CAMPANELLA IN NEAPOLITAN
AND ROMAN CASTLES:
SEVEN NEW DOCUMENTS

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Summary

After the publication of the reprint of Amabile’s monumental works on Campanella in 2006, seven new Inquisition decrees on the seventeenth-century proceedings have been discovered, which are here introduced and reproduced. They regard Campanella’s insistent requests for a more comfortable cell in 1607, the assessment by Roman censors of some of his works in 1621, and the reports by nuncios and local inquisitors about the spread of his works in the 1620s and 1630s.

It cannot be repeated often enough that Luigi Amabile’s monumental volumes published in 1882 and 1887 mark a crucial stage in the biography of Tommaso Campanella. Also Firpo’s I primi processi campanelliani in una ricostruzione unitaria (1939), based on the hundred decrees of the Roman Holy Office published in 1927 by Enrico Carusi, represents still today an indispensable point of reference for historical studies on the Calabrian monk. Then, in the late 1940s, thanks to the intervention of Cardinal Giovanni Mercati, Firpo was allowed to carry out research in the Archive of the Holy Office, and acquired a new documentation, consisting of twenty-three Inquisition decrees. Finally, the opening of the Archive of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith lead to several dozen of new documents, published in the reprint of Amabile’s magnum opus in 2006.

In the light of the new documentation certain events and issues assume particular importance, namely: (1) the attempted escape from the episcopal prison in Padua in July 1594; (2) Campanella’s attempts to evade the surveillance of his superiors in 1598; (3) the date of his abjuration in 1595; (4) the events of the summer of 1606; (5) the censorship and imprimatur of Atheis-

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mus triumphatus; (6) the latest moves by Dionisio Ponzio, his accomplice in the 1599 conspiracy in Calabria.¹

After the publication of the reprint of Amabile’s books, seven new Inquisition decrees on the seventeenth-century proceedings have been discovered, which are now published in the appendix. In the late 1590s, Tommaso Campanella threw himself into the plot against the Spanish dominion in Southern Italy. When the conspiracy had gathered hundreds of partisans and the support of the Turkish navy, two informers betrayed it to the Spanish authorities, which reacted with rapid repression.² Campanella was arrested on 6 September 1599 and, recognized as one of the main leaders of the revolt, he was charged of lese-majesty and heresy. Hence, his case appeared as a rather desperate one even from the very start. Only the conflicts between ecclesiastical and lay tribunals, as well as the hope to press him to detailed revelations and lists of accomplices initially saved his life. When on 7 February 1600 he was submitted to torture, Campanella confessed most of the charges he was accused of, appearing unable to resist the torments. After a short while, however, at the beginning of April, he began to act the part of a madman. Tortured again on 18 May, he did not betray himself and, for more than a year, he maintained the fiction that eventually would save his life.³

When, on 4 and 5 June 1601, Campanella succeeded in getting over the terrible torture of the veglia, his judges let him sign the formal act which declared him legally mad.⁴ Escaped from the scaffold, he lived several months between life and death, and was finally confined to strict surveillance in the underground jail of the Castel Nuovo in Naples, with neither a conclusive verdict nor any hope of acquittal.⁵ In 1603, the prohibition of his works was reiterated and promulgated with an edict of the Master of the Sacred Palace.⁶ In 1604 most of the friars involved in the rebellion were released and, in July of that year, after an attempted escape, Campanella was transferred

² A detailed reconstruction is in AMABILE, Congiura, 1, chap. 3.
³ According to canon law, a madman cannot be put to death because he is unable to regret his sins, hence his soul would be lost, and the fault would lie with the judges who condemn him.
⁵ E. CARUSI, art. cit., n. 37.
to Castel Sant’Elmo. His case was pending, however, as the Spanish government refused to hand him over to the ecclesiastical authorities.

