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# The Unfortunate Fate of a Neoclassical Architect and His Neglected Transylvanian Buildings

## Sudbina arhitekta neoklasicizma i njegovih ostvarenja u Transilvaniji

### ABSTRACT

Among the few examples of Neoclassical architecture in Transylvania, József Weixelbraun's works are important in the region's heritage. Regrettably, his most ambitious designs, such as the Toldalagi mansion in Corunca and his house in Cluj, are either unknown or poorly preserved, which does not do justice to this talented but unfortunate architect. His promising career was adversely affected by a failed sugar factory project.

### KEYWORDS

József Weixelbraun, architect, Neoclassic, Transylvania, Corunca, Cluj

### APSTRAKT

Među rijetkim primjerima neoklasicističke arhitekture u Transilvaniji, djela Józsefa Weixelbrauna zauzimaju važno mjesto u baštini regije. Nažalost, njegovi najambiciozniji projekti, poput vile Toldalagi u Corunci i njegove kuće u Cluju, ili su nepoznati ili su loše očuvani, što ne ide u prilog ovom talentiranom, ali nesretnom arhitektu. Na njegovu obećavajuću karijeru nepovoljno je utjecao propali projekt tvornice šećera.

### KLJUČNE RIJEČI

József Weixelbraun, arhitekt, neoklasicizam, Transilvanija, Corunca, Cluj

### Cluj in the first half of the 19th century

The establishment of the Habsburg rule in Transylvania in the 18th century directly determined the growth of economic, political, and cultural importance of Cluj, which was raised to the rank of Gubernial seat in 1790.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the following period was a time of rapid modernization for the city that decisively changed its appearance, especially after the founding of public security and safety institutions, like the modern Police in 1800, the rehabilitation of communication routes, and the establishment of specialized bodies which regulated building activity, such as the Building Commission in 1838 and the Beautification Commission in 1842.<sup>2</sup> The street layout remained essentially unchanged, with the previous main routes preserved<sup>3</sup> and only “corrected” by punctual interventions<sup>4</sup>. The vernacular wooden houses built on plots with generous gardens were gradually replaced by imposing palaces which, aligned in a continuous front, gave the city a new and modern appearance.<sup>5</sup> The urban layout of Cluj was also affected by its economic development since the medieval fortress, once praised for its defensive advantages, was now seen as a hindrance between the old city and its suburbs. Thus, having lost their strategic importance, the local authorities began the gradual demolition of the walls and gate towers in the 19th century, an operation which led to a better traffic flow along the main access routes in the city, the widening of the old narrow streets,<sup>6</sup> and an accelerated expansion directly proportional to the population growth.<sup>7</sup> The construction density also increased from one decade to the next,<sup>8</sup> and through the erection of administrative palaces or imposing residences, Cluj finally lost its provincial appearance and acquired most of its built symbols.<sup>9</sup>

### Neoclassical architecture in Cluj

As for the stylistic choice, the first decades of the 19th century witnessed a generalization of Neoclassic articulation and specific decoration elements. Unlike the Baroque, which arrived in Transylvania with the Habsburgs and the Catholic Counter-Reformation, Neoclassical architecture was the result of a more organic development since the revival of Antiquity was supported by the Roman carvings found in abundance throughout the province, preserved in churches and castles’ walls and gardens, and proclaiming the greatness of ancient culture for centuries.<sup>10</sup>

However, the affirmation of the new ornamental language was gradual and parallel with a resumption of the late Baroque structural principles. The new stylistic phase can be seen in the simplicity of the façades,

such as those of the Saint George Barracks built in the former wood market, today’s Ștefan cel Mare Square. These façades nevertheless preserved the gates’ round gangways, while the interior courtyards were still Baroque, surrounded by arched porticos on the ground floor and open loggias upstairs,<sup>11</sup> like those of the Calvinist College erected in 1801. Gradually, the buildings showed an increased interest in the Neoclassical harmony of rhythms and the rigorous geometry of forms. The pilasters and colonnades received Doric or Composite capitals, while the windows opened in square or semi-circular frames. Above the entablature, the architrave and attic were treated simplistically, with dentils hanging under the profiled cornices, and the ground floor walls were often rusticated. Ornamental friezes with floral decorations of antique inspiration also became common,<sup>12</sup> like in the façades of the Jósika House (1828), the Catholic College (1817–1825), and the Zeyk, Kendeffy, and Tauffer Houses. Thus, at first, the transition between the two styles was marked by a few buildings that were Neoclassical primarily due to the extreme severity of their façades, from which the decorative elements almost disappeared.<sup>13</sup>

