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EDUCATION AND POLITICS IN PIEDMONT, 1796–1814

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In 1820 many of the leading figures in the governments of the Italian states were men who had already been prominent before 1796, and had collaborated with the French during the period of the Empire. Vittorio Fossombroni and Neri Corsini in Tuscany¹ and Prospero Balbo in Piedmont² are the outstanding examples in the years immediately following the Vienna settlement. The political survival of these men into a Europe dominated by violent reaction against the events of the preceding twenty years poses interesting questions. How had the pre-revolutionary Italian ruling aristocracies reacted to the experience of Napoleonic government, and how did this experience affect their attitude to the events of the succeeding decade?³

¹ For Fossombroni (1754–1844) and Corsini (1771–1845) see A. Carraresi, 'La politica interna di Vittorio Fossombroni nella Restaurazione', *Archivio Storico Italiano*, cxxix (1971), 267–355.

² Balbo (1762–1837) was left fatherless in 1765, and adopted by his maternal grandfather, Count Lorenzo Bogino, minister of the Interior. He studied law at the University of Turin, and graduated in 1780. In 1782 he helped to found the *Patria Società Letteraria* and became one of the Decurioni or municipal officials of Turin. In 1788 he became Secretary of the *Accademia delle Scienze*. Between 1796 and 1799 he was Sardinian ambassador in Paris. After Piedmont was invaded by France in 1798, he accompanied the exiled sovereign to Sardinia and Tuscany. He accepted employment under the Austrian regime in Turin in 1800, but resigned his position after a few weeks. In 1802 he returned to Turin, and refused several offers from the French of employment on the Conseil d'Etat in Paris. In 1805, however, he accepted the comparatively modest position of Rector of the University of Turin. In 1816 he was made ambassador to Madrid, and in 1818 placed at the head of the Magistrato della Riforma, or general administration of education in Piedmont. In 1819, he combined this position with that of minister of the Interior, a post which he lost in the aftermath of the revolution of 1821. His critics asserted that these disturbances originated in the liberal tendencies which he had fostered in the University of Turin, and in the dangerous diffusion of knowledge among the lower classes caused by his enthusiasm for the spread of primary education. His last years were spent in scholarly retirement. There is no adequate biography of Balbo, who has been overshadowed by the renown of his second son Cesare. The best modern account is that of F. Sirugo in *Dizionario degli Italiani* (Rome 1963), vol. v. Detailed examination of the events of 1821 is contained in P. Egidi, *I moti studenteschi di Torino nel gennaio 1821* (Turin, 1923). Material relating to his career as Rector of the University is lengthily misinterpreted along nationalist lines by E. Passamonti, 'Prospero Balbo e la rivoluzione del 1821', *Biblioteca di Storia recente*, vol. xii, ed. Rossi and De Magistris (Turin, 1926), 190–347.

³ There are surprisingly few studies of the Italians who collaborated with the French regime. This deficiency is especially marked in the case of territories outside the Regno

The annexed Italian territories were financially vital to the needs of France. Gaudin, Napoleon's minister of Finance, went so far as to exclaim that the fate of the Empire was settled on the plain of Marengo.⁴ Yet precisely because of their importance, the Italian territories also presented France with serious problems, and their leaders could exert great pressure on her. To obtain men and money from Italy through the channel of an efficient bureaucracy, it was essential to reestablish the political harmony shattered by the violent internal struggles which racked the Italian states in the 1790s. Gaudin was careful to continue his appreciation of the importance of Marengo by pointing out that 'la victoire elle-même eut été inutile si l'administration n'avait pas été toute préparée pour en recueillir les fruits'. To capitalize on their victory, the French had to create a civil administration commanding as wide a support as possible; in the event, this was to mean an administration staffed by as many of the Italian nobility as could be induced to serve.

It is well known that the French in Italy quickly abandoned the extremists who had paved the way for their initial victories, and turned to the moderates for support.⁵ It was difficult to discipline and exploit the tiny provincial republics which were proclaimed in Piedmont after the first French offensives in 1792. Later, it was just as difficult to control the factional struggles in Turin after the collapse of the monarchy and the full French military occupation of late 1798 to late 1799. Accordingly, the French tended increasingly to rely on the collaboration of relatively docile moderate republicans. However, it is rarely pointed out that, between 1800 and 1802, French policy towards Italian collaborators underwent yet another shift. Serious efforts now had to be made to gain the allegiance of the nobility, the very class which had suffered most in the revolutionary period. The French needed to give their rule an aura of legitimacy and stability which the adherence of moderate republicans, mostly drawn from the middle and professional classes, could never provide. Efficient administration through a stable regime would then become possible.

In this paper I examine the reactions of a group of Piedmontese nobles, gathered round Prospero Balbo, to their involvement with the administration of education under the French. Why did they agree to collaborate

d'Italia. Little advance has in fact been made since the study of Tommaso Corsini, 'Di alcuni cooperatori di Napoleone I', in *Ritratti e studi moderni* (Milan, 1914), 397–459. See also the appeal for more detailed biographical study of these men in J. M. Roberts, *Francesco Melzi d'Eril, an Italian Statesman (1796–1806)* (unpublished Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1954).

⁴ Martin-Michel-Charles Gaudin, duc de Gaëte, *Mémoires, Souvenirs, Opinions et Ecrits* (2 vols. Paris, 1826), I, 170–1.

⁵ P. Gaffarel, *Bonaparte et les Républiques italiennes, 1796–1799* (Paris, 1895), p. 29 and note, quoting Bonaparte's famous letter to the Directory of 28 Dec. 1796, 'il y a en ce moment en Lombardie trois partis: 1. celui qui se laisse conduire par les Français; 2. celui qui voudrait la liberté et montre même son désir avec quelque impatience; 3. le parti ami des Autrichiens et ennemi des Français. Je soutiens et j'encourage le premier, je contiens le second, et je réprime le troisième.'

in the first place? French promises to hold down the radical groups were probably the most decisive factor. Other possible reasons, such as economic pressure, may be advanced, but cannot be convincingly sustained. It is undoubted that the period between 1796 and 1814 was one of severe economic stress in northern Italy. But the salaries attached to the upper strata of the University administration in Turin, where appointments among the nobility were to be concentrated, were hardly sufficiently high, at a maximum of 6,000 fr. p.a. for the Rectorship, to overcome all scruples of conscience against collaboration with the French.⁶

In the case of Balbo himself, it could also be argued that his diplomatic career had been instrumental in turning his thoughts towards collaboration. After the Austrian victories of 1799, he certainly considered that Piedmont might have a better chance of survival as a buffer-state within the French orbit than as an Austrian protectorate. But the definitive annexation of Piedmont to France in 1800, and her full legal incorporation with the interior in 1802, would render meaningless the considerations of 1799.⁷

The real reasons for the eagerness of sections of the Piedmontese nobility to accept employment under the French are more convincingly to be found in the political conflicts which centred round the control of education in Piedmont between 1800 and 1802. This area of government had assumed a special importance because republican politics in the 1790s had been dominated by university and college teachers, and because universities and schools were widely credited with the diffusion of new ideas emanating from revolutionary France.⁸ Under the provisional government of Piedmont by General Jean-Baptiste Jourdan⁹ this influence remained. His immediate Italian subordinates, making up the

⁶ Among the teaching staff of the University, the position was rather different. Salaries, never generous (around 2,000 fr. p.a. for a professor) declined in value as the economic situation worsened. Nevertheless, prospects were no brighter in any other kind of employment, and the dissolution in 1809 of the religious orders, to which many teachers belonged, even further increased their dependence on their university salaries. University administrators and university teachers, proceeding from very different economic bases, were thus faced with very different financial problems.

⁷ For Balbo's thought on the situation of Piedmont in 1799, see E. Passamonti, 'Una memoriale inedita di Prospero Balbo nel dicembre 1799', *Accademia delle Scienze di Torino, Atti*, XLIX (1913-14), 914-51. J. M. Roberts has argued, in relation to the Austrian subject territories in Italy, that a strong tradition of the acceptance of *de facto* governments made it easier for the Lombard nobility to collaborate with the French. (*Francesco Melzi d'Eril* § 1). However, these considerations obviously do not apply to Piedmont, ruled by a native dynasty.

