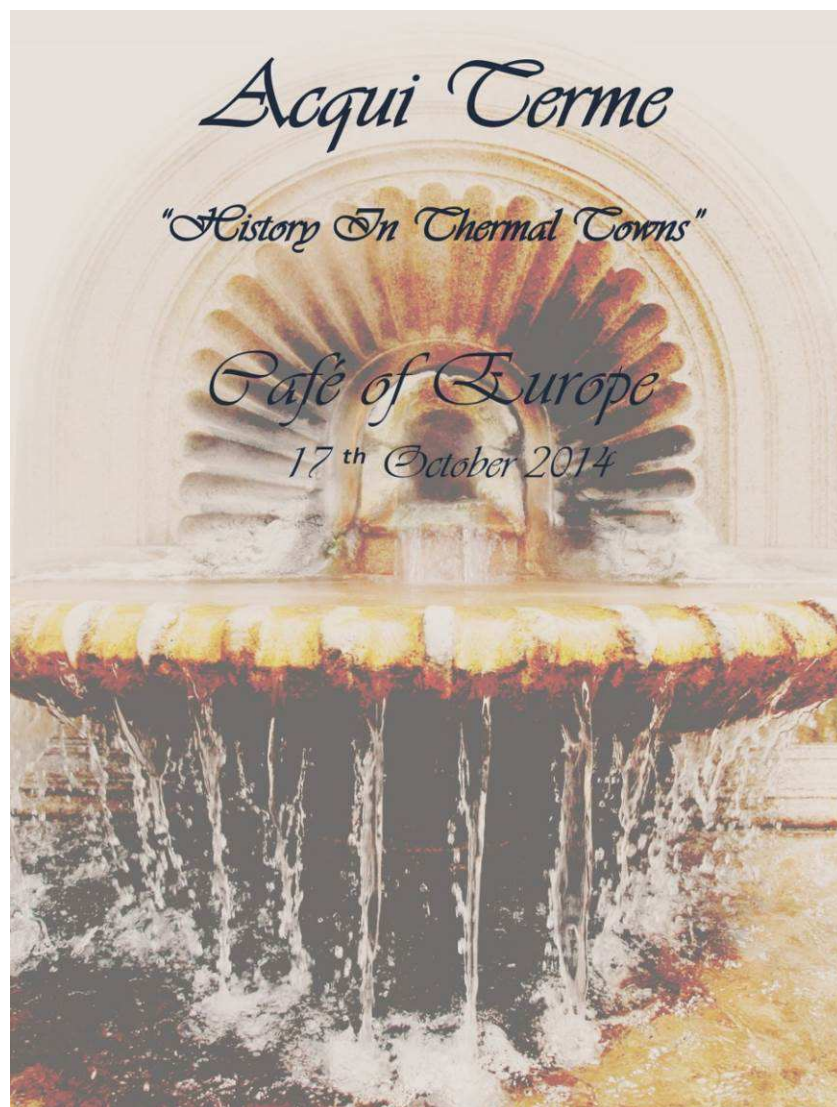


#7<sup>th</sup> Café of Europe: History in Thermal Towns  
17<sup>th</sup> October 2014



**Culture, Literature, Architecture and “Loisir”  
in Thermal Towns**  
Roundtables within the European Project “Source of Culture”

## HISTORY IN THERMAL TOWNS

GRAND HOTEL NUOVE TERME – CONFERENCE ROOM BELLE EPOQUE

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October

Admission free

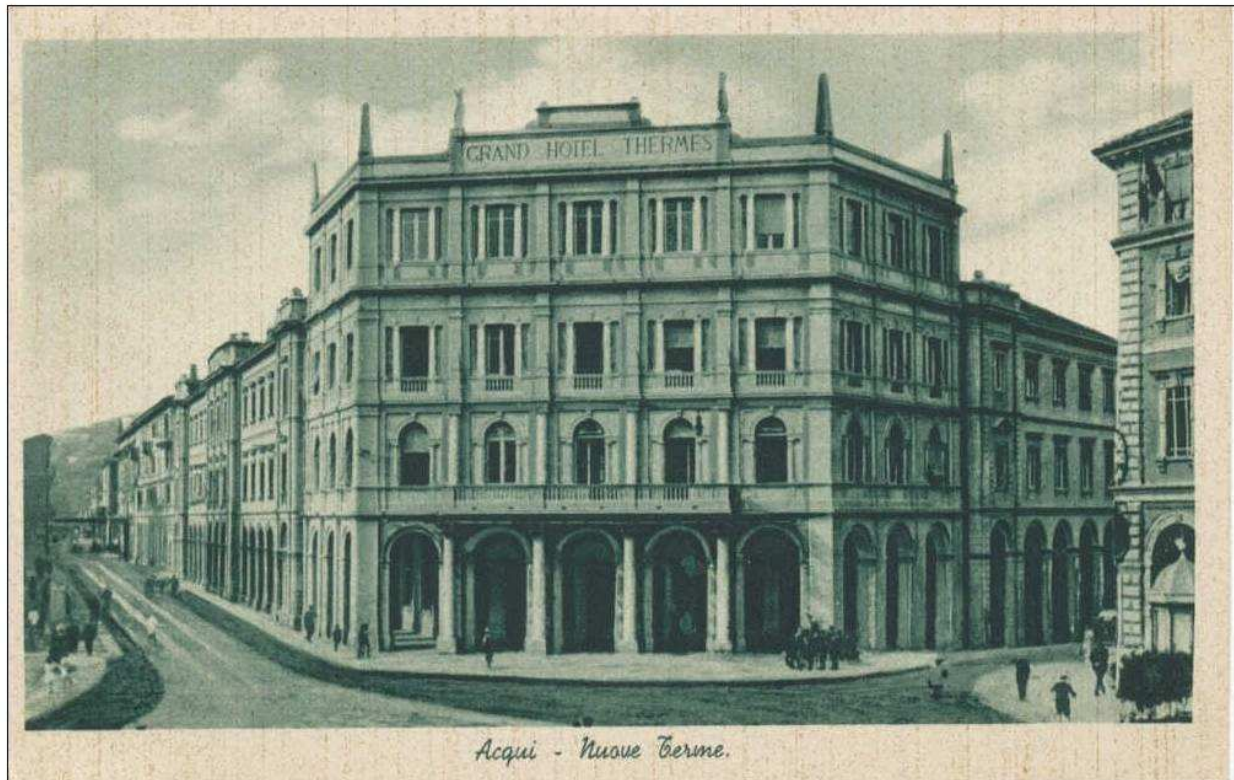
« In a word, the European Thermal Town's History is so rich in exchanges, crossing influences, multiple informal encounters, artistic creation, scientific and medical invention that the « Cafés of an elite Europe » as they were in the past can be reinterpreted and reconsidered, creating new « Cafés of Europe » : Open to all, where, thanks to these multidisciplinary comings together, towns can rediscover their imagination. Cafés where the towns' decision makers, along with their inhabitants and visitors, imagine shared social scenarios, where the local interacts with the European dimension, and where governance goes hand in hand with imagination.

