

# THE "NEW ACADEMY" OF ALDUS MANUTIUS : A RENAISSANCE DREAM

By M. J. C. LOWRY, M.A., Ph.D.

LECTURER IN HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

FORMED at the crucial moment when war was moving Italy and Northern Europe into ever closer contact, deeply concerned in the exploitation of a new medium, and involving most of the leading scholars of the age, the Aldine Academy occupies a unique position in the intellectual history of Europe. But as an institution, it has been strangely neglected or misrepresented. This may seem a monstrous verdict on two centuries of research which have produced compilations as vast as those of Renouard and Pastorello, but two circumstances have prevented the Academy from finding its rightful place at the centre of enquiries.<sup>1</sup> Firstly, particularist interests in the lives of important individuals or in the books they produced have tended to attract attention away from the background against which they worked. Secondly, for nearly two centuries a comfortable belief that there was little to discuss has gradually

<sup>1</sup> Though A. Renouard's *Annales de l'imprimerie des Alde* (Paris, 1834) is still perhaps the greatest single collection of documents, it has been constantly supplemented. J. Schück, *Aldus Manutius und seine Zeitgenossen in Italien und Deutschland* (Berlin, 1862), A. Baschet, *Alde Manuce—lettres et documents, 1495-1515* (Venice, 1867), and P. de Nolhac, *Les correspondants d'Alde Manuce, Studi e documenti di storia e diritto, Anni viii-ix* (Città del Vaticano, 1887-8), together made large areas of Aldus' own correspondence available. R. Fulin, "Documenti per servire alla storia della tipografia veneziana", *Archivio veneto*, xxiii (1882), 84-212, 390-405, and C. Castellani, *La stampa in Venezia dalla sua origine alla morte di Aldo Manuzio seniore* (Venice, 1889), both did much to widen background knowledge of Venetian printing. Hardly less relevant has been the publication of many humanist letter collections, including those of Erasmus, Reuchlin, Celtis and Pirckheimer, which will be cited from time to time. A full, if not absolutely reliable guide to these and other more isolated scraps of evidence is provided by E. Pastorello, *L'epistolario manuziano*, Florence, 1957. The same authoress' *Inedita manuziana, 1502-1597* (Florence, 1960), filled in some gaps in the correspondence, and mention should also be made of her vital contribution of archival material, "Di Aldo Pio Manuzio: testimonianze e documenti", *La Bibliofilia*, Anno lxvii (1965), 163-220.

been taking root: for the origin, aims and activities of the Aldine Academy were assumed to be quite well documented.<sup>1</sup>

Early in the last century Jacopo Morelli published a short printed sheet which had recently been discovered in the binding of an *Etymologicum Magnum* from the Barberini library. The document carried the names of Aldus and six friends, and declared the general aims of an association referred to as the "New Academy". Morelli showed a caution which his successors would have done well to follow: he dated the statute to the late summer of 1502 from contemporary references to an Academy in Aldine colophons and a senatorial privilege of November, but he did not speculate about the group's activities or its connection with publishing, and warned that any discussion of membership was bound to be hazardous.<sup>2</sup> But the document contained its own temptations. The very existence of a statute suggested a more or less regulated organization which could have produced work under the terrifying pressure later described by Erasmus. Firmin-Didot pounced on the titles given to the men named in the statute—"president", "reader", "noble" or "doctor"—to prove that Aldus had distributed separate

<sup>1</sup> Biographies tend to accept the Academy simply as a given factor: cf. A. Renaudet, *Érasme et l'Italie. Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, xv (Geneva, 1954); D. Geanakoplos, *Greek Scholars in Venice* (Harvard University Press, 1962). Even biographies of Aldus rely almost entirely on bibliographical evidence when discussing the Academy. Cf. A. Firmin-Didot, *Alde-Manuce et l'Hellénisme à Venise* (Paris, 1875); M. Ferrigni, *Aldo Manuzio* (Milan, 1925). Though rudimentary in many ways, the latter work contains a number of useful insights and deserves more attention than it has received. In his study *The Venetian Printing Press* (London, 1891), Horatio Brown also accepted the Academy uncritically. M. Brunetti's study "L'Accademia Aldina", *Rivista di Venezia*, viii (1929), 417-31, is the only attempt to scrutinize the Academy as a problem in its own right.

<sup>2</sup> *Aldi Pii Manutii scripta tria longe rarissima a Jacobo Morellio denuo edita et illustrata* (Bassani, 1806), pp. 47-50. The Aldine Sophocles, of August 1502, was the first book to carry the formula "Venetiis in Aldi Romani Academia" (Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 34 (1502, no. 6)). Ibid. p. 504, for the senatorial privilege, which contains the phrase "... iam vel Neacademiam habet...". The statute has been printed many times, and can be found in Renouard, Firmin-Didot, and Castellani. The original is in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barberini Stamp. AAA IV. 13.

functions to secure greater efficiency. Organization<sup>1</sup> naturally hinted at a definite membership. Renouard and Firmin-Didot quickly expanded the few names in the statute to a list of more than thirty. So the notion of the Aldine Academy as a specifiable association gained general acceptance.<sup>2</sup> More than eighty years ago Horatio Brown could write :

It would be superfluous, after the exhaustive works of Renouard, Didot, Baschet and others, to dwell at length on the life and labours of the great scholar and printer Aldus Manutius.<sup>3</sup>

Aldus and his circle were now enshrined in that academic limbo where authorities are cited and no questions asked.

In fact, the activities usually connected with the Academy—philological research and the preparation of texts for publication—are never mentioned in the statute, which deals almost entirely with the teaching of Greek, fines for mispronouncing the language, and the use of those fines to provide an occasional party. These apparently limited aims cannot be considered frivolous, in spite of the curiously affected terms in which they

<sup>1</sup> Firmin-Didot, *op. cit.* p. 151, followed by Brown, *op. cit.* p. 44: "The members of the Academy were divided into classes: there were the president, the nobles, the priests and the doctors. The first list of members numbered thirty-three...". Erasmus' most famous description of Aldus' workshop can be found in M. Philips, *The Adages of Erasmus* (Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 171-90.

<sup>2</sup> The names mentioned in the statute are those of Aldus, Scipio Fortiguerra, John Gregoropoulos, Giambattista Egnazio, Paolo da Canal, Gerolamo Menocchio, and Francesco Rosetto, but there are hints at other interested parties. Renouard (*Annales...*, pp. 385-6) produced a list of thirty-seven members which he described only as "very probable". Firmin-Didot (*Alde-Manuce*, pp. 149-50) reproduced the list with minor alterations but with considerably greater confidence, citing authorities and adding (pp. 441-70) short biographies, which provided a starting point for Brown (*loc. cit.* under previous note) and Geanakoplos, *op. cit.* pp. 128-31. I have failed to trace a pedigree for this list which is even comprehensible, let alone respectable. D. M. Manni's *Vita di Aldo Pio Romano insigne restauratore delle lettere greche e latine* (Venice, 1759) is cited by Firmin-Didot, but contains no such list. The authorities cited by Manni, G-M. Mazzuchelli, *Gli scrittori d'Italia*, vol. i, pt. i (Brescia, 1753), p. 387, and P. Quadrio, *Storia e ragioni d'ogni poesia*, i (Bologna, 1739), 108, also give only a few names. Renouard's list is probably a conflation of these earlier items with his own bibliographical research and should be considered "largely hypothetical and mostly improbable", as it was termed by Professor C. Dionisotti ("Aldo Manuzio umanista", in *Umanesimo europeo e umanesimo veneziano* (Venice, 1963), p. 239).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 42.

are expressed : a society which regarded all language as spoken language, and which read much of its literature aloud, attached far more importance to pronunciation than a more recent age.<sup>1</sup> Those who drafted the statute thought their plans significant enough to be advertised in print, and presumably hoped to attract wider interest. In a world of oral communication, the statute is perfectly understandable : but it is quite impossible to coax any plans for organized modern editorship out of it. The section which Firmin-Didot used to show that Aldus assigned different tasks to his members has no bearing on organization whatsoever : Paolo da Canal was, quite simply, a Venetian noble, Giambattista Egnazio a priest, Francesco Rossetto a teacher, and the naming of proposers by tribes and demes was the standard form for placing a motion before the *ecclesia* in classical Athens.<sup>2</sup> All this clause displays is the fantasy of a few scholarly friends who had read their Greek orators. It is not even clear that any actual "institution" was brought into being by the statute : at one point the associates are described as :

τοῖς τὴν Νεακαδημίαν ὄνειροπολοῦσιν ἤδη, καὶ πλατωνικῶς μικροῦ δεῖν κατασκευάσασιν αὐτήν

By mistranslating this

. . . des hommes qui déjà réalisent le beau rêve d'une Nouvelle Academie, et l'ont instituée presque à la manière de Platon

Renouard implied that an Academy was actually being created by the statute.<sup>3</sup> But the verb *ὄνειροπολεῖν* means to "dream

<sup>1</sup> Ferrigni (op. cit. p. 142) drew attention to the "ostentious solemnity" of the language and suggested that the statute should not be taken too seriously. It is true that phrases like the exclamation *νῆ Δία* (By Zeus!) read oddly, but if we regard the statute as only part-serious we are left with the burden of explaining why it was circulated in print. Though space does not allow a detailed treatment of the topic of oral communication and the tensions involved in the conversion to print, it is probable that Aldus and his contemporaries followed literary and grammatical values which differ greatly from our own. Cf. H. J. Chaytor, *From Script to Print* (Cambridge, 1945); M. McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy, the Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto/London, 1962).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. for example the motions quoted in Demosthenes' *De Corona: Orationes*, ed. S. H. Butcher (Oxford, 1958).

<sup>3</sup> Renouard, *Annales* . . . , pp. 499, 502. The mistranslation must stem from here, since Morelli offered no French version and the Latin "Neacademiam somniantes" is entirely accurate. The distortion was adopted by Firmin-Didot, op. cit. p. 439.

of ", not to " realise a dream ", and the most natural translation of the entire clause is

... men who are already dreaming of a New Academy and have almost founded it in Plato's fashion.<sup>1</sup>

The emotional commitment of the statute must not be allowed to conceal the fact that it is a very imprecise document indeed.

A similar imprecision hangs over the Academy's imagined membership. With its vague reference to the " many others who are eager to learn and to become members " the statute left the situation fluid.<sup>2</sup> The lists compiled by Renouard and Firmin-Didot can be shown even in detail to be almost valueless, since both mention a Michele Fortiguerra who belongs to a later generation and both neglect foreign scholars, like Reuchlin or Celtis, whose correspondence reflects a close association.<sup>3</sup> More serious danger lies in the tacit assumption that we possess any means of drawing up such a list. Marsiglio Ficino left a letter naming some seventy acquaintances whose membership of his Academy can consequently be discussed from a common point of reference.<sup>4</sup> No such standard of membership exists for Aldus' Academy, and any attempt to impose one leads to intolerable confusions. Editorial collaboration might seem the most likely candidate : but this would mean including men such as Piero Summonte or Giacomo Bardellone, who contributed vital material to the press but cannot be proved to have taken part in discussions at Aldus' workshop.<sup>5</sup> A narrower definition

<sup>1</sup> H. Liddell and R. Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961).

<sup>2</sup> Renouard, *Annales* . . . , p. 500.

<sup>3</sup> Michele was Scipio's nephew. Cf. P. de Nolhac, *La bibliothèque de Fulvio Orsini* (Paris, 1887), p. 80. The publication of Reuchlin's *Briefwechsel*, ed. L. Geiger (Tubingen, 1875), and *Der briefwechsel des Konrad Celtis*, ed. H. Rupprich (Munich, 1934), has naturally improved our knowledge of Aldus' collaboration with such scholars, which will be examined in greater detail below. But since Renouard printed a number of the relevant letters (e.g. pp. 515-18), it is surprising that he did not take more account of their implication.

<sup>4</sup> *Opera Omnia*, i (reprinted Turin, 1962), 336-7. The letter is not dated, but probably belongs to the early 1490s. For discussion, cf. A. della Torre, *Storia dell'academia platonica di Firenze* (Florence, 1902), pp. 643 f.

<sup>5</sup> This was the test of membership adopted by Brunetti, op. cit. under p. 379, n. 1, above, p. 424. Summonte sent Aldus a number of Pontanus' poems : cf. Nolhac, op. cit. nos. 47, 48, 2 and 29 August 1505. Bardellone's manuscript

of membership—frequent and continuous attendance at such meetings, for example—might well leave the Academy completely destitute. Scipio Fortiguerra, one of the signatories of the statute, had left Venice by the end of 1504, and even Pietro Bembo, one of Aldus' most valuable and regular collaborators, was at the best an intermittent resident.<sup>1</sup> Most disturbing of all is the number of individuals who crop up in various corners of Europe claiming that they are members of the Academy without any apparent qualifications at all: an unidentifiable patrician named Bernardo Zorzi, Jacobus Spiegel, an imperial secretary, and Henry Urbanus, a Cistercian from Erfurt.<sup>2</sup> Aldus' correspondence survives only in fragments. We possess only scattered items of information about the foreign visitors who poured through Venice and none at all about the literary playboys

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of Hesychius (now Marcianus Graecus 622) was and is unique. Aldus acknowledged his debt to the owner of the exemplar in the dedication of his own edition. Cf. B. Botfield, *Prefaces to the First Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics and of the Sacred Scriptures* (Cambridge/London, 1861), pp. 304-5; Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 66 (1514, no. 3).

