

hitler the war and the pope

Hitler, the War, and the Pope: A Complex Historical Intersection

hitler the war and the pope—these three elements intertwine in one of the most tumultuous and debated chapters of 20th-century history. Exploring the relationship between Adolf Hitler, the devastating global conflict of World War II, and the role played by the papacy offers a fascinating glimpse into the moral, political, and religious dilemmas that shaped this era. Understanding this dynamic requires peeling back layers of historical context, diplomatic intricacies, and ethical challenges that defined the Vatican's stance during one of humanity's darkest periods.

The Historical Backdrop: Europe on the Brink

Before diving into the specific interactions between Hitler, the war, and the pope, it's important to set the scene. The early 20th century was marked by political upheaval, economic instability, and rising nationalism. Adolf Hitler's ascent to power in Germany in 1933 brought with it aggressive expansionist policies and the ideology of Nazism, which ultimately plunged the world into World War II by 1939.

Against this turbulent background, the Vatican and its leader, Pope Pius XII (elected in 1939), faced unprecedented challenges. The Catholic Church, with its spiritual authority and global influence, had to navigate the treacherous waters of wartime diplomacy, moral responsibility, and the protection of human rights amidst widespread atrocities.

Hitler and the Catholic Church: A Fraught Relationship

Early Interactions and the Reich Concordat

One of the earliest significant points of contact between the Nazi regime and the Vatican was the signing of the Reich Concordat in 1933. This treaty aimed to define the rights of the Catholic Church in Germany under Hitler's government. For the Vatican, it was a strategic move to protect the Church's autonomy and clergy; for Hitler, it helped gain legitimacy on the international stage and reduce opposition from German Catholics.

However, the concordat's effectiveness was questionable. Despite the agreement, the Nazi regime frequently violated its terms, suppressing Catholic organizations, arresting clergy, and propagating anti-religious ideology. This betrayal underscored the fraught and often hostile relationship between Hitler's regime and the Catholic Church.

The Vatican's Position During Hitler's Rise

Pope Pius XI, who preceded Pius XII, initially condemned many aspects of Nazism, especially its racist and totalitarian elements. His famous 1937 encyclical, *Mit brennender Sorge* ("With Burning Concern"), directly challenged Nazi ideology and policies, particularly their persecution of the Church and breaches of the concordat.

When Pius XII took over the papacy, the situation escalated with the outbreak of World War II. His approach was more cautious and diplomatic, focusing on neutrality and quiet diplomacy, which has sparked extensive debate among historians.

Pope Pius XII During World War II

Neutrality or Complicity? Debates on the Pope's Role

Pope Pius XII's role during the war remains one of the most controversial aspects when discussing Hitler the war and the pope. The Vatican maintained a policy of strict neutrality throughout the conflict, which Pius XII argued was essential to preserve the Church's ability to act as a mediator and provide humanitarian aid.

Critics argue that this neutrality bordered on silence or complicity, especially regarding the Holocaust. They claim the pope did not speak out forcefully enough against the genocide of Jews and other minorities perpetrated by Hitler's regime. Supporters, however, highlight the clandestine efforts Pius XII undertook to save thousands of lives through discreet diplomacy, sheltering refugees in Church properties, and facilitating escapes.

The Vatican's Humanitarian Efforts

Despite the controversies, there is documented evidence that the Vatican and Pope Pius XII played a significant role in humanitarian activities during the war. Some of these efforts included:

- **Sheltering Jews and political refugees:** Numerous monasteries, convents, and even the Vatican itself provided sanctuary.
- **Diplomatic interventions:** The Vatican used its diplomatic channels to influence Axis and Allied powers to mitigate suffering.
- **Secret rescue networks:** Catholic clergy and laypeople often worked covertly to help persecuted individuals escape Nazi territories.

These actions, while not publicized loudly during the war, demonstrate a degree of moral engagement within the constraints of the Vatican's position.

