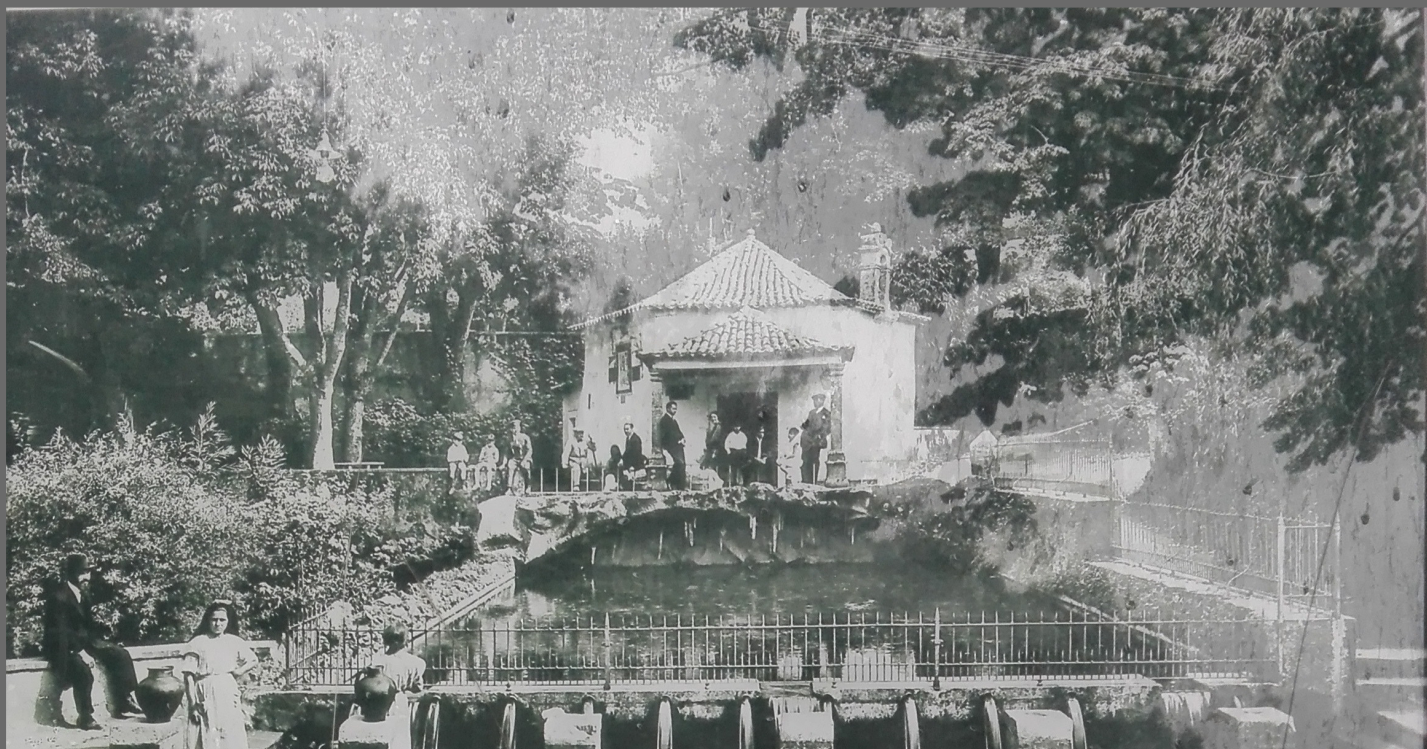


INTERNATIONAL EXTENDED REPORT



SMES, GOOD PRACTICES, OPPORTUNITIES AND INNOVATION ON THERMAL TOURISM



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

International Extended Report.

SMEs, good practices, opportunities and innovation on thermal tourism



Report 2 (of 5) of the CULTOUR+ project (Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership on Higher Education - INNOVATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION FOR CULTURAL MANAGEMENT, HOSPITALITY AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTES)

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1. Presentation

Innovation and Capacity Building in Higher Education for Cultural Management, Hospitality and Sustainable Tourism in European Cultural Routes (CULTOUR+) is a Strategic Partnership (SP) of universities, local governments, SMEs and NGOs funded by the programme Erasmus+.

Participating organizations share the concern, expertise and experience in proving that cultural management, sustainable tourism and European Cultural Routes and Heritage can be a source to promote creative, high-quality work for young graduate and postgraduate entrepreneurs. As well as SME generation, networking, co-working and clustering.

Cultour+ has coordinated research in cultural routes, specially focusing in pilgrimage routes and in the European Route of Historic Thermal Towns to help improving tourism and cultural management of those routes. An important dimension of this research is to know about thermal tourists and their concerns. Some of the results toward this aim are presented in this introduction.

During the research, we have been able to perform research visits on the following cases:

| <i>Spain</i> | <i>Portugal</i> | <i>Greece</i> | <i>Poland</i> | <i>Bulgaria</i> |
|---|---|--|----------------------|------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alange - Baños de Montemayor - El Salugral - El Raposo - El Trampal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - São Pedro do Sul - Chaves - Luso - Monfortinho | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Krinides, Kavala -Loutra Neas Apollonias (Volvi Lake) - Loutra Lagada -Kamena Vourla Spa town -Loutraki Spa -Smokovo - 3 thermal springs in Lesvos: Therma, Polichnitos, Lisvori) | Uniejow | Narecheski bani |

2. Introduction. Literature review

Concepts and terms

There are no universal agreed definitions for thermal tourism and thermal tourists. In the fashion of strange labelling, thermal tourists are called curists by some authors. (Duman & Kozak, 2010).

For Taskov, Metodijeski, Boskov and Filiposki (2011), "thermal or spa tourism can be defined as visit and staying in specialized facilities that provide an opportunity for healing and relaxation with the use of the thermal water".

In a different sense, Spanish Institute of Statistics (INE, 2015) defines Spa and wellness tourism as the one including "trips made with the main purpose of enjoying stays in spas, thalassotherapy centers or other specialized centers to receive massages, beauty or health treatments (thinning, detoxification, etc.) when they are not by medical prescription".

In the National Tourism Survey (Encuesta de Turismo de Residentes (ETR)) the Secretary of Tourism uses a restrictive definition that would exclude the majority of thermal facilities users in those countries where thermal treatments are funded by national governments (as the INSERSO programme in Spain). However, why these patients should not be included? Don't they have an impact in the supply and local development as other users do? Don't they make a choice of the balneary where they will do their treatments?

Research on thermal tourists

Although thermal tourism is a growing sector, especially interesting by its potential for enlarging tourists' stay and for breaking seasonality (Garín-Muñoz, 2009) attracting more and more attention from businessmen and researchers, the academic literature about thermal tourism and thermal tourists is nevertheless scarce. "Thermal tourists" perceptions are not considered, for example, in monographs as Erfurt-Cooper's Health and wellness tourism: Spas and hot springs (2009). We can find, at the present, 893 results in Scholar Google with the search "Thermal tourism" and only 12 with "thermal tourists" (29 with "thermal tourist"). This means, it has been done little effort still to reflect on thermal tourists and to know about their values, motivation and practices.

It is, thus, very important that we progress in contributing to this scarce literature with studies like ours adding interdisciplinary value to the state-of-art with the special contributions from anthropological approaches that transcends and questions simple findings based in questionnaires and scales.

Studies on thermal tourists use normally quantitative approaches, like Structural Equation Models used by Emir & Saraçlı (2011) who conclude that while "'Cleanliness of Private Units' has the greatest influence on 'Private

Thermal Unit' features, the perception of 'Additional Services' has it on 'General Physical Features' on tourists' level of satisfaction with thermal tourism".

Kaşlı Göztürk (2014) do field research in the TR41 region in Turkey, implementing a survey to 384 thermal tourists (or as they name them, "thermal tourism visitors"). The conclusions from this survey that the authors offer in an article that refer to thermal tourists are the following:

Many of the customers belong to the young and medium aged generation. This group goes for holiday with their children. They complain about the absence of the children activities sites regarding sports and fun in case that think to the region again (sic.). The insufficient activity sites for the children shorten the duration of stay at the centre. (...) It is a great indicator for a thermal centre if the customers are happy with the services and with the centres and if the customer revisits or recommends their friend or relatives (83 %) to showed us that the customers are mainly coming from the surrounding areas.

For the case of the Republic of Macedonia, Taskov, Metodijeski, Boskov and Filiposki (2011) summarize the "Survey on foreign tourists in accommodation facilities, 2009" published by the State statistical office of Republic of Macedonia, providing some demographic traits. Foreign thermal tourists in the Republic of Macedonia are:

- "craftsman by profession and other related workers",
- "most of the tourists are above 50 years old"
- "prevailing visitors are with secondary education"

As in all standard surveys about tourists we will find some information about motivations ("the visit is usually because of health reasons"), loyalty ("tourists" previously stayed in the spa centre (and) would like to stay again"), satisfaction ("Nature, personal safety, service by the personnel and diet are rated as very good, and the possibility of excursions, congresses and road infrastructure as good. (...)Tourists are satisfied with housing, nutrition and hygiene in the spa. The only negatively rated are the opportunities for sports and cultural events"), average length of stay (9 days).

This information is completed with other that should be nuanced to know more about the profile, motivations and habits of thermal tourists, since we do not know if they are the result of an election among alternatives or they are forced by the conditions of the place as "Vehicles which they use is a car" (is there other means to get to the thermal resort?), "(tourists) pay in cash" (is there any other way of paying?), "most (tourists) are fed in a room or outdoor spas".

In the conclusions, Taskov, Metodijeski, Boskov and Filiposki (2011) do some remarks, based on observation, interviewing or other sources not specified, that give more a complex picture of real problems of balneary: "Tourists may feel bored and isolated, sharing the space with "sick" people".

Methodology

Anthropology situates discourses in life stories and contrast discourses and practices to deepen in further meanings. For it deals with literality and meaning of words but also about values and emotions, its methods and results are highly valuable for marketing, branding, building upon image and identity.

A highly valuable result of an anthropological research is a good questionnaire, adequate to key research questions but also to the public to which it is directed. This will allow survey's results to be useful to its purposes.

We are doing in depth interviews to thermal tourists taking in account different ages, nationalities, incomes, professional and educative backgrounds to register and analyse discourses and practices and build on the oral history of thermal tourism.

In this sense, as happens in anthropology, the significance and relevance of research results are given by the complexity and diversity of discourses found.

Results and recommendations

In-depth interviews and focused life stories bring to the research a myriad of topics left uncovered by standard questionnaires. They show the affective value and the height of tradition and family emotional links, as well as the nuances of classism and different cultures and life-styles that share the same space but with very different views.

It is quite different to click a box on the scale of importance of cleanliness for private units than to register in an audio recorder the following:

"The spas are anathema (for me). To the hammam I rarely go now-a-days. It was a fashion and I liked it, but now I have the impression that is a place a bit dirty. I think popular culture go there, people go there to paw each other. A bit porn, a bit dirty. I don't like it. I go to the balneary where the water is thermal!" (MGL, Woman, 68)

. This woman appreciates some factors that are not measured by standard questionnaires as the possibility to have access to free thermal water for bathing in a common space besides the balneary as it happens in Alhama de Granada (Spain).

A poet herself, is a special customer, that highlights very particular aspects of the thermal sites,

¹. Original transcription: Los spas anatema. Al hammam ahora voy poco, porque hammam fue una moda y me gustaba pero ahora tengo la sensación de que es un sitio un poco guarro, creo que la cultura de masas, va la gente ahí a sobarse, un poco porno, un poco guarro, no me gusta, ya no me gusta ir al Hammam, porque pienso que van así, yo que sé, las parejitas. No, yo voy a un balneario donde el agua sea termal, que sé que es un lujo imposible porque las grandes piscinas, termal pero tratada.

Lobios (in Galicia) inspired me. In Lobios I caught my great poem Aqua Originis, because there, the romans, the gold, the silver, the thermae. Thus, they are places...² (MGL, Woman, 68)

In depth interviews are good also to question questionnaires and surveys. We saw that in the Republic of Macedonia that has an extension as a country of about 25.513 km², thermal tourists, though using cars, found low opportunities for sports and cultural events. All the contrary happens in this interview, in which cultural events and interesting places are considered in Galicia that has a total extension of 29,574.4 km².

And I am also in a very privileged situation. I have a car and I am normally in environments where you can visit many things. And they know it, for example, in Lobios they put a lot of impressive things that you could go in Galicia³. (MGL, Woman, 68)

Anthropological methodologies as participant observation, mysterious shopper, in depth interviews to significant agents and actors should always be a first step in the process of a survey. One of the most valuable outputs of an anthropological research is to build a good set of questions for a survey.

They are also very convenient to approach to broader publics, combined for example with marketing or museology (Gómez-Ullate, 2008), going beyond the academic and professional circles where the cultural universe of thermalism is framed.

As we have stated, there is very little literature about "thermal tourists" and the existent works are based in little detailed profiles. Designed surveys in the sector do not go much deeper than annual national surveys.

There is also a lack of consensus about the concept of thermal tourists, including or not those thermalists that go by medical prescription. We have defended in this section and stated some reasons for broad definitions including all thermalists (but local residents) in the concept and accounting of thermal tourists.

The processes of standardization of surveys and the limitation of space for presenting scientific research result in a very simple and succinct characterization of the thermal tourist profile, preferences, values, emotions and experiences.

Anthropology can add a very important keystone in the research of thermal tourists experiences, motivations, values, at least in three different ways: first, opening the available information in thermal tourism to new discourses and indicators; second, helping reformulate questionnaires to register more complex and relevant information; third, broadening the audience targets of scientific literature in thermalism.

². Original transcript Lobios me inspiró... en Lobios cacé mi gran poema Aqua originis, porque allí los romanos, el oro, la plata, la terma. Entonces son sitios... Aqua Originis, uno de los poemas más bonitos que he escrito hasta el momento.

³. Original transcript Y luego yo también voy en una situación muy privilegiada. Luego también llevo coche y normal. Y entonces, normalmente estoy en entornos donde puedes visitar muchas cosas.y ellos lo saben, por ejemplo, en Lobios ponían una cantidad de cosas que podías ir impresionante de Galicia.



3. Case Studies



3.1 An international survey on knowledge on thermal sites among undergraduate and postgraduate students of Spain (University of Extremadura) and Portugal (University of Tràs-os-Montes and Alto Douro)

Summary

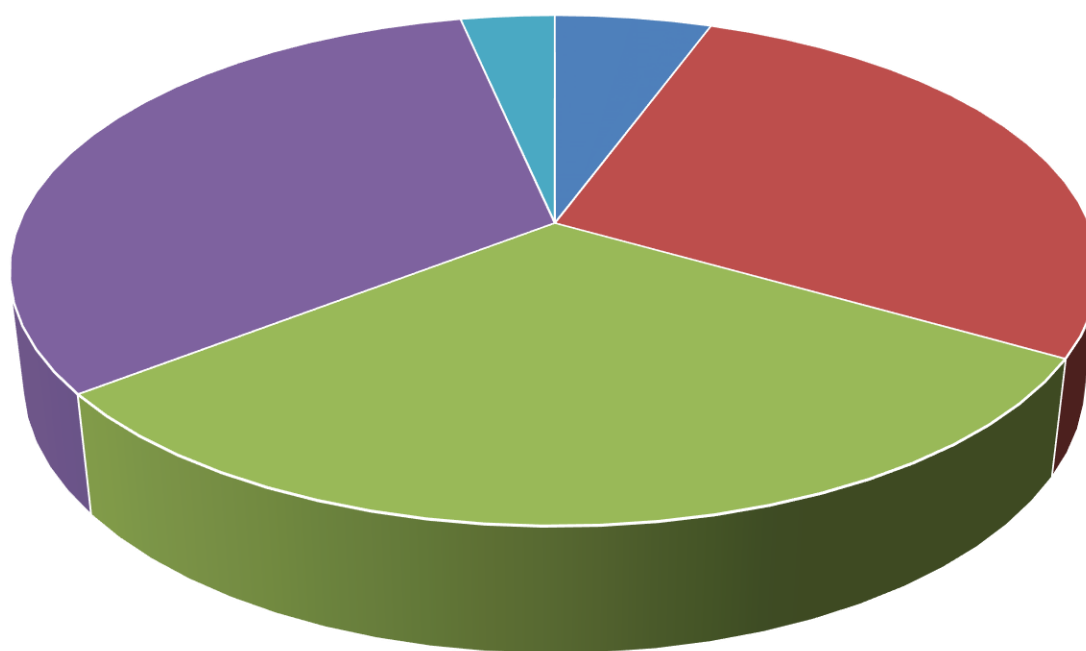
1. Introduction

A survey was undertaken in the Teacher Training College of the University of Extremadura (N=90) and University of Tràs-os-Montes and Alto Douro (N=57) in which we can find some interesting results.

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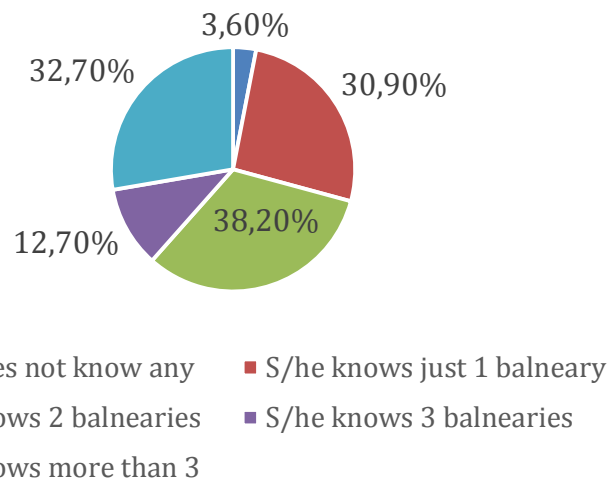
| | S/he does not know any | S/he knows just 1 balneary | S/he knows 2 balnearies | S/he knows 3 balnearies | S/he knows more than 3 | Total |
|-------------|------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------|
| UEx | 5 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 3 | 90 |
| | 5,56% | 27,78% | 31,11% | 32,22% | 3,33% | 100,0% |
| UTAD | 2 | 17 | 21 | 7 | 18 | 57 |
| | 3,6% | 30,9% | 38,2% | 12,7% | 32,7% | 100% |

Balnearies they know in Extremadura (N=90)



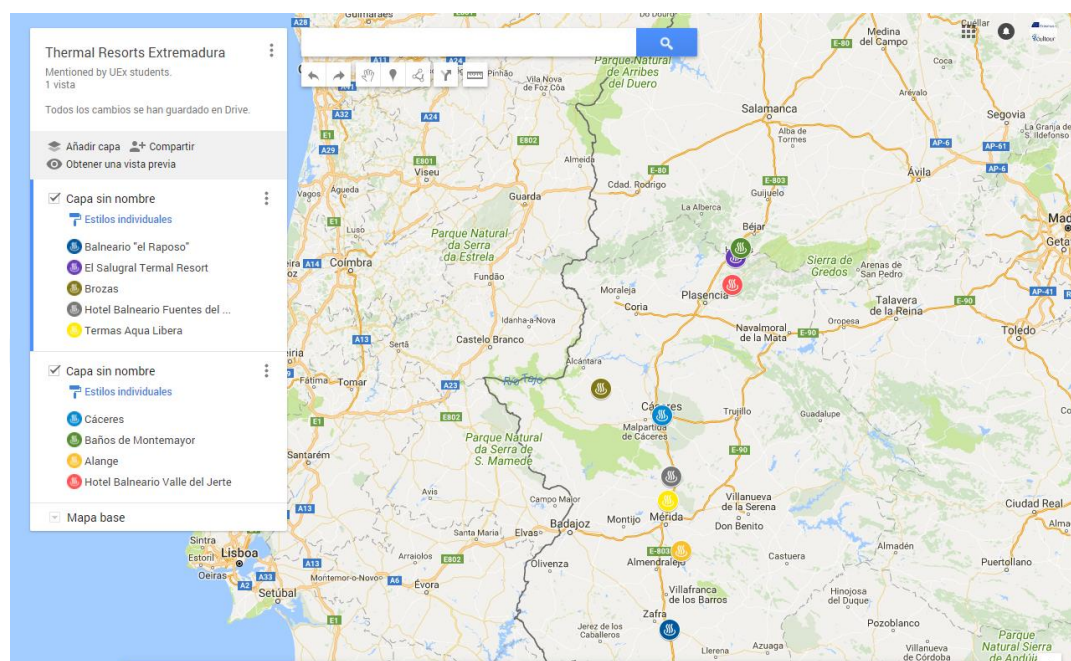
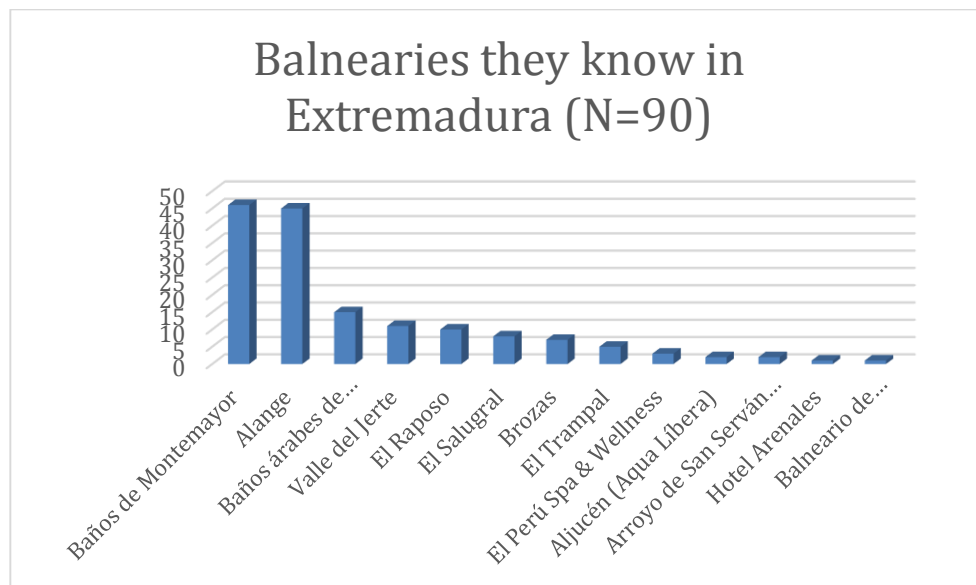
■ S/he does not know any
 ■ S/he knows just 1 balneary
 ■ S/he knows 2 balnearies
■ S/he knows 3 balnearies
 ■ S/he knows more than 3

Balnearies they know in the North of Portugal

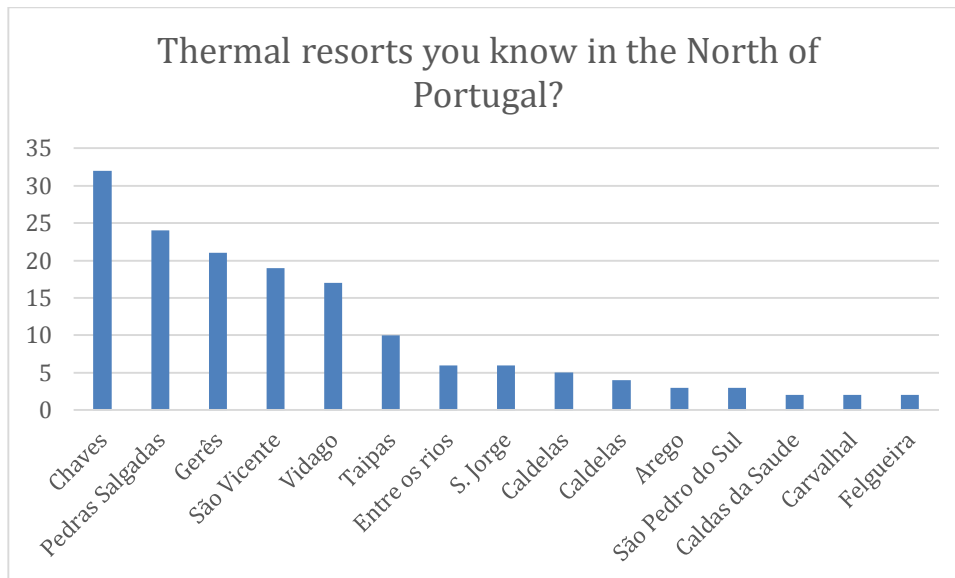


As we can see, a greater percentage of Portuguese students know a much greater number of regional thermal resorts than students in University of Extremadura. In both cases we have clear protagonists as in Extremadura the two first in the list are named three times more than the following, while in Portugal we see a gap between the first five and the following. As we can see there is not proportional relationship between knowledge and distance to residence, that is the best known are not the closest to Vila Real or Cáceres.

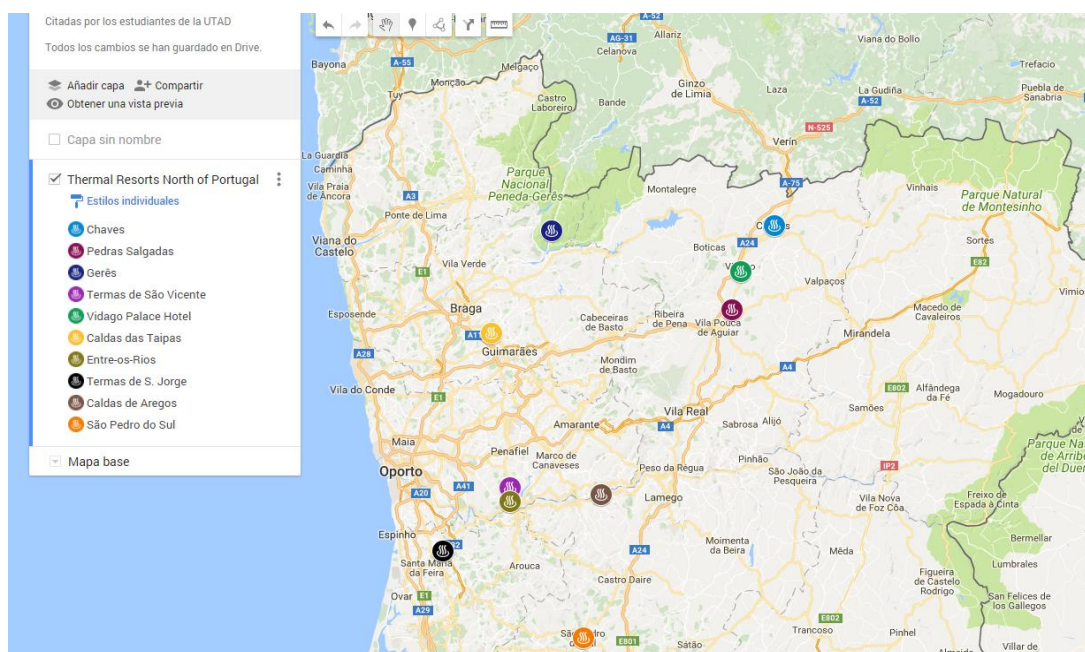
| Thermal Resort | Number of citations |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Baños de Montemayor | 46 |
| Alange | 45 |
| Baños árabes de Cáceres | 15 |
| Valle del Jerte | 11 |
| El Raposo | 10 |
| El Salugral | 8 |
| Brozas | 7 |
| El Trampal | 5 |
| El Perú Spa & Wellness | 3 |
| Aljucén (Aqua Líbera) | 2 |
| Arroyo de San Serván (Spa) | 2 |
| Hotel Arenales | 1 |
| Balneario de Valdefernando | 1 |



As we can see in the map above, in Extremadura almost all important thermal resorts are placed along the silver route (Vía de la Plata), that is why is so important here the relationship between thermalism and pilgrimage.



| Thermal Resort | Number of citations |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Chaves | 32 |
| Pedras Salgadas | 24 |
| Gerês | 21 |
| São Vicente | 19 |
| Vidago | 17 |
| Taipas | 15 |
| Entre os rios | 6 |
| S. Jorge | 6 |
| Aregos | 3 |
| São Pedro do Sul | 3 |
| Caldas da Saude | 2 |
| Carvalhal | 2 |
| Felgueira | 2 |



Among Spanish students, a 75,5% do not know other thermal resorts than the ones in Extremadura. The other 25% mentions 23 thermal sites, being Marina D'Or the only one frequently cited (7). Among Portuguese Students, 80,6% is able to mention thermal resorts in Portugal out of their region, being São Pedro do Sul (13 citations), Estoril (13 citations), Monchique (11), Luso (11) and Caldas da Rainha (10) the most mentioned.

Asked about thermal sites in the neighbour country, Spanish only knew Monfortinho (the closest one) in a 5,5% and Chaves (just one citation), while among the Portuguese, 64,2% did not know any thermal site in Spain. The rest who knew cited those in Galicia, mainly in Orense (the closest province to the frontier).

As for the spas visited, 45,6% of students from Extremadura acknowledge that they have not yet visited any, while 54,4% have visited a spa at some time in their lives. The motivations mentioned are as follows:

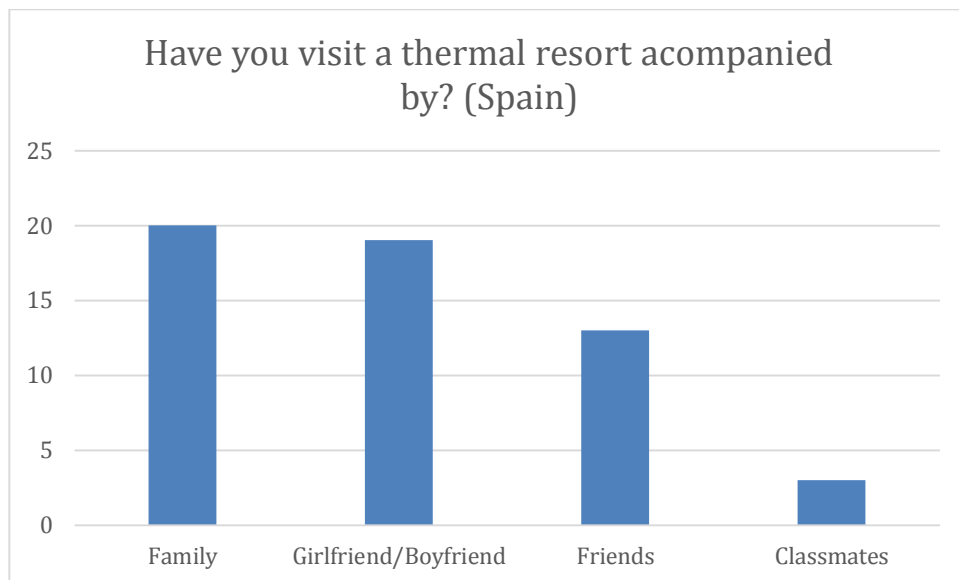
| | | |
|-----------------------------|----|-----|
| Holidays and leisure | 19 | 49% |
| Relax | 8 | 21% |
| School Visit | 5 | 13% |
| Gift | 4 | 10% |
| Closeness | 2 | 5% |
| To experience something new | 1 | 3% |

Among Portuguese students we find a much higher percentage that did not visit yet any thermal site (75%). The ones that visited mention some similar and different motivations or reasons in their visits:

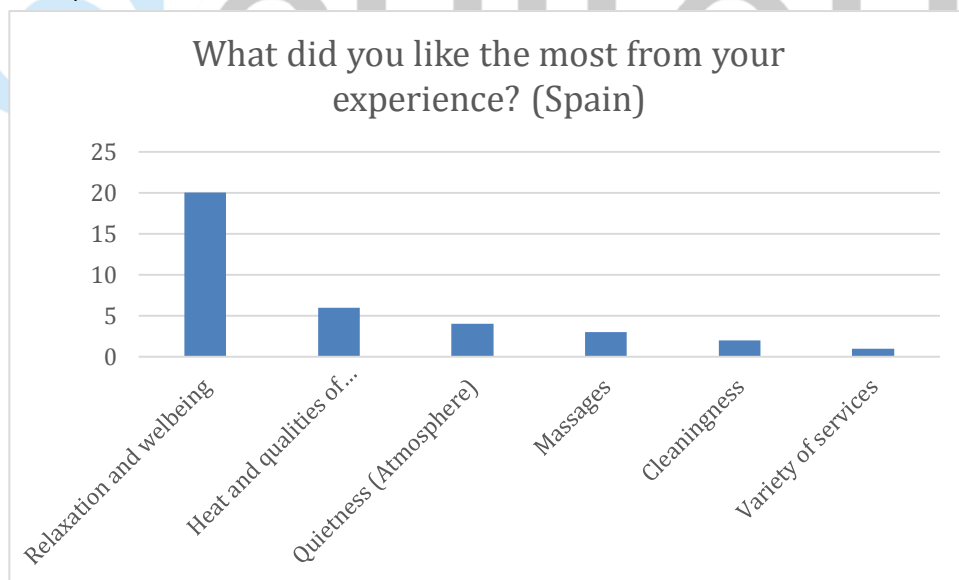
| | | |
|-----------|---|-----|
| Leisure | 5 | 31% |
| Curiosity | 4 | 25% |
| Health | 4 | 25% |
| Relax | 3 | 19% |
| Proximity | 1 | 6% |
| Studies | 1 | 6% |

Although leisure and relax are important motivations in both cases, in Portugal Health is a relevant motivation while in Spain this does not appear. Opposite happens with the thermal experience being motivated by a gift (a commercial strategy somehow frequent in Spain but not in Portugal). Schools visits is almost absent in Portugal, while an important factor in Spain.

