

Popes Cardinals And War The Military Church In Renaissance And Early Modern Europe

Written in the mid-fifteenth century, Pope Pius II's Commentaries are the only known autobiography of a reigning pontiff and a fundamental text in the history of Renaissance humanism. In this book, Emily O'Brien positions Pius' expansive autobiographical text within that century's contentious debate over ecclesiastical sovereignty. Presenting the Commentaries as Pius' response to the crisis of authority, legitimacy, and relevance that was engulfing the Renaissance papacy, she shows how the Commentaries function as both an aggressive assault on the papal monarchy's chief opponents and a systematic defense of Pius's own troubled pontificate and his pre-papal career. Illustrating how the language, imagery, and ideals of secular power inform Pius' apologetic self-portrait, *The Commentaries of Pope Pius II (1458–1464)* and *The Crisis of the Fifteenth-Century Papacy* demonstrates the role that Pius and his writings played in the evolution of the Renaissance papacy.

"All of us are called to keep striving towards something greater than ourselves and our families, and every family must feel this constant impulse. Let us make this journey as families, let us keep walking together." Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia* In his groundbreaking work on modern family life, *Amoris Laetitia: On Love in the Family*, Pope Francis continues to guide and lead the Church, calling us to be a sign of mercy and encouragement for families of all shapes and sizes. The Our Sunday Visitor edition includes exclusive reflection and discussion questions, to help Catholics grow in our understanding of this call, and act upon it. In *Amoris Laetitia: On Love in the Family* the Holy Father expands on the topics and considerations of the two Synods on the family, and adds his own considerations to help us provide pastoral guidance to support and strengthen today's families. *On Love in the Family* guides us through: Scripture – what we can learn from Biblical families and relationships with God and each other Reality – the experiences and challenges we face in today's world Tradition – essential aspects of Church teaching on marriage and families Love – what it means for all our relationships Ministry – Pope Francis offers pastoral perspectives for helping build strong families Spirituality – the expression of the Gospel message in our relationships

After 1500, European warfare was repeatedly revolutionized by new weapons, new methods for supplying armies in the field, improved fortifications and new tactics for taking fortifications. This allowed empires to grow, with, for example, the Ottomans expanding into the Middle East and Africa, Britain dominating India, and Russia conquering the steppe. The dynamics of resistance to this expansion were remarkably similar to what we see today in ISIS, Afghan and Pakistani Talibans, and various jihadist groups that are more tribal than Islamist. The driving force behind these organizations may be tribal resentment of the modern world undermining long-established traditions and beliefs. Religion or their interpretation of Islam is merely a glue that holds the rebels together. Such resistance continues to be met by world powers who misunderstand the motives of the people that take up arms against them, and we should understand that ours is not the first generation to deal with this problem, and ours will probably not be the last. However, there are some methods that work better than others. The failures and successes of the past can help us now and in the future.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century anarchy in Italy led to the capital of the Christian world being moved from Rome for the first and only time in history. It was a critical moment, and it resulted in seven successive popes remaining in exile for the next seventy years. The city chosen to replace Rome was Avignon. And depending on where you stood at the time they were seventy years of heaven, or of hellopinions

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invariably ran to extremes, as did the behaviour of the popes themselves. It was during this period of exile that the city witnessed some of the most turbulent events in the history of Christendom, among them the suppression of the Knights Templar and the last of the heretical Cathars, the first onslaught of the Black Death, the final collapse of the crusading dream, and the first decades of the Hundred Years War between England and France, in which successive Avignon popes attempted to mediate.

Chronicles the complete history of the Vatican's military and security forces, from 1796 through the present-day deployment of modern weapons and technology to protect the Pope and the Vatican from terrorists and assassins.

This book describes the change from the Catholic Church of the ancien regime to the church of the early nineteenth century as it affected the institution of the Papacy and through it the Church at large.

