

QTMUN 2023



House of Medici

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Equity Disclaimers

Throughout this committee, delegates will be engaging in complex debates and discussions covering a wide array of topics. As UTMUN seeks to provide an enriching educational experience that facilitates understanding of the implications of real-world issues, the content of our committees may involve sensitive or controversial subject matter for the purposes of academia and accuracy. We ask that delegates be respectful, professional, tactful, and diplomatic when engaging with all committee content, representing their assigned country's or character's position in an equitable manner, communicating with staff and other delegates, and responding to opposing viewpoints.

This Background Guide presents topics that may be distressing to some Delegates, including but not limited to: Economic disparity, class disputes, poverty, status and treatment of women, lower class citizens and marginalized groups, warfare, disease and pandemics, and religious persecution. Great care will be taken by staff in handling any/all of these topics should they arise.

UTMUN recognizes the sensitivity associated with many of our topics, and we encourage you to be aware of and set healthy boundaries that work for you. This may include: refraining from reading certain parts of the background guide, preparing yourself before reading this background guide, doing some self-care or seeking support after reading the background guide, or anything that can help make you feel more comfortable. We ask that all Delegates remain considerate of the boundaries that other Delegates set.

UTMUN expects that all discussions amongst delegates will remain productive and respectful of one another. If you have any equity concerns or need assistance in setting boundaries or navigating sensitive subject matter, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or our Equity Director, Aidan Thompson, at equity@utmun.org. We want you to feel safe and comfortable at UTMUN!

If you wish to switch committees after having read the content warnings for this committee, please:

- Contact your Faculty Advisor/Head Delegate with your request if you are a part of a group delegation
- Email our Director of Academics, Elaine Wang, with a brief explanation of why you would like to switch committees if you are NOT a part of a group delegation.

Model United Nations at U of T Code of Conduct

The below code of conduct applies to the behaviour of all attendees of UTMUN for the entire duration of the conference, while engaging in any conference-related activities, including but not limited to committee sessions, conference socials, committee breaks, and the opening and closing ceremonies.

1. Harrassment and bullying in any form will not be tolerated, the nature of which includes, but is not limited to, discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, ethnicity, colour, religion, sex, age, mental and physical disabilities, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression,
 - a. Harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, insulting and/or degrading language or remarks; threats and intimidation; and intentional (direct or indirect) discrimination and/or marginalization of a group and/or individual;
 - i. The above prohibition on harassment, bullying, and inappropriate behaviour extends to any and all behaviour as well as written and verbal communication during the conference, including notes, conversation both during and outside committees, and general demeanour at all conference events;
 - ii. UTMUN reserves the right to determine what constitutes bullying and/or inappropriate behaviour toward any individual and/or group;
 - b. Attendees must not engage in any behaviour that constitutes physical violence or the threat of violence against any groups and/or individuals, including sexual violence and harassment, such as, but not limited to,
 - i. Unwelcome suggestive or indecent comments about one's appearance;
 - ii. Nonconsensual sexual contact and/or behaviour between any individuals and/or groups of individuals;
 - iii. Sexual contact or behaviour between delegates and staff members is strictly forbidden;
2. UTMUN expects all attendees to conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times during the conference. Specific expectations, include, but are not limited to,
 - a. Attendees must, if able, contribute to the general provision of an inclusive conference and refrain from acting in a manner that restricts other attendees' capacity to learn and thrive in an intellectually stimulating environment;
 - b. Attendees must adhere to the dress code, which is Western business attire;
 - i. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis depending on the attendees' ability to adhere to the previous sub-clause;
 - ii. Attendees are encouraged to contact Director of Equity, Aidan Thompson, with questions or concerns about the dress code or conference accessibility;
 - c. Attendees must refrain from the use of cultural appropriation to represent their character