The Legacy of Hitler, the War, and the Pope in Historical Memory

Post-War Scrutiny and Historical Reassessment

After World War II, the relationship between Hitler, the war, and the pope came under intense scrutiny. The moral expectations placed on the papacy in the aftermath of the Holocaust led to decades of debate and research. Some historians accused Pius XII of failing to do enough, while others emphasized the complexity of the geopolitical environment and the Vatican's limited power.

More recently, access to Vatican archives from the war years has allowed scholars to reassess Pius XII's actions with greater nuance. These documents suggest a pope deeply concerned with human suffering, constrained by the necessity of preserving the Church's neutrality and survival in a dangerous political landscape.

Influence on Modern Catholic Diplomacy

The experiences of the Catholic Church during World War II, particularly in the face of Hitler's totalitarianism, have influenced how the Vatican approaches international conflicts today. The lessons learned about balancing moral voice with diplomatic pragmatism continue to shape papal policies.

Modern popes often emphasize human rights, peacebuilding, and interfaith dialogue, reflecting a more proactive stance inspired partly by the challenges faced in the era of Hitler, the war, and the pope.

Understanding the Complex Dynamics: Lessons and Reflections

The intertwining stories of Hitler, the war, and the pope provide a powerful case study in the complexities of leadership during crises. It reveals how religious institutions grapple with political totalitarianism, moral imperatives, and the harsh realities of war.

For those interested in history, theology, or international relations, this topic encourages a deeper reflection on:

- How neutrality can both protect and limit moral action.
- The tension between public denunciation and private diplomacy.
- The role of faith-based organizations in times of political oppression.

By examining the historical context, the Vatican's internal challenges, and the broader geopolitical pressures, one gains a richer understanding of the difficult choices

confronting Pope Pius XII and the Catholic Church during World War II.

The narrative of Hitler, the war and the pope is far from simple; it's a testament to the enduring struggle between conscience and circumstance, faith and politics, silence and action.

Frequently Asked Questions

What was the relationship between Adolf Hitler and Pope Pius XII during World War II?

The relationship between Adolf Hitler and Pope Pius XII was complex and marked by cautious diplomacy. Pope Pius XII maintained a position of neutrality during World War II but was criticized for not speaking out more forcefully against the Nazi regime and the Holocaust.

Did Pope Pius XII support or oppose Hitler's policies during the war?

Pope Pius XII opposed many of Hitler's policies on moral grounds but chose a policy of diplomatic neutrality to try to protect the Catholic Church and promote peace. He condemned racism and violence in general terms but avoided direct public denunciations of Hitler.

How did the Vatican respond to the Holocaust during Hitler's regime?

The Vatican, under Pope Pius XII, condemned the persecution of Jews and called for humanitarian aid, but critics argue that the Pope did not do enough to publicly denounce the Holocaust or intervene directly to stop Nazi atrocities.

Were there any secret negotiations or communications between Hitler and the Pope during the war?

There were some indirect communications and diplomatic efforts between the Vatican and Nazi Germany, but no formal negotiations. The Vatican sought to maintain its neutrality while trying to mediate peace and protect Catholics.

How has historical perspective on Pope Pius XII's role during Hitler's war evolved?

Historical perspectives have shifted over time, with some defending Pope Pius XII as a cautious leader who saved lives through quiet diplomacy, while others criticize him for moral silence and insufficient action against Nazi crimes.

Did Hitler or the Nazi regime perceive the Catholic Church as a threat?

Yes, the Nazi regime viewed the Catholic Church as a potential threat due to its influence and opposition to Nazi ideology. The regime sought to control or suppress the Church's activities, leading to tensions and persecution of clergy.

What role did the Catholic Church play in resisting or collaborating with Hitler's regime?

The Catholic Church's role was mixed; some clergy and members actively resisted Nazi policies, helping victims and opposing the regime, while others were complicit or remained silent. The Vatican's leadership aimed for neutrality but faced criticism over its responses.

Are there any significant documents or speeches from Pope Pius XII addressing the war and Hitler?

