

THE PRINCE

Niccolo Machiavelli

Introduction: Machiavelli completed *The Prince* in 1513. It did not win him the recognition he hoped for. *The Prince* was dedicated to Duke of Urbino, nephew of Lorenzo *il Magnifico*, who died in 1519. This work is considered a handbook for new princes. Machiavelli died in 1527.

It is ironic that for someone who emphasized the interplay between talent and fortune in the achievement of great deeds, Machiavelli was singularly unblessed in the realization of his own cherished schemes. Frustration was a significant factor in Machiavelli's life.

Dedication: Desiring to present himself as devoted to his Magnificence (the Duke of Urbino), Machiavelli held nothing more dear than his knowledge of the actions of great men. These were acquired by long experience in contemporary affairs & continual study. Having reflected with great & prolonged diligence and condensed his thoughts into a small volume, he presented *The Prince*.

CHAPTER ONE: Principalities, and how they are acquired

All states are either:

- . Republics, or
- . Principalities. Principalities are either
 - . Hereditary, or they are new.
 - . New principalities are either:
 - . entirely new, or
 - . annexed to the hereditary state of the acquiring prince. Acquired principalities are either:
 - . accustomed to living under a prince, or
 - . accustomed to living in freedom.

Principalities are acquired by force, by fortune or by ability.

CHAPTER TWO: Hereditary principalities

There are fewer difficulties holding hereditary states (and those accustomed to the family of the prince), than new ones.

The hereditary prince has less cause and less necessity to offend ... hence he will be more loved. Barring extraordinary vices, it is reasonable to expect that his subjects will be naturally well-disposed towards him.

CHAPTER THREE: Mixed principalities.

There is inherent difficulty in new or composite principalities ... **men change their rulers willingly, hoping to better themselves, and this hope induces them to take up arms against him who rules.** Usually they are deceived and they go from bad to worse.

New princes always must burden their people with supporting an army and other hardships upon the new acquisition. New princes have enemies in all those injured by the acquisition. **Upon taking over a new province, one always has a need for the goodwill of the natives.**

Those who welcomed a new prince the first time, finding themselves deceived in their hopes of future benefit, will not endure ill-treatment. After acquiring rebellious provinces a second time, they are not so lightly lost.

People in an acquired state are either of the same country and language, or they are not.

(1) When they are ... it is easier to hold them, especially when they are not accustomed to self-government. To hold them securely it is enough to destroy the previous prince's family. The new prince has only to bear in mind two considerations:

- (a) the family of the former lord is extinguished
- (b) neither their laws nor their taxes are altered

(2) When they are not ... there are difficulties. Alternatives:

(a) The biggest help is for the new prince to reside in the acquired state, because disorders are seen as they spring up and the new prince can quickly remedy them.

(b) Send colonies to several places in the acquired country, or keep a large number of cavalry and infantry there. Colonies are preferred because they are less costly, more faithful, they injure less, and the injured (being poor and scattered) cannot hurt.

(c) The prince ought to make himself the head and defender of his less powerful neighbors. He should weaken the more powerful, ensuring that no foreigner as powerful as himself shall, by any accident, get a footing there.

(d) Think ahead. Avoid the *hectic fever* ... in the beginning it is hard to detect but easy to cure. Later it is easy to detect but difficult to cure. **In the affairs of state, when evils arise that have been foreseen, they can be quickly redressed. When not foreseen, there is no remedy.** France was lost because its ruler made five errors ... he destroyed the minor powers, he increased the strength of one of the greater powers, he brought in a foreign power, he did not settle in the country and he did not send colonies.

He who is the cause of another becoming powerful is ruined ... because that predominancy has been brought about by astuteness or force, and both are distrusted by those raised to power.

CHAPTER FOUR: Difficulties in holding an acquired state.

How did Alexander the Great's successors maintain Asia after his death?

Principalities are governed in two different ways:

- (1) By a prince and servants who assist him to govern the kingdom. Servants hold their prince in more consideration because no one is recognized as superior to him.
- (2) By a prince and barons who serve due to bloodlines, not the grace of the prince. Barons have states of their own ... they are recognized as lords and are held in natural affection.

