

The House Of Medici Its Rise And Fall Christopher Hibbert

Ever-loyal Maddalena, a diminutive, blue-eyed, black slave, has borne Cosimo de' Medici a son and seen him rise to the position of cardinal. Now, late in life, she finds herself committed to a convent, as part of a scheme to protect the Medici bank from ruin by Cosimo's sons, by hiding a fortune in gold for Cosimo's grandson, Lorenzo, to inherit. But as the months go by, and the gold does not appear, her faith in Cosimo begins to wane, and with it, her confidence in her own worth. Has she been duped? Approaching old age, she finds in the abbess a confessor, which enables her to share her true story and perhaps, at the same time, convince herself that her life has been worthwhile. But the abbess, too, has objectives of her own, and the two of them may not be on the same side. Edward Charles presents us here with the intrigue, glamour, wealth, and deception of fifteenth-century Florence. One woman's devotion forms the foundation upon which the famed Medici bank was built. The largest and most respected financial institution in Europe in its prime, it came to represent the might of the influential Medici clan, a family of great power, borne of Italy's gold; a

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family who scaled the very heights of human grandeur but was to suffer through one of the most catastrophic financial crashes of early banking. Skyhorse Publishing, as well as our Arcade, Yucca, and Good Books imprints, are proud to publish a broad range of books for readers interested in fiction—novels, novellas, political and medical thrillers, comedy, satire, historical fiction, romance, erotic and love stories, mystery, classic literature, folklore and mythology, literary classics including Shakespeare, Dumas, Wilde, Cather, and much more. While not every title we publish becomes a New York Times bestseller or a national bestseller, we are committed to books on subjects that are sometimes overlooked and to authors whose work might not otherwise find a home. The Borgia family have become a byword for evil. Corruption, incest, ruthless megalomania, avarice and vicious cruelty—all have been associated with their name. And yet, paradoxically, this family lived when the Renaissance was coming into its full flowering in Italy. Examples of infamy flourished alongside some of the finest art produced in western history. This is but one of several paradoxes associated with the Borgia family. For the family which produced corrupt popes, depraved princes and poisoners, would also produce a saint. Previously history has tended to condemn, or attempt in part to exonerate, this remarkable family. Yet in order to understand the Borgias, the Borgias must be

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related to their time, together with the world which enabled them to flourish. Within this context the Renaissance itself takes on a very different aspect. Was the corruption part of the creation, or vice versa? Would one have been possible without the other? The powerful forces which first played out in the amphitheaters of ancient Greece: hubris, incest, murder, rivalries and doomed families, treacheries of political power, twists of fate—they are all here. Along with the final, tragic downfall. All these elements are played out in full in the glorious and infamous history of the Borgia family.

Originally published in 1978 this book assesses the Medici achievements as they appear to the 21st Century reader. As well as discussing individuals from the Medici clan, Medicean politics, bloodshed and conspiracies are also examined and relations with the other city states. Much of the material is based upon Medici archives and helps to provide a distinctive view of the Medici mystique.

A sweeping and magisterial four-hundred-year history of both the city and the people who gave birth to the Renaissance. Between the birth of Dante in 1265 and the death of Galileo in 1642, something happened that transformed the entire culture of western civilization. Painting, sculpture, and architecture would all visibly change in such a striking fashion that there could be no going back on what had taken place. Likewise, the thought and self-conception of humanity

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would take on a completely new aspect. Sciences would be born—or emerge in an entirely new guise. The ideas that broke this mold began, and continued to flourish, in the city of Florence in northern central Italy. These ideas, which placed an increasing emphasis on the development of our common humanity—rather than other-worldly spirituality—coalesced in what came to be known as humanism. This philosophy and its new ideas would eventually spread across Italy, yet wherever they took hold they would retain an element essential to their origin. And as they spread further across Europe, this element would remain. Transformations of human culture throughout western history have remained indelibly stamped by their origins. The Reformation would always retain something of central and northern Germany. The Industrial Revolution soon outgrew its British origins, yet also retained something of its original template. Closer to the present, the IT revolution that began in Silicon Valley remains indelibly colored by its Californian origins. Paul Strathern shows how Florence, and the Florentines themselves, played a similarly unique and transformative role in the Renaissance.

