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The Medieval Inquisition(s) in the Italian Peninsula: a historiographical approach

by Riccardo Parmeggiani

1. *A change of approach from 2000*

By way of introduction to the themes covered by this paper, I will begin – without any claim to exhaustiveness – with three historiographical contributions written over a span of twenty years or so by three Italian scholars venturing beyond the confines of our peninsula. The first and oldest, taken here as a *terminus post quem*, is Daniele Solvi's discussion *La parola all'accusa. L'inquisitore nei risultati della recente storiografia* ('The case for the prosecution: the Inquisitor as seen by recent historiography'), published in the journal *Studi Medievali* twenty-five years ago: Solvi pointed out, with some regret, that before that time, except for the period of its origins,

research on the inquisition, when the times were ripe, that is, at the moment of making the leap from the description to the interpretation of the available sources, failed to acquire its autonomy, remaining confined to a perspective that has always hampered it, subordinate with regard to heresiology.²⁰¹

Newly published at the time was a more-or-less straight reissue of a 1954 monograph by the then elderly Capuchin friar Mariano D'Alatri, on *L'inquisizione francescana nell'Italia centrale del Duecento* ('The Franciscan

²⁰¹ Daniele Solvi, "La parola all'accusa. L'inquisitore nei risultati della recente storiografia", *Studi medievali*, 39 (1998), pp. 367-395: 370 («la ricerca sull'inquisizione, quando i tempi erano maturi, al momento cioè di spiccare il salto dalla descrizione all'interpretazione delle fonti disponibili, non è riuscita ad acquisire una dimensione autonoma, restando fagocitata in una prospettiva che da sempre la contraddistingue, ausiliaria nei confronti dell'eresiologia»).

Inquisition in Central Italy in the 13th Century’),²⁷² which was preceded ten years earlier by his collection of essays *Eretici e inquisitori in Italia* (‘Heretics and Inquisitors in Italy’) in two volumes, the second of which extended the discussion to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.²⁷³ These works, for all their merits, can be said none the less to bring down the curtain on a long season in which the theme of repression – as Grado Giovanni Merlo has noted²⁷⁴ – dominated Inquisition studies, particularly scholarly ones, as well as editions of sources by writers belonging to the Orders, such as Livarius Oliger,²⁷⁵ Antoine Dondaine,²⁷⁶ Gerold Fussenegger,²⁷⁷ Celestino Piana,²⁷⁸ Ilarino da Milano²⁷⁹ and the already cited Mariano d’Alatri, to mention only the most obvious. It would soon be the case that the most important contributions to the reawakening of historiographical interest around the medieval Italian Inquisition would come less from individuals than from institutions of similar orientation: among those bearing mainly or in good part on the geographical sphere of the Italian peninsula, one cannot but recall the important conferences promoted in the first decade of the new millennium by the Dominican Historical Institute, with the first of a series of four conferences under the title *Praedicatores - Inquisitores* inaugurated in 2002, the first being devoted

²⁷² Mariano D’Alatri, *L’inquisizione francescana nell’Italia centrale del Duecento*, Rome, Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 1996.

²⁷³ Id., *Eretici e inquisitori in Italia. Studi e documenti*, 2 vols., Rome, Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 1986-1987.

²⁷⁴ “Predicatori e inquisitori. Per l’avvio di una riflessione”, in *Praedicatores inquisitores*, I. *The Dominicans and the Mediaeval Inquisition*. Acts of the first International Seminar on the Dominicans and the Inquisition (Rome, 23-25 February 2002), Rome, Istituto storico domenicano, 2004, pp. 13-31: 22-23 (re-published as “I frati Predicatori in quanto inquisitori”, in Id., *Inquisitori e inquisizione del Medioevo*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2008, pp. 29-48: 38-39).

²⁷⁵ “Alcuni documenti per la storia dell’Inquisizione francescana in Toscana e nell’Umbria (1272-1324)”, *Studi francescani*, 28 (1931), pp. 181-204; Id., *De secta Spiritus libertatis in Umbria sec. XIV. Disquisitio et documenta*, Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1943.

²⁷⁶ With particular reference to the posthumous collection of personal essays *Les hérésies et l’Inquisition, XIIe-XIIIe siècles*, ed. Yves Dossat, Aldershot, Variorum, 1990, including works published between 1946 and 1959.

²⁷⁷ “De manipulo documentorum ad usum inquisitoris haereticae pravitatis in Romandiola saec. XIII”, *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, 44 (1951), pp. 71-86.

²⁷⁸ To him we owe the list of the inquisitors active in Romagna between the 13th and 15th centuries, in *Chartularium Studii Bononiensis sancti Francisci (saec. XIII-XVI)*, Ad Claras Aquas, ex Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1970, pp. 361-396.

²⁷⁹ His studies relating to the medieval Inquisition in Italy are available in a posthumous essay collection, recently republished: *Eresie medioevali. Scritti minori*, ed. Grado Giovanni Merlo, Spoleto, Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, 2015 (facsimile reprint, Rimini, Maggioli, 1983).

to the medieval Inquisition,²⁸⁰ just as we should not underestimate the importance of the 2005 meeting in Assisi on the theme of *Friars Minor and the Inquisition* promoted by the International Society of Franciscan Studies.²⁸¹

Already partly prior to, but largely subsequent to, the overview edited by Solvi, Lorenzo Paolini and Grado Giovanni Merlo were publishing groundbreaking studies on the medieval Italian Inquisition – some of which we will revisit later – that would then be included in personal essay collections: the former devoting the second part of his volume *Le piccole volpi. Chiesa ed eretici nel medioevo* ('The Little Foxes: Church and Heretics in the Middle Ages', 2013),²⁸² to the *Officium Fidei*, while the second in 2008 published *Inquisitori e Inquisizione del Medioevo* ('Inquisitors and Inquisition in the Middle Ages'),²⁸³, whose foreword proposed a radically innovative methodological approach, reversing that ingrained pairing 'heretics and inquisitors' to 'inquisitors and heretics':

in histories of the Inquisition, the historical and historiographical pairing ought no longer to be heretics and inquisitors, but rather, reversing the order of terms, inquisitors and heretics. Despite the fact that the partnership has demonstrated a certain practical validity in the field of religious history research, medieval inquisitors and the Inquisition can and must also be the object of study in and of themselves, independently, that is, of the study of heretics.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁰ *Praedicatores inquisitores*, I.

²⁸¹ *Frați minori e inquisizione*. Atti del XXXIII Convegno internazionale (Assisi, 6-8 ottobre 2005), Spoleto, Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2006. A subsequent approach to the topic, with exclusive attention to the Italian area, can be found in Marina Benedetti, "Frați Minori e Inquisizione. Alcuni casi nell'Italia medievale", *Revista Territórios & Fronteiras*, 9/1 (2016), pp. 83-96.

²⁸² Lorenzo Paolini, *Le piccole volpi. Chiesa ed eretici nel Medioevo*, ed. Riccardo Parmeggiani, Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2013.