⁸ See the social analysis contained in Giorgio Vaccarino, 'L'inchiesta del 1799 sui Giacobini in Piemonte', *Rivista Storica Italiana*, LXXVII (1965), 27-77.

⁹ Jourdan's regime lasted from 1800 to 1802. There is no adequate account of his career, or of the military republican opposition to Napoleon. For Jourdan's disapproval of the coup of brumaire, see *Correspondance de Napoléon I... publiée par ordre de l'Empereur Napoléon III* (32 vols. Paris 1859-), VI, p. 14, no. 4397. Some additional information on military republicanism can be obtained from H. Auréas, *Un Général de Napoléon: Miollis* (Paris, 1961). Miollis was governor-general of the Roman *départements* from 1809 to 1814.

Executive Commission of Piedmont, were Carlo Botta,¹⁰ Carlo Bossi¹¹ and Carlo Giulio. Botta was also a member of the Conseil d'Instruction Publique which took over responsibility for the University of Turin from the Magistrato della Riforma of the old regime. Other members of the Conseil were Sebastiano Giraud and Carlo Brayda. Giraud, like Bossi, Botta and Giulio, was a former member of the staff of the University of Turin.

Under Jourdan's guidance, the Conseil quickly reorganized the University in Turin. The faculties were regrouped and renamed Ecoles Spéciales after the French model. Literary teaching was relegated to the secondary schools, and many professors displaced. Most important of all, the teaching of theology was abolished, a measure which could not fail to arouse great resentment. Meanwhile, Jourdan and his secretary Philippe la Boulinière prepared their own report on the future progress of educational reform.¹² In the fortunes of this plan can be traced the combination of factors which led to the recall of Jourdan, the collapse of the Executive Commission, and the return of conservative groups in Piedmont to power under the French.¹³

At a time when republicanism was becoming increasingly attacked in France, and when the social thinking of the Consulate was becoming increasingly conservative, Jourdan's plan emphasized values of a very different kind. The report acknowledges its debt to the educational scheme for France put forward by Chaptal.¹⁴ This scheme had already been strongly criticized by Napoleon and was eventually to be rejected in favour of the famous report by the future director of education, the chemist Fourcroy. This report established the tightly organised, mili-

¹⁰ The only biography of Botta is still that of Dionisotti (Turin, 1867). Some effort towards a complete listing of his known correspondence was made by Arturo Bersano, Carlo Frati and Carlo Salsotto, in, respectively, *Accademia delle Scienze di Torino, Atti*, xxxvi (1900-1), 969-96; XLVI (1910-11), 12-28; LI (1915-16), 717-48.

¹¹ F. Boyer, 'Carlo Bossi et le Piémont', *Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento*, LIX (1969), 44-57. There is no biographical study of Carlo Giulio, professor of medicine at the University of Turin, who became Prefect of the Stura in 1804, and died in 1814.

¹² Archives Nationales, Paris, F. 17. 1603, Organisation. . ., report of 77 pp. dated 'Premier jour complémentaire, an IX'. All documents cited in this paper are to be found in the Archives Nationales unless otherwise stated. Little information on La Boulinière is available. He seems to have left no printed works. He was dismissed from his post of Secretary of the French administration of Piedmont when Jourdan was recalled in 1802, to reappear in 1804 as professor of geography and history in the University of Turin. I have been unable to discover any information after that date.

¹³ The importance of issues concerning the University of Turin and its staff in determining the crisis of 1802 has never been fully realised. F. Boyer, 'Les institutions universitaires en Piémont de 1800 à 1802', *Revue d'Histoire moderne et contemporaine*, xvii (1970), 913-17, is an extremely brief summary of the main events.

¹⁴ Report quoted, p. 41. Antoine Chaptal (1756-1832) was minister of the Interior from 1800 to 1804. See J. Pigeire, *La vie et l'oeuvre de Chaptal* (Paris, 1932); for his educational thought, R. Tressé, 'J. A. Chaptal et l'enseignement technique de 1800 à 1819', *Revue de l'histoire des Sciences*, x (1957), 167-74.

taristic, and socially exclusive *lycées* in place of the existing *écoles centrales*.¹⁵

The Jourdan scheme emphasized a much less restrictive social base for educational planning. To declare that 'tous les citoyens doivent être habilités à l'administration municipale' was to emphasize egalitarian values at a time when it was fast becoming politically disadvantageous to do so. The report is sometimes even couched in language which might be taken as criticism of the contemporary swing to the right in France, and especially of the gradually increasing prominence of the nobility. 'Nous sommes encore loin du pur républicanisme, tant que la considération due aux citoyens illustres sera aveuglement déversée sur leurs fils, leurs parents, leurs amis, tant que les fonctions publiques leur seront indistinctement confiées. Et nous n'avons réellement fait autre chose que (de) changer de dynastie dans la noblesse héréditaire.' Worse followed. To avoid a return to aristocratic society, the report concluded, everyone must be offered 'les moyens de développer les facultés dont la nature lui a fait présent sans égard des distinctions sociales. . . un état républicain peut subsister sans savants, sans érudits, sans métaphysiciens. Il n'existera jamais sans hommes instruits de leurs droits et leurs devoirs, sans citoyens.'¹⁶ Where Fourcroy saw the educational system as a means of reinforcing existing social divisions, Jourdan's view was quite the reverse. A system where the main interest of the state lay in the diffusion of specialised knowledge at *lycée* and university level would have been totally opposed to his philosophy; so also was the restoration of the aristocracy in Piedmont to the position of cultural and governmental authority which they had enjoyed before 1796.

Jourdan's plan was not easily implemented. At the time it was written, it was uncertain whether a single plan for the organization of education would be adopted in all French territories, or whether each region would be allowed to evolve its own. After submitting his plan, Jourdan wrote to the minister of the Interior emphasizing the political benefits to France of a rapid reorganization of education in Piedmont. Without it, the French could not hope to influence the rising generation in their favour. The minister merely replied that he must wait for a decision until the fate of the government's own plan for education in all French territories had been discussed in the *Corps Législatif*. Meanwhile, officials criticized the Jourdan scheme for laying too much emphasis on the provision of primary education, and for attempting to break away from the centralized planning of Paris. The issues at stake were clearly much wider than

¹⁵ L. P. Williams, 'Science, education and the French Revolution', *Isis*, XLIV (1953), 311-30. For Fourcroy, see G. Kersaint, 'Antoine-François de Fourcroy, 1755-1809', *Mémoires du Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle*, série D, 1 (1966), 1-296. In his lifetime it was widely believed that he had betrayed his master, Lavoisier, to the guillotine. R. Hahn, 'Fourcroy advocate of Lavoisier?', *Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Sciences*, XII (1959), 285-8.

¹⁶ Report quoted, pp. 2, 10, 14.

the future of Piedmontese schools. The degree to which the provinces of the Empire should be integrated with metropolitan France was also under discussion. The centralized French state did not spring fully armed from the head of Napoleon; it was the result of several years of bargaining and compromise with both French and Italians interested in the government of the occupied territories.

In the end Jourdan obtained permission to implement his plan only for another year.¹⁷ But twelve months later, discussions in Paris on the foundation of a *lycée* in Turin were already well advanced, and the centralized plan embodied in the Fourcroy report had been approved for use in all territories legally incorporated into metropolitan France.¹⁸ Jourdan began to use Fabian tactics to preserve his scheme. When asked why the *lycée* in Turin was taking so long to open, he emphasized the difficulty of gathering sufficient information to prosecute such an important task; and as long as he remained in Piedmont, information continued to be extraordinarily difficult to gather. Meanwhile, Carlo Botta went to Paris to try to negotiate a favourable decision on the fate of the scheme.¹⁹ But before anything had been decided, Jourdan was recalled to Paris and replaced by a temporary governor-general, Alexis Charbonnière,²⁰ who controlled Piedmont until the arrival of the new permanent governor, General Menou.

