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Jules Speller

Galileo's Inquisition Trial Revisited

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This book shows that the known accounts of Galileo's trial leave many important facts unexplained or even clash with them. A most careful reading of the relevant documents and treatises backs an interpretation which has Pope Urban VIII sue Galileo for denying God's omnipotence or His omniscience by admitting the "absolute truth" of Copernicanism. The Pope's opinion results from an argument he fully trusts, together with his belief that Galileo failed to fulfill a condition to which the publication of the *Dialogue* was subjected. That the trial does not end with a conviction for Urban's awful "formal heresy" but merely for "vehement suspicion of heresy", with the "heresy" consisting in the pseudo-heretical belief in a doctrine contrary to the Bible, all this is due to the existence of a Galileo-friendly party inside the Holy Office, led by Cardinal Francesco Barberini and powerful enough to wring a compromise from the Pope.

Contents: The puzzle(s) of papal behavior · The Special Commission Report · An initial deviation: Galileo's first interrogation · The biased answers of the Consultants · An attempt at a solution: the extrajudicial interview · Implementing a promising plan · The Pope's "definitive decree" · The sentence · Urban's argument

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