²⁸³ Merlo, *Inquisitori e inquisizione del Medioevo*.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9 («in una storia dell'Inquisizione la coppia storica e storiografica non può più essere *eretici e inquisitori*, bensì, invertendo l'ordine delle parole, deve essere *inquisitori ed eretici*. Nonostante che quest'ultima coppia storica abbia offerto una propria validità euristica nell'ambito delle ricerche di storia religiosa, inquisitori e Inquisizione medievali possono e devono essere oggetto di studio *anche* di per sé e in sé, vale a dire indipendentemente dallo studio degli eretici»).

Merlo subsequently followed up this research perspective in a historiographical essay – the second of the contributions mentioned at the beginning – on *L’Inquisizione medievale nella medievistica* (‘The Medieval Inquisition in Medieval Studies’),²⁸⁵ discerning in the closing years of the twentieth century the first stirrings of a change of direction in Inquisition research’s subordination to broader investigations into heresiology.²⁸⁶ Also in 2008, along similar methodological lines to Merlo's initiative, Marina Benedetti published a collection of monographic on the *Inquisitori lombardi del Duecento* (‘Lombardy Inquisitors of the thirteenth century’),²⁸⁷ in which heretics are deliberately seen sidelong, as it were, for example in the accounting sources of the *officium* . But I will come back to this.

2. *The current state of play: the need to overcome historiographical indifference*

Marina Benedetti was also recently responsible for the third historiographic contribution considered here, that is, her essay *Eresie e inquisizioni. Osservazioni storiografiche, metodologiche e edizioni di fonti* (‘Heresies and Inquisitions: Historiographical Observations, Methodologies and Editions of Sources’),²⁸⁸ published just a few years ago in *Quaderni di Storia Religiosa Medievale*. Her entirely endorsable observation that "although there are obvious interconnections, heresy and inquisition are two separate areas of research"²⁸⁹ gives an idea of the gap that has matured over a twenty-year period with respect to the previously all but invariable subordination of the latter to the former. I should certainly emphasise here how this perspective has developed in parallel with the consolidation of a widening school of 'sceptics' regarding the actual substance of

²⁸⁵ Id., “L’inquisizione medievale nella medievistica”, in *A dieci anni dall'apertura dell'Archivio della Congregazione per la dottrina della fede: storia e archivi dell'Inquisizione*, Rome, Scienze e Lettere, 2011, pp. 35-50.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

²⁸⁷ *Inquisitori lombardi del Duecento*, Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2008.

²⁸⁸ “Eresie e inquisizioni. Osservazioni storiografiche, metodologiche e edizioni di fonti”, *Quaderni di storia religiosa medievale*, 22/1 (2019), pp. 211-232

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

some forms of heresy, but we do not, of course, want to fall back into the old – now happily outdated – pairing.

Among the many points of interest in Marina Benedetti's contribution, I would like to underline – for its relevance to our discussions here today – her plainly accurate observation that Italian medieval studies have been slow to take note of the scope of the repressive phenomenon, its repercussions going well beyond the exclusive – and therefore narrow – religious perspective to which there has been a propensity to confine the faith tribunals:

We do not yet see a specific sensitivity in Italian medieval studies for an important field of study [on the Inquisition], indeed we might even perceive a sort of wariness (the same wariness perhaps directed more generally at medievalists specialising in religious history). [...] We could also say that it is only with some reluctance that the evident pervasiveness of the *officium fidei* in medieval society has been grasped – in the economic, political, and institutional spheres as well as in the – more obvious – religious one, from which there has been a tendency to distance oneself, perhaps moved by preconceptions that one should not hesitate to define as ideological.²⁹⁰

It will suffice in this context to recall the observations of some important colleagues from across the Alps of the calibre of Sylvain Piron²⁹¹ and Jacques Chiffolleau,²⁹² regarding the Florence and Padua *officia fidei*, to understand the

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 218 («Nella medievistica italiana non si scorge ancora una specifica sensibilità per un importante ambito di studi [sull'Inquisizione], addirittura si coglie una sorta di diffidenza (la medesima rivolta ai medievisti specialisti di storia religiosa). [...] Verrebbe anche da dire che solo con grande difficoltà viene colta l'evidente pervasività dell'*officium fidei* nella società medievale in ambito economico, politico, istituzionale oltre che – come è ovvio – religioso, da cui si tende a prendere le distanze, mossi forse anche da preconcetti che non bisognerebbe esitare a definire ideologici»).

²⁹¹ “Un couvent sous influence. Santa Croce autour de 1300”, in *Économie et religion. L'expérience des ordres mendiants (XIIIe-XVe siècle)*, ed. by Nicole Bériou and Jacques Chiffolleau, Lyon, Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 2009, pp. 321-355.

²⁹² Chiffolleau noted with regard to «les pratiques des inquisiteurs franciscains à // Padoue et à Florence [...] on a observé que la gestion (et parfois le trafic) des biens confisqués [to the heretics] était à la base d'un véritable système économique contribuant – pour le meilleur et pour le pire – à l'insertion très forte des couvents dans la société communale et dans ses conflits politiques» (Jacques Chiffolleau – Clément Lenoble, “Les frères mineurs dans les sociétés de Provence et du Languedoc au temps d'Olivi”, in *Pietro di Giovanni Olivi frate minore. Atti del XLIII Convegno internazionale*

short-sightedness of a perspective conditioned by competition between academic disciplines and answering more to bureaucratic than to scholarly stimuli. Another negative consequence produced by the current system of evaluating research in Italian medievalism is a paradoxical devaluation of editions of sources, works that go, one might say, unrewarded.

Despite the timely reminder of the need to return precisely to the sources, which by their very nature – Benedetti emphasises this too – are open to diachronous study, (although that in itself is often regarded by medievalists as a negative qualification, belonging rather to their ‘Christianist’ neighbours), not much has been done.

To return once again to Solvi’s review as a starting point, subsequent editions of documents are few and far between²⁹³ – excluding from the present contribution the inquisitions with clear political scope promoted by the Avignon popes in the fourteenth century in the Italian area, for which I refer the reader to Irene Bueno’s essay in this volume²⁹⁴ – except for the Milan inquisitorial trials against the worshippers of Guglielma published at the end of the last century by Benedetti herself,²⁹⁵ and procedural texts, including the oldest known Italian manuals (*Explicatio super officio inquisitionis*) published by myself some ten years ago.²⁹⁶

(Assisi, 16-18 ottobre 2015), Spoleto, Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, 2016, pp. 3-100: 36-37).

²⁹³ In the previous quarter of century the production was undoubtedly higher, with regard to both the manuals in use at the local *officia* (*Il «De officio inquisitionis»*). *La procedura inquisitoriale a Bologna e a Ferrara nel Trecento*, ed. by Lorenzo Paolini, Bologna, Editrice Universitaria Bolognese, 1976, to which we should add the edition of the *Constitutiones sacrae inquisitionis* employed by the tribunal of the faith of Vicenza, about which see Francesca Lomastro Tognato, *L’eresia a Vicenza nel Duecento. Dati, problemi, fonti*, Vicenza, Istituto per le ricerche di storia sociale e di storia religiosa, 1988, pp. 157-244), and to documentation – trial records or single documents – related to specific local situations, such as Bologna (*Acta S. Officii Bononie ab anno 1291 usque ad annum 1310*, ed. by Lorenzo Paolini and Raniero Orioli, 3 vols., Roma, Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1982-1984), Orvieto (see Mariano D’Alatri, *L’inquisizione francescana*, with reference to the *Liber inquisitionis* of Orvieto transcribed by Egidio Bonanno, *ibid.*, pp. 209-338) and Vicenza (Lomastro Tognato, *L’eresia a Vicenza*, pp. 81-144).

