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MACHIAVELLI
THE PRINCE

TRANSLATED BY RUFUS GOODWIN
ILLUSTRATED BY BENJAMIN MARTINEZ

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MACHIAVELLI

What He Means To Me

On answering that our next publication would be a new translation of *The Prince* by Machiavelli, my acquaintance, a public school teacher, became puzzled.

“The Prince?” she repeated.

“What do you know about the Prince?”

“From which literature, the French or the English?” She had heard of the title, but was unable to identify it readily.

“*The Prince* is by Machiavelli, from Florence, Italy.”

“Yes, of course. I know that.”

“What do you know about him?”

“He’s the bad guy. Our politicians learn how to scheme and how to cheat from him...a bad dude, not one to have in my house.”

“What else do you know about him? For instance, have you actually read his *Prince*, or any other works, including his plays?”

“Plays? I didn’t know he wrote plays. I haven’t read them.”

I had more or less a similar dialogue with an older professor recently retired from a leading institution of higher learning. He said, “Machiavelli is the father of the tenet, the means justifies the end, that men would use any means to achieve their goals, and that he sanctions that kind of behavior.”

“Can you cite where Machiavelli says that?”

“No, I cannot. I remember it from a survey course — too many years ago! Besides, I wasn’t interested in him then, and I am not interested in him now... What else are you publishing?”

“A book about Hillary...”

“You mean?”

“Senator Clinton...”

In a recent conversation, in Italian, a well-educated medical doctor used the name *Machiavelli* as a synonym for intrigues of unsavory nature.

These examples reflect a general impression of Machiavelli, the man, and Machiavelli, the writer.

Those who have read him in depth have positive opinions; those who have not read his works have negative opinions. The former usually express praise for the way he lived--a rather subdued life devoid of ostentation, and express greater praise for the quality of his prose and the depth of intelligence in his writings, especially in *The Prince*. But, despite the positive and negative press, *The Prince* continues to be a best seller, and Machiavelli is forever popular among young and old, regardless on how one spins him. With editions published throughout the world, the name Machiavelli is becoming more famous, more relevant, and more accepted.

Because of this relevancy, politicians read him and keep applying or adhering to his principles of governing. But like Saint Peter reneging Christ, they will not admit to an intellectual or political connection to the founder of Social Science.

Machiavelli, whose life and works are based on the Roman concept of *virtue*, would not subscribe to opposites of *virtue* and we do not see traces to classify him as lacking in virtue. This being the case, how did he get the reputation wherein being *Machiavellian* connotes being evil, scheming, and dissimulating?

Is it possible that Machiavelli could be virtuous and evil at the same time depending on the role he is playing? Is his description of human nature so stark that we cannot accept it for what it is? Or, is Machiavelli wrong in his observations?

The problem is that we secretly believe that what he says is right but will not admit to it. As a result, we ascribe to him those negatives attributes and blame him for being its messenger!

The strange thing is that while we may learn from his science, we deny him entrance through our front door but keep a path open for him to come in through the back door. And herein lies

the Machiavellian paradox.

When he suggests guiding principles for a Prince concerning his land and people, the principles are not anchored in Machiavelli, the man, but in Machiavelli, the scientist, the *cool* observer of human nature. Because those principles are revealed through his science, we should judge him by the science he's discovered and not by the truths discovered through that science, because too often those truths are not to our liking.

Like other creatures, humans are initially driven by an all-encompassing instinct — *hunger*.

Although other creatures are destined to go from one meal to another, never knowing the whereabouts of the next meal, the human being has designed schemes to assure the next meal. The problem is that because he is not satisfied with what he has, he will fight to his death to increase his cache, thus denying it to others

Unlike other creatures, however, humans are secondly driven by another all-encompassing instinct — *power*.

He has to have sway over other human beings; he has to dominate them because the other choice would be to be dominated. Fortunately, the *alpha* instinct in man is diluted when he seeks fulfillment in other fields of human endeavor. When it comes to tyrants, however, Machiavelli knows too well that their first actions are aimed to satisfy their instincts at the expense of their fellow human beings.

Virtue, then, needs to be discussed in terms of Machiavelli, the scientist. Is virtue desirable in leaders, be they student representatives, managers, appointed justices, ministers, popes or elected presidents? And, is there a higher or lower degree of *virtue* when using certain means to accomplish certain ends?

If a general's mission is to occupy a territory, how he uses the means to achieve the end must come under scrutiny. If the means with which he achieves the end were entirely within established parameters, we would say that he is virtuous and has wisdom. But if, in accomplishing the same mission, he causes people to be killed unnecessarily, or that he does it for his personal glory and

aggrandizement, then we would not ascribe him any virtue and would condemn him for lacking in wisdom.

What if he broadcasts lies as a means to confuse the enemy: Would we admire him? What if he put out lies for personal gains, or to hide personal misbehavior: Would we consider him virtuous — after all, he still accomplished the mission? Machiavelli denies attributes of virtue to those who, in capacity of leadership, use the means for themselves personally and not for those whom they represent or govern. Machiavelli's concern is that leaders, at all levels, need to fulfill the role of governing for the benefit of the people, and to defend them at all costs.

Virtue does not necessarily stand alone as the most important attribute of those in private or public life. The second most important attribute is *astuteness*, which means strength, street smart. Its counter part would be *weakness* or *appeasement* — attributes that generate danger and self-destruction. Leaders have to be virtuous and astute, diligent in their comportment as the caretakers of their people, and be aware of what other leaders and nations do. Machiavelli would build dams before not after floods.

If a river brings water from another nation, Machiavelli's Prince would want to know who and how the leaders and their people control the flow of water. The astute Prince would continuously be concerned with that water flow and be ready to take control of it if his nation's survival is threatened.

Notwithstanding positive or negative results from actions taken, even if the action is to insure proper resources for his nation, the Prince's means to achieve his end would come under the same scrutiny as with the general.

His *virtue* transcends the details of the means when leaders are in the throws of making important decisions. The questions, however, are the same for everyone. If President, what is best for his people? If CEO, what is best for his company? If a tyrant, what is best for himself? If priest, what is best for his flock?

Concerning the latter, priests swear to dedicate their lives in upholding and protecting the flock. When they turn their flock into prey, they become vicious and treacherous, unlike wolves,

which nurture their young and protect them against other predators. And, when their criminally predatory acts go un-answered by church administrators and go unpunished by civil authorities, they continue to harm their victims and turn the community into one continuous Calvary. Regarding these *men of the cloth*, Machiavelli would be harsher than Dante — remember the number of priests populating *Hell*?

In seeing the church infiltrated, Machiavelli would have been the first to condemn the Pope, his cardinals and the public officials who allowed it to happen. In the end, Popes need to be holy, but just as astute as the next successful politician.

Is it preferable to be loved rather than hated, to lie rather than tell the truth, or to be honest or to be dishonest? For different reasons, Machiavelli would ascribe any if not all of these attributes to men and women engaged in conducting public office. Necessity often precludes being loved, and dissimulation likewise may preclude honesty, because only fools, dressed in wool, would travel in the company of wolves.

Untrusting of human nature, Machiavelli easily understood the motives behind the actions of people in the past and in the present, but would have a difficult time understanding the logic behind those actions.

He would have loathed the atrocities of World War I, with the X bayonets and gases spewing over innocent civilians and combatants alike. Unfortunately, we have learned few lessons from that savagery, either for ourselves or for our future generations.

During the Spanish Civil War, the Communists and Fascists fought against each other on behalf of the Spanish people. Many foreigners knowingly chose to fight in support of the *good* side, the Communist. And in honor of the good side, Pablo Picasso created his masterpiece, *Guernica*, which stands for their efforts, their dedications and their convictions. These sacrificed their lives while in Russia, Communists were pulverizing millions of people with the most inhuman kinds of torture. And no one made a ripple of a single demonstration against those atrocities, even when similar ones took place in China.

How does one explain the support given to regimes, which have killed over 90 million innocent people? Why would anyone choose regimes that forced people to kill or be killed? In view of the facts, Machiavelli would be hard put for words.

When greater savagery took place in Germany, hardly anyone demonstrated against those atrocities, while leaders from other nations appeased the conquering tyrant, because he was doing it to someone else.

During the Vietnam War, people demonstrated against the war, but never against those who were committing genocide by exterminating millions of innocent fellow beings to fulfill tenets of political systems spawned in foreign countries.

Hundreds of thousands demonstrated for Saddam Hussein, who torched numberless oil fields whose uncontrolled blazes contaminated atmosphere and land alike; thousands more demonstrated on his behalf even when his weapons of mass destruction (whose only purpose is to kill or degrade life) were obviously being stored for use against other human beings. And people willingly became human shields in demonstrating on behalf of this committed tyrant, who, on having invaded three countries, having mounted a missile attack on a fourth, and having used deadly gas that killed thousands, not one person or group or the Pope was found significantly demonstrating against him or against his despotic regime.

There are always all kinds of rationale behind this behavior. But ultimately, as Machiavelli observed, we are all driven by our two basic instincts, which are blind and unresponsive to the brain and to the heart. One needs to consider the behavior of two representative individuals, by asking, even if rhetorically,

Where would America be, in 2003, had Lindbergh been the leader to implement his convictions on the nation during World War II instead of President Roosevelt implementing his?

With his perception of an “evil” America, would it be a *good* America for the grandchildren of Chomsky were he, in 2003, to be the leader to implement his convictions on the nation instead of President Bush implementing his?

Although these kinds of individuals speak with persuasive diligence, in the face of real politics, they only bring about destruction to themselves and to others. Machiavelli would deny any connection between their perceived world and the real world of *hunger* and *power*, for he neither believed in suicide nor in the destruction of other human beings.

Machiavelli wrote *The Prince* as a manual to enlighten leaders on ways to good government in spite of the compulsive aggressiveness existing in all of us. He would have seconded government programs that allow the largest number of people to pursue the maximum amount of happiness. He realized that happiness is attainable only when governors lead the governed in an atmosphere of harmony and balance.

Good government and great civilizations go hand in hand. When good governments fall short, tragic anomalies usually trample and debase human life; and as long as they exist, the suggestions in *The Prince* may serve as an antidote in coping with our instincts. This may be the reason why Machiavelli continues to be relevant. On one hand, he shows us the way out of these anomalies; on the other, he offers explanations on how and why we, in so many different ways, contribute to that turmoil.

In the end, after all is said and done, Machiavelli carried on with a typical *active* optimism of the Renaissance, wherein men keep busy in discovering schemes and laws in the belief that fellow human beings, aware of their inherent power, can conquer the world from within and from without, and to govern and be governed for their benefit and for the benefit of their later generations. As individuals, however, we make decisions based on choices and on preferences available to us.

And Machiavelli would observe that as humans, we make good choices when we realize that it is better to be governed by virtuous individuals, who are also astute, rather than by hungry tyrants, scheming for power.

ADOLPH CASO
Editor

INTRODUCTION

Assassination is no longer recognized in civilized countries as an instrument of national policy. But in Machiavelli's day, it was approved and practiced by Popes and Kings; duplicity and treachery were looked upon as indispensable accomplishments for a ruler and commanded admiration in proportion to their success; while every brutal act of oppression committed in the name of security of government was excused by the specious principle that the end justifies the means. It was never even suggested that the conduct of rulers and governments should be judged by the same standard of morality as that required of private individuals.

In order to appreciate the Prince at its true value, therefore, the modern reader, imbued with the principles of the Covenant of the League of Nations, must make allowance for the less civilized methods of an earlier age; he must, moreover, have some idea of the general conditions prevailing in Italy at the time when the book was written, and of the particular object that Machiavelli had in view in writing it; otherwise the violence of method and immorality of conduct recommended by Machiavelli may well appear inexplicable.

In the fifteenth century the ancient authority of the Holy Roman Empire had almost ceased to exist outside Germany, while the Church, owing to the corruption and territorial ambitions of the Papal Court, had already lost much of that spiritual influence which had been one of the main factors in keeping all Christendom united in the past. Europe had become divided up into a number of hostile countries, each with its own national language and customs, and France, Spain, and the German states were being rapidly consolidated into extensive kingdoms with strong central governments, and with regular armies led by the nobility

who still spent their lives in the profession of arms.

Italy, however, a more cultivated and less warlike country than her northern neighbors, and less dominated by the feudal system, had developed on different lines. In that country, more especially in the north, the old Communes of the Middle Ages had proved the most powerful element and had gradually become transformed into numberless small republics in which the members of the old nobility found themselves reduced to the state of mere citizens. In the absence of any suzerain to check their ambitions, the more advanced of these republics soon began to aggrandize themselves at the expense of their weaker neighbors, and thence had ensued conditions of rivalry, dissension, and constant petty warfare that were the source of all Italy's subsequent misfortunes.

Two main causes contributed to keep Italy in a state of discontent and confusion, and to prevent any peaceful settlement of the country. Firstly, the citizenship in the republics of those days was strictly limited to a small proportion of the inhabitants of the central town of each republic; so that when a small republic was overcome and swallowed up by a more powerful one, its citizens lost all their civic rights; the result of this was that the smaller towns were continually revolting in the hope of regaining their former freedom, or opening their gates to enemies of the republic on the chance of bettering their position. Secondly, as the wealthier classes who lived in the towns had reached a higher state of culture than the corresponding classes in other countries, and consequently were inclined to be contemptuous of the arts of war, and as the greater part of the population had more aptitude for commerce than for campaigning, the republics of Italy had become incapable of fighting their own battles, and they were driven to adopt the fatal course of depending on mercenary troops to fight their battles for them.

These mercenary troops originally consisted of soldiers of fortune who for one reason or another had been left behind in Italy by invading armies from more northern lands, who had banded themselves together under their chosen leaders, and of-

ferred their services to the highest bidder. Their numbers were continually being increased by recruitment from amongst Italian brigands, malcontents from conquered republics, and other bold spirits in search of adventure. Battles in those days were won or lost by the heavily armed cavalry, or men-at-arms, and it was of these that the mercenary bands, or free companies, mostly consisted. As there was no other similarly armed Italian troops to withstand them, mercenaries were inevitably found fighting on both sides in every local war, and they soon realized there was nothing to be gained by their mutual destruction. But although they did little damage to each other, their pillaging and sacking brought terror and desolation to the peaceful population.

As these bands multiplied, they tended to combine under the leadership of some exceptionally successful captain, and he in his turn, as soon as he had a sufficient following, would retain for himself some town he had captured for his employers, and make it the center round which to carve out a new petty state under his own rule. Thus arose the numberless tyrants who played so large a part in Italy's history during this chaotic period. These small tyrants, having no natural ties with the citizens of their new states, and only keeping their position by the most severe measures of repression, were generally hated and became a byword for ruthless cruelty. And yet they were such a recognized feature of the times that their deceit and cruelties ceased to be the subject of moral blame; on the contrary, the more ruthless and treacherous their conduct, the greater prestige they acquired — provided always that their crimes were crowned with success.

Of these one of the most notorious was Caesar Borgia, of whom we hear so much from Machiavelli. An illegitimate son of the infamous Pope Alexander VI, he enjoyed a short-lived but violent career, excelling even his contemporaries in duplicity, treachery, and cold-blooded murders. By his personal courage and unscrupulous conduct, and with the strong support of his father, he succeeded in creating a powerful state comprising the whole of Romagna and a great part of central Italy, and at one time it looked as though he might dominate the whole peninsula;

but Alexander's sudden death found Caesar himself incapacitated by illness, his carefully laid plans for consolidating his power in this crisis came to nothing, he fell into the hands of his enemies, losing the whole of his newly-acquired kingdom, and he was never able thereafter to recover any position of importance.

Long before Machiavelli's time certain districts in Italy had emerged from the general confusion in the form of comparatively permanent and powerful states. The so-called Republic of Florence, under the veiled autocracy of the Medici, was the master of the greater part of Tuscany. The many small republics of Lombardy had been welded together by the Visconti and Sforza into the Duchy of Milan. With her adjoining mainland, Venice was ruled by the strictly limited and hereditary Grand Council, under the presidency of the Doge. The Kingdom of Naples, under the nominal suzerainty of the Pope, was held by the House of Aragon, though kept in a constant state of unrest by a number of turbulent barons. And successive Popes, lacking in spiritual authority, had endeavored to create a stable temporal state for the Church out of the territories stretching northwards from Rome, though without signal success. But these states were all jealous rivals of each other, and constantly at war, while the remainder of Italy was still divided into numberless smaller states which had by now mostly fallen into the hands of upstart tyrants.

Machiavelli was born at Florence in 1469 and lived till 1527. During his youth he saw the Florentine republic at the height of her power and prosperity under the sway of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and for the time being Italy was enjoying a short period of comparative peace, largely due to Lorenzo's diplomatic influence; but such tranquility could not be expected to last, and on Lorenzo's death in 1492, Italy quickly relapsed into her former state of chaos, which was won to be aggravated by a series of invasions by her more warlike northern neighbors. In 1594 Charles VIII of France made his irruption into Italy to make good his claim to Naples against the House of Aragon, and so helpless was the country to defend herself against attack, that he was able to march from the north through Florence and Rome to Naples, to

take possession of that kingdom, and to return to France by the same route, without once meeting any serious opposition. From that time onwards, throughout Machiavelli's life, Italy was seldom entirely free from the invasions of one foreign army or another, and there followed a period of bewildering confusion during which the Emperor, the French, the Swiss, and the Spaniards, the Pope and the more powerful Italian states were all at war and all alternately enemies and allies of each other, while every part of Italy suffered in turn from the desolation of the country and the brutalities of the foreign soldiery.

Such were the chaotic conditions which prevailed in Italy in Machiavelli's day, and which stirred him to search for some means of restoring his unhappy country to a more peaceful state. On the fall of the Medici in 1494 Florence reverted to true republican government, and a few years later Machiavelli obtained a position of considerable importance, being appointed Chancellor and Secretary to the department of the 'Dìeci di Libertà e Pace,' a post which he retained for fourteen years. While holding this position he was entrusted with a number of diplomatic missions (through he never attained the rank of an ambassador), and although his efforts were by no means invariably crowned with success, he acquired a great reputation for the subtlety of his observations and the skill with which he divined the intentions of those to whom he was accredited.

On the fall of the Republic and the return of the Medici in 1512, Machiavelli lost his official position, and in spite of all his efforts he was never able to obtain any permanent employment under the new rulers. He retired to his villa at San Casciano, and devoted his time to the literary works, which are his great title to fame.

Now Machiavelli was above all a patriot, first as a Florentine, and secondly as an Italian. He was profoundly impressed by Italy's miserable condition, and his active mind had long been occupied in inquiring into the root causes of her misfortunes and in searching for the appropriate remedy. Partly as the result of his study of ancient history and partly from his acute observation of

the methods employed by successful rulers of his own day, Machiavelli ultimately arrived at certain definite conclusions as to what might be done to cope with the chaos and misery that he saw on every side.

He was convinced that the only hope for Italy was that the whole country should be united into a single state, with a stable central government to maintain internal order, and with a national army of sufficient strength to drive out and keep out all the foreign invaders — French, German, Swiss and Spanish. His view was that the Italian states, with their mutual jealousy and rivalry, would never be able to combine into any form of permanent federation of themselves, and that their unity would have to be imposed on them by some overpowering authority. Having remarked the ease with which the more successful tyrants had carved out states for themselves in the past, he conceived the bold idea that, if there was indeed any way of forcing an unwilling Italy into unity, it could only be by the compulsion of a super-tyrant who would conquer every state in turn and subject the whole country to his own absolute domination.

For the purpose of freeing Italy from the disturbance of foreign invaders, he considered it essential that one of the conqueror's first cares should be to create a local militia or citizen army in each state as he conquered it, so that ultimately there would be so powerful a national army that no foreigner would any longer dare to attempt invasion.

Although Machiavelli nowhere definitely stated what permanent form of government his tyrant should establish when once he had united the whole of Italy, it is evident from his *Discourses upon the First Decade of Livy* that he considered the Roman Republic to have been the most satisfactory constitution that had been evolved in the past, and it may be gathered from certain passages in that work that his ideal of the most practical form of government closely approximated to what we should now call a Constitutional Monarchy, but with an elected instead of a hereditary king.

