

Galileo's First Deposition, 12 April 1633.

Summoned, there appeared personally in Rome at the palace of the Holy Office, in the usual quarters of the Reverend Father Commissary, fully in the presence of the Reverend Father Fra Vincenzo Maculano of Firenzuola, Commissary General, and of his assistant Reverend Father Carlo Sinceri, Prosecutor of the Holy Office, etc.

Galileo, son of the late Vincenzio Galilei, Florentine, seventy years old, who, having taken a formal oath to tell the truth, was asked by the Fathers the following:

Q: By what means and how long ago did he come to Rome.

A: I arrived in Rome the first Sunday of Lent, and I came in a litter.

Q: Whether he came of his own accord, or was called, or was ordered by someone to come to Rome, and by whom.

A: In Florence the Father Inquisitor ordered me to come to Rome and present myself to the Holy Office, this being an injunction by the officials of the Holy Office.

Q. Whether he knows or can guess the reason why he was ordered to Rome.

A. I imagine that the reason why I have been ordered to present myself to the Holy Office in Rome is to account for my recently printed book. I imagine this because of the injunction to the printer and myself, a few days before I was ordered to come to Rome; not to issue any more of these book; and similarly because the printer was by the Father Inquisitor to send the original manuscript of my book to the Holy Office in Rome.

Q: That he explain the character of the book on account of which he thinks he was ordered to come to Rome.

A: It is a book written in dialogue form, and it treats of the constitution of the world, that is, of the two chief systems, and the arrangement of the heavens and the elements.

Q: Whether, if he were shown the said book, he is prepared to identify it as his.

A: I hope so; I hope that if the book is shown me I shall recognize it. And having been shown one of the books printed in Florence in 1632, whose title is Dialogue of Galileo Galilei Lincean etc., which examines the two systems of the world, and having looked at it and inspected it carefully, he said: I know this book very well; it is one of those printed in Florence; and I acknowledge it as mine and written by me.

Q: Whether he likewise acknowledges each and every thing contained in the said book as his.

A: I know this book shown to me, for it is one of those printed in Florence; and I acknowledge all it contains as having been written by me.

Q: When and where he composed the said book, and how long it took him.

A: In regard to the place, I composed it in Florence, beginning ten or twelve years ago; and it must have taken me seven or eight years, but not continuously.

Q: Whether he was in Rome other times, especially in the year 1616 and for what occasion.

A: I was in Rome in the year 1616; then I was here in the second year of His Holiness Urban VIII's pontificate; and lastly I was here three years ago, the occasion being that I wanted to have my book printed. The occasion for my being in Rome in the year 1616 was that, having heard objections to Nicolaus Copernicus's opinion on the earth's motion, the sun's stability, and the arrangement of the heavenly spheres, in order to be sure of holding only holy and Catholic opinions, I came to hear what was proper to hold in regard to this topic.

Q: Whether he came of his own accord or was summoned, what the reason was why he was summoned, and with which person or persons he discussed the above-mentioned topics.

A: In 1616 I came to Rome of my own accord, without being summoned, for the reason I mentioned. In Rome I discussed this matter with some cardinals who oversaw the Holy Office at that time, especially with Cardinals Bellarmine, Aracoeli, San Eusebio, Bonsi, and d' Ascoli.

Q: What specifically he discussed with the above-mentioned cardinals.

A: The occasion for discussing with the said cardinals was that they wanted to be informed about Copernicus's doctrine, his book being very difficult to understand for those who are not professional mathematicians and astronomers. In particular they wanted to understand the arrangement of the heavenly spheres according to Copernicus's hypothesis, how he places the sun at the center of the planets' orbits, how around the sun he places next the orbit of Mercury, around the latter that of Venus, then the moon around the earth, and around this Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn; and in regard to motion, he makes the sun stationary at the center and the earth turn on itself and around the sun, that is, on itself with the diurnal motion and around the sun with the annual motion.

Q: Since, as he says, he came to Rome to be able to have the resolution and the truth regarding the above, what then was decided about this matter.

A: Regarding the controversy which centered on the above-mentioned opinion of the sun's stability and earth's motion, it was decided by the Holy Congregation of the Index that this opinion, taken absolutely, is repugnant to Holy Scripture and is to be admitted only suppositionally, in the way that Copernicus takes it.

Q: Whether he was then notified of the said decision, and by whom.

A: I was indeed notified of the said decision of the Congregation of the Index, and I was notified by Lord Cardinal Bellarmine.

Q: What the Most Eminent Bellarmine told him about the said decision, whether he said anything else about the matter, and if so what.

A: Lord Cardinal Bellarmine told me that Copernicus's opinion could be held suppositionally, as Copernicus himself had held it. His Eminence knew that I held it suppositionally, namely in the way that Copernicus held it, as you can see from an answer by the same Lord Cardinal to a letter of Father Master Paolo Antonio Foscarini, Provincial of the Carmelites; I have a copy of this, and in it one finds these words: "I say that it seems to me that Your Paternity and Mr. Galileo are proceeding prudently by limiting yourselves to speaking suppositionally and not absolutely." This letter by the said Lord Cardinal is dated 12 April 1615. Moreover, he told me that otherwise, namely taken absolutely, the opinion could be neither held nor defended.

Q: What was decided and then made known to him precisely in the month of February 1616.