- and/or country, including the use of cultural dress, false accent, and any behaviour that perpetuates a national or personal stereotype;
- d. Delegates must not use music, audio recordings, graphics, or any other media at any time unless approved and requested to be shared by the Dais and/or the Director of Equity, Aidan Thompson;
- e. Attendees must abide by instructions and/or orders given by conference staff members;
- i. Attendees are exempt from this above sub-clause only if the instructions and/or orders given are unreasonable or inappropriate;
3. Delegates, staff, and all other conference participants are expected to abide by Ontario and Canadian laws and Toronto by-laws, as well as rules and regulations specific to the University of Toronto. This includes, but is not limited to,
- a. Attendees, regardless of their age, are strictly prohibited from being under the influence and/or engaging in the consumption of illicit substances, such as alcohol or illicit substances for the duration of the conference;
- b. Attendees are prohibited from smoking (cigarettes or e-cigarettes, including vapes) on University of Toronto property;
- c. Attendees must refrain from engaging in vandalism and the intentional and/or reckless destruction of any public or private property, including conference spaces, venues, furniture, resources, equipment, and university buildings;
- i. Neither UTMUN nor any representatives of UTMUN is responsible for damage inflicted by attendees to property on or off University of Toronto campus;
- ii. Individuals will be held responsible for any damages.
4. The Secretariat reserves the right to discipline delegates and/or attendees for not adhering to/violating any of the above stipulations. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to,
- a. Suspension from committee, in its entirety or for a specific period of time;
- b. Removal from the conference and/or conference venue(s);
- c. Disqualification from awards;
- d. Disqualification from participation in future conference-related events.
5. If online, additional rules apply to delegate and staff conduct, including but not limited to Zoom background usage. Delegates must use either conference-provided Zoom backgrounds, the blurred background, solid colours, or no background.
6. UTMUN reserves the right to the final interpretation of this document.

For further clarification on University of Toronto Model United Nations' policies regarding equity, questions, concerns, or for any equity violations that attendees would like to raise, please contact equity@utmun.org, or fill out this [anonymous form](#).

Letter from the Director

Dear Delegates,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to UTMUN 2023 and the House of Medici Committee. My name is Nesta Muthu and I am a 3rd year student at University of Toronto, majoring in Political Science and the Classics. My involvement with Model United Nations began in 2018 as a delegate in highschool, and since then I have been staff for various conferences since my first year at the University of Toronto. I'm looking forward to seeing how delegates will navigate the committee and tackle the issues at hand.

This committee will cover the events that transpired in 15th century Italy, namely in the Florentine Republic. Delegates will follow the House of Medici, a prominent and powerful banking family in Florence as they vie for control, power, and legacy throughout Florence, going head to head with other noble families and the Guilds of Florence.

While this paper is a comprehensive guide of the events of the committee, it should be treated as a starting point for further research instead of an exhaustive source of knowledge. This paper contains the relevant information regarding the background of this committee, and will direct delegates in the direction the committee may head towards. However, Delegates are encouraged to do their own research regarding the historical settings, institutions and individuals discussed in this paper and build on the foundation it will provide.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about the committee or the conference. Best of luck moving forward with research and preparation. Myself, the crisis team, and the dias are looking forward to meeting you all.

Regards,
Nesta Muthu
Director, House of Medici
medici@utmun.org

Position Papers

This background guide contains “Questions to consider” for committee topics. Position papers should try to address these questions through their research.

It is recommended that delegates ensure that their position papers are concise and to the point. A page is the recommended length, but position papers can be a maximum of **2 pages** in length (12pt font), including a bibliography. Delegates should properly cite their research using the citation style of their choice. Generally for citations, if it isn't common knowledge (e.g Medici starts with the letter M) then it should be cited.

Delegates should submit their paper to the Director at Medici@utmun.org by the start of the conference in order to be eligible for the Best position paper award. Position papers should be submitted in **.pdf, .doc, or .docx** (Microsoft Office Word) **format**. Position papers are necessary to qualify for awards.

If you're having trouble submitting your position paper on time, please feel free to contact me or academics@utmun.org

Introduction

The 15th century was an age of innovation and invention, as social, cultural, and political forces collided in a constantly evolving Europe. Arguably at the center of it all is the Republic of Florence, a north western Italian city state that acts as a bustling hub of commerce and the arts. Home to some of the wealthiest banking families in Europe and at the frontier at the Renaissance movement, Florence occupies a unique space in the social and political climate of Italy and greater Europe.