It is important to realize that, in writing *The Prince*, Machia-

velli was working out the details of one part of his general scheme for the reorganization of Italy, and that he was only dealing with the transitional period while the tyrant would be gradually acquiring dominion over the country; he was considering the difficulties that would be met with, and how they could be overcome. His view was that the conqueror would have to be a man of iron will, prepared to devote his life to the one object in view, and absolutely indifferent to the morality of his methods, to the interests of individuals, or to the temporary sufferings of the nation, provided he could achieve his purpose.

In this book, then, Machiavelli boldly advocated those principles of conduct by which alone he believed that it would be possible for his super-tyrant to dominate Italy. He was not concerned with the morality of the prince's behavior; he was making a scientific exposition of the methods by which a certain object might be attained. He was not endeavoring to expound how a perfect state should be ideally governed; he was showing how very imperfect states, and especially newly created states, were in fact successfully governed. And lastly, he was not putting forward a scheme for permanent government of a settled state, but merely stating the methods that should be employed by his tyrant to keep the recently conquered territories under control until he should have completed the subjection of the whole of Italy and united it into a single state.

In *The Prince* Machiavelli frequently refers with approval to Caesar Borgia (under his title of Duke Valentine), and he has sometimes been called 'Machiavelli's Perfect Prince'; but this is hardly fair to the author. Machiavelli first came into touch with Caesar on one of his diplomatic missions, and he was with this tyrant at the time of his greatest triumph of treachery when he succeeded in entrapping all his captains who had recently revolted against him "and immediately put them to death. There is little doubt that it was this tyrant's conduct and temporarily successful career which first suggested to Machiavelli what might be attained by Caesar's methods if applied to nobler aims, and which inspired him with the idea of the unification of Italy by one

strong man; indeed, his admiration for the tyrant—so long as he was successful—was so great that it was a constant source of amusement to his friends; but anyone who reads *The Prince* will realize that Machiavelli's ideal conqueror, while possessing certain qualities which were strongly marked in Caesar's character, such as his thoroughness, personal courage, cleverness, and aptitude for administration, would have to be endowed with a number of virtues which he never attributed to the Borgia.

The Prince, read alone, is apt to give the impression that Machiavelli was concerned with government solely from the point of view of the rulers, regardless of the rights of the governed, and it is, therefore, worth noting that in the *Discourses*, he constantly showed his interest in and admiration for the people, often comparing their merits with those of princes to the disadvantage of the latter, and it is pleasant to recall that Macaulay wrote of his work: 'We are acquainted with few writings which exhibit so much elevation of sentiment, so pure and warm a zeal for the public good, or so just a view of the duties and rights of citizens, as those of Machiavelli.

Machiavelli dedicated *The Prince* to Lorenzo di Piero (the grandson of Lorenzo the Magnificent), who was just twenty-one years of age when it was written. This prince had devoted himself to the profession of arms, and in the popular opinion of the day he was marked out for great deeds. It is possible that Machiavelli hoped that he would prove himself to be his ideal Prince, and that by following the maxims of this book he would ultimately, succeed in driving all the foreigners out of the country, and in creating a United Italy. If so, he sadly misjudged his hero for, Lorenzo died shortly afterwards from the results of his profligate life. No doubt. Machiavelli also hoped, by his dedication, to induce the Medici to give him some permanent employment; but in this, too, he was disappointed.

Machiavelli wrote *The Prince* in 1513, but it was not printed until nearly twenty years later. It had, however, already been circulated in manuscript, and it quickly became known as a remarkable exposition of statecraft, expressed in terse and vigorous

prose, and showing exceptional powers of observation and originality of thought. Machiavelli was also writing the *Discourses upon the First Decade of Livy* at the same time as *The Prince*, and he began *The Art of War* soon afterwards. These three books are complementary to each other, working out different aspects of the same problem. In the *Discourses* he reviewed various forms of government, but treated principally of republics; in *The Prince* he was mainly occupied with the qualities necessary for the ruler of new state and the methods of government that he should employ, a matter only briefly dealt with in the *Discourses*; while in *The Art of War* he elaborated his ideas as to the need of a national militia to support either prince or republic, as to the methods of its formation and training, and as to the principles of tactical warfare.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the new ideas contributed by Machiavelli's genius. As the author of the *Discourses and The Prince* he was the founder of political science inasmuch as he was the first to analyze various forms of government that had existed and to inquire how they had worked in practice, as opposed to the philosophical method of devising ideal forms of government under ideal conditions; while *The Art of War* has been recognized by modern military experts as having the first of modern classics on military matters.' Moreover, in writing *The History of Florence* 'he showed equal originality, and instead of following his predecessors in producing mere chronicles of events in the order of their happening, he created the modern historical method by giving such an account of events as to bring out their hidden causes, their inter-dependence, and their effective results.

The Prince, however, being the most striking of all his works, and its precepts most open to challenge, has naturally attracted the greatest attention, and it is no exaggeration to say that from the time it was published up to the present day it has never ceased to be the subject of eager discussion and criticism from every possible standpoint. Although written with special reference to the condition of Italy at the time, and with the object of stirring

up Italians to face the problems confronting them, it is, of course, the more general application of the principles laid down in the book which has made it of permanent importance, and which has led to so much violent criticism even to the point of attacks on Machiavelli's personal character.

Much of the conduct cited with approval in this work and many of the methods recommended are obviously immoral when judged by present-day standards, although Machiavelli's contemporaries apparently found nothing in them to shock their conscience. The Church attacked the book on the ground that it was irreligious, and in 1553 it was placed on the Index, together with all Machiavelli's other works; for while Machiavelli did in fact maintain the necessity of some form of religion and of the strict observance of its rites and ceremonies as being essential for the stability of a state, it was impossible to look upon the rules of conduct he recommended as anything but anti-Christian.

But *The Prince* is not concerned with either religion or morality, as Machiavelli would have been the first to point out; it deals with the science of practical government, and the problem is to form a just estimate of the truth or falsity of Machiavelli's propositions. How do the methods of government advocated by Machiavelli work in practice? Is his psychology sound? Is his view of the inherent baseness of human nature correct? How far have his rules of conduct been adopted with success by such modern creators of new states as Bismarck, Lenin and Mussolini? These are the questions, amongst many others, which suggest themselves to the critical reader, and to which each must find his own answer.

Machiavelli's personal character no longer needs to be defended. That he was licentious, at any rate by modern standards, must be admitted, and no doubt he was a master of diplomatic dissimulation (if that is a fault), but in an age of general corruption he appears to have been exceptionally honest and direct in his dealings, and it has been truly said that no one was less Machiavellian than Machiavelli. No dishonorable deed nor any act of self-interest in his official career was ever imputed to him; and

his writings show that, however much to his interest it may have been to write in support of the powers of the day, he was invariably true to his own ideals, and that, at a time when he was hoping to obtain employment from the Medici, he had no hesitation in attacking the corruption and ambitious territorial policy of the Papal Court as being one of the main causes of all Italy's misfortunes.

The most complete account of Machiavelli's life and works will be found in Villari's *Life and Times of Machiavelli* (2nd edition, 1892); shorter reviews in Macaulay's *Essay on Machiavelli*, and in Mr. Henry Cust's introduction to Machiavelli's works in *The Tudor Translations* (1905). In the Introduction to his annotated edition of *Il Principe* (1891), Mr. L. A. Burd considers at length the true purpose of *The Prince*, and surveys the early criticism of the work.

W. E. C. Baynes
London

NOTE: This Introduction appears with the English translation of *Il Principe* by Edward Dacres, and first published in 1640.

This is a very interesting project and I hope it will be a great success.

Dr. HENRY KISSINGER
former Secretary of State

President Clinton greatly appreciates your interest in *The Prince* and sends his best wishes.

WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
Office of,

The Prince must be a very rewarding project to translate and quite a good deal of fun.

Professor **DAVID CALLEO**,
Dean Acheson Chair of History at John
Hopkins University, Admiral Paul H.
Nitze School of Advance International
Study, and author of the book,
The Future Of Europe 2001.

THE PRINCE

by

Niccolò Machiavelli

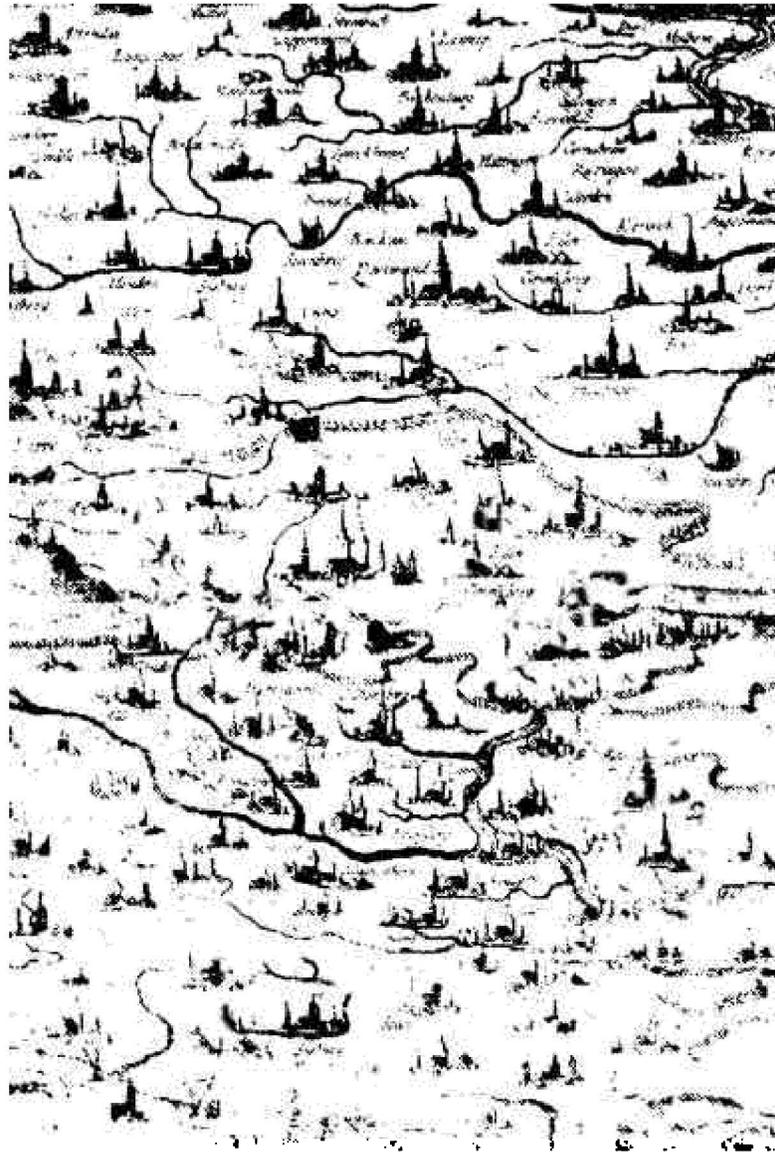
DEDICATION
TO LORENZO DE MEDICI 1492 - 1519
DUKE OF URBINO, DESCENDED FROM THE
MEDICIS OF FLORENCE — NOT TO BE
CONFUSED WITH LORENZO THE
MAGNIFICENT, THE MERCHANT PRINCE,
1469-1492.

Usually those seeking favors from a Prince give him presents dear to themselves or something that may delight him — wherefore we see a Prince presented with horses, weapons, gold banners, jewels, and other treasures. Myself, desiring to offer your Magnificence some token of my service, I only find among my most favored and esteemed things to offer my own knowledge of the actions of great men drawn from long experience of modernity and antiquity. Having long considered and examined these things, I now present them to your Magnificence in this small volume.

Although I hold this work unworthy of your Magnificence, I trust that, for its humanity, it should be accepted, considering that I can make no greater gift than the sharing of the faculty of quickly understanding all that I, through many years of discomforts and dangers, learned and understand. I have neither embellished nor puffed up this work with refined or/and empty phrases which many commentators use. Instead, I wanted reality to be honored, and hope that the variety and seriousness of the subject make it acceptable. I do not mean to be presumptuous or to play a low or vile character desiring to discuss the role and governance of a Prince, but, as those who in picturing the country place themselves from low on the plain to view the mountains and the heights, and similarly, those who want to view the lowlands do so from high on the mountain, so it is that to know the nature of a

people, one needs to be a Prince, and to know the nature of a Prince one needs to be of the people.

Accept, therefore, your Magnificence, this small gift in the spirit that I send it. If it is diligently considered and read, you will recognize my extreme wish for you to achieve that greatness which fortune and your other qualities promise you. And if your Magnificence, from the apex of your heights, will sometime cast your eyes down to lower places, you will know how unjustly I suffer a great and ongoing miscarriage of fortune.



WHAT MAKES A PRINCIPALITY AND HOW TO WIN ONE

States, and all dominions that have or have had sway over people, have been or are either Republics or Principalities. Principalities are either hereditary, transmitted by family blood, or they are new. New Principalities are either cut from new cloth completely, as was the Principality of Milan for Francesco Sforza, or they are new parts added to the holdings of the Prince that acquires them — as was the Kingdoms of Naples and of Sicily for the King of Spain. Such dominions are acquired, whether they were accustomed to living under a Prince, or whether they lived free — and they are acquired either with the arms of others or with one's own, either by fortune or by valor.

OF HEREDITARY PRINCES

Setting aside the discussion of Republics, which I have dealt with elsewhere, I shall turn my attention exclusively to the Principality and, developing the argument outlined in the first chapter above, I will consider how the Principality can be governed and sustained.

In hereditary states ruled by a bloodline there are fewer difficulties of rule than in new states, because it is enough not to diverge from the old order and to temporize against unforeseen developments. Doing this, even an ordinary Prince can maintain his state, unless an extraordinary happening deprives him of it — and even then, as soon as his foe runs into trouble, he can easily gain back his Principality.

In Italy we have good examples of this such as the Duke of Ferrara, who withstood the attack of the Venetians in 1484 and of Pope Julius II in 1510 for no other reason than having a long hereditary claim. This is because a natural Prince with a long hereditary line is less likely to give offense; he is more likely to be appreciated; and if he is not given to vices that make him hated, it is pretty usual for him to be held in his subjects' affections.

Tradition and custom of rule dims the memory and the causes of the original rise to power — otherwise, one change only leads to another if memories of change are not forgotten.

MIXED PRINCIPALITIES

It is in a new Principality that the difficulty arises. Firstly, even if the Principality is not completely new, but a new part of one — and this we can call a mixed Principality — then the possibility of changes arise from a problem natural to all new Principalities: namely, that men change leaders gladly in hopes of improvement in their lot. This belief leads them to take arms against the new leader too, because they have been deceived and see from experience that things have gotten worse. This happens usually and quite necessarily because a new leader always offends his new subjects either by using force or by other injustices associated with the acquisition of a new Principality. Obviously, those you offend become your enemies. You cannot satisfy your friends either because their expectations are disappointed too, or can you oppose them since they helped you. Indeed, even if you are well armed, whenever you enter a new province you need the help of provincial leaders. This was why Louis XII in 1499 first took Milan, then lost it in 1500. Getting help at first from Ludovico the Black's own forces, these forces soon saw that they were deceived, that their hopes were betrayed, and that they could not put up with the troubles of the new Prince.

However, if you win the rebel people back a second time it is easier to hold on to the province. This is because the Prince, now aware of the rebelliousness, is less quick to punish delinquents, hold suspects, or to move against the weak. For France to lose Milan the first time in 1500 it only took Duke Lodovico rumbling around a little in the province, but to lose it the second time in 1511 it took the whole world against them, and France's armies, exhausted, fled to Italy. This happened because of what we said above. Whatever — both times Milan was taken back.

I mentioned the reasons for the first loss. It remains to say

what remedy France might have had and what a Prince in those circumstances might have done to prevent France's second loss.

I should point out when one adds a new state to the old, either it belongs to the same province already and has the same language, or it doesn't. When it does, it is much easier to hold onto, especially if it is not accustomed to freedom. All it takes is to disrupt the dynastic line of former rulers, otherwise maintaining the old customs. If their customs are not disrupted, people will live on quietly. This was the case for Burgundy, Brittany, Gascony and Normandy, which stayed a long time with France. There is some variety of language but the customs are similar. They are easy to integrate. Whoever acquires them needs only to respect two things: one, that the bloodline of the dynasty is ended; two, not to alter the laws or fiscal system. That way the new province becomes quickly a part of the old one.

When one acquires a province with another language, different customs, and different laws, then the trouble begins. It takes real good luck and much work to hold onto such a province. One way to do so is for the Prince who acquires such a holding to go and live there. This secures and preserves the new possession — as the Turks did when they took Greece into the Byzantine Empire, by moving to Constantinople. Despite observing a host of laws to hold onto that State, it would not have been possible had the Sultan not gone to live there. Being there, one sees disorders arise and can take quick measures against them. Not being there they get too big to remedy. It makes it easier too for provincial officials. They have fast and easy access to the Prince. If they are good, they will love him more; if they are bad, they will fear him the more. External enemies will respect the Principality the more because, with the Prince there, the Principality will be more difficult to lose.

The other good solution is to send colonists in one or two places and let them be part of the new state — otherwise one has to place troops there. Colonists don't cost much; one can send them and keep them there without expense. The only people it offends are those whose fields and houses are confiscated, and they

are only a small part of the estate. Those who are hurt by this, being homeless and poor, are not likely to make much trouble. The rest of the populace is unharmed, and should remain quiet, or become afraid to make trouble lest they become victims of the spoils like the others. Therefore, colonies cost less, remain loyal, and make less trouble. The victims can't make trouble because they are poor and dispossessed. Note that you have to be either soft or harsh, because men take offense easily at small insults, but they can't react against harsh measures. When you offend some one, be sure they are incapable of revenge. By placing troops there, the cost is much more and much more goes into the surveillance of all the renegade elements of the state so that its acquisition becomes a losing proposition. Troops offend many more people what with housing and requisition, which harms everybody. Everybody becomes the enemy and they can do harm because, though conquered, they remain at home. Occupation is therefore unproductive while colonization is useful.

Whoever is in such a province has to make themselves Prince and defender of nearby dependent territories and see to weakening the leaders of them and guard against any strong foreigner entering them. Someone like this will always be promoted by the discontents because of ambition or fear — as we saw when the Aetolians sent Roman troops to Greece and in every other province they entered. It is a fact of life that as soon as a powerful foreigner enters a province all those who are weaker flock to his side motivated by envy of the chief put over them. So, in regard to lesser lords, a new Prince has no trouble lining them up because they all swear solidarity with the new state he has acquired. He just has to be careful they don't take too much power and authority. With his own power and their favor he can easily set back those who are ambitious and thereby he can hold sway in all things in the province. If he does not govern well though he will soon lose dominion in what he has acquired — and while he is in power — he will have nothing but trouble.

The Romans, in provinces they conquered, observed these rules well. They colonized, engaged the weaker leaders, without

making them stronger, put down the stronger ones, and did not allow powerful foreigners to gain sway. Greece is an example. The Romans supported the Acheans and the Aetolians and set back the Macedonians. They exiled Antiochus. They never let the Acheans or the Aetolians expand their states. They never let Philip's entreaties persuade them to any friendship without putting him down. They did not concede to Antiochus' power or influence. Because the Romans did in these cases what any savvy Prince must do — a Prince must not only oversee current scandals, but look to future ones and ones, which can be avoided. By taking care immediately of things, crises can be avoided, but prevaricating and putting them off, the medicine doesn't come in time because the disease is incurable.

What the doctors say about behavior is true here too, that in the beginning of something bad it is easy to cure although difficult to know it, but with time, not having recognized or treated it, it becomes easy to know but hard to cure. It is the same with affairs of state: spotting something wrong quickly (which takes prudence), one cures it quickly. But if, not recognizing what is going on, things are left to fester so everybody sees them, then there is no remedy.

