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The Jesuit College at Padua: Growth, Suppression, Attempts at Restoration

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THE JESUIT COLLEGE AT PADUA

GROWTH, SUPPRESSION, ATTEMPTS AT RESTORATION: 1552-1606

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During the sixteenth century there was a marked growth in educational institutions in most of Europe. Three major factors contributed to this growth. Most obvious was the population increase during the century, so that there were more students to be educated in more and larger schools. Secondly the need for formal education was felt in wider circles than before; a number of scholars have pointed out the influx of the nobility into colleges and universities in search of an education which would give them an edge in competing for positions in government and church service.¹ Thirdly both Protestant and Catholic reformers stressed the need for educated supporters for their respective creeds and engaged in a fruitful rivalry to start or improve schools which would spread their faiths.

In Catholic Europe the lead was clearly taken by the Jesuits. By 1615 there were 287 Jesuit colleges. The Jesuits could not keep up with the demand, even though they normally insisted that their colleges, which usually charged no tuition, be well endowed. Claudio Aquaviva in five years after his election as General in 1581 turned down sixty requests for colleges.² Usually the Jesuit colleges moved into the expanding market for education described above, but sometimes their growth threatened or seemed to threaten earlier schools. Since the new Jesuit foundations usually had the backing of the government and of the governing classes, isolated schoolmasters who saw their jobs in jeopardy could not make effective protest.

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¹ Lawrence STONE, "The Educational Revolution in England, 1560-1640," *Past and Present* (July, 1969), 41-80; J. H. HEXTER, "The Education of the Aristocracy in the Renaissance," in his *Reappraisals in History* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963), 45-70.

² Enrico ROSA, *I Gesuiti dalle origini ai nostri giorni*² (Rome: Civiltà cattolica, 1957), 172. Fundamental to the study of early Jesuit education are the *Monumenta paedagogica Societatis Jesu*, I-IV, edited by Ladislav LUKÁCS (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1965-1981). Useful studies are: Gabriel CODINA MIR, *Aux Sources de la pédagogie des Jésuites: le "Modus Parisiensis."* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1968); François DE DAINVILLE, *La Naissance de l'humanisme moderne* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1940); George GANSS, *Saint Ignatius' Ideal of the Jesuit University* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1954); Mabel LUNDBERG, *Jesuitische Anthropologie und Erziehungslehre in der Frühzeit des Ordens (ca. 1540 - ca. 1650)* (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksells, 1966).

But sometimes the Jesuits faced powerful institutions that enjoyed wide support, particularly older universities. Bitter controversy ensued; sometimes the Jesuits won, sometimes they lost. The best-known example is the University of Paris, but similar controversy arose at Louvain, Cracow, Padua and elsewhere.³ This study traces the controversy at Padua that led to the closing of the Jesuit college. Over a century ago Antonio Favaro, best known for his studies on Galileo, published a short book on this subject. His attitude is perhaps best captured by a quotation from Paolo Sarpi which he cites in concluding his book: "The Jesuit Schools have never graduated a son obedient to his father, devoted to his fatherland, and loyal to his prince."⁴ Favaro relied on papers at Venice and Padua that almost exclusively reflect the University's viewpoint. This study draws on manuscripts in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan and especially in the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu which reflect the other side of the controversy.⁵

I. THE FOUNDATION OF THE JESUIT COLLEGE AT PADUA.

The Jesuit community at Padua, begun in 1542 and given the form of a college the next year, was the fourth oldest in the order. The real founder of the college was Andrea Lippomano, who had befriended Loyola in 1537 at Venice. Later he turned over to the Jesuits his benefice of S. Maria Maddalena in Padua, a priorate in the dying order of the Teutonic Knights, to the support of the Jesuit college. His relatives contested the gift, but in 1548 the Venetian Senate ratified the gift and the foundation of the college by a vote of 143 to 2. Still there must have been many Venetians who resented the efficiency of the Jesuits in lining up outside support for their cause — several cardinals, the pope, and even Prince Philip of Spain.⁶ Such support was a two-edged sword at Venice, where

³ Over nine hundred pages of anti-Jesuit material regarding their controversies mainly at Paris, but also at Louvain, Cracow, and Padua, are gathered in *Le Mercure Jesuite: ou recueil des pieces concernant le Progrès des Jesuites...*, no editor given (Geneva: Pierre Aubert, 1626). For an anti-Jesuit account of the Paris controversy, see A. DOUARCHE, *L'Université de Paris et les Jésuites* (Paris: Hachette, 1888); for a pro-Jesuit view: Pierre DELATRE, editor, *Les Établissements des Jésuites en France*, III (Enghien: Institut supérieur de théologie, 1955) 1107-1119, 1129-1146.

⁴ Antonio FAVARO, *Lo Studio di Padova e la Compagnia di Gesù* (Venice: G. Antonelli, 1878). The most valuable part of this work is the long appendix of documents. Favaro's book reprints, with different pagination, his long article of the same title in *Atti del reale Istituto Veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti*, IV, fifth series, 1877-78. References here are to the book.

⁵ ARSI, Ven. 105 I, ff. 191-336, deals exclusively with the Padua controversy. Copies of most of these documents are also found in Ambrosiana D. 463 inferior. All manuscript references in this article are to ARSI unless otherwise noted.

⁶ Lippomano, his bequest, and the difficulties in securing its acceptance by the Venetian government are discussed by TACCHI-VENTURI, II/2, 305-324; he prints several documents on the matter, 672-684. The objections raised against the Jesuits taking over the priorate are found *ibid.*, 674-676. For this article the most important document printed by

many nobles saw the Jesuits as *papalini* and *spagnuoli*, adherents of Venice's rivals. For centuries the Venetian government had inserted men it could trust, particularly Venetian nobles, into key church positions throughout its territory, but the centralized organization of the Jesuit order precluded this sort of infiltration.⁷ In 1583, when the *giovani*, a loosely-knit party which preached and practiced an anti-clerical Erastianism, assumed power in Venice, the Jesuits faced a regime which profoundly distrusted them.⁸ The Jesuit province of Venice included not only the Serene Republic but also Bologna, Ferrara, Mantua, and Parma. The Jesuits enjoyed excellent relations with the rulers of these areas. Few Venetian nobles entered the order, but a Gonzaga prince became a Jesuit saint. The Gonzagas took the lead in founding a Jesuit college at Mantua. In sharpest contrast with Sarpi, the most gifted spokesman for the *giovani*, is what Alessandro Farnese, the Duke of Parma, wrote to his master Philip II: "Your majesty desired me to build a citadel at Maestricht; I thought that a college of the Jesuits would be a fortress more likely to protect the inhabitants against the enemies of the altar and the throne. I have built it."⁹ His successor as Duke encouraged the expansion of the Jesuit college at Parma.¹⁰

The Jesuit college for non-Jesuit students at Padua had an uneven growth. When the first extern students were admitted in 1552, instruction was limited to grammar. The next year there were 150 students. There were 120 students divided into five classes at the beginning of 1554, but enrollment declined to seventy students

TACCHI-VENTURI (*ibid.*, 677-678) is the letter of Doge Francesco Donà to the Podestà of Padua and his successors, dated 15/9/1548, which authorizes the Jesuit college. In the later controversy about the college the Jesuit apologists repeatedly refer to this document. The key passage gives the Jesuits the priorate "ita ut duo collegia studentium erigantur, alterum in urbe Patavina, alterum in hac civitate nostra Venetiarum, alendorum ex fructibus dictae praeceptoriae, sicuti latius de praemissis omnibus constat apostolicis bullis datis Rom a viii idus Aprilis 1546 et etiam ex processu superinde fulminato." It is noteworthy that there is no specific mention of non-Jesuit students. This omission was a serious weakness in the Jesuit legal case that their school for extern students was authorized by the Venetian government. As will be shown, the Jesuit apologists for the college at Padua considered that the reference to the papal bulls implied authorization of all the usual apostolic activity of the Jesuit institute, including the operation of a college for non-Jesuit students. The further history of the Padua college under the generalate of Laínez is traced by SCADUTO, III, 143-144; IV, 422-426. Also valuable for Lippomano and the early days of the Padua college is Angelo MARTINI, "Gli studi teologici di Giovanni de Polanco," *AHSI*, XXI (1952) 225-281. Manuscripts dealing with the Lippomano bequest are found in ARSI, Ven. 105 I, ff. 2-24.

⁷ Paolo PRODI, "Structure and Organization of the Church in Renaissance Venice," *Renaissance Venice*, edited by J. R. Hale (Totowa, N.J.: Rowan and Littlefield, 1973), 421.

⁸ On the *giovani* and their views: Gaetano COZZI, *Il doge Nicolò Contarini* (Venice/Rome: Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 1958); Aldo STELLA, *Chiesa e Stato nelle relazioni dei nunzi pontifici a Venezia* (Vatican: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1964), *Studi e testi*, Vol. 239; William BOUWSMA, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968).

⁹ Quoted by Michael FOSS, *The Founding of the Jesuits 1540* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1969), 168.

¹⁰ B. Palmio to Aquaviva, 6/8/1597; ARSI, Ital. 162, f. 29r.

in four classes by the end of the year. In 1555 the college added logic to its curriculum, but enrollment was only sixty students; later that year an outbreak of the plague caused a suspension of classes. The effects of the plague curtailed enrollment in 1556 but it gradually rose to nearly ninety students by the end of the year.¹¹ By 1563 there were still only sixty non-Jesuits attending the college.¹² As early as 1555 opposition arose, not from the University of Padua, but from local schoolmasters who tried to persuade students of the Jesuits to attend either their own classes or the University.¹³ The severe outbreak of the plague in northern Italy in 1576 caused the closing of both the Jesuit college and the University. There were an estimated ten thousand sick in Padua alone. Despite these problems the college expanded its offerings. In 1579 at the urging of many students and some Venetian noblemen, the Jesuits opened a curriculum in philosophy which immediately enrolled eighty students. Mario Beringucci, the author of the annual letter for 1579, claims that the new curriculum gave great satisfaction to the students enrolled in it. He complacently added that although the Jesuits carefully arranged the hours of their courses so that they would not prevent students from attending University lectures, the competition of the Jesuits practically forced the University professors to increase drastically their teaching loads by adding private and extra lectures. He points out that this made the students happy, but he seems not to have noticed the inevitable resentment of the philosophy professors against the Jesuits. As long as Jacopo Zabarella, a good friend of the Jesuits, held the first chair of philosophy at the University this resentment was curtailed, but later animosity blazed out with disastrous consequences for the Jesuits.¹⁴

In 1582 the bishop of Padua pressured the Jesuits into opening a college of nobles which included four classes in humanities. The new college, a boarding facility, made space so tight that some classes in rhetoric had to be transferred temporarily to Brescia, but the Jesuits were able to prevail upon the bishop for the extra funding that the expansion entailed.¹⁵

The college reached its high point in 1589 when the college had a total of 450 students and an additional course was added in philosophy. The college of nobles had seventy students.¹⁶ One Jesuit wrote Aquaviva that the college at Padua was as important for the Society as any in Italy, an exaggeration that would surely have irked the Fathers at Collegio Romano.¹⁷ Connected to the college

¹¹ Juan POLANCO, *Chronicon Societatis Iesu*, II, 472-480; III, 109-113; IV, 118; V, 159-161; VI, 232 (MHSI).

¹² SCADUTO, IV, 426.

¹³ POLANCO, V, 161.

¹⁴ ARSI, Ven. 105 I, ff. 50v, 57v, 13v, 142r.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 316r.

¹⁶ See the printed *Annuae Litterae S.I.* for 1582 (p. 68), for 1584 (p. 70), for 1585 (p. 83) and for 1591 (p. 69).

