

CULTURAL TOURISM IN IAȘI. THE STURDZA RULERS OF MOLDAVIA, FOUNDERS OF RELIGIOUS PLACES

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Abstract

Cultural tourism is of primary importance in Jassy. Being a city rich in history, it is necessary to underline the rulers of the past, in Moldavia, who built many religious places due to their belief in religious faith. In the past, the aristocratic families had a chapel in their home and a church or monastery near their house. Many of the local ancient places of worship are of great historical and artistic beauty. They are very old, real treasures of art. Moldavia had two rulers from the Sturdza family. Their names are still alive nowadays. Many of their buildings and religious places still exist even today – Ioan Sandu Sturdza Summer place of Copou-Breazu, an old mansion which is a College today of agricultural profile, or Mihail Sturdza Princely Palace, today Faculty of Theology in the centre of Iași, near the Metropolitan Cathedral.

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If you want to visit a historical Romanian town, choose Iași, in the north-east of Moldavia, an area with hills and plains. It is known that Iasi or Jassy is the cultural city capital of Moldavia, full of old history and culture. Nobody knows too much about the fact that Jassy was an old boyar city. The most famous great families of boyars from Moldavia who had residences in Iasi (especially in Copou district) were the following: Sturdza, Cantacuzino, Mavrocordat, Rosetti, Ghika, Catargi, Moruzzi, Mavrogheni, Callimachi, Balș, Conache, Pogor and Bogdan (each with several branches). These families, who represented the true nobility of the country, the elite, set the tone for the aristocratic life in Moldavia in the first half of the 19th century. They provided the rulers and the great rulers of the country, but also politics, justice and most of the economic life, because they mastered the political power of the country, most of the economic resources and all the important

decisions. These families also managed most of Moldavia's natural resources. Their name is also related to the ancient places of worship, of great historical and artistic beauty - the Metropolitan Church of Moldavia, the Frumoasa Monastery, Golia, Galata, the famous and incomparable Church of the Three Hierarchs, founded by Vasile Lupu. This is a church in Moldavian style, dressed in stone embroidery and lace, covered in gold on the outside; inside we find Carara marble, enamel, bronze and ivory. This church is a witness of all the events in the history of Moldavia; for, as good Christians, in addition to the residences of the rulers who had a chapel in the house, there was always, as a natural spiritual necessity, a church or a nearby monastery, sacred spaces, determined by the depth of the Christian faith. Many of the places of worship, in Moldavia and Jassy, were founded by the Sturdza family.



Fig. 1. The Church of the Three Hierarchs (FOTOTECAORTODOXIEI, n.d.)

The names of these boyar families, with Orthodox Christian faith, are closely related to the ancient places of worship, of great historical

and artistic beauty - the Metropolitan Church of Moldavia, the Frumoasa Monastery, Golia, Galata, the old Church of the Three Hierarchs, covered in gold, the interior - a simple decoration of Carara marble, enamel, bronze and ivory - St. Neculai Domnesc, Bărboi and others, for which I have the obligation to remember, as masterpieces of architecture, the most selected and chosen of Iași, worthy of being known all over the world, witness of all the events in the history of Moldavia (POPIȘTEANU & MATEI, 1995).

Today, it is less known that, before becoming ruler of Moldavia, the great and old prince, **Ioniță Sandu Sturdza**, built in Iași, between 1819 and 1821, according to the fashion of time, a boyar mansion, with a carriage vault, a specific element of Moldavian architecture, far from the city, in a delightful landscape of orchards, vineyards and old trees, close to the Breazu forest; a mansion, which he named the *Summer Palace of Copou-Breazu*, that still exists today, in Viticultori Street. At the same time, Grigore Sturdza, the father of the future ruler Mihail Sturdza, built between 1817-1819 a rural mansion, or a great villa, the Belvedere Palace in Socola, according to the plans of the Czech engineer and architect, Martin Kubelca, on the hills of Socola, a beautiful summer residence. The mansion or the Summer Palace of Ioniță Sandu Sturdza of Copou-Breazu was a copy of the palace from Stâncă Roznovanu, where his

wife, Ecaterina, had lived. Thus, in the 17th century, in Stâncă village, Iași county, a famous name that remained in history, a mansion of the boyar Roset (or Rosetti) from Roznov was built for the first time (it was called Roznovanu) and later, in the place of the mansion, a palace, that will become famous.

The mansion from Copou-Breazu of the ruler Ioniță Sandu Sturdza... greets us with a cold air of an old building, with thick, sober, great walls, which transpose us into history. On the ground floor, thick, massive pillars, on the left, the chapel, with the door open, is waiting, as it were, for the parishioners to come... In the middle, another open door leading to a large hall with access to the platform where the carriage was waiting for you, once... Another world, other times, long ago... The writer Rudolf Suțu also confirms us in the well-known work **Iași from the past**: *Once upon a time, around the Boyar houses in Iași, there were chapels. Every Saturday or Sunday, the boyars sent for the priest (...) who came in a carriage with two horses to prepare the holy water to sprinkle in the house.*

In addition to the monumental terrace of the mansion, there is also a chapel at the entrance, on the left and on the right, as many boyars of the past used to have in their homes, on the ground floor, inside the mansion, with the vaulted ceiling. Here, family service was held on Sundays and Sundays (BĂDĂRĂU & CAPROȘU, 2007).



