The Italian Renaissance

Key Concepts

Chapter 12

- French for "rebirth"
  - (from re [again] and nascere [to be born])
- Origins: Italy, 14th c.
- "High Renaissance," 1450-1527
  - Art flourished most during this period

The Renaissance

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The Values:

I. Humanism
II. Individualism
III. Secularism

The Vehicles:

IV. Commerce
V. Invention

Understanding the Renaissance

Early Renaissance
What was the Renaissance?

- Period following the middle ages (1450-1550)
- Renaissance = Rebirth
- Jacob Burkhardt
  - Civil. of the Renaissance in Italy (1860)
  - “Rebirth” of classical Greece and Rome
- Began in Italy
- Moved to northern Europe
- Urban Society
- Emphasis on individual ability

Objectives

- During the middle ages
  - Find God
  - Prove pre-conceived ideas
- During the Renaissance
  - Find man
  - Promote learning

Causes of the Renaissance

- Lessening of feudalism
  - Church disrespected
  - Nobility in chaos
  - Growth of Middle Class through trade
- Fall of Constantinople
  - Greek scholars fled to Italy
- Education
  - Nostalgia among the Italians to recapture the glory of the Roman empire

I. Why in Italy at this Time?

- Revival of Commerce and Town Building was more intense in Italy
- Feudalism had less of a grip on Italy
- Two competing lords for control of Italy were losing influence
- Presence of antiquity was stronger in Italy than elsewhere in Europe

II. European Economic Recovery

- Dramatic recovery of European commerce
- Important industries flourish in Northern Italy
- The significance of printing and mining as new industries
- The fifteenth-century banking empire of the Medici family in Florence

“The Renaissance gave birth to the modern era, in that it was in this era that human beings first began to think of themselves as individuals. In the early Middle Ages, people had been happy to see themselves simply as parts of a greater whole – for example, as members of a great family, trade guild, nation, or Church. This communal consciousness of the Middle Ages gradually gave way to the individual consciousness of the Renaissance.”

Invention

Printing Press
- 1454 – Gutenberg experiments with movable type
- Gutenberg Bible (1456)
  - About 180 copies produced

Information can spread more quickly than ever before... and at a fraction of the cost!

Printing

- The Chinese were the first to invent printing in 868.
- In the mid-1400’s, Johan Gutenberg of Germany invented a printing press using moveable type.
- Now books could be printed with greater speed and less effort.
- The Gutenberg Bible is considered one of the first books ever printed.

Impact of Printing

- The Impact of Printing
  - Johannes Gutenberg
  - Gutenberg’s Bible (1455 or 1456)
- The spread of printing
  - Lay literacy
  - Price of books dropped 80%
  - More books printed in first 30 years of printing press than copied in all the middle ages

III. Renaissance Economics

- Profit-making became more important than Church doctrine
- To overcome guilt, profit-makers indulge in philanthropy
- Influence of guilds declining
- High profits led to economic diversification
III. Renaissance Economics (cont)

- “Cottage Industry”
- Art became the way to advertise economic success
- Intensified commercial competition created the need to be efficient

Social Changes in the Renaissance

- The Nobility (2nd Estate)
  - Reconstruction of the aristocracy
  - Aristocracy: 2 – 3 % of pop.
- Baldassare Castiglione (1478 – 1529)
  - Book of the Courtier (1528)
  - Service to the prince

Commerce

Usury
- Lending money with interest
  - Prohibited by RCC during Middle Ages
  - LIMITED INVESTMENT

Medici Family
- Prominent in Florence, Italy
- Medici Bank
- Patrons of the Arts

IV. Renaissance Society

- Renaissance is an elitist historical phenomenon
- Northern Italy was urban and commercial while Southern Italy mostly was not
- Very family-oriented society

Peasants and Townspeople

- Peasants
  - Peasants: 85 – 90% of pop.
  - Decline of manorial system/serfdom
- Urban Society
  - Patricians
  - Petty burghers, shopkeepers, artisans, guildmasters, guildsmen
  - The poor - unemployed
- Slaves

Family and Marriage in Renaissance Italy

- Marriage
  - Marriages were frequently arranged to strengthen business ties
  - Husband –head of family
  - Wife managed household
  - Children - Many
  - Sexual Norms - different
What was the relationship between husband and wife in Renaissance Italy, and how did this differ from the middle ages?

What was the role of women in Renaissance Italy? Who was Battista Sforza? Isabella d’Este?

IV. Renaissance Society (cont)

- Father’s authority over his family
- Some wealthy women played an important role in Italian city-states
  -- Isabella d’Este of Mantua
- Concentration of wealth among great families
  -- “popolo grosso”

IV. Renaissance Society (cont)

- Extreme social stratification divided into factions around the wealthiest families
- Poor increasingly attempting to improve their social status
  -- The Ciompi Revolt (1378)
  -- “popolo minuto”
- “The Cult of the Individual”

IV. Renaissance Society (cont)

- Number of portraits painted during this era illustrates focus on the individual
- A true nobleman
- Growing humanism and secularism in a Christian context
- Focus on man’s free will
- Rewards for living excellently came in this life

The Book of the Courtier
- A guide on how to be a respectable (and respected) gentleman (or lady)
V. Renaissance Politics

- Same pattern and problems as those of the Greek city-states
- Inter-city warfare led to new advances in diplomacy -- “balance of power”
- Northern Italian “communes”
- The Peace of Lodi (1454)