A: In the month of February 1616, Lord Cardinal Bellarmine told me that since Copernicus's opinion, taken absolutely, was contrary to Holy Scripture, it could be neither held nor defended, but it could be taken and used suppositionally. In conformity with this I keep a certificate by Lord Cardinal Bellarmine himself, dated 26 May 1616, in which he says that Copernicus's opinion cannot be held or defended, being against Holy Scripture. I present a copy of this certificate, and here it is. And he showed a sheet of paper with twelve lines of writing on one side only, beginning "We, Robert Cardinal Bellarmine, have" and ending "on this 26th day of May 1616," signed "The same mentioned above, Robert Cardinal Bellarmine." This evidence was accepted and marked with the letter B. Then he added: I have the original of this certificate with me in Rome, and it is written all in the hand of the above-mentioned Lord Cardinal Bellarmine.

Q: Whether, when he was notified of the above-mentioned matters, there were others present, and who they were.

A: When Lord Cardinal Bellarmine notified me of what I mentioned regarding Copernicus's opinion, there were some Dominican Fathers present, but I did not know them nor have I seen them since.

Q: Whether at that time, in the presence of those Fathers, he was given any injunction either by them or by someone else concerning the same matter, and if so what.

A: As I remember it, the affair took place in the following manner. One morning Lord Cardinal Bellarmine sent for me, and he told me a certain detail that I should like to speak to the ear of His Holiness before telling others; but then at the end he told me that Copernicus's opinion could not be held (340) or defended, being contrary to Holy

Scripture. I do not recall whether those Dominican Fathers were there at first or came afterward; nor do I recall whether they were present when the Lord Cardinal told me that the said opinion could not be held. Finally, it may be that I was given an injunction not to hold or defend the said opinion, but I do not recall it since this is something of many years ago.

Q: Whether, if one were to read to him what he was then told and ordered with injunction, he would remember that.

A: I do not recall that I was told anything else, nor can I know whether I shall remember what was then told me, even if it is read to me. I am saying freely what I recall because I do not claim not to have in any way violated that injunction, that is, not to have held or defended at all the said opinion of the earth's motion and sun's stability.

And having been told that the said injunction, given to him then in the presence of witnesses, states that he cannot in any way whatever hold, defend, or teach the said opinion, he was asked whether he remembers how and by whom he was so ordered.

I do not recall that this injunction was given me any other way than orally by Lord Cardinal Bellarmine. I do remember that the injunction was that I could not hold or defend, and maybe even that I could not teach. I do not recall, further, that there was the phrase in any way whatever, but maybe there was; in fact, I did not think about it or keep it in mind, having received a few months thereafter Lord Cardinal Bellarmine's certificate dated 26 May which I have presented and in which is explained the order given to me not to hold or defend the said opinion. Regarding the other two phrases in the said injunction now mentioned, namely not to teach and in any way whatever, I did not retain them in my memory, I think because they are not contained in the said certificate, which I relied upon and kept as a reminder.

Q: Whether, after the issuing of the said injunction, he obtained any permission to write the book identified by himself, which he later sent to the printer.

A: After the above-mentioned injunction I did not seek permission to write the above-mentioned book which I have identified, because I do not think that by writing this book I was contradicting at all the injunction given me not to hold, defend, or teach the said opinion, but rather that I was refuting it.

Q: Whether he obtained permission for printing the same book, by whom, and whether for himself or for someone else.

A: To obtain permission to print the above-mentioned book, although I was receiving profitable offers from France, Germany, and Venice, I refused them and spontaneously came to Rome three years ago to place it into the hands of the chief censor, namely the Master of the Sacred Palace, giving him absolute authority to add, delete, and change as he saw fit. After having it examined very diligently by his associate Father Visconti, the said Master of the Sacred Palace reviewed it again himself and licensed it; that is, having approved the book, he gave me permission but ordered to have the book printed in

Rome. Since, in view of the approaching summer, I wanted to go back home to avoid the danger of getting sick, having been away all of May and June, we agreed that I was to return here to autumn immediately following. While I was in Florence, the plague broke out and commerce was topped; so, seeing that I could not come to Rome, by correspondence I requested of the same Master of the Sacred Palace permission for the book to be printed in Florence. He communicated to me that he would want to review my original manuscript, and that therefore I should send it to him. Despite having used every possible care and having contacted even the highest secretaries of the Grand Duke and the directors of the postal service, to try to send the said original safely, I received no assurance that this could be done, and it certainly would have been damaged, washed out, or burned, such was the strictness at the borders. I related to the same Father Master Giacinto Stefani, a Dominican, professor of Sacred Scripture at the University of Florence, preacher for the Most Serene Highnesses, and consultant to the Holy Office. The book was handed over by me to the Father Inquisitor of Florence and by the Father Inquisitor to the above mentioned Father Giacinto Stefani; the latter returned it to the Father Inquisitor, who sent it to Mr. Niccolò dell' Antella, reviewer of books to be printed for the Most Serene Highness of Florence; the printer, named Landini, received it from this Mr. Niccolò and, having negotiated with the Father Inquisitor, printed it, observing strictly every order given by the Father Master of the Sacred Palace.

Q: Whether, when he asked the above-mentioned Master of the Sacred Palace for permission to print the above-mentioned book, he revealed to the same Most Reverend Father Master the injunction previously given to him concerning the directive of the Holy Congregation, mentioned above.

A: When I asked him for permission to print the book, I did not say anything to the Father Master of the Sacred Palace about the above-mentioned injunction because I did not judge it necessary to tell it to him, having no scruples since with the said book I had neither held nor defended the opinion of the earth's motion and sun's stability; on the contrary, in the said book I show the contrary of Copernicus's opinion and show that Copernicus's reasons are invalid and inconclusive.

With this the deposition ended, and he was assigned a certain room in the dormitory of the officials, located in the Palace of the Holy Office, in lieu of prison, with the injunction not to leave it without special permission, under penalty to be decided by the Holy Congregation; and he was ordered to sign below and was sworn to silence.

I, Galileo Galilei, have testified as above