

Suceava during the Habsburg rule – urban development and identity completions

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Abstract. This paper is part of the doctoral research concerning the places of sites and church towers in the development of urban patterns in the city of Suceava. For this article, we will dwell on the 18th and 19th century, when, in 1755, Suceava became a Habsburg territory, being part of Bucovina, an area that included the North-East of Moldova. This situation was maintained for a century and a half, Suceava also fulfilling the role of an Austro-Hungarian border town. In this period we can also mention an urban development of the city, a period that left numerous institutional buildings representing the new power. This impressive buildings are, as they follow: the Suceava Prefecture and the Suceava County Council (City Administrative Palace, completed in 1903-1904 and which originally housed the city administration, the police, the fire brigade, a savings bank and the history museum), Bucovina Museum (which includes more buildings) - initially the seat of the District Headquarters, dating from 1902-1903, Ștefan cel Mare National College (The Greek-Oriental Gymnasium, built between 1893-1895 on the site of the old Wood Market), the Old Hospital (General public home for the sick from Suceava, built in the period 1891-1903), the old Suceava Water Plant and many others. Also in these years, the city is equipped with construction equipment (for example, in 1908, the Electric Plant is commissioned), modernizations specific to modern times. A major interest was the establishment of modern institutions, characteristic of the Habsburg administration.

1 Introduction

Suceava (German: Sutschawa, Suczawa or Sotschen, Old/Medieval German: Sedschopff) is the municipality of the county of the same name in Bucovina, northern Romania. (Fig. 1) The town lies in the south of the historical region of Bucovina. The town is located in the Suceava Plateau, on the course of the river of the same name, 21 km away from the Siret river.

Due to the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity before World War II (Romanians, Germans, Jews, Armenians, Poles, Ukrainians and Czechs lived in the town with priests and churches for each rite), Rudolf Gassauer called Suceava "a miniature Austria"[1].

Suceava is one of Romania's oldest and most important cities and is crossed by the European road E85 (DN2), which provides a road link to the capital Bucharest, from which

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it is 432 km away. The CFR 500 main line runs through the town, which is a railway junction, from where the railway line to Transylvania branches off.

Suceava was documented in 1388, when Petru II Musat was ruler of Moldavia (1375-1391). It served as the capital of the Principality of Moldavia for almost two centuries, until 1565. The history of the settlement is linked to the names of some of the most famous voivodes of Moldavia, such as Alexander the Good, Stephen the Great and Peter Rares. Between 1774 and 1918, with the occupation of Bucovina by the Austrians, Suceava became an important city in the Austrian Empire (later Austro-Hungary), being part of the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria and the Duchy of Bucovina. During this period, it served as a border town with the Kingdom of Romania.

After 1918, the town expanded by incorporating the neighbouring Burdujeni and Itcani, which became districts, and after the Second World War, Suceava underwent an extensive industrialisation process and its population increased more than tenfold.



Fig. 1. Physical map of Romania, with main roads

Suceava received the rank of municipality in 1968. At the 2011 census, it had a population of 92,121 inhabitants,[2] making it the 23rd largest urban centre in Romania. In the 2021 population census, Suceava had a population of 84,308 inhabitants [3].

2 Location and relief

Today Suceava County is located in the northeastern corner of Romania, bordering Ukraine in the northeast, in the Suceava Plateau, a subdivision of the Moldavian Plateau, at an average altitude of 325 meters. It is situated on the Suceava River, a right tributary of the Siret, 21 km from its mouth in the Siret (near the town of Liteni) and 149 km from its source (the Lucina Massif in the Mestecanisului Obcina) (Fig. 2).

The territory of Suceava municipality has an area of approximately 52.1 km² and is bordered by the following localities: commune Scheia (to the west); commune Moara (to the south-west); commune Ipotesti (to the south-east); city of Salcea (to the east); commune Adâncata (to the north-east); commune Mitocu Dragomirnei (to the north); commune Patrauti (to the north-west).