²⁹⁴ In any case, it is worth noting, as evidence of what has been said so far, that a number of recent and important editions of texts are due to a young scholar, whose academic discipline is “History of Christianity and of Churches” (Tiziana Danelli, *Inquisizione, frati Minori e cittadini di Todi (1329-1356)*, Spoleto, Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, 2018) and to a French historian (Sylvain Parent, *Le pape et les rebelles. Trois procès pour rébellion et hérésie au temps de Jean XXII (Marche d’Ancône, Romagne, Lombardie)*, Roma, École Française de Rome, 2019).

²⁹⁵ *Milano 1300. I processi inquisitoriali contro le devote e i devoti di santa Guglielma*, con un saggio di Grado Giovanni Merlo, ed. Marina Benedetti, Milan, Libri Scheiwiller, 1999.

²⁹⁶ Riccardo Parmeggiani, *I consilia procedurali per l’Inquisizione medievale (1235-1330)*, Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2011; Id., «*Explicatio super officio inquisitionis*». *Origini e sviluppi della manualistica inquisitoriale tra Due e Trecento*, Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2012.

In more recent times – and, tellingly, the work of a researcher from outside the academy – Renzo Fantappiè has proposed with his volume *Eresia e inquisizione a Prato; secolo XII-XIV* ('Heresy and Inquisition in Prato, 12th to 14th centuries'),²⁹⁷ a comprehensive documentary record of anti-heretical repression in that Tuscan city. One of the merits of this edition, which is admittedly not without its faults, is that it highlights the varied nature of the conservation locations of these inquisitorial writings.²⁹⁸ These are themes that are once again dear to Marina Benedetti, whose research on the documentation and, more specifically, on the inquisitors' own ledgers opens up stimulating glimpses into the study of the containers, as well as their contents, and their history as autonomous, or at least preliminary, objects of study.²⁹⁹

3. *Inquisition documents and Inquisitors' ledgers: upgrading accounting sources*

The study of Inquisitors' own documentation, with particular attention to the Italian sphere, registered an important landmark with the 2002 monograph issue of *Quaderni di Storia Religiosa*,³⁰⁰ in which Benedetti dealt with the accounting sources

Starting from the manuscripts considered in the previous works. Vasil Bivolarov has compiled a list/repertoire of thirteenth-century papal letters, with *regesta* and some editions (*Inquisitoren-Handbücher. Papsturkunden und juristische Gutachten aus dem 13. Jahrhundert mit Edition des Consilium von Guido Fulcodii*, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2014, pp. 28-185).

²⁹⁷ *Eresia e inquisizione a Prato (secolo XII-XIV)*, Prato, Società pratese di storia patria, 2017.

²⁹⁸ Allow me to refer in this regard to my own review published in *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia*, 75/1 (2021), pp. 230-234.

²⁹⁹ Marina Benedetti, "I libri degli inquisitori", in *Libri e altro. Nel passato e nel presente*, ed. by Grado Giovanni Merlo, Milano, Fondazione Arnoldo e Alberto Mondadori, 2006, pp. 15-32; Ead., "Manoscritti eccentrici. Ancora sui libri degli inquisitori", in: *Scriptoria e biblioteche nel basso medioevo (secoli XII-XV)*. Atti del LI Convegno storico internazionale (Todi, 12-15 ottobre 2014), Spoleto, Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2015, pp. 587-608; Ead., *Medioevo inquisitoriale. Manoscritti, protagonisti, paradossi*, Roma, Salerno, 2021 (see in particular pp. 59-93). Regarding the heterogeneous character of the documentation not least from a material point of view, I have myself recently studied a specific extrinsic example, the *rotulus* form: Riccardo Parmeggiani, "Tracce di *rotuli* nella documentazione inquisitoriale italiana (secc. XIII-XIV)", in *Der Rotulus im Gebrauch. Einsatzmöglichkeiten – Gestaltungsvarianz - Deutungen*, ed. by Étienne Doublier, Jochen Johrendt and Maria Pia Alberzoni, Wien – Köln – Weimar, Böhlau, 2020, pp. 359-371.

³⁰⁰ *Le scritture e le opere degli inquisitori = Quaderni di storia religiosa*, 9 (2002).

of the *officium*, opening up new multi-directional research directions.³⁰¹ The recognition of the importance of this kind of documentary source – soon taken up by other specialists in the field,³⁰² including transalpine scholars³⁰³ – we owe to a pioneering 1999 essay by Lorenzo Paolini on *Le finanze dell'inquisizione in Italia; secc. XIII-XIV (Inquisition Finances in Italy, 13th to 14th centuries)*,³⁰⁴ which had the particular merit of placing the economic repercussions of repression at the centre its development, the decisive outcome of which would be fully felt with the subsequent emergence of major scandals, the subject of papal investigations into numerous cases in central and northern Italy (anachronistically dubbed '*Inquisizionopoli*'³⁰⁵ to chime with the 1990s political corruption scandals known as *Tangentopoli*) One extraordinary source is the paduan *Liber contractuum* published in 2002³⁰⁶ – a document not in this case produces *by* but *against* the Inquisition – which provides concrete evidence of collusion between the directors of the tribunal and the local leadership of the Order of Friars Minor in implementing a de facto

³⁰¹ Marina Benedetti, “Le parole e le opere di frate Lanfranco (1292-1305)”, in *Le scritture e le opere degli inquisitori*, pp. 111-182.

³⁰² Ead., “Le finanze dell'inquisitore”, in *L'economia dei conventi dei frati Minori e Predicatori fino alla metà del Trecento*. Atti del XXXI Convegno internazionale (Assisi, 9-11 ottobre 2003), Spoleto, Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2004, pp. 363-401 (re-published in Ead., *Inquisitori lombardi*, pp. 153-178); Vincenzo Lavenia, “Avidi inquisitori? Tribunali della fede e denaro tra Medioevo ed età moderna”, *Cristianesimo nella storia*, 33 (2012), pp. 557-594; Luca Fois, “Les engrenages cachés. Comptabilités «d'usage» pour l'histoire de l'*officium inquisitionis*”, in *Monuments ou documents? Les comptabilités, sources pour l'histoire du contrôle social (XIIIe-XVIIIe siècles)*. Actes du colloque international (Bruxelles, 13-15 décembre 2012), ed. by Aude Wirth-Jaillard, Aude Musin, Nathalie Demaret, Emmanuel Bodart and Xavier Rousseaux, Bruxelles, Archives générales du Royaume, 2015, pp. 81-93.

