



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI  
DI GENOVA

## BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GENOA

The first organized form of higher education in Genoa dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century when Colleges were established as private institutions governed by their own internal rules and regulations. They were entitled to award degrees in Law, Medicine, Theology, the Arts and Philosophy.

Studies are underway to trace the official foundation of the University of Genoa, traditionally regarded as being marked by the Papal Bull of Sixtus IV in 1471 which officially recognized degrees awarded by the "College of Theology". Later on the degrees were recognized by the "Doge" of Genoa, Cardinal Paolo Fregoso (1487), and by the Emperor Maximilian I (Vigevano Diploma 1496).

In 1554 the Company of Jesus of Genoa began taking an interest in higher education and founded its own college.

In 1623 Paolo Balbi, a Jesuit, gave up his inheritance and his relatives undertook to build the seat of the Jesuit College. The building, which was designed by Bartolomeo Bianco, was built around 1640 and is now the main University building (Palazzo Balbi).

When the Company of Jesus was suppressed in 1773, the responsibility for higher education was taken on by the Senate of the Republic of Genoa, which established rules and regulations for the four Faculties existing at that time (Philosophy, Law, Medicine and Theology).

The University became the only institution entitled to award degrees and its official seat was transferred to Palazzo Balbi.

When the Republic of Genoa became part of the French Empire, the University of Genoa was affiliated to the Imperial University in Paris. Later, at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, it was decided that the University of Genoa be entrusted to the Kingdom of Sardinia, affiliated to Turin University and return to its original collegiate structure.

The development of naval steam propulsion and increasing international trade resulted in the need for higher education in technical fields. Two institutes of higher education were established in Genoa: the Royal Naval School (Regia Scuola Superiore Navale, 1870) and the Royal Institute for Economic Studies (Regio Istituto Superiore di Studi Commerciali, 1883). They were supported by Genoa Town Council, the Local Chamber of Commerce and the Ministries of Industry and Agriculture.

In 1933 and 1936 these institutes were absorbed by the University, becoming the Faculties of Engineering and Economics respectively.

Since 1923 the University has been classified as a Type A University (fully supported by the State) even though it has changed structure on several occasions due to political pressure.

Nowadays the University of Genoa is considered one of the most important Italian universities especially for its international relationships.

It has more than 40.000 students and many important research centres.