Free of a formal lord, Florence is a republic run by the aristocratic upper class. This upper class comprises many different aspects, such as the noble families of Florence and the merchants guilds of the city. Of these upper class establishments, none are more famous and wealthy than the House of Medici, a prominent and controlling noble house in Florence. Headed by Lorenzo de' Medici, the House of Medici controls Florence from its highest seat in the city council, all the while contending with other noble families and the guilds vying for power and control. The Medici sit at the forefront of the political scene of the city and are closely tied to key figures of the Italian renaissance.

The city of Florence is in motion at all times from all aspects of politics, society, and culture. Delegates will have to navigate the fragile balance of power the Medici have created in the city, furthering their own interest and maintaining Florence as a cultural and economic hub.

Historic Overview

The early history of the Republic of Florence:

The City of Florence was originally founded as a Roman military settlement, meant to serve as a colony for its legions.¹ By the 3rd century, Florence had become a provincial capital and had become a flourishing economic centre in the Roman Empire. Following the collapse of the Roman Empire and into the Medieval period, Florence would shift hands various times. During the Middle Ages, Florence was most known for its time as a Bishopric state of the Holy Roman Empire.² Eventually it would find itself as part of the Margrave of Tuscany, a military governed territory. In 1115, Florence had declared itself as a self-governing city.³

The Guelphs, Ghibellines and the 13th Century:

By the beginning of the 13th century, Florence had become an emerging commercial and banking leader in Western Europe.⁴ The city had pursued economic policy that benefited its merchant class, allowing them to be Papal bankers, tax collectors for various monarchies such as the English and the French, as well engaging in commerce and trade with Flanders and France.⁵ With the amount of capital and business gained during this time, Florence was also able to mint the gold *Florin* and have it adopted by several European monarchies.⁶ Despite the economic growth and prosperity Florence was experiencing, the city was deeply entrenched in a conflict between two factions, *Guelphs* and the *Ghibellines*, that were warring within the city for control.⁷ The Guelphs and Ghibellines were two political factions that stemmed from larger issues present in Europe. The Guelphs supported the papacy, while the Ghibellines supported Frederick II, the Holy Roman Emperor.⁸ Their conflict stemmed throughout parts of Europe, but their divisions in Florence were notable more than others.⁹ The Guelphs were mostly Merchants and the upper classes of Florence, while the Ghibellines were made largely of nobility.¹⁰

1 Gale Encyclopedia of World History: Governments. Vol 1. "Florence". Detroit, MI: Gale, 2008. Gale eBooks (accessed October 21, 2022). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3048600049/GVRL?u=utoronto_main&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=643f6b0c.

2 Carol M. Bresnahan, "Florence." In Europe, 1450 to 1789: Encyclopedia of the Early Modern World, edited by Jonathan Dewald, 398-402. Vol. 2. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2004. Gale eBooks (accessed October 22, 2022). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3404900381/GVRL?u=utoronto_main&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=5a021bcb.

3 Gale Encyclopedia of World History: Governments. Vol 1. "Florence".

4 Michael Mallet. "The Northern Italian States." Chapter. In The New Cambridge Medieval History, edited by Christopher Allmand, 7:547. The New Cambridge Medieval History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. doi:10.1017/CHOL9780521382960.02

5 Ibid

6 Louis Green. "Florence and the Republican Tradition." Chapter. In The New Cambridge Medieval History, edited by Michael Jones, 6:469-87. The New Cambridge Medieval History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. doi:10.1017/CHOL9780521362900.022.

7 Oxford Academics. "Guelph Party and Ghibelline Party." In The Oxford Dictionary of the Middle Ages. : Oxford University Press, 2010. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780198662624.001.0001/acref-9780198662624-e-2578>.

8 Ibid

9 Ibid

10 Ibid

These two factions warred against each other for much of the 13th century, with control of the city switching between the two parties.¹¹ As the strife between the two factions continued to grow, the skilled tradesmens and workers who did not identify with any prominent noble family known as *Popolo* began to emerge.¹² The *Popolo* then began to form merchant guilds known as the *arti*.¹³ The *arti* guilds began to grow in power and seized authority during the confusion and chaos created by the Guelphs and Ghibellines.¹⁴ A new system was introduced in 1289 that put power into the hands of the *Popolo* and the 21 Major and minor guilds of Florence, and made elections for the Signoria, the governing council of Florence, more fair.¹⁵ A few years later, in 1293, the Ordinances of Justice were enacted, which barred the Ghibellines and a majority of the nobles of Florence from holding a position in the Signoria, instead opting for 8 guild members, with the ninth to serve as the Gonfaloniere.¹⁶ This further cemented the power of the Merchant class in Florence.

