

**Title:** The Origins of Organizing in the Sixteenth Century

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**Introduction**

This chapter is concerned with the emergence of a particular way of practicing managerial power; one which is not reducible to formal bureaucracy, such as accounting systems or rules that seek to regulate conduct in minute detail. The chapter deals with the emergence, in the early modern period, and more specifically, in the sixteenth century, of the managers' 'right to manage' and of their 'freedom to make decisions about the use of organizational resources to achieve desired outcomes' (Pollitt, 1993: 3). These traits of modern managerialism, which already underpinned a 'way of organizing' proper of the sixteenth century, have been absent from extant organization studies scholarship. This sixteenth century 'way of organizing' is testament in Venice's central intelligence organization and the emergence and early development of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), both of which developed impressive formal-bureaucratic accounting and accountability practices (described, in the case of the Jesuits, by Quattrone 2004, 2009, 2015 and Bento da Silva et al 2017). Yet, key decisions on the progression and placement of individual Jesuits, as an example, were not reducible to these practices. Rather, they hinged upon administrative principles that furthered not only Pastoral forms of power (Foucault 2009), but also early modern governmental forms of power. Hence, our chapter will outline the developments of what is understood as 'governmental management' (Hoskin 2012).

We will analyse the developments on 'governmental management' (Hoskin 2012) through two historical case studies: a) the Venetian central intelligence organization and b) the Jesuits' administra-

tive principles. Even though both the Venetians and the Jesuits developed a remarkable administrative apparatus, it is not the development of such apparatus that interests us but the principles underpinning it and which bring to the fore a new mentality of management. The Venetians and the Jesuits are remarkable case studies so as to better understand either the development of modern commerce, or the Counter-Reformation movement and its impact in the development of modernity. However, despite their relevance for the sixteenth century economic and cultural developments, the fact that the Venetians and the Jesuits have developed new ways of organising has been under-researched.

This chapter furthers our understanding of the origins of management and organizing in two ways. First, we find origins of organizing in the sixteenth century, a period largely absent from extant work on the history of management. The Venetian and the Jesuit cases will be used as a lens to peer into how a new mentality of organizing emerged in the sixteenth century. We are not claiming that modern managerialism started in Venice or as a result of the Jesuits' organizational innovations. However, we do claim, after our two case studies, that modern managerialism emerged around the sixteenth century and not later, as is usually taken for granted. Second, we discuss Hoskin's (2012, no pagination) proposal of 're-reading Foucault as a theorist of accounting and management as such'. The sixteenth century administrative principles we identified were supported by forms of knowledge acquired through formal-bureaucratic practices and informal networks. Therefore, by looking closer into the micro-practices of organizing and managing which emerged in the sixteenth century we further Foucault's genealogical account of the emergence of modern forms of governmentality.

This chapter consists of three main parts. The first part will position our study within history and its use within organization studies. The second part will reorient the mainstream periodisation of organization history studies and argue for the relevance of the early modern historical context, with a particular focus on the sixteenth century. The third part of the chapter will critically historicise Venice's central intelligence organization and the Jesuits' administrative principles in order to show

how modern managerialism's main traits emerged in the sixteenth century. Our two cases are exemplary of organizational entities of the early modern period: governments and religious orders. The use of a governmental corpus and a religious order as two distinct forms of organizing in the pre-industrial era also questions our assumption that modern managerialism necessarily emerged out of the industrial and commercial enterprise.

### **Uses of history in organization theory**

The different uses of historical methodologies in organization studies have been widely debated (see Kipping and Üsdiken 2014 for a review). Kipping and Üsdiken (2014) divide the use of historical methodologies into two broad categories: 'history *to* theory' and 'history *in* theory'. The former uses history to test organization theory, whereas the latter looks at how the past determines the present behaviour of organizations. Both these approaches tend to look at organization and management history as starting in the nineteenth century and as being essentially a Western endeavour (Kipping and Üsdiken 2014). We challenge these assumptions. This chapter is not about the history of organization theory, but about 'organization theory's history'. Meaning that our aim is not purely to historicise, but to use history so as to advance organizational theory. In that sense, we will not historicise sixteenth century Venetian government and the Jesuits' administrative practices to either test organizational theory or to look at how history is constitutive of the present (Wadhvani and Bucheli 2014). Instead, our analysis will be historically 'cognisant' (Kipping and Üsdiken 2014), putting both the Venetians' and the Jesuits' administrative principles in historical context.

