

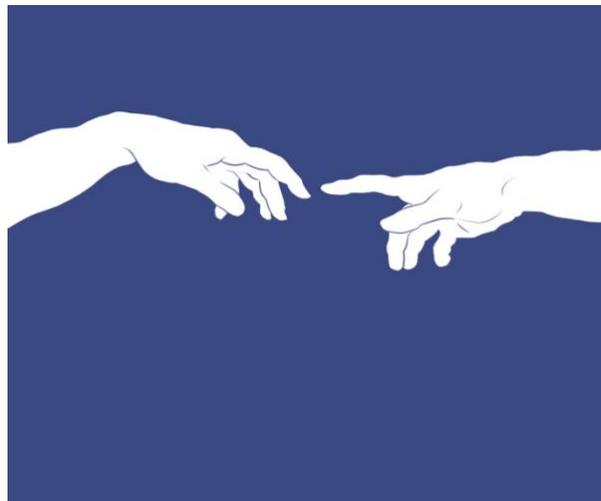
CONFLICT IN RENAISSANCE ITALY

Chair: Sophie Gunyun

Vice Chair: Jonathan Sztainberg

Crisis Director: Sarah Paulin

Assistant Crisis Director: Kendrik Boelen



JACMUN 2021

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Ciao a tutti!

Welcome to the Italian Renaissance, where artists look back towards the classical period and merchants rule the world. Italy, although seeming on an unstoppable, fiery streak, is precariously holding on as the city-states vie for more power. You have been assembled here today as the most important voices of the period to discuss the current trials Italy faces. I am extremely excited to direct this committee and see how you will lead Italy in this tumultuous period!

A little bit about me before we get started! I am a first-year student at McGill, studying English Literature and Classical Studies. As a third-generation Italian, I feel very strongly about this committee and am excited to bring one of the most vivid periods of Italy's history to life. I have been involved in Model UN for over four years now, starting as a shy GA del in high school to being a part of McGill's competitive Delegation Team. I look forward to this weekend and all the exciting crisis updates I will be throwing at you!

Please remember that respect is the most important part of Model UN. Although the crisis format is flexible and can seem more lax than other types of offered committees, I urge you to remember that all the delegates presents are here to learn and have an enjoyable weekend. No hateful or insensitive speech will be tolerated in this committee or at JACMUN 2021 as a whole. If you are concerned about the respectful portrayal of your character while staying historically accurate, please feel free to contact the crisis team at our committee email so we can guide you in the right direction!

Till Soon,

Sarah Paulin

Crisis Director, The Italian Renaissance

Hi everyone!

My name is Sophie Gunyon, and I am very excited to be your Chair this weekend! The Italian Renaissance is such an interesting and complex time period, so I can't wait to see how this committee will go. I began participating in Model UN in my last year of high school and have participated in over 10 conferences. I served as a Head Delegate for John Abbott College's delegation team, alongside our lovely crisis director for this weekend, Sarah Paulin. I am currently studying at McGill University where I major in Political Science and minor in History. I am looking forward to seeing what you guys come up with over the weekend!

Can't wait to meet all of you,

Sophie Gunyon

Chair, The Italian Renaissance

Buon giorno!

Welcome to an incredible 2-day conference on a rich, and vibrant historical period: The Italian Renaissance. My name is Jonathan Sztainberg, and I will be your Vice-Chair for this committee. This will be my first time staffing a Model UN conference after two years of delegating. I am thrilled to see what you guys have planned to make this symposium a memorable one. I am currently in my last semester at John Abbott College studying sciences, and I serve as the VP External for the Student Union of John Abbott College.

I look forward to meeting all of you this weekend!

Best,

Jonathan Sztainberg

Vice-Chair, The Italian Renaissance

Introduction to the committee

The date is January 1st, 1494. Lorenzo the Magnificent is dead, leaving Piero de Medici in charge of the Medici bank and the city of Florence. However, tensions are running high, and Italy faces a plethora of internal as well as external threats. As the committee members take their seats today, France, led by the gluttonous King Charles VIII, lecherously eyes the province of Naples. Within the borders of the country, Friar Savonarola plants discourse in the minds of the Italian people vis-a-vis the corruption of the Church. With Piero losing control of Florence and locking up his fellow brothers for their usurping thoughts, Florence begins to crumble, and the city-states lose their cohesion. Will the Italian golden age end with a French conquest? Or can the Italian leaders put their differences aside to fight this common threat?

