

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910962152003321
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Titolo	The philosopher, the priest, and the painter : a portrait of Descartes // Steven Nadler
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Princeton, N.J., : Princeton University Press, 2013
ISBN	9781299443471 1299443478 9781400847594 1400847591
Edizione	[Course Book]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (255 p.)
Disciplina	194 B
Soggetti	Philosophy, Modern Philosophers - France Europe Intellectual life 17th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Illustrations -- Acknowledgments -- Chapter 1. Prologue: A Tale of Two Paintings -- Chapter 2. The Philosopher -- Chapter 3. The Priest -- Chapter 4. The Painter -- Chapter 5. "Once in a Lifetime" -- Chapter 6. A New Philosophy -- Chapter 7. God in Haarlem -- Chapter 8. The Portrait -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	In the Louvre museum hangs a portrait that is considered the iconic image of René Descartes, the great seventeenth-century French philosopher. And the painter of the work? The Dutch master Frans Hals--or so it was long believed, until the work was downgraded to a copy of an original. But where is the authentic version, and who painted it? Is the man in the painting--and in its original--really Descartes? A unique combination of philosophy, biography, and art history, The Philosopher, the Priest, and the Painter investigates the remarkable individuals and circumstances behind a small portrait. Through this image--and the intersecting lives of a brilliant philosopher, a Catholic priest, and a gifted painter--Steven Nadler opens a fascinating portal

into Descartes's life and times, skillfully presenting an accessible introduction to Descartes's philosophical and scientific ideas, and an illuminating tour of the volatile political and religious environment of the Dutch Golden Age. As Nadler shows, Descartes's innovative ideas about the world, about human nature and knowledge, and about philosophy itself, stirred great controversy. Philosophical and theological critics vigorously opposed his views, and civil and ecclesiastic authorities condemned his writings. Nevertheless, Descartes's thought came to dominate the philosophical world of the period, and can rightly be called the philosophy of the seventeenth century. Shedding light on a well-known image, *The Philosopher, the Priest, and the Painter* offers an engaging exploration of a celebrated philosopher's world and work.

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