
Series Editor Preface

Landforms and landscapes vary enormously across the Earth, from high mountains to endless plains. At a smaller scale, Nature often surprises us creating shapes which look improbable. Many physical landscapes are so immensely beautiful that they received the highest possible recognition—they hold the status of World Heritage properties. Apart from often being immensely scenic, landscapes tell stories which not uncommonly can be traced back in time for tens of million years and include unique events. In addition, many landscapes owe their appearance and harmony not solely to the natural forces. Since centuries, or even millennia, they have been shaped by humans who modified hillslopes, river courses, and coastlines, and erected structures which often blend with the natural landforms to form inseparable entities.

These landscapes are studied by Geomorphology—‘the Science of Scenery’—a part of Earth Sciences that focuses on landforms, their assemblages, surface and subsurface processes that moulded them in the past and that change them today. Shapes of landforms and regularities of their spatial distribution, their origin, evolution and ages are the subject of research. Geomorphology is also a science of considerable practical importance since many geomorphic processes occur so suddenly and unexpectedly, and with such a force, that they pose significant hazards to human populations and not uncommonly result in considerable damage or even casualties.

To show the importance of geomorphology in understanding the landscape, and to present the beauty and diversity of the geomorphological sceneries across the world, we have launched a new book series *World Geomorphological Landscapes*. It aims to be a scientific library of monographs that present and explain physical landscapes, focusing on both representative and uniquely spectacular examples. Each book will contain details on geomorphology of a particular country or a geographically coherent region. This volume, the second in the series, introduces the geomorphology of Spain—a country with highly diverse landscapes, from coastal flats and deltas to very high mountains of different origin. More than 20 selected examples from mainland Spain and its islands are presented, along with fascinating stories behind the marvellous sceneries. Thus, the book is not only suitable for scientists and students of Geography and Earth Science, but can also provide guidance to holidaymaking geoscientists as to where to go to enjoy the very best scenery.

The World Geomorphological Landscapes series is produced under the scientific patronage of the International Association of Geomorphologists—a society that brings together geomorphologists from all around the world. The IAG was established in 1989 and is an independent scientific association affiliated with the International Geographical Union and the International Union of Geological Sciences. Among its main aims are to promote geomorphology and to foster dissemination of geomorphological knowledge. I believe that this lavishly illustrated series, which sticks to the scientific rigour, is the most appropriate means to fulfil these aims and to serve the geoscientific community. To this end, my great thanks go to Prof. Francisco and Prof. Mateo Gutiérrez for coordinating the efforts of Spanish geomorphological community and expertly editing the book, as well as to all individual contributors who worked together to show us the Spanish landscape at its best.

Piotr Migoń

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