Charbonnière's task was to smooth Menou's passage into Turin. To do this, he had to dispose of the Executive Commission, which had been closely linked to Jourdan and the republicanism shown in his educational plan and his long rearguard action in its defence. After the annexation of Piedmont, the Commission was no longer needed by the French; in fact it became harmful to them, because of the factional disputes aroused in Turin between other political groups jealous of its pre-eminent position. The French could not long afford to tolerate such political instability in an important subject state.²¹

The new envoy launched his attack on the Commission by the dismissal of the Conseil d'Instruction Publique on charges of corruption in the administration of the revenues of the University and of attempting to block the introduction of the French educational system into Piedmont. Charbonnière appointed his own investigating commission to provide

¹⁷ F. 17. 1603, Organisation... fo. 2, 15 vendémiaire an X; fo. 4, 4 frimaire an X; fos. 14–16, n.d.; fo. 26, 9 brumaire an X; fo. 30, n.d.

¹⁸ Decree of 21 frimaire, an IX.

¹⁹ F. 17. 1603, Organisation... fo. 45, 15 vendémiaire an XI.

²⁰ Alexis Charbonnière (1778–1819) began his career as a cavalry officer under the old regime. In 1802 he was appointed secretary-general *per interim* to the French administration in Piedmont, and in 1806 was rewarded for his services by a post in the Imperial guard of honour. He was also the author of several forgotten plays and poems. Contemporary opinion on his political work in Piedmont is contained in Giorgio Vaccarino, 'La classe politica piemontese dopo Marengo, nelle note segrete di Augusto Hus', *Bollettino storico-bibliografico subalpino*, LV (1953), 5–74.

²¹ Report of Charbonnière, F. 1E 78, 13 nivôse, an XI.

evidence to substantiate these charges. The Conseil itself was replaced by a new body²² composed of Balbo's friend, Count Giovanni Saluzzo, his old teacher Baudisson,²³ and his relative, Count Faletti-Barolo. The investigating commission was headed by Cavalli, the senior magistrate in the Appeal Court in Turin, and a close friend of Baudisson. In this way, a tightly linked group of conservatives dominated the attack on the Conseil and thus precipitated the fall of the Executive Commission, whose members had served on both bodies. The close connection of the members of the Commission and of the Conseil with republican movements within the University in Turin, and their interests in the direction of education after 1800, had determined that Charbonnière's attack would centre round the issue of the control of educational institutions.

The victory of the nobility was fully supported by Menou.²⁴ Their demands for the preservation of the old educational structure, and for the return of religious teaching and observance to the University were sympathetically received, and led to their willing acceptance of the French system, which was not very different from that operating in mainland Piedmont before 1796. Saluzzo pointed out with relief that 'les lycées sont donc assez conformes à nos collèges d'instruction provinciale, et il n'y a d'autre différence qu'en ce qui se rapporte aux enseignements de la langue française'. His sentiments were echoed in Paris, where it was emphasized that 'en donnant à Turin un Lycée et quelques écoles spéciales, aux villes inférieures des écoles secondaires, et aux communes des campagnes des écoles primaires, les choses se trouvent à cet égard dans le Piémont à peu près sur le pied où ils étoient sous l'ancien gouvernement'.

Preparations for the opening of the *lycée* suddenly began to go ahead with considerably greater speed than they had under Jourdan. Inspectors sent out from Paris praised the co-operation and efficiency of the new governor-general, just as they praised the political means which he used to obtain this administrative efficiency. They well understood the importance of that 'calme que l'Administrateur-Général a contribué à établir par tous les moyens de rapprochement qui sont dans sa main'.

²² Reports in F. 17. 1606, Personnel et Affaires diverses. See also Brayda, Botta et Giraud, *Vicissitudes de l'Instruction Publique en Piémont depuis l'an VII jusqu'au mois de ventôse an XI* (Turin, 1803).

²³ See I. M. Baudisson, *Orationes pro Comite Prospero Balbo*... (Turin, 1780). Baudisson, a professor of canon law, had lost his chair in the reorganization of the University by the Conseil d'Instruction publique.

²⁴ F. 17. 1603, Correspondance... an XI. No study exists of Menou's Italian career. Of aristocratic origins, he was a loyal supporter of Napoleon, and accompanied him on the Egyptian campaign. After the assassination of Kléber, and the departure of Napoleon, he became commander-in-chief of the army of the Orient. In 1808 he was made governor of the newly annexed Tuscan departments, and in 1810 governor of Venetia. He died in 1812. Paul Marmottan's *Le Général Menou en Toscane* (Paris, 1904) briefly sketches a few of the more lurid episodes of his career. His extensive correspondence with Eugène Beauharnais, Governor of the Regno d'Italia, is preserved in Princeton University Library.

It was thus on a basis of cooperation between the French and the Piedmontese nobility that the introduction of the French system of education was effected.²⁵ But the nobility were to discover that collaboration with the French, however necessary, was neither pleasant nor easy. Their political accommodation with the occupying power could only arouse intense resentment among the moderate republicans now relegated, after a brief taste of power, to the class-room and lecture-hall. Further, the ordinary administration of institutions in the annexed territories was full of painful surprises, especially in relation to financial questions.

The mechanisms are now well understood by which the French liquidated the state debts of the occupied territories, invested the funds so gained for their own profit, and at the same time funded the remaining institutions in these territories from such investments.²⁶ However, the internal functioning of institutions funded by these methods has received little attention. In the case of the universities in Italy, Napoleon's own statements of policy clearly stated that the universities would as far as possible finance themselves from the interest on their endowments, which the French had invested on their behalf in state loans. Direct subsidies to the universities from government departments were frowned upon.²⁷ This scheme could only function efficiently given an adequate initial endowment, and a measure of promptitude and honesty on the part of the agencies charged with the payment to the University of its interests. In the case of Turin, these provisos were not met. The university, enormously wealthy before 1796, now suffered a crippling financial burden,²⁸ and the conduct of the French financial agencies strained the loyalty of Balbo and his colleagues almost to breaking point.

Between 1799 and 1805, the University had administered its own endowments, which provided it with an annual income of about 500,000 fr. Such revenues and such independence could not last long. Very early on, Saluzzo expressed his fears that the university would be placed at the mercy of 'la cupidité des financiers'.²⁹ His forebodings were justified. On

²⁵ F. 17. 1603, Correspondance... an XI, 'Délibération du Conseil-Général du Département du Pô, 6 floréal, an XIII... sur la proposition du C. Baudisson, de demander... la conservation de l'Université de Turin'. For Saluzzo's comments, see F. 17. 1607, Personnel; for the comments of the Inspectors Villars and Lefèvre-Ginau, see F. 17. 1611, Lycée, report of 25 frimaire an XII.

²⁶ Marcel Marion, *Histoire Financière de la France depuis 1715* (6 vols. Paris, 1927), vol. IV, ch. 6, 8-9.

²⁷ *Correspondance*... XVIII, 89, no. 14503; F. 17. 1602, fo. 233, doss. 4.

²⁸ Financial difficulties forced Balbo to suspend the opening of the departments of art, pharmacy, and veterinary medicine. No salaries could be paid to the professors of music, the keeper of the botanical gardens, or to the staff of the Museum of Natural History. It was impossible to open a new anatomy theatre, establish an extra chair of medicine, or a new student hostel, all of which improvements had been envisaged by the 'reorganisation' of 1802. Salaries of teaching staff were paid at least three, and often nine, months in arrears. F. 17. 1605, letter of 24 Apr. 1807; F. 17. 1603, report of 28 Apr. 1811.

²⁹ F. 17. 1607, Personnel et notes diverses, Saluzzo to Fourcroy, 12 messidor an XI.

Napoleon's initiative, the minister of the Interior had already decided the university's fate.³⁰ The Domaine sold the university's property and invested the proceeds in 5 % consolidated shares. From this, it was to pay the University annually the resulting 300,000 fr. The Domaine's profit came from delaying payment of the interest and reinvesting it during the delay. Furthermore, of the 300,000 fr., one-tenth was to be retained by the University as an endowment fund, so that its real annual revenue was 270,000 fr., little more than half the amount obtained before 1805.

Difficulties over payment through the Domaine began almost immediately. Delays of up to ten months were common, and left the university with an initial deficit of 157,607 fr.³¹ When payment was eventually obtained, it was in the form of drafts on the Receveur des Domaines in Turin, and on the Receveur Général for the *département*.³² This meant that the university would again be faced with delays in payment, since the Receveurs also depended for their profit on prolonging the period between the receipt and payment of funds so that they could speculate with the money they held.