Pope Pius XII issued several encyclicals and speeches during the war promoting peace and condemning violence and racism in general terms, such as the 1942 Christmas message. However, he avoided explicit references to Hitler or the Holocaust.

Additional Resources

Hitler, the War, and the Pope: An Analytical Exploration of a Complex Historical Triad

hitler the war and the pope represent a historically complex and often controversial triad that has intrigued scholars, historians, and the general public for decades. The interactions, perceptions, and implications of the relationship between Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime, the global conflict of World War II, and the role of the Papacy—particularly Pope Pius XII—have been subjects of intense debate. This article delves into the multifaceted dimensions of this topic, examining the geopolitical, moral, and religious contexts that shaped the interactions and legacies of these key players during one of humanity's darkest chapters.

The Contextual Framework: Hitler's Rise and the Catholic Church

Understanding the relationship between Hitler, the war, and the pope requires situating events within the broader political and religious landscape of early 20th-century Europe. Adolf Hitler's ascent to power in 1933 marked a dramatic shift in Germany's political order, with the Nazi regime espousing aggressive nationalism, racial ideology, and totalitarian control. Concurrently, the Catholic Church, led by Pope Pius XI until 1939 and then Pope Pius XII, faced the challenge of responding to a rapidly changing world order that threatened religious freedoms, ethical norms, and human dignity.

The Vatican's position was inherently delicate. On one hand, the Church sought to preserve its autonomy and moral authority amid increasing state control and ideological extremism. On the other hand, it was confronted with the rise of a regime that openly opposed many Christian values while simultaneously courting the Church's influence to legitimize its rule. This tension set the stage for a complex and often ambiguous relationship during the war years.

Pope Pius XI and the Early Nazi Threat

Pope Pius XI's papacy (1922–1939) coincided with the rise of Nazi Germany. He was outspoken in his condemnation of totalitarian regimes, including communism and Nazism. In 1937, Pius XI issued the encyclical **Mit brennender Sorge** ("With Burning Concern"), which directly criticized Nazi ideology and racial policies. This document, unusual for its directness and for being written in German rather than Latin, was smuggled into Germany and read from Catholic pulpits, signaling the Vatican's disapproval of Nazi racial persecution and breaches of the 1933 Reich Concordat.

Yet, despite this denunciation, the Vatican maintained the Concordat—a treaty signed with Hitler's government that sought to protect the Church's rights in Germany but was repeatedly violated by the Nazis. This paradox highlights the Vatican's strategic balancing act: condemning Nazi abuses while preserving institutional interests and attempting to protect Catholic populations under totalitarian rule.

World War II: The Vatican's Diplomatic and Moral Dilemmas

The outbreak of World War II in 1939 thrust the Vatican into a precarious position. Pope Pius XII, elected shortly before the war began, inherited a world engulfed in conflict and moral catastrophe. His papacy has since been scrutinized for its role during the Holocaust and the broader war effort.

The Vatican's Neutrality and Diplomatic Efforts

Pope Pius XII adopted a stance of official neutrality throughout World War II. This neutrality was intended to position the Vatican as a potential mediator and to safeguard the Church's global mission. However, critics argue that this approach led to silence or insufficient action in the face of Nazi atrocities, particularly the systematic genocide of Jews.

Conversely, defenders of Pius XII highlight the Vatican's behind-the-scenes efforts to save lives. Evidence points to covert initiatives to assist refugees, shelter Jews in Church properties, and facilitate escape routes. The Vatican's diplomatic channels were used to negotiate prisoner exchanges and convey humanitarian appeals, though the extent and efficacy of these efforts remain debated.