The Romans, quick to see wrong things, always took care of them; they knew you couldn't always escape war without giving the advantage to others. But they wanted war with Philip and Antiochus in Greece in order not to fight them in Italy. They could have temporized with both of them, but didn't. Neither did they accept the view of everyone who said let time take care of it, but practiced their own virtue and prudence. Time runs everything ahead of it, and time can bring good with bad, but also bad with good.

But let's look again at France and let's see if anyone did what we say. I have to mention Louis XII and not Charles VIII as the one who held Italy longer and whose course of action is more obvious; you will see that he did the contrary of what needs to be done to hold onto a foreign province.

King Louis XII was set in Italy by the ambitions of the Vene-

tians who hoped to annex Lombardy by getting him to come. I don't want to blame the King for coming, but he put a foot in Italy without having any friends because of the behavior of Charles VIII. All doors being shut, he had to accept what friendships he could find; he might have done well if he hadn't made other mistakes. Annexing Lombardy, he won the reputation he took from Charles. Genoa caved in and the Florentines became his friends. The March of Mantua, Duke of Ferrara, Bentivogli, Forlì, and Lords of Faenza, Pesaro, Rimini, Camerino, Piombino, Lucca, Pisa, and Siena all became his friends. The Venetians were a little surprised at their temerity because, just to acquire Lombardy, they had made Louis King of a third of Italy.

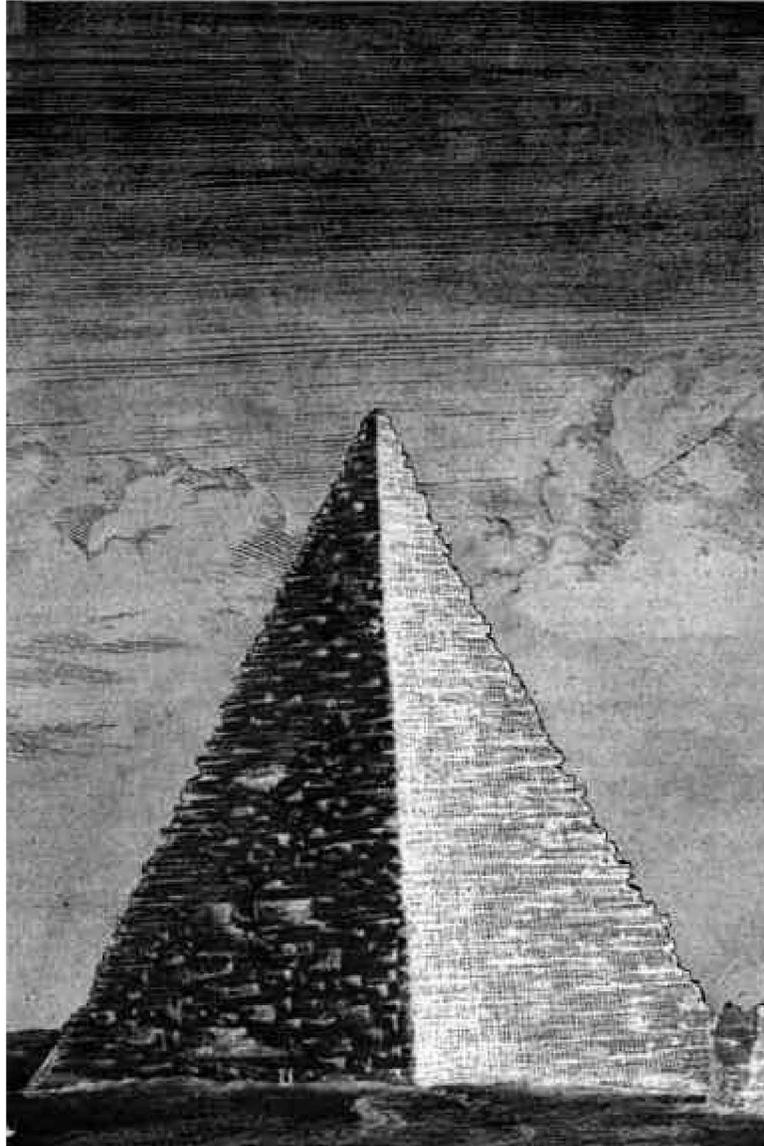
Think with what ease the King could have kept his reputation in Italy if he had observed the rules outlined above. He could have done it if he had kept his friendships safe and sound — there were a lot of them, weak and fearful, from the Church to the Venetians, who needed to stick by him. With their help he could have easily warded off others who remained powerful. But no sooner was he in Milan than he gave aid to Pope Alexander, helping him to occupy Romagna. Nor was he aware how this weakened him, alienating friends and allies, and giving the Church, in addition to the spiritual authority which gives it sway, so much political power. Having made one error, he had to commit another. Namely, to hold back Alexander's ambition and prevent him from becoming Lord of Tuscany, Louis had to enter Italy. It wasn't enough to aggrandize the Church and offend his friends, but, out of his ambitions for the Kingdom of Naples, he divided it with the King of Spain. Instead of remaining arbiter of Italy, he put in a partner to whom the ambitious and discontent ones of that province could turn. When he could have appointed a dependent of his own there, he removed one and put in someone who could turn against him. It is quite natural and ordinary for a Prince to want to expand his rule, and when they do, if they can, they are praised and not blamed. But when they are unsuccessful, but still want to do it, here lies the error and the fault. If France had the power to take Naples, fine; if not, it shouldn't have di-

vided it. Dividing Lombardy with the Venetians merits excuses because it gained France a foothold in Italy; but the agenda in Naples merits blame because it did not have this excuse. Louis therefore made these five mistakes: he lost support among the minor lords; he gave more power to an already powerful ruler; he put a powerful foreign potentate in; he didn't come to live there; and he didn't plant colonies.

He could have escaped the consequences of these errors if he had not made a sixth error by seeking to strip Venice of its acquired possessions. He could have brought the Venetians down if he had not aggrandized the Church nor put in the King of Spain. But having done this he should never have humiliated the Venetians, because they were powerful enough to keep others out of Lombardy. The Venetians would never have let someone else into Lombardy unless they themselves took it over, and the others would never have given it to Venice after taking it from France, and going at it alone against them would not have made sense. If someone said that Louis would have ceded Romagna to Alexander and Italy to Spain to avoid war, I would respond that one should never get into an imbroglio to avoid a war because it doesn't save you. It just makes you vulnerable. If someone else cites the loyalty that the King owed to the Pope, to undertake all this to resolve his marriage and the promises made over the Archbishopric of Rouen, I'd answer with what follows about the faith of Princes and how it should be observed.

So Louis lost Lombardy by ignoring those guidelines mentioned for those who take and want to keep new territories. This is nothing special, just ordinary and reasonable. I talked of this in Nantes with the Archbishop of Rouen when I was in France, when Valentine (as we commonly called Caesar Borgia, son of Pope Alexander) occupied Romagna. The Cardinal told me the Italians understood nothing of war, and I responded that the French understood nothing of politics — otherwise they wouldn't have let the Church become so powerful. Also it was clear that the power of both the Church and Spain had been caused by France — and France's ruin by them. One can draw a general rule

from this, which rarely fails — whoever helps someone else to power gets ruined. The reason is that it takes industry or force to make someone powerful, and both of these are suspect in the mind of the one who becomes powerful.



***REASONS WHY THE KINGDOM OF
DARIUS, WHICH WAS OCCUPIED
BY ALEXANDER THE GREAT,
DID NOT REBEL AGAINST
HIS SUCCESSORS
WHEN ALEXANDER DIED***

Considering the difficulties of acquiring new Principalities, one can marvel at how Alexander the Great became the Lord of Asia in a few years, and, having acquired an Empire, soon after he died. It would seem logical that his Empire would revolt. As if his generals had no other difficulties than, for reasons of ambition, to bicker among themselves! My answer is that one must remember that Principalities are governed in two different ways — either by a Prince whom all serve as ministers who thanks to a concession help to govern the realm, or by a Prince and his Barons who, not by appointment, but by heredity, hold that rank. Such Barons have their own states and underlings who recognize and hold them in affection. Those states that are governed by a Prince and his servants are centralized with more authority, because nobody else in the province is viewed as more powerful or higher. When they obey someone else it is only as a minister or official and they hold no particular affection for them.

The examples of these two diverse methods of government today are Turkey and France. One Lord governs the whole monarchy of Turkey — the rest are his servants. His realm is divided into provinces, or sanglaks. and he sends them administrators — changing and varying them as he wants. But the King of France is situated in the midst of a phalanx of hereditary lords, recognized and appreciated by their subjects. They all have their preemi-

nence and the King cannot remove them without risking danger. Whoever considers these systems will see that Turkey would be difficult to acquire but, once won, easy to hold. Vice-versa, France would be easy to occupy but difficult to hold.

The reasons it is difficult to occupy Turkey are that not being called in by the Princes of the realm one cannot hope for a rebellion from those around the Sultan to aid the enterprise. This is because of what was said above — the subalterns are all tied and obligated to the Sultan and are more difficult to corrupt. Even if they are corruptible, they are of little use because they can't hold the people behind them for the same reason. Whoever attacks Turkey must expect to meet a united front. He has to rely on his own powers and not the disorder of his foe.

But once having broken the enemy in the field, so that no more armies can be formed, the attacker has nothing to worry about except the bloodline of the Prince. Once that is extinguished, there is no one else to fear — no one else holds the esteem of the populace. Just as he had nothing to hope of the ministers before victory, he has nothing to fear from them afterwards.

The opposite is true of countries that are ruled like France. It is easy to insinuate oneself into the realm by gaining the allegiance of a Baron. One always finds malcontents and those who want reform. These interests can help one gain access and ease the victory. But afterwards it is infinitely difficult to control them — both those who have helped and those who were opposed. It is not enough to extinguish the bloodline of the King because other lords remain who head up new groups. Not being able to satisfy or extinguish them, a new Prince loses that state as soon as the situation changes.

Now consider what kind of government prevailed in the realm of Darius — it was similar to Turkey. For Alexander it was needful to risk all and first win the field. After the victory, with Darius dead, Alexander reigned supreme because of the reasons mentioned above. Even his successors, by remaining united, could rule easily — no other uprisings occurred except those they themselves caused.

But in states ruled like France, it is impossible to keep them orderly. This explains the frequent rebellions in Spain, France and in Greece under the Romans, because of the many Princes in these countries. As long as they were there, the Romans could not be sure of possession. Once forgotten, the power and longevity of the empire made them secure rulers. Even warring among themselves they could divide provinces according to who established rule there. Once the bloodline of the native lords was spent people recognized only the Romans. Considering these things it is not so hard to see how Alexander took Asia, while others like the King of Epirus had such difficulty conserving his conquest in South Italy, and others the same. Their cases are not determined by the presence or lack of virtue, but by the disorder of the subject land.

***HOW TO GOVERN CITIES OR
PRINCIPALITIES
WHICH, BEFORE OCCUPATION,
LIVED ACCORDING
TO THEIR OWN LAWS***

In the case of occupied states that have been used to living with their own laws in liberty, there are three modes of holding them: first, to ruin them; second, go live personally in them; third, let them live according to their laws while extracting tribute and creating a faithful oligarchy that will keep the state friendly. Such an oligarchy knows that the Prince created the state and they know they are dependent on his friendship and power and do everything they can to maintain it. It is easier to preserve a city by allowing it to live in liberty according to the customs of its citizens than by any other method.

But both the Spartans and Romans are examples. The Spartans held both Athens and Thebes, creating an oligarchy, although they relost both cities. The Romans, to hold Capua, Carthage, and Numanzia, took them apart, and didn't lose them. They wanted to hold Greece like the Spartans, leaving it free and with its own laws, but it didn't work. They were forced to disband many cities in it to hold Greece.

This is because there is no sure method of pressing cities except by ruining them. Whoever takes a city used to living in liberty according to its own customs and does not ruin it risks being ruined by it. This is because the city can always rebel in the name of liberty and its ancient customs, none of which are ever forgotten with time no matter how much largesse. No matter what one does, if you don't disband the citizenry and immediately eradicate

the customs and traditions, they come back to haunt you — as in Pisa when the city rebelled against the Florentines after a hundred years of servitude.

When the city is used to living under a Prince but the line is extinguished they are used to obeying on the one hand, and on the other hand, their old Prince is gone. They can neither agree among themselves nor can they live in freedom. This makes them likely to take arms; a new Prince can more easily take over and secure his reign. In Republics, there is more life, more hate, more desire for revenge. You can't leave them alone and you can't allow the memory of the old liberty. The safest way to deal with them is ruin them and then live there.



OF NEW PRINCIPALITIES WON BY ARMS AND VIRTUE

Do not be surprised if in talking of new Principalities and Princes and states I allude to examples of greatness because men must take the ways trodden by others and imitate them even if they cannot succeed fully nor add much to the virtue of others. Even so a prudent man will always follow the path beaten by the great and those worth imitating so that, though he himself amount to not much, he will at least have the odor of fame and like the careful archers who, knowing the target is too far, and knowing how far their arrow will shoot, aim higher than their target not to achieve a loftier arc but by aiming high to hit their mark.

I say that in new Principalities where the Prince is new one has more or less difficulty according to how virtuous the conqueror is. Success in becoming a new Prince presupposes either virtue or fortune and both of these mitigate some of the difficulties. However, he who owes less to fortune has an easier time. It is even easier if the Prince holds no other states and comes to live in the new one.

To mention those who succeeded more by virtue than by fortune in becoming Princes I should name Moses, Cyrus, Romulus, Theseus, and others of the same class. In talking about Moses one should note that he was merely the executor of things ordained by God, although he should be admired for the grace that allowed him to talk with God. But let us consider Cyrus and others who acquired or founded realms. They are all admirable. And considering their actions they all differ little from Moses, who had such a great protector. Examining their lives one sees that all they had beside fortune was opportunity, which gave them stuff to work suited to their cause. Without opportunity, their virtue would

have failed and without opportunity, their fortune would have been in vain.

Therefore, it was necessary for Moses to find the people of Israel in Egypt oppressed and ready in fleeing slavery to follow him. It helped Romulus being trapped in Alba and exposed at birth to become King of Rome and founder of that Empire. It helped Cyrus to find the Persians discontented under the Medes who were soft and effeminate from a long period of peace. Theseus could not have shown his virtue had Athens not been disunited. Opportunity made these men, and their virtue dominated the opportunity, making their homelands noble and happy.

Those whose virtues, similar to these, overcome hardship in winning Principalities have an easier time keeping them. The difficulties arise partly in winning the Principality from having to establish new rules and orders that they are forced to introduce to gain a foothold and win their security. One should realize that there is nothing more difficult, more dubious of success, nor more dangerous, than being a leader who introduces new ways of doing things. Such a leader immediately has for enemies all those whom the old ways benefit, while those who get the benefit are lukewarm supporters. This half-heartedness arises partly from fear of old adversaries, who have the old law on their side, and partly from the incredulity of men who never believe in the truth of new orders if not founded in firm experience. So whoever opposes them easily finds partisans while the reformers act hesitantly so that the leader founders with them.

One needs in order to examine this to see clearly whether the innovators stand alone or depend on others — whether, to gain their end, they have to beg or if they can force the issue. If they have to beg, it always turns out badly and leads to nothing. If they are strong themselves and force the issue then they rarely fail. Armed prophets win. The disarmed lose. Besides this, the nature of peoples vary — it is easy to persuade them but difficult to hold them to it. One needs to be prepared so that when the populace no longer cares you can force them to it.

Moses, Cyrus, Theseus and Romulus would not have been

able to hold out long if they had not been armed — as happened in our time to Brother Savonarola who was ruined as soon as the populace began to disbelieve in him. He had no method to hold those who neither believed nor line up those who didn't believe. All those other personages faced grave difficulties but were forced to overcome them — but, once having overcome, they were venerated. Having gotten rid of those who were opposed, they survived powerful, secure, honored, and happy.

To such high examples, I want to add a minor one, which puts perspective on them and will stand for all other examples: namely, Gerone II of Syracuse. This Lord became by himself Lord of Syracuse with no help from fortune except opportunity. The Syracusans were oppressed and elected him their Captain, from which position he gained the Principality. He showed such virtue that it was written, "Nothing prevented him from ruling except having a realm to rule." He terminated the old militia, created a new one, left off old friendships, and took on new ones. With friends and soldiers of his own, he had the foundation for building anew so that although he had a lot of trouble in winning, he had it easy to hold on afterwards.



***OF NEW PRINCIPALITIES WON
WITH THE ARMS AND FORTUNES
OF OTHERS***

Those who become Princes on their own with small effort have difficulty keeping their Princedom; on the way, they experience no hardship, only once they have won do they run into trouble. Such are those who take a state by buying it or by special concession — as happened in Greece, in the Hellepont and Ionia, where Darius made Princes and Satraps to maintain his security and glory. This also happens where officers corrupt the soldiers with money and set up military rule.

Such rulers depend on the will and fortune of others, always volatile and unstable. They do not know how to be Princes and cannot become Princes. They do not know how because they are not men of great enterprise or virtue, and, as private figures, they do not know how to command. They are incapable because they have no loyal and friendly forces of their own. Besides, like all things born too suddenly in nature, they have no roots and branches, so at the first adversity they die. If those suddenly raised to power have no virtue besides what they have from fortune, they fall. Only those with virtue know how to conserve what has been given them and can make up afterwards what others have from the start.

I would like in talking about one or the other way of becoming a Prince, either by virtue or fortune, to allude to two examples from our times — Francesco Sforza and Cesare Borgia. Francesco Sforza with the right means and great virtue became on his own Duke of Milan. What he won with great trouble he maintained with ease. Cesare Borgia, on the other hand, called Duke Valentin by the populace, acquired his state of Romagna with his

father's help, and lost it the same way. This notwithstanding that on his behalf everything that a prudent and virtuous man could do was done, all that arms or fortune could do, to put roots into the state. As I said, whosoever lacks the basics beforehand can with great virtue build them up afterwards, even though it costs the leader something and puts the building at risk. If you consider the Duke's progress, you will see he prepared the foundation for future power, which should be mentioned, because I know of no other new Prince who better exemplified the right course with his actions. That he failed was due not to his own fault but because of extraordinary bad luck.

Alexander VI faced both imminent and future dangers in wanting to make the Duke his son great. First, he saw no way of giving him a realm except by passing a Church estate. Taking one from the Church would arouse the Duke of Milan and the Venetians. Faenza and Rimini were under the protectorate of the Venetians. Besides, the arms of Italy, especially those that could serve others, were in the hands of those who feared the Papacy. Besides, one could not trust them because they were accomplices of the Orsinis and Colomas. It was needful therefore to upset their states and cause disorder among them to insinuate oneself into their territories. This was easy because the Venetians, for reasons of their own, wanted to bring the French into Italy again. This was made easier by the dissolution of King Louis' marriage.

So the King entered Italy with the support of the Venetians and the consent of Alexander. No sooner was he in Milan than the Pope approached him about Romagna — which was agreed on, for the further glory of the King. When the Duke then won over Romagna and defeated the Colonnas, two things blocked him from proceeding further: one, his own armies, which were not loyal; the other, the will of France. Namely, the forces of the Orsini had left him and not only blocked new acquisition but also took away from him what he had already won. He was afraid that the King would do the same. Faenza attacked Bologna but the Orsini pulled off their forces. He saw the King's hand when after taking Urbino, the Duke assaulted Tuscany, but the King made

him stop. The Duke saw he could not depend anymore on the arms or fortunes of others.

At first, this weakened the Orsini and Colonna parties in Rome. Their followers, noblemen, who were successful through them helped them hold Rome and they received honors and military posts. But in a few months, their loyalties were strained and they turned to the Duke. He awaited the opportunity to cut off the heads of the Orsini after disbanding the Colonnas — who then came over to his side, and whom he treated well. The Orsinis were late to see that the ambitions of the Duke and the Church were their ruin, finally convening the Conference of Maglione in Perugia from which sprang the rebellion of Urbino and riots in Romagna and other dangers for the Duke. These he overcame with the help of the French.

