

A Historical Perspective

In 1499 Italy was composed of several independent states and cities. Three of the most powerful were Naples, Venice, and the Papacy. While there were other powerful city-states such as Genoa, Milan and Florence, they exerted influence for such a short time or were normally allied with one of the major powers such that they can be ignored as a separate entity.

There were three major countries which projected their power into this region. They were France, Spain, and the Holy Roman Empire. Of these, France had the most influence due to their invasions. Their major opponent was Spain, while considerably weakened after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, was still able to offer monetary support to the various city-states. The Holy Roman Empire fought a stalemated war with Venice and Milan, but exerted little other influence on the region.

France first invaded Italy in 1494 when they captured Naples. They also defeated a combined army of Milan and Venice in the battle of Fornovo. Unfortunately, the French garrison in Naples was overthrown by a revolt supported and financed by the Spanish. By 1499, France was once again ready to invade Italy for a second time, hoping to not only recover Naples, but to conquer Milan and Florence also.

Spain controlled both Sicily and Sardinia in 1499. They were allied to the King of Naples, helping to set him on the throne when the French supported King was defeated. Spain was ready to invade Italy in response to a French invasion, hoping to gain some territory for themselves also. However, concerns about Britain prevented them from making it a full campaign.

Venice was the most successful of all the Italian states. There was constant bickering with Milan, but a loose alliance kept this from major conflict. Genoa, which was a constant ally of Milan, was also part of this alliance. Venice had extended its influence during the French invasion of 1494, but Naples had been trying to regain their lost territory recently. Another French invasion also threatened Venice as the new Milanese ruler was no longer related to the French King.

Naples had to balance French and Spanish rules more than anybody else. However, they managed it rather well, and kept both at arms length after 1499. Their biggest problems were regaining the territory that Venice had snatched during the confusion of the last French invasion. They were aided by most of the other city-states because of the jealousy they had for the powerful Venetians.