Historical Background

The House of Hohenstaufen ruled the Holy Roman Empire during a power struggle with the Papacy. The geographical protection of Northern Italy conjointly with the political conflict led to communes, owing no allegiance and self-reliance, and subsequently expanding into autonomous City-States¹. The sovereign megalopolitan of Italy served as cultural, economic, and political hubs of medieval



¹ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia. "City-state." Encyclopedia Britannica, March 18, 2019.

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/city-state>.

Europe. The papal states were ruled by the pope, while the Medici family had vast power in Florence derived from the textile trade².

The Kingdom of Naples was inherited by Ferdinand following the death of Alfonso in the War of the Neapolitan Succession³. The decentralized system granted academic and artistic freedom, which paved the road for Italy to become an intellectual crossroad.

Francesco Petrarch, the father of Humanism, reasoned that man is a rational and sentient being with the ability to decide and think. The devout catholic argued in *Secret meum* that God had given humans their vast intellect and creativity to be used to their fullest. The early renaissance saw the revival of classical antiquity⁴. A renewed sense of scholarship led to renaissance authors studying 4th-century Greek opus. Humanists sought to create eloquent dialogues about civil life persuading to various domains: grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry, and moral philosophy. The rebirth of humanistic learning promoted a period of late medieval social and economic changes through art, painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and literature. The influence of politics materialized with famous works such as those by Florent diplomat Niccolo Machiavelli triggering a secularization movement^{5,6}. The artist's perception shifted from

² Linehan, Peter, Janet L. Nelson, and Marios Costambeys. *The Medieval World*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2001.

³ Colletta, Pietro, Susan Horner, and John A. Davis. *The History of the Kingdom of Naples: from the Accession of Charles of Bourbon to the Death of Ferdinand I*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2009.

⁴ Whitfield, J. Humphreys. "Petrarch." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, December 30, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Petrarch>.

⁵ Grudin, R.. "Humanism." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, October 22, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/humanism>.

⁶ Maddox, Graham. "The Secular Reformation and the Influence of Machiavelli." *The Journal of Religion* 82, no. 4 (2002): 539-62. Accessed February 28, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1206519>.

craftsman to intellectuals, as their oeuvres were shared across Southern Europe using Gutenberg's invention⁷.

The economy throughout the cultural paroxysm of medieval Europe relied on trade and manufacturing. Between the 1300s and 1400s, merchants in Florence, Milan, and Venice drove Italy's economy. The economic downturn of the 14th century brought upon by the Black Death, followed by the Hundred Years' War resulted in a loss of labor shortages, leading to increased wages. The monetary surplus was spent on luxury products and services, creating a new class of bankers, merchants, and artisans. Florence produced wooden cloth and silk, Milan made metal goods, and Venice dominated the Mediterranean trade⁸. The fall of the Byzantine

empire in 1453 and the rise of the Ottoman Empire shifted the geopolitical power from Christians to Arabs with the imposition of hefty taxes on spice trades. Venice, once the wealthiest city, lost its status to Istanbul. Concurrently, the resurgence in art led to glass vessels becoming the most valuable export by the mid-15th century⁹. The inland cities less dependent on seaborne trade kept flourishing, with banking becoming a crucial economic domain. The new wealth by the middle and upper class entrained financial support for the newfound arts by nobles¹⁰.



<https://web.sas.upenn.edu/hist-230/09-political-transitions/>

⁷ "The Effect of the Printing Press in the Renaissance in the 15th Century, Italy." ETEC540 Text Technologies. Accessed February 28, 2021. <https://blogs.ubc.ca/etec540sept10/2010/11/09/the-effect-of-the-printing-press-in-the-renaissance-in-the-15th-century-italy/>.