In *Murder of a Medici Princess*, Caroline Murphy illuminates the brilliant life and tragic death of Isabella de Medici, one of the brightest stars in the dazzling world of Renaissance Italy, the daughter of Duke Cosimo I, ruler of Florence and

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Tuscany. Murphy is a superb storyteller, and her fast-paced narrative captures the intrigue, the scandal, the romantic affairs, and the violence that were commonplace in the Florentine court. She brings to life an extraordinary woman, fluent in five languages, a free-spirited patron of the arts, a daredevil, a practical joker, and a passionate lover. Isabella, in fact, conducted numerous affairs, including a ten-year relationship with the cousin of her violent and possessive husband. Her permissive lifestyle, however, came to an end upon the death of her father, who was succeeded by her disapproving older brother Francesco. Considering Isabella's ways to be licentious and a disgrace upon the family, he permitted her increasingly enraged husband to murder her in a remote Medici villa. To tell this dramatic story, Murphy draws on a vast trove of newly discovered and unpublished documents, ranging from Isabella's own letters, to the loose-tongued dispatches of ambassadors to Florence, to contemporary descriptions of the opulent parties and balls, salons and hunts in which Isabella and her associates participated. Murphy resurrects the exciting atmosphere of Renaissance Florence, weaving Isabella's beloved city into her story, evoking the intellectual and artistic community that thrived during her time. Palaces and gardens in the city become places of creativity and intrigue, sites of seduction, and grounds for betrayal. Here then is a narrative of compelling and epic

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proportions, magnificent and alluring, decadent and ultimately tragic. While creating his famous bronze of David and Goliath, Donatello's passion for his beautiful model and part time rent boy, Agnolo, ignites a dangerous jealousy that ultimately leads to murder. Luca, the complex and conflicted assistant, will sacrifice all to save Donatello, even his master's friend--the great patron of art, Cosimo de' Medici.

Ruler of Florence for seven bloody years, 1531 to 1537, Alessandro de' Medici was arguably the first person of color to serve as a head of state in the Western world. Born out of wedlock to a dark-skinned maid and Lorenzo de' Medici, he was the last legitimate heir to the line of Lorenzo the Magnificent. When Alessandro's noble father died of syphilis, the family looked to him. Groomed for power, he carved a path through the backstabbing world of Italian politics in a time when cardinals, popes, and princes vied for wealth and advantage. By the age of nineteen, he was prince of Florence, inheritor of the legacy of the grandest dynasty of the Italian Renaissance. Alessandro faced down family rivalry and enormous resistance from Florence's oligarchs, who called him a womanizer--which he undoubtedly was--and a tyrant. Yet this real-life counterpart to Machiavelli's Prince kept his grip on power until he was assassinated at the age of 26 during a late-night tryst arranged by his scheming cousins. After his death,

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his brief but colorful reign was criticized by those who had murdered him in a failed attempt to restore the Florentine republic. For the first time, the true story is told in *The Black Prince of Florence*. Catherine Fletcher tells the riveting tale of Alessandro's unexpected rise and spectacular fall, unraveling centuries-old mysteries, exposing forgeries, and bringing to life the epic personalities of the Medicis, Borgias, and others as they waged sordid campaigns to rise to the top. Drawing on new research and first-hand sources, this biography of a most intriguing Renaissance figure combines archival scholarship with discussions of race and class that are still relevant today.

A fresh telling of the rise and fall of the House of Medici, the family that dominated political and cultural life in Florence for three centuries.

Between 1512 and 1570, Florence underwent dramatic political transformations. As citizens jockeyed for prominence, portraits became an essential means not only of recording a likeness but also of conveying a sitter's character, social position, and cultural ambitions. This fascinating book explores the ways that painters (including Jacopo Pontormo, Agnolo Bronzino, and Francesco Salviati), sculptors (such as Benvenuto Cellini), and artists in other media endowed their works with an erudite and self-consciously stylish character that made Florentine portraiture distinctive. The Medici family had ruled Florence without interruption

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between 1434 and 1494. Following their return to power in 1512, Cosimo I de' Medici, who became the second Duke of Florence in 1537, demonstrated a particularly shrewd ability to wield culture as a political tool in order to transform Florence into a dynastic duchy and give Florentine art the central position it has held ever since. Featuring more than ninety remarkable paintings, sculptures, works on paper, and medals, this volume is written by a team of leading international authors and presents a sweeping, penetrating exploration of a crucial and vibrant period in Italian art.

