



FINAL CALL FOR PAPERS: American/Romanian International Conference: Appalachians/Carpathians: Researching, Documenting, and Preserving Highland Traditions, Transylvania University, Braşov, Romania, October 6-9, 2015

We invite participation in an International Conference being supported by the Transylvania University of Braşov, Romanian Ministry of National Education, Romanian—U.S. Fulbright Commission, Barbara Knowles Fund, Pogány-Havas Association, the Anglo Romanian Trust for Traditional Architecture [ARTTA], Fundația Adept [Adept Foundation], and distinguished Appalachian Studies scholars from the U.S.A. The program committee—which includes members of the Transylvania University of Braşov Faculty of Letters—is now accepting a select number of proposals for plenary and concurrent sessions, on topics ranging from cultural preservation and folklore, community development and history, critical representations of mountain cultures in literature and arts, sustainable agriculture and forestry, ecological tourism, and other issues related to mountain life in the Appalachians and Carpathians.

Formats include:

- * *individual scholarly research papers or sessions;*
- * *films, documentaries, videos, and musical performances;*
- * *roundtable conversations on contemporary issues, professional development, or community activism;*
- * *basic introductions to Appalachian or Carpathian studies;*
- * *literary readings, plays, and poetry recitations.*

All presenters must register for the conference and pay a registration fee of 100 euro. The registration fee will cover the cost of two dinners and travel and lodging costs for a two day field trip to Bran Castle and Măgura village (Braşov county).

Information about the Transylvania University of Braşov, the city of Braşov, international travel options, conference lodging and special events will be published in the conference handbook (issued to all delegates in mid-July). However, a brief summary of the conference site and proposed program is found on page two of this document. Because only *a limited number of sessions* can be approved by the program committee, we ask that interested persons let the organizers know well in advance if they plan on submitting a paper or session proposal prior to the **June 1 deadline**.

All proposals must be e-mailed prior to June 1 to: transatlanticmountaincultures@gmail.com

*Submit your proposal abstract (approx. 250 words) within the text of your email AND as a single-spaced Word attachment. **Incomplete, mailed, or faxed submissions cannot be accepted.** Applicants will be notified before July 1, 2015, of the committee's final decision.*

The following information is required in the proposal:

Proposal category: Individual presentation or group session. This identifier should also be placed in the e-mail subject heading.

Type of Presentation: Paper/Panel/Roundtable, Film, Reading, or Musical/Dance Performance.

Contact information: Name(s), email address(es), and affiliation(s) of ALL participants.

Title of your individual paper/presentation OR session. Individual papers/presentations will be limited to 15 minutes. If you are proposing a session, include the title of each paper/presentation in the session.

Abstract: A single-spaced abstract of 250 words describing your individual paper/presentation or session in the body of your e-mail AND attachment as a Word file. For sessions, please submit an abstract from each presenter describing the entire session. All abstracts will be published in the final conference program.

Media: Please list any equipment needs (power-point projector, dvd player, etc.)

Participants wishing to notify the committee of their intent to submit a proposal prior to the June 1 deadline should contact:

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American/Romanian International Conference: Appalachians/Carpathians: Researching, Documenting, and Preserving Highland Traditions, Transylvania University, Braşov, Romania, October 6-9, 2015

The 2015 Appalachians/Carpathians conference will be held in the historic town of [Braşov, Romania](#), at the southern end of the eastern Carpathian range. The area is known across Europe for its incredible mountain scenery and unique multicultural history. Even today, it is possible to find individuals in the Transylvania region possessing Hungarian, Saxon, Roma, Armenian and, of course, Romanian ethnic heritage.