<sup>1</sup> Fortiguerra had clearly been away from Venice for a little time by 11 October 1504 (Nolhac, op. cit. no. 32). His feelings about the city are worth recording: "Non posso più a ogni modo a Venetia, non voglio più venire per stare: habet ea urbs nescio quid genii mihi adversi . . ." (Ibid. no. 36, 19 December 1505). Much of Bembo's life was spent at the courts of Urbino and Ferrara, as is shown by Professor Dionisotti in his useful and concise introduction to *Prose et Rime* (Turin, 1960). The list of "absentee members" could be expanded: Aléander was resident in Venice only during 1507-8, one of Aldus' least active periods (cf. J. Paquier, *Jérome Aléandre de sa naissance à la fin de son séjour à Brindes (1480-1529)* (Paris, 1900, pp. 19-29). Musurus also must have spent much of his time in Padua rather than Venice (E. Legrand, *Bibliographie Hellénique*, i (Paris, 1885), cviii-cxxiv).

<sup>2</sup> Nolhac, op. cit., no. 42, 26 April 1505. Zorzi's letter is important, and will be cited frequently hereafter, but the name Bernardo is so common in the family that it is not possible to identify him certainly in Barbaro's *Genealogie delle famiglie patrizie veneziane* (vol. vii in *Archivio di Stato, Venezia*). I found a reasonably plausible candidate in A. S. V. Savii sopra le decime in Rialto, Condizione della città, Busta 81, 1514: the Bernardo Zorzi who made out the tax-return did so in a curiously pompous style, and lived in San Zulian, one of the parishes in the book-selling area between San Marco and the Rialto. He looks the part of a literary dilettante. Spiegel was prepared to swear "per Neacademiam nostram" (Nolhac, op. cit., no. 58, 27 February 1506). Urbanus asked "ut Henricum Urbanum tuorum aggreges examini" (Schück, op. cit. pp. 131-3, 19 November 1505).

whose answer to all boredom was, as the printer remarked bitterly at the end of his life, "Let's visit Aldus". If, as seems likely, any casual visitor or correspondent might consider himself a member, we cannot hope to reconstruct this Academy now.<sup>1</sup>

So the fundamental problems remain wide open: how and why was the Aldine Academy brought into being, what were its aims and pursuits, who were its members, and, most important of all, what was its contribution to the programme of publication? The details of membership are certainly sunk beyond redemption: but it may still be possible to trace the general types of people who were interested, and how their interest was attracted. Increasing information about individuals and groups of scholars in Renaissance Venice enables us to approach this and the other problems in a more cautious fashion than was possible for Renouard and Firmin-Didot, who often had little besides the statute and occasional references in the prefaces to guide them. The conclusions suggested by such an approach are also significantly different from theirs. The rest of this study will argue, firstly, that the network of contacts which made Aldus' achievement possible was largely complete before the statute that is alleged to have brought the Academy into being was even drawn up: secondly, that the open-ended association envisaged by the statute was too vague in structure and far too short-lived to contribute much to the work of publication; finally, that the greater Academy which was to have been the offspring of the first, and which Aldus strove to found until the end of his life,

<sup>1</sup> In the letter cited above, Urbanus appealed to the authority of Conrad Mutianus whom we know to have been in Italy between 1493 and 1503. Cf. L. Spitz, *The Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists* (Harvard, 1963), pp. 135-42. But the nature of his contact with Aldus is simply not clear. There are similar uncertainties with the French scholar Lefèvre (cf. A. Renaudet, *Préréforme et humanisme à Paris pendant les premières guerres d'Italie, 1494-1517* (Paris, 1916), pp. 389-90; E. Pastorello, "Per un' accademia Aldina", *La Bibliofilia*, Anno lxxviii (1966), p. 277, n. 7). Aldus' criticism of the idlers who dropped in to waste his time was made in his introduction to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (Renouard, *Annales* . . ., pp. 65-66, 1514, no. 1). Most of the text is quoted in Firmin-Didot, op. cit. p. 153; "... et ii qui ad nos veniunt partim salutandi gratia, partim perscrutaturi si quid novi agatur, partim, quae longe major est turba, negotii inopia. 'Tunc enim', aiunt, 'eamus ad Aldum'."

never emerged from the cloudy language of the statute to realize the plans formed for it. In plain fact, the Aldine Academy was never more than an undefined company of friends, dreaming of a glorious past and peering hopefully into a golden future which never materialized.

In the prefaces to his editions Aldus struck the conventional tone of agonized isolation so eloquently that it is easy to forget how closely his earlier life had been entwined with the established intellectual circles of the later Quattrocento.<sup>1</sup> During the 1470s he had known the Ferrarese group that centred on Baptista Guarino at one of its most brilliant periods, and been so affected by it that when he made his first will in 1506, he suggested that his wife might seek another husband in Ferrara if the worst should happen to him. Many friendships from this time can be traced into Aldus' later career: besides Guarino himself, he had met Niccolo Leonicensis, later one of his most valuable editors, the poets Tito and Ercole Strozzi, and probably the Hellenists Codrus Urceus and Giorgio Valla.<sup>2</sup> Most important of all, he had come to know Pico della Mirandola and secured employment as tutor to the count's nephews in 1482.<sup>3</sup> When Pico moved to Florence in 1484, Aldus did not miss the chances of extending his contacts, and though he never penetrated beyond the outer ring of the Florentine circle, there are unmistakable signs of his enjoying a useful and deepening relationship with it. Poliziano replied to a somewhat unctuous approach with patronizing

<sup>1</sup> Amongst many other examples, cf. *Thesaurus Cornucopiae*, 1496, in Botfield, op. cit. p. 205. "Postquam suscepi hanc duram provinciam (annus enim agitur iam septimus) possem jurejurando affirmare me tot annos ne horam quidem solidae habuisse quietis." Though the difficulties were real enough, the printers seem to have stressed them in prefaces as a kind of insurance against possible criticism. Editors with an academic reputation to defend were even more sensitive. Cf. Merula's introduction to his editio princeps of Plautus (also printed in Botfield, *ibid.* pp. 141-5). Instances can be multiplied almost infinitely.

<sup>2</sup> G. Bertoni, *La biblioteca estense e la cultura ferrarese ai tempi del duca Ercole I, 1471-1505* (Turin, 1903), pp. 115-18; C. Malagola, *Della vita e delle opere di Antonio Urceo, detto Codro* (Bologna, 1878), pp. 153 f. Aldus' will is printed in Castellani, op. cit. pp. 92-95.

<sup>3</sup> The relationship with Pico and his family is set out in the letter to Caterina Pia printed in Morelli, pp. 8-21. Cf. also Firmin-Didot, op. cit. pp. 6 f.

assurances of good will in 1484<sup>1</sup> : we find Pico sending Aldus a Homer in 1491 ; in the same year Poliziano worked in Venice on the manuscript of Terence owned by Bernardo Bembo, himself an intimate of the Medici circle, and it is unlikely to be a coincidence that Bernardo's son Pietro was one of Aldus' first and most valuable collaborators.<sup>2</sup> During the mid-1490s a number of the younger associates of the Florentine group drift, one by one, into Aldus' orbit : Scipio Fortiguerra, a pupil of Poliziano, and Marcus Musurus, the protégé of John Lascaris, contributed epigrams to some of the earliest editions<sup>3</sup> ; Alessandro Sartio and Piero Ricci collected manuscripts for the edition of Poliziano's works which Aldus published in 1498.<sup>4</sup> In a single

<sup>1</sup> The exchange with Poliziano has been printed on a number of occasions, which can be traced in Pastorello's *Epistolario*, nos. 2 and 3. For text and discussion, cf. L. Dorez, "Alde Manuce et Ange Politien", *Révue des Bibliothèques*, Ann. vi (1896), 310-26.

<sup>2</sup> Pico's letter, which is not long enough to be really informative and does not identify the Homer, is printed in Schück, *op. cit.* p. 105. Poliziano's account of his quest for manuscripts in Venice is contained in his *Prose volgari inedite e poesie latine e greche*, ed. I. del Lungo (Florence, 1867), pp. 78-82. On Bembo's manuscript of Terence, now Vaticanus Latinus 3226, cf. V. Cian, *Un decennio della vita di M. Pietro Bembo* (Turin, 1885), p. 104, and "Per Bernardo Bembo : le relazioni letterarie, i codici e gli scritti", *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, xxxi (1898), 65-67. Poliziano inscribed the manuscript with a tribute both to its own excellence and to the help given him by the young Pietro. Bernardo Bembo's links with Florence and the Medici circle went back at least as far as the 1470s and possibly further (cf. A. della Torre, "La prima ambasceria di Bernardo Bembo a Firenze", *ibid.* xxxv (1900), pp. 258-333 ; V. Cian, "Per Bernardo Bembo : le sue relazioni coi Medici", *ibid.* xxviii (1896), 348-61). Pietro Bembo provided the exemplar for what is generally thought to be Aldus' first publication, the Greek Grammar of Constantine Lascaris (Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 3, 1495, no. 1).

<sup>3</sup> Musurus' influence can already be found in the undated Musaeus, which is one of the earliest Aldine editions : Fortiguerra contributed some verses to the first volume of Aristotle's works in 1495 (cf. Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 7, 1495, no. 5, p. 257). Fortiguerra's earlier career is fairly well documented : cf. A. Chiti, *Scipione Fortiguerra, il Carteromacho—studio biografico con una raccolta di epigrammi, sonetti e lettere di lui o a lui dirette* (Florence, 1902), pp. 3-15. Musurus' movements are less clear, but the evidence points to a period in Florence : cf. Legrand, *loc. cit.* p. 383 above, and Geanakoplos, *op. cit.* pp. iii f.

<sup>4</sup> Nolhac, *op. cit.* nos. 3 and 4 : in the first letter, of 1497, Ricci offered his help in preparing the edition of Poliziano ; in the second he suggested some emendations to Virgil, thanking Aldus for the sheets he had sent to Florence.

surviving letter of 1497 the aged and ailing Marsiglio Ficino made some suggestions for the text of Iamblichus, hinting at a literary exchange which may not have been in its earliest stages.<sup>1</sup> The broad general truth that Venice rose to cultural eminence as Florence declined after the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent can be worked out in detail among the earliest members of Aldus' circle. Though he had not known Medicean Florence directly, Aldus was soon dreaming, like so many Italians of his time, of the Golden Age that had died with Lorenzo.<sup>2</sup> His seeking to re-create some part of it need not surprise us.

But these relics of past glory cannot by themselves explain how a middle-aged schoolmaster could move into the printing industry and within a few years receive the acclaim of intellectuals in Heidelberg, Vienna and London.<sup>3</sup> The first Aldine editions appeared in 1494-5: before 1500, Aldus was a figure of European stature. This lightning success must in part be explained by commercial factors which lurk behind the fragmentary history of the bookselling company and are beyond the immediate scope of this study. But we can trace Aldus' careful broadening and deepening of his scholarly contacts along three general lines which constantly interweave: he secured the friendship of

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The letter was written in early 1500, fully a year before the Aldine edition appeared. *Omnia Opera Angeli Politiani* (Aldus, 1498), Epistolarum lib. xii, nos. 23-24, records an exchange between Ricci and Sartio as they assemble the scattered material of Poliziano's papers. Aldus paid tribute to Sartio's efforts in his introduction, but Dorez, op. cit. p. 386, above, doubts whether he possessed the intimacy with Poliziano which he claimed.

<sup>1</sup> Nolz, op. cit. no. 2, 1 July 1497. Ficino refers to a previous letter from Aldus, and to manuscripts which had been sent to the printer.

<sup>2</sup> Introduction and dedication of Plato's works to Leo X, 1513, in Legrand, *Bibliographie Hellénique*, vol. i, p. 102: "Hinc, ut taceam caeteros, ortus est pater tuus Laurentius, vir optimus ac tanta prudentia ut non solum pacis patriae sed et totius Italiae autor fuerit, quamdiu vixit."

<sup>3</sup> In his preface to Stephanus' *De Urbibus* Aldus wrote that he began printing "eodem anno, quo vexari bello coepit Italia" (Botfield, op. cit. p. 262). By late 1497 Aldus had received the commendations of Conrad Celtis, which he acknowledged in the letter printed by Renouard (*Annales . . .*, p. 515). The first surviving letter of Reuchlin to Aldus is dated 23 April 1499, and came from Heidelberg, but refers to recent personal discussions in Venice (Nolz, op. cit. nos. 14, 15). Grocyn's letter from London was one of open congratulation, which Aldus printed at the beginning of his edition of *Astronomici Veteres* (Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 20, 1499, no. 3).

several Venetian patricians ; he made a great and very natural appeal to his ex-colleagues, the professional teachers ; and he made the utmost of his chances to cultivate influential foreigners, both in Venice and Padua.

The vital connection with the Bembo family was almost certainly inherited from the Medicean circle, and since Pietro Bembo brought from Messina the copy of Constantine Lascaris' Greek Grammar which served as one of Aldus' first exemplars, it is probable that he had known the printer for some time before publication had started. Pietro's friend and fellow-student Angelo Gabriel was also involved at this early stage, but he did not exert the same influence on Aldus' subsequent fortunes.<sup>1</sup> Daniel Renier is a more puzzling figure : a reference in a letter of 1492 seems to hint that he was already in touch with Aldus, and he was unquestionably a recognized personality in Venetian literary circles by that time. But considering that he became one of the printer's executors, and lived to reach procuratorial rank, he has left surprisingly few traces behind him.<sup>2</sup> Marin Sanudo may have got to know Aldus in the capacity of an interested neighbour : the short walk across Campo San Giacomo from his house to the print-shop would hardly have deterred one of his insatiable curiosity, and the prospect of rummaging through a library of 500 volumes would definitely have tempted Aldus to a return visit. Courtesies had been exchanged by 1498.<sup>3</sup> Information about Aldus' other patrician friends is

<sup>1</sup> Gabriel had studied with Bembo under Constantine Lascaris at Messina and was included in Aldus' acknowledgements. He also received the dedication of Bembo's *De Aetna* (Renouard, *Annales* . . . , p. 7, 1495, no. 4). His later career will be discussed below. Cf. p. 386, above, for references to Bembo, which are also relevant to Gabriel.