In May 1606, Campanella pretended to be at death’s door and intended to ‘unburden his conscience’; and once obtained the chance of a new deposition with legal value, he stopped the simulation of madness. On 2 June 1606, Deodato Gentile, minister of the Holy Office in Naples, informed Cardinal Pompeo Arrigoni – then Secretary of the Inquisition –, that Campanella did not appear to be mad anymore, transmitting some of his requests: to leave the Sant’Elmo prison and the assignment of a non-Spanish confessor. Campanella was visited by the Nuncio and the minister of the Holy Office in August of that year, and he asked to be transferred to an ecclesiastical prison. After some months the Pope conceded a non-Spanish confessor, and Gentile obtained a better treatment of the prisoner. On 19 April 1607, Gentile is ordered to confiscate the work Campanella has written (probably *Quod reminiscentur*, as *L’ateismo trionfato* was finished on 1st June) and to transmit the manuscript to Rome. On 13 August, Campanella wrote to Pope Paul V, offering his services, and anticipating the outbreak of *L’ateismo trionfato*. And in September, again addressing the Pope, he outlined the structure of his *Monarchia del Messia* (finished in March 1607), and asked to be extradited to Rome. During these years Campanella reiterated his requests for a more humane and less restrictive imprisonment, obtaining in August 1607 a more comfortable cell (doc. 1), and subsequently – before June 1608 – a transfer to Castel dell’Ovo, where he remained for six years. Then he started a long-lasting battle for a transfer to Rome. In June 1608, the Holy Office ordered the minister in Naples to ask the Spanish authorities for a transfer to an ecclesiastical prison, but the government dropped the request. In June 1609, the Pope ordered the search of Campanella’s cell and asked to prevent him from writing new works. Meanwhile, in 1609, Campanella wrote *De gentilismo non retinendo*, arguing against the use of Aristotle in Catholic theology,
and proposing a new foundation for Christian philosophy.\(^1\) In this year he also wrote the first Latin version of his *Metaphysica*, but in 1610 it was confiscated by order of the Nuncio.\(^2\)

On 21 October 1614 the vice-roy ordered Campanella’s return to Castel Sant’Elmo.\(^3\) On 23 April 1615, the Pope asked the Nuncio in Naples to transmit the manuscript of *Atheismus triumphatus*, and ordered that Campanella should not receive any convenience of writing, or composing further works.\(^4\) The cardinals assigned their colleague Agostino Galamini a review of Campanella’s manuscript, while the latter’s battle for another prison continued.\(^5\) Then, probably between August and September 1616, Campanella was transferred to Castel Nuovo.\(^6\)

After the death of Paul V and with the election of Gregory XV in 1621, Campanella reiterated his request to be released and to print with ecclesiastical approval *Quod reminiscetur, Atheismus triumphatus*, and *Monarchia Messiae*,\(^7\) but, on 23 April 1621, the Congregation ordered a preliminary assessment (doc. 2). On 22 May, Campanella transmitted the manuscripts to the Congregation for the Index which commissioned the *censura* of *Quod reminiscetur* – and probably also of the other two works – first to Rober to Bellarmino, and then also to three other censors, namely Niccolò Riccardi, Marcantonio Cappella, and Ciriaco Rocci. Their examinations have not been preserved in the Archive of the Congregation, but on 28 August, the Congregation denied the *imprimatur* and ordered Campanella to refrain from composing other works, passing his case to the Holy Office.\(^8\) In the next year, on 16 March, the Congregation commission a *censura* to Nicola Ridolfi, Master of the Sacred Palace and known with the nickname of *padre mostro* (doc. 3). In November of this year, the cardinals rejected another request by Campanella for permission to print his works (doc. 4).

In May 1626, Campanella was finally released from Castel Nuovo in Naples and he was accompanied to the monastery of San Domenico Maggiore. Here he was arrested by order of the Nuncio and secretly brought to Rome, where he lived for two years in the prison of the Holy Office. From the Fall of 1626, the Holy Office was informed about the spread of Campanella’s (manuscript and printed) works, and in January of the following year further investigation of his publications was commissioned to the qualificators of the Inquisition,\(^9\) while bishops, local inquisitors and nuncios, among whom the Nuncio in Cologne and the Inquisitor in Ferrara, continued to

\(^1\) Firpo, *Bibliografia*, p. 110.

