Until relatively recently, and with few exceptions, American scholars dealing with the Italian Renaissance centered their research upon Florence, which by itself was not a bad choice. In the last few decades, however, the scope of research has broadened considerably, and monographs on other Italian political and cultural centers have begun to appear in larger numbers. The book under discussion is a good example of this trend, for its subject is Venice, which, at least in America a generation ago, was almost exclusively the private preserve of one scholar, Frederic C. Lane.

Of course, one could raise the objection that Grendler’s book, which covers the period 1540-1605, could hardly be classified as covering the Renaissance period; but the above remarks are even more applicable to this later period of the Counter Reformation.

As the book’s title indicates, the primary concern of Grendler’s investigations is the relationship between Venice and Rome over the issue of enforcing various laws and regulations dealing with book censorship. Venice, for centuries in firm control of the patriciate, had already in the fifteenth century established itself as the leading book production center and it continued to dominate the field during the sixteenth century, producing half or more of all the books printed in Italy. The papacy, rudely shaken by the Protestant Reformation, was awakened to the danger of propagating heretical ideas through the printed word and was interested in controlling the printing as well as the selling of imported suspect books. Because Venetians on the whole considered Rome as another foreign power, they cooperated with papal policies primarily when such policies were beneficial to the republic of Venice. Even then, other political considerations often held sway over the degree of strictness with which papal decrees concerning the book trade were being enforced in Venice.

Grendler’s first chapter is devoted to a survey of the Venetian bookmen during the sixteenth century and a discussion of their publishing practices. He estimates that some 14,800 editions were produced during this century, sometimes in runs of 2,000 or 3,000 copies, but generally on the average of 1,000 copies. Further, he discusses pricing policies and the economic and social aspects of the trade. Being relatively new, the printing trade was little affected by the guild, which was not formed until 1549 and in any case never played an important role. There also seems to be little evidence to show that the Venetian nobility participated in the book industry more than marginally. While the chapter contributes little that was not previously known, Grendler clearly demonstrates that he consulted not only the obvious but the obscure printed sources and delved into archival documents as well.

In the next chapter the author examines the Inquisition, beginning with this statement: “Redeeming a sinful Republic, worshiping God through church and creed, and obeying the spiritual authority of the pope were sometimes viewed as contradictory, rather than complementary activities” (p. 25). In other words the Signoria tended to view the papacy as another foreign power to be dealt with according to the dictates of local exigencies, rather than to be obeyed blindly.

It was not until 1542 that the papacy began the Counter Reformation by creating the Roman Inquisition. Pope Paul III urged the Venetians to suppress heretics and their books, but the Venetians at first ignored his plea because of political
considerations involving the German Protestant princes. Not until 1547 did the Doge appoint three noblemen, the *Tre Savii sopra eresia*, to assist the inquisitor, nuncio, and patriarch in suppressing heresy. Relatively speaking, the Venetian Inquisition was a fair-minded tribunal; in the period 1541-1592, during which 1,560 trials took place, it imposed and executed only fourteen death sentences. The most common punishments were public penance, forced donations to charity, imprisonment for a few years, or a combination of all three. By mid-century, papacy and republic had worked out a modus operandi in which demands for prosecution of heresy and local control could both be satisfied.

In the third chapter Grendler analyzes the growth of censorship. After a brief historical survey of attitudes on this subject, he picks up the story, in 1542, with the Council of Ten ordering the *Esecutori contro la bestemmia* to punish presses for infractions of the law. Heavier penalties were imposed. Furthermore, after 1547, the Venetian Inquisition began to confiscate and burn books. In 1549 the Council of Ten drafted and published the first Venetian Index of prohibited books, but the Senate failed to promulgate it. Another attempt to promulgate an Index in Venice occurred in 1554/55, but it too failed. In 1559 Pope Paul IV tried again, but the Venetian Collegio defied Rome, and Venetian bookmen continued to be protected. However, the Venetian nobility began to perceive the danger to the state of heretical ideas and, after 1559, began slowly to change their attitudes toward censorship.