Controversies Surrounding Pius XII and the Holocaust

The question of whether Pope Pius XII did enough to oppose Hitler's war and the genocide perpetrated by the Nazis remains highly contentious. Several factors contribute to this debate:

- **Public Statements:** Pius XII refrained from explicitly naming the Nazis or the Holocaust in his public addresses, opting for general condemnations of violence and injustice.
- **Information Constraints:** The Vatican's access to reliable information about the full scale of the Holocaust was limited, affecting its responses.
- **Strategic Considerations:** Open confrontation with Nazi Germany carried risks of exacerbating persecution of Catholics and Jews in occupied territories.
- **Post-War Narratives:** The Cold War context and evolving historiography have influenced interpretations of Pius XII's wartime conduct.

Comparative Perspectives: The Church's Role in Other Totalitarian Contexts

To better understand the Vatican's wartime position, it is helpful to compare it with the Church's responses to other totalitarian regimes, such as Stalinist Russia or Fascist Italy. Unlike the overt ideological confrontation with communism, the Vatican's approach to Nazism reflected a complex calculus involving the preservation of religious rights, the protection of the faithful, and the limits of moral diplomacy.

For example, the Church's resistance to communism was often vocal and unequivocal, whereas its stance towards Nazism mixed condemnation with cautious engagement. This contrast highlights the nuanced challenges posed by different forms of authoritarianism and the competing priorities faced by religious leadership.

The Legacy of Hitler, the War, and the Pope in Modern Historiography

The legacy of Hitler, the war, and the pope continues to evolve as new archival materials emerge and scholarly methodologies advance. Recent decades have seen:

- Greater access to Vatican archives from the war period, shedding light on internal deliberations and diplomatic correspondence.

- Reevaluation of Pius XII's actions, balancing criticisms with acknowledgment of humanitarian efforts.
- Broader discussions about the role of religious institutions in political crises and human rights abuses.
- Public debates fueled by films, books, and documentaries that have popularized various interpretations.

These developments underscore the ongoing importance of rigorous, evidence-based inquiry rather than simplistic judgments regarding the pope's wartime role.

Conclusion: Navigating the Complexities of History

The interplay between Hitler, the war, and the pope encapsulates a narrative fraught with moral ambiguity, political pragmatism, and human tragedy. Pope Pius XII's actions and inactions during World War II reflect the profound difficulties faced by religious leadership confronted with unprecedented evil and global conflict. While definitive answers remain elusive, continuous scholarly investigation enriches our understanding of this critical historical epoch and prompts reflection on the responsibilities of spiritual authority amid political upheaval.

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hitler the war and the pope: *Hitler, the War, and the Pope* Ronald J. Rychlak, 2000 Perhaps no modern-day leader of the Roman Catholic Church has sparked as much controversy as Pope Pius XII, the Bishop of Rome during World War II. Was he a Nazi sympathizer? Or did he vehemently oppose Hitler's regime? The conflicting opinions about Pius XII's wartime performance indicate not only the complexities of the man, the former Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, but also the difficulty in understanding the Hitler era and the inherent conflict between political posturing and pastoral actions. With exacting scholarship, Professor Ron Rychlak gives a full exploration of the background facts, including discussions of history, religion, politics, diplomacy, and military tactics. Then come ten fundamental questions concerning Pope Pius XII and the Nazis which are answered with legal analysis and authoritative citation. The epilogue provides a critical examination of John Cornwell's recent book on the same topic, *Hitler's Pope: the Secret History of Pius XII*. - Back cover.

hitler the war and the pope: *Hitler, the War, and the Pope, Revised and Expanded*