\(^2\) Ibidem, p. 120.

\(^3\) Amaibile, *Castelli*, i, p. 174.

\(^4\) E. Carusi, *art. cit.*, n. 67.

\(^5\) Ibidem, nn. 69-70.

\(^6\) Amaibile, *Castelli*, i, p. 188.

\(^7\) E. Carusi, *art. cit.*, n. 72.

\(^8\) Ibidem, art. cit., n. 67.

\(^9\) Ibidem, art. cit., n. 81.
signalize the presence of his works (docs. 5-6). In July 1628 Campanella was transferred to the convent of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, in the following month he received copies of his work in order to correct these, and he obtained greater freedom of movement. Campanella was made master of theology in 1629 by the General Chapter of his Order, and he hoped to be nominated qualificator or consultor of the Holy Office. To avoid this appointment his adversaries, in primis, the Master of the Sacred Palace Niccolò Riccardi, prepared an underground publication of book vii of his Astrologia, in order to compromise the author. This book actually contained the record of superstitious practices which, according to the rumours, had been put in act by Campanella with Urban VIII, to thwart harmful astral influence on the health of the pontiff. In December 1629, Riccardi presented a censura of astrological works, falsely ascribed to Campanella. Then, after some years, Campanella presented an extensive reply to the doubts concerning his Atheismus triumphatus, and in 1632 the Congregation decreed a revision of the prohibition of his works, restricting the total ban to works that appeared without formal approval. In October 1634, Campanella was compelled to go into exile in France, following renewed Spanish suspicions regarding him. In Paris he was received with favour by King Louis XIII and by Cardinal Richelieu and was able to frequent learned circles. When in 1636 his Cento Thomisticus was reviewed, the Pope decreed its prohibition. Also after his death in 1638 Campanella’s works caused concern and worry among the local inquisitors in Italy (doc. 7).

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1 See L. SPRUIT and C. PRETI, Documenti inediti e editi..., cit., nn. 141-142. 
2 E. CARUSI, art. cit., nn. 93-95. 
3 See Lettere 2010, letter 85, p. 327. 
6 FIRPO, Processi, p. 322; Opuscoli, pp. 7-54. 
8 L. SPRUIT and C. PRETI, Documenti inediti e editi..., cit., n. 162; Opuscoli, pp. 145-163; L. FIRPO, Filosofia italiana e controriforma, iii, cit., p. 398.
Appendix

1

Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office
(Rome, 30 August 1607)
acdf, so, Decreto, 1607, f. 198r

[198r] Feria 5.² die 30. Augusti 1607
Coram Reverendissimis Dominis Cardinalibus Pinello,¹ Asculano,² Giuryo,³ Blanchetto,⁴ Arigonio,⁵ Bellarmino,⁶ de Bubalis,⁷ et Sancti Eusebij,⁸ ante ingressum Congregationis
[...]
Dicta die fuit Congregatio Sanctae Inquisitionis <...> Apostolico Montis Quirinalis coram Sanctissimo Domino Nostro Paulo Papa Quinto, ac supraddictis Illustriissimis Dominis Cardinalibus.
[...]
Eiusdem Episcopi Casertae⁹ fuerunt lectae literae <die> <...> <huius>, in quibus scribit Proregem¹⁰ mandasse assignari meliorem carcerem fratri Thomae Campanellae.

2

Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office
(Rome, 23 April 1621)
acdf, so, Decreto, 1621, pp. 118, 120

[118] Feria sexta die 23 Aprilis [1621]
Fuit Congregatio Sanctae Inquisitionis in Palatio Illustriissimi et Reverendissimi Bandini in Regione Campi Martij coram Illustriissimi et Reverendissimi Bandino,¹¹ Sourdis,¹²

