

The Scientific mapping of healing-waters by Dr. TOMAS JORDAN (1539-1586)

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Tomas Jordan from Klausenburg (born 1539 / died 1586) was a very intellectual man for his time. He studied at eight different universities in Europe and in 1569 he went to the city of Brno, in Moravia (in today's modern Czech Republic) to study and to get a 'title': "Doctor of Moravian Margraviate" ---the first person ever to be awarded such a distinction. This doesn't mean that he was the first ever Moravian physician; but rather the first Moravian physician to focus-in on a particular field of study as a 'medical discipline.' His specialty was Balneotherapy studies, which is the treatment of disease, usually practiced at spas. Many mineral waters at spas are rich in particular minerals (such as calcium and iron, potassium, manganese, bromide, iodine, as well as silica, sulfur, selenium, radium, and other trace minerals) which can be absorbed through the skin. Balneotherapy may involve hot or cold water, massage through moving water, relaxation, stimulation, or intensive immersion. Tomas Jordan is widely regarded as the founder of the Moravian medical spas, and he wrote several books about balneology --- yet his accomplishments aren't publicized as widely as a person might expect. I even had trouble finding basic information on him. It seems that the significance of his work is remembered -----yet his human identity is beginning to be obscured with the sands of time.

In many ways, Dr. Tomas Jordan was ahead of his time, since many of his findings echo the modern treatment regimens for many conditions such as for treating arthritis, fibromyalgia, and skin conditions. Admittedly, health spas may not be a total "cure all" for everyone....since different people's ailments may (or may not) be receptive to such treatments. However, for some people: such treatment does provide some relief.

Various people from all social levels ranging from Royalty to commoners have flocked to spas in Europe. England's King Edward VII was a frequent guest at several spas in what is now the Czech Republic. The Royal Spa MARIENBAD is said to feature "breathtaking nature, fresh air, favorable climatic conditions, spa woodlands and English style parks, magnificent architecture, a rich cultural sport and social life and a unique tradition from the year 1818 have created Marianske Lazne into a much sought-after spa town. Visitors to the town have been numerous and amongst the great names have been the likes of Goethe, Chopin, and the English King Edward VII. (Significantly, Goethe and Edward VII were distinguished Freemasons)

At the MARIENBAD SPA, they offer a medical consultation, as well as aroma-massage; hot stone therapy; mineral bath in the Royal Bath of King Edward VII; mineral bath with Dead Sea salt; and dry carbon gas baths. For centuries, those same Royals and commoners have both drunk and soaked-in the waters there, seeking cures for almost any type of disease or ailment---- ranging from arthritis to kidney problems to nerve diseases as well as disorders of the digestive tract, respiratory system, metabolic functions, and so on.

At Chodovar, near Marianske Lazne: bathers soak in steel tanks in a mixture of mineral water and dark lager beer!! A hoppy head forms at the surface of each tank and bathers are encouraged to drink the soak. Supposedly, the yeast aids in digestion.

At the spa at **Teplice**, Roman and Celtic coins were found in the hot springs and are evidence that springs with healing properties in the Czech lands were sought after as long as 2,000 years ago. Hot springs in Teplice are used to treat circulation, cardiovascular and mobility disorders and are said to have beautifying qualities, too.

At Jesenik, this Moravian spa lies on the slopes of the Rychlebske Mountains. Internally-known spa



innovator Vincenz Priessnitz was offering his innovative techniques here as early as 1822.

Luhacovice is the largest spa in Moravia. It specializes in the treatment of respiration and digestive systems. Sixteen mineral rich springs and one sulphuric spring have high concentrations of natural elements and carbon dioxide. The town's location in the wooded hills of the White Carpathians recommends it --- but I suppose Al Gore would disapprove of its carbon dioxide 'footprint'.

As noted earlier in this paper: a spa in a northwest part of Slovakia close to Trencin, is the Trencianske **Teplice**. Altitude is 272 meters above sea level. Due to its position, the spa is protected from winds, and is particularly receptive to sunshine from the South. The first written mention of the warm springs in that area dates to the year 1242, but more detailed descriptions came from Dr. Tomas Jordan from Klausenburg dated 1580. That further illustrates the dedicated effort and widespread travel that Dr. Jordan undertook in documenting medical effects related to natural mineral springs or spas. The Slovak Spectator periodical regards Tomas Jordan as the recorder of "expert" analysis with regard to this spa's effects, in particular. The Sina Spa gained a reputation in the 14th Century as the best-known spa in the Hungarian Empire. That praiseworthy reputation still exists today. Trencianske Teplice cradles a balneo therapy complex of hot sulphurous springs and mineral rich mud. As it gushes from the springs directly into the indoor and outdoor pools, the water reaches optimal healing temperatures of 37 to 40 degrees Celsius.

Although there is no conclusive evidence linking Tomas Jordan to Rosicrucianism, he certainly followed the original practices of our Society's Founders in treating the sick (often for free/gratis) and utilizing the four main elements of Nature: Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. The warm (naturally heated) water of the hot springs, and mud (earthen) packs in an atmosphere of good fresh-air and quiet serene surroundings certainly fit that mold.