The municipality of Suceava is located in the Suceava-Bosanci platform, part of the Suceava Plateau and part of the Moldavian Plateau. The characteristic aspect of Suceava's relief is that of a vast amphitheatre, opening onto the Suceava river valley, with a maximum height of 435 metres (Tarinca hill) and a minimum height of 270 metres (in the Suceava riverbed area). The territory of Suceava County belongs entirely to the Siret river basin. The Suceava River, the main flowing water in the perimeter of the municipality of the same name, creates a wide riverbed in front of the city, a 1.5 km wide corridor, mostly non-floodable, as a result of the dyking and protection measures of the entire area affected by the industrial and recreational area. Over time, the Suceava River has undergone successive movements to the south and south-west, leaving old white water in the form of terraces on which the town has developed. (Fig. 3)



Fig. 2. Geographical map of Suceava County

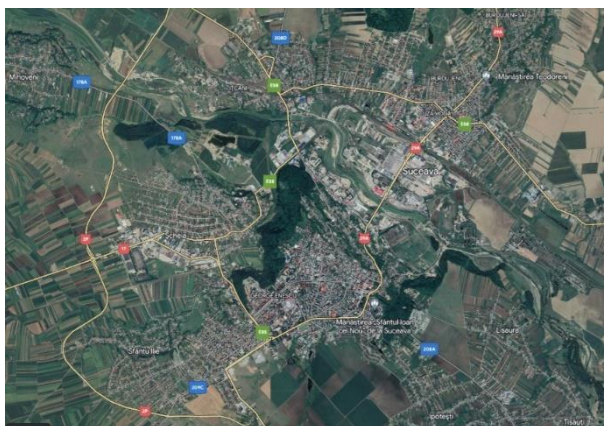


Fig. 3. Geographical map of Suceava municipality with main roads crossing through

3 Suceava during the Habsburg rule

In 1775, following the military conflict between Turkey and Russia (1768-1774), through the peace of Kuciuk-Kainargi, Austria expands in the north of Moldavia, where Suceava is located (the border with Romania passed just southeast of the city) (Fig. 4).

For a century and a half this territory was part of the Habsburg Empire (which became Austro-Hungary in 1867) and was called Bucovina. Suceava is now the second largest and

most important city in Bukovina, after the capital city of Chernivtsi. Suceava also served as an Austro-Hungarian border town during this period.

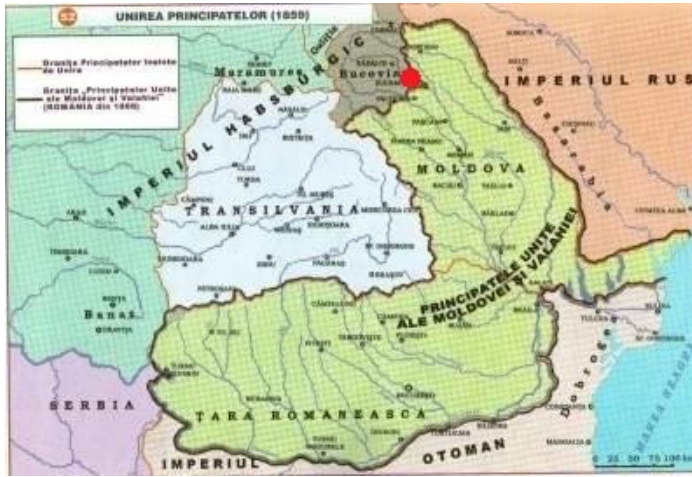


Fig. 4. Map of the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, 1859

Suceava underwent a period of modernization and development, transforming the old medieval fair into an important and modern city within the Duchy of Bucovina. (Fig. 5)

