

0. LAWS in the PAPAL STATES - Story Preface

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5. LAWS in the PAPAL STATES

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This map depicts Italy's Papal States where the Pope of the Catholic Church was the Head of State and canon (church) law applied to all people (including non-Catholics) living within Papal-State borders.

Edgardo Mortara's case was not the first time a child had been kidnapped under similar conditions.

After the Inquisition began, in 1220, Jewish children who had been "baptized" were taken from their homes. But this time—in 1858—the politics were different.

During an earlier time, the power of the Inquisition was widely feared. People were encouraged to testify against their family and friends. The Church wanted to be sure there were no "heretics." Torture and death were common occurrences during the centuries when Inquisitors came to town.

This time, the kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara occurred precisely when the Pope's power as temporal ruler in Italy was under fierce attack. *This* time, an international press reported the story to the rest of the world.

While other European countries were moving away from autocratic rule, the Italian Papal States were still controlled by the absolute power of the Pope and the Catholic church. That power extended over secular authorities, such as the police.

By 1858, however, only within the borders of the Italian Papal States could a Papal Inquisitor order the local police to do what would not be allowed under secular law. The outrageous actions, displayed by both church and state officials in the Mortara case, helped to push the Papal States out of existence.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/LAWS-in-the-PAPAL-STATES-Kidnapping-of-Edgardo-Mortara>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/LAWS-in-the-PAPAL-STATES-Kidnapping-of-Edgardo-Mortara>