⁸ "Economy and Trade." Renaissance: An Encyclopedia for Students. . Encyclopedia.com. (February 26, 2021). <https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/economy-and-trade>

⁹ Jeong, Hae-Yoon. WHKMLA: The Economic History of Italy During the Renaissance. Korean Minjok Leadership Academy International Program , November 2007. <https://www.zum.de/whkmla/sp/0910/haeyoon/haeyoon1.html>

¹⁰ Ibid ^

The Holy Upheaval

Church context

The early 1400s were a time of religious turmoil in Europe. One of the most significant events of this period was the Western Schism, where three men each claimed to be the rightful pope.¹¹ After this conflict was resolved with the Council of Constance in 1414, new measures were put in place to limit the powers of the pope. However, these did nothing to limit the bad behaviors of certain religious authorities, most notably Pope Alexander VI. He is known for having been accused of simony, nepotism, and fathering four illegitimate children.¹² These practices were common among church officials at the time, and it was well known that the institution was becoming increasingly corrupt.¹³

During this time, humanism was on the rise. Many men began to pursue artistic pursuits, diminishing the power of the church somewhat.¹⁴ Rather than focusing on devoting themselves to God, many chose to grow their own power and wealth instead. Humanism also emphasized the importance of critical thinking and questioning what we know about the world. As more people learned to read, write and interpret texts, more critiques of religion emerged.¹⁵ Regardless of the fact that people were

¹¹ <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldhistory/chapter/the-church-during-the-italian-renaissance/>

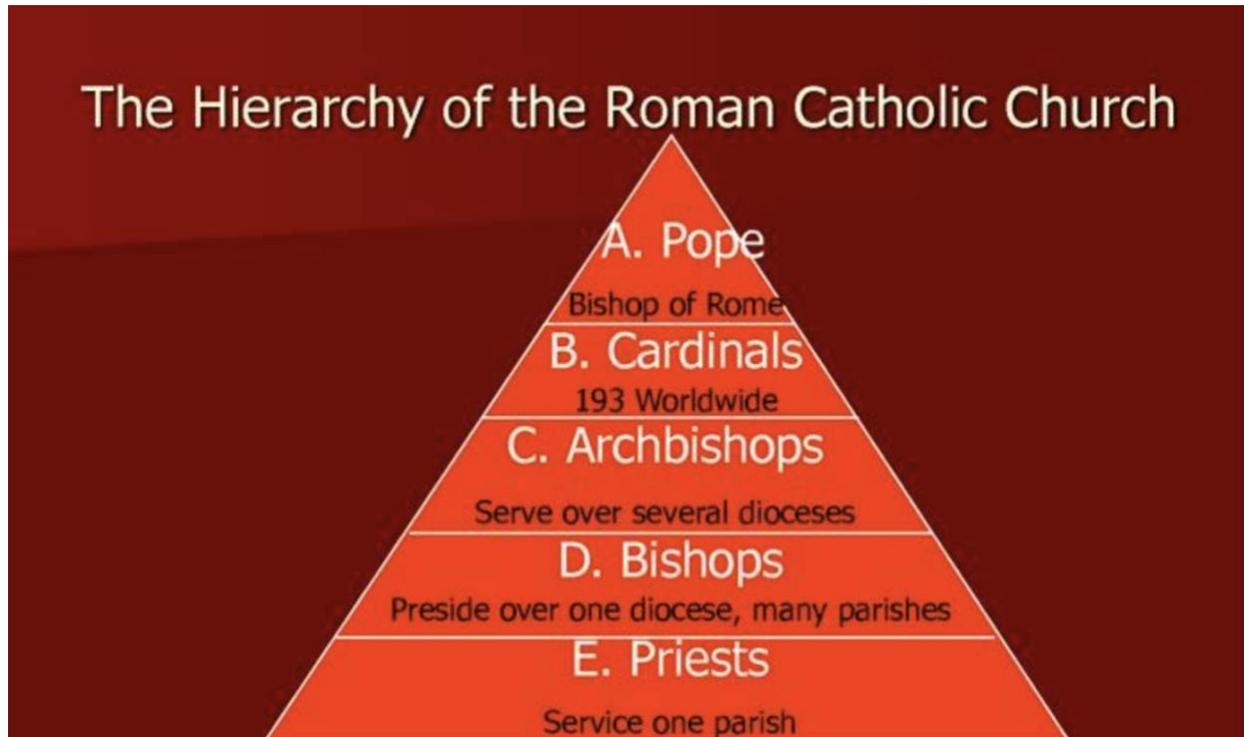
¹² Ibid.