¹⁷ ARSI, Opp. NN. 333, f. 277.

was a Sodality of the Blessed Virgin which enrolled ninety students and nine teachers from the University — not a large number considering the size of the University.¹⁸ By 1589 the curriculum at the Jesuit college had four divisions. For beginners there was *Grammatica* divided into two levels. There followed *Humanistica*, again with two levels. The philosophy curriculum took three years, logic the first year, natural science and the physical works of Aristotle the second year, and metaphysics and philosophical psychology the third year. The final division was theology, which had courses in Hebrew and moral theology added in 1589. In addition to the young Jesuits fifty students were enrolled in the theology program. The College served as the major seminary of the Jesuit Venetian province where Jesuit scholastics took both their philosophical and theological training.¹⁹ From the University's standpoint the philosophical program was the most controversial part of the college since it clearly overlapped courses being taught at the University. Equally offensive to the University was the Jesuit teaching method: a coherent three year program for the whole of philosophy. In contrast the University gave students a choice of professors lecturing on various specific texts of Aristotle, page by page. The University professors considered the Jesuit approach a superficial survey course that allowed teachers to slide over the real problems in Aristotle's text. From the Jesuit viewpoint the professors failed to give students a systematic overview, and a detailed knowledge of specific texts had little value if students lacked an overview. The Jesuits had felt that their approach prepared students well for later attendance at the more scholarly lectures of the professors. Each side believed strongly that its method was best and that the opposite method was ineffective.²⁰

The physical expansion of the Jesuit college at Padua paralleled its academic growth. The Jesuits inherited the old priorate of S. Maria Maddalena which lay about a mile from the center of the city overlooking the Brenta canal, near the city wall and the route to Venice. The original building was inconvenient, especially since its windows looked out over the malodorous canal.²¹ Repairs were undertaken and an enclosed garden added in 1555.²² In 1572 serious consideration was given to transferring the college to a more central location near the cathedral, but this was never done for various practical and financial reasons.²³ In 1566 the Jesuit lay-brother

¹⁸ ARSI, Ven. 105 I, f. 57v.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. 316r, 326v, 327r; ARSI, Ital. 160, f. 206r.

²⁰ For the Jesuit view of University teaching: ARSI, Ven. 105 I, ff. 329r-330v (Palmio); 287r (Bonacorso); Antonio POSSEVINO, *Bibliotheca Selecta...*, II (Rome: Typographia apostolica vaticana, 1593), 109. For the University's view of the Jesuit courses in philosophy, FAVARO, 91-92; Ven. 105 I, f. 191r (Ricobono).

²¹ MARTINI (quoted above, note 7), 230. For a map showing the location of the Jesuit college within the city of Padua, ARSI, Med. 91, f. 185r.

²² POLANCO, V, 161-162.

²³ ARSI, Med. 91, ff. 184-189.

and architect Giovanni Tristano drew up plans for the transformation of the college, and extensive work began. The accommodations for the Jesuits were called "well-built, attractive and good" and the college itself was termed sumptuous.²⁴ Father Benedetto Palmio felt that the architect had tried too hard to make the buildings impressive at the cost of practical utility.²⁵ The ugly little church was redesigned in 1566 and rebuilt between 1581 and 1604. The final complex seems to have taken the form of a rectangle of buildings with the church in the center, the whole measuring some one hundred by fifty meters. The complex has subsequently been destroyed to make room for a hospital.²⁶ The income from the priory ranged between 1200 and 1500 ducats annually in the early years, enough to sustain fifty to sixty Jesuits, although this was not given entirely to the Jesuits for many years.²⁷

II. THE SUPPRESSION OF THE COLLEGE.

In 1591 things began to go wrong for the Jesuits at Padua. The newly elected rector of the University *giuristi* tried to arouse the University against what he considered the illegal competition of the Jesuits against the public *Studio*. The matter was brought before the Venetian Senate, but no action was taken.²⁸ In 1589 two of the leading professors, Giacomo Zabarella and Girolamo Capizucchio, died; both were good friends of the Jesuits, and the Society had few friends on the University faculty.²⁹ Venice experienced its most severe food crisis of the century due to a series of bad harvests, rising population, and declining grain shipments from the Levant. The food crisis increased tensions and therefore government vigilance against any sort of unrest. To augment local food production the Venetian government began to move against monastic property holders, starting with the abbey of San Zeno in Verona.³⁰ The unfavorable government attitude toward religious orders was clear for all to see.

Meanwhile at Padua tensions had been building, although not directly connected with the food crisis. Graffiti began to appear

²⁴ Pietro PIRRI, S.I., *Giovanni Tristano e i primordi dell'architettura gesuitica* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1955), 81-82; 117-118; 221-223.

²⁵ ARSI, Ven. 105¹, f. 321r.

²⁶ Jean VALLERY-RADOT, *Le Recueil de plans d'édifices de la Compagnie de Jésus conservé a la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1960), 88, 441-442. VALLERY-RADOT, 88, has some doubt about the identification of the rectangular plan with the College of Padua.

²⁷ MARTINI, 231.

²⁸ FAVARO, 31.

²⁹ *Annuae Litterae Societatis Iesu anni M.D.LXXXIX* (Rome: In Collegio Societatis Iesu, 1591), 89.

³⁰ Paul F. GRENDLER, *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540-1605* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 204; Brian PULLAN, *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), 355-364.

on the walls of the city and even in the lecture halls; sometimes they were simple obscenities, sometimes they included pictures. Many graffiti attacked the Jesuits or the University faculty. On the night of July 11, 1591, gangs of students went around the city insulting people, shooting off muskets, and breaking windows. They broke the windows of the Jesuit college "with so many filthy words that they seemed to have come out of hell."³¹

The next morning a group of students gathered at the lodging of Giulio Contarini. They stripped down to their shirts or wrapped themselves in sheets, meanwhile shouting out at passing women and children and displaying their *pudenda*. One student grabbed a horse, threw off his sheet and rode naked up the street. The students then began a march on the Jesuit college where they forced their way into the school, threw off their sheets and shouted insults and obscenities at the Jesuits and their students. They then retired to their lodging, marching naked through the streets. The students claimed that their action was a protest against the Jesuits who were lecturing at the same hours as the University professors and thereby hurting attendance at the University.³²

The Venetian rector at Padua, Giovanni Soranzo, did not want to handle the matter since a close relative of his was involved in the protest, so he passed it on to the Council of Ten at Venice. He tried to present the disturbance as simply a case of student light-headedness.³³ The Council of Ten also received a long, lurid anonymous letter denouncing the affair, which Favaro calls "a masterpiece of the kind and evidently done by the Jesuits."³⁴ As usual the Council of Ten acted decisively. An investigation was held, and eight Venetian students were singled out for heavy fines. Almorò Dolfin, Nicolò Contarini, Alessandro Trevisan, Marc'Antonio Correr and Lunardo da Pesaro were fined three hundred ducats each. Lorenzo Giustinian and Vincenzo Querini (the son of Andrea Querini, a leading spokesman for the *giovani*) were fined one hundred ducats, while Giulio Contarini, at whose lodging the affair began, was fined five hundred ducats. The list of students fined included the most illustrious names among the Venetian nobility. Their families would be more than human if they did not in part blame the Jesuits for the disgrace.³⁵

Traditionally Padua attracted students and professors from northern Europe — Copernicus, Vesalius, and Harvey are famous examples. Many of these were Protestants and could have little love for Jesuits. Antonio Possevino, who lived but did not teach at the college, once estimated, perhaps with some exaggeration,

³¹ ARSI, Ven. 105 I, f. 299r; FAVARO, 78; an earlier fracas is reported by the Jesuit *Annuae Litterae* for 1589, p. 88.

³² Favaro prints four documents describing the incident, 76-84.

³³ Favaro prints Soranzo's letter to the Ten, 76.

³⁴ FAVARO, 33, who also prints the letter, 78-82.

³⁵ For documents on the investigation and the fines, FAVARO, 82-86.

that fifty-seven out of sixty Germans at the medical school and all 150 Germans at the law school were Protestants.³⁶ The Venetian government, eager to attract foreign students to Padua, assured them a degree of religious freedom unknown elsewhere in Italy. To attract and convert the German Protestant students the Jesuits introduced German sermons in their church in Padua in 1591. The experiment proved a failure and was quickly abandoned, but it probably sharpened the hostility of the German students toward the Jesuits.³⁷ At any rate the German *natio*, by far the strongest in the University, were among the leaders in supporting the suppression of the Jesuit college late in 1591.³⁸

On the death of Zabarella, Francesco Piccolomini moved up to the first chair of philosophy. He was no friend of the Jesuits. Cesare Cremonini (1550-1631) was called from Ferrara to fill the vacated second chair. He quickly overshadowed Piccolomini both as a philosopher and as a personality. He had taught with distinction at Ferrara, but before coming to Padua most of his publications were poetry and fables. Later he published extensive philosophical works, but enormous quantities of his lecture notes still remain in manuscript, perhaps because his fables easily outsold his philosophical works. Cremonini became the last major representative of the centuries-old Paduan school of Aristotle which leaned heavily on Arab and Greek commentators (particularly Averroes, Simplicius and Alexander of Aphrodisias). Earlier in the sixteenth century the denial of personal immortality associated with Pietro Pomponazzi and the University of Padua had prompted a condemnation by the Fifth Lateran Council, but this had caused little change in the way this question was taught at the University. The problem of the immortality of the soul and the dubious orthodoxy of many philosophers drew fire from the Jesuits and caused friction between the Padua Jesuits and the University professors.³⁹ Cremonini's Alexandrist-Averroist interpretation of Aristotle denied personal immortality, divine providence, and free will and included belief in the controlling influence of the stars over human life. In the history of science Cremonini is best known for his refusal to look through

³⁶ Possevino to the Jesuit Provincial of Poland, ARSI, Opp. NN, 331, f. 265, 12/8/1587: "Reperi ex Germanis solis qui medicinae vacant 57 Calvinianos, tres solos Catholicos. Qui vero iurisprudentiae dant operam, sunt circiter centum quinquaginta et hi omnes haeretici. Nec desunt Poloni, Gallique, interdum etiam Angli eiusdem farinae." Possevino sent a proposal to the Council of Ten on the problem (no date, probably 1588-1591), Opp. NN. 333, ff. 141-143.

³⁷ ARSI, Ital. 160, ff. 159r-160v, L. Gagliardi, Jesuit rector at Padua, to Aquaviva, 22/2/1591: *Ibid.*, f. 161rv, L. Gagliardi (?) to the bishop of Padua, 12/12/1591.

³⁸ FAVARO, 107-108. For the continuing hostility of the German *natio* at the University to the Jesuits, FAVARO, 114-116.

³⁹ ARSI, Ven. 105 I, ff. 243r, 303v. Years later in a letter to Cremonini (23/10/1604) Possevino dwelt on how the Paduan denial of immortality had undermined both the faith and morals of former Padua students that he had encountered during his missions to eastern Europe (Opp. NN. 333, f. 230rv). Possevino is critical of Paduan Aristotelianism in his *Bibliotheca Selecta*, II, 94-96, 107-109. Possevino's hostility to Paduan Aristotelianism is the subject of Gregorio Piaia's article, "Aristotelismo, 'heresia' e giurisdizionalismo nella polemica del P. Antonio Possevino contro lo Studio di Padova," *Quaderni per la storia dell'Università di Padova*, VI (1973), 125-145. This article restricts itself to Possevino's writings during the Interdict crisis of 1606-1607; its failure to use either the *Bibliotheca Selecta*, Possevino's major statement on philosophy, or his manuscripts in Rome is a serious defect.

Galileo's telescope, but he was in fact a respected friend of Galileo. When summoned before the Inquisition in 1611 Cremonini bluntly replied, "I cannot and do not wish to retract my exposition of Aristotle since that is the way I understand him and I am paid to explain him as I understand him, and if I did not do so, I would be obliged to return my wages." The Inquisition dropped the matter.⁴⁰ Cremonini's versatility, outspokenness, and rough-hewn appearance (he was depicted in the graffiti as a peasant with a sickle over his shoulder) quickly made him a beloved figure.⁴¹

The real motives of Cremonini and the other professors will never be known with certainty. It is curious that, although a newcomer born outside of Venetian territory, Cremonini emerged as spokesman for the University and the Venetian state against the Jesuits, whom he branded as outsiders. Perhaps he wished to cultivate favor with the *giovani* politicians, perhaps his Venetian super-patriotism was sincere — later he published a poem glorifying Venice, *Il nascimento di Venetia* (Venice, 1617). Perhaps he found the Jesuits a double embarrassment — their presence had increased the teaching load of the philosophers and sharpened the running quarrel over the immortality of the soul. Cremonini claimed that the Jesuit college was responsible for declining enrollments at the public *Studio*, implying that its suppression would increase enrollment, but the number of students at the Jesuit college was too small to matter much. Padua's student population has been estimated as high as 18,000, which would have made it easily the largest in the world, especially since Paris was the center of raging civil war in France.⁴² Closing the Jesuit college could only add 200 students to the University since those in the lower classes of the Jesuit college were too young for the University and some students would certainly go elsewhere, perhaps to other Jesuit colleges. Professional pride then seems the main reason for the attack of Cremonini and the other professors on the Jesuit college. They felt that the Jesuits had underhandedly and gradually intruded on their right to a monopoly over higher education in Venetian territory.

