

The Power of Protocol

How did the papacy govern European religious life without a proper bureaucracy and the normal resources of a state? From Late Antiquity, papal responses were in demand. The 'apostolic see' took over from Roman emperors the discourse and demeanour of a religious ruler of the Latin world. Over the centuries, it acquired governmental authority analogous to that of a secular state – except that it lacked powers of physical enforcement, a solid financial base (aside from short periods) and a bureaucracy as defined by Max Weber. Through the discipline of applied Diplomatics, which investigates the structures and settings of documents to solve substantive historical problems, *The Power of Protocol* explores how such a demand for papal services was met. It is about the genesis and structure of papal documents – a key to papal history generally – from the Roman empire to after the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, and is the only book of its kind.

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The Power of Protocol

*Diplomatics and the Dynamics of Papal
Government, c. 400–c. 1600*

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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-36111-8 — The Power of Protocol
D. L. d'Avray
Frontmatter
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Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
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314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
a department of the University of Cambridge.

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www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009361118

DOI: 10.1017/9781009361156

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First published 2023

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

*A Cataloging-in-Publication data record for this book is available from the Library of
Congress.*

ISBN 978-1-009-36111-8 Hardback

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TO J.C.W.

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Acknowledgements

Archivio Apostolico Vaticano staff, Benedetta Albani, Bernard Barbiche, Barbara Bombi, British Library Manuscript Room staff, Peter Clarke, Emily Corran, Cecilia Cristellon, Simon Ditchfield, Liz Friend-Smith, Michael Haren (who corrected my errors and suggested the title of the book), Klaus Herbers, Peter Herde, Joshua Hey, Jochen Johrendt, Patrick Lantschner, Ana Paula Lloyd, Werner Maleczek (embodiment of the great Austrian school – I owe more than I can say to his detailed comments), Nelson Minnich, Wolfgang Müller, Jessika Nowak, Sergio Pagano, Miles Pattenden, Ken Pennington, Daniel Ponziani, Kirsi Salonen, John Sabapathy, Benjamin Savill (see copious acknowledgment in footnotes to Chapter 3), Julia Smith, Tom Smith, Ludwig Schmugge, students (inspirational to their teacher) on the UCL ‘Manuscripts and Documents’ MA course, Ugo Taraborrelli, Julia Walworth, Benedict Wiedemann, Agata Zielinska, and (last but perhaps most) Patrick Zutshi.

Abbreviations

AAV	= Vatican City, Archivio Apostolico Vaticano
ACDF	= Archivio Congregazione della Dottrina della Fede
ANF	= Archives Nationales de France
BAV	= Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana
BL	= British Library
J ³	= <i>Regesta Pontificum Romanorum ... edidit ... P. Jaffé</i> , ed. N. Herbers et al., 3rd edn., 3 vols. to date (Göttingen, 2016–), i, ed. N. Herbers, M. Schütz, et al. (2016); ii, ed. N. Herbers, W. Könighaus, T. Schlauwitz, et al. (2017); iii, ed. N. Herbers, J. Werner, and W. Könighaus (2017). The number accompanying J ³ is the document number. ‘Old Jaffé’ refers to the two preceding editions. The first number cited is the document number in the more recent: <i>Regesta Pontificum Romanorum ... edidit ... P. Jaffé</i> , ed. W. Wattenbach, F. Kaltenbrunner, P. Ewald, and S. Loewenfeld, 2nd edn., 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1885–1888). The second number cited, in parentheses, refers to <i>Regesta Pontificum Romanorum</i> , ed. P. Jaffé, 1st edn., 2 vols. (Berlin, 1851)
MGH	= Monumenta Germaniae Historica
PL	= electronic Patrologia Latina Database (‘Migne’), now available through ProQuest
TNA	= The National Archives, Kew, London
*	= see Transcriptions at the end of the volume, at the date after the asterisk.

Preface

This book comes from decades of teaching papal Diplomatics with Palaeography to Master's level at UCL to a series of keen and inspiring students. An underlying assumption of that course has been that the admittedly technical discipline of Diplomatics – the study of the structures and genesis of documents – is a key to historical research. That it is especially crucial for understanding papal history is a central argument in this book. I needed to write the book before attempting further studies to explain why individuals and institutions came to the papacy for decisions and privileges. The demand does indeed require explanation, but the complementary problem, addressed here, is to explain how responses were possible on such an enormous scale, given that the papacy lacked a proper 'taxation and salary' system. More than any of my previous books, this one has drawn on the generosity of living experts in the field, as the acknowledgements and footnotes make clear, I hope. The most recent generation of scholars has transformed our understanding of the papacy by the application to concrete historical problems of Diplomatics – 'applied papal Diplomatics' – the niche-orientated title I originally considered for the book. Most of these contributions are papers in journals and collective volumes (the majority in German), so one of my tasks has been to integrate them into a synthesis, since the existing standard syntheses (in Latin, Italian, German and French) treat Diplomatics as an 'auxiliary science' studied separately from substantive historical problems. That is of course a legitimate approach, but the present book is about 'applied' rather than 'pure' Diplomatics. I do follow the example of these 'pure Diplomatics' treatises, however, in extending the field back to Late Antiquity and forward into the early modern period. Thus: the aim has been to explain through the technique of applied Diplomatics how the papacy coped with the governmental burden effectively thrust upon it in the period from c. 400 to c. 1600.