<sup>2</sup> Schück, *op. cit.* no. 5, 14 October 1492 : Codrus Urceus sent his greetings to a "M. Daniel" who may be either Renier or Daniel Clari. But it is clear from his inclusion as a member of the audience in Sabellico's dialogue *De Latinae Linguae Reparatione*, in the company of Ermolao Barbaro and Gerolamo Donato, that Renier was a known literary figure by about 1493 (Sabellici, *Opera Omnia*, iv (Basle, 1560), 320 f.). Aldus thanked him for his constant encouragement in his edition of Thucydides in May 1502 (cf. Botfield, *op. cit.* pp. 263 f.); he also named him as an executor in his final will (cf. Castellani, *op. cit.* p. 96). Renier's circumstances will be examined in detail below.

<sup>3</sup> The identification of Aldus' house is not certain (cf. Castellani, *op. cit.* pp. 54-56). But it is clear that the diarist and the printer lived in the same

scarcer: the names of Andrea Navagero, Paolo da Canal and Vincenzo Querini begin to creep into relevant documents around the turn of the century, but the circumstances are never very clear.<sup>1</sup> There are also the strongest suggestions that Aldus' contacts among the nobility extended much further: Bernardo Zorzi has already been mentioned, Gasparo Contarini received the dedication of Lactantius shortly after Aldus' death, and the footloose Giovanni Bembo records in his autobiography that Aldus had stood as godfather to one of his daughters.<sup>2</sup> Where so much is uncertain, general conclusions would be rash. But it is safe to observe that when they appear in the printer's circle, most of these nobles were young men with little money or influence, while many of them were hardly out of university.

Shortly before the first Aldine editions were published, Marin

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area. Sanudo received the dedication of Aldus' edition of Poliziano in July 1498, and the printer mentioned a recent visit during which he had seen some of Sanudo's work. In the later dedication of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* he referred to "... tua bibliotheca, ubi supra quingenta electorum librorum habes volumina..." (Renouard, *Annales* . . . , p. 17, 1498, no. 4, pp. 37-38, 1502, no. 13).

<sup>1</sup> The first reference to Navagero is entirely indirect, occurring in a letter of 1502 from Pontano to Soardino Soardo about the publication of some poems by Aldus (Nolhac, *op. cit.* no. 28). Canal, a short-lived intellectual prodigy who became a friar shortly before his death in 1508, was born in 1483 and must have been still in his teens when he took part in the drafting of the statute. A full account of his life is given by F. Lepori, *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*; vol. xvii (Rome, 1974). Vincenzo Querini, destined to fame as an early reformer, was mentioned with deep respect by Avanzio, the editor of the Aldine Lucretius, in 1501. In view of this, he is more likely to be the "Quirino" named as a member of the Academy by Fortiguerra in 1504 than his nephew Gerolamo, a future correspondent of Bembo (cf. Nolhac, *op. cit.* no. 32, with notes). The presence of these men at Padua around the turn of the century can be traced from several sources: N. Papadopoli, *Historia Gymnasii Patavini*, ii (Venice, 1726), 38 f.; *Acta Graduum Academicorum ab Anno 1501 ad Annum 1525*, ed. E. Martellozzo Forin (Padua, 1969), pp. 7, 40, 49, 51; Aldus mentioned the presence of Bembo and Gabriel at the university in his introduction to Lascaris' Grammar; cf. pp. 386, 388 above. For discussion of the circle in general, cf. J. Ross, "Gasparo Contarini and his friends", *Studies in the Renaissance*, xvii (1970), 195-6.

<sup>2</sup> On Zorzi, cf. p. 383, above. The relevant edition of Lactantius appeared in April, 1515 (Renouard, *Annales* . . . , pp. 70 f., 1515, no. 2). Giovanni Bembo's career as a traveller is outlined by Morelli in *Dissertazione intorno ad alcuni viaggiatori eruditi veneziani poco noti* (Venice, 1803), pp. 14-30. His autobiographical letter is printed in full in T. Mommsen's *Sitzungsberichte der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, i (1861), 584-609.

Sanudo wrote in his *Cronachetta* of Venice's public lecturers, and added :

There are also teachers in the various parishes, apart from those living in private houses, who instruct young patricians and others in grammar and good living.<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this assorted group of pedagogues to Aldus. Marcantonio Sabellico, whom he had met by 1492, and Giambattista Egnazio, one of the signatories of the statute, both held public appointments.<sup>2</sup> Others drifted in and out of the patronage of various noble families : Scipio Fortiguerra was supported for a time by the Grimani<sup>3</sup> ; Fra Urbano, whose Greek Grammar Aldus published in 1497, enjoyed a long relationship with the Gritti<sup>4</sup> ; Jerome Aleander, who appears in Aldus' circle in 1504, had taught members of the Priuli, Lion and Bollani families since 1499<sup>5</sup> ; the poet Augurello had known Bernardo Bembo since the 1470s, and probably taught young Pietro<sup>6</sup> ; Aldus himself had somehow found time to instruct the natural son of his partner Pierfrancesco Barbarigo.<sup>7</sup> Even this list takes no account of teachers from the provincial towns like Francesco Rosetto of Verona, who collaborated over the edition of Theocritus as early as 1495, or

<sup>1</sup> Nozze Papadopoli—Hellenbach, Venice, 1880, p. 52. The dedication to doge Agostino Barbarigo is dated 1493. Detailed documentation can be found in E. Bertanza and G. della Santa, *Maestri, scuole e scolari in Venezia fino al 1500. Reale deputazione veneta di storia patria*, ser. i, vol. 12 (Venice, 1907).

<sup>2</sup> Sabellico is mentioned by Urceus in the letter cited under p. 388, n. 2, but there is little to suggest that he contributed much to Aldus' efforts. Egnazio is mentioned in the statute. Cf. B. Nardi, "Letteratura e cultura veneziana del quattrocento", in *Civiltà veneziana del Quattrocento* (Fondazione Cini, 1956), pp. 120 f. and Firmin-Didot, *op. cit.* pp. 449-52, 469, on the positions held by the two men.

<sup>3</sup> Nollac, *op. cit.* no. 33, 2 December 1504. He was in Rome as tutor to Marin Grimani.

<sup>4</sup> I-P. Valeriani, *De litteratorum infelicitate* (Venice, 1620), pp. 94 f. This much sought-after Grammar seems to have been composed partly at Aldus' suggestion (Renouard, *Annales . . .*, pp. 11-12, 1497, no. 4).

<sup>5</sup> *Journal Autobiographique, 1480-1530*, ed. H. Omont, *Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale et autres Bibliothèques* (Paris, 1896), p. 37.

<sup>6</sup> A. Serena, *La cultura umanistica a Treviso nel secolo decimoquinto, Miscellanea di storia veneta : R. Deputazione veneta di storia patria*, ser. iii, vol. iii (Venice, 1912), pp. 181 f.

<sup>7</sup> Pastorello, "Testimonianze e documenti . . .", *Doc.* v, p. 201.

Daniel Clari of Ragusa, who received a number of dedications from 1498.<sup>1</sup> To call these men a "class" or a "group" would be misleading. They were widely dispersed, and their tenure especially of private positions was extremely uncertain. But even before Aldus began to publish, we can observe their sharing a vigorous and varied intellectual life which in many ways foreshadows that of the Aldine circle itself. They exchanged ideas, books and pupils: they set the world to rights in the usual heated discussions; most important of all, they were well accustomed to working for the press, and had even developed sophisticated techniques such as publicizing future editions in their lectures.<sup>2</sup> The emergence of one of themselves as an important printer was bound to focus and concentrate their attention.

The curious social status of these teachers may have been as useful to Aldus as their intellectual interests. They could be mere hacks: but if they found employment in a congenial family, and accompanied one of their young charges to Padua, new vistas could open. The menial was now the friend and confidant, and the literary discussions could continue in the brilliant international society of the university. There is some fragmentary evidence that numbers of Aldus' associates did, indeed, form some kind of loosely organized literary society at Padua around the turn of the century. In a much later work, the *De litteratorum infelicitate*, Gianpietro Valeriani looked back nostalgically from the time of the Sack of Rome to the meetings he had known

... thirty years ago in Padua at the house of the Contarini, sometimes with Gasparo himself, sometimes with his cousin Marcantonio, and occasionally with Andrea Navagero.

<sup>1</sup> Botfield, *op. cit.* pp. 192-3, 218-19. Another typical case can be found in the Trevisan humanist Gerolamo Bologni. Cf. Serena, *op. cit.* pp. 149 f.

<sup>2</sup> An illuminating and neglected source is provided by Sabellico's correspondence, in his *Opera Omnia*, vol. iv. Of especial interest is p. 359: "M. Antonius Cantalycio suo. Tua grammaticae artis praecepta libenter accepi, multoque libentius perlegissem nisi rei ocognoscendae facultas continuo fuisset mihi a librariis adempta. Praestiti tamen studium quod potui, publicaue praedicatione effeci ut prius quam lucubratio illa in apertum referretur, in summa esset expectatione."

This points to the years around 1500, and we know that Valeriani was at Padua at least up to 1506 from his dedication of a book of odes to Andrea Gritti.<sup>1</sup> An epigram printed in the same selection of poems provides more solid evidence: Valeriani directly addresses a “company” of eight poets, asking them to admit him as a ninth. Of those named, five were definitely associates of Aldus—Canal, Navagero, Aleander and two minor humanists, Tryphon Dalmata and Gerolamo Borgia.<sup>2</sup> A somewhat similar poem of Navagero’s, asking Bembo and Canal for news of their latest loves and writings, hints at the same kind of literary association, but cannot be connected to Padua or dated exactly.<sup>3</sup> A manuscript selection of vernacular poetry now in the Marciana offers further evidence: amongst a sprawl of Petrarchan works by Bembo stand several poems in similar style by Canal, Vincenzo Querini, Nicolò Tiepolo and even the future ascetic Tomaso Giustiniani. Once again, there is nothing to date the sonnets

<sup>1</sup> Ed. cit. under p. 390, n. 4, above, p. 3. The dramatic date of the dialogue is around 1530. On Valeriani’s presence at Padua cf. his *Praeludia quaedam*, Venice (Tacuino), 1509, c. 25<sup>v</sup>: “Patavii, Nonis Martiis, MDVI”.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. c. 14<sup>v</sup>:  
 . . . Canalis, citharae decus supremum,  
 Cultus Naviger, elegans, canorus,  
 Emunctus Trypho, perpolitus, acer,  
 Motensis vehemens et eruditus,  
 Expromptus Maro, floridus, decorus,  
 Borges grandiloquus venustulusque,  
 Nardinus gravis, integer, severus,  
 Comis Lampridius, facetulusque . . .

The poem is quoted by E. Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, iii (Venice, 1830), 213, with the introductory phrase “Ad sodales Patavii philosophantes”, which is not carried by the original. “Motensis” refers to the birthplace of Aleander, Motta near Udine. “Trypho” is probably Tryphon Dalmata rather than the more celebrated Venetian noble Triphon Gabriel: the latter remains an extremely shadowy figure, the former can definitely be linked to the circle of Alberto Pio (cf. Nollac, *op. cit.* no. 8). Gerolamo Borgia is mentioned by Aldus in his preface to Sannazaro’s *Arcadia* as having acted as an intermediary between printer and author (Renouard, *Annales* . . ., p. 68, 1514, no. 7).

<sup>3</sup> Andreae Navageri *Lusus*, in *Carmina quinque illustrium poetarum* (Venice, 1548), p. 45:

Canale optime tuque Bembe, nostri  
 Amantissimi utrique, amati utrique  
 A me non minus atque utrique ocelli,  
 Quid rerum geritis? Valetis? Atque  
 Absentis memores sodalis estis?  
 Quid vestrae faciunt bonae Camoenae?

and canzoni precisely, or even to link them definitely.<sup>1</sup> But the close resemblance of matter and form, the known presence of all those concerned at the university around 1500, and the probability that Giustiniani was turning from poetry and secular learning by 1503,<sup>2</sup> must all suggest the common activity of a group centred on Padua at the beginning of the century. It is significant that Gasparo Contarini's letters, which were written a few years later, still connect many of the same figures—Querini, Giustiniani, Tiepolo, Egnazio, Aldus' pupil and patron Alberto Pio, and the ubiquitous Musurus, still keeping an eye on the philological background of everybody else's thought.<sup>3</sup> We should on no account try to convert this circle of friends into an institution: it was an open-ended assortment of scholars, much like those which later gathered round Bembo and Reginald Pole,<sup>4</sup> drawn from different ranks of society and united only by its members' interest in literary experiment. Such people could no more fail to be attracted by Aldus' enterprise than he could refuse to profit from their patronage and skills.

We have already begun to shift the focus of Aldus' connections away from Venice and towards Padua: a closer inspection of his foreign associates bears this out. It has been the custom to stress the printer's reliance on emigré Greeks, and to explain their presence and consequently much of Aldus' achievement by

<sup>1</sup> MS. italiani, cl. ix 203 (6757). The poems are mostly grouped on cc. 119<sup>v</sup>-134<sup>v</sup>. The handwriting is Sanudo's.

<sup>2</sup> Dom J. Leclercq, *Un humaniste érémite: le bienheureux Paul Giustiniani, 1476-1528* (Rome, 1951), pp. 22 f.

<sup>3</sup> H. Jedin, "Contarini und Camaldoli", *Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà*, vol. ii (1959). The letters record a triangular correspondence between Gasparo Contarini, Querini and Giustiniani, but there are frequent references to other friends: e.g. Egnazio, no. 6. No. 9, dated 10 March 1512, describes a visit by Contarini to Alberto Pio and Musurus, during which the Greek suggested an interpretation of a passage of St. Basil which Giustiniani found most offensive. No. 10, of the same date, mentions "Messer Zuan Aurelio", probably the poet Augurello: cf. p. 390, n. 6, above.