The student disorders in July gave Cremonini and his supporters a new opportunity to start action against the Jesuit college. On November 30 Cremonini arranged a meeting of the University professors which resolved that the activities of the Jesuit college were in competition with the University and "must not be permitted to continue to the prejudice of the dignity and honor of the aforementioned glorious college of arts (*Gymnasium artistarum*)."⁴³ Three speakers were elected to present the University's case and seek remedy from the Venetian government: Cremonini, Piccolomini, and Ercole Sassonia (Hercules Saxonia).⁴³

⁴⁰ On the intellectual climate at Padua, see Antonio POPPI, *Introduzione all'aristotelismo padovano* (Padua: Antenore, 1970); John HERMAN RANDALL JR., *The School of Padua and the Emergence of Modern Science* (Padua: Antenore, 1961). The best study of Cremonini is Maria Assunta DEL TORRE, *Studi su Cesare Cremonini* (Padua: Antenore, 1968); on Galileo and Cremonini, Stillman DRAKE, "Galileo and the Career of Philosophy," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXXVIII (1977), 19-32; on Cremonini and the Inquisition, Ernest RENAN, *Averroès et l'Averroïsme* (Paris: Michel Levy, 1866), 408-413, 477-480.

⁴¹ ARSI, Ven. 105 I, f. 299.

⁴² FAVARO, 42.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 31-32; Favaro also prints the minutes of the meeting, 86-89.

The University of Padua was really two corporations, that of the *giuristi* and that of the *artisti*. The *università giurista* was concerned exclusively with the teaching and study of law. The *università artista* embraced all the other disciplines. The *giuristi* were divided into twenty-two nations, the *artisti* into seven. The nations were student organizations. On December 1 Pietro Alzano, the rector of the *giuristi* who had earlier in 1591 unsuccessfully tried to get the Venetian Senate to suppress the Jesuit college, called a meeting of the *giuristi* to add a delegation to Cremonini and the others who would represent the University at Venice. A failure to line up the support of the *giuristi* would obviously weaken the anti-Jesuit campaign. At the meeting of the *giuristi* Alzano summarized the arguments against the Jesuits that had been used the previous day at a faculty meeting, but he was vehemently opposed by the syndic of the *giuristi*, Alessandro Singlitico, who gave a strong speech in favor of the Jesuits. Furthermore the Jesuits were never in competition with legal studies at the University. The vote was fourteen against and ten for joining the attack on the Jesuits. Shortly after this meeting the syndic fell sick. Alzano took advantage of his sickness to call a second meeting on December 3 at which Cremonini gave a speech against the Jesuits. A new vote was taken and resulted in fifteen votes for and fourteen votes against joining the delegation to Venice. Later Singlitico argued that only the first meeting and its votes were valid, while the second meeting and its vote were invalid on several counts: the syndic was absent, no new argument but only Cremonini's oratory was advanced as reason for reconsidering the previous vote, and Alzano had made crucial and illegal substitutions of his own supporters for the representatives of the Lombard and Polish nations; otherwise he would have lost the vote.⁴⁴

On December 3 another event provided ammunition for the gathering anti-Jesuit forces. A young Jesuit mathematician went to the rector of the *artisti*, Agostino Dominichi da Foligno, and in the presence of Alzano and Piccolomini showed him the copies of the papal bulls of Pius V and Gregory XIII conferring privileges on the Society of Jesus. He claimed that anybody who tried to stop the Jesuits from teaching would incur the excommunications threatened in the bulls. Dominichi brought in two non-Jesuit priests to discuss the matter and had a notary make witnessed record of the exchange so that he could submit it to the Venetian government.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Ven. 105 I, ff. 233r-235v, contains a signed disposition of the syndic, including a summary of his speech. Favaro does not mention either of the two meetings.

⁴⁵ Favaro prints the notarized document, 90-91, which refers to the Jesuit in question only as "Rev. Pater D. Marcusantonius nunc mathematicam legens in collegio Societatis Jesu." The person in question turns out to be none other than Marc'Antonio De Dominis, who later left the Jesuits and became famous as a writer and apostate archbishop. There is no catalogue for the Venetian province for 1591, but in the catalogue for 1590 he is the only Marc'Antonio in the Padua community and is listed as a mathematician: ARSI, Ven.

The incident lay behind Cremonini's claim that the Jesuits were teaching at Padua not on the authority of the Venetian government but on that of a foreign prince.⁴⁶ Given the attitude of the Venetian government, the appeal to the papal bulls was a serious tactical error.

On December 5 the rectors of the Padua commune reported to the Venetian government and described their discussions with representatives of the University and the Jesuit superior, Ludovico Gagliardi.

The University officials charged that the college was in illegitimate competition with the University and as evidence pointed to the fact that the Jesuits rang bells to summon students to class and published lists of their lectures, obvious symbols of competition with the University. The Jesuits should stick to "teaching grammar and humanities (*umanità*) without going further, lecturing as they have on logic and philosophy." They objected that in teaching philosophy the Jesuits used a few modern *summisti* rather than the text of Aristotle with the result that the Jesuits have forced the philosophy professors to use the same inferior methods lest they lose their students to the Jesuits. The rectors replied that the professors of law and medicine suffered no competition from the Jesuits and were therefore only indirectly involved in the controversy. Father Gagliardi admitted that the Jesuits had papal bulls authorizing their teaching but he did not want to appeal to them. Gagliardi denied that the Jesuits used the method of dictation, but the rectors were convinced that this prohibited practice was going on at the Jesuit college. The rectors of the Commune, generally favorable to the Jesuits, suggested to their superiors at Venice a compromise ("pensaressimo si potesse facilmente accomodar questa pretensione"): the Jesuits should make sure that the time of their lectures on given material did not coincide with that of the University and they should stop printing their course offerings (*rotoli*) and ringing their bells. The Jesuits were agreeable to this compromise, but not the University.⁴⁷

On December 20 the University delegation of professors and students marched in procession to the Venetian Senate. One disgusted

37, ff. 33r-35v, 61v. His famous scientific work, *De radiis visus et lucis in vitris perspectivis et iride* (Venice: Baglione, 1611), was partly written while he was at Padua: Pietro PIRRI, "Marc'Antonio De Dominis fino all'episcopato," *AHSI*, XXVIII (1959), 265-288 (see 266-269, 282). Pirri is unaware of De Dominis's involvement in this incident. The Jesuit documents (Ven. 105 I, ff. 318v-319v, 240v) that refer to the incident do not mention De Dominis by name but only refer to him as our student and *fratello*. Despite the title of *Pater* in the document printed by Favaro, it is highly dubious that De Dominis was as yet ordained. Nor is it likely that he was still teaching much mathematics since he was probably involved in his third year of theological studies in 1591. Favaro is also unaware of De Dominis's identity. De Dominis's *De radiis visus...* is treated by August ZIGGELAAR, "Das Gymnasium der Jesuiten in Padua um 1590 in Verbindung mit dem Buche von Marcantonio de Dominis 'De radiis visus et lucis', 1611", *AHSI* 49 (1980) (Lamalle Festschrift issue), 255-264. Ziggelaar is also unaware of De Dominis's role in the controversy over the Jesuit Bulls.

⁴⁶ FAVARO, 93, 95.

⁴⁷ FAVARO, 91-93, prints the report of the rectors. Gagliardi was born in 1543 at Padua and died at Modena 9/3/1608. Cremonini admitted the Jesuits willingness to compromise, FAVARO, 95.

Jesuit called it the "most pompous wave that has ever swept into the Senate."⁴⁸ To increase the size of their delegation the German nation even took up a collection among professors to enable poor students to participate.⁴⁹ Cesare Cremonini made a speech that we will analyse later, and the University delegation presented a petition for remedies against Jesuit competition.⁵⁰

The attack on the college at Padua did not catch the Jesuits totally unprepared, but they seem not to have grasped the seriousness of the challenge, and their initial defense lacked cohesion and leadership. The Provincial, Prospero Malavolta, was away giving Advent sermons at Modena; later his absence from Venice during the crucial days before Christmas was bitterly criticized by fellow Jesuits.⁵¹ Aquaviva wrote on December 21 to Ludovico Gagliardi, the superior of the Padua community, that he expected a favorable outcome but that "there will be need for great skill in maintaining our privileges."⁵² Antonio Possevino, the ablest Jesuit in the Padua community, had left for Rome during the fall to supervise the printing of his *magnum opus*, the *Bibliotheca Selecta*, by the Vatican Press. He had experience in the Jesuit quarrels with universities at both Paris and Cracow, had frequently addressed the Venetian Senate, and had even doubled as Venetian ambassador during his famous mission to Ivan the Terrible. The Padua Jesuits could have used his skill and experience. Later Possevino, who did not suffer from excessive modesty, reported to the Bishop of Padua the claim of friends that had he been in Padua, events would have followed a different course.⁵³

The Venetian Grand Council discussed the University petition on the morning of December 23. After the morning meeting Father Giovanni Domenico Bona(c)corso wrote from Venice to Padua, probably to Gagliardi, with good news: there had been a serious debate but the discussion favored the continuing of the Jesuit courses without change. Several prominent noblemen, including a *Savio di terra ferma*, had argued that the Jesuit college aided rather than hurt the University. The *Savio* spoke *angelicamente* "how we teach with the authority of the state since it has conceded the foundation of our college. *Laus Deo* and I hope that tomorrow I will begin my letter with a *Te Deum*."⁵⁴

The afternoon session before the Senate took seven hours. The first two votes on a measure that would have effectively closed the college to non-Jesuit students were inconclusive because there

⁴⁸ ARSI, Ven. 105 I, f. 201r.

⁴⁹ FAVARO, 108.

⁵⁰ Favaro prints Cremonini's speech, 93-100, and the petition, 103-104, which largely recapitulates his speech.

⁵¹ G. D. Bonaccorso to B. Palmio, 1/1/1592, ARSI, Ital. 160, f. 205r; L. Garzoni to Aquaviva, 11/1/1592, *Ibid.*, f. 215r.

⁵² ARSI, Ven. 3 II, f. 433r.

⁵³ ARSI, Opp. NN. 333, f. 53r.

⁵⁴ ARSI, Ven. 105 I, f. 196r.

were more abstentions (*non sincere*) than yes votes. According to Father Paolo Comitoli, writing to Aquaviva on December 28, many of the abstentions were deliberate on the part of opponents since they were waiting for a further attack on the Jesuits that came in a bitter ninety-minute speech. When Leonardo Donà rose to speak in favor of the Jesuits, he was hooted down "with hands, feet and voices." The fact that Donà, leader of the *giovani* faction but on this question more moderate, was not allowed to speak suggests the depth of hostility against the Society. When Marco Venier began his speech by saying that he wished evil on the Jesuits in other matters, but that this cause is ours, not theirs and the college at Padua is useful to us, he got even less of a hearing than Donà. When the *Savio di terra ferma* who had skillfully defended the Jesuits before the Grand Council in the morning and others tried to get a hearing, they were unsuccessful.⁵⁵

At this juncture the resolution against the Jesuits was made even stronger, and the measure carried, with 110 votes for the measure, eight against, and sixty *non sincere*. The Jesuit college was restricted to teaching Jesuit students only. Moreover, the method of formal dictation, used by the Jesuits and then taken up at the University, was forbidden in University lectures. The main reason given for the decision was to prevent discord and unrest at Padua.⁵⁶ The victory of the University was complete "praeter spem et expectationem" according to the chronicler of the German nation.⁵⁷ Following the decree of the Venetian Senate a host of pasquinades against the Jesuits were plastered around Padua, particularly on the walls of the University.⁵⁸

III. THE INITIAL JESUIT RESPONSE.

Immediately after Christmas Jesuits at Venice and Padua began writing Aquaviva with suggestions on what had gone wrong and what should be done. Gagliardi wrote on December 27 that he was going to talk with the commune authorized the next day but that it seemed that the Senate decree precluded not only the teaching of philosophy but even grammar and rhetoric. If the lower schools teaching these subjects were allowed, he felt that Aquaviva would want them to continue lest the Jesuits disappoint the nobles

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 201v-2. The previous day Gagliardi wrote Aquaviva and described the Senate meeting in similar terms: "Ma essendosi portata la cosa in Senato, fu tanto il motto, et strepito di quelli che sentivano contra di noi che non lasciarono parlare a chi pretendeva dir in favore nostro..." *Ibid.*, f. 197r. Possevino reported that Donà was later favorable to a restoration of the Jesuit college: *Opp. NN.* 333, f. 199v.