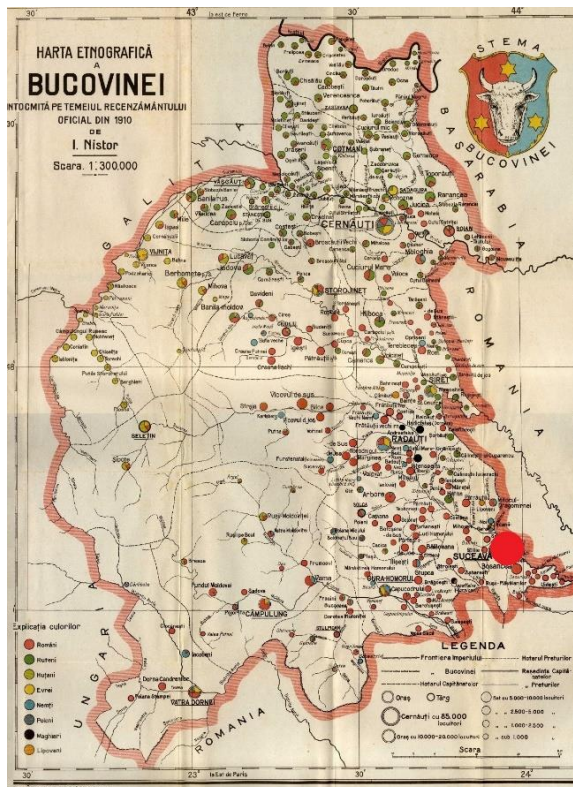


Fig. 5. Ethnographic map of Bucovina, 1910

4 Demography - Austrian census of 1900

According to the 1900 census, the population of Suceava was 10,955 inhabitants. The majority of the inhabitants declared German as their language of communication (61.54%), followed by Romanian (25.38%), Rhaeto-Romanian (5.46%) and other languages (Polish, Hungarian, Armenian, etc.) (7.62%). In terms of religion, the majority of the inhabitants were Moslems (38.60%), but there were also Catholics (31.55%) - of which 16.46% were Greek Catholics and 2.11% were Armenian Catholics, Orthodox (26.42%) - of which 6.22% were Armenian-Gregorians and 1.55% were Lipovans, and other religions (Evangelicals/Lutherans, etc.) (3.43%).

5 Franz Des Loges - Mayor in the heyday of Suceava

Suceava's period of urban flourishing occurred during the term of Franz Des Loges (1846-1914), an Austrian politician from Bukovina. He served as mayor of Suceava for almost a quarter of a century, from 1891 to 1914. During this period a number of buildings for local institutions were constructed, changing the landscape of the town. Some of these buildings still exist today and are still in use:

Suceava Prefecture and County Council – The city Administrative Palace, is located in the city centre, on Stefan cel Mare Street, opposite the Roman Catholic Church of St. John Nepomuk. On the other three sides, the building is bordered by Libertatii Street, Vasile Bumbac Street and Nucului Alley. In the immediate vicinity are two of the city's parks: Central Park (today named after Professor Ioan Nemes) and Flag Park. The latter was completed between 1903-1904 and originally housed the city administration, the police, the fire brigade, a savings bank and the history museum. After the establishment of the communist regime in Romania in 1944, the building of the former town hall housed the Suceava County People's Council, the Suceava County Committee of the PCR and the Suceava County Committee of the UTC. Since 1990, the Administrative Palace in Suceava has housed the Prefecture and the Suceava County Council.

The building was designed by the Viennese architect Peter Paul Brang (1852-1925). The building was originally in the shape of a letter "L", with a stable, firehouse and carriage shed in the courtyard. The Administrative Palace in Suceava was built in Baroque style, with a basement, ground floor and two upper floors. The building is made of brick masonry and covered with pottery. The main façade is architecturally impressive. On the ground floor level, it is covered with woodwork framing the windows. In the middle of the building is a clock tower, raised well above the mansard roof. Originally, the tower building (between the second and third floors) was carved with the old town emblem. On the left side there is a mozarb-like porch, closed on the vertical of the two floors and finished with a closed turret[4] On the right side a body stands out, finished at the top with a baroque pediment in three registers, decorated with the emblem of Bucovina. The windows end in a semicircular arch, those on the first floor have triangular pediments above them. The main entrance is through a semicircular portal on the ground floor of the clock tower framed by two semi-cylindrical columns supporting a Baroque balcony on the first floor. Today the building also has two side entrances. The building has 72 rooms, including the large meeting room on the first floor, which has three windows in the wall of the main building, spanning two storeys and covered with stained glass.