Ronald Rychlak, 2010-05-27 Was Pope Pius XII a Nazi Sympathizer? For almost fifty years, a controversy has raged about Pope Pius XII. Was the Pope who had shepherded the Church through World War II a Nazi sympathizer? Was he, as some have dared call him, Hitler's pope? Did he do nothing to help the Jewish people in the grips of the Holocaust? In a thoroughly researched and meticulously documented analysis of the historical record, Ronald Rychlak has gotten past the anger and emotion and uncovered the truth about Pius XII. Not only does he refute the accusations against the Pope, but for the first time documents how the slanders against him had their roots in a Soviet Communist campaign to discredit him and, by extension, the Church. Let those who doubt but read Rychlak, follow his exquisitely organized courtroom-like arguments. What Professor Rychlak brings to the forum are facts, not rhetoric; dates, not conjecture; evidence, not slander.... The world owes Ronald Rychlak a debt for bringing the truth to light. -- Rabbi Eric A. Silver In his well-crafted pages...the portrait that emerges is one of an extraordinary pastor facing extremely vexing circumstances, of a holy man vying against an evil man, of a human being trying to save the lives of other human beings, of a light shining in the darkness. -- John Cardinal O'Connor (1920-2000) Archbishop of New York (from the Foreword to the first edition) I have read many books on Pius XII, and this is by far the most dispassionate in laying out the context, relevant facts, accusations, and evidence pro and con. The book is highly engaging because it is filled with so many little-known facts. The research has been prodigious. Yet the presentation is as down-to-earth as it would have to be in a courtroom.... This is a wonderfully realistic book. -- Michael Novak, George Frederick Jewett Scholar in Religion, Philosophy, and Public Policy, American Enterprise Institute

hitler the war and the pope: The Pope at War David I. Kertzer, 2022-11-03 Filled with discoveries, this is the dramatic story of Pope Pius XII's struggle to respond to the Second World War, the Holocaust, and the Nazi domination of Europe. The Pope at War is the third in a trilogy of books about the papacy's response to the rise of Fascism and Nazism. It tells the dramatic story of Pope Pius XII's struggle to respond to the Second World War, the Holocaust, and the ongoing Nazi attempts to exterminate the Jews of Europe. It is the first book dealing with the war to make extensive use of the newly opened Vatican archives for the war years. It is based, as well, on thousands of documents from the Italian, German, French, British, and American archives. Among the many new discoveries brought to light is the discovery that within weeks of becoming pope in 1939, Pius XII entered into secret negotiations with Hitler through Hitler's emissary, a Nazi Prince who was married to the daughter of the King of Italy and who was very close to Hitler. The negotiations were kept so secret that not even the German ambassador to the Holy See was informed of them. The book also offers new insight into the thinking behind Pius XII's decision to maintain good relations with the German government during the war, including keeping the Germans happy while they occupied Rome in 1943-1944. And throughout, David I. Kertzer shows the active role of the Italian Church hierarchy in promoting the Axis war while the pope, who as bishop of Rome was responsible for the Italian hierarchy, offered his silent blessings and cast his public speeches in such a way that both sides could claim support for their cause.

hitler the war and the pope: Church of Spies Mark Riebling, 2015-09-29 History has accused wartime pontiff Pius the Twelfth of complicity in the Holocaust and dubbed him Hitler's Pope. Riebling shows that, in reality, Pius ran the world's largest church, smallest state, and oldest spy service. Skimming from church charities to pay covert couriers, and surreptitiously tape-recording meetings with top Nazis, Pius played sent birthday cards to Hitler-- while secretly plotting to kill him. Fearing that overt protest would impede his covert actions, he muted his public response to Nazi crimes.

hitler the war and the pope: Hitler, the War, and the Pope Ronald J. Rychlak, 2000 Perhaps no modern day leader of the Catholic Church has sparked as much controversy as Pope Pius XII, the bishop of Rome during World War II. Was he a Nazi sympathizer? Or did he vehemently oppose Hitler's regime? The conflicting opinions about Pius XII's wartime performance indicate not only the complexities of the man, the former Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, but also the difficulty in understanding the Hitler era and the inherent conflict between political posturing and pastoral actions.