Other drafts, on the Caisse d'Amortissement, were also given to the university. This was just as likely to delay payment, as the Caisse was regularly used by Napoleon to maintain the levels of purchase of state loans at times when confidence in the regime was low. When levels of purchase were high, interest payments tended to be reduced, and no exception was made for the University.

In 1811, the atmosphere became increasingly heated, and Balbo and the governing body of the University accused the Domaine of swindling them by misrepresenting the amount of revenue obtainable from the University's endowment. In August, part of the missing sum was ordered to be paid, but no cash ever materialized, and unpaid arrears continued to cripple the University's finely-balanced finances. By 1813, functionaries of the central educational administration in Paris regarded their defeat at the hands of the financial agencies as inevitable. Attached to one of Balbo's letters of complaint is a despairing comment:

Voici une note de M. de Balbe sur la manière dont l'Académie de Turin est payée des rentes qui lui appartiennent. Comme l'expérience m'a prouvée que toute réclamation relative aux finances est inutile et de nul effet, je me borne à vous transmettre cette note, sans y joindre aucune observation, et seulement pour l'acquiescement de ma conscience.³³

³⁰ *Correspondance*. . . VIII, 278, no. 6593; IX, 651, no. 8008. F. 17. 1607, *ibid.* minister of the Interior to minister of Finance, 13 prairial XIII; F. 17. 1603, fo. 36, 18 germinal XI.

³¹ F. 17. 1609, Ecole de Médecine, procès-verbal of 29 brumaire XIV; F. 17. 1607, letter of 12 May 1807.

³² F. 17. 1613, Domaines, letter of 1 June 1813.

³³ *Ibid.* note of Coiffier to Cuvier, 30 Aug. 1813. See also F. 17. 1605, procès-verbal of 11 July 1811, para 51. 'Le Directeur du Domaine du Pô à force de subterfuges et de prétextes évasifs a réussi jusqu'à présent à contrarier et rendre inutile toute espèce de démarche'.

Financial transactions such as these, unpleasant, frustrating, and with disturbing implications for long-range planning, made up the greater part of the day-to-day administration of the University. This renders even more pressing the need to explain what made continued collaboration worthwhile for the Italians.

The origin of their reaction must be sought at a period far earlier than that of the annexation of 1802. Nearly half a century before, in 1759, the young Count Giovanni Saluzzo, Count Giovanni Cigna³⁴ and Louis Lagrange, the famous mathematician, had together founded the *Accademia delle Scienze* in Turin. They soon attracted royal patronage and began to publish the scientific work of many famous scholars, especially those of French nationality. In 1788 Balbo, who was also involved with many other newly-founded learned societies, became secretary to the *Accademia*. In this way, he and his friends became part of the contemporary European revival of interest in learned societies.³⁵ They also placed themselves in contact with the leading figures of the French scientific world, many of whom were to be metamorphosed by the Revolution into propounders and administrators of the new state educational organisation. Condorcet contributed papers to the proceedings of the *Accademia*; Lavoisier corresponded with it. Saluzzo in later years referred proudly to his 'assez constante correspondance' with both men.

Balbo's involvement with the revival of the academies would have allowed him to view with sympathy the ideas put forward by Condorcet, during the revolutionary period, on the role of the state in education. Chief among them was the direction of instruction and research at all levels by a master-academy,³⁶ not very different either from the Imperial University established by Napoleon between 1806 and 1808, or from the University of Turin as it was in Balbo's youth. Reforms undertaken in Piedmont in 1772 had given the University, governed by the *Magistrato della Riforma*, the surveillance of all stages of education in mainland Piedmont. It was often claimed later, with some plausibility, that the University of Turin had inspired the pattern of the Imperial University. It is certainly true that in Piedmont the manipulation of educational institutions to produce docile citizens was received practice long before 1796.³⁷ Balbo and his group were thus well prepared by their own

³⁴ For Cigna's contribution to the theory of combustion, see R. Fric (ed.) *Oeuvres de Lavoisier. . . Correspondance* (3 vols. Paris, 1953), II, 432–3, 461.

³⁵ G. Torcellan, 'La Società Agraria di Torino', *Rivista Storica Italiana*, LXXVI (1964), 530–52; E. W. Cochrane, *Tradition and Enlightenment in the Tuscan Academies, 1690–1800* (Rome, 1961); Roger Hahn, *The Anatomy of a Scientific Institution: the Paris Academy of Sciences, 1666–1803* (Berkeley, California, 1971).

³⁶ K. M. Baker, 'Les débuts de Condorcet au Secrétariat de l'Académie Royale des Sciences, 1773–1776', *Revue d'Histoire des Sciences*, XX (1967), 229–80. For the continuing acceptance of this idea in Italy, see *Magasin Encyclopédique*, XL (1801), 96, 'Le C. Cagnoli, Président de la Société Italienne des Sciences au C. Delambre, Secrétaire de l'Institut National à Paris, Lyon, 3 pluviôse an X'.

³⁷ E. Rendu, *A. Rendu et l'Université de France* (Paris, 1861), p. 42; M. Viara, 'Gli ordinamenti della Università di Torino nel secolo XVIII', *Bollettino Storico-Bibliografico Subal-*

experience, as well as by their French contacts, for the form that the organization of education was to take under Napoleon.

Actual attendance at the University of Turin also created close personal links between men who were to follow very different paths in the 1790s. Michele Brugnone, professor of medicine, and member of the government of 1798; Carlo Giulio, professor of medicine and member of the Executive Commission of 1800; and Benedetto Bonvicino, professor of medicine and president of the Municipality of Turin in 1801, all frequented Balbo's group, and were members of the *Accademia*.³⁸ The diversity of the political views adopted by those who had been so intellectually united in the 1770s and 1780s should perhaps lead to some modification of the now fashionable interpretation of the revolutionary period in terms which equate radicalism with an interest in the new physical and social sciences emerging at the end of the century.³⁹

Under the Empire, the staff of the University of Turin in fact represented the whole spectrum of political outlook. Some had supported the union of an independent Piedmont with the Cisalpine Republic, like the Boyer brothers, professors of hydraulics and mechanics. There were also those who, at first sympathetic to the French cause, had not dared brave prison or exile in 1799, and had recanted their opinions. Filippo Regis, professor of law, though president of the *Società Patriotica* in Turin, yet published a long declaration of monarchist principles after the Austro-Russian victory, thereby escaping the penalties imposed on extreme republicans such as the medical professors Balbis and Buniva.⁴⁰ Others collaborated with the French, but wisely chose to do so after political confusions had been resolved by the purge of the Executive Commission in 1802. Antonio Franchi, another professor of law, for example, had acted as secretary to the Cavalli commission which provided material for the attack on Botta, Brayda and Giraud. After their fall, his career went from strength to strength. In 1804 he was a member of the electoral college for Turin, and a candidate for the *Corps Législatif* in Paris.⁴¹ Another professor of law, Gaspare de' Gregori, resisted pressure from the extreme radical Ranza to join the annexationist party. This piece of political wisdom earned him a sub-prefecture at Lanzo in 1801. In 1809,

pino, XLV (1942), 42–54. For Bogino's policy towards the University of Cagliari, see F. Venturi, 'Il conte Bogino, il Dottor [sic] Cossu, e i Monti Frumentari', *Rivista Storica Italiana*, LXXVI (1964), 470–506. For earlier policy towards educational reform in Piedmont, see G. Quazza, *Le riforme in Piemonte nella prima metà del settecento* (2 vols. Modena, 1957) II, ch. x.

³⁸ Most of these details are to be found in Prospero Balbo, *Lezione accademiche... intorno alla storia della Università di Torino* (6 vols. Turin, 1825) II, 194ff. Contemporary scientific work in the University is described in A. Pace, *Benjamin Franklin and Italy* (Philadelphia, 1958), ch. 'Eruption Caelo Fulmen'.

³⁹ E.g. R. Darnton, *Mesmerism and the End of the Enlightenment in France* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968).

⁴⁰ N. Bianchi, *Storia della Monarchia Piemontese dal 1779 sino al 1861* (4 vols. Rome–Florence–Turin, 1877), III, 339; F. 17. 1607, Faculté des Sciences, Etats de service.

