

views of Venetian history and its role are far from conventional and the result is a work of great originality and sometimes fascinating ideas.

The author does not use Venetian archival documents as he is obviously unfamiliar with them and partly as a result of this the work does contain certain factual errors. This should not diminish the value of this volume since its intention was not to offer facts, but rather to present ideas and in that respect the book is fully successful.

McNeill discusses the most varied aspects of Venice's role in history: from commercial and shipbuilding techniques to politics, art and philosophy, but the accent is clearly on cultural and intellectual influences. The author spans a vast chronological and geographical area, introducing constantly original points of view, interesting comparisons and sometimes making quite unexpected connections. In addition, one cannot help feeling that McNeill's interpretation of Venetian history contains much that is applicable to our own time and thus this study of the Venetian past holds many useful lessons for today's world.

This book is an altogether fascinating and frequently brilliant approach to the history of Venice and of a large part of Europe and the Levant. It is certain to generate research into heretofore neglected aspects of Venetian history and this will be one of its important impacts. It is, of course, possible to disagree with some of the author's ideas and conclusions, but there is no denying that he has made an extremely interesting and valuable contribution not only to the study of Venice—a Republic that was one of the key elements in the development of Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe—but also to the study of the Balkans, Eastern Europe and the Levant as a whole.

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Anthony Rhodes, *The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators 1922-1945*, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973, pp. 383.

Recently there has been an upsurge of interest in the diplomacy of the Vatican. Focusing upon the Second World War, historians, journalists, and playwrights have examined the record for evidence of Pope Pius XII's political sympathies, the Papacy's response to the Jewish holocaust, and the Vatican's interest in mediating the conflict. The Vatican has joined the debate by publishing its wartime diplomatic correspondence in the multi-volume *Actes et Documents du Saint Siège relatifs à la Seconde Guerre Mondiale*. Given the interest and the available sources it was only a matter of time before the appearance of a full-scale history of Papal foreign policy in the period. In a scholarly and balanced analysis Anthony Rhodes surveys wartime diplomacy in the context of the Vatican's response to the political turbulence of the post-Versailles world.

The author demonstrates that Vatican diplomacy can be understood only as an attempt to enhance the pastoral mission of the Church through political means. In pursuit of this goal the Holy See adopted a pragmatic policy, seeking accommodation with whatever regime or movement protected the religious mission. When conciliation failed, the Vatican was not above political intervention in the affairs

of recalcitrant states through support for opposition groups or the imposition of religious sanctions.

The investigation of Vatican policy in the interwar years is a valuable contribution to a little known area of diplomatic history. In a survey ranging from Mexico to the Middle East the author reveals the scope and influence of the Papacy. Separate chapters deal with the Italian Concordat of 1929, the Italo-Ethiopian War, the Soviet Union, and the Spanish Civil War. Of special interest to students of Balkan affairs is the analysis of Vatican relations with the Hapsburg Secession States. In particular, the troubled negotiations over a concordat with Yugoslavia provide an insight into Papal diplomacy. King Alexander needed an agreement on the status of the Church in order to preserve peace between the Orthodox Serbians and the Catholic Croats. Realizing the King's dilemma, the Holy See prolonged negotiations until it received important political concessions. Orthodox protests, however, prevented the promulgation of the agreement and Church-state relations remained a source of political conflict.

The treatment of the Vatican and the Second World War is conventional. The author endorses the thesis that Pope Pius XII wisely adopted neutrality as the best guarantee of global Church interests. Within the limitations of this neutrality the Pope did not hesitate to speak out against offences to the laws of men and nations. The author specifically refutes allegations of Papal sympathy with Germany and passivity during the extermination of the Jews. Special consideration is given to the issue of the Vatican and the Jews as well as Papal activity in the Occupied States including the Balkans and the Axis States. An entire chapter is devoted to the regime of Anton Pavelitch, the fascist dictator of the rump state of Croatia. A devout Catholic, Pavelitch enhanced the status of the Church in Croatia while persecuting the Serbian Orthodox and Jewish minorities. The author recounts the terrible pogroms and the attempts by the Holy See to restrain Pavelitch and the fanatical Croatian clergy. An analysis of Papal relations with the partisans of Tito is unfortunately brief and focuses mainly upon the activity of Captain Evelyn Waugh of the British Military Mission and his attempt to report anti-Catholic persecutions by the communists.

In terms of the scope of the study and the sophistication of the analysis this work is unrivalled. For both the specialist in Papal diplomacy and the general student of modern European and East European history it is a valuable contribution to the literature.

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