Italian Background

- Major city centers
  - Venice: Republic ruled by oligarchy, Byzantine origins
  - Milan: Visconti and Sforza families
  - Florence (Tuscany): Republic ruled by the Medici
  - Papal States: Ruled by the Pope
  - Kingdom of Naples: King of Aragon

Italian Background

- Florence
  - Medici’s—family of physicians
  - Money in banking
  - Financed wool trade
  - Became defacto rulers of Florence

Italian Background

- Cosimo de Medici
  - Advanced arts and education
- Piero de Medici
  - Continued father’s artistic support
- Lorenzo de Medici
  - Poet
  - Friend of Michelangelo
  - Rebuilt University of Pisa
  - Continued to invite scholars to Florence
Italian Background

- Piero de Medici
  - Forced to make military and commercial concessions to King of France
  - Medici's forced out of the city
- Savonarola
  - Friar who decried money, power
  - Gained power in lower class, but lost pope's support
  - Excommunicated and hung

V. Renaissance Politics (cont)

- Rome, Venice, Milan, Florence, and the Kingdom of Naples
- Renaissance Venice
- Renaissance Florence
  - Lorenzo the Magnificent (1449-1492)
- 1300's republicanism became 1400's despotism—with the exception of Venice

V. Renaissance Politics (cont)

- Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527)
  - "The Prince"
  - The goal of the prince must be power
  - Cynical view of human nature
  - Fear is a better motivator than affection
  - Politics as the art of deception

V. Renaissance Politics (cont)

- Ancient and contemporary examples of effective political leaders
  - Cesare Borgia
- A new realism in political thought
- 1400's "Civic" humanism
- Leonardo Bruni's *The New Cicero*
- Henry VIII as a Renaissance prince

The Birth of Modern Diplomacy

- Product of Ren. Italy
- Changing concept of the ambassador
  - Resident ambassadors
  - Agents of the territorial state

Machiavelli

The Prince

- Advice to rulers
  - "Machiavellian"
  - The end justifies the means
VI. Intellectual Renaissance

Why were there so many Renaissance men during the Renaissance?
- Lack of boundaries between disciplines
- Knowledge was just knowledge

Renaissance period
Leonardo da Vinci
Michelangelo
Raphael
Petrarch
Erasmus
Pico della Mirandola

"I don't buy the notion that the world is organized the way universities and companies are. Ideas don't know what discipline they're in. We might kidnap them and say, 'That's a marketing idea' or 'That's an anthropology idea.' But if you walked up to an idea on the street, it wouldn't know about that."

- Gerald Zaltman, Professor of Business Administration at Harvard, personal communication, October 2003.

IV. Intellectual Renaissance

Broad knowledge about many things in different fields
Deep knowledge of skill in one area
Able to link areas and create new knowledge

Renaissance Man

- Ancient:
  - Plato (daVinci)
  - Aristotle

VII. Renaissance Education and Philosophy

- Humanistic age
- Various types of humanism
- Great men displayed in finding and collecting old documents
- Leads to critical examination of documents
- Love for the study of history most of all
- A Greek language fad after 1454
- Petrarch (1304-1374): the Father of Italian Renaissance humanism
- Focus on the individual and his dignity

VII. Renaissance Education and Philosophy (cont)

- A true liberal education
- Humanist education for women
- Love for the study of history most of all
- A Greek language fad after 1454
- Petrarch (1304-1374): the Father of Italian Renaissance humanism
- Focus on the individual and his dignity
Greek Literature

Fall of Constantinople (1453)
- Turks close Christian universities
- Greek scholars flee to Italy with Ancient texts
- Plato’s complete works translated into Latin for the first time.

Classical Studies

- Humanism
  - “the study of humanity”
  - From studia humanitatis
    - coined by Cicero to describe the education of a cultivated human being
- Classics
  - Prominent works of Greek, Roman, and Biblical literature
  - Emphasis: original languages

Classics in the Christian Era

St. Basil the Great (c. 333-379)
- Bishop and Theologian
  - Address to Young Men on the Right Use of Greek Literature

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)
- Summa Theologica
  - Attempt to reconcile Aristotle’s philosophy with Christian teaching

Classics in the Christian Era

“...In 1423...a Sicilian adventurer named Giovanni Aurispa returned from Constantinople with a hoard of 238 manuscripts written in Greek, a language that scholars in Italy had learned only in the previous few decades. Among these treasures were six lost plays by Aeschylus and seven by Sophocles... But there was also a complete copy of the works of the geometer Proclus of Alexandria and, even more important for engineers, a treatise on ancient lifting devices, the Mathematical Collection of Pappus of Alexandria. In the decades that followed, so many manuscripts on Greek mathematics and engineering emerged that it is possible to speak of a “renaissance of mathematics” in fifteenth-century Italy.”

The Rebirth of Classical Studies

Petrarch (c. 1304-1374)
- “Father of Humanism”
- “The First Tourist”

Recovered crumbling Latin texts, including some of Cicero’s works

“Dark Ages”

Petrarch

The Rebirth of Classical Studies

“Each famous author of antiquity whom I recover places a new offence and another cause of dishonor to the charge of earlier generations, who, not satisfied with their own disgraceful barrenness, permitted the fruit of other minds, and the writings that their ancestors had produced by toil and application, to perish through insufferable neglect… they robbed posterity of its ancestral heritage.”