The startling changes that have taken place within the Catholic Church since World War II were the direct accomplishments of Pius XII and his successors. These modern popes, however, formed their policies and wrought these changes based on the work of four transitional popes who preceded them: Leo XIII (1878-1903), who re-established a direct link between the papacy and the lay communicant; Pius X (1903-1914), who was a conservative reactionary; and Benedict XV (1914-1922) and Pius XI (1922-1939), who revived and extended Leo's efforts to modernize the Church and its policies. Based largely on unpublished or ephemeral materials, Papal Elections in the Age of Transition recounts the stories of how these four men rose to the papal throne, including previously unpublished details of the conclaves. This fascinating narrative sheds new light on the rise to power of the popes who prepared the way for the Catholic Church at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

This story is predicated upon the little known fact that any male who has been baptized as a Christian is eligible to become Pope. The Catholic Church usually requires that he also be confirmed. This, however, is not the real impediment as such a thing is most unlikely to happen, on the face of it. Unless, of course, if as the Church proclaims the Holy Ghost actually exists. St. Malachy, an Irish mystic, created a remarkably accurate list of Popes from his day in the 1300s to beyond our present time. According to this list there are to be two more Popes; a short reign and then the last Pope. What would the world be like if the Holy Ghost did interfere in the election of the last Pope. That does indeed present us with many interesting possibilities. This book is in eight parts, starting with: THE END OF DAYS: The story opens in the late spring of 2007 with a conclave to elect a successor to the second-last Pope. For a number of months it has been deadlocked, when a series of dreams introduce a name that eventually is voted as the next Pope. A search finds the possessor of that name and a birthmark on his neck that will make him Pope. THE COMING: We go back to Ireland in 1896 where one of the O'Shey twins is murdered in a most gruesome manner. The other runs off to Canada. He marries a young woman he meets in a most unusual manner on the ship. They have a family and we follow their son Patrick (Paddy) O'Shey who has a very eventful life as a professional baseball player and war hero, and despite his feeling of failure his son becomes the new Pope. WAR: Concerns the exploits of Paddy O'Shey while in France in 1940. JOURNEY TO NOW: Here we follow the quiet life of our hero, James Michael O'Shey, from birth until he is most unexpectedly picked to be Pope. With a stop to cover the exploits of his father in the Far East during the war against the Japanese. FROM PERDITION TO PERIL: Back to Ireland in 1896 where the murdered of the O'Shey twin, one Jack Cassidy,, runs away in great remorse for the obscenity he has committed. He goes to England and to the astonishment of even himself, becomes a Catholic, a lawyer, a General serving in WWI and long time member of parliament. his son, Aaron, who lives a quiet life, has a son he names for his father; James Winston Cassidy becomes the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster and the antagonist to the new Pope. He is one of the ones who tries to kill Michael. IN THE BEGINNING:

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This section follows Michael as he accepts the charge to be Pope. He introduces a new theology into the Church, dissolves the College of Cardinals and calls an Ecumenical Council. He fires every bishop and most of the workers in the Curia and replaces them temporarily until the council can decide on the future structure of the Church. He replaces over a thousand Bishops with men who are not wedded to the fear based past. END OF THE BEGINNING: Here we follow Michael as he meets the world and introduces his new theology, travels to Canada, the United States and the UN, survives a number of attempts on his life, and generally puts his house in order. He introduces the universal Catholic Church and meets the resistance from the frightened ones with alacrity and forceful theological dexterity. However, a supposed miracle put a bit of a damper on his enthusiasm. THE END OF THE BEGINNING: Michael sets forth the criteria for the Council. When all seems to be going as expected he is faced with a double attempt to kill him. With this negative adventure, and a metaphysical juxtaposition, the fate of the Universal Catholic Church is put on hold while the readers make up their minds as to the desirability of the message that Michael preaches.

Marcantonio Colonna's *The Dictator Pope* has rocked Rome and the entire Catholic Church with its portrait of an authoritarian, manipulative, and politically partisan pontiff. Occupying a privileged perch in Rome during the tumultuous first years of Francis's pontificate, Colonna was privy to the shock, dismay, and even panic that the reckless new pope engendered in the Church's most loyal and judicious leaders. The Dictator Pope discloses that Father Mario Bergoglio (the future Pope Francis) was so unsuited for ecclesiastical leadership that the head of his own Jesuit order tried to prevent his appointment as a bishop in Argentina. Behind the benign smile of the "people's pope" Colonna reveals a ruthless autocrat aggressively asserting the powers of the papacy in pursuit of a radical agenda.

This book offers a new and interdisciplinary approach to the history of papal Rome, 1400-80. It argues that the College of Cardinals emerged as key agents of its renaissance because of the crises of the fifteenth century.

