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Students at Home: Young Scholars among Pinelli's Circle in 16th-Century Padua

Abstract: Padua is among the most important poles for intellectual circulation in the late Renaissance. Here, students found the most radical university of the time, but also a cultural circle of the highest order, the one run by Gian Vincenzo Pinelli between 1558 and 1601. This chapter aims to investigate the student presence in Pinelli's house. Many students were educated in that exceptional environment, consulting *avvisi*, ancient works, university and private lectures, genealogies, travel accounts, and much more. The reasons that attracted those young scholars to the circle, what kind of resources they had at their disposal, the people they dealt with, and the relationships they established with the patron and his friends are analyzed. It was a fundamental circle for many students, such as Andreas Dudith, Thomas Seget, or Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, intellectuals who in turn continued to spread knowledge in their cultural and national contexts.

1 Introduction: Reaching the *Patavina Libertas*

Along the bumpy roads, the dangerous rivers, and seas of the early modern age, not only pilgrims and missionaries, soldiers and merchants traveled, but also numerous young students, moved by their desire to learn.[1] The constant movement of students was a well-established phenomenon in the Renaissance, so much so that it stimulated the creation of institutions and the promulgation of written documents created to protect these young men. In the years 1155–1158, Emperor Frederick I (1122–1190) had already promulgated a constitution called *Authentica "Habita"* or *Privilegium Scholasticum*, by which those who had turned into travelers for the love of knowledge were protected.[2] The rule, established in relation to the *Studium* of Bologna, inaugurated a new way of dealing with the *scholares*, who also represented a source of prestige and economic income.

The flow of individuals determined to study elsewhere reached numbers never equaled during the early modern age. Various factors contributed to this phenomenon, such as the relative consolidation of the international economic system, the rediscovery of the classics and the growth of their importance in certain

1 Chittolini 1987.

2 Zornetta 2022; La Rocca-Zornetta 2022.

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university centers. The Peace of Lodi of 1454 facilitated this influx of students, who migrated mostly from Central and Northern Europe to Italy. The social stability allowed by the military and diplomatic agreement increased the attractiveness of all Italian universities, where foreigners had already been an essential part of the student community in the past. Padua was the city that benefited most from this immigration.[3] In smaller numbers these *scholares vagantes* also traveled to Bologna, Pavia, Siena, Perugia, or other cities, staying there for a more or less extended period, attending their courses or even just to get to know academic celebrities and notables to whom they had been recommended.

The international reputation of the Paduan *Studium* continued to grow throughout the 15th and 16th centuries. The prestige of the lecturers, both in the field of law (civil, canon) and in the arts (medicine, philosophy, and theology) was a big factor in motivating these young minds to take the risk of embarking upon a long journey. In Padua, one could count on the presence of many *nationes*, student associations established on a linguistic-territorial basis, within which one could find help with both studies and daily life. Where to find a room to rent, what interest to pay on loans, where to buy the texts chosen by the professors, or which notary to turn to in case of need, were all needs that were anything but infrequent. It was good to find a solution in the shortest time possible and with the minimum financial outlay. These students came from every corner of the continent, from Scotland to Cyprus, from Livonia and Sweden to Portugal and Sicily, in an international context highly fragmented into kingdoms, national Churches, regional states, and local potentates.[4]

The Venetian Republic had protected the Paduan *Studium* ever since the city's submission to the Serenissima in 1405, making it the only university for the entire state. For Venice, having the *Studium* (second in antiquity only to the *Alma Mater*) under its control was a source of pride. Many of Europe's elites came to study in Padua: future presidents of the Parliament of Paris, rectors of other universities, councilors and personal physicians of many rulers, future kings and princes, a large part of the College of Cardinals and numerous pontiffs, ambassadors, poets, and illustrious men of letters, as well as scientists and jurists who in turn became *auctoritates* in their respective fields of study. The Republic had thus powerfully financed the ancient *Studium*, investing in what today we would call its "soft power." At the Battle of Agnadello in 1509, the Serenissima had been limited in its expansion-

3 Caracausi-Molino-Solera 2022.

4 Martini-Solera-Zornetta 2022.

ist aims, but the honor denied on the battlefields could be obtained by graduating the descendants of its adversaries.[5]

Venice was committed to maintaining the ancient privileges (*libertates*) of teachers and students. This took the form of a policy that was very open to radical scientific novelties and conditioned by the preferences of the students. Until the beginning of the 16th century, the *scholares* held the prerogative of choosing their own lecturers, who were then formally appointed by the Serenissima, which was willing to pay some of the highest salaries in the European university market to hire the most sought-after lecturers. This tradition was progressively curtailed by Venice to suppress the aspirations of the student body and reduce expenses. However, not even the creation of a special magistracy such as the *Riformatori allo Studio* in 1516 succeeded in eliminating student power, which continued to exert strong pressure for the appointment of famous and innovative lecturers.[6]

Venice's general openness towards the *Studium* and its students was also dictated by economic needs. Guaranteeing the high level of the lecturers and ample freedom meant attracting students from all over Europe, thus increasing the fees they had to pay. That lucrative community was protected by various regulations. For example, students were granted a guarantee fund specially endowed by the Comune, the right to sit in prestigious positions, to open certain processions, or to be free from taxation. Students were exempted from the authority of any court of law and left exclusively to the power of the rector (a student) of their *Universitas* (*iuristarum* or *artistarum*). This could try their fellow students, but rectors' indulgence was frequent, leading to students acting with relative impunity, including violence.

These exceptions were due to the famous *Patavina Libertas*, which still forms part of the university's motto today. It was a freedom understood in the medieval sense (freedom from) and not in the modern sense (freedom of), a clarification that helps avoid misunderstanding here. The immunity enjoyed by the students lead to their feeling free not to recognize even some important authorities in the Paduan context, such as the bishop, chancellor of the *Studium* since the Middle Ages. This became a cause of conflict in the complex relations between the Serenissima and the Papal Court during the second half of the 16th century, when, during the Counter-Reformation, Rome decided to prevent non-Catholics from obtaining academic degrees, especially in Padua, where there was a known influx of Protestants. They mostly came from present-day Germany, France, and Poland, where Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Socinianism had taken root. The imposition from Rome

5 Grendler 1990.

6 Del Negro 2002.

in 1564 of an oath of catholicity before graduation was circumvented by Venice, which first informally and then formally allowed non-Catholics access to degrees. From 1587, the palatine counts residing in Padua were authorized to grant degrees even without an oath, while from the 16th century (1616, 1635) two state *Collegia* were actively graduating with the sole authority of the Venetian state. The *Patavina Libertas* continued to attract thousands of young people from all over Europe even when religious conflicts raised walls between various European areas. Students could be sure that in Padua they would be able to study and obtain a universally recognized degree while the Empire was torn apart by war between Catholics and Protestants, France was divided by civil wars, and England by religious persecution.