Turmoil and Trouble in the 14th Century:

By the beginning of the 14 century, the Guelphs had had internal conflicts and divided themselves into two new groups, the Black Guelphs and the White Guelphs.¹⁷ The Black Guelphs still supported the Pope and behaved like the original group, whereas the White Guelphs opposed the Church and its authority.¹⁸ In 1302, the Blacks had seized control of the government of Florence and exiled the Whites.¹⁹ Exile would become a prominent tool to remove political opponents in Florence, with the Guilds, Noble families and the Guelphs & Ghibellines using this tactic.²⁰ The rest of this century is characterized by warfare and tragedy for Florence. The city would be engaged in several conflicts throughout the mid century with other Italian states and the Ghibellines, most notably Pisa in the 1320s, by the Ghibelline Castruccio Castracani at Altopascio, and later on the War of Eight Saints against Milan among others.²¹ During this century, Florence was also hit by the Black Plague, which was ravishing communities all over Europe. In 1348 the population of Florence was roughly halved, but the wealth of those who had passed were reincorporated back into the wealthier classes of Florence.²² Around the time of the

11 Louis Green. "Florence and the Republican Tradition." Chapter. In *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, edited by Michael Jones, 6:469–87

12 Louis Green. "Florence and the Republican Tradition." Chapter. In *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, edited by Michael Jones, 6:483-5.

13 Ibid

14 Gale Encyclopedia of World History: Governments. Vol 1. "Florence".

15 Ibid

16 Ibid

17 Ibid

18 Ibid

19 Ibid

20 Ibid

21 Gordon Campbell. "Florence." In *The Oxford Dictionary of the Renaissance*. : Oxford University Press, 2003. <https://www.oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780198601753.001.0001/acref-9780198601753-e-1419>.

22 Ibid

1360s, two noble families, the Albizzi and the Ricci, formed two factions that once again struggled for leadership of Florence. Eventually, the Albizzi faction pushed the Ricci faction out of the scene, allowing the Albizzi family to dominate the political scene of Florence for the time being.²³

The Albizzi family would continue to be the leadership in Florence until 1378, when several revolts that would come to be known as the Ciompi revolts would occur.²⁴ During this time, conditions for workers had severely declined, and the lower classes had decided to rise up, headed by the *Ciompi*, wool traders who were barred from joining the Wool guild.²⁵ They demanded for more equal representation in the Signoria, and eventually exiled the Albizzi and occupied the Signoria by force. While in power, the Ciompi created new guilds for the unrepresented and introduced policies that were more equitable for the lower classes of Florence.²⁶ Their rule, however, was brief, lasting only 5 weeks as the nobles of Florence restored power and the Albizzi returned from exile to continue to rule Florence into the 15th century.²⁷

The 15th Century and the rise of the Medici family

During the early portions of the 15th century, the Albizzi continued to rule, however, another noble family was beginning to rise, the Medici. The Medici rose to power under the founder of the family banks, Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici.²⁸ Giovanni had made the Medici family incredibly rich during his time after being appointed the Papal banker, and they occupied a seat in the Signoria.^{29 30} Eventually, his son Cosimo de' Medici, later referred to as Cosimo the Elder, inherited the family business and wealth.³¹ Cosimo became extremely popular in the council and had considerable influence in Florence, and his presence challenged the pre-established rule of the Albizzi.³² In retaliation, the Albizzi exiled Cosimo from Florence in 1433. Cosimo took residence in Venice during his exile, removing him from the picture and restoring the status quo, or so they had thought.^{33 34} Many newly elected members of the Signoria were Medici supporters, and they rallied together to have Cosimo return to Florence, which he did a year later.³⁵ Upon his return,

23 Louis Green. "Florence and the Republican Tradition." Chapter. In *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, edited by Michael Jones, 6:481-483.