Turk is governed by one lord and his servants. There would be great difficulty in seizing the state of Turk, but once conquered, great ease in holding it. He who attacks Turk will find him united, and he will have to rely more on his own strength than on the revolt of others. Once conquered however and the Turk prince exterminated, there remains no one to fear.

The King of France is in the midst of ancient lords, each having their own subjects and beloved by them. An enemy can easily enter France by gaining over some baron of the kingdom (there are always malcontents who desire a change). However, once conquered, there are infinite difficulties, both from those who have been assisted and those who have been crushed. The lords that remain make themselves the heads of fresh movements against the conqueror.

Asia was like Turk, governed by one prince and servants. When Alexander the Great conquered Asia, the state was very secure. This was not due to the ability or disability of Alexander ... it was due to the lack of uniformity in the conquered state.

CHAPTER FIVE: Principalities that lived under their own laws before being annexed.

There are three courses for those princes who wish to hold these principalities:

- (1) Ruin them.
- (2) Reside there in person.
- (3) Permit them to live there under their own laws, drawing a tribute, establishing an oligarchy, which will keep it friendly. For a city accustomed to freedom, it is easier held by its own citizens than any other way.

He who becomes master of a city accustomed to freedom and does not destroy it, may expect to be destroyed by it ... for in rebellion it always has the watchword of liberty and its ancient privileges as a rallying point. Neither time nor benefits will ever cause it to forget.

When cities are accustomed to live under a prince, and the family is exterminated, they do not know how to govern themselves. They are slow to take up arms.

In republics, there is more vitality, greater hatred, more desire for vengeance and long memories of former liberties. So, it is safest to destroy them or to reside there.

CHAPTER SIX: New principalities acquired by force and ability.

A wise man ought always to follow the paths beaten by great men.

In new principalities with new princes, there is more or less difficulty holding them in accordance with the ability of the prince. Prince-hood was achieved through ability or fortune ... he who relied least on fortune is the strongest. It also facilitates matters when the prince resides in the state.

Sometimes opportunity creates good fortune. Great ability enables a prince to become famous (Moses, Cyrus). These men acquire a principality w/difficulty, but keep it w/ease.

There is nothing more difficult to do, more perilous to conduct or more uncertain in success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things. The innovator has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions, and lukewarm defenders in those who may do well under the new.

If these innovators must rely only on their ability, they always succeed badly. If they can rely on their ability and force, they are rarely endangered. Hence, all armed prophets have conquered, and unarmed ones have been destroyed. **It is the nature of people to be variable. They are easy to persuade, but difficult to keep committed. When they believe no longer, it may be possible to make them believe again by force.**

CHAPTER SEVEN: New principalities acquired by force of others or fortune.

Those who become princes by good fortune have little trouble rising, but much in keeping atop.

(1) They rely upon the goodwill and fortune of those who elevated them ... two most unstable things.

(2) They do not know how to command, having always lived in a private condition.

(3) They cannot hold the state because they have no forces which they can keep faithful and friendly.

(4) Unexpected princes will fail unless they have so much ability that:

(a) they prepare diligently to hold that which fortune has thrown in their laps

(b) the foundations others laid before they were princes, these must lay afterwards.

The son of Alexander the Sixth was in this position. He was a man of great ability, but his father died too soon and the son himself was ill. Otherwise, his abilities alone would have led to success. His major mistake was consenting to the election of Pope Julius II, a man who he had earlier injured.

He who believes that new benefits will cause great personages to forget old injuries is deceived.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Principalities acquired by wickedness.

A prince may rise from a private station in two ways:

- (1) by some wicked or nefarious method
- (2) by the favour of his fellow citizens

Barbarous cruelty and inhumanity with infinite wickedness do not permit men to be celebrated among the most excellent. It cannot be called talent to slay fellow citizens, to deceive friends, to be without faith, mercy or religion. Such methods may gain empire, but not glory.