One should not think that all of these young men came to the city motivated only by intellectual interests. Among the reasons that attracted them were the beauty of the surrounding areas, such as the Euganei hills and hot springs, the proximity of the powerful Venice with its brothels and patrician houses, the many lending banks, bookshops, the presence of their own compatriots, but also the opportunity to learn dancing or fencing.[7] As a result, some took advantage of the excuse of studies to come to Padua with quite different aspirations. These interests led to the development of a very diverse student population, often undisciplined and violent, not without intellectual excellence, that was multilingual, multi-religious, and scattered across various districts of the city, in continuous renewal based on dynamics very different from those of today.[8]

2 Gian Vincenzo Pinelli: A European Patron

Padua was also a city of personalities whose fame extended far beyond the borders of the peninsula, attracting some of the best minds of the time to the city. The names of those celebrities could be known for their rare literary talents, their importance on the political scene, the role they played in famous scientific discussions, or for the book collections they possessed. Among its illustrious citizens, Padua had Pietro Bembo (1470–1547), the father of 16th-century Petrarchism, Reginald Pole (1500–1558), who spent many years in St. John of Verdara monastery, Alvise Corner (1484–1566), the patron of an important intellectual circle,

7 Del Negro 2011. Some precursor cases are reported in Treviso (1518), Vicenza (1556), and Padua (1564).

8 Davies 2013.

but by mid-century those excellences seemed to be concentrated in one individual: the non-Paduan Gian Vincenzo Pinelli (1535–1601) [Figure 1].

Figure 1: Portrait of Giovanni Vincenzo Pinelli (Austrian National Library, PORT_00108151_01 POR MAG).

The scion of a noble Genoese family that had moved to Naples, Gian Vincenzo had come to Padua in 1558, attracted by what was happening at the *Studium.* It was not that in the capital of the Viceroyalty he had been deprived of knowledge. Already in his younger years, Pinelli had distinguished himself for remarkable scholarly qualities and a great dedication to erudite collecting. These qualities had been put to good use with the help of attentive masters, such as Bartolomeo Maranta (1500–1571) (the favorite pupil of Luca Ghini, 1490–1556) who trained him in the arts, Giovanni Paolo Vernaleone (c. 1526–c. 1602) in literature and philosophy, and the Flemish Philippe de Monte (1521–1603) (who would become the future court master of Emperor Rudolf II) in music. Gian Vincenzo had thus extended his knowledge with constant commitment, deepening his expertise of the classics (especially Aristotle and his commentators), philology, botany, languages (in addition to Italian, he mastered Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, and Spanish), and other disciplines. During his time in Naples, Pinelli had already begun to weave important correspondence with a growing number of European scholars, writing his first letter to Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605) as early as 1556. These relationships often lasted until the death of the correspondents.[9]

The intellectual opportunities offered by Naples soon seemed limited to the young scholar, who after overcoming his father's resistance managed to obtain permission to move to Padua. There he could count on the help of his cousin Domenico (1541–1611), at that time a student at the *Universitas iuristarum* and future cardinal dean. Gian Vincenzo initially moved into Domenico's house, but after his cousin's graduation and his departure, the nobleman decided to take up residence, first in the neighborhood of St. Sophia (1565), and then permanently in today's Via del Santo (1573), close to the Franciscan Basilica of St. Anthony.[10]

The Neapolitan immediately became a point of reference for students, professors, and notables alike who had the occasion to reside in or pass through Padua. The love of knowledge of all kinds, and the resulting book collecting, made the Pinelli house a cultural center of European standing, a true intellectual "harbor" for any lover of knowledge.[11] Lecturers from the *Studium*, Venetian aristocrats, students, city chroniclers, new doctors, publishers, prelates and clerics, courtiers, senators, and travelers, without any distinction of nationality, language, or religious creed, assiduously met in Pinelli's house until the death of the patron.

Some of the celebrities of the late Renaissance used to spend time in those rooms, a list of whom it would be impossible to mention here. Suffice it to say

9 For the biography of the humanist and the importance of his library, see Raugei 2018.
10 Callegari 2015.
11 Gualdo 1607, 71–72: "peregrini se lubentes tamquam in portum recipiunt, quotquot litterarium otium amant."

that among them were Andreas Dudith (1533–1589), Girolamo Mercuriale (1530–1606), Jacques Auguste de Thou (1553–1617), Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), Paolo Sarpi (1552–1623), Thomas Seget (1570–1627), Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc (1580–1637), and many others. However, Gian Vincenzo did not care about fame, whether his own or that of others, but only about knowledge itself and its dissemination. As a true humanist, he spent his life restoring the classics, their texts and above all their ideas, in order to be able to take further those ancient intellectual elaborations interrupted by time and advance them.

Gian Vincenzo was born the second son (together with his twin sister Cornelia) and was freed from most of the duties imposed on first-born nobles, such as the need to marry, to ensure an offspring, or to administer the family's substantial estates. The young scion was guaranteed substantial financial support, first by his father Cosimo (d. 1566) and later by his brother Galeazzo (d. 1600). Gian Vincenzo allocated that capital to his own upkeep and the purchase of often very expensive books. His standard of living (simple, but appropriate to his noble status) allowed him to spend large sums on the purchasing or copying of manuscripts and printed books, intercepting them in Venetian or Paduan printers, in the collections of others, including those of princes and rulers, or on the international market, in Basel, at the Frankfurt fairs, in Paris, in Vienna, in Lyons, in the Vatican, and anywhere else he could find them.

As early as the 1560s, the humanist had an extensive collection, more like a modern archive than a library. It contained much of what had been produced over the centuries on a very wide range of topics: medicine, philosophy, theology, mathematics, physics, astronomy, astrology, chemistry, Kabbalah, architecture, engineering, diplomatic reports, notices from all over Europe, dynastic tables of reigning houses and known families, successions of doges, news collected on specific plants, animals, minerals or historical events, on specific words, reports of battles, mystical apparitions, medical prescriptions, culinary recipes, homilies, personal notes, and much more. This was a heterogeneous collection, written in many languages (especially in Italian, Latin, French, and Greek) and on different media, from fine to low-quality paper to parchment, in loose or bound sheets, illuminated manuscripts and printed volumes of all formats, printed by sought-after publishers or those in hiding.

As valuable research has shown, the humanist did not care about the aesthetic quality of the collected texts, the quality of the medium, the absolute completeness of the texts, or the presence or elegance of the binding.[12] Pinelli was keen to have those texts, to possess them in his own library, avoiding distractions due to their

12 Raugei 2018, 72–73.

beauty. This is a fundamental point for understanding this patron and the role his collection played for students in Padua. Shy of self-promotion, Pinelli wanted to set up a true collegiate study group, equipped with all the tools necessary for research in all the disciplines covered at the time. He did not desire to have a beautiful library, within an aristocratic palace, where to host an intellectual academy. Without shifting our attention too much, we could think of the Paduan circle of Alvise Corner or that contemporary with Pinelli's, Andrea Morosini's (1558–1618) in Venice.[13] These intellectual circles cannot be equated with Pinelli's, whether in terms of the focus on the scientific usefulness of the collection formed by the humanist, the number of works possessed, or the direct use that Pinelli's guests made of those writings.