Extant accounts on the origins of organizing and on the 'emergence of organizations and markets' (Padgett and Powell 2012) seem to assume that 'managerialism was only invented when the time was metaphysically right' (Hoskin 1998: 102). The emergence of large organizations, engaging innovative modern managerial practices, is typically seen as a phenomenon of the nineteenth century. Weber (2001 [1930]: 29-30) describes how, in the early nineteenth century, the 'traditionalistic'

marketing practices that underpinned the ‘putting-out’ system in the UK changed, leading to an all-pervasive change in the textile industry. Chandler (1965) describes managerial innovations in the railroads from the mid-1800s, driven by the financial size of the enterprise and problems associated with territorial expansion; controlling assets and ‘men to whom [managers] rarely talked to or even ever saw’ (Chandler 1965: 19). Hoskin and Macve (1988), describing the ‘West Point connection’, outline a system of ‘complete accountability’ (Chandler 1977: 74) at the Springfield armoury by 1815. Without further labouring the point, it is almost axiomatic – for organization studies and sociology - that the emergence of large organizations deploying non-traditionalistic management practices is inexorably bound to modernity, as it gathered pace and took shape in the post-industrial era. Organizations both responded to and reflected modernity; or, put more authoritatively, ‘modernity could only be accomplished by organizations’ (Clegg 1990: 25).

Concomitant with the historical development of organizations and organizing described by business historians, a history of organization theory also emerged. Unsurprisingly, the history of organization theory has been trapped within the same periodisation of modernity as business history: Taylor, Follet, Fayol, Gulick and Barnard are systematically presented as the forefathers of organization theory. Others, like Adam Smith and Karl Marx, have been considered to be part of a ‘prehistory of organization theory’ (Hatch and Cunliffe 2006: 27). This periodisation of organization theory is coherent with the mainstream view of how organizations and markets might have emerged (Padgett and Powell 2012). Perrow (2002) provides a brief account of a well-known history of the emergence of organizing: ‘The nineteenth century opened with an overwhelming agricultural base, and with local communities as the organizing principle. Gradually, industry supplanted agriculture, and markets, networks, and then hierarchies supplanted the communal organizing principle. Before we can understand the novelty of hierarchy, that is, large-scale industry ... we should briefly examine the economic and social changes that made [it] possible.’ (Perrow 2002: 22).

### **The relevance of the sixteenth century**

The secularisation of the Pastorate and its transposition into governmental forms of power (Foucault 2009) is particularly interesting insofar as ‘governmentality’, when defined as the ‘conduct of conduct’, seems to speak not only to economics and State politics, but to management and accounting. Also, as McKinlay *et al.* put it, Foucault’s governmentality is about the ‘ways governing is conceptualized’ (2012: 9). As Foucault asserted, governmentality ‘has population as its main target’ (Foucault 2009: 108). However, in this chapter we will not be concerned with the relevance of the Pastorate and governmentality to either the secularisation (Dean 2013) or the ‘Governmentality Studies’ debates (see McKinlay 2010). Instead, we will discuss how ‘distance’ and ‘population’ (here understood as geographically dispersed organizational members) underpinned the conceptualisation of ‘governmental management’ within the administration of both the Venetians and the Jesuits. These cases will show how Foucault’s ‘governmental management’ took shape in the sixteenth century as a set of practices and administrative principles. These administrative principles allowed the development of a fully organized ‘*corpus*’ in which ‘the right to manage’ a population parallels the right to manage each individual: ‘managing the population does not mean just managing the collective mass of phenomena or managing them simply at the level of their overall results; managing the population means managing it in depth, in all its fine points and details’ (Foucault 2009: 107). ‘Governmental management’ is therefore an administrative principle in its own right that has been systematically overlooked by extant organization theory scholarship. In the next sections, we will expand on this through the analysis of the Venetian Central Intelligence Organization and the Jesuits’ administrative apparatus.