In the 1960s, the county authorities demolished the outbuildings in the courtyard and built a Baroque-style building that enclosed the entire ensemble, giving it a rectangular shape. On this occasion, the facades were renovated with plaster in stone dust and mosaic and a fresco with a historical theme was placed on the walls of the central hall.[5] The fresco has a surface of 8x4 meters and was made of colored marble by Gheorghe Popescu in 1971. In 2006, the

building of the Administrative Palace in Suceava underwent capital repairs. On this occasion, the wooden windows were replaced with laminated wood double glazing, the interiors were sanitised and painted. [6] (Fig. 6)



Fig. 6. Suceava Prefecture and County Council, personal archive

Bucovina Museum - The Museum of History of Suceava is the oldest section of the Bucovina Museum, being practically the core around which the museum complex was born and later developed, which over time has borne several names (Museum Society, City Museum, Regional Museum, County Museum, Bucovina Museum). The building that currently houses the headquarters of the Bucovina Museum and its history and art sections was built at the beginning of the 20th century, when Franz Des Loges was mayor of Suceava, according to the plans of the Austrian architect Julius Bochner [7]. Originally, the building was used as the administrative headquarters of the District Captaincy (Kreisamt) of Suceava. In addition to its role as the headquarters of the District Captaincy in the Duchy of Bucovina, the building also houses the Post and Telegraph Office and the Customs Office [9]. After the Union of Bucovina with Romania in 1918, the building serves as the headquarters of the Prefecture of Suceava County, and after 1944 the People's Council of Suceava is located here. Now a new wing is added on the north side, later occupied by the State Archives [11]. Since 1968 it houses the History Section of the Suceava County Museum. The Bucovina Museum is the most important institution of its kind in Suceava County, currently consisting of a collection of museums and medieval sites located both in the city of Suceava and in the county. The establishment of a museum in Suceava is closely linked to the beginning of restoration works at the Citadel at the end of the 19th century, under the patronage of the Austrian architect Karl Adolf Romstorfer, after the fortress had been abandoned and ruined for over two centuries. As early as 1887, the town council decided to ban the destruction of the fortress walls and grazing near the fortress. Between 1895 and 1904, the ruins of the fortress, which had been covered with earth for some time, were cleared, the first archaeological excavations were carried out and the parts threatened by collapse were reinforced.

Work on the new building began in the spring of 1902 and was completed in April 1903. The building has two levels (ground floor and first floor), where the rooms are arranged symmetrically. On both the ground and first floors, longitudinal corridors open out from the central hallway, along which the rooms (25 on each level) are arranged. The central

architectural module, which exceeds the height of the wings of the building, is also highlighted by a slight slope, at the centre of which is the entrance on the ground floor and a wrought-iron balcony on the first floor, and a halo representing the imperial coat of arms of the Habsburg monarchy, bordered laterally by a wreath. The coat of arms is carved in sandstone and depicts a two-headed eagle [7][8] The same decroix is also present at the two ends of the building facing Stefan cel Mare Street. The facade is divided horizontally into two registers: the ground floor, with rectangular windows set in a rusticated bushwork, and the upper one, with windows above which are arranged elements in relief, either in triangular form or in the form of horizontal bars, alternating in groups.9] The building has an eclectic architectural style, Baroque features blending with neoclassical elements characteristic of buildings intended to house Austrian administrative institutions. [10] (Fig. 7)