A tall, yellow-haired young European traveller calling himself "Mogor dell'Amore," the Mughal of Love, arrives at the court of the real Grand Mughal, the Emperor Akbar, with a tale to tell that begins to obsess the whole imperial capital. The stranger claims to be the child of a lost Mughal princess, the youngest sister of Akbar's grandfather Babar: Qara Köz, 'Lady Black Eyes', a great beauty believed to possess powers of enchantment and sorcery, who is taken captive first by an Uzbek warlord, then by the Shah of Persia, and finally becomes the lover of a certain Argalia, a Florentine soldier of fortune, commander of the armies of the Ottoman Sultan. When Argalia returns home with his Mughal mistress the city is mesmerised by her presence, and much trouble ensues. The Enchantress of Florence is a love story and a mystery – the

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story of a woman attempting to command her own destiny in a man's world. It brings together two cities that barely know each other – the hedonistic Mughal capital, in which the brilliant emperor wrestles daily with questions of belief, desire and the treachery of sons, and the equally sensual Florentine world of powerful courtesans, humanist philosophy and inhuman torture, where Argalia's boyhood friend 'il Machia' – Niccolò Machiavelli – is learning, the hard way, about the true brutality of power. These two worlds, so far apart, turn out to be uncannily alike, and the enchantments of women hold sway over them both. But is Mogor's story true? And if so, then what happened to the lost princess? And if he's a liar, must he die?

The House of Medicis Rise and Fall William Morrow

An account of the fortunes and influences of the great Florentine banking family, covering over three hundred years of soldiers, art patrons, collectors, builders, popes, statesmen, and scholars.

The perfect introduction to England's history for readers of all ages.

A bestseller in hardback, this is a highly-praised and much-needed biography of the first Duke of Wellington, concentrating on the personal life of the victor of Waterloo, and based on the fruits of modern research. Christopher Hibbert is Britain's leading popular historian.

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One of the defining moments in Western history, the bloody and dramatic story of the battle for the soul of Renaissance Florence. By the end of the fifteenth century, Florence was well established as the home of the Renaissance. As generous patrons to the likes of Botticelli and Michelangelo, the ruling Medici embodied the progressive humanist spirit of the age, and in Lorenzo de' Medici (Lorenzo the Magnificent) they possessed a diplomat capable of guarding the militarily weak city in a climate of constantly shifting allegiances between the major Italian powers. However, in the form of Savonarola, an unprepossessing provincial monk, Lorenzo found his nemesis. Filled with Old Testament fury and prophecies of doom, Savonarola's sermons reverberated among a disenfranchised population, who preferred medieval Biblical certainties to the philosophical interrogations and intoxicating surface glitter of the Renaissance. Savonarola's aim was to establish a 'City of God' for his followers, a new kind of democratic state, the likes of which the world had never seen before. The battle between these two men would be a fight to the death, a series of sensational events—invasions, trials by fire, the 'Bonfire of the Vanities', terrible executions and mysterious deaths—featuring a cast of the most important and charismatic Renaissance figures. Was this a simple clash of wills between a benign ruler and religious fanatic? Between secular pluralism and repressive extremism? In an

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exhilaratingly rich and deeply researched story, Paul Strathern reveals the paradoxes, self-doubts, and political compromises that made the battle for the soul of the Renaissance city one of the most complex and important moments in Western history.

An account of the fortunes and influences of the great Florentine banking family, covering over three hundred years of soldiers, art patrons, collectors, builders, popes, statesmen, and scholars

"Cosimo de'Medici (1389-1464), the fabulously wealthy banker who became the leading citizen of Florence in the fifteenth century, spent lavishly as the city's most important patron of art and literature. This book is the first comprehensive examination of the whole body of works of art and architecture commissioned by Cosimo and his sons. By looking closely at this spectacular group of commissions, we gain an entirely new picture of their patron, and of the patron's point of view. Recurrent themes in the commissions - from Fra Angelico's San Marco altarpiece to the Medici palace - indicate the main interests to which Cosimo's patronage gave visual expression. Dale Kent offers new insights and perspectives on the individual objects comprising the Medici oeuvre by setting them within the context of civic and popular culture in early Renaissance Florence, and of Cosimo's life as the leader of the Medici lineage and the dominant force in the governing elite." "From the wealth of available documentation illuminating Cosimo de'Medici's life, the author considers how his own experience influenced his patronage; how the culture of Renaissance Florence provided a common idiom for the patron, his artists, and his audience; what he preferred and intended as a patron; and how focussing