<sup>4</sup> Though I know of no detailed study, several works contain useful information on these circles: e.g. Cian, *Un decennio . . .*, op. cit. pp. 109-32; P. McNair, *Peter Martyr in Italy* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 86-115; D. Fenlon, *Heresy and Obedience in Tridentine Italy—Cardinal Pole and the Counter Reformation* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 24-44; M. Anderson, "Biblical Humanism and Roman Catholic Reform: Contarini, Pole, and Giberti", *Concordia Theological Monthly*, xxxix (1968), 686-706.

reference to Venetian geographical and commercial contacts. Though indisputable in itself, this view has been magnified out of all proportion. Musurus made an indispensable and unbroken contribution of books and editorial skills. Lascaris provided invaluable material during his embassy in Venice between 1503 and 1509. But these men were international figures: Aldus had approached Lascaris while the Greek scholar was with the French court in Blois.<sup>1</sup> Justin Decadyos, Arsenios Apostolios, John Gregoropoulos and Demetrius Doucas all had something to offer, but none seems to have enjoyed a very close or lasting relationship with Aldus.<sup>2</sup> By 1500 the printer's German associates were barely less in number than the Greeks and certainly their equal in eminence, since they included Conrad Celtis, John Reuchlin, Vincent Lang, and probably Willibald Pirckheimer.<sup>3</sup> Even the English formed a significant group, to

<sup>1</sup> The unquestionable but easily exaggerated connection between Venice's geographical position and the presence of Greek scholars has been stressed with little alteration by all writers since Firmin-Didot: cf. works cited under p. 379, n. 1, above. Geanakoplos, *op. cit.* pp. 111-66, gives a useful summary of Musurus' career. On Lascaris cf. B. Knös, *Un Ambassadeur de l'Hellénisme, Janus Lascaris* (Paris/Upsala, 1945), pp. 102-33. The manuscript of the Greek orators which he had brought back from Mount Athos was a contribution which Aldus acknowledged very gratefully (cf. Botfield, *op. cit.* pp. 297 f.; Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 61, 1513, no. 2). That Aldus had originally approached Lascaris while the Greek was at the French court is shown by the tone of Nolhac, *op. cit.* no. 24, 24 December 1501.

<sup>2</sup> Decadyos can be shown to have worked on the undated Greek Psalter and part of the text of Aristotle (Renouard, *Annales . . .*, pp. 10, 1497, no. 1, 260). But he soon left Venice (Legrand, pp. cii-cvii). Apostolios edited the undated *Galeomyomachia*, but a quarrel over money soon ended his dealings with Aldus (*ibid.* p. clxvi). Gregoropoulos' name stands high in the statute, and it will be shown later that he gave some lectures which may have been connected to Aldus' activities; but the published letters of his brother-in-law Musurus to him are mostly attempts to prod him into some kind of action (cf. Firmin-Didot, *op. cit.* pp. 499-514). Doucas emerges as a valuable but very temporary helper from Geanakoplos, *op. cit.*, pp. 226-9.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 387, n. 3, above, on Celtis and Reuchlin. A letter of 17 October 1499, from Lang to Celtis shows that the former had recently visited Aldus (*Der Briefwechsel des Konrad Celtis*, ed. H. Rupprich (Munich, 1934), pp. 375-6, no. 226). Though I have not been able to prove it directly, Pirckheimer probably knew Aldus personally: he had studied at Padua in the early 1490s, possessed a large collection of Aldine editions, some illuminated by Dürer, and followed Aldus' plans closely through John Cunon. Cf. H. Rupprich, "Willibald

whom Aldus paid a special, if slightly astonished tribute.<sup>1</sup> Everywhere, it is the importance of the Florentine background and the vitality of contemporary Padua rather than the mere geography of Venice which stands out. Reuchlin had studied under Pico, Thomas Linacre under Poliziano. The Englishman continued his work at Padua, where Celtis and Pirckheimer had also studied.<sup>2</sup> At Padua, too, Aldus could have made more exotic acquaintances: one reference, in particular, conveys both the intimacy and the range of the university's intellectual society. In 1502 Aldus dedicated his edition of Valerius Maximus to one John Ludbranc, whose virtues he had first appreciated at Padua:

... especially when I was sitting in a group in your lodgings ... along with our friend Raphael Regius, a man full of integrity and learning, and a few others: you promised, whatever the cost, to send and search for books in the land of the Dacians, where men say there is a tower full of ancient books.<sup>3</sup>

Ludbranc was Bishop of Posnan and a councillor to the King of Poland. We do not know what became of this particular project, but a glance at the university's matriculation lists will show where Aldus could have met the "Poles and Hungarians" whom Erasmus later acclaimed for bringing their manuscripts to the

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Pirckheimer: Beiträge zu einer Wesenserfassung", *Schweizer Beiträge zur allgemeinen Geschichte*, xv (1957), 64-110; E. Offenbacher, "La bibliothèque de Willibald Pirckheimer", *La Bibliofilia*, xl (1938), 241-63; W. P. Eckert and C. von Imhoff, *Willibald Pirckheimer Dürers Freund im Spiegel seines Lebens, seiner Werke und seiner Umwelt* (Cologne, 1971), pp. 85-87.

<sup>1</sup> In his first approach to Aldus, Erasmus mentioned Grocyn, Linacre, Latimer and Tunstall as the printer's friends in England (*Opus Epistolarum*, ed. P. S. Allen, i (Oxford, 1906), p. 438, no. 207, 28 October 1507). In 1499, in his preface to the *Astronomici Veteres*, Aldus had already paid tribute to the conversion of the English from obscurantist scholasticism to literary studies, and in 1502 he mentioned a manuscript of Prudentius "abusque Britannis accitus" (Botfield, *op. cit.* pp. 240, 254).

<sup>2</sup> On Reuchlin and Celtis cf. L. Spitz, *The Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists* (Harvard, 1963), pp. 60-80; *Conrad Celtis, the German Arch-Humanist* (Harvard, 1957), pp. 11-12. Linacre's exact movements are not quite clear, though their general direction is known (P. Allen, "Linacre and Latimer in Italy", *English Historical Review*, xviii (1903), 514-17).

<sup>3</sup> Renouard, *Annales* ..., pp. 36-37, 1502, no. 10. Renouard does not provide the text of this important dedication, which is translated here from the copy in the John Rylands University Library (Spencer Collection 5662).

print-shop.<sup>1</sup> These Northern Europeans were the active partners, not the passive beneficiaries of Italian scholarship. The Greeks were just another component of an international network.

The tactful dedication and the discreet gift could do much to exploit the opportunities which circumstance had sent. How much direct commercial success contributed to the spread of Aldus' influence is difficult to say, but his publication of large editions in octavo from early 1501 was a most important development in the history of printing. The octavo form was not new: but Aldus pioneered it as a means of supplying the best literature in a compact form, and directed it specifically at the busy man of affairs who had not time to deploy a weighty folio in his study.<sup>2</sup> By the end of the year two such men—the Hungarian royal secretary Sigismund Thurz and the Greek scholar-diplomat John Lascaris—had written from Budapest and Blois to commend the delightful ease with which they could handle the books at odd moments during the day's business.<sup>3</sup> Equally reliable if less cheerful evidence of their popularity is provided by the flood of brazenly pirated copies turned out by the Lyon presses.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M. M. Philips, *The Adages of Erasmus—a Study with Translations* (Cambridge, 1964), pp. 185-6. Compare *Acta graduum . . .*, op. cit. under p. 389, n. 1, above, p. 32, and A. Veress, *Matricula et Acta Hungarorum in Universitate Patavina studentium, 1264-1864* (Budapest, 1915).

<sup>2</sup> Renouard, *Annales . . .*, pp. 26 f. The authors selected were mainly in the field of Latin and Italian literature, and Aldus' dedication of Horace to Marin Sanudo shows that he had a clear idea of the market he wished to reach (pp. 27-28, 1501, no. 4): "... sua parvitate ad se legendum, cum vel a muneribus publicis vel a Venetarum rerum componenda historia cessare potes, invitet [Horatius]". Octavos were produced in Treviso as early as 1470: cf. V. Scholderer, "A Fleming in Venetia: Gerardus de Lisa, Printer, Bookseller, Schoolmaster and Musician", *The Library*, 4th Series, x (1930), 255-6; but Aldus' large-scale production of literary editions was a new development. Cf. L. Febvre and H-J. Martin, *L'Apparition du Livre* (Paris, 1958), pp. 127 f.

<sup>3</sup> Nolhac, op. cit. nos. 23, 24, 20 and 24 December 1501. Thurz's words compare interestingly with Aldus' dedication to Sanudo: "Nam ex quo propter varias meas occupationes vix tantum ocii conceditur ut in edibus nostris vel poetis vel oratoribus vacare possimus, iis [libris] propter eorum tractabilitatem et inter ambulandum et ut sic dixerim inter aulicandum, nacta opportunitate, pro maximis utimur deliciis."

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Aldus' *Admonitum in Lugdunenses Typographos*, 16 March 1503, in Renouard, *Annales . . .*, pp. 321-3. His anxiety was well justified: I examined

Complementing and constantly interacting upon one another, these various social, intellectual and commercial factors combined to make 1502 a triumphant year for Aldus' enterprise, the greatest in fact that it ever achieved. Sixteen separate editions were produced, the highest number which the press ever reached.<sup>1</sup> The systematic extension of literary contacts, already obvious in the previous year's approach to Lascaris, continued with a friendly gesture towards Sannazzaro and the Neapolitan circle,<sup>2</sup> and the fruits of Aldus' method show in a letter he received from John Spiesshammer in Vienna: along with a number of suggested readings, the German scholar enclosed material to supplement Aldus' edition of Valerius Maximus.<sup>3</sup> Reuchlin, meanwhile, was buying books at a rate which leaves one hardly surprised to find half his Greek library consisting of Aldines.<sup>4</sup> There was every reason for that unique flash of confidence which we find in Aldus' dedication of Stephanus' *De Urbibus* in April 1502: in spite of war, the great works of the past were finding their way to the surface; literary studies were flourishing amongst all age-groups in every part of Europe; his own hopes, even, were being surpassed.<sup>5</sup>

Somewhere against this background of optimistic expansion

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the plagiarized edition of Horace in the John Rylands University Library, and though the grade of paper is very inferior and the errors numerous, it reproduces the Aldine form exactly, even to the dedication.

<sup>1</sup> The concentration of editions within particular years was stressed by C. Bühler, "Aldus Manutius: the First Five Hundred Years", *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, xliv (1950), 210-12.

<sup>2</sup> G. Interiano, *Vita e sito de Zichi: chiamati Ciarcassi: historia notabile*, 20 October 1502. Since the dedication to Sannazzaro is not quoted by Renouard, the relevant section should be repeated: "Simul ut hac ad te epistola peterem, ut quae et Latina et vulgari lingua docte et eleganter composuisti ad me perquam diligenter castigata dares, ut excusa typis nostris edantur in manus studiosorum quam emendatissime et digna Sannazzaro" (John Rylands University Library, no. 18863).

<sup>3</sup> Nolhac, *op. cit.* no. 27, 28 December 1502.

<sup>4</sup> *Briefwechsel*, gesammelt und herausgegeben von L. Geiger (Tubingen, 1875), pp. 77-78, 18 August 1502: this is a covering letter from Aldus, who had sent copies of Pollux, Stephanus, Thucydides, and the *Etymologicum Magnum*. Of the fifty-five Greek items inventoried in Reuchlin's library, twenty-eight were Aldines (K. Preisendanz, "Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlin", in *Festgabe Johannes Reuchlin*, ed. M. Krebs (Pforzheim, 1955), pp. 80-82).

<sup>5</sup> Botfield, *op. cit.* p. 262.

we must set the famous *Lex Neacademiae*. It has never been dated precisely: Renouard and Firmin-Didot placed it indefinitely around 1500, but the first appearance of the formula "in Aldi Romani Academia" in a colophon of August 1502, followed by the phrase "iam vel Neacademiam habet" in the senatorial privilege of November, strongly suggest the latter part of that year.<sup>1</sup> The exact date matters little, since it is clear enough that Aldus and his associates were simply trying to focus and regularize the activities which were going on all around them. The statute's rather pedantic preoccupation with grammar is understandable in a company which consisted so largely of professional teachers, and the elaborate plans for "academicians' feasts" give the impression of preparing a poor man's version of Ficino's feasts, the gargantuan banquets at contemporary Padua, or the chic social gatherings of young patricians' clubs.<sup>2</sup> For a year or so Aldus and his friends had some success. They did teach foreigners Greek: some notes taken by the German friar John Cuno from Gregoropoulos' lectures on Aristophanes have survived in manuscript, and carry the date 29 September 1504. Cuno declared himself a student of Aldus.<sup>3</sup> We know, too, that Scipio Fortiguerra lectured on Demosthenes during 1504, and that he delivered a public oration in praise of Greek literature, which Aldus later published. Since a large folio edition of Demosthenes appeared at the end of the year, it seems that the lectures were preparing the public for the book, just as Sabellico had tried to prepare them for his friend's Grammar.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Morelli, *op. cit.* under p. 379, n. 2, above, pp. 47-50; Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 384; Firmin-Didot, *op. cit.* p. 147. Cf. same footnote for the references to the Aldine Sophocles and the text of the senatorial privilege.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. *Diarii*, xxix, col. 467, 19 December 1520: a description of a party to celebrate the doctorate of Andrea di Priuli. It lasted some days. There were also a number of more or less established "clubs" for younger nobles in Venice itself, with special costumes and arrangements for social functions. Sanudo describes their activities in an entry of 24 October 1507 (*ibid.* vii, col. 169). Cf. also L. Venuri, "Le compagnie della calza, sec. XV-XVI", *Nuovo archivio veneto*, n.s., xvi (1908), 161-221.

<sup>3</sup> H. Saffrey, "Un humaniste Dominicain, Jean Cuno de Nuremberg, precurseur d'Erasmus a Bâle", *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et de Renaissance*, xxxiii. 19-62. On this point cf. especially pp. 26-28.