¹ Domenico Pinelli (1541-1631), created cardinal on 13 May 1585.
² Girolamo Bernieri (1539-1611), created cardinal on 16 November 1586.
³ Anne d’Escars de Givry (1546-1612), created cardinal on 5 June 1596.
⁴ Lorenzo Blanchetti (1545-1612), created cardinal on 5 June 1596.
⁵ Pompeo Arrigoni (1552-1616), created cardinal on 5 June 1596.
⁶ Roberto Bellarmino (1542-1621), created cardinal on 3 March 1599.
⁷ Innocenzo Del Bufalo-Cancellieri (1566-1610), created cardinal on 9 June 1604.
⁸ Ferrante Taverna (1558-1619), created cardinal on 17 September 1603.
⁹ Deodato Gentile (1558-1616), bishop of Caserta from 9 July 1604, and minister of the Holy Office in Naples.
¹⁰ Juan Alonso Pimentel de Herrera, Count of Benavente (1576-1621), was vice-roy of the Kingdom of Naples from 1603 to 1610.
¹¹ Ottavio Gervasio Bandini (1558-1629), created cardinal on 5 June 1596.
¹² François de Sourdis (1574-1628), created cardinal on 3 March 1599.
Millino, Verallo, Camporeo, Bonsio <...> praesentibus Assessore, Commissario, et fiscali, in qua <...>  

[120] Compositio fratr. Thomae Campanellae <...> <...> <...> apud Caesarem fallen. Nullo modo imprimetur, sed censuretur <...>.

3  
Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office  
(Rome, 16 March 1622)  
ACDF, SO, Decreta, 1622, pp. 90, 92

[90] Feria 4. die 16 Martij 1622.  
Fuit congregatio Sancti Officii in Palatio Illustriissimi et Reverendissimi Domini Cardinalis Bandini in Regione Campi Martij coram Illustriissimis et Reverendissimis Dominis  
Gervasio episcopus Praenestinensis Bandino praedicto  
Francisco titulo Sancti Praxedis de Sourdis  
Carolo titulo Sancti Caesarii Madrutto  
Joanne Garcia titulo Sanctissimorum quatuor Coronatorum Millino  
Petru titulo Sancti Thomae in Parione Camporeo et frate Desiderio Scallia titulo Sancti Clementis de Cremona nuncupatis presbyteris  
miseratione divinae Sanctorum Romanae Ecclesiae Cardinalibus adversus haereticam  


1 Giovanni Garzia Millini (1562-1629), created cardinal on 11 September 1606.  
2 Fabrizio Veralli (1566/70-1624), created cardinal on 24 November 1608.  
3 Pietro Campori (1553-1643), created cardinal on 19 September 1616.  
4 Giovanni Bonsi (1560-1621), created cardinal on 17 August 1611.  
5 Mario Filonardi, assessor of the Holy Office from 1616 to 1624.  
6 Ippolito Maria Lanci, OP (1570/1-1634), commissioner of the Holy Office from 1621 to 1632.  
7 Carlo Sinceo (ca. 1570-1654), procurator fiscal of the Holy Office from 1607 to 1641.  
8 The rest of the text is illegible because the paper is seriously damaged.  
9 From the index of the codex it can be made up which work was referred to: «Liber fr. Thomae Campanellae ord. Praed. inscriptus Monarchia di Spagna».  
10 Contemporary copy in Decreta, 1621-1622, f. 182r-v.  
11 Carlo Gaudenzio Maruzzo (1562-1629), created cardinal on 9 June 1604.  
12 Desiderio Scaglia (1567-1639), created cardinal on 11 January 1621.  
13 Nicola Ridolfi, OP (1578-1650), Master of the sacred Palace from 1622 to 1628.
4

Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office
(Rome, 2 November 1622)
*ACDF*, *SO*, *Decreta*, 1622, pp. 320-321

[320] Feria 4. Die 2.\(^a\) Novembris 1622

Fuit Congregatio Sanctae Inquisitionis in Palatio habitationis Illustriissimi et Reverendissimi Domini Cardinalis Bandini in Regione Campi Martij coram Illustriissimis et Reverendissimis Dominis

Octavio episcopo Praenestinensis Bandini praedicto

Carolo titulo Sancti Eusebii Madruto

Joanne Garcia titulo Sanctorum Quattuor Coronorum Millino

Fabritio titulo S. Augustini Verallo

Gaspare titulo Sancti Crucis in Hierusalem Borgia\(^2\)