### **The Council of Ten and Venice’s Central Intelligence Organization**

The Council of Ten was the exclusive committee responsible for state security in early modern Venice (Finlay, 1980). Established in 1310, initially it oversaw the protection of the government from overthrow or corruption. By the mid-fifteenth century the Ten’s powers had extended to such

a degree that they encompassed Venice's diplomatic and intelligence operations, military affairs, and other legal matters of state security. By the early sixteenth century the Ten assumed almost complete power over the government, and were in control of secret affairs, public order, domestic and foreign policy, as well the security, not only of the city of Venice itself (Finlay, 1980), but of the entire Venetian Republic, that spanned vast parts of northern Italy, the Balkan Peninsula and the islands of the Levant (Lane, 1973). The Ten were actually made up of seventeen men, including the ten ordinary members, six ducal councillors, and Venice's Doge – the city's ceremonial prince. They were headed by three men, called the *Capi* (the heads of the Ten), who took monthly turns at managing the council's operations.

While the Council of Ten is primarily known in historiography as the repressive government body that evoked fear and veneration due to its stringent authoritarian disposition (Finlay, 1980), one aspect of their operations that has been overlooked by scholars is their spearheading of one of the world's earliest centrally administered state intelligence organizations (Iordanou, 2016). This was housed in one of the most impressive intelligence headquarters of the early modern (and admittedly, even the modern) world, the Ducal Palace, overlooking the Venetian lagoon in Saint Mark's Square. Its organizational structure comprised several departments, including operations, science and technology, and analysis, among others (Iordanou, 2016). This service was also supported by several other state departments, including the Senate, the *Colleggio* (an executive branch of the government), the office of state attorneys (*Avogaria di Comun*), and the Inquisitors of the State (*Inquisitori di Stato*), a special counter-intelligence magistracy directly reporting to the Ten (Romanin, 1858). The Ten were responsible for informing these departments on issues relevant to domestic and foreign security by means of formal reports. The information flow between the different councils, however, was regulated by internal censorship – what in organization studies we would call 'organizational secrecy' (Costas and Grey, 2014), as the Ten were selective about what they shared with their governmental counterparts. This caused the proliferation of paperwork and is emblematic

ic, not only of bureaucratic expansion, but of internal tensions and polarities amongst the governmental departments (De Vivo, 2013).

Overall, the Ten were responsible for the central administration of intelligence gathering and espionage in sixteenth century Venice. For this reason, they created and oversaw a composite network of informers and spies, which included professional informers – the formally appointed diplomats who were stationed in various territories around Europe and the Levant (including Spain, France, England, Rome, Constantinople, and several of the major Greek islands), where Venice had formal diplomatic representation or commercial presence; and casually salaried employees, like travelling merchants and amateur intelligencers, who were shipped to any area that intelligence operations were underway, especially the Ottoman Empire, Venice's perennial enemy. The Ten also organized and oversaw the professional training and development of in-house personnel stationed in the Ducal Palace, such as state secretaries, archivists, personal assistants to diplomats, as well as the famed Venetian cryptographers and cryptanalysts (Iordanou, 2016). Unlike the Jesuits' predominately decentralised managerial practices, the Ten's intelligence service was characterised by high degrees of centralisation. Its organization, including the management of in-house and expatriate personnel, was contingent upon two interdependent processes: epistolarity and archiving. The former was linked to communication; the latter to secrecy.

Epistolarity, the writing and exchange of letters, was a prevalent means of communication in the pre-industrial era (see Schneider, 2005; Bethencourt and Egmond, 2007). In the early modern period, for instance, that saw the consolidation of trade practices, letter writing and exchange was the main tool of communication between merchants, their agents, and their clients (see, Lane, 1944; Tucci, 1957, Origo, 1992). The communication of the Ten with their formally appointed underlings was conducted exclusively through letters. More often than not, the same letter would be sent to several appointed staff across the Venetian dominion, in order to keep everyone informed of the same issue. In November 1597, for instance, the Ten sent a letter to the formal Venetian envoy in Milan, instructing him to locate a certain monk that was believed to be in that city. The monk was

wanted because he had published a controversial book that questioned the authority of rulers. Upon finding him, the envoy was ordered to interrogate him regarding his reasons for being in the city, whom he associated with, and what his future plans were. In case the monk had left Milan, missives were also dispatched to the governors of surrounding Venetian cities, such as Brescia and Bergamo, with clear instructions to kill him, after they had verified his identity. The envoy was also expected to send letters with the same orders to the governors of those cities. The recommended assassination method was strangling or any other ‘secret’ way that would not leave a trace. It goes without saying that all underlings involved were ordered to keep the affair strictly confidential and to report on the ensuing progress in writing<sup>1</sup>.

