

Contents

Introduction 9

1 *The Diplomat* 11

The humanist background 11

The diplomatic missions 14

The lessons of diplomacy 23

2 *The Adviser to Princes* 29

The Florentine context 29

The classical heritage 32

The Machiavellian revolution 39

The new morality 50

3 *The Philosopher of Liberty* 56

The means to greatness 58

The laws and leadership 66

The prevention of corruption 75

The quest for empire 81

4 *The Historian of Florence* 87

The purpose of history 87

The decline and fall of Florence 91

The final misfortune 95

Works by Machiavelli quoted in the text 98

Note on sources 99

Further reading 101