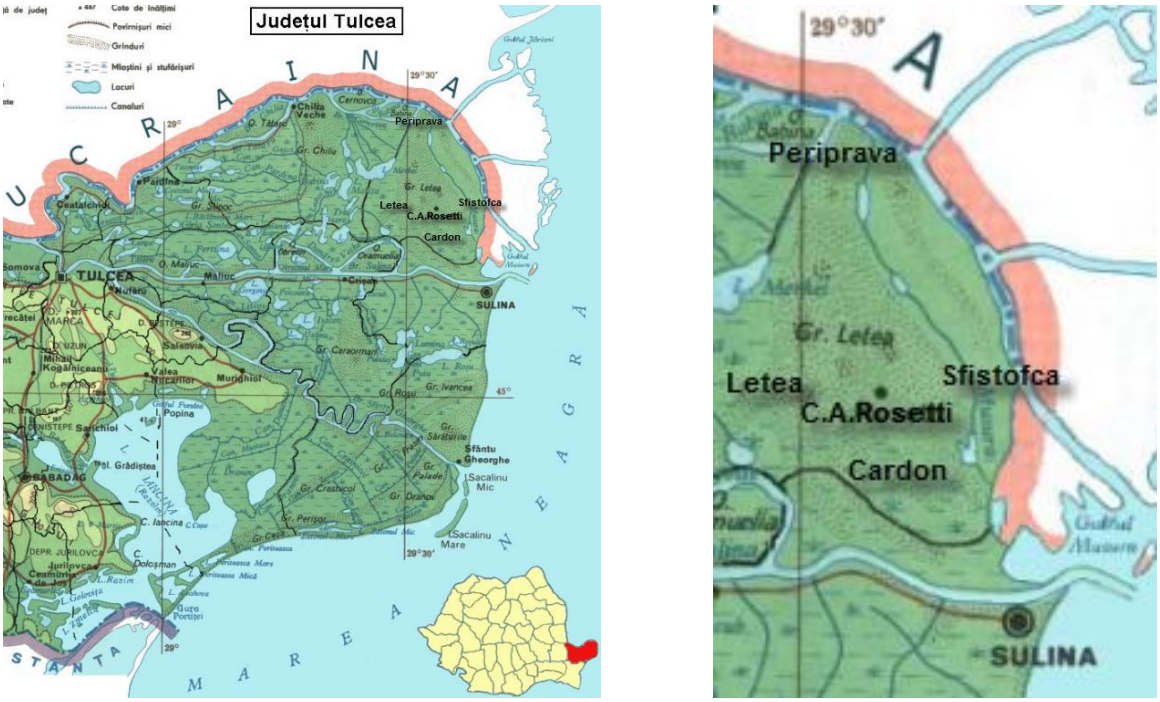
# 260.465 Ressource Landschaft Exkursion Entwicklung und Schrumpfung im Donaudelta 3.-8. Juli 2017

# 260.465 Excursion Development and Decline in the Danube Delta - July 3rd to 8th, 2017

*Excursion TU Wien, E260L*

This excursion will take place in the North-eastern part of the Romanian Danube Delta, between the Chilia Arm in the north and the Sulina Arm in the south. The area includes the municipality of C.A.Rosetti with its five villages C.A.Rosetti, Sfiştofca, Letea, Periprava and Cardon and the town Sulina.

Figure 1: Area to be visited under the excursion




Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tulcea_County#/media/File:Harta-judetului-Tulcea.jpg

The excursion is also part of co-operation with Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest, Dr. Marius Voica and TU Wien, Dr. Meinhard Breiling. This is the fourth TU Wien academic course in the Danube Delta since 2009. The aim is to let students experience a magnificent landscape and their inhabitants at the very end of the River Danube and to see to where the water in and around Vienna ends up after a journey of two weeks. The excursion will confront students with simple local life styles which they will widely share as guests of local inhabitants.

*Background to the excursion:*

The Danube Delta is a hot spot of global biodiversity and a unique landscape. With an age of approximately 10,000 years the Danube Delta is also the youngest landscape in Europe. During the 1950ies until the 1980ies, the Danube Delta was considered as a prime agricultural development area for farms, cattle breeding, aquaculture, and reed production. Most of marshes were considered for conversion into agricultural land and ponds for fish breeding. The population was expected to grow extraordinary. Due to a lack of work force initially thousands of political prisoners had to work in concentration camps to full fill the aims of the communist Ceausescu government. They had to dig channels and other infrastructure for the improvement of local traffic and to get access to the available resources.