⁴¹ F. 17. 1607, Ecole de Droit, Balbo to Champagny, 2 Apr. 1807.

he was deputy in the *Corps Législatif* for the Sésia, and in 1811, together with Cavalli, was given high legal office in Rome.⁴²

It would seem that among the teaching staff of the university the French had been successful in creating an amalgam of all political parties, prepared to work together under the French. But a closer examination shows that this was far from the case. Real extremists had been completely excluded. Of the rest, it was rare for any but the willing collaborators, with records clean of political involvements in the last decade, to be accorded honours by the French. Careful police supervision of the University was in any case always on hand to repress movements of discontent.⁴³ No real reconciliation had taken place. The remaining republicans had been left powerless, but discontented at the favour shown to the nobility by Napoleon.

If the policy of *amalgame* so often enunciated by the emperor⁴⁴ had really been intended to be put into operation, Balbo's career in the period before 1806 should have disqualified him from holding office in an administration so filled with disgruntled republicans. Few could have shown themselves more faithful to the Sardinian monarchy. As Piedmontese ambassador in Paris, he tried unsuccessfully between 1796 and 1799 to avert the advance of the French. When the monarchy collapsed, he followed the king into exile in Sardinia and Tuscany, only returning to Turin when in 1802 all émigrés were threatened with the confiscation of their property. He remained completely apart from public life until his appointment as rector of the University in 1805, refusing several offers of employment in the Conseil d'Etat in Paris. In this interval of private life, he and a group of friends decided to attend to the education of their children, rather than expose them to the baneful influence of the French institutions. Saverio Provana and Filippo Grimaldi taught the children mathematics and physics, and Balbo himself took charge of their literary studies. Maintenance of the traditions of monarchist Piedmont was also actively taken up by the children themselves. In 1804 a group which included Balbo's second son, Cesare, and his friend, the young Carlo Vidua, founded the *Accademia de' Concordi* and admitted Balbo and his circle as senior members. Its demand for the increasing study of the Italian language as a gesture of protest against French domination cannot have been displeasing to their parents.⁴⁵

⁴² A. Bersano, 'Un conformista: Gaspare Antonio de'Gregori,' *Bollettino Storico-Bibliografico Subalpino*, LXVI (1968), 523-40.

⁴³ E. d'Hauterive, *La Police secrète du premier Empire: Bulletins quotidiens adressés par Fouché à l'Empereur: d'après les documents originaux inédits déposés aux Archives Nationales* (4 vols. Paris, 1922).

⁴⁴ For statements of the policy of representing all shades of political opinion in the filling of positions, see *Correspondance*...VI, p. 152, no. 5528; VIII, p. 389, no. 6735; x, p. 451, 8663.

⁴⁵ E. Passerin d'Entrèves, *La giovinezza di Cesare Balbo* (Rome, 1940), p. 9; G. Gentile, 'L'eredità di Vittorio Alfieri', *Opere Complete* (Florence, 1963), vol. xvii; V. Cian, *Gli alfieriani-foscoliani piemontesi ed il romanticismo lombardo-piemontese del primo risorgimento*

If any real policy of *amalgame* had been held by the French such a pronounced royalist as Balbo could never have been appointed as rector of a university, many of whose staff held strongly opposed political views. Indeed, Balbo was even chosen *in preference* to Giovanni Saluzzo, who was far less associated with adherence to the fallen monarchy. Only a shift in French policy towards a definite favouring of the nobility can explain such an appointment.⁴⁶

The detailed account of Balbo's reception of his nomination to the post must be reconstructed almost entirely from his own account of the matter. Neither Lecestre nor the authorised version of Napoleon's correspondence contains much material on the Italian journey of 1804–5, and the recent monumental edition of Cambacérès' correspondence with the Emperor is similarly deficient.⁴⁷ We know that Balbo did meet Napoleon in 1805.⁴⁸ The rest of the story is contained in a letter which he wrote to Carlo Emanuele IV, after the Restoration, in order to excuse his collaboration with the invader.

In the end, all I hoped for was to be forgotten; but in the autumn of 1805 I saw in the newspapers that I had been nominated Rector of the University. This position could have pleased me, because it was neither lucrative nor prominent, because it suited my interests, and above all, because it would save me from other harassment. Nonetheless I remained doubtful (whether I should accept it) and I asked advice from persons loyal to your Majesty and lovers of their country. They all urged me to accept, pointing out that though I might not be able to do all the good I wished to do, I could at least prevent much harm; and that in any case, that I should not leave to some Frenchman chosen by intrigue in Paris and a stranger to our customs, or to some Piedmontese upstart from the revolutionary years, a position so important for the education of our rising generation. These considerations convinced me, and I have nothing to repent of, for my success outstripped my hopes. I laboured long and hard, and suffered bitter conflicts, terrible persecution, and unceasing worries. However, in the end I succeeded in controlling my enemies. . . the old institutions were preserved and, where possible, restored; the old traditions, most glorious for the royal family, were recalled on every occasion, and commemorated, not without daring.⁴⁹

(Rome, 1934). After 1802 the official language of Piedmont was French. This made the political significance of the language question much greater in the former kingdom than it was in areas such as Tuscany, where Italian was kept as the language of official transactions. It seems likely that Balbo would have used both languages in the domestic circle, especially as his second wife, Madeleine des Isnards, widow of the Comte de Séguin, was French.

⁴⁶ Significantly, Botta ascribed his failure to gain the Rectorship himself to the fears of the French 'de déplaire à la noblesse piémontaise' A. Bersano, 'Il fondo Rigoletti dell'epistolario Botta', *Bollettino storico-bibliografico subalpino*, LVI (1958), 351–79; no. 221. See also A. Neri, 'Una lettera apologetica di Carlo Botta', *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 5 ser., ix (1892), 76–87.

⁴⁷ J. Tulard, (ed.) *Cambacérès: Lettres inédites à Napoléon* (2 vols. Paris, 1974).

⁴⁸ Bianchi, *Storia*. . . iv, 369.

⁴⁹ Quoted in E. Passamonti, 'Prospero Balbo e la Rivoluzione. . .'; pp. 206–9. Another version of this letter, in French, is printed in M. degli Alberti, *Lettere inedite di Carlo Emanuele IV. . . ed altre*, 1814–1824 (Turin, 1900), pp. 30–8.

Possible modifications may be suggested in this account. Balbo had frequently been solicited by the French authorities in Turin to accept employment, and the renewed request of 1805 can hardly have come as a great surprise. His years in Paris would also have brought him into contact with many Frenchmen now influential in Italian affairs, including Napoleon himself. While in Paris as ambassador, he had also been called upon to participate in the deliberations of the Commission meeting to determine the bases of the metric system.⁵⁰ Here he would have met men such as Louis Lefèvre-Ginau⁵¹ who were later to be instrumental in introducing the French educational system into Piedmont, and who would have served in the intervening years to keep Balbo's name before the French authorities.

However, examination of Balbo's actions as rector does largely bear out his emphasis to Carlo Emanuele on the conservative and defensive aspects of his tenure in office. In the university, Balbo was surrounded by the same group of nobles who had returned to power after 1802, and who had dominated intellectual life in Turin in the period before the Revolution. Giovanni Saluzzo, who had also been considered by the French for the post of rector, became Balbo's immediate subordinate, as inspector of the Academy of Turin. Cesare Saluzzo, his son, became a second inspector of the academy by a decree of 27 April 1811. His brother Alessandro became head of the *lycée* in Turin in January 1814. Balbo's uncle, the Abate Incisa-Beccaria, formerly a member of the *Magistrato della Riforma*, returned as head of the Pensionat Académique, or student accommodation; both he and his predecessor in the post, Carlo Adami, had held corresponding positions under the monarchy. In March 1811, Incisa-Beccaria was made a member of the governing body of the University, and was decorated with the title of *Officier* of the Imperial University.

A similar tendency in the making of appointments may be discerned further down the educational ladder, in the Piedmontese *Lycées*. At Casale, Iacinto Carena, another elderly man with a long history of involvement with the Monarchy, was made *Provisieur*. A friend of Giovanni Saluzzo, he had been for many years secretary to the king's personal office. The financial administrator at Casale was Joseph Pieroleri, a client of Balbo ever since he had been his secretary in the embassy to Paris. Largely through Balbo's influence, Joseph's brother Francesco became secretary to the University in Turin. In running the administration of education in Piedmont, the French showed not only their intention of favouring the nobility and their clients; they also revealed their

⁵⁰ For the Commission des Poids et Mesures, see M. P. Crosland, *Science in France in the Revolutionary Era, described by T. Bugge* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969). Bugge was the Danish delegate to the Commission.