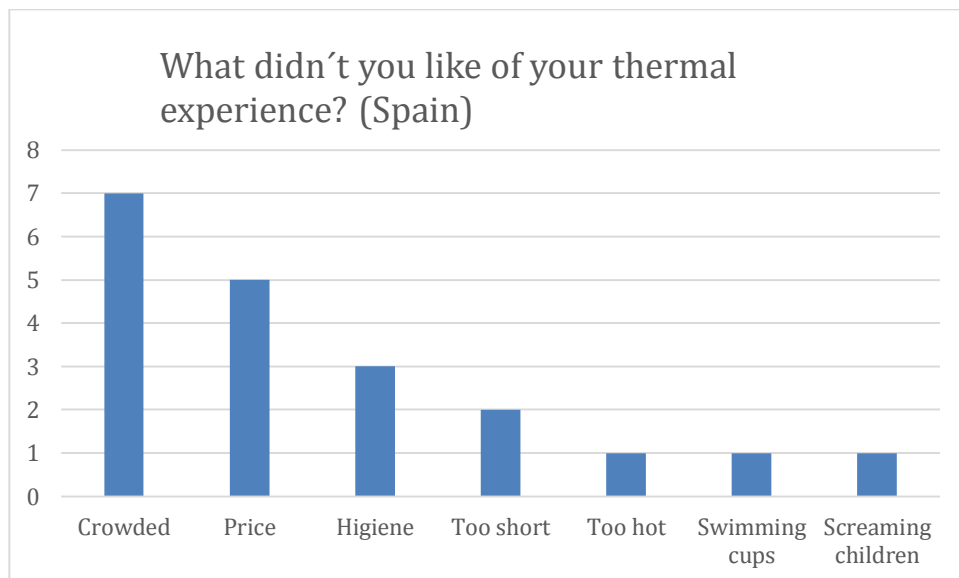
In both cases reasons for not having frequented a thermal resort are similar, some say it is for economic reasons, but the majority states lack of interest or that is something that simply has not yet happened.



Among Spanish students it is clear that they have experienced thermal resorts more frequently accompanied by their families or by their couples. This is a challenge for thermal sites' management since they have to deal with different attitudes, desires and wants in the same place (family tourism, love tourism, therapeutic experiences and treatments).



Among Spanish students relaxation and wellbeing are mentioned as the most valuable outputs of the experience.



Last but not least, asked about what they did not like of their thermal experience, we find crowdedness the first reason (also between the few Portuguese students that had had a thermal experience) and price or relationship price/duration. Hygiene is also a very sensible and important factor to deal with while managing thermal resorts.

This survey, although preliminary, has served to know well the level of knowledge among higher education students they have of their regional and national thermal resorts, to check the reasons why they go or they do not visit balnearies, spas or thermal sites, and what they found best and worst out of their thermal experiences.

3.2. An Assessment of Thermal Tourism in Greece: Field surveys, literature and the voice of experts

Afroditi Kamara, Yorgos Tzedopoulos, Cleopatra Ferla, Despoina Lampada

Thermal Tourism was a priority for the Greek partners of Cultour+ because thermalism is much better established in Greece than religious itineraries (although religious tourism on a local level is thriving).

For our case study we picked thermal springs and infrastructure situated along the religious itinerary "Footsteps of St. Paul", linking both objects of study and both researches, optimizing therefore resources and efforts.

Our work started by drafting a Google map where we traced both thermal and religious spots of interest according to the aforementioned itinerary. The map can be visited following the link: https://www.google.it/maps/@39.4385196,22.2653894,7z/data=!3m1!4m2!6m1!1sIPmSyKWjUYD9e8CL_EYyD47t6LY?hl=en

On the map we traced hotels and thermal infrastructure that we thought of as relevant tour subject due to a thorough internet investigation. This investigation formed also the basis of our Internet site evaluation on Jot Form for both Thermal Tourism (completed end of November 2016). As this is an on-line evaluation we could not include a copy of the results in this report.

In August 2016 Time Heritage team undertook also a field trip along the aforementioned itinerary, covering large part of Northern and Central Greece. At a later stage, on daily-tour basis (October 2017) we also covered a last destination for Thermal Tourism, namely the spa of Loutraki and the Baths of Beautiful Helen, nearby the ancient port of Kenchreai, also important from its religious point of view.

The field study was combined with a thorough bibliographical research as well and the result was the following on Thermal Tourism in Greece, pointing out its challenges and opportunities as well as its historical track:

Note: All pictures were taken by Time Heritage team during our survey. We have uploaded most of them in Wikimedia Commons

Thermalism in Greece: An Old Cultural *Habitus* in Crisis

Tzedopoulos, Y., Kamara, A., Lampada, D., Ferla, K.

The transformations of bathing in thermal springs from antiquity to modernity

Bathing in thermal springs was a practice common in ancient Greek and Rome. Greeks and (particularly) Romans turned many thermal springs into centres of worship for Asclepius (Aesculapius), the god of medicine and healing, and the Nymphs. The cultic practices, which aimed at providing cure for the ailing believers who visited the shrines, included bathing in the waters of the thermal springs.

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This was not an isolated phenomenon, but one embedded in Greek and Roman bathing culture. Bathing was common in the Greek *gymnasia* and the Roman *palestrae*, the public institutions that combined physical exercise and civic education for athletes and the male youths of the wealthier classes. At the same time, public bathing in state-led or privately owned establishments, as the Greek *balaneia* and the Roman *thermae* and *balneae*, was for the urban population a part of everyday life associated with pleasure, well-being, and particular forms of sociability. According to a scholar, it would be no exaggeration to say that “at the height of the empire, the baths embodied the ideal Roman way of urban life” (Yegül, 1992: 30; Lucore & Trümper, 2012). Under the Romans, some thermal bath establishments, as those of Baiae in Campania that developed in a large complex patronized by the emperors, became holiday centres for the wealthy, famous for their hedonistic atmosphere (Yegül, 1992: 93ff).

The rise of Christianity provoked a setback from this tradition, as bathing in general became an ambivalent practice; taking care of one's body aroused suspicions as a sign of neglecting one's spiritual duties. However, the use of public baths in urban milieus, particularly among the higher social strata, did not cease, but continued to be regarded as a typical feature of “civilized life”, although it atoned with the decline of the Byzantine Empire's urban culture from the 7th century onwards. On the other hand, thermal springs that were linked to pagan cults were “Christianized” in late antiquity and became associated with the cult of the Archangel Michael. In a similar way, the activities of the Frank kings Pepin the Short and Charlemagne were thought to have driven away the demon who haunted the thermal baths of Aachen (Howe, 1997: 75). In Byzantium, as in Western Europe, bathing in thermal springs continued during the Middle Ages due to its healing properties with the permission of the church and within the framework of popular culture (Yegül, 1992: 314ff.; Berger, 2011).

Bathing regained its central religious meaning under the Muslim Ottoman Empire, when physical cleanliness was seen as a means for the believers' purification of body and soul; thus, public bathing entered again into everyday urban culture. This had been the case in previous Islamic states, for instance in Umayyad Syria, where the Roman bathing tradition also played a role in the proliferation of bath establishments (Tohme, 2011). Among the numerous *hammams* that were founded in the Ottoman lands under the patronage of high-ranking officials or the sultan himself, there were thermal bathing establishments, not only in big cities like Bursa, Buda and Sofia (Peychev, 2015), but also in

smaller places. According to the Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi, the sultan Süleyman the Magnificent (1520-1566) was healed from his rheumatism in the thermal baths of Aydos (today in southeastern Bulgaria) (Kiel, 2011).

Thermalism in its modern sense emerged in Europe in the modern period, mainly from the 18th century onwards. Its levers were the emergence of a secular culture of physical well-being, cure and recreation among the aristocratic and bourgeois social strata that were engaged in leisure activities, as well as the rise of a scientific discourse and practice in medicine and physical chemistry based on observation and experiment (Walton, 2014). Spas became centres of a more informal sociability among “respectable” persons of both sexes and were placed somewhere in the middle between the conveniences of urban life and the picturesque countryside in a division of space such as it was imagined by the higher social classes. Daniel Defoe described the English spa town of Bath in the early 18th century as “the resort of the sound, rather than the sick”. Bathing, he added, was made “more a sport and diversion, than a physical prescription of health” (Borsay, 2014:46).

In the next centuries, the recreational and the medicinal functions of thermal centres went together and coexisted in a “permanent symbiosis of tension” (Weisz, 2011:138). Thermalism became a widely spread phenomenon in late 19th century western and central Europe, a fact demonstrated by the proliferation of spas, both luxurious and more modest, and provided a favorite setting milieu for fiction and social imagination. In the next century, thermalism was “democratized” through the thorough medicalization of thermal baths and the inclusion of thermal cures in the social insurance system of several European states. France and Germany were the main levers for this development that led to the transition of thermalism from a “recreational” to a “social” and from hence to an “assisted” phase (Naraindas & Bastos, 2011: 2; Zollo et. al., 2015: 65).

Thermalism in Greece: From the late 19th century to the apogee of the post-war decades

In modern Greece, thermalism developed from the mid-19th century onwards, when the thermal springs of Kythnos, Ypati, Kyllini, Loutra Kaiafa and Loutraki began to be organized and used for therapy treatments and well-being purposes. Most prominent among them were the springs of Loutraki, which attracted the more well-to-do visitors and showed a potential for evolving into a resort according to the model of European spas. Towards the end of the century, the Greek state leased some of the springs to private persons. However, due to the vagueness of the legal framework and to the lack of consistent development strategies, the infrastructure remained virtually non-existent (Vlachos, 2003).

Things changed in the mid-war period: in the 1920s the methods for the scientific analysis of the spring waters were defined along with the classification of the springs and the necessary infrastructure for their effective use. The exploitation of thermal springs in that period shows their hierarchy according to financial and socio-economic criteria: the ones that were leased to private enterprises appealed to social strata of higher income, namely the Greek bourgeoisie of the time, while the others, which were exploited by municipal authorities, attracted their clientele from

the middle social groups; the lower social strata, it seems, continued to bathe in thermal springs that were not yet exploited and thus did not dispose of any infrastructure or medical supervision.

The number of spa visitors rose considerably in the mid-war period: in the late 1930s, the thermal baths attracted a little less than 65,000 persons annually; more than one third of the visitors frequented private establishments, mostly the ones of Loutraki and Aidipsos. Apart from the bathing facilities, some Greek spa towns developed a set of recreation infrastructures as cinemas, concerts, and promenades (Vlachos, 2003; Melios, 2003).

The difference in the status of thermal establishments was reproduced in the post-war legislation (1954, 1960) that organized the hot springs into two categories, namely the "springs of touristic importance", which were in the jurisdiction of the Greek National Tourism Organization (GNTO, Greek: EOT), and the ones of "local importance", which fell under the Ministry of the Interior and were exploited by the municipal authorities. Thermalism underwent a qualitative and quantitative transformation in the post-war decades, as infrastructure was improved and the exploitation of thermal springs was included effectively within a national plan for tourism development. This effort was not without success. European celebrities came to spend their holidays in the luxurious establishments of Aidipsos, contributing thus to a boost in the numbers of more humble visitors: from 1950 to 1964 the number of visitors in Greek thermal establishments grew from little more than 100,000 to little less than 150,000 annually and reached its peak in the mid-1980s (around 170,000); in 1983 was founded the Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs (HAMTS) in order to coordinate the actions of its members towards the protection of thermal springs and the further development of thermalism (*Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs*, <http://www.thermalsprings.gr/> (last retrieved on July 7, 2016). The most important contribution to the rise of the thermalists' numbers, of course, was the inclusion of thermal baths in the social insurance system, a fact that put the emphasis rather on curative than on well-being thermalism.

Thermalism in Greece in late 20th and early 21st centuries: Shifts in consumption patterns and economic crisis

From the mid-1980s, the rise of thermalism came to a halt and was followed by a decline. Similar was the development in French thermalism (Anido Freire, 2013: 33). In that case, a major factor for the decline of the number of thermalists were the cuts in social security support, while the medical efficacy of thermal cure was questioned (Weisz, 2001: 480-481). It is, however, very probable that the decline was also due to the widespread association between thermalism and old age, as was the case for Greece.

The number of visitors began to fall until, in the mid-1990s it had reached the levels of the mid-1960s. The decline was sharper in the category "thermal springs of touristic importance", a fact that underlined the overall touristic devaluation of thermal establishments (Papageorgiou, 2009: 160ff; Didaskalou, 1999: III ff.).

This decline was partly the outcome of a shift in consumption patterns and leisure practices that had already taken place at least since the 1960s, when a new sun and sea bathing culture, with its emphasis on youth, nature,

emancipation of the body, and eroticism, became dominant in the post-war generations (Urry, 2002: 35-36; Vlachos, 2003: 27). In what concerns thermalism, the shift showed only when these generations came to middle age. For them, visiting thermal springs was a practice that had become associated with old age and illness. The rise of visitors of thermal establishments between the 1950s and the mid-1980s was due to the gradual access to leisure practices and treatment services that appealed mostly to middle-aged and aged persons; the next generations did not quite follow their example. It is indicative that the percentage of thermal visitors in the overall picture of tourism in Greece did not exceed 1% (2% in 1985) from 1981 to 1993 (Didaskalou, 1999: 116).

The relative decline in the use of thermal establishments continued in the next decade, although there are no reliable statistical data that could present an integrated picture. In the first 15 years of the 21st century, the proliferation of university departments on tourism, business administration and development produced a series of theses and dissertations on thermal bath establishments; at the same time, the Greek state re-organized the legal framework (2006) in order to promote thermalism and facilitate the exploitation of thermal springs in the direction of thermal tourism, signaling thus a depart from “classic” balneotherapy (Papageorgiou, 2009: 168ff).

These developments coincided with a further shift in consumption models and practices, which had also played a role in the decline of traditional thermalism. A new generation from the middle and higher urban social strata became the cradle for the formation of a culture of individualistic self-fashioning, well-being, fitness, and new-age relaxation practices, well embedded in the post-industrial capitalist service market and consumer democratization (Giddens, 2007: 135ff.). In this framework, mass tourism lost some of its appeal and the emphasis was rather put on personalized touristic products and expectations of self-development experiences.

This shift, which was reflected in overall tourist practices all over Europe and gave rise to new approaches of exploring culture, environment, gastronomy, landscape etc., was represented also in the emergence of wellness tourism, a multi-layered phenomenon closely linked to alternative, holistic and individualistic approaches of health and well-being (Voigt, 2014). This had its impact on thermalism, which thus underwent a slow transition from medical treatment into a phase of well-being, self-promotion, and sensory experience (Zollo et al., 2015: 65). In Greece, some of the old luxurious establishments in spa towns were renovated (e.g. “Thermai Sylla” in Aidipsos, 1999, “Galini” in Kamena Vourla, 2002) and started to offer complete packages of wellness services in addition to “traditional” spa activities: anti-ageing, anti-stress, detox, weight-loss programmes, etc. These developments, which were in accordance with the first emergence of wellness tourism in Greece (Vasileiou & Tsartas, 2009), led to a diversified situation that in a sense was the re-shaping of earlier differences among the visitors of thermal establishments in regard not only to socio-economic position, but also to approaches of leisure and self-fulfillment.

The emergence of new thermalism services, in combination with an unprecedented diversification of consumerist practices in Greece during the late 1990s and the 2000s, led to a new rise in the number of visitors.

According to a recent research of the Greek National Centre for Social Research (Greek: EKKE), from 2005 to 2008 the number of tickets for bathing in thermal establishments all over the country grew from ca. 1,980,000 to ca. 2,323,000. From 2009, however, the outbreak of the economic and financial crisis, which hit Greece particularly hard, provoked a dramatic decrease: the number of tickets fell from ca. 2,050,000 in 2010 to ca. 1,586,000 in 2011, and then to approximately 880,000 in 2013, 2014, and 2015 (EKKE, 2016).¹In order to evaluate the data and to compare them with the previous development of thermalism in Greece (the data for which are mainly given in numbers of visitors and not in numbers of tickets), we must note that the overall number of bathing tickets in the decades of 1961-1970, 1971-1980, and 1981-1990 was ca. 17,000,000, 19,380,000, and 20,900,000 respectively, while in the eleven years between 2005 and 2015 it was not more than 18,065,000 (Papageorgiou, 2009: Appendix of chapter 2: 34-37; EKKE, 2016)

It is indicative that the number of ca. 880,000 tickets for the years 2013, 2014, and 2015 is substantially lower than the respective number for the years of the 1950s, when the tickets per year were more than 1,300,000, and is closer to the levels of the mid- and late 1930s (Papageorgiou, 2009:161)!

The economic crisis hit Greek thermalism in a twofold way. On the first hand, the social insurance funds made substantial cuts in services regarding the number of beneficiaries, the duration of the thermal cure, the access to thermal establishments irrespectively of their geographic position, and the list of illnesses and ailments covered; on the second hand, the crisis led to a consumption drop that reduced the number of visitors who were not beneficiaries of the social insurance system (EKKE, 2016).

At the same time, it is interesting to note the differences between the several entrepreneurial categories of thermal springs' exploitation. The ones that have been hit more severely were the enterprises that were based on state or private property. As to the first, their bathing tickets for 2015 represented only 18,6% of the tickets for 2005; as to the latter, the fall in bathing tickets between 2005 and 2015 for all privately held enterprises except the ones in the spa town of Aidipsos amounted to ca. 58%, while the fall for the privately held enterprises in Aidipsos was abysmal, as its percentage was more than 90% (EKKE, 2016)! The municipal enterprises were the only ones that were capable of somehow reducing the loss: the fall in the number of their bathing tickets between 2005 and 2015 amounted to ca. 33,4%. Today, the percentage of their bathing tickets in the Greek thermalism market represents more than 68%. Apart from the lower prices, a reason for the municipal establishments' better position in comparison to state and private enterprises was that some of them, organized either as municipal development companies (Greek: OTA), often based on public and private capital, or as small-scale private enterprises that lease municipal property, were more capable of attracting visitors also outside the field of social insurance beneficiaries through a combination of more affordable prices and well-being services in addition to medical ones (EKKE, 2016). Two examples are the municipal development company "Loutraki Thermal Spa" in the spa town of the same name in Central Greece (although the

municipality belongs administratively to the Region of the Peloponnese), and the small private enterprise “Therma Spa” on the island of Lesvos, which is leasing the property from the municipality of the island. See <http://www.loutrakispa.gr/>, and <http://thermaspalesvos.com/> respectively (last retrieved on July 21, 2016).

Thermalism in Greece today: Quantitative and qualitative factors in a period of economic recession

In a series of publications between 2009 and 2011, the urban planner Marilena Papageorgiou analyzed a set of data that were produced by her own fieldwork in Greek spa towns. In the analysis she discerned two main categories of visitors. On the one hand, there were the “classic” visitors of thermal establishments, aged for the most part over 65 years, who visited the baths in order to find cure or relief from a wide variety of illnesses and ailments. A significant number among them belonged to semi-urban and rural social strata of mediocre or low income; their visit was funded wholly or partly by their social insurance. This group’s interests in other forms of recreation were limited; most of them, although they spent a significant amount of time in spa towns (more than two weeks), did not look for any participation in excursions in the nearby areas and/or explorations of cultural, religious, or nature tourism.

On the other hand, there was the smaller category of “modern” spa visitors, which represented an almost diametrically opposite social type. With more than a half of them aged below 49 years, this group consisted of people from urban social strata of medium and high income, whose visit was rather prompted by a desire for wellness, beauty, relaxation, and self-development. Not surprisingly, many among them were women. Modern visitors lodged mostly in the renovated and expensive hotels, which offered all-inclusive packages, and confined their visit from a weekend to one week. In comparison to the “traditional” visitors, this group showed a greater interest in other forms of recreation, if available. Consequently, “modern” visitors had the tendency to spread the spatial scope of their activities, even though their stay was substantially shorter, a fact that hindered their participation in other forms of tourism (Papageorgiou & Beriatos, 2011. For a similar duality among Italian thermalists see Zollo et al., 2015, 69ff.)

This duality covered the whole scope of the visitors’ relationships with the local society and economy: while “classic” tourists formed closer ties with the local community (e.g. by staying in rented rooms or in low-budget hotels), they could not offer more to the economy, due to their restricted financial situation; on the other side, “modern” spa visitors had a minimal contact with the local community and a minimal contribution to the local economy, because of their limited stay in the luxury establishments’ atmosphere of all-included exclusiveness (Papageorgiou & Beriatos, 2011).

The parallel existence of these two categories, given here in a rather pronounced contrast, marked the most well-visited Greek spa towns and presented the main challenge for the further evolution of thermalism. Some of the classic spa towns of Greece presented a dual image: a few establishments were renovated and offered high-priced wellness services, while many other establishments, which were aimed at providing strictly medicinal services for the

middle and lower incomes, could not fund the modernization of their infrastructures; many were in a state of decay. In 2008, “in Kamena Vourla half of the treatment installations/buildings [were] completely abandoned while in Ypati the main spa center core [was] operating in a rather downgraded building construction and several hotels [were] also empty and nearly ruined” (Beriatos & Papageorgiou, 2008: 149). Towns as Aidipsos, Kamena Vourla, and Loutra Ypatis were partly developing into “brownfield sites”, that is, agglomerations of architectural complexes that once housed commercial activities, the shells of which continue to dominate the urban environment although their economic importance has withered (Beriatos & Papageorgiou, 2008).

According to the analysis of spatial planning and regional development experts, the way out of this impasse was to opt for a viable combination of both the therapeutical and the well-being functions of thermalism within an integrated framework of services and infrastructures that would attract the whole range of socioeconomic strata (with particular emphasis to middle incomes, which presented rather a gap in the spa towns’ social landscape), would promote and enhance the visitability of the relevant regions’ natural and cultural heritage, and would upgrade the spa towns’ spatial planning, in order for spa centres to acquire a “strong identity” (Papageorgiou & Beriatos, 2011: 46-47. See also Beriatos, 2009: 780, as well as Papageorgiou, 2009: 469 ff.). This, they added, “depends on political will and is mainly a task of local authorities, which are the direct and valid conveyor of local interests, which should be mobilized with the support of the central government and the financial contribution of local private investors” (Beriatos & Papageorgiou, 2008: 158). All this is very close to the recently coined concept of “regional branding”, as well as to sustainable development through a social-driven economy.

The economic crisis that followed transformed the landscape of thermalism in Greece and added new factors in its already complicated position. The duality between “classic” and “modern” spa visitors persists, but the condition of the two categories has changed. The number of “classic” spa visitors has shrunk, due to the cuts in the social security system, while some “modern” spa visitors cannot or are not willing to afford the prices of luxury hotels and turn to more modest new establishments that offer well-being services in lower price and in an atmosphere that, while very different from the one of popular establishments offering cure services for lower income and old age, has neither the exclusive character nor the “upper-class” pretensions of expensive hotels. It is indicative that, as the urban planners insisted, this development has taken place mostly at the municipal level. The Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs declares in its website that “whenever the Greek state put its trust in local authorities, notwithstanding the difficulties that were provoked by the economic crisis in the development of entrepreneurial activity after 2010, the visitability was held at some level”, and adds that, although the shift from social security funding to other target groups is not easy, the coordinated promotion of thermalism in the European Union, the networking activities between thermal springs establishments in Europe, and the homogenization of the legal and institutional framework regarding cross-border health care will lead to the improvement of thermalism services in

Greece (<http://www.thermalsprings.gr/index.php/el/nea-anakoinoseis-2/448-i-episkeysimotita-stis-ellinikes-iamatikes-piges-to-2015-erevna-tou-ekke>, last retrieved on July 21, 2016).

Impressions from a recent field survey

In August, 2016, a four-persons team of Greek cultural managers and humanist researchers undertook a survey of thermal establishments in central and northern Greece. The survey was organized by the Greek cultural management company Time Heritage within the framework of Cultour Plus, a project funded by the EU programme Erasmus+.

During the survey we visited the spa town of Kamena Vourla, the thermal establishments of Langadas near Thessaloniki and Nea Apollonia at the shore of lake Volvi, as well as the mud baths of Krinides near the city of Kavala. At the small city of Langadas we interviewed Mr. Markos Danas, secretary general of the Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs. At a later stage the team also visited the thermal spa of Loutraki and the Baths of Beautiful Helen (Loutra Oraias Elenis) in Corinthia.

The survey gave a nuanced picture of the relationship between curative and wellness thermalism along with issues of exploitation (private or municipal) and state support. The hotel "Galini" in Kamena Vourla, the only one that has been left from the historic hotels of the spa town in the 1960s, belongs to a large hotel company and is oriented to wellness services. It is indicative that, although the hotel does recommend a medical examination for the customers who intend to use the thermal baths in its premises, does not have any medical staff. The visitors have to look for a private medical doctor for their examination. In addition, the staff is less informed on thermalism and more on issues of lodging and services. In contrast to the luxury ambience of the hotel, thermalism in Kamena Vourla is in a state of sharp decline in comparison with the 1960s and 1970s, corroborating thus the picture given by the urban planning research that was carried on in the 2000s. The larger part of the so-called "thermal park", a complex comprising four hotels and the hydrotherapy centre, has been abandoned; only the hotel "Galini" and the hydrotherapy centre "Hippocrates", leased to the same tourist company to which the hotel belongs, survive today (Papageorgiou, 2009: 331 ff.).



Fig 1: Galini spa hotel, Kamena Vourla

The thermal establishment at the small town of Langadas, some 18 kilometres north of Thessaloniki, is a municipal enterprise. Langadas developed as a thermalism centre in the mid-war period (Papageorgiou, 2009: 225). when it became a spa and resort place for the bourgeoisie of Thessaloniki. The hotel "Megas Alexandros", a splendid example of modernist architecture, attests to this past. Today, the site and facilities of the thermal springs of Langadas are well maintained. The complex includes four indoor pools, of which the two are actually renovated Byzantine baths, one dating to the 9th and the other the 14th century, individual bath-tubs and hydrotherapy massage tubs, and two open swimming pools (<http://www.loutralagada.gr> (last retrieved on September 14, 2016).

Inside the hydrotherapy centre there is a medical station for the examination of the thermalists.



Fig. 2: Byzantine bath complex, Langadas

The average age of the thermal springs' visitors is significantly lower in recent years. The cuts in state subsidized thermalism have led to the decrease of third-age visitors, who used to come for purely therapeutic reasons, to the dramatic drop of accommodation services in the town of Langadas: of the numerous hotels and particularly rooms-to-let that used to operate, there exists now only one hotel in a state of absolute decline. The hotel "Megas Alexandros" closed down a few years ago, but the municipal enterprise of the thermal springs is looking for an investor; the call is being prepared in collaboration with the Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs.

On the other hand, some younger visitors are attracted by the facility's wellness and spa services; athletic clubs are visiting the facility for recovery and/or maintenance of fitness (Papageorgiou 2009: 227). This has led to the prolongation of the active season for the thermal springs beyond the summer months; new planning envisages all-year operation. In a sense, the springs of Langadas turn back to their past as a spa centre for nearby Thessaloniki. In this framework, the emphasis is now put in a combination of spa and wellness services (e.g. aromatherapy, jacuzzi) and in a relative detachment from strictly medical thermalism. A significant addition is the two open-air, Olympic-dimension pools, suitable for athletes and athletic teams.



Fig.3: Open-air pool in Langadas spa complex

The thermal baths at Nea Apollonia by lake Volvi, some 50 kilometres east from Thessaloniki also have a long history. According to Nikolaos Lekkas, head of the directorate of thermal springs in the late 1930s, when a hotel and a hydrotherapy centre were opened in Nea Apollonia, the people that used to bathe in the thermal springs turned to an old "Byzantine" bath some two kilometres away, where the thermal waters also spurted from the ground, and bathed there in order to avoid the cost (Lekkas, 1938: 21). The old bath, actually an Ottoman 16th-century building, stands today as a monument of Ottoman bathing culture in a very beautiful but rather neglected place, at the site of the small Ottoman town of YeniPazar (Vingopoulou-Papazotou, 1989).

The existing spa-town, developed also in the mid-war period, but presents a different picture than the ones of Langadas, as they are still predominantly a centre of curative thermalism. Their clientele, particularly during the summer months, consists mainly of third-age persons included in social tourism programmes. The situation of the facility, not so impressive as in Langadas, is in accordance to the low cost of social tourism services and the infrastructure is in need of improvement. There is a small pool and bathtubs for one or two persons, while a larger pool is planned. There are also rooms for hydro-massage, massage and sauna, while some wellness services are provided. The latter, however, are rarely sought by the visitors. Lodging is provided in hotel "Aristoteles" and in bungalows, situated within the thermal baths complex, while accommodation is available also in the town of Nea Apollonia (mainly rooms-to-let). For the use of the baths there is required the medical examination of the visitors in the medical centre located in the premises.



Fig.4: Thermal hotel "Aristoteles", Nea Apollonia

In the last few years, the bathing tickets have been reduced to the half, due to the cuts in social insurance services. Younger visitors are still rather few, but nevertheless more than in the past, particularly in spring and autumn. There is also a potential for small enterprises in connection to the thermal baths (canoe and kayak rental, bicycle rental, organization of tours in the nearby countryside), but has not yet been explored. Unfortunately, a new bath complex and hotel was completed in 1993 but never opened, due to reactions and conflicts within the local society and the municipality. Materials and infrastructure are left to ruin and pillage. See also *Volvi Press News*, <http://volvipress.gr/%CE%BD%CE%AD%CE%BI-%CE%BA%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B1%CE%B3%CE%B3%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%AF%CE%BI-%CF%83%CF%87%CE%B5%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AC-%CE%BC%CE%B5-%CF%84%CE%BI-%CE%BB%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%84%CF%81%CE%AC-%CE%BD%CE%AD/>, last retrieved on September 14, 2016).

Today, the management of the baths is in the hands of a company with the Municipality of Volvi and the Bank of Piraeus holding 51% and 49% of the shares respectively. The effort to move in the direction of a combination between curative thermalism and wellness services is evident (as can be seen by the rather glossy presentation in the baths' website), but the transition is not easy (*Iamatika Loutra Neas Apollonias*, <http://www.apollonia-spa.gr/> (last retrieved on September 14, 2016)).



Fig. 5: Ottoman baths in Apollonia

Last station of the first phase of the survey was the mud baths centre near the small town of Krinides in northeastern Greece, some 17 kilometres north of Kavala. The baths are situated some few kilometres away from the archaeological site of the ancient Filippi, which has been recently included in UNESCO's list of World Heritage Monuments (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1517>). The proximity of the mud baths prompts some tourists to a short visit, the more so since curative mud treatments are not so well-known and thus may awake some curiosity. Indeed, the area has a good potential for the mutual development of thermal, religious, and cultural-archaeological tourism: the ancient city of Filippi was visited by St Paul in his travels and was the seat of one of the first Christian Churches in Europe.

The spa, which is run by a municipal company (Municipality of Kavala), is in a very good condition (<http://www.pilotherapia.gr/>). The area is functional, welcoming and relatively well-visited. While the number of visitors has been severely reduced since 2009, the blow has not been so hard as elsewhere.

In the spa complex there is a large mud pool, as well as a hydro-therapy facility in an Ottoman bath that has been restored and renovated, while a gymnastic programme is also offered to the visitors; specialized medical support is provided in the complex. The spa is in open from June to October; the municipality has applied for a fund from the Greek National Strategic Reference Framework for the construction of a vaulted roof over the pool, so that the spa can operate all-year round. For the time being, most of the visitors are supported by social tourism programmes, while there are also some wellness tourists. Visitors can lodge in the municipal camping that operates inside the complex or in one of the hotels nearby. Some of the reasons for the spa's relative success in overcoming the impact of the economic crisis, despite the heavy losses, is the good cooperation between the municipality, the local stakeholders and the community, the proximity of other touristic attractions, as well as the fact that natural mud baths, due to their relative scarcity, do not have to cope with much competition. Many visitors seem to be well-acquainted with the place and to have developed a communal spirit, a fact reinforced by the presence of the camping that creates small "neighbourhoods" in the area it occupies. In general, the spa of Krinides presents a balanced example of popular curative thermalism that is now moving also in the direction of wellness tourism.



Fig.6: Restored Ottoman Hammam in Krinides

Significantly later than our main field trip, namely in October 2017, part of our team visited the famous Loutraki spa, a thriving summer resort in the 1970s and 1980s. The mayor of Loutraki has recently renovated radically the bath complex, creating a modern concept of thermalism, with a large pool where all kinds of hydro-massage and Jacuzzi practices are offered. The old building for drinking-therapy is nowadays functioning only as a museum. The town of Loutraki is only at an hour's driving distance from Athens, connected to it also by rail, so this makes it ideal for daily escapes. The occasion of our visit was the Autumn meeting of EHTTA (European Historic Thermal Towns Association) to which we were invited by mr. Markos Danas in order to meet mr. Mario Crescente, thermal architecture specialist. On this occasion, mr Andreas Zongos asked us to accompany him to the Baths of Beautiful Helen, where allegedly Helen of Troy used to take her beauty baths, in order to start working out ways of exploiting and

enhancing the site for touristic exploitation. The thermal water flows directly into the sea, and is currently not exploited but freely used by sea bathers in the region. Some basic 1950s infrastructure has been destroyed and the municipality is now looking for the best possible way to use and enhance it, in order to upgrade Loutra Oraias Elenis as a summer resort, by linking it to other touristic and cultural activities in the region.



Fig. 7 Baths of Beautiful Helen

A specialist's view

The interview with Mr. Danas, secretary general of the Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs, revealed some of the main issues for the development of thermalism in Greece. Chief among them is the question of certification: according to the Greek law 3498/2006, all thermal springs establishments needed to follow the new guidelines for getting certified (*National Printing Office, Government Gazette A 230 of October 24, 2006*, <http://www.et.gr/index.php/2013-01-28-14-06-23/2013-01-29-08-13-13> (last retrieved on September 15, 2016). This was in accordance with the effort for the homogenization of the legal and institutional framework within the European Union. Things were not easy, however, since municipal authorities were not able to deal with the complex procedure, and the latter was somewhat simplified by the ministerial decision 14759 of November 9, 2011. The Association supports member towns all over Greece to compile the dossiers and successfully follow the procedure, the final deadline being December 2016 (*Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs*, <http://www.thermalsprings.gr/index.php/el/nea-anakoinoseis-2/445-dieukolynsi-ton-diadikasion-gia-tin-xorigisi-tou-eidikou-simatos-leitourgeias-meletes-perivallontikon-epiptoseon-pistopoiitika-aktinoprostasias> (last retrieved on September 15, 2016).