His reputation regained, nor trusting the French nor the other parties, fearing they would turn on him, he resorted to intrigue. He was so good at dissembling that even the Orsinis, through Paolo Orsini, reconciled themselves with him. The Duke made every effort to reassure them, giving them offices, money, uniforms and houses. This was so successful that their incredulity led them into his hands at Sinigaglia where their chiefs were killed and their partisans reduced. This laid the groundwork for the Duke's position; now in possession of Romagna and the Duchy of Urbino, he was strong. It seemed as if he had gotten the friendship of Romagna and its and peoples and that he was going to enjoy the fruits of his labors.

This part of the tale is worth noting and of use to imitate, and I won't hold it back. Having taken Romagna, he found powerless Lords who only despoiled their subjects and sowed discord, not union, so that the whole province was full of thieves, brigands, and all manner of insolence administered it. The Duke judged it necessary to give it good government in order to make it peaceful and obedient to his own rule. But he promoted Ramiro de Lorqua, a cruel and expedient man, to whom he entrusted full powers. De Lorqua subjugated Romagna quickly and efficiently, to his fame. The Duke had second thoughts and decided such excessive au-

thority was too much, because he himself didn't want to become hated. He proposed a civil tribunal in the province with a president where every city would have its representative. He knew the past measures had generated some hatred so to purge the state and gain the populace and show that the cruelty had not come from him but from the strict character of his minister, he took the occasion in Cesena one morning to show his minister's body cut in two pieces with a wood club and a bloody knife beside it. The ferocity of this calmed the populace and rendered them docile and satisfied.

But let us return to the story. The Duke, powerful and for the moment secure, armed and having disarmed the offending parties around had no obstacle to further acquisition if he could gain the respect of the French — because he knew that the King, recognizing his error late, would no longer support him. So, the Duke looked for a new friendship and vacillated with France in case the French made a move against the Kingdom of Naples, against the Spaniards who were then assaulting Gaeta. The Duke's idea was to get their support — in which he would have succeeded if Alexander had lived.

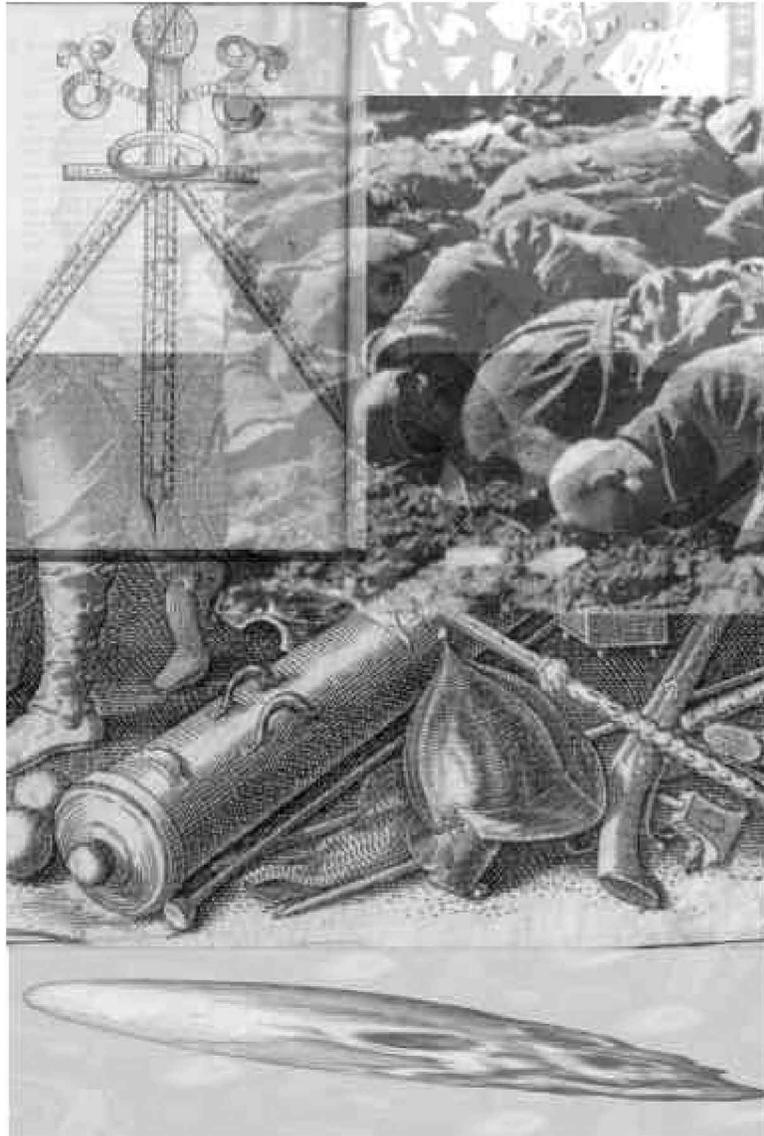
This, in current matters of state, was his policy. But as to the future, he had to worry first that a new successor to the Papacy would be his friend and not take away from him what Alexander had given. He set himself four goals to accomplish this: first, eliminate those Lords whom he had despoiled, in order to outmaneuver a new Pope; second, to line up the noblemen of Rome in order to put the brakes on a new Pope; third, to rig the College of Cardinals in his favor; and fourth, to acquire enough territory before the current Pope died so that he could withstand any first attack against himself. Of these four goals, he had, by Alexander's death, accomplished three. The fourth he had underway. He had killed as many enemies as he could reach and few had survived; he had lined up the Roman noblemen; he had gained a lot of support in the College of Cardinals; as to acquisitions, he had been designated Lord of Tuscany, possessing Perugia and Piombino, and even Pisa was his protectorate.

As if he had no respect for France (which no longer held him because the French had taken away the territories of the Spanish where everyone had to buy friends), he jumped on Pisa. Next, Lucca and Siena caved in, partly because of jealousy of Florence and partly from fear. Florence had no recourse left. If he had succeeded in all this, he would have had strength and fame enough to save himself on his own virtue and fortune. But Alexander died after five years of living by the sword. He left the Duke with Romagna in tact, everything else in the air, and two powerful enemy armies in the field, the French and the Spaniards, and the Duke himself was sick unto death. The Duke was of such ferocity and such virtue and knew well enough — how men win and lose, and so valid were the basics that he had built in a short time, that if he hadn't had two armies against him and he had been well he would have shaken off every difficulty. That his basics were good one sees from the fact that Romagna waited a month — and in Rome, although half dead, he was still secure. He could name his own man Pope as long as it was no one objectionable. If he had been well when Alexander died, everything would have gone well. He told me when Pope Julius II was being elected that he thought of what might happen when his father died and that he could remedy it all except that he had no idea that as his father died he himself would be dying.

Having narrated the actions of the Duke I would not know wherein to reprove him — in fact, he seems to me to be worthy of imitation to all who would rise to rule by fortune and the arms of others. Having a grand spirit and lofty aims, he could not govern otherwise. His only obstacles were Alexander's death and his own sickness. Whoever finds it needful in a new Principality to secure himself against enemies, gain friends, to win by force or deceit, be loved and feared by the populace, follow and uphold his soldiers, terminate those who could hurt him, innovate new orders in place of old customs, be strict, grateful, magnanimous and liberal, cut down unloyal militia, create a new army, keep the friendship of Princes and Kings in such a way that they help one

or respect one, one could not find a better example than that of the Duke.

Only in the election of Pope Julius II could one criticize him, where he had bad luck. Not being able to make his own man he could at least have prevented the wrong man from being elected. He should never have consented to the election of a Pope by those Cardinals whom he had offended, and who had reason to fear him. Men do harm out of fear or hate. Those whom he had offended were among others Giuliano della Rovere, Giovanni Colonna, Cardinal Raffaele Riarlo, and Cardinal Ascanio Sforza. All the others if they had been elected Pope would have feared him except the Cardinal of Rouen and the Spaniards; the Spaniards would have remained on his side because they were related, while the Cardinal of Rouen would have been sympathetic because he was connected with the Kingdom of France. Therefore, the Duke should have first of all created a Spanish Pope. Short of that, he should have gone with the Cardinal of Rouen and not Rovere. Whoever believes that in great personages new benefices make them forget old injuries is deceived. The Duke made a mistake in this election and it led to his ruin.



OF THOSE WHO COME TO POWER THROUGH VILLAINY

There are two ways to rise to a Princedom from the private citizenry wherein neither fortune nor virtue plays a part. Let us not neglect these cases, although one of them — the civic Prince — belongs more to a discussion of Republics. I refer here to cases where a man rises to Princedom by nefarious or villainous means, or in the case of the civic Prince, treated in the next chapter, when a citizen rises to power with the help of his fellow citizenry. But speaking of those who rise by nefarious or villainous means, I will show two examples, one ancient, one modern, without arguing the merits of the cases, because in cases of necessity, I judge it simply expedient to imitate them.

The Sicilian Agatocle (Tyrant of Syracuse, 317-289 B.C.) not only rose from the citizenry but from infamous and abject fortune to become King of Syracuse. Born of a potter, he lived a bad life. Notwithstanding, he lived his wicked ways with such vigor and fitness that, after joining the militia, he rose to Commander in Chief. Having reached this position, and having decided to become Prince by violence and without obligation to others who would block him, and keeping in mind the presence of the Carthaginian Hamilcar — whose army was in Sicily — he convened the people and senators one morning of Syracuse as if he wanted to consult them about affairs of state. At the sign, his army killed the senators and the richest citizens, clearing his way to take the Principality without civil opposition. Although he was twice defeated by the Carthaginians and city was assaulted, not only did he succeed in defending the city but, leaving part of his army to hold the fort, with the rest he attacked Hamilcar and in a short time not only liberated Syracuse but chased the Africans out and

they had to rest content with African bases and leave Syracuse to Agatocle.

Whoever considers this life, and Agatocle's actions, will not find much left to fortune; not by anyone's favor was Agatocle helped, but by military intervention beset by many inconveniences and dangers. This was brought him to power and maintained his Principality. Nor can one say it was virtue when he killed citizens, betrayed friends, walked without faith, without piety, and without religion. By this means, he could achieve power but not glory. Still, if you consider Agatocle's virtue in facing and overcoming danger, and his greatness in facing and overcoming obstacles, there is nothing by which to judge him worse than any good Captain. Despite his extreme cruelty and inhumanity and his wickedness, he stands among great-celebrated men. But this cannot be attributed either to fortune or virtue. Without either, he reached his goal.

In our times, with Pope Alexander VI reigning, Oliverotto Uffreducci of Fermo lost his father at an early age and was raised by a maternal uncle, Giovanni Pigiiani. At an early age he also joined the army under Paolo Vitelli and rose to officer. When Paolo died (decapitated for suspected treason, 1499 — he served in the Florentine war against Pisa), Oliverotto fought for a while with Vitellozzo, Paolo's brother. In a short time, ingenious, dashing, and brave, he became head of the militia. But service with others seemed to him demeaning and he decided, with the help of some citizens of Fermo who were more used to servitude than freedom, and with the help of Vitellozzo, to occupy Fermo.

He wrote his uncle Giovanni Fogliani that as he had been away from home many years he would like to return and see him and his city and reclaim some of his patrimony. He had spent his time in search of honor and he said, to show he had not worked in vain, that he wanted to ride in with a hundred horses and servants and he hoped Fogliani would receive him with honors. This said, Giovanni honored his nephew. Oliverotto, well received, took up residence in his houses. After a few days, making his secret and evil preparations, he invited Giovanni Fogliani and all the princi-

pal men of Fermo. After the banquet and entertainments, Oliverotto expanded to the party on the greatness of Alexander IV and his son Desare and on their enterprises. When Giovanni and the others began to make comments, Oliverotto stood up and said that they should discuss the matter in greater privacy and retire to another room, where Giovanni and the others followed him. As soon as they were seated, the hidden soldiers entered, killed Giovanni, and murdered the rest of them.

After the massacre, Oliverotto mounted his horse, rode to town, and besieged the supreme magistrate in his palace. Out of fear, they obeyed him, forming a government and making him the chief. Everybody was dead who might have objected and now civil and martial laws were passed. Within a year, Oliverotto was secure in Fermo and a source of intimidation to all his neighbors. It would have been as difficult to remove him as Agatocle except that he was deceived by Cesare Borgia, who at Sinigaglia, as mentioned previously, captured the Orsini and Vitelli, and where a year after committing patricide, Oliverotto himself, along with Vitellozzo, a mask of virtue and wickedness also, was strangled.

One can certainly question why Agatocle and such persons, after betraying everybody and exercising great cruelty, can live a long life sure at home and safe from external enemies, and why the citizens don't conspire against them — whereas others almost as cruel have not been able to maintain states even in peaceful times and certainly not in times of war. I believe this is because of the good and bad use of cruelty. Cruelty well used (if one can ever say cruelty is good) is when it is practiced suddenly and decisively, but not prolonged. The practicanter converts to practices more useful for his subjects. Cruelty badly used is when although slight at the beginning, it grows more widely used in time. Those who work the first way can rectify their state with God and with men, as Agatocle did. Those who practice the second way fail.

Note that in taking a state the occupier has to act quickly and commit the worst offenses right away, so that he doesn't have to go on offending everyday. This way, giving no more offense, he can reassure and benefit others. Who doesn't do this, either out of

timidity or bad advice, always has to have the dagger in hand. He can't count on anyone because no one can count on him. Offense has to be done all at once so as to be over and forgotten, while favors should be dealt out bit by bit slowly so that they can be savored better. A Prince has to live with his subjects free to vary the good and the bad. This is because in bad times he has no room to maneuver and has to act harshly out of necessity while when he does good, if he is so constrained, he gets no credit for what he does.



OF THE CIVIL PRINCIPALITY

Turning to the case of a private citizen who eschews nefarious means and intolerably violent methods and instead curries favor with the citizens to become Prince (here called a Civil Principality — achieved neither by virtue nor by fortune but rather by lucky astuteness), this kind of rulership is reached with the favor of both the people and leading citizens. Every city is made of these two elements created by the fact that the people do not want to be commanded or oppressed by the prominent leaders, and the prominent leaders wish to command and oppress the people. From these two instincts are born three outcomes; either a Principality, or liberty, or unbridled license.

A Principality arises when either the people or the prominent citizens see an opportunity to dominate: the prominent leaders, scared of the populace, back the reputations of one of their own so that they can work their purposes under his shadow. Or the populace, scared of the prominent citizens, sees an opportunity to raise one of their own who will defend their interests. One who assumes leadership with the help of the prominent citizens or oligarchy has more trouble maintaining his position than one raised by the populace. A Prince raised by other prominent leaders finds himself constrained because the others surrounding him are his equals and will not be commanded by him or easily managed.

One who is raised by the populace finds himself alone surrounded mostly by people ready to obey. It is hard, moreover, to please equals and other great citizens without hurting someone, but easier to help the populace. The interest of the populace is more honest than that of prominent citizens who want to command and oppress, while the populace only wants to be free of oppression. On the other hand, an unfriendly populace is hard to

manage because they are many, while, since prominent citizens are few, a Prince can manage them.

The worst a Prince can expect from the populace is to be abandoned by them. But if the prominent few are against him not only may they abandon him but also they may conspire against him. They see more clearly and are themselves more astute, are out to save and advance themselves, and support whomsoever can win. A Prince always has to live with the same populace, but he can do without other leading citizens whom he can suppress or favor every day, wrecking or making their reputations. To be clearer, as to important personages — the noblemen — either they help in governance by their ways to favor the Prince's fortune, or they don't. Those who help out and are not rapacious need to be honored and loved; there are two ways of dealing with the others. Either they behave this way because they are pusillanimous and naturally flawed — in which case the Prince needs to rely on the most wise and expert among his counselors, because in times of prosperity they will honor him while in adversity there is nothing to fear from them. But with those who behave this way purposely and consciously and for motives of ambition, it shows they think first of themselves rather than of the Prince. Against these, the Prince needs to be on guard. He should fear and treat them as enemies. In times of trouble, they will always help to ruin him.

One who becomes Prince through the favor of the populace needs to keep it friendly. This is easy because all the populace wants is to not be oppressed. But one who reaches power by favor of great personages needs at all costs to curry the favor of this populace — which is easy if he appeals for its protection. People, when they get something good where they expected something bad, admire their benefactor more, and the populace is even more favorable if the Prince can win this favor in many ways. Each Prince differs. There are no rules or certainties. So we will skip this. In conclusion: a Prince needs a friendly populace; otherwise, in adversity, there is no hope.

Nabide (205 to 192 B.C.), Prince of the Spartans, survived the

blockade of all Greece and a victorious Roman army, and defended his homeland and state; surviving the original onslaught, he needed only to defend himself against a few enemies. If he had had the populace against him, this would not have sufficed. This is true despite those who repeat that trite proverb: "Who counts on the populace builds on mud." This may be the case when a man of the people counts on them and promises to liberate them from the oppression of enemies and magistrates. Such a person may be deceived, as were the Gracchi in Rome (2nd century B.C.), and as was Giorgio Scali in Florence (d. 1382). But, when a Prince who can rule as a man of valor, who avoids disaster, who is otherwise prepared, who serves the universal common good, if he counts on the populace, he will never be deceived and will have built on a solid good.

Princes rising from a civil to an absolute Principality should be aware. Either they are alone in arms or command through magistrates. In the latter case they are weaker and at greater risk because they depend on the people who follow the magistrates. The magistrates, in difficult times, can easily withdraw the support of the state, act against the Prince, or refuse to obey. The Prince cannot quickly seize absolute power. The citizens and subjects, used to the commands of the magistrates, and in cases of conflict, won't obey the Prince. They will always doubt him in difficult times. Such a Prince cannot rely on things as they are when there is peace and people count on the Prince. Then they want to do and promise everything for him, and — when there is no danger — to die for him. But in difficult times, when the state needs the support of its citizens, few come forward. This is more dangerous the more exceptional the need. So a Prince needs to find a way to make the citizens at all times in all ways dependent on the state and on him, and only then will they remain faithful.

HOW TO MEASURE THE STRENGTH OF PRINCIPALITIES

It is important in evaluating Principalities to know whether a Prince controls enough state so that, in need, he can defend himself or rather if he always needs the defenses of others. To make this clear I will say how I judge those who can defend themselves, namely, by whether they can call up enough men and draw on enough money to mount a good army and do battle with any aggressor. Others always need other people's reinforcements, can't field a force against the enemy in battle, and need to take refuge behind walls at the mercy of others. Of those ready to do battle, we will speak further. Of the others who rely on third parties, we can only say they need to fortify and stock themselves, and forget about the open territory. Those who fortifies themselves well and who governs according to the rules, will only be attacked with considerable circumspection. Men dislike difficult undertakings. They do not see making an easy assault where the Prince rules proudly and is not hated by the populace.

German cities are pretty free, don't control much countryside, obey the emperor — when they want to, and don't fear other lords around them. They are adequately fortified so that any enemy realizes that any assault will be tedious and hard. These cities have ditches and walls around them and maintain enough artillery. Their stores hold enough drink, food, and fuel for a year. They keep a backlog and pay enough to supply the army, nerve and life of the city, for a year and the public citizens doing public works. Their militia are qualified and they maintain these security forces well.

A Prince, who fortifies his city well and who is not hated by

the populace, is not easy to attack. If someone attacks him, it is likely they will be shamed because such is the world that it is “hard to keep an army inactive and camping for a year.” If someone answers that people will turn against the Prince when they see their holdings outside the walls burned and despoiled, I answer that a valorous Prince will always overcome these problems if he offers hope that the evil will not last long, striking fear into them when the defenders are still brave and ready. The Prince need not worry so much later when things cool off because the damage is already done and there is no recourse. The populace tends to unite with the Prince who, since their houses are burned and their properties destroyed, is obliged to defend them. The nature of man is such that he feels obligated both for benefits given and benefits received. Everything considered, a Prince will not have a hard time keeping in control those who, under assault, have something to live off and defend themselves with.



OF ECCLESIASTICAL PRINCIPALITIES

We still have to deal with Ecclesiastical Principalities. All the difficulties here come before possession of them. They are acquired either by virtue or by fortune, but maintained without either. Such Principalities are kept by ancient religious rules, which are of such force and quality that their Princes are supported no matter how they rule or live. Only ecclesiastical Princes have states, which they do not defend, subjects that they do not govern. Because they don't defend them, no one takes them away. The subjects, since they are not governed, don't care about, think about, nor alienate themselves from their Princes. Therefore, only these Principalities are really secure and happy.