³⁰³ For geographical areas outside the Italian Peninsula: Jaume de Puig i Oliver, “El pagament dels inquisidors en la Corona d'Aragó els segles XIII I XIV. Recull documental”, *Arxiu de textos catalans antics*, 22 (2003), pp. 175-222; Laurent Albaret, Isabelle Lanoix-Christen, “Le prix de l'hérésie. Essai de synthèse sur le financement de l'Inquisition dans de Midi de la France (XIIIe-XVe siècle)”, *Heresis*, 40 (2004), pp. 41-67), but also in reference to the scandals of the Italian Inquisition (Sylvain Parent, “Entre extorsion de fonds et procès truqués. Le contrôle de l'activité des inquisiteurs en Italie au XIVE siècle, in *Aux marges de l'hérésie. Inventions, formes et usages polémiques de l'accusation d'hérésie au Moyen Âge*, ed. by Franck Mercier, Isabelle Rosé, Rennes Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2018, pp. 291-324.

³⁰⁴ “Le finanze dell'Inquisizione in Italia (XIII-XIV sec.)”, in *Gli spazi economici della Chiesa nell'Occidente mediterraneo (secoli XII-metà XIV)*. Atti del XVI Convegno internazionale di studi, Pistoia, 16-19 maggio 1997, Pistoia, Viella, 1999, pp. 441-481, re-published in Id., *Le piccole volpi*, pp. 209-242.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

³⁰⁶ *Il «Liber contractuum» dei frati minori di Padova e di Vicenza (1263-1302)*, ed. Elisabetta Bonato, with the collaboration of Elisabetta Bacciga, introductory essay by Antoio RIGON, Rome, Viella, 2002.

extortion system to the detriment of the institutions competing for the management of convicted heretics' property, namely the municipality and the episcopate.³⁰⁷

The close strategic ties between the inquisitors and the monastic and provincial elite do not in any case seem to emerge as a specific characteristic of the Venetian *officium*, but apparently emerged in different contexts of the Peninsula, in line with an Inquisitorial profile that does not suggest any kind of specialist in repression – as if that was ever likely to be an exclusive career – but more that of a friar quite at home in the local administrative circuits, in the interchangeability of roles and offices that seems to characterise – especially, but not exclusively for the Italian courts run by the friars minor – what Sylvain Piron has called, with reference to Florence, a ‘properly ensconced elite’.³⁰⁸ Similar comments, taken with the recognised centrality of the role of the Inquisitor – holder, again in Piron’s of “la charge ... plus convoitée, en raison des gains qu'elle permet" ("the most coveted ... of offices, on account of the revenue it could generate”),³⁰⁹ often closer to that of a financial operator than a champion of orthodoxy³¹⁰ – has led, in relation to the city of Dante, to prosopographical insights that have revealed, for example behind an otherwise banal toponymic surname, significant family affiliations traceable to the Tuscan banking elite.³¹¹ Studies, these, that are only apparently peripheral to the reality of repression: one only need think of the detailed picture of the Paduan university lecturers, with detailed biographical profiles, proposed by Emanuele Fontana just under ten years ago in his *Frati, libri e insegnamento nella provincia minoritica di S. Antonio; secoli XIII-XIV* (‘Friars, Books and Teaching in the

³⁰⁷ On this sensational judicial investigation, see the studies by Antonio Rigon, “Fratelli Minori, Inquisizione e Comune di Padova nel secondo Duecento”, in *Il «Liber contractuum»*, pp. V-XXXVI; André Vauchez and Lorenzo Paolini, “In merito a una fonte sugli *excessus* dell’inquisizione medievale”, *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa*, 39 (2003), pp. 561-578 (a portion of the essay by Paolini has been re-published as “Sulla corruzione degli inquisitori francescani di Padova e Vicenza”, in Id., *Le piccole volpi*, pp. 259-271); Alberto Cadili, “Kritik und Reflexion der Entscheidungsprozesse oberitalienischer Inquisitoren (13.–14. Jahrhundert). Forschungsperspektiven und Forschungsstand”, *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 53 (2019), pp. 191-245.

³⁰⁸ Piron, “Un couvent”, p. 340. For a wider perspective beyond the Florentine area, see Riccardo Parmeggiani, “«Teneatur insuper potestas seu rector omnia bona hereticorum [...] dividere tali modo». Dialectiche istituzionali, modalità di gestione ed effetti delle confische sulle società comunali”, *Studi storici*, 62/3 (2021), pp. 615-642.

³⁰⁹ Piron, “Un couvent”, p. 341.

³¹⁰ Paolini, “Sulla corruzione degli inquisitori francescani”, p. 271.

³¹¹ Riccardo Parmeggiani, *L’Inquisizione a Firenze nell’età di Dante. Politica, società, economia e cultura*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2018.

Minorite Province of S. Antonio, 13th-14th centuries)³¹² to see how misleading it would be, also in view of what has been said above, to focus solely on the financial profile of the Inquisitor friars, who often played important teaching roles within the *studia* of the orders (especially, as the sources testify, those of the Friars Minor),³¹³ suggesting cultural interests that were certainly not confined within the horizon of polemics or anti-heretical repression, but embraced a wide range of knowledge: We now have tangential evidence of this through some of the profiles in the recent catalogue of the codex owners of the Florentine convent of Santa Croce, published on the occasion of an important exhibition marking the seventh centenary of the death of Dante.³¹⁴

4. *A difficult reductio ad unum: the plural nature of Italian medieval Inquisitions*

There is a distinct lack broad-sweep compendious works on the medieval Italian Inquisition: two notable exceptions are Andrea Del Col's successful *L'Inquisizione in Italia. Dal XII al XXI secolo* ('The Inquisition in Italy. From the 12th to the 21st centuries'),³¹⁵ published in 2006 and reprinted several times, and Jill Moore's recent

³¹² *Frati, libri e insegnamento nella provincia minoritica di S. Antonio (secoli XIII-XIV)*, Padova, Centro Studi Antoniani, 2012 (specifically for prosopography, pp.187-266).

³¹³ In addition to the studies mentioned in the two previous notes and in the following one, see Paolo Marangon, *Il pensiero ereticale nella Marca Trevigiana e a Venezia dal 1200 al 1350*, Abano Terme, Francisci, 1984, pp. 62-63; Riccardo Parmeggiani, "Inquisizione e frati Minori in Romagna, Umbria e Marche nel Duecento", in *Frati minori e inquisizione*, pp. 113-150: 120-121; Id., "Minores, lectores, inquisitores. L'attività antiereticale nelle carriere dei frati Minori nella provincia del Santo (secoli XIII-XIV). Considerazioni a margine di un recente studio", *Il Santo. Rivista francescana di storia dottrina arte*, 53/3 (2013), pp. 393-403. As far as the Dominican sphere is concerned, pending further study, the frequency of the overlap between the roles of inquisitor and *lector* seems to occur at a similar rate, at least in the Bolognese case: see Id., "Studium domenicano e Inquisizione", in *Praedicatores / doctores. Lo Studium Generale dei frati Predicatori nella cultura bolognese tra il '200 e il '300*. Atti del Convegno internazionale di Studio (Bologna, 8-10 February 2008), ed. Roberto Lambertini, Florence, Nerbini, 2009 pp. 117-141; Id. "Lettori dello *studium* domenicano e tribunale dell'Inquisizione a Bologna", in *Università, teologia e studium domenicano dal 1360 alla fine del medioevo*. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi (Bologna, 21-23 ottobre 2011), ed. by Roberto Lambertini, Nerbini, Florence, 2015, pp. 171-187.