Read Petrarch’s Letter to Posterity

The Robbery

The Periochae of Livy
http://www.livius.org/liv/ln/livy/periochae

The Fall of Carthage
as summarized by some unknown medieval monk:

When Hasdrubal surrendered to Scipio during the final stage of the siege, his wife, who had -only a few days before- been unable to convince her husband to escape to the victor, threw herself from the citadel into the flames of the burning city with her two children.

Lorenzo Valla

Discourse on the Forgery of the Alleged Donation of Constantine [Text]

Textual Criticism

Secularism

Although Petrarch and other Renaissance humanists were devout Christians, they studied the classics for his own enjoyment and edification… an end in themselves.

NOTE: Secularism does not necessarily imply an anti-religious or irreligious mindset.

Humanism

- Pursuit of individualism
- Recognition that humans are creative
- Appreciation of art as a product of man
- Basic culture needed for all
- Life could be enjoyable
- Love of the classical past
“When a mural or altarpiece came to be judged not for its pious effulgence and fitness for the spot in need of decoration, but instead for what we now call its aesthetic merit, art for art’s sake was just below the horizon. Aesthetic appreciation is something more than spontaneous liking; a good eye for accurate representation is not enough; one must be able to judge and talk about style, technique, and originality.”

— Barzun, Jacques, From Dawn to Decadence, Perennial, 2000, p70.
Education in the Renaissance
- Liberal Studies: history, moral philosophy, rhetoric, letters (grammar and logic), poetry, math, astronomy and music
- Education of women
- Goal of ed. = complete citizen

Humanism and History
- Secularization
- Guicciardini (1483 – 1540), History of Italy, History of Florence

VII. Renaissance Philosophy (cont)
- Renaissance philosophy flourishes during Greek revival after 1450
- Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499)
- The teachings of Hermeticism
  - astrology, alchemy, and magic philosophy and theology
  - pantheism (God in nature)
- Giovanni Pico Mirandola (1463-1494)
  - Oration on the Dignity of Man

Renaissance Art
The Rebirth of Classicism
- The proliferation of portraiture and its significance
- The depiction of nudes
- Nudes in medieval art
- Imitation of nature was a primary goal
- Pagan scenes and myths were popular subjects with no apologies to the Church
Characteristics of Renaissance Art

1. Vivid, Bright Colors
2. Perspective – Depth, Realism
3. Balance
4. Classical Themes – Greek, Roman, & Biblical figures predominate

VIII. Renaissance Art and Architecture (cont)

- Boticelli’s “Birth of Venus”
- Giotto’s admiration for Saint Francis
- Status of artist is elevated to cultural hero
- Renaissance art stressed proportion, balance and harmony — and was not otherworldly
- Artistic problems of perspective and composition addressed

Raphael, The School of Athens (1511)

Masaccio, Tribute Money

Primavera – Botticelli, 1482

Depicted classical gods as almost naked and life-size.
Botticelli's Venus Motif.

10¢ Italian Euro coin.

Birth of Venus – Botticelli, 1485

An attempt to depict perfect beauty.

VIII. Renaissance Art and Architecture (cont)

- These problems were solved by emphasizing the mathematical side of painting
- Brunelleschi’s “linear perspective”
- Innovations in Renaissance painting
  - “chiaroscuro”
  - “sfumato”

VIII. Renaissance Art and Architecture (cont)

- Differences between Italian and Northern European painting
- Italian frescoes vs. Northern European altar pieces
- Van Eyck’s oil paintings
- Rome became the center of the High Renaissance (1480-1520)
Donatello, 
*St. Mark* (1413)

Donatello, 
*St. George* (1417)

Donatello’s *David* was the first free-standing nude statue since the classical period.

Donatello, *David* (1430)

Compare to Michelangelo’s

VIII. Renaissance Art and Architecture (cont)
- Raphael (1483-1520)
- Man of great sensitivity and kindness
- Died at the age of 37
- “The School of Athens”
- Famous for frescoes in the Vatican Palace

3. Raffaello Sanzio (1483-1520)
- *Self-Portrait*, 1506
- *Portrait of the Artist with a Friend*, 1518
Raphael Early Life

- Born in Urbino
- Quick learner and hard worker

Time in Rome

- Borrowed techniques from other great artists
- Often sketched women and children
- Architect for St. Peter’s
- Died at 37 and buried in Pantheon

Baldassare Castiglione by Raphael, 1514-1515

- Castiglione represented the humanist “gentleman” as a man of refinement and self-control.

Raphael’s Canagiani Madonna, 1507

Raphael’s Madonnas (1)

- Sistine Madonna
- Cowpepper Madonna
**Raphael's Madonnas (2)**

- Madonna della Sedia
- Alba Madonna

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**The School of Athens – Raphael, 1510 -11**

- One point perspective.
- All of the important Greek philosophers and thinkers are included → all of the great personalities of the Seven Liberal Arts!
- A great variety of poses.
- Located in the papal apartments library.
- Raphael worked on this commission simultaneously as Michelangelo was doing the Sistine Chapel.
- No Christian themes here.