While the Baroque had flourished under the hands of foreign architects and sculptors invited to Transylvania by the Habsburgs, Classicism was mainly promoted by the growing number of local master masons, since by this time, the immigrants’ grandsons had formed entire dynasties, and practiced their craft as native citizens of Cluj.<sup>14</sup> Still, despite the city showing clear signs of modernization, there were very few qualified architects, as the craftsmen learned their trade under the guidance of local masters. Even though the Gubernium, interested in raising the professional standards, encouraged the young to attend the Sunday drawing schools, these did not meet the specific masons’ needs and insufficiently compensated for the absence of an arts or polytechnic institute.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, master masons or contractors dominated the local activity, replacing the architects and often producing provincial designs, generally lacking elaborate functional schemes.<sup>16</sup> The only architects who left their distinctive mark on Cluj during the first decades of the 19th century were Leder József, Carlo Justi, Alföldi Antal, Winkler György, Thalinger Friedrich, Kagerbauer Antal, Böhm János, Kindt Mihály, and Hottner Ferdinánd, some of which trained abroad, in Munich, Vienna, and Budapest.

Soon though, around the middle of the century, Romanticism gradually began to assert itself in the architecture of Cluj. Under the influence of the historicist movement, ancient motifs were replaced by



those inspired by Renaissance, Gothic, and Baroque art, or a combination of these, resulting in Eclecticism, an amalgam of styles, which eventually left a heavier mark on Cluj, instead of Neoclassicism which was soon forgotten.

#### **Weixelbraun József and his Neoclassical works**

One of Winkler György's successors was Weixelbraun (Weixelbraun) József (1805–1854)<sup>17</sup>, who arrived in Cluj from the Krems area in Upper Austria, settling in the city around 1822 and building his family's house on today's Ștefan cel Mare Square. In 1835, he appeared in the town registers as Josephus Weixelbraun, a master stonemason and builder of Viennese origin, aged thirty, married to Terézia Müller. He received a good education, being an exceptionally talented draughtsman and working for several Transylvanian aristocrats<sup>18</sup>. His work in secular architecture represents the style of Neoclassicism, being one of the few architects whose buildings do not contain Baroque elements or the following Eclecticism and Romanticism.

#### **The Toldalagi mansion in Corunca, Mureș County**

One of Weixelbraun's first works in Transylvania was the enlargement of the Toldalagi mansion in Corunca,<sup>19</sup> for which he designed in 1829 a radical transformation of great elegance and symmetry in Neoclassical style<sup>20</sup> (Fig.1).

Around 1630, the Toldalagis had built in Corunca a manor house, recorded in a 17th century inventory, along with two horse stables, a cart-house, a stable for oxen, a pigsty, a cookhouse, and a granary, a fruit and vegetable garden, along with a small park with wicker and pine trees.<sup>21</sup>

Later in the 18th century, Toldalagi László (1748–1806), the commissioner of the Toldalagi-Korda Palace in Cluj, started the transformation of this manor house

in Corunca into a large Baroque castle,<sup>22</sup> which was finally completed only around 1830, by his nephew, Toldalagi Ferenc (1803–1864).<sup>23</sup>

But by this time, since the Baroque had fallen out of fashion even in the countryside, Count Toldalagi Ferenc, chief magistrate of the Seat of Mureș, employed young architect József Weixelbraun to design the enlargement of the castle. According to his original intentions, the existing Baroque manor house would have remained only a side wing of an enormous U-shaped ensemble with two side wings projecting towards the park<sup>24</sup> (Fig. 2).

Alas, the financial instability of the province at the beginning of the 19th century, along with Count Toldalagi's unprofitable investment in the Transylvanian railway that was just being built, almost ruined him<sup>25</sup> and caused the abandonment of works before their completion<sup>26</sup>, with only one wing being finally transformed in the 1830s, but conveying a completely new appearance to the former manor house.