hitler the war and the pope: The Pius War Joseph Bottum, David G. Dalin, 2010-03-16 In the brutal fight that has raged in recent years over the reputation of Pope Pius XII-leader of the Catholic Church during World War II, the Holocaust, and the early years of the Cold War-the task of defending the Pope has fallen primarily to reviewers. These reviewers formulated a brilliant response to the attack on Pius, but their work was scattered in various newspapers, magazines, and scholarly journals-making it nearly impossible for the average reader to gauge the results. In *The Pius War*, Weekly Standard's Joseph Bottum has joined with Rabbi David G. Dalin to gather a representative and powerful sample of these reviews, deliberately chosen from a wide range of publications. Together with a team of professors, historians, and other experts, the reviewers conclusively investigate the claims attacking Pius XII. *The Pius War*, and a detailed annotated bibliography that follows, will prove to be a definitive tool for scholars and students-destined to become a major resource for anyone interested in questions of Catholicism, the Holocaust, and World War II.

hitler the war and the pope: Hitler's Pope John Cornwell, 2000 Draws on secret archives to present a record of the career of Pope Pius XII, showing his collaboration with the Nazis and his anti-Semitism, and discusses his continuing influence.

hitler the war and the pope: The Myth of Hitler's Pope David G. Dalin, 2012-03-28 Was Pope Pius XII secretly in league with Adolf Hitler? No, says Rabbi David G. Dalin, but there was a cleric in league with Hitler: the grand mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husseini. As Pope Pius XII worked to save Jews from the Nazis, the grand mufti became Hitler's staunch ally and a promoter of the Holocaust, with a legacy that feeds radical Islam today. In this shocking and thoroughly documented book, Rabbi Dalin explodes the myth of Hitler's pope and condemns the mythmakers for not only rewriting history, but for denying the testimony of Holocaust survivors, hijacking the Holocaust for unseemly political ends, and ignoring the real threat to the Jewish people.

hitler the war and the pope: The Pope at War David I. Kertzer, 2022 Filled with discoveries, this is the dramatic story of Pope Pius XII's struggle to respond to the Second World War, the Holocaust, and the Nazi domination of Europe. *The Pope at War* is the third in a trilogy of books about the papacy's response to the rise of Fascism and Nazism. It tells the dramatic story of Pope Pius XII's struggle to respond to the Second World War, the Holocaust, and the ongoing Nazi attempts to exterminate the Jews of Europe. It is the first book dealing with the war to make extensive use of the newly opened Vatican archives for the war years. It is based, as well, on thousands of documents from the Italian, German, French, British, and American archives. Among the many new discoveries brought to light is the discovery that within weeks of becoming pope in 1939, Pius XII entered into secret negotiations with Hitler through Hitler's emissary, a Nazi Prince who was married to the daughter of the King of Italy and who was very close to Hitler. The negotiations were kept so secret that not even the German ambassador to the Holy See was informed of them. The book also offers new insight into the thinking behind Pius XII's decision to maintain good relations with the German government during the war, including keeping the Germans happy while they occupied Rome in 1943-1944. And throughout, David I. Kertzer shows the active role of the Italian Church hierarchy in promoting the Axis war while the pope, who as bishop of Rome was responsible for the Italian hierarchy, offered his silent blessings and cast his public speeches in such a way that both sides could claim support for their cause.

hitler the war and the pope: Hitler's Shadow War Donald M. McKale, 2006-03-17 In *Hitler's Shadow War*, World War II scholar Donald M. McKale contends that the persecution and murder of the Jews, Slavs, and other groups was Hitler's primary effort during the war, not the conquest of Europe. According to McKale, Hitler and the Nazi leadership used the military campaigns of the war as a cover for a genocidal program that centered on the Final Solution. Hitler continued to commit extensive manpower and materials to this shadow war even when Germany was losing the battles of the war's closing years.

hitler the war and the pope: The Pope's Jews Gordon Thomas, 2012-10-02 A revelatory account of the Vatican's efforts to save thousands of Jewish people during World War II refutes

beliefs about Pius XII's neutrality.

