
Welcome Address

In 2011 the University of Pavia celebrated the 650th anniversary of foundation. The *Studium generale*, in fact, was established in 1361 by the Emperor Charles IV. The European and international event of our celebrations was certainly the 2nd Coimbra Group Birthday Seminar.

The theme “Collegiate learning in middle ages and beyond” was significant, because of the structure of our University campus: one of the oldest in Europe, with a large number of colleges.

I was honoured to share this celebration with the Coimbra Group and I need to welcome all the international colleagues who joined Pavia for this Seminar. The Seminar led us to late middle ages when universities started to appear in Europe in small towns as Pavia, with colleges to lodge poor students and scholars.

“Future has deep roots” is the motto we chose for our 650th celebration, and I am sure that all the Coimbra Universities agree with the idea that our identity, our present and, above all, our future perspectives are based on our fathers.

I would like to thank all the authorities, the eminent speakers and the scientific committee of this Seminar for their presence and their contribution, attesting the importance of the Coimbra Group and also of the University of Pavia.

I wish all of you a good conference and a good birthday.

Angiolino Stella
Rector of the University of Pavia

Foreword

On 26-27 October 2011, in the frame of the ceremonies commemorating the 650th anniversary of the foundation of its *Studium Generale*, the University of Pavia was delighted to host the 2nd Coimbra Group Birthday Seminar.

A happy coincidence of dates was remarked on that occasion. On 27 October 1361 the *Studium Generale* in Pavia, established according to the edict issued in Nuremberg on 13 April 1361 by the Emperor Charles IV, started its activity¹.

On 25 October 1985 a first meeting of representatives of few European universities took place in Louvain, giving rise to what became the Coimbra Group, an association of long-established European multidisciplinary universities of high international standard.

The theme of the Seminar “Collegiate learning in middle ages and beyond” was suggested by the University of Pavia, one of the few universities in Europe still having a large number of colleges attached to them.

As is known, the origin of universities in the Western world dates back to late middle ages (11-12th c.) when, thanks to the revival of town life, universities started to appear in Europe generally in small towns in the form of communities of scholars and or students with the purpose of education in law, philosophy, medicine and liberal arts. The need of lodging poor students, or scholars, or both, sometimes offering also facilities for lectures, is at the origin of the birth of colleges. The term college, in Latin *collegium*, is essentially connected with the term community. Since early times, in fact, college was not just a dormitory or a hall of residence but a self-governing community of people living together with the purpose of study or instruction.

¹ *Charters of Foundation and Early Documents of the Universities of the Coimbra Group*, ed. by Jos M.M. Hermans - Marc Nelissen, Coimbra Group, University of Groningen, 1994.

Colleges necessarily requested the creation of buildings, whereas universities did not, at least at the origin. Therefore medieval university towns are still generally identified by the presence of college buildings. The life of young college students (goliards) in towns was not at all quiet and their customs not upright, as abundantly reported by secular literature: students enjoyed life and were pleasure seeking (Bacchus and Venus). Pavia, in particular, was famous for the easy virtues of students (“*Quis Papiæ demorans castus habeatur?*”, *Confessio Goliarum*, middle of 12th c.). Towns authorities and university members (town and gown) were often in conflict.

In various countries over the centuries the term college has been used in a number of different interpretations, for instance college for poor students, college of masters of a faculty, college of students coming from a specific dioceses or country, college for students selected by merit, etc. More and more up to recent times colleges, and in general universities, became instruments for social promotion based on merit (Le Goff, 1989). Some universities were based on colleges (collegiate universities like Oxford and Cambridge). Other universities had many colleges that later practically disappeared (Paris) or survived on the whole (Pavia). Some universities like Bologna had few colleges. Most universities had no colleges. Degrees were awarded by universities, whereas colleges provided just lodging and private tutoring.

The 2nd Coimbra Group Birthday Seminar offered an opportunity to overview the variety of cases and to outline the historical role of colleges and, more generally, of college-like institutions in ancient universities, most of which belonging to the Coimbra Group.

Historians and representatives from colleges presented, in a diversified and colourful way, the richness of interpretations of the role of colleges in European universities from the middle ages to the present time.

After a welcome introduction by Prof. Angiolino Stella, Rector of the hosting University, Gian Paolo Brizzi, who chaired the first session devoted to “Collegiate learning in early times”, reviewed different types of colleges across history. Their main purpose of assistance was later associated with the promotion of merit. He concluded that now-a-days colleges appear as institutions that were able to adapt themselves to changes, at the same time preserving a strong link with tradition.

The history of the colleges of Paris University from 12th to 16th c. was presented by Thierry Kouamé. Paris, that saw the birth of the first college in the history, in early times was really a collegiate university because of the remarkable number of colleges that have been erected initially to accommodate poor clerks and that became institutions for public education at the dawn of the modern age. The most famous one is the Sorbonne.