¹³ <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/renaissance-reformation/reformation-counterreformation/beginner-guide-reformation/a/the-protestant-reformation>

¹⁴ <https://www.belmont.edu/burs/pdf/Art%20History-Waller.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://www.history.com/topics/renaissance/renaissance>

commenting on the Church's internal power struggles and rampant corruption, there had not yet been a successful attempt to reform the institution.¹⁶



<https://sites.google.com/a/ehschools.org/global-9/unit-2/middle-ages---ch-13/church-13-3>

Girolamo Savonarola

Friar Girolamo Savonarola was an Italian preacher who was well known for his opinions against the Catholic Church.¹⁷ He was born in Ferrera, Italy, as he grew up and became more involved within the Church, he came to be disgusted by the rampant corruption that plagued all levels of the clergy.¹⁸ After receiving a degree in liberal

¹⁶ <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/renaissance-reformation/reformation-counterreformation/beginner-guide-reformation/a/the-protestant-reformation>

¹⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Roman-Catholicism/The-age-of-Reformation-and-Counter-Reformation>

¹⁸ Ibid.

arts, he entered the Dominican order in Bologna, Italy.¹⁹ In 1482, he was sent to Florence and became a lecturer in a convent. He became very well known for his intelligence and self-discipline. He was strongly opposed to any sort of finery, women, the upper classes, and forms of easy living.²⁰ In 1485, he started criticizing the Church in his sermons, asserting that it needed to be punished and then reorganized.

He returned to Bologna to continue his studies, but also because his superiors were concerned with his new style of preaching and wanted to keep an eye on him.²¹ However, he was quickly sent back to Florence when Lorenzo de Medici summoned him. By 1490, Savonarola had been openly preaching against the tyrannical government and was quickly gaining popularity. At this time, Lorenzo was very ill and had to meet Savonarola at his bedside. The friar asked him three things. He asked if Lorenzo repented his sins and adhered to the faith, if he would give up all his wealth, and if he would "restore the liberty of the citizens of Florence".²² Lorenzo only responded yes to the first question and remained silent for the other two. He died shortly after on April 8th, 1492, and the Medici rule quickly became weak without Lorenzo.

A Florentine party called the Arrabbiati formed in opposition to the friar.²³ They were allied with the Duke of Milan and the Pope. They had joined the Holy League against the King of France and wanted to see Florence join as well. They saw Savonarola and his lectures as a threat to their goals.²⁴

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Strathern, 199.

²¹ Ibid, 201

²² Ibid, 205

²³ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Roman-Catholicism/The-age-of-Reformation-and-Counter-Reformation>

²⁴ Ibid.

The Franco-Italian Wars

Milan and Naples

To understand the conflict with France, we must first understand the political situation affecting Milan and Naples. At the same time as the religious conflict, Gian Galeazzo, the rightful heir and son of assassinated ruler Galeazzo Maria Sforza, was to gain control of the throne in Milan²⁵. However, his power-hungry uncle, the current regent of Milan, Lodovico Sforza, refused to give up his power and instilled himself as ruler²⁶. In order to justify his rule, he painted Gian as a buffoon who could not handle the burdens of ruling²⁷.

This brought about tensions with the kingdom of Naples, as Gian Galeazzo was married to Isabella, the daughter of the Duke of Naples, Alfonso²⁸. If Gian were to gain control of the throne, this would elevate the status of Naples and bring more power to the Duke. Thus, a power struggle ensued between the two nations to gain control of Milan. As heir to the throne of Naples, Alfonso had a lot riding on his daughter becoming the ruler of Milan and thus threatened to invade the city-state if Sforza did not give up the power that belonged to Gian²⁹.

Sforza stood alone before the whole of Italy, who saw him as a usurper and did not support his right to rule Milan³⁰. Desperate to hold onto his power, Sforza called in forces from the North: King Charles VIII enters the stage³¹.

²⁵Strathern, 208

²⁶ Ibid 208

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

The French Situation

Charles VIII was not the optimal choice to lead France. The child of the infamous Spider King³², Louis XI, Charles was neither intelligent nor prudent³³. He took the throne at the tender age of thirteen³⁴ but his sister Anne and her husband Pierre de Bourbon ruled as regents in his place³⁵ until 1491³⁶. His marriage to Anne of Brittany allowed him to barter some land and become a powerful figure in European politics³⁷. Charles VIII's main goal was, however, from the beginning, the expedition into the Italian city-state of Milan, which he believed to be owed to him through the cession of the Angevin rulers in the 12th century³⁸.

