

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910788909303321
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Titolo	The Roman Inquisition on the Stage of Italy, c. 1590-1640 // Thomas F. Mayer
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Philadelphia : , : University of Pennsylvania Press, , [2013] ©2014
ISBN	0-8122-0934-6
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (368 p.)
Collana	Haney Foundation Series
Disciplina	272/.209032
Soggetti	Trials (Heresy) - Italy - History - 17th century Trials (Heresy) - Italy - History - 16th century Inquisition - Italy - History - 17th century Inquisition - Italy - History - 16th century Italy Church history 17th century Italy Church history 16th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Introduction -- Chapter 1. Spain and Naples -- Chapter 2. Naples: Tommaso Campanella -- Chapter 3. Venice in the Wake of the Interdict -- Chapter 4. Venice: Giordano Bruno, Cesare Cremonini, and Marcantonio De Dominis -- Chapter 5. Florence I -- Chapter 6. Florence II -- Conclusion -- Notes -- List of Abbreviations -- Selected Bibliography -- Index -- Acknowledgments
Sommario/riassunto	From the moment of its founding in 1542, the Roman Inquisition acted as a political machine. Although inquisitors in earlier centuries had operated somewhat independently of papal authority, the gradual bureaucratization of the Roman Inquisition permitted the popes increasing license to establish and exercise direct control over local tribunals, though with varying degrees of success. In particular, Pope Urban VIII's aggressive drive to establish papal control through the agency of the Inquisition played out differently among the Italian states, whose local inquisitions varied in number and secular power. Rome's efforts to bring the Venetians to heel largely failed in spite of the interdict of 1606, and Venice maintained lay control of most

religious matters. Although Florence and Naples resisted papal intrusions into their jurisdictions, on the other hand, they were eventually brought to answer directly to Rome—due in no small part to Urban VIII's subversions of the law. Thomas F. Mayer provides a richly detailed account of the ways the Roman Inquisition operated to serve the papacy's long-standing political aims in Naples, Venice, and Florence. Drawing on the Inquisition's own records, diplomatic correspondence, local documents, newsletters, and other sources, Mayer sheds new light on papal interdicts and high-profile court cases that signaled significant shifts in inquisitorial authority for each Italian state. Alongside his earlier volume, *The Roman Inquisition: A Papal Bureaucracy and Its Laws in the Age of Galileo*, this masterful study extends and develops our understanding of the Inquisition as a political and legal institution.
