

MACHIAVELLI

THE CHIEF WORKS AND OTHERS Volume III



ALLAN GILBERT, TRANSLATOR

MACHIAVELLI



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THE CHIEF WORKS AND OTHERS

TRANSLATED BY ALLAN GILBERT

VOLUME THREE

Non in exercitu, nec in robore . . .

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[Late in the year 1520 Machiavelli received from Pope Leo X (Giovanni de' Medici) a commission to write the HISTORY OF FLORENCE. Eight books were presented to Pope Clement VII in 1525; no others were completed.]

Machiavelli announces dissatisfaction with the historians of Florence accessible to him, in that they dealt inadequately with the internal affairs of the city, though they were satisfactory for external matters, such as warfare. From his own attempt to treat those internal affairs, however, he allowed himself to be turned aside, partly through his interest in the Sforza wars in Lombardy, partly because all Italian activities were of import for his city. Moreover, Machiavelli did not spend his life in archives. But an archival attempt would have demanded that he be ahead of his age, and would have occupied time far longer than the four years and a half he gave to the HISTORY. What could one man hope to do with the uncalendared records of the city of Florence? The latter part of his work and the notes for its continuation do indicate documentary study. Yet part of the HISTORY is only a compilation, not to be used, as historians did until an astonishingly recent time, as a source for facts. Still there is in it truth enough to serve as a basis for Machiavelli's observations on man as a political animal.

One of the chief of these is that government exists for the common good. To forgetfulness of this truism is to be charged the long list of Florentine troubles, where political changes were made for the benefit of a party, not for that of the city as a whole. The city was continually torn by divisions, not united for the happiness of the citizens. On this internal strife Machiavelli often remarks, handling his material to emphasize it. For example, the story of Michele di Lando, not for the most part unreliable in fact, is that of a man who in his unselfish virtue thought of the city as a whole, and for his patriotism suffered ingratitude inspired by party spirit.

Avowedly fictitious are the frequent orations in the Thucydidean manner of the Florentine historians before Machiavelli. These are developed beyond dramatic requirements into expositions of social and political truths suggested by Florentine events. Incidentally, these orations enabled Machiavelli to deal with the problem of the Medici. They were de facto rulers of Florence, and her only possible rulers. For a wise patriot the clear path was to accept them, hoping for a better future. So Machiavelli did. He writes of the family up to the death of Lorenzo, where his history ends, with a frankness that shows his

courage or his knowledge of the good sense of the living Medici. Yet one of his friends, Donato Giannotti, reports that Niccolò often said to him:

I cannot write this history from the time when Cosimo took over the government up to the death of Lorenzo just as I would write it if I were free from all reasons for caution. The actions will be true, and I shall not omit anything; merely I shall leave out discussing the universal causes of the events. For instance, I shall relate the events and the circumstances that came about when Cosimo took over the government; I shall leave untouched any discussion of the way and of the means and tricks with which one attains such power; and if anyone nevertheless wants to understand Cosimo, let him observe well what I shall have his opponents say, because what I am not willing to say as coming from myself, I shall have his opponents say.

Yet even in such speeches, Machiavelli sometimes substituted for his first draft softer second thoughts. For example, a speech by Rinaldo degli Albizzi is changed from direct to indirect discourse, and the following is bolder than the final form:

Union and prosperity are impossible while Cosimo de' Medici lives in this city, because his way of living surpasses what is proper for a citizen; his excessive wealth makes him bold; with it he has bribed all the heads of the common people and many other citizens, in such a way that in all the councils and magistracies of the city he can do what he wants to; our soldiers are all his partisans, because he employs whom he likes, whom he likes he gets rid of. . . . He lacks nothing of being prince but the title. It is the duty therefore of a good citizen to find a remedy for this, to call the people to the Public Square, and to take over the government, in order to restore to the republic her liberty. [Cf. bk. 4, chap. 28.]

That even a weakened form of this stood in the manuscript put in the hands of Giulio de' Medici, Pope Clement VII, is astonishing enough, a tribute to Machiavelli's desire to write a history that would inspire all lovers of the common good of man in whatever age or nation.]

THE HISTORY OF FLORENCE

TO THE MOST HOLY AND BLESSED FATHER
OUR RULER CLEMENT VII, HIS HUMBLE
SERVANT NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI

Since Your Holiness, Most Blessed and Most Holy Father, when you were still occupying a lower position, charged me to write out what has been done by the Florentine people, I have used all the industry and skill given me by nature and bestowed on me by experience to satisfy you. And since, in writing, I have come to those times which, through the death of the Magnificent Lorenzo de' Medici, changed Italy's condition, and since the events occurring afterward have been loftier and greater, and must be set forth with a loftier and greater spirit, I have thought it well that all I have written up to those times should be assembled in one volume and presented to Your Most Blessed Holiness, in order that in some measure you may now enjoy the fruits of your seeds and my toils.

As you read then, Your Holiness will first see, beginning with the time when the Roman Empire lost her power in the West, with how many disasters and under how many princes Italy for centuries suffered change in her governments; you will see that the Papacy, the Venetians, the Kingdom of Naples, and the Duchy of Milan took the first places and the chief authority in the land; you will see that your native city, withdrawing as a result of internal division from her allegiance to the Emperors, continued to be divided until her government came under the protection of your house. And because Your Blessed Holiness especially charged and required me to write in such a way of the things done by your ancestors that I should be far from all flattery (because however much it pleases you to hear men's true praises, to the same extent fictitious praises and those described with special favor displease you), I greatly fear lest, as I describe the probity of Giovanni, the wisdom of Cosimo, the kindness of Piero, and the high-mindedness and prudence of Lorenzo, I may seem to Your Holiness to be disobeying your orders. Of that transgression I clear myself before you and before anybody whom such descriptions displease as inaccurate, because finding how full of their praises were

the accounts of those who at various times have written of them, I was obliged either to write of them just what I found or, as hostile, to be silent about them. And if underneath their excellent works was concealed any ambition which, as some say, was opposed to the common good, I who do not recognize it in them am not obliged to write of it; indeed in all my narratives I have never permitted a dishonorable deed to be defended with an honorable reason nor a praiseworthy deed, as though done for an opposite purpose, to be blackened.

But how far I am from flattery can be observed in all the parts of my history, and especially in the public speeches and private conversations, both quoted and reported, which in their ideas and arrangement preserve what is fitting to the temperament of the person who speaks without any reservation. Yet I avoid, in all places, offensive terms, as unnecessary to the dignity and truth of history. So nobody who rightly examines my writings can rebuke me as a flatterer, especially when he sees that I have said little on the achievement of Your Holiness' father. The cause of this was his short life, in which he had no opportunity to make himself known, nor have I with my writings been able to make him glorious. Nevertheless great and splendid enough were his deeds, since he begot Your Holiness—an act that far outweighs all those of his ancestors and will give him more ages of fame than the malice of Fortune took from him years of life. I have then striven, Most Holy and Blessed Father, in these writings of mine, without defacing the truth, to satisfy everybody; and perhaps I have not satisfied anybody, and if this should be so, I shall not be astonished by it, because I judge it impossible, without angering many, to write on the affairs of their own times. Nevertheless, I come cheerfully into the field, hoping that, as by the kindness of Your Holiness I am honored and supported, so by the armed legions of your most sacred judgment I shall be aided and protected; and with the same spirit and confidence in which I have written up to now, I am going to continue my undertaking, if life does not desert me and Your Holiness does not forsake me.

PREFACE

It was my purpose, when I first decided to write of the things done at home and abroad by the Florentine people, to begin my

narrative with the year of the Christian era 1434, the date when the Medici family, through the abilities and laudable deeds of Cosimo and Giovanni his father gained more power than any other in Florence, because I considered that Messer Lionardo d'Arezzo and Messer Poggio, two very good historians, had told in detail all the things that happened before that time. But later carefully reading their works, in order to see with what ruling ideas and methods they carry on their writing, so that, by imitating them, I might make my history more acceptable to readers, I found that in description of the wars fought by the Florentines with foreign princes and peoples they are very careful, but as to civil strife and internal hostilities, and the effects these have produced, about one part of them they are wholly silent, and the other part they describe so briefly that their readers can get no profit or pleasure. The cause of their doing so is either that they considered these affairs so paltry as to be unworthy of preservation in writing, or that they feared to offend the descendants of those whom, in such narratives, they would have to calumniate.¹ These two causes (with all respect to them) appear to me wholly unworthy of great men, because if anything in history delights or teaches, it is what is presented in full detail. If any reading is useful to citizens who govern republics, it is that which shows the causes of the hatreds and factional struggles within the city, in order that such citizens having grown wise through the sufferings of others, can keep themselves united.