Fortunately, the finished part was undoubtedly originally intended as the front single-story building. The fifty-meter-long façade has an imposing three-bay Neoclassical central section shaped as a triumphal arch, with a vaulted archway in the middle, crowned by a high attic. Even though incomplete, the L-shaped

1  
The Neoclassical  
façade of the  
mansion in  
Corunca

Neoklasicistička  
fasada vile,  
Corunca

(moNumentEUITATE,  
Universitatea de  
Arhitectură și  
Urbanism „Ion  
Mincu” București)

2  
The parc in Corunca  
seen from the  
mansion

Pogled na park iz  
vile, Corunca

(moNumentEUITATE,  
Universitatea de  
Arhitectură și  
Urbanism „Ion  
Mincu” București)





ensemble was still spectacular, a proportionate and elegant architectural work, and indeed the clearest Neoclassical castle in Transylvania.<sup>27</sup>

One of Count Ferenc Toldalagi's daughters, Róza, married to Baron Schleinitz Vilmos, recorded the castle in Corunca in her memories,<sup>28</sup> as it was in 1847, in its heyday. She remembers with incredible detail episodes of her paradise childhood there, the first Christmas tree, the harvest, or the theatre party held for her grandfather's name day.

In the countess' memoirs, her grandfather's<sup>29</sup> old manor house, the Toldalagi castle in Murgești,<sup>30</sup> represented the traditional patriarchal Hungarian farming model. In contrast, her father's castle in Corunca stood for everything new.<sup>31</sup>

She records that since her father had already made several visits to the imperial court, he built a "beautiful and modern" though simple residence according to the "French" style,<sup>32</sup> with large, high-ceiling rooms with chandeliers, parquet flooring, painted or paneled walls and decorated with family portraits<sup>33</sup>. The halls were tastefully filled with Viennese fine Baroque and Empire furniture chosen in the fashion of the 1830s<sup>34</sup> and had a library of over 10,000 volumes (Fig. 3). József Biró described the library as the largest and most beautiful one in Transylvania, inherited by Toldalagi Ferenc's wife, Countess Anna, from her father, Zsigmond Katona, a scholar and bibliophile who had attended universities abroad. The collection of books included a 1498 edition of Titus Livius and the 1514 Nuremberg Bible, copies of the Latin classics, rare Hungarian publications on the history of Transylvania, and even some of Palladio's original folios and Hogarth's engravings. The library also included a collection of antique family jewelry (swords, pendants, necklaces,

3

The library of the Toldalagi family, 1943

Knjižnica obitelji Toldalagi, 1943.

(Biró József, Erdélyi kastélyok, LIX.)

4

The Toldalagi mansion in 2021

Vila Toldalagi, 2021.

(photo / foto: Zoltán Rab, Székelyhon.ro)

buttons), Transylvanian genealogical and heraldic literature, as well as an extensive archive of the Toldalagi and other Transylvanian aristocratic families.<sup>35</sup> Countess Toldalagi compared the 110-acre park to the one in Schönbrunn, with trees and shrubs growing freely in English style, including large groves of magnolias and date trees.<sup>36</sup> József Biró described its layout as symmetrical, with soft hills, gentle slopes, and a gloriette that provided a delightful view of the surrounding landscape. He records seeing two plans for the garden in the castle's library, one made by Zalabsky in 1825 and one by the Viennese gardener Johann Erras in 1832, but neither of the two was implemented. He assumes that, since Péter Bodor was the Toldalagi family gardener in the 1830s, he was responsible for the final design of the dendrological park with enormous 18th trees and other varied plants that conveyed a serene atmosphere.<sup>37</sup> The park also contained the crypt of the family, built in 1806 to replace the Baroque one, which had collapsed after a landslide.<sup>38</sup> The household ran on a small scale but in a refined manner, being attended by cooks, hussars, lackeys, a head gardener, four greenskeepers, and gypsies. And they always had people invited over, during the festive or simple Sunday gatherings, like French, German, and Polish guests, old teachers like "Professor von Bolyai" and even young and lively artists, like Sándor Petőfi who, with his shirt collar folded back, and long hair, attended lunch in Corunca just a few days before he fell into battle during the 1848 Revolution.<sup>39</sup> In the 20th century, after the communists came to power in Romania and abolished the monarchy, the former aristocracy lost all their rights and belongings; private property was confiscated and became state goods. Thus, the Corunca estate was also taken from

the expelled Toldalagi family, given to the local Cooperative of Agricultural Production, and used for grain storage. But this, not before being looted for days on end, the furniture and other valuable pieces being destroyed or simply scattered without any trace.<sup>40</sup> The only things saved were the 2,343 volumes of the initial over 10,000, which are now in the Teleki Library in Târgu Mureş. In the following decades, the English park with magnolias was plowed for cultivation. At the same time, the magnificent Neoclassic castle designed by József Weixelbraun lost its roof and gradually fell into ruin<sup>41</sup> (Fig. 4).