To maintain secrecy, a large corpus of letters exchanged between the Venetian intelligence headquarters and the Venetian envoys was produced in cipher. The Ten’s systematic organization of clandestine communication was so meticulous that they even ordered and regulated the creation and use of two distinct ciphers: the ‘grand cipher’ (*zifra grande*) that was reserved for the communication between the Ten and formal high-level dignitaries such as ambassadors; and the small cipher (*zifra piccola*), that was allocated to lesser representatives, such as the consuls, governors and the Supreme Commander of the Sea<sup>2</sup>, who usually distributed the small cipher to the various Venetian dignitaries in the Mediterranean<sup>3</sup>. This did not always go according to plan. In June of 1591 for instance, the governor of Zante wrote to the Heads of the Ten twice, lamenting that the cipher key he had been sent was wrong and therefore he could not decipher the encrypted letters he received from the Ten. In consequence, he had to rely on the secretaries of other neighbouring dignitaries for this purpose, for example that of the Supreme Commander of the Sea, who happened to be around at the

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<sup>1</sup> Archivio di Stato di Venezia (Hereafter ASV), Consiglio dei Dieci (Hereafter CX), *Deliberazioni Segrete*, Registro. 14, cc. 22v. - 24 v. (13, 23-24 November 1597).

<sup>2</sup> ASV, CX, *Deliberazioni Segrete*, Registro. 14, cc. 126r.- 127r. (31 Aug. 1605).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, ASV, Capi del Consiglio di Dieci (CCX), *Lettere dei Rettori e di altre Cariche*, busta 291, fol. 106 (12 February 1527).



time when most needed<sup>4</sup>. At times, indeed, the sent ciphers did not match, as happened to another governor of Zante in 1605, when he wrote to the Ten to inform them that the cipher that had been granted to him was different to the one granted to the governor of the Venetian island of Cerigo (the modern day island of Kythira) and this hindered the smooth communication between the Venetian territories in the Mediterranean.<sup>5</sup>

Managing the information flow between the different actors was not an easy task. Still, the Council of Ten pioneered a complex system of information management through the systematic collection and archiving of letters, reports and other sensitive records. This system was the *Cancellaria Secreta* (Secret Chancery), Venice's secret archive. The Secret Chancery was established in 1402 with the purpose of becoming the repository for the secret (what nowadays would be termed 'classified') documents pertaining to the Venetian Republic's domestic and foreign security (De Vivo, 2010; 2013). By the 1460's the *Secreta* was entirely controlled by the Council of Ten and it became the mainstay of their intelligence organization (Trebbi, 1980, pp. 79-81).

To operate effectively, the *Secreta* was staffed by about one hundred professional state servants who were responsible for transcribing, indexing and archiving all documents pertaining to state security. These were primarily conciliar records and letters from foreign diplomats. Having gone through formal training and rigorous examinations, the secretaries were expected to transcribe the archival records into leather-bound parchment registers, complete with indexes, in order to bolster their endurance and their preservation for posterity (De Vivo, 2010; 2013). Due to the nature of their activities, the working culture in the *Secreta* was enmeshed in strict scrutiny and secrecy. Any civil servant who attempted to delegate work to unauthorised staff was liable to legal sanctions (De Vivo, 2013, p. 480). Access to the archive was restricted only to authorised individuals, and a notary was responsible for producing a list of approved readers and the documents they accessed. In

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<sup>4</sup> ASV, CCX, *Lettere dei Rettori e di altre Cariche*, b. 296, folios 101, 103 (23 and 26 June 1591).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 130 (28 May 1605)

practice, however, admission controls were lax and leaks and disclosures were inevitable (De Vivo, 2007, pp. 49-51; De Vivo, 2013, p. 477).