If the experiences of any republic are moving, those of a man's own city, when he reads about them, are much more moving and more useful; and if in any republic internal dissensions were ever worth noting, in that of Florence they are especially noteworthy, because most of the other republics of which there is any record have been content with one sort of factional struggle, with which, according as it has happened, they have sometimes expanded, sometimes ruined their cities. But Florence, not content with one sort of factional quarrel, has had many. In Rome, as everybody knows, after the kings were driven out, there was disunion between the nobles and the people, which continued in the city until her fall. So it did in Athens, and in all the other republics that flourished in those days. But in Florence first there were factions among the nobles, then

1. *To descendants, the truthful historian seems to calumniate ancestors when he relates their evil deeds.*

factional struggles between the nobles and the middle class, finally between the middle class and the masses. Many times it happened that one of these parties, having conquered the others, was itself divided into two factions. From these dissensions resulted as many deaths, as many exiles, as many ruined families as ever were known in any city of which we have record.

Certainly, according to my judgment, nothing shows so well the vigor of our city as does the quality of these dissensions, which had might enough to destroy the greatest and most powerful of cities. Nevertheless ours seemed always to grow stronger. Such was the ability of those citizens and the power of their intelligence and spirit to make themselves and their native city great, that as many as remained superior to so many ills could do more to exalt her with their ability than the evil influence of those events that might have weakened her could do to depress her. And beyond doubt if Florence had had the good fortune, when she freed herself from the Empire, to take a form of government that would have kept her united, I do not know what republic, modern or ancient, would have been superior to her—with such ability in arms and in peaceful arts she would have abounded. She expelled such numbers of the Ghibellines that they filled Tuscany and Lombardy. Yet the Guelfs and those who remained within her walls, when they fought against Arezzo, a year earlier than the battle of Campaldino, raised among the citizens of their party twelve hundred men-at-arms and twelve thousand infantry. Later, in the war fought against Filippo Visconti Duke of Milan, when she had to put to the test her economic ability and not her own arms (which by then had disappeared), we see that in the five years while that war lasted the Florentines spent three million five hundred thousand florins. When that was ended, being discontented with peace, in order to show further the power of their city, they besieged Lucca.

I cannot, therefore, see any reason why these divisions do not deserve to be fully described. And if those very noble writers held back in order not to injure the memory of those whom they were going to discuss, they deceived themselves and showed that they did not understand the ambition of men and the desire they have to perpetuate the names of their ancestors and themselves; these historians did not remember that many who have not had opportunity to gain fame with praiseworthy deeds have striven to gain it with blame-

worthy actions, nor did they consider that conspicuous actions such as those of government and state, however they are carried on or whatever outcome they have, are always looked upon as bringing their doers honor rather than censure.

These things, when I had considered them, made me change my plan, and I determined to begin my history with the origin of our city. And because it is not my intention to fill the places of others, I shall describe in detail, up to 1434, only the things that happened inside the city, and of those outside I shall say nothing else than what is necessary for understanding of those inside. Then, when I have passed the year 1434, I shall write in detail of both sorts. Besides this, in order that this *History* may at all times be better understood, before I deal with Florence I shall describe by what means Italy came under those powers which at that time ruled her. All these things, both Italian and Florentine, will be completed in four books. The first will tell in brief all the events that happened in Italy from the decline of the Roman Empire to 1434; the second will carry its narrative from the origin of the city of Florence to the war that, after the expulsion of the Duke of Athens, was fought against the Pope; the third will end in the year 1414, with the death of King Ladislas of Naples; and with the fourth I shall come to the year 1434. From that time on, I shall present, with many details, the things that happened in Florence and outside, up to our present times.

BOOK ONE

[FROM THE DECLINE OF THE EMPIRE TO 1434]

CHAPTER I

[*Barbarian invasions. 375-439*]

The peoples who live in the northern countries beyond the Rhine and the Danube, being born in a prolific and healthful region, often have increased to such a multitude that part of them were forced to leave their native places and seek new lands to dwell in. The method they used when one of those districts wished to get rid of some of its inhabitants was to divide its people into three parts, assigning every man in such a way that every part was equally provided with nobles and commoners, rich and poor. Then the part on which the lot fell went to seek its fortune, and the other two parts, freed from the burden of the third, remained behind to enjoy their ancestral goods. The groups which left home were the multitudes that destroyed the Roman Empire. Opportunity to do so was given them by the Emperors who, by abandoning Rome, the ancient seat of the Empire, and living in Constantinople, made the western part of the Empire weaker, since by watching it less carefully, they left it exposed to plunder by their officials and their enemies. And certainly for the overthrow of so great an empire, founded on the blood of so many able men, the fitness of things demanded that the rulers should not be less sluggish than they were, or the officials less disloyal, or the attackers weaker and less persistent. Actually, not one multitude but many joined forces for her destruction.

The first who came against the Empire from these northern regions after the Cimbri (whom Marius, a Roman citizen, defeated) were the Visigoths, whose name in their language means nothing more than Western Goths in ours. After some combats on the borders of the Empire, for a long time, by grant of the Emperors, they occupied territory on the Danube River. Although for various reasons and at various times they frequently assailed the Roman provinces, nonetheless the Emperors' power always kept them in check. The last who gloriously defeated them was Theodosius. Being brought under his authority, they never again established a

king over themselves but, contented with the pay granted them, lived and fought under the Emperor's control and under his ensigns.

But after Theodosius died and his sons Arcadius and Honorius were left heirs of his Empire, but not of his ability and Fortune, with their rule conditions changed. Theodosius had appointed over the three parts of his empire three deputies: Rufinus over the East; over the West, Stilicho; and Gildo over Africa. All of these, after the death of the monarch, determined not to act as deputies in their provinces but to occupy them as princes. Gildo and Rufinus were crushed very early, but Stilicho, knowing better how to conceal his purpose, sought to gain the confidence of the new Emperors and nevertheless so to shake their power that it would then be easier for him to seize it. In order to make the Visigoths hostile, he advised the Emperors no longer to give those barbarians their accustomed subsidies. Besides this, since he believed that to shake the Empire these enemies would not be enough, he arranged that the Burgundians, Franks, Vandals and Alans, they too northern peoples and already beginning to seek new lands, should attack the Roman provinces. Thereupon the Visigoths, deprived of their subsidies, in order to be better organized to revenge that injury, made Alaric their king and, attacking the Empire, at last plundered Italy and took and sacked Rome. After that victory Alaric died and was succeeded by Ataulfus, who took as his wife Placidia, sister of the Emperors. Because of that marriage he agreed to go to the rescue of Gaul and Spain, provinces that the Vandals, Burgundians, Alans and Franks, for the reasons given above, had attacked. The result was that the Vandals, who had taken that part of Spain called Baetica, being hard pressed by the Visigoths and unable to resist, were invited by Boniface, who was ruling Africa for the Empire, to invade his province because, having rebelled, he feared that the Emperor would punish his transgression. For the reasons given, the Vandals gladly undertook that expedition and under their king Genseric made themselves masters of Africa. Meanwhile the Empire had descended to Theodosius the son of Arcadius; since he paid little attention to things in the West, the Vandals believed they could keep what they had gained.

CHAPTER 2

[Barbarian conquests. 440-600]

And so the Vandals ruled Africa, the Alans and the Visigoths Spain; and not merely did the Franks and the Burgundians conquer Gaul, but the regions they inhabited were called by their name, so that one region is called France and the other Burgundy. Their success roused new multitudes to the destruction of the Empire, and another people, called Huns, conquered Pannonia, a province on the other shore of the Danube, which today, having taken the name of those Huns, is called Hungary. To these troubles others were added because the Emperor, seeing himself attacked from so many sides, in order to have fewer enemies, made truces, now with the Vandals, now with the Franks. These things increased the authority and the might of the barbarians but diminished that of the Empire.

