

Personal View

CLASSIC AND MODERN IN NATURIST THERAPY AT CACICA SALT MINE IN SOUTHERN BUCOVINA

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Abstract

The paper introduces several historical guidelines of Bucovina after being raped by the Habsburgic Empire in 1774-1775, when the Austrians inventoried in a German manner the resources of the most eastern province. Cacica salt mine was inaugurated in 1791 and knew an alert development due to the workers brought from the Empire: Polishes, Ukrainians, Slovaks, Germans, Hebrews. Gradually, the salt mine's undergrounds revealed speleotherapeutic qualities in the allergic respiratory disorders and in the last years, the physical, chemical and radiobiologic parameters made the object of certain complex research studies conducted by the National Institute of Balneology. Since 2010, a PHARE project promoted by Cacica Town Hall enabled the creation of a Medical-Spa and Entertainment Complex which uses salt water from the salt mine next to the electro-masso-kinesitherapy in treating the disorders from the myo-arthro-kynetic system. It also provides sheltering facilities.

From Cacica there can be started touristic trips at the famous monasteries of Bucovina, but also in the ex-capital of the entire Bucovina, Cernauti city, with monuments from the Habsburgic and Romanian glorious times, especially the Metropolitan Complex and the Orthodox Cathedral.

In Cacica can also be admired a beautiful catholic church, built in 1904 and raised in 2000 at the rank of Basilica Minor by Pope John Paul II.

Keywords: Bucovina, speleotherapy, SPA, moral and spiritual ecology

Rezumat

Comunicarea expune câteva repere istorice ale Bucovinei după raptul habsburgic din 1774-1775, austriecii inventariind „nemțește” bogățiile celei mai estice provincii; salina Cacica este inaugurată în 1791, dezvoltându-se alert cu muncitori aduși din

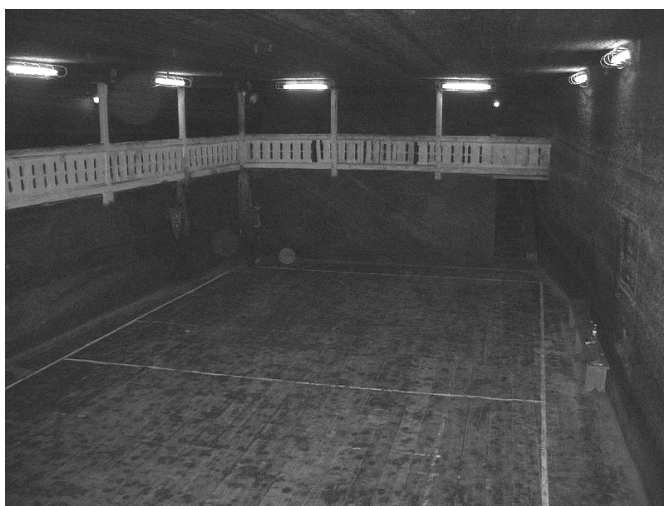
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imperiului: polonezi, ucraineni, slovaci, nemți, evrei. Treptat, subteranele saline își dezoăluie virtuți speleoterapeutice în suferințe respiratorii alergice iar în ultimii ani, parametrii fizici, chimici și radiobiologici au făcut obiectul unor cercetări complexe din partea Institutului Național de Balneologie. Din 2010, un program PHARE promovat de Primăria Cacica a permis realizarea unui Complex medico-balnear modern, care utilizează apa sărată de la salină pe lângă electro-masso-kinetoterapie în boli ale sistemului mio-artro-kinetic, dispunând și de posibilități de cazare.

Din Cacica se pot face deplasări turistice la celebrele mănăstiri ale Bucovinei, dar și în fosta capitală a Bucovinei întregi, orașul Cernăuți, cu monumente din epoca de glorie habsburgică și românească, îndeosebi Complexul Metropolitan și Catedrala ortodoxă.

În Cacica poate fi admirată și o frumoasă biserică catolică edificată în 1904 și ridicată în anul 2000 la rangul de Bazilică Minor de Papa Ioan Paul al II-lea.

Cuvinte-cheie: Bucovina, speleoterapie, turism balnear, ecologie moral-spirituală



In the atypical peace for these times, neighbored and protected by Obcinile Bucovinei Mountains, Cacica town that occurred on the Bucovina map in 1791 offers to the beholders the elegance of Medical-Spa and Entertainment Complex resulting from a PHARE project initiated and finished in 2010 by the Town Hall of Cacica led by Petre Todosi and his collaborators.