Following the bureaucratic growth of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the systematic organization of the *Secreta* became emblematic of good government and good governance (Cecchetti, 1865, p. 21). This was achieved in two distinct ways: organizational secrecy and institutionally controlled historicization. Organizational secrecy has been defined as ‘the ongoing formal and informal social processes of intentional concealment of information from actors by actors in organizations’ (Costas & Grey, 2014, p. 1423). The Ten, as the organizational elites of the *Secreta*, were obsessed with secrecy in the workplace, not only because the sensitive nature of work dictated it, but because to them it epitomised harmony and concord (De Vivo, 2007, p. 43). As a result, the *Secreta* secretaries were strictly instructed to keep no record of conciliar debates and censor any instances of dissent in the final transcript of committee deliberations. The purpose for the censorship was to conceal from posterity any trace of internal conflict in order to preserve the halcyon image of communal serenity triumphing over private interests and discrepancies that conferred to Venice the title ‘*La Serenissima*’, the most serene of states (De Vivo, 2013, p. 474).

The secrecy that permeated the organizational culture of the *Secreta* did not only pertain to the preservation of the state’s most sensitive records. Importantly, it served the purpose of creating a desired future image of the past, what Gioia et al. (2000, p. 66) termed ‘projected image’, emanating from those records. As such, the archival records were intended for institutionally controlled historicization. This was officially sanctioned in 1601 when the post of the supervisor (*soprintendente*) of the *Secreta* was assigned to the official historian of the Venetian Republic<sup>6</sup>. This appointment marked the first instance in the Venetian state’s history that a historian was placed in charge of a governmental organization (De Vivo, 2010, p. 243). In consequence, the superintendent

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<sup>6</sup> ASV, CX, Deliberazioni Secrete, Registro 14, cc. 74r.-75r. (17 Sept 1601).

of the state's secrets became the custodian of the records that could provide the narrative for the construction of the government's (in our case, the organization's) historical image.

### **The Jesuits' 'way of organizing'**

The Jesuits were aware of Venice's bureaucratic apparatus. Ignatius of Loyola, the Jesuits' founder, lived in Venice between 1537 and 1539, a period in which he was deciding on the organizational features of the Jesuit organization (García Hernán 2013). Furthermore, before Ignatius thought of founding the Jesuits, he had also worked for the Spanish Empire State bureaucracy, as an accountant, and had been a military man himself. Under the command of the Duke of Nájera, famous for his military and administrative skills and for having one of the biggest networks of spies of the time (García Hernán 2013), Ignatius most probably become familiarised with the administration of large scale organizations and networks. Such knowledge was transposed by Ignatius into a set of administrative principles that, we argue, put the Jesuits at the cornerstone of the emergence of modern managerialism.

The Jesuits' innovative managerial practices emerged into history as concrete social facts prior to (or at the very edges of) modernity. We propose that a specific 'way of organizing', which features all the main tenets of modern managerialism, was invented in the sixteenth century by the Jesuits as a development of practices which already existed, like the ones we described earlier when discussing the Venetian case. However, just as it happened with accounting systems, this 'way of organizing' only took hold in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries with the 'social development of a discourse of accountancy' (Hoskin and Macve 1986: 106) and with the attempt to institutionalise and professionalise management (Khurana 2007).

The Jesuits have previously been identified as an important early modern global organization by Quattrone (2004, 2009), who describes sophisticated and totalising accounting practices that meas-

ure the movements of material, money and the human soul. Furthermore, Bento da Silva *et al.* (2017) have described the emergence and institutionalisation of unaccountable managerial power within the Jesuits. However, extant literature did not address two administrative principles devised by Ignatius of Loyola and made visible in the practices the Jesuits' Constitutions put forward. These administrative principles are the need to preserve organizational unity and the continuous attempt to balance centralised administration of the '*corpus*' with local adaptation of geographically dispersed members and organizational units. These administrative principles, and the practices they underpin, are presented as Ignatius of Loyola's managerial innovation, with no obvious historical comparison. The 'way of organizing' the Jesuits put in place was a spiritual-managerial apparatus that, along with the accounting and spiritual measures (Quattrone 2004, 2009, 2015; Bento da Silva *et al.* 2017), enabled the Jesuits to cope with organizational problems of control arising from global expansion (Quattrone 2004), whilst exemplifying a new mentality of governmental management. So as to achieve organizational unity and manage a geographically dispersed population of individuals, the Jesuits, just like the Venetians, deployed, first and foremost, highly developed and centralised letter exchange processes. We expand on this point below.

