

RUSE FREE SPIRIT CITY

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emilia VELIKOVA

University of Ruse, Bulgaria

evelikova@uni-ruse.bg emivelikova@yahoo.com

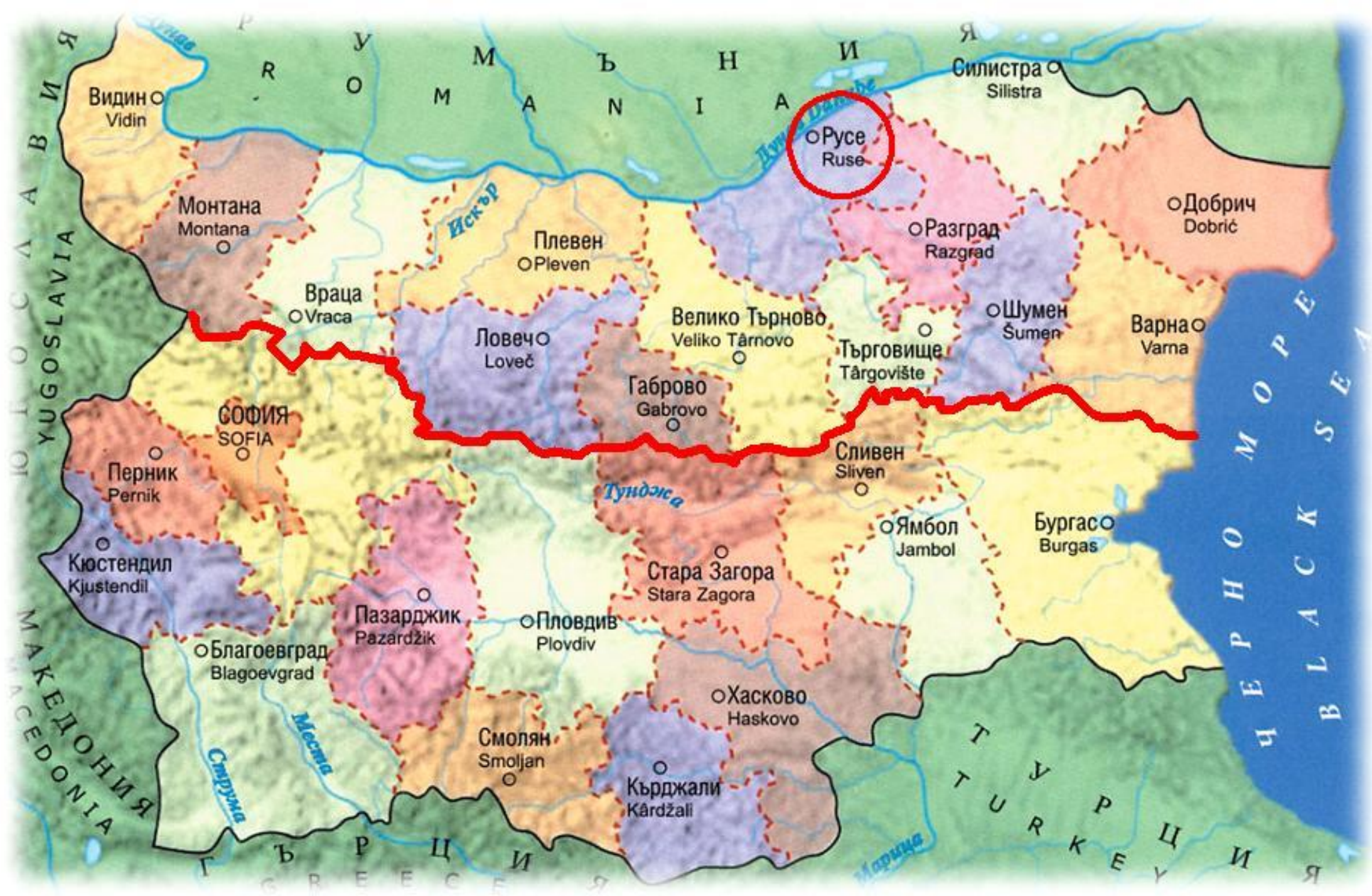


Hello travelers!