<sup>4</sup> Renouard, *Annales . . .*, pp. 46-48, 1504, nos. 3 (Scipionis Carteromachi Oratio de Laudibus Literarum Graecarum) and 7 (Demosthenis Orationes duae

The occasional glimpse in a preface of the academicians clustered round the fire in tense literary argument reminds one very much of Valeriani's description of the Paduan circles he had known.<sup>1</sup> For a time, Aldus had plainly captured the attention and canalized the energies of the various loose-jointed groups which had carried his enterprise to success. Later in life, he might complain that his print-shop had become a social-centre, but in 1503 he declared proudly that his academy was turning out "a thousand or more copies of some fine author every month".<sup>2</sup>

But groups of students and literary men are liable to be disorganized and short-lived: Aldus' association was subject to the same pressures as the groups from which it had sprung, and was also vulnerable to the economic shocks of the book-trade. There were signs of tension as early as the summer of 1504, when Fortiguerra left Venice in an ill humour.<sup>3</sup> He kept in touch with his old colleagues, but the news he received was not encouraging. On 26 April 1505, the mysterious Bernardo Zorzi wrote: "The New Academy is gravely ill. We have a doctor whose medicines have brought on bile and vomiting".<sup>4</sup> Soon Fortiguerra heard—wrongly—that Aldus had given up printing Greek works entirely, and by the end of the year even John Cuno was criticizing his teacher's dwindling and unenterprising output, now limited to

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et sexaginta). On Fortiguerra's lectures on Demosthenes, cf. Saffrey, *op. cit.* under previous note, p. 29. For the use of this publishing tactic by Sabellico cf. p. 391, n. 2, above. Another oration on Greek literature was delivered in 1504 by Richard Pace (J. Wegg, *Richard Pace, a Tudor Diplomatist* (London, 1932), p. 10).

<sup>1</sup> The most famous case comes in Aldus' dedication of Sophocles to John Lascaris. Cf. Botfield, *op. cit.* p. 261: "Sedentibus nobis his brumae temporibus in hemicyclo ad ignem cum Neacademicis nostris, forteque esset una Marcus Musurus noster, post multa variaque vicissim, ut solet, in tui incidimus mentionem." Compare the passages cited under pp. 391-2, 395, above.

<sup>2</sup> Aldus did not complain about the crowds of visitors until 1514 (cf. quotation under p. 384, n. 1, above). The much-repeated and confident claim of 1503 comes from the preface to Euripides (Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 44, 1503, no. 10).

<sup>3</sup> Nolhac, *op. cit.* no. 32, 11 October 1504. The tone is defensive, even slightly hostile: "Di poi parti di costa non ho mai havute vostre, pure vi scrissi pel nostro Zodecco, stimo l'Academia no habbi piu bisogno di noi, il perche io ho preso altro partito . . .".

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* no. 42, 27 April 1505. Cf. p. 383, n. 2, above, on Zorzi.

“ a few odds and ends about Love, in the vernacular ”, as he termed Bembo’s *Asolani*.<sup>1</sup> The following year the print-shop was closed and Aldus was away from Venice. The phrase “ In Aldi Neacademia ” disappeared from colophons permanently.<sup>2</sup>

Was this simply financial collapse, or was it a reappraisal of policy? Cash-flow was a chronic problem for the early printer, and with his investment in Greek and italic founts, his 200 ducats per month expenses, and his very doubtful business-sense, Aldus must have been dangerously exposed.<sup>3</sup> It is also a grave mistake to assume that his books were either cheap or uniformly acceptable to the wider public. Codrus Urceus could not wholly conceal his admiration for the edition of Aristotle, but grumbled that he could have bought ten fine Latin manuscripts for the same price. In 1510 Aldus’ old friend Daniel Clari was pressed to return either the books he had been sent, or the money realized by their sale: he replied that he would be only too glad to return the books and be free of the trouble and embarrassment they had caused him.<sup>4</sup> A catalogue of Aldine publications available in 1513 adds some detail to the picture: Greek editions are offered at cut prices, while Latin or vernacular works printed at the same

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. no. 35, 19 April 1505: “ La stampa greca havete in tutto intermessa, benche resumpturus, secondo che m’avisa ser Andrea.” Aldus did in fact print a Greek Book of Hours and the *Fables* of Aesop in 1505 (Renouard, *Annales* . . . , p. 49, nos. 3, 6). Cuno’s misgivings are expressed in a letter of 21 December 1505 (*Willibald Pirckheimers Briefwechsel*, ed. E. Reicke, i (Munich, 1940), 281).

<sup>2</sup> Morelli, loc. cit. under p. 379, n. 2, above, points out that the Academy was proclaimed in colophons only between 1502 and 1504-5. Baschet (op. cit. under p. 378, above, Docs. xiii-xvii, pp. 27-36) collects the material on Aldus’ stormy career during 1506. A reference on p. 30 to the quest for manuscripts of Virgil suggests that his journeys through Northern Italy were undertaken partly for the purposes of future business.

<sup>3</sup> Without entering on the vexed problem of early printing and finance, I should cite a number of passages which have been useful: Fevre and Martin, op. cit. pp. 162-93; C. Bühler, *The Fifteenth-Century Book* (Philadelphia, 1960), pp. 50-60; R. Hirsch, *Printing, Selling and Reading, 1450-1550* (Wiesbaden, 1967), pp. 22 f. Aldus stated his expenses in a petition to the Senate dated 17 October 1502. It has been printed several times, immediate reference being to Castellani, p. 76. I am frankly guessing about Aldus’ business-sense: Pastorello, “ Testimonianze e documenti . . . ”, ut cit. p. 189, contains references to payments which the printer did not meet on time.

<sup>4</sup> Dorez, op. cit. under p. 386, n. 1, above, pp. 323-5. Clari’s letter is printed by Nolhac, op. cit. no. 19.

time have been exhausted.<sup>1</sup> Thousand-copy editions of the Greek dramatists must have been hazardous investments in a world where so few could read the language, and even the safer Latin and Italian texts may have been dangerously undercut by forgeries.<sup>2</sup>

But the simple explanation—that the Academy and the printing-company wilted together in the same financial crisis—is not wholly convincing. Aldus' enterprise, like those of so many early printers, was underwritten by partners who supplied the working capital, and in his case it was a particularly powerful syndicate. Equal sums were put up by a doge's son Pierfrancesco Barbarigo and the prosperous bookseller Andrea Torresani, successor to the great company which had centred on Nicholas Jenson in the 1470s. The contract—unfortunately lost—was drawn up in 1495 and was not formally dissolved until 1542. Aldus' financial backing must therefore have survived the problems of 1506 in some form at least.<sup>3</sup> The evidence suggests that he was in fact moving closer to his business partners at this time. In early 1505 he married Andrea's daughter Maria Torresani: by March of the following year he was living with his father-in-law, and on the 28th of the month the two men drew

<sup>1</sup> P. Leicht, "I prezzi delle edizioni aldine al principio del '500", *Il libro e la stampa*, Anno vi, fasc. iii (1912), pp. 77-84. The author discovered a version of the catalogue with the items priced, and pointed out that Greek editions dating from 1495 were still available, while copies of Dioscurides and Xenophon were offered at 4L as against 6L 4s in 1503. Cf. also Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 329 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 303. Renouard shows that the Lyons plagiarists reprinted their text of Valerius Maximus four times before Aldus turned out his second printing.

<sup>3</sup> The crucial document is printed in Pastorello's "Testimonianze e documenti . . .", pp. 214 f., Doc. xi: "Cum ita sit . . . quod dudum de anno millesimo quadringentesimo nonagesimo quinto contracta fuerit quaedam societas impressionis librorum inter quondam magnificum dominum Petrum Franciscum Barbadico olim Serenissimi Principis ex una parte, et quondam Dominum Andream de Thoresanis de Asula, mercatorem librorum, interveniente etiam pro certa portione ut asseritur quondam domino Aldo de Manutiis romano . . .". The company's total capital is not declared, but it is clear that Aldus himself can have controlled only a small part. On Torresani and his connection with Jenson, cf. D. Bernoni, *Dei Torresani, Blado e Ragazzoni, celebri stampatori a Venezia e Roma nel XV e XVI secolo* (Milan, 1890), pp. 6-7. The probability of some form of financial trouble was seen by Ferrigni, *op. cit.* under p. 379, n. 1, above, pp. 161 f.

up a legal act unifying all their property. The will which Aldus made a day earlier directs Andrea to continue publication if Aldus should die, and disposes of a comfortable fortune of around 2,000 ducats which hardly implies that the testator was facing imminent ruin.<sup>1</sup>

But if the company was not facing actual collapse, there are still signs of growing disagreement amongst Aldus and his associates about the right policy for it to pursue. It is quite clear that the professional scholars in Italy and abroad, who had done so much to supply Aldus with material and to spread his prestige, were mainly interested in his programme of Greek publications. Lascaris openly remonstrated with the printer over his profiteering taste for vernacular texts.<sup>2</sup> Fortiguerra and Cuno were obviously disappointed about the dwindling supply of Greek editions in 1505, and Cuno added the significant detail that Andrea Torresani had threatened to accept no further Greek editions for sale unless the cost of production could be more satisfactorily covered.<sup>3</sup> Taken in conjunction with the 1513 catalogue, this evidence can only mean that the Aldine Greek texts, whatever their ultimate fame and importance, were simply not commercially viable in their own time. Whatever pressures were exerted on him by Torresani, it seems clear that Aldus himself was deeply interested in the vernacular, and he must certainly have been given some encouragement by the young

<sup>1</sup> Firmin-Didot, *op. cit.* p. 142, dated Aldus' marriage in 1499. But a letter of 11 March 1505, from Alberto Pio, refers to the event as if it had occurred very recently (Nolhac, *op. cit.* no. 8). The document unifying the fortunes of Aldus and Andrea does not survive, but can be dated from the Ferrarese notarial act which nullified it (Pastorello, "Testimonianze e documenti . . .", pp. 174, 195). Aldus' first will is printed by Fulin, "Documenti . . .", p. 155, and Castellani, *La stampa . . .*, pp. 92 f. It is addressed at San Patrignano, where Andrea's house was situated. The exact value of the estate cannot be computed, but this approximation is based on the cash-assets declared.

<sup>2</sup> Nolhac, *op. cit.* no. 24, 24 December 1501: ". . . la vera causa de la vostra transmigracione dela Graecia alla Italia asseverano essere lo guadagno, lo quale senza dubio è indecente cosa che sia primo proposito ad homo docto . . .".

<sup>3</sup> *Locis citatis* under p. 400, n. 1, above. Cuno's words are important enough to be quoted in full: "Quid causae sit tantae mutationis apud Aldum considerare nequeo praeter illam Aristophanicam τὴν πενίαν. Libros enim graecos a se impressos deinceps socer eius Andreas de Asula, bibliopola famosissimus, non accepturus erat uti solebat, et ob id necessaria pro impressione retribuere."

Petrarchists from Padua.<sup>1</sup> The relative confidence and unanimity of 1502 seem to have broken down as it became clear how long it would take for the cost of the editions to be realized, and a tension between the scholarly and the commercial side of the Aldine enterprise becomes more and more apparent. In 1516, Musurus said explicitly that Aldus had been helped out of financial difficulties by Torresani. He did not specify a date, but the edition of Origen's *Sermons* published in February 1504 carries a note that it was produced by Andrea's money and Aldus' learning.<sup>2</sup> Clearly, the business-partner was beginning to intervene more and more directly. He seems to have been a pragmatic man, with an eye firmly on profit, and he may well have thought that his kindly associate was being led astray by literary fanatics without the slightest market-sense. The scholars and dilettanti did not love him: he is probably Bernardo Zorzi's doctor, who was making everybody sick; and the portrait of "Antronius" in Erasmus' dialogue may be merely the last blow in the wrangle between the men of letters and the man of business.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On Aldus' attitude to the vernacular, cf. C. Dionisotti, "Aldo Manuzio umanista", op. cit. under p. 380, n. 2, above, and *Gli umanisti e il volgare fra Quattrocento e Cinquecento* (Florence, 1968), pp. 1-14. The John Rylands University Library has two copies of the 1501 Petrarch, one of which—Spencer collection no. 15442—contains an extensive justification by Aldus of the word-forms he had adopted and an insistence that the exemplar lent him by Bembo was an autograph manuscript of Petrarch. The speed of the reply to criticism and the beauty of the vellum edition do not suggest that Aldus printed vernacular texts purely for commercial reasons.

<sup>2</sup> Musurus' preface to Pausanias, in Botfield, op. cit. p. 314. The edition of Origen is described by Renouard, *Annales* . . . , p. 44, 1503/4, no. 11.

<sup>3</sup> There are few personal reminiscences of Torresani—Bernoni, op. cit. under p. 401, n. 3, above, relies mainly on material relevant to Aldus himself—and this judgement on him rests mainly on inference from his publications. These followed in the "safe" legal tradition set by Jenson in his later years (*Catalogue of Books Printed in the XVth Century now in the British Museum*, part v, London, 1924, pp. 306 f.). Cf. p. 399, n. 4, above, for Zorzi's remarks, which seem to refer to Andrea. Pastorello, *Epistolario* . . . , no. 282, reflects Paolo Manuzio's criticism of his father's partner. Erasmus' *Opulentia Sordida* has been the subject of extensive scholarly controversy in itself: cf. C. Thompson, ed., *The Colloquies of Erasmus* (Chicago, 1965), pp. 488-99, for translation and bibliography, and M. Dazzi, *Aldo Manuzio e il dialogo veneziano di Erasmo* (Vicenza, 1969), for full discussion.