³¹⁴ *Lettori e possessori dei codici di Santa Croce. Schede prosopografiche*, ed. Luca Fiorentini, Federico Lucignano and Riccardo Parmeggiani, in *Dante e il suo tempo nelle biblioteche fiorentine*, ed. Gabriella Albanese, Sandro Bertelli, Sonia Gentili, Giorgio Inglese and Paolo Pontari, 2 vols., Florence, Mandragora, 2021, vol. II, pp. 611-633.

³¹⁵ Andrea Del Col, *L'Inquisizione in Italia dal XII al XXI secolo*, Milan, Mondadori, 2006.

study on *Inquisition and its organisation in Italy, 1250-1350*.³¹⁶ While the first, adopting a stimulating evolutionary approach,³¹⁷ is the work of a modernist and an excellent synthesiser of others' research, at least as regards the medieval part, the second claims, on the basis of a detailed and on the whole well-documented investigation, to offer an innovative perspective, which – taking a well-known study by Richard Kieckhefer³¹⁸ as something of a negative touchstone – would translate the notion of an entirely repressive office to an institutional level in the Italian sphere, a conclusion reached largely by excluding from the range of sources used those relating to procedure (manuals and *consilia*). There is at least the suggestion of a linguistic impediment in Moore's coverage of the Peninsula's faith courts – a good part of the most recent historiography in the Italian language is ignored³¹⁹ – and in any case Lorenzo Paolini had reached similar conclusions almost twenty years ago precisely through a re-evaluation of the manuals,³²⁰ a line of enquiry taken further by his students in subsequent studies.

Paolini emphasised, in the context of the institutionalisation of the *officium*, the key role played by Innocent IV's *Ad extirpanda* (1252), a bull that, as we know, followed the assassination of the preaching friar Peter of Verona,³²¹ one of the few

³¹⁶ Jill Moore, *Inquisition and its organisation in Italy, 1250-1350*, Woodbridge, York Medieval Press, 2019.

³¹⁷ Almost simultaneously to the publishing of the miscellaneous volume, with the same perspective, *I tribunali della fede: continuità e discontinuità dal medioevo all'età moderna*. Atti del XLV Convegno di studi sulla Riforma e sui movimenti religiosi in Italia (Torre Pellice, 3-4 settembre 2005), ed. Susanna Peyronel Rambaldi, Turin, Claudiana, 2007.

³¹⁸ “The Office of Inquisition and Medieval Heresy: The Transition from Personal to Institutional Jurisdiction”, *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 46 (1995), pp. 36-61.

³¹⁹ Critical remarks on the volume are also expressed in the review by Francesca Tasca published in the journal *Riforma e movimenti religiosi*, 8 (2020), pp. 365-369.

³²⁰ “Il modello italiano nella manualistica inquisitoriale (XIII-XIV secolo)”, in *L'Inquisizione*. Atti del Simposio internazionale (Città del Vaticano, 29-31 ottobre 1998), ed. by Agostino Borromeo, Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2003, pp. 95-118, re-published in Id., *Le piccole volpi*, pp. 175-193. Immediately before Paolini's contribution, the same theme was dealt with in an important article by Thomas Scharff “Schrift zur Kontrolle – Kontrolle der Schrift. Italienische und französische Inquisitoren-Handbücher des 13. und frühen 14. Jahrhunderts”, *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 52/2 (1996), pp. 547-584. More recently, see. L.J. Sackville, “The Inquisitor's Manual at Work”, *Viator*, 44/1 (2013), pp. 201-216.

³²¹ To cite only the most relevant recent contributions, I should mention at least the miscellaneous volume *Martire per la fede. San Pietro da Verona domenicano e inquisitore*, ed. by Gianni Festa, Bologna, Edizioni Studio Domenicano, 2007; Benedetti, *Inquisitori lombardi*, pp. 5-37 and Ead., *Medioevo inquisitoriale*, pp. 42-58; Donald Prudlo *The Martyred Inquisitor: The Life and Cult of Peter of Verona († 1252)*, Aldershot – Burlington, Ashgate, 2008; Marco Rainini, “«Plus quam vivus fecerim, mortuus faciam contra eos». Vita morte e culto di Pietro da Verona a Milano”, *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia*, 65/1 (2011), pp. 31-55 and, on the opposite side of this last, Alessia Trivellone, “Qui a tué Pierre de Vérone? Conflits et résistance anti-inquisitoriale à Milan au XIIIe siècle. Premier jalon d'une recherche en cours”, in *Contester au Moyen Âge: de la désobéissance à la révolte*. XLIVe Congrès de la SHMESP (Rennes, 24-27 May 2018), Paris, Editions de la Sorbonne, 2019, pp. 77-93. In confirmation of the historiographical vitality of research relating to the martyred inquisitor, we expect in the near future the proceedings of the recent conference

inquisitors – with the exception, on a lesser scale, of Raniero of Piacenza³²² and a few other similar figures, largely also Dominicans and also active in Lombardy³²³ – to whom specific attention has been paid by historians, and not only in the Italian language. It should also be noted that medium-to-long term studies on specific tribunals located in major urban centres are equally thin on the ground,³²⁴ investigations usually focusing on one or other of the eight large inquisitorial provinces created by Innocent with his later bull *Licet ex omnibus* (1254).³²⁵ If it is

Anatomy of an inquisitor. Friar Peter of Verona / saint Peter Martyr (Anatomia di un inquisitore. Frate Pietro da Verona – san Pietro martire), Milan, November 2022.

³²² On Raniero – “the pope’s inquisitor” – see Benedetti, *Inquisitori lombardi*, pp. 39-73 in addition to – with a specific reference to his *Summa de catharis* – Caterina Bruschi, “Converted-Turned-Inquisitors and the Image of the Adversary. Ranier Sacconi Explains Cathars”, in *Cathars in Question*, ed. by Antonio C. Sennis, York, York Medieval Press, 2016, pp. 185–207.

³²³ The reference is to the faith judges of the 13th century Daniel of Giussano (on whom see Marina Benedetti, “Un ex-eretico inquisitore: frate Daniele da Giussano”, in «*Ubi neque aerugo neque tineae demolitur*». *Studi in onore di Luigi Pellegrini per i suoi settanta anni*, ed. by Maria Grazia Del Fuoco, Naples, Liguori, 2006, pp. 17-39, re-published in Ead., *Inquisitori lombardi*, pp. 75-95), Florio of Vicenza (Riccardo Parmeggiani, “L’inquisitore Florio da Vicenza”, in *Praedicatores inquisitores*, pp. 681-699) and Lanfranco of Bergamo (Marina Benedetti, “Le parole e le opere” and Ead., “Frate Lanfranco da Bergamo, gli inquisitori, l’Ordine e la curia romana”, in *Praedicatores inquisitores*, pp. 157-204; both reworked in Ead., *Inquisitori lombardi*, pp. 99-152). It is not possible here to give a full account of the different entries relating to specific judges of faith present in encyclopedic dictionaries, such as the *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (100 vols., Rome, Treccani, 1960-2020) and the recent *Dizionario storico dell’Inquisizione*, ed. Adriano Prosperi, Vincenzo Lavenia, John Tedeschi, 4 vols., Pisa, Edizioni della Normale, 2010.