Figure no.1: Room, „Ing. Agrippa Popescu”, 38 meters

The western limit is occupied by Cacica Salt mine opened by the Austrian entrepreneurs 220 years ago. The Habsburg Empire needed salt and its eastern province, subsequently named Bucovina, was an El Dorado given its richness of soil and underground that the Vienna Empire was aware before. Without any gunfire, the Vienna diplomacy had reached an onerous agreement with the Ottoman Empire under Russia's neuter watch that had been bought previously, in 1774 / 1775, and the Habsburg Empire had entered deep into the east. “After things had settled”, the Russians were not happy. I believe this was one of the reasons why the Tsarist Russia occupied the eastern part of Moldova, beyond Prut, as revenge. In 1812, the Ottoman Empire gave up easily to “what didn't belong to it”. In 1772, Galizia, twice as great as Bucovina, had already become “an Austrian province” (1; 3; 4; 9).

Cacica Salt mine (figure no.1, p. 80) was developed rapidly, with experts brought especially from Poland, from the mines near Krakow, Wielickza and Bohnia, having almost a millennium of experience in exploiting salt. They found a territory filled with marshes and ducks (in Polish, duck is kaczyka), this being the origin of the name given to this place. They settled here, next to Ukrainians, Ruthenians, Slovaks, Germans, Jews, all allured by important facilities, each building own schools and churches. Even since the



19th century a pavilion of salt baths operated, with oak tubs, as well as with fir-tree branch and mountain spontaneous flora tubs (“Salzbad in Kakzyka”). It operated until the 1950s. Empirically, the persons having chronic lung disorders, allergies, but without tuberculosis, children and adults, used speleotherapy¹ in the rooms of 1st horizon even since the 19th century (5) (figure no.2).

Figure no.2: Cacica salt

The new salt mine, (figure no.3) 3 km away, on the territory of neighboring commune, Partesti de Jos, used in the technological process hyper-concentrated water resulting by dissolving it deep inside the salt mine, by vacuum spraying, thus acquiring the best recrystallized salt. The modern “Minorities Complex” uses the same well salty water, after hydrolysis, sand-filters purification and ozone disinfection process.



Figure no 3. New therapy of Cacica Mine

At the surface, during the summer, the Old Salt mine gives people the opportunity to bathe in the outdoor pool having semi-Olympic size and the surrounding area is used for heliotherapy under the protection of fir forests (figure no.4).



Figure no 4: Enclosure landscape nature of Cacica Mine

However, the undergrounds of the salt mine, several centuries old, the Sf. Varvara Catholic Chapel, (figure no.5), protector of miners, located at a depth of 27 m and the galleries, take one to the small salty underground lake of 12 / 8 m and deep of 1.5-2 m,



located at a 38 m depth. Behind this lake is the famous “Ballroom” dug in salt stone, having the size of 19 / 12 m and the height of 5.5 m that was once the place of miners’ festivals. Young couples of newly weds “had the honor” to cross the lake on a small boat that now lies wrecked on its bottom.

**Figure no 5:
Catholic chapel in the mine gallery**

Other galleries take one to the deepest place of the salt mine 75 m deep, suggesting by shape and size a huge cathedral nave arranged recently for sport games and designated to the persons suffering chronically of lung diseases, but without tuberculosis, that can spend several hours in this pure microclimate (as that in the ballroom). It is unpolluted, bacteria and fungi-free, loaded with salty aerosols. The sick persons come here to undergo speleotherapy with medical guidance according to the model of other salt mines located in Targu Ocna, Praid, Slanic Prahova, Solotvino (Ukraine) and Wieliczka (Poland (1; 5; 7).

The physical, chemical, bacteriological and radioactive parameters have been assessed during the 3-4 years by a team of brilliant researchers led by Dr. Gh. Simionca, on behalf of the National Balneology Institute. The second round of determinations

included also complex observations on a batch of laboratory rats; it follows a program of clinical observations on groups of patients with asthmatic disorders.

On the surface, a series of old buildings have been kept and the land freed of ruins awaits investors for building some sanatoria. For now, they are present only in the blueprints of architects (5).

Across, the large church built by catholic parishioners in 1904, of red brick, stands out by its size (50 m high), the original style and the art treasures, which made it Basilica Minor in 2000 by Pope John Paul the 2nd.

Recently, in front of the Basilica has been placed the statue of Pope John Paul the 2nd made in Poland. On August 15, 2009, it was the 200 years anniversary of the Black Madonna of Czestochawa (copy) blessing the Marian Sanctuary of Cacica.

Several meters away of this pearl of religious architecture, the "Minorities Complex" offers a "three-star" comfort in two-bed rooms with TV and a toilet located at the ground floor. The restaurant can become anytime meetings and conferences room. In addition, in the basement, there is the spa and kineto-physio therapy center; everything in an elegant, civilized and functional atmosphere.

The small-size pool (5 m / 3 m) is endowed with modern wave-making installations and underground lighting that colors pleasantly the water having 32-33 degrees C, in a continuous circuit, its salinity reaching 90-95‰.