### School of Athens

![School of Athens](image)

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**The School of Athens – Raphael, 1510 -11**

![The School of Athens](image)

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### The School of Athens – Raphael, details

- Plato: looks to the heavens [or the IDEAL realm].
- Aristotle: looks to this earth [the here and now].
More concerned with politics than with theology.
The "Warrior Pope."
Great patron of Renaissance artists, especially Raphael & Michelangelo.
Died in 1513

Pope Leo X with Cardinal Giulio deMedici and Luigi De Rossi by Raphael, 1518-1519
A Medici Pope.
He went through the Vatican treasury in a year!
His extravagances offended even some cardinals [as well as Martin Luther].
Started selling indulgences.

Portrait of Pope Julius II by Raphael, 1511-1512

The Liberation of St. Peter by Raphael, 1514

Madonna of the Meadow
Legacy of Raphael

- Refinement
- Exemplar of the Renaissance
- Expertise:
  - Artist, archeologist, writer, philosopher, teacher

VIII. Renaissance Art and Architecture (cont)

- Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519)
- True Renaissance Man
- Scientist, inventor, engineer and naturalist
- Dissected Corpses
- Short attention span

Early Life

- Madonna of the Rocks
  - Geometrical arrangement of figures
  - Chiaroscuro
  - Sfumato
  - Foreshortening
  - Background treatments
  - Artists live on commissions
The Renaissance “Man”

- Broad knowledge about many things in different fields.
- Deep knowledge/skill in one area.
- Able to link information from different areas/disciplines and create new knowledge.
- The Greek ideal of the “well-rounded man” was at the heart of Renaissance education.

1. Self-Portrait -- da Vinci, 1512

- Artist
- Sculptor
- Architect
- Scientist
- Engineer
- Inventor

1452 – 1519

Milan

- Last Supper
  - Used new fresco method
  - Built into the room’s end
    - Light from the side with the window
    - Door cut below
  - During WWII a bomb hit the monastery
  - Destroyed by erosion

The Last Supper - da Vinci, 1498 & Geometry

The Last Supper - da Vinci, 1498

Refractory
Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie
Milan

Perspective!
Deterioration

- Detail of Jesus
- The Last Supper
- Leonardo da Vinci
- 1498

Da Vinci “Code”:
St. John or Mary Magdalene?

Legacy

- Only 17 paintings
- Notebooks
- Drawings of unfinished works
- Diverted rivers to prevent flooding
- Principles of turbine
- Cartography
- Submarine
- Flying machine
- Parachute
- ...And much more....

Leonardo, the Artist

- The Virgin of the Rocks
- Leonardo da Vinci
- 1483-1486

Leonardo, the Artist:
From his Notebooks of over 5000 pages (1508-1519)

Mona Lisa

- The greatness of the Mona Lisa
  - What do you see?
Mona Lisa – da Vinci, 1503-4

Parody ➔ The Best Form of Flattery?

A Macaroni Mona

A Picasso Mona

An Andy Warhol Mona

A “Mona”ca Lewinsky
Leonardo, the Sculptor

- An Equestrian Statue
- 1516-1518

Mona Lisa OR da Vinci??

Notebooks

- Coded
  - Read R → L with a mirror
- Scientific illustration
  - Used science to support art
“Those sciences are vain and filled with errors which are not borne of experiment, the mother of all certainty.”

Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo, the Architect:
Pages from his Notebook

Study of a central church.
1488

Leonardo, the Architect:
Pages from his Notebook

Plan of the city of Imola, 1502.

Anatomy

Leonardo, the Scientist (Biology):
Pages from his Notebook

An example of the humanist desire to unlock the secrets of nature.

Leonardo, the Scientist (Anatomy):
Pages from his Notebook
Leonardo, the Inventor: Pages from his Notebook

Technology
- Machines
- Hydraulics
- Vehicles on land
- Architecture
- Scientific method

Military

Man Can Fly?

Aeronautics
Leonardo da Vinci....

_O investigator, do not flatter yourself that you know the things nature performs for herself, but rejoice in knowing that purpose of those things designed by your own mind._

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**Leonardo, the Engineer:**

- Pages from his _Notebook_
- A study of siege defenses.
- Studies of water-lifting devices.

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**VIII. Renaissance Art and Architecture (cont)**

- Michelangelo
- Neo-Platonist
- Ceiling of the Sistine Chapel
- Conflict with Pope Julius II
- Incredible energy and endurance
- "Mannerism"

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**Renaissance Rome**
2. Michelangelo Buonarroti

- 1475 – 1564
- He represented the body in three dimensions of sculpture.

Early Life
- Born outside of Florence
- Apprenticed as a sculptor – Master recognized his talents

Leonardo’s Environment and Motivation
- Earning a living (profit)
- Rivalry with other artists
- Scientific curiosity
- Civic duty

Commissions by Medici
- Lived in the Medici palace
- Studied anatomy
- Several pieces for the Medici tombs, etc.

Rome
- Commissioned to do Pieta

The Popes as Patrons of the Arts
- The Pieta
- Michelangelo Buonarroti
- 1499
- Marble
Return to Florence

- Commissioned to do *David*

What a difference a century makes!

