

University “Al. I. Cuza” of Iasi

The University emblem



The graphical ensemble which constitutes a part of the visual identity of the University is full of symbols. Practically, each element signifies a historical stage of one of the oldest yet modern educational institutions in Romania. Thus, the heraldic fork shaped as “Y” symbolizes the three initiatives which led to the establishment of the University. These are, chronologically speaking, The Trei Ierarhi College founded by the voivode Vasile Voda Lupu, The Mihailean Academy, founded by Mihai Voda Sturdza and The University, founded by ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza. The central element is the Bible, which represents the classical emblem of the superior educational establishment. Another symbol is the presence of the three shining stars, which symbolize the three faculties existing at the establishment of the University (Philosophy, Law and Science). The last symbolical element is represented by the colours, as the blue and the silver were also on the Cuza family’s shield. Thus, the emblem gathers all the historical and axiological aspects which individualize The “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University.

History

The University of Iasi (the first higher education institution in Romania) was inaugurated on October 26th, 1860. The University bears the name of the ruler to whom this fundamental act of Romanian culture is due: Alexandru Ioan Cuza.

From its founding to the present, the structure of the University of Iasi has been constantly changing in harmony with the evolution of the Romanian society and culture.

The University included the first three faculties: The Faculty of Philosophy, Law and Theology. As a result of the education law in 1864, the University was reorganized into four faculties: The Faculty of Letters and Philosophy, The Faculty of Physics, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, The Faculty of Law and The Faculty of Medicine, inaugurated in 1879. After only a few years of functioning, the Faculty of Theology stopped functioning because of its small number of students. Stimulated by a new law in 1898, The University of Iasi managed to diversify its profile, to increase the number of sections, departments, and scientific subjects taught. At that time there was a spectacular development of the Faculty of Science: in 1892 the departments of

Organic Chemistry and Inorganic Chemistry were founded, and later, in 1906, the Agricultural Chemistry added to them. Within the same university, the creation of the School of Electricity in 1910 was a great success. After its modest beginnings in 1879, the Faculty of Medicine acquired, in 1889, a type organization and a profile which were meant to allow the formation of highly professional experts capable of responding to the social demands of the time.

The period immediately following the National Union of 1918 was characterized by remarkable developments of the University in accordance with the requirements of the Romanian society and of European progress of that time.

The Education Law of 1932, 1937 and 1938 favored the evolution of science as well as the development departments of the University: Medicine and Pharmacy, Sciences, Law, Philosophy and Letters, and Agriculture. In 1933, the agricultural education sub-sectors included in the department of applied sciences became the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences. The other two branches of the department (The Electrotechnic School and The Department of Technologic Chemistry) were reorganized in 1937, and led to the foundation of the "Gheorghe Asachi" Polytechnic Institute of Iasi, where the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences was also included a year later.

In the period between the two World Wars, the University "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" had the same rank as the European institutions, both in terms of management and organization, as well as in terms of teaching programs.

After the Second World War, the regime of popular democracy forced universities to promote education in the communist spirit. The Education Reform of 1948 imposed the first steps for this task to be completed, and was followed by the reforms in 1968 and 1978. The communist ideology brought radical changes in the University of Iasi, as well as in all higher education institutions throughout the country. Many subjects were censored or eliminated, many teaching programs underwent extreme rigidity, the academic freedom was restricted, while all activities were guided or verified by the bodies of the single existing political party.

Also during this period, due to an increasing request of economists, the need of setting up the Faculty of Economics (1962) was felt, after long years in which courses of Political Economy, Public Finance and Economic Doctrines were taught within the Faculty of Law.

Thus, during the academic year 1968-1969, there were already eight faculties (Mathematics and Mechanics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, Law, Philology, History, Philosophy, Economics), while in 1974 there were only seven, due to the transfer of the Faculty of chemistry to the Polytechnic Institute.

The fall of the totalitarian regime in 1989 opened new perspectives on education in Romania. Curricular and organizational forms that were required were immediately abandoned. The reconstruction of the University was spontaneous and radical and it included all areas: the structure organization, the curriculum, the communication system and the human resources. The autonomy and the freedom of decision led the "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University to what it is

today: one of the best universities in Romania, the standard for excellence in research and teaching flexibility.

The "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iasi has over 38,000 students and 800 teachers, it enjoys an important prestige both nationally and internationally, with about 260 collaborations with universities abroad.

Research is carried out at the top, as the "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University holds a leading position in national research rankings based on the international standards in 2007. The teams of teachers in the university are involved in over 442 national and international projects through 24 research centers of excellence and whose results are presented in numerous articles published in prestigious journals. The University "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" engages in any activity aimed at excellence by its unique initiative to boost research performance, to encourage a creative and interactive teaching model, and to attract the most talented young academic life.

“Sala pasilor pierduti” Hall (“Lost Steps Hall”, in translation)

Sabin Balasa (1932-2008) - famous Romanian painter.

Sabin Balasa lived in Iasi in the '70s, when he made 18 murals, an area of about 270 square meters - which is in the lobby of the “Al. I. Cuza” University. He returned in Iasi in 2002 at the age of 70, when he painted "Galaxy of Love", an area of 50 square meters in the "Mihai Eminescu" Hall within the same university.



One of the most impressive locations of the “Al. I. Cuza” University of Iasi, the lobby is famous for both its beauty and for the one who painted it, which put “ patches of blue over an entire era”, the painter Sabin Balasa.

The 19 murals covering 120 square meters of the University’s main building, were made by the “painter of unicorns and of cosmic silhouettes”, between 1968 and 1978 and were thought of as a representation of the Romanian soul. At 36 years old when he started work, Sabin Balasa decided to spend perhaps the most beautiful period of his life painting the lobby, to which he remained strongly linked, his last wish being to be buried in Iasi.

The artist began working on the masterpiece of the lobby in 1968. The first work was the portrait of the poet Mihai Eminescu.

The pictures in the lobby can be grouped into three categories:

Universal myths:

The universal myths address to themes such as: Life, Revelation, Beauty.

Representative paintings: "The Triumph of Life", "Atomic Mutilation," "Aspirations", "Prometheus", "Journey to the Light," "Venus de Milo."

Romanian legends:

The Romanian culture, as part of the universal myths, is represented by its creators: "Stefan cel Mare", "Legend of Manole, the master builder", "Moldova", "Lucifer," "Death of the Dove", "Miorita", "Legend of Dochia".

University:

The academic environment and the history of the "Al. I. Cuza" University can be found in the three paintings with specific themes: "Auditorium", "Generations" and "Tribute to Ancestors".

The "Gheorghe Asachi" Lecture Room

This is the old auditorium (the first one) of the "Al.I. Cuza" University; it is the auditorium where many historical moments of this country took place.

In 2010, fragments of paintings older than 100 years were discovered by the people working to restore "Gheorghe Asachi" Lecture Room in Copou. Frescoes contain floral patterns with gold leaf. It seems that the frescoes were covered during the Second World War, when the building was bombed and needed major repairs.