Today we are taking you to **Ruse – free spirt city.**

Ruse is also know as **Little Vienna of Bulgaria** because of its architecture and the Classical music festival “March Music Days”.









- A city of diverse culture and communities. Since antiquity and until today it has been a vibrant and exciting place to live.
- The city has always been an important crossroad of land and water routes. It is the biggest Bulgarian city on the Danube river.

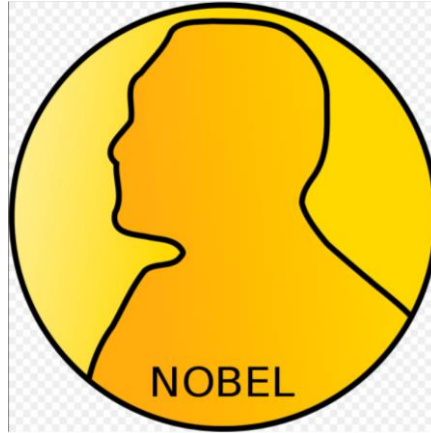


- The town of Ruse was first founded 1800 years ago by the Thracians and later by the Romans. The city they called "Sexaginta Prista" – the port of sixty ships. Later it was called different names Ruse, Rousse, Gyurgev grad and by the Ottomans – Roustchouk. The name was turned back to Ruse after the liberation of Bulgaria from the Ottoman rule in 1878.



- It is a well established academic center. Every year thousands of young people graduate from one of the most prestigious University of Bulgaria – Angel Kanchev University of Ruse.





the city route "European Heritage Buildings"

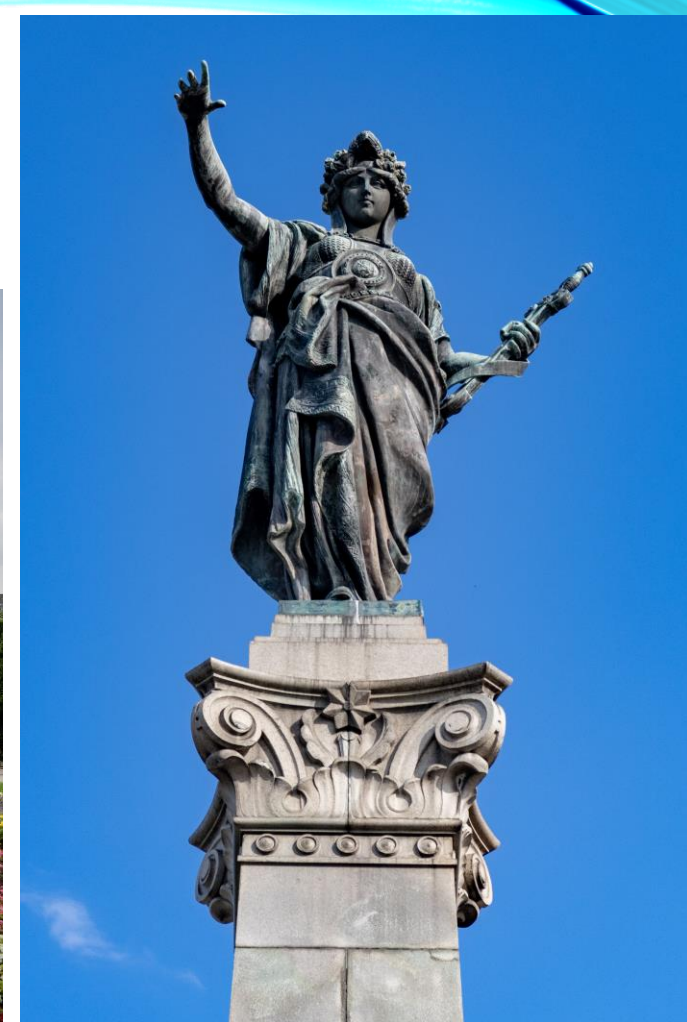
- Ruse is a city of culture and arts. It is the birth place of the only Bulgarian born **Nobel laureate Elias Canetti**. In 1981, Elias Canetti received the Nobel Prize in Literature for his entire work. His words about his childhood in Ruse are famous: ***"Everything I experienced later had already happened to me in Ruschuk."***

Elias Canetti

In 1980, Elias Canetti received the **Johann Peter Hebel Prize** of the state of Baden-Württemberg, Germany.