Nor was the island of Britain, which today is called England, safe from such great destruction, because the Britons, fearing those people who had seized France and not seeing how the Emperor could protect them, called to their aid the Angles, people of Germany. Under Vortiger their king, they undertook the expedition; at first they protected the Britons, but later drove them from the island and remained there themselves to live, and from their own name called it England. But the earlier inhabitants, being deprived of their native land, of necessity became courageous and decided that though they had not been able to defend their own country, they were able to conquer that of others. They therefore with their families crossed the sea and conquered the region nearest to the shore, and after their own name called that land Brittany.

CHAPTER 3

[Italy invaded. 452-476]

The Huns, who, as we said above, had taken Pannonia, uniting with other peoples called Zepidi, Heruli, Thuringi, and Ostrogoths (for so in that language the eastern Goths are called), set out to seek new lands. And since they could not enter France, which was de-

fended against the barbarian forces, they came into Italy under Attila, their king, who a little earlier, in order to be sole ruler in the kingdom, had killed Bleda, his brother. Since he had thereby become very powerful, Andaricus King of the Zepidi, and Velamir King of the Ostrogoths were subject to him. Coming into Italy, then, Attila invested Aquileia, where he remained without any hindrance for two years; and in besieging it, he laid waste all the region round about and dispersed all its inhabitants. This, as we shall tell in its place, brought about the founding of the city of Venice. After the capture and destruction of Aquileia and of many other cities, he turned toward Rome; from her destruction he refrained on the request of the Pope, for whom Attila had so much respect that he left Italy and retired to Austria, where he died. After his death, Velamir, King of the Ostrogoths, and the leaders of the other nations took up arms against Eric and Uric, his sons; they killed one and forced the other, with the Huns, to recross the Danube and return into their own country. The Ostrogoths and the Zepidi then settled in Pannonia, and the Heruli and the Thuringi remained near the Danube on the other side of the river. After Attila had left Italy, Valentinianus, the Western Emperor, determined to bring back prosperity; to be better situated for defending Italy against the barbarians, he left Rome and made Ravenna his capital.

These troubles in the Western Empire were the reason why the Emperor, who lived in Constantinople, many times granted its possession to others, as a matter of great danger and expense. And many times also the Romans without his permission, seeing that they were abandoned, set up for themselves an emperor who would defend them, or someone on his own authority usurped the Empire, as happened in those times when the Roman Maximus seized it after Valentinianus' death; he forced Eudoxia, who had been the latter's wife, to take him as her husband. Eager to revenge such an injury since, being sprung from imperial blood, she could not endure marriage with a private citizen, Eudoxia secretly encouraged Genseric, king of the Vandals and master of Africa, to come into Italy, showing him the ease and the value of conquering it. Allured by the hope of booty, that king came at once and, finding Rome abandoned, plundered the city, remaining there fourteen days. He also took and plundered many other cities in Italy, and having loaded himself and his army with booty, returned to Africa. When the Romans were

back in Rome, since Maximus was dead, they made Avitus, a Roman, Emperor.

Then, after many events in Italy and outside her, and after the deaths of many emperors, the control of Constantinople came to Zeno and that of Rome to Orestes and Augustulus his son, who seized the Empire by trickery. And while they planned to hold it by force, the Heruli and the Thuringi, who after the death of Attila placed themselves, as I said, on the other side of the Danube near the river, made a league and under Odoacer, their general, came into Italy. And into the regions they left vacant, the Longobards entered, led by their king, Godogus—they too a northern people who, as we shall tell in its place, were the final plague of Italy. So, having come into Italy, Odoacer defeated and killed Orestes near Pavia, and Augustulus fled. After that victory, in order that Rome might change her title with her power, Odoacer, abandoning the name of the Empire, had himself called King of Rome. He was the first, among the leaders of peoples who then were overrunning the world, who settled down to live in Italy, because the others, either through fear that they could not hold her because she could easily be assisted by the Eastern emperor, or for some other hidden reason, had plundered her and then sought other countries in which to make their abode.

CHAPTER 4

[*Theodoric in Italy. 476–526*]

So in those days the ancient Roman Empire was under these leaders: Zeno, reigning in Constantinople, controlled all the Eastern Empire; the Ostrogoths ruled Moesia and Pannonia; the Visigoths, Suevi, and Alani held Gascony and Spain; the Vandals, Africa; the Franks and the Burgundians, France; the Heruli and the Thuringi, Italy. The Kingdom of the Ostrogoths had come to Theodoric, the grandson of Velamir, who, being friendly with Zeno, the Eastern Emperor, wrote to him that his Ostrogoths believed it unjust, since they were superior in vigor to all the other peoples, that they should be inferior in dominion, and that it was impossible to keep them confined within the boundaries of Pannonia. Hence, since he was forced to let them take arms and seek new lands, he wished first to inform the Emperor of his intention, in order to enable him to

provide for it, by granting them some country where with his favor they could live more honorably and in greater ease. Hence Zeno, partly through fear, partly that he hoped to drive Odoacer out of Italy, gave Theodoric permission to march against him and take possession of the land. Theodoric at once departed from Pannonia, where he left the Zepidi, people friendly to him; having come into Italy, he killed Odoacer and his son and after his example took the title of King of Italy. He established his capital in Ravenna, moved by the same reasons that once made the Emperor Valentinianus dwell there.

Now Theodoric was a man very able in war and in peace, so that in the first he was always conqueror, in the second he greatly benefited his cities and his people. He scattered the Ostrogoths and their leaders through his lands, so that in war he could control them and in peace could govern them. He enlarged Ravenna, he rebuilt Rome, and, except for military discipline, he restored to the Romans every other dignity. He kept within their boundaries, without any of the disturbance of war, by his authority alone, all the barbarian kings who were occupying the Empire. He built towns and fortresses between the head of the Adriatic Sea and the Alps, to hinder more easily the passage of new barbarians who might attempt to attack Italy. And if near the end of his life so many virtues had not been defaced by cruelties caused by various suspicions about his kingdom, such as the deaths of Simmacus and of Boethius, very holy men, his memory would have been altogether worthy of every sort of honor; because, by means of his ability and his goodness, not merely Rome and Italy but all the other parts of the Western Empire, freed from the continual attacks by so many floods of barbarians that for many years they had been enduring, showed new life, and attained good order and a very happy condition.

CHAPTER 5

[*Changes in Italy in barbarian times. 395-493*]

And truly, if any times ever were miserable in Italy and in these provinces overrun by the barbarians, they were those extending from Arcadius and Honorius up to Theodoric. For if one will consider what a damage it may be to a republic or to a kingdom to change its

prince or government, not through any external force but merely because of internal discords (by which we see that through little changes all republics and all kingdoms, even though very powerful, are overthrown), one can then easily imagine how much in those times Italy and the other Roman provinces suffered, for they not merely changed their government and their prince, but their laws, their customs, their way of living, their religion, their speech, their dress, their names. Individually and still more in total these things when merely thought about and not seen or suffered, are enough to terrify the firmest and steadiest mind. From this came the destruction, the origin, and the expansion of many cities. Among those destroyed were Aquileia, Luni, Chiusi, Popolonia, Fiesole and many others. Among those for the first time built were Venice, Siena, Ferrara, Aquila and many other cities and fortified towns that for brevity are omitted. Small towns that became big were Florence, Genoa, Pisa, Milan, Naples and Bologna. To all these are to be added the destruction and the rebuilding of Rome and of many others that were variously torn down and rebuilt.

Among these ruins and these new peoples originated new tongues, as appears in the languages now used in France, in Spain, and in Italy; these are mixtures of the native languages of these new peoples and of the ancient Roman, that make a new sort of speech. Besides this, not merely have the provinces changed their names, but so have the lakes, the rivers, the seas, and the men, for France, Italy, and Spain are full of names that are new and wholly unlike the ancient ones; for example, omitting many others, the Po, Garda, the Archipelago are known by names unlike the ancient. The men, too, instead of Caesars and Pompeys, are now Pieri, Giovanni, and Mattei.