The patron put together the largest private library of late Renaissance Europe. We have five inventories of the collection, compiled in different years (1564–1565, 1601, 1604, 1608, and another from the beginning of 17th century) and divided based on different needs, which testify to the progressive development of the collection.[14] It has been calculated that Pinelli's collection consisted of around 9,000 printed books and 750 manuscripts.[15] These estimates are approximate because some titles are difficult to decipher, others are preserved in various editions, and still others are present in such large numbers of copies as to raise questions regarding why. As Pinelli's house was a center for the elaboration and dissemination of knowledge, having several copies of the same text may have allowed a group to simultaneously study the same source, enabling readers to annotate it more easily, or for the copyists to reproduce it more quickly. Another hypothesis is that these copies were sent by the authors to Pinelli for promotional purposes, for later forwarding to other acquaintances, as it was known that Pinelli's circle was well connected with all scholars and publishers in Europe.[16] Those who entered Pinelli's home could dispose of the best that culture had to offer, consulting the classics in their best philological versions, being up to date on the main scientific debates and events from across the continent and beyond.

At a time when it was not easy to associate a famous name with a recognizable profile, Pinelli had hung numerous portraits on the walls, which by 1601 reached the remarkable number of 110.[17] In this way, the Paduan humanist conformed to

13 Barzazi 2022.

14 Nuovo 2005.

15 Barzazi 2017, 16; Raugei 2018, 55.

16 Raugei 2018, 84.

17 Nuovo 2007, 1183. The catalogue of portraits owned by Pinelli is preserved in three different copies: Biblioteca Ambrosiana S 93 sup., f. 175r ss., ff. 178r–v, ff. 181r–184v. They are all dated after

the custom of the time of constituting a sort of pantheon, in which to place without distinction the greats of the past and those of the present, including emperors, kings, prophets, tyrants, philosophers, sibyls, saints and fathers of the Church, humanists, rebels, editors, and friends.[18] We know with certainty that Pinelli asked to be sent some portraits,[19] but it is currently unknown whether Pinelli himself enriched the collections of others by sending his own image.[20] For the humanist, the portrait was not simply the reproduction of a face, but a starting point for understanding the character's mind, as emerges from one of his notes on the works of Titian Vecellio (1488/1490–1576). The Venetian painter's material color and veiled nuances allowed a glimpse of the innermost aspects of human soul.[21]

In addition to portraits, handwritten sheets, and printed volumes, there were two other types of instruments that Pinelli made available to his friends to satisfy their intellectual curiosity. He had a discrete collection of scientific objects: catalogs documenting terrestrial and celestial globes, maps, measuring instruments, mathematical and musical instruments, and unidentifiable objects. Unfortunately, this part of the collection was lost during the transfer of Pinelli's inheritance from Padua to his Neapolitan heirs in 1601, when one of the three ships in which the crates were crammed was seized by pirates in the Adriatic Sea. The cargo was thrown overboard because it was considered worthless by the marauders.

Last but not least, the benefit of frequenting Pinelli was access to his correspondence network, the extent of which still awaits precise reconstruction. If we limit ourselves to the correspondence received by Gian Vincenzo, an ongoing study has identified 190 names of correspondents, which can be located on the en-

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1585. The first mentions 108 subjects, the second 70, the last 110 (10 pontiffs, 6 cardinals, 6 religious, 3 emperors, 9 kings, 3 queens, 23 men of letters, 43 captains and rectors, 7 Turks and pagans).

18 Filippo Pigafetta (1533–1604) had sent his friend Pinelli a topographical description of the Vasarian corridor in Florence, where the Medici kept their portrait collection, Biblioteca Ambrosiana D 195 inf., cc. 95r–96v.

19 Biblioteca Riccardiana Rinuccini 27, c. 193r, (June 1593) Pinelli's letter to Baccio Valori the Young (1535–1616), in which he asked for a portrait of Vincenzo Borghini (1515–1580), historian and philologist at the court of Cosimo I de' Medici. In the same days in which Pinelli died in Padua, Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540–1609) sent his own portrait to the humanist together with that of his father Julius Caesar (1484–1558), cf. Castellani 1893. Mathias de l'Obel (1538–1616) would do the same. Fulvio Orsini sent him the portrait of Bernardo Navagero (1507–1565) from Rome by Titian, de Nolhac 1887, 431.

20 A portrait of him was kept in the collection of his friend Lorenzo Pignoria, Tomasini 1632, 19. Another is attested in the studio of Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, Nuovo 2005a, 319.

21 Biblioteca Ambrosiana N 342 sup., c. 57r: "Il Titiano è stato eccellentissimo nel colorire, il quale è una cosa che non si può insegnare, perché si fa in istrada guidata dal giudicio et dalla prattica, di colui che si desiderasse et metter vi sopra il più et il meno. Et il sopradetto desiderio nasce da una dottissima imaginatione di quella cosa che la persona si mette ad rappresentare."

tire European continent, with offshoots in Malta, Tripoli, Crete, and Cyprus. The scholar carefully preserved the letters he received, marking the sender on the back along with the subject matter, then placing them in chronological order with the others. Very often, minute letters were also interleaved with the letters of others. As can be seen from these documents, Pinelli shared his information channels with those he deemed worthy, requesting copies of useful works for his patrons, plant bulbs, rare materials, or specific documents. While this allowed Pinelli's friends to almost always obtain the desired object, it also further enriched the patron's collection, who often kept a copy or the original with him.

All these favors were granted to the guests, a large and varied group that changed greatly over the decades. Some left Padua for family or career reasons, others graduated or died during their stay in the city. The Pinellian circle thus continued to regenerate, including other celebrities, new professors who took up tenure, wealthy nobles, and travelers, involving successive generations of students. It is to these young frequenters that we will now turn our attention.

3 The Attractiveness of the Circle

Having been a student at the Paduan *Studium* could make all the difference in late Renaissance Europe. The same could be said in relation to Pinelli's intellectual circle, because having frequented the scholar's home could make an even greater difference. There are many cases that testify to this phenomenon, but first it seems appropriate to consider the reasons that made that context valuable to young students. Why should a student, very often non-Italian or non-Catholic, find it interesting to frequent the salon of a noble man of letters? The question may seem banal, but it presupposes knowledge of what the daily life of a Paduan student was.[22]

In addition to the many courses taught publicly by teachers (in the mornings or afternoons), there were others taught privately, within more restricted and diligent circles, where contents of a less orthodox nature were taught with greater freedom. Students attended the activities of their *natio*, attending meetings and acting as representatives when requested. More rarely their intervention was witnessed in meetings called by their *universitas.* In addition to their formal duties, at least for those who were an active part of these organizations, students attended numerous ceremonies, such as internal *natio* elections, propaganda and rector's elections, graduations of friends and others, all according to a tight schedule.