How is it some wicked princes live long and secure in their countries, never conspired against by their people, whereas others cannot hold their state even in peaceful times? It follows from severities being either badly or properly used:

- (1) Proper use ... applied at one blow and necessary to one's security, not persisted in afterwards. The cruelties may be mitigated somewhat later in their reigns. By not unsettling men he will be able to reassure them and win them to himself by benefits.
- (2) Bad use ... increasing w/time, impossible to maintain ... compelled to keep knife in hand.

Injuries ought to be done all at one time, so that, being tasted less, they offend less. Benefits ought to be given little by little, so that the flavour of them may last longer.

**A prince should be known for consistency (concentrated pain, dispersed benefits).
Otherwise, harsh measures are ineffective and mild measures are meaningless.**

CHAPTER NINE: Civil principalities.

Some princes are elected by the favour of fellow citizens, or the favor of the nobles. People do not wish to be ruled nor oppressed by nobles, but the nobles wish to rule and oppress the people. Nobles: seeing they cannot withstand the people, cry up the reputation of one of themselves and make him prince, so that under his shadow they can give vent to their ambitions.

People: finding they cannot resist the nobles, also cry up the reputation of one of themselves and make him a prince so as to be defended by his authority.

He who obtains sovereignty via the nobles maintains himself with more difficulty than he who comes to it by the aid of the people, because:

- (1) He who is elevated by nobles finds himself surrounded by many who consider themselves equal, and because of this he can neither rule nor manage to his liking.
- (2) He who is elevated by the people finds himself alone and finds none not prepared to obey.
- (3) One cannot satisfy the nobles, but the people can be satisfied because their objective is more righteous ... nobles wish to oppress, while people desire not to be oppressed.
- (4) A prince cannot secure himself against the people because they are too many, whilst from the nobles he can secure himself as they are few.
- (5) A prince will live always with the same people. He can do well without the same nobles.

Nobles ought to be looked at 2 ways ... they align themselves to the prince's fortune, or not.

- (1) Those who do ought to be honored and loved
- (2) Those who do not may be dealt with in 2 ways:
 - (a) If they simply lack courage, make use of them (for example, as counselors) ... in prosperity the prince is honored by them and in adversity the prince need not fear them.
 - (b) If they are ambitious, they are thinking more of themselves than the prince, and the prince should fear them as if they were open enemies.

A prince elevated by the people ought to keep them friendly ... easily done because they ask only not to be oppressed. A prince elevated by nobles should seek to win the people over to him ... easily done if he takes them under his protection. Because men, when they receive good from him of whom they expected evil, are bound more closely to their benefactor. Thus the people quickly become more devoted to him than if he had been elevated to prince by them. It is necessary for a prince to have the people friendly, otherwise he has no security in adversity.

Princes rule either personally or through magistrates. Using magistrates is weaker because:

- (1) government rests entirely on the goodwill of those raised to the magistracy, who in troubled times could easily destroy the government
- (2) the prince has little opportunity to demonstrate absolute authority
- (3) The prince cannot rely on what he sees in quiet times, because then everyone agrees with him. In troubled times, he finds few.

A wise prince will ensure his citizens always need him. Then he will find them faithful.

CHAPTER TEN: Measuring the strength of principalities.

Some principalities have the strength to support themselves with their own resources (ie, raise an army). Others cannot, and are forced to defend themselves by sheltering behind walls. Those without strong resources:

(1) should provision and fortify their towns

(2) will never be attacked without great caution, for it is not an easy thing to attack one who has his town well fortified, and who is not hated by his people.

Therefore a prince with a strong city, who is not himself odious, will not be attacked. Even for people whose homes and property have been burnt outside the city, they are ready to unite with the prince because now he is obliged to them ... since their wealth has been ruined in his defense. It is the nature of men to be bound by the benefits they confer as much as by those they receive.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: Ecclesiastical principalities.

These are sustained by religion ... all powerful. These principalities may be held no matter how their princes behave and live. Only these principalities are secure and happy.

These principalities should not have their own cardinals (who could become pope). Whenever these factions have their own cardinals, they do not remain quiet for long. Strengthening the church is permissible ... but do not strengthen a private person.

CHAPTER TWELVE: Armies and mercenaries.

The chief foundations for all states (new, old and composite) are good laws and good arms.

Arms are either the prince's own, mercenaries, auxiliaries or mixed.