The unique cases of Oxford, and Cambridge, was the subject of the presentation by Laurence Brockliss. Since the early modern period young students of the two universities are expected to reside in a college where they are placed under the care of a tutor or supervisor, respectively, providing supplementary individual education. This system of tutor/supervisor training has remarkably evolved over the years but still characterizes these two world-class universities.

Michael Kiene reported about the architecture of colleges and universities before 1500. Originally masters and students used to rent ordinary houses for both teaching and lodging. Later building for colleges were erected, called halls in Oxford and hostels in Cambridge. Central university buildings for teaching became commonplace in Southern Europe, and particularly in Italy.

The growth of higher education institutions in Catholic countries after the Counter Reformation, and the role of Jesuits in particular, was examined by Simona Negruzzo. It was during that period, in particular, that Pavia enriched his system of university colleges for poor students by adding two important institutions that survived, i.e. the Borromeo and Ghislieri colleges.

At the end of the first session a book on memorials of masters and students at the University of Pavia, edited by Maria Teresa Mazzilli and just published, was presented by Gian Paolo Brizzi and Carla Riccardi. The memorials of ancient masters of Pavia University, particularly in the 15th and 16th century, represent a sort of book of stone pictures of university life in lecture rooms of those times.

The second session of the Seminar devoted to “Collegiate learning today” was chaired by Inge Knudsen. Introducing it, she made a reference to the first Coimbra Group Birthday Seminar, devoted to the forgotten origins of universities², and emphasized the link between the words college and colleague. Universities were born when groups of students and scholars started to gather to find new ways of thinking and studying, as testified by pictures from the past like the Allegory of the Good Government in Siena or the stone memorials in Pavia. In the new context of mass universities this remains the mission of our universities.

The first contribution in this session was offered by Penelope Wilson whose main focus was on the adaptation of Oxbridge to different ages and different educational contexts. Colleges in those collegiate universities not only provide the solution to student accommodation but continue to offer a special learning

² *The Forgotten Origins of Universities in Europe*, ed. by Bogdan Petru Maleon, Alexandru Ioan Cuza Univ., Iași, 2011.

process by means of a tutor/supervisor who gets a little group of students and smokes at them. It is from him/her, or rather with him/her, that students learn. The tutorial system, essentially individual and unsystemized, which assumed its essential form in the second half of the 19th century, has been flexible enough to adapt itself to the requirements of the changing world.

Since 1663 students in Uppsala are organized in nations, i.e. self governed organizations of students having a professor as an inspector. Carolus Linneus himself used to be an inspector for 34 years during which he urged orations and disputations as rhetorical training. The contribution by Lars Burman underlined how nations later changed from places for supplementary training to organizations offering possibilities for personal development through the exercise of democracy.

The Irish College in Leuven, founded in 1607, is one of the few existing Irish colleges set up in Europe centuries ago for Irish catholic clergy and lay people. As reported by Caroline Nash, historically it preserved the Ireland's rich cultural traditions. Today the College is a secular centre for the promotion of European affairs attached to the Leuven University.

Recently doctoral training, particularly in Germany, has undergone remarkable changes associating collegiate training to the traditional individual one. The contribution by Nele Hoffmann, based on her experience, was concerned with the Graduate School of Humanities in Göttingen that is hosted in the historic Observatory of Carl Friedrich Gauss. The doctoral training programme on theory and practice of the dissemination of literature in the age of information society was described.

The initiative undertaken by the University of Padova seven years ago to set up a School of Higher Education for an elitarian group of undergraduate and graduate students was illustrated by Cesare Barbieri. The School named Galilean after Galileo, the founder of modern science and a professor of the University of Padova, is hosted in the Collegio Morgagni and offers courses in two classes: moral and natural sciences with tutoring.

The last contribution by Andrea Belvedere outlined the college system characterizing the University of Pavia among other Italian universities. Fifteen colleges, eleven of which public and four private, provide students with the advantage of lodging and complementary education and, at the same time, secure a national and residential character to the University.

While collecting all the above contributions to be published as the Proceedings of the second Coimbra Group Birthday Seminar, the editor feels himself obliged to express gratitude to a number of persons who contributed to the publication of this volume, starting from Gian Paolo Brizzi and Inge Knudsen who took over the responsibility of organizing the two sessions of the Seminar,

and including all qualified speakers who diligently and promptly submitted their texts.

Thanks are due to the Coimbra Group for accepting to held this Birthday Seminar in Pavia and, finally, to the University of Pavia for hosting the Seminar and supporting the cost of publishing the proceedings in the series of publication of its Centro per la storia dell'Università di Pavia.

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