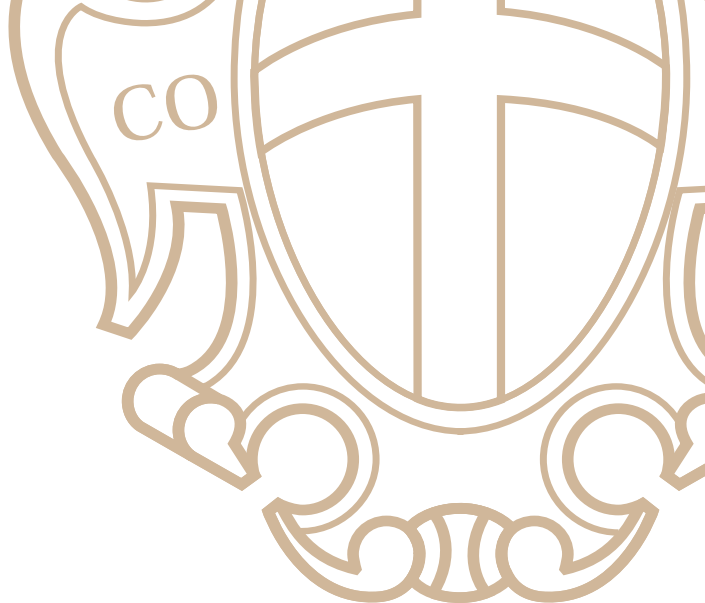




Comune di Pavia



Pavia

Town of Art, Cradle of Culture



PAVIA: ITS REBIRTH AFTER THE YEAR 1000 A.D.



■ Town Museums: Lombard Jewellery

The city of Pavia, founded by the Ligurians on the bank of the river Ticino and founded again by the Romans in 89 B.C. was chosen as the capital of the kingdom both by the Ostrogothic king Theodoric (who got the Royal Place built in Pavia) and by the Lombard kings who embellished the town with several wonderful churches. In the 10th century Pavia fell into decline, which reached its climax in 924 when the town was sacked by the Hungarians. But during the 9th century many political changes gave birth to the free city-state. Thus, at the beginning of the new millenium, Pavia had

a really thriving economy, politics and culture. This climate of rebirth resulted in a new architectural fervour. In fact several builder's yards were opened, therefore new places of worship were built, old and noble religious places recovered their former magnificence. The remarkable quantity of churches and monasteries, which highlighted the sight of the medieval town, was partly due to Pavia's traditional religious vocation, partly to its strategical position on the "Francigena Via", the atonement journey of the pilgrims towards the Holy Land. The believers arrived in Pavia to chiefly worship the revered remains of St. Augustine, the Doctor of the Church, in Saint Peter Basilica. This helped foster a growing need to provide accomodation to travellers and many hospital facilities were built in Pavia.

It was also a thriving and active economical period because Pavia was ideally situated at the cross-roads to northern Europe. Moreover, the longest river, the Po, into which the river Ticino flows, provided, then, a privileged river route towards Venice and the East. During the two fairs of Saint Martin and Palm Sunday in Pavia, many exotic items were displayed on the stalls. These products, such as fabrics, spices, carpets, drew several merchants from Naples, Saler-

no, Amalfi. Thanks to its wealth and traditional ties with the imperial power, since the end of the 9th century, Pavia competed with Milan in order to conquer the leading role in becoming the cultural and political capital in Lombardy.



San Michele Church

Masterpiece of the Romanesque architecture in Lombardy, this church has a majestic nave and two aisles, surmounted by the lantern and its façade is richly decorated with sculptures, bas reliefs and figures of animals, plant volute cornices and green shoots. The present church was built on the site of a previous Lombard church and was the coronation place. In fact Frederick Barbarossa was crowned here in 1155. The inside boasts capitals showing biblical stories, allegorical figures. The crypt is greatly attractive.

The mosaic floor in the presbytery shows the “Months” and the “Labyrinth” and the transept contains Teodote’s crucifix, a silver-laminated masterpiece by a skilled goldsmith, who worked in northern Italy in the second half of the 10th century.