But these developments in Venice can only be understood against the background of Aldus' negotiations with his associates in Germany. Though not all was easily accessible to him, Firmin-Didot certainly glossed over the evidence which was at his disposal: and though the publication of Pirckheimer's letters has revealed far more, it has produced a nationalistic wrangle for the possession of Aldus' soul rather than a cool appraisal of the real issues.<sup>1</sup> These concern nothing less than the nature of the Academy and the entire role of Aldus in the culture of his times. When so much is at stake, the evidence must be set out in full. On 23 April 1499 John Reuchlin penned a rapid note to Aldus. Since he was referring to a personal conversation, Reuchlin unfortunately had no need to be explicit, but he confessed his failure to interest either the Emperor or the scholars he had consulted in "the cause", and concluded: "In short, my Aldus, you must understand: we are not worthy of you". The implication is that there were already plans to tempt Aldus to Germany.<sup>2</sup> Slightly more information is yielded by a triangular correspondence which passed between Aldus, Conrad Celtis, and John Spiesshammer during the early years of the sixteenth century. At the end of a long letter written on 23 December 1501, Spiesshammer promised that he would soon approach Maximilian and "get everything for you".<sup>3</sup> Whatever the errand, Aldus apparently entrusted it to Spiesshammer, for when he wrote to Celtis on 3 June 1503, he added:

You will hear all you want about me from our friend Cuspinianus [Spiesshammer], to whom I wrote about the matter in great detail. I only pray that my hopes are fulfilled: the plan will greatly benefit scholars of our own and later ages, and will make Germany another Athens to the men of our time.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. pp. 151-2, 277. Firmin-Didot spoke only of Aldus' seeking imperial protection, though he cited the preface to Pontanus, which is far more specific. The evidence on the negotiations has been set out by M. von Kleehoven, "Aldus Manutius und der Plan einer deutschen Ritterakademie", *La Bibliofilia*, lii (1950), 169-77. A sharp retort then came from L. Donati, "La seconda Accademia Aldina ed una lettera ad Aldo Manuzio trascurata da bibliografi", *ibid.* liii (1951), 54-59. The rather partisan viewpoint of both writers prevented them from getting all the issues into perspective.

<sup>2</sup> Nolz, op. cit. no. 14. Other printings are listed by Pastorello, *Epistolario*, no. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Nolz, op. cit. no. 27.

<sup>4</sup> *Der Briefwechsel des Konrad Celtis*, ed. cit. p. 517.

The confident and expansive tone, similar in many ways to the prefaces of this period, naturally suggests that Aldus was hoping to shift his efforts to Germany and fill the Empire with fine books : but the details of his plan have been lost with the letter to Spiesshammer. Even in 1504, when the interest of statesmen was added to that of scholars, the same infuriatingly vague hints and oblique allusions remain the rule. Aldus dedicated his edition of Theodorus Gaza's translations from Aristotle to Matthew Lang, the powerful imperial councillor and bishop of Gurk. The terms were general, but the gesture was obvious, and it seems to have been pressed home by another contact in the imperial service named John Collaurius. Collaurius wrote in May to assure Aldus that Maximilian was genuinely interested in his scheme, and promised to do what he could to bring Lang and Maximilian himself to a decision.<sup>1</sup> But the plans which were so well known to contemporaries are only revealed to us in 1505. In August Aldus dedicated the first part of his edition of Pontanus' poems to Collaurius, and wrote gratefully of his friend's efforts to sway the Emperor "towards founding an Academy". He even mentioned personal letters from Lang and Maximilian. But he also had to admit that "still nothing had been done",<sup>2</sup> and the crescendo which the negotiations reached during the winter has a slightly desperate quality about it. Some time in the autumn Aldus repeated his appeal to Collaurius, Lang and Maximilian. A sympathetic letter came from Jodocus Gallus of Speyer during November,<sup>3</sup> but there was still no reply from the imperial court, and on 6 December Aldus pressed

<sup>1</sup> Renouard, *Annales* . . . , p. 45, 1504, no. 2. Collaurius' letter is printed in Nollhac, *op. cit.* no. 30, 24 May 1504.

<sup>2</sup> Since this dedication is not easily available, the relevant section is quoted here from John Rylands University Library, Spencer Collection no. 18792 : "Quoniam tu plurimum favisti nobis apud Maximilianum Caesarem pro Academia constituenda . . . , meas esse partes duxi ut quo possem modo, gratum mihi extitisse officium tuum cognosceres. Nam etsi nihil est adhuc factum, tum quod et tu et Matthaeus Longius, viri doctissimi et integerrimi, Caesaris a secretis, ad me scribitis, tum vero Caesar ipse benignissimis literis significavit, futurum tua opera, tuo studio facile spero, praesertimque cum rex natus ad commune bonum id maxime cupiat, ut quemadmodum est armorum, ita et bonarum literarum sit decus et gloria."

<sup>3</sup> Nollhac, *op. cit.* no. 50.

Collaurius yet again for a final answer.<sup>1</sup> The negotiations seem to have been widely known, since Fortiguerra was following them eagerly from Rome.<sup>2</sup> On 21 December John Cuno informed Pirckheimer that Aldus was actually preparing to leave for Germany, and—providentially—added a short sketch of his plans.<sup>3</sup> But in February 1506 another official, Jacobus Spiegel, was offering his help, and as late as June 1507 John Ludbranc repeated the story that Aldus had actually been summoned by the Emperor. By this time rumour had outstripped reality, for a good six months before even Cuno had admitted that Aldus had given up all hope.<sup>4</sup>

In spite of the obvious gaps in the evidence, certain issues cannot be avoided. Aldus was hoping for a place in the Empire before he and his friends had proclaimed their association in Venice. While one Academy was celebrating its triumphs in Venice, another was being planned in Germany. A scheme which involved several prominent scholars, a number of influential councillors, and the King of the Romans himself, cannot be shrugged off as an extravagant fancy. What was this “other Academy”, and how was it related to the group who framed the statute of 1502?

Since the letters in which Aldus presumably elaborated his ideas have not survived, we have to rely on the summary which Cuno sent to Pirckheimer in December 1505 :

Aldus is preparing to move to Germany, to found a New Academy under the protection of the King of the Romans, in some place determined by him. With him will be various other men, some highly learned in Greek and some in Hebrew,

<sup>1</sup> “Lettere inedite dei Manuzii, raccolte dal dottore Antonio Ceruti”, *Archivio veneto*, Anno xi, xxi (1881), 269: “Abhinc prope tres menses dedi Iohanni cuidam monacho germano ad Caesarem, ad Longium, ad te literas pro Academia constituenda sub umbra et favore Maximiliani, ut ipse ad me olim significasti, quo scirem quid agendum mihi.” Cuno (Johannes monachus) was clearly the main intermediary: cf. Saffrey, *op. cit.* under p. 398, n. 3, above.

<sup>2</sup> Nolhac, *op. cit.* no. 36, 19 December 1505.

<sup>3</sup> *Willibald Pirckheimers Briefwechsel*, ed. cit. i. 280-2. The letter will be quoted and discussed below.

<sup>4</sup> Nolhac, *op. cit.* nos. 58, 61, for the letters of Spiegel and Ludbranc. Cuno's final word is in *Willibald Pirckheimers Briefwechsel*, ed. cit., i. 457, 26 December 1506: “... cum videam Aldum longa expectatione a Rege Romanorum frustratum.”

who, while Aldus prints all the best books, will instruct the youth of Germany not only in good scholarship, but, as he claims, in military skill and exercises, so that those who are well versed in literature may not be proved unwarlike.<sup>1</sup>

Modern writers have greeted this passage with open incredulity, asking what conceivable place either Aldus or Hebrew could have had in a military academy.<sup>2</sup> Cuno, it is argued, was indulging in some wild fantasy, possibly a product of Reuchlin's study of Hebrew and Maximilian's cloudy ambitions of military glory. But Cuno had studied with Aldus, he was acting as his intermediary, and he stated explicitly that the plan was Aldus'.<sup>3</sup> We need very good reasons for discrediting our main item of evidence, and I am not at all convinced that we have them. The publication of Hebrew texts was one of Aldus' earliest dreams, which was mentioned in the mid-1490s by Justin Decadyos in his preface to the Greek Psalter and was well known to William Grocyn by 1499. By 1501 Aldus himself seemed confident that he could soon publish a trilingual Bible, and he was ready to add an "Introductio perbrevis ad Hebraicam linguam" to his Latin Grammar.<sup>4</sup> In spite of the desertion of his Jewish contact in

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 280. Cf. p. 406, n. 3, above. Since a great deal depends on particular phrases, I quote the Latin text in full: "Parat enim se idem Aldus migrare in Germaniam, sub titulo Regis Romanorum neacademiam aliquo loco sibi praefixo instituere cum quibusdam aliis admodum doctis viris partim graece partim hebraice, qui Aldo imprimente optimos quosque libros Germanicam pubem apte erudiant non solum bonis artibus, sed, ut praetendit idem, pericia et militari exercio ut docti litteris non imbelles inveniuntur . . .".

<sup>2</sup> Von Kleehoven questioned the relevance of Hebrew, while Donati rejected the entire notion of a military academy. Cf. p. 404, n. 1, above, for references.

<sup>3</sup> Saffrey, *op. cit.* pp. 26-27, shows that Cuno was very closely associated with Aldus. Also, the phrase "ut praetendit idem" in the passage quoted under n. 1 above can only refer to Aldus, so the plan for military exercises was attributed directly to him.

<sup>4</sup> The date of the Greek Psalter's publication is uncertain: Renouard (*Annales . . .*, p. 260) attributes it to 1497 or 1498; Legrand (*Bibliographie Hellénique*, i. 22) prefers an earlier date. Decadyos' introduction, which is printed by Legrand on pp. 24-25, treats the Psalter as a preliminary exercise for the trilingual Bible. The plan was mentioned by Grocyn in the letter which Aldus printed with the *Astronomici Veteres* (Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 20, 1499, no. 3). In a letter to Celtis and Lang dated 7 July 1501, Aldus himself sounded quite confident: "Vetus et Novum Instrumentum Graece, Latine et Hebraice nondum impressi, sed parturio" (*Der Briefwechsel des Konrad Celtis*, ed. cit. p. 451). The "Introductio perbrevis" was printed in the same year (Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 31, 1501, no. 9).

1503, Aldus never entirely abandoned his interest in Hebrew, reprinting the "Introductio perbrevis" in 1508 and 1514.<sup>1</sup> Military exercises had excellent precedent in humanist education, both in the "gymnastics" of Plato's Guardians and in the school of Vittorino da Feltre.<sup>2</sup> In 1508 these shadowy classical ideals were given a practical turn when the condottiere Bartolomeo d'Alviano founded a kind of Academy at Pordenone and attracted a number of contemporary poets, including Andrea Navagero.<sup>3</sup> Aldus' fame as a printer must not be allowed to obscure his career as an educator. Far from containing anything that is even particularly improbable, Cuno's letter places Aldus squarely in the middle of the educational currents of his time. The mention of exercise looks back to the Italian preoccupation with moulding the entire personality: the place given to Hebrew hints at the rising force of Biblical scholarship, which was soon to give trilingual colleges to the universities of Alcalá, Oxford, and Louvain. The only surprising feature in the plans outlined by Cuno is the prominent but unnoticed position which Aldus occupied in the most important developments of early sixteenth-century education.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Der Briefwechsel des Konrad Celtis*, ed. cit. p. 541, 17 November 1503. Reprints of the "Introductio perbrevis" are recorded by Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 52, 1508, no. 1, p. 69, 1514, no. 10.

<sup>2</sup> "Military exercises" probably imply no more than athletics, which derived a respected place in humanist education from Book III of Plato's *Republic*. Platina stressed the classical precedent for Vittorino da Feltre's course of physical education, and also gave an idea of the form it took. "Saltare enim, currere, aequitare, iaculum torquere, ensem rotare non alienum a bono cive esse dicebat" (E. Garin, *Il pensiero pedagogico dell'umanesimo* (Florence, 1958), p. 678).

<sup>3</sup> E. Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, vi (Venice, 1853), 225 f. Frascatoro, Cimbriaco, Cotta and Flaminio are also named as members of the circle. Since it was dissolved so rapidly, few traces of its activity survive.

<sup>4</sup> The fullest account of the trilingual colleges seems still to be P. S. Allen's "The trilingual colleges of the early sixteenth century", in *Erasmus—Lectures and Wayfaring Sketches* (Oxford, 1934), pp. 138-63. The College at Louvain has been studied in depth by H. de Vocht, *History of the Foundation and the Rise of the Collegium Trilingue Lovaniense, 1517-1550*, 4 vols., Louvain, 1951-5. Corpus Christi College, Oxford, still possesses a large collection of Aldine editions presented by the founder Bishop Fox. The College authorities kindly allowed me to inspect them personally, but a compact study is available in J. R. Liddell's "The Library of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in the sixteenth century", *Transactions of the Oxford Bibliographical Society*, xviii (March, 1938),

It is hard to reconcile this world of court-patronage and higher education with the print-shop and the statute, but it is harder still to make it an entirely separate phase of Aldus' plans. Books were printed with the colophon "in Aldi Neacademia" for only two years, 1502-4. This period is completely overlapped by the seven years of more or less hopeful negotiations with the Germans.<sup>1</sup> The very term "Academy" seems to have been used indifferently by Aldus and his friends to refer to the print-shop, the men who met there, and the projected imperial college.<sup>2</sup> Far from being kept secret from Italian members of the circle, the developments in Germany were followed with such interest by Fortiguerra and Aleander that we can only assume that they hoped to be among the learned men who would follow Aldus north.<sup>3</sup> Slender though the evidence is, it must suggest that Aldus hoped firstly to institutionalize the ill-defined group of professional teachers and men of letters which had gathered round his workshop by attaching them to a permanent school, and secondly to free his own printing operations from that embarrassing world of profit and loss which he seems to have understood so little. A compact group of editors and teachers working for a sponsored college would have few worries about the market. This background would do something to explain the vagueness and subjectivism of the statute of 1502: perhaps it was little more than the dream of men who were looking towards a more organized future.

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385-416. For discussion of Aldus' educational views cf. Dionisotti, "Aldo Manuzio umanista", *op. cit.* under p. 380, n. 2, above.