15c

16c

Statue of David returns to Italy after 3 years in the USA
The Sistine Chapel
Michelangelo Buonarroti
1508 - 1512

Return to Rome
- Worked on tomb for Julius II
- Sistine Chapel

Sistine Chapel Details
The Creation of the Heavens
The Sistine Chapel Details

Creation of Man

The Last Judgment

Moses
- Received funding from Pope Leo X
- The Moses

The Sistine Chapel Details

The Fall from Grace
VIII. Renaissance Art and Architecture (cont)

- Mannerism’s greatest representative: El Greco (1541-1614)
- Romanesque architecture was revived in Renaissance building projects
- Brunelleschi’s Church of San Lorenzo

Legends

- World’s greatest sculptor
  - See the figure inside the stone and remove excess
- Painter
  - Mannerism
- Poet
- Architect
- Engineer
A Portrait of Savonarola

- By Fra Bartolomeo, 1498.
- Dominican friar who decried money and power.
- Anti-humanist → he saw humanism as too secular, hedonistic, and corrupting.
- The "Bonfire of the Vanities," 1497.
  / Burned books, artwork, jewelry, and other luxury goods in public.
  / Even Botticelli put some of his paintings on the fire!!

The Execution of Savonarola,
By the mid-16c, High Renaissance art was declining. Mannerism became more popular. This painting is a good example of this new artistic style.

Titian and the Venetian School

- Characteristics:
  - Vivid colors
  - Dynamics and dramatic movement
  - Sensuality

Exam questions

(Note: the exam image will not have the helpful blue lines)

The figures in this image are organized in a _________ triangle or pyramid

This is a characteristic design configuration of many paintings in the _________ Renaissance

The Northern and Late Renaissance
The Northern and Late Renaissance

- More religious & economic than artistic
- Humanism with a skeptical twist
- Realism & real people; everyday life
- PRINTING PRESS
- Oil painting
- Portraits (including self-portraits)
- Landscapes

A Darker Humanism

Matthias Grünewald
Isenheim Altarpiece
1515

Compare to Christ Pantocrator-type images

The Reformation

- Martin Luther – a composer himself
- Effort to reform creates new church
- Sides with rulers against peasant revolts
- Printing press disseminates The Word
- Boost to individualism
- Consequences for music: Mass less important; hymns

Failed earlier rebellion

RULERS    CHURCH

PEASANTS − Jan Hus

Unintentional Revolution

RULERS

CHURCH

Martin Luther

PEASANTS out of it
Gossaert’s portrait shows a merchant seated in a cramped yet cozy space, surrounded by the tools of his trade. Scattered over the table are such useful items as a talc shaker used to dry ink, an ink pot, a pair of scales for testing the weight (and hence the quality) of coins, and a metal receptacle for sealing wax, quill pens, and paper. Attached to the wall are balls of twine and batches of papers labeled “miscellaneous letters” and “miscellaneous drafts.” . . .

The artist’s Netherlandish love of detail and texture combine with his admiration for the massiveness of Italian High Renaissance art to achieve here what might be termed a monumentality of the particular. At the same time, the sitter’s furtive glance and prim mouth are enough to inform us of the insecurity and apprehension that haunted bankers in the 1530s, when the prevailing moral attitude was summed up by the Dutch humanist Erasmus, who asked, “When did avarice reign more largely and less punished?”
Is a more realistic painting a **better** painting?

That painting is the most to be praised which agrees most exactly with the thing imitated.

- Leonardo da Vinci

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Dürer, Albrecht

*A Young Hare*

1502

Watercolor and gouache on paper

25 x 23 cm

stunning realism

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Dürer, Albrecht

*The Wire-drawing Mill*

c. 1489. Watercolor and gouache on paper 29 x 43 cm

Hey, where did everybody go?

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Dürer, Albrecht

*Knight, Death and Devil*

1513

Engraving

24 x 19 cm

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Dürer

- new media: prints (wood & metal)
- refines oil painting
- subjects:
  - sacred
  - secular
  - portraits
  - SELF
  - LANDSCAPE

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Jan van Eyck

*Marriage of Giovanni Arnolfini and Giovanna Cenami, 1434*

- single candle = God's eye
- crystal prayer beads
- oranges = ?
- shoes
- imported carpet $$$$
What does a painting mean?

How does a painting mean?
Is there a meaning or meanings inherent in an image?
Why are our pictures puzzles? (James Elkins)

HOLBEIN, Hans
The Ambassadors
1533
Oil on wood
207 x 209.5 cm

BRUEGEL, Pieter
The Ambassadors
1565
Oil on panel
117 x 152 cm

BRUEGEL, Pieter,
The Ambassadors, 1565
Oil on wood, 117 x 152 cm (45 3/4 x 64 1/8 in.)
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

BRUEGEL, Pieter,
The Harvesters, 1565
Oil on wood, 46 1/2 x 63 1/4 in. (118.1 x 160.7 cm)
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

BRUEGEL, Pieter,
Peasant wedding, c. 1568
Oil on wood, 114 x 164 cm (45 x 64 1/2 in.)