■ Detail of the St. Michael's Church

■ On the left:
San Michele Church

■ San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro.
Saint Augustine's Arch

San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro

The Romanesque Church, refurbished in the 12th century, is well-known all over Europe for Saint Augustine's remains, which in the 8th century were transferred here from Sardinia in obedience to the Lombard





■ The façade of San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro

King Liutprando's will. The King's tombstone is also visible. In the presbytery the magnificent and imposing marble Arch is dedicated to the Father of the Church. This arch was made between 1362 and 1402 by Lombard masters, who

decorated it with many statues and carved figures.

Outside the Church a memorial tablet shows the lines Dante (1265-1321, one of the most prestigious Italian poets) wrote about San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro on the famous philosopher Severino Boezio's burial.

San Teodoro Church

This church with its redbrick façade is situated in the central medieval fishing quarter. Dedicated to one of the patrons of the town, the church houses several votive tokens: from the Romanesque frescoes on the pillars to the Renaissance painting cycles of Saint Agnes and Saint Theodore (16th century) and the famous, early 16th century "View of Pavia", which is

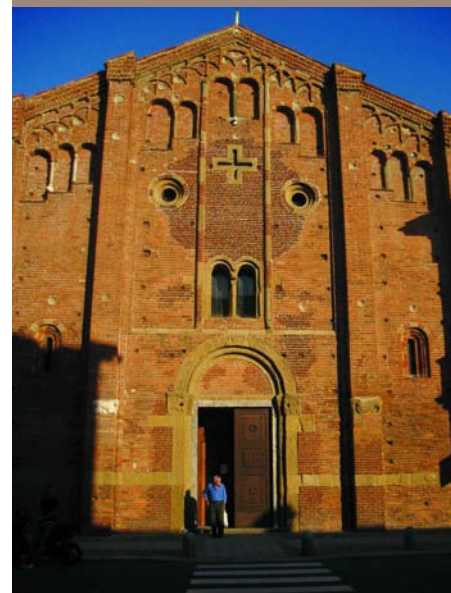


■ San Teodoro Church

an amazing proof of Pavia's topographical value. The basement crypt is remarkable captivating with its Romanesque carved figures, Roman capitals and the Lantern, once as decorated as the façade with polished ceramic basins of oriental origin.

Santa Maria in Betlemme Church

This 12th century Romanesque church is situated in a town area, which was once an ancient quartier outside the town walls. In the Middle Ages, the pilgrims on their journey to the East used to travel across this area, which fell within the Bishop of Bethlehem's competence and was next to the ancient hospital of St. Antonio: a typical medieval building which was to give hospitality to travellers and help poor and sick people too. The church contains the wooden statue of the Madonna della Stella, which is worshipped and traditionally carried in procession on the boats along the river.



■ Santa Maria in Betlemme

The "Broletto" (the ancient town hall)

The "Broletto" was the histori-



■ The façade of the "Broletto"



■ The Notaries' small Loggia

cal seat of the city meetings from the 11th century to the 16th century. It was gradually restored to respond to the growing needs of the municipal community. According to the typical solution of the public building, the "Broletto" has a porch on the ground floor and a very large meeting room on the first floor. The southern wing has recently been restored and it is the seat of many cultural associations. The northern part looking on to the "Piazza Grande" (Main Square), features the sixteenth-century Loggia giving access to the "Fresco" Hall.

Vittoria Square

It is the main town square, known as "Platea Magna", large square, in ancient times, in contrast with the "Platea Parva", small square, i.e. the Cathedral Square.

Near the intersection point between "Cardo" and "Decumano" (the Romans used these words to indicate the sense of town directions and divisions), this square was an important market place.

It was almost totally surrounded by the 14th century arches. The "Broletto" and the noble Gothic small mansion of the "Diversi" look on to the square. There is also the desecrated



■ Vittoria Square

church of S.ta Maria Gualtieri, founded in the 10th century. The imperial delegate Gualtierio wanted it to be built near his house. Today it is used as a centre for cultural events. Somewhere on the Square it is possible to get into the underground market, which was carried out in modern times.