Ignatius used correspondence and information gathering not only as a government mechanism, but also as a means to ensure unity of the *corpus*, as the title of the eighth part of the Constitutions clearly states<sup>7</sup>: 'Helps toward uniting the dispersed members with their head and among themselves'. In the Jesuit Constitutions, paragraph 673, the main objective of letter writing is clearly stated: 'Another very special help [for the union of members] will be communication by letter between subjects and superiors, and their learning frequently about one another and hearing the news and reports which come from the various regions' (§673). Later on in the same constitutional text, paragraph 676 puts the 'fuller knowledge of everyone' (§676) as fundamental for the better gov-

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<sup>7</sup> We will use the following edition of the Jesuit Constitutions: Loyola, I. (1996). *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus - and their complementary norms*. Saint Louis, The Institute of Jesuit Sources.

ernment of the Jesuits: 'For in this way it will be possible to have more information about the persons and to govern the whole body of the Society better' (§676).

Paragraphs §673 and §676 also detailed the main obligations related to the use of correspondence, mainly their periodical nature and the main issues always to be included. First, the Provincials (regional managers) ought to write regularly to the General (global manager) about details related to the individual Jesuits and to the various missions (business units) under their responsibility. Also, the Provincial had to prepare, annually, a catalogue containing biographical details of every Jesuit he manages. Then, every three years, the Provincial was supposed to prepare a more detailed catalogue about every Jesuit in his Province (mission and aptitudes of the Jesuit were to be part of this catalogue). Lastly, the Provincial ought to write about all those that might be, one day, elected as Superiors, and also about the progression of those who were to be ordained priests and reach the Profession, the highest rank within the Jesuit order. These letters were known as *informationes ad gradum*.

There were three main types of letters sent to the General, all of which with different purposes serving the government of the Jesuits: the *litterae quadrimestres/semestres/annuae*, the *litterae ex officio* and the catalogues. The *quadrimestrales* letters (§675) were to be sent every four months, both to the Provincial and the General. The content of these letters was intended to foster edification and comfort to those who read them (§673). According to the Constitutions (§276, §280), the edification of other members meant everything that could contribute to the spiritual growth of the person. However, they were also useful for the government of the Jesuit order. These letters were to be sent in January, May and September. After being read and corrected by the General's secretary, the letters were circulated through all the Jesuit order. In 1564, General Lainez decreed that these letters should be sent only twice a year, so they were hereafter referred as *semestrales*. It was later determined that these letters should be annual and that they should contain biographical notes on deceased members.

The *Litterae ex officio* were to be written by the local Superiors to the Provincial every week<sup>8</sup>. The same rule applied to the Provincial, who should write weekly to the General. The General was also expected to write monthly to the Provincial, and the latter to all the Superiors and the individual members whenever possible (§647, §790). These letters were vital for Ignatius, and the early government of the Jesuits, who often gave detailed directions on those sent on missions, on what they should do and how to behave. General Lainez, in 1564<sup>9</sup>, reduced the number of letters, given the increasing number of Jesuits. These letters contained information on the regular visits of the Provincial to the different houses, official documents such as contracts, accounting issues and so forth. These were, therefore, important letters for administrative issues concerning the daily operations of the Jesuit order. In 1580, General Mercuriano sent an instruction to the Jesuits, entitled *Formula Scribendi*. The *Formula Scribendi* established norms on how to write letters according to the Constitutions (§629, §673-§676) and had three parts dealing with: the letters of the Superiors; the annual letters; with the catalogues and annual information.