Several meters away, a small-size sauna meets the demands of persons interested in it. The kinetotherapy room is endowed with devices that facilitate training for prophylaxis purpose and / or for treating some diseases of mio-artro-kinetic system, according to the medical directions supplied by the medical practice located at the ground floor. Then, persons suffering of different illnesses can enjoy therapy or cosmetic massage, physiotherapy with state of the art apparatus (low, medium and high frequency). Next to the building of the complex, the fenced premises offer the possibility to enjoy open air sports (tennis and others) and the eastern scene is used already for summer shows. With a little imagination, for a moment one can be taken back to the legendary antic Asclepius practices in Kos or Pergam. Next to the sanctuary where the priest physician performed the healing of people, there is also the amphitheater where theater plays or shows completed the treatments, mainly naturist, more than two millennia ago.

After the 1888 opening of the Suceava - Darmanesti - Cacica - Gura Humorului - Vatra Dornei railroad, on one car it was written Vienna - Lemberg - Cernauti - Cacica and on the other Vatra Dornei Bai was added next to this. This is a faded glory but in progress of rehabilitation in several manners. On April 18, 2009, the present management of Old and New Salt mine (Dipl. Eng. Corneliu Zup and his collaborators) organized for Easter the "Resurrection from depths" with priests of all confessions, at the Sf. Varvara Catholic Chapter that was built by the first miners in 1806. The celebration was accompanied also by a touching parade of folklore costumes.

Cacica is near the center of Bucovina so that from here the northern Bucovina is reached easily, going through Siret, former capital of Moldova under the rule of Petru Musat and through Codrii Cosminului (Cosminului Forest) where in 1497 Stefan cel Mare defeated the army of Ioan Albert Polish king. In Cernauti, gorgeous buildings from the Habsburg glory times will greet one.

Among these ones, by color and style, the Metropolitan Palace stands out by far.

This means Cernauti, the capital of old Bucovina, with luxurious buildings and the traces of Vienna cultural and town aristocracy. At the university created in 1875 under the name “Frantz-Josefs Universitat” on the land of a theological high school, the teaching language was German but two departments for the Romanian language and literature and Ukrainian language operated also. Under the Austrian rule, the university had three colleges: Orthodox theology, law and philosophy. In the first year of operation, the student body was made up 20-25% of Romanians and Ukrainians, the Jews and Germans being the majority.

“Metropolitan Palace” Cernauti complex, a citadel-town, is the work of the famous architect of the Vienna Court, Joseph Hlavka “the Czech of Bohemia” that used wood and stone from southern Bukovina. Karl Jobst of Vienna and the painters Epaminonda Bucevschi and Carol Swoboda achieved the interior decorations. The U-shaped Metropolitan Palace was and still is an architectural pearl of the Bukovina Duchy, a mini-Versailles built in the refined and mosaic-like Moorish-Byzantine style, with impressive gardens and walls of gross red brick, and roofs made of colorful glass tile that remember of the Saint Stephan Dome of Vienna and some monuments in Prague. As symbol, the granite seal of the old Habsburg Empire remained there.

The complex is made up of 3 main ensembles (5):

- at the entrance, to the left, it is the building that was home of the Faculty of Theology and to the right it is the Monastery and printing house where many Romanian newspapers and magazines were published: “Candela” (Candle), “Gazeta Bucovinei” (Bukovina Gazette), “Deșteptarea” (Awakening), and others.
- on the center of the square it is the Metropolitan Palace per se that includes the magnificent Synod Hall, with 12 alabaster columns and walls plated with marble. The subject of paintings from the Synod Hall has artistic, theological and Romanian historic meanings, executed in a Renaissance manner in 11 golden frescoes: the Apostles preaching the Gospel; The Holy Cross sign appearing on the sky in 312 for Emperor Constantine the Great; the Geto-Dacians conversion into Christianity after the Roman conquest; founding the Metropolitan Bishopric of Moldova and Suceava by Alexandru cel Bun (Alexander the Good) in 1401; bringing the Relics of Saint Ioan cel Nou from Cetatea Alba to Suceava in 1402; choosing the place for the altar of Putna Monastery by Stefan cel Mare (Stephen the Great) in 1466 and others.

On November 15/28, 1918 in the Synod Hall of the Metropolitan Palace the General Congress of Bucovina met where the representatives of Romanians, Germans, Polish and Ukrainians proclaimed the unconditional Union of Bukovina to the Kingdom of Romania. In 1920, the Metropolitan Palace hosted the royal family of Romania, King Ferdinand I, the creator of Great Romania, and Queen Maria at the time of reorganizing and festive inauguration of the “Alma Mater Cernautensis” University when the teaching of classes in Romanian instead of German was introduced.