22 Piovan-Sitran Rea 2001.

The serious conferring of degrees (in the presence of the specific doctoral *Collegium*) alternated with noisy banquets in honor of the newly elected or graduated. These were not sporadic celebrations: the new doctors were obliged to organize it in order to feed and soothe their colleagues. There are numerous records of these gatherings in the *acta* of the two universities, as well as in town chronicles and in accounts by individual students.

They also did much more. Some students spent a substantial part of their time in the city fencing. Right in the middle of the 16th century, Padua established itself on a continental scale as one of the capitals of the new fencing style. Its famous schools and the English edition of *Practice*, the illustrated guide written by Vincenzo Saviolo (d. 1598/1599), made Padua a point of reference for many aristocratic families eager to give their children a thorough education. The art of dueling was progressively transformed thanks to the introduction of a new weapon, the *striscia*, the invention of which is still disputed between Italy and Spain. The clumsy movements with which it was necessary to wield the heavy late-medieval broadsword or the *cinquedea*[23] were replaced by a few swift, snappy blows with their own elegance. This innovation was among the reasons for the attraction of certain *nationes*, first and foremost the *Anglica.* In England, perhaps thanks to student emigration, the new fashion took root, so much so that it provoked a violent reaction from part of the local aristocracy, who considered the use of the *striscia* to be improper, cowardly, and feminine, and tried to prohibit it.[24]

The presence of students in the city was often a seasonal phenomenon. Many continued to enrich their cultural and relational capital by traveling during the periods when classes were not in session. During the winter holidays or summer break, students from Northern Italy tended to return home to reduce the cost of their studies. This was impossible for those who had come from farther afield, such as the *ultramontanos*, *ultramarinos*, and southern Italians, who preferred to stay in Padua for the summer, participating more heavily in the renewal of student positions. Others instead, especially Germans, Frenchmen, and Poles, toured Italy, meeting acquaintances or unknown compatriots, celebrities to whom they had been recommended, or places of worship, such as the sanctuary of Loreto or the Roman basilicas.

Why would these students, attracted by such varied opportunities, be interested in the circle of intellectuals that gathered around Pinelli? The answer is for once simple: in that house, one could find everything that the *Studium* did not

23 A precious *cinquedea* is discussed in Herzig 2019.

24 The *striscia*-homosexuality juxtaposition recurs in Florio 1578; Florio 1591; Silver 1599; Peacham 1622; Brathwait 1630. The theme is discussed in Elam 2004; Carroll 2018. For more extensive research on the relationship between masculinity and violence, see Spierenburg 1998; Shepard 2003.

(or could not) offer. In that circle, it was permissible to conduct one's intellectual investigations beyond the academic level and to pursue discussions beyond the limits imposed by opportunism, institutional breaks, or cultural, linguistic, and social barriers. At Pinelli's house, there was no distinction between students and lecturers, between students from one *natio* or another, between Catholics or Protestants, between nobles and non-nobles. At those gatherings one could enjoy a purer and more authentic *Libertas*, now understood in the modern sense of the expression.

The private dimension of the circle and the informality of the confrontation, as well as the respectability of the patron, allowed this sort of academy to survive in a Catholic city, where the rigors of the Counter-Reformation were also manifest. The *Index of Forbidden Books* had its full value in Padua and the Roman Inquisition had its local representative, a Franciscan.[25] Historians of book collections have argued that Pinelli's absolute orthodoxy allowed his library to remain intact, though without providing any textual evidence to support this interpretation.[26] Certainly, as this very research shows, Pinelli's collection was formed and continued to exist as if there were no censorship. About 10 per cent of the library consisted of forbidden works, mostly philosophical, which were stored without being blackened in the designated passages. What is sure is that Pinelli attempted to obtain a license from the Congregation of the Index, contacting Cardinal Guglielmo Sirleto (1514–1584) (secretary of the *Index*) through his friend Fulvio Orsini (1529–1600). The license was granted to others but not to the Paduan humanist, perhaps to avoid official recognition of a collection full of forbidden authors, the consultation of which was not exclusive to the owner.[27] The censors' condemnation did not fall on Pinelli and his books perhaps because his network of contacts was a resource for the censors themselves, who did not hesitate to contact the humanist to track down suspicious works on the international market. Such was the case with an edition of Conrad Gessner's (1516–1565) *Bibliotheca Universalis*, which was requested by Sirleto to Pinelli. One could therefore think of a convergence of interests between the censors and the humanist himself, a thesis that deserves further study. In the same years, all Italian libraries were subjected to a systematic inquisitorial investigation, which forced wealthy individuals as well as religious orders, chapters, and abbeys to send updated inventories of their collections. It caused the disappearance of a considerable part of the literary and intellectual heritage of the

25 Solera 2021.

26 Wolf 2006; Callegari 2015, 728; Nuovo 2006, 126.

27 Frajese 1999, 778. Among those who obtained a license during that period were the canonist Francisco Peña, the cardinal Odoardo Farnese, Francesco Mantica, Mercuriale, Battista Bandino, Camillo Pellegrino, among others. See Grendler 1977.

time, impoverishing collections centuries old or thousands of years old.[28] At Pinelli's house, this black wave never arrived. While in Venice or Padua the religious themselves were forced to dispose of their volumes, those who entered the Pinellian circle had almost everything they desired.

One fact must be underlined. The patron's liberality towards his guests should not be understood as a total openness of that intellectual environment to any student. The elitist culture that characterized Pinelli and pervaded his circle determined a very careful selection of those who could enjoy its benefits. Only those who had distinguished themselves with the quality of their intellectual gifts were admitted into that circle of lovers of the *humanae litterae.* Alternatively, the seriousness, erudition, and intelligence of the individual had to be ensured by a letter of recommendation (written by one of Pinelli's many admirers) or the recommendation of other members of the circle. One entered it not because one was a "student," but because one was a respectable intellectual, eager to engage with those minds and works.[29] What mattered was not age or student career, but conformity to the ideals that united the Republic of Letters.[30]

Pinelli's lack of interest in formalities led him to carefully evaluate the recommendations he received and the expressions of interest in his circle in order to understand the real intentions of the candidates. This is an aspect that emerges clearly from his biography, written by Paolo Gualdo (1553–1621), a friend and himself a member of the circle.[31] The Neapolitan would admit newcomers with circumspection in the atrium of the house, studying their behavior and words. Only after this examination were the deserving ones admitted to the other rooms, where the rich collection was kept.

There were many ways for students to get into Pinelli's good graces: with the help of one of their professors, a colleague, friends, or by meeting him personally in the city, such as at graduation ceremonies. During his stay in Padua, Pinelli attended 24 ceremonies, some of which related to students who had been members

28 Nuovo 2002, 106; Barzazi 2017, in which some important essays by the same scholar are taken up; Fragnito 2019.

29 Gualdo 1607, 71: "Nullibi enim (Europam ut libet pervagare) Academiam reperias, in qua Musarum altrix quies litteratos aeque ad se invitet. Hic nemo est, qui advenarum vitam curiosius exploret, hic seu genio indulgere quis velit, seu ipsum defraudare, nemo erit qui impense curet. Animadverterat haec Pinellus, narrabantque Patavii omnes, peregrinos quantumvis, perinde vivere ac si in patria essent, Germanos enim, Gallos, Polonos."