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on his patronage of art alters the image of him that is based on his roles as banker and politician. Cosimo was as much a product as a shaper of Florentine society, Kent concludes. She identifies civic patriotism and devotion as the main themes of his oeuvre and argues that religious imperatives may well have been more important than political ones in shaping the art for which he was responsible and its reception."--BOOK JACKET.Title Summary field provided by Blackwell North America, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This colorful history of a powerful family brings the world they lived in—the glittering Rome of the Italian Renaissance—to life. The name Borgia is synonymous with the corruption, nepotism, and greed that were rife in Renaissance Italy. The powerful, voracious Rodrigo Borgia, better known to history as Pope Alexander VI, was the central figure of the dynasty. Two of his seven papal offspring also rose to power and fame—Lucrezia Borgia, his daughter, whose husband was famously murdered by her brother, and that brother, Cesare, who inspired Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Notorious for seizing power, wealth, land, and titles through bribery, marriage, and murder, the dynasty's dramatic rise from its Spanish roots to its occupation of the highest position in Renaissance society forms a gripping tale. From the author of *The Rise and Fall of the House of Medici* and other acclaimed works, *The Borgias and Their Enemies* is "a fascinating read" (*Library Journal*).

In Renaissance Italy, Elisabetta longs for romance, and when Leonardo da Vinci introduces her to Guiliano de Medici, whose family rules Florence but is about to be deposed, she has no inkling of the romance--and sorrow--that will ensue.

This book provides a thorough introduction to the War of American Independence. Told with great authority and clarity the book describes and details the effects of each notable event from

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1770 to 1781. The book examines each of the major battles and skirmishes but does not get bogged down in deep analysis of battle formations and strategies. Instead the book concentrates on the war as a whole and its political and economic impacts on Britain and America and consequently how each commander's strategy was affected. The book is littered with anecdotes to give the reader a clearer understanding of how the war affected the lives of those involved.

Recounts the life of Lorenzo de' Medici, the Florentine banker, statesman, and arts patron, and includes his competitive and at times violent career in politics.

A dazzling piece of Italian history of the infamous family that become one of the most powerful in Europe, weaving its history with Renaissance greats from Leonardo da Vinci to Galileo. Against the background of an age which saw the rebirth of ancient and classical learning, The Medici is a remarkably modern story of power, money and ambition. Strathern paints a vivid narrative of the dramatic rise and fall of the Medici family in Florence, as well as the Italian Renaissance which they did so much to sponsor and encourage. Strathern also follows the lives of many of the great Renaissance artists with whom the Medici had dealings, including Leonardo, Michelangelo and Donatello; as well as scientists like Galileo and Pico della Mirandola; and the fortunes of those members of the Medici family who achieved success away from Florence, including the two Medici popes and Catherine de' Médicis, who became Queen of France and played a major role in that country through three turbulent reigns. 'A great overview of one family's centuries-long role in changing the face of Europe' Irish Independent

One of America's most distinguished military historians offers the definitive account of the

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greatest tank battle of World War II—an epic clash of machines and men that matched the indomitable will of the Soviet Red Army against the awesome might of the Nazi Wehrmacht. While the Battle of Kursk has long captivated World War II aficionados, it has been unjustly overlooked by historians. Drawing on the masses of new information made available by the opening of the Russian military archives, Dennis Showalter at last corrects that error. This battle was the critical turning point on World War II's Eastern Front. In the aftermath of the Red Army's brutal repulse of the Germans at Stalingrad, the stakes could not have been higher. More than three million men and eight thousand tanks met in the heart of the Soviet Union, some four hundred miles south of Moscow, in an encounter that both sides knew would reshape the war. The adversaries were at the peak of their respective powers. On both sides, the generals and the dictators they served were in agreement on where, why, and how to fight. The result was a furious death grapple between two of history's most formidable fighting forces—a battle that might possibly have been the greatest of all time. In *Armor and Blood*, Showalter re-creates every aspect of this dramatic struggle. He offers expert perspective on strategy and tactics at the highest levels, from the halls of power in Moscow and Berlin to the battlefield command posts on both sides. But it is the author's exploration of the human dimension of armored combat that truly distinguishes this book. In the classic tradition of John Keegan's *The Face of Battle*, Showalter's narrative crackles with insight into the unique dynamics of tank warfare—its effect on men's minds as well as their bodies. Scrupulously researched, exhaustively documented, and vividly illustrated, this book is a chilling testament to man's ability to build and to destroy. When the dust settled, the field at Kursk was nothing more than a wasteland of steel carcasses, dead soldiers, and smoking debris. The Soviet