⁵¹ Louis Lefèvre-Ginau (1751–1829), mathematician and engineer, member of the Institut in 1795, Inspector-General of Public Instruction in 1802. In 1807 he became a member of the *Corps Législatif*.

dependence on the administrative expertise of the old regime governments to carry on the business of their over-extended Empire.⁵²

In the period before the definitive establishment of the Imperial University in 1808, the main development in the life of the university in Turin was the resolution in the favour of the conservatives of the struggle over religious observance. The way in which the university had been reorganized by the Executive Commission had made this issue one of great symbolic importance. A victory for religion was a victory against the radicals. When the university church was reopened in 1807, Balbo commented, 'Tout annonce que... les exercices de religion qui auront lieu tous les jours de fête seront très suivis par les élèves, malgré l'opposition de quelques personnes qui heureusement ont perdu beaucoup de leur influence.' In 1810, the teaching of theology was at last restored to the university. Balbo viewed this as a return to the proper traditions of the university distorted in the radical period. He commented to the governing body, 'Rappelée dans notre sein, la faculté de théologie y est accueillie avec d'autant plus de plaisir qu'elle a formé, il y a plus de quatre siècles, le premier noyau de l'Université de Turin.' Shortly afterwards, Balbo went even further in his efforts to preserve university traditions, by opening a library containing 'Une collection des ouvrages qui peuvent servir à l'histoire de l'Université de Turin et de ses anciens professeurs'.⁵³

At the end of the period between 1806 and 1808, legal changes took place which should completely have altered the status of the University of Turin. In 1806, the first organizing decrees of the Imperial University were promulgated. This state organization was given complete control over all levels of education, apart from some restrictions on its control of seminary teaching. The territory of the Empire was divided into Academies usually corresponding to the jurisdictional area of the Appeal Court for the same area. The university of that area was, under the control of the central administration in Paris, given the surveillance of all levels of education within the area of the academy. Thus Balbo as rector was responsible for the administration not only of the university itself, but also for primary and secondary education within almost the whole area of the old Monarchy. At the same time he was expected to enforce a complex system of regulations dealing with the new French university examination system, and a whole series of financial transactions

⁵² Similar remarks could be made about the composition of the administration of metropolitan France. Both Gaudin and Lebrun, the financial expert, Third Consul and *Architrésorier* of the Empire, for example, had already achieved distinction in the government of the old regime before 1792. Exploration of this neglected topic would tell us much about the continuities between Napoleonic and royal France. For the rest of the information in the preceding paragraphs, see F. 17. 1607, Personnel, fo. 98, 8 Jan. 1814, para. 1; F. 17. 1611, Lycée, report of 9 Apr. 1811; F. 17. 1604, Personnel, fo. 84; F. 17. 1605, 18 July 1811; F. 17. 1611, Lycée, letter of 13 Feb. 1813.

⁵³ For the theology faculty, see E. Passamonti, *Prospero Balbo e la rivoluzione...*, p. 205; F. 17. 1605, Balbo to Champagny, 22 Apr. 1807. For the library, see F. 17. 1613, budget for 1809. This library probably provided much material for the *Lezioni Accademiche*.

between Paris and Turin arising from this system. Apart from this, the new functions of the university were little different from those it performed under the old *Magistrato della Riforma*. After the financial changes of 1804–5, however, the university was left with little more than half of the revenues even of the revolutionary period with which to carry out these demanding functions. It was hardly surprising that Balbo, even apart from his hostility to the French regime as such, should have tried to delay the implementation of the decrees of 1806. He argued that the University regulations of 1806 and those of 1802, formulated by Saluzzo, contained nothing contrary to each other, and that the older regulations should therefore remain in force. For two years he argued the case with Paris, and took care that nothing changed in Turin. In 1808, however, the final organizing decrees of the Imperial University were published. Fourcroy resigned as director of public instruction to be replaced by Louis de Fontanes as grand-master of the Imperial University. The new and more urgent threat brought out an even greater mastery of the tactics of delay on Balbo's part. Those professors in the university who hastened to comply with the new regulations were fobbed off so effectively that one of the professors of medicine wrote a letter of complaint to Paris. Balbo waited six months to react to the charges. When at last he did answer the queries from Paris, he admitted the delays politely, but hardly accounted for them satisfactorily.

Je supplie votre Excellence de vouloir bien excuser les délais qui ont eu lieu jusqu'au présent, et je puis l'assurer que la presque totalité des agents de l'instruction publique actuellement en place dans l'arrondissement de l'Académie de Turin désire de se mettre parfaitement en règle pour pouvoir [faire] parti de l'Université Impériale.

Strategic delay, however, continued to be used to good effect, and it was only in 1812 that the governing body of the University at last got round to discussing the implementation of many of the basic provisions of the French system. Until 1808, the astonishing weakness of direction from Paris helped Balbo to maintain this polite disregard of French attempts to remodel the university. He made full use of his privilege of corresponding directly with the minister of the Interior, to put his grievances before the highest authority in the most favourable light. At the same time this manoeuvre kept Fourcroy so short of information on the state of affairs in Turin that effective control from Paris was impossible. He admitted, in reply to Balbo's letter, 'Je n'ai pu me former aucun avis sur les objets énoncés parceque je ne connais pas le montant des rétributions ni même l'organisation de l'Université.' Against this background of ineffectual complaint, the dark warnings issued to Fourcroy that Balbo's administration was 'tendant évidemment à ramener l'ancien régime de l'Université dans toute son étendue . . . et à rétablir une

instruction publique absolument piémontaise', were unlikely to produce much immediate reaction.

Balbo also continued to fight to retain control of the making of appointments within the University. Only after a protracted struggle did he concede that the right to ratify appointments lay with the grand-master in Paris. Even after this, the making of appointments was in practice still controlled firmly by Balbo and his friends. Many of his clients and relatives had already been found employment in the educational administration. Over the years, Turin eroded the initiative of Paris still further. The manoeuvres leading up to Alessandro Saluzzo's appointment to the *lycée* in Turin in 1814 form a case in point. Balbo described them in a letter to Fontanes.

Monsieur Hannibal de Saluces, un des écuyers de sa Majesté l'Empereur, a eu l'honneur de parler à votre Excellence d'un projet d'après lequel M. Alexandre son frère, succéderait à M. Adami dans la place de Proviseur du Lycée de Turin . . . il jouit dans ce pays de toute la considération qui est due à son nom, à sa mérite, à ses services militaires, et aux connoissances qu'il possède, et qui sont pour ainsi dire héréditaires dans cette branche de son illustre famille'.⁵⁴

Balbo's claims that he had as far as possible maintained the traditions, possessions and institutions of the University are thus largely borne out by his actions. The French paid a high price for the politically stabilising effects of reinstating the conservative nobility. Balbo's first loyalty was always to his friends and to the institution he directed, rather than to the French. While the French could weaken the University financially, they could not impose many structural changes without arousing a highly effective opposition.

Further, the central administration of education established in 1808 possessed a highly distinctive character. Handpicked by Napoleon to symbolize the new stable, conservative state he had created in France, the mentality of the officials in Paris played into the hands of the collaborators in Turin. The establishment of the Imperial University completed the movement which the signing of the Concordat and the publication of the *Génie du Christianisme* had begun in 1802. Its functionaries tended to be men who had made their way in the world by supporting Napoleon's campaign against *idéologie*, and in favour of the return of conservative values to public life and of state imperatives to public education. This was the logical consequence of the idea that the untrammelled diffusion of knowledge had caused the horrors and catastrophes of the Revolution. At the head of the university was placed Louis de Fontanes, a man who supported moderate royalism in 1793 and had been exiled in England for his pains, together with his friend Chateaubriand. On his return he collaborated with Lucien Bonaparte on the

⁵⁴ For Fourcroy, and the warnings of the Inspector-General Sédillez, see F. 17. 1703, letters of 21 June 1809, 2 Nov. 1809; For Saluzzo, see F. 17. 1606, letter of 31 Jan. 1812.

famous pamphlet, *Parallèle entre César, Cromwell et Bonaparte*, published in November 1800, but almost immediately suppressed as showing too clearly the First Consul's ambition for supreme power. In 1802 he launched a series of attacks in the press on the liberal opposition, and on Mme de Staël in particular. The campaign culminated in a laudatory review of the *Génie* in the *Mercure* of 15 April 1802. Such was the review's success as a justification of the regime's progression towards conservatism, that Napoleon ordered it to be reprinted in the official *Moniteur* three days later, to coincide with the celebrations which marked the reconciliation of Church and State.