Another issue, the importance of which was evident in the survey, is the one concerning the ways of exploitation of thermal springs. In cases where the municipalities have retained the exploitation of thermal baths and spa facilities, funding continued (even with substantial cuts in services provided) despite the negative effects from the decline of supported thermalism. However, local authorities are not always quick to adapt to changing conditions, and changes at the political level affect the management and the sustainability of the thermal establishments. The Association tries to help municipalities to set up business plans for partial cooperation with the private sector, as well as for getting funding by European Union projects and by the Greek National Strategic Reference Framework, in order to expand the range of offered services and attract more visitors at a quantitative and qualitative level. As for the private sector, the small enterprises that used to draw their clientele from supported thermalists have faced much more severe difficulties, a fact underlined also in the recent research of the Greek National Centre for Social Research. On the other hand, larger companies have turned to offering wellness services, abandoning the curative aspect of thermalism.

These developments confirm the duality between “traditional” thermalism and wellness services that was revealed in scientific research, as well as the validity of the call for the formation of integrated and research-informed strategies on thermalism and other forms of cultural tourism through a cooperation between local authorities, the central government and the private sector (Papageorgiou, 2009; Danas, 2015). Any effective measure towards this development must take into account the European framework as concerns funding, institutional homogenization, and common actions. Institutions like the European Historic Thermal Towns Association, of which the Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs is a member, can play a crucial role in this development (*European Historic Thermal Towns Association*, <http://www.ehtta.eu/> (last retrieved on 7, July 2016). Another significant step would be the inclusion of thermal establishments into the primary health care system of Greece, a development that would allow Greek thermal springs to attract insured persons from other countries of the European Union (Danas, 2013). It is significant that in all these suggestions the public sector (the central state, the regional and local governments) plays a decisive role, even at a time when social state services are shrinking all over Europe.

For a re-conceptualization of popular thermalism

It seems that the “golden age” of supported thermalism in Europe is irretrievably gone. The countries that in the postwar decades included thermalism in their social security services, capitalist and communist alike, are following –or have already followed– the same path: “with the collapse of state socialism in the East, and the shrinking of the welfare state in the West, the spa was “re-invented as a wellness destination”, a development that has alienated the “classic” spa visitors culturally and economically” (Naraindas & Bastos, 2011: 3). At the same time, “medical science provided a host of therapies that worked more quickly and consistently (although not necessarily more cheaply) than

did mineral waters". The shift in medical science towards a clinical approach as to therapeutic efficacy put the curative efficacy of thermal springs into doubt (Weisz, 2011: 142).

The difficult co-existence between medicinal and wellness thermalism may –in fact, it already does– lead to the widening of the gap between them and between the social groups they draw on. Moreover, the clinicalisation of health care exiles a large part of –particularly elderly– Europeans in the unfriendly territory of the ubiquitous pill. These are developments that emphasize and consolidate differences and inequalities as regards to economic position, age, and sociocultural identities. At the same time, the development of thermalism into a commercialized product not only affects its popular character, but also endangers its importance as an economic sector. The success of the "Galini" luxurious establishment in Kamena Vourla cannot compensate for the decline of overall thermalism in the old spa centre, nor for the loss this development means for the local economy, exactly as the efforts of Czech spas to attract wealthy Germans cannot compensate for the loss of the Czech visitors who used to frequent the facilities (Speier, 2011). As the historian George Weisz says, "it is always nice to be reminded that private enterprise has its limitations and state intervention its uses" (Weisz, 2011: 141).

Intervention in which direction, however? The German model, which combines supported thermalism (even with serious cuts in comparison to the past) with curative pluralism (Naraindas, 2011), is very different to the French one, where "medicalized thermalism has become almost entirely dependent on government funding, with all the uncertainty that entails" (Weisz, 2001: 480). The analysis of thermalism in crisis-stricken Greece may provide a useful occasion for a re-conceptualisation of European popular thermalism.

As we have seen, the most successful thermal establishments in reducing the loss during the current recession were the municipal enterprises, which have tried –not always with success– to combine curative thermalism with wellness services. Cases like the mud baths of Krinides display a rich potential for opening the way to a new popular thermalism. First, they have not alienated their traditional clientele; second, they capitalise on their vast expertise in thermal issues; third, they cultivate a sense of communal belonging in regard both to their visitors and to the local society; fourth, instead of just "selling" a product, they have embedded mud bathing into the historical and cultural identity of thermalism as a healing process, a notion that cuts across medicinal and wellness thermalism. In Krinides, mud bathing is offered as a collective experience that is open to all, young and old, ailing and healthy, cure- and wellness-seeking alike. Side by side in the pool and covered in therapeutic mud, the visitors are transformed into a healing community of equals.

The next step is network formation and cluster building. The Krinides mud baths are already a member of the European Historic Thermal Towns Association; good cooperation between the municipality and the local society has allowed the formation of a cluster of private enterprises that operate around the mud bath facilities. This potential could expand at the direction of holistic tourism at a local and regional level that in its turn would be linked with other networking initiatives at a European scale.

The role of public institutions in this process remains crucial, not only in monitoring activities but also in supervising and planning. In order for popular thermalism to safeguard its sociocultural and economic importance, it has to become the target of integration policies in the framework of the European Union. A close cooperation between European public authorities, local, regional, national and central, on the one hand, and collective bodies like the associations of thermal springs and spas, could lay the foundations for the planning and regulating of public and private funding; for defining the scope of curative and wellness thermalism; for embedding it in the health systems of European states; for ensuring a fair and productive division of labour between spas, as well as affordable access to Europe's working and retired social groups; and for exploring possibilities for the further development of thermalism in connection with other forms of recreation and leisure. Admittedly, this seems to be a long and winding road, exactly as European integration appears nowadays.

Bathing in thermal springs is a sociocultural *habitus* and an economic activity deeply rooted in European historical experience. Its long history shows clearly its close relation to three important concepts: social identity and interaction, healing, and enjoyment. All three are of fundamental importance for a Europe threatened by rising socioeconomic inequality and exclusion, anxiety and fear for the future, and intellectual *tristesse*. Any thought of sustainability must take into account the sociocultural and political factors and implications of economic activity. A new popular thermalism could contribute to social coherence, social participation, and social well-being (Keyes, 1998).

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3.3. Water, culture and education: a unique selling proposition to promote tourism in Chaves

1. Summary

Based on a combination of desk and field research, we decode the synergies occurring over recent decades to promote tourism in Chaves, which creatively combines three dimensions: water, culture and education.

Chaves, a medium-sized town in northern Portugal, now promotes itself as part of a 'Eurocity of Water'. Hence we analyse how water has been used for different purposes. There are about a dozen natural mineral water springs in the area, some having served what was once the largest Roman medicinal baths in the Iberian Peninsula, while others provide one of the largest and best equipped spas of modern Portugal. Less than 20 km to the south of Chaves are the springs of Vidago, with a splendid belle époque hotel constructed in 1908, which reopened after a complete restoration and with a new spa in 2010. The Pedagogical Spa for the Research and Development of Spa Practices, a good use of a former railway station, is soon to be opened. In addition, the Tâmega River runs through Chaves.

We conclude that focusing on the triad 'water, culture and education' offers a unique selling proposition to develop not just tourism in Chaves but also the local economy in general.

2. Introduction

Wherever you are in the world, you need a unique selling proposition (Reeves, 1961) in order to be convincing and stand out amidst your competitors. In this section, we will reflect on a case study on the town of Chaves (northern Portugal) that has, amongst other attractions, water (various natural mineral springs and the Tâmega river) and built heritage as outstanding ingredients for the development of its tourism industry. Simply by observing what is actually happening now in Chaves, we noticed that another factor, 'education', recurred in combination with water and/or heritage/culture.

One can encounter in Chaves obvious mixtures of water, culture and education. These include an education service in the local museum; weekly talks in the modern spa of Chaves as a means to pass the time in an interesting way for the spa goers; members of local cultural associations guiding visitors through historical parts of the city; explanatory signposting near historic buildings; swimming lessons in the municipal swimming pool; a teacher taking students to the local churches to explain them *in situ* the characteristics of different architectural styles; the municipal archaeologist who goes to schools and describes what is being discovered in the city, etc.

As there are moreover different less obvious combinations of water, culture and education present in Chaves, this triad offers a unique and outstanding character to the town. We thus formulated the following working question: 'In what degree are those three elements – water, education and culture – consciously brought together to promote tourism?'

In the next paragraphs we will offer a brief presentation of (1.1) the water resources of Chaves and (1.2) the Chaves-Verín Eurocity – given its importance as an example of good practice in cross-border collaboration in various domains, such as spa and cultural tourism.

2.1. Water Resources of Chaves

Chaves is situated in the north of Portugal near the border with the Spanish region of Galicia. This middle-sized town is the urban centre of a municipality extending over 600 km², containing 39 parishes and 41,243 inhabitants (INE, 2011). Chaves is also the centre of a region with abundant natural mineral springs that have great potential to promote not only tourism but also local development. This water was already used in Roman times as the former name of the city, *Aquae Flaviae*, reminds us. Chaves is a part of the Galicia/North Portugal Euroregion which, as a whole, is the area of the Iberian Peninsula with the highest number of thermal springs. It is also a part of the *Agrupación Europea de Cooperación Territorial-AECT EuroCiudad Chaves-Verín*, the Eurocity of Water.

The existence of a tectonic fault, the Penacova-Régua-Chaves-Verín fault which runs north-south, gives rise to a high incidence of mineral water springs. Therefore the springs share some physical and chemical properties and differ primarily by their emergence temperature (between 15 and 73 °C) (ECV, 2014; Domínguez, 2008; Pardellas de Blas, Padín Fabeiro, 2013). Thanks to the quality and quantity of these (natural mineral) water springs, not only Chaves but also the Chaves-Verín Eurocity possess unique and precious endogenous resources.

2.2. Chaves-Verín: Eurocity of Water

As Chaves is integrated in the Chaves-Verín Eurocity, which promotes itself as the 'Eurocity of Water', we will provide some background information about this grouping. Launched in 2007, the Chaves-Verín Eurocity project is led by the two municipalities who gave it their name. The Eurocity's main objectives are: the adoption of a 'Euro-citizenship', the sustainable development of the territory and the implementation of a cross-border dynamic economy. As a member of the network of cities 'Eixo Atlántico' and the Euroregion 'Galicia-Norte de Portugal', the Chaves-Verín Eurocity promoted non-stop cross-border dynamics between Portugal and Spain until it saw its partnership institutionalised when it was recognized as a European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) in 2013 (MOT, 2015).

Due to their common resources, shared interests and solid political collaboration, cross-border cooperation between the two towns has grown considerably over the last decade, until they were selected in October 2015 with their project for cross-border cooperation, the Chaves-Verín Eurocity, as the best project of the European Union for the 2015 RegioStars awards, in the category CityStars (ECV, 2015b). As a matter of fact, it becomes increasingly difficult to isolate Chaves from the 'Eurocity'.

Having presented Chaves' water resources and the Eurocity concept, we can now proceed to analyse how the triad water, culture and education – as a basis for tourism promotion, and thus local development – is present on the ground and in the strategic plans (Illustration I).

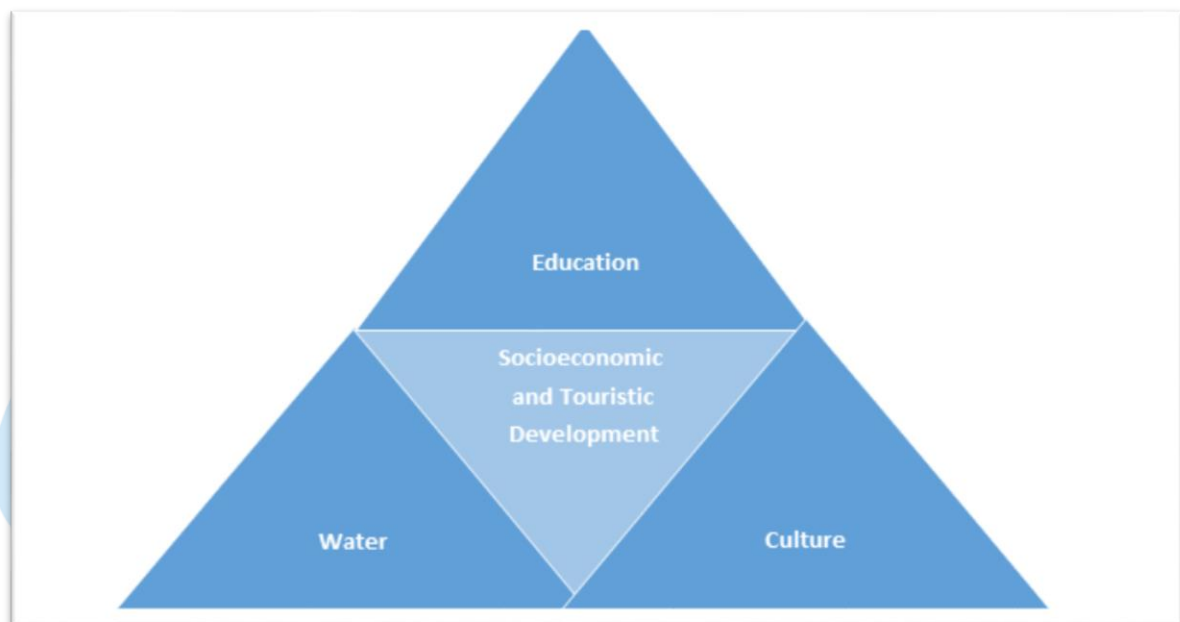


Illustration I. The triad water/culture/education under analysis. Source: Own elaboration.

3. Methodology

We chose to start our research by observation and therefore we observed what is happening on the ground. In a second phase we confronted what is being done in real life with what is being planned for the territory.

In previous research work (Joukes, Costa, 2015) we concluded that, in several European projects like the Chaves-Verín Eurocity, and thus in Chaves, in order to promote its 'water' resources, a component of 'training' was introduced. This section goes a step further as it takes a third element that contributed to the success of Chaves in the area of project management into consideration: the factor 'heritage' is added to the winning double. That is why an extensive documentary analysis was undertaken to reveal the kind of linkages between the three elements. Data were obtained from the websites, the newsletters, and published tourism information of the town and the Chaves-Verín Eurocity, as

well as their strategic plans. These data were cross-referenced with local and national newspapers and scientific articles, as well as with the results of the observation.

Paragraphs 3 to 5 reflect the analysis of the field observation mixed with desk research, each on one of the items of our interest (water, heritage/culture and training/learning/education).

The field work and desk research were undertaken as part of the project, "CULTOUR+ Innovation and Capacity Building in Higher Education for Cultural Management, Hospitality and Sustainable Tourism in European Cultural Routes", with a two-year duration (September 2015–2017). This European project aims to enhance professional capacities and to upgrade tourism services along a set of pilgrimage ways, and especially in historic spa towns along these routes, in six European countries, namely Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Bulgaria and Poland. It takes an innovative approach in practice by bridging the gap between academic research and tourism practitioners through vocational education and training and the implementation of information technologies.

We mainly opted for the terms 'education' and 'culture' in the rest of this section, as they are part of the project's title, but they can easily be interchanged with other general designations such as 'training/learning' and 'heritage', respectively.

4. Thermal Springs and Freshwater, the Main Natural Resources of Chaves

In this paragraph we describe the springs that are being used in the water/culture/education context: two spa complexes in the centre of Chaves and two in Vidago.

4.1) Modern Spa Complex and Roman Baths in Chaves

On the right bank of the Tâmega river, in and around the town centre of Chaves, natural mineral water springs occur with a unique composition; they are hyper-thermal, at 73 °C, meso-mineralized and gaso-carbon and contain bicarbonate of soda. History tells us that, when the Romans dominated this region, the legions, after military expeditions, recovered their strength in the hot water spa of the city of Aquae Flaviae. The exact location of the baths was forgotten over time and for more than 1500 years there were only speculations. In 1807 a 'new', rather rudimentary, structure was built for taking the waters, very near the river. In 1934 another simple and small-scale tap room with stone pillars in neo-Roman style was built next to it. Then in 1950 both of these buildings were demolished and replaced by a tap room which is still in use and by a modern though temporary *medical spa* that functioned for some 20 years. The latter was then itself destroyed to make way for the first part of the present thermal complex. This was officially opened in 1972 and has since undergone various remodelling and expansion projects, the latest completed in 2015. It now is equipped to serve 15,000 clients per year (Joukes, 2009b; Termas de Chaves, 2015). The successive phases of the growth of this spa are shown in Illustration 3.



Fig. 1. Structures of 1807 and 1934. Source: <http://fotos.sapo.pt/pluto/fotos/?uid=q8wNj8begvQ65B0EC6n6>



Fig. 2. Spa complex of 1950. Source: <http://chaves.blogs.sapo.pt/288891.html?thread=714875>

Fig. 3. Spa complex of 1972. Source: <http://es.euroidadechavesverin.eu/turismo/conoce/patrimonio-balneario>

The Chaves springs are the hottest in continental Portugal, with temperatures of approximately 73 °C. Use of this water for



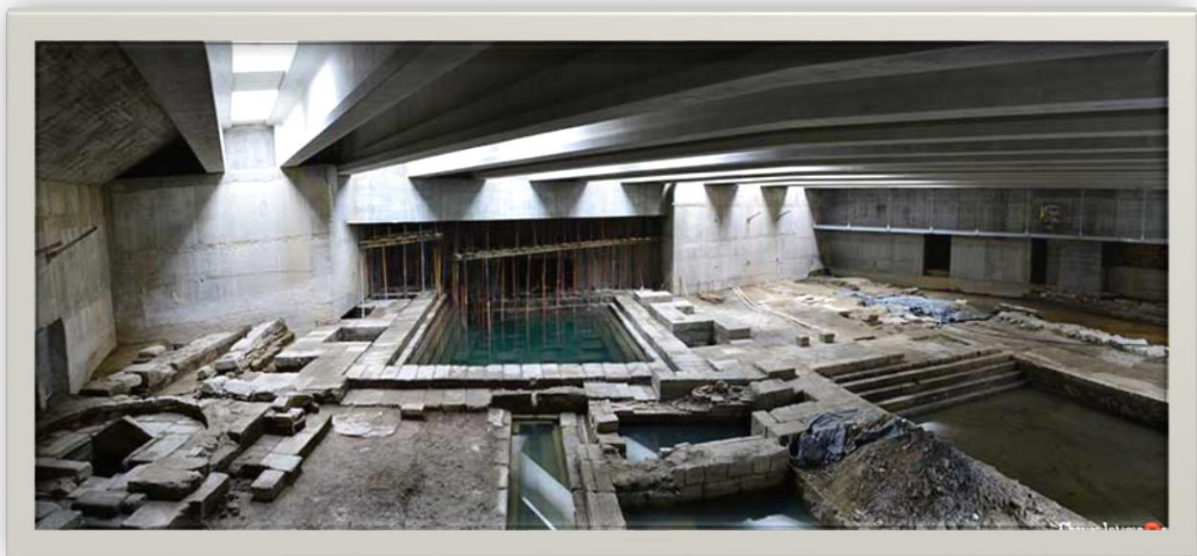
geothermal purposes commenced in 1982 and has become ever more systematic (Oliveira, Almeida, Reis, Alencão, Sousa, Lourenço, 2012: 419; translated by V. Joukes).

The latest upgrade of the building corresponds with its new designation, Centro de Competências em Turismo, Termalismo, Saúde e Bem-estar (Competence Centre for Tourism, Spa, Health and Wellness). Part of this remodelling resulted in a well-equipped laboratory that serves scientific investigation – a form of education – in the form of, for example, the composition and testing of cosmetic products made from the local natural mineral water (Anúncio, 2013; Termas avançam, 2013). Working in Chaves on a dermocosmetic line based on thermal water, the research team hopes to emulate the biggest spa complex in Portugal, São Pedro do Sul, where their dermocosmetic line 'Aqua' was presented to the public in 2013. (Investigação [2015]; Lice, 2013; Agência Lusa, 2014). Better physical equipment will also stimulate new forms of interinstitutional cooperation, making it more attractive for researchers to work and live in Chaves (Quatenaire Portugal, 2014: 27).

Regarding the Roman baths (Illustration 4), they were discovered in 2004 during the mandatory archaeological surveys preceding the construction of an underground car park (Silva, Pinto, Quintino, Teixeira, 2007). Since 2006 systematic archaeological excavations conducted on the site of the former Largo do Arrabalde square, have brought a Roman



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Figs. 4 & 5 The Roman baths of Chaves.

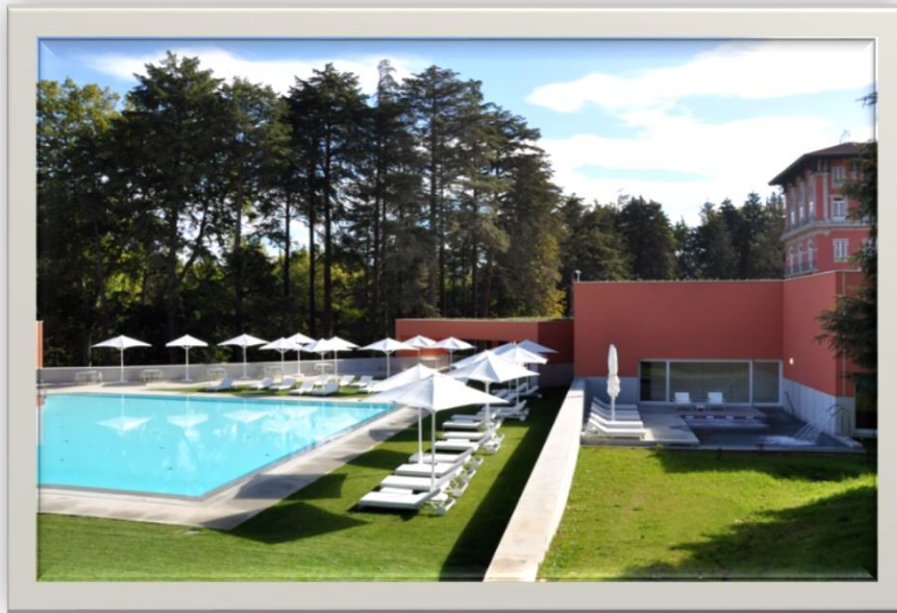
<http://en.euroidadechavesverin.eu/discover/archaeological-heritage;>

<http://casamentojoanaemiguel2015.com/oquever.html>

wellness and healing spa in all its splendour to light. It is a monumental bathing complex with three pools known to date, three rooms with opus signinum flooring, a castellum aquae and an intricate system of water conveying and disposal (Carneiro, 2013). Chronologically, it is not yet possible to ascertain the date of the Roman spa. The information available shows that it operated at least until the last decades of the fourth century CE. The good state of preservation of the lower floor of the building is partially owed to the sudden collapse of the roof and walls, probably caused by an earthquake. The remains of people who were actually bathing at the time, excavated from beneath the rubble, is testimony to the destruction of the baths when they were still in everyday use. This building, remarkable for its monumentality and excellent state of preservation, is comparable with other great thermal medicinal complexes of antiquity such as Bath, Badenweiler or Hammam Salehine and has all the qualities of a popular visitor attraction (Carneiro, 2013; Termas Medicinaias, 2013; comments of Sérgio Carneiro during a guided visit in November 2015).

4.2) Two Contemporary Spa Complexes in Vidago

Two other examples of profitable use made of the same kind of resource – although in a completely different way and in different periods – can be found in Vidago, where the natural mineral waters were discovered in 1863 (Joukes, 2009b: 174-175). From 1875, when the first spa hotel was opened to the public, to the 1940s new visitor accommodation was added on a regular basis, the most impressive being the Vidago Palace Hotel, opened in 1910. It was thoroughly renovated at the beginning of this century and, as cost was no object, the prestigious architect Siza Vieira, who received the Pritzker prize in 1992 (also known as the Nobel prize of architecture), was contracted for the project (Joukes, 2009a; Castro n.d.).



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Fig.7.8 8. The spa of the Vidago Palace Hotel. http://www.termasdeportugal.pt/media/4/Image/AA8D7875-6490-4D62-AF24-7734F3D548CC/vti_cnf/OutdoorPool.jpg; http://www.termasdeportugal.pt/media/4/Image/AA8D7875-6490-4D62-AF24-7734F3D548CC/vti_cnf/Vidago%20-%200020.JPG

The most recent spa project in Vidago, the Pedagogical Spa for Research and Development of Spa Practices, is also a public initiative, carried out by the City Council of Chaves, and is currently 'on hold' for lack of funding of the final phase of the refurbishment (Illustration 6 – left). This original project – the transformation of a former railway station into a spa – is the best example of the willingness of the City Council to reinforce the potential of two of its strongest resources, water and culture, combining them with education, because this building will, amongst other purposes, be used for the training of future spa professionals (Ladeiras, 2014; Medeiros, 2015).

The second usage of the natural mineral water at Vidago is bottling water from two local springs, the 'Campilho' and the 'Vidago' brand (Illustration 6 – right).

As summed up in the introduction, Chaves is a very well-endowed micro region when it comes to natural mineral water resources. From our perspective, the large variety of ways in which the natural mineral waters of Chaves are being used is impressive. In this section we have not even mentioned the potential of Segirei and Vilarelho da Raia, where the springs are currently not used; instead we referred to the positive uses made of the springs in the town centre and in Vidago.

We want to underline that, although so far we have not done anything but describe the water resources of Chaves, we can already list different mixed uses of the water/culture/education triad: preservation and display of the Roman baths in the historic centre of Chaves (water/culture-heritage), creation of a pedagogical spa in a former railway station in Vidago (water/culture-heritage/education-training), quality research laboratories in the 'new' spa of Chaves (water/education-research), guided visits to the bottling plants (water/edutourism), and the addition of a hyper modern spa, designed by the prominent Portuguese architect, Siza Vieira, to the completely renovated belle époque five-star Vidago Palace Hotel (water/culture-heritage and contemporary architecture).

Hence, in Chaves mainly through public, but also through private, initiative, a great deal is being done to promote the local (natural mineral) water and the heritage around it, introducing at the same time some educational activities.

5. Chaves takes care of its heritage, culture being another of its main resources

As for the heritage of Chaves, it is rich and diversified. It is not within the scope of this paper to draft a complete list; just to recall that, through it, we may follow the course of millennia of history. Very close to the city are traces of its prehistoric past (for example, the Celtic fortified village of Curalha). In the city there are numerous testimonies of its past: Roman (the baths, the Roman bridge, milestones, and votive, honorific and funerary epigraphs); medieval (the medieval quarter and walls, and the keep tower, the remains of the ancient castle); and early modern (Santa Maria Maior, known as the Matriz Church – itself a mosaic of periods –, the Misericórdia church, chapels, the restored town walls, and the forts of São Francisco and São Neutel). This heritage has been the object of studies by professional researchers and local amateurs (for an extensive list of the tangible and intangible heritage, see: *Aquae Flaviae* Group; publications sponsored by the City Council; Leite, 2010; Costa, Joukes, Diniz, Morais, Pereira, 2014: 22).

There has been a constant stream of investments in the preservation and recuperation of the built heritage in the town in the last two decades: making the Roman bridge only accessible to pedestrians, conservation of Roman remains below the municipal archive, recovery of the seventeenth-century ramparts, transformation of the old railway end station into a cultural centre, and transforming the Roman spa into a museum, are only some of the results of these efforts.

The rise in the number of museums can also be considered as an indicator of the growing notion of the potential of cultural assets. Museum of the Chaves Region is the name of the network of municipal museums of Chaves, which covers the different thematic museums of the region, namely the Archaeology and Pre-History Centre, the Military Centre, the Sacred Art Museum and the Railway History Centre (Leite, n.d.). This set of museum spaces – modest for now – will soon be enriched with two bold

projects: the aforementioned museum of the Roman spa and the Nadir Afonso museum. Both are meant to be opened to the public hopefully in the near future and thus will bring more visitors to the town with positive economic consequences.

As the discovery of the Roman baths, and the objects found during the excavations, are unique in the Iberian Peninsula, this museum will automatically become a major tourist attraction. The decision to house the Roman remains in a modern building with a high-tech roof [see video with time-lapse of its installation (Moura, 2014)] is a further source of admiration and interest. The Nadir Afonso museum, a 7-million euro investment, 85% of which is co-funded by European funds, opened in 2016 and put the city of Chaves on the world map of contemporary art. Construction of the museum, located on the left bank of the Tâmega river, began in 2011. The project was designed to honour Nadir Afonso, a philosopher, painter and architect born in Chaves in 1920, who died aged 93 in Cascais (Museu Nadir Afonso, 2015).

In the first stage of our research, we observed a clear intention of preserving, enhancing and promoting heritage. And once again, talking about one element of the triad under discussion, one cannot avoid talking about the other two: a new contemporary art museum, dedicated to Nadir Afonso, was constructed near the river, the museum director finds ways to 'educate' his fellow citizens by introducing museum pieces indirectly into the daily life of the population, and since their discovery the city archaeologist, Sérgio Carneiro, has offered informative guided visits to the Roman baths.

6. Education in Chaves

6.1) Education in the Traditional Way

At the level of formal education Chaves is also very well off. Apart from public schools, an indefinite number of private art schools operate in Chaves (painting, music, dance, folklore, sport, etc.). We highlight the Arts Academy, where music is taught (Costa et al., 2014: 23-24).

A more recent – and in the context of this section fascinating – project is the Pedagogical Spa for the Research and Development of Spa Practices (Balneário Pedagógico de Investigação e Desenvolvimento de Práticas Termais de Vidago) into which the former railway station has been transformed (Elias, 2014). The building is already open to the public for medical and wellness treatments, but its managers are still on the lookout for funding in order to turn it into what its title tells us it will be: a school where you can learn how to apply spa treatments.

This is what De Visscher (2015) calls learning *in* the city – taking advantage of the formal pedagogical facilities like schools, museums, etc. He, however, invites people to go one step further and start learning *from* the city – referring to the opportunities for informal learning offered by the city. He thus creatively reformulates that cultural heritage can be “an effective educational tool for formal, non-formal and informal education, life-long learning and training” (CEU, 2014: 2).

In Chaves great advantage is taken of this perspective through the creation of multiple routes through which one can learn something, in this case mostly about heritage, in many cases linked with natural mineral water.

6.2) Gaining Insight into the City Through Tourism Routes

In the course of our research, we were surprised by the amount of routes that already exist to promote Chaves as a tourism product, for special niche markets or for the public in general. We use a general term 'route' here to introduce this section, but as a matter of fact, we are dealing here with different kinds of 'routes': some are clearly marked circular or linear itineraries, others indicate different options from which to choose; some are digital, others on paper; some are for pedestrians, others for bicycles or cars; some are projected on a local scale or regional scale, others on national or even international level. We list some of the recent achievements, all selling in a creative way (something of) the triad water/culture/education, we will not give any details about the two "digital formats" for general use (for more information, see: Orbcom, 2014; Pinto, 2014; ECV, 2015e; TOMI, 2015), focus only on the "real life" format for spa tourists.

The EGTC has been concentrating quite some efforts in the creation of a set of tourism routes that can be followed by foot, car or bicycle. They are well marked on the terrain and also available in well-organized printed information. Some of the titles of the digital or paper booklets available in Portuguese, Spanish and English are: Chaves-Verín Quick Guide, Map and Guide of the Thermal and Water Route of Eurocity of Chaves-Verín, and Eurocity Guide. On the tourism site of the Chaves-Verín Eurocity <http://www.visitchavesverin.com/es> there are even more suggestions, like the 'Smuggling Route', the 'Eco-way of the Tâmega River', or a mountain bike trail linking the frontier fortresses. A 41-kilometre cycle route, the Chaves-Verín Ciclovía, links Chaves and Verín; mostly adopting the former railway track in Portuguese territory it is thus a way of revitalizing this transport route (ECV, 2015d, 2015c).

The map below (Illustration 2) shows the thermal and water route Verín-Chaves-Vidago, and explains the use made of the main natural mineral water springs in the territory of Chaves.



Fig. 9. The Vidago pedagogical spa complex https://chavesandaround.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/estac3a7ao-de-vidago_2015-10.jpg



Fig 10. The bottling line of 'Vidago' mineral water: http://www.pedrassalgadapark.com/fotos/galerias/018_28250427350169b3243f3d.jpg

in the middle of the countryside, one arrives at the modest spa of Vilarelho da Raia (b), constructed in 1865 (Joukes, 2009b: 176) and never modernized. In the centre of Chaves are the Roman baths (c), now being transformed into a museum, and less than a kilometre further on, the actual spa, recently enlarged (d). Closer to the southern border of the municipality are the Vidago springs (used for bottling water and spa treatments), some of them located in the park of the award-winning Vidago Palace Hotel (Awards, 2015) (e). In the same locality another bottling company, Campilho, exploits other springs. A more recent project is the Pedagogical Spa for the Research and Development of Spa Practices (Balneário Pedagógico de Investigação e Desenvolvimento de Práticas Termais de Vidago) at the former railway station (Elias, 2014) (f). In addition to the mineral water springs, we must not overlook another kind of water, freshwater, the main river being the Tâmega. In this section, however, we will not explore this resource.

In other words, there is no lack of (natural mineral) water in Chaves and all facets are clearly explained in the brochure and accompanying map.

At the local level there is a true panoply of options to discover Chaves and its surroundings following one or another tourism route. Besides, Chaves is included in different international thermal and cultural routes, as we will exemplify next. Furthermore, Chaves is integrated in the following international tourism routes: the European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA) (Arca Petrucci, 2005). Another European project in which Chaves participated between 2014 and 2016, is 'In the Footsteps of the Romans', which links European thermal water health resorts of Roman origin (ESPA, 2014; RTSE, 2014). The Caminho Português Interior de Santiago (Portuguese Inland Way of Saint James) stretches for 205 kilometres in Portuguese territory, starting in Viseu and passing through Chaves before reaching the Spanish border at Verín. There are very interesting associations between pilgrimage (or culture, in the broad sense, as the way follows a historically proven trail and religion can be seen as a form of cultural expression) and water, since thermal spas can help travellers recuperate during the long journeys on the trail, and can also be the site of ritual bathing to cleanse the body and the soul as well.

7. Conclusions

As was explained in the introduction, one can encounter in Chaves obvious mixtures of water, culture and education. The reason we chose to work on this combination in Chaves is because this triad is present in a more conscious and premeditated and clearly intelligent way. Indeed, it is hard to find elsewhere creative projects like a spa in a former railway station; Roman baths in a hyper modern setting; a municipal centre of research on mineral water in a spa complex; museum objects on display in local shops or an interactive application for mobile phones to promote tourism in a town. Moreover, all these unique services stimulate curiosity, and a desire to visit Chaves.