Sustained by higher powers, which the human mind cannot understand, there is no use talking about them. Being held up by God, it would be presumptuous of man to discourse on them. Yet if someone asked where the Church got its great temporal power, I would have to say that since Pope Alexander VI (1492) the Italian potentates, and not only those who ranked themselves as potentates, but every baron and lord, even lesser ones, underestimated the Church's temporal power and now the King of France himself trembles. Alexander has taken over Italy, and ruined the Venetians. Since this is the case, maybe we should bring these events to mind.

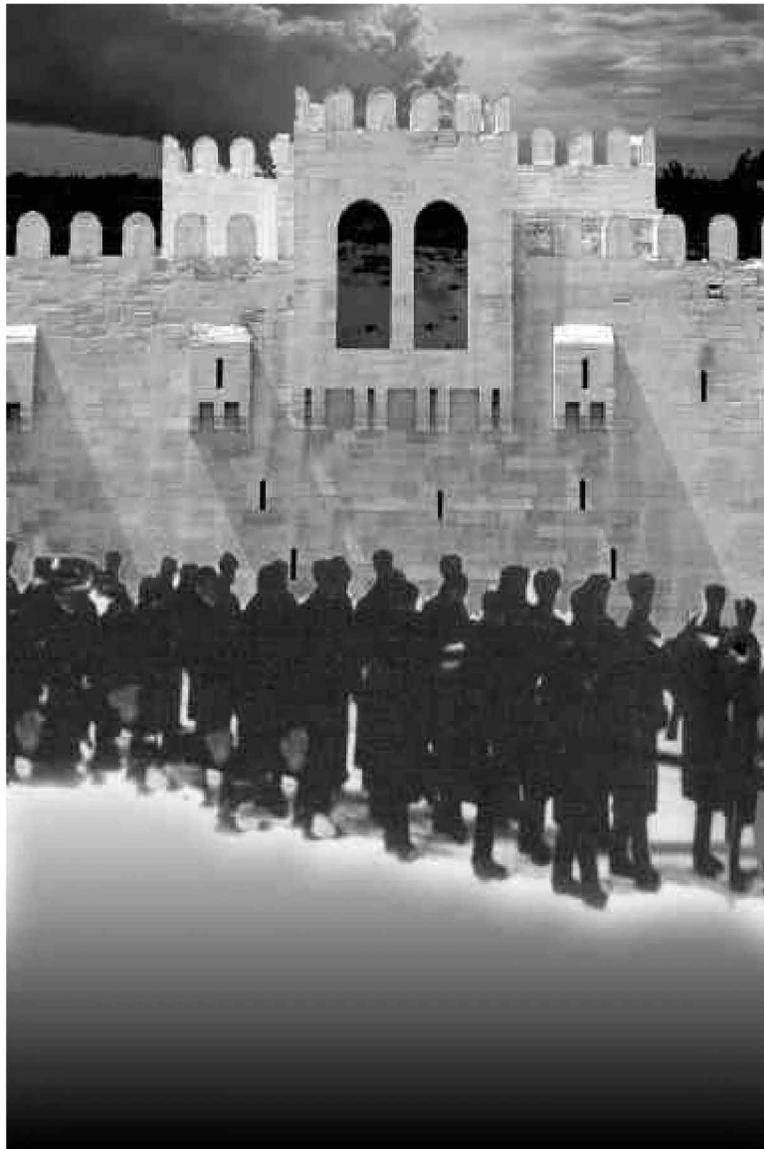
Before King Charles of France invaded Italy in 1494, this province was ruled by the Pope, by Venetians, by the King of Naples, by the Duke of Milan and by the Florentines. These potentates care about two things: one, that no foreigner enter Italy with arms; two, that no potentate expand his state. The most troublesome were the Pope and the Venetians. To keep after the Ve-

netians, the others had to hold together, as in the defense of Ferrara (1482-1484). To hold the Pope back, the others played on the Barons of Rome. The Barons of Rome were divided into two factions, the Orsini and the Colonna, with scandals going on between the two. Armed and under the eyes of the Popes, they kept the papacy weak. Although sometimes a strong Pope like Sixtus IV (1471-1484) emerged, neither fortune nor savvy could get around the Barons. The shortness of Popes' lives was the real reason a Pope ruled on average ten years. In this short time, it was impossible to knock one of the factions out. If one almost did the Colonnas in, another enemy of the Orsini would turn up, reviving the Colonnas, and the Orsini themselves never gave way.

This fact led to the underestimation of the Pope's power in Italy. Then, Alexander VI was coronated (1492-1503) who of all the Popes showed how much a Pope with both money and the use of force could prevail. Using Duke Valentine and capitalizing on the failure of the French, he did all those things I mention above in the history of the Duke. Although his intention was not to aggrandize the Church, the Duke despite his actions did just that. The Church, after the Duke's death, reaped the benefits. Then came Pope Julius II (1503-1513) who found the Church great in state, owning all of Romagna and with the Barons weakened — the factions having been wiped out by Alexander. He found the way open as never before to make money (by selling indulgences).

Julius not only followed but also increased these practices, hoping to gain Bologna, finish off the Venetians, and chase the French out of Italy. He succeeded in all these, to his own renown, working for the Church and not just some private concern. He kept the Orsini and Colonnas at bay, and though there was friction, two things kept them quiet: the greatness of the Church, and the fact that neither family had a cardinal in the Sacred College. Such parties are never quiet with a cardinal because cardinals nurse parties in and outside Rome, and the Barons have to defend them. The ambitions of cardinals nourish discord and tumult among the barons. The papacy of Leo X followed

(1513-1521), a Medici, and a powerful Pope who, while the barons made him great with their arms, he made his reputation and was venerated for other munificent virtues.



CONCERNING THE MILITIA AND MERCENERY SOLDIERS

We have talked of the different Principalities which I set out to start with and the causes of their success or failure and we saw how to win and lose such states. Now we turn to the good and bad points of such states, and how they occur. We mentioned how a Prince should have certain basic goods in place; otherwise, he comes to ruin. The main fundamentals that a state — new, old, or mixed — has to have are good laws and a strong army. Good laws do not come without strong security; where the army is strong, one needs good laws. Leaving the question of good laws aside, let's discuss armies.

The forces a Prince uses to defend his state are either his own, or they are mercenaries, auxiliaries, or mixed forces. Mercenaries and auxiliaries are useless and dangerous. A state based on mercenary forces will never be solid or secure. Mercenary forces are not united; they are ambitious, undisciplined, and disloyal. They are careful of friends, villainous with enemies, not fearing God, and faithless among men. Attack and defeat are the same to them. In peacetime, they rob you. In war, the enemy ruins you. The reason is that nothing keeps them in camp except a miserable wage, not enough for them to die for you. They want to be soldiers as long as there is no war, but when war comes, they flee and run away.

This does not take much convincing because the ruin of Italy is not from anything but being in the hands, for many years, of mercenary troops. Left alone they made some advances, but as soon as foreigners came, they showed their true colors. When Charles of France showed up they called it the "war of chalk" — because white chalk marked the houses where he could lodge his troops. He, who said, like Giovanni Savonarola, that defeat was

due to our fault and sins, was telling it right. But it wasn't those sins, but the ones that I relate. And because the Princes sent the mercenaries, they suffered the consequences.

I'd like to show even better the weakness of such armies. Mercenary captains are either excellent soldiers, or not. If they are, you can't trust them because they aspire to glory themselves — either by putting you down, or putting others down that you don't intend to harm. If they are no good as soldiers, they ruin you anyway. If someone answers this happens no matter who the soldier is, I have to answer that there is a difference in how armies work under Princes or in Republics. The Prince must be his own captain; in a Republic, one of the citizens assumes the captaincy. When he is not a valiant man, he has to be replaced. When he is valiant, it is hard to contain him within the law. But from experience, one sees Princes and Republican armies make progress, Mercenaries do nothing but damage. An armed Republic falls to its own dictator from within less easily than an army raised from outside.

Rome and Sparta lasted many centuries armed and free. The Swiss are armed and free. Mercenary armies of antiquity are, for example, the Carthaginians who were oppressed by their own mercenaries after the first Punic campaign against Rome (241 B.C.), when they still had their own captains. Philip of Macedonia (father of Alexander the Great), after the death of Epaminonda, was made captain of the armies by the Thebans and, after their victory, took their liberty from them. The people of Milan, after Duke Philip's death, made Francesco Sforza their captain against the Venetians. After defeating the Venetians at Caravaggio, he joined with them to put down his patrons in Milan and take over. His father, a soldier for Queen Gio of Naples, abandoned her unarmed, whereupon she had to throw herself on the mercy of the King of Aragon.

True, the Venetians and Florentines expanded their territory with mercenary arms, and their captains did not become Princes, but defended them — but, in these cases, they were favored by fate. Some valorous captains, whom they might fear, did not win,

others had opposition, and still others directed their ambitions elsewhere. Giovanni Acuto (John Hawkwood, 1320-1394) was not a winner — so he was never tested. But everyone said that if he had won he could have had Florence. Sforza in Milan always had Andrea Fortebracci (1368-1424) against him, holding back each other. Francesco Sforza cast his lot with Lombardy, while Braccio went against the Church and the Kingdom of Naples.

Let's look at what happened recently. Florence made Paul Vitelli captain, a most prudent man who made a big reputation out of a private fortune. If he had succeeded in Pisa, he could have done the same in Florence. If he had become their soldier, soldier of the enemy, Florence would have had to obey him too.

Look at Venice and their success. At first, they advanced their interests surely and gloriously with their own tactics until they campaigned on the ground. At sea they succeeded with their own leaders and people, but when they launched a ground campaign they adopted the Italian use of mercenaries. At first, as a great city with little territory, they'd didn't have much to fear from their captains. But in the second war with Milan under Francesco Bur-rone, Count of Carmagnola, they learned the error of their ways. Lauding him as virtuous because at first he had defeated the Duke of Milan, but knowing how he had turned, they saw they could not win with Count of Pitigliano and others who all risked losing, as happened at Vaila (1509) when Venice lost in one day gains of eight hundred years. Such arms make gains slowly, late, and feebly, and they are soon lost. There are examples from Italy, governed for a long time by mercenary troops, and I discuss them at length to define the origins and progress of their cases so that things can be improved.

It is to be understood, then, how in recent times with the decline of imperial power in Italy and the increase in the temporal power of the papacy, Italy divided into many states. Many great cities took arms against the nobles who were formerly favored by the Emperor. The church favored the cities because it increased their own temporal power. Many citizens became Princes. With the Church rising and some republics, things were headed by

priests and citizens not accustomed to arms — and they began to use foreign troops. The first to resort to this sort of militia was Alberigo of Conio, from Romagna, who founded in 1409 the Company of St. George. From his example Braccio and Sforza followed, both in their times arbiters of Italy. After them came the others who into our times have commanded mercenary armies. The outcome of this was the descent of Charles of France into Italy, Louis the XII, and Ferdinand of Aragon, all helped by the Swiss.

Their tactic was to reduce the infantry. Without a state and in the business of war, the infantry burdened them and were hard to provide for. So they built up the cavalry which were less numerous but easier to support. Finally, in an army of 20,000 soldiers, there were only two thousand infantry. Everything was done to reduce the work and fears of the soldiers, not massacring each other but taking prisoners. They didn't assault cities at night and the cities did not launch surprise attacks on the tents. There was no campaigning in winter. All this was permitted in the military to escape burdens and hardships till finally the Italian military was weakened and vitiated.



CONCERNING AUXILIARY, MIXED, AND NATIVE MILITIA

Auxiliary arms, the other useless weapon, are when someone calls on another potentate to come with his forces to aid and defend you. Pope Julius II did this recently. Having seen the sad fate of his mercenaries at Ferrara, he turned to auxiliaries. He asked Ferdinand of Spain to help him with his personnel and armies. For their owners these forces can be useful and good, but for third parties they are almost always harmful. If they lose, you are defenseless; if they win, you are a prisoner.

There are many examples of this in ancient history, but I don't want to forget the fresh example of Pope Julius II. At first, he made the bad call, wanting Ferrara, of throwing himself in the hands of a foreigner. But luck smiled on him from another quarter, and thus he escaped the fate of his bad choice. Namely, although his Spanish auxiliaries were broken at Ravenna, the Swiss came to his aid and chased the French so that he did not become prisoner of either his enemies or his auxiliaries. The Florentines, when they were disarmed, sent 10,000 French to Pisa, running a greater risk than at any time in their history. In 1353 the Emperor of Constantinople fielded 10,000 Turks against the Greeks who, when the war was over, didn't want to leave. Thus began the servitude of the Greeks to the Infidel.

Losers, therefore, rely on such arms — they are much more dangerous than mercenaries. Auxiliaries lead to sure ruin — they are united in obedience to others. Mercenaries, once victorious, if they want to offend you, need more time and opportunity. They are not all in accord and besides, are being paid by you. A third of them depend directly on your authority and are not likely to offend you. To summarize, mercenaries are dangerous because of

their cowardice, while auxiliaries are dangerous when they are brave.

A wise Prince therefore avoids dependence on these forces and relies on his own. Better to lose with his forces than win with arms of others, judging victory not real when acquired with the arms of others. I cannot cease citing Cesare Borgia and his deeds. He entered Romagna with auxiliaries, leading the all-French troops in. With them, he took Imola and Forlì. But, suspecting his own security, he turned to mercenaries, believing them to be less dangerous. He turned to the Orsini and Vitelli, got rid of them, and fell back on his own forces. You can judge the difference in such forces by measuring the reputation of the Duke with the French, then with the Orsini and Vitelli, and then on his own. His reputation only increased and he was never admired more, than when he was seen in command of his own forces.

I don't want to wander from fresh Italian examples, but I don't want to forget Gerone II (265-215 B.C.), tyrant of Syracuse, already mentioned. Gerone, made captain of the army by the Syracusans, realized that the mercenaries were useless — so he had them cut to pieces, and then waged war with his own men and not with aliens. I want to remind you in this regard of a figure from the Old Testament. David offered to Saul to combat Goliath, the troublesome Philistine. Saul offered David help — his troops. But David refused, saying he couldn't count on them. He preferred to confront the enemy with his sling and dagger. The troops and arms of others either hang heavy, turn against you, or force you.

Charles VII (1422-1461), King of France, father of Louis XI, by valor and fortune having liberated France from the English, realized this need and conscripted citizens and infantry. His son Louis dismissed the infantry and relied on Swiss mercenaries. These two errors, as we saw, led to dangers to his realm. By raising the Swiss, he undermined his own troops. He dismissed his infantry and put the other troops under Swiss leadership. Growing accustomed to the superiority of the Swiss, the French thought they couldn't win without them. Thereafter the French could not resist the Swiss. Without the Swiss, they couldn't pre-

vail against others. French armies became mixed — part their own, part mercenary. These armies, although better than auxiliaries and one hundred per cent mercenaries, were not as good as native troops. This example suffices, because if Charles' order had prevailed France would have been unbeatable. Meager human prudence is thus corrupted and begins something thinking it is good without realizing the secret poison underneath.

Whoever ruling a Principality cannot see an evil aborning is not truly wise — and this is given to few. If you look at the first cause of the fall of the Roman Empire, you will see that they began to conscript the Goths. From that move first came the weakening of Roman imperial forces. The valor they had passed to the Goths.

I conclude that without its very own native troops no Principality is secure; in fact, fate hangs on fortune, no longer having the virtuous valor that in adversity defends it in full faith. It was always the view of wise men “quod nihil sit tam informum aut instabile quam tam potential non sus vi nixa” (Tacitus: “No human things is so weak and unstable as a reputation of strength not based on actual force”). One's own arms can be based on subjects, citizens, or relatives: all other forces are mercenary or auxiliary. The method of utilizing one's own troops will be easy to see if you follow the example of the four figures mentioned above (Cesare Borgia, Gerone II, David, Charles VII) and if you observe how Philip, father of Alexander the Great, and other Republicans and Princes have armed and defended themselves — on which rules I completely rely.

**WHAT ONE NEEDS TO KNOW
IN A PRINCIPALITY
ABOUT THE MILITIA**

A Prince should have no other objective nor any other thought nor attends to any other skills other than war and the orders and disciplines of war. This is the only art that concerns one in command. This is the virtue that maintains those born to rule but also makes the fortunes of those private leaders who rise to rank. Vice-versa, those Princes who think more of gentle arts instead of arms lose their states. The prime reason why Princes lose their states is the neglect of the art of war. The prime reason how persons acquire states is the profession of this art.

Francesco Sforza, because he was armed, rose from private citizen to be the Duke of Milan. His sons, discarding the hardships and being unarmed brought scorn upon themselves. A Prince cannot afford to be scorned. There is no match between an armed and a disarmed force. It isn't reasonable for an armed party to voluntarily obey a disarmed party, or that a disarmed party rest secure among armed forces. He is at once scorned and suspect; so things cannot go well. His soldiers cannot esteem a Prince who does not understand militias, besides other problems, nor can he trust them.

He must therefore never lose sight of war exercises, and in peace he has to stay armed more than in war. He can do this in two ways: one, operationally; two, mentally. Operationally, besides constantly maintaining and disciplining the troops, a Prince must always hunt. This hardens the body to hardship but also helps the Prince learn the nature of the landscape and places, the ways of mountains, valleys, plains, and he gets to understand the rivers and swamps and to respect them. This knowledge is useful

in two ways: he gets to know his own country the better to defend it, but also gets to know terrain and what to expect about other and new places. The lakes, valleys, plains, and rivers and swamps of Tuscany are similar to those of other places. What one learns in one province applies to another. A Prince who lacks this skill lacks the first thing needing in a Captain. All this helps in finding the enemy, pitching camp, leading the troops, settling the order of the day, and staking sites to your advantage.

Pelopomene, Prince of the Acheans, among virtues attributed to him by writers, was that of thinking of nothing but war in times of peace. Often if he was in the country with friends he would stop them and say; "If the enemy were on that hill, and we were here with the army, who would have the advantage? How would we advance to meet the enemy? If we wanted to retreat which way would we go? They would go over all the possibilities, hear opinions, express their own, then test them. So it was by continued practice that the Prince, when leading the army, never lacked a solution in any circumstance.

As to mental preparation, a Prince must ever read history and examine the records of excellent men, the reasons for victory and defeat — to better achieve the one and avoid the other. He should study some excellent man to imitate those who have been praised and glorified, borrowing his gestures and actions, as Alexander the Great imitated Achilles, Ceasar imitated Alexander, and Scipio imitated Cyrus. Whoever reads the life of Cyrus written by Xenofantes (430-354 B.C.) realizes how much in life Scipio owed to imitation — chastity, affability, humanity, and liberality. In all this Scipio followed what Xenofantes writes about Cyrus.

A wise Prince will do likewise. He will never be lazy in peacetime but will be industrious in preparing to have all ready in times of adversity so that, when fortune changes, he can meet it and resist.



***CONCERNING MEN'S PRAISE,
ITS CAUSES,
ESPECIALLY FOR PRINCES,
AND THEIR CONDEMNATION***

We still need to consider the mode of governing of a Prince with his subjects and friends. I know many others have written a lot about this, so I fear I will be held presumptuous by departing from what others have said about the matter. But since my intent is to write something useful to the reader, I plan to go behind appearances and posturing and deal with the effective reality of things. Many states have pretended to be Republics or Principalities that were nothing of the sort. There's a big difference between how one actually lives and how one should ideally live. Often one who strays from what he actually does and what he should ideally do risks ruin. He who wants always to do good often wrecks himself among those who are not good. Wherefore it behooves a Prince who wants to maintain his position to learn how to not be good, and to use the good or not use it according to the needs.