hitler the war and the pope: The Life and Pontificate of Pope Pius XII Frank Coppa, 2013-02-04 Eugenio Pacelli, Pope Pius XII, is one of the most studied but least understood popes of the twentieth century while his pontificate remains the most turbulent and controversial. Although there is a general consensus that he faced serious problems during his tenure--fascist aggression, the Second World War, the Nazi genocide of the Jews, the march of communism, and the Cold War--there is disagreement on his response to these developments. Applauded by some as an apostle for peace for his attempt to prevent the outbreak of war, he has been denounced by others as an advocate of appeasement for this same effort. Praised by both Christian and Jews for his Crusade of Charity during the war, he was denounced by many for his silence during the Holocaust. These conflicting interpretations, dubbed the Pius Wars, are often narrow in focus, lack objectivity, and have shed more heat than light. Written by one of the foremost historians of Pius XII, the present biographical study, unlike the greater part of the vast and growing historiography of Pope Pius XII, is a balanced and nonreactive account of his life and times. Its focus is not on the pope's silence during the Holocaust, though it does address the issue in a historical and objective framework. This is a biography of the man as well as the pope. It probes the roots of his traditionalism and legalism, his approach to modernity and reformism in Church and society, and the influences behind his policies and actions. This book is the first biography of Eugenio Pacelli to appear in English since the opening of the papers of the pontificate of Pius XI (1922-1939), in which Pacelli served as nuncio to Germany and secretary of state, along with the publication of the memories of figures close to Papa Pacelli. ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Frank J. Coppa is the first recipient of the Lifetime Distinguished Scholarship Award of the American Catholic Historical Association and professor of history and the director of doctoral studies in modern world history at St. John's University. He has published widely in the areas of modern Europe, modern Italy, and papal history. His more recent works include *The Papacy, the Jews, and the Holocaust*; *Politics and Papacy in the Modern World*; *The Policies and Politics of Pope Pius XII*; *Controversial Concordats: The Vatican's Relations with Napoleon, Mussolini, and Hitler*; and the *Encyclopedia of Modern Dictators*. PRAISE FOR THE BOOK: This book adds a great deal to what we currently know about this most written about pope. Frank Coppa introduces a number of principles which need to be discussed by experts and also by biographers of this pope, most importantly the concepts of papal impartiality and anti-Judaism as related to Pope Pius XII.--Charles R. Gallagher, S.J., assistant professor of history, Boston College This is a balanced and highly nuanced biography of Eugenio Pacelli that examines the whole life and times of the man. Frank Coppa has examined the considerable, publicly available, historical record on Pacelli, placed the war years and the Holocaust in the broader scope of Pius XII's life, and brought much needed attention to the oft-neglected pre-1939 and post-1945 years of this complex, enigmatic and intriguing man.--Paul O'Shea, co-director of the Australian Institute for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Sydney These books approach the wartime pontiff with such a clear mastery of the arguments that both Pius's supporters and his denigrators will find it difficult in the future to expect any serious student to accept the hoary myths that have clouded or exalted that pontiff's reputation . . . Coppa opens both books with the statement that Pius is the most studied but least understood of modern pontiffs. His books will go a long way toward changing that perception. --The Catholic Historical Review A refreshingly balance

hitler the war and the pope: The Conspiracy Against Hitler in the Twilight War Harold C. Deutsch, 1968-05-20 *The Conspiracy Against Hitler in the Twilight War* was first published in 1968. Minnesota Archive Editions uses digital technology to make long-unavailable books once again accessible, and are published unaltered from the original University of Minnesota Press editions. This is the first detailed account in English of the German anti-Nazi plot of September 1939 - May 1940, a conspiracy which involved the services of Pope Pius XII as in intermediary. Much new information is presented, and the book puts the whole story of the German resistance movement in a clearer light than has been possible before. Much of the account is based on the testimony of over fifty witnesses whom Professor Deutsch interviewed or interrogated, comprising virtually all the