30 They were all male, as no women are attested in the scholar's house. This was undoubtedly due to the exclusion of women from the universities of the time and not to the alleged misogyny of the patron, Gualdo 1607, 87–88. Pinelli's misogyny seems to find other clues in Biblioteca Ambrosiana N 342 sup., cc. 8v, 23v, 37v.

31 Gualdo 1607.

of the circle or who would become members.[32] The careful reconstruction of the biographical profiles of those graduates has made it possible to identify two periods in which the relationship between the patron and the students was closest, namely between 1571–1575 and between 1578–1579. Two fairly cohesive groups of students graduated during those periods.[33]

The intense relations of friendship and intellectual esteem created bonds that not even the return home of those students could break. They contributed to the ongoing formation of the collection, sending diplomatic reports, books, plans, commissioning maps or portraits to be sent to their friend in Padua for the benefit of those who would attend the circle in subsequent years. An example of the full maturation of that virtuous system was the stay at Pinelli's house of Nicholas-Claude Fabri, who arrived in Padua as a student with his brother Palmède at the end of 1599. The young Provencal's intellectual depth immediately struck the patron, who placed his rich collections and correspondences at his complete disposal. It was Fabri himself who drew up one of the inventories of the collection and a very interesting prospectus for the history of book collections.[34]

It should not be forgotten that early modern Padua lacked an instrument, or rather a place, that today we would be inclined to take for granted in a student city, namely a university library. This would only be founded in 1629 and was the first of its kind in Italy. So how did students consult the volumes they needed? The alternatives were few. The first was to buy the volumes indicated by the professors, going to the numerous publishers and resellers of used tomes in Padua or Venice. There was a flourishing book market in the city, especially near the Jewish ghetto, where it was possible to rent or buy almost anything one needed for the stay, such as books, furniture, food, and more. It was, however, a considerable expense and some *nationes* began to create book collections for the benefit of their members.

32 Solera 2022.

33 Pinelli, and sometimes other exponents of the circle (Guilandino, Gualdo, Mercuriale, Aicardi, other undergraduates, etc.), attended the graduations of Roderigo Lopez da Lisbona (07/20/1559), Jean Regnault-Molinet da La Rochelle (11/10/1567), Orazio Amaduzzi da Ravenna (01/25/1570), Ascanio and Ottavio Rebiba dalla Sicilia (04/05/1571), Giuseppe Faraoni da Messina (05/21/1571), Francesco Bandini da Firenze (09/22/1571), Ermolao Barbaro da Venezia (08/26/1572), Pierre Del Bene da Lione (09/29/1572), Giulio Gennaro da Vasto (08/28/1573), Annibale Balsamo da Specchia (02/11/1575), Jean Chifflet da Besançon (03/18/1575), Giovanni Vida da Capodistria (06/16/1575), Innocenzo and Germano A Prato da Segonzano (08/30/1575), Ottavio Caracciolo da Napoli (08/31/1575), Francesco Giustinian da Venezia (08/29/1578), Orazio Caio da Mel (06/26/1579), Sertorio Loschi da Vicenza (06/26/1579), Ascanio Martinengo da Brescia (07/01/1579), Alcasto Trissino da Vicenza (09/23/1579), Girolamo Velo da Vicenza (10/08/1579), Tommaso Manecchio da Sarzana (10/23/1579), Scipione Loschi da Vicenza (10/23/1579).

34 Nuovo 2009. About the eccentric student, see Miller 2000.

Those volumes were, however, exposed to numerous risks, such as deterioration due to use and losses. Moreover, these small collections were kept not in a specific building, but in the homes of the various rectors or secretaries of the *nationes*, together with their archives. The volumes changed location in occasion of each student election, ending up year after year in the homes of the newly elected. As a study of the Paduan library context has shown, Pinelli's collection became a viable alternative at least for selected students, perhaps inspiring the creation of the University Library.[35] What did those students find so interesting on Pinelli's shelves? And with whom did they have the opportunity to discuss those works?

4 The Library: An Intellectual Toolbox

Marked according to Pinelli's strict classification, it was possible to find the texts adopted by the *Studium*'s lecturers. The patron closely followed the evolution of local and international academic environments, being able to find out who taught where, at what times, what they explained, and what texts they adopted. Among the surviving documents, it is possible to consult, for example, the list (*rotulo*) of lecturers of the Paduan *Studium* in 1577, the year in which classes resumed after the terrible plague epidemic of 1575–1576, the same which had killed many students. Another preserved catalog is that of Bologna from 1591.[36] With such material, Pinelli probably provided students of the circle insight into the broader university context, revealing to them what was taught elsewhere and by whom. This may have stimulated the mobility of some students, who were curious to attend specific lectures on certain topics.

In that library, there were many manuscripts and printed books bought by Pinelli from the heirs of eminent scholars and teachers. Other times, it was the owners themselves who indicated Pinelli as their heir. Such was the case with Giuseppe Moleti (1531–1588), who held the chair of mathematics in Padua in 1577 until his death. He left the scholar his book collection, perhaps the most valuable of the time for texts related to Greek mathematics. His manuscripts (various notes and unpublished works) were acquired by the Neapolitan. At an unknown date and in an unknown way, Pinelli also managed to obtain the collection of Ettore Ausonio, lecturer of astronomy and mathematics in Padua in 1547, who later moved to Venice and Turin and died after 1570.[37] His writings, like those of Moleti, proved

35 Bernardinello 2019.

36 Biblioteca Ambrosiana Q 116 sup., cc. 37r–38v; ivi, D 181 inf., c. 52r.

37 Ausonio writings are scattered in many volumes that belonged to Pinelli, including Biblioteca Ambrosiana R 105 sup., which contains a list of works drawn up by Pinelli himself, c. 230r.

fundamental for Galileo Galilei, who lived in the Pinelli house as soon as he arrived in Padua in 1592. The Pisan relied precisely on those texts and others owned by his patron to develop his research and prepare his first Paduan lessons. Among these gifted books, there were also those of Nicaise Ellebaudt (1535–1577). He had graduated in Padua in 1563, studying and living in the home of Pinelli, who had financed a trip undertaken by the student in pursuit of antiquarian interests. The Flemish remained in contact with the Pinellian circle for the rest of his life.

Those who entered the house would quickly come to realize the sheer number of research tools it offered. There were inventories of the collection, of other people's libraries, chronologies, grammar books, and dictionaries in various languages and in different editions (certainly in Greek, Latin, German, Italian, Etruscan, Hebrew, Arabic, Ethiopian, Syriac, and Japanese). Through these guides, it was possible to resolve doubts and begin new paths of knowledge, with the sure help of the master.[38] The students could extend their analyses beyond the mere mediation of the lecturers, turning directly to the works they cited. Pinelli's collection included almost every edition of Aristotle (90 available at the time), Plato, or Cicero. If classics were almost completely represented, there were also large sections on religion (Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, Jewish, Islamic), theology, canon and civil law, mathematics, vernacular literature (especially Italian and Provencal, with numerous texts from other national traditions), poetry, astronomy, Kabbalah, and many other branches of human knowledge.

In addition, on those shelves there was a group of works that we can easily assume were highly valued by students. Pinelli was an assiduous collector of transcriptions of lessons, and not only of those from Padua. These documents have not yet been studied and merit careful attention. Among the collected lectures (some show the year they were delivered) are those of Ercole Sassonia, Marco Antonio Passeri (1542), Gabriele Trifone (1544), Giorgio Pachimario (1548, 1549, 1550), Nicola Curtio (1563), Francesco Piccolomini (1564, 1565, 1570), Benedetto Persio (1566), Federico Pendasio (1567), Giovanni Ambrogio Barbavara (1568, 1570, 1572), Iacopo Zabarella (1573, 1575, 1584, 1585), Girolamo Mercuriale, Ottaviano Ferrari, Lazzaro Bonamico, Tommaso Pellegrino, Antonio Trombetta. The predilection was for *artisti* lecturers, with a special focus on teachers of natural philosophy. Sometimes theology lectures were reported indicating only the chair from which the lesson was given (*via Sancti Divi Thomae Aquinatis* or *via Scoti*). Other times Pinelli collected lectures from different years and lecturers but related to the same topic or work, a specific book of Aristotle's *De anima* or an interpretation of Alexander of Aphrodisia. Not to be overlooked is the group of Bolognese lectures, such as those by Pie-

38 Solera 2026.

tro Pomponazzi (1521), Andrea Alciati (1540), Ludovico Boccaferro (1542), and Carlo Sigonio (1570). There are dozens of lectures preserved without a date or without a specific lecturer. This is all valuable material for understanding the intellectual transmission between masters, students, and other members of the Pinellian circle, in a mutual influence that undoubtedly contributed to the scientific dynamism of the late Renaissance.[39]

The texts of the lectures were collected close to other works of different professors, Paduan and otherwise, who were teaching at that time or not. Those texts had not always been chosen by the teachers as the basis for their courses; often they had not even been disseminated by the authors. Pinelli had succeeded in collecting or nearly collected the *opera omnia* of the already mentioned Zabarella (1533–1589), Piccolomini (1523–1607), Pendasio (d. 1603), Barbavara (d. 1595), Girolamo Fabrici d'Acquapendente (c. 1533–1619), Guido Panciroli (1523–1599), and others.[40] This allowed students to consult works that were difficult or impossible to find. These sections of the library were undoubtedly formed according to the interests of the master of the house, but it cannot be ruled out that he also arranged them to facilitate the study of his frequent visitors, several of whom were attending lectures at the *Studium* at the same time. It seems necessary to ask who these students were and what traces they left in Pinelli's collection and life.

5 Uncommon Students

In a hitherto unpublished collection of notes, Pinelli wrote the following between thoughts on other topics: "the freedom of Padua, which can alarm the preachers, seems to arise from the large number of students (lay people, friars, priests)."[41] He was aware of how the general freedom that could be enjoyed in the city was due to the presence of those students, just as their presence was due to the assured ample margins of intellectual freedom it provided. A virtuous circle, which could have been spoiled by some zealous "preacher." Attention had to be paid to

39 The research carried out made it possible to identify many volumes (about 60) in which these lessons are preserved, much more numerous than those already intercepted by scholars. Given their importance, an approximate list is offered here: Biblioteca Ambrosiana D 138 inf., D 221 inf., D 236 inf., D 239 inf., D 297 inf., D 351 inf.–D 388 inf., D 424 inf., D 461 inf., D 499 inf., D 502 inf., I 93 inf., I 102 inf., Q 116 sup., Q 122 sup., R 114 sup., S 87 sup.

40 Nuovo 2007, 1185, notes 39–41, 45, 50.

41 "La libertà di Padova, che può dar una larga materia a predicatori, pare che nasca dal numero grande di Scolari (laici, frati, preti)," Biblioteca Ambrosiana N 342 sup., c. 13v. All translations are by the author.

whom to open the doors of the collection. So who were the students who came in contact with Pinelli and his visitors?

That is not easy to answer. Many factors make it difficult to determine precisely which students participated in the circle. One could be a student without being registered at the *Studium*, others only attended private lessons and not public readings, others not even that but only private circles. Some considered themselves students for life, others not even during the years spent in those rooms. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify, with varying degrees of approximation, certain groups of individuals who were students when they met the patron and his circle. The first consists of those whose biographies are partly known due to the fame they achieved after. The second is represented by unknown individuals who are witnessed in the Pinelli household as students. This second group partly overlaps with that of the copyists, a constant presence in the Pinelli house, where there were always two or three salaried workers dedicated to copying the texts requested by the humanist or his friends. The employment of students as copyists has been attested in Padua since the Middle Ages, as such work provided those young men with a valuable source of income.[42]

Let us now focus on the first group. Pinelli's home had always been a den of excellent minds, even in the early years when the nobleman had moved to the city. He himself had been a student for an unspecified period, and we do not know which courses he had attended. Not even his friend Mercuriale, who attended Gian Vincenzo for a long time, could say whose student he had been, perhaps only Pendasio's.[43] Among the firsts, Pinelli's house had been home to renowned Greek scholars, such as Michael Sophianos (c. 1530–1565), Theodorus Rendios (c. 1515–1580), and Constantine Patrikios. All three were originally from Chios, which constituted a central point of reference in Pinelli's intellectual map, as he was extremely interested in the culture and the political and military dynamics of South-Eastern Europe. Together with their host, they formed the first student circle, engaged in an intense study of the classics. They were joined by the Hungarian Andreas Dudith by 1559–1560, who with Pinelli and the Spaniard Pedro Núñez Vela would prepare a critical edition of Lucretius, which later remained in manuscript form. Not even the insistence of Paulus Manutius (1512–1574), an active member of the circle, convinced the group to finish the text, which may have remained unpublished due to the departure of Dudith, who became an assiduous correspondent of his Paduan friend.[44]

42 Gargan 2011; Giovè Marchioli 2022.

43 Nuovo 2007, 1185.

44 Ceccarelli 2015.

In 1559, Theodor Zwinger (1533–1588), a famous physician whose descendants continued to train in Padua, was about to end his career as a student. The relationship between Theodor and Pinelli is not attested for that year but only later and through Mercuriale. Certainly, the two intellectuals were soon in correspondence, writing to each other even when Theodor's son, Jakob (1569–1610), was entrusted to Pinelli to study philology and literature in 1585. The young man stayed in the city for a long time, having other members of the circle as teachers, such as Zabarella, Mercuriale, Melchiorre Guilandino (c. 1520–1589), and Acquapendente. Jakob would graduate in Basel in 1594, without interrupting his relationship with the generous scholar, who was curious about Swiss culture.[45]

In 1560–1562, Torquato Tasso (1544–1595) was a student in Padua and active in the circle, spending long periods at Pinelli's home. Perhaps the two had got to know each other at Carlo Sigonio's (c. 1520–1584) lectures at the *Studium* in 1561–1563. They thus built up a mutual esteem and affection that would last a lifetime.[46]

From the late 1560s and into the 1570s, there is a perceptible change in Pinelli's habits towards students. His fellow students had graduated, left, or died; he no longer belonged to restricted research groups but reserved for himself the role of promoter of other people's studies, though continuing his own analyses in private. It is no coincidence that it was precisely in the 1570s that Pinelli appeared at the largest number of graduations. In that period, the patron's interest in French-speaking students, who appear in the Pinellian circle even earlier than others, was stronger. Such is the case of Claude Dupuy (1545–1594), the future president of the Paris Parliament, or Abbot Pierre Del Bene (1550–1590), who forged a lasting relationship around their common love of collecting and erudition.[47]

One debated issue is whether Pinelli kept students in his quarters in exchange for remuneration, a common practice even among professors of the *Studium.* Galileo himself had several students in his house during his stay in Padua. It seems unlikely, however, that this was done by the Neapolitan, a nobleman with a rich family income. In his personal notes, he complains about many aspects of daily life, mentioning various guests and servants, describing his finances, his country estates, but never writing about payments from students. There is no doubt that

45 Puliafito 1989a; Puliafito 1989b. It does not seem accidental that in the same months in which Pinelli was also collecting military information from the Zwingers on the Swiss militias, Galileo was preparing his first Paduan writings on the same subject.

46 Sophianos would die in Ferrara in 1565, Rendios in Rome in 1580, and Dudith in Breslau in 1589. Tasso remained in contact with Pinelli even from the Ferrara jail where he had been imprisoned, before dying in Rome in 1595.

47 Colliard 1972; Raugei 2001.

there were students among those who lived in his house, as evidenced by the cases of Sophianos, Ellebaudt, Fabri, and others. On March 22, 1591, arts student Vegerio Massario, son of Orazio da Urbino, attended the graduation of ser Gaspare Bonato, son of Girolamo da Este, declaring himself "resident in the house of the so illustrious Genoese man Gian Vincenzo Pinelli."[48]

A large group of students came to Pinelli's house from England and Scotland.[49] Among them were the antiquarian Richard White (1539–1611), the astronomer Edmund Bruce (fl. 1585–1606), the diplomat Richard Shelley (1513–1587), and the poet Thomas Seget, author of a famous *album amicorum* in which there are dedications to some of the members of the circle. In addition to Gian Vincenzo himself, Galilei, Sertorio Loschi, Antonio Riccoboni (1541–1599), Lorenzo Pignoria (1571–1631), Antonio Quarenghi (1546–1633), and others signed their names on his work. The Flemish area was also well represented, from which Ellebaudt arrived in 1561. He had entered the circle as a student, only to leave it with a degree (in arts and medicine) in 1571. That very year he is said to have given Pinelli a copy of Ludovico Castelvetro's (1505–1571) *Poetica*, much sought after by the collector. As soon as he arrived in Bratislava, of which he became bishop, Ellebaudt wrote to his friend Pinelli: "I would like to have news of those who are there […]. I greet everyone in the house and all friends, firstly our Mercuriale, Guilandino, […], Manutius."[50] His attachment to that community showed no signs of diminishing, not even after graduation or his own departure. The reverse was also true: Pinelli in some cases seemed not to want to detach himself from those old students, even after their departure, sometimes not even after their death, gathering information about their health or their inheritance, their books, poems, and epitaphs.[51] The threads of intellectuals in Europe continued to be woven even beyond the limits of life.

It is uncertain whether other students, already famous in Padua at the time, such as Jan Zamoyski (1542–1605), were among the frequenters of the circle. Elected rector of the *universitas iuristarum* in 1563, he was in close contact with his master Sigonio, a frequent visitor to Pinelli's house. There being a direct relationship between the circle and Zamoyski is very probable, though not certain. Upon

48 "familiari in domo magnifici domini Vincentii Pinelli Ianuensis," *Acta graduum* 2008, 1588, doc. 2517.

49 There are numerous attestations of students who borrowed works from Pinelli, Philo 2019.

50 "Vorrei haver nova del star di molti […]. Saluto tutti di casa e tutti gli amici, in primo [Girolamo] Mercurialem nostrum, [Melchior] Guilandin, [Dontasum], [Paolo] Manutium," Rusnáková 2012, 136, letter from June 5, 1571.

51 For those relating to Sophianos and Ellebaudt Biblioteca Ambrosiana P 242 sup. Often the compositions were written by colleagues with whom they had studied in Padua.

the death of the famous anatomist Gabriele Falloppio (1523–1562), three students recited odes in the professor's honor, namely Ellebaudt, Casimiro Accursio (d. 1563), and Zamoyski, which were later printed.[52] We have evidence of a direct relationship between the first two and Pinelli, which also makes that between the Polish nobleman and the Neapolitan humanist likely. Certainly, Zamoyski was in contact with other members of the circle, such as Tasso and Guilandino, while Pinelli collected information about him in the following decades, e.g., speeches, diplomatic reports, religious inquiries, etc. It has even been proposed that Zamoyski was inspired by the Pinellian circle and not by the Paduan *Studium* in the establishment of the Zamoyski Academy in 1594.[53]

Many came to Padua just to study but remained there for the rest of their lives. After his early studies in Turin in medicine and philosophy, Paolo Aicardi from Albenga came to Padua in 1570 and soon joined Pinelli's circle. He became an inseparable friend of Pinelli's, with whom he attended many graduations. Aicardi continued his studies under Mercuriale's direction. The Piedmontese never again left the humanist's house, uniting his library with Gian Vincenzo's and designating him as his heir. He died in 1597 assisted by Pinelli, who expressed the wish to one day be buried together with his friend. Another student of Mercuriale's, who attended the circle in 1578, was the Dutch Bernhard Paludanus (1550–1633), who later became a correspondent of the humanist.