The medieval towers

Today these are just five of a hundred or perhaps more towers featuring the outline of the medieval town: three near the university and two in L. Porta street. They date back to the 11th and 12th centuries, they are made of bricks and were the symbol of the powerful families they belonged to.

Remains of smaller towers are still incorporated in many buildings.

The town tower, which once stood next to the medieval cathedral with its 16th century marble loggia suddenly collapsed in 1987. Its remains are still visible.



■ The medieval towers





■ The view of the town from Borgo Ticino

THE FLOWERING OF ART UNDER THE VISCONTI AND THE SFORZA

In 1359 Pavia, divided by internal fights between several families, was conquered by Galeazzo Visconti the 2nd master of Milan. During this period, Pavia, thanks to Galeazzo and his son Gian Galeazzo, got a splendid town-planning, architectural and cultural restoration project. Thus the new court made Pavia a prestigious European capital. After the building of the castle, the opening of the main square, the reconstruction of the typical bridge on the Ticino and the beginning of several religious and town building yards, Pavia got the late Gothic aspect, which still characterizes it in many of its terracotta decorated buildings.

In the same years the institution of the "studium generale", which an official document in 1361 by Emperor Charles IV made equal to the University of Bologna, Paris and Montpellier, the foundation of the Carthusian Monastery, established, at the end of the century, by Gian Galeazzo Visconti and which was to be Champol Chartreuse's replica, as a sumptuous chapel and family

mausoleum, ranked Pavia among the leading towns in Europe.

The Cathedral

Since 1488 the inhabitants of Pavia wanted a Renaissance cathedral to be rebuilt to replace the ancient Romanesque cathedral of St. Stefano and S.ta Maria del Popolo. At the beginning, Bramante, an architect from Urbino, was given the project with da Vinci's consultancy. Then Bramante continued his work by following Amadeo's instructions.

The ambitious construction continued with difficulty in the 17th and 18th centuries; in the 19th century the imposing dome (the third in size in Italy) was carried out together with the façade still lacking its marble cover.

In order to prove the initial



■ San Lanfranco: Cloister



■ The Cathedral dome



■ The Cathedral front and Regiole Statue



■ The Covered Bridge



■ The view of Borgo Ticino from the bridge

magnificence and refinement of the project, the town museums house the wonderful wooden model carved by local skilled craftsmen in the early 16th century.

In front of the cathedral there is the bronze statue of the “Regisole”, which is F. Messina’s modern copy of the original in Ravenna, the war trophy, destroyed by the Jacobins.

The Covered Bridge

In the middle of the 14th century the bridge was reconstructed to replace the ancient Roman bridge, whose piers are still visible. It links the old city centre to the picturesque medieval village, a traditional place of washerwomen, gravel diggers and fishermen. This bridge is one of Pavia’s famous landmark with its tile roof, wanted by Galeazzo II Visconti the day after the capture of the town, and a small



■ Visconteo Castle



■ Visconteo Castle: the courtyard

18th century chapel dedicated to St. Giovanni Nepomuceno. The bridge was bombed out during the Second World War and reconstructed in the early 1950s.

The Visconteo Castle

Built by Galeazzo II Visconti as from 1360 the construction was achieved after only five years. It was a stately and refined court residence rather than a fortress. The two and three mullioned terracotta windows and the refined decoration of the courtyard highlight this purpose. There are some significant proofs of the great frescoes showing battles, hunting and middle-class life scenes, which decorated rooms, porches and



■ Visconteo Castle: Tower



■ Bernardino Luini's (circa 1516)
"The Virgin Mary with the Infant Jesus"
in the lavatory (Carthusian Monastery)

loggias. Another excellent proof is the complete decoration of the splendid Blue Room with its gold and lapislazuli. Perhaps it was the seat of the Visconti library with its 1.000 manuscripts and commissioned by Petrarch. The Castle was used as barracks and during Napoleon's age the crenellations were covered by a roof. In the 20th century the Castle was bought by the municipality, restored and used as a cultural centre. In fact, it houses the various sections of the town museums as well as art exhibition rooms.

The Visconti Park

When Gian Galeazzo inherited the Castle from his father, he extended the park towards Milan and ended it by founding the Carthusian Monastery. The park was totally walled and used as the Duke's hunting place. There were farmhouses, exotic animal menageries, the "Torretta" (a country house), the castle of Mirabello, the captain's home. In 1525 the French King Francis 1st and the Span-



■ Town Museum: the Battle of Pavia

■ The Carthusian Monastery





■ Detail of the Carthusian Monastery

ish Emperor Charles V met in battle in this park. The French army was defeated, thus Pavia started being ruled by Spain. Today this wonderful park can be crossed thanks to many peaceful trails.

The Carthusian Monastery

It is seven km to the north of Pavia. Gian Galeazzo Visconti wanted a magnificent complex to be constructed at the park boundary. It was to be a private chapel and a family mausoleum too.

The foundation stone was laid in 1396 during the late Gothic period, but only in the mid-15th century, the building was achieved in its rich Renaissance decoration, which makes it one of the most prestigious monuments of the Italian art. Its façade is remarkably

decorated with white and polychrome marble. It is worth visiting the ivory triptych in the old vestry, the superb frescoes by Bergognone in the transept, the amazing wooden carving in the choir and the rich



■ Front of Borromeo College

terracotta decorations in the two cloisters.

Borromeo College

This College, founded by St. Charles in 1561, is one of the most beautiful mannerist mansions in Lombardy. It was constructed between 1561 and 1588 on the project of Pellegrino Pellegrini, alias Tibaldi. Afterwards, Richichi enriched the complex with beautiful Italian gardens.

This "palace of Learning", as Vasari called it, looks on to one of the most admirable squares in Pavia. Its front has a strong plastic relief underlined by the

■ Courtyard of Borromeo College





■ A fresco in Borromeo College

decorated windows alternating with niches and a monumental main doorway.

In the early 17th century the large hall on the first floor was decorated with paintings dedicated to Saint Carlo Borromeo. The vault and the north wall are the work of Cesare Nebbia from Orvieto. The south wall shows the laying of the cardinal's hat, Federico Zuccari's work.

In 1818-1820 the college was achieved and enlarged towards the river. Thus the nearby medieval church of San Giovanni in Borgo was demolished and its rich sculptures are now in the town museums. The College was founded to enable talented but poor students, who could not consequently afford to attend university, to devote themselves to studies.

Meanwhile, during the Counter-Reformation the College was to warrant adequate moral values.

In the 18th and 19th centuries jurists destined for highly responsible positions in the Church and Milan's State

attended this prestigious college.

Ghislieri College

It was founded by Pope Pius V in 1507 on Tibaldi's project: an extremely austere three-floor building on a square plan.

In fact the front is severe with its windows without cornice. The plastic effect is highlighted by the large main door, the only jutting element. The college courtyard features porches with coupled pillars, while the upper floor is closed. The domed Oratory is to the west.

Next to the College there is an elegant, neoclassical two-floor building, which was constructed during Napoleon's time in order to supply the military school with classrooms. Today this building is the seat of the college administration.

The statue of St. Pius V stands in the middle of the square. It is a refined example of the baroque sculpture by Francesco Nuvolone.



■ Ghislieri College



■ Saint Pius V's altar. Piece in the Chapel of Ghislieri College



■ University courtyard dedicated to A. Volta



■ University Volta lecture-hall



■ University magnolia garden



THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

After the well-known battle of Pavia in 1525, the town fell into a long decline affecting every field of social life. It was in the 18th century, the Age of Enlightenment, and during the passage from the Spanish rule to the Austrian rule that Pavia recovered its vitality and industriousness. The Habsburg rulers proved to be chiefly interested in the economical and social situation of the town. Therefore several reforms were made to revive the economy and social life. Queen Maria Theresa and her son Joseph II gave major boost to Pavia's university and made it one of the most prestigious European universities, mainly for its avant-garde scientific courses. New experimental teachings were carried out by eminent men of science: Antonio Scarpa, the father of anatomy, Lazzaro Spallanzani, famous for his experiments on fertilization and for creating one of the most appreciated naturalistic collections of his time, and Alessandro Volta, a famous physicist, the inventor of the pile, who did his researches on electricity. One of the most important hydraulic works was then carried out: the building of the Naviglio, a navigable canal conceived by da Vinci and executed in 1772 on Paolo Frisi's plan.

In the seventies, on the initiative of four Pavia aristocrats, the foundation of the Theatre of the Four Knights (today, Teatro Fraschini) took place. It was the first public theatre planned by Antonio Galli Bibiena.

The private architecture was also thriving: refined and splendid noble buildings were constructed.

They were richly decorated with paintings and stuccoes, namely: Palazzo Mezzabarba, Palazzo Olevano, Palazzo Gambarana, Palazzo Vistarino, Palazzo Brambilla.

At the end of the century, despite the political changes, the works of reform concerning the town refurbishment did not stop. The main town entrances were designed again, such as the Gate of San Vito, together with welfare and education institutions.

Marchese Luigi Malspina, an architect and collector, a skilled person of culture and strong civic consciousness wanted the first town museum to be built.

The University

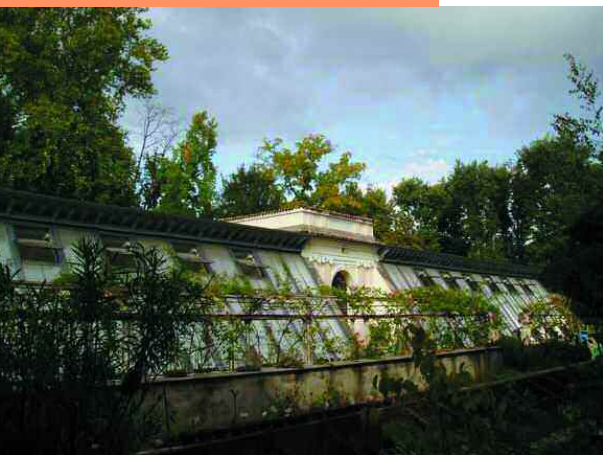
The university, one of the oldest in Europe, was founded in 1361 by Galeazzo II Visconti, who set up courses in law, medicine and liberal arts. The University underwent subsequent changes, but thanks to the Austrian rule, it keeps its



■ Detail (University)

■ University Great Hall: the opening ceremony of the academic year





■ Piermarini's greenhouses in the Botanical Gardens

present architectural structure. In fact, under the Austrian rule, the university teachings were reformed, the buildings were restored in the neo-classical style and enlarged by the architects Piermarini and Pollack. New lecture halls were added: the Library called "Teresiana", Antonio Scarpa's anatomy theatre and the physics theatre, where Alessandro Volta showed the invention of the pile to Napoleon.



■ Botanical Gardens

In the 20th century the University also occupied the complex of the nearby San Matteo Hospital, a Renaissance cross-shaped building with terracotta decorated courtyards.

The Botanical Gardens

They are situated in an ancient area where the convent of Sant'Epifanio once stood and whose cloister is still visible. In 1773 under the Austrian rule they were refurbished by the botanists Brusati and Borsieri. The architect Piermarini planned wooden greenhouses which were then replaced by iron and glass greenhouses. Research was deeply boosted by Giovanni Antonio Scopoli (1777), who increased the botanical specimens, so he made Pavia's Botanical Gardens a centre of studies and avant-garde experimentation in Europe.

The Naviglio (the canal)

This very important hydraulic work was to link the Darsena (wetdock) of Milan to the river Ticino, then, via the main Italian river, the Po, to Venice and the East. Da Vinci planned it in



■ Botanical Gardens



■ Naviglio (the canal)



■ The front of Fraschini Theatre



the 16th century, it was partly carried out in the 17th century and only achieved in Napoleon's time in the town section. The locks, used to fill the ground differences in level, respond, in their scenographical disposition, to the standards of neoclassical town decorations. Along the canal, in a town area, the quarter of Borgo Calvenzano was carried out. It was intended for storing the goods and is a still existing infrastructure, but now it is mainly a residential area.

