



The Borgias and Their Enemies: 1431-1519

By Christopher Hibbert

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Christopher Hibbert's latest history brings the family and 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 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 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.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Acclaimed British historian Hibbert's latest work focuses on three members of the notorious Borgia family of Spain, who came to power in Rome with the election of Alfonso de Borgia (1378–1458), the scholarly bishop of Valencia, to the papacy as Calixtus III. Calixtus's nephew Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia (1431–1503) was known for decadence as well as keen administrative skills. Cardinal Rodrigo played a key role in electing Pope Sixtus IV, had a lucrative career as vice chancellor under five popes, fathered several children and bribed his way to becoming pope himself, as Alexander VI, in 1492. His children were infamous, including the unscrupulous military leader and politician Cesare (1475–1507), who inspired Machiavelli's *The Prince* and murdered his own brother and brother-in-law to achieve his goals, while his daughter Lucrezia (1480–1519) overcame an incestuous reputation to become a respected patron of the arts as duchess of Ferrara. The book is a heavily researched and generally engrossing account of a famous dynasty, but readers may wish Hibbert (*The Rise and Fall of the House of Medici*) had used a more assertive and analytical voice to accompany the detailed descriptions of Renaissance life. (Oct.)

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Review

PRAISE FOR CHRISTOPHER HIBBERT

"[A] superbly scrupulous and sympathetic interpreter."—*The Boston Globe*

"Simply unputdown-able."—*The New York Times Book Review*

About the Author

Christopher Hibbert has written more than fifty acclaimed books, including *The Rise and Fall of the House of Medici* and *Rome: The Biography of a City*. A leading popular historian whose works reflect meticulous scholarship, he is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. He is married with three children and lives in Oxfordshire.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ernie Swisher:

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