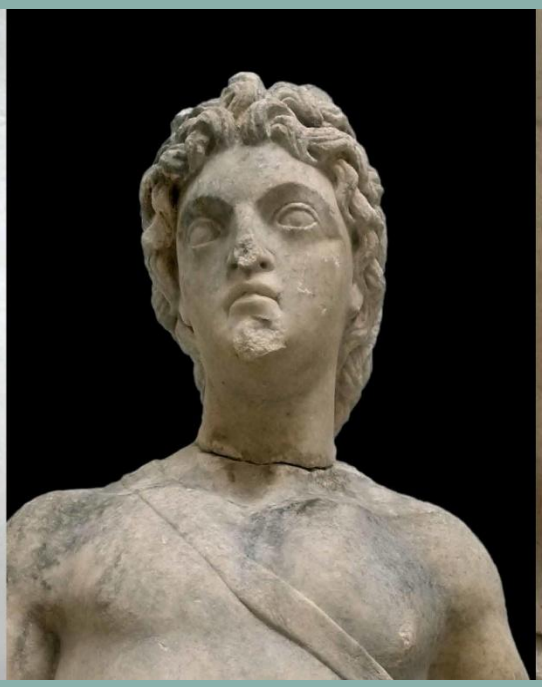
THE 5TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON ANCIENT THERMALISM

ZAGREB & VARAŽDINSKE TOPLICE, MAY 17- 21, 2027.

CALL FOR PAPERS IS OPEN!



Builders, Users and Promoters: The Role of the Roman Army and Other Agents in the Development of the Ancient Healing Spas

The goal of the 2027 congress is to bring together specialists in Ancient thermalism to explore the role of the Roman army and other agents in the development of Roman healing spas in antiquity, focusing on their construction, use, and promotion. By addressing this subject from multiple perspectives, the congress seeks to deepen our understanding of how these spas evolved across different regions of the Roman Empire.

The program will specifically examine the army's role in this process—namely, how and to what extent it influenced the development of individual thermal complexes—alongside other agents and social groups that shaped the nature of thermalism as we understand it today.

Through the study of textual, epigraphic, architectural, and material evidence, this approach will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the army's impact on the construction and use of thermal baths—facilities primarily intended for army's use—as well as its influence on the religious, political, and social life surrounding thermal springs, given the army's role as a vehicle for Romanization.
The congress will also explore the roles of other users and promoters of thermal complexes, addressing issues of access and visitor profiles.

Building on this theme, we propose additional avenues of research into the role of local communities in the operation and use of thermal sites prior to Roman intervention, as well as their subsequent evolution.
In particular, we aim to explore how traditions of use, ritual practices, and interactions with the landscape shaped the construction and spatial organization of these sites.
We also encourage submissions on the use and perception of medicinal mineral waters in other periods—both pre-Roman and post-Roman—including evidence from medieval and post-medieval archaeology, to provide a fuller diachronic overview of these thermal sites.
We also encourage the participation of specialists from other disciplines who study the impact of thermal waters on the surrounding landscape and on archaeological remains.

Finally, we invite contributions presenting results from new excavations and new and established projects aimed at interpreting archaeological sites and finds in thermos-mineral areas.

With these objectives in mind, we propose the following thematic sessions, which encompass all the topics outlined for this congress:

1. Builders, users, and promoters: the role of the Roman army and other agents in the development of thermal complexes.

2. Thermal springs and indigenous communities: characteristics of water sourcing and use among local populations prior to the arrival of the Romans.

3. Thermalism throughout history: the use and misuse of medicinal mineral waters as revealed by ANCIENT, medieval and post-medieval archaeology.

4. New studies focusing on the impact of thermal waters on the surrounding landscape and archaeological remains

5. *Novitates*: new discoveries and new proposals. Heritage and archaeological projects aimed at highlighting the archaeological heritage of thermo-mineral areas in the Mediterranean.

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

If you would like to present a paper, please send your proposal directly on the website,

by registering in advance!!!

Submission deadline:

DECEMBER 15th, 2026

Oral presentation will last approximately 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes for questions. Poster presentations will last approximately 10 minutes, followed by 5 minutes for questions.

the official language of the congress is English.

We look forward to receiving your proposals.

If you have any difficulty submitting your proposal, please contact us by email: thermalismconference2027@gmail.com

Please include the following information in your proposal:

- The session most suitable for your topic
- Presentation preference: Oral presentation/ Poster
- Full names of all authors
- Institution or organisation
- Contact details
- Title Abstract (250-300 words)
- Five keywords
- Will you participate in-person? YES / NO
- Are you interested in publishing your paper? YES / NO

The best papers will be selected for inclusion in a high-quality, peer-reviewed scholarly publication.

See you in AQUAE IASAE next year!!!

amz

UAM Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

EUROPEAN HISTORIC THERMAL TOWNS

Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe
Itinéraires culturels du Conseil de l'Europe

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE