Supplementary Research Sources for the ASFE Study of the Student Population in Bologna during the Early Modern Period

Fuentes adicionales de investigación para el análisis ASFE de la población estudiantil en Bolonia durante la temprana edad moderna

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Abstract: Having completed a database of institutional sources relating to the University of Bologna during the early modern period (the ASFE project section titled Onomasticon Studii Bononiensis), we now aim to provide an overview of certain potential supplementary sources that might complete the picture and above all fill in areas left uncovered by serial documentation relating to the University. The Status animarum of parishes, as with personal files of professors, together with processes involving students, provide sources that will enable us to obtain a better overall picture of the Bologna University’s student population during the Ancien Régime. The research will then focus on a source as yet unutilized to this end, and this is the epitaphs in the numerous Bologna churches, where many students who died suddenly during their university years in the city are buried. Very often, these students do...
not appear in the ASFE database in that, as a result of their sudden death, they had not yet managed to officially enrol at the University.

**Keywords**: ASFE project, student population, Bologna University, early modern period, supplementary sources.

The ASFE project (acronym by the incipit of the *Authentica Habita* from Frederick Redbeard, “amore scientiae facti sunt exules”), coordinated by Professor Gian Paolo Brizzi, has been running for approximately fifteen years with the aim to provide a detailed picture of the student populations of Italian universities during the early modern period1. Within this contribution, I would like to present a rapid overview of the current situation before moving on to the subject of my essay, and that is the identification of certain documentary typologies which, although not strictly related to university institution sources, may be used as supplementary sources in the study of the student population in Bologna during the early modern period.

**ASFE project sources**

It is a well-known fact that the inputting of information in databases is susceptible to continual updating: which is the greatest advantage of information technology in the field of humanities, a field of inquiry in which data are hardly ever contained in a single solution, but are rather the result of long and often interrupted work on documentary sources. Following completion of the *Onomasticon Studii Bononiensis* section within the ASFE project2, we are now proceeding to revise the information held in the remaining sections: *Iter Italicum*3 and *Italici doctores*4. In particular, the latter, *Italici doctores*,

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2 asfe.unibo.it/it/onomasticon_studii_bononiensis.

3 asfe.unibo.it/it/iter_italicum.

4 asfe.unibo.it/it/italici_doctores.
which relates to the filing of records pertaining to graduates attending Italian Studia in the early modern period, cannot yet be considered complete since certain important serial documentation concerning Italy have not yet been stored in ASFE. The acta graduum of Padua (a major seat in this period for the study of student population movement) have in fact been inputted for the period up to 1605. What is lacking therefore, from the series documentation preserved at the University’s Historical Archives, is the last two centuries of the early modern period relating to degrees awarded. To overcome this problem, in ASFE we are seeking to fill the gap by means of a synthetic record of degrees awarded which is very different from the extraction version used by the Padua group up until now. A major absentee in ASFE is the University of Rome whose degree records are preserved in two large archives: the Archivio Segreto Vaticano and the State Archive. Degrees awarded in law from 1549 to 1774 are transcribed in approximately forty registers. Degrees in philosophy and medicine from the late sixteenth century (1583) until the early years of the nineteenth century have yet to be released. Awards in theology are still missing but they are presumed to be among the documentation held at the Maestro del Sacro Palazzo. Finally, what is also missing in ASFE is the second part of degrees awarded by the University of Naples from 1648 on, in order then to complete the work initiated by Ileana del Bagno.

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7 Ileana del Bagno, Legum doctores. La formazione del ceto giuridico a Napoli (Napoli: Jovene, 1993).
Sources employed to build the architecture of the entire ASFE project have a prevalently institutional nature. Degree records, enrolment registers, *fides matriculandorum, syllabi* (lists of student names)\(^8\), professions of faith, account books and proceedings of student *nationes* have all contributed over the years to enrich the substantial database together with data gathered from numerous records pertaining to students coming from common areas of origin\(^9\), and all of which have been cross-checked. Data collected from major Italian universities even include detailed information on the *peregrinatio academica* made by many young people originating from all over Europe.

**Onomasticon Studii Bononiensis**

In this brief overview on potential supplementary sources, which can be consulted as support material in the study of the student population in Italy during the early modern period, it is necessary, *in primis*, to provide a more detailed update on the *Onomasticon Studii Bononiensis* section within ASFE. Providing there are no last-minute setbacks, the work on this section of the database can be considered complete with regard to institutional sources since registers containing degrees awarded (in canon and civil law, in philosophy and medicine as well as theology) have been filed in their entirety for the early modern period\(^10\). Likewise, thanks to the *Imago Universitatis* project\(^11\), the student councils known as *consigliature*, have been reconstructed in great detail. In addition, records of university enrolments and records relating to university *collegi* have been inputted, as have the names of the

\(^8\) Source compiled annually from 1740 and printed under the supervision of the Assunzione di Studio.

\(^9\) Cf. wide-ranging list of sources consulted is included in the section *Sources et bibliographie* of the page dedicated by Heloise to ASFE (heloise.hypotheses.org/37).

\(^10\) For the Middle Ages the work is not yet complete as demonstrated by the Berardo Pio in Pio, “Osservazioni preliminary all’edizione delle più antiche registrazioni del Liber secretus iuris pontificii”. In *Università e formazione dei ceti dirigenti. Per Gian Paolo Brizzi, pellegrino dei saperi*, edited by Giancarlo Angelozzi, Maria Teresa Guerrini, Giuseppe Olmi (Bologna: Bologna University Press, 2015), 51-60.

components of the student *nationes*. In the case of Bologna, there is a serial documentation trace relating to the German and Polish *nationes*\(^{12}\).

As for the section strictly concerning Bologna, the research could be considered complete were it not for a series of non-institutional sources available which could potentially add more detail to our already quite detailed ‘mosaic’.

Leaving aside the issue of inevitable gaps in documentation caused by the loss of material over the centuries, and which prevents us from having a complete picture of the student population in Bologna, I would like to dwell for a moment on another question, which is valid in relation to certain Italian universities during the early modern period. This relates to matriculation not being obligatory and, in some cases, students only officially enrolled towards the end of their academic pathways and as a prelude to being awarded their degrees. This issue was raised and demonstrated in depth, at a documentary level, by Gian Paolo Brizzi a number of years ago\(^{13}\). Brizzi argued that, since in certain Italian universities during the early modern period, there was no obligation to matriculate: the rule in force was the *una tantum* registration. Furthermore, with data at hand, he proved that students belonging to *collegi* and religious orders, who therefore were not in need of legal protection provided by *Universitas scholarium*, never actually registered at the University of Bologna.

*Supplementary research sources*

1. The *Status animarum*

In order to find records of this ‘underground’ student population, it is therefore necessary to resort to alternative sources which do not strictly relate to


the life of the Alma Mater. I am referring in particular to the Status animarum of Bologna parish churches, a small number of which have been examined to test their usefulness\textsuperscript{14}. By using this source, ASFE has already added new names of students staying at Collegio Ferrero, known as della Viola, which housed undergraduates from the dioceses of Vercelli, Turin, Ivrea, Asti and Mondovì\textsuperscript{15}. The lists from which these names have been traced are preserved in the Status animarum of the Bologna parish church Santa Maria della Mascarella, the parish land where the Collegio Ferrero was founded in 1540. Examination of these registers\textsuperscript{16} has revealed the presence of 115 boarders accommodated over a period of two hundred years (1595-1795), and of more than half of these there had been no record in university sources. There are in fact 61 new names of students, which have been identified thanks to the examination of this hitherto unused source, and they cover a long period. From the mid 1700s, University authorities kept series documentation, such as student syllabi, but despite this, no information concerning the 61 had emerged. We are dealing then with students who had chosen not to register at the University since they belonged to a Collegio that provided tutelage of their rights. Or may their absence be justified by other reasons that have escaped our notice?

From this viewpoint, the study in such a direction could proceed by widening the research to the Status animarum of other parishes which had similar structures providing student accommodation. The same source could hold further unexpected surprises in cases whereby members of the teaching staff both rented accommodation to University students and gave them private tuition\textsuperscript{17}.

\textsuperscript{14} For the results of this archive search conducted by prof. Gian Paolo Brizzi, cf. Maria Teresa Guerrini, “A proposito di ASFE: fonti complementari per lo studio della presenza studentesca a Bologna in età moderna”. In Università e formazione dei ceti dirigenti. Per Gian Paolo Brizzi, pellegrino dei saperi, edited by Giancarlo Angelozzi, Maria Teresa Guerrini, Giuseppe Olmi (Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2015), 299-305.


\textsuperscript{16} Preserved in the archives of the same parish church (Bologna, Santa Maria della Mascarella parish church archive, Status animarum).

2. Professors’ logbooks

Continuing along these lines, notebooks kept by University professors and held in the Assunteria dello Studio collection in the Bologna State Archives\(^{18}\), have produced a reasonable crop of new names. These books contain material relating to requests made from the first half of the 1500s by professors to the senatorial committee (Assunteria) who oversaw the running of the Alma Mater. Professors hoping to obtain a lectureship, a salary rise, or enjoy particular dispensations relating to their university teaching, had to report to this committee and maintain correspondence, of which records still remain in the archives. When making applications to the commission, professors would provide documentation in order to strengthen their cases: such as good comments received from students attending their lectures and private lessons. This would provide evidence the esteem shown by students attending their lectures and private lessons. The greater the number of students attending classes provided an indicator; notwithstanding the professor’s effective teaching skills, of an excellent quality of lectures. In particular, from the second half of the 1600s, lists of student names were frequently contained in such documentation\(^{19}\).

Here, I will illustrate briefly the emblematic case of Filippo Romagnoli, professor of civil and public law, and law of nations, over the last two decades of the eighteenth century. He openly stated that he had “always […] a high attendance rate and […] without exaggerating, the highest in Bologna”\(^{20}\). Hoping to obtain a salary increase in 1794, he presented the notebook he had compiled containing a list of students who had attended his lessons in canon, public, civil and natural law, both in the University and privately between 1783 and 1793. The names of students frequently reappear in the logbook since it would happen that a student might attend lessons held by his professor for two to three years consecutively to then become, upon completing his studies, a trainee at the professor’s legal office which he used when working as a lawyer\(^{21}\). The students under the guidance of Romagnoli over the ten-year period

\(^{18}\) Bologna, State Archives, Assunteria di Studio, Requisiti dei lettori, b. 30-59 (1537-1800).
\(^{19}\) Guerrini, “Tra docenza pubblica e insegnamento privato.”
\(^{21}\) On this topic, as for what concerns Bolognese legal professions in the early modern period, I wish to mention the paper I presented at the seminar La formazione dei giuristi (Uni-
in question numbered 154 in total\textsuperscript{22}. Many observations could be made on the origins of students attending Romagnoli’s courses during his teaching years\textsuperscript{23} but here it is opportune to dwell a moment on the considerable share of students he mentions in documentation but who do not appear in the ASFE database. Of the 149 whose identity is known, even simply by their surname, only 52 have in fact been traced through other official documentary sources relating to the administration of the University of Bologna. The remaining 97 are students largely unknown to the academic authorities because not even the student syllabi, held at the time by the Assunteria di Studio, show any record of them as students. They therefore attended the university lectures or private lessons held by Romagnoli but never formalized their attendance by registering at the University. And this was in a period in which, precisely in virtue of the strict control carried out by the Assunteria di Studio by means of the syllabi, it was most unlikely that the names of any registered students could be lost.

3. Court cases as source

Moving on with this quick overview of supplementary sources, there are records of criminal and civil court cases held in Bologna’s courts which saw University students involved in one way or another. Court sources provide a wealth of information which has produced a significant number of names of students involved in legal cases (as defendants, witnesses or marginal figures) as well as minute details that are hard to find in University sources\textsuperscript{24}.

\textsuperscript{22} Although the names of five of these students included in the document are not explicitly provided, and as the professor himself explains, “non sono nemmeno venuti alla scuola per essere anche fuori di Paese” (“they never came to the School because they were out of the country”): Bologna, State Archives, Assunteria di Studio, Requisiti dei lettori, b. 53, f. 35, List of students under the guidance of Filippo Romagnoli.

\textsuperscript{23} A certain number of students close to him came from the Brescia area. Obviously most of his students were from the Bologna area but there were also students from Trentino, Tirol, Modena and Turin.

\textsuperscript{24} On the theme of student violence, Ilaria Maggiulli has been working in Bologna for a few years within the ASFE project, and has produced the initial findings of her research in the paper Maggiulli, Ilaria. “Li scolari per il più vivono, et vestono à guisa di soldati, con grande licenza …: 1564, un episodio di violenza studentesca a Bologna.” Annali di storia delle università italiane 18 (2014): 313-326. I wish to mention too the paper by the same author presented...
In Bologna, within ASFE group, Ilaria Maggiulli has recently started to follow up this new line of inquiry by working on papers held in the *Tribunale del Torrone* (the city criminal court) in the second half of the sixteenth century\(^{25}\). In the trials examined by her, the names of 136 students have appeared, of which only 28 were already known to ASFE. This rather surprising number is to be lowered considering that some of these young men, as recorded in the trial records, are indicated solely by their first names and such information makes it impossible for them to be identified within ASFE.

### 4. Tomb inscriptions

Finally we move on to the numerous tomb inscriptions preserved in Bologna’s churches, and these have traditionally interested University historians for the information they provide in relation to noted University professors buried there. This source can also provide a valid support to help integrate official documentation relating to students, since a number of foreign students died in Bologna from natural causes or as a result of accidents or violence during the latter centuries of the Middle Ages and the early modern period. They were buried in city churches and the inscriptions still today record the student *status* of these young men.

The churches of San Francesco, San Giovanni in Monte and particularly the cloisters of San Domenico were the sites preferred by students to house their tombs: a legacy perhaps of a medieval past in which San Francesco and San Domenico were the seats of the schools of artists and legists. This is ongoing research\(^{26}\), however, and currently there are 35 tomb inscriptions relating to the early modern period and bearing information on the students interred. Most of the students in question were about twenty years old and died from illnesses associated with extreme fever. Others died at the hands of fellow stu-

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\(^{26}\) Research carried out with Ilaria Maggiulli at Bologna University Library, *ms. 1301*, Montieri, Luigi. *Raccolta di tutte le memorie, lapidi ed iscrizioni che si trovano nelle chiese, palazzi e strade di Bologna*, t. 5.
dents (Francesco Marchelli from Genova, and Orazio Marenzo from Brescia)\textsuperscript{27}, while in many cases there is no mention of the cause of death. Instead, what is highlighted is their promising talents in the study of law and medicine.

Many observations could be made on the origins of students buried: 30\% of these young men came from various parts of the German empire, there was a French (Bertrando de Lesblay)\textsuperscript{28}, two Polish students (Nicolaus Golcevski and Gaspar Chadzinio), three English (Arthur Coo, William Elysios and William Rose)\textsuperscript{29}, a Brabantine (Jaquardus de Mole)\textsuperscript{30} and a Spaniard (Bernardo Pigna from Minorca)\textsuperscript{31}. The remaining group comprises Italian students originating mainly from the Duchy of Milan, Marca d’Ancona and the Romagna region. Some were buried by friends: Andreas Noschovius arranged the burial of his friend Gaspar Chadzinio in 1566\textsuperscript{32}, as did Philp Burchart who arranged for Georg Sachs’ burial in 1518\textsuperscript{33}. Others were buried by the young men who accompanied them. This was the case of the German tutor Wolfgang Ortegel who arrived in Bologna in 1542 accompanied by Nicolas ab Ebeleben, Damianus Pflug and Rodolfus de Bunau, who arranged to give their tutor a dignified burial in San Domenico\textsuperscript{34}.

Others were close to completing their studies: although these young men obviously attended lessons at the University of Bologna, of the 35 names garnered from inscriptions, only 9 appear in University registers. Some of

\textsuperscript{27} The case of Marenzo has been investigated by Maggiulli, “Li scolari per il più vivono, et vestono à guisa di soldati, con grande licenza ...” 322-323.

\textsuperscript{28} Montieri, Raccolta di tutte le memorie. T. 2, San Domenico, 47.

\textsuperscript{29} Ivì, 50-51.

\textsuperscript{30} Ivì, 46.

\textsuperscript{31} Ivì, 6.

\textsuperscript{32} Ivì, 48-49: “D.O.M. Gasparo Chadzinio nobili / Polono genere virtute / ingenio prestanti / juveni hic Bononiae ex / febri continua in ipso / aetatis flore maximo / suorum cum dolore atq(ue) / luctu mortuo / Andreas Noschovius / nobilis Polonus amiti/ciae (!) ergo posuit / Anno Domini MDLXVI / hic procul a patria tumulor p(os)t funera q(uo)d tum / ad summi inde vocor regna beata Dei / felix o nimium vitam quod sponte perennem / anteferas patriae dulcis alumne tuae.”

\textsuperscript{33} Ivì, 49: “G.S. / Georgius Sachs Spiren(se) Germano qui dum scientiaru(m) ardo / re Ita-liam adolescentu(m) adisset quadrien(n)o in ea mi/ro virtutu(m) profectu versatus febri acerbissima absu(m)p tus est / Philippis Burchart Amitino perq. dilecto moestus posuit / obiit VII Idus Aprilis MDXVIII / claru(m) que(m) sum(m)a reditur(m) laude Nemetes / spera-ba(n)t tumulo hoc Felsina docta tenet.”

\textsuperscript{34} Ivì, 55: “D.O.M. / ornatiss(imo) viro Vuolfango Ortegel Germano Nicolaus ab / Ebeleben, Damianus Pelug, Randolphus Abunau praeeceptor B.M. hoc monumentum pietatis ergo p.p. ob(iit) an(no) / Salutis nostrae MDXLII No(nas) Aug(usti) aetatis vero saue XXXII.”

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these students are actually listed in the register of the *Natio germanica* and others appear in the University *matricula* of law which the notary Belvisi compiled in the second half of the sixteenth century. The names of some students who died in the years covered by the Belvisi register do not appear; however, in this list. This is the case of Alessandro Visconti who died in 1558, Michele Bottini in 1581, and Bernardino Vivaldi in 1590, to name but a few. Just as surprising is the fact that certain records relating to students who were close to graduating are missing: Giovanni Francesco Bertondelli from Tirol who died in 1565, is the most emblematic case since at that time his name should have been recorded in the Belvisi register.

**Conclusions**

The case of Bologna, as with other Italian universities, is rather particular for the value attributed to non-compulsory university matriculations for certain categories of students.

It is therefore possible to make up for any gaps in documentation by utilizing a number of alternative sources as demonstrated by the examples provided in this contribution. In fact, by using the *Status animarum* of the parish church of *Santa Maria della Mascarella* registers provided approximately


37 *Ivi*, 55: “D.O.M. Michaeli Bottinio patricio Lucensi cui summam ad gloriari / politicae jurisque universi scientiae contendenti certissimu(m) / conatus gloriis fructum mors importune iniqua praeripuit an/no aetatis ejus XIX salutis autem nostrae MDLXXXI / Vincentius / et fraternae pietatis & suae Germanum in fratrem claritatis indi/tium M.H.S.”


39 *Ivi*, 43: “D.O.M. / Joannes Franciscus Hieronymi Bertondelli / philos(ophiae) & med(icinae) doctoris eq(uis) aur(ati) & nob(iliis) imperialis / de Burgo Vallis Ausugii Tyrolis / filius / innocentiae candidatus legalem jur(is) utr(jusque) lauream / quam venerat consecuturus / in meliorem ac immortalem commutans / XXVII anuar(ii) MDCLXV etatis suae anno XXIII / hic jacet extinctus quasi flos succisus aratro / virtutis splendor religionis honor.”
sixty names of boarders at Collegio Ferrero between the end of the sixteenth century and the final decades of the eighteenth century. Therefore, the same operation could be performed for the other twenty colleges for scholarship holders of Bologna Studium between the Middle Ages and the modern period\textsuperscript{40} by carrying out searches from similar sources in order to find the names of students boarding at and registered by prelates in parishes in which collegi were located. By adopting this line, the scope of the research could be widened to include students lodging at the homes of lecturers who, from the University’s beginnings, used to rent rooms to young students from abroad or other parts of Italy and, in addition to providing accommodation, also gave private lessons (repetitiones) covering topics dealt with during their public lessons. The jurist Filippo Romagnoli, with his approximately 150 students, of which two-thirds were unknown to University authorities during a period (late eighteenth century) of tight controls on student numbers through the employment of Sillabi, demonstrates an emblematic case in this direction. In the same way, an analysis of sources containing trial records, which would prove complex due to the enormous and disordered mass of documentation held in the Bologna archives of Tribunale del Torrone, could prove to be an aid to research on student numbers in Bologna during the modern period.

Tomb inscriptions therefore provide valuable information which would be missed since gaps occur in documentary records due to a lack of institutional data covering certain periods; or because students never actually enrolled because they died before being able to do so; or because they were covered by other particular jurisdictions and thus never recorded in Universitas scholarium registers. Jurisdictions which, however, in spite of all the guarantees offered to the students, which were not capable of preventing their unexpected deaths.

\textbf{Bibliography}

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BRIZZI, GIAN PAOLO, and ANDREA DALTRI. “ASFE: «amore scientiae facti sunt exules» (Bologna)”: In heloise.hypotheses.org/37

\textsuperscript{40} See list included in Brizzi. \textit{I collegi per borsisti e lo Studio bolognese. Caratteri ed evoluzione di un’istituzione educativo-assistenziale}, 5 of which, besides Ferrero, are the most ancient collegi: Avignonesi, Bresciano, Reggiano, S. Clemente or Spagna, Fieschi, Urbaniano, Gregoriano, Ancarano; and the collegi founded in the modern period: Vives, Poeti, Ungaro-illirico, Palolinì, Montalto, Sinibaldi, Palantieri, Dosi, Cataldi, Jacobs, Comelli and Sole.
SUPPLEMENTARY RESEARCH SOURCES FOR THE ASFE STUDY OF THE STUDENT