The first comprehensive overview of its subject in any language. Its thirty-five essays explain who cardinals were, what they did in Rome and beyond, for the Church and for wider society.

PULITZER PRIZE WINNER • NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE From National Book Award finalist David I. Kertzer comes the gripping story of Pope Pius XI's secret relations with Italian dictator Benito Mussolini. This groundbreaking work, based on seven years of research in the Vatican and Fascist archives, including reports from Mussolini's spies inside the highest levels of the Church, will forever change our understanding of the Vatican's role in the rise of Fascism in Europe. The Pope and Mussolini tells the story of two men who came to power in 1922, and together changed the course of twentieth-century history. In most respects, they could not have been more different. One was scholarly and devout, the other thuggish and profane. Yet Pius XI and "Il Duce" had many things in common. They shared a distrust of democracy and a visceral hatred of Communism. Both were prone to sudden fits of temper and were fiercely protective of the prerogatives of their office. ("We have many interests to protect," the Pope declared, soon after Mussolini seized control of the government in 1922.) Each relied on the other to consolidate his power and achieve his political goals. In a challenge to the conventional history of this period, in which a heroic Church does battle with the Fascist regime, Kertzer shows how Pius XI played a crucial role in making Mussolini's dictatorship possible and keeping him in power. In exchange for Vatican support, Mussolini restored many of the privileges the Church had lost and gave in to the pope's demands that the police enforce Catholic morality. Yet in the last years of his life—as the Italian dictator grew ever closer to Hitler—the pontiff's faith in this treacherous bargain started to waver. With his health failing, he began to lash out at the Duce and threatened to denounce Mussolini's anti-Semitic racial laws before it was too late.

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Horrified by the threat to the Church-Fascist alliance, the Vatican's inner circle, including the future Pope Pius XII, struggled to restrain the headstrong pope from destroying a partnership that had served both the Church and the dictator for many years. The Pope and Mussolini brims with memorable portraits of the men who helped enable the reign of Fascism in Italy: Father Pietro Tacchi Venturi, Pius's personal emissary to the dictator, a wily anti-Semite known as Mussolini's Rasputin; Victor Emmanuel III, the king of Italy, an object of widespread derision who lacked the stature—literally and figuratively—to stand up to the domineering Duce; and Cardinal Secretary of State Eugenio Pacelli, whose political skills and ambition made him Mussolini's most powerful ally inside the Vatican, and positioned him to succeed the pontiff as the controversial Pius XII, whose actions during World War II would be subject for debate for decades to come. With the recent opening of the Vatican archives covering Pius XI's papacy, the full story of the Pope's complex relationship with his Fascist partner can finally be told. Vivid, dramatic, with surprises at every turn, *The Pope and Mussolini* is history writ large and with the lightning hand of truth. Can Christian clergy - supposedly men of peace - also be warriors? In this lively and compelling history D.S. Chambers examines the popes and cardinals over several centuries who not only preached war but also put it into practice as military leaders. Satirised by Erasmus, the most notorious - Julius II - was even refused entrance to heaven because he was 'bristling and clanking with bloodstained armour'. *Popes, Cardinals and War* investigates the unexpected commitment of the Roman Church, at its highest level of authority, to military force and war as well as - or rather than - peace-making and the avoidance of bloodshed. Although the book focuses particularly on the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a notoriously belligerent period in the history of the papacy, Chambers also demonstrates an extraordinary continuity in papal use of force, showing how it was of vital importance to papal policy from the early Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. *Popes, Cardinals and War* looks at the papacy's stimulus and support of war against Muslim powers and Christian heretics but lays more emphasis on wars waged in defence of the Church's political and territorial interests in Italy. It includes many vivid portraits of the warlike clergy, placing the exceptional commitment to warfare of Julius II in the context of the warlike activities and interests of other popes and cardinals both earlier and later. Engaging and stimulating, and using references to scripture and canon law as well as a large range of historical sources, Chambers throws light on these extraordinary and paradoxical figures - men who were peaceful by vocation but contributed to the process of war with surprising directness and brutality - at the same time as he illuminates many aspects of the political history of the Church.

The authors focus on four major thematic areas – the reform of church, the reform of theology, the reform of perspective, and the reform of method – which together encompasses the breadth and depth of Cusanus' own reform initiatives.