We conclude that focusing on the triad 'water, culture and education' offers a lot of possibilities to develop not just tourism in particular but also the local economy in general in Chaves.

The answer to our working question, 'In what degree are water, education and culture consciously brought together in Chaves for tourism promotion?' is that Chaves combines these elements in an ever more coherent way, and succeeds in successfully promoting this triad. The 'water' and 'culture' pillars of the triad are already fairly well developed. The "educational" pillar is mostly present under the form of different types of routes. Consequently, one of the main strengths of Chaves derives

from the fact that it has been systematically enhancing and interrelating its water and heritage resources over the years through different projects (Joukes; Costa, 2015) and that it in the future will strengthen the education panel even more, offering special trainings in the Pedagogical Spa for the Research and Development of Spa Practices.

Within the frame of the CULTOUR+ project, namely a phase dedicated to improving tourism experiences in thermal towns, ways will be found to optimize the contribution of the weaker 'education' angle of the triangle under investigation in order to guarantee an optimal use of the resources at the disposal of Chaves. The next research question will be: 'In what way can the educational component reinforce water/culture even more in order to create a unique selling proposition?'



3.4. Governance models for spa and health tourism: Bath and Alange¹

Pilar Barrios Manzano, Juana Gómez Pérez (Special collaborator: Juan Diego Carmona)

Presentation

This document centres around a comparative study of two models of spa management, Bath (United Kingdom) and Alange (Extremadura, Spain). The former is an example of the Anglo-Saxon model and is observed from an outsider's perspective. The latter is a local model, well-known and experienced for many years in our own region. Both are founded upon on similar ancestral legends wherein a person is cured from a serious illness and the spa is born as a result of that cure. Both towns have meaningful names, which tells us something about their past, present, and future. For our research, we analysed the main websites and obtained information in conversations with the owners, employees, and neighbours. Our personal experience as clients attuned to and involved in carrying out this project was essential in this descriptive and comparative study.

The two spas, and the two towns, are a direct inheritance of the Roman Empire, to say the least. They share the fact that twenty centuries later they remain iconic sites in their own areas. They are both recognized by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites. The reason for this recognition and for their survival is the indispensable resource of their mineral-medicinal waters. These waters have an intense and direct restorative effect on the health of those who seek multi-day treatment to alleviate their illnesses under medical supervision.

In the modern day, there has been a proliferation of establishments with spas. There seems to be an obsession with the cult of the body, spirituality, alternative therapies, and the search for a mind-body balance. These establishments offer different treatments with massages and bodywork with natural products that without a doubt improve the health and well-being of those who receive it. Their waters and steam, which are certainly good, are not necessarily different than any other location. But it is the curative properties of the water which distinguish thermal baths like Bath and Alange and have allowed them to survive throughout time and history. The preservation of the properties of their waters and the coexistence of modern construction alongside ancient Roman baths is what keeps these baths in the highest esteem, all based on the mineral-medicinal waters, their traditional therapies, and the abundance of natural, historical, and cultural resources.

Bath and Alange, notwithstanding the above-stated similarities which are essential for their common past, are two very different places due to their location, climate, the number and qualities of their inhabitants, their resources, the number of visitors they receive, and the types of visitors. Bath can be seen as a resort city, with a

¹ Our gratitude goes to all those who provided us information, many of them anonymous, during our visits. We thank especially: Juan Diego Carmona for his intensive collaboration, an invigorating researcher of the cultural heritage of Alange who selflessly gave information in the course of this project; to Fernando Fernández-Chiralt, Director of the Thermal Baths of Alange and President of the Association of Thermal Baths of Extremadura; to Luis Ochoa for his editing help; to Tim Foster of Vanderbilt University for his careful translation and editing; and to Mary Stakelum and her colleagues at the University of Bath Spa for her enthusiasm and dedication to collaborations and agreements between our universities.

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this paper is analyse an Anglo-Saxon model of thermal spa, using the city of Bath (UK) as an example. At the same time, a local model is presented with the case of the Alange thermal spa in Extremadura (Spain). Both of them are World Heritage Sites. In this way, cultural management will be another subject to take into consideration (Sánchez Lomba, 2014: 264).

According to the data, both thermal towns were founded in the same era. In this way, they have a common past as resort spas in Roman times. The question is, what were the circumstances for such a different development? In our research, similar ancient legends were found related to the sites, which are inspired by the cult of nature that dates to pre-Roman times (Calero, Carmona, 1989: 330). Both villages have very significant names, which tell us a lot about their past, present and future.

We have inherited from Rome many health and wellness traditions. The Roman culture of water, as a melting pot of cultures, is alive and well today (Beard, 2015: 103). In fact, the Romans were the promoters of therapeutic medical sites linked to leisure and healthy habits (Álvarez, 2012:15). For example, "Emerita Augusta" (Mérida) was a city dedicated to "*emeritus augustus*" or distinguished older people.

In our view, we have a shared heritage, for instance, our Roman past, the Christian religion (Dunning, 2008:7, Garrett, Gawford, 2013:10), and the culinary traditions of bread and pork products. In addition, we have some icons in common like the images of the sun set in stone (Stone, 2015), the pig, and the acorn. On the other hand, a number of differences were hit upon which prevented the successful development of both spa models to the same degree.

AIM

This work focuses on the comparative study between two models of thermal management. The objective of this study is analyse a shared cultural heritage, the tourism and the hospitality management at Bath (UK) and Alange (SP) Thermal Historical Towns and Sites. We feel that both towns have a historical position offering visitors the

opportunity to bathe in natural hot spring waters. In this way, they are offered as a practical model of thermal and cultural tourism because many of the health and wellness traditions are tourist resources.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Regarding the importance of these touristic and resort centres, we offer some data. We show pictures, the spa websites and some information from interviews with the owners, employees and locals. However, in our opinion, the most important thing is to show our personal point of view about this matter regarding our experiences as customers (Barrios, Gómez, 2014:38).

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MATERIALS. Bath and Alange. Singularities, similarities and differences

Bath, a resort city

Our last trip to the thermal spa area took place this year. We went on a trip to Bath set in the valley of the River Avon in Somerset (England) (Figure 1). The initial idea was to stay in Bath for a week, but in the end, we extended the trip to a month. The trip was about to be postponed or even cancelled, but in the end, on the 28th of February, we set off on a journey to the touristic city of Bath, located in an ancient sacred site beside hot spring waters. The purpose of the visit was to study the shared cultural heritage, tourism and hospitality management at a Thermal Historical Town and Site. We feel that Bath has a historical position as the only city in the United Kingdom offering visitors the opportunity to bathe in natural hot spring waters (Dunning, 2001:30). In this way, it is offered as a practical Anglo-Saxon model of thermal and cultural tourism.

Regarding the foundation of Bath, there is a legend commonly known by the locals and shared with the visitors through guides, who give daily free tours around the city. This story narrated the adventures of the Prince Bladud:

Bladud was the legendary founder of Bath and the sacred temple of Aqua Sullis. Lud Hubibras (Bladud), was a British Prince in Celtic times. While at court the Prince contracted the dreaded Leprosy, and was banished and disowned by his father. Before he made his way out of the kingdom his mother took him aside and gave him a golden ring. This was to be the key to his return if he could ever cure himself of the disease. Everywhere the Prince went he was shunned, he eked a living as a swineherd until some of the herd also caught the disease. To hide this from his employer, he fled across the river Avon (at a place now called Swineford), and into the land where the city of Bath now stands. He wandered the area until one day one of the pigs seemed to go crazy and rushed headlong into a black bog in the marshy ground. Bladud struggled to pull the pig from the bog and became covered in the foul smelling mud. When he had finally freed himself and

the pig, he found that the pig's skin lesions had disappeared, and where the mud had touched his bare skin he was also cured. He immersed himself fully in the warm mud and became fully cured of the disease. Finally Bladud returned to Court, where he was welcomed with open arms by his mother, who recognised the ring she had given him so many years before. Bladud ruled wisely as King for twenty years. He founded the city of Bath, and created the temple of Aqua Sullis dedicated to Minerva. He was said to have been a man of great learning, he studied in Athens and brought much Greek wisdom into Britain. He was killed when a magical experiment went wrong; he built himself some wings, and was flying over New Troy when they gave way and he crashed to the ground. (Topham, I., Parkinson, D., Boothman, N., 2011)

We believe that Bath is a beautiful city, rich in Roman and Georgian heritage. It is very suitable for a weekend stay, when the centre is a really lively area. And in this way you can enjoy some of the main attractions of the city like hitting the shops on fashionable Milsom Street, as well as getting lost off the beaten track in its tiniest streets. In our opinion, Thermae Bath Spa is a place one must get to know. We recommend very strongly not missing the absolutely breath-taking view from the rooftop pool. It is the perfect place to recharge your batteries and recuperate after a tiring day. Another attraction is sampling the local cuisine in a traditional restaurant like Sally Lunn's.

We would like to highlight some interesting points to take into consideration. For example, the baths have an important sponsor, the Lottery Foundation, and is a traditional resort with great experience in the tourist sector. The people are kind and they have a great team of volunteers for everything. In addition, Bath is a university city. The size of the tourist industry is reflected in the almost 300 places of accommodation, including more than 80 hotels, two of which have five star ratings, over 180 bed and breakfasts, many of which are located in Georgian buildings, and two campgrounds. The city also has about 100 restaurants and a similar number of pubs and bars. Several companies offer open-top bus tours around the city, as well as tours on foot and on the river.

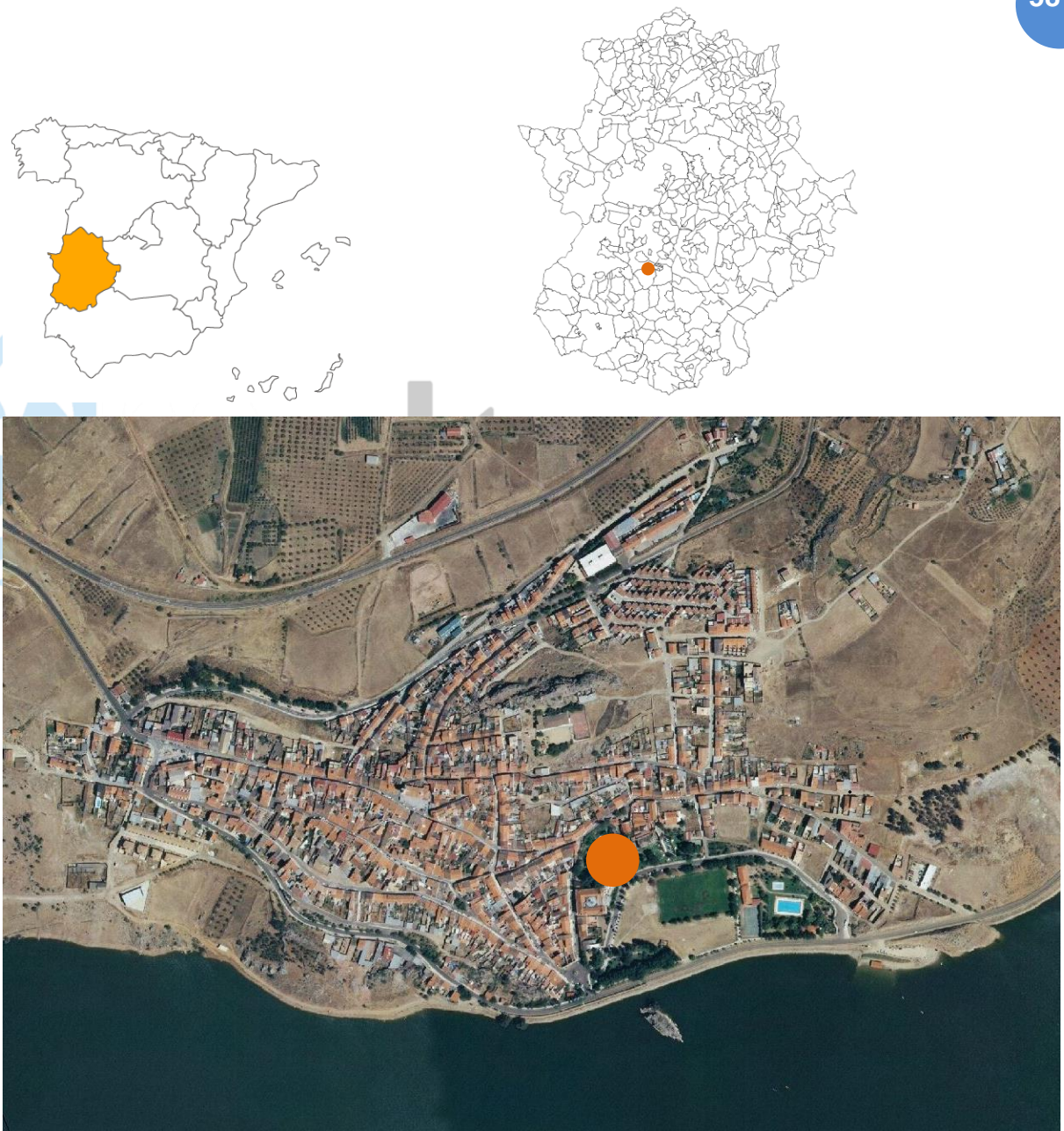
However, as with all tourist cities, Bath has its negatives. The souvenirs are made of plastic and are low-quality. Some museums are dull, and the area of Southgate is unattractive. The seagulls are truly a plague. In our opinion, some modern restaurants are overrated. The thermal spa is always overcrowded. The site of the Roman Baths is very remote, under the main square. And finally, there are some controversial new buildings like the casino, which is currently under construction.

To conclude, in our opinion Bath is the perfect place to get away from it all. Even if it is a very popular tourist city, it is almost completely unspoilt. Therefore, you can go sightseeing, wander round the Royal Crescent, one of the most picturesque streets in Britain, or soak up the atmosphere of the thermal spa. Bath is both beautiful and historic and is a resort that has attracted pilgrims and tourists alike over the centuries.

Alange. Villa & Thermal Baths

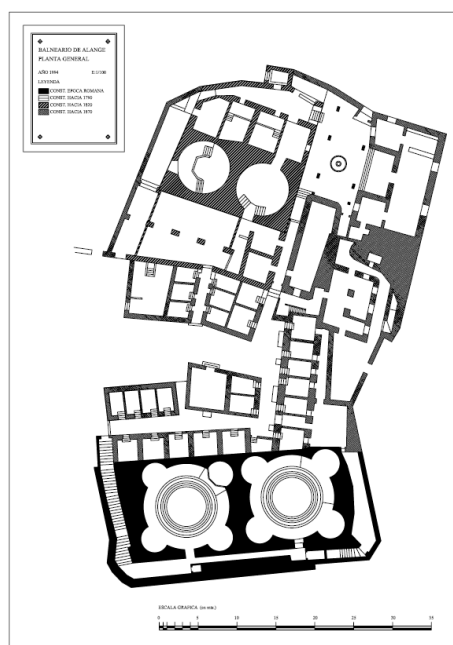
Alange is located in Spain, in the heart of Extremadura and 18 km from the Roman city of Mérida (Figure 2). According to legend, and confirmed by the marble altar kept in the main courtyard of the baths, Varinia Serena was the daughter of the patricians Licinio Sereniano and Varinia Flacinia. They arrived in Emerita Augusta (Mérida), originally from Cappadocia. These patricians were landowners in the district of Serena, very near to Alange. Their daughter Varinia Serena had a chronic disease of her reproductive system, which was cured with the medicinal waters of the spring at Alange. In gratitude, her parents ordered the construction of the spa, dedicating it to the goddess Juno. Two baths from the original third-century Roman construction remain in use to this day.

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Preserved during the Visigothic period, the name Alange comes from the Arabs, meaning "Water of Allah." After the Arabic period the baths fell into disuse and deteriorated until their rediscovery and rehabilitation in the 13th century. In 1863, during the property confiscations lead by Madoz, it was auctioned off and restructured, resulting in what we see today. In 1930 it was declared a national monument, in 1985 a National Heritage Site by the Ministry of Culture, and in 1993 a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Alange is a town totally centred around the spa, which has different thermal pools inside and idyllic gardens outside. The baths are open between March and November, the outdoor pool only in the summer.





According to traditional healing, the properties of the mineral-medicinal waters of the Alange spring are apt for the musculoskeletal system, rheumatic diseases, and for the reproductive system (when heated to 39°C), for the nervous system (natural spring water at 24°C) and as water vapour for the respiratory system. In the area around the outdoor pool there is a Kneip Cure circuit, according to the guidelines of the philosophy of Sebastian Kneip, considered one of the pillars of hydrotherapy. In this pool, traditional healing runs alongside new massage techniques with grape seed oil, cacao, and green tea, with aromatherapy and aesthetic medicine for the whole body. They also make products with spring water available for sale.

There are health programmes for senior citizens, in keeping with the Institute for the Elderly and Social Services (IMSERSD). The General Administration of the State, with its policy of Active Aging, promotes a program of tourism for retirees. This is aimed at facilitating the incorporation of these persons into tourist streams and to ease the employment effects of the seasonal nature of the country's tourist sector.

Therefore, it must be known that Alange is a place for relaxation and seclusion, a good place to get away from it all, to read and write, but certainly not to engage in other leisure activities. In keeping with this, the area around the spa is idyllic with its botanical gardens. The care taken in the area around the spa is not reflected in the rest of the town and its surroundings.

With respect to infrastructure, Alange has various hotel establishments with a rich local gastronomy based on traditional Extremaduran cuisine. At the same time, it offers modern cuisine options that provide quality and enjoyment to their patrons, as can be seen in their evaluations.

The town and its surrounding area have great natural and cultural potential, such as hiking routes and water sports in the large lake next to the thermal area. There is an effort underway to promote its resources at general tourism and spa tourism conferences (Fernández-Chiralt, F., 2013), as well as to create recreation programmes to disseminate through the Internet and in study forums (Carmona Barrero, J.D., Calero Carretero, J.A., 2014).

After analysing the strong points and discussing the great potential of this place, we observe that there is not adequate recognition nor participation on the part of the institutions themselves. With the exception of cultural visits to Mérida and the Festival of Classical Theatre in the summer, there are not organized activities to supplement the client experience with cultural and leisure offerings, broadening the possibilities of greater numbers of tourists.

Despite the existence of the lake, very suitable for sporting activities and companies dedicated to them, the area, with great natural resources, is abandoned and is difficult to access by people and boats. An agreement between municipal, provincial, and regional officials and the Guadiana watershed would be welcome, to establish a renovation project in the area for the reception of lake tourism, which is currently expanding in the Community of Extremadura and in other areas.

It would be important to mark the routes of hiking paths, because many people that visit the spa fit the profile of hikers. On the subject of hiking, Alange is located on the Silver Route (*Ruta de la Plata*) of the Way of St. James. Each year there are a growing number of pilgrims that go to Santiago on this route. It is also important for Alange to get involved in the accommodation of this pilgrimage tourism, with proper way marking and cultural offerings.

Although there are sufficient hotel beds, other services are lacking, such as a campground, as you can currently find many motorhomes wild camping in the square opposite the spa.

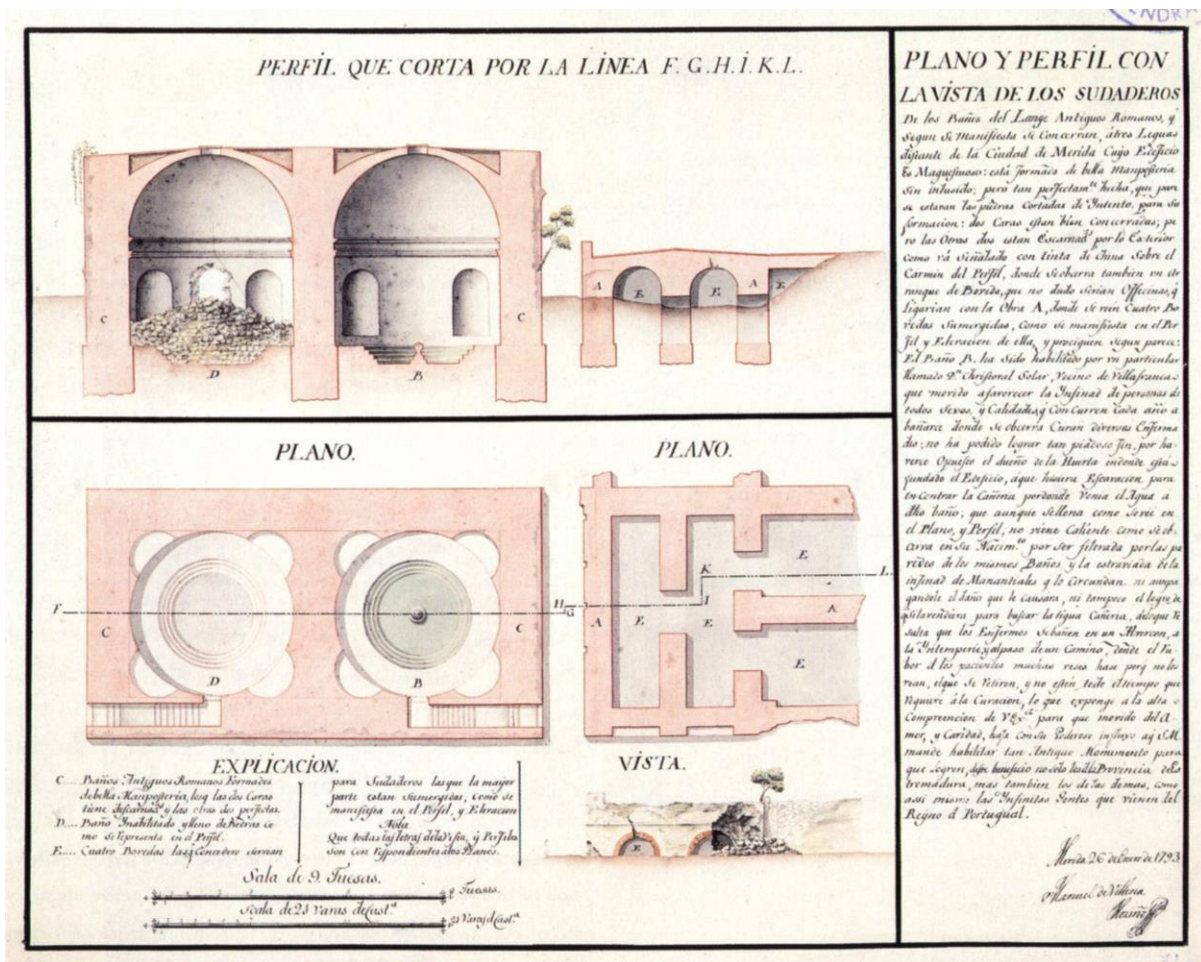
Museological resources and new technologies in thermal sites. The Interpretation Centre of “El Lavadero” in Alange

Water, an element that constitutes one of the key resources for the maintenance of life, takes on a different meaning in Alange than in other places in the region. In Alange, water has been and is a resource for agricultural development, before providing water to their gardens from the springs and rivers and today supplying large irrigation areas of Las Vegas Bajas of Guadiana river; It has been and is a source of wealth thanks to the business network that revolves around the spa and has been and is a source of health thanks to the mineral-medicinal characteristics of its spring. For all this we consider that this is the ideal population to show, in a space enabled for it, how man has exploited this resource that nature has placed in his hands.

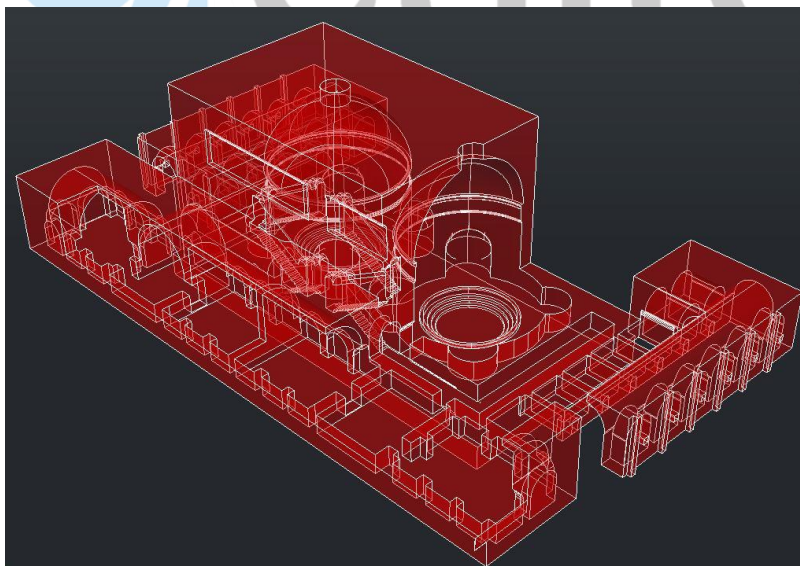
The project seeks to enhance the value of a heritage asset fallen into disuse a few years ago. The space to recover is an old municipal laundry that took advantage of the surplus waters of the Alange Spa spring. In this space and its surroundings, direct references to its functionality date back to the 18th century, becoming, due to its singularity within the urban fabric of the population, an element of great ethnographic value.

Paradoxically, water has covered those resources that man devised to take advantage of it. Thus reservoirs like the one of Alange or that of the Molinos in Hornachos, have covered a good part of those constructions that on the banks of the river Matachel, took advantage of the strength of the water to grind grain or its abundance to irrigate the fertile plains.

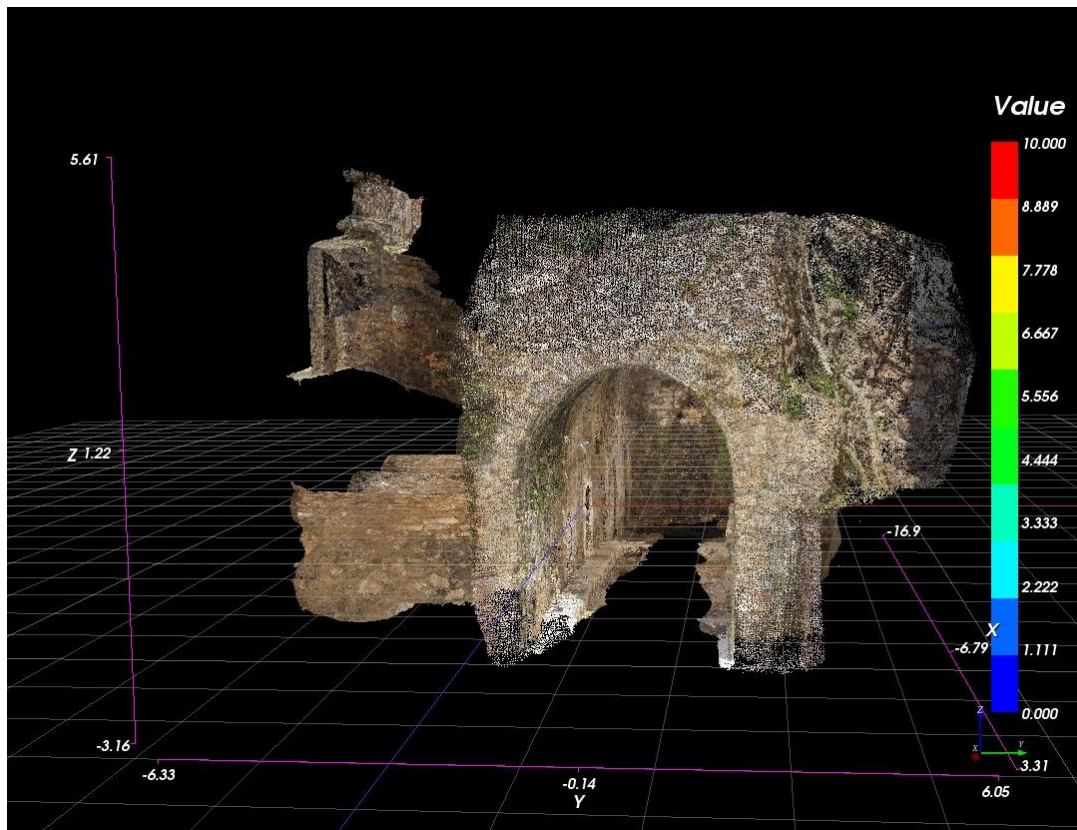
The creation of this Center of Interpretation, allows to recover, to make known to those who could not see them, those resources that, although today flooded, for centuries they behaved like one of the pillars of the regional economy. The recovery of this space is done with an intervention of minimal visibility that avoids subtracting the originality to the establishment, trying only to reinforce those aesthetic aspects that give it a greater ethnographic "flavor".



Termas de Alange (M. Villena, 1790).



Termas de Alange. Reconstrucción volumétrica. (J.D. Carmona, 2013).



Termas de Alange, galería oriental. (Carmona-Aza, 2014).

The provision of panels divided into different thematic blocks, all of them related to the different systems of exploitation of water resources, allows the visitor to make contact with life forms that have already gone down in history or visually enter inside buildings and artifices to understand its operation.



Laundry (J.D. Carmona, 2013).



Roman Performance at Laundry. (J.D. Carmona, 2013).



Panel of Interpretation Centre (J.D. Carmona, 2013).

Taking advantage of the proximity of the spring that supplies the spa and the well-known "fountain of the bath", the municipal laundry of Alange is located on the southern slope of the town, intruding on its urban plot as another furniture element. It is accessed through a small square on which, in the past, the central pillar served as a watering hole for the pack animals that left towards the west of Alange along the road to Palomas.

[illegible]

In a second platform that occupies practically all of the enclosure, there is the laundry room, a large rectangular water tank, around which, located on the edge and sloping inwards, a series of stone slabs are arranged,

mostly quartzites from the environment. These stones, which serve as a support for rubbing the clothes that were washed, are placed at ground level, which, unlike in other laundries, the task had to be performed on knees and leaning on the stone. Although it may seem more uncomfortable, this position had the advantage that when the body was dropped on the hands that were resting on the stones, the pressure exerted on the clothes being washed was much greater than if the foot wash was performed. At the opposite end to the water inlet, a spillway drains keeping the laundry level constant. The excess water flowed to the nearby orchards where they were used for irrigation.

The project is intended for different types of visitors: Visitors, individuals or small groups that come from other regions and do not know the heritage of the area; Groups of school children who arrive through organized excursions from different schools both in the region and outside it; Groups of Secondary students to deepen the knowledge of the technologies used.

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Panel of Interpretation Centre (J.D. Carmona, 2013).

With the development of a Management Plan of the Interpretation Center and its link to Tourist Offices of the Comarca as well as teaching centers, an influx of young visitors would be guaranteed, which would be complemented by the individual visits.



Panel of Interpretacion Centre (J.D. Carmona, 2013).

Results

As we have observed above, Bath and Alange have some basic traits in common, and many notable differences today.

Both have a shared past of the Roman Empire and preserve many significant portions of the Roman baths in use today. These baths in Alange are used with regularity within the customary regimens of the clients, and those of the agreements with IMSERSO. In Bath, the Roman baths are closed to the general public, and those that wish to bathe in them must rent them for private use with a considerable fee.

Bath is a great city with a wide range of touristic activities, hotels, restaurants, stores, theatres, cinemas, and soon to be a casino. Alange is a small town that is dedicated to its thermal resources, more in relation to the health properties of its waters, specifically for the nervous and respiratory systems.

In regards to the above, it must be said that together with traditional therapies related to the properties of its waters, both spas offer modern massage therapy, aromatherapy, aesthetic medicine, etc., with distinct products unique to their area.

Both have cultivated their high regard, not only for spa tourism, but to promote cultural tourism through marketing that promotes their tradition, legends, art, and culture, broadening the range of activities to potential visitors.

While the waters of Bath are hot springs, which is more attractive to its clients, the waters of Alange are cold, which promotes the usage of contrast between hot and cold baths, as in Scottish showers. These contrasts and the qualities of their waters make Alange one of the most important thermal baths in Europe for diseases of the nervous system.

While Alange is developing its range of sporting activities in the summer due to its warm weather with the expansion of an outdoor pool and in the lake, Bath is more focused on leisure, shopping, and culture.

To conclude, it must be said that Alange offers a very peaceful rural area dedicated to the calming and healing of the aches and pains of its clients, while Bath is more of a 21st-century spa, dedicated to tourism on all levels. In comparing the two, it would be beneficial for Alange to increase tourism promotion as an economic resource, while trying not to lose the pleasant and tranquil qualities that its surroundings give it. In relation to Alange, it would be beneficial for Bath to return more focus to the health aspect of the spa for the great potential that it has in this area.

The following table clarifies the similarities and differences between the two spas studied.



