous spas of Hungary.

The cultural traces of history

The predecessor of Pécs in the Roman age, Sopianae was a provincial seat. The early Christian cemeteries and painted burial chambers of the city date back to this age, the 4th century AD, which are the most significant early Christian necropolis to be found outside of Italy. The bishopric of Pécs was founded in 1009 while the university (the first one in Hungary) in 1376. The bull that founded the university called the city a place especially suitable for the cultivation of sciences. An anonymous medieval poet mentioned it in one of his poems as the "Athens of the Hungarian Homeland." The name Pécs is probably of Slavic origin, meaning "five" and the same number shows up in the German and Latin name of the city: it was called Quinque Ecclesiae or Fünfkirchen after its five churches. The still extant sculptures and relieves of its formerly Gothic dome can now be seen in the Dome Museum. Pécs boasts the largest downtown area with a medieval structure surrounded by walls. In the 15th century the greatest humanist poet writing in Latin outside of Italy, Janus Pannonius was the bishop of Pécs; then from the middle of the 16th century Pécs became a flourishing Turkish city. Evelia Cselebi, a famous Turkish traveler counted as many as seven mosques and ten minarets in the city in 1664. Two of the mosques and one minaret survived and can still be seen. In the 18th century Pécs became a German city; the conductors of the choir and the orchestra of the bishopric came from Vienna, among them Georg Lickl who - while he was also a significant composer himself - included at least one Mozart piece in the program every year. The most important cultural trace of the end of the 18th century is the great Klimo library, while that of the beginning of the 19th century is the huge building complex of the cathedral. Several famous artisan families lived in Pécs in the second half of this century (Angster, Engel, Hammerli, Littke, Zsolnay), of whom the Zsolnay family become the most famous all over Europe for their pottery and eosin-dyed ceramics used for decorating buildings. The railway line from Budapest reached Pécs only in the 1880s. From this time on, for about one hundred years, the most important economic feature that characterized the development of the city was mining. It was only after 1920 that Pécs regained the rank of a university city. The international career of Marcel Breuer (and several other architects of the Bauhaus school) started in Pécs at the beginning of the 20s; the plan of this world-famous architect and designer to build a house in Káptalan Street that would have become a home for his legacy could not have been implemented because of the death of this fine artist. Still, there are a number of significant museums in Káptalan Street: a Victor Vasarely collection, Erzsébet Schaár's "Street", the Amerigo Tot collection and just one street further down, Csontváry Museum. The housing estate called Uránváros is the legacy of the socialist era, a unique implementation of modern Scandinavian city architecture. Anybody who takes a walk in today's Pécs can see the traces of the culture and history of seventeen centuries side by side, layered upon one another.

INFORMATION ON THE CONGRESS FROM APRIL 24 - APRIL 28

If you have not received the Invitation Packet or Registration Form contact Agnes Burek: agnesburek@yahoo.com, or our Congress office, the co-ordinators are: Agnes Burek (tel.: ++ 36-30-416-6755) and Viola Paeschke (tel.: ++49-30-21 79 2-153).