Fig. 2. Ioniță Sandu Sturdza's mansion or the Summer Palace



Fig. 3. Ioniță Sandu Sturdza



Fig. 4. The Mansion Chapel

The chapel is not only a sacred place of silence for the family members and their guests, but one of the spaces of social representation of the boyar house, because many events of members of the Iași high society took place here to celebrate religious ceremonies. such as: baptisms, engagements, weddings, deaths of family or relatives.

Mihail Sturdza's Princely Palace near the Metropolitan Church also had a Chapel, the Princely Palace rebuilt by him, in Lozonschi Street, where his father, Grigore Sturdza, had lived.

It is interesting that the **Prince's Palace**, in the shape of the letter **U**, was not designed

facing the main street, Ulița Mare, where there is the Palace of the boyar Roznovanu, the City Hall of today, but facing the old Lozonschi

Church. In front, the towers of the Metropolitan Cathedral are outlined. Next to the palace is the Metropolitan Cathedral.



Fig. 5. Gheorghe Lozonschi old Church in the centre of Jassy



Fig 6. Mihail Sturdza Princely Palace (up) The Palace Chapel (down)

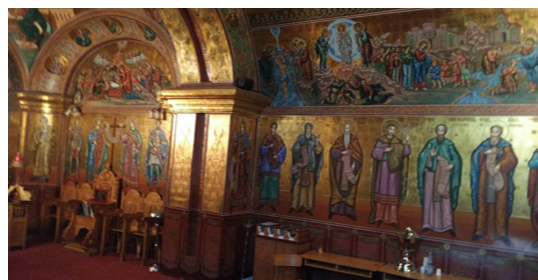


Fig. 7. Sfântul Nicolae Church of Cilibiu (inside)

The Sturdza family has always been close to the Romanian Orthodox Church. In Cilibiu, Golăești village, Iași county, in 1818, the Sturdza family built a church dedicated to the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel. This church was rebuilt several times. We speak about the Church of St. Nicholas. Mihail Sturdza's first wife - Elisabeta (Safta) Rosetti, remarried Pallady, who was buried here. Later, the bones were moved to the Eternitatea Cemetery of Iași. This church of the Sturdza family remains an old historical monument of local importance, registered in the register of Historical Monuments.

The Church of St. Nicholas in Cilibiu was rebuilt between 1800 and 1850 by the ruling Sturdza Family on the place of an older church dedicated to the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel. An old inscription was found on the church door that mentions that the church was built in 1818. In front of the altar, there is the Sturdza family tomb, largely destroyed after the two world wars. Over the years, the Church has been rebuilt with the support of worthy believers of the community and has been reconsecrated with the Feast of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



Fig. 8. Sfântul Nicolae old Church of Cilibiu (outside) (WIKIPEDIA, n.d.)

In the courtyard of the Agricultural High School from Miroslava, there is also the **Church of Nativity of the Mother of God**, built and founded by the Sturdza and Mavrocordat families.

It is an Orthodox church built around 1811 in Miroslava, Iasi county. It is located in the school yard of the "Mihail Kogălniceanu" Agricultural High School in Miroslava.

The Church of Nativity of the Mother of God in Miroslava was built around 1811. It is mentioned in a document from December 21, 1833. According to some sources, it was rebuilt around 1850 by the bishop Filaret Beldiman "Apamias" (1770 -1844). This Church was included in 2004 on the List of Historical Monuments in Iasi County

The Sturdza family was a family of good Christians. There is a long list of churches founded by the Sturdza rulers (SUȚU, 2015).



Fig. 9. The Nativity of Mother of God from Miroslava



Fig. 10. Frumoasa Church

<https://presshub.ro/manastirea-frumoasa-din-iasi-reabilitata-pe-fonduri-europene-1365/>

Being placed on a terrace land with a relative altitude of 8-10 meters from the Bahlui plain, the **Frumoasa Church** nowadays consists of the following 6 objectives: the Church "St. Voivodes" - dating from 1836-1839, the Palace on the walls - from the period 1818-1819, the ruins of the Palace "for women" - the palace of the ladies, the bell tower - from 1819-1833, the enclosure wall - from 1726-1733, the Mausoleum of Grigore Sturdza - from 1833.

In the courtyard of the **Frumoasa Monastery**, in Iași, on the left side of the church, Prince Mihail Sturdza built a big marble mausoleum where **Grigore Sturdza** (1758-1833), the prince's

father, is buried. Other members of the Sturdza family were also buried in the mausoleum; two of them were related to Vogoride and Mavrogheni families.



Fig.11. Grigore Sturdza

Another monastery that was taken care of by the ruler Mihail Sturdza, was the **Galata Monastery**, a green place dear to Mihail Sturdza. The oldest building in Iași standing is the 430-year-old Galata Church. The church dedicated to the "Ascension of the Lord" was documented in 1582-1583. Destroyed by a fire in 1814, the Princely House of the monastery was rebuilt in 1847 by Prince Mihail Sturdza who also rebuilt the bell tower.



Fig. 12. Galata Monastery (FACEBOOK, 2020)



Fig. 13. Mihail Sturdza (EDITORIAL TEAM, 2020)

It was rebuilt in the middle of the 19th century during the restoration works undertaken by the ruler Mihail Sturdza. The enclosure wall was rebuilt from the middle up during the reign of Mihail Sturdza and later in 1849-1853, when the border decoration and the country's coat of

arms above the entrance were made (GANE, 1939).

Ruxandra, Mihail Sturdza's sister, also contributed to the renovation of the monastery, adding several small but beautiful houses, in which she lived for the fresh air of Galata, until the end of her life.



Fig. 14. Grigore Sturdza Mausoleum



Fig. 15. Mihail Sturdza Chapel, Baden Baden, Germany

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