But among all these changes, of not less importance was that in religion because, in fighting the established habits of the ancient faith with the miracles of the new, there sprang up very serious troubles and enmities between men. And if indeed the Christian religion had been united, it would have caused slighter disturbances, but since the Greek, the Roman, and the Ravenna churches were fighting among themselves, and in addition the heretical beliefs were fighting with the catholic ones, in many ways they afflicted the world. Of this a witness is Africa, since she endured many more distresses because of the Arian sect, believed in by the Vandals, than because

of their avarice or natural cruelty. Living, then, in the midst of so many persecutions, men bore written in their eyes the terror of their spirits, because in addition to the countless ills they suffered, a good part of them lacked the power to flee for aid to God, in which all the wretched are wont to hope, because the greater part of them, uncertain to what god they ought to turn, destitute of all aid and all hope, died wretchedly.

CHAPTER 6

[*Italy in Justinian's time. 493-555*]

No little praise therefore is due to Theodoric as the first who allayed so many evils. During the thirty-eight years of his reign he brought Italy to such greatness that the ancient afflictions were no more to be seen in the land. But when he died and left on the throne Atalaric, the son of his daughter Amalasiumta, Italy in a short time, since Fortune was not yet satisfied, returned to her ancient distresses. Soon after his grandfather's death, Atalaric died, and the kingdom was left to his mother; she was betrayed by Theodatus, whom she had summoned to aid her in ruling the kingdom. By killing her and making himself king, he incurred the hatred of the Ostrogoths. This encouraged the Emperor Justinian to believe that he could drive Theodatus from Italy, so he appointed Belisarius leader of an expedition for the purpose; this man had already conquered Africa, driven out the Vandals and restored that province to the Empire. Belisarius conquered Sicily, passed thence into Italy and took Naples and Rome. After this defeat the Goths killed Theodatus their king as its cause and in his stead chose Vitigetes; after some combats Belisarius besieged and captured him in Ravenna. But before Belisarius had completed his conquest, Justinian recalled him and put in his place Joannes and Viales, completely unlike him in ability and conduct, so that the Goths regained their courage and chose as their king Ildovrado, governor in Verona.

After he was killed, the kingdom came to Totila, who defeated the Emperor's soldiers, regained Tuscany and Naples, and pushed the imperial generals almost out of the provinces Belisarius had regained. Justinian therefore decided to send Belisarius back to Italy. Returning with weak forces, he lost the reputation gained from his earlier deeds instead of gaining more. For when he was with his

soldiers at Ostia, Totila captured Rome before his eyes, but since Totila could neither abandon nor hold her, for the most part he destroyed her, drove away the people, and took the Senators off with him. Making little account of Belisarius, he led his army into Calabria to meet soldiers who had come from Greece to aid that general. So Belisarius, seeing Rome abandoned, undertook a noble enterprise: entering the Roman ruins with the utmost speed, he rebuilt the city walls and called back the inhabitants. But Fortune opposed this praiseworthy enterprise because Justinian, at that time attacked by the Parthians, recalled Belisarius. In obedience to his master, he abandoned Italy, and the province remained in the power of Totila, who again took Rome. But he did not treat the city with the same cruelty as before, because at the request of St. Benedict, who in those days had a lofty reputation for holiness, he chose rather to rebuild her.

Justinian meanwhile, having made a truce with the Parthians and planned to send new soldiers for the relief of Italy, was hindered by the Slavs, a new northern people who had crossed the Danube and attacked Illyria and Thrace; hence Totila conquered almost all Italy. But as soon as Justinian had overcome the Slavs, he sent his armies into Italy under Narses the eunuch, a man most excellent in war, who, arriving in Italy, defeated and killed Totila. The Goths who survived that defeat gathered in Pavia, where they made Teia their king. Narses, on the other hand, after his victory took Rome, and at last fought with Teia near Nocera and killed and defeated him. Through this victory he wholly destroyed the name of the Goths in Italy, where, from King Theodoric to Teia, they had ruled seventy years.

CHAPTER 7

[*The exarchate of Ravenna. 565-568*]

But as soon as Italy was free from the Goths, Justinian died, and there was left as his successor Justin his son, who, on the advice of his wife Sofia, recalled Narses from Italy and sent there Longinus as his successor. Longinus followed the plan of the others, by living in Ravenna. And besides this he gave Italy a new form, because he did not set up governors of provinces, as the Goths had done, but established in all the cities and regions of importance leaders whom he called Dukes. In this arrangement he did not honor Rome more

than other cities because, taking away the Consuls and the Senate, names until that day preserved there, he put her under a Duke who was sent annually from Ravenna, and she was called the Roman Dukedom. And to the official stationed at Ravenna who ruled all Italy for the Emperor, Longinus gave the name of Exarch. This division made easier the destruction of Italy and more quickly gave opportunity for the Longobards to conquer her.

CHAPTER 8

[*The Longobards. 568-756*]

Narses was very angry with the Emperor for taking away from him the government of that province which he had gained with his ability and his blood, since it was not enough for Sofia to injure him by recalling him but she added words full of insult, saying that she wished to have him return to spin with the other eunuchs. Hence Narses, bursting with anger, persuaded Alboin king of the Longobards, who then ruled in Pannonia, to invade Italy. As I showed above, the Longobards had entered those regions near the Danube which the Heruli and Thuringi abandoned when their king Odoacer led them into Italy. After the Longobards had been there some time and their kingship had come to Alboin, a bold and savage man, they crossed the Danube and fought with Commundus king of the Zepidi, who was ruling Pannonia, and defeated him. Finding among the spoil Rosmunda, Commundus' daughter, Alboin took her as his wife and made himself master of Pannonia. In harmony with his savage nature, he made from Commundus' skull a cup from which he drank in memory of that victory. When he was summoned into Italy by Narses, with whom he had been allied in the war with the Goths, leaving Pannonia to the Huns, who returned to their country after Attila's death, as we have said, Alboin came into Italy. Finding that province divided into many parts, he at once seized Pavia, Milan, Verona, Vicenza, all Tuscany, and the larger part of Flaminia, today called Romagna.

In the belief that through so many sudden conquests he now was victorious in Italy, Alboin held in Verona a splendid banquet, and being made rash by much drinking and Commundus' skull being full of wine, he had it presented to Queen Rosmunda, who was at

table opposite him, saying in a loud voice, which she heard, that in such prosperity he wished her to drink with her father. Those words were like a stab in that lady's breast. Deciding on revenge and knowing that Almachild, a noble and fiery Longobard youth, loved her handmaid, she planned with her a secret arrangement for Almachild to sleep with the queen instead of the maid. Almachild, coming into a dark place according to her plan and believing he was with the maid, lay with Rosmunda. She then revealed herself, showing him that it was in his choice either to kill Alboin and always enjoy her and the kingdom, or to be killed by Alboin as the violator of his wife. Almachild decided to kill Alboin. But when they had killed him, since they had not succeeded in seizing the kingdom but on the contrary feared that the Longobards who loved Alboin would kill them, they fled with all the royal treasure to Ravenna, where Longinus honorably received them.

In the midst of these disturbances, the Emperor Justin died; Tiberius was crowned in his place. Occupied with wars against the Parthians, he could give Italy no attention. Hence Longinus thought he had a good opportunity to become king of the Longobards and of all Italy by means of Rosmunda and her treasure. He discussed this plan with her, and urged her to kill Almachild and to take himself as her husband. She accepted this and prepared a cup of poisoned wine which with her own hand she gave to Almachild when, thirsty, he had come out of the bath. When he had drunk half of it, feeling his vitals disturbed and realizing the cause, he compelled Rosmunda to drink the rest. So in a few hours both of them died, and Longinus was deprived of his hope of becoming king.

The Longobards, meanwhile, gathering in Pavia, which they had made the chief seat of their kingdom, chose Clefi as their king. He rebuilt Imola, which had been destroyed by Narses, and took Rimini and almost every city as far as Rome, but in the course of his victories he died. This Clefi was so cruel not merely to foreigners but also to his own Longobards that, frightened by the royal power, they no longer wished to set up kings, but chose among themselves thirty dukes to govern the rest. This plan was the reason why the Longobards never could conquer all Italy, and why their kingdom did not go beyond Benevento, and why Rome, Ravenna, Cremona, Mantua, Padua, Monselice, Parma, Bologna, Faenza, Forlì, Cesena partly

protected themselves for a time, partly were never conquered. Not to have a king made them less ready for war, and when they did again establish one, after having been free for a time, they were less obedient and more prone to dissensions among themselves. This state of things first impeded their victory, then at last drove them from Italy. When the Longobards were in this condition, the Romans and Longinus made an agreement with them that everyone should lay down his arms and enjoy what he was occupying.