24 Louis Green. "Florence and the Republican Tradition." Chapter. In *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, edited by Michael Jones, 6:483-486.

25 Gale Encyclopedia of World History: Governments. Vol 1. "Florence".

26 Louis Green. "Florence and the Republican Tradition." Chapter. In *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, edited by Michael Jones, 6:483-485.

27 Ibid

28 Robert Black. "Medici." In *The Oxford Companion to Italian Literature*. : Oxford University Press, 2002. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780198183327.001.0001/acref-9780198183327-e-2015>.

29 Ibid

30 Oxford Academics. "Medici." In *The Oxford Dictionary of Art*, edited by Chilvers, Ian. : Oxford University Press, 2004. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780198604761.001.0001/acref-9780198604761-e-2300>.

31 Oxford Academics. "Medici." In *The Oxford Dictionary of Art*, edited by Chilvers, Ian.

32 Robert Black. "Medici." In *The Oxford Companion to Italian Literature*.

33 Michael Mallet. "The Northern Italian States." Chapter. In *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, edited by Christopher Allmand, 7:552.

34 Robert Black. "Medici." In *The Oxford Companion to Italian Literature*.

35 Ibid

the Signoria banished the Albizzi family from Florence, barring a few exceptions, and cemented Cosimo as the de facto head of a new regime in Florence and secured the power of the Medici family for the time being.^{36 37}

Cosimo eventually passed the family business and Florence to his son, Piero. Piero, known as “Piero the Gouty”, had his rule mired with conflicts and conspiracy against the Medici.³⁸ Despite this, however, Piero managed to ensure a peaceful transition of Power to his son, Lorenzo de’Medici.³⁹ Lorenzo would follow in the footsteps of his grandfather. A poet, scholar, and collector of antiquities, Lorenzo at a young age showed interest in the classical world.⁴⁰ Now as the head of the Medici family, bank, and Florence itself, Lorenzo sits chief among all the noble families, guilds, and citizens of Florence as one of the most powerful men in the city.

The Renaissance

During the period in which the House of Medici had its rise to power, social movements in Europe would begin to give rise to a rebirth of classical ideas, knowledge, and values. Arising from a myriad of warfare and the reallocation of wealth following the Black plague, the beginning of the Italian Renaissance can be marked around the 1300s.⁴¹ During this time, many values and ideas from the classical Greek and Roman past, such as Humanism, philosophy, and sculpture made a resurgence in Italian culture and were adopted by many.⁴² Roman rhetoric and writing was also renewed, with names like Cicero and Plutarch returning to modern discussions.⁴³ Alongside the humanities, the sciences were also renewed with newfound vigour, with figures such as Galileo and Benedetti and Copernicus all made discoveries and innovations in the fields of mathematics, physics and astronomy.⁴⁴ Religion also underwent upheaval, as the return of paganism and pagan values challenged Christian tradition at the time, and pagan motifs were everywhere in art.⁴⁵ During this time the Medici were prominent patrons of these newly emerging arts. Under their Patronage, famous Renaissance artists, writers and Architects like Brunellschi, Dotallo, Michelangelo, Botticelli and Da Vinci made some of their most famous pieces of art and architecture.⁴⁶

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ Michael Mallet. “The Northern Italian States.” Chapter. In *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, edited by Christopher Allmand, 7:552.

³⁸ Robert Black. “Medici.” In *The Oxford Companion to Italian Literature*.

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Neal W Gilbert. “Renaissance.” In *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2nd ed., edited by Donald M. Borchert, 421-428. Vol. 8. Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2006. Gale eBooks (accessed October 21, 2022). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3446801746/GVRL?u=utoronto_main&sid=bookmark-GVRL&id=a64ee0eb.

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Oxford Academics. “Medici.” In *The Oxford Dictionary of Art*, edited by Chilvers, Ian.



Sandro Botticelli, *Adoration of the Magi*. 1476, Uffizi Gallery, Florence Italy.