The development and growth paradigm changed significantly after the change in the political system in December 1989. Since the 1990ies the Danube Delta is a UNESCO Biosphere Park and under strict environmental protection supervised by the state. However, most of the public land in the delta is owned by the province of Tulcea or the local municipalities. The land is the most important source of income to local administrations. The property is licensed out to the best bidder according to economic principles.

Since 1991 the population in the remote delta municipalities like C.A.Rosetti was shrinking with 40%. Tax revenues decreased to an even higher percentage. The old and poor population unable to pay taxes remained while the younger population left to other places with higher income opportunities. So far, very few people could take advantage from the new opportunities provided by the EU since 2007.

It is not easy to access the villages in the delta. Usually one can only move forward by boat and has to change several times the means of transport to arrive at a particular location. Similar to constructions in the high Alpine Zone, any construction and building venture is much more costly in the Danube Delta than in other more average European rural zones. Many locals have no means to consider any new construction.

Figure 2: Small farm at Sulina arm in the Danube Delta

Source: M. Breiling, Sept. 27th, 2014

For the majority of inhabitants the income is less than € 1.500 annually. Only state employees like Duane employees, entrepreneurs considering larger scale agriculture, aquaculture, reed harvesters, touristic companies have several times higher incomes. Different economic and ecologic logics exist in parallel. This leads to many social problems in the remote villages and in particular the old and

poor inhabitants suffer. In general the conditions during communism are considered better than current circumstances.

Former free resources like reed as a building material are no longer available. Architect students in need for locally grown building materials for practical studio work had to buy reed from other parts of the delta for market prices. Many non natural materials are currently more accessible and cheaper.

Figure 3: Workshop "Nature near construction" with architect students from Bucharest

Source: M. Breiling, Sept. 28th, 2014

Things and circumstances are targeted to be changed: the Danube Delta was selected as one of only three European regions to apply ITI Integrated Territorial Investment. The Danube Delta is supposed to receive 1 billion Euros due to this instrument in the current EU legislative period. Several European Structural and Social Programs should be combined in this instrument: European Social Fund ESF, European Regional Development Fund ERDF, and Cohesion Fund CF, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development EAFRD, and European Maritime and Fishery Fund EMFF. The Danube Delta had to produce a so called Danube Delta Strategy to list the most important projects and several funding lines have to be combined in single projects. During our excursion we will discuss several topics related to the observed decline and intended development of C.A.Rosetti and Sulina municipalities with inhabitants and local decision makers.

Figure 4: Sulina, Boulevard on the Northern shore of the Danube

Source: M. Breiling, Feb. 8th, 2016

*Friday June 23rd, 2017,*

10:00: Questions and Answers, Operngasse 11/4, Room 32, A-1040 Wien (or different location if department will move).

*Invited resource persons to join the excursion 2017 (to be confirmed):*

1) Marius Voica, assoc. Prof.; Mrs. Catalina Varzaru, lecturer and Ph.D. student. Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism
2) Mr. Octave Gioza, President Association of Romanian Former Political Prisoners, Bucharest. During the 1950s he was prisoner in Periprava concentration camp
3) Mr. Vassili Serbov, Chairperson Lipovan Association of Sfiştofca
4) Laura Nona Ivanov, Sfiştofca Art Association, preparation of art installations to remember political prisoners in Romania during 1950ies and early 1960ies
5) Local Architect: Dan Ervin Ivanov, Reedland Project

***Tentative Program as of January 25th, 2017***

*Monday July 3rd, 2017:*

Individual arrangement to travel to Tulcea, Romania, (air, train, boat, important to arrive by evening in Tulcea)
18:30, Welcome of participants at Hotel Restaurant, Insula, Address: Ing. Dumitru Ivanov FN Str., 820168 Tulcea, RO,
19:00, Dinner at Hotel Insula, Overnight at Hotel Insula (or at hotels, guest houses nearby) .

