

Barocius, Franciscus | Encyclopedia.com

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also known as **Francesco Barozzi**

(*b.* Candia, Crete, 9 August 1537; *d.* Venice, Italy, 23 November 1604)

mathematics, astronomy.

A Venetian patrician, Barocius received a humanistic education and achieved an admirable command of Greek and Latin. He studied at the University of Padua and, according to his own account, lectured there about 1559 on the *Sphere* of Sacrobosco. Barocius' edition of Proclus' commentary on the first book of Euclid's *Elements* was the first important translation of this work, for it was based on better manuscripts than previous efforts had been. The translation, published at Venice in 1560, was completed by Barocius at the age of twenty-two.

In 1572 he brought out a Latin translation of Hero's book on war machines, and in 1588 he completed his corrections, unpublished to this day, of a manuscript copy of Federicus Commandinus' translation of Pappus' *Collectio*. His translation of the Archimedean *De dimensionibus* also is still in manuscript. Barocius wrote in Italian on *rythmomachia* (1572), a number game that he attributed to Pythagoras but that appears to go back only to eleventh century. The book is based on Boissière's work on the same subject (Paris, 1556). Barocius composed a Latin treatise on thirteen ways to draw two parallel lines in a plane (1572) and an elementary *Cosmographia* (1585), based on the *Sphere* of Sacrobosco and containing chapters on meteorology and physical geography. Barocius noted eighty-four errors in Sacrobosco's work, largely, according to Thorndike, matters of definition and order of treatment. The "errors" did not include the geocentric theory, and a marginal comment condemned as false the opinion of Aristarchus and Copernicus.

Barocius had a stormy career. In 1587 he was brought before the Inquisition on charges of sorcery, and more particularly of having caused a torrential rainstorm in Crete. He was sentenced to provide silver crosses at a cost of 100 ducats and condemned to remain in prison at the pleasure of the Holy Office (apparently a suspended sentence). After the trial the only work that he published was another edition of the *Cosmographia* (1598).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Original Works. Works by Barocius include *Opusculum, in quo oratio, & duas questions: Altera de certitudine & altera de medietate mathematicarum continentur* (Padua, 1560); *Procti Diadochi in primum Euclidis elementorum librum commentariourum libri IIII a Francisco Barocio ...* (Padua, 1560); *Commentarius in locum Platonis obscurissimum, & hactenus a nemine recte expositum in principio dialogi octavi de Rep. ubi sermo habetur de numero geometrico, de quo prouerbiū est, quod numero Platonis nihil obscurius* (Bologna, 1566); *Heronis mechanici liber de machinis bellicis, necnon liber de geodesia a Francisco Barocio... Latinitate donati* (Venice, 1572); *It nobilissimo et antiquissimo givoco Pythagoreo nominato rythmomachia, cioe battaglia di consonanze di numeri, in lingua volgare a modo di parafresi composto* (Venice, 1572); *Cosmographia in quattuor libros distributa* (Venice, 1585, 1598; Italian trans., 1607); *Admirandum illud geometricum problema tredecim modis demonstratum, quod docet duas lineas in eodem plano designare, quae numquam invicem coincidunt, etiam si in infinitum protahantur* (Venice, 1586). His *Descrittione dell'isola di Creta* was edited by Giuseppe Nicoletti (Venice, 1898).

Manuscripts include his corrections of Federicus Commandinus' translation of Pappus' *Collectio* (BN MS Lat 7222¹⁻²) in the Bibliothèque Nationale and two manuscripts at Trinity College in Dublin: *Savorsdae Judaei liber de arcis, infinitis erroribus expugatis atque scholis et annotationibus illustratus* and *Archimedis liber de dimensionibus a Franc. Barocio restauratus*.

II. Secondary literature. Works concerning Barocius are B. Boncompagni, "Intorno alla vita ed ai lavori de Francesco Barozzi," in *Bullettino di bibliographia e di storia delle scienze matematiche e fisiche*, **17** (1884), 795–848; Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, VI ([New York](#), 1941), 25, 47, 154–155, 199; Athanasius Pryor Treweek, "Pappus of Athanasius. The Manuscript Tradition of the *Collectio mathematica*," in *Scriptorium*, **11**, no. 2 (1957), 195–233; Paul Ver Eecke, ed. and trans., *Proclus de Lycie, les commentaires sur le premier livre des Éléments d'Euclide* (Bruges, 1948), pp. xxi ff.; and the entry in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, VI (1964), 495–499.