National Institutions and Positions:

The Papacy: During the 15th century, the Catholic Church enjoyed a high degree of power in Italy. The Pope, at this time Sixtus IV, had considerable power in office, and was the sovereign of several Papal states in the Italian peninsula. The Pope and the Church have much power over the politics of the various states within Italy's borders serving as an important political, diplomatic, and religious entity in both national and international matters.^{47 48}

Mercenary Companies: Throughout Italy and broader Europe, roaming bands of

⁴⁷ Gordon Campbell. "papacy." In *The Oxford Dictionary of the Renaissance*. : Oxford University Press, 2003. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780198601753.001.0001/acref-9780198601753-e-2720>.

⁴⁸ Gordon Campbell. "Sixtus IV." In *The Oxford Dictionary of the Renaissance*. : Oxford University Press, 2003. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780198601753.001.0001/acref-9780198601753-e-3296>.

mercenaries sold their skills to whoever was willing to pay. Loyal only to the coin that bought them and removed from political motives, Mercenary armies were often hired by states to conduct warfare against each other. Even the Church used mercenaries in order to protect their interests and fight on their behalf.⁴⁹

Condottiere: The term for a captain of a mercenary company or army, the Condottiere was the one who commanded an army of mercenaries. Often a Condottiere would serve a noble or a lord, in some cases even figures like the Pope, and served as military for many notable engagements through the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries.⁵⁰



Diego Velázquez. *The Surrender of Breda*. 1635, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid Spain.

Florentine Institutions and Positions:

The following groups and institutions served as the de facto government of the Florentine republic. Public matters of economic, social, and political nature were directed towards these institutions, and the introduction and upkeep of law, civic policy and polity of the republic rested in their hands. All matters of the state were addressed and dealt with the by the following:

Signoria:

Following the establishment of Ordinances of Justice, The Signoria of Florence was the government of the Republic of Florence. The council was composed of 9 **Priori**, members of government who were chosen from the major and minor guilds of Florence. 5 members would be chosen from the major guilds, while the remaining 3 would be chosen from among the minor guilds. The 9th member of Signoria was given the title Gonfaloniere of Justice.⁵¹

49 Oxford Academics. "mercenary companies." In *The Oxford Dictionary of the Middle Ages*. : Oxford University Press, 2010. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780198662624.001.0001/acref-9780198662624-e-3936>.

50 Gianluca Raccagni. "condottieri." In *The Oxford Dictionary of the Middle Ages*. : Oxford University Press, 2010. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780198662624.001.0001/acref-9780198662624-e-1486>.

51 Gale Encyclopedia of World History: Governments. Vol 1. "Florence".

Gonfaloniere of Justice:

The title given to the 9th member elected to Signoria, Gonfaloniere was the head of government in Florence. Officially, they were the standard bearer of the republic of Florence and maintained the standard. The Gonfaloniere was also in charge of security in Florence and was tasked with maintaining public order.⁵²

Greater and Lesser Guilds of Florence:

The Guilds of Florence were groups that controlled many of the artisanal trades within Florence. They played a key role in the city, influencing the political scene and creating a standard of quality for Florentine trades and goods. The guilds were composed of the major guilds, the **Arti Maggiori**, and the 5 lesser guilds, the **Arti Minori**, with the exact number of guilds fluctuating over time.⁵³

Arti Maggiori:

Arte dei Giudici e Notai - Patronage of Judges and lawyers

Arte di Calimala - Patronage of Merchants, finishers and dyers of cloth

Arte della Lana - Patronage of Wool manufacturers and merchants

Arte del Cambio - Patronage of Bankers

Arte della Seta - Patronage of Wool weaver

Arti Minori

Arte dei Vinattieri - Patronage of Vintners

Arte degli Albergatori - Patronage of innkeepers

Arte dei Cuoiai e Galigai - Tanners

Arte degli Oliandoli - Olive oil merchants

Arte dei Correggiai - Saddlers and Harness makers

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ Louis Green. "Florence and the Republican Tradition." Chapter. In The New Cambridge Medieval History, edited by Michael Jones, 6:483-486.



Stemmi delle Arti fiorentine, sec. XVIII. Archivio di Stato di Firenze.