Michel Thomas-Penette,  
EHTTA Delegate General.

The seventh Café of Europe, "History in Thermal Towns", is part of a two-year European cultural project, entitled "Sources of Culture: the Café of Europe", coordinated by the Route of Spa Towns of the Massif Central, in partnership with the European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA), of which Acqui Terme is a founding member. The objective of this multidisciplinary project is to raise awareness among European citizens about the wealth of the cultural heritage of the historic spa towns in Europe. Submitted as part of the 47th edition of the literary prize "Premio Acqui Storia", the Acqui Café is divided into two round tables. During the long-awaited appointment, critics, experts and representatives of the culture world will discuss the theme of literature, architecture, history, tourism and thermalism in a cultural European dimension. The event will be held in October 17th in the Conference Room "Belle Époque" of the Grand Hotel Nuove Terme.

Information: Tourist Office Citta di Acqui Terme tel: +39 0144 770 240

Contatti Stampa – [turismo@comuneacqui.com](mailto:turismo@comuneacqui.com)



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## 1. Programme of the Café of Europe: “History in Thermal Towns

16.00 – Welcome speeches

**Mr Enrico Silvio Bertero**, Mayor of Acqui Terme

**Mr Giuseppe Bellandi**, EHTTA President and Mayor of Montecatini Terme

**Dr Eleonora Berti**, Council of Europe Cultural Routes Project Coordinator - European Institute of Cultural Routes of Luxembourg

16.15 – 18.00: 1<sup>st</sup> round table: *“Culture, literature architecture of thermal towns”*

Moderators **Michel Thomas Penette** EHTTA Delegate General and **Carlo Ludovico Sburlati** Executive Responsible *“Premio Acqui Storia”*

**Prof Augusto Grandi**: *“Spa and Wellness from the crisis to the relaunch”*

**Prof Alessandro Federico Martini**: *“Acqui and the architecture for its thermal buildings, through “long-term” and uncompleted projects”*

**Prof Carlo Prosperi**: *“Literature and thermal towns”*

**Dr Giovanni Reborà**: *“The Baths of Acqui Terme from “Le Guide per il Bagnante” in the XIX and XX centuries”*

18.00 – 18.15: Coffee Break

18.30 – 19.30: 2<sup>nd</sup> round table *“Loisir in Spa Towns in the history of writers and artists”*

Moderators **Michel Thomas Penette** EHTTA Delegate General and **Carlo Ludovico Sburlati** Executive Responsible *“Premio Acqui Storia”*

**Mr Lionello Archetti Maestri**: *“Chats and coffee: causerie au Café”*

**Prof Annunziata Berrino**: *“Stories of Italian Thermal Towns: culture, practice and immaginay”*

**Prof Aldo Alessandro Mola**: *“Diuretic water and spa treatments for statesmen and diplomats wandering on the brink of the Great War: Giovanni Giolitti, Antonino di San Giuliano and others...”*

### CLOSING CEREMONY

Mr Michel Thomas Penette: *“Writing thermal towns”*

Presentation of the 8<sup>th</sup> Café of Europe – *“European Spa towns – utopias of the past and present?”*

**Bath, England, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015**



## 1.1. Café of Europe: “History in Thermal Towns

### INTRODUCTION

“Heritage offers a way of exploring and building a storytelling (narrative) of the history of our continent generating a “European vision” of history. We need a reinterpretation of the past to understand our European heritage at a level that transcends national boundaries and enlightens, at the same time the contributions of national, regional and local identities, to build together a “common European house”

This wish expressed by the Council of Europe from the very turn of the XXI century has been taken to the letter by the historic thermal towns gathered as part of the European network EHTTA - EUROPEAN HISTORIC THERMAL TOWNS ASSOCIATION, that among its primary objectives are offer to its visitors, tourists, as residents the possibility to reread and rediscover a thermal heritage that has undergone critical phases linked to the major stages in the history of Europe.

These are milestones of the Roman Empire passing through the Arabic and Turkish influence in the south and east of the continent, and of the days of elite thermalism linked to the Grand Tour, that of health and green tourism, to which all contemporary cities aspire.

Their vivid expression ranges from classical music festivals linked to the historical presence of the greatest composers, to large contemporary gatherings which accompany jazz, rock and electro music festivals.

Their gathering places vary from archaeological sites, to hammams, from open air thermal pools to the most modern thermal leisure centres, from outstanding buildings marked by the Art Nouveau or Art Deco with audacious architectural designs to the contemporary use a new materials, from the most prestigious art foundations to anthropology museums.