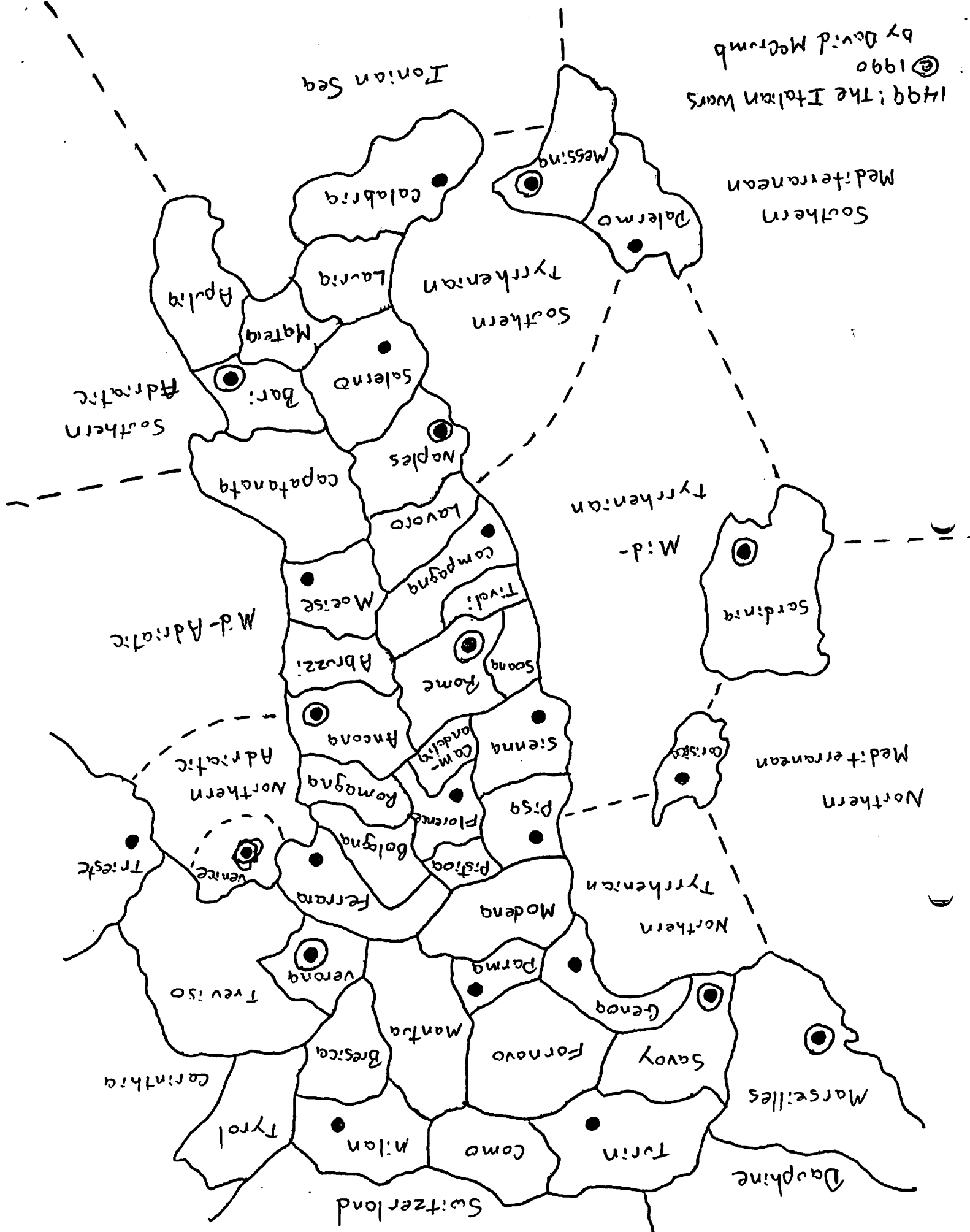
The Papacy claimed all of Italy as a fiefdom, but their actual control only extended to the central portion of Italy. Their power base was being further eroded by Ancona, Romagna, and Bologna trying to exert their independence from Rome. In a bid to once again regain the power base that the church had once held, Pope Alexander VI tried to annex Naples, purportedly to keep out the French and Spanish influences. Unfortunately, they got nowhere because of a severe lack of artillery.

This variant takes a few liberties with history, but nothing that couldn't have happened. While Spain played a smaller part than it did in this game, the desire to participate was present, and only the Armada disaster held them back. A few other powers could have been added, such as Milan, Florence and the Holy Roman Empire, but I wanted a quick and easy game which is different from Machiavelli. I believe this variant is balanced, but that can only be determined through play.

1499: THE ITALIAN WARS

1. Standard Diplomacy Rules apply (version used is up to the GM), with the following exceptions:
2. The game begins in 1499.
3. The Great Powers and their starting positions are:
 - FRANCE: Fleet Marseilles, Army Savoy.
 - SPAIN: Fleet Sardinia, Army Messina.
 - NAPLES: Fleet Naples, Army Bari.
 - PAPACY: Fleet Ancona, Army Rome.
 - VENICE: Fleet Venice, Army Verona.
4. Victory is achieved by control of 13 of the 25 supply centers.
5. If owned, the following Powers may build fleets in these centers:
 - France - Ferrara
 - Venice - Genoa
 - Papacy - Sienna
6. Venice is considered a coastal province for army movement.

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Southern
Mediterranean

Middle
Tyrrhenian

Northern
Mediterranean

Dauphine

Switzerland

Ionian Sea

Southern
Adriatic

Middle-Adriatic

Northern
Adriatic

Marseilles

Northern
Tyrrhenian

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Apulia

Calabria

Lucania

Materia

Salerno

Capitanata

Naples

Lavoro

Campania

Moerise

Tivoli

Rome

Abruzzi

Senoga

Ancona

Cam-
ondelia

Sienna

Romagna

Pisa

Bologna

Pistoia

Ferrara

Modena

Verona

Parma

Treviso

Genoa

Carinthia

Mantua

Forlivo

Savoy

Tyrol

Milan

Como

Turin

Messina

Palermo

Southern
Mediterranean

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