Another Doctor....Dr Albert G Mackey, M.D., a 33rd degree Mason and a Knight Templar, wrote that a Waterfall is a symbol used in the Fellow Craft Degree of Masonry, as a symbol of 'plenty' or signifying health and prosperity. Dr. Mackey also wrote: (In a Masonic context) Clean hands are a sign of purity. The Psalmist says 'that he only shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or shall stand in his holy place, who hath clean hands and a pure heart.' Mackey noted that the white gloves worn by European Masons (and some American Masons) refer to clean hands as a sign of a pure heart. In some instances, the act of lustration consisted of either immersing the hands (or sometimes the whole body) in lustral or consecrated water .

Therefore, "healing-waters" can alleviate and rejuvenate our outward health as well as our inner spirits or soul. Physical muscle, tangible bones and intangible moral ethics can be toned, conditioned, and improved by the application of healing-waters. A promotional pamphlet for the spa Sucha Loz (Slatina) noted Tomas Jordan describing its healing-qualities of the water at that spa due to its high concentrations of carbon dioxide. It touts the slogan: "It definitely freshens and cheers you up".

Let us remember with gratitude the efforts of dedicated men such as Doctors Jordan and Mackey. In our Fraternal lives, we need to share the nurturing water of knowledge, along with the rich minerals which can be likened to decent moral ethics and rectitude of life .

Ironically, (and sadly), few writers have written much of anything about Dr. Tomas Jordan. There was a physician and medical historian, Gustav Gellner (1871-1943) who wrote a few discourses on the life of Tomas Jordan (which some have inverted as Jordan Tomas).

Dr. Tomas Jordan also was involved in treating the epidemics of the day --- including a syphilis outbreak. According to Petra Swaczynova who told me quite a bit about Dr. Jordan's life and accomplishments: she also noted that in the year 1573, he was designated a Knight from Klausenburg. Ms. Swaczynova works at Masaryk University in the city of Brno, in the Czech Republic.

When she told me that Dr. Jordan was not the first ever physician in Moravia, but rather the first



Moravian physician who attempted "mapping" the therapeutic benefits of healing-waters, I initially thought that the word "mapping" was just a quick grab at a rough English equivalent translation. However, after I pondered it a while, I realized that it was an apt description to summarize Dr. Jordan's attempts at **mapping** or **diagramming** the benefits of natural mineral water spas.

Dr. Tomas Jordan's focus on outlining specific results or detailing "Restorative Healing Cures" noted that warmth of the mineral springs aided in improving circulation of blood as well alleviating stiffness of joints. He described how iron acidulous water would help with respiratory function; and that what we now call "mud therapy" would rejuvenate the skin and treat the conditions we now call eczema, acne, and psoriasis. Then, too, Dr. Jordan noticed that a few patients who had no apparent outward 'physical ailment' benefited from the warm springs because it offered a place to get away and essentially shut-out the worries of their regular routine. The mineral springs in Moravia became popular as a sporting venue for activities such as tobogganing and skiing. A place for good exercise, serene solitude, and remedial cures for ailments of the overall wellness of the mind, body and soul --- is the magnet that drew people to Moravian spas.

Dr. Jordan, in his writings, mentioned several spas including: Velke Losiny; Slatinice; and Bochor.

Tomas Jordan had a wife named Zuzana, and five children--- 3 sons: Karel Ludvik Jordan; Fridrich Jordan; Vaclav Prokop Jordan; and 2 daughters whose precise given names weren't readily available in his biographies.

Dr. Tomas Jordan is buried in St. John's Church at Brno, which is a major city in southern Moravia, located in today's modern Czech Republic.



Dr. Tomas Jordan 1539 - 1586

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Sources / Recommended Readings/Acknowledgements:

Personal e-mail letters transmitted from Ms. Petra Swaczynova, librarian Masaryk University, city of Brno, in the Czech Republic to James A. Marples, Longview, Texas..

- The Royal Spas of Europe. Overview of Royal Spa MARIENBAD.
website: <http://www.royal-spas.net/englisch/Marienbad.html>

- (image) Commemorative medal purchased by James A. Marples from a seller in the Czech Republic which commemorates the life and achievements of Dr. Tomas Jordan (1539-1586). It depicts women bathers partaking of the healing waters of Moravia, in the Czech Republic.

- The Slovak Spectator = Periodical. Its article: "Goodbye ailments: Slovak spas possess the power of healing". 9 May 2005 issue.

- Historic archives of The Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon.

- Literature from Slovakia Spa.



website: http://www.slovakia-spa.sk/triencanske_teplice_en.html

- Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and its Kindred Sciences by Albert G. Mackey, M.D.
- Greek Samos Island website promoting spas: <http://diavlos.gr/slovakia/spas/>
It promotes old world history with extraordinary venues of nature, culture, and travel.
- Spas in Region of Olomouc (Olmutz)
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website: <http://en.infoglobe.cz/region-of-olomouc-2/slatinice/>
- Literature spa Sucha Loz
website: www.sucaloz.cz

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James A. Marples, VII^o, was Raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason in Sunflower Lodge No. 86 A.F. & A.M. in Wichita, Kansas. He is now a Perpetual Life Member of Mulvane Lodge No. 201 A.F. & A.M, in Mulvane, Kansas; and a honorary member of Golden Rule Lodge #567 in Willard, Ohio as well as an honorary member of Nelson Lodge #77 at Nelson Nebraska.

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