So, never mind the imaginary Prince. Let's talk about real ones. All men, and particularly Princes, who are raised above them, display qualities, which draw praise or blame. Some are considered liberal, others miserly (the Tuscan term, not to say avaricious — which implies rapaciously taking what belongs to others, while miserly means not spending what one already has). Some are considered generous, others avaricious, some cruel, others compassionate, some faithless, others faithful, some effeminate, others pusillanimous, some humane, others proud, some lascivious, others chaste, some loyal, others astute, some

hard, others soft, some somber, others lighthearted, some religious, others non-believers — and so on.

I know people will say it would be praiseworthy for a Prince to possess all those above qualities that are considered good. But because they can't have them all nor practice them all since the human condition doesn't allow it, it is needful for a Prince to be prudent and know how to escape the infamy of those vices that would upset the state and those which he can avoid. But if he can't, he needs to know which vices will hurt him or the state the least. He best avoid those vices that will surely compromise the state. All things considered there will be traits considered good that, if followed, will lead to ruin, while other traits considered vices which if practiced achieve security and well being for the Prince.

CONCERNING LIBERALITY AND PARSIMONY

Starting from the above, liberality is generally considered good. Nonetheless, liberality, as it is usually practiced, is harmful. As, usually practiced, virtuously, as it should be, liberality is not recognized; it does not protect you against charges of avarice. To win from men praise for liberality, you need to exercise sumptuousness at every opportunity. The trouble is ostentation will consume enormous amounts of spending. To keep up the reputation of liberality, the Prince will have to exercise strong fiscal policies and do all he can to raise money. This will turn the populace against him. When he is poor, no one will admire him. Having offended everyone and pleased only a few, he becomes vulnerable. When he realizes this and tries to change course, he gets a reputation for miserliness.

A Prince cannot exercise liberality without damage to himself in the public eye, so he has to brace himself against being known as stingy. In time, he will be known for liberality because his parsimony will preserve his assets, and he will be able to defend himself in war and undertake projects without leaning on the populace. That way those who give, who are many in number, will see him as exercising liberality, while those to whom he does give, who are few, are the only ones who will see him as a miser. In our times no great things have been done except by those who were perceived as misers. The others faded away. Pope Julius II, exploiting a reputation for liberality to reach the papacy, didn't keep up this pretence to make war. The King of France waged many wars without special taxes by practicing steadfast parsimony. The current King of Spain had he been reputed liberal would not have won many of his undertakings.

So a Prince has to bear the reputation of being stingy if he is

to not rob his subjects, if he is to defend them, if he is not become poor, if he is not to become rapacious. It is a vice that helps him rule. If someone objects, that Ceasar practiced liberality to become emperor, and many others as Prince of the realm or to win a Princedom. In the former case, liberality is harmful; in the latter case, it is necessary. Ceasar needed to practice liberality to win the Principality of Rome, but once established, if he had not abated the spending, he would have ruined the Empire. If someone alleges that many Princes who have done great things with the armies have been considered liberal, then I answer, the Prince either spends his own or his subject's goods, or he spends the goods of others. In the former case he will have to be parsimonious, in the second situation he should skimp in no way.

A Prince who travels with the armies and lives off the prey, sacking and pillaging, lives off others and must practice liberality in every way. Otherwise, the soldiers will not follow him. It is best to liberally distribute the goods of others, as did Cyrus, Ceasar, and Alexander. Spending the wealth of others tarnishes no reputation but adds to it. Only spending your own resources hurts you. Nothing harms your own resources like liberality. As you spend, you deplete the resources for spending. You become either poor or impoverished, or, to escape poverty, rapacious and hateful. Of all things that a Prince needs to avoid are becoming withdrawn and hated. Liberality leads to that. It is wiser to be known as a miser, which gives you a bad but not a hated name, than to desire to bask in the name of liberality and be reduced to infamy as a rapacious and a hated ruler.



***OF CRUELTY AND COMPASSION
WHETHER IT IS BETTER TO BE LOVED THAN
FEARED, OR RATHER FEARED THAN LOVED***

Moving on to other qualities of the Prince, I would say every Prince would want to be esteemed compassionate rather than cruel. But I have to warn him to be careful about compassion. Cesare Borgia was deemed cruel. But his "cruelty" pacified Romagna, united it, and subjected it. Truly seen, this was more compassion than what the Florentines did. The Florentines temporized and procrastinated in Pistoia in the name of compassion, only to let the town be destroyed. A Prince should ignore charges of cruelty and make his priority the unity and faith of his subjects. Many times, it is better to take a hard line than to let compassion and softness lead to disorder and riots. These are counter to the public good. Disciplinary action only hurts a few — the offenders. Among Princes, it is hardest for the new Prince to avoid charges of cruelty, because new states are full of threats. Virgil put these words into the mouth of Dido:

Hard political necessity and the newness of
the realm force me to take tough measures
and deploy troops to protect my realm.
(Aeneid, I, 563-564)

At the same time, the Prince should be deliberate in believing what he hears and in acting nor just create fear for the sake of fear. He should proceed with prudence and with humanity. Overconfidence should not supersede caution and carelessness would only lead to making the Prince unpopular.

From this arises the question: should a Prince better be feared, or loved? The answer is: he should be both, but because it is hard

to be both at the same time, it is much safer to be feared than loved, if one must renounce to one or the other. Of men, this can generally be said: they are generally ungrateful, over talkative, imitators, dissimulators, cowardly in the face of danger, and greedy for money. When you favor them they are all on your side offering their blood, goods, life, and sons, when there is no real need. They are all on your side offering their blood, goods, life, and sons, when there is no real need. But if you crowd them, turning the screws, they revolt. The Prince who relies on their word is ruined if he has no other defense. Friendship bought with money and not with nobility of soul may be owing but is never stable, and in bad times you can't count on this friendship. Men care less about offending one whom they love than one whom they fear. Love creates a bond that sadly obligates men only as long as it serves their own purpose, but fear is hardened by the sureness of punishment and never lets you down.

Nevertheless, the Prince must make himself feared in such a way that, short of being loved, he is at least not hated. These two conditions can be very well linked together. This will happen easily as long as you lay off the goods and women of your citizens and subjects. If you have to take someone's life do it when there is easy justification and apparent cause. Above all, don't touch people's possessions. Men forget the death of a father sooner than the loss of his estate. Reasons for taking people's property always exist, and once started down this path, there is no stopping, but reasons for killing someone are more rare, and it is easier to lie off.

When a Prince is leading the army, however, and has a lot of soldiers under him, then particularly it is important not to care about having a reputation for cruelty. Without this reputation, it is impossible to keep the army united and prevent them from turning to some other faction. Among the noteworthy deeds of Hannibal (247-183 B.C.), having a large army at his command, should be noted that he never let dissension surface even though he commanded men of very different ages on alien terrain. They didn't bicker among themselves or against their Prince either in

good or bad fortune. This made him venerated and terrible in the eyes of his soldiers. Without this fear, his other virtues would not have been enough. Historians don't realize this, and while they praise his virtues, they wrongly condemn the source of his strength.

That his other virtues would not have sufficed, can be shown by considering Scipio (236-183 B.C., victor over Hannibal), a rare figure in his own times and an exception in all times. In Spain, his army rebelled against him. This came from nothing other than his excessive compassion, which gave his troops more license than military discipline. For this Fabio Massimo reproved him in the Senate and called him a corruptor of the Roman militia. When his Locrensi were destroyed by a false legate and not vindicated by Scipio or the legate chastised, it was because of Scipio's easy nature. So much so that in the Senate some defenders who really should have known better, but wanting to excuse him, said he should correct his ways. This nature of his would have in time wrecked Scipio's reputation if he had aspired to be Emperor, but, since he remained loyal under the senate, this dangerous virtue of his not only didn't harm him but also added to his glory.

I conclude that as to being feared or loved that being loved makes you depend on others while being feared helps you depend on yourself so that a Prince should rely on himself, and not on others. All he needs to do is avoid being hated.

HOW A PRINCE SHOULD UPHOLD FAITH

Everyone feels that a Prince should keep the Faith and live by honesty and not by astuteness. Nevertheless, one sees that Princes who have done great things in our times have held the Faith in low regard. They have rather by their wits known how to get around men. In the end, they overcame men who remained loyal.

There are two ways to fight: with laws, and with force. The first is rightly the man's way; the second is the way of beasts. Often the first way is not enough and it is necessary to resort to the second. A Prince has to know how to manage beasts and men. The ancient writers deal this with Indirectly. They say that Achilles and many other ancient Princes were given to feeding Chiron the Centaur, whom they kept watch over. This means they held up Chiron as an example of nature, half human and half beast — one without the other was not viable.

A Prince needs to know bestial nature and differentiate between the lion and the fox. The lion cannot keep away from snares; the fox can't defend itself from wolves. You need to be a fox to know snares, a lion to scare wolves. He who just knows lions doesn't understand. A prudent man cannot rely on good faith nor should he when such observance turns against him or undermines the reasons themselves for observing it. If men were all good, this percept would not matter. Because men are imperfect and don't keep faith with you, neither must you keep it with them. A Prince will never lack reasons to break good faith. One could give infinite modern examples and show how often peace and promises have been nullified by the unfaithfulness of Princes. He who knew but how to play the fox came out best. But it is best to temper and disguise this nature, to be an actor and dissembler.

Men are so simple and obey their present needs so much that who deceives will easily find someone to deceive.

I will give one example: Alexander VI, who never did anything else than deceive men, always found victims. No man ever swore to more things and betrayed his promises more. His ruses were always successful because he understood this side of the world well. The Prince needs not always do this, but must appear to have these qualities. To practice deceit is harmful; appearing to have these qualities is useful as it is to appear compassionate, faithful, human, honest and religious, and at the same time be able to change to the opposite. He must know that a Prince, and particularly a new Prince, cannot always observe those qualities that men hold well since, in order to maintain the state as needed, he may have to act contrary to good faith, charity, humanity, and religion. Thus he needs to have a variable nature capable of changing with the winds of fortune and situations, and know how to act not just by the good but, if need be, by the bad.

So a Prince needs to take care never to let escape from his lips anything contrary to these five qualities, seeming always to be compassionate, faithful, honest, humane, and religious. Nothing is more important than to seem to be religious. Men judge more by appearances than by deeds. Everyone can see, few people can actually perceive and judge. Everybody can see what you seem to be; few can judge what you actually are. Those few do not dare to oppose the majority, who control the state that defends them. Men's actions, and those of Princes, have no other tribunal or appeal. Judgment is final. So a Prince dissimulates to win and maintain the state. Some Princes of today, whom it is well not to name, preach nothing but peace and good faith, but despise both. Had they respected peace and good faith they would have lost both their reputations and their states.



HOW AS A PRINCE TO AVOID BEING DESPISED AND HATED

I have mentioned the most important qualities for a Prince but want now to be a little more specific: how, namely, the Prince should avoid that which makes him hateful or scorned, and how. If he does this, he should not worry about his reputation otherwise. The fastest way to become hated is to be rapacious and take the property or women of your subjects. This, the Prince has to avoid. Men left to their possessions and honor live contentedly. All one needs then is to guard against the ambitions of a few. It is easy and there are many ways to hinder them. He must guard against being lackadaisical, effeminate, and pusillanimous. Irresolute. Above all the Prince needs to guard against irresoluteness. He should cultivate greatness, liveliness, gravity, and strength. In relations with his subjects, they should know that his judgment is irreversible. They should view him in such a way that no one dare deceive or aggravate him.

A Prince who builds this reputation has enough. He becomes difficult to conspire against, difficult to attack. He is instead esteemed and revered. A Prince must fear two things: internal danger from his subjects, and threats from foreign powers. The best defense is to be well armed and have good friends, and whoever is well armed will have good friends. Internal security will be good if threats from outside are blocked, as long as there is no internal conspiracy. When the attack comes from outside, if the Prince has things under control internally and lives as I say, as long as he doesn't panic he will be able to ward off every threat as did Nabis the Spartan.

When things are peaceful abroad, the Prince has to be careful that his subjects do not plot at home. If he avoids hatred and scorn he goes a long way to avoiding this — the people will be

satisfied with him. I already showed how to do this. One of the first ways of avoiding plots is to be loved by the masses. Those who plot against the Prince reckon on pleasing the populace. If they are afraid of offending the people, they no longer have the courage to follow this path, because the obstacles faced by conspirators are endless. There have been many plots, but few have succeeded. Who plots cannot be alone nor can he seek out anyone except malcontents. As soon as you share a secret with a malcontent, you give him ammunition to be content because he can gain advantage by informing. Since he sees an immediate advantage in informing, he must either be an awfully good friend or hate the Prince awfully in order to keep faith.

In short, the conspirators have to deal with fear, jealousy, and possible punishment, while on his side the Prince has majesty of the Principality, the laws, his friends and estate to protect him. So much so that if he join to this popularity, it is unlikely that anyone will plot against him. Ordinarily, a plotter has to reckon with fear before the fact. In this case, he has to fear the aftermath too, the populace too being against him, nor can he hope for any refuge.

Of this one could give many examples. I will give only one example that was a memory to our fathers. Annibale Bentivoglio (d.1445), ancestor of the living Annibale Bentivoglio II (1469- 1540), who was Prince of Bologna, was targeted and killed by the Canneschi band, leaving Giovanni his son still in diapers. Right after the assassination, the populace rose and killed all the Canneschi. This happened because of the popularity of the Prince so that though there was no heir who could rule, they followed up on a report that Bentivoglio had a natural son in Florence who was a blacksmith (Sante, 1426-1463). The Bolognesi went and got him and made him governor of the city, where he ruled until Giovanni came into his majority.

I conclude that a Prince need not worry about conspiracies when he enjoys popularity. When he is an enemy of the people and hated, then he should fear everything and everyone. A well-ordered state and a wise Prince should diligently avoid embitter-

ing the nobles and try to favor the people and keep them happy. This is one of the most important tasks of a Prince.

One of the best ordered and governed kingdoms of our times is France. Here there are many constitutional guidelines on which the liberty and security of the King depend. The first of these is the parliament and its authority. The laws of that state, recognizing the ambitions and insolence of power and the nobles, and judging it necessary to reign them all in, and, on the other hand, recognizing the universal hatred of potentates arising from fear, the laws did not want the King to deal with this, trying to remove the friction he would have with the nobles if he favored the populace, and the friction he would have with the populace if he favored the nobles. So they created a third force that without relying on the King could hold off the nobles and favor the populace. Nothing could be better or more prudent nor contribute more to the security of the King and the Kingdom. A further moral can be drawn from this: namely, that a Prince should let others administer unpopular measures and only claim credit for popular measures. Again, a Prince should esteem the nobles but not alienate the populace.

Maybe someone will object, considering the life and death of the Roman Emperors, that there are examples opposed to my opinion. They will say some emperors ruled and lived exemplarily showing great virtue who nevertheless lost their empire and were assassinated by those who plotted against them. Since I want to answer these charges I will mention the qualities of certain emperors, showing the reason for their fall to be in line with what I have said. This will put in perspective the conditions of those times. It is enough to cite all those Emperors who succeeded to the rule of Marcus Aurelius the Philosopher (161- 180) up to Massimino (235-238) — I mean Marcus, his son Commodus (180-192), Pertinacius (193), Julianus (193), Septimus Severus (193-211), Caracalla (211-217), Macrinus (217-218), Eleogaballus (218-222), Alexander Severus (222-235) and Massiminus (235-238).

The first thing to notice is that while other Princes have only to contend with the ambitions of the nobles and the insolence of the populace, the Roman emperors had a third difficulty: the cruelty and avariciousness of the military. This was foremost in the ruin of Princes. The soldiers love the warlike Prince, one who was insolent, cruel, and rapacious. This often made the Prince turn against the populace to pay and satisfy the avarice and cruelty of the military.

As a result, those Emperors who had, by nature or design, no great reputation could not keep one or the other element in line. They always got ruined. Most of them, especially those who rose newly to ruler, seeing this conflict, mostly favored the soldiers, under-estimating the harm done to the people. This was necessary. A Prince will always be hated by some one. He can try first to win general popularity, but, if he has to choose, he cannot afford to be unpopular with the most powerful faction — which is the army. Those new Princes who need to curry special favor turn sooner to the army than to the people. This in turn stands useful to the Prince according to how he stands with the populace.

For these reasons, it turns out that Marcus, Pertinacius, and Alexander, all living modest lives, loving justice, enemies of cruelty, human and benign, all — except Marcus — had bad ends. Only Marcus lived and died in honor. This was because he inherited the empire legally. He did not owe it to either the soldiers or the populace. As a man of virtue for which he was venerated, he kept a balance between the two orders on his own terms, avoiding both hatred and scorn. But Pertinacius was raised to Emperor against the will of the soldiers who, accustomed to a licentious life under Commodus, could not tolerate the honest life that Pertinacius demanded. Arousing their hatred, and, besides, being old, his tenure was compromised from the beginning.

It should be noted here that hatred is aroused by good actions as well as evil actions. Therefore, as I said before, often a Prince to maintain the state is forced to act badly. When the general will, of the populace, the military, or the nobles, whatever, that you need to rule is corrupt you have to humor it. Good deeds will then

be your enemy. Now, turning to Alexander, we note that he was of such a benign nature that in fourteen years of his reign no one was ever put to death except by due process of law. Even so, he was held to be effeminate and under the thumb of his mother, scorned' for this. His army plotted against him and killed him.

On the other hand, turning to Commodus, Severus, Antonino Caracalla and Massimino, they were all cruel and rapacious. In order to please the military, they tolerated any injury to the populace. All of them, except Severus, ended badly. Severus, although he favored the soldiers, was a man of virtue and he was able to reign successfully because his virtue gained the respect at least of both the populace and the army, so that the populace was at least pacified and mute, while the soldiers were admiring and satisfied.

Since his actions for a new Prince were notable, I'd like to briefly show how Severus knew how to use the qualities of both the fox and the lion — which I said before that a Prince should imitate.

Learning the treachery of Emperor Julianus when he was in ancient Illiria, he persuaded his army when he was captain that he would do well to go to Rome to avenge the death of Pertinacius, who had been killed by the Pretorian guard. With this excuse but betraying no ambition to be Emperor, he moved his army against Rome. He was in Italy before they knew he had left. Arriving in Rome, he was out of fear elected Emperor as soon as Julian was dead. With this beginning, two difficulties faced Severus who wanted to lead the whole state. One was in Asia, where Pescennius (governor of Syria, (d.194), head of the Asian armies, had called himself emperor, and the other in the West, where Albinus (British commander, (d. 197) also aspired to be Emperor. Severus, realizing it would be difficult to fight two fronts, decided to fight Pescennius and deceive Albinus. He wrote Albinus that though he was elected Emperor by the Senate he wanted to share the honor with him, giving him the title of Ceasar, and by deliberation of the Senate making him his equal. Albinus accepted all this as real. But once Severus had put Pescennius to

death, and reestablished peace in the East, as soon as he returned to Rome he told the Senate that Albinus was not grateful of the honor he had received and tried to kill him. He was thus obliged to go and punish Albinus. He went to France, stripped him of his state and killed him.

Whoever examines carefully Severius' actions will see he was ferocious as a lion and as astute as a fox. He was feared and revered generally and not hated by the army. No one will be surprised that even as a new Prince he was able to rule so much empire. His great reputation learned the hatred that the people might have had for his rapaciousness. But Antoninus, his son, known as Caracalla, a man who had great qualities and impressed the people and satisfied the soldiers as a military man who bore every burden and despised delicacies and every softness. This his soldiers admired. But his cruelty and ferocity were so great and unheard of first murdering individuals and then massacring crowds of Romans and Alexandrians that he became loathed by the world. Even those near to him began to fear him so that finally he was cut down by one of his own centurions in the midst of his army.

Such deaths, engineered by a hostile person, are inevitable for a Prince. Anyone not afraid of death can harm him. But, because such incidents are very rare, a Prince should not fear them. He should instead seek to avoid insulting anyone he relies on and who has close access to him. Antoninus did this by calumniating a brother of the centurion, threatening him every day, while at the same time keeping him in the guard. This seems foolish and likely to ruin him, which it did.

