



Ruse (also transliterated as Rousse or Russe; Bulgarian: Pyce, pronounced [ˈrusɛ]) is the fifth-largest city in Bulgaria. Ruse is located in the northeastern part of the country, on the right bank of the Danube, opposite the Romanian city of Giurgiu, 300 km (186 mi) from the capital Sofia and 200 km (124 mi) from the Bulgarian Black Sea Coast. It is the most significant Bulgarian river port, serving an important part of the international trade of the country.

Ruse is known for its 19th- and 20th-century Neo-Baroque and Neo-Rococo architecture, which attracts many tourists. It is often called the Little Vienna. The Ruse-Giurgiu Friendship Bridge, the only one in the shared Bulgarian-Romanian section of the Danube, crosses the river here.

Ruse is located on the right bank of the Danube, which is the high bank, having two underwater terraces and three river terraces at 15–22 m (49.21–72.18 ft), 30–66 m (98.43–216.54 ft), and 54–65 m (177.17–213.25 ft). The average altitude is 45.5 m (149.28 ft) AMSL. The urban area is an approximately 11-km ellipse running along the river. The city extends from the land-connected Matey (Матей) island and the mouth of Rusenski Lom on the west to Srabcheto (Срѣбчето) hill on the east. During the 20th century, the west end of the city was significantly modified by moving the mouth of Rusenski Lom to the west, as well as by moving the bank itself with its fairway considerably to the north. Sarabair (сарѣбаир) hill is to the south of the city and is 159 m (521.65 ft) high. The Rousse TV Tower is built there on the remains of Leventtabia, a former Turkish fortification.

The city emerged as a Neolithic settlement from the 3rd to 2nd millennium BCE, when pottery, fishing, agriculture, and hunting developed. Excavations reveal several layers, suggesting that the place was attacked by neighbouring tribes and suffered a number of natural disasters. Ancient sanctuaries were found nearby, where idols of a pregnant woman, a fertility goddess, were prevalent.

The later Thracian settlement developed into a Roman military and naval centre during the reign of Vespasian (69-70 CE) as part of the fortification system along the northern boundary of Moesia. Its name, Sexaginta Prista,[4] suggests a meaning of "a city of 60 ships" (from Latin: sexaginta — "60" and Greek: pristin — a special type of guard ship), based on the supposed 60 nearby berths.

The fortress was located on the main road between Singidunum (modern Belgrade) and the

Danube Delta and was destroyed in the 6th century by Avar and Slavic raids. Hungarian historian Felix Philipp Kanitz was the first to identify Sexaginta Prista with Ruse, but the Škorpiil brothers demonstrated the link later through studying inscriptions, coins, graves, and objects of daily life. An inscription from the reign of Diocletian proves that the city was rebuilt as a praesidium (a large fortification) after it was destroyed by the Goths in 250 CE.

In the 13th and 14th centuries, during the time of the Second Bulgarian Empire, a fortified settlement called Rusi (also Golyamo Yorgovo; Bulgarian: Голямо Йоргово), first mentioned in 1380, emerged near the ruins of the Roman town. It later strengthened its position as an important trade centre with the lands on the opposite side of the Danube, until it was conquered by the Ottomans in 1388. Scholars suggest that the city on the river bank derived its present name from the Cherven fortress (Bulgarian: Чèрвен; "червèн" meaning red) through the root rous, which is present in many Slavic languages and is a cognate of French rouge and Latin rusos.

During Ottoman rule, the invaders destroyed the town, reacting to a 1595 unsuccessful liberation attempt by a joint Vlach-Bulgarian army, led by Michael the Brave. After its rebuilding in the following years, Ruse was dubbed Rusçuk (Turkish for "little Ruse") and had again expanded into a large fortress by the 18th century. It later grew into one of the most important Ottoman towns on the Danube and an administrative centre of Tuna Vilayet, which extended from Varna and Tulcea to Sofia and Niš.

The "Dunav" newspaper appeared – it was the first printed in Bulgaria and ... in Bulgarian. Some Bulgarian schools were founded. The streets are renamed and numbered for the first time in Bulgarian lands. A post-office, hospital, home for the aged were founded. Three empires met here for trading: Austro-Hungary, Russia, British Empire, France and Italy opened consulates in Ruschuk. Imperceptibly, the modern city arose from the shades of the settlement. In 1865 the Obratsov Chiflik was founded on the place where the English Consul's farm was and it was the first modern farm on the territory of the whole Ottoman Empire of that time.

Ruse developed into a centre of the Bulgarian National Revival and hosted the headquarters of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee.

Ruse is one of the 100 Tourist Sites of Bulgaria. The city is famous for its preserved buildings from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. There are more than 260 monuments. Most of the sights of the city are located at the center of Ruse (museums, architectural landmarks, the theater, the opera, hotels, restaurants, cafes and souvenir shops).