⁵⁶ Favaro prints the report of the Senate meeting and the decision that was sent to the rectors at Padua, 105-107. Two copies are also found in the ARSI, *Ital.* 60, f. 195rv; *Ven.* 105 I, f. 232r.

⁵⁷ FAVARO, 108.

⁵⁸ *Ven.* 105 I, f. 335v.

who had sent their children to Padua; otherwise there would be risk of losing "those few friends that we have." Gagliardi reported that he had already urged his community to act gently and accept the closing of the college as God's will. He included in his letter an outline of a response he was writing to the charges of Cremonini against the Jesuits.⁵⁹

Antonio de Molino, a remarkable young scholastic from a noble family in the Venetian *terra ferma*, wrote that the Jesuit superiors had not built a broad base of support among the Venetian nobility but were content to cultivate a few senators. In contrast the opposition had a broad-based party. This observation was made repeatedly in other letters of advice to Aquaviva. The Jesuits had been conditioned too much by experience in princely states where a few key supporters were essential but sufficient. Venice was an oligarchy, but it was still the most broadly-based state of the time. Molino went on to urge that the Jesuits' "dealings with these gentlemen depend, as I have said, on using the methods that are in use here." If the Jesuits use the right approach, the loss of the college at Padua could be compensated by building up its equivalent from the smaller colleges in Verona or Brescia or even by setting up a college in Venice itself.⁶⁰

The frustration felt by some Jesuits came out in a letter of Paolo Comitoli, an influential priest at the Professed House in Venice, who wished that the whole city of Venice would disappear, leaving only a few children in "queste salse lagune." His long letter to Aquaviva returns repeatedly to the hatred for Jesuits at Venice: "Pardendo ogni dí più gli odi di questi signori Venetiani contra tutta la nostra religione, ... l'odi et malevolenza, quale sanno di questi signori, ... passione implacabile degli odi." In contrast to the optimism of Gagliardi, Comitoli concluded that it would be very hard to get a revocation of the decree. "The less importance your paternity gives to the counsel and advice of Father Ludovico Gagliardi in this matter, the better it will be." Comitoli was convinced that the Venetian senators had incurred the excommunications threatened in the Bull *In Coena Domini*. He also sent Aquaviva a description of and extracts from a book written anonymously but clearly by a Venetian that was being widely read. The book argued that Philip II of Spain was aiming at a "tyranny and hegemony over the world and that the servants of his design are the members of our Company." He recommended that Aquaviva take steps to have the book condemned by Rome. He also urged him to have the pope declare the Jesuits innocent of the charges made in this "marvelously diabolical" book. He concluded his long letter by outlining

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 197r.

⁶⁰ 27/12/1591, *Ibid.*, f. 199r. Benedetto Palmio also stressed the need for broad-based support: "Here they do not weigh but count the votes." Ital. 160, f. 246r.

for Aquaviva his answers to the charges made by Cremonini.⁶¹ As will be seen, Comitoli was one of five Jesuits who wrote refutations of Cremonini. His was the most colorful, slashing and the best researched, but it was also dangerous because Comitoli was an angry man in a situation that demanded utmost tact. Branishing the threats of *Coena Domini* could easily have resulted in the total banishment of the Jesuits from Venetian territory.

On January 3 Gagliardi reported to Aquaviva on his meeting with the local authorities about implementing the Senate's decree. The meeting had been cordial, and Gagliardi agreed to close the college to all but Jesuit students since the authorities felt that would head off unrest. The local authorities favored trying to get permission to re-open the lower classes (*scuole*); and Gagliardi agreed not to send away the teachers of grammar and rhetoric, although there could be no thought of reopening any classes without authorization from Venice. They promised to seek permission, but this left Gagliardi in a quandary since retaining only the lower classes would be a burden (*incommodo et gravamina*) on the Society. He therefore felt that Aquaviva himself should make the decision, although he proceeded to give the General six reasons for opening the lower classes as against three reasons for not opening them. One feels that beneath surface impartiality Gagliardi, born and raised a Paduan nobleman, favored the partial restoration of the college.⁶²

On the first day of 1592 Father Giovanni Domenico Bonaccorso wrote to Father Benedetto Palmio and raised the same problem; he felt that it was inexpedient to open only the lower classes — "o tutti, o niente."⁶³ The problem was not an easy one. Aquaviva was convinced that small colleges which taught only elementary and intermediate subjects were a drain on the limited resources of the Society.⁶⁴ But a practical problem was already developing that would go on for fifteen years. If they pushed to reopen only the lower *scuole*, the Jesuits might seem to be disobedient to the Venetian government; if they showed little interest in reopening them, they risked offending their friends in the Paduan Commune, who obviously wanted and needed a good school on this level for the adolescents of the city.

Aquaviva gathered that Gagliardi favored the reopening of the lower classes if possible. His reply on January 4 brought Gagliardi up short. The Jesuits were to sit tight and wait for the Vene-

⁶¹ Ven., 105 I, ff. 201-205. The extracts from the book against Philip II and the Jesuits that Comitoli sent Aquaviva seem to be *ibid.*, f. 228r. Comitoli was born at Perugia in September, 1545 and died 13 /3 /1626 at Perugia. For other Jesuit correspondence that voices the hatred among the Venetian aristocracy for Jesuits, see Ital. 160, ff. 205r, 211v, 222r, 245r-246r, 282r.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 206r-209r.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, f. 205r.

⁶⁴ Ladislav LUKÁCS, "De Controversiis circa collegiorum paupertatem" AHSI, XXX (1961), 3-89 (see 25-27).

tian government to make the first move about opening the lower classes.⁶⁵

Gagliardi acknowledged these instructions on January 11 and brought the General up to date; all classes have been kept closed but the city officials are expecting some sort of answer from us. Meanwhile resentment among parents of the children in the lower classes, both in Venice and Padua, had been building up since it seems that the complete shut-down of the college was not the intention of the decree, at least according to many senators who attended the deliberations. The Paduan authorities have been pressing Venice for clarification and have been keeping the Jesuits informed. They would like to know the Jesuits' inclination. Gagliardi had told them that any decision on the Jesuit side would have to come from Rome. He again outlined his dilemma to Aquaviva. If the Jesuits agree to the Commune's desire for the lower classes before Venice gave its permission, this might increase the distrust of the senators, whose hatred had two roots: *ob vivendi licentiam* or *per ragioni di stato*. If the Jesuits reject the commune's request, it might be attributed to resentment and would increase suspicions in senatorial circles. Although Gagliardi felt that the Senate would agree to the reopening of the lower classes since this would mollify the Paduans, a statement now by the Jesuits might later hamper the free disposal of Jesuit manpower and would cause resentment from the University *humanità* who had already picked up a good number of students from the rhetoric classes of the Jesuit college. According to Gagliardi most of the Jesuit community was inclined to reopen the lower classes, but such an action would face continued hostility from the University, including the professors of law and medicine since they made common cause with the rest of the University. The recent decree of the Senate promised to increase tension and unrest if the college were partially reopened. Gagliardi was convinced that unrest at Padua was the main reason the Senate voted to close the college, although some senators had other motives and used the unrest as a pretext to attack the Jesuits.⁶⁶

Aquaviva replied that the Jesuits should say that they would reopen the school, assuming the Senate's consent, from logic downward through grammar, otherwise they would have to decline. The retention of classes in logic was sure to arouse opposition from the University — one suspects that Aquaviva did not really want to see the college reopened but wanted to shift the burden of decision, together with attendant resentment, away from the Society.⁶⁷

By the end of January a new figure began to play a central role for the Jesuits in the Padua affair. This was Benedetto Palmio, former assistant for Italy. On February 2 Aquaviva delegated the supervision of the problem to Palmio, who tended to be less optimistic than Gagliardi.⁶⁸ A month before the Padua crisis he had advised

⁶⁵ ARSI, Ven. 3 II, f. 435v.

⁶⁶ Gagliardi to Aquaviva, 11/1/1592. ARSI, Ital. 160, ff. 210r-214v.

⁶⁷ Ven. 3 II, ff. 441v-442v.

⁶⁸ Aquaviva to Palmio at Ferrara, 8/2/1592, *ibid.*, f. 446. Palmio, famous as a preacher, was born at Parma, 11/7/1523, and died at Ferrara 14/11/1598. On his earlier activity at Padua, see PULLAN (quoted above, note 30), 385-390.

Aquaviva that the novitiate for the Venetian Province should be situated near the college of Padua but that the humanistic studies of young Jesuits should be at Bologna, also a university city, since Bologna was papal territory where "we will not have to worry about being disturbed."⁶⁹

Palmio felt that the Jesuits should reply negatively to suggestions from the Paduan officials because a positive reply would arouse suspicions. Since the Venetian Senate had closed the school, negotiations with anybody else, including the doge, were beside the point. Palmio argued that the senators were so hostile to the Society that efforts to approach the body directly would do more harm than good. He felt a better approach would be for Aquaviva to enlist the support of the pope, the Venetian cardinals, and the foreign ambassadors at Venice. Then the friends of the Jesuits among the Venetian nobility could take the initiative. He reported that Cardinal Morosini had already remonstrated with some senators.⁷⁰ Up to this point the Venetian government had been able to take advantage of a paralysis of power at Rome where four popes had died between August 1590 and December 1591 (Sixtus V, Urban VII, Gregory XIV, and Innocent IX). The election of Clement VIII on January 30, 1592, meant that a strong pope would be able to help the Jesuits. Aquaviva replied that the Holy See had been advised of the developing situation at Venice.⁷¹

During the spring of 1592 the Jesuit reputation at Venice suffered another blow. At Rome both Aquaviva and Possevino had been appointed to a commission set up by Clement VIII for the reform of religious orders. The appointment of the zealot Possevino with his intimate knowledge of Venice disturbed members of other religious orders in the Serene Republic. Cardinal Cusano, the Franciscan Protector, asked the Venetian Cardinal Morosini to help investigate the Venetian Franciscans. He in turn enlisted the Venetian Jesuit Flaminio Ricchieri, who went about the task so indiscreetly that the Franciscans felt that the Jesuits were intruding in their affairs and hostile senators were reconfirmed in their suspicion that the Jesuits were spies for the Vatican.⁷²

IV. THE JESUIT ANSWER TO CREMONINI'S ATTACK.

In tracing the Jesuit reaction to the suppression of the college at Padua, we have so far concentrated on plans for a partial restoration of the college. Meanwhile an effort was being mounted to answer the charges made against the Jesuits. Five important Jesuits wrote refutations of the classic attack on them, Cesare Cremonini's speech to the Venetian Senate. The Jesuit apologies had three

⁶⁹ 21/10/1591, *Ital.* 160, f. 187r.

⁷⁰ 29/1/1592, *ibid.*, f. 222rv.

⁷¹ Ven. 3 II, f. 458v.

⁷² *Ital.* 160, ff. 238r, 244v-46v, 282r.

interconnected purposes: the full restoration of the college at Padua (a rather forlorn hope), the defense of the Society's reputation, and the defense of other on-going Jesuit apostolates in Venetian territory, especially the colleges at Brescia and Verona.

Since all the Jesuit apologies were directed against Cremonini's speech, that document must be examined in more detail. It acquired such popularity that one Jesuit apologist stated that it was being read aloud on the barges along the Brenta canal.⁷³ Another Jesuit claimed wrongly that it had been printed at Venice.⁷⁴ Within a few decades it was printed three times together with French translations as part of the fight against the Jesuits at the University of Paris.⁷⁵ At least eleven manuscript copies still exist in Italian libraries and archives.⁷⁶ A copy was early sent to Aquaviva.⁷⁷

Much of Cremonini's speech is devoted to the praise of the University as the greatest center of learning in the world, to its illustrious past and famous graduates⁷⁸.