IIX. The Renaissance Papacy

- Loss of influence over European nation-states
- Decline in moral prestige and leadership
- Pope Julius II (1503-1513)
- Popes as patrons of Renaissance art
  - Leo X (1513-1521)
- Nepotism used to promote family interest
IX. Spread of Humanism to the Rest of Europe

- The significance of Gutenberg’s printing press
- Explosion of printed materials
  -- By 1500, 40,000 titles printed and between 8-10 million copies
- The impact of movable-type printing presses: research and literacy

IX. Spread of Humanism to the Rest of Europe (cont)

- William Shakespeare (1564–1616)
  -- Globe Theater
  -- Shakespeare returns to classical subjects and genres
  -- His history plays were the most popular at the time
- Macbeth: ambition
- Hamlet: individualism
- Keen sensitivity to sounds and meanings of words

THE EUROPEAN STATE IN THE RENAISSANCE

- The Renaissance State in Western Europe
- New Monarchies
  - France
    -- Impact of 100 years war
    -- Charles VII
    -- Louis XI the Spider King (1461 – 1483)
    -- Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy
  - England
    -- Impact of 100 years war
    -- War of the Roses
    -- Henry VII Tudor (1485 – 1509)

The Unification of Spain

- Spain
  - Marriage of Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon
  - Unification of Castile and Aragón
  - Establishment of professional royal army
  - Religious uniformity
  - The Inquisition
  - Conquest of Granada
  - Expulsion of the Jews

Map 12.2: Europe in the Second Half of the Fifteenth Century
Central, Eastern, and Ottoman Empires

- Central Europe: The Holy Roman Empire
  - Failed to develop a strong monarchical authority.
  - Habsburg Dynasty (1438) -- Holy Roman emperor
  - Austria (Habsburg possessions along the Danube)
  - Dynastic marriages
  - Maximilian I (1493 – 1519)
  - Reichstag
  - Marriage alliances
- The Struggle for Strong Monarchy in Eastern Europe
  - Poland and Bohemia (weak monarchies)
  - Hungary (King Matthias Corvinus)
  - Russia (Ivan III) -- Principality of Moscow

The Ottoman Turks

- The Ottoman Turks and the End of the Byzantine Empire
  - Seljuk Turks spread into Byzantine territory
  - Battle of Kosovo (1389)
  - Constantinople falls to the Turks (1453)
  - Sultan Mehmet II

The Church in the Renaissance

- The Problems of Heresy and Reform
  - John Wycliff (c. 1328 – 1384) and Lollardy
    - No basis in Scripture for papal claims of temporal authority and advocated that the popes be stripped of their authority and property.
    - Bible should be Christians sole authority (vernacular push)
    - Condemned pilgrimages, veneration of saints, rituals
  - John Hus (1374 – 1415)
    - Urged the elimination of worldliness and corruption of the clergy and excessive power of the papacy
    - Burned at the stake (1415) (Council of Constance)
    - Hussite wars

- Church Councils (Frequens and Sacrosancta)
- Execrabilis (Pope Pius II, 1460)
- The Papacy
  - Supreme in Catholic church
  - No longer had asserting supremacy over temporal govts.
  - Moral prestige
The Renaissance Papacy

- The Renaissance Papacy
  - End of Great Schism (1417) to beginnings of the Reformation (early 16th century)
  - Primary concern is governing the Catholic church as its spiritual leader
  - Julius II (1503 – 1513)
    - "Warrior Pope"
  - Nepotism
  - Pope Sixtus IV (1471-1484)
  - Patrons of Culture
  - Leo X (1513 – 1521)
    - Son of Lorenzo de’ Medici

Discussion Questions

- Does the Renaissance represent a sharp break from the Middle Ages or a continuation of the Medieval Period?
- What social changes did the Renaissance bring about?
- How did Machiavelli deal with the issue of political power?
- How did the printing press change European society?
- What technical achievements did Renaissance artists make? Why were they significant?
- What was the relation between art and politics in Renaissance Italy?
- How did the popes handle the growing problems that were emerging in the Church in the Fifteenth and early Sixteenth Century?

Web Links

- Renaissance Secrets
- Explore Leonardo’s Studio
- Leonardo da Vinci on the BBC
- Vatican Exhibit – Rome Reborn
- Renaissance – Focus on Florence
- The Uffizi Gallery – Florence
- Vatican Museums – The Sistine Chapel
- Gutenberg.de
- The War of the Roses
- The Ottoman Website

Renaissance Music

Basic structure

- Words dominate
- Tone painting

Texture

- Middle ages:
  - Monophonic
- Renaissance:
  - Polyphonic
- Late Renaissance:
  - Homophonic
- Harmonies based upon Pythagoras
Music at Court

Dances

Instrumentation unspecified; usually a consort (group) of a family of instruments of uniform timbre

Dances are collected into suites (Baroque) which evolve into symphonies (Classical)

Listening example – a dance

Key info:
• a family of instruments of uniform timbre
• Dance music from the Renaissance

Extra info:
• La Bouree (title & type of dance) by Michael Praetorius (c. 1571-1621)
• German composer of international fame

Crumhorn – an instrument from the Renaissance

http://www.music.iastate.edu/antiqua/instrumt.html

Music at Court

Madrigals

Origin of term obscure
A type of song (see text for longer definition) for multiple voice parts
Text is a rhyming poem, usually with sections of repetition & is usually about Love

Listening example - madrigal

Key info:
• a madrigal
• Note homorhythmic texture & repetitive structure. Chords begin to function as musical units, rather than as the byproducts of independent contrapuntal lines. Be able to identify period – Renaissance

Extra info:
• Now Is the Month of Maying, 1595
• Thomas Morley (1557-1603) Composer mentioned p. 247.
Music at Court

Listening example - madrigal

Key info:
• a madrigal
• TEXT PAINTING
• secular vocal music from the Renaissance

Extra info:
• Thomas Weekes (c. 1575-1623)
• title: As Vesta Was Descending, 1601 (relate to Elizabeth I, reigned 1558-1603)
• piece discussed p. 247

As Vesta was from Latmos hill descending
She spied a maiden Queen the same ascending,
Attended on by all the shepherds’ swain;
To whom Diana’s darlings came running down amain
First two by two, then three by three together
Leaving their Goddess all alone, hasted thither;
And mingling with the shepherds of her train,
With mirthful tunes her presence did entertain.
Then sang the shepherds and nymphs of Diana:
Long live fair Oriana!