Noble Families:

The noble families of Florence are aristocratic families that have resided in Florence for many years, serving as an integral part of Florentine society. Many of the noble families specialize in a certain trade, such as banking or metallurgy, and they bring in considerable wealth from these occupations. The noble families are well respected and are able to exert their influence within Florence, as many of them hold positions in institutions like the Signoria and are able to sway the council's activities to suit their goals and plans for the city.

The Medici Family:

The Medici Family are a powerful banking family that resided in Florence. Originally from the Mugello region of Tuscany, the Medici family slowly grew their banking business over time, their names first being mentioned around the 13th century.⁵⁴ Under Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici, the family rose to great wealth and prominence as Papal bankers.⁵⁵ The family would truly rise to power under the supervision of Cosimo De' Medici, later known as Cosimo the Elder. Under his rule, the Medici family would continue to gain power and prestige until his eventual exile by the

⁵⁴ Patrizia Salvadori. "Medici." In Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages. : James Clarke & Co, 2002. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780227679319.001.0001/acref-9780227679319-e-1828>.

⁵⁵ Robert Black. "Medici." In The Oxford Companion to Italian Literature.

Albizzi Family.⁵⁶ Cosimo would return from his exile thanks to his allies in the Signoria, cementing the Medici family as the powerfulest family in Florence thereafter in his son Piero, and Piero's son Lorenzo.⁵⁷

The Pazzi Family:

A noble family from Florence, the Pazzi family were bankers.⁵⁸ The first recorded member of the Pazzi family was Jacopo de' Pazzi il Vecchio, a cavalry captain for the Guelphs in the 13th century.⁵⁹ The Pazzi family would be very connected to the religious ties in not only Florence but as well as throughout Italy, being well connected with the Pope and several Archbishops. The Pazzi were bitter rivals of the Medici family and its banks, seeking to take their seat of power and be the dominant banking family in Florence. Despite this, however, Bianca De'Medici, sister of Lorenzo, was married to a member of the Pazzi family, tying the families together.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Robert Black. "Pazzi." In *The Oxford Companion to Italian Literature*. : Oxford University Press, 2002. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780198183327.001.0001/acref-9780198183327-e-2400>.

⁵⁹ Paolo Garbini. "Pazzi family." In *Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages*. : James Clarke & Co, 2002. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780227679319.001.0001/acref-9780227679319-e-2144>.

⁶⁰ Claudia Tripodi (2015). Pazzi, Guglielmo de' (in Italian). *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, volume 82. Rome: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana.

Topic A: The Future of Florence

With Lorenzo now in control of one of the most powerful families in Florence, the fate of the Republic not only lies in his hands, but in the vast web of the noble families of Florence and the guilds, who are all vying for control and power. Trade, business and commerce within the republic as well as on a national scale rely on the cooperation and communication of the guilds and the noble houses. In recent times, however, while things have improved for the upper class, the majority body of the city composed of lower class citizens and peasants have been experiencing harder economic times. Taxes have increased as competition from Venice and Milan continue to grow. Many peasants grow restless while the guilds and noble families prosper as civil unrest begins to brew. Delegates must find a way for Florence to continue to be hub of economic and cultural flourishing while also providing for even its lowest residents before they decide to take Florence for themselves.

Guiding Questions:

- Though nearly a century ago, the Ciompi revolts are still fresh in the minds of everyone in Florence. Is the republic doomed to repeat history and have a conflict between social classes?
- Milan and Venice continue to challenge Florence as economic powerhouses. What might be the best way for Florence to continue to remain an economic hub in Italy?
- Increased taxation seems to be a burden on the lower classes, but is necessary for the state. Is lowering the taxes a possibility for Florence or is it a necessity of the state?

Topic B: The Seat of the Chancellor

Shortly after the change of power in the Medici family, on a larger scale Florence is also experiencing a changing of the guard. Benedetto Accolti, the Chancellor of Florence, has stepped down without leaving a successor to the seat of the Chancellor. This leaves a massive power vacuum in the republic, as the Chancellor exists above the Signoria and the Gonfaloniere, the highest seat of the de facto government.⁶¹ The seat is open for any member of a noble family, or is closely related to one. The seat of Chancellor will be decided by popular vote. Delegates must decide who amongst them should become the next Chancellor of Florence and assume the responsibility and duties of the civic head of the state.