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victory ended German hopes of restoring their position on the Eastern Front, and put the Red Army on the road to Berlin. *Armor and Blood* presents readers with what will likely be the authoritative study of Kursk for decades to come. Advance praise for *Armor and Blood* “The size and the brutality of the vast tank battle at Kursk appalls, this struggle that gives an especially dark meaning to that shopworn phrase ‘last full measure.’ Prepare yourself for a wild and feverish ride over the steppes of Russia. You can have no better guide than Dennis E. Showalter, who speaks with an authority equaled by few military historians.”—Robert Cowley, founding editor of *MHQ: The Quarterly Journal of Military History* “A fresh, skillful, and complete synthesis of recent revelations about this famous battle . . . As a myth buster, *Armor and Blood* is a must-read for those interested in general and military history.”—David M. Glantz, editor of *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* “Refreshingly crisp, pointed prose . . . Throughout, [Showalter] demonstrates his adeptness at interweaving discussions of big-picture strategy with interesting revelations and anecdotes. . . . Showalter does his best work by keeping his sights set firmly on the battle at hand, while also parsing the conflict for developments that would have far-reaching consequences for the war.”—*Publishers Weekly*

The Year is 1500. Christopher Columbus, stripped of his title Admiral of the Ocean Seas, waits in chains in a Caribbean prison built under his orders, looking out at the colony that he founded, nurtured, and ruled for eight years. Less than a decade after discovering the New World, he has fallen into disgrace, accused by the royal court of being a liar, a secret Jew, and a foreigner who sought to steal the riches of the New World for himself. The tall, freckled explorer with the aquiline nose, whose flaming red hair long ago turned gray, passes his days in prayer and rumination, trying to ignore the waterfront gallows that are all too visible from his

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cell. And he plots for one great escape, one last voyage to the ends of the earth, one final chance to prove himself. What follows is one of history's most epic -- and forgotten -- adventures. Columbus himself would later claim that his fourth voyage was his greatest. It was without doubt his most treacherous. Of the four ships he led into the unknown, none returned. Columbus would face the worst storms a European explorer had ever encountered. He would battle to survive amid mutiny, war, and a shipwreck that left him stranded on a desert isle for almost a year. On his tail were his enemies, sent from Europe to track him down. In front of him: the unknown. Martin Dugard's thrilling account of this final voyage brings Columbus to life as never before--adventurer, businessman, father, lover, tyrant, and hero.

At its height Renaissance Florence was a centre of enormous wealth, power and influence. A republican city-state funded by trade and banking, its often bloody political scene was dominated by rich mercantile families, the most famous of which were the Medici. This enthralling book charts the family's huge influence on the political, economic and cultural history of Florence. Beginning in the early 1430s with the rise of the dynasty under the near-legendary Cosimo de Medici, it moves through their golden era as patrons of some of the most remarkable artists and architects of the Renaissance, to the era of the Medici Popes and Grand Dukes, Florence's slide into decay and bankruptcy, and the end, in 1737, of the Medici line.

A social history of London from the Early Middle Ages to the present which also

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serves as a comprehensive guide to its buildings and treasures

“The Confessions of Catherine de Medici is a dramatic, epic novel of an all-too-human woman whose strength and passion propelled her into the center of grand events. Meticulously-researched, this engrossing novel offers a fresh portrait of a queen who has too often been portrayed as a villain. Bravo Mr. Gortner!”—Sandra Gulland, author of *The Josephine B Trilogy* and *Mistress of the Sun* The truth is, not one of us is innocent. We all have sins to confess. So reveals Catherine de Medici, the last legitimate descendant of her family’s illustrious line. Expelled from her native Florence, Catherine is betrothed to Henri, son of François I of France. In an unfamiliar realm, Catherine strives to create a role for herself through her patronage of the famous clairvoyant Nostradamus and her own innate gift as a seer. But in her fortieth year, Catherine is widowed, left alone with six young children in a kingdom torn apart by the ambitions of a treacherous nobility. Relying on her tenacity, wit, and uncanny gift for compromise, Catherine seizes power, intent on securing the throne for her sons, unaware that if she is to save France, she may have to sacrifice her ideals, her reputation, and the secret of her embattled heart. BONUS: This edition contains a *The Confessions of Catherine de Medici* discussion guide and an excerpt from C.W. Gortner's *The Queen's Vow*. Praise for *The Confessions of Catherine de Medici* “Alison Weir