The convoluted history of Naples allowed Charles VIII to make a claim on the land: in 1282, the territory, separated from the wider Kingdom of Sicily, was ceded to the French, where it was ruled by Charles I, also known as Charles, I of Anjou, and held under French control until the line was disputed and Alfonso, I took over the throne in 1458³⁹. Since then, the line has been occupied by Alfonso's lineage. With the current king of Naples, Ferdinand I on his deathbed, Charles VIII is hungrily looking upon Italy as a country to expand into⁴⁰.

³² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_XI

³³ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-VIII>

³⁴ Strathern 208

³⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-VIII>

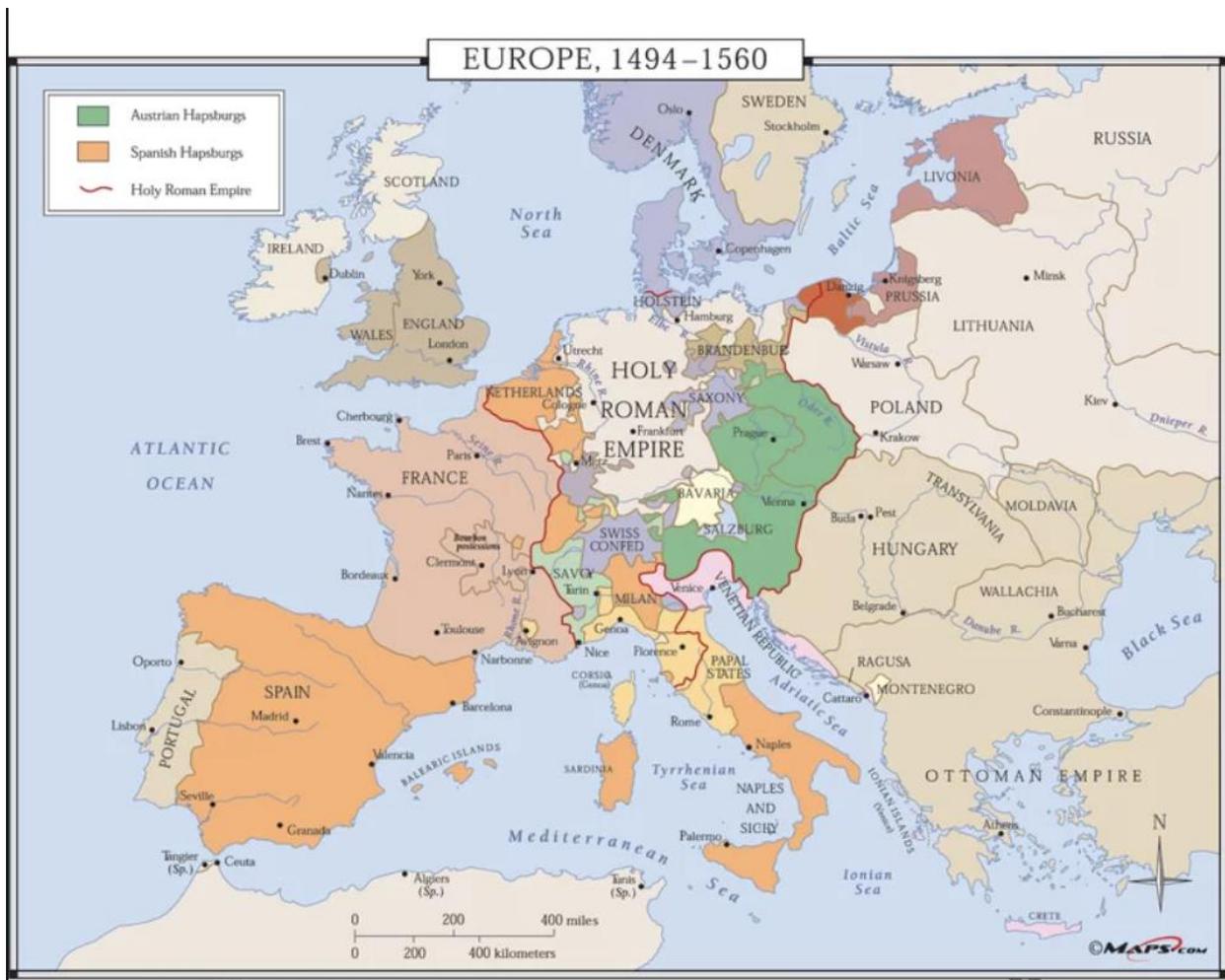
³⁶ Strathern 208

³⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-VIII>

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_monarchs_of_Naples#Kingdom_of_Naples_\(1282%E2%80%931501\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_monarchs_of_Naples#Kingdom_of_Naples_(1282%E2%80%931501))