*Tuesday July 4th, 2017*

8:30 "Planning Ventures in the Danube Delta", Planning Division of Danube Delta Institute DDI, 165 Babadag street, Tulcea 820112, Romania
10:00, "Governance in the Danube Delta" Meeting with Governor and officers of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority DDBRA,
11:30 Meeting with Chief Architect from Tulcea County at DDBRA
12:00 Coffee Restaurant,
13:30 Departure to Sulina per boat
18:00 Arrival in Sulina. Transfer to Sfistofca, taking shelter with locals

*Figure 5: Sulina Boulevard, Southern shore, students arriving*

Source: M. Breiling, Sept. 27th, 2014

19:30 Dinner in Lipovan Club House
20:30 Lipovan evening in Lipovan Club House.

*Wednesday July 5th, 2017*

8:00 Breakfast with local families

Figure 6: Local houses in Sfiştofca village

Source: M. Breiling, Sept. 28th, 2014

8:45 Excursion 1: Sfiştofca, C.A.Rosetti and Letea
Guided tour Sfiştofca village by Vassili Serbov, foot walk to C.A.Rosetti, 3 km distance, foot walk to Letea village, 5 km

i) *Guided tour Sfiştofca village by Vassili Serbov,*
ii) *Cemetery of Sfiştofca village*
iii) *Wild horses and tracks of wild horses in C.A.Rosetti Municipality*
iv) Visit to mayor of C.A.Rosetti Municipality, Florentina Hancarenco and to deputy Aurel Pocova
v) Explanations to development projects in C.A.Rosetti Municipality and in its five villages
vi) Visit to school in C.A.Rosetti
vii) *Lunch*
viii) *Swimming in Salt Lake with Therapeutic Power*
ix) *Animal husbandary in C.A.Rosetti and Letea*
x) *Letea Forest and explanations to Letea forest, the first national monument in Romania*
xi) *Letea village tour and meeting Hohol people (Ukrainian speaking population)*

19:00 Dinner in Letea village (Viorica guest house)
21:00 Taxi back to Sfiştofca

Figure 7: Salt Lake Landscape between C. A. Rosetti and Letea

Source: M. Breiling, Sept. 28th, 2014

Figure 8: Air taxi in C. A. Rosetti

Source: M. Breiling, Sept. 28th, 2014

*Thursday, July 6th, 2017*

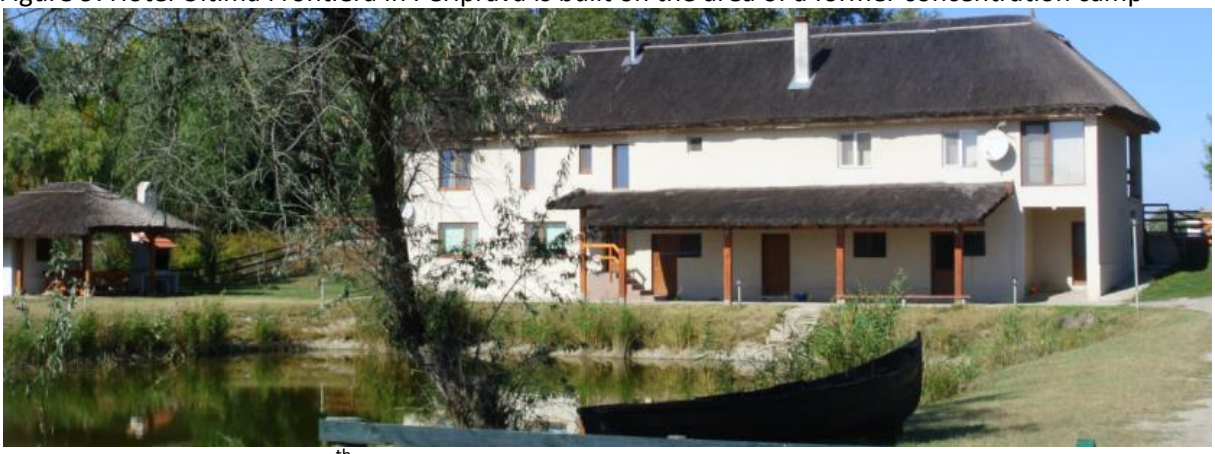
*8:00 Breakfast with local families*

*8:45 Walking along Sfiştofca channel in direction to Periprava (partly walking, partly by taxi)*