To these more formal students could be added many others who had recently obtained academic degrees or had abandoned lectures to devote themselves to more private study. Among them was the Dutchman Erycius Puteanus (1574–1646), who introduced himself to Pinelli with a letter from Justus Lipsius (1547–1606). A law graduate in 1595, he arrived in Italy in 1597 and spent a year at Pinelli's house before becoming a professor in Milan at the behest of Federico Borromeo (1564–1631). In letters to his teacher, Puteanus described the preciousness of that circle, endowed with every resource necessary for lovers of the *humanae litterae.* Worsening health did not prevent the humanist from taking in Frans Tengnagel (1576–1622), a pupil of Tycho Brahe (1546–1601), who had been sent by his master to Italy for further education. In a letter dated January 24, 1600, he described the many discussions that took place at the Neapolitan's home in the presence of the mathematician Galilei, whom Pinelli had put in contact with Brahe.[54]

Information is available about other students who are not easily identifiable or young men presented to the patron but whose status as students is not made

52 Biblioteca Ambrosiana D 388 inf.

53 Stella 1992, 315; Lepri 2019.

54 Bucciantini 2007, 86.

explicit. In 1583, Scipione Ammirato (1531–1601) recommended Matteo Botti to Pinelli, "who has come to Padua to attend to the studies of fine letters." It is therefore unknown whether the young man was a mere traveler or a formal student. Ammirato had recommended Botti "to make him a friend of Your Lordship" and to place him under Pinelli's direction.[55] Other young men were introduced to get them into that kind of academy, but it is not known whether they were students or not. In 1570, Fulvio Orsini had announced the arrival of Ercole Ciofano (?–1592), a talented young man. He was "to be in the company of messer Aldus [Manutius] and coming to Padua he wishes to see Your Lordship as the noblest thing that is in Padua."[56] Only a careful study of Pinelli's correspondence will allow us to be more precise about this group of probable students.

Finally, we must not forget a final group of students who, although in contact with the patron, are not clearly documented within the circle. In other words, we know that many of them met the great humanist during their study stay in Padua, but their presence in Pinelli's house is not certain. Some names stand out among them, such as Cinzio Passeri (1551–1610), who graduated in Padua with Guido Panciroli in 1592. The same year, his uncle Ippolito Aldobrandini (1536–1605) was elevated to the Papal throne, making that student a cardinal nephew and a strong link between papal Rome and the Pinellian circle.[57] Clement VIII (1592–1605) insisted in vain to have Pinelli in Rome in the following years.

The last but very important enclave of probable students at Pinelli's house were the students at the Jesuit College in Padua. The nobleman was always on excellent terms with the Jesuits, as evidenced by the confidence with which he wrote to the rectors of neighboring colleges or to the leaders of the Society. The direct relationship between the patron and various members of the *Societas* emerge from the catalog of Pinelli manuscripts edited by Adolfo Rivolta and from Gualdo's biography.[58] These include Agostino Giustiniani, Giulio Negrone, the Gagliardi brothers, Gerolamo Barisoni, and others about whom it is difficult to find detailed information. They certainly contributed to enriching not only the religious and theological section of the library, but also the "exotic" section, providing the patron with reports on the Far East, mission tales, and letters from Jesuits, in which information on the political, cultural, and social systems of those peoples abound-

55 "il quale è venuto a Padova per attendere a gli studii delle belle lettere," "per farlo amico di Vostra Signoria," Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magliabecchiano VIII.1451, c. 6rv (September 10, 1583).

56 "per stare in compagnia di messer Aldo [Manutius], et venendo a Padova desidera vedere Vostra Signoria come la più nobile cosa che sia in Padoa," de Nolhac 1887, 77 (September 27, 1570).

57 Solera 2024.

58 Rivolta 1933, XXIV; Gualdo 1607, 45.

ed.[59] This was an important contribution, which facilitated the opening of that circle to new worlds, challenging inherited convictions from the past, and paving the way for new knowledge.

6 Conclusion: Padua 1601

Once through the door of that house, many young students were offered opportunities for growth and cultural exchange that were hard to find elsewhere, even in a city that had made *Libertas* its motto. Some of them never stopped participating in that club and making use of those works for the rest of their lives. Should the need arise to contact someone, to have a text or curiosity about a subject, one could be sure that the love for letters would induce Pinelli or his friends to make themselves useful. *Vice versa*, Pinelli never failed to make his contribution to all those who, out of a love of knowledge, were moved to contact him.

A fact that deserves more attention is the interest the patron took in texts in which the figure of the perfect student or the canons of good teaching was theorized. Which disciplines needed to be known? Which works were useful and which were to be avoided? How much effort should one devote to studying and how much to memorizing the notions? These treatises sometimes took on the appearance of study guides, placed among the volumes consulted by the students. These include part of the *Libro dello scolare* by Francesco Ambrosio, the *Modus studendi* by the jurist Giovanni Cefali (1511–1580), and a long essay by Mercuriale on how medicine should be studied.[60] Only careful analysis of these materials will be able to prove whether they were annotated by hands other than that of the possessor.

59 Letters to general superiors and members of the *Societas* are preserved in Biblioteca Ambrosiana B 140 sup., R 100 sup., R 106 sup., S 80 sup. Pinelli collected materials relating to the dispute between the *Studium* and the Jesuits which arose in 1591 separately from the letters, Biblioteca Ambrosiana Q 117 sup., D 434 inf., D 463 inf.

60 Biblioteca Ambrosiana Q 115 sup., cc. 190r–191v. We have little information about Francesco Ambrosio. Born in Ferrara, he died at the age of 29 in 1563. He wrote a poem in praise of Pinelli, Zampese 2008. For the book by Cefali, see Biblioteca Ambrosiana B 143 sup., cc. 83r–93r. For that of Mercuriale, see Biblioteca Ambrosiana S 84 sup., cc. 301r–307r, *De modo studendi eorum qui medicinae operam navant libellus* (1570). The prudent master taught not to issue a diagnosis until one was certain of the disease; among the authors to know perfectly were Strabo, Plato, Galen, Pausanias, and others. See Durling 1990.

Pinelli died on August 3, 1601, and with his life also ended the existence of the circle he had created.[61] In the home of the scholar, the student Nicolas-Claude Fabri had remained to look after him in his last months. The Provencal arranged with other friends to notify all those scattered across Europe who had remained in contact with the patron. There was no lack of former students from Padua who received the news in the deepest despair, remembering the youth they had spent with these highly cultured men. Some wrote laudatory works and letters, attempting to preserve the memory of that patron. On September 19, 1601, Puteanus sent a few written lines from Milan to his master Lipsius, lamenting how serious that death was for all humanists, comparing Pinelli to Atticus.[62] The juxtaposition with Cicero's friend also appears in other eulogies, revealing how it constituted a *topos* in that genre of *encomia*, though dense with moral values. Just as Atticus represented the perfect man of the late Roman Republic, divided between public engagement and philosophical *otium*, Pinelli had been the perfect man for their contemporary age. The humanist had cultivated the study of the ancients without forgetting the moderns, helping many intellectuals to progress, even if young students, each on their path to knowledge.

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62 *Iusti Lipsi* 2006, 404–406. The comparison also appears in Pignoria 1629, vol. 2, 74 (letter from Pignoria to Gualdo of 1619) and in de Thou 1733, 96. Pinelli was very familiar with Cicero's letters to Atticus, as demonstrated by his notes on the Latin text, Castiglione 1948, 120. The biographer friend proposed the figure of Scipio Africanus as Pinelli's *alter ego*, Gualdo 1607, 114–115.

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