

ICSD 11TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

IASI, ROMANIA, 25-28 JUNE 2008

GENERAL INFORMATION

• DESCRIPTION OF TOWN

- SHORT HISTORY AND LOCATION

Iasi has stood for centuries as the most important political, economic, social and cultural centre north-east of Romania. Owing to its location, Iasi was the crossroads for the main trade routes coming from Poland, Hungary, Russia and Constantinople. The first written evidence of the economic importance of Iasi and also of its very existence comes from a 1408 charter by which the Moldavian ruler Alexandru cel Bun (*Alexander the Good*) granted commercial privilege to the Polish merchants of Lvov.

On the other hand, the same geographical location proved disadvantageous from a military point of view: the town and the whole region had to face innumerable attacks especially of the Tatars and Turks. A 15th century Moldavian ruler, long-celebrated for his courage (he won over 40 battles) and for his religiousness (after each battle he had a monastery built) was Stefan cel Mare (*Stephen the Great*), a name you will find in many institution and street appellations.

At the middle of the 16th century Iasi became the capital of Moldova (*Moldavia*) and witnessed, for the next three centuries, some of the greatest historical events. The first, though short, union of the three Romanian historical provinces was sanctioned in Iasi in 1600. The famous 1848 Revolution, which was to spread all over the country, burst out here. Iasi was also the place where the first Romanian higher education institution was founded, *Academia Mihaileana*, and the first newspaper in Romanian was issued.

The picturesque position of Iasi, its spreading over seven hills, determined the Italian Marco Bandini (1644) to call it 'a new Rome'.

Stylish, cozy and richly rewarding, Iasi is brimming with history and art. The impressive number of interacting scientific and cultural institutions (seven universities, over sixty schools and high schools, a branch of the Romanian academy with several research institutes, three theatres, an opera, a philharmonic, dozens of museums and art galleries, libraries, several publishing houses, many radio and TV stations, cultural centres of main European countries, all in a 400,000-inhabitant town) explain why Iasi is considered to be 'the cultural capital city of Romania'. This expression was first used at the inauguration of our University in 1860.

- MAIN LOCAL/CULTURAL EVENTS

- The National Book Fair – April
- Romanian-French Music Festival ("Fête de la musique") – May
- "Cucuteni 5000" – Ceramics Fair - June and October
- The Beer Festival - June
- The Romanian Folk Music Festival for Children "Catalina" – July or August

- The Fashion Week – 1 week in October
- The City of Iasi Festival (St. Paraschiva Days, the patron saint of Iasi) - Religious and Cultural Festivities 14 October
- "Dies Academicus" of the "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University - 26 October (conferences, symposia, etc.)
- “Unifest”, Students’ Festival – 8-14 November

- HOW TO REACH TOWN (LINKS FROM THE NEAREST AIRPORT, TRAIN OR COACH STATIONS)

Your place of arrival in Romania will be, most likely, the *Otopeni* (now *Henri Coanda*) Airport near Bucharest. You can take a taxi/bus from the airport to the North Railway Station (*Gara de Nord*) in Bucharest, from where all the trains to Iasi leave. There are several trains every day from Bucharest to Iasi. The best choice, due to the comfort provided, would be the IC (Intercity) train. The trip by train takes about 6 hours with the IC and about 7 hours with the *Rapid* or *Accelerate* trains.

Price: The Intercity: approx. 25 EUR, the *Rapid*, the 2nd class ticket costs approx 20 EUR, the 1st class ticket costs approx 30 EUR). The *Accelerate*, the 2nd class ticket costs approx. 16 EUR); the 1st class ticket costs approx. 25 EUR. Payments should be made in Romanian currency, Leu (RON). One EUR is about 3, 6 RON.

For information about train schedule in Romania you can visit the web page www.infofer.ro.