**The Weixelbraun House in Cluj<sup>42</sup>**

With the demolition of all the eastern fortifications and the systematization of the former wood market, today's Ştefan cel Mare and Avram Iancu squares, the remodeling and modernizing of this area began, and palaces of administration and imposing residences appeared one after the other. In 1837, Terézia Müller, the wife of the architect, inherited from a relative just enough to allow Weixelbraun to acquire a plot in Cluj, on the North-Eastern end of Király Street, today I. C. Brătianu, on the former *glacis* area, and close to the now demolished town precinct. Here, in 1838, he started the construction of his family's home.<sup>43</sup>

5  
Plan of Cluj in 1940, with the Weixelbraun House's columns slightly projecting forward

Katastarska karta Cluja, 1940. s vidljivom istaknutom kolonadom Weixelbraunove kuće

(Arcanum Maps, Arcanum Adatbázis Kft, Georeferenced by Bartos-Elekes Zsombor, supported by a grant of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences)

Still, the project was not achieved without hindrance, as in 1840, the town records mention the architect's conflict with the local building commission. They seemingly disagreed with Weixelbraun's intention to design a building whose façade was not in line with the existing street front at that time. Probably after several debates, the town Council finally agreed to this exception since it was not the entire main façade, which stood in front of the neighboring houses, but only the six columns attached to this, which in fact contributed to an elegant appearance.<sup>44</sup> Thus, the house escaped demolition, preserving this discreet detail, as shown in various later historical topographical surveys, and remained in Weixelbraun's possession, as attested by an advertisement in the local press in 1850: "Weichselbraun József, stonemason and builder, I design or finish every type of stone monuments and buildings. My apartment is on the corner of Király Street"<sup>45</sup> (Fig. 5). Probably to remain on good terms with the Gubernium, after overcoming the problems, the architect donated a series of drawings to the local school, for which the authorities praised and thanked him.<sup>46</sup> As for the Weixelbraun house, even if today it is far from being in a proper conservation state, although it is listed and seemingly protected as a historical monument, the remarkable artistic value and careful



6  
The main façade of the Weixelbraun House in Cluj

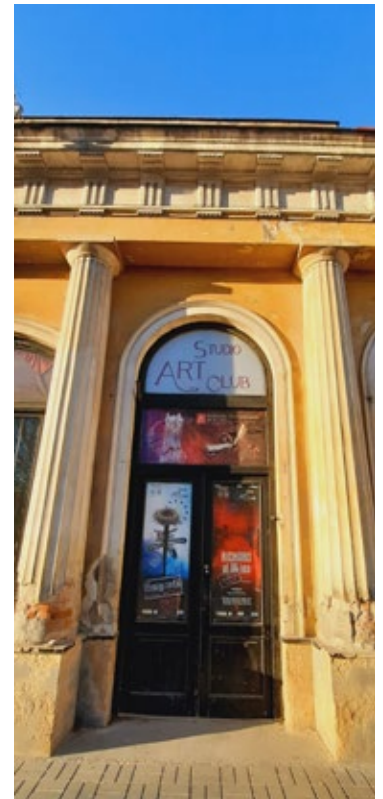
Pročelje Weixelbraunove kuće, Cluj

(photo 7  
foto: Ioana Rus-Cacovean)

7  
Detail of the main façade of the Weixelbraun House in Cluj

Detalj pročelja Weixelbraunove kuće, Cluj

(photo 7  
foto: Ioana Rus-Cacovean)



implementation are still evident in its original parts,<sup>47</sup> representing an essential stage in the historical architectural heritage of Cluj as it is among the city's very few buildings erected in Neoclassical expression.

The building almost entirely occupies an elongated corner lot, placed at the intersection of two streets and the square, having three outer façades, of which the main one faces the piazza. The house has four wings surrounding an inner square courtyard, a basement, a ground floor, and a mezzanine towards the west. The main façade has a pseudo-portico with six brick and plaster fluted Doric columns on high stone bases that slightly project from the building's layout. The centrally placed columns convey symmetry and rhythm to the composition, between which a large arched gate and two semi-circular smaller doors open. The wall has fine horizontal striations that form voussoirs around the windows. A stone slab plinth runs along the entire wall, while the above entablature with a triglyph frieze and a simple cornice ends with an undecorated attic (Fig. 6 and 7).