For centuries the Venetian state has wisely given it privileges, protection and support. But the Jesuits have secretly set up an *anti-studio*. They came as poor men of humble appearance to teach children grammar but have gradually heaped up riches and expanded their school so that they teach all the disciplines. They will end by making themselves the monarchs of knowledge and will destroy the University of the Venetian State. Their school rings its bells for class and publishes its course lists just like the University. This competition (*concorrenza*) has hurt the enrollment and dignity of the University, indeed, has "already absolutely corrupted your University." The Jesuits have done this on their own authority and that of a foreign prince (i.e. papal bulls) without the authorization of the Venetian state and against the regulations of the University statutes which imply that nobody can teach in Padua without the authorization of University officials. The result has been rivalry and riots between their students (*Gesuiti*) and ours (*Bovisti*). Such divisiveness is obviously evil. Venice should learn from the example of other university towns such as Paris, Pisa, Bologna, Perugia and Ferrara where no school besides the public studio is allowed. At Rome on the other hand, where a Jesuit school was allowed, it utterly destroyed the public university. The Jesuits entice students to transfer from the University on the promise of rapid progress, but Jesuit education is superficial, in the hands of young teachers who have merely cribbed their notes from others and who fly through the sciences.

⁷³ Comitoli, Ven. 105 I, f. 299v.

⁷⁴ Confalonieri to Aquaviva, 19/6/1592, Ital. 160, f. 18r.

⁷⁵ There were Paris editions in 1595 and 1624. It was also printed in the *Mercure Iesuite* (1626), 445-480.

⁷⁶ There are three copies of Cremonini's oration in ARSI, Ven. 105 I, ff. 215r-226r. Ambrosiana D. 463 inferior has two copies. For the location of other copies, see P. O. KRISTELLER, *Iter Italicum*, I (London: Warburg Institute, 1963), 118, 366; II (1967), 18, 22, 236, 271; FAVARO, 93.

⁷⁷ Gagliardi to Aquaviva, 11/1/1592. ARSI, Ital. 160, f. 213r.

⁷⁸ The most convenient edition of Cremonini's speech is that in FAVARO, 93-100, who is unaware of the previous editions.

Three of the five Jesuit refutations of Cremonini were anonymous, one circulated pseudonymously, and one was written in the name of the college at Padua. Four of these apologies are found in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan; none of them bears any indication of the real author.⁷⁹ The same four are also found together in the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, where each has the name of a Jesuit author written on top. The same manuscript binder contains a fifth apology by Antonio Possevino.⁸⁰ All five apologies are in copyist hands, but that they are attributed correctly can be verified by the correspondence of the five Jesuit authors. Since all five are refutations of Cremonini, they repeat many of the same arguments, but except for one passage they seem to have been composed independently. The analysis that follows tries to avoid repetition and to highlight what is distinctive in each apology.

The longest and most important of the apologies is that written by Benedetto Palmio in the name of the Jesuit community at Padua. Palmio circulated several copies of his apology among influential senators. According to Palmio the senators were pleased by it. Palmio also planned a shorter version of his apology which could be read in thirty or forty minutes before the Venetian Senate, but as late as May 27 he reported to Aquaviva that this had not been done.⁸¹ There is no evidence that Palmio's *scritto* or any of the other apologies had more than private circulation.

The tone of Palmio's apology is dignified and very polite toward Venice.⁸²

His purpose in answering Cremonini is to defend the reputation of the Society and give an account of Jesuit activities at Padua. The Jesuits began their college not to enter competition with the University but simply to carry out their ministry there as in other university cities such as Rome and Naples. Their activity has the sanction of a letter of Doge Francesco Donà with a concession from the Senate. Originally Jesuit students attended classes at the University but around 1558 (Palmio puts the date six years too late) the Jesuits began to teach classes in the humanities to both Jesuits and extern students, in accord with the Jesuit institute. For thirty-three years the college operated and grew without opposition, much to the benefit of the local citizens and of the Venetian state. In answer to Cremonini's charge that the Jesuits came to Padua poor and are now rich, Palmio included a short discussion of the college's finances and the role of the college in training young Jesuits for service throughout the Venetian Province. Palmio's apology is the most detailed of the five in tracing the history of the college. He drove home his point about the Jesuit college being set up with the approval of the Venetian state by noting that the University of Padua was not set up by Venice since it long antedated her acquisition of Padua. He then

⁷⁹ Ambrosiana D. 463 inferior.

⁸⁰ ARSI, Ven. 105 I.

⁸¹ Palmio to Aquaviva, 3/4/1592, Ital. 160, ff. 244r-47r; 27/5/1592, *ibid.*, f. 291rv.

⁸² Palmio's apology is found in Ven. 105 I, ff. 311-336, and Ambrosiana D. 463 inferior, ff. 1-32.

tried to explain away the action of Marc'Antonio de Dominis in showing the papal bulls to University officials. In a private conversation with friends he had mentioned the bulls and out of charity noted the danger of excommunication. His friends insisted on the bulls being shown to University officials, but his was a private action done "without threats or protests or making any claims against their statues ... but simply informing them by reason of charity and love."⁸³

Palmio is more effective in dealing with Cremonini's charge that the Jesuits have secretly built up their school — in fact they have been teaching openly for thirty-three years and have tried to avoid *concorrenza* with the University by making sure that their lectures are at different times than University courses on the same material. The posting of course offerings, the *rotoli* to which Cremonini objected, is different from the University practice. The Jesuit *rotoli* are printed and posted in several places so that students can easily find out the hours and required books for the various courses. The University list, handwritten and notarized, is solemnly read by the chancellor or another official together with an oration in praise of the University at the beginning of the scholastic year.⁸⁴

The Jesuit college, far from bringing discredit to the University, gives it help. Obviously the college does not conflict with courses in law and medicine. It is hard to imagine that the fifty students in philosophy and theology, plus a somewhat larger number in logic, are a threat to the thousands of students at the University, or that four or five Jesuit teachers in these disciplines have caused representatives from the whole faculty to come trooping to Venice for help in restoring the splendor of their school. Parents send their lads to the Jesuit college at a tender age because of its well-organized curriculum and moral discipline. Later many of these students go on to study law, medicine or other advanced studies at the University. Had they not started their studies in Padua, they might easily have taken their advanced studies at Naples, Ferrara, Pisa or some other University.

Palmio described the Jesuit curriculum at Padua in far greater detail than did the other Jesuit apologists. He admitted that the matter being taught at the college and the University may overlap for a few days, but this is no real *concorrenza*. The University professors, against their own statues, try to lure students to their courses. Despite the violence used against them by University students, the students of the Jesuit college come there freely. Contrary to Cremonini's accusation, the Jesuits never try to persuade students to transfer from the University. The professors admit the value of Jesuit training in rhetoric but mock the courses in logic and philosophy; but the quality of Jesuit training at Padua is clear from the books published by the Jesuit teachers and the subsequent careers of their students. Some former students of the college hold high office in the Venetian state and can testify about their training, others have gone on to become professors at the University — Palmio named three of them. If the Jesuit teachers are young and superficial, why do the professors fear their competition and claim that it has ruined

⁸³ Ven. 105 I, f. 319r.

⁸⁴ The use of printed *rotoli*, a common practice in Jesuit colleges, seems much more efficient and modern than the University ceremonies. Perhaps precisely for this reason it was resented by the University, which of course was not about to abandon its venerable usage and copy the Jesuits.

the University and emptied their classrooms? Palmio then argued that the success of the Jesuit college in teaching philosophy derives from organization and teaching methods.

Palmio alone among the Jesuit apologists described the two meetings of the *giuristi*, the first of which decided against taking part in the attack on the Jesuits. Basing himself on Singlitico's testimony, he made a good case against the legality of the second meeting on December 3. He went on to argue that the Paduan Jesuits have always avoided secular business, especially politics, and have taught obedience to constituted authority. For more than forty years the college has served the Venetian state well. Two University representatives warned the Senate against foreigners who seek dominion over the Venetian state. In fact both of them were subjects of foreign princes. In contrast the four major officials of the Jesuit college are all Venetian subjects. The rector is Paduan, the minister and the procurator are Brescians, and the prefect of the church is from Feltre. Many of the other fathers are also Venetian subjects, and the other fathers have served Venice well with their sweat and blood, particularly in time of war and plague.

For many years the students at the two schools at Padua have lived together peacefully, and the fracas last year has been greatly exaggerated. The rivalry between *Gesuiti* and *Bovisti* is minor compared to the rivalries that have always existed among groups of students and among the various nations at the University. Palmio concluded by recapitulating his arguments and claimed that any remedy which seemed appropriate to the Senate would satisfy the Jesuits, who were resolved not only to obey but to spend their blood and life in the service of the Serene Republic.

Possevino's apology was written in Rome, where Possevino was kept abreast of the crisis in Padua. Two copies exist, neither containing his name, but his authorship is clearly indicated by many autograph revisions and marginalia on one copy.⁸⁵ Possevino mentions the apology in a letter to the bishop of Padua in a surprising connection: in 1597 Cremonini visited Possevino, who was sick, in his room at the Jesuit college in Padua. They discussed the differences between the Jesuits and the University and the contents of Possevino's apology with considerable frankness and cordiality, at least on the surface. According to Possevino, at the end of the discussion Cremonini said that had he known when he gave his speech what he learned later, his attitude to the Jesuit college would have been very different.⁸⁶

Possevino's "Riposto al Cremonini" begins by praising Venice for its care of true religion by inviting religious orders to Padua to study and carry on their ministries, thereby strengthening the orthodoxy of the University, particularly against those who disregard the teaching of the Fifth Lateran Council on the immortality of the soul. Venice has also welcomed the Jesuits to Padua, where they have been careful not to lecture at the same hours as the University professors. The Jesuit college

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. 265-279; ARSI, Opp. NN. 333, ff. 348-60. The second copy contains many interlinear and marginal corrections in Possevino's autograph.

⁸⁶ 16/10/1597, Opp. NN. 333, ff. 52-54.

has sent well-grounded students on to the University and helped poor scholars prepare during vacation time for University doctorates in law, medicine and theology. Contrary to Cremonini, the Jesuits did not come to Padua and Venice by stealth but openly at the invitation of Abbot Lippomano. They have served Venice well, for instance as chaplains in the galleys and during the Turkish war; they have worked in the hospitals, especially during the plague. Their college at Padua, once the palazzo of a single noble family, now houses sixty Jesuits who are either training for the priesthood or are engaged in active ministry.

Contrary to Cremonini's claim that only those officially deputed can teach at Padua, private lectures have been going on there in theology since time immemorial. The same is true in surgery, as long as the lectures do not coincide with those of the University's anatomist. In the thirteenth century charges similar to Cremonini's were brought at the University of Paris against Saints Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, and Albert the Great, yet the teaching of the Dominicans and Franciscans saved France from the Albigenian heresy. Possevino examined Cremonini's historical examples and analogies and tried to show that they are either inaccurate or do not apply because of changed circumstances. Cremonini had urged Venice to follow the example of other states that had excluded Jesuit colleges; Possevino countered with a long list of princes and places that had welcomed Jesuit colleges. Indeed, in the previous eleven years the Jesuits had to decline 118 requests for colleges. In Milan and Naples a public *Studio* and a Jesuit college flourish side by side.

To Cremonini's claim that the Jesuit college causes divisiveness and disorders, Possevino replied that Jesuit colleges, at Padua and throughout Europe, are noted for their strict discipline and piety. The causes for the disorders at Padua lie elsewhere: the tensions between students from many nations, the heated campus politics and elections, and the controversies between conflicting philosophical schools. These have caused killings among students and even among teachers. It is these disorders, and not snide remarks by the Jesuits, that have hurt the University's reputation and cut enrollment. Another cause of declining enrollment is the new universities in the North: Tübingen, Leipzig, Wittenberg, and Geneva. If the University were to set up well-disciplined residential colleges, such as the Jesuits have done in many schools, the enrollment in the professional schools alone would increase by a thousand students.