⁴⁰ http://www.historyofwar.org/articles/wars_first_italian_war.html



<https://www.wayfair.ca/school-furniture-decor/pdp/universal-map-world-history-wall-maps-europe-1494-1560-zo1325.html>

Holy Leagues

First instituted in 1454, the first Holy League incorporated Venice, Florence, Milan, and the Pope in order to defeat the incoming forces of Turks attempting to conquer Venice⁴¹. With the states in constant turmoil and war against one another, this

⁴¹ Strathern 121

league also allowed the countries to sign a form of peace treaty, ensuring a short era of overall peace⁴².

Another league was forged in 1495 in order to fight the childish king of France who had declared himself king of Naples after his invasion⁴³. Both times, the leagues were sponsored by the papacy in order to prevent invasions from destroying the balance of the Italian city-states⁴⁴. This iteration of the league was composed of the Papal States, the fallen Alfonso II, the regretful Lodovico of Milan, the Spanish king, and Venice⁴⁵. Florence, the fallen cultural, political, and economic center of Italy, interestingly refused to take part in the campaign against France⁴⁶. Evidence suggests this might have something to do with the powerful sermons of Savonarola, strongly supporting the king of France through the treaty signed back in 1282 that the preacher considered binding⁴⁷.

Although the city-states are self-governed and stand virtually alone, history has shown that by coming together, they can defeat exterior enemies. However, will Italy succumb to the powerful forces of inner turmoil fueled by public denunciations of Girolamo Savonarola? That, delegates, is up to you.

Questions to ask yourselves:

- Which states do you support?
- On what religious ideological side does your character assign to?
- How can you salvage Italy's economic downfall?

⁴² <https://www.britannica.com/place/Italy/Italy-from-c-1380-to-c-1500>

⁴³ Ibid 222

⁴⁴ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Holy-League-European-alliance-1495>

⁴⁵ Strathern 122

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

- What is the role of the artist in this world divided between science and religion?

Character list

Venice

Christine de Pizan (displaced in time)

Christine de Pizan is an influential poet of the French court. Although originally of Venetian origin, she travelled around Europe and ended up in France. She wrote mostly for royalty and knights on how they should conduct themselves, influencing the high nobility of the French court with her enchanting pen.

Francesco II Gonzaga, Marquess of Mantua (leader of Venitian army)

Francesco II Gonzaga was a military commander and ruler of the city Mantua. He inherited the title of ruler from his father at the age of 18 after his impromptu death. He was given command of the Venetian troops in 1489 and thus holds a lot of military power in committee. He is married to Isabelle D'Este, the "First Lady of the Renaissance".

Isabella d'Este

Known as the "First Lady of the Renaissance", Isabella d'Este was a powerful, intelligent, and non-confrontational political figure, humanitarian, and marchioness. She married Francesco Gonzaga in 1490, and she became the acting regent of Mantua, supporting and helping her people while negotiating her husband's return. The

relationship with Francesco II Gonzaga was marked by jealousy, however, for she was a far more popular ruler amongst their people. Isabella d'Este therefore spent time in the court of Pope Leo X, the brother of Piero the Unfortunate, where she met and became a patron of many artists.

Agostino Barbarigo

Agostino Barbarigo was the Doge of Venice at the time of this committee. He is said to have possessed the strength and courage of a lion and is interested in expanding Venice's territory by annexing neighboring areas. Barbarigo has had amicable relations with the Ottoman sultan Bayezid II, however tensions between the two have been rising and may reach a breaking point soon.

