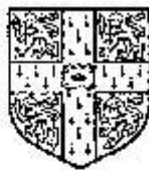


UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
FACULTY OF HISTORY



POLITICAL THOUGHT AND INTELLECTUAL HISTORY  
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Series 1

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Old Combination Room, Trinity College

A Protestant Bookseller in Counter-Reformation Rome:  
Science, Censorship, Commerce

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## The author

Daniel Stolzenberg is an historian of science and scholarship in early modern Europe. His recent publications include *Egyptian Oedipus: Athanasius Kircher and the Secrets of Antiquity* (Chicago, 2013) and “John Spencer and the Perils of Sacred Philology” (*Past & Present*, 2012). Among his ongoing research projects are a study of orientalist scholarship in early modern Rome and a comparison of Jesuit and Anglican attempts to preserve sacred history in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. He teaches at the University of California, Davis, where he is Associate Professor of History.

## The paper

In 1660 Elizeus Weyerstraten, agent of the famous publisher Johannes Janssonius of Amsterdam, arrived at the gates of Rome on a sales trip. At the customs house his massive shipment of books was confiscated and delivered to the Holy Office, setting in motion the gears of bureaucratic censorship. Based on a unique trove of previously unstudied archival records, this paper examines the Dutch booksellers’ encounter with Catholic censorship, focusing on two scientific works that garnered particular interest: the famous *Celestial Atlas* of Cellarius, which depicted the Copernican theory, and the *Atlas Minor* of Gerard Mercator, popular for its maps, but problematic for its ethnographic content, including accounts of Protestant and Catholic religious practices. The episode demonstrates the strong ties that continued to connect Italian and northern European scholarship in the decades after Galileo’s condemnation, and reveals the existence of a surprisingly friendly, even collaborative relationship between Protestant booksellers and Roman inquisitors.

## Further Reading

Primary:

Gerard Mercator, Atlas minor (Amsterdam, 1634)

Andreas Cellarius, Harmonia macrocosmica, seu atlas universalis et novus: totius universi creati cosmographiam generalem, et novam exhibens (Amsterdam, 1661)

Catalogus variorum et insignium in quavis facultate, materia et lingua librorum officinae Jodoci Janssonii (Amsterdam, 1656)

Index librorum prohibitorum Alexandri VII (Rome, 1664)

Secondary:

Ugo Baldini and Leen Spruit, eds., *Catholic Church and Modern Science: Documents from the Archives of the Roman Congregations of the Holy Office and the Index*, Volume 1: *Sixteenth-Century Documents*, Tomes 1-4, (Rome, 2009).

Marco Cavarzere, *La prassi della censura nell'Italia del seicento tra repressione e mediazione* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2011).

Maria Pia Donato, and Jill Kraye, eds., *Conflicting Duties: Science, Medicine and Religion in Rome 1550-1750: Warburg Institute Colloquia 15* (London: The Warburg Institute, 2009).

Gigliola Fragnito, ed., *Church, Censorship and Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge, 2001).

Elisa Rebellato, *La fabbrica dei divieti: Gli indici dei libri proibiti da Clemente VIII a Benedetto XIV* (Milan: Edizioni Sylvestre Bonnard, 2008).