The choice of a theme in Acqui Terme that highlights the architectural and literary heritage, the artists glance and the testimony of history to be put in relation with the prestigious Acqui Storia Award Prize has resulted as evidence. This is an opportunity to add an important chapter to the “storytelling of the history of our continent”.

#### MODERATORS MICHEL THOMAS PENETTE



Born in Paris in 1946, **Michel Thomas-Penette**, biologist and former director of the European Institute of Cultural Routes, has always shown a great interest in art and writing, and has brought these together in one passion, implementing a programme launched by the Council of Europe 20 years ago. The European cultural routes bring together 24 major themes of European cooperation in artistic, scientific and technological culture. From silkworm to parks and gardens via the Spa Towns, biology goes hand in hand with Romanesque architecture and the route of the book.

#### CARLO SBURLATI



Carlo Sburlati was born in Acqui Terme 23rd December 1945. Surgeon and Head Physician of Gynaecology and Obstetrics at the Hospital in Acqui Terme.

He's written many articles and scientific texts, and at the age of 20 he wrote two cult books *Codreanu il Capitano* (published by Giovanni Volpe 1970) *Codreanu e la Guardia di*

*Ferro* (published by Giovanni Volpe 1977) on Peron and Evita, translated in different languages.

He cooperates with daily newspapers, illustrated magazines and encyclopaedias, and writes articles and texts regarding collecting, medicine, surgery, wellness, art, fashion, history, science and design.

Since 2007 he is the Executive Responsible of the International Prize Award Acqui Storia and Acqui Ambiente (Acqui's Environmental Prize award).

## 1.2. First roundtable

### *“Culture, literature and architecture in thermal towns”*

From 16.15 to 18.00

#### Speakers

#### **AUGUSTO GRANDI**



Journalist and Italian writer

Historian, and since 1988 a professional journalist at the Sole 24 ore, Economist.

He's published fiction and non-fiction books; among the first *Sistema Torino*, *“Sistema Piemonte”*, *“Lassù i primi, la montagna che vince”*, *“Eroi e cialtroni: 150 anni di contro storia*. Together with Daniele Lazzeri and Andrea Marcigliano he wrote *Il Grigiocrate, Mario Monti nell'era dei mediocri*”. For the non-fiction he's published *“Un galeone*

*tra i monti”*, *“Baci e bastonate”*, *“Razz, politici d'azzardo”*.

He's participated at collective operas such as: *“Altri risorgimenti”*, *“Oltre Lepanto”*, *“Viandanti tra due monti”*, *“Da Baikonur alle stelle, il grande gioco spaziale”*, *“La profondità strategica turca nel pensiero di Ahmet Davutoglu”*. As a photographer he produced various travel reportages and an exhibition dedicated to the exploitation of workers, as part of the national Security Festival. He was awarded with the Journalism prize St. Vicent, l'Acqui Ambiente (Acqui's Environmental Prize) and the silver Anguillara. He's a member of the jury for the Premio Acqui Storia (Acqui's History Prize award) and vice-president of the Artaban Onlus – an association for people in need in Italy, Africa and Latin America.

#### **“Spa and Wellness from the crisis to the realunch”**

Estimates indicate that the thermal and wellness sectors will grow during the next few years, and at an average growth rate of 10% at international level.

An increase that is not altogether homogenous. In-fact apart from few exceptions, the historic

thermal towns are encountering difficulties more or less consistent on an ever more complicated market. On the other hand the spa centres are multiplying and enlarging and registering a constant growth. It is therefore evident that we have in front of us two different wellness concepts. On one side the Thermae seen as a place for old people and ill people, or rather for old ill people, therefore without much appeal and scarce ability of attracting new clients. Whilst the spa centres are offering an attractive, dynamic image that appeals more to younger people.

It isn't only due to a lack of communication, more the fact that the thermal resorts haven't known or haven't been able to adequately invest in order to continue offering the facilities that clients expect. Grand hotels that have transformed into big, large, oversized hotels, along with an inadequate thermal offer. Consequently, charming towns that are no longer capable of organizing activities along with a high level cultural offer, but instead propose modest entertainment along with occasional events. It's essential to restart from here to compete against the offers flowing from the spa centres that concentrate on spoiling and pampering their clients, along with aperitifs, music and gadgets.

#### ALESSANDRO MARTINI



Alessandro Martini (Turin, 8th July 1972) graduated in 1999 at the Faculty of Architecture of the Polytechnic in Turin where in 2004 he obtained the Doctorate for Research in History and Criticism of the architectural and environmental fine Arts. Since 2007, at the same Polytechnic he's a Professor for the Contemporary History Architecture course.

Freelance Journalist, he's the editor of «Il Giornale dell'Arte» for the <<news>> and <<Museums>> sections and the Italian correspondent for «The Art Newspaper». He's collaborated and still collaborates for Italian periodicals «TuttoLibri de La Stampa», «Il Giornale dell'Architettura») and at International level («le Journal des Arts», «The Art Newspaper», «El Periodico del Arte»). Since 2000 he's a member of the editorial committee for the literary review «Atti & Rassegna tecnica della Società degli Ingegneri e degli Architetti in Torino». He was the Editor of MuseoTorino, the first on-line Museum of Italian history and the



Editor in charge of the review «Rivista MuseoTorino» (2009-12). He's involved in the study of the city and its architecture for the periods between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, in particular the museums and the exhibition buildings, 20<sup>th</sup> century public and private archives, architecture in contemporary graveyards, the publishing trade and 20<sup>th</sup> century book trade. He's the author of essays and studies published in reviews, volumes, conference acts. Among his main publications: *Le Terme di Acqui. Città e architetture per la cura e per lo svago* (Allemandi, 2009; in 2010 the English edition), *Sfogliando i musei. Architetture e politiche culturali. Dieci anni di scritti per «Il Giornale dell'Arte», 2000-2010* (Allemandi, 2010) and the essays: *Architettura e "stile", istruzione e diletto. I musei di storia naturale in Europa nel tardo Ottocento* (Silvana Editoriale, 2014), *I musei dell'Italia unita* nel volume *Architettare l'Unità. Architettura e istituzioni nelle città della nuova Italia 1861-1911* (Paparo, 2011), *Torino, la città dell'industria. Mito, visione e progetto* (Treccani, 2011), *Le Terme carloalbertine di Acqui* (Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Asti, 2010), *L'impegno privato e la passione pubblica, dall'Europa all'Italia. Riccardo Gualino tra teatro, musica e danza, 1923-1931* (Liguori, 2009), *Giulio Bollati, l'Einaudi e la «perfezione grafica»* (Fondazione Torino Musei, 2006).