CHAPTER 9

[*The Popes. 4th–16th Centuries*]

In these times the popes attained greater authority than ever before. The first after St Peter, because of their holy lives and their miracles, were respected by the people. Their examples so strengthened the Christian religion that the princes were obliged, to get rid of the great disorder then existing in the world, to adopt that religion. When the Emperor became a Christian and left Rome for Constantinople, the Roman Empire fell more quickly, as we said in the beginning, and the Roman church grew more rapidly. Nevertheless up to the coming of the Longobards, since all Italy was subject either to emperors or kings, the pontiffs of those times obtained no other power than was given them through respect for their habits and their teaching. In secular things they obeyed the emperors and the kings, and sometimes were killed by them or employed as their servants in their administration. But Theodoric king of the Goths brought the popes greater importance in the affairs of Italy when he established his seat in Ravenna; since Rome was without a prince, the Romans for their protection began to render more submission to the pope. Yet this did not much increase the popes' strength; it only caused the Church of Rome to be put over that of Ravenna. But when the Longobards came and Italy was divided into several parts, the pope had reason for making himself more active; since he was almost ruler in Rome, the Emperor of Constantinople and the Longobards respected him; by means of the pope, the Romans entered into an alliance—not as subjects but as equals—with the Longobards and with Longinus. And so the popes, continuing to be friends now with the Longobards, now with the Greeks, increased their dignity.

But later, after the ruin of the Eastern Empire (which came about in these times under the Emperor Heracleus, because the Slavic people, whom we mentioned above, again assailed Illyria, and when that was conquered called it, after their own name, Slavonia; and the other parts of the Empire were attacked first by the Persians, then by the Saracens, who under Mahomet came out of Arabia, and lastly by the Turks, and Syria, Africa, and Egypt were taken from it) the pope because of the Empire's weakness had no further possibilities for taking refuge with it in his difficulties. And on the other side, since the forces of the Longobards were growing, he decided that he must seek new help, and had recourse to France, to the kings there. Hence the many wars that were carried on by the barbarians in Italy after these times were for the most part caused by the popes, and the many barbarians that flooded her were usually summoned by them. This sort of thing has lasted even to our times; it has kept and now keeps Italy disunited and weak. So, in describing events from those times to ours, the fall of the Empire will no longer be shown—since it has struck bottom—but the growth of the pontiffs and those other princedoms which have ruled Italy from that time to the coming of Charles VIII. It will be evident that the popes, first with censures, and then with censures and arms at the same time, mixed with indulgences, excited fear and awe, and that through bad use of censures and arms they have wholly lost awe, and as to fear, they are in the power of others.

CHAPTER 10

[*Pope Gregory III.*¹ 731–741]

But getting back to our subject, I say that Gregory III had now come to the papacy, and Astolfo to the kingdom of the Longobards; the latter, in violation of the treaties that had been made, took Ravenna and began war against the Pope. Because of that, Gregory, who, for the reasons given above, no longer relied on the Emperor of Constantinople, because he was weak, and did not wish to rely on the faith of the Lombards,² who many times had broken it, betook himself to France to Pepin II. The latter, at first Lord only of

1. Misled by his source, the *DECADES* of Flavius Blondus, Machiavelli has attributed to Gregory III the actions of Stephen II.

2. The Longobards. Machiavelli changes to the modern form.

Austrasia and Brabant, had become King of France, not so much through his own ability as through that of Charles Martel his father and Pepin his grandfather. Charles Martel, being ruler of the kingdom, inflicted a memorable defeat on the Saracens near Tours, on the River Loire, where more than two hundred thousand were killed. As a result, Pepin his son, through his father's reputation and ability, later became king of that kingdom. To him Pope Gregory, as has been said, sent for aid against the Longobards. Pepin promised to send it, yet wished first to see him and to do him honor in his presence.

So Gregory went to France, passing through the lands of the Lombards, his enemies, without hindrance—so great was their reverence for religion. Having come into France, Gregory was honored by that King and sent back with his armies into Italy; these besieged the Longobards in Pavia. Hence Astolfo, forced by necessity, entered into a treaty with the French; they made the treaty on account of requests by the Pope, who did not wish the death of his enemy but that he should be converted and live. In this treaty Astolfo promised to restore to the Church all the cities he had taken from her. But when Pepin's soldiers had returned to France, Astolfo did not keep the agreement. So the Pope again had recourse to Pepin, who sent a second army into Italy, conquered the Longobards and took Ravenna. Against the wish of the Greek Emperor he gave that city to the Pope, with all the other cities in the Exarchate, and added to them the districts of Urbino and the March. But Astolfo died while still restoring those cities, and Desiderio, a Lombard who was duke of Tuscany, took up arms to seize the kingdom. He asked aid from the Pope, promising his friendship; since the Pope granted aid, the other princes gave up. Desiderio at first kept his promise and continued to restore the cities to the Pontiff, according to the agreement made with Pepin; moreover no longer did an exarch come from Constantinople to Ravenna, but the city was ruled according to the Pope's will.

CHAPTER 11

[*Charlemagne; the Pope's temporal power. 768-844*]

Pepin then died and was succeeded as king by his son Charles who, through the magnitude of the things he did, was called the Great. The papacy meanwhile had come to Theodore I. He got

into strife with Desiderio and was besieged by him in Rome. So the Pope applied for aid to Charles, who, having crossed the Alps, besieged Desiderio in Pavia, and captured him and his sons and sent them as prisoners into France. Then Charles visited the Pope in Rome, where he decreed that as Vicar of God, the Pope could not be judged by men. And the Pope and the Roman people made him Emperor. And so Rome again had its Emperor in the West; and whereas the Pope had according to custom been confirmed by the Emperors, the Emperor, for his election, now had need of the Pope; and the Empire kept on losing its offices and the Church gaining them. By these means continually there was an increase in her authority over the temporal princes. By that time the Longobards, having been two hundred and thirty-two years in Italy, no longer retained anything of the foreigner except the name. So when Charles set about reorganizing Italy, which he did in the time of Pope Leo III, he permitted them to live in those places where they had been brought up, and after their name that province was called Lombardy. And that they might hold the Roman name in respect, he decided that all that part of Italy near them, which was subject to the Exarchate of Ravenna, should be called Romagna. Besides this, he made his son Pepin King of Italy, with jurisdiction that extended as far as Benevento; and all the rest was in the power of the Greek Emperor, with whom Charles had made an agreement.

In those times Paschal I came to the pontificate, and the parish priests of the Roman churches, being nearer the Pope and having a share in his election, began calling themselves cardinals, in order to adorn their power with a splendid title. And they arrogated so much authority, especially after they excluded the people of Rome from choosing the Pope, that seldom did the choice of him go outside their number. Thus, when Paschal died, Eugenius II was set up, from the titular church of Santa Sabina.

And Italy, when she was in the hands of the French, changed in part her form and organization, because in temporal matters the Pope had taken more authority, and they had brought into her the names of count and marquis, as earlier Longinus, exarch of Ravenna, had established there the name of duke. At last, after several pontiffs, Osporco, a Roman, came to the papacy, who, because of the ugliness of his name, called himself Sergius. This was the beginning of the change of name that the popes make on their election.

CHAPTER 12

[*Berengar. 814-951*]

Meanwhile Charles the Emperor died, and was succeeded by Louis his son. After Louis' death so many differences came up among his sons that, in the time of his grandsons, the house of France lost the Empire, which was moved to Germany, and the first German emperor was called Arnolfo. Not merely did Charles' family, through its dissensions, lose the Empire but also the Kingdom of Italy, for the Lombards regained their power and attacked the Pope and the Romans. Hence the Pope, seeing nobody to whom he could turn, of necessity chose as King of Italy Berengar Duke of the Friuli. These happenings gave courage to the Huns, who were in Pannonia, to attack Italy, and coming to conflict with Berengar, they were forced to return to Pannonia, or rather to Hungary, for so that province, after them, had come to be called.