- The aristocratic beauty and the attention to details, created by many architectures, sculptors, artists from Germany, Hungary, Italy, Bulgaria and Austria, especially from Vienna, will enchant you.



- There is the Liberty square with the Liberty monument. It shows a female figure pointing north-east - where the liberators of Bulgaria and Ruse came from. The Monument shows our gratitude for being supported in our liberation battle and has now turned into a symbol of Ruse.



- Do not be surprised by the name Caliopa House that you are going to see. The legend says that the beauty Caliopi was a mistress of Midhat Pasha – the Ottoman ruler of North Bulgaria with Ruse as a capital. Caliopi (the wife of a Greek officer) received the house as a prize for winning a competition in shooting pigeons. Legend says also that behind Caliopi was a soldier who won the contest for her.
- The house shows the way local people lived during the XIX and the early XX century.



- Midhat Pasha built the first train line in Bulgaria which connects Ruse and Varna. The legendary Orient Express train, which runs from Paris to Istanbul, stopped at the Central Railway Station of Ruse every year between 1882 – 1977 and 2001 - 2019. The price for a one-way ticket varied with an average amount of about 8000 euros.



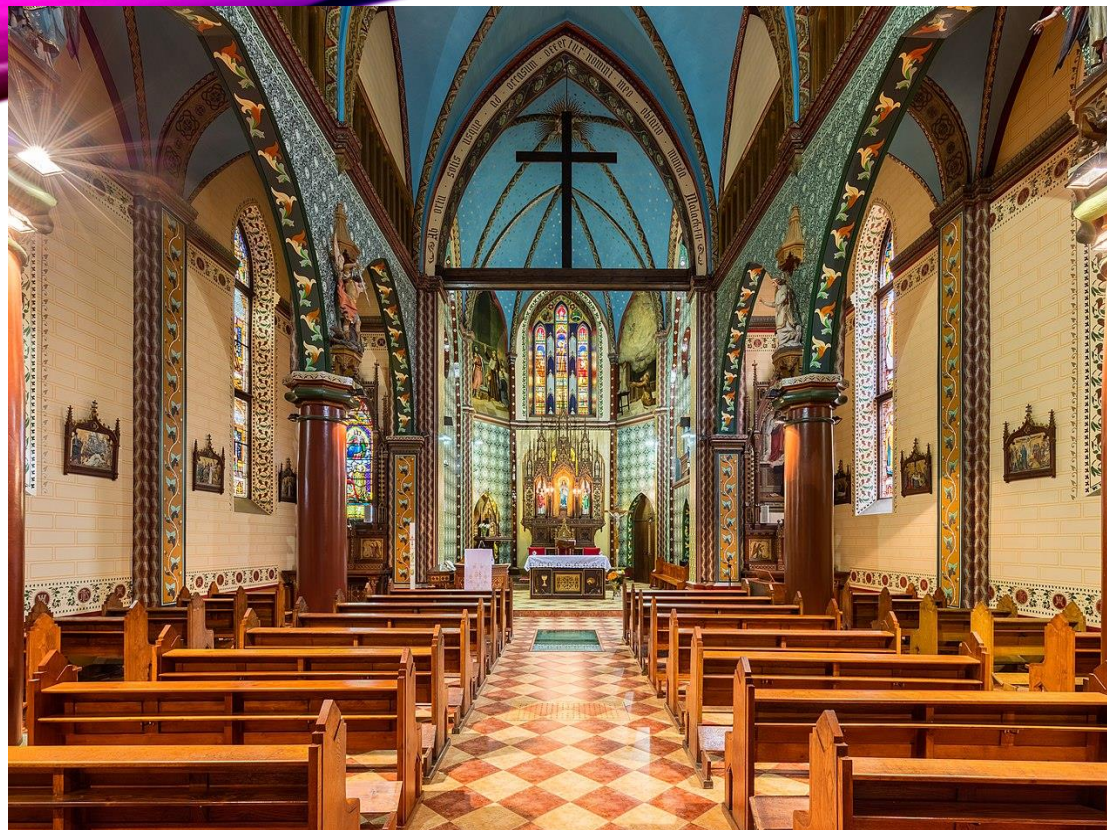
- In Ruse is the only National Transport Museum in Bulgaria. Its exhibition includes technics and also trains that were used by many famous persons such as: Sultan Abdul Aziz, Empress Eugenia, Princess Klimentina, prince Alexander Battenberg - Bulgarian, King of Bulgaria Ferdinand I, King of Bulgaria Boris III the Unifier.



