WATER AND CULTURE HERITAGE

THE LEGACY OF THE PORTUGUESE SPA ARCHITECTURE

[ PATRIMONIO Y ARQUITECTURA TERMAL ]

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Scientific knowledge is the base for the correct safeguard and appreciation of thermal heritage.

The scientific studies contribute to divulging and consolidate the knowledge of the evolution of architecture as an essential support of thermalism, and the outputs for intervention strategies in different Portuguese Architecture of Spas.

From the important roman thermal bathhouse of Chaves to the international affirmation of the thermal heritage linked to the first and oldest thermal hospital in the world, Caldas da Rainha, the Spas legacy in Portugal is the result of many strategies (from programming, drawing, constructing, using) and divulging of the waters.

Hot spring water complexes are defined by the different buildings (bathhouses, water spring pavilions or buvettes, halls for walking, hotels, casinos, newsstands) and outside grounds.

In small or large scale, depending on the development and importance of the thermal resort, what this system seeks is to allow the space to express itself, in order to enable the users to have pleasant stays and diversified occupations that contribute to the physical and mental wellbeing, associated with the therapy and leisure through the use of the waters.
THE PORTUGUESE SPA ARCHITECTURE
Portuguese hot water springs have left us with an important heritage, from the roman archaeological traces (*Chaves, Caldas das Taipas, Lisboa, Óbidos and São Vicente*), the structures from the early beginnings of Portuguese Nationality, like the case of *Lisboa* or *São Pedro do Sul*, and the first and oldest thermal hospital in the world, founded in the end of the 15th century, in *Caldas da Rainha*.

The biggest revolution occurred in mid-19th century, when the architectural programs transform the bathing area to other complementary functions: bathhouse and housing simultaneously (*Caldas da Rainha and Caldas de Monchique*) or bathhouse and social area (*Banhos da Poça, Banhos de São Paulo, Caldas da Felgueira, Luso, São Pedro do Sul*).

However, the great thermal heritage belongs to the 20th century, justified through great investments, and when thermalism represented an important activity in the context of communities, either in health care, or as an economic strategy for the affirmation of a small town or the consolidation of a city (*Estoril, Curia, Vidago, Pedras Salgadas*).
Ir a banhos / Going to the Spas
1747–50. Hospital Termal, Caldas da Rainha
1849>56. Banhos de Luso
1894. Balneário das “Nascentes do Rio”, Caldas de Moledo
1901. Termas de São Vicente
1908. Termas do Vidago  Arq. José Ferreira da Costa - Palace Hotel
1916. Spring pavilions and thermal bath  A. Rodrigues da Silva Júnior
1909>15. Pavilhão das Nascentes, Melgaço
There was, in fact, a consolidation in Portugal of an **innovative model** layout of thermal territory in the past century: **an enclosed park and with life of its own** *(Melgaço, Monção, Quinta do Eirogo, Canaveses, São Vicente, Entre-os-Rios, Vidago, Pedras Salgadas, Curia, Estoril and Amieira).*

Parallel to this model layout, there is a development of other thermal spaces, whose equipments are distributed by the community, through different private or corporate initiatives, where, aside from the bathhouse, the territory is completed with other buildings essential to the thermal practice.

Aware of their importance in a life-valuing and healing process, the space between meals and treatments, becomes essential for the rites of the aquistas, and exquisite for socialization or conviviality that would course through the regular users of the water springs.
1914>... Estoril
1917. Project for Thermal Park and Equipment. Termas de Melgaço
1922–26. Palace Hotel da Curia
1932>36. Buvette das Termas do Luso
1952>61. Buvette de Chaves