- xii) *visit to the aquaculture projects in the Ceausescu era,*
- xiii) *renaturation of aquacultural ponds*
- xiv) *wildlife and bird watching*
- xv) *reed production and organization of reed commercialization*
- xvi) *tourism projects and failure of touristic complex*
- xvii) *swimming in old arm of the Danube "Sfistofca Channel"*
- xviii) *"Ultima Frontiera" Hotel Complex and former Concentration Camp of the Ceausescu era,*
- xix) *Mr. Gioza, head of prisoner organization of former Romanian Political refugees*
- xx) *Ad hoc architectural and artist studio to design "Memorials for the victims"*
- xxi) *Presentation of ideas to "Prisoner Memorial" in Periprava*

19:00 Common dinner at Ultima Frontiera Complex
21:00 Return to Sfiştofca

Figure 9: Hotel Ultima Frontiera in Periprava is built on the area of a former concentration camp



Source: M. Breiling, Sept. 29th, 2014

*Friday, July 7th, 2017*

8:00 Breakfast with local families
8:45 Departure to Sulina by boat

i) *Buna Vestire Monastary,*
ii) *Bird Watching on the way to Sulina*
iii) *Zero point, where the Danube meets the Black Sea*
iv) *The new touristic complex in Sulina and the beach development*
v) *Swimming in the black sea*
vi) *Lunch at the beach*
vii) *The cemetery of ethnic groups in Sulina*
viii) *The Danube Commission*
ix) *The Sulina Bulevard*
x) *Discussion with chief architect of Sulina city*

Figure 10: Sulina beach – a development area

19:00 Transfer to Sulina Hotel,
20:00 Farewell Dinner in Sulina Restaurant

*Saturday, July 8th, 2017*

7:00 Boat departure from Sulina
11:30 Arriving in Tulcea,

**End of excursion to Danube Delta**

**Administration:**

*Exam, 2 ECTS*

**Planning students** will produce a written work of some 5000 words to a free selected subject in relation to the excursion. This may include current governance, planning or land use and resulting conflicts in the Danube Delta, the implementation or non implementation of EU programs, the social conditions of locals in the Danube Delta including ways to improve the situation or possibilities of using and rearranging the local resources in a sustainable way.
**Architect students** can alternatively also produce sketches to building and implementation plans for ventures in the Danube Delta following the rules of nature near construction in accordance to the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority.
Deadline for delivering works: July 31st, 2017

*Participation and Costs:*

The number of participants is restricted to 15. The costs for 6 days local excursion including all arrangements for travel, boat trips, local transports, guides, accommodation and provision of 14 meals in hotels, private homes or restaurants is € 300. Local arrangements will be organized via a local NGO, Sfiştofca Art Association.

In additions participants have to consider their travel cost from and to Tulcea which is not included and which has to be arranged individually. Flight costs Vienna to Bucharest highly depend on the date of booking. The bus transport between Bucharest and Tulcea is € 20.- for each way. During high season buses can be overbooked. Alternatively there is a train connection from Vienna to Tulcea taking 28 hours. One to two overnight stays might be needed. We advice to calculate € 300.- for the combined individual travel arrangements.

Applications for support to the "Dekanat für Architektur und Raumplanung" may reduce the total costs of € 600.- for students. Applicants have to pay € 50 for registration a.s.a.p. at the secretariat and the reminder of € 250 latest until June:

**Contact**: DI Dr. Meinhard Breiling
Department for Urban Design and Landscape Architecture
Division for Landscape Planning
Technical University Vienna
Operngasse 11; A-1040 Wien
Tel. +43-1-58801-26114/ Fax: +43-1-58801-26199
e-mail: meinhard.breiling@tuwien.ac.at
http://www.landscape.tuwien.ac.at/ and www.breiling.org

**For Payment:** Kerstin Martens
Department for Urban Design and Landscape Architecture
Division for Landscape Planning
Technical University Vienna
Tel. +43-1-58801-26110/Fax: +43-1-58801-26199
e-mail: kerstin.martens@tuwien.ac.at
www.landscape.tuwien.ac.at
Operngasse 11; A-1040 Wien