The third type of written information sent to the General were the Catalogues. The Constitutions (§676) stipulated that information concerning the members of the Jesuits must circulate. Every four months, a list containing every Jesuit and the house he was attached to, was sent to Rome to form the Catalogues. In 1573, General Mercuriano introduced changes to the Catalogues. There used to be three types of Catalogues. The first one, to be sent every three years, had information on the name, date and place of birth, date of entry into the Society of Jesus, academic qualifications and information on which vows the member had attained. The second, also to be sent every three years, had information on the physical and moral qualities of each member, his character, his talents and his aptitude for the Jesuit ministries. The third contained the list of the members of each house with a simple description of their role in the house and the assigned ministries.

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<sup>8</sup> See O'Neill, C. E. and J. M. Domínguez (2001). *Diccionario Histórico de La Compañía de Jesús*. Roma/Madrid: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu/Universidad Pontificia Comillas. Hereafter referred to as DHCJ

<sup>9</sup> See idem

Any Jesuit could and should write to his Superiors whenever he deemed it necessary, providing information about anything he considered to be relevant. In case the Jesuit would prefer that his letter would be read only by the General, then he would write in the envelope the Latin word “*Soli*” (meaning that only the General could open the letter) and seal the letter (Friedrich 2007).

### **The origins of organizing**

The two cases we described above present several similarities. The most obvious one is the detail associated with letter writing and exchange in early modern bureaucratic forms. Early modern bureaucracy already featured in centralised administration, supporting offices and departments, high degrees of formalisation, written processes and well defined flows of information. This is visible in both cases of the Venetian intelligence organization and the Jesuits (for a fuller discussion of bureaucratisation in the Jesuit order see, *inter alia*, Quattrone 2004 and Friedrich 2007).

The Jesuit order, in particular, incorporated several practices and features to which Ignatius of Loyola had been exposed prior to founding the Jesuits in 1540. In this sense, we stand close to Hoskin and Macve’s (1988) search for ‘connections’. Extant historical research has established Ignatius’ knowledge about letter exchange processes, information gathering mechanisms (including the use of spies), networks of merchants, accounting, archiving and the importance of, among other considerations, the function of the secretary in early modern state bureaucracies (see, *inter alia*, Schurhammer 1943, Friedrich 2007, 2009, Garcia Hernán 2013). Historical scholarship has also uncovered the formalisation of such practices on the part of the Venetians, already from the fifteenth century (see, for example, Cecchetti, 1865; Trebbi, 1980; De Vivo, 2010; 2013; Iordanou, 2016; 2018). However, we argue that what is interesting in both cases is not their similarities but the apparent shift towards the development, in the context of the sixteenth century, of a novel way of organizing.

The Venetian central intelligence organization already emphasised the development of a composite network, in which information – primarily exchanged through letters – was treated in light of the

overarching objective of security, serenity, and concord. Venice purposively projected an image of itself (Gioia et al., 2000) and used the development of the state archive as means towards such an end. Just like the Venetians, the Jesuits also developed centralised archives as a repository of the extraordinary amount of letters that matched the exponential growth of the Jesuit order.

However, letter exchange in the Jesuits had implications far beyond information gathering and control at a distance; it was mainly about describing their achievements so as to edify the '*corpus*' and foster organizational unity in a context of global geographical dispersion (Friedrich 2008). Whereas in the case of the Venetian central intelligence organization geographical dispersion was not a major issue – if anything, it was 'business as usual' for a maritime empire like Venice, for the Jesuits it was 'all about' geographical dispersion. Distance and the awareness that most of the Jesuit 'population' would be geographically dispersed were decisive in the design of the Jesuits' governance mechanisms.

For the Jesuits, control at a distance was not reduced to a principal-agent relation. Instead, the Jesuits were committed to a large scale moral project (Anteby 2013) which relied heavily on the routinisation of morals. The expected behaviour of a Jesuit who was placed far from the organization's centre in Rome was not controlled via letter exchange. Other routines, like the visitation (Mutch 2016) were set in place. However, it was the building of one common moral purpose, the sharing of one mission, and the construction of a unified '*corpus*' which underpinned the government practices devised by Ignatius of Loyola.