Guidone titulo Sancti Joannis ante Portam Latinam Bentivolo\(^4\) et

Fratre Desiderio Scalii titulo Sancti Clementis de Cremona nuncupatis presbyteris

miseratione divinae Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae Cardinalibus adversus haereticam

pravitatem in tota Republica Christiana Inquisitoribus Generalibus a Sancta Sede specialiter deputatis. Praesentibus Mario Filonardo <...> <...> Referendario Assessore Sancti Officij, fratre Hippolito Maria Lancio, Ordinis Praedicatorum Sacrae Theologiae magistro Commissario Generali, et <...> <...> Iuris Utriusque Doctore Procuratore fiscali, in qua propositae fuerunt Causae Infrascriptae quas in notam sumpsit Idem Dominus Assessor, et mihi Notario tradidit videlicet [...] 

[321] [...] 

Lecto memoriali in quo petitur <...> ad <...> <...> fratris Thomae Campanellae Ordinis Praedicatorum, ut possint typis mandare lecto memoriali Illustriissimi Domini dixerunt huiusmodi libros nullo modo esse publicari.

5

Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office
(Rome, 28 January 1627)
*ACDF*, *SO*, *Decreta*, 1627, ff. 22\(^v\), 23\(^r\)-v

[22\(^v\)] Feria v Die 28 Jan. 1627

In Congregatione Sancti Officij habita in Palatio Apostolico apud Sanctum Petrum coram Sanctissimo Domino Nostro et Illustriissimis et Reverendissimis Dominis Cardinalibus Generalibus Inquisitoribus presentibus et Reverendo patre domino Assessori\(^4\) et Domino Commissario Sancti Officij nec non alij Dominis Consultoribus iuxta

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1 Contemporary copy in *Decreta*, 1621-1622, f. 255\(^r\)-v.
2 Gaspar de Borja (1580-1645), created cardinal on 17 August 1611.
3 Guido Bentivoglio (1579-1644), created cardinal on 11 January 1621.
4 Cesare Monti (1593-1650), assessor of the Holy Office from 1624 to 1627.
stilum, idem Dominus Assessor ea quae fuerunt proposita et decreta notis except, et mihi haec scribenda tradidit etc.

[23r] Lectis literis Illustrissimi Cardinale Aracaeli\(^1\) huius quibus mittit librum Patris Campanellae, cui tituli Atheismo Trionfato, placuit Sanctissimo scribi Nuntio Coloniae\(^2\) residenti qui reperiri curet infrascriptos libros eiusdem Campanellae videlicet Riconscimento della religione\(^{23v}\) Cattolica con l’Antichristianismo Macchiavellesco \(^3\)

Un libro secreto de’ discorsi di Monarchia di Spagna \(^4\)
De philosophia naturali et morali \(^5\)
De sensu rerum et magia libri etc. \(^6\)
La Città del Sole \(^7\)
De politica Aphorismi 150., \(^8\) et exemplar singulorum mittat

6
Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office
(Rome, 31 October 1628)
ACDF, 50, Decreta, 1628, ff. 181r, 182v

[181r] Feria iii. die xxxi Octobris MDCXVIII.
Fuit Congregatio Sancti Officij in Conventu Sanctae Mariae super Minerva coram Illustrissimis et Reverendissimis Dominis Cardinalibus contra haereticam <pravitatem> in tota Republica christianarum generalibus Inquisitoribus Millino, Bentivolo, Cremonensi,\(^9\) et Sancti Honphrij\(^10\) Praesentibus Reverendius Patris Dominus Commissario generali, Assessore, Domino Alexandro Buccabella\(^11\) et Domino Carolo Sincero Iuris Utriusque Doctore Procuratore fiscali Sancti Officiij, in qua propositae fuerunt causae infrascriptae, quas in notam sumpsit frater Dominus Assessor, et mihi Notario tradidit. [...]