The Braşov area also provides unique opportunities to witness subsistence practices historically found in Appalachia, including brandy distillation, hay cultivation, animal pasturing and transhumance, horse-logging, and the growing of heirloom corn, beans, tomatoes, and pumpkins in home gardens. Regarding the region's celebrated hay culture, *National Geographic* featured Transylvania's hay-dependent communities in their July 2013 issue:

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2013/07/transylvania-hay/nicolson-text>

In one Transylvania community, ethnobotanists discovered that local residents were able to identify 120 different species of plants. The same villagers also have an incredible "habitat" vocabulary, meaning they use different words when describing a location as "damp," "mossy," "shady," or "steep," for example. While the average person on the planet uses only 25 to 40 such words to describe a particular landscape, people in the Carpathian village of Gyimes can verbalize as many as 148!

While Romania is still predominantly an agrarian nation, it is quickly becoming urbanized and has witnessed extraordinary social changes in the past two decades. Real estate in the capital Bucharest is now some of the most expensive in Europe. Only a handful of Romania's rural communities have avoided the modernizing effects of EU integration and most are struggling with the dilemma of maintaining their unique agricultural heritage in the face of an ever-expanding global economy.

Communities in the Romanian Carpathians have much to teach Appalachia. Numerous NGOs in the Carpathians have been successful in promoting environmental and cultural preservation as interdependent enterprises. Place-based community development is also practiced in Transylvania. Of course there is much Romanian communities can learn from Appalachia as our own experience with modernization and rural economic development has not always gone as planned.

The 2015 Appalachians/Carpathians conference is the culmination of a more than a decade of collaboration between Appalachian Studies scholars in the U.S. and academics and NGO representatives from the Carpathians of Ukraine and Romania (the 2013 Conference was held in Ukraine). In more recent years, scholars have uncovered very real historical connections between the two mountain regions as a result of early 20th-century migration from Maramureş and Transylvania to the coalfields of Appalachia.

Conference organizers have planned several unique outdoor excursions during the event, including an overnight stay in the rural village Măgura, located twenty miles southwest of Braşov. An obligatory trip to the Bran Castle is also on the agenda. Our keynote speaker is Mr. Nathaniel Page, the Director General of [Fundatia Adept](#) [the Adept Foundation]. Page has appeared in such film documentaries as [Wild Carpathia](#) and his views on the preservation of Romania's rural landscapes are featured in *The Ecologist* and *The Daily Telegraph*. Fundația Adept works toward protecting the nature-rich landscapes of Transylvania, while simultaneously providing agricultural and marketing support for farmers living in those same areas.

While the program committee welcomes submissions on the entire range of topics listed above, we are hoping to have several panels devoted to the Humanities. Our main sponsor of the conference is the Transylvania University of Braşov Faculty of Letters, so papers related to Appalachian and Carpathian folklore, storytelling, literature and music will be given particular priority. We also hope to recruit individuals directly involved in Carpathian community based organizations or NGOs, particularly those working on topics related to local agriculture, sustainability, or ecological tourism. Presentations focusing on environmental problems are also welcome, as Romanian citizens have themselves been actively involved in such issues, including shale fracking and surface gold mining. All non-plenary sessions will be exactly one-hour long, so the number of presenters will be limited to three individuals per session, except in unusual circumstances, such as student-led panels.

There will also be published proceedings. For those wishing to submit their presentations in a peer-reviewed academic journal, the [Bulletin of the Transylvania University of Braşov](#) will accept papers from all conference participants.

Regarding travel and local hotel arrangements, we expect that most participants will want to arrive at the [Henri Coandă International Airport](#) in Bucharest (also known as the [Bucharest Otopeni International Airport](#)). From there, conference participants will find a train to Braşov every other hour during the day at the Bucharest main train station, [Gara de Nord](#). The train ride from Bucharest to Braşov is two-and-one-half-hours. Tickets can be purchased online or at the station. Once in Braşov, delegates will have the option of staying in faculty dormitories [at no charge] or at suggested area hotels within walking distance of [Transylvania University](#). A list of hotels and other traveling tips will be provided in a handbook issued to the participants in mid-July.

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