Mercenaries and auxiliaries are useless and dangerous ... if one holds his state based on these, he will stand neither firm nor safe.

(1) They have no reason to take the field except money ... insufficient for them to die for the prince.

(2) They are able enough during peace, but in war they take off and run from the foe.

(3) Mercenary captains are either capable, or they are not

(a) If they are capable, they cannot be trusted ... they aspire to greatness against the prince

(b) If they are incapable, the prince is ruined in the usual way

(4) Experience shows that mercenaries do nothing except damage

Italy was ruled for years by mercenaries. In an army of 20,000 there were only 2000 foot soldiers. Their policies minimized fatigue and danger to themselves. They did not kill in battle ... they took prisoners, liberated without ransom. They brought Italy to slavery and contempt.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: Auxiliaries, own soldiers and mixed.

Auxiliaries are like reserves, called in by another prince to aid and defend. He who calls them in is always disadvantaged:

- (1) In losing, one is undone
- (2) In winning, one is their captive

Auxiliaries are much more hazardous than mercenaries ... they are united and obey other masters. Mercenaries are not of one community (not united) and are unable all at once to assume enough authority to injure the prince. Auxiliaries may.

A wise prince always avoids mercenaries and auxiliaries and turns to his own. He is willing to lose with his own rather than conquer with others, not deeming a real victory that which is gained with the arms of others.

Mixed forces are better than mercenaries or auxiliaries alone, but inferior to one's own forces.

No principality is secure without having its own forces. Nothing can be so uncertain or unstable as fame or power not founded on one's own strength.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: The art of war.

A prince ought to have no other aim or thought than war ... its rules and discipline. When princes have thought more of ease than of arms, they have lost their states. **A prince who does not understand the art of war cannot be respected by his soldiers, nor can he rely on them.**

It is not reasonable that he who is armed should yield obedience willingly to him who is unarmed. The unarmed man should not feel secure among armed servants. There is disdain in one and suspicion in the other, and it is not possible for them to work well together.

A prince should keep his forces well organized and drilled because:

- (1) he accustoms bodies to hardships and learns to understand nature
- (2) he learns about his country and is better able to undertake its defense
- (3) he learns how to study other countries which may be necessary in the future
- (4) he exercises his intellect by reading histories

A wise prince ought to never in peaceful times stand idle, but increase his resources in such a way that they may be available to him in adversity, so that if fortune changes it may find him ready to resist her blows.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: Praise or blame.

**The prince who focuses on idealism rather than reality,
sooner effects his ruin than his preservation.**

It is necessary for a prince wishing to hold his own to know how to do wrong ... and make use of it or not according to necessity.

It would be most praiseworthy for a prince to exhibit all good qualities. But they cannot be entirely possessed ... human conditions do not permit it. Therefore the prince should simply avoid those vices that would lose him his state.

**Sometimes that which looks like virtue, if followed, leads to ruin; whilst something else,
which looks like vice, yet followed, brings security and prosperity.**

CHAPTER SIXTEEN: Liberality and meanness.

It would be well to be reputed as liberal. But liberality exercised in a way that does not bring the reputation for it, injures you.

- (1) Liberality exercised the way it should be done ... would not be noticed.
- (2) To be known as liberal, avoid any attribute of magnificence.
- (3) Such a prince consumes all his property and unduly weighs down his people with taxes.
- (4) This makes him odious to his subjects.
- (5) His liberality will offend many and reward few.

Therefore a wise prince should not fear the reputation of being mean, for in time he will become more considered than if liberal ... his economy generates enough revenue, he can defend himself and engage in enterprises without burdening the people. A reputation of being mean is one of those vices which will enable him to govern.

We have not seen great things done except by those who have been considered mean ... the rest have failed. A prince should be liberal handling that which belongs to others (otherwise his soldiers would not follow him). With others' property, a prince can be a ready giver.

There is nothing that wastes so rapidly as liberality, for even while being exercised it is being lost, and so the prince becomes poor or despised or hated. Above all things, a prince must guard against being despised and hated ... and liberality brings both.