Table 1. Touristic Services

| | BATH | ALANGE |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Population | 83.992 | 1.900 |
| Essential and indispensable resource | Hot Spring water (33.5 ° C) | Cold water (28° C) |
| Location and environment | South England Natural surroundings (river and hills), calm and peaceful atmosphere | Western Spain Natural surroundings (river and hills), calm and peaceful atmosphere |
| History | Roman baths intact - World Heritage Sites | |
| Sponsor | Local Council, National Lottery Foundation & Malahisia Luxury Resort | Family run business |
| Proximity | London /Bristol | Mérida /Cáceres |
| Event | Christmas Market & Jane Austin Festival | Sports in the lake |
| Baths | Ancient Roman baths and modern baths | |
| Museums | More than 30 | National Museum of Roman Art in Mérida |
| Annual visitors | More than 1.000.000 overnight visitors | 200.000 visitors |
| Historical recreation | Roman and Georgian | Roman and Medieval |
| Restaurants, pubs and bars | More than 100 | 12 |
| Accommodation | More than 300 hotels (2 *****) | 2 hotels, 3 guest houses, 3 rural accommodation (463 hotel beds) |
| Activities | Different tours around the city | Hiking |
| Web-site information | More than 100 pages | 12 pages |
| Other Services | 2 Theatres, 2 Universities, 1 Rugby club, Hospital, Casino, Shopping Centre, parks. | Golf Club, rural hiking |

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Balloon tour over the Royal Crescent



The authors in Bath with a fashionable pig



Milsom Street Area



New Thermal Spa

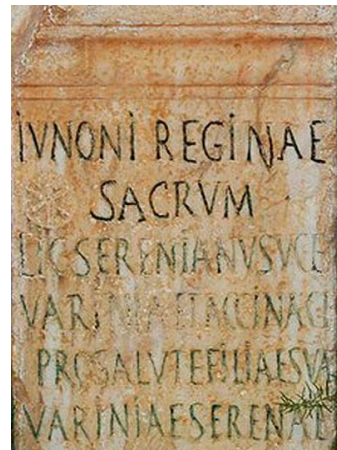


Image of Sulis Minerva in stone



Ancient Roman Thermal

Figure 1. Different locations in Bath Spa (U.K.). (Pictures: Juana Gómez, 2016)



Roman altar preserved in the Alange Spa, with the dedication thanking the goddess Juno for healing Varinia Serena, daughter of the patricians who built the spa in Roman times. The text says: Iunoni reginae | sacrum | Lic. Serenianus v. c. et |



Roman baths



Outdoor Gardens. Kneip circuit



Summer Outdoor pool



Spring-fed pool

Figure 2. Different locations in Alange (Spain). (Pictures: Fernando Fernández-Chiralt)

3.5. Possibilities for Sustainable Development of Tourism in Bulgaria by Developing Cultural Pilgrim Routes - Thermal Tourism Analysis, Cross Forest Case Study

Gergana Zhelyazkova

In May 2017, was carried out a survey on religious, thermal and cultural tourism in the region of Cross Forest. The survey took place within the framework of the Erasmus+ project Innovation and Capacity Building in Cultural Tourism, Entrepreneurship for European Cultural Routes (or Cultour+ as its shorter form goes) (Cultour Plus, 2017).

Pilgrim route Cross Forest is one of the largest religious centers in Bulgaria. This place called in Bulgarian Krastova Gora is considered by the Bulgarians as their own "Rhodope Jerusalem".

The aim of this second research is an assessment of the possibility for sustainable development of tourism in Bulgaria by developing thermal routes.

Summarizing all the responds we can define the Thermal Tourism as visiting places where people can enjoy thermal water facilities. Some of the respondents are focusing Thermal Tourism definition on curing, recreation and relaxing. They mention different type of facilities you can visit as balneology and spa centres.

One of the best thermal water resorts is near the Cross Forest Route. Just 3,5 km away of the route in the village Narechen, also called Narechenski Bani, and 24 km from Asenovgrad, and 30 km from the Cross Forest 35 km from "The Wonderful bridges", 4 km south along the road to Smolyan is the Roman Bridge, it is also close to the Dyavolskoto gurlo ("The Devils throat") and the Yagodinska cave. Narechenski Bani is set amid pine forest on the Asenitsa River (Chepelare River) in the Rhodope Mountains. The village is famous or was famous for its hypothermal mineral springs which have transformed it into an important spa resort. In the past our grandparents considered it as the best one on the base of curing effect. Now a days just 32 % of the respondents mention it and 51 % of the age of 20 declared that had no idea that exist and 16% gave no answer.

In 1891 first bath was opened and this became starting point for the development of the future resort. In 1910 was open the first public balneology bath, in 1927 the first balneology sanatorium and in 1935 a military sanatorium. At the beginning it was part of the Kosovo village, although it is twice closer to Narechen village. Later grew and developed as a separate village in 1944.

Thermal water

Mineral water contains radon and has healing radioactivity. There are three mineral springs, close to the main road. The temperature water of between 21,5 and 29°C.

Participant in the survey mentioned the following thermal water centers in Bulgaria: Sandanski, Devin, Varna, Sofia, Velingrad, Pavel banya, Hisaria, Dolna Banya, Gorna Banya, St.St. Konstantin and Helena, Stara Zagora's Mineralni bani,

Haskovo's Mineralni bani, Pomorie etc. participants couldn't name any thermal water center in Greece. As it became clear the opinion of the younger generation about thermal facilities no wonder they visit very few times such centers mainly because they had to accompany their parents or grandparent. Just 14% visited thermal whater centers on a vacation organized by their school. Another 14% visited such a center some weekend accompanied by their girl-friend or boy-friend.

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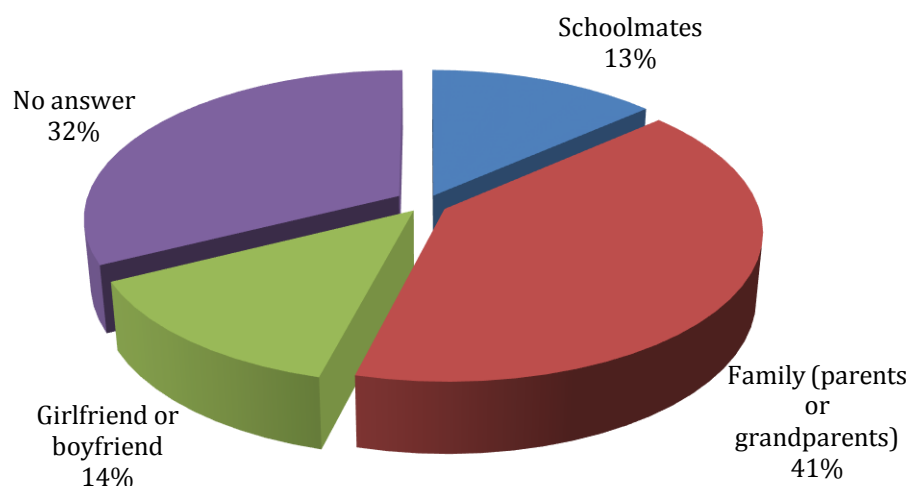


Figure 1. The preference of the people to visit Narecheski bani alone or in the company of relatives, friends or others?

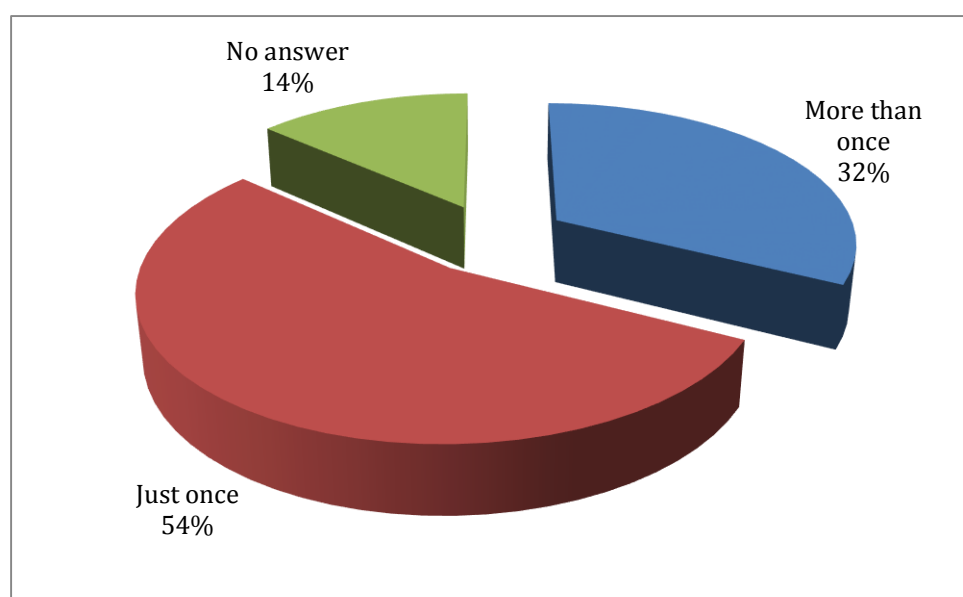


Figure 2. How many times people have visited thermal tourist centre?

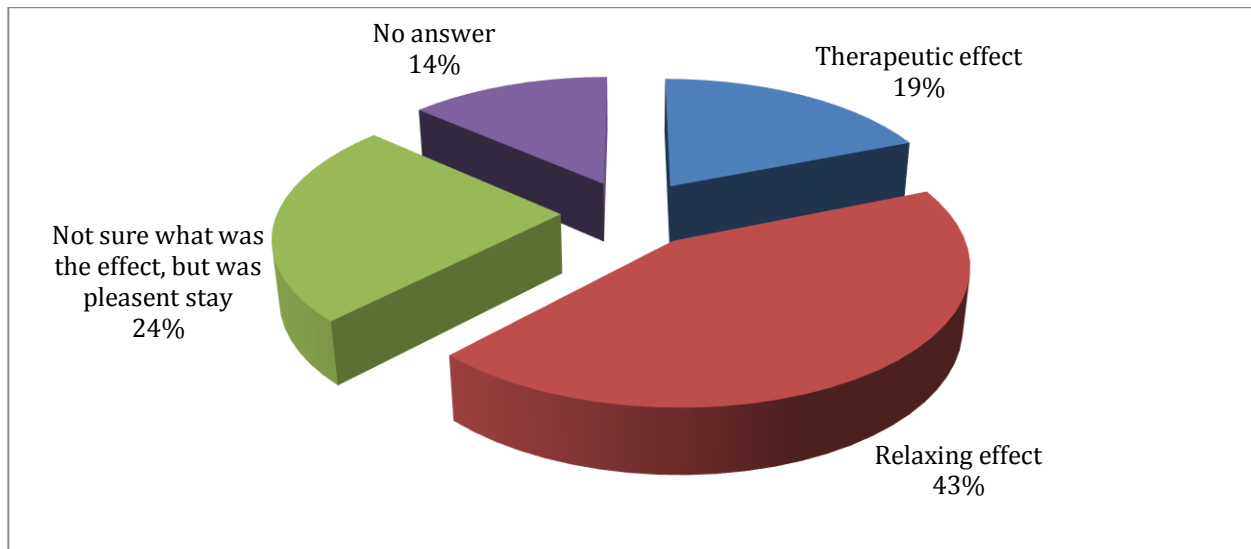


Figure 3. The effect of thermal water procedures

The total amount of the water flow from the three springs is 300 liters per minute or 432 cubic meters per day. For the treatment of 1 person, 24 hours we need 210 liters. That means it can be treated 1200 people, 14 hours a day.

Narechenski Bani treat a 13 serious diseases: nervous system, cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, endocrine-exchange, including hypertension and diabetes etc. It is the only one in Bulgaria to treat neurosis, depression, stressful conditions. Currently there are 3 balneosanatoriums who operate: two state-owned military and health ministries and 1 private, as well as several holiday stations.

The nature around Narechenski Bani is curative as well. All the beautiful sightseeings combined with the curative power of mineral water have miracle effect on people health.

Conclusions:

People pointed the following:

Disadvantages

- Traffic jams because of poor infrastructure and current road reconstructions
- A bit dirty
- It's too expensive for the younger generation and local people paying for themselves because of their low incomes
- Sometimes there is struggling of interests of the generations like young people are not willing to reduce the time for the procedure they paid for in order to leave the place to somebody else who is in a "hurry" and not paying for the treatment. Usually younger generation is paying for themselves but old people stay is covered by the state.

- Contemporary life of people form some requirements about the accommodation facilities which desperately need reconstruction

Advantages

- Great way to relax and cure in the same time
- It is very pleasant experience
- Good way to have rest and sightseeing
- To take deep breath of fresh mountain air
- Very delicious local food
- It's ridiculously cheap for aliens

Solutions offered:

- To reconstruct
- To offer better quality serves
- To clean facilities more often
- To raise the price in order to attract high income tourist in that way to cover the cost for the reconstruction
- To advertise and attract more young people
- To develop the website so they become more user-friendly and more functional

3.6. Thermal Tourism Management in European Cultural Routes: The case of Uniejów – Thermal Spa Area Development

Summary

The aim of this paper is to describe the current situation and the ideas for formation and development of thermal tourism business in Poland. It presents the research carried out in May-August 2017 concerning the possibilities to develop the new enterprises in the area of Thermal Spa Center basing on case study of Uniejów Thermal Spa. The research presents important facts about business activities that can be connected with thermal spa tourism management possibilities like: Health tourism, Agrotourism, Culinary tourism, Alternative Tourism, Qualified Tourism. The paper is part of the Intellectual outputs of the "Innovation and Capacity Building in Higher Education for Cultural Management, Hospitality and Sustainable Tourism in European Cultural Routes [Cultour+]" ERASMUS+ project nr. 2015-1-ES01-KA203-016142.

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1. Introduction

For several years, thermal tourism in Poland has been becoming more and more popular. This refers both to the supply and demand of market side. Therefore, the aim of the section is to try to outline the current situation and the possible development of thermal tourism in Poland. The implementation of the work objective required the use of several research methods, such as critical analysis of literature on the subject, statistical data analysis, case study (example of Uniejów Thermal Spa), observation methods, and inference through deduction in the scope of the research question. Based on the research results it can be concluded that the thermal tourism market is dynamically developing. There is a great interest by consumers in the use of this kind of tourism. However, there is still unused geothermal potential that can be used for therapeutic and recreational purposes.

Such a situation influences the economy of regions located in the area of thermal springs and the people living there. The creation of new sanatoriums and thermal spas favours and entails the formation of new , tourism and service enterprises, often associated with them. In the past the sanatoriums were owned and managed by the government, the Ministry of Health and they provided the entire organization of the patients' stay, that is: accommodation, meals, curative and entertainment program were placed in one place of the health spa complexes. In the free time the spa guests could use the walks, sightseeing and nearby outdoor cafes, restaurants and dancing, but they were also mostly owned by government. Political and economic changes in Poland in the 90s of the last century opened the possibility of privatizing also this area of the economy, allowing to develop the new health tourism services, giving the business opportunity and new work places for the local population.

The global thermal tourism market has a significant potential and extensive reach. On the one hand, thermal tourism market includes tourists travelling for various health purposes; on the other one – companies operating in the thermal tourism market. The common ground for the two groups is the thermal tourism product that satisfies the needs (the demand side) and can be provided (the supply side) at a price and quality tailored to both these groups and adjusted to the market.

Given various health purposes of thermal tourism, four main groups of tourists can be identified (Das Profil der Wellness, 2004).

Tourists take the following types of holidays:

- wellness holidays, focusing on psycho-physical relaxation and restoring strength and vitality;
- beauty holidays, focusing on therapies and treatments improving one's looks;
- health care holidays, focusing on methods and therapies preventing or mitigating diseases, as well as treating various psychological or physical dysfunctions;
- anti-ageing holidays, focusing on maintaining or improving mental health or physical fitness, as well as effectively combatting detrimental habits.

Despite numerous drilling activities commissioned by the Polish state authorities in the second half of the 20th century, resulting in geothermal water discoveries, e.g. in Marusza near Grudziądz (1972) or in Uniejów (1978), the market of thermal resorts in Poland is still relatively new.

Research carried out over 10 years (2003–2013) on samples of tourists staying at Polish spa resorts (2003–sample of 1988 tourists (Dryglas, 2006); 2005–sample of 3461 tourists (Burzyński et al., 2005), and 2013–sample of 2050 tourists (Dryglas, Różycki, 2016), indicated that thermal pools constitute the most desirable tourist attraction. On the other hand, an in-depth review of literature on the subject concerning the supply side of thermal tourism points to relatively low dynamics of its development. This is reflected by a relatively small number of health resorts in Poland using geothermal waters for therapeutic purposes (merely 20%, that is 9 out of 45) in spite of the fact that Polish tradition of using geothermal waters in health resorts can be traced back to the 12th century. Legend says that the foundation of the Cieplice Śląskie-Zdrój resort is connected with the discovery of hot springs made by Prince Boleslav IV in 1175 while hunting (Zieliński, 1983, p. 33).

For many years, geothermal waters have been used for therapeutic purposes in seven statutory spa resorts in Poland: Cieplice Śląskie-Zdrój, Łądek-Zdrój, Duszniki-Zdrój, Ciechocinek, Konstancin-Jeziorna, Ustroń, Iwonicz-Zdrój (Kępińska, 2013) and, recently, that is since 2011, in Rabka-Zdrój and since 2012, in Uniejów (the only thermal spa resort in Poland), which is the subject of our research taking into account its character and development possibilities.

In 2016, there were nine statutory spa resorts in Poland (Cieplice Śląskie-Zdrój, Łądek-Zdrój, Duszniki-Zdrój, Ciechocinek, Konstancin-Jeziorna, Ustroń, Iwonicz-Zdrój, Rabka-Zdrój, Uniejów), seven geothermal bathing and

recreation centres in the Podhale region (Aqua Park Zakopane and the geothermal bathing pool Szymoszkowa in Zakopane; Termy Szaflary, Termy Gorący Potok in Szaflary; Terma Bukovina; Terma Białka, Termy Chocholowskie), and four in the Polish Lowlands (Termy Mszczonów, Geotermia Grudziądz, Geotermia Poddębice, Termy Maltańskie in Poznań) and Termy Warmińskie in Lidzbark Warmiński, which use geothermal water for medical, recreational and heating purposes. (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Location of spa resorts using geothermal water and thermal centres in Poland (own compilation, map source: www.topmapy.pl)

2. Uniejów as town and thermal spa center in Poland

Uniejów is a town in Poddębice County, Łódź Voivodeship, Poland, with 2,984 inhabitants (2016). The town lies in northwestern corner of Poddębice County, near the border with Wielkopolskie Voivodeship.



Source: <https://www.google.pl/search?q=uniej%C3%B3w+mapa+do+pobrania+za+darmo>

The history of the town dates back to the early years of Polish statehood. Mentioned as Uneievo in a bull of Pope Innocent II (1136), Uniejów is one of the oldest towns of Poland. At that time it belonged to the Archbishops of Gniezno, and received its town charter most likely before 1290. In the late 13th century, Archbishop Jakub Swinka founded Church of the Holy Spirit, and in 1331, Uniejów was burned by the Teutonic Knights. The town was rebuilt, and in the late 14th - early 15th century, it was a local centre of commerce and crafts. For centuries, Uniejów enjoyed several privileges, granted to it by the Archbishops of Gniezno. In 1360-1365, a defensive castle was built here. It became one of residences of the Archbishops, here several councils and meetings took place.

Like many Polish cities, Uniejów declined after Swedish invasion of Poland. The castle was ransacked, and the town itself was burned. There also were two extended fires, in 1736 and 1790, and after the Congress of Vienna (1815), the town became part of Russian-controlled Congress of Poland, where it remained until World War I. In 1836, Uniejów was granted to a Tsarist General Aleksander Toll, and in 1870, it lost its town charter, becoming a village. In 1919 Uniejów again became a town.

In September 1939, during the Invasion of Poland, Polish units of Poznań Army resisted here the advancing Wehrmacht. During the heavy fighting, Uniejów was partially burned.

Uniejów is famous for its landscape park (34 hectares (84 acres), regarded as one of the best preserved and most beautiful parks of central Poland.



Source: <http://ekouniejow.pl/jestesmy-eko/wyjatkowa-gmina/>

Currently, Uniejów is a popular spa and tourist destination, due to its landscape park and geothermal waters. The town has several restaurants, hotel located in the castle, and other amenities. There also are walking and bicycle trails. Among the sights are the Gothic castle (built in 1360-1365 by Archbishop Jaroslaw of Bogoria and Skotnik, restored in 1956-67), collegiate with a 14th-century Gothic presbytery, the neo-Baroque church tower (1901), and the Classicistic manor house (1845). The village of Spycimierz, with its ancient Slavic gord, lies four kilometres (2.5 miles) away. (source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uniejów>)

Case study of Uniejów Thermal Spa

As we mentioned in the Introduction Uniejów is the best example and research subject concerning the creating of the new business ideas and work places.

According to Józef Kaczmarek, Mayor of Uniejów, with the start and dynamization of economic transformations, new opportunities opened up for the residents. A visible and noticeable effect compared to the pre-investment period is the lowering of the unemployment rate in the commune and the limitation of the unfavourable phenomenon of professional emigration, especially of young people. New employment opportunities in the services sector and good conditions for setting up and developing their own business have emerged. This is particularly evident in the tourism industry.

The statistical data showing the percentage of people registered as unemployed in the total number of economically active persons is evidence of a decrease in unemployment in the municipality of Uniejów. In 2004, they constituted 15.6%, and after 10 years this value decreased to 10.7%. The lowest unemployment rate, however, was recorded in 2008, when the first tourist facilities of the "Uniejów Thermal Spa" were opened - at that time it amounted to 7.6%.

Józef Kaczmarek, mayor of Uniejów: "First of all, all spa and tourist investments were carried out with the aim of creating new jobs - at the moment the company "Termy Uniejów" employs over 300 employees, and the number of entrepreneurs providing hotel or gastronomic services in the commune, thanks to activation programs has doubled over the last 10 years. Thanks to additional measures, we can constantly increase the number of municipal flats, equip schools with modern scientific tools, or think about expanding a kindergarten with the function of a nursery, so that young parents do not face a difficult choice of giving up their professional life. Thanks to health-related investments, we managed to obtain huge funds for promotion. Uniejów, which has become a "showcase" of the Lodz region, can provide its residents with an extremely rich cultural offer and funds to secure important monuments. The ultimate consequence of all these activities is the increase in the comfort of life for the residents of the Commune, which I enjoy the most ("W Uniejowie" No. 58, 2014).

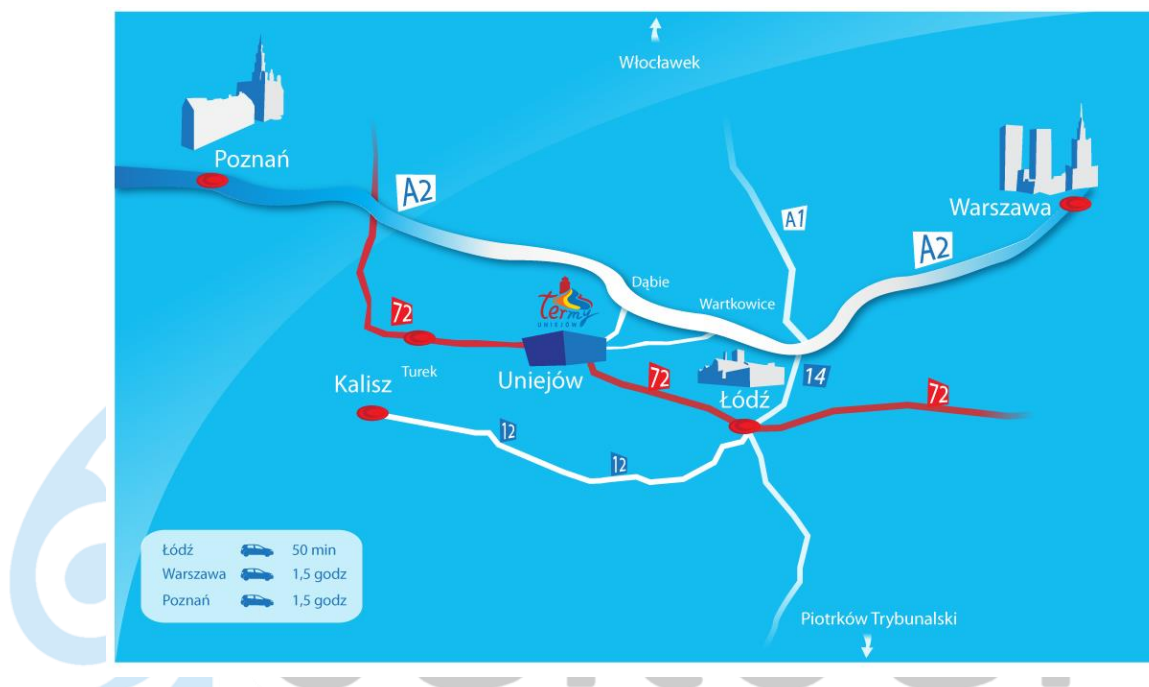
Basing on our research results it can be also concluded that the thermal tourism market connected with Uniejów area is developing very fast.

According to our research we can conclude that surveyed hotels, restaurants, apartments, agrotouristic farms and the rest of the accommodation and entertainment places provide the unique sometimes innovative services related to tourism economy. The individual, different companies from Uniejów acting in the range of thermal tourism

perfectly cooperate and complete the common services advertising each other on the official websites or the other tourism sites, giving the information or links to the other enterprises.

Hotel & Thermal Tourism Trends in Uniejów

The Thermal Spa and Pool Complex in Uniejów is located at the foot of the 14th-century Castle surrounded by a 19th-century park and offers hot baths in curative thermal brine.



Source: <https://www.termyuniejow.pl/pl/dojazd-i-nocleg>

Thermal waters can be found 2,000 m below the surface. Water coming from three boreholes is characterized by:

- output of 120 m³/h,
- temperature of 68°C,
- low mineralization of 7g/l.

The Uniejów thermal brine finds application in treatment of many diseases, mainly:

- rheumatoid arthritis,
- orthopedic and traumatic conditions as well as post-operative conditions of motor organs,
- skin diseases,
- nose, ear, throat and larynx conditions,

nerve related pain,
discopathy,
neurosis.

Uniejów Spa Complex features new indoor and outdoor pools as well as a spa centre. The outdoor pools have been connected to the indoor pool building and supplied with thermal brine water. Such a solution enables operation of the pools in any weather throughout the whole year. The Complex also boasts a brine pool with warm water and a separate outdoor pool divided into the main and children's sections. The total water surface area in all zones is around 1,500 m².

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Source: <https://www.termyuniejow.pl/en/thermal-spa-and-pool-complex>

Thermal and complementary services are described this way in their website:

It is a place where everyone can find something for themselves: whether hot or cold. A wide range of different saunas, a massage room, a hot brine pool and an ice pool, as well as a snow chamber will not only offer an unforgettable experience, but also leave your body relaxed and full of energy. After relaxing in our pools and saunas you should definitely visit our restaurant - the only restaurant of this type in Poland where time is not charged for stay.

Below we provide an analysis of hotel - accommodation resources, agrotourism, health tourism, culinary tourism, guided tours, alternative tourism within the town and surroundings. Detailed research based on questionnaires (checklists) prepared in the frame of Coltour+ Project in order to obtain information about the business objects taken from their websites, the other official tourism sites show the strong and weak points of the existed enterprises. According to this research we can conclude that surveyed hotels, restaurants, apartments, agrotouristic farms and the other accommodation and entertainment places provide the best quality services and what is the most important the business ideas are unique, innovative and based on cooperation between the tourism enterprises, eg.

free vouchers, better prices for access to Thermal Spa Center for guests of particular hotels or the other accommodation places.

| Enterprise | Category / Type | Webb site | Addresse |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| TERMY UNIEJÓW | Health tourism, accommodation, entertainment, culinary tourism, qualified tourism | www.termyuniejow.pl | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Zamkowa 3/5 |
| POKOJE I APARTAMENTY "ALEX" | Accommodation, apartments | www.alexuniejow.dobrynocleg.pl | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Orzechowa 4a |
| APARTAMENTY TERMALNE | Accommodation, apartments | apartamentytermalne.pl | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Reymonta 2 |
| E-VITA POKOJE GOŚCINNE | Accommodation, apartments | www.evita-uniejow.superturystyka.pl | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Dąbska 8 |
| HOTEL UNIEJÓW ECO ACTIVE & SPA | Health tourism, accommodation, entertainment, culinary tourism, qualified tourism | www.hoteluniejow.pl | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Bogumiła 32 |
| BROWAR WIATR APARTHOTEL | Health tourism, accommodation, entertainment, culinary tourism, qualified tourism | http://browarwiatr.pl/noclegi/ | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Dąbska 49 |
| ZŁOTY RÓG | Accommodation, entertainment, culinary tourism, agrotourism, alternative tourism | www.zlotyrog-uniejow.pl | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Sienkiewicza 75 |
| PENSJONAT STAROMIEJSKI | Accommodation, apartments | www.supernoclegi.com.pl/nocleg-53549-uniejow-pensjonat-staromiejski | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Rynek 9 |
| ZAGRODA MŁYNARSKA | Accommodation, entertainment, culinary tourism, agrotourism, alternative tourism | www.termyuniejow.pl/pl/zagroda-mlynarska | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Polna 37 |
| LEŚNA PRZYSTAŃ | Accommodation, entertainment, culinary tourism, agrotourism, alternative tourism | https://lesnaprzystan.nocowanie.pl/ | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Polna 50 |
| POKOJE I APARTAMENTY CZTERY PORY ROKU | Accommodation, apartments | www.nocowanie.pl/noclegi/uniejow/kwatery_i_pokoje/161797/ | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Kościelnicza 7a |
| KWATERY PRYWATNE PRZYLESIE | Accommodation, entertainment, culinary tourism, agrotourism, alternative tourism | http://przylesie-uniejow.pl/ | 99-210 Uniejów ul. Kościelnicza 105 |

The use of geothermal waters, has evolved from empiricism in natural sciences practiced by people without any theoretical basis to a science currently cultivated in numerous centres by qualified staff. Thermal tourism is characterised by complex and complementary use of treatments based on geothermal water. Modern knowledge has proven that geothermal waters are important for human health and constitute a development trend in a number of tourist resorts. For thermal tourism to develop, it is necessary that both sides of the market that is the demand side and the supply side develop evenly. Excessively dynamic development of only one of them can significantly hinder the development of the market of thermal tourist services. Survey results have confirmed the need to use thermal pools in Polish spa resorts, but the analysis of the literature on the subject has indicated that the supply of thermal tourist services is adjusted to the demand in terms of the number and construction time of thermal facilities in statutory spa resorts (two thermal facilities: in Uniejów and in Cieplice Śląskie-Zdrój), and in other tourist destinations (12 thermal facilities in 10 years). Such status quo could entail serious long-term ramifications for the relatively young market of thermal tourism and its stakeholders. For this reason, strengthening the supply side of the market (construction of thermal facilities) seems to be one of the key challenges. Facing this challenge will enable further development of the market in Poland.

The development of thermal tourism in Poland is stimulated by:

- relevant geothermal resources (Kępińska, 2016);
- tradition and history of geothermal water use for therapeutic and recreational purposes;
- legal circumstances related to geothermal water exploration, construction of thermal centres and geothermal water use (Dej et al., 2013a; Polityka resortu w dziedzinie hydrologii na lata 2008–2015, 2008);
- health care trend;
- “bath fad”, i.e. popularity of thermal baths as a new way of spending leisure time (Dej et al., 2013a)

On the other hand, the obstacles in the development of thermal tourism include high costs of geothermal investment (e.g. Płochniewski, 1990), which discourage potential investors from taking action. However, geothermal undertakings can be subsidised by/with:

- the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management
- the Fund’s financial means from environmental charges and penalties;
- the EkoFundusz foundation;
- low interest loans from Bank Ochrony Środowiska (English: Environmental Protection Bank)

The above mentioned factors could influence the thermal spa tourism market development, and every new created and advertised thermal spa will develop and shape the next business ideas and work places.

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3.6. São Pedro do Sul (Portugal). Heritage and modernity applied to social and cultural thermalism.

1. Termas de s. Pedro do sul. O balneário romano e piscina d. Afonso henriques

Eduardo Nuno Oliveira

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1.1. O enquadramento termal em S. Pedro do Sul

As águas mineromedicinais tem um aproveitamento longínquo em S. Pedro do Sul, com os avanços e constantes aperfeiçoamentos dos balneários termais e da ciência dos seus tratamentos a estarem na base da evolução desta estância termal. Assim, S. Pedro do Sul, é conhecido por possuir recursos aquíferos minerais, normalmente designados de águas termais, com um aproveitamento para fins terapêuticos, geotérmicos, lúdicos e patrimoniais, promovendo o desenvolvimento da economia local ao nível turístico e social.

Essa água mineral natural é pródiga em propriedades terapêuticas, procurada para tratamentos termais relacionados com problemas respiratórios, músculoesqueléticos e dermatológicos, capazes de garantir, manter ou recuperar a saúde de quem as utiliza.

Existem dois balneários em pleno funcionamento, com estruturas modernas, com tecnologia, técnicas e tratamentos de ponta, constituindo-se na maior e na mais importante estância termal do país, inclusive da Península Ibérica.

Juntamente com o recurso aquífero, o lugar apresenta uma história e um património edificado relevante, mas também um envolvimento paisagístico notável, com a proximidade do rio Vouga e de uma natureza verdejante, tornando-se assim um destino valorizado e diferenciador para quem visita S. Pedro do Sul.

Mas a ocupação do lugar e o aproveitamento das águas termais já é antigo. Vejamos uma breve contextualização histórica.

O Banho foi um antigo concelho de Portugal, constituído pela depois designada freguesia de Várzea, actualmente incluído na União das Freguesias de S. Pedro do Sul, Várzea e Baiões, no concelho de S. Pedro do Sul.

A ocupação do lugar do Banho (hoje Termas de S. Pedro do Sul) é antiga, com vestígios de um povoamento castrejo (Castro do Banho), mais tarde romanizado e por esta civilização construído no lugar um primeiro balneário terapêutico, aproveitando os recursos aquíferos do território e assim potenciando o desenvolvimento da região.

Devido à sua crescente importância, no século XII, o lugar foi povoado e elevado à condição de concelho, através do foral outorgado por D. Afonso Henriques, em 1152, que empreendeu obras de requalificação no balneário e

na gafaria dos doentes, na mesma medida que concedeu benefícios para quem se quisesse estabelecer no Banho, acabando por criar condições para se assumir como cabeça da terra de Lafões. O mesmo monarca, em 1169, após o desastre sofrido na batalha de Badajoz, fixou o seu paço real no Banho durante cerca de 2 meses, onde convalesceu das feridas, reunindo em várias ocasiões a Cúria Régia, que discutiu e tomou importantes decisões para o então reino nascente.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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Timeline



Twelfth century (XII)

KING AFONSO HENRIQUES

Constructed a pool.
Made improvement works to the existing installations.
Ave, with his presence, huge visibility to the local.



Two thousand years ago

ROMAN TIMES

The Iberian Peninsula was part of the great Roman Empire; this, because of the importance of the raw materials it possessed and of the rivers, as an important mean of communication. As such, it became palatable to the commerce and fixation of the Romans. And the region of *Lafões* did not escape the **Roman occupation**, more than **2000 (two thousand) years ago**.

There are many marks of this throughout the region. In Termas de S. Pedro do Sul we have, as the greatest, the *Roman balneum*.

The Romans constructed their baths on the left bank of the Vouga river, consisting of swimming pools and other buildings.