The New York Times Bestseller '[An] earth-shaking exposé of clerical corruption' - National Catholic Reporter In *The Closet of the Vatican* exposes the rot at the heart of the Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church today. This brilliant piece of investigative writing is based on four years' authoritative research, including extensive interviews with those in power. The celibacy of priests, the condemnation of the use of contraceptives, the cover up of countless cases of sexual abuse, the resignation of Benedict XVI, misogyny among the clergy, the dramatic fall in Europe of the number of vocations to the priesthood, the plotting against Pope Francis – all these issues are clouded in mystery and secrecy. *In the Closet of the Vatican* is a book that reveals these secrets and penetrates this enigma. It derives from a system founded on a clerical culture of secrecy which starts in junior seminaries and continues right up to the Vatican itself. It is based on the double lives of priests and on extreme homophobia. The resulting schizophrenia in the Church is hard to fathom. But the more a prelate is homophobic, the more likely it is that he is himself gay. 'Behind rigidity there is always something hidden, in many cases a double life'. These are the words of Pope Francis himself and with them the Pope has unlocked the Closet. No one can claim to really understand the Catholic Church today until they

have read this book. It reveals a truth that is extraordinary and disturbing.

Where Heaven and Earth Meet is an interdisciplinary collection that focuses on the writings of Ademar of Chabannes, Western religious history and early Islamic Jerusalem.

THE STORY BEHIND THE SCREENPLAY OF THE TWO POPES, THE MAJOR MOTION PICTURE STARRING ANTHONY HOPKINS AND JONATHAN PRYCE From the Academy Award-nominated screenwriter of The Theory of Everything and Darkest Hour comes the fascinating and revealing tale of an unprecedented transfer of power, and of two very different men - who both happen to live in the Vatican. In February 2013, the arch-conservative Pope Benedict XVI made a startling announcement: he would resign, making him the first pope to willingly vacate his office in over 700 years. Reeling from the news, the College of Cardinals rushed to Rome to congregate in the Sistine Chapel to pick his successor. Their unlikely choice? Francis, the first non-European pope in 1,200 years, a one time tango club bouncer, a passionate soccer fan, a man with the common touch. Why did Benedict walk away at the height of power, knowing his successor might be someone whose views might undo his legacy? How did Francis - who used to ride the bus to work back in his native Buenos Aires - adjust to life as leader to a billion followers? If, as the Church teaches, the pope is infallible, how can two living popes who disagree on almost everything both be right? Having immersed himself in these men's lives to write the screenplay for The Two Popes, Anthony McCarten masterfully weaves their stories into one gripping narrative. From Benedict and Francis's formative experiences in war-torn Germany and Argentina to the sexual abuse scandal that continues to rock the Church to its foundations, to the intrigue and the occasional comedy of life in the Vatican, The Pope glitters with the darker and the lighter details of one of the world's most opaque but significant institutions.

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A member of the imperial Palaiologan family, albeit most probably illegitimate, Isidore became a scholar at a young age and began his rise in the Byzantine ecclesiastical ranks. He was an active advocate of the union of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches in Constantinople. His military exploits, including his participation in the defence of Constantinople in 1453, provide us with eyewitness accounts. Without doubt he travelled widely, perhaps more so than any other individual in the annals of Byzantine history: Greece, Asia Minor, Sicily, Russia, Poland, Lithuania, and Italy. His roles included diplomat, high ecclesiastic in both the Orthodox and Catholic churches, theologian, soldier, papal emissary to the Constantinopolitan court, delegate to the Council of Florence, advisor to the last Byzantine emperors, metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia, and member of the Vatican curia. This is an original work based on new archival research and the first monograph to study Cardinal Isidore in his many diverse roles. His contributions to the events of the first six decades of the quattrocento are important for the study of major Church councils and the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks. Isidore played a crucial role in each of these events.

In The Ottoman Threat and Crusading on the Eastern Border of Christendom during the Fifteenth Century Liviu Pilat and Ovidiu Cristea focus on less-known aspects of the later crusades in Eastern Europe, examining the ideals of holy war and political pragmatism.