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and Philippa Gregory fans will devour this.”—Booklist “Highly recommended . . . a compelling and fascinating view of Catherine’s life and world.”—Historical Novels Review “Remarkably thoughtful in its insight into an unapologetically ruthless queen.”—Publishers Weekly “A fresh, well-researched and powerful portrait.”—RT Book Reviews

The Riveting Sequel to *The House of Medici: Inheritance of Power*. Lucrezia Tornabuoni, brought up in the Palazzo Medici alongside Cosimo’s children, always expected to marry his charismatic younger son, Giovanni. But now in later life, she finds herself imprisoned in a loveless marriage with the gout-ridden elder son, Piero. Like Cosimo, she sees the future salvation of the family in the hands of her own son, Lorenzo the Magnificent, but how can she be sure he inherits the mantle before Piero ruins everything? For years she has groomed her son to be a great prince, and in the process to ignore the Medici Bank—whose wealth has funded the City and Republic of Florence. But now the economy is faltering, the money is running out, the burdens of leadership are becoming more onerous for her son, and she begins to question whether she has led him astray. Her difficulty is that in the closed society of Florence, there is no-one she can confide in. Then, while on a journey away from the city, she is approached by a young priest, Girolamo Savonarola, recently appointed to a teaching post in Florence and

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asking for guidance about the workings of Florentine society. In confessing the secrets of her family to this benign outsider, she is able to unburden herself of the various worries that plague her. But Savonarola may not be the simple monk he appears, his objectives proving troublesome in compatibility with Lucrezia's as the two characters hurtle towards a thrilling and unexpected ending. Skyhorse Publishing, as well as our Arcade, Yucca, and Good Books imprints, are proud to publish a broad range of books for readers interested in fiction—novels, novellas, political and medical thrillers, comedy, satire, historical fiction, romance, erotic and love stories, mystery, classic literature, folklore and mythology, literary classics including Shakespeare, Dumas, Wilde, Cather, and much more. While not every title we publish becomes a New York Times bestseller or a national bestseller, we are committed to books on subjects that are sometimes overlooked and to authors whose work might not otherwise find a home. One of the world's leading historians of Renaissance Italy brings to life here the vibrant--and violent--society of fifteenth-century Florence. His disturbing narrative opens up an entire culture, revealing the dark side of Renaissance man and politician Lorenzo de' Medici. On a Sunday in April 1478, assassins attacked Lorenzo and his brother as they attended Mass in the cathedral of Florence. Lorenzo scrambled to safety as Giuliano bled to death on the cathedral floor.

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April Blood moves outward in time and space from that murderous event, unfolding a story of tangled passions, ambition, treachery, and revenge. The conspiracy was led by one of the city's most noble clans, the Pazzi, financiers who feared and resented the Medici's swaggering new role as political bosses--but the web of intrigue spread through all of Italy. Bankers, mercenaries, the Duke of Urbino, the King of Naples, and Pope Sixtus IV entered secretly into the plot. Florence was plunged into a peninsular war, and Lorenzo was soon fighting for his own and his family's survival. The failed assassination doomed the Pazzi. Medici revenge was swift and brutal--plotters were hanged or beheaded, innocents were hacked to pieces, and bodies were put out to dangle from the windows of the government palace. All remaining members of the larger Pazzi clan were forced to change their surname, and every public sign or symbol of the family was expunged or destroyed. April Blood offers us a fresh portrait of Renaissance Florence, where dazzling artistic achievements went side by side with violence, craft, and bare-knuckle politics. At the center of the canvas is the figure of Lorenzo the Magnificent--poet, statesman, connoisseur, patron of the arts, and ruthless "boss of bosses." This extraordinarily vivid account of a turning point in the Italian Renaissance is bound to become a lasting work of history. The roots of modern capitalism go back to the Italian banking system of the late