**It is wiser to have a reputation for meanness which brings reproach without hatred
than to seek a reputation for liberality and incur a name for rapacity,
begetting reproach with hatred.**

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: Is it better to be loved than feared.

Every prince ought to desire to be considered clement, not cruel ... but not misuse clemency.

A prince who keeps his people united and loyal, ought not to mind the reproach of cruelty, because he will be more merciful than those who, through too much mercy allow disorders to arise, from which follow murders and robberies. These will injure all the people, whilst those executions originating with a prince offend the individual only.

It is impossible for a new prince to avoid cruelty, because new states are full of dangers. In military matters, cruelty is necessary (Hannibal) ... too much forbearance gives soldiers too much license than is consistent with military discipline (Scipio).

It is safer to be feared than loved. Men have less reluctance to offend one who is beloved than one who is feared. Owing to the baseness of men, love is broken at every opportunity for their advantage. Fear is preserved by a dread of punishment that never fails.

A prince should inspire fear in such a way that, if he does not win love, he avoids hatred. He must keep his hands off the property of others ... for men more quickly forget the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony. **A wise prince endeavors only to avoid hatred.**

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: How should princes keep faith.

Princes who have done great things have not always acted with integrity. They circumvent the intellect of men by craft, and in the end overcome those who rely on their word.

Law is proper to men ... force to beasts. Because the first is frequently not sufficient, it is necessary to have recourse to the second. It is necessary for a prince to understand how to avail himself of the beast and the man. One without the other is not durable.

A wise prince cannot keep faith when such observance may be turned against him, and when the reasons that caused him to pledge to it exist no longer. Because men are not entirely good and will not keep faith with the prince, the prince is not bound to observe it with them.

It is necessary to be a great pretender and dissembler. Men are so simple and short-sighted that he who seeks to deceive will always find a victim.

It is unnecessary for men to have all the good qualities, but it is very necessary to appear to have them. Everyone sees what you appear to be, but few really know what you are. Those few dare not oppose the many. One judges by the result. The means will always be considered honest. The vulgar are always taken by what a thing seems to be and by what comes of it ... and in the world there are only the vulgar.

CHAPTER NINETEEN: Avoid being despised and hated.

A prince must avoid those things which will make him hated or contemptible.

- . Hated ... to violate the property and women of his subjects.
- . Contemptible ... to be thought fickle, frivolous, effeminate, mean-spirited, irresolute.

That prince is highly esteemed who conveys greatness, courage, gravity and fortitude. He who is highly esteemed is not easily conspired against. A prince ought to have two fears:

- (1) From within, that his people will conspire against him secretly. This is guarded against by avoiding being hated & despised. He who conspires against a prince expects to please the people by the prince's removal. When a conspirator offends the people, he has infinite difficulties.
- (2) From external powers, he is defended by being well-armed & having good allies. Being well-armed, he will have good friends. Affairs will be quiet within when they are quiet without.

There have been many conspiracies, but few successes. A conspirator cannot act alone, and his companions must come from those believed to be malcontents. **Confiding in a malcontent presents him the material to content himself:**

- (1) By denouncing you, he gains every advantage. The gain from this course is assured.
- (2) By joining you, the course is doubtful and full of dangers. He must be a very rare friend or a very obstinate enemy of the prince. Factoring in the popular goodwill, it is impossible that anyone should be so rash as to conspire.

In general, a conspirator is fearful before the execution of the plot. In this case, he also fears the sequel to the crime ... he now has the people for an enemy and cannot escape.

One of the most important goals of a prince is to keep the people satisfied and contented. When held in high esteem, conspiracies are of little concern. When the people are hostile and bear hatred, he ought to fear every thing and everybody.

Princes ought to leave affairs of reproach to the management of others, and keep those of grace in their own hands. A prince ought to cherish the nobles, but not be hated by the people.

Since princes cannot avoid being hated by someone, they ought to avoid being hated by everyone. Failing that, they must avoid the hatred of the most powerful. Some princes have adhered more readily to their soldiers than their people. But times have changed. Today, all princes will find it more necessary to satisfy the people than soldiers, because the people are more powerful.

CHAPTER TWENTY: Are fortresses (and other things) advantageous or hurtful.

