

## Girolamo SAVONAROLA

Born in Ferrara, Italy, September 14, 1452, Savonarola was the third in a family of doctors. He has four brothers and two sisters. Very soon, he is interested in religious questions and studying the Bible and Aristotle. He began his studies at the University of Ferrara, where he graduated in Arts. His anticlerical opinion appears in a poem about the destruction of the world entitled "De Ruina Mundi", written at age 20. He was also at this time that he chooses his spiritual path, and his poem "De Ruina Ecclesiae" shows his contempt for the Roman Curia, he called a "fucking liar and proud." In 1475, he entered the convent of San Domenico in Bologna and sent his father a letter explaining his decision: "In addition to the villainy committed by the man whose greatest scourges, which are the depravity and adultery I regret blasphemy in a world or it does not find a single individual integrity. These words foreshadow his future exalted sermons. He left Bologna and went to the convent of Saint Mary of the Angels, until the Order never sent to Florence in 1482. He preached in several Italian cities before arriving in Florence in 1485 at the convent of San Marco. Michelozzi comes to complete construction of the first public library of Europe. Many codices come from all over Europe. The walls of the cloister are decorated in frescoes by Fra Angelico.

After the Pope Sixtus IV had issued a decree that the order is granted the right to own property and dispose of fixed income, friends and patrons are more affluent and pence. Given this enrichment, the Dominican order was shaken by a debate on property, wealth and poverty. It is in this context that in 1487 Savonarola returns to Bologna where as Master.

He was recalled to Florence in 1490 at the request of Pico della Mirandola and he became his confessor. The monk somewhat rustic and rough focus has radically changed. Since February 1491 he preached for the first time in the dome of Santa Maria del Fiore and the same month, he became prior of San Marco. With words more and harder than Savonarola condemned the decadence and moral mistakes, he criticizes the waste of the rich and the tyranny of the powerful.

Subject to prophetic visions, he announced the fall of the clergy and the church. It threatens the Florentines an upcoming trial divine. His speeches are a clear color and social policy and the gap continues to widen between Savonarola and Lorenzo the Magnificent which is the confessor. Lawrence died in 1492 and Peter II of Medici succeeded him. The same year, Alexander VI Borgia becomes pope through vote buying cardinals.

Peter II of Medici is a man who does not recognize the Florentines one talent that always make the worst decisions that some circumstances. Under his rule, Florence has one of his harshest attacks.

Savonarola had predicted that Cyrus would cross again to Italy to restore order, the sensational debut of the French army of Charles VIII in Tuscany in 1494 seems to confirm his prophecy, and if that army to the gates of the city and threatens to subject, it is because of political misjudgments committed by Peter II.

Driven by Savonarola, the people revolted this time refuses to sell out the distribution of wine and drove the Medici out of town.

Savonarola took power and so deftly directs the delegation to negotiate with Charles VII as the largest army ever reached the gates of Florence, withdrew without causing damage in the city. Strengthened by this success, Savonarola's popularity reached its peak and he is elected. He then introduces what he calls a "Christian and religious Republic." He engages himself in a practice of power more and more fanatical and authoritarian. He creates a real dictatorship,

not hesitating to claim a stake for those who engage in deviant sexual sin in the game he advises parents not to entrust their children to nurses whose milk they could transmit moral values questionable.

In the arts, he maintains the beauty of ideas against the perfection of form. Professing iconoclasm, he demands the renunciation of representation of body and demands the destruction of pictures.

Faced with such demands can only wonder that the painter Sandro Botticelli the author of "The Birth of Venus" could be during a time supporter of Savonarola ?

The humanists of the time themselves, such as Niccolo Machiavelli, are influenced by the actions of the religious fanatic.

His increasingly virulent attacks against the pope himself worth being summoned to Rome in 1495. He continues his sermons accusers. The activities of Savonarola experiencing a climax during the Carnival of 1497 with the first "Bonfire of the Vanities."

On the evening of February 7 Savonarola ordered a solemn procession and have drawn up a huge bonfire on the site of the manor.

The symbols of vanity and peach in this world: wigs, musical instruments, playing cards, mirrors, perfumes and portraits of beautiful women are sacrificed, and books of famous authors such as Boccaccio and Petrarch.

Savonarola is creating a "vice squads" based on the children of the city who become the instruments through which it can impose its law more and more dictatorial.

Police patrols child through the streets of Florence looking for 'bad actions to denounce. "

Each area is organized in a strict hierarchical structure.