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Middle Ages and the Renaissance. In the fifteenth century, the Medici Bank succeeded in overshadowing its competitors, the Bardi and the Peruzzi, who were the giants of the fourteenth century, and grew into a vast establishment with branches in most of the large cities of Western Europe. A study of its operations is essential to an understanding of the economic conditions in Europe in the fifteenth century. From a careful study of pertinent documents, including a set of libri segreti (confidential ledgers) discovered in 1950, Professor de Roover has reconstructed the details of the bank's organization and operating methods; its loan policies, which reflected the Church's doctrine on usury; its trading and industrial investments; its roles within the Florentine guild system and tax structure; and its activities as financial agent of the Church. He covers every aspect of the bank's history, from its early years under the management of Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici to its collapse with the expulsion of the Medici from Florence. "An invaluable contribution to the economic history of the period....A splendid book."—Harry A. Miskimin, *The American Economic Review* "The most important work in English on a medieval or Renaissance bank."—*The Economist* "The best book ever written on the medieval banking system."—John T. Noonan, Jr., *Harvard Law Review* "The most authoritative treatment of its subject in any language."—Rondo Cameron, *The Accounting Review*

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The Renaissance in Florence conjures images of beautiful frescoes and elegant buildings—the dazzling handiwork of the city’s skilled artists and architects. But equally important for the centuries to follow were geniuses of a different sort: Florence’s manuscript hunters, scribes, scholars, and booksellers, who blew the dust off a thousand years of history and, through the discovery and diffusion of ancient knowledge, imagined a new and enlightened world. At the heart of this activity, which bestselling author Ross King relates in his exhilarating new book, was a remarkable man: Vespasiano da Bisticci. Born in 1422, he became what a friend called “the king of the world’s booksellers.” At a time when all books were made by hand, over four decades Vespasiano produced and sold many hundreds of volumes from his bookshop, which also became a gathering spot for debate and discussion. Besides repositories of ancient wisdom by the likes of Plato, Aristotle, and Quintilian, his books were works of art in their own right, copied by talented scribes and illuminated by the finest miniaturists. His clients included a roll-call of popes, kings, and princes across Europe who wished to burnish their reputations by founding magnificent libraries. Vespasiano reached the summit of his powers as Europe’s most prolific merchant of knowledge when a new invention appeared: the printed book. By 1480, the king of the world’s booksellers was swept away by this epic technological disruption, whereby

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cheaply produced books reached readers who never could have afforded one of Vespasiano's elegant manuscripts. A thrilling chronicle of intellectual ferment set against the dramatic political and religious turmoil of the era, Ross King's brilliant *The Bookseller of Florence* is also an ode to books and bookmaking that charts the world-changing shift from script to print through the life of an extraordinary man long lost to history—one of the true titans of the Renaissance.

Having founded the bank that became the most powerful in Europe in the fifteenth century, the Medici gained massive political power in Florence, raising the city to a peak of cultural achievement and becoming its hereditary dukes. Among their number were no fewer than three popes and a powerful and influential queen of France. Their influence brought about an explosion of Florentine art and architecture. Michelangelo, Donatello, Fra Angelico, and Leonardo were among the artists with whom they were socialized and patronized. Thus runs the "accepted view" of the Medici. However, Mary Hollingsworth argues that the idea that the Medici were enlightened rulers of the Renaissance is a fiction that has now acquired the status of historical fact. In truth, the Medici were as devious and immoral as the Borgias--tyrants loathed in the city they illegally made their own. In this dynamic new history, Hollingsworth argues that past narratives have focused on a sanitized and fictitious view of the

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Medici--wise rulers, enlightened patrons of the arts, and fathers of the Renaissance--but that in fact their past was reinvented in the sixteenth century, mythologized by later generations of Medici who used this as a central prop for their legacy. Hollingsworth's revelatory re-telling of the story of the family Medici brings a fresh and exhilarating new perspective to the story behind the most powerful family of the Italian Renaissance.

The first full-length study of the impact of the discovery of the Americas on Italian Renaissance art and culture, *Imagining the Americas in Medici Florence* demonstrates that the Medici grand dukes of Florence were not only great patrons of artists but also early conservators of American culture. In collecting New World objects such as featherwork, codices, turquoise, and live plants and animals, the Medici grand dukes undertook a “vicarious conquest” of the Americas. As a result of their efforts, Renaissance Florence boasted one of the largest collections of objects from the New World as well as representations of the Americas in a variety of media. Through a close examination of archival sources, including inventories and Medici letters, Lia Markey uncovers the provenance, history, and meaning of goods from and images of the Americas in Medici collections, and she shows how these novelties were incorporated into the culture of the Florentine court. More than just a study of the discoveries themselves, this volume is a vivid exploration of the New World as it existed in the minds of the Medici and their contemporaries. Scholars of Italian and American art

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history will especially welcome and benefit from Markey's insight.

