

Some Annotations for *The Prince*
(in order encountered in the text)

Milan/Sforza Francesco Sforza (1401–1466) became Duke of Milan in 1450. (See the List of Characters.)

Naples/King of Spain Ferdinand (1452–1516) had originally agreed to divide the Italian kingdom of Naples with Louis XII of France, but Ferdinand drove out the French forces and took over Naples in 1503.

Duke of Ferrara actually two dukes, Ercole d'Este (1431–1505), who lost territory to the Venetians in 1484, and his successor, Alfonso d'Este (1476–1534), who managed to stay in power despite the opposition of three different popes. The d'Este family had ruled Ferrara for almost four centuries.

Ludovico Ludovico Sforza (1451–1508), Duke of Milan and son of Francesco Sforza. (See the List of Characters.)

Turks/Greece Forces of the Ottoman Empire (the Turks) controlled Greece and much of the Balkan peninsula in the 15th century and followed a policy of settling in their conquered territories.

Aetolians The Aetolians and Achaeans were rival confederacies of Greek states. In circa 211 B.C., the Aetolians asked the Romans to help them fight against Philip V of Macedon. The Romans defeated Philip and, a few years later, defeated the Aetolians and their new ally, Antiochus III of Syria, effectively taking over Greece.

King Louis Louis XII (1462–1515), King of France. (See the List of Characters.)

Alexander Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.), King of Macedon and one of the great conquerors of the ancient world.

Darius (circa 380–330 B.C.) King of Persia, one of the territories that Alexander conquered.

Pyrrhus King of Epirus who fought against the Romans. He won several victories, but at a very high price.

Pisa In 1406, Florence bought the city of Pisa from the dukes of Milan; in 1494, when Charles VII invaded, the Pisans asserted their liberty from Florence. Florence won Pisa back in 1509.

Moses prophet and lawgiver who led the Israelites out of captivity in Egypt, as recounted in the Biblical book of Exodus.

Cyrus “the Great,” founder of the Persian Empire, beginning with his conquest of the Medes (circa 549 B.C.).

Romulus with his brother Remus, the legendary founders of Rome.

Theseus legendary hero of Athens who killed the Minotaur, a half-man, half-bull monster, in the Labyrinth of Crete.

Savonarola Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498). Dominican monk, charismatic preacher, and reformer. (See the List of Characters.)

Hiero also called Hieron II, King of Syracuse (circa 271-216 B.C.). He was made commander of the Syracusan army and was so successful that he was elected king by the citizens.

Duke Valentino Cesare Borgia was often referred to as Duke Valentino or Duke Valentinois, a title he was granted by Louis XII of France.

Orsini and Colonna rival families of the Roman aristocracy, both enormously powerful in Italian politics. The Orsini family, in particular, was a bitter opponent of the Borgias, and Cesare Borgia ordered at least three of the leading Orsini family members to be killed.

College of Cardinals an assembly that is responsible for electing a successor when a Pope dies.

San Piero Machiavelli refers to a number of cardinals (Colonna, San Giorgio, Ascanio, and Rouen) who were potential candidates for Pope, calling some of them by the names of their churches. “San Piero” was Giuliano della Rovere, who became Pope Julius II. “Rouen,” whom Machiavelli thinks Borgia should have contrived to elect, was Georges d’Amboise.

Agathocles (circa 361–289 B.C.), King of Syracuse. Exiled from Syracuse because of his power and popularity, he was able to return through the intervention of Hamilcar, leader of the Syracusan’s allies, the Carthaginians. A military coup followed in which Agathocles killed or banished the oligarchy that had ruled the city. Machiavelli summarizes Agathocles’ long campaigns against the Carthaginians.

Oliverotto da Fermo (circa 1475–1503). Machiavelli accurately describes how he seized power. Soon after, he joined a conspiracy of Cesare Borgia’s captains to try to limit Borgia’s growing power. This group included Vitellozzo Vitelli, the brother of Oliverotto’s mentor, Paolo Vitelli. Pretending to be reconciled with them, Borgia lured the conspirators to a meeting at Senigallia, where he had them killed.

Nabis ruler of Sparta (circa 207–192 B.C.). Machiavelli is probably exaggerating Nabis’ success, but Nabis did introduce many social reforms.

Gracchi brothers Tiberius (166–133 B.C.) and Gaius Gracchus (154–121 B.C.). Roman officials who instituted many social reforms and were killed by aristocratic opponents.