participants or observers who survived the period. He also had access to previously unavailable French and Belgian documents as well as to diaries and other private material. As the author explains, there were four major rounds of opposition to the Hitler regime, the conspiracy described in this volume being the second. IN many ways it was the round in which circumstances were the most favorable for success. High military quarters were the most fully committed, it was the only plan in which a foreign power at odds with Germany (britain) took a supporting position, and it was the only instance in which a notable outside figure, Pius XII, made his good offices available as an intermediary. The role of the Pope in this conspiracy has been known in a general way since 1946, but Professor Deutsch's investigation is the first intensive study were at the core of the affair, Josef Muller, the Opposition agent who dealt with the Pope and who later became the Bavarian Minister o Justice, and Rev. Robert Leiber, S.F., the Pope's confidential aide. In his conclusion Professor Deutsch points out that the story of this conspiracy clearly testifies to the moral nature of the German resistance movement. The author writes: No term recurred more often in these months to define the conflict with the Third Reich than 'the decent Germany.'

hitler the war and the pope: *The Pope's Dilemma* Jacques Kornberg, 2015-01-01 A meticulous and careful analysis of the career of the twentieth century's most controversial pope, *The Pope's Dilemma* argues that Pius XII's refusal to condemn Nazi Germany and its allies was driven by the desire to keep Catholics within the Church.

hitler the war and the pope: Pope Pius XII and the Holocaust Carol Rittner, John K. Roth, 2016-10-06 This collaborative effort by a number of the world's leading experts on the Holocaust examines the question: how should Vatican policies during World War II be understood? Specifically, could Pope Pius XII have curbed the Holocaust by vigorously condemning the Nazi killing of Jews? Was Pius XII really 'Hitler's Pope', as John Cornwell suggested? Or has he unfairly become a scapegoat when he is really deserving of canonization as a saint? In *Pope Pius XII and the Holocaust*, scholars including Michael Marrus, Michael Phayer, Richard L. Rubenstein and Susan Zuccotti wrestle with these questions. The book has four main themes: (1) Pope Pius XII must be understood in his particular historical context. (2) Pope Pius XII put the well-being of the Roman Catholic Church, as he understood it, first and foremost. (3) In retrospect, Pope Pius XII's priorities, understandable though they are, not only make him a problematic Christian leader but also raise important questions about post-Holocaust Christian identity. (4) Jewish and Christian memories of the Holocaust will remain different, but reconciliation can continue to grow. On all sides, relations between Christians and Jews can be improved by an honest engagement with history and by continuing reflection on what post-Holocaust Christian and Jewish identities ought and ought not to mean.

hitler the war and the pope: War and Genocide Doris L. Bergen, 2009-02-16 In examining one of the defining events of the twentieth century, Doris L. Bergen situates the Holocaust in its historical, political, social, cultural, and military contexts. Unlike many other treatments of the Holocaust, this revised, second edition discusses not only the persecution of the Jews, but also other segments of society victimized by the Nazis: Gypsies, homosexuals, Poles, Soviet POWs, the handicapped, and other groups deemed undesirable. With clear and eloquent prose, Bergen explores the two interconnected goals that drove the Nazi German program of conquest and genocide—purification of the so-called Aryan race and expansion of its living space—and discusses how these goals affected the course of World War II. Including firsthand accounts from perpetrators, victims, and eyewitnesses, the book is immediate, human, and eminently readable.

hitler the war and the pope: Rethinking World War Two Jeremy Black, 2015-01-29 History is both the past and our accounts of the past. In *Rethinking World War Two*, Jeremy Black explores the contesting accounts and interpretations of the war, critically examining the leading controversies surrounding the conflict, its aftermath and its ongoing significance in the modern world. The first half of the book considers controversies surrounding the course of the war, with chapters looking at the importance of military history, the causes of the war, politics and grand strategy and domestic politics. The second half goes on to consider the memory of the war and its echoes in political and

military spheres, with chapters devoted to the memory of the war in Europe and in Asia. A detailed further reading section provides guidance on how to take study of various topics further. Rethinking World War Two is unique in offering a survey of both the events of the conflict and the various debates surrounding its memory. It will be an invaluable resource for any student of World War Two, particularly those seeking a better understanding of its continuing legacy in the postwar world.

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