

Analysis of the cultural-rural landscape of the commune Teremia Mare

Ursachi R.¹, Ţenche-Constantinescu Alina-Maria¹

¹Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine „King Michael I of Romania” from Timisoara, Calea Aradului no. 119, 300645, Timisoara, Romania

Corresponding author: consta_alina@yahoo.com

Abstract Teremia Mare is a commune in Timiș County, Romania, situated near the border with Serbia, at 17 km South of Sânnicolau Mare and 24 km North-West of Jimbolia. It is composed of three villages: Nerău, Teremia Mare and Teremia Mică. The history of the settlement is closely related to the stages of colonization in Banat Region. The cultural-rural landscape of the commune Teremia Mare was influenced during the time by the Romanians, as well as other ethnic groups like: Germans, Serbians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Ukrainians and Slovaks. The ethnic and religious diversity of the population from this commune is reflected in the rural cultural landscape through the traditional architecture of the houses, of the religious buildings and by the traditional customs. The presence of fertile agricultural land is a determining factor in the local economy, the main activities of the inhabitants being agriculture and horticulture. The touristic potential of the commune is given by the presence of the Vine and Wine Museum, the Painting Exhibition as well as the Nichita Stănescu Exhibition and Museum. At the same time, the locality has geothermal waters, used in the past for Spa purposes and as a thermal agent in the present. The landscape analysis of the studied space highlights the existence of a central public park in which species of trees and ornamental shrubs were planted, which significantly contribute to the aesthetics of the rural landscape. In the purpose of improving the rural landscape, the street alignments of Teremia Mare should be rearranged. At the same time, in order to increase the local community's quality of life a Spa center should be realized using the local geothermal springs.

Key words

Teremia Mare, landscape, traditions, green areas, tourism

Material and Methods

The working methodology was:

→ A bibliographic study was made regarding the historiography, demography and traditions of the village.

→ During the study we made field visits for the purpose of direct observation, taking pictures and analyzing the existing cultural-rural landscape.

→ The analysis of the touristic potential of the commune;

→ Proposals to improve the rural landscape by increasing biodiversity and also by capitalizing on the local, natural and cultural resources.

Results and Discussions

Teremia Mare, „*Villa Therim-talwk*”, *Valea Terim*, was mentioned for the first time in history in the year 1256. In the year 1315 the village *Theremi*, *Teremi* it was recorded in the papal documents [1].

The cultural landscape of Teremia Mare commune was defined during a long and harmonious coexistence of different ethnic and religious communities. As it was usual in the Banat Region, the inhabitants of Teremia Mare belonged to different ethnic groups, among which the most important were Romanians, Germans, Hungarians and Serbians.

The demographic evolution of the commune in terms of ethnicity has been fluctuating over time. Initially, the population was mostly autochthonous. After the successive colonization during the periods 1690-1700 and 1769-1770, the population became predominantly German, consisting of Swabians from Alsace and Württemberg. They named the village Marienfeld or Grossteremin [1]. In the year 1785 Teremia Mare was bought by Cristofor Nako, and in the year 1835 it became the property of Ioan Nako. In the interwar period Teremia Mare was part of Timiș-Torontal county and it was a locality inhabited by Germans, with very few Romanians and Hungarians [4]. Subsequent to World War II, the ethnic Germans began to leave the village, but their massive exodus

took place after 1989, since then Teremia Mare has been a locality mostly inhabited by Romanians. According to the population census of 2002, the population of the Teremia Mare commune was 4148 inhabitants, of which 3652 were Romanians, 280 Hungarians, 105 Roma, 12 Ukrainians, 78 Germans and for 21 inhabitants, ethnicity is unknown. In the year 2011 the population of Teremia Mare commune was 4,019 inhabitants, of which (86.04%) were Romanians. The main minorities were Hungarians (4.4%) and Roma (1.64%). For 6.15% of the population, ethnicity is unknown [5]. Most inhabitants are Orthodox (77.78%), but there are also minorities of Roman Catholics (6.54%), Pentecostals (4.98%), Baptists (1.82%), Jehovah's Witnesses (1.12 %) and Reformed (1.09%). For 6.15% of the population, confessional membership is unknown [6].