Tips: It is always advisable to buy a 1st class train ticket. Train schedule can always suffer small changes, so it is better to buy a ticket directly from the railway station and not to make a reservation before arrival. The cost of the taxi from the airport to the railway station can be outrageously high if you take a private taxi (a car that is not registered with any taxi company, even if it bears the label “taxi”).

If you decide to take the plane, you should know there are three air companies that have flights to Iasi: *Tarom Airways* (via Bucharest), *Carpatair* and *Austrian Airlines*.

The Tarom Company has two internal flights per day. One flight leaves at 20.45 from Bucharest every day, 7 days/week; the other flight leaves Bucharest at 1.05 hrs. p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The trip from Bucharest to Iasi takes about one hour. A plane ticket costs approx. 90 EUR. If your flight to Iasi is part of an international Tarom flight (e.g. Rome-Bucharest-Iasi), the trip Bucharest-Iasi will be free of charge. More info on Web www.tarom.ro.

Tips: When you reach Bucharest (*Henri Coanda* International Airport) and you must change planes for Iasi, you must pick up your luggage and do the check-in again down the stairs, in the same airport. Also, it is advisable to buy your plane ticket from a tourist agency, where you can be advised about the lowest prices and the most convenient flights.

The Carpatair Company has one internal flight per day, from Monday to Saturday. International Carpatair flights only come from Italy (cities: Torino, Bologna, Florence, Milano, Rome, Venice, Verona, Ancona) and from Germany (cities: Dusseldorf, Munchen, Stuttgart). The departure hour from all these cities is around 11.15, and the arrival time in Iasi is 4.40 p.m., with one stop and plane change in Timisoara. More info at www.carpatair.com.

The Austrian Airlines has one internal flight per day, from Monday to Sunday, except for Saturday. Austrian Airlines operates to and from Iasi to Vienna. The departure hour from Vienna is 10.30, and the arrival time in Iasi is 13.10 p.m. Departure from Iasi is 14.25, arrival in Vienna 15.00. More info on www.austrian.com.

A fourth possibility to reach Iasi is the minibus (*maxi-taxi*). There are several minibus stations near the North Railway Station (*Gara de Nord*) in Bucharest. There are at least 4 trips to Iasi organised per day. The ticket is 35 lei (approx. 10 EUR). The trip takes about 7 hours. However, there is not much comfort in the

enterprise. If you have a lot of luggage, the trip by minibus is less recommended, especially if there are many passengers.

- TRANSPORT IN TOWN (BRIEF INFORMATION ON THE MAIN MEANS OF TRANSPORT AVAILABLE)

Iasi has a good local transport system: trams, buses, minibuses and trolley-buses. Tickets cost 1,5 Leu (about 0.40 EUR) for one trip.

• **SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE CORRESPONDING INSTITUTION**

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi (www.uaic.ro), the first university in Romania, was inaugurated on 26 October 1860. Organised according to modern conceptions, the university is one of the main outcomes of the institutional renewal in Romania during Alexandru Ioan Cuza's reign, in an époque characterised by both a spectacular revival of national pride and determined steps of the Romanian state along with and towards an evolving modern Europe.

With almost 40000 undergraduate and postgraduate students and almost 2000 doctoral students currently registered, the University provides at present one of the fullest ranges of classical education available in Romania. There are 15 faculties: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics and Business Administration, Geography-Geology, History, Law, Letters, Mathematics, Orthodox Theology, Catholic Theology, Psychology and Education Sciences, Philosophy, Physical Education and Sports, and Physics, and three Centres: The Centre for European Studies, The Centre for Aegeo-Mediterranean Studies, and The Centre for Jewish Studies. Almost all faculties offer Master's and PhD degrees. According to the Bologna system, full time undergraduate studies last for three years, Master courses for two years, and PhD studies for three years.