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1. Agostino Galamini (1552-1639), created cardinal on 17 August 1611.
2. Pier Luigi Carafa, sr. (1581-1655) was Nuncio in Cologne from 1624 to 1634.
3. The subtitle of *Ateismo trionfato*.
4. This work was published in a German translation in 1620 and in 1623.
7. This work was written in Italian in 1602; a Latin version was composed in 1613-1614, and published in Frankfurt in 1623.
8. The first version of this work dates back to 1605, then it was elaborated in several extended versions (1607, 1614, 1632, 1633-34, 1637). The first Latin edition was in *Campanella, Realis philosophiae epilogisticae partes quatuor, hoc est De rerum natura, Hominum moribus, Politica, (cui Civitas solis iuncta est) et Oeconomica, cum adnotationibus Physiologicis. A Theobia Adami nunc primum editae*, Francofurti, impensis Godefridi Tampachii, 1623.
9. Desiderio Scaglia; see *supra*, note 66.
10. Antonio Barberini (1569-1646), created cardinal on 7 October 1624.
11. Alessandro Boccabella (ca. 1593-1639), consultor of the Holy Office from 1624, and from 1627 substitute of the Fiscal Carlo Sincero.
[182v] [...] 
Literis Inquisitoris Ferrariae\(^1\) datis 21 huius, 21 huius\(^2\) rescríbitur ut hic mittat librum intitulatum fratris Thomae Campanellae Calabri ordinis Praedicatorum Apologia pro Galileo Mathematico Florentino.\(^3\)

7

Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office
(Rome, 25 January 1645)
ACDF, 50, Decreta, 1645, ff. 14v, 16r

Fuit Congreg.\(^6\) Sancti Officii in Conventu S. Mariae super Minerva coram Eminentissimis et Reverendissimis Dominis S. R. E. Cardinalibus de la Cueva,\(^4\) Spada,\(^5\) Ginetti,\(^6\) S. Clementis,\(^7\) Panzirolo,\(^8\) de Lugo,\(^9\) et Columna\(^10\) Generalibus Inquisitoribus. Praesentibus Reverendis Patribus Dominis Assessor,\(^11\) et Commissario Generali\(^12\) S. Officii, nec non D. Petro Serista\(^13\) Substituto fiscal, in qua propositae fuere causae infrascriptae, quas in notam sumpsit idem Dominus Assessor, et mihi Notario tradidit videlicet. [...] 

[16r] [...] 
Litteris Inqiositoris Anconae\(^14\) datis 12 Ianuarii, rescríbatur ut huc mittat quinquaginta exemplaria libri Patris Campanellae Ordinis Praedicatorum residuum vero dictorum librorum ducere faciat Anconam reponendo in Archivio Sancti Officii.

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\(^1\) Paolo Franchi from Naples was Inquisitor of Ferrara from 1620 to 1636; cf. ACDF, 50, St. st, ii.2.i, f. 22r.
\(^2\) ‘21 huius’: repeated in the ms.
\(^3\) Apologia.
\(^4\) Alfonso de la Cueva Benavides y Mendoza Carrillo (1572/5-1655), created cardinal on 5 September 1622.
\(^5\) Bernardino Spada (1594-1661), created cardinal on 19 January 1626.
\(^6\) Marzio Ginetti (1586-1671), created cardinal on 29 January 1626.
\(^7\) Vincenzo Maculani, OP (1578-1667), created cardinal on 16 December 1641.
\(^8\) Giovanni Giacomo Panciroli (1587-1651), created cardinal on 13 July 1643.
\(^9\) Juan de Lugo y de Quiroga (1583-1660), created cardinal on 13 July 1643.
\(^10\) Girolamo Colonna (1604-1666), created cardinal on 30 August 1627.
\(^11\) Francesco Albizzi (1593-1684), assessor of the Holy office from 1635 to 1654.
\(^12\) Giovanni Battista de Martinengo, OP (ca. 1599-1649), commissioner of the Holy Office from 1639 to 1649.
\(^13\) Pietro Serista, substitute fiscal for Carlo Sincero.
\(^14\) Michele Sassi or Agostino Cormelli, both Dominicans.