Evolution of the cultural and spiritual landscape in the Teremia Mare

In the year 1770 the Catholic Church and the School of Teremia Mare were built. In the year 1865, the Music and Singing Society was established. In the year 1875, a small treasure trove of gold coins was discovered. In the year 1936, 869 houses, a mill, an electrical plant and a post office were built in Teremia Mare. At the same time, the cultural life was reflected in the activities that were done in the Primary School, the Confessional School, the school library, the Romanian Reading Meeting, the fanfare and the three male choirs. In the commune there were: Craftsmen's club, Sports club, Wine-growing meeting, Agricultural meeting and Hunting society. Today, Teremia wants to be the place where people fight for a better life, here there are functioning: the Secondary School, Cultural homes: Teremia Mare, Teremia Mică and Nerău, the credit cooperative and the post office. Also, the Cultural Center of the commune has the following activities: the circle of computers, Museum of vineyards and wine, painting exhibition, Nichita Stănescu Exhibition and museum, GYM, Pensioner's Club, Children's drawing circle.

The museum of vineyards and wine houses a very interesting collection of tools used over time in the specific works of the vine culture and wine production, such as: wood plows with wrought metal furrow manually, presses for squeezing grapes, grafting machine, barrels for storing wine, and tools for the execution of barrels [7]. The activity of the inhabitants in this area has been a top one, noted and recognized throughout the time both locally and abroad. For example, we talk about the superlative of the cognac of Teremia. About these performances speak convincingly the diplomas and effigies obtained over time and kept in the museum's collection.

The Teremia Mare library houses a collection of paintings signed by Horia Bernea, Constantin Flondor, Paul Gherasim and Sorin Dumitrescu, true values of the Romanian painting made since 1975.

Nichita Stănescu's memorial exhibition includes materials that illustrate the poet's artistic activity: manuscripts, books, old photographs, magnetic tapes with recitals of the poet [3].

In Teremia Mare there are built: Teremia Mare Roman Catholic Church (1867, renovated in 1926), Teremia Mică Roman Catholic Church (1856) and Nerău Roman Catholic Church (1871); Teremia Mare Romanian Orthodox Church (1994), Teremia Mică Romanian Orthodox Church (2005) and Nerău Romanian Orthodox Church (1810); Teremia Mare Pentecostal Church, Teremia Mică Pentecostal Church and Nerău Pentecostal Church; Teremia Mare Baptist Church (1996) and Church "Jehovah's Witnesses" Teremia Mare.

At Christian holidays the religious traditions are intertwined. When the Orthodox celebrate Easter, also the Catholics light candles as a sign of respect and approval towards their fellow citizens. Also, at the Catholic holidays, the bells of the Orthodox church also ring. At the same time, the Banat "Ruga" from Teremia Mare, the "Ruga" from Nerău and German Kirchweih, are celebrated in the care of the whole community.

Traditional activities

The traditional activities of the locals were: practicing viticulture, horticulture, agriculture, animal husbandry and meat processing. Some inhabitants made barrels, others were wheelwrights, carpenters and blacksmiths [3].

In the past there were three wine farms and one nursery. About 5 million rootstock cuttings were harvested annually. Of the STAS vines obtained annually, an important part of the extension of the wine-growing areas was retained. Thus, at the level of 1980, only the IAS (State Agricultural Enterprise) in the locality had 1,200 ha of vines per fruit. In the perimeter of the locality there were also important areas in the possession of the CAP, as well as of the individuals [2]. Creata, Majarcă and Steinschiller varieties were cultivated on sandy lands, at a distance of 1/1 meters, thus having a density of 10,000 vines/ha. Short cuts were made, and maintenance work was done almost exclusively manual. To combat *Plasmopara viticola*, CuSO₄ treatments were performed. After the year 1989, thousands of hectares of *Vitis vinifera* were cleared and *Triticum aestivum* was planted. All this has led to the drastic reduction of Teremia cognac production, the only alcoholic drink homologated in Timis county. Currently, the cognac is prepared only by a few inhabitants. The traditional recipe is no longer preserved, although the residents claim that their drink exactly respects the initial manufacturing process [8]. At the moment, the economy of Teremia Mare commune is 90% based on agriculture that is well developed due to the superior quality of the agricultural land and there are three powerful agricultural associations that use modern working methods. In the

last years a large number of inhabitants cultivated vegetables in greenhouses and solaris.