It seemed only fitting that those who through the press had guided opinion towards acceptance of Napoleon's undivided power before 1808, should do so through the medium of educational institutions after that date. Most of Fontanes' assistants shared his background and views. The brothers Philibert and François Guéneau de Mussy, for example, had both been expelled from the Ecole Normale in 1793 for refusing to take an oath of hatred towards monarchies. Under Napoleon, François returned to the Ecole Normale as its Director, and Philibert became an inspector-general of Education. Antoine Arnault, one of the most scathing critics of the Jourdan plan, was equally close to Fontanes; in his autobiography, he stresses the similarity of their views on education, and of their admiration for the Emperor. Previously, Napoleon had used Arnault, a successful dramatist, to strengthen his links with the literary world. Another inspector-general, Jean Joubert, was a friend of Chateaubriand, and Fontanes' collaborator in the article on Mme. de Staël.⁵⁵

After 1808 Fontanes' political views went even further than Napoleon had intended them to do. Support of the Concordat was one thing; support of ultramontanism in the state educational system was another. In 1810 the Emperor's mounting distrust of Fontanes' religious policy came to a head in the famous police enquiry into the conduct of the Imperial University in that year.⁵⁶

Thus the administration of education which appeared in Piedmont after 1808 was moulded by men holding opinions tending to be even more conservative than those of the Emperor himself. These men worked with the conservative groups restored by the French. One of the most important political functions of the Imperial University in the annexed territories was to preserve and stabilize this body of conservative support. Its

⁵⁵ Such examples could be extended. See A. Aulard, *Napoléon I et le Monopole Universitaire* (Paris, 1911); P. Jeannin, 'Une lettre d'Augustin Périer, sur la suppression de l'Ecole Normale', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, xv (1968), 466–70; A. Arnault, *Souvenirs d'un Sexagénaire* (4 vols. Paris, 1835), III, 292; P. de Reynal, *Les correspondants de Joubert* (Paris, 1883), p. 77; A. Wilson, *Fontanes, essai biographique et littéraire, 1757–1821* (Paris, 1928).

⁵⁶ Ch. Schmidt, *La réforme de l'Université Impériale en 1811* (Paris, 1905). For Fontanes' hostility to Fouché, see L. Madelin, *Fouché, 1759–1820* (2 vols. Paris, 1901) Fouché had been one of the terrorists sent out in 1793 to quell the rebellion in Lyons, Fontanes' native city.

task was made easier by its substantial agreement on social policy with the attitudes of the collaborators: this made a system workable which otherwise would not have withstood the intense resentment generated by the actions of the financial bodies.⁵⁷

But this very degree of political collusion meant that the French retained only a limited freedom of manoeuvre. Balbo spoke in his letter to Carlo Emanuele of the 'aspri combattimenti e terribile persecuzione' which his functions as rector had compelled him to suffer. Undoubtedly, he was referring at least partly to his prolonged struggle with the medical faculty within the University of Turin. Balbo's delays in introducing the French system of examination were the ostensible causes of the dispute. It is also possible, however, to view it as a movement of political opposition against the conservative monarchist Balbo, by men who had been deeply involved in radical politics before 1802.

The dean of the faculty, Benedetto Bonvicino, had an impressive record of support for the early revolutionary regimes in Piedmont, as

Commissaire du Gouvernement pour installer les autorités civiles, politiques et militaires dans le département de la Stura, et Président permanent de la Municipalité de Turin en 1799, membre de la Consulte en 1800, de la Commission Municipale... en 1801, Président du Collège électoral de l'arrondissement de Coni, et membre du Corps Législatif en 1801.

The background of his supporter Balbis, professor of botany within the medical faculty, showed an even more extreme involvement. In 1798 he had become a member of the provisional government set up in Piedmont by General Joubert. As a friend of Carlo Botta, he was sent out in 1799 to the province of Saluzzo to persuade the municipalities to vote for union with France. During the brief period of Austro-Russian rule, he was denounced as a French supporter and imprisoned. Such was the strength of his reputation as a political agitator that Balbo decided to transfer his chair to the Faculty of sciences, remarking, 'Il ne faut perdre aucune occasion d'affaiblir dans la faculté de médecine l'esprit de faction qui l'agite, malheureux reste des troubles politiques.'⁵⁸ Another of Bonvicino's supporters was Michele Buniva, famous as the introducer into Piedmont of vaccination against smallpox. In 1799 he led a demonstration

⁵⁷ The French also made misguided attempts to fix the loyalties of the Italian nobility by a form of educational conscription. The children of noble families were drafted willy-nilly into military schools in the interior of France, or made to accept subordinate positions on the Conseil d'Etat in Paris, as a preparation for office in the administration of the Empire. Naturally, this policy produced precisely the contrary to the desired result in the families concerned. Balbo himself suffered badly. His eldest son, Ferdinand, was forcibly drafted into the army after a spell at St Cyr, and killed on the retreat from Moscow. His second son, Cesare, was pushed into a subordinate position in the French administration in Rome. For the revulsion with which his duties inspired him after the fall of the Papacy, see his *Sommario della Storia d'Italia... con autobiografia dell'autore* (Lausanne, 1846).

⁵⁸ F. 17. 1606, 31 Jan. 1812. Bianchi, *Storia*... III, 99, 331; F. 17. 1607, Personnel et Affaires, Etat de Services de J-B Balbis; *ibid.* letter of 6 Aug. 1809.

mounted by the university in favour of the union of Piedmont with France, and was forced to leave Piedmont after the Austro-Russian invasion. He went to Paris to continue his studies, and came into contact with Antoine Fourcroy. In 1800 he returned to Piedmont and recommenced his political career, which ran closely parallel to that of Bonvicino. As 'membre et secrétaire du comité général du département du Pô... Président permanent de la Commission Municipale de Turin... Adjoint au Maire de Turin... Membre du Collège électoral du département du Pô', he too occupied a prominent position in Turin. The fourth professor of medicine, Giovanni Rizzetti, pursued a similar career, though at a rather lower level, occupying a series of positions in the administration of public health and education.⁵⁹ His career, though considerably less prominent than that of the other three professors, shows the same features of co-operation with the French regime, and notably with the regime of the Executive Commission which collapsed in 1802. It was this common background, as well as their ostensible grievances, that united the faculty in its attempts to discredit Balbo's authority.

The medical professors placed him and the French in a difficult position, for strictly speaking, Balbo was indeed in the wrong. But the French, on the other hand, fully intended that their politics of the restoration of the conservative nobility should be put into practice, and the revolutionary period forgotten. The deluded radicals of the 1790s were to be treated with consideration, but only so long as they consented to be relegated to their professional avocations. Special envoys to Piedmont had emphasized the point ever since annexation had been decided.

Les savants et les hommes de lettres ont été pour la plupart très prononcés en faveur de la révolution français et... la réunion à la France, et la liberté de leurs idées a dû les rendre odieux au parti royaliste. Ils m'ont paru aujourd'hui rentrés dans le cercle d'où ils n'auroient pas dû sortir, et diriger toute leur exaltation vers les sciences et les arts. Il est donc bien essentiel que le gouvernement leur accorde une éclatante protection, et surtout qu'on ne leur oppose pas pour les éloigner des places, la hardiesse de quelques principes philosophiques indiscretement avoués pendant l'effervescence de la révolution. J'ai recommandé cet esprit de tolérance aux autorités locales, persuadé que l'instruction publique seroit bientôt dégradée par la médiocrité si l'on a voulu juger trop rigoureusement des véritables savants que le malheur du temps ou l'erreur ont quelquefois entraînés au delà des bornes de la moralité et de la sagesse.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ For Buniva and Balbis, see 'Studi Pinerolesi', *Biblioteca della Società Storica Subalpina*, ed. B. Vesme *et al.* 1 (1899), 305-77; Bianchi, *Storia...* III, 94; F. 17. 1609, Ecole de Médecine, Personnel, Etats de Service. For Rizzetti, *ibid.* letter of 20 Aug. 1809.