### **Acqui and the architecture of its Thermae, between a « long period of time» and projects never accomplished**

Since roman times, and later throughout the medieval period and finally from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the mud and curative waters are the resources on which Acqui builds its identity, along with significant architecture for treatments and welcome.

Marked by certain reluctance in relationship with the splendours and the worldly pleasures, Acqui confirms its vocation towards a rigorously sanitary thermalism during the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the construction of buildings (ahead of its time respect to the rest of the country) destined to a specific clientele like the military or the lower-class.

The case of Acqui, a city of treatments before one of leisure, is deeply different to that of many spa resorts of the international *loisir* that exploded during the Belle Époque period. *The Liberty style doesn't leave any noteworthy buildings, whereas during early 1910 and the 1920's spectacular hypothetic projects for the Antiche and Nuove Terme signed by quality designers were presented capable of stimulating new ambitions on a quality architectural and urban scale.*

These were the projects by Antonio Vandone from Cortemilia, of Ugo Giusti and Pietro Betta, presented between 1917 and 1927 but never accomplished.

With minor ambitions and architectural results during the Fascism years the local system completes the Nuove Terme and the thermal swimming pool, intended to favour the use of the Thermae for “healthy” people. Only later after the war, a new phase takes off, led by the National Health Service.

### CARLO PROSPERI



Born in Solignano (PR) 1st December 1948, he taught literary subjects and Latin for many years in Secondary schools, and published various collections of poems: *L'erba moli* (1981), *Cuore inquieto* (1986), *Il farmaco ospitale* (1989), *Fuori rotta* (1989), *L'angelo di Chagall e altre epifanie* (1995), *Il campo dei miracoli* (1912) and many studies concerning literary critics.

He translated and commentated the *Psychomachia* by Prudenzio (Acqui Terme 2000), as well as the *Statuti del feudo imperiale di Roccoverano* (Acqui Terme 2009). He 's written many articles and essays which have been featured in magazines and collective volumes of history and local art, and has written various biographies on religious people such as : *Madre Leonarda di Gesù Crocifisso*, Grugliasco 2003; *Il teologo Adolfo Garbarino canonico e prevosto di Rivalta Bormida (1879-1950)*, Acqui Terme 2011] and on artists active in the Monferrato and Alessandrino areas between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. He personally edited the volumes *Giuseppe Baretti . Rivalta Bormida, le radici familiari, l'opera*, “Atti del convegno nazionale - Rivalta Bormida, 6th September 1997”, Alessandria 1999; *Letteratura e Terme*, Ovada 2005, “ Conference acts held in Acqui Terme 8th May 2004”; and with S. Arditi, *Tra romanico e gotico. Percorsi di arte medievale nel millenario di San Guido (1004-2004) vescovo di Acqui*, Acqui Terme 2004. He cooperated with two essays, *Philosophy and Economy* and *Ethical and Economy* – for an Economy politics manual published by Pavia Studi University ( 2011) . *Pioneer*, among philosophy and artistic, on the iconographic theme regarding “the Calvacata dei Vizi”. Together with S. Arditi and A. Vercellino he published the monograph “*A due passi dal paradiso: Giovanni Monevi e la sua bottega (Visone, sec. XVII- XVIII)*,”

whereas with his friend G. L. Rapetti Bovio della Torre he wrote *Rivalta Bormida. Vita e vicende villanova dalle sue origini fino alla fine del 1900*, Acqui Terme 2004 and *Rivalta Bormida: l'antica chiesa conventuale di Santo Spirito. Vicende storiche e recente restauro* Acqui Terme 2011.

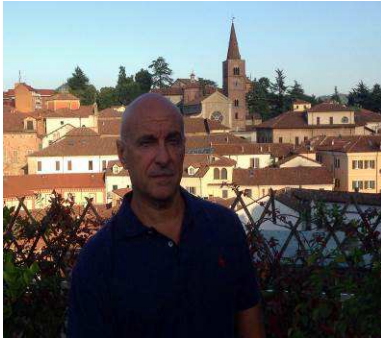
### **Acqui Terme: literature and thermal springs**

In 1585, a nobleman from Casale Orazio Navazzotti, exalts in a mythological- metamorphic way the origins of the Acquese thermal springs in an aetiological short-poem *Idralea*, dedicated to Federico Sangiorgio, the Commendatore from Jerusalem. It's an encomiastic opera that in its own way retraces *Ninfale fiesolano del Boccaccio* and the tradition of the pastoral drama. Whereas the Renaissance privileges mythological explanations of a natural phenomenon, Enlightenment investigates them using a scientific approach. The meaning of things and their symbolic or moral foundations is no longer looked for, rather a lifeless and perspective over-excited virtuosity prevails that from the "carità del nation loco" draws reason for emphatic events of local *wonders*. Just as an 18th century sonnet by the Mantovano Gianmaria Galeotti and in a sonnet by the Doctor from Novara Filippo Zaffiri. More interesting is the short poem *La Bojenta or rather the Bollente spring from Acqui* by the abbot don Luigi Lingeri (1816), exemplar in the *Cicerone* by Passeroni. The Bollente becomes an occasion for an excursion, in a witty and continuous style, among the "wonders" of the city, described in the glorious story as a *paradisum delitiarum*. Anecdotes and scenes from everyday life, embellish the amiable *causerie*.