The side elevations are much more austere, displaying flattened pilasters with simplistic Doric capitals. Their initial windows have either been recently walled in or enlarged and transformed. At the top, these façades end with narrow, vernacular eaves. The elevation towards Baba Novac Street, the former Bethlen Street, has a door with a stone lintel leading to the inner courtyard of the building and the staircase to the mezzanine. This almost square courtyard must have been among the most elegant in Cluj at the time, with an arched portico on three sides. The round arches rest on massive prismatic pillars, articulated by two flattened pilasters each, with Doric capitals.<sup>48</sup> The western façade had elegant, classicist stone window frames, while the original plinth was of massive stone slabs decorated with striations.

Unfortunately, just a few years after using this elegant house as his family home, Weixelbraun found himself in a precarious financial situation caused by a project that had gone wrong. This seems to have taken a heavy toll on his image, a scandal that brought him to the brink of insanity and left him with fewer commissions, at least in Cluj, compelling the architect to fragment his house on Király Street into at least four different apartments of which three he put to rent: "In the Weixelbraun house – on the end of Király Street, across the military barracks – various lodgings are for rent from Saint Michael's Day on. One of the units has seven rooms, a kitchen (with a new oven and a baking oven), a pantry, a cellar, a five-horse stable, and seven huts. The second and third units consist of



8

The 1870 Military Topographical Survey of Cluj, showing the ensemble of the Sugar Factory

Vojna karta  
Cluja iz 1870.  
s vidljivim  
kompleksom  
šećerane

(Arcanum  
Maps, Arcanum  
Adatbázis Kft,  
Österreichisches  
Staatsarchiv)

9

Old postcard showing The Royal Institute for the Correction of Minors, the former Sugar Factory in Cluj

Stara razglednica  
koja prikazuje  
Kraljevski  
odgojni zavod  
za maloljetnike  
smješten u zgradi  
bivše šećerane u  
Cluju

(Erdélyi Krónika)

four separate rooms and alcoves each, with a kitchen, a pantry, and a hall. Prices are available from the owner of the house, József Weixelbraun".<sup>49</sup> Thus, the building suffered various transformations, the most important of which was the partial closing of the portico towards the courtyard, which received carpentry, to extend and enlarge the rooms it preceded.

The house was probably sold in the following decades, as in 1860, it already appears under the name of Sombori house, by which it is still known today, and which does not do any justice to its unfortunate architect. The further fragmentation of the house into even more living and commercial spaces led to the opening of doors on the façades instead of windows, the building of an annex in the courtyard attached to the south wing, and the general uneven treatment of the ensemble. The courtyard is now covered with a thick layer of cement, which hides the original paving. The subsequent transformations have continued to this day, mutilating the appearance of one of the very few Neoclassical buildings in Cluj.

### The Sugar Factory in Cluj

The project that negatively marked Weixelbraun's career was that for the Sugar Factory in Cluj, which he was hired to build around 1838, on the eastern outskirts of the town.<sup>50</sup>

At the beginning of the 19th century, several newly founded local joint-stock companies, which invested

capital in the emerging industry, the extractive and manufacturing sectors<sup>51</sup>. For processing sugar beet, factories opened in Sibiu (1840), Gârbou (1831), and Cluj (1837), where powerful presses and grating machines were brought from Austria.<sup>52</sup>

The Sugar Factory in Cluj was built around 1838 according to Weixelbraun's plans. The Military Topographical Survey of 1840 shows an ensemble erected on a generous, irregularly shaped site bounded by the street to the South and the Mill Canal to the North. In the center of the plot was an elongated courtyard, around which several wings were erected: the main building, arranged on a North-South axis, along with other smaller annexes, a mill, and a small garden to the north. In terms of stylistic choice, unfortunately, we have not found other data on what the sugar factory looked like at this stage but given that Weixelbraun's work represents Neoclassicism in secular architecture, the factory's façades must also have had elements of articulation that are specific to this style (Fig. 8).

This ensemble caused the decline of Weixelbraun's career, marked by the fact that in 1842, part of the factory vaults collapsed due to a miscalculation, urging a reconstruction in the following year, a revision of the plan and supervision of the works by another builder.<sup>53</sup> Also, Transylvania's backwardness, especially in the field of factory industry, as compared to other provinces of the empire, along with the precarious political and military conditions, led to the short life of many industrial enterprises, with very few surviving from one generation to the other. The sugar factory in Cluj could not keep up with the first signs of heavy industry and was overwhelmed by competition, with similar products invading the city markets. Thus, the factory closed its doors soon after the events of 1848. Abandoned for almost forty years, the former factory was later used as a military garrison and stables for soldiers' horses, but also as a place of isolation for the town's sick cattle. In 1886, after various alterations, the Royal Institute for the Correction of Minors was opened here for about eighty children<sup>54</sup> (Fig. 9). The only remembrance of the former factory preserved to this day is the street's name: The Sugar Factory Lane.