There are many kinds of theatres – State Opera, State Puppet Theater, Summer Theatre, Musical Theatre. The **Drama Theatre** “Sava Ognyanov” started to host **March Music Days** in 1961 as *Days of German-Bulgarian Musical Friendship*. The idea was of Iliya Temkov who graduated Humboldt University, had musical performances in many German towns, was the conductor of the Berlin radio (1957-1959), and director of the State Symphony Orchestra of Ruse (1960-1972). The program of that event includes classical music performed by participants from all continents.







1890-1892, arch. Valentino del Antonio Borcan Moreno, Italy

- Here is also the Roman-Catholic Church "St. Paul on the Cross". It guards the oldest pneumatic, pipe organ in Bulgaria which is also the only specimen in South Eastern Europe.



- Here we are in front of the History Museum. There is a lovely park, surrounded by incredible buildings with special charm (the Regional Library, the First Bulgarian bank, the High School “Prince Boris”, the History Museum, the Nature Museum). The beautiful fountains and surrounding architecture give a different fascination.



- It is quite obvious why Ruse was called “**The Little Vienna**”. The historical bond between Vienna and Ruse has endured through time. You can see the resemblance even today.
- In the History Museum you can see artefacts of prehistoric ceramic, as well as personal belongings of Bulgaria’s freedom fighters. There are also Borovo Gold exhibition, one of the oldest golds in Bulgaria, and a numismatic exhibition. The building was designed as a palace for Alexander I Battenberg.



- The Nature Museum of Ruse (open in 2014) is situated nearby. It is one of kind in Bulgaria with a freshwater aquarium with Danube fishes, bones of prehistorical mammals, among which Mamutus Romanos's – the only mandible preserved in the world.



- The Danube Association of Masters of Folk Art Crafts presents wonderful creations of carving, woodworking, copperwork and many more.



- History is all around Ruse. The church “Sv. Troitsa”, for example, is among the oldest buildings in town. It was built back in 1632. It is dug 4 meters underground, in order to comply with the Ottoman rules. It is open for the faithful and it is a wonderful place to be visited.



- You can see some other places just outside of Ruse which increase the faith of local people. The “St. Dimitar Basarbovski” Monastery is the only monastery, built into rock, that still operates in Bulgaria.



- The astonishing Rock-Hewn Churches of Ivanovo from the 12th century is UNESCO World heritage. With their fantastic views they are magnet for tourists.



- We would like to show you one of Ruse's cultural symbols – the Carnival. The Carnival's shows, dances, lots of fun, competition, games, and smiles echo in the summer evenings. Thousands of people gather to celebrate together with a fire show and some fantastic fireworks.



- In the late XIXth and early XXth centuries, European values and ideas entered Bulgaria through Ruse. A distinguished future and its beautiful architecture, a combination of baroque, modern, neoclassic, and succession. A modern European city. **A free spirit city.**