A different, almost romantic setting is felt in the notes by Jules Michelet. Whereas Martin Piaggio narrates his *Viaggio ai bagni di Acqui* in rhymed ottonari full of *verve and vis comica*, aware of his diminished social consideration (of his loss of his aureole) , the poet portrays the Thermae among lively grotesque and carnival-like descriptions.

In 1870 the canonical Jacopo Canepa takes part in an exhibition of a monorhyme sonnet on *Acqui's mud baths*. Two extemporary sonnets are from 1913 that combine the Bollente with Barbera – by Gaudenzio Miglio and a *laudatio temporis acti* in verses most certain Eda, not deprived of unstated polemics.

Of delayed or late romanticism we must mention the song by Francesco Bisio dedicated to the Bollente in 1930. More amusing a pomposity of the mud, all played on the ambiguity of the *phàrmacon*, written in 1913 by the parish priest from Orsara don Pietro Gaino.



### GIOVANNI REBORA

Doctor Giovanni Rebora was born in Acqui Terme the 11th November 1954.

He graduated with full votes in “Medicine and Surgery ” at Pavia University on the 22.06.1984

He undertook a specialization in “Phthiology and illnesses related to the respiratory apparatus” – at the Faculty of Medicine of

Genoa University 22-11-1991.

He obtained the specialization in “Medical Hydrology” at the Faculty of Pharmacy Pavia University 22-10-2003

From 2001 till 2005 he was a Professor at the Seat in Acqui – a section of Novara University for courses on Thermalism and thermal products I and II, as part of the Degree Course “Quality control – herbal, cosmetology and thermal products”.

From 2005-2006 till 2010 he worked as a Professor at Novara University for the Thermalism course - part of the Degree in “Quality control herbal, cosmetology and thermal products”.

Since 2010 he’s a Lecturer for a Masters II level organized by Pavia University

Since 1985 his main work is at the “Terme of Acqui S.p.a” – where since 1998 he’s the Medical Director

Since 2011 he is also Medical Director at the Terme of Genoa

He’s the author of many publications and the lecturer and organizer of many conferences regarding Thermalism and Medical Hydrology, amongst which since 1998 “ The Acquese Medical-Rheumatology Days” – an event that has now reached its 63<sup>rd</sup> Edition - and is considered a priority in the Italian Thermal panorama.



### **The Thermae of Acqui in the “bathers guide books” of the 19th and 20th centuries**

The so-called “bathers guide books” were born around mid-19<sup>th</sup> century with the aim of providing detailed information on the water and the treatments available at the various spa establishments, and in second place, on the historic and tourist heritage.

From an editorial point of view, for the Thermae of Acqui, the 19<sup>th</sup> century begins with a concise study dated 1807 on behalf of the French Inspector of the Military Hospital Jean **Charles Lesne** on the “City of Acqui” and its thermal springs. Scientific essays concerning chemical aspects on the waters and therefore real monographic volumes follow that gradually become the bathers’ guide books. Among these we recall: **L. Granetti**, “Cenni sulle Terme di Acqui”, Torino 1841; **Padre I. Ratti**, “Le Regie Terme di Acqui”, Milano 1844; **G. Lavezzari**, “Guida ai Bagni d’Acqui...”, Acqui 1869; **P. Schivardi**, “Giuda ai Bagni d’Acqui”, Milano 1873; e **D. De Alessandri**, “Acqui le sue Terme e i suoi dintorni”, Acqui 1888. The latter, nevertheless the Health Director at the Thermae of Acqui is the first to describe the new thermal establishments that opened in 1879 in the city centre, or rather the present “Nuove Terme”.

With the 20<sup>th</sup> century the scientific popular and tourist production of the “bathers guide books” continue, among which those of **F. Meda**, “Le Terme di Acqui” Le loro vicende. I loro problemi”, Acqui 1916 emerge, and more of health issue “Le Terme di Acqui” by **S. Pisani**, Firenze 1927.

By means of these publications, it is possible to understand the evolution of the therapeutic structures and that of the Thermae’s hotel-trade, and most of interest for the doctors the relative changes concerning the type of treatment and the methods of application.

### 1.3. Second roundtable

#### *“Loisir in Spa Towns in the history of writers and artists”*

**From 18.15 to 19.30**

#### **LIONELLO ARCHETTI MAESTRI**



From January 1974 till June 2011 Documentalist at the Public Library of Acqui Terme and from 1981 Tourist Guide for the Province of Alessandria

Founding- member of Italia Nostra - Section of Acqui Terme – Association for the safeguard of the country’s historic, artistic and natural heritage.

President in *prorogatio* – section of Acqui Terme – covered the task of regional and national President

A member of the FAI – Fondo Ambiente Italiano ( National Trust) – founder and councillor for the first delegation, and a member of the national committee. Member of the International Institute of Studi Liguri – a member

of the Directive Committee of the Statiella section Alessandria

Founder- councillor for the Society of history, art and archaeology for the provinces of Alessandria and Asti. Promoter and founding member of Aquesana – cultural association of studies and researches of cultural and environmental heritage of the old and modern Aquesana – of which I was President. Member of the Society of Valdese History Member of the Piemontese Society of Architecture and Fine Arts. Member of the Scientific Committee of the Institute of History and Resistance and of the Contemporary Society of Alessandria. Member of the Scientific Committee of the European Historic Thermal Towns Association – EHTTA. Lecturer at the University of the Third Age of Acqui Terme. Member of the Scientific Committee of the Inst. of Resistance History and of the Contemporary Society of Alessandria.

During my youth I lived abroad for various years in India and the Eastern, London and Paris. Contributed towards the realisation of prestigious publications for: Italia Nostra, FAI, Aquesana and for the Int. Institute of Studi Liguri.