As termas, ao longo dos tempos, cresceram de fama e importância, de modo que o rei D. Manuel I concede à povoação e ao seu balneário uma série de benefícios: duas cartas de couto e de privilégios (1502), em que institui o couto das Caldas de Lafões e nomeia o seu procurador e administrador; fomenta profundas modificações no velho edifício balnear e transforma-o em Real Hospital das Caldas de Lafões; em 1514 confirma os cargos e ofícios de 1502 e aumenta os privilégios; para, em 1515, no âmbito da reforma dos forais, conceder foral novo às Caldas de Lafões; e usar também ele as propriedades curativas das águas, numa passagem pela povoação e pelo então Hospital.

Na relação administrativa do Banho com a terra de Lafões, é dito por A. Pires da Sylva (1696) que: "sendo antes a Villa do Banho, cabeça de toda a terra de Alafoens, & Julgado, que se governava por dous Juizes, & quatro

Vereadores, dous de cada parte do rio Vouga, aonde, & não em outra parte, fazião suas audiencias¹.". Assim, com este testemunho eloquente, é fácil concluir que a vila do Banho constituiu ao longo de vários séculos a cabeça administrativa da terra de Lafões. Só mais tarde (séc. XV) formou-se o concelho de Lafões, ficando a sua administração bipartida entre S. Pedro do Sul e Vouzela, com o Banho a ficar numa situação de concelho enclave dentro do vasto concelho de Lafões, embora sempre com os seus oficiais de cargos administrativos, casa da Câmara, tribunal e cadeia.

O Banho, que mais tarde se chamou Caldas de Lafões, depois Termas da Rainha D. Amélia (1894-1910) e agora se chama Termas de S. Pedro do Sul, manteve o seu regime administrativo (concelho/couto) até às reformas administrativas de 1834/1836, quando foi extinto e incorporado no concelho de S. Pedro do Sul.

A povoação, nos finais do século XIX, assim como parte do concelho, lograram substancial desenvolvimento após a transferência da concessão da exploração das águas termais para a Câmara Municipal de S. Pedro do Sul (1839) e a construção de um novo balneário terapêutico (1886), potenciando a visita da família real portuguesa durante várias temporadas, especialmente a passagem da rainha D. Amélia durante os anos de 1894, 95, 96 e 98.



Sixteenth century (XVI)

D. MANUEL I

He came, after more unconfirmed presence of other royal members, and with him, he brought some benefits to this local: he ordered the construction of the *Royal Hospital of Caldas de Lafões* and he granted a new charter to the village, increasing its importance and skills.



1894

EIGHTEEN, NINETY-FOUR

Rainha D. Amélia, the last queen of Portugal, came for the first time to Termas de S. Pedro do Sul, in order to put an end to some health problems that tormented her. Her name was given to the facility – *Balneário Rainha D. Amélia*.

¹ Sylva, A. P. (1696), p. 12.

O desenvolvimento prossegue no decorrer dos anos subsequentes, quer com a serventia da linha de caminhos-de-ferro do Vale do Vouga, construção de uma estação e respectivos acessos viários, quer através da crescente fama e frequência dos aquistas, que incentivaram à construção de infraestruturas hoteleiras, instalação de comércio e serviços.

Já na década de 1980, um novo balneário foi construído: é o actual balneário D. Afonso Henriques. E, no virar do século, quer o Balneário Rainha D. Amélia, quer o Balneário D. Afonso Henriques, foram recuperados e remodelados, investindo-se em equipamento moderno e em instalações confortáveis e adaptadas às novas necessidades dos termalistas.

As Termas de S. Pedro do Sul foram as primeiras a nível nacional a certificar os serviços termais em termos da gestão de qualidade, de acordo com a norma ISO9001 de 2000, e em termos ambientais, de acordo com a norma ISO 14001 de 2004.

Apesar de existirem, no nosso país, abundantes águas termais, poucas são aquelas que se podem ufanar de uma tão antiga e valiosa história, que recua a sua identidade ao período romano, passando em seguida por todos os importantes estádios da monarquia: a monarquia nascente com D. Afonso Henriques, a monarquia venturosa com D. Manuel I e a monarquia agonizante com a rainha D. Amélia. Depois, com o advento da República, aproveita o embalo do novo regime para prosperar, tornando-se (como sempre foi) no grande motor de desenvolvimento da região de Lafões.



2008

TWO THOUSAND AND EIGHT

Balneário D. Afonso Henriques closed in 2006 (two thousand and six) for expansion and modernization works and reopened its doors in 2008 (two thousand and eight). It has a capacity for more than 30 (thirty) thousand thermal baths per year and offers an excellent service, highlighting Termas de S. Pedro do Sul as a destination of unparalleled quality in the panorama of national thermalism.



1987

NINETEEN, EIGHTY-SEVEN

In the meantime (1980s), the Balneário Rainha D. Amélia, with a century of existence, becomes inadequate for the number of people that daily used to come to the Baths. So, the Municipality undertook the construction of a new bathhouse, inaugurated on July 8, 1987 – Balneário D. Afonso Henriques.





1.2. Síntese sobre a história e evolução do balneário romano e medieval

Encontrando-se presentemente em fase de recuperação e musealização, fica à margem esquerda do rio Vouga, no centro das Termas de S. Pedro do Sul e trata-se de um dos complexos termais de origem romana mais importantes e bem conservados dos existentes no país, com uma utilização contínua ao longo de 2000 anos e que sempre se constituiu no grande motor do desenvolvimento local.

Este vetusto edifício termal foi sofrendo algumas remodelações consoante as suas necessidades e conveniências, constituindo-se na mais inequívoca e importante marca da romanização na região de Lafões e, mais tarde, da passagem do primeiro rei de Portugal por terras do Banho.

Aproveitando as abundantes nascentes de águas terapêuticas, a posição favorável no sistema das redes viárias e a proximidade com o Castro do Banho, aos romanos se deve a construção inicial do balneum, que, através da análise dos aparelhos utilizados no levantamento dos alçados, o fizeram em dois momentos: uma 1ª fase de construção no século I d. C. e uma 2ª fase, coincidindo com a conclusão do edifício, nos finais do mesmo século, com a arqueologia

a deixar a descoberto piscinas, canais de esquamento de águas, colunas, fustes e capiteis, lápides epigrafadas, revestimentos e construções em opus signenum e opus quadratum. É, no país, o único edifício medicinal romano que possui uma ocupação contínua e que apresenta alçados de paredes originais romanas desde as fundações até ao telhado (as paredes viradas ao rio e alguns arcos de portas e janelas).

Entrados na época da reconquista cristã, acredita-se que o edifício termal e o seu espaço envolvente foram ocupados e alvo de algumas transformações, como é o caso da construção da antiga igreja de S. Martinho do Banho (séc. IX)², da qual já só resta a capela-mor, importante e rico património histórico enquadrado na área arqueológica.

Já nos alvares da fundação da nacionalidade, assinala-se o foral atribuído por D. Afonso Henriques à povoação do Banho (1152) e surge a designação “Piscina D. Afonso Henriques”, conjunto de edificações do século XII assentes em estruturas romanas pré existentes, promovidas pelo rei conquistador, que frequentou os banhos locais após a fratura sofrida na malograda batalha de Badajoz (1169), estabelecendo paço real na povoação do Banho juntamente com o filho Sancho (futuro rei D. Sancho I), as filhas Teresa e Urraca e toda a cúria régia, com eles reunindo e decidindo importantes políticas nacionais.

Existem, igualmente, vestígios arquitectónicos do período dinizino e da passagem dos reis D. João I (que renovou o foral da povoação) e D. Duarte (que possivelmente criou o concelho de Lafões), assim como dos príncipes da ínclita geração e da sua mãe D. Filipa de Lencastre.

A fama e excelência destes banhos granjearam a visita de outros soberanos portugueses, como foi o caso, no século XVI, do rei D. Manuel I, que concedeu foral novo às já então chamadas Caldas de Lafões (1515) e abonou fundos para que se convertesse o velho edifício termal em Real Hospital das Caldas de Lafões, frequentando igualmente o edifício para tratar de uma doença dermatológica.

Foi este monarca que concedeu a exploração do couto das Caldas de Lafões e do seu Real Hospital a uma proeminente família vouzelense, os Almeidas, da Casa da Cavalaria, benesse que só cessou praticamente 300 anos depois.

Também no período filipino o edifício foi alvo de importantes modificações, exemplificando-se, dentro do edifício, a criação da capela de N.ª Sr.ª da Saúde e, no espaço exterior, a construção de uma casa da câmara, tribunal e cadeia. Já no século XIX, o rei D. Luís chama a si a alçada do edifício e promove, em 1889, o restauro da chamada sala dos camarotes reais. Mais para o fim do mesmo século, ao longo de 4 temporadas, o lugar foi procurado pela última rainha de Portugal, D. Amélia de Orleães, que ali realizou tratamentos e deixou a marca da sua passagem no novo edifício balnear que então se construiu, descontinuando assim o uso do antigo balneário romano.

² Real, M. L. (2013).

O velho edifício ainda serviu de instalações para a instrução primária e depósito de materiais, mas o descuido e progressivo abandono levou à sua rápida degradação, sobretudo ao desabamento provocado pelas cheias no Vouga em 1995.

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MUNICIPALITY OF SÃO PEDRO DO SUL

Area



350 (three hundred and fifty) square kilometres



Population

17 000 (seventeen thousand) inhabitants



Distance to the city of Porto

100 (a hundred) km (kilometers)



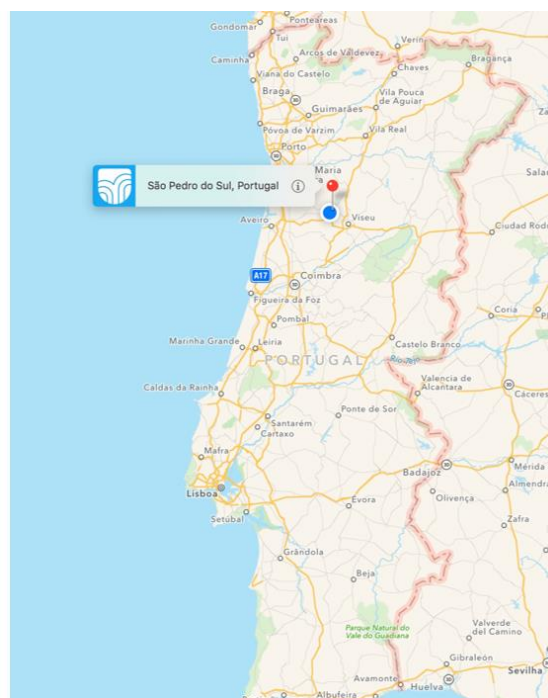
Distance to the city of Lisboa

300 (three hundred) kilometers (km)



City

Became a city on June, 2009 (two thousand and nine)



Nos anos 50 e 80 do século XX foram empreendidas prospecções e escavações arqueológicas na área, que deixaram a descoberto algum espólio. O que mais realçamos e que confere uma importância excepcional a este conjunto patrimonial é o seu carácter único no país e o seu aproveitamento contínuo ao longo de dois mil anos. Nas suas ruínas, apesar do aspecto caótico, é possível identificar as várias intervenções arquitectónicas realizadas no decurso dos tempos: as estruturas, aparelhos e elementos da construção romana, as remodelações operadas na época medieval, as intervenções arquitectónicas manuelinas incrementadas no renascimento, as alterações delineadas durante os séculos XVII e XVIII e as últimas reformas no século XIX. E tudo isto visível num só edifício balnear/medicinal, constituindo-se numa peça patrimonial e histórica de inegável valor nacional. Não existe outro com as mesmas características em Portugal.

Após vários anos votado à ruína, a Câmara Municipal de S. Pedro do Sul encetou uma enérgica aproximação às entidades públicas que gerem a política cultural e patrimonial, logrando captar um financiamento comunitário para concretizar a vontade de fazer da área arqueológica do balneário romano das Termas de S. Pedro do Sul um monumento vivo, respeitado e com a dignidade que merece.

É nesse sentido que, agora, se encontra em curso a execução da maior obra cultural e patrimonial da região centro, para revitalizar e valorizar este edifício medicinal romano, classificado na categoria de Monumento Nacional, pelo Dec. n.º 28 536, DG, I Série, n.º 66, de 22-03-1938.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Termas de S. Pedro do Sul

Therapeutic indications



Respiratory diseases
Rheumatic diseases

Treatments



Pools (manual and automatic
hidromassage)
Bathbubs (manual and automatic
hidromassage)
Showers (jet, circular, ...)
Vapours (spine, limbs, ...)
Inhalations
...

Technical data



Water temperature: 68.7 (sixty-
eight point seven) centigrade
Capacity: 17 (seventeen) litres
per second (natural spring and
artesian bore)
The water: sulphurous, poorly
mineralized

Hotel capacity



1800 (one thousand and eight
hundred) beds

1.3. O aproveitamento das águas no período pré romano

Provavelmente, foram as civilizações correspondentes ao período do bronze final, que habitavam as imediações da nascente, os primeiros a aproveitar os recursos minerais das águas quentes, inicialmente numa dimensão mística e religiosa, depois enquanto fonte de tratamentos.

Muito próximo existe o castro do Banho. Construída num pequeno cabeço, entre o rio Vouga e a ribeira de Beirós, encontra-se uma povoação lusitano-romana que se localiza no lugar de Ferreiros, freguesia de Serrazes, mas a poucas centenas de metros das Termas de S. Pedro do Sul.

Foi designado de Castro do Banho devido à sua proximidade com as termas locais, que antes se chamavam Banho. Presume-se que a sua existência e manutenção se deva à magnífica situação estratégica: entre os dois cursos de água, protegido pelas suas vertentes naturais e por muralhas nos pontos mais facilmente atacáveis, a meio caminho no controlo e defesa das duas nascentes de água quente (a principal, junto aos balneários, e a outra, junto a Valgode), reforçado pelos excelentes recursos cinegéticos da região e centralidade nas rotas de transumância, circulação de pessoas e de mercadorias.

Instalou-se, assim uma pequena comunidade no cabeço, cuja vida seria dura e difícil, mas que se podia defender com facilidade e vigiar as nascentes de água quente.

Supõe-se que seja um povoado castrejo do tipo mais arcaico, com uma edificação original na Idade do Bronze, escassamente povoado na Idade do Ferro, profundamente romanizado e com uma ocupação a atingir a Alta Idade Média.

Desde cedo que a estação arqueológica despertou o interesse dos especialistas: primeiro, nos anos 20 do século XX, o doutor Aristides Amorim Girão, depois, nos anos 50, o Dr. José Coelho, Manuel Bairrão Oleiro e Fernando

Russel Cortez. Assim, em 1954, o arqueólogo Manuel Bairrão Oleiro levou a cabo um conjunto de pesquisas e escavações, que visavam a preparação para um estudo mais sistemático e ordenado. Ao longo dessa breve campanha, foram deixadas a descoberto para cima de 30 casas, de um total superior a 150 por descobrir, procurando-se limpar a área, isolar as habitações e estabelecer uma ligação entre elas, o que deu uma ideia de como as pessoas viviam no castro. Apesar de considerado de enorme interesse histórico e arqueológico, não se deram continuidade a novas e constantes campanhas, que permitissem estudar, valorizar e preservar a estação arqueológica.

Aproveitando todas as saliências rochosas, o povoado distingue-se sobretudo por causa da malha habitacional de grande densidade, escalonada nos socacos e com uma curiosidade invulgar: as casas foram, total ou parcialmente, escavadas na rocha, de forma a lembrar uma autêntica colmeia. Não há um tipo uniforme de planta. Existem casas de planta redonda, oval e quadrada, com algumas a possuírem uma planta elaborada, distinguindo-se vários compartimentos. A natureza do terreno impera e o homem adaptou-a aos seus propósitos: por meio de caleiras circundando as casas, pequenos aquedutos, regos e pias escavadas no solo rochoso, defendeu a povoação e aproveitou as águas pluviais, escavou rampas de acesso, cavou degraus, fez lareiras e silos, talhou soleiras e bancos. Apareceram, curiosamente, numa das casas escavadas, umas bancadas largas e curvas, que podem significar um lugar de reunião. Durante a escavação ainda se recolheram: telhas, mós manuais, pesos de tear, ímbrices, pregos de ferro, campainhas de gado, vidraria, cerâmica doméstica vulgar, terra sigillata hispânica, uma fíbula de bronze completa e um conjunto de moedas dos imperadores Constantino, Constante e Galeano³.

Grande parte do espólio recolhido encontra-se em parte incerta. Do pouco que se conhece, parte distribui-se através das colecções arqueológicas da Assembleia Distrital de Viseu e do Dr. José Coelho, igualmente em Viseu, respectivamente a saber: cerâmicas várias e 14 moedas e uma peça em cerâmica romana do séc. II d. C.⁴

Sendo um castro profundamente romanizado, supõe-se ter sido a partir da sua ocupação que os romanos iniciaram a construção do balneum no século I d. C.

É possível que, durante o período romano, a actual povoação das Termas de S. Pedro do Sul fosse inexistente, com os habitantes do castro a terem que daí se deslocar diariamente aos banhos. Só mais tarde se teria começado a organizar um povoado em torno do balneum, com a primitiva povoação castreja a ser gradualmente abandonada,

³. Vaz, J. I. (1993).

⁴. Esta peça é proveniente do Castro do Banho, em S. Pedro do Sul. Foi referenciada ao Dr. José Coelho, juntamente com outros fragmentos cerâmicos, por alguém que interveio neste sítio, talvez o Dr. Amorim Girão ou o Prof. Moreira de Figueiredo. A terra sigillata é um tipo de cerâmica da época romana muito característica sendo um excelente indicador cronológico. Era a cerâmica de ir à mesa, cerâmica fina e rica. O nome relaciona-se pelo facto de estes recipientes (pratos, taças, copos, etc.) serem normalmente marcados com o selo (sigillum) do oleiro ou da oficina onde eram produzidos. O gosto pelo uso desta cerâmica era tão grande que surgiram centros produtores nas diversas províncias romanas, cada uma delas apresentando características individualizadoras. Esta taça foi produzida na Hispânia, desconhecendo-se ao certo a oficina. Um outro elemento distintivo deste tipo de cerâmica é o facto destas peças serem cobertas por um engobe que vitrifica ao cozer dando-lhe um aspecto brilhante, resistência e impermeabilidade. O facto de serem feitas através de moldes, permitiu criar tipologias muito úteis para a classificação destas peças. Assim, podemos dizer que a taça do Castro do Banho é uma taça com a forma Drag. 37 de bordo retilíneo, com lábio alto mas pouco saliente, decorada com círculos dentados concêntricos, sendo provavelmente do séc. II. O seu aparecimento num castro não é incomum tendo em conta que grande parte destes povoados fortificados da Idade do Ferro foram romanizados.

havendo vestígios da sua ocupação até a um período relativamente tardio para estes casos: a Alta Idade Média. Nascia a então medieval vila do Banho.

Por ser considerada uma estação arqueológica de inegável valor histórico, cultural e patrimonial, o Castro do Banho foi classificado como Imóvel de Interesse Público, pelo decreto nº 41.191, de 18 de Julho de 1957.

1.4. O aproveitamento das águas no período romano

Embora o uso dos banhos fosse já antigo, é com a chegada dos romanos e da sua civilização que se construiu o primeiro balneário.

Com efeito, é aos romanos que se deve um profundo conhecimento dos poderes das águas, seu aproveitamento lúdico e terapêutico, e igualmente da divulgação dos mesmos nos lugares onde chegavam, coisa que aconteceu em S. Pedro do Sul.

E tão forte foi esta marca que os seus usos e costumes aqui perduram conotados até aos dias de hoje, tanto na cultura popular, como nos hábitos, religião ou arquitectura.

Estes balneários medicinais aparecem, assim, nas margens de aglomerados populacionais e junto aos principais caminhos e vias que os convertiam no centro fulcral do desenvolvimento do populado bem como da urbanização. A rede de pequenas habitações iniciais que se transforma numa cidade necessita da construção de uma rede de infraestruturas que a suporte e apoie, bem como outros detalhes importantes como: a relação com a envolvente, com as suas águas (usos, temperatura, composição), os usos, costumes, etc. Tudo isto permite conhecer melhor a actuação destes conjuntos, tal como destas construções, a sua configuração funcional e as suas implicações sociais, permitindo perceber a maneira como estes microcosmos funcionavam⁵. Todos estes detalhes têm especial impacto na configuração arquitectónica e no desenvolvimento destes mesmos edifícios.

Um desses espaços criados foi o balneum das Termas de S. Pedro do Sul. As aquae (cidades das águas) implicavam, para os romanos, uma série de características termais, mas para o aproveitamento humano, que, usadas para fins curativos, também tinham uma dimensão religiosa, como são exemplo as epígrafes romanas encontradas: em S. Pedro do Sul destacamos a inscrição a Mercúrio Augusto Aquaeco⁶. E esta vertente religiosa também condicionava o aspecto arquitectónico.

Ao longo dos tempos vários foram os autores que discerniram sobre este edifício. Começou em 1696 com António Pires da Sylva, médico e cronista que escreveu a “Cronographia Medicinal das Caldas de Alafoens”, obra que ainda hoje se lê com muito proveito; depois é já no século XIX que se voltam às termas e a mais pesquisas; para se continuar em

⁵. Carriço, A. (2013).

⁶. Manifestação das divindades cultuadas nas águas termais de S. Pedro do Sul, com uma particularidade relevante: o culto simultâneo da divindade romana introduzida (Mercúrio) e da sua conotação imperial (Augusto) e da divindade indígena pré existente (Aquaeco).

força durante o século seguinte. Esse conjunto de estudos e investigações, cada vez mais assumindo carácter científico, porfiam em avançar, porque a importância do monumento e da sua utilização contínua ao longo de 2000 anos são exemplo nacional para os edifícios congéneres. Mas, a entrada em cena dos arqueólogos, sobretudo com campanhas e escavações sistemáticas, dá-se apenas nos anos da década de 1950, protagonizadas por Bairrão Oleiro, ilustre arqueólogo e professor da Universidade de Coimbra, depois com Fernando Russel Cortez, também professor e investigador da Universidade do Porto e director do Museu Grão Vasco.

Durante essas campanhas, numa primeira fase, foram encontradas e deixadas a descoberto uma piscina exterior, e também fustes e capitéis, entre outros materiais. Contudo, o que mais chamou à atenção foi a descoberta de um fuste e de uma coluna romana, de duas epígrafes e da grande natatio romana (piscina de água fria ao ar livre), acontecimento que motivou as primeiras obras e o despertar para o valor patrimonial do edifício, comprovando-se então a origem romana do edifício e a utilização destas águas de S. Pedro do Sul por parte da civilização de Roma.

E, mesmo após esta descoberta científica, porque a identidade de um povo é forte, a crença popular continuava a atribuir a D. Afonso Henriques a sua construção, quer da piscina conhecida como “Piscina Afonsina”, quer da grande parte das paredes que a circundam.

É já em 1985 que os arqueólogos José Beleza Moreira e Helena Frade, do então IGESPAR, iniciaram escavações arqueológicas mais alargadas, que permitiram analisar e perceber, com pormenor, não só a construção, como o ambiente vivido.

No entanto, centremo-nos na construção do balneário romano. Localiza-se na margem direita do rio Vouga e é um dos raros exemplares de balneários medicinais romanos existentes no país, datado inicialmente do século I d. C., relativamente bem conservado.

Segundo a DGCP, este povoado corresponde, possivelmente, à romana Aquae Sulis, evocativa de Sulis, deusa celta da cura e relacionada com as fontes de água quente, denotando que estas termas poderiam ter sofrido alguma influência, embora ténue, de povos Celtas, aquando da sua permanência em Portugal.

Ademais, factor que contribuiu para a fixação de aglomerados romanos na região de Lafões, mormente junto às caldas, foi a passagem da estrada romana que ligava Viseu a Talabriga (Águeda), também conhecida por “Estrada do Peixe”, passando um ramal por Vouzela e Banho de S. Pedro do Sul, com uma importância fundamental para as pessoas que circulavam e que levavam bens, mercadorias e ideias do litoral para o interior e vice-versa. Outras importantes causas foram as riquezas minerais existentes nesta zona: jazidas de estanho, de cobre e de ouro aluvionar da bacia do rio Vouga. Assim, com estas condições, os povos foram sendo atraídos para a edificação em torno da estação balnear, o que nos leva a considerar que naquela altura um pequeno povoado começava-se a fixar,

podendo também ter coexistido durante algum tempo com o povoado do Castro do Banho, se bem que as primeiras estruturas junto ao balneum devem corresponder aos serviços de apoio aos banhos romanos⁷.

1.4.1. A 1ª Fase romana de construção

Mas, voltando ao balneum original, a sua construção deve ter origem nos engenheiros das legiões romanas, nas suas técnicas e nos seus saberes, iniciado no período pós augusto, talvez claudiano, portanto da primeira metade do século I d. C., que servia exclusivamente para tratamentos medicinais: o carácter sagrado das águas.

Essa 1ª fase de construção, com a nascente a cerca de 180 metros, aproveitando a depressão natural do terreno para mais facilmente encaminhar as águas quentes, e igualmente junto ao Vouga, para aproveitar as águas do rio no arrefecimento e no despejo das águas termais, devia contar com instalações mais modestas e funcionais, simples, apenas com o imprescindível e apresentando uma planta rectangular e simétrica ao eixo norte/sul, não se verificando a orientação preconizada por Vitrúvio (voltado a poente)⁸. Apresentava um só piso, era sólido e coeso, como se fosse feito de um só bloco e indeformável, construído com os materiais da região: blocos de granito e seixos do rio. Assim, as fundações assentavam num maciço constituído essencialmente por seixos do rio bem acamados e por terra negra bem compactada, levantando-se as paredes com elementos irregulares de tamanho pequeno e médio, ligados com argamassa de areão e com os espaços vazios preenchidos com pedras pequenas ou fragmentos de tijolo. Também ostentava colunas e capitéis.

O abastecimento das águas quentes era feito via condutas de pedra, que desciam da nascente e cuja arrefecia durante o percurso e nos tanques existentes para o efeito.

A entrada para este edifício da 1ª fase de construção seria feito a meio da parede nascente, contribuindo para essa crença a existência de duas bases de colunas situadas de forma um pouco mais afastada, que, supostamente, deviam suportar um pórtico coberto de acesso ao interior do balneário.

Segundo as investigações de 1985⁹, o edifício original disponibilizava duas piscinas: uma grande natatio ao ar livre (PI), para os banhos frios (frigidarium), e uma piscina interior (P3), para os banhos quentes (caldarium). A PI exibia 20,5 m (comprimento) x 9 m (largura) x 1,5 m (profundidade), sendo circundada por uma galeria com uma fileira dupla de colunas graníticas com cerca de 7 metros de altura, existindo ainda algumas sapatas, fustes e capitéis jónicos a descoberto. Essa dupla fila de colunas devia ser encimada por uma armação de madeira onde assentava uma cobertura cerâmica inclinada para o interior da piscina, que devia ter degraus em granito parcialmente submersos e o fundo constituído por opus signinum acente numa camada de seixos. A P3, no interior, ficava no centro de uma sala delimitada por duas paredes (nascente e poente) e por duas absides (norte e sul), apresentando as dimensões de 7,4

⁷ Vaz, J. I. (1993).

⁸ Carriço, A. (2013).

⁹ Frade, H. e Moreira, J. (1993).

m (comprimento) x 5,4 m (largura) x 1,2 m (profundidade), com o acesso a ser feito por quatro degraus existentes em cada um dos topos da piscina e com o pavimento igual à P1. Existia, igualmente, para escoamento e abastecimento de águas às piscinas, uma profusa rede de canalizações. Supõem-se que, a norte e a sul do edifício, estavam localizadas salas de apoio aos banhos. Este edifício da 1ª fase de construção não durou muito tempo.

1.4.2. A 2ª fase romana de construção

Ainda nos finais do século I d. C., princípios do século II, uma 2ª fase de construção é iniciada, com o surgimento avultado de obras no edifício original.

A influência de muitas pessoas e o atravessar de diversas épocas fizeram com que se tornasse necessário o alargamento do espaço balnear, com a consequente construção de dependências que se iam adoçando à primeira estrutura. Mantendo quase o mesmo tipo de organização interior, esta nova ampliação possuía um maior cuidado no divisionamento, adaptado já a um maior número de utentes e, possivelmente, a uma procura mais exigente.

Continua com um só piso, mas amplia-se o edifício, novas salas e uma nova piscina surge (P2), notando-se já um maior cuidado na construção: revestimentos graníticos, acabamentos aprimorados e paredes em opus quadratum com algumas fiadas de tijoleira com funções específicas para o arranque das abóbadas de berço¹⁰.

Agora, o acesso à sala principal era feito por duas portas na parede norte e, no lugar da P3, o espaço é entulhado, criando-se então uma sala de apoio.

Por conseguinte, nesta 2ª fase, a P3 desaparece, dá lugar a uma sala, e é criada outra piscina interior. Havia cinco portas: duas de acesso à piscina, uma noutra parede que servia de ligação à P1 exterior, outra numa parede de ligação a nova piscina e uma quinta na parede virada para o rio Vouga que fazia a ligação para o exterior, sendo esta uma porta com cerca de 1 m de largura e em arco de volta perfeita com sete aduelas de granito.

Novamente existiam intrincadas redes de esgotos para as águas.

Cumpria-se o percurso ritual usual de um utente dos banhos romanos: a A entrada fazia-se pelo lado nascente, por um pórtico com colunas, que se podia prolongar um pouco mais para norte. Continuação do percurso para uma ala mais quente, posteriormente para a piscina de água quente (P2), para depois os utentes submergirem na piscina de água fria (P1), consoante o tipo de banho.

Já informamos que a piscina interior original (P3) foi desactivada e que no seu lugar construíram outra piscina interior (P2). Esta P2, com água quente e toda em granito, exibia 8 m (comprimento) x 4,7 m (largura) x 1 m (profundidade), assente sobre seixos do rio e argamassa, possuindo em todos os seus lados três degraus de acesso e o pavimento da sala também feito com lajes graníticas, sendo a cobertura com abóbada de berço. É criada uma outra

¹⁰ Frade, H. E Moreira, J. (1993).

piscina (P5) que também resulta de remodelações numa outra piscina (P4), que era uma piscina menor e cuja seria utilizada por mulheres.¹¹

Não há evidências para a localização das latrinas.

A remodelação de finais do séc. I d. C., princípios do séc. II d. C., é mais profunda do que se supunha: dá a impressão que demoliram o 1º edifício romano para construírem ou ampliarem, não exactamente no mesmo lugar, o 2º edifício romano, um pouco mais recuado em relação ao rio, talvez para o prevenir das enchentes.

Subsiste, igualmente, a possibilidade da existência de um desenvolvimento (investimento) no balneário e estruturas dependentes durante o séc. III ou IV d. C., dado que foram períodos de investimento geral: podia servir a um vicus (Aquae Sulis?) ou, mais provável, às populações castrejas envolventes, dado que não se conhece cidade romana importante nas proximidades, mas que traziam gente da outra ponta da península para usar as águas medicinais (sagradas).

É provável (praticamente certo) que existia também um espaço religioso (um templo), primeiro de evocação às divindades romanas e indígenas, depois cristianizado no período medieval.

Para além deste conjunto termal, também era frequente existirem anexos, habitações e alojamentos para os frequentadores e as tabernae – estabelecimentos comerciais de uma só sala com 15 a 20 m² de superfície), que se devem encontrar soterrados. No entanto, a avaliar pelo que está a descoberto, estas constituíram um dos principais pontos da cultura romana no nosso país.

1.5. O período altomedieval

Após a queda do império romano do ocidente, as hordas de Suevos e Visigodos, que constituíram reinos independentes na Península Ibérica, depois os muçulmanos invasores e os cristãos da reconquista, não viam os banhos da mesma forma que os romanos os consideravam.

Do período muçulmano, pouco dominante no norte do país, não subsistem vestígios materiais da ocupação dos banhos romanos de S. Pedro do Sul, existindo apenas elementos ligados à toponímia, à cultura e à tradição.

O lugar e o velho balneum continuou, de certo, a ser utilizado, mas porque as suas águas revestiam-se de propriedades curativas, místicas e religiosas, datando desta época, possivelmente, a cristianização do lugar, com a construção da capela de S. Martinho do Banho, à ilharga do edifício balnear romano, estávamos nos finais do século IX e Lafões destacava-se por ter uma forte comunidade moçárabe.

Durante esse processo de reconquista, a partir do século IX e X, a terra de Lafões teve um papel de charneira na senhorialização do território da antiga civitas romana de Viseu, sendo que o lugar do Banho foi ocupado, permanecendo alguns indícios: para além da referida construção da capela de S. Martinho e a permanência em Lafões

¹¹ Frade, H. E Moreira, J. (1993).

de um clã da família real asturo-leonesa¹², durante o acompanhamento de umas obras em curso, surgiu um pavimento altomedieval, que se caracteriza por ser empedrado com seixos do rio colocados em "cutelo", ou seja, em vez das pedras serem colocadas deitadas (na horizontal), são colocadas mais ao alto (na vertical), forma de construção coeva com a primitiva capela de S. Martinho do Banho, conjecturando-se (ou confirmando-se) uma ocupação altomedieval do espaço, se bem que o edifício banhear em si não deve ter sofrido alterações neste período.

Entretanto, já no século XI, após as reformas administrativas e territoriais decorrentes da reconquista cristã, as divisões em civitas (romanas) são extintas e no seu lugar surgem as terras, como é exemplo para esta região a terra de Lafões, sendo que, como já abordamos, a povoação do Banho passa a ser cabeça administrativa desse novo território.

Assim, as águas termais de S. Pedro do Sul continuaram a ser procuradas por muitos doentes que ali buscavam a cura. Não se sabe se já no tempo dos Romanos ali eram tratados os gafos (leprosos), no entanto, foi mais propriamente a partir das cruzadas que se verificou maior afluência por parte de determinados doentes. Muitos Leoneses tinham instalações nas termas em pleno séc. XI, pois aquelas terras ainda faziam parte do reino de Leão e, conforme demonstram documentos da época, atribuíase-lhes a fundação da Gafaria, provando-se este facto com uma lista das albergarias do distrito de Viseu que refere: *"A Albergaria de Lafões - (S. Pedro do Sul) - fundada pelos leoneses antes do séc. XI, junto da gafaria e beneficiada como ela por D. Afonso Henriques."*¹³

Junto ao balneário, portanto, já existia uma albergaria e uma gafaria. Mas é com D. Afonso Henriques que a povoação e os banhos logram mais um importante impulso.