Milan

Ludovico Sforza (Duke of Milan)

Ludovico Sforza is currently the Duke of Milan. He is the fourth son of Francesco Sforza, and gained his power after the death of Gian Sforza, who was his nephew. Prior to becoming the Duke, he acted as Regent of Milan, so he is well versed in the politics of Milan. He was an important patron of the arts, and supported Leonardo da Vinci among other artists. He is married to Beatrice d'Este, who came from an influential family and was well loved by the Milanese court. Aside from the arts, Ludovico is interested in agriculture, cow breeding, and metallurgy.

Baldassare Castiglione

Baldassare Castiglione was an Italian courtier, diplomat and writer. Born in Mantua to a noble family, Castiglione spent most of his early years in courts. His most popular book, *The Book of the Courtier*, was a famous guide to morality in messenger circles.

Castiglione is currently in Milan under the court of Ludovico Sforza, although he was born in Mantua.

Papal States

Pope Alexander VI

Pope Alexander VI assumed his role in 1492 and is remembered as one of the most controversial popes of the Renaissance period. He was born into the influential Borgia family in Spain and studied law at the University of Bologna before entering the clergy. He quickly rose through the ranks while acquiring wealth and power. During this time, he fathered many illegitimate sons and engaged in nepotism and simony.

Cesare Borgia

Cesare Borgia is the illegitimate son of Alexandre VI. Despite his father's powerful position in the Catholic Church, Borgia had little to no religious aspirations, despite his father appointing him as a cardinal. Instead, Borgia sought power, which gained him a lot of support, especially from Italian writer Machiavelli. As well as holding the position of cardinal, he is the leader of a group of mercenaries for the king of France (a condottiero).

Florence

Piero the Unfortunate - son of Lorenzo de Medici

Piero di Lorenzo de' Medici was the eldest son of Lorenzo de Medici ('Lorenzo the Magnificent') and Clarice Orsini. While he was a strong and skilled soldier, he was

lacking in his political skills due to his own errors in judgement. Piero is known for being arrogant, yet unable to follow through on his tough words.

Michelangelo

Michelangelo was a jack of all trades in the artistic realm. He was originally sent to Florence to study grammar but fell in love with art by mindlessly drawing the scenery around him. He was well known for his rivalry with Leonardo Da Vinci, another master of the arts. After Lorenzo de Medici's death, who was his patron, he returned to Caprese and started sculpting and has recently rejoined the court of the Medici at Piero's request.

Leonardo Da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci is the illegitimate son of a notary and a peasant woman. Despite his impoverished upbringing, he was able to leave the countryside and settle in Florence, where he was taken under the wing of the master Verrocchio. Despite having little to no academic training, he has become a master in his own right. He is now renowned in Florence as a painter, polymath, and inventor, competing with Michelangelo for patrons and praise.

Machiavelli

Niccolò di Bernardo dei Machiavelli, was a diplomat for Florence, writer and philosopher in the Renaissance period. However, he was forced into exile after, and had to give up politics. He has strong political ideas, such as how a ruler must not be restricted by morality in order to choose what is best for the state. Machiavelli found a good example of the new Italian ruler in Cesare Borgia, who used ruthless measures to achieve his goal.

Bernardo Rucellai (Gonfaloniere di Giustizia)

Bernardo Rucellai was a Florentine politician and socialite. Bernardo Rucellai was closely connected to the Medici family through his marriage to Nannina de Medici. Through this relationship, Rucellai became increasingly involved within the Florentine political sphere. He has held the position of Gonfaloniere of Justice while in Milan and has represented the Medici and Florence as a whole to the Pope on occasion.

Sandro Botticelli

Botticelli (an affectionate nickname meaning 'little barrel') was a quintessential Renaissance painter. Although trained as a goldsmith, he found himself drawn to paintings and was soon taken under Lorenzo de Medici's wing. Botticelli draws a lot of his inspiration from mythology to depict religious messages and is a follower of Friar Savonarola after a falling out with the Medici family.

Poliziano

Poliziano (Angelo Ambrogini) is an Italian writer and scholar remembered for his developments in the field of philology. He was fluent in Greek, Italian and Latin. Poliziano's dedication to Lorenzo de' Medici of a partial translation of the Iliad marked the beginning of a lifelong friendship with the Medici ruler. He was a tutor for the Medici children for some time, but lost the position in 1479, and he abruptly left the Medici villa. He also had a deep passion and admiration for the Portuguese empire.