#### **“Chats and coffee: causerie au Café”**

The theme that I would like to talk about today is dedicated to the expressions that up until not long ago the local Acquesi people used to describe those who attended their thermae - “strangers” that before the wide spreading of <<amaro e reo caffè>> came and frequented Acqui.

This isn't going to be a delightful list of satisfied customers that have faded away in our memories, but I want to bring back to life famous Mr nobodies: from Niccolò III d'Este, husband of the Parisian sung by Byron, to the anonymous rascal that found himself with a paralysed arm and hand caused by a lapidation, and in eight days was entirely cured. For a few moments, ladies and cavaliers will return to life, cardinals and simple sick people, along with animals like Bonifacio Paleologo's dog or those« horses and other creatures » that were submitted to purification « in the bath destined to that ». I'll never forget humanists such as Betussi, soldiers like the Admiral greedy of salted focaccia, filled with Nutella. I'll remember with some chronological exceeding how up until the last century, there were the *cocottes* and the *gigolò*. The adventurer Celso Cesare Moreno, *vizir* of the sultanate of Sumatra, the melancholic and impoverished homosexual *Maharaja*, the spies, the solitary vacations of Alice B. Toklas, the figures of the *hôtellerie* such as incomparable *concierge* Bussi, the capable administrator Ambrogio Michetti, the far-sighted businessperson Francesco Cirio and the recklessness of the calibre of Mosè Osmo Morris.

I cannot forget the doctors from Guainerio to Malacarne to the persecuted Professor Donati. The «Compagnia dei fangaroli» whose indispensable exponents before the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century « non diu vivunt » were due to constant jumping in the water to collect the mud.

I'll reserve a moment– without confining in the domination of my friend Alessandro Martini – to all the architects that contributed in the course of the centuries to the shape of our *ville d'eaux*.

#### ANNUNZIATA BERRINO



A graduate in philosophy, she taught Contemporary History for many years at the Naples Orientale University and since 2006 has been working as a researcher and associated professor of the University Studi of Napoli Federico II. In the 1990's she became interested in the migration phenomenon which took place in the southern Italian regions during the 19th century.

Since 1998 her interests have been concentrated on tourism. From 2001 till 2007 she worked as a Tourism councillor for private and public bodies and has signed a fixed schedule dedicated to the history of tourism for the monthly magazine “Traveller” – edited

by Condè Nast. She reordered and published private archives, among which the Correale of Sorrento and Bernich of the Neapolitan society of History patria. She's directed research projects regarding the history of tourism, and in 2002 founded the editorial series the "History of tourism" – Annale" Franco Angeli Editions.

In 2011 she published the book entitled "*History of Italian Tourism*"- with Il Mulino, a volume that is concentrated on research and covers tourism in Italy from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the year 2000. She dedicated specific studies to the Spina – the first Italian 12 metre international Rule-Yacht from 1929 (*La Spina, a yacht from the 20<sup>th</sup> century*) The history of the first Italian 12 metre International-Rule, Umberto Allemandi & C., Torino, 2009; English edition: *La Spina, a 20th-Century Yacht The Story of the First Italian 12metre International-Rule Yacht* and the happenings of the safeguard of the Trulli – traditional Apunian dry stone huts (found in the Italian region of Apulia) and their role in tourism up until the recognition by UNESCO as a world heritage site. (*I trulli di Alberobello. Un secolo di tutela e di turismo*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2012).

Her last work is dedicated to the thermae in Italy in this day and age (*Ritrovare l'Italia. Andare per terme*, Il Mulino, Bologna, in uscita).

### **"Stories of Italian Thermal Towns: culture practice and imaginary"**

We cover the history of the Thermae in Italy, through the projection of a rich collection of images, that portray throughout Europe how springs and baths were attended for therapeutic use during mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. It's a phenomenon that spreads like wildfire and gives life to a variety of passionate stories: scientific and medical culture, politics, the institutions, entrepreneurs, everyone is interested in the therapeutic water. From the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and an increase in attendances, a sociality around the waters and baths becomes popular, giving way to a rich and unexpected cultural production. Theatres, music, literature, art, graphics, essay writing – everyone produces and creates for the public that frequent the Thermae.

Without forgetting that the expansion of this therapeutic practice represents an important occasion for architecture, hydraulics, urban planning that give life to functional and beautiful places, where men and women combine body care along with leisure and recreation. Up until the



present days when the therapeutic water and baths are part of a much more ample complex, that expands to the quality of the air, the food, the care of one's body and mind, the teaching and refusal of artificiality and the research of a total well-being.

### MOLA ALDO ALESSANDRO



Aldo A. Mola (Cuneo, 1943), Professor, co-Chair Théodore Verhaegen at Libera di Bruxelles University, author of operas, biographies and essays. Among his works

Storia della Massoneria italiana dalle origini a oggi (Bompiani, 1977; 2013, VIII<sup>a</sup> reprint of the 3<sup>a</sup> edition), Storia della Monarchia in Italia (Bompiani, 2001), Declino e crollo della monarchia in Italia (Mondadori, 2006) and the biographies on Giuseppe Garibaldi (1982), Adriano Lemmi (1985), Giuseppe Mazzini (1986), Silvio Pellico (2005), Giosue Carducci (1906). His

work Giovanni Giolitti, lo statista della Nuova Italia (Mondadori, 2003) has been since 2012 among the History Classics . Co-Director of Il Parlamento italiano dal 1861 al 1992 (Milano, Nuova Cei, voll. 24), in 2011 he published Italia. Un Paese speciale. Storia del Risorgimento e dell'Unità (Torino, Published by del Capricorno, voll.4). He manages the European Centre "Giovanni Giolitti" the study of the State (Dronero-Cavour).

