

# HOW THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH DROVE STATE FORMATION IN EUROPE

*Sacred Foundations* argues that the medieval church was a fundamental force in European state formation. Existing accounts focus on early modern warfare or contracts between the rulers and the ruled. In contrast, this major study shows that the Catholic Church both competed with medieval monarchs and provided critical templates for governing institutions, the rule of law, and parliaments.

Bringing to light a wealth of historical evidence about papal conflict, excommunications, and ecclesiastical institutions, *Sacred Foundations* reveals how the challenge and example of powerful religious authorities gave rise to secular state institutions and galvanized state capacity.

"Fascinating and convincing. Grzymała-Busse advances a set of powerful theses, demonstrating how the medieval Catholic Church played a fundamental role in shaping the institutional foundations of the modern state."

—**Carles Boix, author of *Democratic Capitalism at the Crossroads: Technological Change and the Future of Politics***

"Grzymała-Busse compellingly demonstrates the significant role the medieval church played in creating the European state. Clear, persuasive, and precise, *Sacred Foundations* is one of the most important contributions to the state-formation literature in recent years."

—**Melissa Schwartzberg, New York University**

"In this rich and compelling study, Grzymała-Busse shows how the Catholic Church, as both rival and a source of knowledge, fundamentally shaped the formation of European states. A must-read for anyone seeking a new explanation that goes beyond emphasizing war."

—**David Stasavage, author of *The Decline and Rise of Democracy***

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