Today, the Metropolitan Palace is office of “Yurii Fedkovici” University and Bukovina Studies Center. A few traces remember the exhibits in the 7 rooms of the Museum of Orthodox Metropolitan Bishopric of Bukovina; they have been emptied of content by the invaders of the second kidnapping of Bukovina, in 1940 (5).

The two “eternal” symbols of the Habsburg rule in Bukovina, made from the income of the Church Fund, fulfilled one of the Romanian wishes, the city Cernauti exercising a gradually greater attraction for the Christians in Romania and especially, of Bukovina, a school of Romanian character. That is why going from Cacica, a day dedicated to visiting Cernauti City, historic capital of whole Bukovina, will become a day dedicated to Romanian moral and spiritual ecology.

After the Union of northern Bucovina to the Kingdom of Romania, the university acquired the name of King Carol 1st. The present-day building of the university has a Scottish or Irish architecture style, being made in 1920-1922 by the Romanian government. Ion Nistor from Vicovul de Sus, near Radauti, governor of Bucovina (1919) after the resignation of Iancu Flondor, historian of Moldova and especially of Bucovina, was chancellor of this university for many years.

In Cernauti there still are many monuments that deserve to be known. The Church of Sf. Nicolae built in 1607 by Stroescu Family that built also the famous monastery Dragomirna, together with Anastasie Crimca appreciated for the original style and the penmanship miniature school, the “Adormirea” church of rulers built by Nicolae Mavrocordat in 1709-1716, the “Sf. Treime” church built by Dositei Ilie and Ecaterina Herescu in 1771-1773, former Episcopal cathedral in 1781-1864, and of course, the Metropolitan Cathedral built in 1844-1864 (10).

The Cernauti Cemetery is a true PANTHEON by the graves of many representatives of Bucovina culture and history from I.G. Sbiera, Hurmuzachi, Onciul and other dynasties, but the most sought and known of the poems of great Eminescu is the grave of his dear professor from Cernauti, Aron Pumnul. To all we owe gratitude and we must take a bow in front of their funerary monuments (8, 9).

Closer to Cacica are the monasteries with fresco from southern Bucovina, famous all around the world for those “polychrome mantles placed on the stone shoulders of rulers’ churches”: Voronet, Humorului, Moldovita, Sucevita, Balinesti (10) and others without fresco. Then, there are the cultural monuments and museums, mainly in Falticeni (Ion Irimescu Museum) and others, and in Suceava – Bucovina Museum. Modern roads connect Cacica Salt mine to all these objectives.

Everything that is classic and modern in Cacica Salt mine facilitates our reconciliation with the nature of which we grew apart in the last decades, more than by smearing it in different manners.

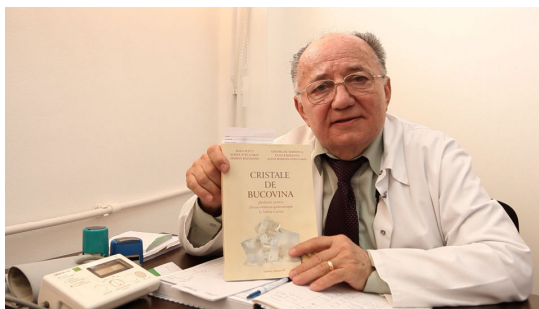


Figure no.6: Professor Ioan Ietcu and his book

Speleotherapy (lungs therapy in caves, grottos and salt mines), climate and landscape therapy, aromas and color therapy, spa and crenotherapy, kinetotherapy become more and more means of recovery therapy in chronic illnesses, chemotherapy and acute phase therapy, although they are assigned only acute diseases that occupy 1/3 – 1/4 of the pathology (5, 6) (figure no.6).

In a gradually globalized world from an economic and financial point of view, with chemical, physical, sound and moral pollution, threatened by the imminence of all sort of crises, energy, food, demographic and ecologic or that of domestic and industrial waste, the modern man is growing fragile and he is searching instinctively for refuges. That is even temporary, in the middle of the nature that remained unspotted. The man is aware that he reached almost the irreversible limit as regards degrading the natural environment and he searches anxiously to defend himself of the reserve of civilization that he created with great efforts. The equivalent value of this civilization is greater and greater and heart and vascular, neoplastic, environment, and neuroses pathologies, the hecatomb of nuclear and car accidents, dissonant syndromes and psychoses of adjusting to the environment represent it. They are gradually anti-biologic.

The conflict between technosphere and biosphere grows geometrically, thus that the MAN or NATURE question arises more acute. (2, 7).

The mild climate of the depression area around Cacica Salt mine, the conditions of old salt mine's underground and those offered by the modern complex opened recently are the models, paths and means for remaking the relation between MAN and NATURE before it is too late.

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