The next chapter shows how Venetian publishers began to shift their production from secular vernacular literature to the field of religion, stimulated by a changing public consciousness and a religious revival. They also reprinted fewer of the older secular works. The change in attitudes of the governing classes was also marked; between 1565 and 1569 fifteen nobles were accused of heresy. In 1564 the Senate voted overwhelmingly to publish the Tridentine decrees, making Venice one of the first states to accept them. This was also the time when Venetians became convinced that local Jews acted as Turkish agents, which led to the growth of anti-Semitism.

Censorship was further strengthened by the promulgation of the Tridentine Index by Paul IV in 1564. In the same year the Index was published in Venice by the Aldine press and was frequently republished thereafter. The Council of Ten ruled in 1566 that *imprimatur* and *privilegio* were to be registered with the *Esecutori contro la bestemmia* and, in 1569, that the applicant had to deposit a copy of the manuscript for which a *testamur* was desired with the *Riformatori dello Studio di Padova*, which acted as a pre-censorship board.

By the 1560's Venice came to believe that the book industry had to be carefully regulated, not in order to please the papacy but simply for the security of the state. In 1569 the Council of Ten extended the prepublication procedures to include foreign printed books, and allowed inquisitorial inspections at the customshouse. Also for the first time, inspectors made surprise visits to bookstores. Civil and ecclesiastical censors worked hand in hand to suppress heresy, but where business and profits were endangered, the government supported the bookmen. This fact is best illustrated by the controversy involving the newly established reformed canonical texts, for which the papacy granted privileges to Roman printers. But when Venetians published these texts, the civil government refused to intervene.

The sixth chapter examines the clandestine book trade, which flourished despite the efforts of the Holy Office. By the 1580's many Venetian bookmen failed to
perceive censorship in religious terms and viewed its circumvention as a means of ensuring their livelihood. It is interesting that the greatest demand for prohibited contraband books was in occult titles.

During the decade of the 1590's, as a result of economic, ideological, and political realities, the attitude of the Venetian patriciate toward the Inquisition began to change, and the power of the Holy Office waned. With the decline of heresy and the growth of theories of state absolutism, Venice began to challenge Church prerogatives in landholding and other interferences with civil matters, especially civil jurisdiction over the clergy. The tensions between Venice and Rome continued to worsen; finally, in 1606, Pope Paul V placed Venice under interdict. Of course, these difficulties were reflected in the treatment of the Venetian bookmen by the civil authorities, who were less and less willing to cooperate with papal policies. The republic became convinced that its bookmen must be protected against papal regulations, which abetted the Roman press at the expense of Venice. Thus, in 1596, the Senate abolished all past, present, and future papal privileges. Similarly the enforcement of censorship laws declined and more and more prohibited titles entered the city. A specific dispute arose in 1596, where Pope Clement VIII promulgated the Clementine Index, but the Signoria refused to act. Impatient, the Church authorities proceeded to promulgate the Index in Venice and in doing so created a political storm. More than a month passed before a compromise was worked out.

The last chapter evaluates the impact of the Index and the Inquisition on Italian intellectual life. Grendler notes judiciously that the Counter Reformation was not foisted on a protesting lay society by the Church leaders; rather, it was achieved through the cooperative efforts of all segments of society. "The Index and Inquisition undeniably affected Italian intellectual developments, but were by no means the only, nor the major, influence at work. Certainly Italy altered profoundly in the cinquecento, but only a part of this great transformation can be charged to the Counter Reformation. And the Counter Reformation itself must be seen in the context of economic, intellectual, political, and religious change" (p. 292). While the Index and Inquisition lasted until the fall of the republic in 1797, it was most effective during the few decades of the late cinquecento.

The book also contains two appendices of relevant documents and an extensive bibliography: 32 manuscripts, 87 primary and 288 secondary printed sources. The book is well produced, very carefully edited — I failed to see any typographical errors — and contains eighteen illustrations, mainly of title pages of contemporary works.

On the whole, Grendler set for himself a clearly delimited topic and then carried out the task masterfully. He spared neither time nor energy to pursue even the more obscure archival or printed sources; the book is literally loaded with supportive evidence, perchance even overloaded in places. The organization of the book follows mainly a chronological development. It would have been a great help to the reader if the author had included a table listing the various pieces of legislation dealing with his topic; however, it is very easy to suggest to others how to improve their books.

LEONARDAS V. GERULAITIS, Oakland University