



THE EUROPEAN SPA  
AS A TRANSNATIONAL PUBLIC  
SPACE AND SOCIAL METAPHOR



## CALL FOR PAPERS

### THE EUROPEAN SPA AS A TRANSNATIONAL PUBLIC SPACE AND SOCIAL METAPHOR

Pula / Brijuni Island (Croatia), 2 – 4 June 2022

Funded by the Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA) initiative, the project *The European Spa as a Transnational Public Space and Social Metaphor* investigates how the European Spa, with its characteristic institutions such as the *Kurpark*, grand hotel or sanatorium, developed into a genuinely transnational public space ([www.theeuropeanspa.eu/](http://www.theeuropeanspa.eu/)).

We follow the development of the European spas from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, tracing the changes of institutions and of spa life and culture in the *longue durée*. Together with partners from some European resorts, we explore the chances and perspectives of a pan-European reconceptualization and revalorization of spa culture today, given the context of a thriving cultural nostalgia on the one hand and the actual decay of many resorts on the other.

Having worked on the topic since May 2019, we now wish to issue a call for papers for the project's final academic conference, to be held in Pula / Brijuni Island (Croatia) from 2 to 4 June 2022. The conference aims to put a special focus on aspects of spa life that are not usually in the spotlight of research and public discourse. This includes topics as varied as the workforce in the spas (often employed on a seasonal basis), the development of spa-promoting infrastructures beyond the railways, or the role of individual spas in times of political crises. We invite proposals for papers on subjects which might include, but are not restricted to:

- *Keeping spa life going: the human backbone* – focusing on the (invisible) spa workers. Papers can refer to both historical and cultural sources.
- *Keeping spa life going: the technical backbone* – focusing on spas' built and technical infrastructures with an emphasis on their transnational aspect.
- *Spa Memory and Amnesia* – including the 'ugly' histories of spas that are often forgotten about or repressed.
- *Spa Culture in the Popular Imagination* – focusing on the contemporary revival of spa settings in popular fiction, including film.

Abstracts of max. 300 words and a short bio of max. 200 words should be sent to [info@theeuropeanspa.eu](mailto:info@theeuropeanspa.eu) by 1 September 2021.