Giorgio Scali a leader of the Ciompi (wool workers) revolt in Florence in 1378. The wool workers' guild briefly held some political power, but its leaders, including Scali, were quickly overthrown and later executed.

German cities the Holy Roman Empire, a loose confederacy of states that comprised most of what is now Germany, as well as parts of Italy and France. In Machiavelli's time, the empire included more than 70 imperial cities, which exercised greater and lesser degrees of obedience to the Emperor, Maximilian I.

Pope Leo X Giovanni de Medici (1475–1521). A son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and therefore uncle of the man to whom *The Prince* was dedicated. He became Pope in 1513. It was during the general amnesty celebrating his election that Machiavelli had been released from prison. Leo would later excommunicate Martin Luther, the Protestant reformer.

chalk Alexander VI supposedly remarked that Charles VIII of France was able to conquer Italy with a piece of chalk, simply by marking the doors of houses in order to claim them as quarters for his soldiers.

sins Savonarola interpreted the foreign invasions as punishment for Italian sinfulness, but Machiavelli says that the only sin involved was that of relying on mercenaries.

Carthage ancient city-state in northern Africa, founded by Phoenicians near the site of modern Tunis and destroyed by Romans, rebuilt by Romans, and destroyed by Arabs.

Epaminondas a famous Theban general. Philip II of Macedon (382–336 B.C.) was not a mercenary but an ally of the Thebans.

Duke Filippo Filippo Maria Visconti (1392–1447), Duke of Milan. Francesco Sforza's rise to power in Milan is described in Chapter 2.

Queen Giovanna Giovanna II of Naples (1371–1435). The incident referred to involved a dispute between Giovanna and Muzio Attendolo Sforza (1369–1424). Sforza supported Louis III of Anjou as Giovanna's successor, while she favored Alfonso V, King of Aragon.

John Hawkwood (circa 1320–1394), also called Giovanni Acuto, an English mercenary who spent his career in Italy. Near the end of his life, he worked for the Florentines.

Paolo Vitelli (circa 1459–1499) mercenary leader employed by the Florentines. The Florentine government became suspicious of his conduct in the war against Pisa and had him executed.

Carmagnola Francesco Bussone (1380–1432), Count of Caramagnola, was a mercenary originally employed by the Milanese and dismissed by them. He was then employed by the Venetians, for whom he defeated the Milanese army. The Venetians were suspicious of his relationship with the Milanese and had him executed.

Vailà the city at which the League of Cambrai, including forces of Julius II and Louis XII, defeated the Venetians in 1509.

Empire the Holy Roman Empire, in west-central Europe, comprising the German-speaking peoples and northern Italy.

Alberigo da Cunio Alberigo da Barbiano (1348–1409), Count of Cunio. He founded the Company of St. George, the first company of Italian mercenaries.

Julius Pope Julius II tried to take Ferrara, allied with the French, in 1510. Julius probably allied with Spain more out of fear of French power in Italy than out of specific desire to conquer Ferrara.

Constantinople former name for Istanbul. Christian capital of the Byzantine Empire. During a period of civil war, the emperor asked Ottoman Turkish forces to intervene. Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Empire in 1453.

David the great king of the Israelites, only a young shepherd boy when he fought for King Saul against the Philistine giant, Goliath. David's refusal of Saul's armor appears in I Samuel 17:38–40.

Charles VIII (1403–1461) King of France. His royal ordinances established permanent infantry and cavalry in the French army. His successor Louis XII reversed this policy.

Goths Germanic people who invaded and conquered most of the Roman Empire.

Philopoemen (253–184 B.C.) Greek general and leader of the Achaean League; he defeated Nabis the Spartan on several occasions.

Alexander Alexander the Great. Machiavelli proposes that Alexander imitated the example of Achilles, the legendary Greek warrior who appears in Homer's *Iliad*; Julius Caesar (100–44 B.C.), the great Roman general and emperor, imitated Alexander; and Scipio Africanus (circa 236–183 B.C.), another great Roman general, imitated Cyrus the Great, the founder of the Persian empire.

Xenophon author of the *Cyropaedia*, purportedly a biography of Cyrus the Great, but actually an exploration of how an ideal ruler should be educated.

Tuscan the variety of Italian spoken in Tuscany, the region of Italy where Florence is located.

Caesar Julius Caesar had a reputation for generosity that contributed to his popularity. He was assassinated in 44 B.C., only a year after his triumphal return to Rome from a series of military victories.

Dido founder and queen of Carthage: in the *Aeneid* she falls in love with Aeneas and kills herself when he leaves her.