To Cremonini's charge that the Jesuit teachers were too young and untrained Possevino responded with a eulogy on their piety and learning. Knowledge does not depend on a long beard and ample robes. The young Jesuit teachers get a thorough grounding in the humanities followed by eight to ten years of philosophy and theology. As a witness to the quality of Jesuit education Possevino cites Zabarella, Cremonini's illustrious predecessor, who sent his own sons to the Jesuit colleges at Padua and Rome. Venice should trust Zabarella's judgement in this area, for "he loved the Republic better than many other foreigners (Cremonini is obviously implied) ever will."⁸⁷

Like Cremonini, Possevino tried to flatter Venetian pride. His apology is vague about the precise legal status of the Jesuit college, a major point at issue, and he dared not dwell directly on the other major issue:

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 358r.

who started the recent student disorders and why. To do so would involve him in an attack on the University itself and on the sons and relatives of the senators whom he was trying to conciliate.

The most colorful Jesuit apology is entitled "Risposta apologetica all'invettiva del Cremonini contra i Padri Reverendi del Giesù per occasione del loro studio in Padova." It pretends to be written by one Eufemio Filarete who claims that while in Lombardy he heard about the attack on the Jesuits and as a proud graduate of the college at Padua he investigated the matter and determined to write his apology. The real author was Father Paolo Comitoli, who outlined some of his arguments against Cremonini in a letter to Aquaviva on December 28; some of the more colorful phrases from that letter reappear in the Filarete apology. Aquaviva reported receiving a copy of his "apologia honesta" on March 8, 1592.⁸⁸

Perhaps because of the pseudonym Comitoli felt free to attack Cremonini much more directly than the other Jesuit apologists.⁸⁹ Repeatedly his apology directly addressed Cremonini by name and describes him as driven by hate, envy, and fraud. Cremonini would make a better farmhand than a professor; he is more apt for carrying a sword on his hip and a musket on his shoulder than for holding forth on Aristotle. The apology claims that Cremonini was helped by a committee of professors in drawing up his speech, which has thirteen basic errors: three against piety and doctrine, ten against truth and justice. There is no need here to follow Comitoli through his thirteen points. Unlike the other Jesuit apologists who tried to downplay the claim that the Jesuit college depended on papal authorization, Comitoli makes this his main point; indeed, a denial of the Holy See's right to regulate universities throughout Christendom is openly heretical. His is the most erudite and canonical of all the Jesuit apologies, invoking a whole series of papal and conciliar documents as evidence for the right relation between church magisterium and university teaching. Examples are drawn from the history of the Universities of Padua, Cracow, Basel, Prague, Paris, Bologna and others. Theology and canon law are the architectonic sciences with other branches of knowledge as their handmaidens. Cremonini's claim that the University of Padua recognizes no authority outside the Venetian state is refuted by a series of papal actions dealing with the University and printed in the University's own statutes which list the privileges that the Holy See has granted it. "Learn, learn, o Cremonini, not from Simplicius, nor from Alexander of Aphrodisias, nor from Averroes but from Agatho, from Stephen, and from Gregory IV"⁹⁰ Like the other Jesuit apologists, Comitoli argues that the Jesuit college was established not by the authority of the Jesuits themselves but by that of Paul III, Doge Donà and the Venetian Senate. For forty years the Venetian government observed the operation of the college, and now this

⁸⁸ Ven. 105 I, ff. 201r-205v; Aquaviva's reply is Ven. 3 II, f. 446r. For parallel passages in Comitoli's letter and in his apology, compare Ven. 105 I, f. 201r with f. 299r and f. 204rv with f. 308rv.

⁸⁹ Two copies of Comitoli's apology are known, *ibid.*, ff. 299-310; and Ambrosiana D. 463 inferior, ff. 35-49.

⁹⁰ Ven. 105 I, f. 303v.

foreigner Cremonini discovers its illegality in one day. Cremonini stated that only in Rome did a Jesuit college and a University function together in the same city. Comitoli gave nine other instances. Likewise Cremonini had observed that only one university, that of Athens, sufficed for ancient Greece; hence it was redundant to have two at Padua. Comitoli, a notable Greek scholar, pulverized this argument with a barrage of quotations from Greek literature. To the claim that Jesuit teaching was superficial, Comitoli cited examples of former students of the Jesuit college who went on to brilliant careers at the University of Padua. Toward the end his apology wanders and ends with a personal attack on Cremonini. Of the five apologies this one is both the most brilliant and least successful because its vindictive tone and its appeal to papal authority were likely to be offensive to the Venetian aristocrats whom it presumably was trying to convince. Neither is it a successful popular pamphlet since it is weighted down with scholarly references.

Giovanni Domenico Bonaccorso was the widely respected rector of the Jesuit college at Mantua and was one of Palmio's two choices for provincial as the Venetian Province faced continuing problems in the spring of 1592 and badly needed thoughtful, prudent leadership.⁹¹ Bonaccorso must have finished his apology in late January since Aquaviva noted its reception in Rome on February 8. The General considered it a good piece of work and hoped it would forward God's greater service.⁹²

Like Comitoli, Bonaccorso wrote a slashing attack against Cremonini "who is unworthy of the name of Philosopher since he is openly the enemy of truth" and whose speech is full of "malignity, falsity and calumnies."⁹³ Like the other apologists he grounded the Jesuits' right to operate a college at Padua on the letter of Doge Donà and was amused that Cremonini attacks the Jesuits both for acting furtively and for ringing their bells. He confronted Cremonini's claim that the Jesuits were outsiders by giving a list of Jesuits who had been recently stationed at the college and were members of noble Paduan families; in fact only three out of sixty Jesuits at the college were non-Italians. Like Possevino he praised the young Jesuit teachers at the college and mentioned several of the professors at the University who held the mortality of the soul — a question that Cremonini, of course, avoided. Alone among the Jesuit apologists Bonaccorso suggests that *concorrenza* is a good thing, using the analogy of businessmen who are forced to sell better products or risk losing customers to competitors. But in fact the college had never meant to challenge the University — for instance the college bells, which are rung some thirty times daily, are not a challenge but merely signal the start and finish of various exercises in the college or in the Jesuit community. Nor is there much *concorrenza* in subject matter since the Jesuit survey course cuts across the material of the philosophy professors for only a few hours a year, much like the course of the sun and the moon in an eclipse. In fact the Jesuit college helps the University by providing

⁹¹ Palmio to Aquaviva, 4/3/1592; Ital. 160, f. 245v.

⁹² Ven. 3 II, f. 447v.

⁹³ Ven. 105, I, ff. 284r, 280r.

the schools of law and medicine with students well grounded in Latinity and having an overview of philosophy. In doing this the college also serves the Venetian Republic.⁹⁴

As early as December 27 Ludovico Gagliardi, the superior at Padua, wrote Aquaviva that he was planning a reply to Cremonini.⁹⁵ Fifteen days later he noted that his reply was half done and promised to send the General a copy the following week.⁹⁶ Although he did not hesitate to call Cremonini's speech a vituperative pasquinade full of blasphemies, his apology never mentions Cremonini by name and generally takes a polite, dignified stance. Gagliardi found four major accusations in Cremonini's speech and tried to answer them.

First Cremonini claimed that the Jesuits had set up a new *Studio* on their own authority; but, Gagliardi countered, the college was founded in 1548 on the authority of the Senate which gave the old priory to the Jesuits, as is clear in Doge Donà's letter, so that they might carry on their ministries, one of which is teaching not only letters but also philosophy and theology. The admission of the Jesuits to Padua implied permission to carry on all ministries proper to the Jesuit institute. Thus did Gagliardi try to slide over the crucial omission of explicit permission to teach extern students in the much-appealed-to letter of Doge Donà. Gagliardi also appealed to the *de facto* support of the rectors of Padua and of the *reformatori dello Studio* for the gradual expansion of the college. The University statutes that forbid teaching to unauthorized persons do not apply to the Jesuits since they do not teach at the University.

Secondly the Jesuits have not used the privileges of a foreign prince. The use of the phrase *foreign prince* for the Vicar of Christ is an invidious slur. The question of the papal bulls was brought up by a pharisaical trick on "*nostro simplicitto fratello*" (de Dominis!). In fact the bulls threaten excommunication only to private individuals who interfere with Jesuit schools; hence it is false to raise the accusation that the college rests on the authority of a foreign prince. The accusation pretends great zeal for the Venetian Republic, but in fact harms the Republic by robbing her of the Jesuits' service. Indeed since the closing of the college many young men have left Padua.

Thirdly Cremonini claims that the Jesuits furtively expanded their college from grammar to philosophy and theology — but growth is a normal process. Venice herself started small and grew to her present perfection gradually. It was to please the Venetian and Paduan nobility that the Jesuits gradually and quite openly expanded their course offerings.

The final accusation is that of competition, but there is no competition at all with the study of law and medicine, which enroll the vast majority of students. Any decrease in enrollment at the University derives not from the competition of the Jesuit college but from the establishment of many new schools and universities in Italy and throughout Europe. It is Cremonini who detracts from the University when he says that it has been "overcome, conquered, destroyed and defeated" by four Jesuit

⁹⁴ There are three known copies of Bonaccorso's apology, *ibid.*, ff. 280-288 and 289-298; Ambrosiana D. 463 inferior, ff. 51-67.

⁹⁵ Ven. 105 I, f. 197r.

⁹⁶ Ital. 160, f. 213r.

teachers in philosophy, men that Cremonini (falsely) calls young and untrained. Cremonini also attributes the decline of the University to the friction between *Bovisti* and *Gesuiti*, but student tumults were endemic to Italian universities long before the foundation of the Jesuits. On the contrary, Jesuits worked to pacify unrest in Padua. In the other cities where there are both Jesuit colleges and older universities peaceful relations flourish. Gagliardi then briefly took up some of the other accusations made by Cremonini, but his treatment merely summarized arguments that we have already seen in the other Jesuit apologies.⁹⁷

The five Jesuit apologies made many rhetorical points against Cremonini and were most successful in refuting details of his argument, for instance his statements about the relations of Jesuit colleges to other universities. About that topic the Jesuits were far better informed than Cremonini. All the apologies are obsequious toward the Venetian Republic — their purpose required no less. Except for a few oblique remarks about the immortality of the soul, the Jesuits do not mount a counter-attack on the University, which was the pride of the Serene Republic.⁹⁸ Modern readers might expect them to argue the value of competition since *concorrenza* was the distinctive mark of the University of Padua, where two professors were assigned to lecture simultaneously on the same material so that students would have a choice of teachers and rivalry would keep professors keen. Instead the apologies minimize Jesuit competition with the University. The Jesuit apologies labored under three major weaknesses: first, the right to teach extern students was not explicit in the letter of the doge which originally authorized the college, nor had this right ever been explicitly approved by the Venetian government; secondly, *de facto* student unrest in 1591 pivoted on the existence of the Jesuit college so that its suppression seemed an easy solution; thirdly, and most importantly, many senators hated the Jesuits as *spagnuoli* and *papalini*. The Jesuit apologists dared not even admit this last problem or attack it directly

⁹⁷ There are four known copies of Gagliardi's apology: Ven. 105 I, ff. 236-249 and 251-264; Ambrosiana D. 463 inferior, ff. 69-84 and 87-108.

⁹⁸ Cremonini's speech entirely passed over in silence the complaint of the University's professors about the Jesuit use of dictation, which practice the professors themselves then took up in reply. Cremonini merely mentions in passing "multiplicare tante lezioni" (FAVARO, 98) in the Jesuit college, which again forced the professors to copy the Jesuit example. Perhaps because Cremonini did not dwell on the matter, neither do the Jesuit apologists. But there is reason to think that the Jesuit teaching methods were a major source of the professors' hostility since it forced them to change their methods and work harder. The question of dictation figures very prominently in the account of the controversy written by the University *humanista* Antonio Riccobono (ARSI, Ven. 105 I, f. 191r) and in the letters of the rectors of the University to the rectors of the Padua commune (FAVARO, 92); the decree of the Venetian Senate which closed the college forbade the use of dictation at the University in very strong language ("mala introductione del dettar, ... perniciosissimo abuso ... questa maniera di leggere quel molto danno ..." FAVARO, 106). On Riccobono, who will reappear in this article, see Gian Carlo MAZZACURATI, *La crisi della retorica umanistica nel Cinquecento* (Antonio Riccobono), (Naples: Libreria scientifica, 1961). He treats Riccobono's relation with the Jesuits, pp. 129-131.

