

**Renaissance and Reformation**  
**Renaissance et Réforme**



**Vitali, Francesco. I nunzi pontifici nella Firenze di Ferdinando I (1587–1609)**

James Nelson Novoa

Volume 42, Number 4, Fall 2019

Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola (1469–1533): Faith, Antiquity, and the Witch Hunt

Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola (1469–1533) : Foi, Antiquité et chasse aux sorcières

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1068621ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1068621ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0034-429X (print)

2293-7374 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this review

Novoa, J. (2019). Review of [Vitali, Francesco. I nunzi pontifici nella Firenze di Ferdinando I (1587–1609)]. *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 42(4), 275–277. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1068621ar>

© All Rights Reserved Canadian Society for Renaissance Studies / Société canadienne d'études de la Renaissance; Pacific Northwest Renaissance Society; Toronto Renaissance and Reformation Colloquium; Victoria University Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 2020

This document is protected by copyright law. Use of the services of Érudit (including reproduction) is subject to its terms and conditions, which can be viewed online.

<https://apropos.erudit.org/en/users/policy-on-use/>

**Érudit**

This article is disseminated and preserved by Érudit.

Érudit is a non-profit inter-university consortium of the Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and the Université du Québec à Montréal. Its mission is to promote and disseminate research.

<https://www.erudit.org/en/>

veut en partie biographique, permet d'expliquer comment Jean de Ségovie en vint à travailler (en Savoie, avec un *faqih*, Yçe de Gebir, rattaché à la mosquée de Ségovie) à un Coran trilingue (259). Si cet ouvrage précieux est disparu, on ne peut qu'imaginer l'influence d'un tel projet sur la pensée du cardinal : « Jean de Ségovie ne parle pas seulement à un musulman ; il parle *avec* un musulman, et ce musulman parle avec lui » (263). Le chercheur note avec justesse, dans les quatre dernières sections de ce chapitre, l'importance de ces échanges dans la construction d'une rhétorique qui s'éloigne des insultes et des controverses de l'époque.

Des « conclusions et perspectives » viennent finalement clore l'ouvrage de Tristan Vigliano. Le mot « perspectives » est important et ironique, dans ce contexte, car ces tentatives de dialogue avec les musulmans éclateront en mille morceaux sous la pression de l'Évangélisme et de la Réforme. Si les penseurs de la Renaissance ont alors bien d'autres soucis, cherchant à rétablir un dialogue entre chrétiens, il faudra attendre une certaine pacification des troubles et l'apparition de nouvelles sources d'information sur l'Islam, comme des relations de voyage ou l'œuvre d'un Jean Bodin, pour reprendre le fil d'un dialogue interrompu.

GUY POIRIER

University of Waterloo

### **Vitali, Francesco.**

#### ***I nunzi pontifici nella Firenze di Ferdinando I (1587–1609).***

Rome: Edizioni Nuova Cultura, 2017. Pp. 198. ISBN 978-8-8681-2849-4 (paperback) €19.

Francesco Vitali's book is a welcome addition to scholarship on the reign of Ferdinando I, early modern diplomacy, and papal nuncios themselves. The book, the fruit of original archival work and displaying a thorough command of recent early modern historiography, provides readers with a telling portrait of the men who represented the Holy See in Tuscany during decisive years (1587–1609) that saw the consolidation of the grand duchy of Tuscany as a state on the international scene and the establishment of Livorno as an important international Mediterranean port.

Drawing upon a host of different sources, but especially the important material in the Segretaria di Stato—the dispatches sent to the Holy See by its diplomatic representatives in Tuscany—Vitali shows us the complexity of the role of these papal representatives: men with a clear mandate who had to grapple with the designs of the ruler and his state, where they resided. In the first chapter (“Il nunzio Giovanni Francesco Canobio e la politica di autonomia da Madrid del nuovo granduca”) Vitali traces the early activities of the diplomatic presence of the Holy See in Tuscany, from the implantation of the nuncios—beginning with their arrival in 1560 under Cosimo I, which brought closer ties between Rome and the duchy, and the arrival of the tribunal of the Inquisition—to the arrival of Ferdinando I to power in 1587, after the death of his brother Francesco I. In this chapter, the author shows how the diplomacy of the Holy See dealt with Ferdinando’s skilful maneuvering to chart an independent political path for his state in its own right.

Chapter 2 (“I nunzi e la politica filofrancese di Ferdinando I”) presents us with clear divisions between Rome and Tuscany with regards to geopolitical choices in the larger European context, most notably Ferdinando’s option for a pro-French policy. In this, the Medici ruler and former cardinal opposed the designs of Gregory XIV in favour of Spain and ultimately coincided with the reversal of papal policy under Clement VIII, which brought France back into the good graces of the Holy See. Vitali chronicles Ferdinando’s skilful and savvy diplomatic ventures in order to ensure that Medici efforts in favour of France in the last decade of the sixteenth century prevailed.

Chapter 3 (“Nell’instabilità italiana ed europea: la nunziatura e le incertezze del granduca”) presents the activities of the nuncios during the crucial final years of the sixteenth century, which coincided with the economic crisis of Spain and the passage of the duchy of Ferrara to the Pontifical States, putting Ferdinando I at odds with Rome and France over his support of the continued domination of the territory by the Este family. At the same time, the book shows how Rome was actively involved in internal Tuscan matters, such as a dispute in a Florentine convent in which certain members of the minim order were expelled from the religious house, provoking the intervention of the nuncio Offredo de Offredi. The same chapter also deals with the resistance on the part of Pisa’s archbishop Antonio dal Pozzo to what he saw as the excessive influence of the nuncio in the affairs of his diocese.

Chapter 4 (“I nunzi ed il tortuoso riposizionamento di Firenze nell’orbita asburgica”) presents readers with a period of relative serenity in the final years of Ferdinando’s reign, which saw Tuscany coincide with the designs of the Holy See in many matters in the wake of Henry IV’s marriage to Maria de’ Medici in 1600. Despite diffidence on the part of the grand duke towards Spain, with the fear of a possible invasion of his territory, Ferdinando gradually adopted a reconciliatory attitude towards Spain which prevailed until his death. As Vitaly shows, Rome did its best to assuage Medici concerns over their support of the grand duchy through its diplomatic agents, and hence contributed to the transformation of Medici policy in this regard. The final years of Ferdinando’s reign were not devoid of conflict with Rome, as the stringent defense of orthodoxy on the part of the nuncios demonstrates: in particular, the increase in Roman Inquisitorial activity in Pisa in response to the arrival of foreign merchants (especially Jews and *conversos*) to Pisa and Livorno following the 1591 and 1593 *livornine* edicts.

Vitaly’s book will be useful to scholars of Tuscany, Mediterranean history, early modern diplomacy, and Rome. His vivid evocation of Rome’s men in Tuscany under Ferdinando I in those crucial years is a joy to read and goes a long way to fleshing out that historical context. This book is as much a portrait of those men as of Ferdinando’s changing and complex political will. It is a welcome addition to the body of literature on that grand duke, papal diplomacy, and early modern Europe at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

JAMES NELSON NOVOA

University of Ottawa

**Wolk-Simon, Linda, ed.**

***The Holy Name: Art of the Gesù: Bernini and His Age.* With the collaboration of Christopher M. S. Johns.**

Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts 17. Philadelphia: Saint Joseph’s University Press, 2018. Pp. xv, 639 + 246 colour ill. ISBN 978-0-916101-00-8 (hardcover) US\$50.

This tome comprises fourteen chapters by twelve authors; it contains a solid overview of early Jesuit history, biobibliographies, and case studies of specific