Hannibal (247–183 B.C.) Carthaginian general: crossed the Alps to invade Italy in 218. He was defeated by Scipio Africanus in 202 B.C. Fabius Maximus, more conservative in his tactics than Scipio, also fought against Hannibal.

Locri a city captured by Scipio and brutally treated by one of his commanders.

Chiron the wisest of all centaurs (half-man and half-horse), famous for his knowledge of medicine: he is the teacher of Asclepius, Achilles, and Hercules.

prince who is not named the reference is to King Ferdinand of Spain, who had a wide reputation for being deceptive and crafty.

Marcus Marcus Aurelius (161–180), called “the Philosopher;” one of the most respected of the Roman emperors.

Commodus (161–192), oldest son of Marcus Aurelius. Noted as an enthusiast for gladiator and wild animal games in the Coliseum. Assassinated by a group of conspirators.

Pertinax (126–193). After Commodus was assassinated, Pertinax was proclaimed emperor by the praetorian guard, but was assassinated three months later by rebellious soldiers.

Julianus (died 193) After the assassination of Pertinax, Julianus bought the office of emperor from the praetorian guard, but was assassinated by order of the Senate two months later.

Severus Septimius Severus (145–211). Proclaimed emperor by the Senate. Overcame claims to the throne by Pescennius Niger and Clodius Albinus. He died while on a military campaign in England.

Antoninus Caracalla Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (188–217), called Caracalla. Oldest son of Septimius Severus. He was killed by the prefect of the praetorian guard, Macrinus.

Macrinus Marcus Opellius Severus (circa 164–218) spent all of his brief reign on military campaigns in Asia. He was executed by his opponents.

Heliogabalus also called Elagabalus (circa 204–225), Heliogabalus was killed by the praetorian guard.

Alexander Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander (208–235). Succeeded his cousin Heliogabalus. Killed by rebellious soldiers in Gaul.

Maximinus (died 238) named emperor by the army after Alexander Severus was killed. Subsequently killed by his own troops.

Guelphs supporters of Papal interests. Their opponents, the Ghibellines, were supporters of the Holy Roman Empire.

Pandolfo Petrucci (1450–1512) ruler of Siena. It is not clear to what “suspected men” Machiavelli is referring.

Niccolò Vitelli (1414–1486) mercenary leader, father of Paolo and Vitellozo Vitelli. He became leader of Città de Castello and destroyed several fortresses built there by his opponent, Pope Sixtus IV.

Countess of Forlì Caterina Sforza Riario (1463–1509). Her husband was Girolamo Riario (1443–1488). Negotiations with Caterina were the subject of Machiavelli’s very first diplomatic assignment in July 1499. When her husband was assassinated, she held out against the revolt in one of her fortresses until help arrived from her uncle, Ludovico Sforza of Milan. When Cesare Borgia invaded in late 1499, her subjects welcomed him and again revolted against her, and she was forced to surrender despite the protection of her fortress.

Moors Islamic residents of Spain, the Moors had invaded from north Africa in the early eighth century and controlled large portions of Spain until Ferdinand drove them out during the Reconquest, completed by 1500. Ferdinand expelled the Jews at the same time, in his desire to make Spain a pure Christian nation. Machiavelli implies that this was a purely political maneuver done under a religious pretext.

Bernabò Bernabò Visconti (1323–1385), ruler of Milan, was famous for giving bizarre punishments.

Antonio da Venafro Antonio Giordani was a lawyer employed as a minister by Pandolfo Petrucci, ruler of Siena.

Maximilian Emperor Maximilian I (1459–1519), ruler of the Holy Roman Empire. Father Luca Raimondi was one of his advisors. Machiavelli had an opportunity to observe Maximilian when Machiavelli visited Maximilian’s court on a diplomatic mission from 1507 to 1508.

Philip of Macedon Philip V (238–179 B.C.), king of Macedon. He was defeated in 197 B.C. by Titus Quintus Flaminius, a Roman general, at Cynoscephalae.

Julius the warlike pope's remarkable career as a military leader was cut short by his sudden death in 1513.

Moses, Cyrus, Theseus the great leaders Machiavelli cited in Chapter 6, whom he presents here as liberators of oppressed peoples.

head of the Church Giovanni de Medici, the newly elected Pope Leo X.

Sea, cloud, stone, manna miracles that occurred when Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. Machiavelli claims these are signs that point to the Medici's role in liberating Italy.

Taro . . . Mestre battles in which Italian forces were defeated.