Arms: There never was a new prince who disarmed his subjects. When he has found them disarmed, he has armed them. By arming them, those arms become his, men who were distrustful become faithful, those who were faithful are kept so, and his subjects become his adherents.

When disarmed, subjects are offended because they feel distrusted and that breeds hatred against the prince. Disarming subjects means the prince must turn to mercenaries for defense, which is bad.

A new prince in a new principality has always distributed arms. But when a prince acquires a new state and makes it a province of his old one, it is necessary to disarm the men of that state.

Factions: They can never be of use. It is certain that when the enemy comes upon you in divided cities, you are quickly lost.

False Obstacles: Princes become great when they overcome difficulties with which confronted.

A wise prince, when he has the opportunity, ought with craft to foster some animosity against himself, so that having crushed it, his renown may rise.

Trust: Princes (especially new ones) find more fidelity and assistance in those men who in the beginning of their rule were distrusted than among those who in the beginning were trusted.

Those men who early were hostile, if not self-sufficient, can be gained over with the greatest ease and they will be loyal to the prince since they know it necessary to cancel the bad impression which he had formed of them.

A prince, who by means of secret favors acquires a new state, must consider the reasons that induced those who favor him to do so. If not natural affection but discontent with their government, he will find it difficult to keep them friendly, for it will be impossible to satisfy them. It is easier to make friends with those content under the former government (the prince's enemies) than of those who, being discontented with it, were favorable to him.

Fortresses: It depends on the circumstances ... if they help a prince in one way, they injure him in another. The prince with more to fear from his people than from foreigners ought to build fortresses. He who has more to fear from foreigners ought to leave them alone. **The best possible fortress is ... not to be hated by the people.**

I praise him who builds fortresses as well as him who does not, and I shall blame whoever, trusting in them, cares little about being hated by the people.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE: How a prince should conduct himself so as to gain renown.

A prince is esteemed by great enterprises and setting a fine example. A prince is respected when he declares for one party over another ... more advantageous than standing neutral.

If two states fight and one conquers, the prince will fear the conqueror or not.

(1) If the conqueror is to be feared and:

(a) Prince does not declare: enemies will demand your neutrality and friends will entreat you to join them in battle. Irresolute princes follow the neutral path and are ruined. They will fall prey to the conqueror, to the pleasure of the defeated state. **He who conquers does not want doubtful friends.** The defeated state will not shelter you because you did not assist him.

(b) Prince declares: If the state with whom he allies conquers, although he may be powerful, he is indebted to the prince and there is established a bond of amity. **Victories are never so complete that the victor must not show some regard.** If allied with the losing state, you may shelter and aid each other and become companions in a fortune that may rise again.

(2) If the conqueror is not to be feared it is even *more* important to declare an alliance.

(a) The prince's aid will assure victory ... the victor becomes indebted to the prince.

(b) Warning: **a prince should avoid alliances with one more powerful than himself for the purpose of attacking others ... if he conquers, he is at the powerful state's discretion.**

There are no perfectly safe courses. Avoiding some troubles runs into other troubles. Prudence is knowing how to distinguish the character of troubles and choosing the lesser evil.

A prince also ought to:

- (1) be a patron of ability and honor proficiency in every art
- (2) encourage citizens to practice their callings peaceably
- (3) reward whoever brings honor to the city or state
- (4) entertain the people with festivals and spectacles
- (5) associate with lesser guilds and societies
- (6) be an example of liberality and courtesy
- (7) maintain the majesty of his rank ... this must never be diminished

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO: The secretaries of princes.

The first opinion one forms of the wisdom of the prince is by observing the men around him. When capable and faithful, the prince is wise. Otherwise, one cannot form a good opinion.

One test of a servant never fails: if a man thinks more of his own interests than the prince's, he is never a good servant and the prince cannot trust him. To keep a servant honest, the prince ought to study him, honor him, enrich him ... and at the same time let him see he cannot stand alone. Then they can trust each other. Otherwise, the end will be disastrous for one or the other.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE: How flatterers should be avoided.