³²⁴ Exceptions, subsequent to the 20th-century studies – in both cases as their titles suggest, with a greater emphasis on the heretical than the repressive side – devoted to Bologna (Lorenzo Paolini and Raniero Orioli, *L’eresia a Bologna fra XIII e XIV secolo*, 2 vols., Rome, Istituto storico italiano per il medioevo, 1975 e *Acta S. Officii Bononie*) and to Vicenza (Lomastro Tognato, *L’eresia a Vicenza*) – there have been in-depth studies on Milan (Marina Benedetti, “Inquisitori a Milano dalla metà del XIII secolo”, in *Martire per la fede*, pp. 120-203, revised and republished in Ead., *Inquisitori lombardi*, pp. 5-73; Ead., “Inquisizione a Milano (secc. XIII-XV)”, in *Contro frate Bernardino da Siena: processi al maestro Amedeo Landi (Milano, 1437-1447)*, ed. by Marina Benedetti and Tiziana Danelli, Milano, Milano University Press, 2021, pp. 15-50) and, more recently, on Florence (Parmeggiani, *L’Inquisizione a Firenze*). More numerous, though still limited enough, are the short contributions on other cities, often focused on specific sources or episodes, which we cannot give a full account of here. On local references to the activities of the faith tribunals in citizen’s accounts (referring for example to Genoa, Parma and Florence) it would be wrong not to mention Thomas Scharff’s stimulating essay, “Die Inquisition in der italienischen Geschichtsschreibung im 13. und frühen 14. Jahrhundert”, in *Bene vivere in communitate: Beiträge zum italienischen und deutschen Mittelalter. Hagen Keller zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Thomas Scharff and Thomas Behrmann, Münster – New York – München – Berlin, Waxmann, 1997, pp. 255-277.

³²⁵ For the provincial organisation of the Italian Inquisition, see Mariano d’Alatri, *Eretici e inquisitori in Italia*, I, pp. 127-138. Of these provinces, two were entrusted to the Dominicans, six to the Franciscans. To put it simply, the Friars Minor were entrusted with central Italy and the Triveneto (roughly, the entire North-East), while the Preaching Friars were given the central-eastern part of the North (*Lombardia*) and all of the South. For medieval *Lombardia*, given the vastness of the area, studies have concentrated on geographical areas that substantially reflect the current administrative border of two individual regions: for Lombardy, see Benedetti, *Inquisitori lombardi*, and for Piemonte see Grado Giovanni Merlo, *Eretici e inquisitori nella società piemontese del Trecento*, Torino, Claudiana, 1977. With regard to the inquisitorial provinces managed by the Franciscans in central Italy, in addition to the overview provided in Mariano d’Alatri’s monograph (*L’inquisizione francescana*), a number of essays were dedicated to specific areas on the occasion of the already-

true that the geographical reach of research is often determined by documentary availability (unfortunately almost nothing as far as the South is concerned³²⁶) and to some extent defined by the organisation of the tribunals (as well as the mendicant Orders themselves) on a provincial basis, it may well be the case, none the less, that future archival excavations,³²⁷ together with a better appreciation and contextualisation of sources that have so far remained on the margins of historiographic attention, will provide, as has already happened, surprising and significant results.³²⁸

5. *The faith judges and their entourages*

Recent studies, taking the *Ad extirpanda* and the subsequent, related, measures of Innocent IV as a starting point, have shown how control of the Inquisition in the Peninsula gradually and imperceptibly slipped from the full control of the Papacy

mentioned conference held in Assisi in 2005 *Frati minori e Inquisizione*: specifically see, following the order of the titles in the volume, Raimondo Michetti, “Frati minori, papato e inquisizione a Roma e nel *Patrimonium beati Petri* (XIII sec.): tra vocazione universale e dimensione territoriale” (pp. 25-79), Parmeggiani, “Inquisizione e frati Minori” (regarding Romagna, Umbria and Marche), Caterina Bruschi, “Inquisizione francescana in Toscana fino al pontificato di Giovanni XXII” (pp. 287-324), without forgetting the *case study* of Orvieto, analysed by Daniele Solvi (“Inquisizione e frati Minori a Orvieto”, pp. 81-111). As for the Veneto area the only specific large-scale study remains the now rather dated study by Mariano d’Alatri, “Inquisitori veneti del Duecento”, *Collectanea franciscana*, 30 (1960), pp. 398-452, now in Id., *Eretici e inquisitori*, I, pp. 139-217, whereas for the absence of studies on southern Italy, see the following note.

³²⁶ With some sporadic exceptions, such as the case of Roccamandolfi, in Molise, studied by Giovanni Vitolo (“Gli eretici di Roccamandolfi (1269-1270): una Montaignou molisana?”, in «*Sapiens, ut loquatur, multa prius considerat*». *Studi di storia medievale offerti a Lorenzo Paolini*, ed. Caterina Bruschi and Riccardo Parmeggiani, Spoleto, Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, 2019, pp. 119-148), the overall picture appears skimpy: see Mariano D’Alatri, *Eretici e inquisitori*, I, pp. 135-136; Francesco Quaranta, “L’Inquisizione e gli italo-greci”, in *Praedicatores inquisitores*, pp. 625-641.

³²⁷ How fruitful such results can be, is demonstrated by the documentary *dossier* relating to Prato published by Fantappiè, *Eresia e inquisizione*.

³²⁸ The discovery at the beginning of the century by Marco Giacomo Bascapè of an unknown fragment related to the famous prosecution of Armano Pungiluppo (*In armariis officii inquisitoris Ferrariensis*. Ricerche su un frammento inedito del processo Pungiluppo”, in *Le scritture e le opere degli inquisitori*, pp. 31-110) and the analogous finding of interrogations relating to an investigation against another well-known exponent of the controversial dualist church of Bagnolo, Mirabella of Faenza (document identified by Angelo Turchini and fully published by Lorenzo Paolini, “*Domina Mirabella de Faventia*. I catari nella Faenza del Duecento”, *Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia*», 70/2 (2016), pp. 395-423: 420-423), demonstrate precisely how much, despite the scarcity of surviving sources, unexpected finds are still possible even for the thirteenth century.