Fig. 7. Bucovina Museum - The Museum of History of Suceava, personal archive

National College "Stefan cel Mare" - is the oldest high school in Suceava. The high school was founded in 1860 as a result of the efforts and requests of the Bukovinian Romanians to have schools in Romanian language. Initially it operated in a building near St. Dumitru Church. In 1895, the Lyceum was moved to the location where it still operates today, which is in the Baroque-style building at 3 Vasile Alecsandri Street in the centre of the town. The building that houses the "Stefan cel Mare" National College was built between 1893 and 1895 on a 3,588 square metre plot of land in the centre of Suceava, where the wood market used to be. The building, built in Baroque style, was inaugurated on 19 November 1895, [12] representing the second oldest building in Suceava where an educational establishment is currently operating. [13] The building stands out in the landscape of the area for its solidity, having two floors, with the gable facing the current Vasile Alecsandri Street. The massive building of the "Stefan cel Mare" High School stands out for its sobriety, balance and simplicity. It has a vaulted entrance in the middle of the street, which continues upstairs with tall vaulted windows, bordered by pilasters that give a pronounced vertical touch. The building's exterior decoration features rusticated woodwork surrounding the ground-floor window frames and the corners of the building. Two stone bays surrounding the building delimit the ground floor and the two upper floors [12] Inside, there is a wide hallway at the main entrance that opens onto a monumental staircase that provides access to the upper floors. Two side staircases also lead from the ground floor to the upper floors. Three wide corridors into which open classrooms, laboratories, teachers' chancelleries and various offices lead through the building on both the ground and upper floors. Extensions carried out in the 1960s and 1970s, resulting in the construction of side wings, have given the building

its present 'U' shape. Over the years, the building has undergone several restoration and finishing works on the interiors and, in particular, on the facades, which are made of stone dust and mosaic [12]. The most recent renovation took place in 2000, with Phare funds totalling 10 billion lei. [13] (Fig. 8)



Fig. 8. National College "Stefan cel Mare", personal archive

The Old Hospital - is a complex of heritage buildings built between 1891 and 1903 in Suceava to serve as a district hospital during the term of office of Mayor Franz Des Loges (1891-1914). It was erected in the Areni area (today the district of Suceava), on the site of an older building dating back to the early 19th century. [14] Designed from the beginning to serve as a district hospital, these buildings were known at the time as the "General Public House for the Sick in Suceava". The hospital complex consisted of a main building and four pavilions, with a total of 14 wards with a capacity of 70 beds, an operating theatre, four doctors' and staff offices, a mortuary, laboratories and storerooms, ice cellars, etc. The hospital complex was surrounded by a park. [15] In the pavilion without a floor on the street was the headquarters of the institution's administration. The first Romanian doctor from Bucovina, Teofil Lupu (1869-1935), lived here for a while, together with his daughter Octavia and his son-in-law, the writer and publicist Alexandru Leca Morariu. Between 1926 and 1929 the editorial office of the literary and folklore magazine "Fat-Frumos", directed by Leca Morariu, operated here [16]. (Fig. 9)



Fig. 9. The Old Hospital, personal archive

The Old Suceava Water Plant - is a complex of buildings with industrial heritage value in which functioned the former water plant of the city of Suceava, put into use on 12 August 1912. It is located at 4 Apeductului Street, in the Suhat area. Currently, the Centre for Architecture, Urban Culture and Landscape "Water Plant" Suceava is operating here. (Fig. 10)



Fig. 10. The Old Suceava Water Plant, personal archive

In 1895, Mayor Franz de Loges took out a loan of 1.5 million crowns for the electrification of the town, the construction of sewers, an aqueduct and the embankment of the Suceava river [17]. In 1908 the Electricity Plant, built by the Unified Electricity Company of Vienna, was put into operation. Electric public lighting was introduced in the town, with the installation of metal lattice poles and street lamps. [18] In 1912 the Waterworks was put into use, together with the public water supply and sewage network. The town's streets were also paved for the first time.

Franz Des Loges also plays an important cultural role. He supports the process of restoration and enhancement of representative historical monuments, [18] coordinated by the

Austrian architect Karl Romstorfer. As part of this project, the ruins of the Citadel are being consolidated, the Monastery of Saint John the New and the Church of Mirauti are being restored. In January 1900, the "City Museum of Suceava" Society (now the Bucovina Museum) was founded.

After the First World War, Suceava came under Romanian administration, and on November 28, 1918 the Union of Bucovina with Romania took place.

6 Conclusion

The period of the 18th-19th centuries, and in particular that of Franz Des Loges (1846-1914), an Austrian politician from Bucovina who was mayor of Suceava, was one of maximum urban development for the city. A number of historic buildings were built at that time, which have been renovated over the years and most of them have also changed their use, and now function for a different purpose from their original one.

Acknowledgments

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