Since 1982 he's been cooperating with the Historic Office of the Major Armed Forces, for which he's organized conferences and personally edited the Acts (Garibaldi, Generale della libertà, 1982; Garibaldi vivo, 1982; Forze Armate e guerra di liberazione). He edited the new edition concerning the "Inchiesta su Caporetto" (US-SME, 2014 ). Since 1980 he's been awarded with the Golden Medal for School, Culture and Arts.

### **"Diuretic water and spa treatments for statesmen and diplomats wandering on the brink of the Great War: Giovanni Giolitti, Antonino di San Giuliano and others..."**

It was the beginning of the catastrophic Franco-Prussian war that in 1870 made the Thermae (and / or "Bagni") the main stage for the representation of the "great story" of Europe. On the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1914, three days after the magnicidio of Sarajevo, the foreign Minister, Antonino di San Giuliano

informed the Prime-Minister, Antonio Salandra, that he was going to leave Rome for Fiuggi where he had direct phone contact with the Consulta.

But in August 1911 it was precisely the Thermae of Fiuggi that became the laboratory in the war against the Turkish-Ottoman Empire for the reign on Tripolitania and Cirenaica. There San Giuliano and the prime-minister, Giovanni Giolitti were photographed with big glasses in their hands as they walked together in a friendly manner. In truth they were risking to trigger the European conflagration, to avoid a danger of measure in 1908, but always in impending danger. Giolitti would eagerly have gone to the Terme in Acqui, but this establishment, even though with fervour from public and private forces, was still not at its best.

Not only, Acqui recalled Giuseppe Saracco, president of the Senate (and president of the Council of Ministers) to which in September 1904 the statesman, rational of the remunerated role of “notary of the Crown” in the solemn notarial deed of the birth of the Prince Royal. Reluctant of contacts with journalists and photographers that crowded the Thermae, the statesman preferred the French ones, in particular Vichy, described by him as a healing “doctor’s paradise”. He avoided everyone, which wouldn’t have been possible if he were at home, and most of all in Acqui, that didn’t fail to list and boast about famous visitors, as happened after the War. It was the period of prestige when the magnificent Thermae of the “Bollente” welcomed diverse personalities and even rivals, forced to parade in public, one next to the other, even though they detested each other. It was the case of the Marshal, Pietro Badoglio and the Marshal dell’Aria Italo Balbo...

Places of history, and also of occult plots, favoured by the comforting and cheerful reassuring atmosphere of the waters, that eventually conferred the correct sense of wellbeing even to the most tormented happenings.



## Literary Prize

### “Premio Acqui Storia”

The Premio Acqui Storia was founded in 1968, inspired by an idea of Cino Chiodo, Piero Galliano, Ercole Tasca and Marcello Venturi, to remember and honour the memory of the soldiers of the Acqui Division and their sacrifice in September 1943 on the Ionian islands of Kefalonia and Corfu, but also to create awareness that historical research is one of the cornerstones of the moral, cultural and social progress of the nation. The award is intended for historical printed works concerning the XIX, XX and XXI centuries; not only for the scientific historiography, but also for essays that, with an informative and historical narrative approach, are trying to make the issues of contemporary history more accessible to the wider non-specialist public.

The successful original peculiarity that combines specialised analysis and vocation to historical disclosure has brought, through the years, to the division into two different sections: an historical- scientific and a popular. Starting from the 42<sup>nd</sup> edition a **new section**, of literary character was set up, **dedicated to historical novels**, an idea and project created by Carlo Sbrulati: together with the other two sections (**historical-scientific and historical-popular**), it has allowed to point out the value of prose literary works that, based on a rigorous understanding of past events, stimulate the interest of the general public in history.

The Premio Acqui Storia is organized by the **Department of Culture for Acqui Terme City Council**, with the support of the **Piedmont Region**, the **Province of Alessandria**, **Terme di Acqui**, **Amag Group** and the **Cassa di Risparmio di Alessandria Foundation**, which is a key partner of this initiative.

Over the years, the Award has established itself among the most prestigious literary awards in the Italian and international cultural scene: its success and prestige are confirmed by an increasing participation of volumes (186 in 2011), not only published by major publishing houses, but also by young and innovative publishers. Since 2006, it has had the honour of being **under the Patronage of the President of the Italian Republic and under the patronage of the Prime Minister, of the Senate, of the Chamber of Deputies and, for the 2011 edition, of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage**. Starting from the 42<sup>o</sup> edition the **President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano** wanted to give the event a special mention, awarding it with a presidential bronze medal, which reproduces his original signature, realized by the State Institute of Printing and Minting: the Award could therefore be qualified for the first time with the mention **"with the support of the President of the Republic."**



## **2. Sources of culture project: the Cafés of Europe**

### **Sources of Culture: the Cafés of Europe, a brand new European project**

The 7<sup>th</sup> Café of Europe, “History in Thermal Towns”, is part of a two year-long European project entitled “Sources of Culture: the Cafés of Europe”. This project brings together eleven partners from six countries. Its aim is to raise awareness of the wealth of cultural heritage of all the thermal towns among European citizens. In the context of this project, a series of eight Cafés of Europe, multidisciplinary meetings of discussion and forward thinking, are to be held in several thermal towns. They will enable a Blue Book to be written on the thermal towns’ essential role in the future of a people’s Europe based on social dialogue, strengthened by the use of digital technology, and by a sustainable cultural approach to tourist policy, founded on reinterpreting the birth of modern tourism.

### **E.H.T.T.A. - The European Historic Thermal Towns Association**

Created in Brussels in 2009, this network brings together 25 spa towns in eleven European countries, including, Fiuggi and Montecatini Terme in Italy. It aims to gain European Union recognition for the European thermal towns’ specific culture and innovation, both historical and contemporary, with a view to developing their tourist activity in the framework of the new plan to encourage transborder tourism, “Destination Europe”. Every member town is an integral part of the historic thermal towns cultural route, one of the twenty-six cultural routes recognized by the Council of Europe since 1987.