### Other works designed by Weixelbraun

This scandal affected Weixelbraun's career and well-being, leaving him with fewer commissions. Although he continued to receive small projects from the city and was employed by several Transylvanian aristocrats, none of the subsequent works reached the level of his initial ambitious designs, such as the Toldalagi castle in Corunca and his family home in Cluj,

discussed above. He further worked on more modest projects, like the house of Baron Bethlen Károly on Király Street (1836) and the school in the village of Ghindari, Mureș County (1836), built on land bought by Baron Wesselényi Miklós. He designed the house of Baroness Teleki József in the Old Fortress (1840), the house of Baron Mikés János on the Inner Mănăștur Street (1841), and the Horváth Miklós house on Platea Luporum in Cluj (1848).<sup>55</sup> In 1838, he worked on the city prison and the construction of the bridge over the Gypsy Stream in front of the Mănăștur Gate.<sup>56</sup> He is subsequently mentioned only performing repairs and renovations, like examining the state of the remaining gate towers in Cluj (1837), renovating the Teleki Castle in Dumbrăvioara (1843), the Toldalagi-Korda Palace (between 1844 and 1850), and the Reduta Palace (before 1850), both in Cluj. In 1847, he worked on the general renovation and as a stone sculptor on the Teleki manor house in Sânpetru de Câmpie, Mureș County.<sup>57</sup>

Between 1846 and 1848, he built in Unirea, Alba County, the headquarters of the administration of the Szekler Seat of Arieș at that time, today the town hall of the village, and in Șincai he built the Calvinist church.<sup>58</sup> Weixelbraun József died on April 1, 1853, at the age of forty-nine<sup>59</sup>.

The text has been proofread by Anda Crețiu, Ph.D., associate professor at the University of Arts and Design in Cluj-Napoca, Department of Theoretical Disciplines.