But take the case of Commodus who could easily have held the Empire together having legitimately inherited it as the son of Marcus Aurelius. He only needed to follow in the footsteps of his father and he would have been popular with the soldiers and the people. But he was a cruel and bestial person. To exploit the populace, he encouraged his army to be rapacious and licentious. He did not maintain his dignity of person and often went down into the theater to combat with the gladiators. Vile and undigni-

fied, sullyng the majesty of his office, he lost the respect of the army. Hated by the people and scorned by the army, conspirators took his life.

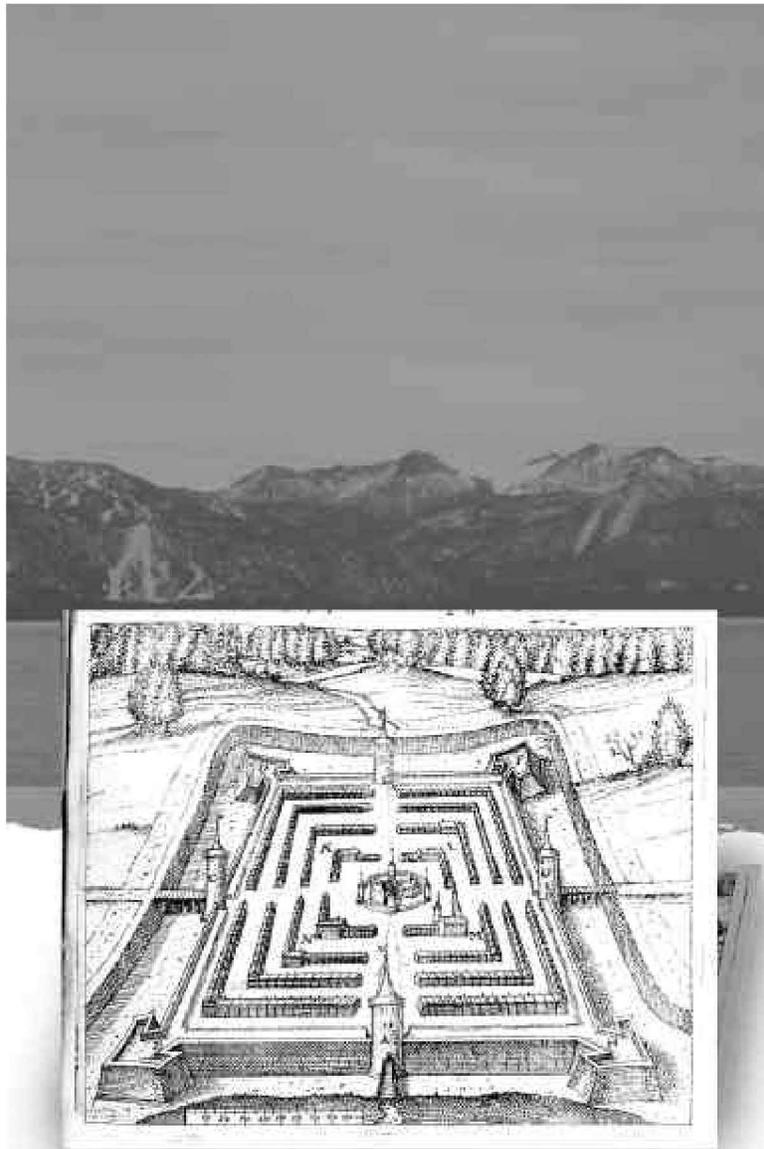
There remains the figure of Massiminius. He was a very war-like figure. The armies were tired of Alexander's softness. On his death, they elected Massiminius emperor. He didn't last long. Two things militated against him: his low background, having herded sheep in Thrace (this was widely known and put him low in esteem in the eyes of everyone), and his having at the start of his reign put off going to Rome and his reputation for cruelty based on the delegation in Rome and elsewhere of very hard prefects. Because of his low rank, hate and fear of his practices, the African provinces rebelled first, then Rome, then all of Italy. Then his army joined the revolt. The army was encamped at Aquila; since it was hard to get rid of him otherwise, and they were impatient with his cruelty, and his other enemies rose against him, they simply killed him.

I don't want to discuss Eleogabalus, son of Macrinus — son of Julian, who was gotten rid of immediately, so I will conclude the discourse. Princes of our time have less difficulty satisfying the armies and governments. They have to give it some attention but can resolve this more quickly since these Princes are not compromised by armies and offices involved in provincial administrations, as were the Roman military. Then it was necessary to play more to the armies because they had more influence than the people. Now, except for the Sultans of Turkey and Greece, the Princes owe more to the people because the people exercise more influence.

The Turkish Sultan is an exception because he keeps twelve thousand infantry and fifteen thousand cavalry close at hand. The security and strength of the realm depend on them. Above all, the Sultan needs to keep them friendly. Similarly the Sultan of Egypt who is in the hands of the soldiers. He also, regardless of the people, must keep the army friendly. Note that Egypt under the Sultan differs from other Principalities, because it is like the Christian papacy, which is neither a hereditary nor a new princi-

pality. Not the son of the old Prince, or any other heredity, but the office is elected by the elders who are in authority. Since the office is ancient, it is not a new Principality, and there are none of the difficulties of a new Principality. Although the Prince himself is new, the orders and offices, which he enters, are traditional, as if he were a hereditary ruler.

But returning to our subject, I suggest that anyone who follows the above discourse will see that either hatred or scorn were the causes of downfall of those emperors I mentioned. And one can see why some came to a bad end and the others reached happy ends. For Pertinacius and Alexander, both being new Princes, it was useless and harmful to imitate Marcus, who was a hereditary Prince. Carcalla, Commodius, and Massiminius should never have imitated Severius, not having the virtue necessary to follow in his footsteps. A new Prince in a new Principality cannot imitate Marcus, nor should he try to do what Severius did. He should take those qualities of Severius necessary for founding a state of his own and mix them with the glorious qualities of Marcus, which are necessary for conserving and maintaining a state already on its feet.



***ON FORTS AND OTHER THINGS
OF EVERYDAY USE
OR NOT TO PRINCES***

Some Princes, for reasons of security, have disarmed their subjects, others have partitioned their territory, others have encouraged hostile factions, others have sought to win over suspect elements, others have built fortresses, still other have torn them down. Although one cannot judge the advisability of such measures apart from the particulars of those situations where they take place, nevertheless I will make some generalities.

Never has a new Prince disarmed his subjects. Often, Instead, he has armed them. By arming them he appropriates their force — they are on his side. Those who you arm become your faithful armed subjects and overcome your partisans since you can't arm them all you subject those you don't arm to those you do arm. The discrimination obliges those that you favor to support you. The others excuse you because they respect those who take the risk and the duty. You offend those whom you disarm. They feel a loss of your faith in them either from cowardice or distrust. Suspicion of either increases their hatred. Because you must be armed you have to turn to mercenaries, which are untrustworthy, as I said above. Even if they are reliable, they are not strong enough to defend you against strong enemies or suspect subjects.

Therefore, as I said, a new Prince always sets up an army. History supplies many examples.

When a Prince adds a new member to his old state, however, he should disarm the new state, unless they were allies before being incorporated. Even these with time and opportunity should be neutralized. The arms should be restricted to one's own soldiers in that part of the old state that is close to you.

Our forefathers, and those reputed to be wise, held that Pistoia be partitioned and Pisa occupied by force. To facilitate this, they sowed division there in order to move more easily against them. In times of a balance of power, this was fairly easy. But I don't think it is suitable today. I don't think these divisions help anyone now — it always happens in a divided city that the weaker faction joins the enemy, the other can't hold, and the city goes down to defeat.

The Venetians, following these old guidelines, encouraged the Guelfs and Ghibellines in their occupied cities. Although they avoided bloodbaths, they kept the factions at each other so that citizens would be preoccupied by their differences with each other and not united against the Venetians. This did not work. Defeated at Vailate (1509), the Venetians were assailed by one of the factions and stripped of their state. Such methods seem to weaken the Prince. In a proud Principality, such divisions are not permitted. They are useful during peace, but useless during war.

Without a doubt Princes wax great when they overcome the obstacles in their path; a new Prince needs fortune and making a reputation is more important to him than to a hereditary Prince. Enemies make reputations for the Prince and the feats against them, which he overcomes. A Prince mounts by the ladder his enemies use against him. A sage Prince, some say, astutely cultivates enemies when he can so that, when he puts them down, his reputation increases.

Sometimes a Prince and especially new ones have profited more from using those men who are suspect than using his own confidants. Pandolfo Petrucci, Prince of Siena (1500-1512), ruled more with help of suspect personages than with men of faith. But one cannot say too much because the matter varies with the subject. Only note this that men, who are enemies at the outset of tenure, if they have quality, make a Prince strong if they can be won over. They become the more loyal the more they need to blot out the sinister reputation they had before. The Prince gets more use out of them than out of loyal servants who neglect things.

While investigating this matter, I don't want to overlook

Princes who having taken over a state with the help of some of the citizens should keep in mind their interest and favor it. If the tie with them is not natural and only arose because they were discontent, it will be hard to keep them as friends, because it will be hard to satisfy their needs. To tell the truth, ancient and modern examples show that it is much easier to pacify a population that was content before your takeover even though this made them your enemies than it is to content those who favored you and your purposes because they were discontent beforehand.

Princes, to consolidate their power, are accustomed to building fortresses. These harness and break those who have designs against them. They give secure refuge from sudden attack. I favor these because they have been used since antiquity. Still, Niccolo Vitelli (Citta' di Castello, 1482) in our times tore down two forts in Citta di Castello to hold that state. Guido Ubaldo (Urbino, 1504), the Duke of Urbino, returned to his state after being thrown out by Cesare Borgia and tore down all the forts of the province believing it less easy to lose dominion without them. The Bentivogli on returning to Bologna in 1511 also did this. Forts are useful or not according to the times. They help in one way and are handicaps in another way. I will make clear how this is so.

The Prince who fears his own people more than foreign enemies needs to build forts. Those who fear the foreign enemy more should forget forts. The Sforza's castle in Milan has caused and will cause more wars than anything else in that state. The best fortress is to not be hated by the public. Even while you have forts and as long as the public hates you, they will not save you. If the populace has arms, they will never lack foreigners to help them. In our times, one sees few occasions when forts have helped the Princes except in the case of the Countess of Forli. When her husband, Count Girolamo died (1488) she escaped into the fort to wait the help of Ludovico the Black of Milan, and recovered her state. The situation was such that foreigners could not reinforce the populace. However, when Cesare Borgia attacked the fortress did not help because the people joined with the

foreigner. She would have been more secure if the people had not hated her than by having a fortress. Considering all this, I commend both those who build forts and those who don't. I warn those who count on these castles but underestimate the hate of the populace.



WHAT A PRINCE NEEDS TO BE HELD IN ESTEEM

Nothing makes a Prince more esteemed than great deeds and rare displays of himself. In our times, there is the example of Ferdinand of Aragon, new King of Spain (1479-1516). He almost qualifies as a new Prince because he rose from the ranks of the weak to become the first King of Christendom in glory and fame. His deeds were on a large scale and sometimes extraordinary. At the beginning of his reign, he attacked Granada, an undertaking, which founded his state. First, he lulled the Granadans. He enlisted the Castillian barons in the war, taking their minds off other plans. This established his influence over them without their realizing it. It gave him the chance to build an army with money from the people and the Church, which then honored him. Besides, ambitious for greater things, always exploiting religion, he initiated a divine war against the Moors. This wasn't his only cruel, ingenious and exceptional move. On these same grounds he attacked Africa. He invaded Italy. Finally, he attacked France. He always did things on a grand scale. These efforts preoccupied his subjects and new dominions. One thing always led to another so that men could never muster time to take action against him.

It behooves the Prince also to promote himself in internal affairs with judicious shows of himself, similar to Bernabo Visconti of Milan (1354-1385) who took note of outstanding enterprises in civil life, good or bad, and moved quickly to punish or reward them, getting people to talk of him. In such things, the Prince needs to profile himself as a great and wise man.

A Prince is always esteemed when he takes a strong stand against enemies or in favor of friends. This ploy is always more favorable than standing neutral. If two strong parties come to

arms or show virtuous qualities, you have to fear the winner. In either case, it is always better to commit yourself openly and wage a good campaign. In the first instance, if you don't show your hand, you always will be the target of the winner — and the loser will take solace and pleasure in your plight. Even the loser has no more interest in helping or receiving you. Who wins wants no dubious friends who won't help him in adversity. Who loses won't touch you either because you did not help him out when misfortune came.

This happened in Greece when Antioch of Syria (189 B.C.) was deployed there by the Aetolians to chase the Romans. Antioch sent orators to the Achaeans, who were friends of the Romans, to ask them to stay out of it. The Romans urged them to side with them. The Achaeans deliberated in council where the legate of Antioch persuaded them to neutrality. The Roman legate responded; "The plea for you to stay neutral could not be more against your interest. You will be without dignity and without thanks the spoil of the victor."

It always happens that someone who is not your friend will urge you to neutrality. Your friend will ask you to take arms with him. Irresolute Princes almost always follow the path of neutrality to escape pressing dangers. And almost always, they ruin themselves. But a Prince, who bravely declares himself in favor of one party, if that party wins, as long as you stay strong and remain on his side, will find the winner obliging and friendly. Men are not so dishonest that they oppress you in such an easy way with ingratitude. Their victories are seldom so clear that they don't have some respect for justice. If your side loses, your ally will still receive you. He may help you if he can and your fortunes may rise again. In the case when the parties are such that you need not fear who wins, still prudence says you should stick your neck out. You help ruin someone with the help of someone else who, if they were wise, should have helped them. Winning, they remain subject to you. Their victory would have been impossible without you. Here it should be noted a Prince should never take sides with a more powerful party when it offends oth-

ers, except out of absolute necessity. In victory, you will become subject to them. Princes should avoid as much as possible obligations to others. The Venetians sided with France against the Duke of Milan when they could have avoided that alliance. It ruined them. When it is impossible to escape the alliance, as it was for the Florentines when the Pope and Spain combined to wage war on Lombardy, the Prince should declare himself as outlined above. Nor should he ever believe that he is taking sides in a sure thing — he should always be skeptical. This is the natural state of things. One never can sidestep an uncertainty without stepping into another one. Prudence consists in weighing the qualities of the uncertainty, and choosing the best of alternatives.

A Prince should show love of virtue, and recognize virtuous men and honor those skilled in any art. He must encourage the citizens to quietly exercise their various disciplines, in trade or agriculture, and in every other human occupation. He must act so that this one will not fear improving property because it might be taken from him, or that one fears not to open trade because of taxes. He needs to create medals and awards for those who undertake these things. He needs to reward all those who aggrandize his city or state. Further, he needs, at different times of the year, to occupy the populace with feasts and spectacles. Since every city is divided in quarters and guilds, he has to cultivate them and sometimes visit them, and exemplify humanity and munificence to them. Always he should cultivate his personal majesty and dignity. This should never be lacking in anything.

ON SECRETARIES THE PRINCE SHOULD HAVE NEAR HIM

Of importance to a Prince is the selection of his ministers. They will be good or bad according to his choice. His first thought is to select persons close to him. If they are capable and loyal, it is always wise to tap them because the prince knows them and commands their loyalty. But if they are not capable, their selection will reflect badly on his reputation. This is the first error he makes.

Those who knew Antonio da Venafro (Antonio Giordani, Minister of Siena, 1502-1512), Pandolfo Petrucci's minister, praised him as a valiant man for selecting such a minister.

There are three types of ministerial mind: first, those who understand themselves; second, those who perceive what others intend; third, those who understand neither themselves nor others. The first kind make excellent ministers, the second kind make excellent ministers, the third kind are useless. Pandolfo himself, though is not the first kind; luckily, he was the second kind — by understanding the good or bad of what others said, even though he did not know himself, he could judge whether a minister acted rightly or not. He could advance and correct others. Nor could a minister hope to fool him and stay in office.

How can a Prince evaluate a minister? The following guideline never fails: when a minister thinks more of himself than of you and looks always for his own advantage you can be sure: a) he won't be a good minister and b) you can't trust him. Whoever is engaged by the state should never think of himself but of the Prince. His first concern should be what concerns the Prince. On the other side, the Prince should, to curry the minister, think of him, honor him, make him rich, obligate him to himself, and shower the minister with honors and offices so that he cannot do

without the Prince, and so that he need not desire other honors and other riches, and his task and offices make him wary of changing things. When things are thus arranged, minister to Prince, and Prince to minister, they can confide in and cooperate with each other. Any other relation will be harmful to both.

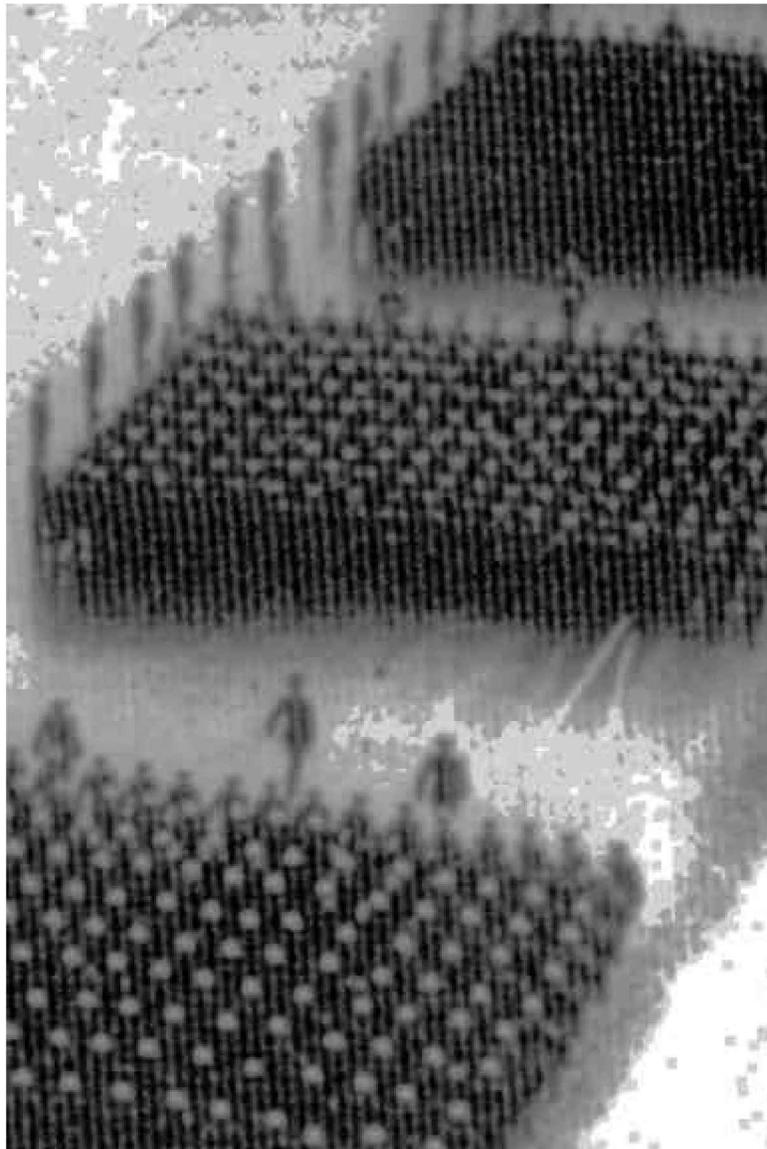
HOW TO ESCAPE FLATTERERS

I should mention an important problem that Princes can only avoid with the utmost prudence or with discretion. I speak of flatterers and adulators — the courts are full of them. Since men indulge their own persons, and deceive themselves, it is hard to defend oneself against this weakness. If one does defend oneself, there is a risk of not being popular. The only way to guard against flatterers is to have men tell you the truth — but when they tell you the truth, there is risk of being irreverent.

So a Prince should cultivate a third way, appointing wise counselors, giving only them the privilege of speaking plainly and telling the truth, and only when asked and not otherwise. But one should inquire with them about everything, and listen to them. Then one should take counsel with oneself. With each of these counselors one should behave in such a way that they know that the more openly they speak the more accepted they are. Don't listen to anyone else. Follow up on what they say and don't be put off. Whoever does not do this either falls into the hands of flatterers or wobbles among various opinions — which detract from your reputation.