– after an isolated attempt at coordination by the first *inquisitor generalis*, Giovanni Gaetano Orsini (later Pope Nicholas III)³²⁹ – to that of the friars, who more or less moulded their own repressive procedures, which were not uniform but conditioned by local dynamics, as well as by the individual dispositions of the various presiders over the courts.³³⁰

In order to better understand such dynamics, studies on the entourages of the judges of the faith are fundamental, with some first significant results regarding the development of the *familia*, to which Caterina Bruschi devoted an important essay some ten years ago.³³¹ Among the members, in addition to various figures, including counsellors, who have sporadically been the subject of specific historiographical attention,³³² the notaries stand out for their importance, genuine fulcrums of the courts, guarantors of an institutional continuity otherwise frequently interrupted by the alternation of different inquisitors for the individual *officia* and, as regards documentation, indirectly responsible – in the words of Marina Benedetti – for the

³²⁹ Recently we have seen numerous contributions on the future pope Nicholas III's work for the *negotium fidei*: noteworthy in particular an edition of two procedural consultations concerning the Franciscan Inquisition in central Italy, Peter Herde, "Antworten des Kardinals Giangaetano Orsini auf Anfragen von Inquisitoren über die Behandlung von Ketzern und deren Eigentum", in: Id. *Gesammelte Abhandlungen und Aufsätze*, 2 vols., Stuttgart, Hiersemann, 2005, vol. II/2 *Studien zur Papst- und Reichsgeschichte, zur Geschichte des Mittelmeerraumes und zum kanonischen Recht im Mittelalter*, pp. 527–554 and Parmeggiani, *I consilia procedurali*, pp. 95–99 (n. 19); as regards the mediating role played by Cardinal Orsini between the centre (papal authority) and the periphery (inquisitors), see Wolfram Benziger, "Dezentralisierung und Zentralisierung. Mittelalterliche Ketzerinquisition und neuzeitliche Römische Inquisition", *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 81 (2001), pp. 67–106: 78–100 and Vasil Bivolarov, "Die Vermerke des Kardinals Giovanni Gaetano Orsini auf Originalpapsturkunden zugunsten der Inquisitoren und deren Quellenwert", *Archiv für Diplomatik, Schriftgeschichte, Siegel- und Wappenkunde*, 56 (2010), pp. 151–163. Finally, for the backdating of the start of the assignment to 1260 under the pontificate of Alexander IV (instead of 1262 under Urban IV), see Parmeggiani, *Explicatio super officio inquisitionis*, pp. LXVII–LXVIII and note 186.

³³⁰ Paolini, "Il modello italiano"; Parmeggiani, *I consilia procedurali*; Id., "Ein Modell und seine Reinterpretation. Die Entscheidungsverfahren der italienischen Inquisition in der Auffassung von Papsttum und Inquisitoren (1252–1334)", *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 52 (2018), pp. 419–433.

³³¹ *Familia inquisitionis. A study on the inquisitors' entourage (XIII–XIV centuries)*, *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome. Moyen Âge*, 125/2 (2013), pp. 537–572; see also, taking into account Francesca Tasca's observations (see above, note 49), Moore, *Inquisition and its organization*, pp. 144–171.

³³² Allow me to refer to some works of my own: *I consilia procedurali*; "«Consiliatores» dell'Inquisizione fiorentina al tempo di Dante: cultura giuridico-letteraria nell'orbita di una oligarchia politico-finanziaria", in «*Il mondo errante*». *Dante fra letteratura, eresia e storia*. Atti del Convegno internazionale di studio (Bertinoro, 13–16 settembre 2010), ed. Marco Veglia, Lorenzo Paolini and Riccardo Parmeggiani, Spoleto, Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2013, pp. 57–79; "Tribunale della fede ed ebrei. Un *consilium* processuale di Dino del Mugello e Marsilio Manteghelli per l'Inquisizione ferrarese (1290)", in «*Honos alit artes*». Studi per il settantesimo compleanno di Mario Ascheri, ed. by Paola Maffei and Gian Maria Varanini, 4 vols., Florence, Reti Medievali – Firenze University Press, 2014, vol. I, *La formazione del diritto comune. Giuristi e diritti in Europa (secoli XII–XVIII)*, pp. 119–126.

"eccentricity in the preservation of judicial sundries"³³³ – a formulation that cannot but recall Robert Brentano's famous definition of the medieval Italian Church as 'a church of clerks'.³³⁴ It is precisely on these notaries, as Grado Giovanni Merlo has also suggested,³³⁵ that future research could profitably be directed, focusing particularly on their role as the link between the *familia* and the corps of officers, the twelve 'viri probi et catholici' envisaged by the *Ad extipanda* bull who were to be responsible for arrests.³³⁶ This corps, which is not to be confused with the broader inquisitor's *familia*,³³⁷ with which it overlaps only partially,³³⁸ were the beneficiaries, under the terms of Innocent's bull, of a third part of the goods confiscated from heretics, a circumstance that encourages, with the additional stimulus of fruitful studies on the early modern era,³³⁹ research into the identity of its members (and we already have some interesting partial results) – key figures in the interconnections among the political-financial upper echelons of urban societies.³⁴⁰

In the light of this rapid overview, taking into account the variety and specificity of the contexts of communal Italy, the necessity of speaking of 'Inquisitions' in the plural even within the confines of the Peninsula, and not only on the provincial, but also at the local level, becomes more than clear. The growing and increasingly apparent discretion of the Italian inquisitors – in addition to their sidelining the bishops in the conduct of proceedings, a collaboration later reimposed by Boniface VIII in the *Liber Sextus*³⁴¹ – was often manifested in the bending of procedures to desired ends, usually in response to the internal dynamics of particular local society.

³³³ "Eresie e inquisizioni", p. 229.

³³⁴ See Attilio Bartoli Langeli, "Prefazione", in *Chiese e notai (secoli XII-XV) = Quaderni di storia religiosa*, 11 (2004), pp. 7-13: 7-8.

³³⁵ "Problemi documentari dell'Inquisizione medievale in Italia", in *I tribunali della fede*, pp. 19-29, now in Id., *Inquisitori e Inquisizione del Medioevo*, pp. 125-138.

³³⁶ On the characteristics of this 'police force', see Benedetti, *Inquisitori lombardi*, pp. 179-207.

³³⁷ See above, note 61.

³³⁸ Benedetti, *Inquisitori lombardi*, pp. 200-204.

³³⁹ I refer in particular to Dennj Solera, *La società dell'Inquisizione. Uomini, tribunali e pratiche del Sant'Uffizio romano*, Rome, Carocci, 2021.

³⁴⁰ I have expressed some considerations in this regard in "«Teneatur insuper potestas»".

³⁴¹ Lorenzo Paolini, "Bonifacio VIII e gli eretici", in *Bonifacio VIII*, Atti del XXXIX Convegno storico internazionale (Todi, 13-16 ottobre 2002), Spoleto, Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2003, pp. 413-444, now in Id., *Le piccole volpi*, pp. 91-115: 109-112. On the relationship between bishops and inquisitors in the Italian area, to which I intend to return in a future contribution, there is still nothing more recent than Mariano d'Alatri's study of almost sixty years ago, "Il vescovo e il «negotium fidei» nei secoli XII-XIII", in *Vescovi e diocesi in Italia nel medioevo (secc. IX-XIII)*, Padova, Antenore, 1964, pp. 349-363, now in Id., *Eretici e inquisitori*, I, pp. 113-125.

It will be obvious how such a state of affairs demands wider comparative research, especially on the level of synchrony.

6. *Hostility to the Inquisition(s)*

It should also be noted that the dynamics mentioned above by no means always turn out to be linear and harmonious, and could at times be fiercely oppositional, especially – as the important studies of Andrea Padovani³⁴² and, above all, Thomas Scharff³⁴³ have shown – on the occasions when unpopular pontifical anti-heretical legislation was imposed on reluctant communes, with disputes often resulting in open resistance to the Inquisition's rooting itself in the urban fabric, perceived as a threat to their autonomy, even in the case of city administrations of a pro-papal hue.