Electing the Pope in Early Modern Italy, 1450-1700 is the first major study of early modern papal elections and uses them as an opening for re-assessing the papacy's wider history in the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. This was a momentous period for the papacy, which saw them acquire a temporal state, lose half a Church, see their state tip into decline, and then found them coming full circle by burnishing their pastoral credentials once more. The ceremonial pomp and high drama that accompanied early modern papal elections make compelling theatre and are documented here in detail for the first time in English. This study, however, is more than just an narrative account of interesting anecdotes: through the figures of these cardinals, it offers us a unique case study for observing the approaches to decision-making and problem-solving within an elite political group.

Examining the urban and architectural developments in Rome during the Pontificate of Julius II (1503–13) this book focuses on the political, religious and artistic motives behind the changes. Each chapter focuses on a particular project, from the Palazzo dei Tribunali to the Stanza della Segnatura, and examines their topographical and symbolic contexts in relationship to the broader vision of Julian Rome. This original work explores not just historical sources relating to buildings but also humanist/antiquarian texts, papal sermons/eulogies, inscriptions, frescoes and contemporary maps. An important contribution to current scholarship of early sixteenth century Rome, its urban design and architecture.

On the brief life and rule of all the popes from Simon Peter to the present one (Pope Benedict XVI).

This volume brings together a selection of the papers on the theme of the Papacy and the Crusades, delivered at the 7th Congress of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East. After the introduction by Michel Balard, the first papers examine aspects of crusader terminology. The next section deals with events and perceptions in the West, including papers on the crusades against the Albigensians and Frederick II, and on the situation in the Iberian peninsula. There follow studies on relations between crusaders and the local populations in the Byzantine world after 1204 and Frankish Greece, and in Cilician Armenia, while a final pair looks at papal interventions in Poland and Scandinavia.

Plague and Pleasure is a lively popular history that introduces a new hypothesis about the impetus behind the cultural change in Renaissance Italy. The Renaissance coincided with a period of chronic, constantly recurring plague, unremitting warfare and pervasive insecurity. Consequently, people felt a need for mental escape to alternative, idealized realities, distant in time or space from the unendurable present but made vivid to the imagination through literature, art, and spectacle.

The “explosive” (The New York Times) bestseller—now with a new introduction by the author When Hitler’s Pope, the shocking story of Pope Pius XII that “redefined the history of the twentieth century” (The Washington Post) was originally published, it sparked a firestorm of controversy both inside and outside the Catholic Church. Now, award-winning journalist John Cornwell has revisited this seminal work of history with a new introduction that both answers his critics and reaffirms his overall thesis that Pius XII, now scheduled to be canonized by the Vatican, weakened the Catholic Church with his endorsement of Hitler—and sealed the fate of the Jews in Europe.

This intimate, affectionate portrait of Pope John Paul II by his longtime secretary and confidant reveals fascinating new details about the opinions, hopes, fears, and dramatic life of this public man. “I had accompanied him for almost forty years: twelve in Kraków and then twenty-seven in Rome. I was always with him, always at his side. Now, in the moment of death, he’d gone on alone. . . .And now? Who is

accompanying him on the other side?" —From *A Life with Karol* Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz worked side by side with Pope John Paul II for almost forty years, enjoying unique access to both the public and private man. In *A life with Karol*, he provides a close-up glimpse into the Pope's life and the critical events of his papacy. Dziwisz was sitting next to the Pope during the assassination attempt in 1981. He recounts the Pope's reaction to 9/11, describing his thoughts and feelings on that day. And the Cardinal's moving description of the Pope's haunting memories of World War II uncovers the roots of the pontiff's intense opposition to George W. Bush's war on Iraq. The two men shared moments of fun and spontaneity as well. Dziwisz writes about the times the Pope would slip out of the Vatican, wearing a Panama hat, to stroll the streets of Rome, and he describes the clandestine ski and hiking trips the pair made to escape the Vatican. His firsthand account of the Pope's last years also reveals that John Paul II considered resigning. These stories and others lend added poignancy to Dziwisz's extraordinary portrayal of the Pope's courage and calmness during his final illness.

This popular text circulated widely in manuscript form and was printed in several editions between the late 15th and the early 18th centuries, in Latin, German, and Italian. The present volume represents the first time this work has been translated into English, bringing its colorful narrative to the attention of a wider audience. This edition also provides extensive footnotes, an appendix of rulers, and a lengthy introduction to Aeneas's life and the context and relevance of this work.

