



UNIVERSALITAS & PERVASIVITAS

IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede autori Sotto attacco

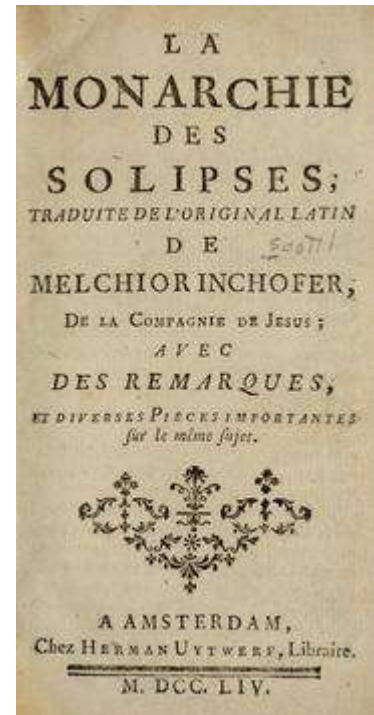
Melchior Inchofer

Melchior Inchofer or Imhofer (c.1584-1648) was a Hungarian Jesuit. He played an important part in the trial of Galileo, by his arguments that Galileo was an advocate of the Copernican system in *Tractatus Syllepticus*. His role in the Galileo affair is being reassessed in the light of fresh documentary evidence.[1]

Life

He was born at Kőszeg, Hungary in 1584 or 1585; and died at Milan September 28, 1648. In 1607 he entered the Society of Jesus in Rome, and after the completion of his novitiate went to Messina, where he taught philosophy, mathematics, and theology.

In 1633 the Holy Office examined Galileo's *Dialogue of the Two World Systems*, and Inchofer was one of three theologians appointed to assess the work, the others being Agostino Oreggi and Zaccaria Pasqualigo. Inchofer's lengthy report concluded that the Dialogue taught Copernicanism, that Galileo was a Copernican, and that the book was designed as an attack on Christoph Scheiner.[2]



In 1634 he resumed his professorship in Sicily, where he remained until 1636, when his order called him to Rome that he might devote himself entirely to writing. He endorsed strongly the work of [Athanasius Kircher](#) on the Coptic language.[3] His dispute with Joachim Pasqualigo on the immorality of making castrati, and his appointment as member of the Congregation of the Index and of the holy office dissatisfied him with Rome, and at his own request he was transferred in 1645 to the college at Macerata where he intended to devote his leisure hours to the compilation of a history of martyrs. The last few years of his life were troubled, and he was brought to trial by his order in 1648.[4] With the situation unresolved he undertook a journey to the Ambrosian library at Milan, but died there.

Works

In his *Epistolae Beatae Mariae Virginis ad Messanenenses veritatis vindicata* (Messina, 1629) he endeavored to prove the genuineness of the epistle and the apostolic activity of Saint Paul at Messina, but the Congregation of the Index summoned him to Rome and suppressed the first edition, although he was permitted to remove all objectionable features from his work and republish it.[5]

He wrote also *Annales ecclesiastici regni Hungariae* (Rome, 1644); and *Historia sacrae Latinitatis* (Messina, 1635), in which he elevated Latin to the rank of a heavenly court language and regarded it as the speech of the blessed, but also gave a history of its teaching, drawing heavily on the



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pioneer work in the history of education, the *Academiae orbis Christiani* of Jakob Middendorp, first published in 1567.[4] He was also the author of astronomical works, and in three polemical treatises (1638-41) he defended the order of the Jesuits and its mode of education, attacked by Caspar Scioppius. He attained his main contemporary fame, however, by the anonymous *Lucii Cornelii Europaei monarchia Solipsorum, ad virum clarissimum Leonum Allatium* (Venice, 1645); the long-accepted view is that of François Oudin writing in 1736 for the *Mémoires* of Jean-Pierre Nicéron, namely it was incorrectly attributed to him and was really by Giulio Clemente Scotti, but recently scholars have re-opened the question.[4]

Notes

1. <http://www.unav.es/cryf/newlightistanbul.html#titulo3>
2. Michael Sharratt, Galileo: Decisive Innovator (1994), pp. 172-3.
3. <http://fathom.lib.uchicago.edu/1/777777122590/>
4. a b c <http://www.phil-hum-ren.uni-muenchen.de/GermLat/Acta/Laureys.htm>
5. As De Epistola Beatae Virginis Mariae ad Messanenses Conjectatio (Viterbo, 1631).

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Cfr.: Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melchior_Inchofer

Vedi anche: [breve profilo biografico di Melchior Inchofer nel sito dell'Enciclopedia Treccani](#)