Romanus was in those days the Emperor in Greece, for he had taken the Empire from Constantine, being prefect of his army. And because early in his reign Apulia and Calabria had rebelled (which, as we said above, were subject to his empire), angered by that rebellion, he permitted the Saracens to cross over into those places. When they had come and taken those provinces, they tried to capture Rome. But the Romans, because Berengar was busy defending himself from the Huns, chose as their general Alberico Duke of Tuscany, and by means of his valor saved Rome from the Saracens. The latter, leaving that siege, made a fortress on Mount Gargano, and from there ruled Apulia and Calabria, and continually raided the rest of Italy. And so Italy in those times came to be wonderfully distressed, being attacked on the side of the Alps by the Huns and on the side of Naples by the Saracens.

Thus Italy suffered these afflictions many years and under three Berengars, who succeeded one another. In that time the Pope and the Church were troubled every hour, having no place where they could turn, because of the disunion of the Western princes and the weakness of the Eastern ones. The city of Genoa and all its coastal territories in those times the Saracens laid waste. From that came the greatness of the city of Pisa, in which many people who were driven from their native cities found refuge. These things happened

in the year of the Christian religion 931. But when the Empire came to Henry and Matilda's son, Otto Duke of Saxony, a prudent man and of high reputation, Agabitus the Pope decided to beg him to come into Italy and take it from under the tyranny of the Berengars.

CHAPTER 13

[*Affairs in the states of Italy. 951-1046*]

The states of Italy in these times were organized as follows: Lombardy was under Berengar III and his son Albert. Tuscany and Romagna were governed by an official of the Western emperor. Apulia and Calabria were partly under the Greek emperor, partly under the Saracens. In Rome there were set up each year two consuls from the nobility, who ruled it according to the ancient custom; there was added to this a prefect who administered justice to the people; they had a council of twelve men, who assigned the rulers each year to the cities subject to them. The Pope had more or less power in Rome and in all Italy according to the assistance of the emperors or of those who were most powerful in the land.

Otto the Emperor then came into Italy and took the kingdom away from the Berengars, who had reigned there fifty-five years, and restored his powers to the Pope. He had a son and a grandson each also named Otto, who, one after the other, succeeded him in the Empire. And in the time of Otto III, Pope Gregory V was driven out by the Romans; hence Otto came into Italy and put him back in Rome. And the Pope, to avenge himself on the Romans, took away from them authority to choose the Emperor and gave it to six princes of Germany: three bishops, Mayence, Treves and Cologne, and three princes, Brandenburg, Palatine and Saxony; this happened in 1002. After the death of Otto III, the Electors chose as Emperor Henry Duke of Bavaria, who, after twelve years, was crowned by Stephen VIII. The lives of Henry and Simeonda his wife were very holy, as is shown by the many churches endowed and built by them, among which was the church of San Miniato, near the city of Florence. Henry died in 1024. Conrad of Suevia succeeded him, and then Henry II. He came to Rome, and because three popes were causing schism in the Church, he deposed them all and caused the choice of Clement II, who crowned him Emperor.

CHAPTER 14

[*The government of Italy. The Popes and the Roman people.*
1046-1061]

Italy was then ruled partly by the people, partly by the princes, partly by the appointees of the Emperor; the chief of these, to whom all the others were subordinate, was called chancellor. Among the princes the most powerful were Gottfried and the Countess Matilda his wife, the daughter of Beatrice, sister of Henry II. She and her husband held Lucca, Parma, Reggio and Mantua, with all that today is called the Patrimony.

The popes at this time were strongly opposed by the ambition of the Roman people, who earlier had made use of papal influence to gain freedom from the Emperors. After the people had seized the rule of the city and reformed her as they thought best, they immediately became hostile to the popes, who from that people received many more injuries than from any Christian prince. And in the times when the popes with their censures made all the West tremble, the Roman people were in rebellion against them, and neither of the two had any other intention than to take away the reputation and the authority of the other. On the assumption, then, of the papacy by Nicholas II, just as Gregory V took from the Romans the power to choose the emperor, so Nicholas took from them the power to share in choosing the pope, and assigned that choice to the cardinals only. Nor was he satisfied with this, because, having made an agreement with those princes who ruled Calabria and Apulia, for reasons that we shall soon report, he forced all the officials sent by the Romans, throughout the territory controlled by them, to render obedience to the Pope, and some of them he deprived of their offices.

CHAPTER 15

[*Henry IV at Canossa; Robert Guiscard.* 1061-1084]

After the death of Nicholas, there was a schism in the Church, because the clergy of Lombardy were not willing to obey Alexander II, chosen at Rome; so they made Cadolo of Parma antipope. Henry, who hated the power of the pontiffs, informed Pope Alexander that he must renounce the pontificate, and the cardinals that

they must go into Germany to elect a new pontiff. As a result of this, he was the first prince to learn the great importance of spiritual wounds, because the Pope held a council at Rome and deprived Henry of the empire and of the kingdom. Some Italian states followed the Pope, and some Henry. This was the seed of the division into Guelfs and Ghibellines, so that Italy, when without the barbarian floods, might be torn in pieces with intestine wars. Henry then, being excommunicated, was obliged by his subjects to come to Italy, and barefoot, to kneel before the Pope and ask pardon. This happened in the year 1080. Nevertheless, a little later a new discord came up between the Pope and Henry, so that the Pope again excommunicated him; the Emperor sent an army to Rome with his son, also named Henry, and with the help of the Romans, who hated the Pope, besieged him in his fortress. So Robert Guiscard came from Apulia to rescue him, and Henry did not wait for him but returned into Germany. The Romans alone remained obstinate, so that Robert sacked Rome and put her again into the ancient ruins from which various pontiffs had earlier restored her. And because this Robert first organized the Kingdom of Naples, I think it not superfluous to tell in detail his actions and his origin.

CHAPTER 16

[*The Normans in Italy. 845-1520*]

When discord rose between the heirs of Charlemagne, as we have shown above, opportunity was given for new northern people, called Normans, to attack France, and they conquered the district that today is called Normandy. Of these people, one portion came into Italy in the times when that land was overrun by the Berengars, the Saracens, and the Huns, and took some cities in Romagna, where in the midst of those wars they vigorously sustained themselves. To Tancred, one of those Norman princes, several sons were born, among whom was William, called Iron-armed, and Robert, called Guiscard. The sovereignty had come to William, and the disturbances in Italy to some extent had stopped. Nevertheless the Saracens held Sicily and every day were raiding the shores of Italy. Because of this, William made an agreement with the princes of Capua and of Salerno and with Malochus, the Greek, who for the Emperor of

Greece was ruling Apulia and Calabria, to attack Sicily, and if they should gain the victory, they agreed among themselves that, of the booty and of the territory, each of them should have a fourth part as his share. The expedition was successful, and driving out the Saracens, they took possession of Sicily. After this victory, Malochus had soldiers come secretly from Greece and took possession of the island for the Emperor, and divided merely the spoil. At this William was discontented, but he waited until a more fitting time to show it, and departed from Sicily with the princes of Salerno and of Capua.

When they had left him to return home, William did not go back to Romagna, but led his army toward Apulia, and quickly took Melfi, and then in a short time, in spite of the forces of the Greek Emperor, he made himself master of almost all Apulia and Calabria. These provinces were ruled until the time of Nicholas II by Robert Guiscard his brother. And because he had many differences with his nephews about the inheritance of those states, he used the power of the Pope to settle them. This the Pope did gladly, for he was eager to gain Robert's support, so that the latter would protect him against the German emperors and against the arrogance of the Roman people; and so it turned out, according to what we have explained above, for on the urging of Gregory VII he drove Henry from Rome and subdued the people. Robert was succeeded by Roger and William, his sons, to whose possessions were added Naples and all the territory extending from Naples to Rome, and then Sicily, all of which were controlled by Roger. But when William went to Constantinople to receive the Emperor's daughter as his wife, his territory was attacked by Roger and taken from him. Made proud by such an acquisition, Roger first called himself King of Italy; later, satisfied with the title of King of Apulia and of Sicily, he was the first who gave name and organization to that kingdom, which even to this day keeps its ancient boundaries, though it has many times changed not merely family but nation, because when the stock of the Normans died out, that kingdom went to the Germans, from them to the French, from them to the Aragonese, and today is held by the Flemings.