The present building of the University, dominating the area of Copou hill, came into use in 1897 and some other buildings, as well as a new wing, have been added over time. Several research units have also appeared in the meantime: "Mihai Eminescu" Central University Library, the Botanical Garden, the Museum of Natural History, the Computer Centre, the Marine Biology Research Unit of Agigea (at the Black Sea), the Biological Research Unit of Potoci (in the Carpathian Mountains), etc. Since 1990, the University has had its own publishing house and printing press.

• **ACCOMMODATION**

Accommodation for participants will be provided in:

Gaudeamus Centre for International Exchanges (University Residence Hall, 17 Codrescu Street, tel.: +40 232 201077, fax: +40 232 201701) is guaranteed on request. *Gaudeamus* Centre is situated in the campus, within walking distance from the main University Building (where the meetings take place), the University Library. Places are available in double or single rooms, fully furnished, including with a TV set and a refrigerator, coffee filter and air conditioned. Each room has a private bathroom and a little balcony. Some extra rooms are available in a new building called "Akademos", under the same administration.

The prices to be paid are 44 EURO/night for a single room and 30 EURO/night for a place in a double room. In order to arrange for your accommodation in this hostel you are kindly asked to let us know your option when you make your registration, and we will confirm you the reservation.

Unirea Hotel, a three stars hotel, right in the heart of the city with two restaurants (one with the most beautiful panoramic view of the city). It is located at 12 minutes walking distance from the University Building, or 5 minutes by taxi. The prices to be paid are 63 EURO/night for a single room and 42 EURO/night for a place in a double room. The local organizing committee has booked the rooms in this hotel for the conference so those interested in a hotel room are kindly requested to make this known together with the application.

- **MEALS**

The conference fee will cover the meals (two lunches, the Romanian traditional dinner, coffee breaks, conference papers and local transport to and from Iasi airport and railway station), as stated in the provisional programme. For extra meals, there is a wide range of restaurants in and around the campus and in the city centre, where you will be located. An ordinary dinner in a restaurant rises to around 20 EURO, alcohol not included.

- **RECEPTION**

- *THERE WILL BE A FEW STEWARDS HELPING THE PARTICIPANTS FIND THEIR WAY OR COLLECTING THEM FROM THE ARRIVAL POINT*

The registration and distribution of conference materials will take place in the main hall of the University Building, within the main Hall, famous for its mural cosmic paintings and echoesm reason why it was called the Hall of Echoing Steps, starting one hour prior to the official opening of the conference. A tour of the mural cosmic paintings of the Hall can be provided for those interested.

- **CITY TOUR**

Participants will be provided a city tour (mainly on foot) to visit the most important monuments of art in Iasi (The Palace of Culture, The Union Museum, Ion Creanga's Memorial House) as well as the most important religious sites. Iasi is extremely rich in religious monuments of all ages, from the Middle Ages (the 'embroidered' Church of the Holy Three Hierarchs) to the modern times (the Metropolitan Church).

- *POST CONFERENCE EXCURSION*

An excursion will be organized to the famous chain of monasteries in Northern Moldavia. Most of these are painted monasteries dating back to the 15th – 16th centuries. To give just a few examples:

- the Monastery of *Voronet* is unique in the world due to the mysterious origin of its deep-blue colour and to the painting of the "Last Judgement" on its western exterior wall;
- the Monasteries of *Sucevita*, *Moldovita*, *Agapia*, *Varatec* or *Neamt* and many others are all beautifully-painted unique monuments of art and religion.

A detailed proramme will be provided to those interested. The cost of it will definitely depend on the number of participants.

- **WEATHER**

June is the beginning of the hot period of the year, with temperatures varying between 20 and 30 degrees Celsius. There could be showers, unless we experience the drought we faced last year. Not to take into account the climate changes, it would not be too risky to travel light.

NOTE: IN ORDER TO MAKE ALL YOUR ACCOMMODATION AND DIETARY PREFERENCES KNOWN, PLEASE WRITE AT iecumster@gmail.com OR USE THE CONTACT FROM www.dansandu.ro OR SEND A FAX TO 0040 232 22090.