— they could only appeal to their long record of loyal service to the Republic.

What did the Jesuit apologists accomplish? Obviously they failed to bring about a restoration of the college, but that was too much to expect in the political climate. At least no further action was taken against the Jesuits and their other schools in Venetian territory, and perhaps the apologists contributed to this by strengthening their friends and giving the wavering food for thought. The apologies furnished friendly senators with arguments to use in private conversation with their colleagues, but it may be doubted that the apologies had much effect on any of the convinced *giovani* politicians who may have read them.⁹⁹

V. LATER ATTEMPTS TO RESTORE THE COLLEGE.

The suggestions raised about re-opening the lower *scuole* of the Jesuit college soon after its suppression in 1591 came to nothing, but efforts to re-open the school were not dropped. There was an important new effort in 1594, whose initiative came from Paduan city officials at a meeting of the city council on June 27. A speech proposed that the Venetian government should declare that the decree against the college should not apply to lower *scuole* in *grammatica*, *humanità*, and *retorica* since these courses seemed to the citizens to serve the universal good of the city, especially since the lack of adequate teachers in these subjects was forcing citizens to send their sons to study elsewhere. The council voted for the resolution fifty to ten with one abstention.¹⁰⁰ In August eight speakers were appointed to present to the Venetian government a petition incorporating the resolution.¹⁰¹

At least one Jesuit played a role in encouraging this action by the Paduan citizens. The Jesuit archives contain a document entitled: "Ragioni, le quali hanno mosso questa nobilissima città di Padova a tener publico consiglio et determinar' il dì Giugno 1594 di pregar il Ser.mo Principe et Ecc.mo Senato della Republica a restituire alla città le scuole della Compagnia di Giesù per loro Gioventù et di molti nobili di altre città et nationi che lo desideranno."¹⁰² Many passages were obviously written by somebody with an intimate knowledge not only of the procedures of the Jesuit college at Padua but also the state of Jesuit education through much of Europe. The author of parts of the *Ragioni*, if not the whole, is certainly Antonio Possevino, recently returned to Padua after the failure of his diplomatic involvement in the absolution of Henry IV of France.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ ARSI, Ital. 160, f. 244r.

¹⁰⁰ The speech and vote are printed by FAVARO, 108-110.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹⁰² Ven. 105 I, ff. 209r-214v.

¹⁰³ Internal evidence makes it clear that some Jesuits played a major role in drawing

The document argues that as soon as the Jesuit college was closed the citizens of Padua experienced a great loss to their youth. The citizens and the bishop had made their needs known to the Venetian officials at Padua but, the *Ragioni* claims, the Senate was preoccupied with other concerns and the Jesuits, fearful of seeming resentful, merely recommended their cause to God. Things have gotten worse in the intervening three years. Enrollment at the University has not increased but has continued to decline. Young students at Padua need a combination of good instruction in classical languages with the moral and religious upbringing which is necessary for personal discipline. Such discipline is even needed for reasons of state. Three years of experience and careful examination have made it clear that private schoolmasters are no substitute for a Jesuit college. The local schoolmasters are too few in number, are too often pre-occupied with other concerns, and cannot provide systematic education on a variety of levels. They do not accept poor students, as the Jesuits did, with consequent waste of talent. Nor should the Public Lecturer in Humanities at the University (Antonio Riccobono) object to a Jesuit school. His salary will remain unaffected, and a Jesuit college will provide him with well-prepared students for his lectures. His lectures take only one hour a day, are a sort of condiment for advanced students in history, language and eloquence, and are unsuited for adolescents. Previous holders of Riccobono's chair (several are named and praised) never objected to there being grammar teachers in the city. The citizens ought not to be stripped of their ancient right to provide teachers for their children. At this point the *Ragioni* devotes three pages to the achievements of Jesuit colleges in various European countries, followed by a detailed description of the procedures at the Jesuit college of Padua. Entering students are examined and placed in the level where they can get the best foundation. Twice annually students take examinations and are promoted according to their progress. There are monthly confessions so that students do not become enemies of God and of the state. The role of teachers and the prefect of studies is explained, as well as the continual repetitions and compositions designed to promote language skills. Even vacation time is utilized through educational diver-

up the *Ragioni*, if they did not write it entirely, since the document contains detailed knowledge of Jesuit schools in other cities. There are three reasons that point to Antonio Possevino as the author. First, the general style and mode of argument seem to reflect Possevino, especially the appeal to Polish examples (ff. 212r, 214r); not many Paduans would have had such detailed knowledge of Polish affairs. Secondly, the document is written in a scribal hand, but there is a single word (*Siena*) interpolated on the bottom line of f. 211r; having read several thousand pages of Possevino's autograph, I would judge that the interpolation is in his hand. Thirdly and crucially, the *Ragioni* borrows phrases from Possevino's apology, a document which according to Possevino was not circulated (ARSI, Opp. NN. 333, f. 53r). Let the reader compare these two passages: "Al che tutto si aggiunge l'altra consideratione, che anticamente sempre ha Dio monstrato desiderio, che nelle principali città fusse la gioventù instituita più tosto da gli Ecclesiastici, che da altri. Così Carlo Magno fundando le chiese fundava le scuole presso le chiese, et fra i capitoli di canonici era uno, che si chiamava scholastico, che haveva cura delle scuole." *Ragioni*, Ven. 105 I, f. 213v. "... scuole, delle quali ne habbiano specialissimamente cura persone ecclesiastiche, fu antichissimo questo nella Rep.ca christiana, sì che et nei capitoli di molti cathedrali restanno i nomi di quei che si chiamavano per questo conto scholastici et capi scuole, et altri tali, i quali dovevano presso le chiese stesse insegnare gratuitamente senza mercede alcuna, non solo i chierici ma altri poveri scolari. Né Carlo magno pretermise questa cura, poichè fondando tante chiese ... aggiunsi immediatamente quella della scuole in mano dei sacerdoti." Possevino's apology, *ibid.*, f. 270r.

sions such as dialogues and academies. The *Ragioni* stresses the superiority of the Jesuits over private schoolmasters; they bring greater dedication and better training to their job, they combine moral and religious training with solid discipline in their schools, and when a Jesuit teacher falls sick, a replacement is always ready to take over. The Jesuits teach rich and poor alike without discrimination. The *Ragioni* closes by claiming that the re-opening of the college will increase enrollment in the University, where many professors have complained that since its closing their students have fallen off in both numbers and quality.

When the Paduan petition was presented to the Venetian *Pieno Collegio* on August 10, University representatives were on hand to oppose it. Antonio Riccobono (University *humanista*), Nicolò Borlizza (rector of the *giuristi*), and others made speeches against restoring the Jesuit college. There were other speeches in favor of the Jesuits. An initial vote was taken to refer the matter to the Paduan rectors, a resolution tantamount to restoring the college, but this was decisively defeated. The opponents of the Jesuits then proposed referring the matter to the Senate, a body even more hostile to the Society than the *Pieno Collegio*, but in the event the Senate never even took the matter up.¹⁰⁴ The Jesuit *Annual Letter* rather ingenuously suggested that the question was put off because of the obvious need to allow more time for the wounds of 1591 to heal.¹⁰⁵

Again in 1596 the city decided to petition Venice for a restoration of the college. This time preliminary discussions were undertaken with Riccobono, who again rejected the proposal. As a concession to him it was proposed to restrict the restored classes to grammar and studies connected with *umanità*, rhetoric being dropped, but he was convinced that once the Jesuits opened their school they would expand their offerings until they overlapped with his field.

Riccobono insisted on this in private correspondence with the Jesuits and also forwarded his objections to the University officials. Meanwhile the city officials had been investigating the matter, but Riccobono felt that their investigation was selecting only professors favorable to the Jesuits, so he demanded that their report to the Venetian government include not only the responses of the professors interviewed but also his own report since he was an interested party. He contended that his report was being ignored, and at a public meeting before the University faculty and representatives of the Venetian government he gave a long speech developing his contention. The *università artistica* backed him up with letters which were read before the Senate. Once the Venetian Senate felt the continued hostility of the University, it intimated to those working for a restoration of the Jesuit college that they had no present prospect of success.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 193rv.

¹⁰⁵ *Litterae annuae Societatis Iesu duorum annorum MDXCIII et MDXCV* (Naples: Tarquinio Longo, 1604), 94.

¹⁰⁶ For Riccobono's account, Ven. 105 I, f. 194v.

In 1597 the efforts to re-establish the college were more complex. Once again the city council took the lead and voted forty-two to six on August 27 to petition Venice again.¹⁰⁷ Again the Jesuits were certainly working behind the scenes to encourage the project. Palmio sent a furious letter to Aquaviva on August 6 complaining about the political activities of various unnamed Jesuits. He reported receiving letters from noble friends describing these back-door Jesuit activities "suscitando il negotio delle scuole tanto da V. P. interdetto, et dal P. Provinciale." Palmio also thought the provincial was uninformed about these activities. Palmio felt that this indiscreet zeal and involvement in politics were so dangerous that the General should either transfer the guilty parties from Venice and Padua or bind them under holy obedience to keep out of such matters. Palmio considered that there was no hope of restoring the college to its former status. The failure of the efforts to re-establish the college was, in fact, the best thing that had ever happened to the Province. He then blithely described for Aquaviva his recent conversations with the Duke of Parma about the possibility of transferring the Jesuit seminary from Padua to Parma, although this would have to be done in such a way as not to offend Venetian sensibilities. Palmio went on to describe the advantages of Parma, the prospects of expanding the Jesuit holdings there, and the hope of financial help from the Duke of Parma. He then suggested that a discreet and secret way might be found to siphon funds from Padua to Parma, justifying this on the attitude of the Venetian government and the original intention of the donor to support the education of the Jesuits.¹⁰⁸ Palmio was born in Parma.

The effort to restore the college in 1597 started with efforts to assure Riccobono that the Jesuit teachers would stick to teaching grammar and not intrude on his material, scholarly commentary on the rhetorical works of Aristotle and Cicero. The Jesuits promised to make their restored college into a *seminarium* of the University and to encourage their students to attend the lectures of the professors. A document to this effect was drawn up and signed by Riccobono, Girolamo Barisone (the Jesuit Rector at Padua), Marco Cornaro (the bishop of Padua) and the University professors including Cremonini.¹⁰⁹ The agreement was the culmination of quiet negotiations which involved Barisone, Possevino, Cornaro, Riccobono, Cremonini, Leonardo Donà, and Galeazzo Secco, the secretary of the doge.¹¹⁰ Even Doge Marino Grimani favored the restoration of the college.¹¹¹ Possevino felt that the concessions

¹⁰⁷ Document printed in FAVARO, 112-113.

¹⁰⁸ Ital. 160, f. 29rv.

¹⁰⁹ FAVARO, 117-18; Ven. 105 I, f. 195r.

¹¹⁰ The negotiations are described by Possevino in a letter to Cornaro, 16/10/1597; ARSI, Opp. NN. 333, f. 52r-54r.