Guiding Questions:

- The seat of the Chancellor is extremely powerful, but difficult to attain by just anybody. Is pushing to install a powerful noble who will be privy to your goals a better option than running yourself ?
- Public image and rhetoric is extremely important in gaining votes for the seat of Chancellor, but what you can offer for the city can be equally as powerful. Will actions speak louder than words?

⁶¹ Martin McLaughlin. "Salutati, Coluccio." In *The Oxford Companion to Italian Literature*.: Oxford University Press, 2002. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780198183327.001.0001/acref-9780198183327-e-2839>.

Topic C: Patron of the Arts

Under Cosimo De'Medici, many humanist artists arose and created many works of breath-taking art and architecture. Now, in Lorenzo's time, even more artists have joined the humanist movements and the arts are reaching their apex. In order to create their art, however, artists require a patron to support them. This patronage is two-way exchange, as the artists get the benefit of financial support to create whatever they wish, and in turn the Patron can use the artist's works to elevate their social status and put themselves at the fore-front of the Renaissance. Delegates will have to compete for the patronage of newly emerging artists, in turn cementing their status in the social body of Florence and the greater renaissance movement at large.

At the same time, there is unrest concerning the morality of this art. While art pertaining to Christian teachings and values is produced, many artists draw inspiration from ancient Greece and Rome and have distinct pagan influences that clash with the religious beliefs of the time. Opposition to these trends in the artistic movement come mainly from Girolamo Savonarola, a Dominican friar. Savonarola claims that Florence has indulged itself in worldly pleasures too much, and has become filled with sin and corruption. His movement to destroy what he considers profane has grown popular with lower class and the economically downtrodden. While delegates will compete for the patronage of famous artists, they must also consider whether they wish to take part in the rebirth of Classical values and icons or whether Savonarola's fanatical words carry weight and are the path forward for Florence.

Guiding Questions:

- While artists will clearly look for financial support, they will also look for a Patron that increases their social standing and offers them the freedom to make what they want. Will money alone be enough to win them over? Savonarola has become increasingly fanatical overtime and his following only grows among the lower classes of the city. Should he be stopped before his cause becomes substantial enough to cause havoc in the city?
- Savonarola uses religion and traditional values to push his message. While pagan influences are a product of modernity and changing times, is embracing the traditions of old a plausible path for the future of Florence?

Current Overview

The committee will begin in the year 1469, immediately following the passing of Piero the Gouty, and the beginning of Lorenzo De'Medici rule over the Medici Family and banks. In the years of Piero's rule, Florence had begun to decline from the prosperous period of Lorenzo's grandfather, Cosimo. Lorenzo has inherited a Florence that disproportionately favours its people. Those in the upper classes flourish as art and social movements take off, while the lower classes face increasingly difficult times. The city's elites have called a meeting to discuss the new head of the Medici family, and the future of Florence.

Further Research and Preparation

This background guide attempts to provide all the information necessary for debate. That being said, however, it is not a complete coverage of the historical background of Florence or any of the institutions or people that lived during the era. If you find it necessary, please feel free to go beyond the scope of this background guide and conduct your own research on the topic.

If you are looking for a point to begin your research, the work cited page can provide you with good resources you can use to begin your research. Make sure that any sources you do consult are trustworthy and accurate.

When preparing for this debate, Delegates should not research past the year 1469, when Lorenzo de'Medici became the head of the House of Medici. This means that delegates should be knowledgeable about the institutions and political bodies at the time, as well as the attitudes and positions of the historical figures they are representing, in order to make informed decisions during debate that would reflect what their character would do. This committee puts commitment to policy over commitment to history, and so delegates should not limit themselves to the past events during debate and are encouraged to react as their character would in a novel situation.

Once you are familiar with your character assignment and the historical background, make sure that you also understand the flow of the committee. Crisis committees can become very fast paced, so make sure you are familiar with standard crisis mechanics as well as the mechanics that are unique to this committee.

If you have any questions about research, character assignments, crisis mechanics or the committee in general, please feel free to contact me and it would be my pleasure to help you out.

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