From 1900 through 2000, the Catholic Church has had nine popes. As the 21st century began, John Paul II was in his 22nd year as head of the church. During the century more than 600 cardinals have helped to lead the church. This biographical reference work covers all nine popes and all 641 cardinals. The first section presents the popes in chronological order and provides date and place of birth and death, education and training for the priesthood, positions held within the church, and roles in church leadership and various conclaves. In the second section the cardinals are listed alphabetically and much the same biographical information is provided for them. (An appendix gives all the cardinals appointed by John Paul II in 2001.)

When Pope Francis' pontificate has passed, it's very likely that one of the nineteen cardinals featured in these pages will be elected to become the next Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Church, the spiritual leader of over a billion Catholics and the most influential and widely respected moral and religious figure in the world. Yet outside the Vatican walls, despite the considerable roles that some of these men play in the Church and in the world, few of them are known by the public — or even by their brother cardinals. Hence this book, an engrossing and thoroughly documented instrument through which a future pope may be known in that sphere that matters most: his life and service, first as a priest, and then as a bishop. Written by the National Catholic Register's longtime Rome correspondent, Edward Pentin, in collaboration with an international team of qualified scholars, these encyclopaedic pages present you with the fruit of years of research. Each cardinal profile begins with a brief biography that sketches the major points of his ecclesiastical life. Then comes a detailed, richly footnoted report and assessment of his three fundamental roles as a successor to the apostles: his sanctifying role as a priest, his governing role as a bishop, and his prophetic role as a teacher. As an important bonus, these pages also carefully document many of the candidates' published views on moral and theological issues currently debated in the Church and in the public arena, as such views often reveal most efficiently the individual's true character and deepest held beliefs. Finally, each profile concludes with a summary, recapitulating the main points brought to light by the thorough research, giving readers and tomorrow's cardinal electors a fair and accurate picture of the man who may soon become The Next Pope.

Valla (1407-1457) was the most important theorist of the humanist movement. His most famous work is the present volume, an oration in

which Valla uses new philological methods to attack the authenticity of the most important document justifying the papacy's claims to temporal rule.

This volume is concerned with diplomacy between England and the papal curia during the first phase of the Anglo-French conflict known as the Hundred Years' War (1305-1360). On the one hand, Barbara Bombi compares how the practice of diplomacy, conducted through both official and unofficial diplomatic communications, developed in England and at the papal curia alongside the formation of bureaucratic systems. On the other hand, she questions how the Anglo-French conflict and political change during the reigns of Edward II and Edward III impacted on the growth of diplomatic services both in England and the papal curia. Through the careful examination of archival and manuscript sources preserved in English, French, and Italian archives, this book argues that the practice of diplomacy in fourteenth-century Europe nurtured the formation of a "shared language of diplomacy". The latter emerged from the need to "translate" different traditions thanks to the adaptation of house-styles, formularies, and ceremonial practices as well as through the contribution of intermediaries and diplomatic agents acquainted with different diplomatic and legal traditions. This argument is mostly demonstrated in the second part of the book, where the author examines four relevant case studies: the papacy's move to France after the election of Pope Clement V (1305) and the succession of Edward II to the English throne (1307); Anglo-papal relations between the war of St Sardos (1324) and the deposition of Edward II in 1327; the outbreak of the Hundred Years' Wars in 1337; and lastly the conclusion of the first phase of the war, which was marked in 1360 by the agreement between England and France known as the Treaty of Bretigny-Calais.

The first comprehensive study of Renaissance diplomacy for sixty years, focusing on Europe's most important political centre, Rome, between 1450 and 1530.

The first book-length study of Aquinas's teaching on just war, its antecedents, and its reception by subsequent thinkers. The stories of seven popes who ruled at seven different critical periods in the 600 years leading into the Reformation. The best-selling author of *Enigma* and *Fatherland* turns to today's Vatican in a ripped-from-the-headlines novel, and gives us his most ambitious, page-turning thriller yet--where the power of God is nearly equaled by the ambition of men. The pope is dead. Behind the locked doors of the Sistine Chapel, one hundred and eighteen cardinals from all over the globe will cast their votes in the world's most secretive election. They are holy men. But they have ambition. And they have rivals. Over the next seventy-two hours one of them will become the most powerful spiritual figure on Earth.

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