¹¹¹ Gaetano Cozzi, "Federico Contarini: un antiquario veneziano tra Rinascimento e Controriforma," *Bollettino dell'Istituto di Storia della Società e dello Stato Veneziano*, III (1961), 199-202.

made to Riccobono were reasonable. Cremonini told Possevino that had he understood the situation at Padua and the work of the Jesuits better, he would have acted differently than he had in 1591 and he promised to support a compromise solution.¹¹² Even earlier Ercole Sassonia, another of the University's spokesmen in 1591, had agreed to support the restoration of the college.¹¹³ Donà promised his support, as did Secco. Donà also favored the establishment of a Jesuit college at Vicenza, where there would not be the same sort of opposition that faced the Jesuits at Padua.¹¹⁴

Although the University faculty had agreed to the compromise, some of the professors remained hostile to a restoration of the college. The main opposition came from the students, particularly from the German *natio*, who argued that the Jesuits had already destroyed the public universities in such cities as Vienna, Prague, and Ingolstadt. The German *natio* contended that even if the Jesuits promised to restrict their teaching to grammar, they would gradually add rhetoric and logic, then philosophy and ethics: "proprum commodum patres isti et imperium in studia totius Gymnasii cogitant."¹¹⁵ The lead in the anti-Jesuit campaign was taken by Mathias Jacobaeus, the Danish syndic of the *artisti*. First he asked that the Paduan Commune's petition not be taken up until the University had an opportunity to discuss it. He then held a meeting of the Council of *artisti* on October 3, 1597, which voted ten to zero to present a counter-petition to the Venetian government and the Senate against the restoration of the college.¹¹⁶ The counter-petition not only opposed the re-opening of the Jesuit college at Padua but also argued that the existing Jesuit colleges of Brescia and Verona constituted illegal competition with the University in Padua and requested their suppression. The Venetian government did not authorize the restoration of the Jesuit college at Padua, but neither did it agree to suppress the colleges at Brescia and Verona needlessly. Later the Acts of the German *natio* again mention an attack on the college at Brescia, once more to no avail.¹¹⁷ Indeed a college for nobles at Brescia was placed under the direction of the Jesuits in 1604.¹¹⁸

In 1601 the novitiate of the Venetian Province was transferred to Padua, where space was easily available; but the step would

¹¹² Opp. NN. 333, f. 53v.

¹¹³ FAVARO, 111.

¹¹⁴ Opp. NN. 333, f. 199rv. This document in Possevino's autograph is an undated series of memos on his negotiations about the college. Internal evidence suggests that it is linked to the 1597 negotiations.

¹¹⁵ FAVARO, 115.

¹¹⁶ FAVARO 116-17. Antonio FAVARO, *Nuovi documenti sulla vertenza fra lo Studio di Padova e la Compagnia di Gesù sul finire del secolo decimosesto* (Venice: Istituto veneto di arti grafiche, 1911), 8, 9. This last is a short pamphlet that prints documents that Favaro discovered after his *Lo Studio* of thirty-three years earlier. It will be referred to henceforward as *Nuovi documenti* to distinguish it from *Lo Studio*.

¹¹⁷ FAVARO, *Nuovi documenti*, 9-14.

¹¹⁸ PULLAN (quoted above, note 30), 406.

make any future re-opening of the college more difficult.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless the need of good training in grammar and the other disciplines for the youth of the city was still felt by leading citizens. In January of 1602 another attempt to restore the lower classes was made, much of the initiative coming from Jacopo Foscarini, one of the Venetian *Riformatori* of the University, who had come to Padua to treat with the Jesuit rector. The rector's response apparently made a very bad impression on the supporters of a restoration since they had assumed from earlier conversations with Fathers Achille and Ludovico Gagliardi that the Jesuits would eagerly seize the opportunity to restore the college. Instead the rector had merely expressed gratitude for their efforts and insisted that nothing could be concluded without the permission of the General in Rome, which would take some ten days to secure. The Venetian friends of the Society planned to push the matter in the Senate within the week. After the interview the brother of the late Cardinal Morosini (who was serving as both Venetian rector of the city of Padua and temporary *podestà* and was a good friend of the Society) called the Jesuit rector and Father Stefano del Bufalo to his quarters and warned them that the Jesuit hesistance had placed the Venetian officials who had encouraged the restoration in an embarrassing position. The enemies of the Society at Venice would now accuse her friends of having been duped by the Jesuits, who were playing some sort of strategem. The Padua Jesuits were extremely agitated by the dilemma that they faced. The rector made the community vow Masses, devotions, and even disciplines for a favorable outcome of the negotiations and sent a messenger on horseback to keep the provincial at Venice informed. As Stefano del Bufalo wrote to Rome, to Bernardo de Angelis, the Secretary of the Society: "Padre mio, questo fuoco sì acceso, se viene smorzato, sarà causa di un noioso fume a gli occhi della Compagnia."¹²⁰ Another Jesuit wrote Rome that the Society ought to seize the opportunity since a refusal now would jeopardize all the Society's works in Venetian territory, that the opportunity would not come again, and that there was no other place in the Province where the Society had any hope of establishing an "università."¹²¹

On January 22 Aquaviva wrote to Foscarini that the lack of subjects and commitment to other schools and various other difficulties, far from preventing the Society from granting the desire of the Venetian government, would only serve as additional signs of the Jesuits' readiness to serve the Republic's wishes.¹²² The same day he wrote to the Jesuit rector at Padua to the same effect.¹²³ Four days later he explained to the provincial, Bernardino Rossi-

¹¹⁹ *Annuae litterae Societatis Iesu anni MDCI* (Antwerp: Nutti, 1618), 113.

¹²⁰ 17/1/1602, ARSI, Ital. 162, ff. 134r-135r.

¹²¹ Andrea Eudemonjoannes to [Bernardo de Angelis?], 17/1/1602, *ibid.*, ff. 136-137r.

¹²² ARSI, Ven. 5 I, f. 150r.

¹²³ *Ibidem.*

gnoli, that the situation would not have caused such excitement had the Venetian Jesuits considered carefully previous letters on the subject from Rome, which argued that while it was not expedient for the Jesuits to encourage the restoration of the college among friends of the Society, since it would be a burden, now that these friends had requested this service, it was expedient to meet their request promptly and generously. The provincial should therefore consider how to provide the college with good teachers.¹²⁴

The effort to re-open the college in 1602 was not successful and the Commune tried a final time in 1606 when on April 7 it included a petition for restoration with its congratulations to Leonardo Donà on his election as doge.¹²⁵ Probably the Commune was encouraged by Donà's earlier attitude toward the project. Ten days later the Interdict Controversy broke out and resulted in the expulsion of all Jesuits from Venetian territory. Even after Rome and Venice made their peace, the Jesuits remained banished from the Republic.¹²⁶ The income from Lippomano's original benefice was reassigned to the support of the University and of the Accademia dei Nobili on the Giudecca Island at Venice.¹²⁷ In 1612 the Venetian Senate decreed that any Venetian subject who allowed his children, relatives or dependents to study at Jesuit schools outside of Venetian territory was subject to severe punishment by the Council of Ten.¹²⁸ The pamphlets defending the Venetian position during the Interdict crisis were answered by many prominent Jesuits, particularly Antonio Possevino. These heated exchanges expressed openly many of the arguments and attitudes of both Jesuits and their opponents that had found more muted expression in Cremonini's oration and the replies of the Jesuit apologists.¹²⁹

Throughout his book on the suppression of the Jesuit college at Padua Antonio Favaro assumed that the Jesuits were working mightily to restore the college. As has been seen, this was certainly the goal of many local Jesuits. But the mind of Aquaviva is less clear. The General nowhere made a comprehensive policy statement during the fifteen years that re-opening the college was under discussion. Certain general considerations seemed to have determined his policy. The Jesuit order, although expanding rapidly, was short of manpower, at least in view of its many opportunities for God's greater service. Aquaviva was convinced that small colleges with rather elementary curricula (which a restored college at

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 151.

¹²⁵ FAVARO, *Lo Studio*, 118; FAVARO, *Nuovi documenti*, 14.

¹²⁶ PIETRO PIRRI, *L'interdetto di Venezia del 1606 e i Gesuiti* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1959). Pirri prints the vivid description by Father Ascanio Marazzi of the expulsion of the Jesuits from Padua, 161-168.

¹²⁷ FAVARO, *Lo Studio*, 60; PULLAN, 417-418.

¹²⁸ See the decree of the Senate, 9/6/1612, printed by Giuseppe CAPPELLETTI, *I Gesuiti e la Repubblica di Venezia* (Venice: Grimaldo, 1872), 238.

¹²⁹ BOUWSMA (quoted above, note 8), 350-482; PIAIA (quoted above, note 39), 130-137.

Padua would be) were not a preferred ministry but rather a drain on precious Jesuit manpower. Moreover neither Padua in particular nor Venetian territory in general were choice fields for the investment of Jesuits. Of all the regimes in Italy during the late sixteenth century the Serene Republic was least favorably disposed to the Jesuits. In the other areas and cities of the Venetian Province — Mantua, Parma, Ferrara, Bologna — the Jesuits enjoyed excellent relations with the rulers. In Padua the Society would always face the opposition of the University and the hostility of University students toward those of the college. Given these considerations Aquaviva seemed disinclined to seek a restoration of the college, but neither did he wish to reject curtly a concrete offer since this would offend many Jesuits at Padua as well as the friends of the Society, particularly in the city council, who were eager to restore the college. Still less could he reject an offer that had the approval of the Venetian Senate since that would be an affront which could damage Jesuit apostolic efforts everywhere in Venetian territory, including the Jesuit mission on Crete. In many ways the enemies of the Society at Padua and the extreme *giovani* in the Senate made Aquaviva's task easier.¹³⁰

In her long history the Society of Jesus has been banished from many countries. The Society endures and almost always comes back. So it was with Venice. The return of the Jesuits to Venetian territory was authorized on January 19, 1657. Five years later there was a Jesuit college at Padua with 290 students in nine classes; there were even larger Jesuit colleges operating at Venice, Verona, Vicenza, and Brescia, but that story is beyond the scope of this study.¹³¹

¹³⁰ This interpretation is suggested by several passages in the correspondence of Aquaviva and his advisors: ARSI, Ital. 160, ff. 212v-213r; Ital. 162, ff. 29rv, 134r-135r; Ven. 5 I, ff. 150-151. Also LUKÁCS, "De Controversiis" (quoted above, note 64), 26-28.

¹³¹ Gian Paolo BRIZZI, *La formazione della classe dirigente nel sei-settecento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1976), 155.

RIASSUNTO

In più di un caso l'aprire le scuole del loro collegio agli esterni mise i gesuiti in concorrenza, e quindi in urto, con le precedenti istituzioni d'insegnamento. È quanto accadde a Padova, dove i gesuiti soccombettero, causa l'ostilità della nobiltà veneziana.

Gli alunni esterni cominciarono nel 1552, e nel 1589 erano 450; ai corsi umanistici si erano aggiunti anche quelli di filosofia e teologia, mentre anche l'edificio del collegio veniva ampliandosi. L'emulazione scoppiò. Nel 1591 si ebbero gravi provocazioni da parte degli studenti del Bò, e un intervento indiscreto da parte di Marc'Antonio De Dominis, il docente gesuita di matematica, non ancora sacerdote. Dopo la scomparsa dello Zabarella, i nuovi titolari delle due cattedre di filosofia dell'Università, Francesco Piccolomini e Cesare Cremonini, consideravano una violazione delle loro prerogative che si impartisse in collegio l'insegnamento filosofico; sicché il corpo accademico padovano, guidato dal Cremonini, appellò al Senato veneziano, che accolse le motivazioni e ordinò la chiusura delle scuole per gli esterni.

Della vicenda, già descritta un secolo fa dal Favaro, ma sulle sole fonti degli avversari, si offre qui la narrazione e i prolungamenti secondo le fonti interne della Compagnia. In risposta agli attacchi del Cremonini vennero stese apologie da cinque gesuiti: B. Palmio, A. Possevino, P. Comitoli, G. D. Bonaccorso e L. Gagliardi, i quali misero in rilievo i vantaggi derivanti allo Stato veneto dalle scuole della Compagnia. Tentativi per riaprire i corsi inferiori (letterari) cominciarono già nel 1592, e si ripeterono negli anni 1594, 1596, 1602 e 1606. In essi ebbe parte principale il Comune cittadino, sensibile al lamento dei genitori che i figli fossero privi di una buona educazione secondaria; lo affiancarono pure alcuni gesuiti, principalmente il Possevino, di cui è certamente un memoriale da presentarsi tramite il Comune al Senato nel 1594, notevole per il quadro tracciato dell'estensione e degli effetti dell'educazione impartita dalla Compagnia sin allora. Una restaurazione parziale del resto era auspicata anche da molti professori, compreso il Cremonini. Meno ben vista invece era proprio da Acquaviva, in considerazione dello stato della provincia veneta: era forse meglio non sottrarre personale ai collegi delle altre città che avevano tratto impulso dalla chiusura di Padova, per es. Brescia, e godevano l'apoggio della cittadinanza senza contrasti. Tanto più che a Padova erano stati trasferiti da Novellara i novizi, per godere di un posto più salubre. A ogni modo gli approcci per una parziale riapertura del collegio patavino agli esterni furono troncati dall'Interdetto del 1606.