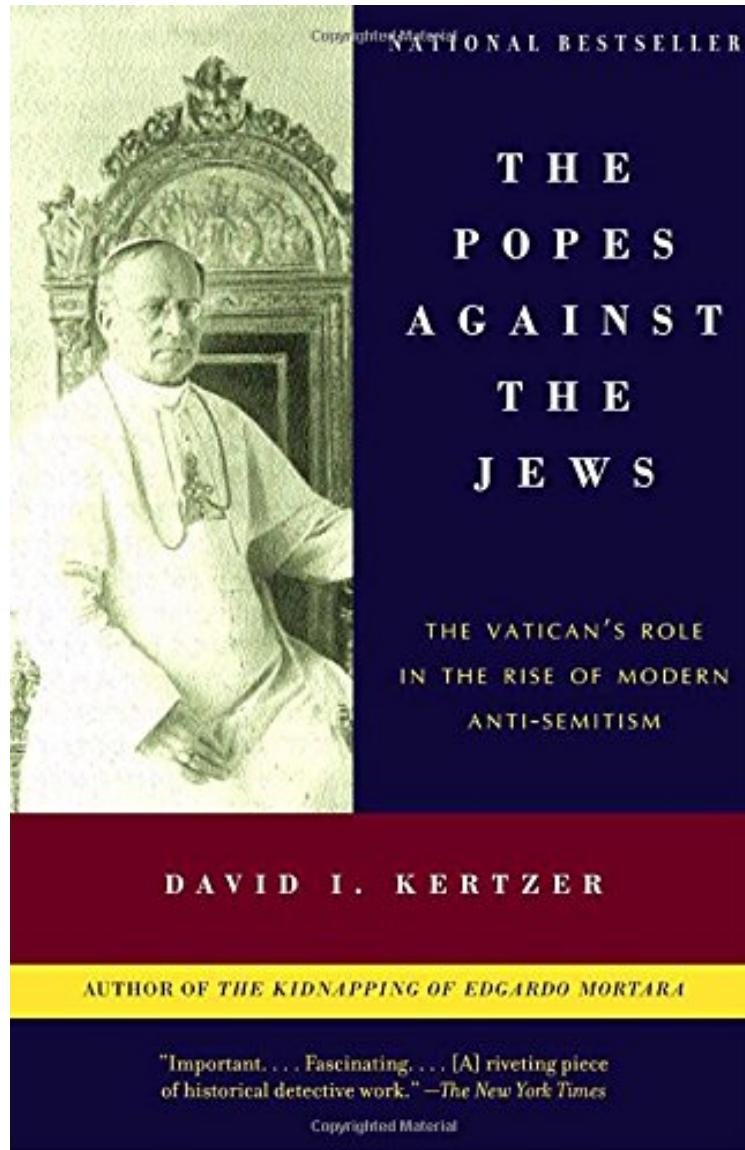


(Ebook pdf) The Popes Against the Jews: The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism

# The Popes Against the Jews: The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism

David I. Kertzer

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**David I. Kertzer : The Popes Against the Jews: The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Popes Against the Jews: The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism:

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In this meticulously researched, unflinching, and reasoned study, National Book Award finalist David I. Kertzer presents shocking revelations about the role played by the Vatican in the development of modern anti-Semitism. Working in long-sealed Vatican archives, Kertzer unearths startling evidence to undermine the Church's argument that it played no direct role in the spread of modern anti-Semitism. In doing so, he challenges the Vatican's recent official statement on the subject, *We Remember*. Kertzer tells an unsettling story that has stirred up controversy around the world and sheds a much-needed light on the past.

.com The Vatican's 1998 report "*We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*" purportedly exonerated the Church of complicity in the Holocaust. In *The Popes Against the Jews*, David I. Kertzer argues that the report is "not the product of a Church that wants to confront its history." Kertzer's book refutes the Church's thesis that the Holocaust grew out of "an anti-Judaism that was essentially more sociological and political than religious." In fact, Kertzer asserts, those dimensions of European anti-Semitism developed "in no small part due to the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church itself." The racial laws of fascist Italy and the Nuremberg Laws of 1930s Germany, for example, were directly modeled on the Church's own rules governing treatment of Jews: until the collapse of the Papal States in the late 19th century, Jews living in these territories were forced to wear yellow badges and live in ghettos. Kertzer's arguments make for compelling reading because they're presented in story form, based on the actions of the popes themselves. Access to long-sealed Church archives allowed Kertzer to reconstruct some of the most shocking, secret conversations that occurred in the Vatican in the decades leading up to World War II. --Michael Joseph GrossFrom Publishers WeeklyA number of excellent studies have recently addressed the political and social role of the Catholic Church in Europe during the Holocaust. Along comes a book that explores the church's role in setting the stage for that Holocaust. If the title of *The Popes Against the Jews: The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism* isn't enough of a hint, David Kertzer spells out his thesis in the introduction: Although "the Vatican never approved the extermination of the Jews... the teachings and actions of the Church, including those of the popes themselves, helped make it possible." Kertzer argues that centuries of the church's demonization of the Jews paved the way for genocide. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.From Library JournalKertzer (history, Brown Univ.) expands on a theme he first developed in *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* (LJ 5/1/97). In his latest book, he exposes a trail of anti-Semitic papal policies and practices that stretched from the French Revolution to the era of the Final Solution. Kertzer argues that the modern popes and their minions helped create and perpetuate an anti-Semitic Catholic culture that facilitated the eventual extermination of six million European Jews. He asserts that despite occasional denunciations of the persecution of the Jews, the Roman Curia for political and theological reasons persistently demonized the European Jews by accusing them of such heinous crimes as the ritualistic murder of Christian children. His thesis is grounded on a thorough examination of recently released Vatican archival material and a penetrating analysis of Catholic journals and newspapers. Kertzer reveals a far more systemic pattern of papal anti-Semitism than even John Cornwell confronts in *Hitler's Pope* (LJ 5/15/99). His book promises to stir up considerable controversy and belongs on the shelves of both public and academic libraries. Jim Doyle, Sara Hightower Regional Lib., Rome, GA Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.