1.6. A permanência de d. Afonso Henriques no banho e a 3ª remodelação do balneum

A primeira relação de D. Afonso Henriques com o Banho é a outorga de um foral à povoação em 1152, elevando-a a concelho, mais tarde a "Couto do Reino" e posteriormente a "Couto de Honra", sendo um dos mais antigos do reino e o mais antigo de Lafões, constituindo durante muito tempo a sua capital, foral que servia para conceder privilégios a quem se quisesse fixar no Banho e promover o seu desenvolvimento.

No entanto, é já em 1169 que o rei português, após ter fracturado a perna direita num ferrolho da porta da praça de Badajoz, veio procurar tratamento medicinal nos banhos de Lafões, entre os meses de Setembro e Outubro, estando acompanhado pelos filhos Sancho (futuro rei D. Sancho I) e pelas princesas Teresa e Urraca, por quase todos os magnates do reino, os clérigos mais importantes (arcebispo e bispos), aqui reunindo a corte régia e com evidentes tomadas de decisões para a política nacional.¹⁴

¹² Real, M. L. (2013).

¹³ Oliveira, A. N. (2002).

¹⁴ Cruz, A. (1973).

São vários os documentos que por si só atestam este acontecimento, exemplificando-se com os seguintes excertos:

- Escritura em Santa Cruz (Coimbra, 1169): *"quando Rex venit de Badalios, et jacebat infirmus in balneis de Alafoens."*
- Escritura da Torre do Tombo, no 1º das ordens militares (1169): *"Facta charta apud alafoem (...).Rex Alphonsus cum filio suo Rege Sanchio et filiabus suis Regina Urraca et Regina Tharusia (...)."*

A tradição diz que o monarca teria patrocinado a construção de um hospício para os doentes pobres, de uma gafaria, alguns alojamentos para pessoas de qualidade, uns paços para si e para os seus, casas de habitação para os criados e um largo casarão de banhos com piscina, cuja, agora sabe-se, não foi uma construção de raiz, mas sim um aproveitamento ao nível do rés do chão de uma piscina romana: é a 3ª fase de reconstrução e já tinham passado 1000 anos do edifício original.

Neste edifício, que já era um edifício existente, houve necessidade de moldar, não só o próprio edifício às necessidades da época, mas também ao gosto da época: privilegia-se o material em bruto, as paredes rectas, pavimentos e telhados básicos e rudimentares, adobes e taipais, as dimensões dos espaços variam ao sabor das necessidades, em suma, é uma construção mais em força do que em jeito, que vai romper com a sistematização dos banhos romanos e criar espaços avulsos, sem uma finalidade concreta no ritual dos banhos.

Foi a partir deste período que o edifício e as suas dependências assumiram um carácter de espaço público, utilizado pela comunidade em geral e com o poder senhorial a contribuir para a sua modificação e ampliação.

O balneário continua com um só piso e o esquema interior simétrico, a P1 (piscina exterior) é encerrada (aterrada) e a entrada principal passa a ser feita pelo lado do rio Vouga, pondo-se de parte os banhos de água fria.¹⁵

Assim, o balneário funcionava apenas com a P2 (piscina baptizada com o nome de D. Afonso Henriques e destinada aos homens) e com a p5 (piscina destinada para as mulheres), ambas interiores e de água quente ou tépida, lugares separados porque também separados por sexo passam a ser os banhos, como se manifesta em certos documentos medievais, graças a influências religiosas que desaconselhavam tais exposições ou deleites públicos.

Os tratamentos realizados nestas termas, para além dos banhos de tradição romana, como inalações e imersões, passam a contar também com outros banhos, agora destinados aos leprosos, que por sua vez eram separados das pessoas sãs.

1.7. Os Séculos XIII, XIV e XV

Nos anos que se seguiram a D. Afonso Henriques, a povoação e o seu edifício balnear continuam a prosperar, com a cada vez mais procura das suas águas para o tratamento medicinal dos ricos e pobres, dos nobres e plebeus.

¹⁵ Frade, H. E Moreira, J. (1993).

Na porta de ligação da chamada Piscina D. Afonso Henriques para a capela de N.^a Sr.^a da Saúde, existem elementos decorativos e arquitectónicos que nos remetem, possivelmente, para o período dinizino (1261-1325), o que leva a crer que, durante esses anos, o edifício sofreu alguma espécie de remodelação. Trata-se de uma porta em arco, com uma decoração vegetalista e zoomórfica, que nos encaminha para um estilo de transição entre o românico e o gótico, em voga no reinado de D. Dinis.

Igualmente, já para os finais do século XIV, princípios do século XV, a povoação e o seu balneário ficaram ligados à Casa de Avis, com o rei D. João I, em 1411, a doar ao seu filho, o infante D. Henrique, os territórios da comarca da Beira e, posteriormente, em 1415, com a criação do ducado de Viseu em benefício do mesmo infante, havendo a crença de que, quer esse rei e a sua esposa, D. Filipa de Lencastre, quer os príncipes da ínculta geração, passaram pelo Banho.

É já no reinado de D. Duarte (1391-1438) que se cria o concelho de Lafões (13 de Maio de 1436), estabelecendo-se S. Pedro do Sul e Vouzela como cabeças desse concelho, sendo que o Banho perde o estatuto de cabeça da terra de Lafões, vindo mais tarde, já com D. Manuel I, a sofrer uma série de reformas administrativas na povoação e estruturais no balneário.

1.8. O Período Manuelino (Século XVI)

Começa a desaparecer o nome de Banho para a povoação, substituído pela designação Caldas de Lafões.

Existem dois diplomas do rei D. Manuel I, ambos de 1502, em que o 1.^o institui Fernão Lopes de Almeida, vouzelense, com o ofício de procurador e administrador do couto das Caldas de Lafões, hospital¹⁶, celeiro e tudo o mais que lhe pertença, e o outro é uma carta de privilégios concedida a todos quantos fossem viver para o couto, isentando-os de servir em guerras por mar ou por terra. Em 1514, novo diploma passado pelo mesmo rei, concede a Duarte de Almeida, cavaleiro de sua casa e filho do dito Fernão, o cargo e ofício então atribuído a seu pai, reforçando ainda o bom funcionamento do hospital e aumentando os privilégios aos indivíduos que tencionassem morar no local. Nos três casos, o objectivo é o mesmo: instituir um hospital com rendimentos próprios que dê albergue aos banhistas e atrair moradores que possam garantir o aprovisionamento do hospital, fornecer alimento e dormida aos enfermos que vierem a tratamentos.

Assim, em 24 de Julho de 1515, através da política de revisão e renovação dos forais, o rei D. Manuel I outorga foral novo às então Caldas de Lafões, conferindo uma maior importância administrativa e judicial à povoação, reforçada pela alegada visita do monarca aos banhos de Lafões.

Mas, pese embora todos os benefícios administrativos concedidos por este monarca à povoação, é a transformação do velho balneário romano e afonsino em Real Hospital das Caldas de Lafões, que servia para nele se recolherem e curarem os pobres, a 4.^a fase de reconstrução operada no edifício.

¹⁶ Trata-se do Real Hospital das Caldas de Lafões.

Assim, o rei D. Manuel I dotou a povoação com o Hospital, que funcionaria enquanto hospital termal, com dimensões razoáveis para a época e para o lugar, reconstruindo algumas partes e ampliando outras, concedendo igualmente o respectivo património para garantir a sustentação do empreendimento.

O agora Real Hospital das Caldas de Lafões, na sua identidade própria, possui características arquitectónicas romanas na sua base, mais visíveis do que as medievais, devido ao tipo de ampliações e aos recursos empregues na reconstrução. A solução adoptada neste conjunto parece ter sido inicialmente a construção das paredes e pavimentos em granito (aproveitando a zona de banhos existente da época romana) até ao nível do sobrado, e uso de madeira, adobe ou taipa para o nível superior (criação do 1º andar). É ainda de salientar a ampliação do edifício para o lado, entre a P2 e a P1 (hospital e capela) e para o Rio Vouga¹⁷.

Esta 4ª ampliação aproveitava, assim, o duplo pé-direito da edificação destinada aos banhos.

O material mais usado no prolongamento do edifício continua a ser a pedra granítica, o que exigia um maior poder económico, quer na aquisição dos materiais, quer na sua aplicação, mas que resultava em edifícios com uma qualidade arquitectónica superior. Nas áreas mais destacadas dos exteriores, a pedra apresenta-se sem reboco, com um maior efeito decorativo, e as pedras almofadadas, lavradas das janelas, escadas portas assumem um corte mais cuidado. Nos interiores, para fazer face à despesa, usase uma construção mista: pedra no rés do chão, com a combinação de madeira nos interiores e no piso superior, permitindo o crescimento em altura. Entre pisos foi colocado um madeiramento, sobre o qual se assentou soalho, constituído por tábuas largas e resistentes. Os compartimentos situados no piso superior tinham um pé-direito alto, com tetos em madeira realizados com tábuas. A cobertura do edifício, assente num beiral saliente para proteger a fachada, que nesta altura teria quatro águas, era em madeira e já possuía alguma complexidade para a época.

É, igualmente, de crer que tivesse sido durante as obras para a transformação do edifício romano e medieval em Real Hospital das Caldas de Lafões que a capela de S. Martinho também sofreu alterações, com a retirada da sua ala basilical (estendida para o balneário) e que ficou sensivelmente com o aspecto que lhe conhecemos hoje: a capela com portal gótico no lugar do altar-mor da igreja maior que lá existia.

A CAPELA DE NOSSA SENHORA DA SAÚDE E A CASA DA CÂMARA E A DO CORREGEDOR

Fora já do reinado de D. Manuel I, talvez já com D. João III ou D. Sebastião, mas mais provavelmente com Filipe I, é construída a capela de N.ª Sr.ª da saúde, pegada ao edifício balnear e cuja servia para o préstimo dos doentes, tradição com origem num oratório existente na chamada Piscina D. Afonso Henriques.

Fica a sensação de que, por essa época, o culto a N.ª Sr.ª da Saúde suplanta o culto a S. Martinho: a primeira é criada, a segunda fica remetida ao simples altar. Esta capela, exterior ao edifício dos banhos, mas com ligação ao mesmo (encostada à P2 e em cima de parte da P1), apresenta uma autonomia na sua definição arquitectónica,

¹⁷ Carriço, A. (2013).

funcional e de dimensões maiores inicialmente, como ainda hoje é visível na interrupção dos beirais. Assim, as paredes executadas em granito, com reboco, tinham janelas decoradas e beirais elaborados que protegiam as paredes.

Salientam-se os prumos das paredes, os apoios e o entablamento de madeira. Levantadas as paredes da igreja, cresceram também as empenas onde assentavam os topos.

Também no reinado do primeiro Filipe, em 1584, a povoação volta a sofrer alguns benefícios estruturais: junto ao Hospital, para além da dita capela de N.ª Sr.ª da Saúde, nasce uma casa para as sessões da câmara, tribunal e cadeia das Caldas de Lafões, mas também a casa do corregedor e, possivelmente, no espaço foi erigido um pelourinho, para simbolizar as justiças próprias.

Assim, torna-se verosímil que o arranjo espacial do agora Real Hospital das Caldas de Lafões, capelas de S. Martinho e de N.ª Sr.ª da Saúde e casas da administração se dispusessem de forma a formar uma espécie de praça central da povoação, talvez ainda coberta com pórticos e colunas nalguns pontos.

1.7 – OS SÉCULOS XVII E XVIII

É o médico e cronista das Caldas de Lafões, António Pires da Sylva, que, em 1696, nos dá a precisa ideia de como eram e como funcionavam os banhos do Hospital. Já no século XVII, por volta de 1684, o edifício balnear deve ter sofrido a sua 5ª fase de remodelações e adaptações, no momento de uma provedoria nomeada pelo rei a Pedro Aires de Almeida Sousa e Sá, fidalgo da casa real.

Assim, já no século XVII, o edifício possuía dois pisos: no rés do chão, funcionavam as piscinas interiores de água quente P2 (para os homens) e P5 (para as mulheres), aposentos com banheiras (umas forradas com azulejos e outras em granito) e espaços para transpiração, sempre separados por sexos, mas relacionados com os tratamentos; no 1º piso, relacionado com as áreas de descanso, existiam quartos onde ficavam as pessoas e uma varanda que corria sobre a porta principal onde secavam roupas, depois convertida também em quartos, havendo ainda em volta do peristilo da P2 um passeio onde se circulava. No caso, a piscina masculina comportava cerca de 40 pessoas, enquanto que a feminina comportava umas 10 pessoas.¹⁸

A principal funcionalidade da existência de dois pisos é que permitia diferenciar as zonas: uma zona de tratamentos, no rés do chão e uma zona de descanso no 1º piso, mas também separar a esfera social da esfera privada. Neste período, sobre a sala da P2 é feita a seguinte descrição: é a piscina onde se banhou D. Afonso Henriques e apresenta cinco arcos (três na parte do norte, com dois deles vasados para uma sala com três portas) e outro a meio destes não vasado e formando o camarote que se diz ter servido para o primeiro monarca português tomar suores, sendo que, da parte leste, estava a porta principal, e do lado poente outro arco não vasado, o quinto arco ao centro e lá fizeram um oratório, para, no meio da sala, ficar a piscina com três degraus e um parapeito com quatro

¹⁸. Sylva, A. P. (1696).

entradas, sobre o qual existiam quatro colunas quadrangulares que sustentavam uma varanda, da qual se descia por uma escada da parte do oratório (lado do ocidente).¹⁹

Já para a sala da P5, é esta a descrição: fica na ala norte/poente e com a frente voltada para o rio, a um nível inferior da piscina dos homens, com serventia por uma porta (antes uma janela gradeada) e outra para o alpendre que estava nas costas dos banhos dos homens.

A água quente continuava a chegar ao balneário através de um reservatório junto ao edifício, sendo encaminhada pelos canaletos que corriam junto às paredes do mesmo. Para complementar os banhos no hospital, existia a designada Casa dos Banhos Secos, que se localizava na nascente principal da água quente, constituída por uma sala em abóbada e onde cabiam oito pessoas sentadas.

É um tempo em que os homens ficavam alojados em várias casas: na Casa das Audiências e Câmara, que nas temporadas termais desocupava-se em duas salas e um sobrado; na Casa do Corregedor, constituída por uma sala e duas câmaras forradas; na Casa Nova do Couto, com uma sala grande bem forrada; na Casa de D. José, com uma sala grande, duas alcovas e quatro cubículos; e na varanda da Casa do Banho, em quatro beliches e um compartimento para os pobres e onze camarotes para os doentes suarem.

E as mulheres, por sua vez, alojavam-se em casas separadas, nos seguintes lugares: duas casas novas, cada uma com uma sala e uma cama; uma sala na Casa da Laranjeira; sobre o banho que lhes era destinado, mais um cubículo; de frente para este uma casa grande; e para suarem, dentro dos banhos, dispunham de três camarotes, com duas camas cada. Os moços que conduziavam os animais e os próprios animais dispunham de uma estalagem no lugar para acomodar a ambos. O hospital dos banhos dispunha de um médico, a quem os doentes deviam relatar as suas queixas; um boticário, responsável por dar todos os medicamentos necessários; um sangrador, que administrava as sangrias e que também dava os banhos secos, mediante pagamento excepcional; um banheiro, para dar banho aos homens e, para as mulheres, uma banheira.

Os homens de condição rica ficavam com a obrigação de pagar os serviços.

E, uma vez que as águas estavam sob o controlo do hospital, não podiam os doentes usá-las sem prévia consulta médica. Os banhos, em primeira classe, custavam 80 reis e, em segunda classe, 60 reis.

Com estes rendimentos pagavam ao médico, ao boticário, ao sangrador, ao banheiro e à banheira.

Mas como eram esses banhos dos séculos XVII e XVIII?

Novamente, a distinção fazia-se por sexos. Os homens entravam nos banhos somente em ceroulas e deitavam-se com os pés firmados numa pedra no meio do banho e apoiando a cabeça no segundo degrau da escada, que estava raso de água, para com ela activar a nuca, apoiados numa toalha ou almofadinha, lá permanecendo por

¹⁹ Carriço, A. (2013).

meia hora entoando cânticos e ladainhas a N.^a Sr.^a da Saúde, cuja imagem encontrava-se no oratório constituído por um altar com uma imagem de reduzidas dimensões da santa²⁰. Aqueles que se sentissem bem dispostos, saíam cobertos por um lençol e recolhiam-se aos seus camarotes e deitavam-se nas suas camas com roupa limpa, continuando aí a suar durante mais meia hora. Depois, de meia em meia hora, soava uma campainha de aviso, para os homens voltarem a limparem o suor e mudarem de roupa, saírem agasalhados para os seus aposentos e descansarem. As mulheres banhavam-se de forma um pouco diferente, vestindo apenas anáguas (quem não tivesse anáguas usava um lençol enrolado no corpo), entravam na piscina e lá ficavam sentadas, saindo para as suas camas onde o tratamento já era igual ao dos homens.

Para concluir, já em 1731, a povoação crescera e as Caldas de Lafões possuía 27 fogos, o lugar do Reguengo 4 e o lugar da Várzea 125, sendo que 98 pertenciam ao couto; existia um juiz ordinário de crime e cível para o couto das Caldas de Lafões, que, juntamente com um vereador e um provedor, compunham a Câmara²¹.

1.8 – A OCUPAÇÃO MILITAR E O SÉCULO XIX

Também os militares passaram pelo velho balneário e lá tiveram os seus anos de influência.

Foi em 1806 que os militares procederam a alguns arranjos no Hospital existente nas Caldas de Lafões, deixando ainda uma enfermaria de reserva para os pobres e os cómodos da hospedaria da Casa do Corregedor.

Mas, pretendiam ir mais longe, com a apresentação de dois projectos: o primeiro, resumia-se em reparar os telhados e fazer tarimbas para 40 ou 50 soldados; o segundo, já consistia em acomodar todos os oficiais e soldados da província do norte (cerca de 200 soldados) e requeria a construção de um novo quartel.

Prevaleceu a primeira opção, ficando as instalações restritas aos soldados da Beira, excluindo os de Trás-os-Montes e Minho²².

A vida destes militares por terras das Caldas de Lafões foi efémera: em 1861 já tinham abandonado a povoação e as instalações (o balneário/hospital). O paradigma do conceito de termalismo estava a mudar. Por várias razões, a vida do balneário/hospital das Caldas de Lafões, sem manutenção e desajustado em termos arquitectónicos, de conforto e sem modernidade, ia definhando e ia ficando desajustado aos novos tempos, cada vez mais perdendo o conceito de hospital (função hospitalar), enquanto que este tipo de estâncias ganhavam novas práticas balneares. As instalações, assim, começavam a degradar-se e as pessoas evitavam o seu uso. A qualidade reduzida dos alojamentos e o pouco cuidado de quem os geria, provocavam uma diminuição nos rendimentos. Chegou a tal ponto que, em 1819, evocando pobreza, a Câmara apresentou uma petição para começar a cobrar os banhos e arrendar anualmente o direito de se fazerem barracas no rio para banhos, com o propósito de aumentar os rendimentos. O corregedor anuiu com a

²⁰. O pequeno oratório e respectiva imagem foi posteriormente (1732) mudado para a capela de N.^a Sr.^a da Saúde

²¹. Oliveira, A. N. (2002).

²² Moura, M. B. (1997).

pretensão, mas os moradores do couto continuavam a tomar banho gratuito, conforme era de tradição antiga. E, em 1821, as coisas não tinham melhorado e os rendimentos continuavam a ser fracos²³.

Assim, em 1822, o couto das Caldas de Lafões tinha 44 fogos e, para além do juiz ordinário, vereador e do procurador, existia também o corregedor (responsável por nomear todos os funcionários) e os oficiais de justiça que também constituíam a Câmara, terminando com o escrivão dos órfãos, tabelião, almutacé, meirinho e porteiro.

O corregedor da comarca era o inspetor do Hospital e o juiz do Couto o subinspetor. No hospital, havia o boticário, o inspetor, o subinspetor, o capelão, o médico e o cirurgião, que não assistiam aos banhos. O médico visitava os doentes duas vezes por semana durante as quadras balneares, dava conselhos e fazia as prescrições médicas. O cirurgião acorria às termas só quando era chamado, e os médicos só consultavam os doentes pobres ou mais necessitados que se encontravam dentro do Hospital. A capela, independente, era isenta do pagamento de qualquer renda e o pároco não tinha qualquer jurisdição no Hospital. A frequência média anual era de 1000 pessoas.

Com a extinção do concelho de Lafões e da reorganização administrativa consequente, o couto das Caldas de Lafões também foi extinto e incorporado no agora independente concelho de S. Pedro do Sul, com a administração das caldas a transitar para a Câmara Municipal de S. Pedro do Sul no dia 12 de Novembro de 1839, passando a mesma a ser proprietária em 1878.

Mais tarde, em 1853, e por Portaria de 23 de Maio foi determinado o melhoramento das termas e que fosse cobrada uma taxa de 40 reis por cada banho, isentando os indigentes e soldados, uma norma semelhante à disposição do decreto de 2 de Abril de 1873.

Entretanto, a povoação das Caldas de Lafões aumentava, a procura terapêutica das suas águas também e o velho balneário de origem romana, sem manutenção, funcionalidade ou dimensão, foi ficando desajustado e já não supria as necessidades, o que motivou a edilidade camarária de S. Pedro do Sul e um seu deputado nas cortes a apresentar um projecto de abandono deste edifício para fins termas e a construção de um novo balneário mais moderno e adequado aquelas águas. Nascia assim o depois chamado Balneário Rainha D. Amélia, cuja construção se iniciou em 1884, com inauguração em 1886, mas é a partir dos anos de 1894, 95, 96 e 98 que o novo estabelecimento ganha nome e fama, com as temporadas e os tratamentos protagonizados pela última rainha de Portugal nos banhos de Lafões.

Mas, ainda em 1875, o velho edifício, que temos vindo a percorrer, entrava em nova fase de obras (a 6ª alteração), apesar do seu estado de conservação já ser considerado degradante, que implicou, não só a desactivação de alguns aposentos, como a sua demolição: no rés do chão interior do edifício, os banhos (piscinas) deixaram de existir; no 1º andar havia um salão de espera de dois quartos com duas tinas forradas de azulejo e uma extensa ala onde havia 12 pequenas camas; o oratório foi mudado para a capela do lado nascente da N.ª Sr.ª da Saúde; a área da piscina foi

²³. Sousa, J. B. (1940).

restaurada em 1899 pela Câmara Municipal de S. Pedro do Sul e ainda existiam 11 aposentos com banheiras, quatro forradas de azulejos e as restantes de granito, estando oito em quartos isolados e as outras oito distribuídas duas a duas. Alguns compartimentos encontravam-se vedados ao público. E, no edifício balnear, existia a capela onde os banhistas ouviam a missa.

No particular das piscinas, a P1 (exterior de água fria) já estava totalmente soterrada. No entanto, as P2 (interior masculina de água quente) e a P5 (interior feminina de água quente), podiam até 1821, pelo menos, serem utilizadas, porque existem referências às suas dimensões e utilidades nesse ano. Mas, em 1875, já deixavam de exercer as funções de banhos gerais de imersão.

1.9 – O FIM DO VELHO BALNEÁRIO E O SÉCULO XX

Construído que foi o novo balneário e depois de entrado em pleno funcionamento, prestigiado com o nome de Rainha D. Amélia, o velho edifício balnear, com origem romana e medieval, entrava definitivamente em processo de desactivação e abandono, que, sob a mão de vários monarcas, exerceu as suas funções terapêuticas durante praticamente 2000 anos.

Continuou a sua ocupação da década de 1930 à década de 1950 como sala para funcionamento da escola primária, sendo que as canalizações de água quente que existiam nas suas paredes e chão, fizeram desta a primeira escola do país com aquecimento central! No rés do chão funcionava a cantina escolar.

Nos anos de 1950 em diante serviu de balneários para o Termas Hóquei Clube: os desportistas tomavam banho nas banheiras existentes na P5. Nos anos de 1970 o espaço funcionou como café e esplanada: o café era no lugar da cantina escolar, a esplanada virada para o rio.

A partir dos anos de 1980 o espaço acelerou a sua degradação, começou a entrar em ruína, o café fechou e o interior servia para arrecadação de barcos de recreio que vogavam no rio durante o verão.

E, a machadada final da destruição deu-se na década de 1990, com a ruína das paredes norte e este, após uma violenta cheia do rio Vouga, acompanhada com a falta de conservação do edifício.

Em 2005, foi realizada uma candidatura para valorização, reabilitação e conservação das Termas Romanas de S. Pedro do Sul. O projecto de valorização, reabilitação e conservação vencedor foi do Arq. João Mendes Ribeiro, tendo dado entrada na Câmara a 20 de Dezembro de 2005. O objectivo é uma intervenção mínima, somente com o intuito de utilização, visita e interpretação do local. Na proposta, a intervenção seria ao nível da adaptação dos espaços, procurando relembrar o ambiente romano, através de símbolos tão característicos como a água, a luz e a escala, mantendo, no entanto, os vestígios das sucessivas fases de intervenção. Através da criação de percursos, restauro e remodelação, no edifício será criado um museu, tentando mostrar ao visitante o historicismo do edifício, (através da recuperação da forma, das dimensões, dos sistemas construtivos, materiais, com a manutenção da área da capela e

coro, e a área e ruína romana) mas contudo adaptado às novas necessidades. Será na verdade uma ótima experiência para ser vivenciada assim que o projecto for executado e o edifício recuperado²⁴.

A obra foi adjudicada em 2017, está a ser acompanhada pelos senhores arqueólogos doutores Marcelo Mendes Pinto e Maria Pilar Reis, e constitui-se na maior e mais dispendiosa obra cultural e patrimonial da região centro portuguesa.

IDEIAS PRINCIPAIS E CONCLUSÃO GERAL

Ao longo dos dois milénios de ocupação ininterrupta deste edifício, sujeito a inúmeras construções e reconstruções (pelo menos 7 fases), que começou no período romano (origem, passou por todo o período medieval (várias reconstruções e adaptações), entrou no renascimento (transformação em Real Hospital), depois nos séculos XVII, XVIII, XIX e até no século XX, apenas abandonado e interdito definitivamente a partir de 1995, devido à ruína de duas das suas paredes.

Agora, descobrir e interpretar todo o percurso arquitectónico do edifício é uma tarefa difícil, dado que é cheio de “costuras” e modificações, constituindo um autêntico puzzle arqueológico.

A construção original (romana) é feita em duas fases: a 1ª no século I d. C., a 2ª no final do mesmo século ou princípios do seguinte. Existe um ritual dos banhos, com fins terapêuticos e de deleite. Na 1ª fase existia uma piscina exterior de água fria (P1) e outra interior de água quente (P3), esta desactivada na 2ª fase e substituída por outra piscina com as mesmas características (P2).

No período medieval dão-se alterações ao edifício: separação dos banhos, encerramento da P1 e modificações na P2 (banhos masculinos que ficam conhecidos por Piscina D. Afonso Henriques) e na P5 (exclusiva para os banhos femininos), acabam os banhos de prazer e passam unicamente a banhos terapêuticos, abrem-se os banhos aos leprosos e a povoação prospera.

Com o rei D. Manuel, no século XVI, o balneário ganha um novo piso, é requalificado e transformado no Real Hospital das Caldas de Lafões, logrando assim nova vaga de termalistas e doentes que lá procuravam alívio nas águas termais. Nos séculos XVII e XVIII, depois nos séculos XIX e XX, novas e significativas remodelações surgem ligadas à construção de novos vãos.

Assim, este edifício demonstra várias e importantes influências arquitectónicas, com valor cultural e patrimonial, mas também histórico e arqueológico, que merecem ser estudadas, valorizadas e divulgadas, não apenas para fins científicos, mas igualmente para um aproveitamento turístico e cultural do monumento.

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²⁴. Carrigo, A. (2013).

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4. Good practices



4.1. Efficient networking makes mineral spa towns more attractive: a handful of examples¹

Summary

Based on personal experience and research, as I have now been co-lecturing a class about health and wellness tourism for over a decade and have published a considerable number of articles on this theme, I presented a range of examples of players in thermal tourism working together to inspire the CULTOUR+ entrepreneurs.

The first section is dedicated to definitions of five related terms, all expressing forms of “working together”: cooperation, collaboration, partnerships, networks, and clusters. In the second section, the thermal tourism sector is presented as a growing, vibrant sector. The third paragraph contains examples of networking that strengthen thermal companies. The conclusions underline that these “thermal” examples demonstrate that working together confers benefits. Hopefully, all possible actors in tourism in general will be inspired to intensify the ways in which they work together to improve their business results in the thermal sector.

1. Introduction

The first section is dedicated to definitions of five related terms: cooperation, collaboration, partnerships, networks, and clusters. In the second section, the thermal tourism sector is presented as a growing, vibrant sector. The third section contains examples of networking that strengthen thermal companies. The conclusions highlight that these “thermal” examples should inspire everyone in the tourism sector to work together.

2. Cooperation, collaboration, partnership, network, and cluster – Just related words?

The first section contains an obligatory mention of the definitions of terms that express different ways of working together. It is not at all my purpose to provide an extensive theoretical overview of the meaning of each of the chosen nouns; I just intend to introduce at least one correct and easily understandable definition of each to highlight some of the differences and overlaps between the terms.

Mattessich and Monsey (1992: 7) define collaboration as a “mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations. The relationship includes a commitment to mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and sharing of resources and rewards.”

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Buchko, Judd, Kizer, and Villegas (2015) define collaboration by comparing it with cooperation, stating that collaboration “requires cooperation among team members focused on a shared task or goal that leads to an agreed upon outcome. A collaborative team will generally have defined roles for team members who will work together until the goal is achieved or priorities’ change.” Harold Jarche (2015) asserts that “cooperation is not the same as collaboration, though they are complementary. Teams, groups, and markets collaborate. Online social networks and communities of practice cooperate.[...] Collaboration happens around some kind of plan or structure, while cooperation presumes the freedom of individuals to join and participate.” In other words, working together in a cooperative way involves fewer formal requirements than working together in a collaborative way.

To take a step further, collaboration with another company can be formalized through a partnership. The UK Government website explains that “in a business partnership, you and your business partner (or partners) personally share responsibility for your business” (UK Government, 2016). On the website of the U.S. Small Business Administration, the following description of a partnership is provided: “A partnership is a single business where two or more people share ownership. Each partner contributes to all aspects of the business, including money, property, labor or skill. In return, each partner shares in the profits and losses of the business” (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2016).

In relation to networks, I limit myself to the following citation (Tinsley & Lynch, 2007: 15–27), as it clearly demonstrates how wide this term is and to how many different situations it can be applied:

[...] a network can be defined as a set of relationships between individuals and groups to achieve a particular purpose. According to Gibson, Lynch and Morrison (2005), such tourism networks may be of three types: formal, semi-formal and informal. [...] The networking concept is relevant to all types of networks, and refers to cultural patterns of behaviour whose functions serve a mix of exchange, communication and social purposes. Such cultural networks and networking operate within an individual and community context.

A particularly concrete and structured way of working together with different partners, be they companies or institutions, can take the form of a cluster. According to Michael Porter (1998), “clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field”, and the web page of the European Commission dedicated to clusters (European Commission, no date: S.p.) states that “clusters are groups of specialised enterprises – often small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) – and other related supporting actors that cooperate closely together in a particular location. In working together, SMEs can be more innovative, create more jobs and register more international trademarks and patents than they would alone.”

The same site justifies the importance of clusters because their members operate together in regional markets: “38% of European jobs are based in such regional strongholds and SME participation in clusters leads to more innovation and growth.”

Citing Porter (1998) again, clusters affect competition in three ways: "first, by increasing the productivity of companies based in the area; second, by driving the direction and pace of innovation, which underpins future productivity growth; and third, by stimulating the formation of new businesses, which expands and strengthens the cluster itself". He then uses the following metaphor: "A cluster allows each member to benefit as if it had greater scale or as if it had joined with others formally – without requiring it to sacrifice its flexibility."

The Economist (2009: S.p.) describes clustering as "the phenomenon whereby firms from the same industry gather together in close proximity". It is "a means for small companies to enjoy some of the economies of scale usually reserved for large ones". The governmental website of the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (Wierzyński, 2012) is even more explicit:

The concept of clustering is becoming increasingly popular in tourism, which is evidenced by the constantly growing number of co-operative links joining together different entities involved both directly and indirectly in offering tourist products and services. Although today the traditional clusters are less often associated with geographical proximity of entities creating such links (technological progress, easy communication, digitalization of the world allow remote, online co-operation), these aspects remain decisive in creating and developing co-operation links. In tourism, the starting point for cooperation between numerous entities in order to join their potential, use the effects of synergy and scale.

In the context of this section, it is enough to know that working together can occur in different ways: the motivating factors can be very diverse (WHY you do it), the one another can be very different (HOW you do it), the number of partners can be reduced or high (WHO does it), the geographical scope can vary from local, to regional, to national, and even to international (WHERE you do it), and the period of working together can be shortened or enlarged (WHEN you do it). I certainly see the terms "cooperation, collaboration, partnership, network, and cluster" as related words and even – to a certain degree – as synonyms. In this section I prefer the term "networking", because it can be applied in so many different circumstances: every form of cooperation, collaboration, partnership, or cluster involves aspects of networking. Common goals formulated may be very limited or vast (WHAT you do), the forms chosen to work with

Another vital element of working together stressed in the literature (Erkuş-Öztürk, 2009: 589–597; Erkuş-Öztürk & Eraydın, 2010: 113–124; Lemmetyinen & Go, 2009: 31–40; Novelli, Schmitz, & Spencer, 2006: 1141–1152) is the benefits in terms of business results gained in comparison with working alone. Paybacks in general terms may include the following plus points: knowledge transfer; access to markets or technologies; exchanging, sharing, or co-developing products or services; collaborative use of resources; improved services and products through inter-firm linkages and innovative business approaches; taking part in decision-making processes; commercial collaboration; easy generation of business referrals; joint marketing; saving of costs thanks to scaling; commitment to a brand ideology; and strengthening of social capital.