<sup>1</sup> Morelli, *Aldi Manutii scripta tria . . .*, p. 47, pointed out this very restricted use of the relevant phrase. Cf. also Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 34, 1502, no. 6, p. 46, 1504, no. 4. Cf. also Botfield, *op. cit.* p. 285 (Pindar, 1513) for continued references to the Academy in Prefaces.

<sup>2</sup> The much-quoted sentence from the preface to Euripides clearly refers to the print-shop: "Mille et amplius boni alicuius autoris volumina singulo quoque mense emittimus ex Academia nostra" (Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 44, 1503, no. 10). Fortiguerra's words "Commendo me Academiae universae . . ." must refer to his Venetian friends (Nolhac, *op. cit.* no. 33). For the application of the word "Academy" to the projected German college, cf. the dedication to Pontanus' poems quoted under p. 405, n. 2, above.

<sup>3</sup> Nolhac, *op. cit.* no. 32, 11 October 1504 (Fortiguerra). *Ibid.* no. 53, 10 March 1506 (Aleander).

But the more we stress Aldus' ambition to establish himself in the Empire, the less the importance we can attach to Venice as the focus of his plans, and to the statute of 1502 as their ultimate expression: and the Aldine Academy has become so closely identified with Venice's fame as a cultural centre that such a change of emphasis may be difficult to accept. Scholars have been reluctant to face up to the full implications of the contacts discussed above. The cosmopolitan society, the numerous printing-presses, the rich libraries and the promise of noble patronage, all combine to give the Venetian culture of this period an impressive and coherent pattern, into which Aldus and his friends seem to fit exactly. But this broad view does not bear closer scrutiny. It may well have been true in 1489 or 1490 that Aldus was attracted to Venice partly by the collection of Greek manuscripts in the Biblioteca Marciana.<sup>1</sup> The senate was having one of its periodical fits of conscience about the prolonged neglect to which it had subjected Cardinal Bessarion's bequest, and members of the College were formally obliged to come forward with proposals for the better care of the books. Since Bessarion's will had stressed that the manuscripts should be accessible to everyone, the situation must have looked promising for a man who hoped to publish Greek literature. But the senators had other worries, and the books remained, unpacked and decaying, in the Ducal Palace. It is just possible that Aldus was able to make some illicit use of the library, but certain that it had no important effect on his publications. By 1500 at the latest he must have realized that his fast-expanding contacts in the academic world would serve him far better.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This "broad view" of Venetian culture is perhaps most explicitly stated by Renaudet, *Érasme et l'Italie*, pp. 76 f. For particular concentration on the lure of the Marciana, cf. Firmin-Didot, *op. cit.* pp. 26, 46, and Geanakoplos, *op. cit.* pp. 116-17.

<sup>2</sup> Aldus' use of the Marciana will probably always be a debatable point. The basic likelihood of his having used the manuscripts has been enough to satisfy some critics: cf. C. Castellani, "Il prestito dei codici manoscritti nella Biblioteca di San Marco a Venezia nei suoi primi tempi e le conseguenti perdite dei codici stessi", *Atti dell'istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ser. vii, vol. 8 (1896-7), p. 318: "... quasi tutte le edizioni... furono condotte sopra testi esistenti nella libreria...". A more cautious attitude is taken by Miss L. Labowsky, "Il Cardinale Bessarione e gli inizi della Biblioteca Marciana", in *Venezia e*

Aldus' patrician friends can also be seen both as a link connecting him to Venice, and as a symptom of growing interest in humanist studies at the highest level of society. But an individual analysis soon reveals how pitifully inadequate these men would have been as patrons of the kind of institution that Aldus seems to have planned. What was needed was money and influence, on the scale offered to Ficino for more than three generations by the ruling clique of Florence. Aldus' friends lacked not only money and influence in Venice itself: they lacked any real coherence as a group. The members of the ducal Barbarigo family, who could have played the desired role, showed no interest in Aldus' enterprise beyond what was strictly commercial, and do not figure even in dedications.<sup>1</sup> The Bembo and Navagero families had both been hit by commercial disasters.<sup>2</sup> Pietro Bembo's father Bernardo was a respected, if not pre-eminent, figure in Venetian politics, who certainly knew and quoted Aldus'

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*l'Oriente fra tardo medioevo e rinascimento*, ed. A. Pertusi (Florence, 1965), p. 176. The authoress argues from the condition of the library at the beginning of the century that Aldus would have been able to obtain only occasional copies, and that he would have had to rely on underground contacts. On textual grounds, I am inclined to go further and argue that the Marciana made no significant contribution to Aldus' output. Cf. my article "Two great Venetian libraries in the Age of Aldus Manutius", *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library*, lvii (1974-5), 128-66. Private conversation with N. Wilson of Lincoln College, Oxford, confirms that he has arrived at the same view.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Pastorello, "Testimonianze e documenti...". The John Rylands University Library possesses a copy of Petrarch illuminated with the family arms of the Barbarigo, but this is the only sign of their being more than financial backers.

<sup>2</sup> A ship owned by Bernardo Bembo and his brother was lost on the voyage from Flanders in 1461, and the state intervened to help them (Archivio di stato, Venezia, Senato, Deliberazioni Terra, Filza 4, c. 168. I must thank my colleague Dr. Michael Mallett for this reference.) Andrea Navagero faced pressing financial problems for some time: in April 1509 his father needed a safe-conduct to protect him from his creditors (Sanudo, *Diarii*, viii, col. 72). On 20 May 1513, news arrived of his uncle's death on the voyage from Cyprus (*ibid.* xvi, col. 277). On 13 June the senate petitioned the Pope for a benefice which would provide Andrea with the means of subsistence (*ibid.* col. 371). When the Venetian state appointed him librarian of the Marciana and official historian, it did so largely to keep him in Venice and give him a livelihood (P. Papinio, "Nuove notizie intorno ad Andrea Navagero e Daniele Barbaro", *Archivio veneto*, iii (1872), 256-7).

publications, but does not seem to have approved wholly of his son's literary distractions.<sup>1</sup> Both he and Aldus' staunch friend Daniel Renier were proclaimed public debtors in 1512.<sup>2</sup> Unflagging devotion to public service brought Renier to procuratorial rank just before his death in 1534, but he appears from his will and from Sanudo to have been a man of no outstanding talents, very modest means, and no family connections.<sup>3</sup> Some of Aldus' friends supply examples of the heavy demands made on the patrician by Venetian social ethics. Angelo Gabriel, Bembo's fellow-student, appears only sporadically in correspondence and dedications, and in a letter written around 1514 he bewailed his long neglect of literature.<sup>4</sup> In 1523 he drew up a will which gives some clue to the loss of interest: from small beginnings he had made such a fortune in the booming wool-trade that he had assumed all the attitudes of the rising capitalist, and warned his sons portentously against any possible distract-

<sup>1</sup> Though a distinguished diplomat who appeared regularly in the government as *Avogadore*, more occasionally as ducal councillor or as a member of the Ten, Bernardo never broke into the ranks of the *Savii grandi* who controlled the College (A.S.V., Segretario alle voci, Misti, Registro 7 ex 12). References to Aldine publications, especially the *Thesaurus Cornucopiae*, may be found in his Commonplace Book, now British Library, Additional MS. 41068A (e.g., ff. 93<sup>v</sup>, 172<sup>v</sup>). There are hints of disagreement between Bernardo and his son in a letter of 5 August 1497 (Pietro Bembo, *Delle Lettere*, ii (Verona, 1743), 3-4); cf. also P. Floriani, "La giovinezza umanistica di Pietro Bembo fino al periodo ferrarese", *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, cxliii (1966), 25-71.

<sup>2</sup> Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. xiv, col. 639, 30 August 1512.

<sup>3</sup> Renier became *Procurator de supra* on 4 December 1534, and died on 15 February of the following year (M. Barbaro, *Genealogie delle famiglie patrizie veneziane*, vi. 417). He never married. Sanudo records his constant appearance in office, but calls him only "homo intelligente" and gives no sign of knowing him personally (*Diarii*, xxv, col. 399, 4 May 1518). Renier's will, dated 24 August 1528, is preserved in A.S.V. Notarili, Testamenti (Atti Cavaneis) Busta 217, insert 111. It provides for small bequests of 100-200 ducats to his brothers and a few dependents.

<sup>4</sup> Gabriel is mentioned in the preface to Lascaris' Greek Grammar, in Bembo's *De Aetna*, and in Aldus' dedication of his edition of Demosthenes (Renouard, *Annales* . . . , p. 3, 1494, no. 1, p. 7, 1495, no. 4, and Botfield, op. cit. p. 273). The Demosthenes appeared in November 1504. Gabriel spoke of his long neglect of literature in a letter to the Trevisan humanist Gerolamo Bologni (Biblioteca Comunale, Treviso, MS. 962 (ii), pp. 5-6). It cannot be precisely dated, but stands at the beginning of Bologni's eighteenth *Liber Promiscuorum*: these poems seem to have been circulated annually from the mid-1490s.

tions.<sup>1</sup> One can only hope that the young men had not read the poems in which Augurello had praised their father's happy absorption in the pleasures of life and love.<sup>2</sup> Marin Sanudo was clearly a very active member of the Aldine circle around 1500, keeping in close touch even while he was in Verona: but by the autumn of 1502 Aldus was regretting that Sanudo's recent election as Savio agli Ordini had kept him from discussions, and there is no sign of further contact between them until the diarist paid his magnificent tribute to Aldus' memory.<sup>3</sup> In direct contrast, numbers of Aldus' acquaintances rejected the patrician quest for power and money outright. Querini and Canal are the classic cases: Navagero and Pietro Bembo followed a precarious existence on the fringes of court life; while Giovanni Bembo, with disarming frankness, thanked Heaven for the family property without which he would certainly have starved, after devoting a lifetime to the quest for useless knowledge.<sup>4</sup> If there

<sup>1</sup> Gabriel's will, which is insert 26 in the same busta as Renier's, is a most revealing document. The testator declared assets amounting to 17,800 ducats, and expanding, which he claimed to have built up unaided. His advice to his sons may explain his success: "Fioli mei, ve prego et commando che non ve dobbiate allargar da questa arte de la lana... Lassate la praticha de solazi, compagnie et feste. Attendete a ben viver. Vigilate su la marchadantia." Gabriel, clearly, was one of the faces behind the impressive statistics assembled by D. Sella, "The rise and fall of the Venetian wool industry", in *Crisis and Change in the Venetian Economy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. B. S. Pullan (London, 1968), pp. 106-26.

<sup>2</sup> *Carmina*, in aedibus Aldi, 1505, Iamborum Lib. i, no. 17: "Ad Angelum Gabrielum... vivendum esse, et amandum... inter sodales id venuste comprobans."

<sup>3</sup> R. Murari, "Per l'epistolario di Aldo Manuzio il Vecchio", *Ateneo veneto* Anno xxii (1899), pp. 1-17. These four letters come from the period 1501-2, when Sanudo was *camerlengo* of Verona, but found time to act as intermediary between Aldus and a Veronese humanist named Mateo Rufo, who hoped to attract interest to his emendations to Pliny. For other evidence of Sanudo's interest, cf. p. 388, n. 3, above. However, Aldus' dedication of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in October 1502 hints that the diarist was losing touch: "... tua iucunda praesentia nobis in Academia nostra uti non licet." This letter is not readily available, and is quoted from John Rylands University Library, Spencer Collection, no. 3366. The next definite sign of contact between Sanudo and Aldus is the diarist's description of the printer laid out for burial in San Patrini, surrounded by the editions he had published (*Diarii*, xix, col. 425, 8 February 1514/5 (M.V.)).

<sup>4</sup> On the careers of Querini and Canal, cf. p. 389, n. 1, above. On Bembo, P. Floriani, "La giovinezza umanistica di Pietro Bembo..."; C. Clough,

is any general truth to be derived from all this, it must be that Aldus' patrician friends around 1500 were young men who quickly grew up to go their separate ways, becoming leisured nobles with little influence, or not particularly influential nobles with no leisure. Effective patronage would have to come from elsewhere.

After 1506 all references to an Aldine Academy become more scattered, less connected to any one place, and ever more dream-like. The years 1508-9 brought Erasmus' famous visit, and it is a measure of his genius that of all the distinguished writers and scholars who passed through Aldus' workshop, he was the only one to leave a vivid description of life there.<sup>1</sup> Naturally, his name has been attached to the Academy: a partnership of the leading humanist and the leading printer of the age was too much to resist, and there is at least no doubt that our view of life in the Aldine circle will always be that of Erasmus. But strictly speaking, Morelli was right to question Erasmus' involvement. In spite of the frantic activity reflected both in the *Adagia* and *Opulentia Sordida*, we must remember that Erasmus knew the Aldine circle only when it was operating at a greatly reduced intensity, after two years of inactivity and under the baleful eye of Andrea Torresani.<sup>2</sup> Only eight editions appeared between 1507 and 1509, when the print-shop closed for two more years.<sup>3</sup>

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"Pietro Bembo's *Gli Asolani* of 1505", *Modern Language Notes*, lxxxiv, no. 1 (January 1969), 16-45. Some details of Navagero's life in the first decade of the sixteenth century are given by Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, vi (Venice, 1853), 173-4. No one was quite as explicit as Giovanni Bembo: "Quod si ea [sc. domus] carerem, inedia laborarem, quia (ut scis) in studiis inutilibus et in orbe spectando veritateque perquirenda bonam et meliorem partem vitae meae contrivi..." (Mommsen, *op. cit.* under p. 389, n. 2, above, p. 588).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. especially Geanakoplos, *op. cit.* pp. 256 f. The author's numerous references to Firmin-Didot, Renaudet, Nolhac, etc., make further citations unnecessary. Useful comment on Erasmus' ability to capture a character or an atmosphere can be found in M. M. Philips' recent study, "Erasmus and biography", *University of Toronto Quarterly*, xlii, no. 3 (1973), 185-201.