Marsilio Ficino

Marsilio Ficino was a Catholic priest and one of the most influential humanist philosophers of the Italian Renaissance. He was an astrologer and was interested in

studying Plato's works in Latin. He founded the Florentine Academy, inspired by Plato's Academy, which influenced the development of European philosophy as well as the Renaissance as a whole. His work with the sciences landed him in trouble with the church, and he was suspected of heresy after the publication of his third book in 1489.

Fra Domenico da Pescia

Domenico was a small Italian preacher until he was introduced to the teachings of Savonarola. Upon hearing him speak, he became a frenetic and avid follower of the Friar's messages to reform the Church. With his belief in his abilities as a thaumaturgist, he was bold and rash, challenging his enemies to trials by fire. At times, even Savonarola disapproved of his actions.

Naples

Alonso de Aragón (5)

Alonso was the illegitimate son of Ferdinand II of Aragon and a Cataline woman. Although more interested in politics than religion, his father forced him to undertake a religious career as of the age of 5 years old. Ferdinand II exerted his political power upon the Pope to have his son elected as archbishop of Zaragoza and Valencia. His father also named the Lieutenant General of Aragon.

Alfonso II of Naples

Alfonso II of Naples was the Duke of Calabria, and heir to the throne of Naples. With his patronage, the city of Naples was remodeled with new churches, renovated roads, and an aqueduct-supplying fountain. Alfonso II was a well-known soldier as well as a supporter of architecture and arts. In 1486, his harsh hold on the nobility incited a

revolt which discredited Alfonso as well as his father, the king of Naples. He has extensive experience in military affairs and is adept at commanding troops. He led the Neapolitan forces into battle against the Ottomans in 1478.

Ferdinand II of Aragon (King of Sicily and Spain) (6)

Ferdinand of Aragon was king of the Crown of Aragon. Additionally, he was king of the Crown of Castile through his marriage to Queen Isabella I of Castile. Their union is considered as the first unification of Spain. Often referred to as Ferdinand the Catholic, Ferdinand of Aragon was a fervent Catholic monarch. His joint rule with Isabella of Castile was marked with the conquest of the Emirate of Granada in 1492, the subsequent expulsion and forced conversions of Muslims and Jews and the beginning of the American expeditions, which led to the Spanish colonization of the Americas.

Vincenzo Bandello

Vincenzo Bandello started off as a prior for a church in Milan but then joined the Order of the Preachers. He disapproved of Savonarola, but he did not suppress the Congregation of San Marco founded by the friar. He was a member of the Dominican Order, who believed strongly in community life and that the individual belonged to the Church.

Bologna

Copernicus

Nicolaus Copernicus, a Polish scientist, is a strong source of displeasure among the church as he brings to the scene revolutionary ideas. He is a mathematician, astronomer, and scholar who proposed the heliocentric system (the idea that the Sun

is at the center of the universe, not the Earth). Although Polish, Copernicus left his home country to study liberal arts in Bologna. There, he lived with an astronomer and was introduced to notions that would change his viewpoint on the world.

Ferrara

Ercole I, Duke of Ferrara

Ercole I d'Este was the Duke of Ferrara who made Ferrara nearly double in size and power. He was the father of Isabella d'Este and married to the daughter of Ferdinand I of Naples, his strongest ally. To further his societal connections, the Duke married off his son, Alfonso, to Pope Alexander VI's daughter; a marriage that brought in notable monetary donations for the Estes. Ercole I was considered one of the most prominent Renaissance patrons of the arts who was famous for his theatrical interpretations and musical abilities.

Savoy

Blanche de Montferrat

Blanche de Montferrat was the duchess of Savoy, and the wife of Charles I. Her husband, the Duke of Savoy, died in 1490, leaving Blanche to act as regent for her young son. She has access to information about the territory she oversees, and the people of Savoy respect her. Her son, Charles II, will become the duke when he comes of age. He is also the heir to the throne of Cyprus, Jerusalem, and Armenia.

Genoa

Paolo da Novi

Paolo da Novi is a silk dryer from Novi Ligure now located in Genoa. Although from the merchant class, he has gained a lot of political and economic influence. Currently, he is appointed to the Office of the Authority. Known for his wisdom, he is very beloved by all who meet him and continues to work his way up the political ladder while growing his silk empire.

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