### NOTES

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  - 21 Bicsok and Orbán, *'Isten segedelmével'*, 536.
  - 22 Bicsok and Orbán, *'Isten segedelmével'*, 536.
  - 23 Toldalagi Ferenc, Count of Nagyersei (1803–1864), was appointed chief magistrate of the Seat of Mureș on December 11, 1847, and held the office until 1848, living in Corunca. In 1832, he was one of the founding directors of the Casino in Târgu Mureș, and in 1840, he was the representative of the General Consistory of the Calvinist Church. He died in Vienna on June 16, 1864. His wife was Katona of Sárosberk Anna, having together three daughters (Francziska, Adél, and Róza) and a son (Viktor). See \*\*\* , *Marosvásárhelyi Pantheon* [Târgu Mureș Pantheon], [http://www.erdelyweb.hu/mv-hely/lexikon/lexikon\\_t.htm](http://www.erdelyweb.hu/mv-hely/lexikon/lexikon_t.htm), and Iván, Nagy, *Magyarország családai* [The Families of Hungary] (Pesta: Ráth Mór kiadása, 1865), chap. 11, at <https://www.arcanum.com/ro/online-kiadvanyok/Nagyivan-nagy-ivan-magyarorszag-csaladai-1/tizenegyedik-kotet-B410/tholdalagi-csalad-nagy-ercsei-grof-es-n-iklodi-B879/> (accessed on September 10, 2023).
  - 24 Biró József, *Erdélyi kastélyok* [Castles in Transylvania] (Budapest: Új Idők Irodalmi Intézete, Singer és Wolfner kiadása, 1943), 80. The author speaks in 1943 about the drawings of this Neoclassical castle made by Weixelbraun in 1829, together with a fragment of the plan and cost estimate of the castle, that he had found and consulted in the library of the mansion. Unfortunately, these were probably lost in the following decades since our recent inquiries in the Teleki Library and the National Archives in Târgu Mureș remained without results.
  - 25 The memoirist attributes part of her father's financial ruin to the fact that Ferenc Toldalagi took the path of "modernization". Carried away by his passion, he rushed to invest in several enterprises without having the patience to wait for these to grow and become profitable. He made the Corund Baths accessible and comfortable, founded the first brewery in Transylvania, and finally undertook the construction of the Cluj – Oradea – Budapest railway, of which, after the enormous costs of the preparatory works, his partner count Ödön Zichy lost the concession. See Róza Toldalagi, "Toldalagi Róza grófnő, későbbi Schleinitz báróné memoárjai. Schleinitz báró osztrák nagykövet volt Törökországban. Emlékek melyeket drága anyám 1900-ban jegyzett le Gmundenben," [The Memoirs of Countess Róza Toldalagi, later Baroness Schleinitz. Baron Schleinitz was Austrian ambassador to Turkey. Memories recorded by my dear mother in Gmunden in 1900 in Gmunden], <http://magyar-irodalom.elte.hu/2000/uj/10.htm> (accessed on September 10, 2023).
  - 26 Biró, *Erdélyi kastélyok*, 20.
  - 27 Biró, *Erdélyi kastélyok*, 80.
  - 28 Toldalagi, "Toldalagi Róza memoárjai."
  - 29 Toldalagi Zsigmond (1766–1847).
  - 30 In Hungarian, *Nyárádszentbenedek*.
  - 31 Toldalagi, "Toldalagi Róza memoárjai."
  - 32 Toldalagi, "Toldalagi Róza memoárjai."
  - 33 Biró, *Erdélyi kastélyok*, 96–97, 104.
  - 34 Bicsok and Orbán, *'Isten segedelmével'*, 536–537.
  - 35 Biró, *Erdélyi kastélyok*, 120–122.
  - 36 Toldalagi, "Toldalagi Róza memoárjai."
  - 37 Biró, *Erdélyi kastélyok*, 113–114.
  - 38 Biró, *Erdélyi kastélyok*, 168.
  - 39 Toldalagi, "Toldalagi Róza memoárjai."
  - 40 For more on the matter of Transylvanian castles destroyed during and after their confiscation by the communist local authorities, see Ioana Rus–Cacovean, "A Disaster for the History of Transylvanian Architecture, a Disgrace for the Local Bodies that Take Care of it and a Load on the Conscience of Architects and People of Culture from This Country. The Fate of the Bánffy Castle in Bontida During the Communist Regime in Romania," *Brukenenthal. Acta Musei* 16.4 (2021): 813–831, and Ioana Rus–Cacovean, "SOCIALISM. HAPPINESS.' The 'NEW WAY' of the Haller Castle in Coplean after 1950," *Annales Universitatis Apulensis. Series Historica* 1 (2017): 125–150.
  - 41 Bicsok and Orbán, *'Isten segedelmével'*, 537.
  - 42 Ioana Rus–Cacovean, "Studiu istoric – imobil Piața Ștefan cel Mare nr. 14, Str. Baba Novac nr. 27 și Str I. C. Brătianu nr. 55, Cluj–Napoca," [Historical Study – The House on 14 Ștefan cel Mare Square, 27 Baba Novac St. and 55 I. C. Brătianu St., Cluj–Napoca] (mss. Cluj–Napoca, 2017). The historical study was drawn up as documentation support for the project of rehabilitation of the façades and roofing of the building.
  - 43 B. Nagy, "Művészek és mesterek," 257–258.
  - 44 B. Nagy, "Művészek és mesterek," 257–258.
  - 45 "Weichselbraun József kolozsvári kőfaragó és építőmester mindennemű emlékeket és épületekhez való kőfaragási munkákat tart készen, vagy készít. Saját lakása a Király utca szögletén." See \*\*\* , *Kolozsvári Lap* [Cluj Bulletin], 29 (March 6, 1850).
  - 46 B. Nagy, "Művészek és mesterek," 257–258.
  - 47 B. Nagy, "Művészek és mesterek," 257–258.
  - 48 B. Nagy, "Művészek és mesterek," 257–258.
  - 49 "Kiadó szállások. Weixelbraun házána – királyutca végén, a katonai laktanyával szembe – Szentmihály napkor különböző szállások bérbé adandók, u. m. Egyik szállás het szobával, konyhával (melyben ujmódrú főző kemence és sütő kemence), kamára, pincze, 5 lóva való istálló és hét hiu rész. A második és harmadik szállás áll: külön külön négy négy szobából és alkovenből, konyha és kamára, és hiu részből. Árukrol értekezhetni a ház tulajdonosával Weixelbraun Józseffel." See *Ellenőr* [Bulletin], ed. Kövári László, 65 (August 25, 1848), 258.
  - 50 Ioana Rus–Cacovean, "Memoriu istoric al imobilului situat pe Str. Fabricii de zahăr, nr. 51, Cluj–Napoca. Școala populară de Arte Tudor Jarda," [Historical Study of the Building on 51 Sugar Factory Street, Cluj–Napoca. Tudor Jarda Art School] (mss. Cluj–Napoca, 2014), and Ioana Rus–Cacovean, "O fabrică transformată în școală: Fabrica de Zahăr din Cluj și Institutul Regal de Corecție," [A Factory Turned School: The Sugar Factory and the Royal Institute of Correction in