Just such resistance, not infrequently tipping over into violence, has been the object of several recent studies³⁴⁴ (not to mention the periodic revisiting of, in particular, the 1299 mass uprising in Bologna³⁴⁵), which demonstrate – and here we

³⁴² “La repressione dell’eresia nei comuni dell’Italia settentrionale tra *ius proprium* e *ius commune* (secolo XIII)”, *Rivista Internazionale di Diritto Comune*, 22 (2011), pp. 55-87, an essay to be read in dialogue with a previous study of the same author “L’Inquisizione del podestà. Disposizioni antiereticali negli statuti cittadini dell’Italia centro-settentrionale nel secolo XIII”, *Clio*, 21 (1985), pp. 346-393.

³⁴³ *Häretikerverfolgung und Schriftlichkeit. Die Wirkung der Ketzer Gesetze auf die oberitalienischen Kommunalstatuten im 13. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 1996.

³⁴⁴ Peter D. Diehl, “Overcoming reluctance to prosecute heresy in thirteenth-century Italy”, in *Christendom and its discontents. Exclusion, persecution, and rebellion, 1000-1500*, ed. by Scott L. Waugh – Peter D. Diehl, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 47-66; Guy Geltner, *The Making of Medieval Antifraternalism. Polemic, Violence, Deviance, and Remembrance*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012; Anna Benvenuti, “Conflitti giurisdizionali agli esordi dell’*officium fidei*; il caso fiorentino (prima metà del XIII secolo)”, in «*Sapiens, ut loquatur, multa prius considerat*», pp. 77-99; Cadili, “Kritik und Reflexion” and Id., “Umstrittene Narrative und religiöse Sprache. Widerstände gegen inquisitorisches Entscheiden in Italien (1230-1330)” in *Semantiken und Narrative des Entscheidens vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. by Philip Hoffmann-Rehnitz, Matthias Pohlig, Tim Rojek, Susanne Spreckelmeier, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2021, pp. 133-157; Riccardo Parmeggiani, “Manifestazioni di dissenso alla repressione del nonconformismo religioso”, in *Manifestare e contrastare il dissenso (secoli XI-XIV)*, ed. Maria Pia Alberzoni, Roberto Lambertini, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2023, pp. 101-112.

³⁴⁵ Paolini and Orioli, *L’eresia a Bologna*, vol. I, Lorenzo Paolini, *L’eresia catara alla fine del duecento*, pp. 63-79; Id., “Gli ordini mendicanti e l’Inquisizione. Il “comportamento” degli eretici e il giudizio sui frati”, in *Les Ordres Mendicants et la ville en Italie centrale (v.1220-v.1350)*. Actes de la Table ronde (Rome, 27-28 April 1977) = *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome. Moyen âge. Temps modernes*, 89 (1977), pp. 695-709 (re-published in Id., *Le piccole volpi*, pp. 195-208); Augustine Thompson, “Lay versus Clerical Perceptions of Heresy. Protests against the Inquisition in Bologna, 1299”, in *Praedicatores inquisitores*, pp. 701-730. A specific use of a deposition collected in the context of the subsequent trial is offered by Robert Earl Lerner, “Reception of

are waiting to see what new material the shortly to be published proceedings of the 2018 Lyon conference entitled *Résister à l'Inquisition*³⁴⁶ have to offer – how aversion to the courts of faith frequently reverberated against the religious order to which the judge belonged (we might mention too the echoes in literary works such as *Il Fiore*, sometimes attributed to Dante, or Boccaccio's *Decameron*, recently explored in this context with the interdisciplinary approaches of Antonio Montefusco³⁴⁷ and Justin Steinberg,³⁴⁸ as well as by Giuseppe Indizio³⁴⁹ and Caterina Bruschi³⁵⁰).

7. *Conclusions: trends and prospects*

From the overall picture briefly offered here, in a necessarily fragmentary and incomplete form (deliberately omitting any detailed examination of the categories of religious nonconformism actually pursued by the Italian faith courts in the Middle Ages), what surely emerges is a revitalisation of significant historiographical interest in the Italian Inquisition, now extending to the century that was the watershed between the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age – the 15th³⁵¹ (and here I should mention, limiting myself to monographs, Michael Tavuzzi's studies³⁵² and, not least for her important editorial work on the sources,

prophecy in Bologna: the 'Visio fratris Johannis' in a hearing of 1299", *Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia*, 61 (2007), pp. 67-74.

³⁴⁶ Forthcoming with a slight change from the original title of the Conference: *Contester à l'inquisition*, ed. Sylvain Parent and Martine Ostorero, Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2023 (in press).

³⁴⁷ Antonio Montefusco, "Sull'autore e il contesto del *Fiore*: una nuova proposta di datazione", in *Sulle tracce del Fiore*, ed. by Natascia Tonelli, Firenze, Le Lettere, 2016, pp. 135-158 (an essay which has the 'inquisitorial issue' at its core).

³⁴⁸ Justin Steinberg, *Law and Mimesis in Boccaccio's Decameron. Realism on Trial*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2023.

³⁴⁹ "Supplemento a "Fiore", CXXIV e CXXVI: l'inquisizione tra fede e azione politica", *Rivista di Studi Danteschi*, 9/1 (2009), pp. 99-113, re-published in Id., *Problemi di biografia dantesca*, Ravenna, Longo, 2014, pp. 173-187.

³⁵⁰ "Falsembiante-inquisitor? Images and stereotypes of Franciscan inquisitors between literature and juridical texts", in «*Il mondo errante*», pp. 99-136.

³⁵¹ *Prima di Lutero. Nonconformismi religiosi nel Quattrocento italiano*, ed. Lucio Biasiori and Daniele Conti = *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 129/3 (2017), pp. 799-1021, where a few articles also concern the repressive side.

³⁵² *Renaissance inquisitors. Dominican Inquisitors and Inquisitorial Districts in Northern Italy, 1474-1527*, Leiden, Brill, 2007.

Marina Benedetti's work³⁵³). The times seem ripe for a less preconceived approach and for discarding historiographical clichés that are well past their sell-by date. In short, looking towards the future, the best hopes for new research seem, to put it simply, to be framed on space-time coordinates that are superficially antithetical, on the one hand identifying specific situations and events to be studied – including through single sources – diachronically; on the other, with a reversal of perspective, maintaining polycentric investigations from a perspective of synchrony.

³⁵³ *I margini dell'eresia: indagine su un processo inquisitoriale (Oulx, 1492)*, Spoleto, Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2013; Ead., *La valle dei Valdesi: i processi contro Tommaso Guiot, sarto di Prigelato (Oulx, 1495)*, Spoleto, Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2013. These volumes inaugurated a specialised book series, whose overall title is "Sources and documents of the Inquisition (13th-16th centuries) – "Fonti e documenti dell'Inquisizione (secoli XIII-XVI)" – published by the Fondazione Centro italiano di studio sull'alto medioevo. Confirming what has been said above about the scarcity of significant publishing initiatives, the series has yet to include further titles. Returning to the 15th century, we should also mention the recent miscellany, edited by, again, Marina Benedetti in collaboration with Tiziana Danelli, *Contro frate Bernardino da Siena*.