Fraschini Theatre

Four representatives of the town nobility wanted the first public theatre to be built. The project, carried out between 1771 and 1773, was assigned to one of the greatest stage designing architect of the time, Antonio Galli Bibiena, who carried out a complete masonry building and adopted innovative and clever solutions: a bell-shaped parterre to get excellent acoustics. In the middle of the 19th century the theatre was owned by the municipality and named after the famous tenor from Pavia Gaetano Fraschini. Acknowledged as a "theatre of tradition", every year from October to January, it has a varied programme: operas, plays, music and ballet.

Mezzabarba Mansion and Oratory

Masterpiece of the late Lombard Baroque, the Palace was planned by the architect Giovanni Antonio Veneroni as a stately



■ Mezzabarba Mansion

residence of the noble Mezzabarba family. The picturesque façade is severe despite its decorated architectural aspect. Its large halls are beautifully decorated, chiefly its dance-hall with the frescoes of "Diana's Stories" on the walls and "The Virtue overcoming the Dagron" on the vault. They were painted by Giovanni Angelo Borroni. Next to the building there is the Oratory dedicated to Saint Quirico and Giuditta with beautiful rococo stuccoes and frescoes by Pietro Antonio Magatti. This mansion has been town hall since the end of the 19th century.



■ Frescoes with goddess Diana's stories
in Mezzabarba Mansion

Malaspina Mansion

This neoclassical residence was planned by Luigi Malaspina, a cultivated marquis and enlightened collector, to whom Pavia owes art collections. Today the building is the prefect's residence whose monumental gate shows the statues of Petrarch and Severino Boezio. It mirrors the principles of the nobles magnificence and honour. The frescoed front faces a "romantic" English garden. The halls are richly and variedly decorated with neoclassical paintings and stuccoes.

THE VISCONTEO CASTLE MUSEUMS

The Visconteo Castle, Pavia's monumental place "par excellence", is the seat of the town Museums. It is three-floor long and over 8.000 square metre wide.

■ The Blue Room in the town Museums



On the ground floor there are the ticket office, the bookshop, the exhibition room, the audiovisual room, the museum sections: archaeology, Lombard jewellery, medieval sculptures, the Romanesque cathedral room, the Gothic and Renaissance room and the Sant'Agata al Monte fresco.

The first floor houses the art-gallery with ancient paintings, together with the 17th and 18th century paintings, the room containing the wooden model of the cathedral, the

19th century picture-gallery and the Morone Donation. There are also the print room, the coin cabinet, the manager's office, the art reference, the photograph library and the speciality library.

The second floor houses the Italian "Risorgimento" museum, the Robecchi Bricchetti ethnographical museum, the collection of plaster

casts and the modern scul-

ture section.

Important building works are being carried out in order to warrant both a greater functionality to the exhibition rooms devoted to the history of the castle and a wider room for the collections, not yet on display, and temporary art exhibitions. The garrets and the basements will be recovered, so new rooms will be devoted to modern art, to the very rich Renaissance print collection and minor guilds.

The campaigns for the restoration of the castle frescoes, after the refurbishment of the Sala Azzurra, will aim at the porch and open Gallery vaults and the decorations of the tower room, which, in ancient times, used to be the Visconti family's rich library.

The Castle Museums aim at becoming the centre of the town museum system thanks to the quality, variety and richness of their collections. The existing University Natural Science Museum, with Lazzaro Spallanzani's collection, together with the Electrical Technique Museum, the Cathedral Crypt Museum, the Diocesan Museum and the Carthusian Monastery Museum will join this important process.

The Castle Museum house temporary art exhibitions and promote meetings, courses of lectures and publications.



■ Town Museums: The Portrait of Nicola Massa by T. Cremona



■ Town Museums: Roman art section



■ Malaspina art gallery in the town Museums