Musical Notation

• Invented to publish books of music
• Invented instruments
• Instrumental arrangements appeared

Shakespeare

Part of a general revival of theater, which we need to mention now, because OPERA is about to develop in the Baroque period.

HAMLET - 1602

The Counter-Reformation

Palestrina

Chant a source of musical materials (revival & last gasp of cantus firmus technique)
Very refined; no text painting
Repetition (other than in imitative counterpoint) an anathema (in other words, it’s avoided)
“16th Century Counterpoint” still taught today – why?
To teach control, focus & line
We usually celebrate innovators in history – Palestrina was a consolidator and perfecter of a soon-to-fade style
Palestrina – listening example

Kyrie from *Mass of Pope Marcellus* (*Missa Papae Marcelli*), date of composition, 1562-3; date given in text, 1567, is probably incorrect) See p. 248; the mass is mentioned in text, but is not the one in the example (9.26). A 6-part texture; very conservative in style. The epitome of 16th-century counterpoint.

→ Note forward (but gentle) rhythmic drive.

William Byrd

Catholic composer in Protestant England
p. 243
(DVD *Playing Elizabeth’s Tune*)

Example: **Ave Verum Corpus**
Cross relations subtle comment on text
Homorhythmic texture

Ave Verum Corpus

**COMPOSER:** William Byrd

**PERIOD:** LATE RENAISSANCE

**IDEA TO ASSOCIATE:** Catholic composer in Protestant England
Ideas mark the music?

Summary – Northern and Late Renaissance

• RELIGION/POLITICS – Reformation; much political & religious violence
• IDEAS – a skeptical Humanism
• ART – a realism of everyday life: PORTRAITS, LANDSCAPES; oil painting
• MUSIC – conservative perfection (Palestrina) & new approaches (madrigals)
Back to Italy –  
Color & Mannerism

Palestrina – two more examples
Which one is from a mass for the dead and which one is erotic love poetry?

Gabrieli
Half Renaissance, half Baroque! (Transitional music)

Palestrina – a story
The Church was about to ban polyphonic music from the church, because it obscured the sacred text. In response, Palestrina then composed the Missa Papae Marcelli, which, despite its 6-part texture, features very clear text-setting. The powers-that-be heard its merit & beauty and music was SAVED!
\[\rightarrow\] Charming story, often told, but alas not true.

“a cappella”
• “as in the chapel”
• So, the question is, how was vocal music performed in the chapel? Entirely without instruments, or just without the organ?

Erasmus
• The leading humanist of the age
• Studied ancient languages
  - Translated New Testament
• Criticized Martin Luther
  - ...Free Will and Hyperaspistes
• In Praise of Folly
  - Major work
  - Written in classical style
  - Discoursed on the foolishness and misguided pompousness of the world

In the Early Renaissance, the organ was found mostly in private homes, not in churches. Eventually, by the Late Renaissance, the organ was a part of music in the church.
“There are also those who think that there is nothing that they cannot obtain by relying on the magical prayers and charms thought up by some charlatan for the sake of his soul or for profit. Among the things they want are: wealth, honor, pleasure, plenty, perpetual good health, long life, a vigorous old age, and finally, a place next to Christ in heaven. However, they do not want that place until the last possible second; heavenly pleasures may come only when the pleasures of this life, hung onto with all possible tenacity, must finally depart. I can see some businessman, soldier, or judge taking one small coin from all his money and thinking that it will be proper expiation for all his perjury, lust, drunkenness, fighting, murder, fraud, lying and treachery. After doing this, he thinks he can start a new round of sinning with a new slate.”

— Erasmus in *Praise of Folly*

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**Ghiberti**

- Sculpture competition with Brunelleschi
- *Gates of Paradise*

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**“Sacrifice of Isaac” Panels**

Ghiberti  
Brunelleschi

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**Gates of Paradise**

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**Donatello**

- Saint George
- David
- Mary Magdalene
Early Renaissance Architecture

Filippo Brunelleschi

- Founded Renaissance style
  - Simple lines
  - Substantial walls
  - Structural elements not hidden

Il Duomo Cathedral's dome (Florence)

Filippo Brunelleschi

- Commissioned to build the cathedral dome
  - Use unique architectural concepts
    - Studied Pantheon
    - Used ribs for support
  - Structural elements have been copied on other buildings

Dome Comparison

Il Duomo (Florence) St. Peter's (Rome) St. Paul's (London) US capital

"An innovator in countless other areas [besides the building of the dome of the Cathedral in Florence,] he [Filippo Brunelleschi] had also received, in 1421, the world’s first ever patent for invention...for 'some machine or kind of ship, by means of which he thinks he can easily, at any time, bring in any merchandise and load on the river Arno and on any other river or water, for less money than usual.' Until this point no patent system existed to prevent an inventor's designs from being stolen and copied by others. This is the reason why ciphers were so widely used by scientists and also why Filippo was so reluctant to share the secrets of his inventions with others... The patent for invention was designed to remedy this situation... According to the terms of the patent, any boat copying its design, and thereby violating Filippo’s monopoly, would be condemned to flames."