There is one more reason why I chose this theme: I would prefer young entrepreneurs who are so intensively engaged in their own project not to forget that they might succeed more easily by working together – be it through cooperation, collaboration, partnering, networking, or clustering – from stage one.

3. The spa and thermal context

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In general spas are considered as places where treatments are given on the basis of water, whether it is natural mineral water or plain tap water (Smith & Puczko, 2014). For this section, however, I will concentrate on the uses of natural mineral water for tourism purposes.

To gain a general idea of the global spread of spas, mineral spas in particular, I reproduce two figures from the Global spa & wellness economy monitor (Figures 1 and 2) (SRI International, 2014). Both represent the year 2013. They show that a considerable number of spas and mineral spas exist not only in Europe but all over the world.

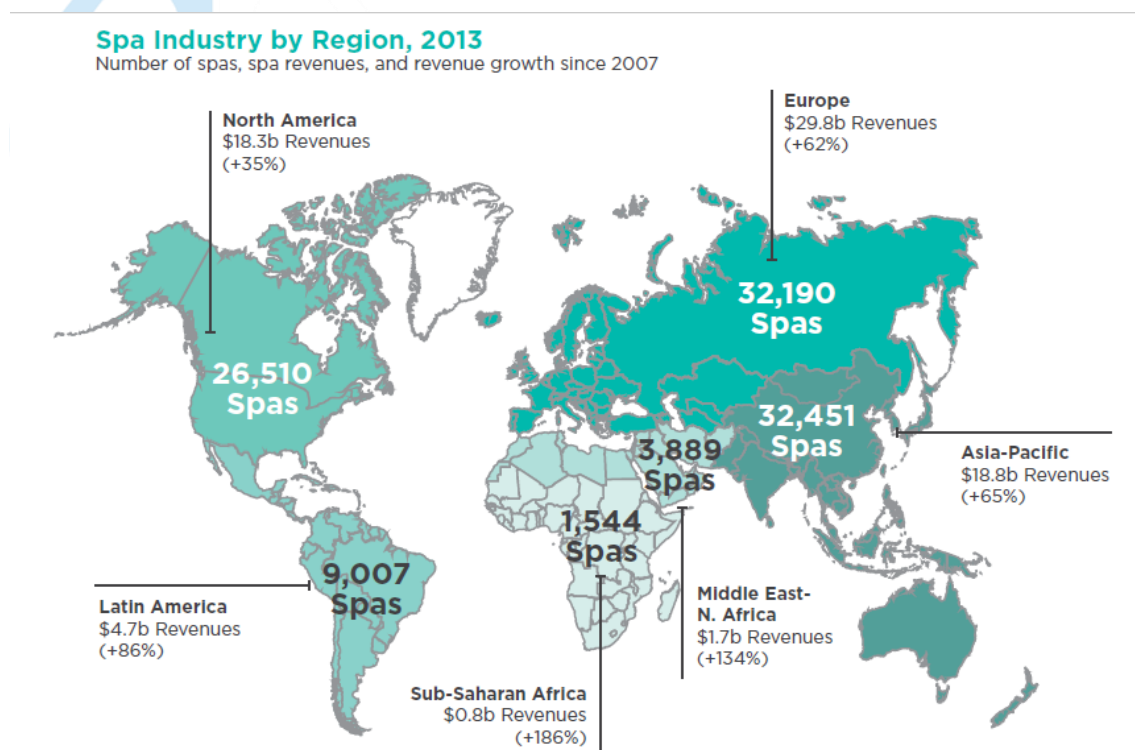


Figure 1. Spa industry by region in 2013 (SRI International, 2014: iv)

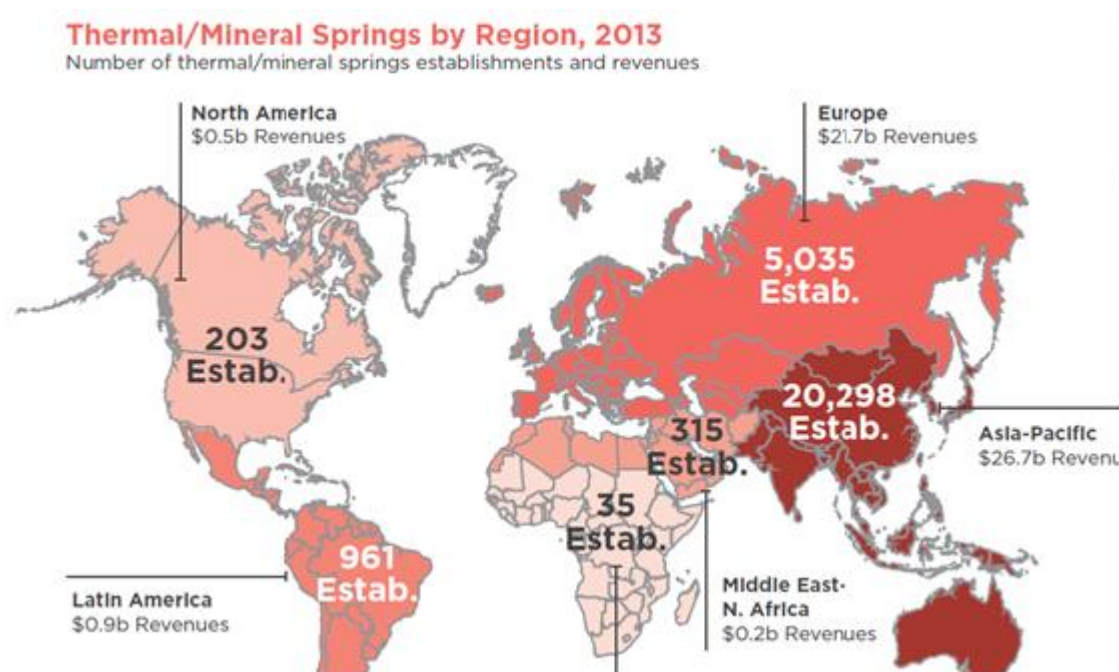


Figure 2. Thermal/mineral spas by region in 2013 (SRI International, 2014: viii)

"Europe continues to be the top global spa market, measured in spa revenues. With a large and wellness-savvy consumer base, Europe has added over 9,500 spas since 2007. Spa revenues grew by nearly \$11.5 billion since 2007, reaching \$29.8 billion in 2013 (representing an 8.4% average annual growth rate)" (SRI International, 2014: 25).

Regarding the niche market of thermal/mineral spa tourism in Europe, the GWI states that "European countries are among the oldest and most developed markets for thermal/mineral springs-based facilities and treatments", counting 5,035 thermal/mineral spring establishments and \$21.7 billion thermal/mineral spring establishment revenues in 2013 (SRI International, 2014: 24).

It is also interesting to recognize the leading countries in this growing mineral spa market. Table I shows the top-ranked countries.

Table I. Top 25 thermal/mineral spa markets in 2013

Top Twenty-Five Thermal/Mineral Springs Markets, 2013

| | Number of Establishments | Revenues (US\$ billions) | Rank in 2013 |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| China | 2,160 | \$14,078.3 | 1 |
| Japan | 17,653 | \$11,687.0 | 2 |
| Germany | 1,265 | \$7,520.0 | 3 |
| Russia | 776 | \$3,688.5 | 4 |
| Italy | 756 | \$1,742.7 | 5 |
| Austria | 124 | \$928.8 | 6 |
| Turkey | 196 | \$862.4 | 7 |
| Hungary | 531 | \$691.3 | 8 |
| Czech Republic | 84 | \$686.4 | 9 |
| Spain | 165 | \$672.0 | 10 |
| France | 175 | \$665.5 | 11 |
| Poland | 72 | \$576.0 | 12 |
| Switzerland | 61 | \$485.8 | 13 |
| Slovenia | 63 | \$439.2 | 14 |
| United States | 185 | \$395.0 | 15 |
| Portugal | 84 | \$376.2 | 16 |
| Slovakia | 81 | \$364.8 | 17 |
| Taiwan | 119 | \$307.5 | 18 |
| Romania | 70 | \$295.0 | 19 |
| Iceland | 135 | \$293.0 | 20 |
| South Korea | 96 | \$283.4 | 21 |
| New Zealand | 96 | \$255.0 | 22 |

Source: SRI International (2014: 17). Note: only the first 22 countries are reproduced.

I would like to point out that, of the six partnering CULTOUR+ countries, four are listed above: Italy (fifth place), Spain (tenth), Poland (twelfth), and Portugal (sixteenth); Greece and Bulgaria did not win a place in this ranking, although they both possess dozens of spas. With regard to Portugal, I should report that 84 mineral spas were officially recognized in 2013, but only 41 were actually open to the public (TP, 2014: 4) and can be considered to be responsible for the revenues mentioned in Table 1.

4. Examples of working together in thermal tourism with benefits for SMEs

This is the main section of this contribution. It contains different “artificial/subjective” subsections to create a little more coherence between the chosen real-life examples. The purpose of this section is to inspire: in which forms can we work together and what kind of benefits can this bring us? I created three groups: one based on a geographical perspective – here I start at the international level (global and European scale) and descend to the regional level, one –

mainly because CULTOUR+ is an international project – based on transborder cooperation, and the third one concerning the theme that partners pick around which to work.

3.1. Geographical perspective

3.1.1. International level

Figures 1 and 2 and Table 1 were all produced by the Global Wellness Institute (GWI). It is the parent organization of the Global Spa & Wellness Summit and the Global Wellness Tourism Congress.

GWI is considered the leading global research and educational resource for the [...] global spa and wellness industry and is known for introducing major industry initiatives and regional events that bring together leaders and visionaries to chart the future of the industry. GWI positively impacts global health and wellness by advocating for both public institutions and businesses that are working to help prevent disease, reduce stress, and enhance overall quality of life. (ESPA, 2015)

Even without being an official member, it is interesting to follow such institutions, as they publish data about the sector and future objectives, which help to envisage how the spa business in general is currently performing and how it is evolving. Furthermore, they might actually inspire people to innovate their offer. It simply helps to remain updated.

A related example is Spafinder, which founded the GWI. "Spafinder Wellness, Inc.® is the world's largest media, marketing and gifting company for the wellness industry. With nearly 30 years of experience as a spa and wellness authority, the company, through its Spafinder Wellness 365™ brand, guides the industry, partners, consumers and employers with the most comprehensive resource for wellness-related products, services and insight in the marketplace" (Global Wellness Institute, 2014). It deserves our respect for inspiring millions of people to live well through its website. For example, it publishes yearly its top 10 trends for the wellness business in the coming year. The Trends report 2016. Top ten global spa + wellness trends forecast can be consulted at <http://www.spafinder.com/blog/trends/2016-report>. This again is a leading source of new ideas for businesses.

Descending to the European level, the European Spas Association (ESPA) presents itself on its home page as "an umbrella industry organisation representing 20 members from 19 European countries. The European Spas Association's global objective is to promote spas and balneology in Europe and to take care that the natural remedies based on mineral water, landscape and climate will be available to as great a number of citizens and visitors as possible" (ESPA, 2016).



Figure 3. International certificates EuropeSpa med and EuropeSpa wellness for medical spas and wellness hotels

Guaranteeing quality in the international health and wellness sector is of extreme importance, as it is necessary to persuade people from a different country with a different (health) culture to visit. That is one of the reasons why the ESPA launched two international quality seals (see Figure 3) to enhance the international transparency and fairness in competition. The criteria under evaluation are safety, hygiene, and therapy infrastructure for medical spas (EuropeSpa med) and safety, hygiene, and wellness infrastructure plus service quality for wellness hotels, hotel spas, thermal spas, or day spas (EuropeSpa wellness) (ESPA, 2015).

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1.1.2. National level

Most countries have an association at the national level that represents their spas not only within the country but also at the international level, through their membership of the ESPA, for example. Table 2 provides a list (in alphabetical order of the countries in the first column) of the associations within the countries that partnered up for the CULTOUR+ project.

Table 2. National mineral spa organizations of CULTOUR+ countries

| Country | Name of the national association | Website | ESPA member |
|----------|---|---|-------------|
| Bulgaria | Bulgarian Union of Balneology and SPA Tourism (BUBSPA) | http://www.bubspa.org | Yes |
| Greece | Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs | | No |
| Italy | <i>Federazione Italiana delle Industrie Termali e delle Acque Minerali Curative</i> (FEDERTERME) National Association of Thermal Municipalities (A.N.CO.T) | http://www.federterme.it | Yes |
| | | http://www.comunitermali-ancot.it | No |
| Poland | Stowarzyszenie Gmin Uzdrowiskowych | http://sgurp.pl | Yes |
| Portugal | Associação das Termas de Portugal (A.T.P.) | http://www.termasdeportugal.pt | Yes |
| Spain | Asociación Nacional de Balnearios (ANBAL) | http://www.balnearios.org | Yes |

Below are two examples of what national associations might signify for their members, apart from promoting them.

The Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs was founded in 1983 to protect and develop the thermal and mineral resources of the country. Today it comprises 55 members or municipalities that are spread all over Greece, and it has its headquarters in Thessaloniki. It is interesting that in Greece only public entities – mostly municipalities – are allowed to own mineral springs. They can, however, lease them to entrepreneurs. That is why 82

companies (38 of them are owned by municipalities, 37 are private-owned, and 7 are state-owned) offer hydrotherapy facilities. In 2014 they sold 900,000 treatments, a very small number compared with the 2,500,000 sold in the years before 2010 (the year of the breakthrough of the economic crisis) (EHTTA, 2016; information provided by Aphrodite Kamara).

In October 2015 the Board of Directors of the Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs met the Minister of Tourism to defend the interests of its members, such as to obtain a delay in the deadline to submit files for the acquisition of the operating license for the mineral springs that they exploit; to consolidate the protection zones; to change the legislative framework for the employees of medical springs; to create a specialized training programme for spa staff, which implies cooperation between the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Education; and to draft a new bill for primary health care, so that the medical units of hydrotherapy centres can be staffed with medical personnel, something that implies cooperation between the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Health (Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs, 2015). Due to the collaboration between the Association and the Ministry of Tourism and other public authorities, Greek thermal springs are on the way of getting new, modern accreditation, conforming to EU standards, permanent license for functioning (until now they had to get a yearly permit) and having the possibility to diffuse thermal water (pending upon availability) to more than one hotels and enterprises.

Federterme, the network of Italian thermal baths, «represents an important resource for the health and wellness of its citizens as well as for the economy and the territory. There are 380 spas spread over 20 regions and 2 autonomous provinces – 177 are in the north (46.7%), 56 in the centre (14.8%), and 146 in the south and islands (38.5%). They are located in 180 municipalities and employ over 16,000 workers (Catri, 2009: 265–272)».

What is very peculiar is that *Federterme*, representing small and medium-sized companies, mostly family run, from its beginning in 1922 “called for the Government and Parliament to recognise the scientific evidence of the proven therapeutic value of mineral waters, the economic and social roles of the thermal initiatives and enterprises” (Catri, 2009: 265–272). In a much later stage, in 2003, the *Foundation for Scientific Research Thermal (FoRST)* was created to promote and support medical and scientific research at mineral spas (FoRST, 2016). Italy was thus a precursor regarding what is now very important in the thermal sector: obtaining scientific evidence that natural mineral waters have medical/curative powers.

1.1.3. Regional level

Especially when countries are huge, thermal associations are created at the regional level. Again, two examples follow: one linked to the Centre Region of Romania and the other linked to Galicia.

The first one was chosen simply because it dares to call itself a cluster. This thermal tourism grouping was founded in Romania in February 2014, with the name Transylvania Regional Balneo Tourism Cluster, covering the Centre Region of Romania. All its members share the same principal aim: to develop the Centre Region through the touristic exploitation of natural mineral water resources. The main activity axes are: the prevention or treatment of diseases, a focus on well-being, and the promotion of mental health care, preferably in self-care packages. As local, regional, and even national entities join forces in this strategic partnership, they hope to provoke a global impact (Balneotourism, 2016).

In 2010 the Association of Spas of Galicia, the front runner in Spain concerning thermalism, promoted the creation of an innovative thermal business group – *Agrupación Empresarial Innovadora Termal de Galicia (AEITEGAL)* – that brings together a set of agents representing all those who use and transform natural mineral waters in the region, an important economic activity today. The group consists of 55 private and public entities linked to the value chain of natural mineral waters. Amongst its full members it can count 18 spas, 3 thalasso units, 4 bottling companies of natural mineral waters, 1 incoming DMC, the official regional tourism promoter, and 14 indirect suppliers. Moreover, it has 4 regional associations in the tourism and peloid sector as collaborating partners and 9 institutional partners (mainly universities and public administrations). The whole group is coordinated by the leading partner, the Association of Spas of Galicia. In other words, here we have a real cluster at work, even without the term being included in the designation. During the period 2010–2013, for example, a total of 56 projects were developed, mainly concentrating on cooperation, innovation, and internationalization, in addition to improving human capital (Aeitegal, 2015).

1.2. Transborder cooperation

3.2.1. Local level

I am very familiar with the next innovative and constantly evolving project, as the tourism bachelor course of UTAD where I lecture functioned in Chaves for 15 years. In 2007 the Portuguese border town Chaves and its Spanish neighbour launched the Chaves–Verín Eurocity (see Figure 4), which promotes itself as the Eurocity of Water. The Eurocity's main objectives are: the adoption of "Euro-citizenship", the sustainable development of the territory, and the implementation of a cross-border dynamic economy. It saw its partnership institutionalized as a European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) in 2013 (MOT, 2015). Due to their common resources, shared interests, and solid political collaboration, the cross-border cooperation between the two towns has grown considerably over the last decade, until they were selected in October 2015 with their project for cross-border cooperation as the best project in the European Union for the 2015 RegioStars awards, in the category CityStars (ECV, 2015b).



Figure 4. Map of the location of the Eurocity Chaves–Verín on the Spanish–Portuguese border (ECV, 2015b)

Their website serves to promote all the work that has already been carried out and is a way to sell the destination. Meanwhile, a website purely focused on attracting tourists has been created —<http://www.visitchavesverin.com/es>— and the corresponding Facebook page —<https://www.facebook.com/visitchavesverin>— is constantly updated. The cooperation even has its own YouTube channel to upload mainly promotional videos —https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCitoWb3xCi57NtQM_32Doew/videos. To provide only some examples of the latest accomplishments, they include guide books about the Eurocity, a themed route that connects the local natural mineral springs, a guided bus tour along this route with a pick-up service at different hotels, and a booklet that offers experiences/mini packages with a fixed price (ECV, 2014, 2015a, 2015c).

1.2.2. Regional level

Searching the Internet for other “thermal” transborder cooperation projects, this time on a larger scale, I came across two more examples.

The already mentioned Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs led IT SPA TOURISM. It worked with two Bulgarian partners, the municipalities of Devin and Mineralni Bani. Together they assumed the development of spa tourism in their border region, namely the mountainous region north of Thessaloniki (Greece) and along the transborder mountainous region of Rodopi (Bulgaria), in particular Central and Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (Greece) and the region of Smolyan and Haskovo (Bulgaria) (see Figure 5), with the use of innovative IT services. They asked for funding within the European Territorial Cooperation Programme Greece–Bulgaria for the period 2007–2013.



Figure 5. Location of the cross-border region where the IT SPATOURISM project functions (Wikimedia Commons, 2013)

The main aim of the project was to implement an integrated information system for spa tourism and e-health services, through which the network of municipalities of this cross-border region would operate the springs as health tourism centres, offering a large variety of health services and implementing an online reservation system. Some of the results of the project were an interactive website, the creation of joint tourist packages, the promotion of the project, transborder networking, upgrading of the service quality offered to clients, a positive impact on employment, and the modernization of the businesses involved (ETCP Greece–Bulgaria 2007–2013, 2007; Development of spa tourism in the border region with the use of innovative IT services, 2007).

Although the project won an honourable sixth place in a group of 14 competitors in a rating of the projects of the EU Cross-Border Cooperation Programme “Greece Bulgaria 2007–2013”, according to a study focusing on the cross-border area of the region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, the website <http://www.hellenicspa.com> no longer works in 2016. Just to be complete, the aim of the study was to find out how the funded companies and organizations implemented smart specialization for the promotion of competitiveness, research, and innovation (Drama Chamber of Commerce & Industry, 2014).

I also found a project focusing on the development of cooperation in the field of spa and health resort tourism in the Polish–Ukrainian borderland (see Figure 6); the general objective of this project is to increase the tourism and investment attractiveness of the borderland areas of Poland and Ukraine through health resort tourism development. There are two specific objectives: to create conditions for the development of health resort tourism in the villages of

Biszczka (Poland) and Kiwerciwski (Hrem'yache village; Ukraine) and to create a cross-border tourist offer based on the advantageous bioclimatic conditions of the two villages. The soft results of the project include: an increase in the attractiveness and competitiveness of the Volyn and Byszczka regions; increased use of the tourism potential (spa and health resort) in both regions; increased facilities for spa and health resorts in both regions; quality and balanced cross-border tourism between the two regions based on their health resort potential; the promotion of both regions; and the creation of additional workplaces in the health and spa branch (Cross Border Cooperation Programme Poland–Belarus–Ukraine 2007–2013. 2013).

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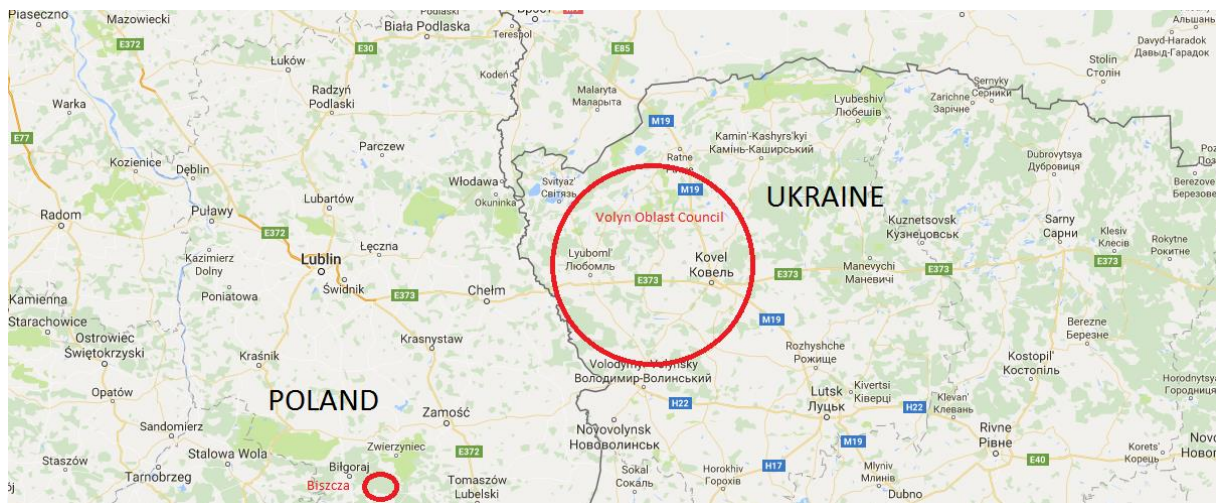


Figure 6. Location of the Polish–Ukrainian cross-border regions that will cooperate (the Google map <https://www.google.pt/maps/@51.2863367,24.0086243,8z> was adapted)

1.3. Themed networking

Leaving the obvious geographical classification behind, let us have a look at some examples of working together around a theme.

The European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA) is a membership organization composed of the most traditional thermal stations in Europe that represent historic thermal spa towns across Europe and is certified by the Council of Europe to run the European Route of Historic Thermal Towns, as part of the Cultural Routes programme. It is only this “small” project that I want to present here. For a start, only some 30 European Routes are recognized by the Council of Europe, and therefore it is exceptional to represent one. Thus, the partnering historic spa towns, including 11 countries and 15 towns, found a unique way to stand out in their pairs and to promote themselves as a group (EHTTA, 2015b).

As a matter of fact, the principal goals of the European Route of Historic Thermal Towns are: the valorization of thermal cultural heritage in Europe; the revitalization of the historical tradition of European thermal cities; the preservation and promotion of the European spa towns’ heritage; and the promotion of European spa culture, which brings with it different concepts like welfare, health, and tradition. It is very important that this route supports the

development of tourist and cultural activities that cause economic impacts on tourism and spas, enhancing not only the material heritage (such as the architectural heritage) but also the immaterial heritage (such as traditions, philosophies, cultures, techniques, and knowledge), which are all part of the thermal heritage (D'Alessandro, 2011; EHTTA, 2015a, 2015b).

The Great Spas of Europe is a selected group of spa towns that represents historically outstanding places for healing pain and disease with mineral waters. The association comprises the following European spa towns, which are famous for their urban planning around great spa buildings (GSE, no date):

- Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně, Františkovy Lázně, Luhačovice (Czech Republic)
- Baden-Baden, Bad Kissingen, Bad Ems, Bad Homburg, Wiesbaden, Bad Pyrmont (Germany)
- Baden bei Wien, Bad Ischl (Austria)
- Montecatini Terme (Italy)
- Spa (Belgium)
- Vichy (France)
- Bath (Great Britain)

The Great Spas of Europe are considered as a serial transnational property by the UNESCO world heritage organization. Each of the spa towns has “the potential to demonstrate they make a substantial contribution to the outstanding universal value of the serial property. The individual component parts of the series demonstrate attributes of European spas providing medical treatments through applying mineral and thermal water including drinking cures, bathing, irrigations, hydrotherapy and mud treatments” (UNESCO, 2015). Therefore, apart from a promotional effort, these spas also want to preserve “spa culture”.

1.4. Informal networking

To finalize this section, I want to draw attention to the importance of informal networking through two examples.

The first one is rather obvious: you should visit fairs dedicated to your niche to speak to your direct competitors and become acquainted with the suppliers of the sector as well as other key players. TERMATALIA is one example. This fair is organized every two years in Ourense (Galicia) and in the alternate years in a South American country; in 2016 Mexico will host the fair, which started as the only thermal fair on the Iberian Peninsula (FEFO, 2016). While attending such an event, you should not forget to participate in some of the parallel workshops and/or conferences to keep updated and to meet other people who share your interests.

The second example might not be immediately apparent, but submitting your company to some kind of contest might actually bring benefits, at least for marketing purposes. An example is the international film festival ART&TUR. Each year tourism companies are invited to send in their promotional videos, one of the categories for nomination

being “hotels, spas, and resorts”. All the winners of the past editions are associated with a world map. Therefore, anybody who is interested can visit <http://www.aptur.net/artetur/map/>, click the category of interest, and review the winning films. See Figure 7.



Figure 7. Map indicating the winners since 2008 in the category “hotels, spas, and resorts” of the film festival ART&TUR (ART&TUR, 2016)

Conclusions

Some of the benefits of working together, suggested by the literature, were illustrated by the examples gathered above. To summarize the essence of our case studies, the following is a rather extensive and varied list of advantages: gaining access to scientific research and to data that allow you to follow trends and compare your results with those of your competitors; keeping updated; having a say in the decision-making process of, for example, the creation of a quality label for the sector; assuring that your interests are defended at all possible levels, for example through legislation; engendering specialized training courses; proving jointly the therapeutic value of mineral waters and spread those results to raise the credibility of these “medical” waters; enhancing the correct use of mineral springs within, for example, tourism or economic development plans; joint promotion of a tourism destination; creating new products and services together; offering more diversity and better quality to tourists; joining forces to apply for European or national funding; increasing your online visibility through, for example, shared websites and online shops; enhancing international cooperation; modernization – through new technologies – of the businesses involved; guaranteeing a more competitive destination with better quality standards; elaborating joint marketing actions; and creating new jobs.

The examples of working together, be they in the form of cooperation, collaboration, partnerships, networks, or clusters, were organized to elucidate that different goals (some more ambitious than others) can be achieved through more or less coherent and more or less numerous groupings, active at different geographical scales.

Having reached the end of this section, my main concern remains: will these success stories of working together in the spa tourism sector help you to realize that in tourism working together is a competence that is increasingly mastered by the most diverse stakeholders? I really hope that I was convincing enough to make you believe that working together is worthwhile, whatever format you prefer. It is all your choice, using your imagination and creativity, as long as you adapt intelligently to your surroundings. A start-up company can benefit from that kind of spirit. I am curious to find out with whom you might partner within and outside CULTOUR+ within the coming months or years. Please keep me informed.

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4. Executive Summary

In this report we have focused and highlighted in a series of case studies, surveys that have served to reflect on challenges, diagnosis, good practices and cases of success, all of them, originally researched by Cultour+ partners teams.

We can summarize some of our conclusions here:

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- It is most important for thermal sites to manage their cultural heritage, firstly gathering all thorough knowledge from their archaeological, ethnographical and historical sources (as in São Pedro do Sul – Portugal-) and to use new technologies to best show and teach this knowledge (as in Alange –Spain-). Big important museums (as in Chaves or Sao Pedro do Sul) are great efforts very valuables, but also, it is important to build stories and performances –as in Alange (Spain)-, giving live to this knowledge from ancient times and linking local people to their heritage.
- This will give an added value to the thermal resort as well as build bridges between local population and visitors. The case of mud baths of Kirinidi (Greece) is a wonderful example of building these bridges and building up community –or in fact “communitas”- and very special experiences.
- In this interactivity we have found cases of best practices –as Aqua Libera in Aljucén, Spain- where we have fostered internships due to its special interest for some of the Cultour+ entrepreneurs. Aqua Libera is an example of how little private Spa business can benefit of cultural heritage management. Offering economic discounts to clients that come disguised as romans, and clothing as romans those who come in modern clothes, it develops an experience right from the first moment. Basing its food offer in II Century Cook Books, noticing visitors how the space is faithfully representing a ancient roman house, creating a real relaxing atmosphere.
- Cases of crossborder cooperation as Chaves-Verín show original practices as water routes with water passports to be sealed.
- In different degrees, depending on countries legislations, thermal resorts are shifting from exclusively therapeutic centres to include beauty, relaxing and wellbeing experiences for healthy (and wealthy) people. This poses challenges to balnearies as how to deal with overcrowding, how to not overlap such different clients as young couples or senior groups.

- This is also a challenge for staff, which makes its preparation and professionalization a very important issue.
- Mixed tourism combinations has demonstrated very useful for thermal sites, as congress tourism, a successful bet at El Raposo (Spain). Opening in low season the balnearies to educational activities as swimming or swimming for pregnant are also good practices we have detected (El Salugral, Spain).
- Bottling water or creating cosmetic products are also successful business lines (Sao Pedro do Sul).

Products available

Face cream | Body cream | Soap | Cleansing base | Body oil | Thermal water sprays



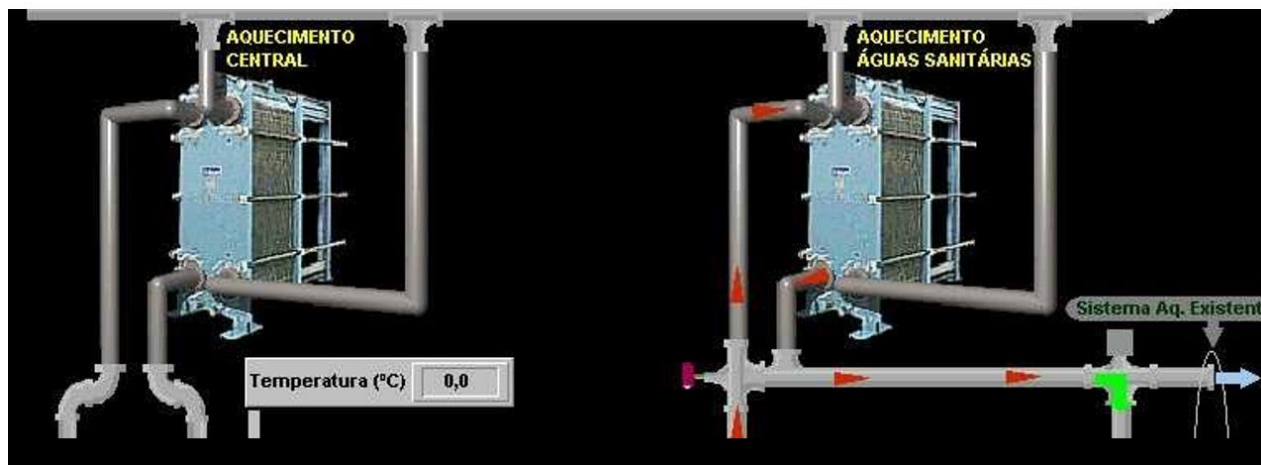
- Geothermal projects, environmentally friendly, that use the hot water to heat public water and buildings are a great base to democratize and socialize the benefits and profits of thermal resources. These are good practices developed also in São Pedro do Sul.

Geothermal Project

Through a heat exchanger (water/water), we take the temperature of the thermal water to heat the public water and vice versa

This water is then conducted to both bathhouses for its use in the treatments (the thermal water) and also for sanitary use and to heat the spaces (the public water)

This geothermal process, that is environmentally friendly, is also used for 2 (two) hotels in the surrounding area (for the baths, for sanitary uses and for the space heating)



- Some of the benefits of working together, of thermal sites networking can be summarized as gaining access to scientific research and to data that allow to follow trends and compare results with those of your competitors; keeping updated; having a say in the decision-making process of, for example, the creation of a quality label for the sector; assuring that your interests are defended at all possible levels, for example through legislation; engendering specialized training courses; proving jointly the therapeutic value of mineral waters and spread those results to raise the credibility of these “medical” waters; enhancing the correct use of mineral springs within, for example, tourism or economic development plans; joint promotion of a tourism destination; creating new products and services together; offering more diversity and better quality to tourists; joining forces to apply for European or national funding; increasing your online visibility through, for example, shared websites and online shops; enhancing international cooperation; modernization – through new technologies – of the businesses involved; guaranteeing a more competitive destination with better quality standards; elaborating joint marketing actions; and creating new jobs.



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