The Jesuits developed power mechanisms which were beyond Pastoral power and beyond the principle-agent ones implied by other networks' letter exchange practices, including the Venetian central organization. Moreover, even though letter writing was clearly formalised in the Jesuit order, it is the emphasis on knowing more about the individual so as to better govern the entire '*corpus*' that is relevant for understandings the origins of organizing. The focus of managerial intervention was clearly on the 'conduct of conduct' of each Jesuit. Other early modern '*corpi*', such as those es-



pousing the Renaissance Humanism<sup>10</sup> or the Reformation, used letters (see, *inter alia*, Constable 1976, Najemy 1993, Vaillancourt 2003, Schneider 2005). The humanists' letters were already full of epistolary friendship. As for the Reformers, like Calvin and Luther, letters were used to ask for advice, consult on moral cases, on how to elect ministers, on how to establish churches, on how to reform universities, among other functions (Greengrass 2013). The number of letters produced by the humanists and the Reformers is as impressive as the one produced by Ignatius of Loyola. However, whereas the Humanist and Reform movements had no evident and centralised leadership, the Jesuits relied on several mechanisms for achieving unity of doctrine, like correspondence, centralised decision making, leadership and extensive teaching and training (Friedrich 2009). All of these mechanisms were in place with the main objective of shaping a specific way of behaving, which the Jesuits termed 'way of proceeding' (in the original, '*modo de proceder*'). Such a 'way of proceeding' went beyond assigning numbers to people, the establishment of numerical organizational targets and the practices for achieving control underpinning principal-agent relationships.

Furthermore, the shaping of the Jesuit subject was also an organizational issue: the 'way of proceeding' was an individual and organizational trait, in which extensive training and direction of conscience targeted the individual 'way of proceeding', whereas organizational practices, like letter exchange, were part of the *corpus*' 'way of proceeding'. In this regard, the move from letter exchange practices for control at a distance – as in the case of the Venetian Council of Ten, into epistolary communities (as for the Renaissance Humanists and the Reformers) and ultimately into a means towards the unification of a '*corpus*', enlightens our understanding of how a specific way of exercising managerial power came to be in the sixteenth century.

In this sense, we argue, the origins of organizing can be theorised in terms of 'governmental management' (Foucault 2009). Both cases of the Venetian central intelligence organization and the Jesuits bring to the surface the administrative principles that informed 'governmental management' in

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<sup>10</sup> Hereafter referred to as Humanism.

the sixteenth century, and represent a contribution for our understanding of how the early modern government and the pastorate transformed themselves into modern governmental management as described by Foucault (2009). Particularly with regard to the pastorate, Foucault argues there is a close relationship between pastoral and later forms of state or governmental power. At different points, the pastorate is described as the *a priori* of modern government (see Foucault 1979; 1982; 2009). The state gradually incorporates and refashions the individualising technologies of pastoral power within a new project, underpinned by a distinctive rationality (Blake 1999: 82-90). This raises a series of questions, one of which is how pastoral power gives way to this new individualising power, the ‘new pastoral power’ (Foucault 1982: 783-4). Foucault himself was wary of tackling this question, stating that he ‘obviously [had] no intention whatsoever of recounting the evolution of pastoral power throughout Christianity’ (Foucault 1979).

The present chapter attempts no such feat. Its more modest aim is to sketch how early modern governmental and, more pertinently, pastoral power was supplemented through innovations introduced into some practices that secured a largely unaccountable form of managerial power. These innovations represent precisely the kind of bridge Foucault alluded to, but never actually located, between the ecclesiastical pastorate and its modern bureaucratic-organizational counterpart. Seen from this light, both the Venetians’ and the Jesuits’ innovative ‘way of organizing’ sheds light on the origins of organizing that can be traced back to the sixteenth century, long before conventional wisdom dictates. The ‘way of organizing’ in both our cases was not restricted to the deployment of accounting related technologies (Quattrone 2004, 2009); it was devised so as to guarantee that the Ten and the Superior (the equivalent to what modern managerialism classifies as the ‘line manager’) would be able to better allocate human resources for the purpose of the overall mission. This means that managing in the sixteenth century was discretionary and placed emphasis primarily on the manager. This is enlightening, as it defines management as ‘the conduct of the individual’s conduct’ in face of the organization’s goals, and hierarchy as a means of assuring the manager knows what he needs to know so as to better manage.



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