Courts are full of flatterers. There is no other way of defending oneself from flatterers except letting men understand that *to tell you the truth does not offend you* ... but when every one may tell you the truth, respect for you abates.

A wise prince chooses wise men in his state and gives them the liberty of speaking the truth to him, but only of those things of which he inquires and none others. With these counselors the prince should carry himself in such a way that each knows the more freely he speaks, the more he shall be preferred. Outside of these he should listen to no one. He who does otherwise is overthrown with flatterers, or is so often changed by varying opinions that he falls into contempt.

A wise prince therefore always ought to take counsel ... but only when he wishes, and not when others wish. He ought to be a constant inquirer, and afterwards a patient listener. On learning that anyone has not told him the truth, he should let his anger be felt.

A prince who is not wise himself will never take good advice, unless by chance he has yielded his affairs entirely to one person who happens to be a very prudent man. If an inexperienced prince takes counsel from more than one, he will never get united counsels. Each counselor will think of his own interests and the prince will not know how to control them. Men will always prove untrue to you unless they are kept honest by constraint.

**Therefore, good counsels are born of the wisdom of the prince ...
not the wisdom of the prince from good counsels.**

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR: Why the princes of Italy have lost their states.

The actions of a new prince are more narrowly observed than those of an hereditary one. When they are seen to be able, they gain more men and bind far tighter than ancient blood. **Men are attracted more by the present than the past.**

It will be a double glory for a new prince to establish a new principality, strengthen it with laws, arms, allies, good example – a double disgrace for a prince to lose his state for lack of wisdom.

Some of the princes of Italy who have lost their states had the people hostile ... or if they had the people friendly, they knew not how to secure the nobles. Otherwise, states that have enough power to keep an army in the field cannot be lost. These princes of Italy can blame their own sloth ... in quiet times they never thought there could be a change. **It is a common defect in man not to make any provision in the calm against the tempest.** These princes of Italy in bad times fled. You should never abandon the state expecting that someone later on will restore you. That deliverance is of no avail which does not depend upon yourself ... the only certain, reliable and durable deliverance is that which depends on yourself and your valor.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE: Fortune, and how to withstand her.

Some believe that the affairs of the world are governed by fortune ... and that it is not necessary to labor much, but let chance govern. I believe that fortune governs half our actions, but she still leaves us to direct the other half (or perhaps a little less).

Fortune shows her power where valor has not prepared to resist her ... she turns her forces where barriers and defenses have not been raised to constrain her.

A prince may be happy today and ruined tomorrow without changing disposition or character because the prince who relies entirely upon fortune is lost when it changes. A prince will be successful who directs his actions according to the spirit of the times. Men achieve glory and riches by various methods, all arising from conformance in methods with the spirit of the times.

If using caution and patience, times and affairs converge so that his administration is successful, his fortune is made. If time and affairs change, he is ruined if he does not change his course of action. But man is not often sufficiently circumspect to know how to deal with change ... because he cannot deviate from what nature inclines him to do, and having always prospered by acting one way, cannot be persuaded to leave it. **Fortune being changeful and man steadfast, so long as the two are in agreement men are successful, but unsuccessful when they fall out.**

It is better to be adventurous than cautious. Fortune is a woman ... if you wish to keep her, it is necessary to beat her, because she allows herself to be mastered by the adventurous rather than those more cold. She is a lover of young men because they are less cautious, more violent and command her with more audacity.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX: Exhortation to liberate Italy from the Barbarians.

So many things concur to favor a new prince that I never knew a time more fit than the present.

- (1) Italy waits for him who shall yet heal her wounds & put an end to ravaging & plundering.
- (2) She entreats God to send someone who shall deliver her.
- (3) She is ready and willing to follow a banner if only someone will raise it.

Nothing honors a man more than to establish new laws and ordinances when he himself is newly risen. Such things when they are well-founded & dignified will make him revered and admired.

It is necessary to have your own forces ... because there can be no more faithful, truer or better soldiers. Invent a new armed force, one which will resist cavalry and not be afraid of infantry. These are the kind of improvements which confer reputation and power upon a new prince.

This opportunity should not be allowed to pass for letting Italy at last see her liberator appear. To all of us, this barbarous dominion stinks.