Born in an age of turmoil, Cosimo de' Medici-heir to the Medici banking fortune-grew up privileged, but surrounded by poverty, corruption, war, and famine. It was the Middle Ages and Italy's future was bleak. Reserved and soft-spoken yet charismatic and determined, Cosimo vowed to use his wealth for the greater good, manipulating his enemies while courting popes and artists. Despite the oligarchs who schemed to seize the power he almost reluctantly held, Cosimo became a "first among equals," the de facto leader of the Florentine Republic. A devotee of ancient literature and patron of education and the arts, Cosimo brought peace, reforms and prosperity to the Republic, defining Florence as the cradle of the Renaissance. The Medici dynasty would last for centuries and without its support and keen eye for talent and genius, Da Vinci, Brunelleschi, and Galileo and many others may have never been given their own opportunities to change the world.

The second instalment in a prize-winning series charting the rise of the House of Medici as they become Masters of Florence and progenitors of the Renaissance. Florence, 1469. The Medici family is preparing for the marriage of its son and heir Lorenzo. His heart belongs to another, but this union will strengthen the alliance with a powerful Roman family. Torn between love and power, the bounties and the compromises of governing, Lorenzo has become complacent. He has forgotten the bloody path he forged on his ascent to power, and the enemies left in his wake. When the family's

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historical enemies and shadowy new conspirators put their bloody plot into action, the consequences will be terrible. In order to protect their supremacy, the Medici will enact a violent vengeance from which few will be spared.

This book is as captivating as the city itself. Hibbert's gift is weaving political, social and art history into an elegantly readable and marvellously lively whole. The author's book on Florence will also be at once a history and a guide book and will be enhanced by splendid photographs and illustrations and line drawings which will describe all the buildings and treasures of the city.

"The first English translation of the complete literary works of Lorenzo de' Medici (1 January 1449-9 April 1492), Italian statesman and ruler of the Florentine Republic during the Italian Renaissance. Comprises love poems, comic poems, short stories, and philosophical and devotional works, including one play"--

The name Borgia is synonymous with the corruption, nepotism, and greed that were rife in Renaissance Italy. The powerful, voracious Rodrigo Borgia, better known to history as Pope Alexander VI, was the central figure of the dynasty. Two of his seven papal offspring also rose to power and fame - Lucrezia Borgia, his daughter, whose husband was famously murdered by her brother, and that brother, Cesare, who served as the model for Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Notorious for seizing power, wealth, land, and titles through bribery, marriage, and murder, the dynasty's dramatic rise from its Spanish roots to its occupation of the highest position in Renaissance society forms a

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gripping tale. Erudite, witty, and always insightful, Hibbert removes the layers of myth around the Borgia family and creates a portrait alive with his superb sense of character and place.

The Medici are famous as the rulers of Florence at the high point of the Renaissance. Their power derived from the family bank, and this book tells the fascinating, frequently bloody story of the family and the dramatic development and collapse of their bank (from Cosimo who took it over in 1419 to his grandson Lorenzo the Magnificent who presided over its precipitous decline). The Medici faced two apparently insuperable problems: how did a banker deal with the fact that the Church regarded interest as a sin and had made it illegal? How in a small republic like Florence could he avoid having his wealth taken away by taxation? But the bank became indispensable to the Church. And the family completely subverted Florence's claims to being democratic. They ran the city. *Medici Money* explores a crucial moment in the passage from the Middle Ages to the Modern world, a moment when our own attitudes to money and morals were being formed. To read this book is to understand how much the Renaissance has to tell us about our own world. *Medici Money* is one of the launch titles in a new series, Atlas Books, edited by James Atlas. Atlas Books pairs fine writers with stories of the economic forces that have shaped the world, in a new genre - the business book as literature.

"An inventory of the private possessions of Lorenzo il Magnifico de' Medici, head of the

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ruling Medici family during the apogee of the Florentine Renaissance"--Provided by publisher.

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