⁶⁰ AF. IV 1025, 'Mission du Citoyen Laumond dans la 27^e. Division Militaire... 27 frimaire an XI, p. 17, 'Esprit Publique'. For Laumond, see J. Godechot, *Les Commissaires aux Armées sous la Directoire: Contribution à l'Etude des Rapports entre les Pouvoirs civils et militaires* (2 vols. Paris, 1937), II, 344.

But the radicals refused to accept this measure of recognition, and agitation in the medical faculty in Turin eventually became so violent as to be viewed by the French as a possible cause of political upheaval. Fourcroy was warned, 'Dans un pays comme celui-là une étincelle peut causer une incendie; une discussion classique peut faire naître des partis.'⁶¹ Tension increased after Bonvicino made the whole affair public by venturing into print with a pamphlet sharply attacking Balbo. Menou warned Bonvicino that such actions endangered his attempts to 'Bannir cette diversité de pouvoirs et d'autorité qui est le plus souvent mère à l'anarchie, dont nous avons fait une si terrible épreuve'. In the same month, June 1807, with Menou presiding *ex officio*, the governing body of the university formally condemned Bonvicino and his party. Nevertheless, agitation continued. Balbo tried, as he had done in the case of Balbis, to moderate the conflict by the use of his powers of appointment. In 1809 he recommended that the successor to one of the chairs in the faculty which had fallen vacant should be chosen not by competition, as the regulations demanded, but from among names which he himself would submit for the Grand-Master's approval, 'pour neutraliser autant que possible les effets de l'esprit de parti'. As a final manoeuvre, Balbo and Menou used the pretext of Bonvicino's election to the *Corps Législatif* in 1812 to oust him from his position as dean of the faculty, and replace him by the more docile professor Bellardi. Bonvicino's protests went unheeded, since the Imperial University had by then decided, with whatever misgivings, to throw the weight of its support behind Balbo, Menou, and the conservatives.⁶²

Once Menou had given his support to Balbo, there was in fact little else that could have been done without undermining the authority of both men, and hence of the conservative group. Balbo's own frequent threats of resignation if he were not supported by Paris would in any case have left the central authority in Paris with little freedom of choice. It was a great disadvantage to the policy of installing conservative native officials that, once appointed, they were difficult to dispense with or dispose of, for the very reasons which had dictated their appointment in the first place. In this respect, the French were captives of their appointees, even

⁶¹ F. 17. 1609, Ecole de Médecine, Sédillez to Fourcroy, 8 Sept. 1807.

⁶² Bonvicino's pamphlet is in F. 17. 1609, Organisation, Affaire de M. Bonvoisin (*sic*) from which the preceding paragraph is also drawn. Balbo's rejoinder of 1807 is in the Wellcome Museum of the History of Medicine, London, MS. 1040. The prominence of doctors in the politics of the revolutionary period has yet to be satisfactorily explained. The great advances in medical science in this period, in the work of such pioneers as Xavier Bichat, may have encouraged an awareness of new ideas and an openness to change, particularly changes emanating from France. More specifically, a strong connection is observable between the theories of perception which underlay the new medicine, and the high value placed on individual interpretation of the visible world, unconstrained by tradition and religion. See S. Moravia, 'Philosophie et médecine en France à la fin du XVIIIe. siècle', *Studies in Voltaire and the eighteenth century*, LXXXIX (1972), 1089-1151.

if these appointees, like Balbo, devoted much of their time to the obstruction of the French system. In the case of the Imperial University, the conservatism of its staff ensured that no more flexible compromise with the remaining republicans was possible. The French remained trapped by the paradoxes of their own political solution to the problems of Piedmontese civil administration within the Empire.

These paradoxes did not vanish with the collapse of the Empire; in fact they became increasingly important during the succeeding decade. A substantial part had been played in revolutionary politics in Piedmont by men engaged in academic life. The new importance of this occupational group in political life has only recently been realized, and never fully explored. This is partly due to the surprising lack of biographical analysis of the protagonists of the revolutionary period. It is also only recently that the Napoleonic period in Italy has ceased to be dismissed as a sterile interlude between revolution and Risorgimento; little attempt has been made to establish continuities between all three periods. One such linking thread is provided by the gradual rise of professional men and university teachers as a political force to be reckoned with. Between 1814 and 1830, great changes took place in the organisation of the institutions of learning and science and their relation to the state. At the same time, it became possible as never before to diffuse facts and opinions fast and effectively to most classes of society. The control of the diffusion of knowledge thus became a newly acute political problem, and educational institutions became new political battlegrounds. In Italy, those who were involved with these problems, as Balbo was during the upheaval in Turin in 1821,⁶³ faced a political situation moulded by the actions of the previous regime.⁶⁴

The early Risorgimento held many contradictory ideas on the subject of the Napoleonic regime. The Empire had brought with it a high degree of the very territorial unification and administrative rationalisation demanded by liberals in the 1820s. Former employees of the French were to the fore in many of the revolts of 1821.⁶⁵ Yet at the same time the subordination of the Italian people within the Empire was repugnant to aspirations of national unity and independence. The Empire had also

⁶³ P. Egidi, *I. Moti...*; Lenore O'Boyle, 'The problem of an excess of educated men in Western Europe, 1800-1850', *Journal of Modern History*, IV (1970), 471-95.

⁶⁴ Most of the appointments made in the Universities by Napoleon were maintained by the restored monarchies. This surprising degree of continuity also helped to keep in being the attitudes towards education and politics generated by experience of the Imperial regime. For the careers of Beniamino Sproni at Pisa and Daniele Berlinghieri at Siena, see A. Zobi, *Storia Civile della Toscana dal MDCCXXXVII al MDCCCXLVIII* (5 vols. Florence, 1850-2), vol. IV and Appendix. For Gerolamo Serra at Genoa, see R. Boudard, *L'organisation de l'Université... dans l'Académie Impériale de Gênes entre 1805 et 1814* (Paris-The Hague, 1962). Appointments in the former Dutch departments of the Empire showed the same degree of continuity. See S. Schama, 'Schools and Politics in the Netherlands, 1796-1814', *Historical Journal*, XIII (1970), 589-610.

⁶⁵ E.g. G. T. Romani, *The Neapolitan Revolution of 1820-1821* (Evanston, 1950).

established new lines of political cleavage. Conservative collaborators had had to turn to the French to restrain the university radicals, as Balbo had turned for help against Bonvicino. In the period of the Enlightenment, things had been very different. The Italian ruling houses and the intelligentsia had worked together for reform.⁶⁶ In the 1790s the position had started to change. Fearful that events in revolutionary France would spread to their own territories, the monarchs drew back from their support of reform and, in doing so, isolated many of the intellectuals who had been their strongest supporters. When the French began to invade Italy, it was thus not surprising that this group should provide much of the impetus behind the revolutions which paved the way for the final collapse of many of the old monarchies. But the French were not grateful allies. The radicals and republicans found themselves exiled or relegated to the obscurity of the classroom. When Napoleon reinforced the position of the conservative nobility in administration, he did nothing to quieten the hostility of the moderates, and in fact could have found no better way of provoking such outbursts of hostility as that between Balbo and the medical professors. No real policy of *amalgame* was put into effect. The disaffection of the republican intelligentsia within the University from the ruling authority was thus maintained, and carried over without difficulty after the restoration of the ruling houses once so gladly served by the universities.

It was in the light of this development that conservatives and liberals were to face each other in the 1820s. The demands of conservative collaborators strongly affected the functioning of the Napoleonic Empire; the way in which they were met influenced many of the characteristics of the politics of the Restoration period in Italy.

⁶⁶ N. Carranza, 'L'Università di Pisa e la formazione culturale del ceto dirigente toscano del settecento', *Bollettino storico pisano*, xxxiii–xxxv (1964–66), 469–537; Cochrane, *Tradition and Enlightenment*. . . .