

Preface

It was in 1958 when the founding fathers established the Permanent International Altaistic Conference in Mainz, Germany, among them scholars the names of whom the members of my generation have only learned in school. For us Aalto, Bawden, Doerfer, von Gabain, Heissig, Menges, Pritsak, Sagaster, Sinor, to make an incomplete list of the participants of the first Meeting, were idols symbolizing the golden age of Altaic studies. The idea of the PIAC itself was Walther Heissig's who served as the first Secretary-General for the first few years.

By the time of the founding of the PIAC as well as in the subsequent decades the debate on the existence of a genealogic linguistic relation of the region was at its height. From the very beginning, however, other related topics (i.e. other than linguistics and philology) also infiltrated into the Meetings, thanks to the ever growing number of participants. Behind the coulisses of the cold war participation of scholars from the Eastern bloc was a difficult issue and with that stance PIAC has seen ups and downs in terms of attendance, but – as Denis Sinor put it – it was the propitious start that helped PIAC survive, to which the genuine PIAC spirit should be added that kept the Meetings running until the present day.

In that spirit the 60th PIAC was held in the historical city of Székesfehérvár, Hungary. The opening speeches were delivered by Barbara Kellner-Heinkele the Secretary-General of PIAC, Ramazan Korkmaz, the president of the 2016 PIAC Meeting in Ardahan (Turkey) followed by the introductory lecture of Ákos Bertalan Apatóczy.*

PIAC guests enjoyed two guided tours during their stay, one to the most important historical sites of Székesfehérvár, once the coronation site and capital of the Hungarian Kingdom and a full day tour to Budapest.

The Meeting attracted nearly sixty participants from fourteen countries, and forty-three papers were presented in twelve sections.

Ákos Bertalan Apatóczy
President of the 60th Meeting of the PIAC

* Detailed reports about the conference and the summaries of the papers have already been published: Ákos Bertalan Apatóczy: Report on the 60th Meeting of the Permanent International Altaistic Conference. In: *Turkic Languages* 22: (1) pp. 138–142. (2018) and Permanent International Altaistic Conference 60. In: *Távol-Keleti Tanulmányok* 9: (2) pp. 211–214. (2018) as well as at the official PIAC website edited by Oliver Corff: <http://www.altaist.org/annual-meetings/60th-meeting-szekesfehervar-2017/>