Cluj] in *Cluj-Kolozsvár-Klausenburg 700: várostörténeti tanulmányok* [Cluj-Kolozsvár-Klausenburg 700: Studies of Urban History], Mária Lupescu Makó et al., eds. (Cluj: Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, 2018), 481–489. The historical study was drawn up as a documentation support for the project of rehabilitation of a part of the ensemble.

- 51 Nicolae N. Constantinescu, *Istoria economică a României* [Romania's Economic History] (Bucharest: Editura Economica, 1997), vol. I, 170, 230.
- 52 Constantinescu, *Istoria economică*, 231.
- 53 B. Nagy, 'Művészek és mesterek', 122.
- 54 Constantin Daicoviciu, *Din istoria Transilvaniei* [Transylvanian History] (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Populare Române, 1961), vol. II, 157; Constantinescu, *Istoria economică*, 234; Maria Roșca, "Dezvoltarea economică, socială și demografică a orașului (1867–1914)," [The Economic, Social and Demographic Development of the City (1867–1914)] in *Istoria Clujului*, ed. Ștefan Pascu (Cluj, 1974), 287; Gyemant and Teodor, "Clujul în timpul revoluției," 278; \*\*\*, *A kolozsvári királyi javítóintézet ismertetése* [Description of the Royal Institute for the Correction of Minors in Cluj] (Budapest, 1891); József Bokor, ed., *A Pallas Nagy Lexikona* [The Pallas Great Lexicon], (1893–1897), <https://mek.oszk.hu/00000/00060/html/059/pc005917.html#4> (accessed on September 10, 2023).
- 55 B. Nagy, "Művészek és mesterek," 257–258.
- 56 B. Nagy, "Művészek és mesterek," 257–258.
- 57 B. Nagy, "Művészek és mesterek," 257–258.
- 58 B. Nagy, "Művészek és mesterek," 257–258.
- 59 B. Nagy, "Művészek és mesterek," 257–258.

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**SAŽETAK**

## Sudbina arhitekta neoklasicizma i njegovih ostvarenja u Transilvaniji

Transilvanska arhitektura u 19. stoljeću doživljava procvat neoklasicizma, stila prepoznatljivog po harmoniji ritma i strogoj geometriji oblika. No, ovaj stil uskoro nestaje, zamijenjen eklekticizmom. U tom razdoblju nedostaje kvalificiranih arhitekata, a većina koja radi projektira jednostavne građevine. U tom kontekstu, djela Józsefa Weixelbrauna (1805. – 1854.), predstavnika neoklasicističkog stila, postaju iznimno značajna. Weixelbraun dolazi iz Gornje Austrije i oko 1822. godine nastanjuje se u Cluju, gdje radi za gradsku upravu i lokalnu aristokraciju. Njegova značajna djela uključuju proširenje palače Toldalagi u Corunci 1829. godine, gdje ostvaruje njezinu elegantnu preobrazbu. Godine 1838. u Cluju gradi i obiteljsku kuću u ulici Király, izuzetne umjetničke vrijednosti, koja je danas značajan primjer arhitektonске baštine grada. Autorica se u tekstu fokusira na Weixelbraunove najambicioznije projekte, koji su manje poznati ili loše očuvani. To zanemarivanje ne odgovara talentu i nesretnoj sudbini ovog arhitekta, čiju perspektivnu karijeru prekida neuspjeh projekta. Tvornica šećera u Cluju, izgrađena oko 1838. godine, djelomično propada zbog pogrešne procjene, što dovodi do skandala. Weixelbraun ostaje bez narudžbi, te je prisiljen fragmentirati i iznajmljivati svoj dom. Naknadne preobrazbe nagrđuju izvorni izgled kuće, a neoklasicistička zgrada, iako proglašena povijesnim spomenikom, do danas je slabo očuvana. Ljetnikovac u Corunci također propada nakon dolaska komunista na vlast u Rumunjskoj. Zaplijenjeno je imanje, uništena knjižnica i namještaj Empire, a kompleks se koristi za skladištenje žita.

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