<sup>2</sup> Morelli considered Erasmus' stay in Venice too short (*Aldi Manutii scripta tria* . . ., pp. 49-50). The problems of reconciling Erasmus' two descriptions of life in the Aldine circle have naturally clouded the issue: cf. p. 403, n. 3, above.

<sup>3</sup> Renouard, *Annales* . . ., pp. 51-57. The legal moves made by Aldus and Andrea Torresani to protect their interests in 1509 are fully documented by Pastorello, "Testimonianze e documenti . . .", pp. 177-8, 196, Doc. iii. It is

As an editorial collaborator and a member of the household, Erasmus must be considered a "member of the Academy" in the same loose sense as all Aldus' friends.<sup>1</sup> But all talk of the Academy now centred on vague dreams for the future. The tone for the whole period is set by a neglected anecdote in a letter which Erasmus wrote many years later to Ambrogio Leon, a medical friend from his time in Italy :

In familiar conversation Aldus used to joke by imitating the faltering speech of an old man, in which he thought we would address each other some day. . . . It was an amusing fancy of his, especially when there was any talk of establishing a New Academy.<sup>2</sup>

Even to Aldus, the Academy was now a joke and a dream of years far ahead.

The disorganized, almost desperate, quality of the negotiations which can be traced bears out this impression in every way. Hope seems to have centred on Rome, and from a few months after the collapse of discussions with Maximilian until shortly before Aldus' death we can follow a disjointed series of contacts with the Curia. As early as 14 April 1507 Fortiguerra wrote of approaching a number of cardinals "on the matter of the Academy".<sup>3</sup> The critical position of Venice after Agnadello may well have encouraged such hopes : to safeguard his interests, Aldus fled to Ferrara and took every chance to further his plans personally. We find him in Siena late in 1509, apparently sounding out Erasmus as the Dutchman travelled North,<sup>4</sup> and at

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even possible that Aldus' personal position in Venice was compromised, since two of his patrons, Alberto Pio and Matthew Lang, were deeply involved in the affairs of the League of Cambrai. Cf. Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, Books viii-x, in *Opere*, ed. V. de Caprariis (Milan, 1961), pp. 667, 682, 722, etc. Aldus had also been an intimate of the French ambassador John Lascaris, and a personal letter survives in which Maximilian himself asked Federigo Gonzaga to protect Aldus' property (Baschet, *op. cit.* pp. 37-38, Doc. xviii).

<sup>1</sup> Besides the *Adages* and the translations from Euripides, Erasmus seems to have done some preliminary editorial work for Aldus on the texts of Plautus, Terence and Seneca (Firmin-Didot, *op. cit.*, pp. 414-15, n. 2; Renaudet, "*Érasme et l'Italie*", pp. 85-86).

<sup>2</sup> *Opus Epistolarum*, ed. cit. iii. 404, no. 868, 15 October 1518.

<sup>3</sup> Nollac, *op. cit.* no. 37.

<sup>4</sup> *Opus Epistolarum*, ed. cit. i. 462, no. 223 : "...dalla quale [lettera] si rileva, che [Desiderio] era a Siena, e che seco era Aldo . . . e che si era ivi discorso

Bologna in 1510, reviewing the progress of Fortiguerra's negotiations.<sup>1</sup> The Pistoiese scholar certainly did not lack contacts : he was in touch with the Pope's secretary, Sigismondo Conti, and with the rich dilettante Angelo Colucci, who in May 1511 actually wrote of organizing the Academy in Rome as soon as the court reassembled there.<sup>2</sup> But, as Fortiguerra had reported to Aldus a year earlier, political upheavals were delaying "the cause", and they must simply hope for the best.<sup>3</sup> While the alliances regrouped and the war flared up again, hopes must have been fading. In 1512, Aldus returned to his press.

A scattering of vague allusions hints at the other avenues which were being explored during these years. In January 1514 Aldus dedicated an edition of the poems of Tito and Ercole Strozzi to Lucretia Borgia, paying a grateful tribute to her offer to endow his Academy as soon as circumstances allowed.<sup>4</sup> Presumably he was referring to plans made during his residence at Ferrara between 1509 and 1512, but we have no further evidence. Besides Ferrara, Milan may have been considered as a possible centre. In an undated letter Matteo Bandello harked back to the visit Aldus had made in 1506, and advised the printer that the contacts they had marked out were now complete : an Academy for the study of Greek, Latin and the Italian vernacular could soon be established. The letter was probably written around 1510, and an approach to interested parties in Milan

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dell'Academia che instituir voleva detto Aldo, la quale sembrava simile alla Republica di Platone." The letter was dated tentatively to 1511 by Allen, but clearly refers to earlier communications.

<sup>1</sup> Nohac, op. cit. no. 40, 3 June 1510 : "A di passati fu qua Aldo e facemo un poco di discorso d'Academia."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. nos. 39, 40, are both addressed by Fortiguerra to Colucci. No. 43 expresses Colucci's hopes in 1511. Cf. G. F. Lancellotti, *Posie italiane e latine di Monsignor Angelo Colucci*, 1772. The best account of the contacts being followed at this stage is given by Brunetti, "L'Accademia Aldina", cit. under p. 379, n. 1, above, p. 427.

<sup>3</sup> Nohac, op. cit. no. 41, 10 July 1510. Fortiguerra hoped that Conti's illness was the main cause of the delay.

<sup>4</sup> Renouard, *Annales . . .*, p. 65, 1513, no. 10 : "... quia Academiam, cui constituendae iam multos annos studeo, tuis opibus, tuo solius sumptu facturam te, sinant tempora, ultro mihi receperis . . .". Quoted here from John Rylands University Library, Spencer Collection, no. 5538.

would have been natural enough, since Aldus' friends there included men high in the French administration, like Jean Grolier. But, once again, the evidence is totally isolated.<sup>1</sup> A letter of the younger Aldus preserves an even vaguer tradition that his grandfather was at some time invited to the kingdom of Naples.<sup>2</sup> It is hard to believe that any of these schemes represents more than a clutching at straws, and the reason for their all coming to nothing is probably contained in the phrase "sinant tempora"—"when the times allow it"—which Aldus used in his tribute to Lucretia Borgia. Between 1508 and 1512, the times hardly encouraged major enterprise in Naples or Northern Italy.

But the sporadic dealings with the papal court do seem to have entered a more hopeful phase in 1513. The moment was propitious: the print-shop was working at something like its old intensity<sup>3</sup>; the open-handed son of Lorenzo the Magnificent now occupied the papal throne; and in early August Pietro Bembo, now apostolic secretary, sounded out Musurus on the chances of recruiting some young Greeks to form the nucleus of a Greek College.<sup>4</sup> Probably Aldus and Musurus hoped to turn this papal initiative to their own advantage, for in September

<sup>1</sup> This letter was used by Donati in the study cited under p. 404, n. 1 as his main means of neutralizing the evidence of Aldus' negotiations with German scholars. With respect to the author's percipience in pointing out its relevance, I think it must be stressed that the letter is undated, isolated, and without reference to the contacts being followed or the centre which was planned. This is simply not enough evidence to fulfil the purpose required, and the whole incident should be set alongside the other frustrated plans which Aldus pursued at this time. The text is printed in full on pp. 56-57 of Donati's study. Vernacular Italian, rather than Hebrew, is mentioned as the third language to be studied, but otherwise there is no new information about Aldus' aims. An approach to friends in Milan was likely enough; the French bibliophile and treasurer of the city, Jean Grolier, mentioned conversations with Aldus in a copy of Erasmus' *Adages*. Cf. M. Le Roux de Lincy, *Recherches sur Jean Grolier, sur sa vie, et sa bibliothèque* (Paris, 1868), pp. 49-61, 212.

<sup>2</sup> *Lettere volgari di Aldo Manucci* (Rome, 1592), p. 1, Ep. 1. Aldus the Younger to Giovanni Angelo Papio: "et prima il Principe della stessa città [Salerno] si degno di honorar mio avo, invitandolo a risedervi con offerte segnalate di commodità, di favori e d'honori." There is a possible reference to this scheme in Nolhac, op. cit. No. 64 (Letter of Andrea-Matteo Acquaviva, July 2nd 1507).

<sup>3</sup> Renouard, *Annales* . . . , pp. 60-70. Twenty-two editions appeared in 1513 and 1514.

<sup>4</sup> Legrand, *Bibliographie Hellénique*, i. cxvi: ii. 321.

they addressed the first Greek edition of the works of Plato to the Pope with one of the most elaborate dedications ever to come from the Aldine press. Aldus appealed to the past, reminding Leo of his father's favours to Ficino. He appealed to the future, picturing a golden age of peace among Christian peoples while the Faith spread across conquered Turkish dominions to newly discovered corners of the world and enlightenment reached in every direction through the advance of literacy and learning. Finally, he asked the Pope directly for funds to establish the Academy for which he had striven so long.<sup>1</sup> It is uncertain why so eloquent an approach to so munificent a patron produced so little effect. Paolo Bombasio forecast at the time that Greek expatriates rather than Latins would be chosen to staff the new college, and that Aldus would have to be content with printing.<sup>2</sup> But perhaps it was simply a question of time. The Quirinal college was founded, with its own press, under the direction of Aldus' friends Musurus and Lascaris.<sup>3</sup> But this occurred in 1516, and Aldus, as Erasmus sadly remarked, never reached a faltering old age.<sup>4</sup>

This endless catalogue of frustrations may leave us hesitating to speak of the Aldine Academy as a real institution at all. Contemporaries clearly had their doubts. In an epigram, Pirckheimer played with the idea that Aldus had failed to find a place on earth, and departed to found his Academy in heaven.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The dedications—Aldus' in Latin prose and Musurus' in Greek elegiacs—are printed in Legrand, *op. cit.*, i. 101-12, and Botfield, *op. cit.* pp. 286-96. It is not possible to cite more than the relevant section of Aldus' letter: "... sperantes eam rem academiae, quam tot annos parturimus, mirum in modum profuturam, ut scilicet nos foveas, provinciamque hanc nostram, maximi cuiusque principis favore ac auxilio dignissimam, amplectaris, ac potius eam ipsam academiam, sempiternum bonum hominibus, tu, Pontifex Maxime, in urbe Roma cures instituendam..." (Legrand, p. 105).

<sup>2</sup> Nolz, *op. cit.* no. 78, 2 July 1513.

<sup>3</sup> Legrand, *op. cit.* i. cl-clii: Knös, *op. cit.* under p. 394, n. 1, above, pp. 140 f.

<sup>4</sup> Aldus died on 6 February 1514/5 (M.V.) (Firmin-Didot, *op. cit.* p. 396). Erasmus' comment—"Reliquit nos ante balbam illam aetatem"—was an ending to the anecdote quoted under p. 415, n. 2.

<sup>5</sup> "Posset ubi tandem concepta Academia condi  
Nullus in hoc Aldo cum locus orbe foret,  
'Seclum', ait, 'insipiens, tellusque indigna, valet!'  
Atque opus ad Campos transtulit Elysios."

All references to an Academy after 1504, and a considerable number before that date, apply to the cloudy dreams of the college which might one day be founded in Vienna, Rome, Ferrara, Milan, or Naples. Only between 1502 and 1504, in the statute, eight editions, and a handful of letters, can we find unambiguous references to an existing institution, and these display no "solid bond of intellectual partnership",<sup>1</sup> but the enthusiasm of an ill-defined, uncoordinated group of literary friends. Strictly speaking, we probably should relegate Aldus' Academy to the realm of dreams. But apart from the natural feeling of reluctance, there are good reasons for refusing to do so. In kind, Aldus' circle may well have looked back to the loosely grouped humanist coterie of the Quattrocento rather than forward to the more institutionalized academies of the following century<sup>2</sup>: but differences of degree set it apart from its predecessors. The prestige of Padua and the quickening pace of diplomacy gave the Aldine Academy an international quality which even Ficino's much-admired circle could hardly have rivalled. The new medium of printing, besides easing and stimulating learned communication, introduced a new dimension into education, and gave those involved with it a sense of exaltation and responsibility even more intense, perhaps, than that of the Florentine pioneers of the previous century. At its face value, the statute may mean little enough: as a comment on the enthusiasm of the men who drafted it, it means a great deal. Questioned on every other count, the Aldine Academy could fall back on sheer élan to establish its existence.

But we must definitely abandon any notion of the Academy

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Quoted by Firmin-Didot, *op. cit.* p. 279. With an astonishing neglect of the Latin, Firmin-Didot attached the piece to 1505 rather than the year of Aldus' death.

<sup>1</sup>The phrase, and the figures, belong to Brunetti: cf. "L'Accademia Aldina", *ut cit.* p. 421. Cf. also p. 380, n. 1, above.

<sup>2</sup>The most obvious comparison is the sixteenth-century Accademia Venetiana, which possessed some kind of administration, a constitution, and a definite programme of publication. Aldus' son Paulus was its printer. But in spite of its apparently solid base, the institution had a tempestuous history and was closed after heavy embezzlement of its funds. Cf. P. Rose, "The Accademia Venetiana: science and culture in Renaissance Venice", *Studi veneziani*, xi (1969), 191-242.

as an organized body firmly based in Venice, and without which the programme of Aldine publications would have been impossible. Aldus' position in Venice was in fact distinctly precarious, and from 1499 until the end of his life he was busily trying to withdraw from it. True, he owed much in the short term to the background of Venice and Padua : but he was relying on the chance-passage of learned foreigners and the unpredictable enthusiasm of a few very untypical patricians and their clients. His support had breadth, variety, even dedication—but no real depth. The statute of 1502 plainly did not reflect Aldus' ultimate plans for his Academy. When it was drafted, the printing enterprise had already reached its zenith, and within two years it was showing unmistakable signs of internal dissension and financial difficulty. The statute therefore promoted neither activity nor unanimity. The more ambitious plans never materialized. Ultimately, we can base an historical view of the Aldine Academy on nothing more than the enthusiasm of a few individuals in the unflagging pursuit of a dream.