Rural landscape

The plan of the settlement was created three centuries ago, by the engineers who were working for the Habsburg Empire. The plan was a rectangular like a chess board with a main street in the central part. The buildings were placed perpendicular on the streets on narrow pieces of land. The facades have one or two windows oriented to the street. The free space between the road and the line of the facades was wide, creating green spaces which were traditionally planted with fruit trees such as: *Prunus avium*, *Prunus cerasifera*, *Prunus cerasus*, *Prunus domestica*, *Prunus persica*.

Teremia Mare Park with a surface of 11375 m² is situated in the center of the commune. It was rearranged in the year 2017. The statue of the Holy Trinity was restored, the alleys have been rebuilt, and new urban furniture with a modern design was introduced. The alleys are properly dimensioned and follow straight directions which lead visitors towards the existing centres of interest. Along the alleys there can be found benches, waste bins and lamps. The main tree species identified in the park are: *Quercus robur*, *Acer sp.*, *Tilia sp.*, *Juglans regia*, *Liriodendron tulipifera*, *Betula pendula*. At the same time, in the center of the commune a square was arranged, where specimens of *Rosa spp.* and *Thuja sp.* were planted. In the year 2017 between Teremia Mare and Teremia Mică a cycling route was built (Photo 1).



Photo 1 Recent landscaping made in Teremia Mare

In the present, the touristic offer of Teremia Mare commune is reduced, being represented by the few existing museums. At the same time, the locality has constant natural resources of geothermal waters recognized locally and cross-border. On the territory of the commune there is a thermal water drill, unpowered and unused and a thermal water drilling that administrates the oil well gas and heats with geothermal water some homes in the commune. Although at present they are not used efficiently, there is a tradition in their use, both as a treatment base and as a thermal agent. If the natural resources of geothermal water from the commune would be exploited for the purpose of building a Spa resort, it would represent a main tourist objective for Teremia Mare.

Conclusions

Following the performed landscape analysis, we found that the rural cultural landscape of the Teremia Mare commune is marked by the multiethnic cultural traditions. Analysis made obvious that Teremia Mare was famous for the cultures of *Vitis vinifera* and the production of wine and cognac. Today this tradition is lost. In the present, there is interest from the local authorities for the improvement of the rural landscape, fact that resulted in the redevelopment of the park and the square in the central area of the commune. To improve the image of Teremia Mare Park the following measures are necessary: the accounting of the existing tree individuals by doing the necessary maintenance works; the remodeling of the existing regions of the

park by: eliminating the individuals which have dried; planting turf and flower beds with special shapes and creating an ecological parking. In order to improve de rural landscape, the green space along the streets must be planted with more species of decorative trees and shrubs. In order to increase the tourist potential of the commune and implicitly the quality of life of the inhabitants, we recommend the arrangement of a Spa resort that uses the geothermal water existing in the commune's territory, the establishment of a natural gas distribution network and the modernization of the water-canal network.

Acknowledgements

The financial assistance for this article from the part of research project „*Study regarding development strategy of green infrastructure of Giroc Commune*” (no. 32001/30.09.2015) is gratefully acknowledged.

References

- 1.Crețan, R. *Dicționar toponimic și geografico-istoric al localităților din județul Timiș*, Editura Universității de Vest, Timișoara, 2006 ISBN 973-7608-65-8;
- 2.Ghinea, D., *Enciclopedia geografică a României*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 2000;
- 3.Mic Atlas - Ed IV – Cap. Comune și sate Pag.362;
- 4.Lotreanu, I., *Monografia Banatului*, Institutul de Arte Grafice „Țara”, Timișoara, 1935;
- 5.Rezultatele finale ale Recensământului din 2011: „Tab8. Populația stabilă după etnie - județe, municipii, orașe, comune”. Institutul Național de Statistică din România. iulie 2013;
- 6.Rezultatele finale ale Recensământului din 2011: „Tab13. Populația stabilă după religie - județe, municipii, orașe, comune”. Institutul Național de Statistică din România. iulie 2013;
- 7.[http://www.primariateremiamare.ro/prezentare_local a;](http://www.primariateremiamare.ro/prezentare_local_a)
- 8.<https://romanalibera.ro/actualitate/proiecte-locale/celebrul-coniac-de-teremia-mare-la-un-pas-de-disparitie-4485> Anton Borbely 02.09.2006