### **The Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central**

The Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central, EHTTA associate member, is the coordinator for the European project Sources of Culture. Born in 1998 under the impetus of the Massif Central DATAR (inter-ministerial delegation for regional development and attractiveness), and the mayors of thermal communes’ desire to create a tourist network just for spa towns, the Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central today counts 18 spa towns as members, spread over 5 regions (Auvergne, Bourgogne, Limousin, Rhône-Alpes and Midi-Pyrénées) and 9 departments (Allier, Ardèche, Aveyron, Cantal, Creuse, Loire, Nièvre, Puy-de-Dôme and Saône-et-Loire). The Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central is an associate member of the EHTTA (European Historic Thermal Towns Association). Since May 2013, the Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central has also been coordinating the European project “Sources of Culture: the Cafés of Europe”. Through this initiative, it places the Massif Central as a dynamic and innovative cluster of regions, a laboratory for new ideas aiming to promote the promotion of the heritage of European thermal spas.



### 3. Acqui Terme and the events of the Café



#### Acqui Terme, tourist destination

Tucked away in the south of Piedmont, a fascinating land, where the landscape changes constantly with breath-taking scenery, situated in a strategic position just an hour's drive from Genoa, Milan, Turin, where tranquillity, traditions, wine and gastronomy delights and respect towards nature still exist.

Acqui Terme, a charming spa resort, the old roman town of *Aquae Statiellae*, renowned for its boiling hot waters, rich in therapeutic properties, that gush out in the heart of the city, and across the Bormida river. Its ancient name recalls the importance of the thermal springs, the same reported during their primo genial splendour by *Plinio the Elder* and *Strabone*.

Today the city represents the main thermal resort in the region of Piedmont, and is among the most well-known in Italy, not only for the quality but for the vast selection of treatments available. Wine and gastronomy is the second most esteemed produce that plays a fundamental role for tourism and most of all for the local economy.

No matter what you're looking for, you may discover a selection of attractions, from relaxation and pampering yourself at the spas, to history and culture, the charming historic centre characterized by archaeological sites and beautiful building from the late medieval period, or explore the local area rich in castles, ancient watch towers, fascinating medieval hill-top hamlets, churches and abbeys, all surrounded by the picturesque vineyards recently recognised by **UNESCO as a world heritage site**.

Other important events of the Café of Acqui Terme  
EHTTA TRAVELLING EXHIBITION

Piazza Levi from October 16<sup>th</sup> to October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014



The EHTTA travelling exhibition will be on display in Piazza Levi, the administrative heart of the town in front of the City Hall. The City Hall a palace of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, built by the **Lupi of Moirano** family, then came into the property of the Jewish **Abraam Levi** who donated it to the town's administration, hoping that it could become their seat, is still considered a jewel in town

Acqui Storia



47<sup>o</sup>  
**Premio Acqui Storia**

INVITATION



Patronage of Senato della Repubblica  
Patronage of Camera dei Deputati



You are cordially invited to the  
47<sup>o</sup> PREMIO ACQUI STORIA  
Saturday 18th October 2014

Programme

- at 9:30  
Breakfast with the author  
Café of the Terme
- at 10:00  
Opening of the stalls  
"The history book market"  
Arcades of Corso Bagni & Via XX Settembre
- at 10:30  
Meeting of the prize winners  
with students and readers  
Belle Epoque Lounge - Grand Hotel Nuove Terme
- at 17:15  
Awards Ceremony  
Ariston Theatre - Piazza Matteotti

EXECUTIVE RESPONSIBLE  
Carlo Sburati

THE MAYOR  
Enrico Silvio Bertero

PRESENTED BY  
Franco di Mare and Antonia Varini

Winners

Winners for the historic-scientific section  
Luciano Mecacci  
"La Ghirlan da fiorentina  
e la morte di Giovanni Gentile"  
Adelphi

Gianpaolo Romano  
"Pio X" - Alle origini  
del cattolicesimo contemporaneo"  
Lindau

Winners for the historic-popular section  
Giancristiano Desiderio  
"Vita intellettuale e affettiva di Benedetto Croce"  
Liberilibri

Winners for the historic-novel section  
Vasken Berberian  
"Sotto un cielo indifferente"  
Sperling & Kupfer

Witness of Tim e 2014  
Livio Berruti  
Lorella Cuccarini  
Mario Orfeo  
Enrico Vanzina

Carrier Awards  
The Medal of the Presidency of the Republic  
Roberto Vivarelli

History in TV "MAGAZZINO 18"  
Simone Cristicchi





#### 4. Contacts and information

The 7<sup>th</sup> Café of Europe will take place at the Conference Room Belle Époque - Grand Hotel Nuove Terme – Piazza Levi, 1 – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October from 16.00 to 19.30.

#### Press Conference

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2014 – at 15.00

Grand Hotel Nuove Terme

Conference Room – Belle Époque

Piazza Italia 1 – ACQUI TERME

The European Delegation of the SOURCE Project will be present

#### For further information

- [www.ehtta.eu](http://www.ehtta.eu)
- [www.villesdeaux.com](http://www.villesdeaux.com)
- [www.sources-of-culture.com](http://www.sources-of-culture.com)
- [www.facebook.com/sourcedeculture](https://www.facebook.com/sourcedeculture)
- [www.facebook.com/ThermalTravel](https://www.facebook.com/ThermalTravel)
- [www.scoop.it/historic-thermal-cities-villes-thermales-historiques](http://www.scoop.it/historic-thermal-cities-villes-thermales-historiques)
- [www.sources-of-culture.com](http://www.sources-of-culture.com)
- [www.turismoacquiterme.it](http://www.turismoacquiterme.it)
- [www.comune.acquiterme.al.it](http://www.comune.acquiterme.al.it)

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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