In the year 1497, the pope excommunicates Savonarola and demands his arrest. In response the preacher back in the flesh and does not hesitate to organize in February 1498 a new "Bonfire of the Vanities"!

The pressure exerted by Rome is such that his followers should give up the protection. So Savonarola proposes to prove his good faith by the test of fire. But called upon to run, he gave up and triggers a riot.

His opponents storm the convent of San Marco and the day ends with his arrest.

The next day begins questioning seven weeks interspersed with horrific torture in the presence of commissioners appointed by Rome. Under the effect of the pain he confesses everything we asked.

On May 23, 1498 Savonarola was condemned by the Inquisition was to be hanged. The Pope grants him a final indulgence: He will be hanged before being burned !

His ashes were then scattered into the Arno river.

## Niccolo MACHIAVELLI

Niccolo Machiavelli was born May 4, 1469 in Florence in a middle class family in Florence. The city is then directed by the Medici, whose authoritarian rule is challenged. In 1478, the Pazzi conspiracy fails in his attempt to overthrow the government. In 1494, the French entry in Florence and the uprising of the city followed the exile of the Medicis and the dictatorship of the Dominican preacher Girolamo Savonarola punctuated the early years of Nicolas Machiavelli is still unknown in the public arena.

The excommunication of enthusiastic preacher of the convent of San Marco and the Pope's threats against the city caused his downfall and execution in 1498. The republic is undermined. In this political context that Nicolas Machiavelli was appointed June 19, 1498, second Chancellor of Florence in lieu of Alexandro Braccesi compromise with Savonarola. At 29 years, probably not prepared to hold high public office but certainly supported by powerful patrons, he became Gonfaloniere of Justice and Chancellor of New Officers Ordinance and the army of Florence. But mostly, he is "the man" of Piero Solderini, Supreme Judge of the Republic.

He is a privileged witness of the political and diplomatic in Italy and a Europe troubled by wars and constant reversals of alliance. His considerations on the behavior of Caesar Borgia, with whom he conducts missions between 1501 and 1503, fed his famous treatise "The Prince" in which he theorized the principle of "reason of state" and the reality principle. According to him, consider the state and people as they are, not as one would imagine that they were. The ambiguity of his words and perhaps the complexity of his thought to be worth Machiavelli strong hostility of the papacy and a strong and probably unfair reputation for cynicism: his detractors attributing the justification of political action that the end justifies ways; Political action based solely on the interests and rejecting any ethical consideration. In fact, the criticism of "Prince" directed more to those who have or are misguided to use its true meaning.

Machiavelli is primarily concerned with the "public interest" as evidenced by her voluminous correspondence and in particular his almost daily letters to his friends, historians and diplomats like himself, Francesco Guicciardini and Francesco Vettori.

He carries out missions to Germany in his capacity as Chancellor of New Officers and in 1510 he was sent to France with Louis XII in order to convince him not to intervene in the conflict between Ferrara and the Pope. He addresses diplomatic relations noticed and becomes a theoretical exercise of power. At the same time, he creates and begins to organize the Florentine militia.

In 1512, backed by the Pope and the Holy League, the Medici returned to the commands of the city. Florence remained a republic and formally retains its institutions but is in fact a monarchy headed by Lawrence II. Solderini fled to Dubrovnik and Machiavelli soon to be ousted from the political scene. He is among those who embody the previous regime and which are wary of the Medici. Machiavelli often "the Academy of Plato," politico-literary circle which organizes meetings with political and cultural Oricellari-Orti, gardens of Rucellai family. His political analysis has on those around him a strong influence. In 1513 several members of the academy are accused of plotting to overthrow the government. Niccolo Machiavelli is arrested and imprisoned but escapes to the death, unlike the main responsible

Pier Paolo Boscolo is executed. Machiavelli nevertheless suffered torture before being pardoned at the election of Giovanni of Medici, who ascends the throne of St. Peter with the name of Leo X. Machiavelli retired to his property Albergaccio near San Casciano. From that moment he ceases to consider himself a politician and diplomat, to undertake a literary activity that highlights his intellectual qualities. He writes "The Prince" (1513), "The Mandrake" (1518), "Discourse on the first decade of Livy" (1519) and "The Art of War" (1520), and probably, the "Speech or dialogue about our language" (1515 or 1516) highlighting the Florentine literary language. These works earned him favor with the Medici who entrust a diplomatic mission in 1518. Then he was hired by the University of Pisa by Cardinal Giulio of Medici becomes Pope in 1523 (Clement VII) after the death of Leo X. Became official historian and retired Medici, he was commissioned to compose an history of Florence. In 1526 he was appointed Chancellor of the fortifications of Florence which is facing threats of an attack deck. Between 1521 and 1527, he performed various tasks in the context of the war between the Spanish and French, which takes place in Italy, which will culminate in the sack of Rome, 5 and May 6, 1527.