CHAPTER 17

[*The Crusades. 1088–1192*]

By this time the papacy had come to Urban II, who was hated in Rome. And because he feared that on account of the discords in Italy he could not be secure, he turned to a noble undertaking, and went into France with all the clergy and brought together in Auvergne many people, to whom he made a speech against the infidels. By this he so much inflamed their spirits that they determined to make an expedition to Asia against the Saracens. This expedition and all the other similar ones were later called Crusades, because all those who went on them were marked on their arms and on their clothing with a red cross. The leaders of this expedition were Godfrey, Eustace and Baldwin of Bouillon—counts of Boulogne—and a Peter the Hermit, widely renowned for holiness and prudence. Many kings and many states joined in contributing money for it, and many individuals without any pay served as soldiers—so powerful then in the minds of men was religion, when they were moved by the examples of her leaders.

This expedition at the beginning was glorious, for all of Asia Minor, Syria, and part of Egypt came into the power of the Christians. By its means was founded the order of the Knights of Jerusalem, which even today rules and holds the island of Rhodes, now the sole obstacle to Mohammedan power. It caused the founding also of the order of the Templars, which as a result of their wicked conduct soon disappeared. There happened at various times various events, in which many nations and particular men were renowned. In support of that expedition, the King of France and the King of England crossed the sea; and the Pisans, Venetians and Genoese gained very great reputations; with varied fortune they carried on the war as late as the time of Saladin the Saracen. His ability and the dissensions among the Christians finally took from them all the renown that in the beginning they had gained, and after ninety years they were driven from the place that with such honor and good fortune they had regained.

CHAPTER 18

[*Frederick Barbarossa and the Antipope. 1088-1174*]

After the death of Urban, the next Pope installed was Paschal II, and Henry IV succeeded to the Empire. He came to Rome, pretending to be friendly with the Pope; then he put the Pope and all the clergy in prison and did not liberate them until they granted him power to manage the churches in Germany as he wished. In those days the Countess Matilda died and left the Church heir to all her territory.

After the death of Paschal and of Henry IV, there were many popes and emperors, until the papacy came to Alexander III, and the Empire to Frederick of Suevia, called Barbarossa. In those days the pontiffs had many troubles with the Roman people and with the emperors, which in the time of Barbarossa greatly increased. Frederick was a man of high ability in war, but of so much pride that he could not endure having to yield to the Pontiff. Nonetheless, on his election he came to Rome for the crown and peacefully returned into Germany. But for only a little while did he continue this policy, because he returned into Italy to master some cities in Lombardy that were not obeying him.

In that time it happened that the Cardinal of San Clemente, of Roman birth, separated himself from Pope Alexander, and by some of the cardinals was made pope. Frederick the Emperor was at this time besieging Crema. When Alexander complained to him about the antipope, he replied that both of them should visit him, and then he would decide which of them should be pope. Disliking this reply, Alexander excommunicated him, because he saw him inclined to favor the antipope, and fled to Philip King of France. Frederick, meanwhile, continuing the war in Lombardy, took and destroyed Milan. For this reason Verona, Padua and Vicenza united against him for their common defense. Meanwhile came the death of the antipope, so that Frederick set up in his place Guido of Cremona. The Romans, at this time, through the absence of the Pope and through the hindrances the Emperor found in Lombardy, had regained some authority in Rome, and continued to acknowledge the submission of those cities that had before been their subjects. And because the Tusculans did not wish to yield to their authority,

the whole population of Rome marched against them. The Tuscans were aided by Frederick, and defeated the army of the Romans with such great slaughter that never afterward was Rome either populous or rich. Meanwhile Pope Alexander had returned to Rome, since he believed he would be secure, because of the hostility of the Romans to Frederick, and because of the enemies the latter had in Lombardy. But Frederick, putting aside all hesitation, marched on Rome, where Alexander did not wait for him, but fled to William King of Apulia, who was heir to that kingdom after the death of Roger. But Frederick, driven away by the plague, gave up the siege of Rome and went back to Germany. And the cities of Lombardy that were united against him, in order to be able to attack Pavia and Tortona, which adhered to the imperial party, built a city to be their headquarters in that war, which they named Alessandria, in honor of Pope Alexander and in mockery of Frederick. Then Guido the antipope died, and in his place was set up Giovanni da Fermo, who with the help of the Emperor's party remained in Montefiasconi.

CHAPTER 19

[*St. Thomas of Canterbury. Death of Barbarossa. 1170-1190*]

Pope Alexander meanwhile had gone to Tusculum, summoned by that people so that with his authority he would defend them from the Romans. There ambassadors came to him from Henry King of England to make plain to him that the King was without guilt in the death of the blessed Thomas, bishop of Canterbury, though he had been publicly censured for it. The Pope therefore sent two cardinals to England to learn the truth of the matter. Although they did not find the King plainly guilty, yet because he was generally reputed to have sinned and because he had not honored Thomas according to his deserts, they assigned to the King as penance that, summoning all the barons of his realm, he should in their presence make apology with an oath; and in addition that he should at once send two hundred soldiers to Jerusalem, paid for a year, and that he himself should be under bond to go there in person, with the largest army he could assemble, before three years had passed, and that he should annul everything done in his kingdom in opposition of the Church's liberty, and that he should agree that any of his subjects could at will

appeal to Rome. All these things Henry agreed to. Thus so great a king subjected himself to that judgment which today a private citizen would be ashamed to submit to. Nonetheless, while the Pope had such great authority over distant princes, he could not make himself obeyed by the Romans, from whom he could not secure permission to stay in Rome, though he promised that he would not concern himself with other than churchly matters. So much more at a distance than nearby the things that make a show are feared.

At this time Frederick had returned into Italy, and when he prepared to wage another war against the Pope, all his prelates and barons gave him to understand that they would desert him if he were not reconciled with the Church, so he was forced to submit to the Pope at Venice, where they laid aside their hostility; in the agreement the Pope deprived the Emperor of all authority over Rome, and named William, King of Sicily and Apulia, as his ally. And Frederick, discontented when not making war, went off on an expedition into Asia, in order to vent on Mahomet the ambition that he had not been able to vent on the representatives of Christ. But having come to the River . . . ,¹ attracted by the clearness of the water, he bathed in it. As a result of that mistake, he died. And so the waters gave more aid to the Mahometans than did the excommunications to the Christians, because the latter bridled his pride and the former destroyed it.

1. Left blank by Machiavelli.

CHAPTER 20

[Frederick II, Emperor and King of Naples. 1190-1218]

On the death of Frederick, nothing was left for the Pope to do except to control the insolence of the Romans, and after many disputes over the election of the consuls, the two parties agreed that the Romans according to their custom should choose them, but that the consuls should not assume the magistracy unless they first took oath to keep their faith with the Church. This agreement caused Giovanni the antipope to flee to Mount Albano, where he soon after died. In these times, William King of Naples also died, and the Pope planned to take over that Kingdom, since the King left no other sons than Tancred his natural son; but the barons did not yield

to the Pope, but decided that Tancred should be king. The Pope at that time was Celestine III, who, eager to get that Kingdom out of Tancred's hands, contrived that Henry, son of Frederick, should be made emperor, and promised him the Kingdom of Naples on condition that he should restore to the Church the cities that belonged to her. To make the thing easy he took Constance, the daughter of King William, from a cloister, and gave her to Henry as wife, though she was already old. Thus the Kingdom of Naples passed from the Normans, who had been the founders of it, to the Germans. Henry the Emperor, as soon as he had settled the affairs of Germany, came to Italy with his wife Constance and with a son four years old, named Frederick, and without much difficulty seized the Kingdom, because by that time Tancred was dead, and as his heir had left a little son named Roger.