I want to bring up one modern example. Luca Rinaldi (a bishop and confidant of Emperor Maximilian of Hapsburg) was talking of his Majesty and said he never took counsel with anyone or did what they said — which went against the advice given above. The Emperor was a secretive man and told no one of his plans nor asked advice of anyone. His plans became known as they were put into effect, whereupon people started to comment and opinionate. The Emperor, easily influenced, would start to change his mind. He would start to undo what he began to do. Since no one could fathom what he wanted to do, no one could base his or her plans on his.

So, a Prince should consult continuously, only when he wants to, not when the others want to. He has to be short with those who offer counsel when they are not asked, but he has to ask for counsel often. He has to listen patiently to the truth from those he has consulted. Many people deceive themselves who believe that a Prince reputed to be prudent is not really so by nature, but only by virtue of good counsel around him. But it is a general rule that seldom falls: namely, that a Prince who is not himself wise cannot be counseled well, unless he entrust one person alone who is himself prudent. In that case, it could go well, but probably not for long, because such a governor would be likely to take over the state himself. If the Prince relies on more than one person, if he is not himself wise, he will never have a consensus nor know how to unite his counselors. The counselors will each think of their own interest and the Prince won't know how to correct them or whom to trust. A Prince can't expect otherwise because men will always turn out badly unless necessity constrains them to be good. So I conclude that good counsel, no matter where it comes from, has to start with the prudence of the Prince himself — for the prudence of the Prince cannot itself come from good counsel.



REASONS WHY ITALIAN PRINCES HAVE LOST THEIR STATES

The guidelines I have given, prudently observed, will make a new Prince appear established. He will be more secure and firm in his seat even than if he were traditionally established. A new Prince is much more closely watched than a hereditary Prince. When virtuous, they attract men and draw them to service more than traditional dynasties. Men are more drawn by the present than by the past. When they meet something good in the present, they appreciate it and don't look elsewhere. They will do everything for a good new Prince as long as they don't lack in anything themselves. A new Prince can have double glory: for having given birth to a new Principality, and for having furnished it with good laws, strong and outstanding examples — just as the Prince who is born to it can suffer double shame who through imprudence loses his Principality.

If you consider the Princes in Italy who have recently lost their states — like the King of Naples, the Duke of Milan, and others — you will note, first, a weakness in arms as discussed above, and you will note that they had either enemies in the populace or, if they were popular, they couldn't get the nobles on their side. Without these defects, a state that can field an army will not be lost. Phillip IV of Macedonia (221 to 179 B.C.), not the father of Alexander but the one eventually defeated by Titus Quintius of Rome, did not have a great state compared to Rome and Greece, which he attacked. Still he was a military man who knew how to deal with the populace and placate the nobles. He waged his war successfully for many years. Though in the end he lost some cities, he kept his kingdom.

So, Princes who were in the throne for many years and then lost their Principality did so not through fortune but through their

own flaws. In times of peace not having thought things could change (a common defense among men who in good weather discount the danger of storms), they find when times turn bad they turn to flight and don't defend themselves. They hope the populace will be turned off by the insolence of the victors and recall them. When this is the only remedy, it is good. But it is foolish not to have guarded against it. It is never good to fall and to have to call for aid. It may not come. If it comes it is never sure because of your need and your dependence. That defense only is good and certain which rests on yourself and your own virtue.



***THE ROLE OF FORTUNE
IN HUMAN AFFAIRS
AND WAYS IT CAN BE RESISTED***

I am quite aware that even many informed people believe that the world is governed by fortune and by God and that men cannot correct it nor have any recourse against fate. They deduce from this that there is nothing much to do and those things should be left to themselves. This opinion has been reinforced in our times by events and happenings more so every day, beyond human intervention. As I think about this, I often incline to their opinion.

However, free will is not entirely powerless. It may be that fortune is the arbiter of half our world, but she also leaves half a world to our governance. I compare fortune to one of those floods that fill the plains, uproot trees, ruin buildings, and slide mud from one corner to the other. Everyone runs before her and cannot block her. But, although this is so, men in quiet times can prepare, repair, and build dams, so that fortune, when it comes, may channel here or there and its effects need not be so devastating or widespread.

Fortune strikes in a similar way. She wrecks havoc where virtue is weak to resist her and she strikes where she knows no dams and banks will contain her. If you look at Italy, the place of all these convulsions, and the conditions that are open to fortune, you will see Italy is a country without banks and resources to fend off fate. If here there were valor and virtue as in German, Spain, and France, fortune would not have played fast and loose as she has.

This is enough said as to resisting fortune and fate in general. As to the particulars, I see Princes rise today and fall tomor-

row without any change in their nature or capability whatsoever. This happens first for the many reason I have already described, and namely that the Prince who relies on fortune gets ruined as soon as fortune changes. I also believe that a Prince succeeds who adapts to his time, while that Prince falls who is at variance with the ways of his time.

Men advance to their goals in different ways, whatever they aim at — glory and riches. One respects fate, the other rebels against it. One proceeds violently; another with art. One is patient; another is not. Each of these ways may succeed. One sees men with similar methods come to different ends, and also men come to the same end with different methods — one proceeding with caution, the other intrepid. This happens for no other reason than the turn of the times. Sometimes they are suited to one method, sometimes to another. Thus as I said it happens that two persons operating with the same methods in one case reach the objective and in the other case not.

Thus, the good varies according to circumstances, whether one should govern with caution and patience to suit the times and it will be good and successful. But if times and circumstances change it is possible to get ruined by not changing method. One never finds such a prudent man as can accommodate to this, either because he cannot change his own nature or because, having been successful one way, he can't part from the given path. A cautious man, when the time comes to be bold, can't do it. He gets ruined. If one could change with the nature of the times and with circumstances, fortune would not change.

Pope Julius II operated impetuously in all his affairs. This suited times and circumstances and he was successful. Consider his first moves in Bologna when Giovanni Bentivogli was still alive. The Venetians looked askance at this, the King of Spain also. France objected. But Julius II personally moved so ferociously and rapidly that he stood the Spanish and Venetians on their ears — the Venetians were afraid, while the Spanish hoped to recover the whole Kingdom of Naples. Louis the XII of France fell into place because seeing Spain move he hoped to stay

friends in order to put down the Venetians, and thought that to refuse military aid would be an offence.

So, Julius II brought off with his impetuosity what no other Pope could have done through prudence. If he had only thought to leave Rome when things were in hand and everything set, as any other Pontiff would have done, he would never have succeeded. France would have made military excuses and the others a thousand fears. I won't mention his other ventures, all of which were similar, all successful. In the shortness of his life, it never turned out otherwise. If times had come for caution, he would have been ruined. He never could have acted otherwise because he was so inclined by nature.

So, my conclusion is that fortune changes and men when they stick by their methods are successful as long as they agree with fortune, but when things change, they go wrong. On the whole, it is better to be impetuous than cautious because fortune is a woman. It is necessary, to keep her down, to surprise and force her. She gives in more to that than to those who proceed coldly. Fortune, like women, is friends of youth, because youth is less cautious, more ferocious, and its audacity dazzles them.



***AN APPEAL TO TAKE BACK ITALY
AND LIBERATE HER
FROM THE BARBARIANS***

All said and done, and thinking about a new Prince for Italy and if matters rest now so that a prudent and virtuous man could do honor to himself and populace of Italy, it seems to me that the times are right for a new Prince — in fact, I know of no better time. As I said, the times are ripe. One need only think of Moses during the subjection of his people in Egypt; of Cyrus, when the Medes enslaved the Persians; and of Theseus, when Athens was weak — so it is now, ripe for the virtue of an Italian spirit. Italy too has fallen into her current piteous state — more abject than the Hebrews, more enslaved than the Persians, more strung out than the Athenians, without a leader, without order, conquered, exploited, wounded, weakened, and visited by every sort of devastation.

Although we have seen some sparks here and there seemingly favored by God for Italy's redemption. In the course of events, we have seen that such hopes were damned by fortune. Without life, Italy awaits someone to heal her wounds, to put an end to the ransacking of Lombardy, to the French partitioning of the kingdom and rape of Tuscany, and to heal the long festering wounds. See how Italy prays to God for someone to staunch the cruelty and the Insolence of the barbarians. You see how Italy is ready to follow any flag that' will save her.

Nor is anyone in sight better than your Excellency's house (House of Medici), which vaunts both fortune and virtue, the favor of God and Church, of which you are now Prince to take on this task. It cannot be so difficult if you follow the worthy lives and actions described above. Such men were exceptional and

marvelous, but they were men. Each of them seized a lesser opportunity than you have now. Their cause was no more just or easier, nor were they more befriended by God. Great truth lies in this saying: "That war is just which is necessary; those arms are sacred without which there is no other hope." (Titus Livius, *Histories*, IX, 1). Here lies a great dispensation — and where a great dispensation lies, there cannot be great difficulty. The Medici House can rise to the occasion if it follows the guidelines I have set out. Furthermore, as with Moses, miracles happen: the seas divide; a cloud hides the armies; a stone pours water; manna falls from heaven; everything favors the hero. The rest is up to you. God does not want to do everything nor tears from us free will and that part of glory that belongs to us.

It is no surprise that some of the worthy Italians mentioned were not able to achieve what is hoped from the illustrious House of Medici. Nor that from the many revolutions in Italy and the maneuvers of war it seems that military virtue is dead. This happened because the ancient orders of Italy no longer sufficed and no one emerged who could initiate new ones. Nothing honors a new man on the rise more than the new laws and ways he can find. Such achievements, when well grounded and grandly designed, make him revered and respected. Italy does not lack in Ingenuity. Her members have it even when it is lacking in her Chiefs. Just look at the deeds and battles of the outnumbered few, when Italians show superior force, skill and ingenuity. Only when it comes to armies are they lacking. It all hangs on the witness of the chiefs. Those who are in the know are not obeyed. It seems as if everybody is in the know because there is not one who stands out, on virtue or on fortune, to whom the others might bow. Because of this, for a long time in the many wars of the past, for twenty years the Italian army has always done poorly. Witness to this are the battles of Fornovo di Taro, Alexandria, Capua, Genoa, Vaila', Bologna and Mestre.

If your house wants to follow the great role models of history to redeem the state, it means first of all, as the basis of every undertaking, to furnish your own arms. Only your own soldiers will

be faithful, true, and brave. No matter how valiant each soldier is, together they'll be more effective if their own Prince commands them. Thus, he honors and engages them. It is therefore necessary to arm in order for Italic virtue to defend itself against foreigners.

Although Swiss and Spanish soldiers are considered mighty fierce, both lack something that a third order can trust to oppose and vanquish them, The Spanish fear the cavalry, and the Swiss fear the infantry in hand to hand combat. Experience has shown that the Spanish cannot withstand the French cavalry, and Spanish infantry has overwhelmed the Swiss. Although this has not been seen wholesale, it was seen in glimpses at Ravenna when the Spanish opposed the German ranks — which are modeled the same as the Swiss. The Spaniards with their agility and the spear-pointed shield got under the spears of the Germans, who were helpless to stop them.

If the cavalry had not driven them back, they would have decimated everyone. Knowing the weaknesses of these forces, it would be possible to model a new force that could sustain a cavalry rush and not fear hand to hand combat. This can be done with innovative arms and by fielding the troops differently. Such innovations give a new Prince both greatness and repute. This moment of history should be grasped so that Italy finally finds her redeemer. I cannot stress more how welcome he would be in all provinces where this foreign horde has descended. He would be received with a vengeance, with firm faith, with sympathy, and tears. What doors would not open? What populace would not offer obedience? Who would envy him? What Italian would deny him allegiance? The domination of the barbarian stinks. May your illustrious house rise and assume the mantle of courage and hope that stems from a just cause, so that under its Insignia, this land can be ennobled and under its auspices Petrarch's words can be validated:

*Vertù contr' al furore
Prenderà l'arme, e fia il combatter corto:
Che l'antico valore
Ne gli Italici cor non è anchor morto.*

Virtue will take arms against sound and fury
Let the battle be brief
For the ancient valor
In the Italic heart is not yet dead.

(from *Italia Mia*, by Francesco Petrarca 1304-1374).



MESS. FRANCESCO PETRARCA

TOMO PRIMO



IN ROMA MDCCCVI.

DALL' STAMPA E A CURA DI VINCENZO PUGGIONI
PER FRATELLI ARIZONA & C.

Con approvazione de' Superiori.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

In this edition, *The Prince* is the first English translation for a general *everyman* public. Originally composed in 1513, Machiavelli gifted it to Lorenzo de Medici, Duke of Urbino, who received it coldly. It was finally published in 1532, posthumously, and quickly appeared on the church's *Index*. Its first English edition appeared in 1640.

The many historical editions and translations were published mainly for statesmen, princes, nobles, churchmen and kings; subsequent editions were for scholars and special audiences.

This edition is the first general, journalistic, readable translation that dispenses with scholarly footnotes and apparatus, incorporating the dates and brief attribution to the players within the text itself. For further information on the personages and period, any reader can easily go to the encyclopedia for more details.

The Prince is famed as the first tract of modern political science, and Machiavelli as the father of modern political science. Hitherto, political science had tended to be a rhetorical exercise based on the implicit assumptions of Church or Empire. Or like *The Republic* of Plato, the tracts of this kind had been about Utopias or the ways "aft bring about ideal societies". Machiavelli thus was the first to found the science of modern politics on the actual study of mankind, and divorced politics as a science from ethics. It appeared in Italy at the height of the Renaissance, which powered humanism and the new free consciousness into the modern age.

Machiavelli is widely seen as a forerunner. For the first time he based political observation on facts rather than on philosophical principles. He emphasized practice, not theory. He raised strategy to importance over theory and principle. He required theory to be balanced by the realities of weaponry, troops, and arms. He argued that Christianity had made values that outmoded antiquity but was the first to see the full divergence of State and Church.

He argued that the mystique of virtue was a quality beyond good and evil, and that in real politics secular power needed to instrumentalize the Church and be aware that it was a political power, not just an exceptional power of God. He posed man's virtue against the vagaries

of fortune; he stressed how the moment of decision needed to be followed up by planning and effort, and he foresaw how tumult becomes an opportunity for liberty. He was the first to factor “the voice of the populace” into political equations. Above all, he formulated the new prestige of the “State.”

He dealt even in revolution — and, again, stressed that virtue was a force greater than good and evil. In one sense, *The Prince* supersedes Plato's *Republic* — the first tract of political science in antiquity that posed the problem of what the State should be. In answer to this, Machiavelli wrote of basing the State on what is — not on what should be.

Machiavelli served Florence as a ministerial secretary and in other roles, being briefly imprisoned and tortured in 1513. He executed various diplomatic missions to the Papacy, France, and to other states in Italy. He married in 1501 to Marietta di Luigi Corsini and had six children, although he was not a great family man. He also had a long liaison with the singer, Barbara Salutati. His general allegiance, surprisingly, was to Republicanism, although he largely favored constitutional monarchy with parliamentary power and a king.

Machiavelli ended up being distrusted and suspect to a wide spectrum of political and religious forces and was excluded from office when in the year of his death, 1527, he returned to Florence under the new republican constitution. His association with the Medici, on the one hand, and the growing reputation and suspicion of *The Prince* spoiled his chances. He died, rejected in poverty, and with only a few friends. He was buried in the Church of Santa Croce.

This rendering of his *Prince* is as much as possible in the plain style, a contemporary journalistic translation that takes wherever possible the everyday meaning of the text. It is not a popularization in the sense of pandering to the modern reader, but rather a literal transportation of the original Italian into its nearest equivalent in English.

Sometimes this will puzzle the modern reader because a word in Italian like *virtù* — a pliable word meaning a variety of things from ingenuity to skill to dexterity to valor to virtue itself — will be rendered pretty consistently here as *virtue*, a word which in the original Latin language from which Italian is derived meant pretty much manly strength in the best and most varied sense.

The hope here is that the reader will come closer to Machiavelli's original spin even when slightly arcane or outmoded. The purpose in reading such a text as the *The Prince* is after all to reenter the past in a living way just as much as it is to update the past or claim it in the pre-

sent by translated sleight of hand. History has its own sound and is betrayed by putting it in too modern a dress. It needs the authentic ring of its own context and surroundings, its own oxygen, to be true to itself. If that makes it sound quaint, so be it.

After all, history is about antiquated times — times when things were different, not just the same as now. Let us import some of this value and spirit into our minds rather than merely be revisionists of the past. The past is past. That is its value. That is why we opt for a rather simple rendering, leaning in the direction of transliteration, rather than sophisticating Machiavelli's text to our taste. Although bias will always creep in, this should render the translation not simplistic, but real, authentic, and firsthand, so the reader also comes closer to Machiavelli rather than trying to bring Machiavelli closer to us. For the same reason, words as *Prince*, *Principality*, and *Republic* are capitalized to emphasize their conceptual importance to Machiavelli.

Such a literal translation brings the reader closer to the Italian, rather than trying to masticate and digest the Italian so as to make it sound as if Machiavelli had written the text in English. Further, this text does not advance footnotes, glossary, biography, historical references, bibliography, or other academic apparatus. All this can be readily attained from the encyclopedias and in the numerous tortuous educated and scholarly translations available from Harvard, Oxford, Cambridge and elsewhere. The text here is aimed at the common man with readability and plainness for those who simply want to read *The Prince* for what Machiavelli may have had to say about the human condition — read President for Prince, or chicanery for virtue, or Establishment for Bloodline, or however you will.

As to Machiavelli himself, he was a maverick, with an acute mind. He was acerbic, ironic, and double-edged. Nietzsche said that Machiavelli wrote with “a galloping rhythm,” that he had his tongue in his cheek sometimes, and that he dealt with change in the consciousness paradigm of the Renaissance when man began to think in new ways about himself and the world around him.

The key to Machiavelli is his concept of “effective reality,” rather than idealized, philosophical, or “ethical reality.”

His final plea to free Italy from the barbarian and to unite the land and people came true only later, in the 19th century, under Garibaldi; but, it was the issue he was already speaking to.

Personally, I may not always agree with Machiavelli — although almost always I respect his counsel. A ruler, he says, should never think

or practice anything but war, weapons, and military exercises. Even a modern President has come far from this ancient and rudimentary philosophy, practicing diplomacy, administration, and civic virtues. For Machiavelli, a Prince scorns the gentle arts — yet even such as Frederick II of Sicily played the flute, danced, and cultivated the arts. Times may have changed; we may be, or almost, in a post-bellum world, if not a post military world. War may almost be old-fashioned. I would it were so. Machiavelli warned against such Pollyanna. And nations still maintain the military and defense posture as their number one option.

Machiavelli is always the realist and almost always the clear thinker. The centerpiece of his philosophy is in Chapter XVII where he shows unequivocally that a successful Prince should prefer to be feared than loved.

The text of *The Prince* is still as relevant today to social affairs as it was in 1532, although now the Prince is replaced in title by a president, prime minister, premier, or dictator. The rules are often the same, although the democratic means of coming to power are changed and tempered. The psychological, social, and political dynamics are often similar, viz. Kissinger, viz. Clinton. Further, *The Prince* still serves as a realistic primer to school, college, and university civics and political science studies. Because its language and description are more naked and unsophisticated by statistics, jargon, and nomenclature, it still serves as a primary source for those interested in the raw nature of social affairs.

“But of all who thought to construct a State, the greatest beyond all comparison was Machiavelli,” says Jacob Burckhardt in the great classic, *The Civilization Of The Renaissance In Italy* (Basel, 1860 reissued, Phaidon Press, London, 1951, the Middlemore translation). “He treats existing forces as living and active, takes a large and accurate view of alternative possibilities, and seeks to mislead neither himself nor others.” Burckhardt also points out unflinchingly that, although Machiavelli was a minister of state, he himself was denied as a prophet by his own Tuscan country, and his realism and modernism led him eventually to ruin.

RUFUS GOODWIN
Boston, 2003

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