Ironically, the links established with the Medici discredit upon the restoration of the republic in 1527. He is definitely ruled out of politics.

He does not survive this huge disappointment and died June 22, 1527.

32 years later, "the Prince", a work founded modern political science, is blacklisted by the Inquisition. One can wonder about the underlying reasons for this ban as a challenge to some basic Christian doctrine appear more in the "Speech" than in "The Prince" (religion and violence, the historicity and relativity of good and evil ...) except that the latter conceptualizes a secular state whose springs are the reality and pragmatism rather than a religious morality and, thus, it may appear as a radical challenge to the legitimacy Pope in his capacity as head of the Papal States.

The Vatican's ban was lifted in 1929!

## Pietro ARETINO

Pietro Aretino was born April 20, 1492 in Arezzo (Aretino means "from Arezzo"). Banished from his hometown, he spent a decade in Perugia before being sent to Rome, where the rich banker Agostino Chigi, patron of Raphael takes him under his protection. Aretino became known in the papal city by his pamphlets and "Lustful Sonnets" (Apollinaire will do a translation of it) written between 1524 and 1525, illustrated by Giulio Romano, one of the assistants of Raphael. This publication makes it lose the favor of Pope Leo X. His "Ragionamenti" (or "Divine Dialogues"), about a prostitute turned to various interlocutors as arguments in the form of Platonic dialogue, deride the society of his time and particularly the religious sacraments (monastic vows, marriage) .

Although dubbed the Scourge of Princes because of his formidable satire, he does not look the least protection and favors the larger characters. Most of them make him valuable presents. So Francis, which Aretino dedicated "Genesis" gives him gifts and pensions. He dedicated in 1538 to Isabella of Portugal "Humanity" and the following year the King of Hungary "Life of the Virgin."

He is also the author of five comedies (including "The Cortigiana" and "Talent") and tragedy "The Horatii" (1546).

He becomes the friend of Tiziano Vecellio Titian which says it serves as a model and which we know at least three portraits. Titian sent his works as gifts to nobles. On the picture painted in 1545 which was intended to the Duke of Florence, Cosimo I of Medici. Given the experimental technique adopted by Titian, the poet, pamphleteer complained of the appearance of this unfinished work.

In 1527, he escaped the sack of Rome by imperial troops and fled to Venice where he leads a life of pleasure. Venice is famous for its splendor and its beauty as reflected in the excerpt from one of his letters to his friend Titian "Oh, where are you? Well, if you had painted what I tells you, you strike the men of the same awe that I was confused when contemplating what I just described, I mind my fill, more same time that lasted this wonderful show."

The poet meets in Venice Jacopo Robusti said "Tintoretto". It seems that the young painter, the target of criticism by Titian, Aretino had threatened to kill the poet if he were to insult him in his terrible sonnets. Indeed, Aretino never cited the name of Tintoretto!

He does not forget his friends and he happens to intercede with powerful patrons Venetian offer the services of Titian as was the case during the completion of the work place Saint Marc by Sansovino.

According to tradition, his death was a reflection of his life: On October 21, 1556 in Venice, during a hearty meal, a joke, especially among adult Aretino provoked a huge crisis of laughter that made him fall to the reverses. He cracked his skull.

In conclusion, let in Guy de Maupassant care to summarize what was Aretino:

"Pietro Aretino was simply a journalist, an Italian journalist of the sixteenth century, a great man, an admirable skepticism, a prodigious contemptuous of kings, the most surprising of adventurers, who knew how to play, a master artist of all weaknesses of all vices, all the absurdities of mankind, an upstart genius endowed with all the natural qualities that allow someone to make his way by all means, get all success, and be feared, respected and praised as the equal of God, despite the most shameless audacity. This fellow Machiavelli and Borgia seems to be living the kind of Panurge who meets him all baseness and all the tricks, but has to such a degree the art of using these repulsive defects that commands respect and command our admiration. "