After some time Henry died in Sicily and was succeeded in the Kingdom by Frederick, and in the Empire by Otto Duke of Saxony, chosen as a result of support by Pope Innocent III. But as soon as he had received the crown, against all expectations Otto became an enemy to the Pontiff; he occupied the Romagna and made arrangements for attacking the Kingdom. For that reason the Pope excommunicated him, so that he was abandoned by everybody, and the electors chose as emperor Frederick King of Naples. Frederick came to Rome for the crown, and the Pope did not wish to crown him, because he feared his power, and sought to get him out of Italy, as he had got rid of Otto. So Frederick in anger went to Germany and, making various wars against Otto, overcame him. Meanwhile Innocent died, who, as the greatest of his excellent works, built the hospital of Santo Spirito in Rome. His successor was Honorius III, in whose time originated the orders of Saint Dominic and of Saint Francis, in 1218. This Pontiff crowned Frederick. Then Giovanni, who was descended from Baldwin King of Jerusalem, and who was with the remnants of the Christians in Asia and still held that title, gave Frederick one of his daughters in marriage, and with the dower granted him the title of that kingdom; from this it comes that any king of Naples is called King of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 21

[*Frederick II as Emperor; Guelfs and Ghibellines. 1212-1243*]

In Italy things were then going as follows. The Romans elected no more consuls, and in place of these, and with the same power, they set up sometimes one, sometimes more senators. The league made against Frederick Barbarossa by the cities of Lombardy was still in force; these were Milan, Brescia, Mantua, with the greater part of the cities of Romagna, and in addition, Verona, Vicenza, Padua and Treviso. On the side of the Emperor were Cremona, Bergamo, Parma, Reggio, Modena and Trent. The other cities and towns of Lombardy, of Romagna and of the March of Treviso favored, according to necessity, now this party, now that one. In the time of Otto III, a certain Ezzolino came into Italy and remained there; he had a son to whom was born another Ezzolino. The last, being rich and powerful, allied himself with Frederick II, who, as has been said, had become an enemy to the Pope. And coming into Italy, by means of the effort and aid of Ezzolino, Frederick took Verona and Mantua, destroyed Vicenza, seized Padua and defeated the army of the allied cities; then he went on toward Tuscany. Ezzolino meanwhile had subjugated all the March of Treviso. He was not able to capture Ferrara, because it was defended by Azzo da Este and by the soldiers the Pope had in Lombardy. Hence, when the besieging army had gone, the Pope gave that city in fief to Azzo da Este, from whom are descended those who today are its rulers.

Frederick fixed his seat at Pisa, in his eagerness to make himself master of Tuscany; and in paying off his friends and his enemies in that province, he sowed so much discord that it caused the ruin of all Italy, because the Guelf and Ghibelline parties increased, since those were called Guelfs who followed the Church, and those who followed the Emperor, Ghibellines; this name was first heard at Pistoia. After Frederick left Pisa, in many ways he attacked and laid waste the cities of the Church, so that the Pope, having no other resource, proclaimed a crusade against him, as his predecessors had done against the Saracens. And Frederick, in order that his soldiers might not suddenly desert him, as did those of Frederick Barbarossa and others of his ancestors, hired many Saracens; to attach them to himself and to make a barrier in Italy that would be solid against the Church,

so that he need not fear papal curses, he gave them Nocera in the Kingdom, in order that, having a refuge of their own, they could with greater security serve him.

CHAPTER 22

[*Manfred King of Naples; Ezzolino; Charles of Anjou. 1243-1268*]

The papacy had now come to Innocent IV, who, fearing Frederick, went off to Genoa and thence to France, where he summoned a council at Lyons, to which Frederick determined to go. But he was kept away by the rebellion of Parma. Being repulsed in his expedition against her, he went off into Tuscany and from there into Sicily, where he died. And in Suevia he left his son Conrad, and in Apulia, Manfred, born of a concubine, whom he had made Duke of Benevento. Conrad came to take possession of the Kingdom, and when he reached Naples he died; he was survived by Conradin, a child, who was in Germany. Meanwhile Manfred, first as guardian of Conradin, took possession of all that state. Then, reporting that Conradin was dead, he made himself king, against the wish of the Pope and the Neapolitans, whom he forced to consent.

While these troubles were going on in the Kingdom, there were in Lombardy many disturbances between the Guelf and Ghibelline parties. On the Guelf side was a legate of the Pope; on the Ghibelline was Ezzolino, who possessed almost all Lombardy on the other side of the Po. And because, in the course of the war, Padua rebelled against him, he put to death twelve thousand Paduans; he himself, before the war ended, was killed, at the age of eighty years. After his death all the cities he possessed became free.

Manfred King of Naples continued hostilities against the Church in the manner of his ancestors, and kept the Pope, who was named Urban IV, in unceasing anxieties. Hence the Pontiff, in order to overcome him, proclaimed a crusade against him and went to Perugia to wait for soldiers. And when he realized that soldiers were coming in small numbers and were weak and behind time, he decided that in order to defeat Manfred he needed surer aid; so he turned for assistance to France, and appointed, as King of Sicily and Naples, Charles of Anjou, brother of Louis King of France, and summoned him into Italy to take that kingdom. But before Charles

came to Rome, the Pope died, and in his place Clement IV was chosen. In this Pope's time, Charles came to Ostia with thirty galleys, and arranged that his other people should come by land. And during the visit he made to Rome, the Romans, to get his favor, made him senator. The Pope invested him with the Kingdom, with the pledge that he would every year pay to the Church fifty thousand florins, and decreed that in the future neither Charles nor anybody else holding that Kingdom could be Emperor. And when Charles moved against Manfred, he defeated and killed him near Benevento, and became master of Sicily and of the Kingdom. But Conradin, to whom by the will of his father that state belonged, having gathered many soldiers in Germany, came into Italy against Charles, with whom he fought at Tagliacozzo. And he was first defeated and then, fleeing in disguise, was taken and killed.

CHAPTER 23

[*The beginning of papal nepotism. 1276-1281*]

Italy remained quiet until the papacy was assumed by Adrian V. Since Charles was at Rome and ruled it through the office of senator that he held, the Pope, unable to endure his power, went off to live at Viterbo, and urged Rudolph, the Emperor, to come into Italy against Charles. Thus the pontiffs, now through love for religion, now through their personal ambition, did not cease to provoke new dissensions in Italy and to stir up new wars, and when they had made a prince powerful, they repented of it and sought his ruin; thus that country which through their own weakness they could not hold, they did not permit any other to hold. Yet the princes were afraid of them, because they always won, either fighting or running away, if through some deception they were not defeated, as Boniface VIII and some others, who under the pretense of friendship were captured by the emperors. Rudolph never came into Italy, since he was kept away by his war with the King of Bohemia.

Meanwhile Adrian died, and the new pontiff chosen was Nicholas III of the house of Orsini, a man bold and ambitious, who strove in every way to lessen the power of Charles. So he arranged that Rudolph the Emperor should complain because Charles was keeping a governor in Tuscany to support the Gueft party, which he had

restored to that province after the death of Manfred. Charles yielded to the Emperor and took away his governor, and the Pope sent there a cardinal, his nephew, as governor for the Empire. Hence the Emperor, because of this honor shown him, restored to the Church the Romagna, which his predecessors had taken away from her, and the Pope appointed Bertoldo Orsini as Duke of Romagna. And since he believed he had become so strong that he could show a bold face to Charles, he deprived him of his office as senator and made a decree that nobody of royal blood should thereafter be a senator in Rome. He also formed the purpose of taking Sicily from Charles, and to this end carried on secret negotiations with Peter King of Aragon, which later, in the time of his successor, were put into effect. He planned also to set up two of his own house as kings, one in Lombardy, the other in Tuscany; their power was to defend the Church from Germans who might attempt to come into Italy and from the French who were in the Kingdom.

But in the midst of these plans he died. He was the first of the popes who openly revealed his personal ambition, and who attempted, under the pretext of aggrandizing the Church, to honor and assist his own relatives. As before this time no mention had ever been made of any pontiff's nephews or relatives, so in the future they will fill history; and at last we shall come to sons; and there is nothing left for the pontiffs to try except that, as up to our times they have planned to leave their sons as princes, in the future they may strive to leave them the popedom as hereditary. It is indeed true that up to now the principedoms they have established have had short lives, because most of the time the pontiffs, since they lived but a short while, either did not finish setting out their plants, or if they did set them out, left them with so few and so weak roots that, since the strength sustaining them was gone, at the first wind they withered away.

CHAPTER 24

[*Pope Martin IV: the Sicilian vespers. 1281-1285*]

This man's successor was Martin IV who, being French by nationality, favored Charles' party. To aid him, Charles sent his soldiers into the Romagna, which had revolted against the Pope. When they were besieging Forlì, Guido Bonatto, an astrologer,