Filippo Brunelleschi
- Pazzi Palace Chapel
- Compare to Gothic

Early Renaissance Art
- What was different in the Renaissance:
  - Realism
  - Perspective
  - Classical (pagan) themes
  - Geometrical arrangement of figures
  - Light and shadowing (chiaroscuro)
  - Softening of edges (sfumato)
  - Backgrounds
  - Artist able to live from commissions

Masaccio
- Realism and expression
  - The Expulsion from Paradise

Masaccio
- Perspective
  - Tribute Money
  - Size of people diminishes with distance
  - Use of light, shadow and drama

Masaccio
- Perspective (cont.)
  - The Holy Trinity with the Virgin and St. John
  - Geometry
  - Inscription: "What you are, I once was; what I am, you will become."
"The grand innovation that made Renaissance painters certain that theirs was the only right path for art was the laws of perspective. The discovery made them as proud as the men of letters after their discovery of the true path. For some Nature had been rediscovered; for the others, civilization had been restored. Perspective is based on the fact that we have two eyes. We therefore see objects as defined by two lines of sight that converge at a distance, the painter’s ‘vanishing point’ on the horizon. Since those two lines form an acute angle, plane geometry can show the size and place that an object at any distance must be given to the painting to make it appear as if it looks in life… Hence the statement in an early Renaissance treatise that painting consists of three parts: drawing, measurement, and color. One of the uses of color is to create ‘aerial perspective.’ A light blue-gray makes distant objects in the painting look hazy, as they appear to the eye owing to the thickness of the atmosphere. Combined, the two perspectives create the illusion of depth, the three-dimensional ‘reality’ on a flat surface.”

– Barzun, Jacques, From Dawn to Decadence, Perennial, 2000, p73.

Sandro Botticelli

- Pagan themes
- La Primavera
- The Birth of Venus
- Attempt to depict perfect beauty

Classical Pose

| Birth of Venus | Medici Venus (1st century AD) |

Renaissance Man

- Broad knowledge about many things in different fields
- Deep knowledge of skill in one area
- Able to link areas and create new knowledge

Thank You

"In 1423…a Sicilian adventurer named Giovanni Aurispa returned from Constantinople with a hoard of 238 manuscripts written in Greek, a language that scholars in Italy had learned only in the previous few decades. Among these treasures were six lost plays by Aeschylus and seven by Sophocles… But there was also a complete copy of the works of the geometer Proclus of Alexandria and, even more important for engineers, a treatise on ancient lifting devices, the Mathematical Collection of Pappus of Alexandria. In the decades that followed, so many manuscripts on Greek mathematics and engineering emerged that it is possible to speak of a "renaissance of mathematics" in fifteenth-century Italy."

Escher Perspective

"Actually, the true Renaissance man should not be defined by genius, which is rare... It is best defined by variety of interests and their cultivation as a proficient amateur. A Renaissance man or woman has the skill to fashion verses and accompany or sing them; a taste for good letters and good paintings, for Roman antiquities and the new architecture; and some familiarity with the rival philosophies. To all this must be added the latest refinements in manners as practiced in the princely courts, where men and women were expected to talk agreeably, to dance gracefully, to act in masques, and improvise other at-home theatricals. Social life for them was a species of serious work for mutual pleasure, one motive being to fend off boredom. The men must be soldiers; both sexes could be adept at politics. In short, it is the exact opposite of our intellectual and social specialisms, the reverse of our prefabricated hobbies and entertainments."

— Barzun, Jacques, From Dawn to Decadence, Perennial, 2000, p79.

"We will never know whether Cardano [1500-1571] wrote Liber de Ludo Aleae as a primer on risk management for gamblers or as a theoretical work on the laws of probability... Cardano begins Liber de Ludo Aleae in an experimental mode but ends with the theoretical concept of combinations. Above all its original insights into the role of probability in games of chance, and beyond the mathematical power that Cardano brought to bear on the problems he wanted to solve, Liber de Ludo Aleae Liber de Ludo Aleae is the first known effort to put measurement at the service of risk... Whatever his motivation, the book is a monumental achievement of originality and mathematical daring... but the real hero of the story is not Cardano but the times in which he lived. The opportunity to discover what he discovered had existed for thousands of years. And the Hindu-Arabic numbering system had arrived in Europe at least three hundred years before Cardano wrote Liber de Ludo Aleae. The missing ingredients were the freedom of thought, the passion for experimentation, and the desire to control the future that were unleashed during the Renaissance.

— Peter L. Bernstein, Against the Gods; 1996, 54

"For the original Humanists, the ancient classics depicted a civilization that dealt with the affairs of the world in a man-centered way. Those books – poems and plays, histories and biographies, moral and social philosophy – were for the ancients exercises to improve themselves, rather than subordinate to an overriding scheme that put off human happiness to the day of judgment. Humanitas, that is, the studies [in the Renaissance] it involved, opened a vista on the goals that could be reached on earth: individual self-development, action rather than pious passivity, a life in which reason and will can be used both to improve worldly conditions and to observe the lessons that nature holds for the thoughtful... but learning Greek in order to read these authors [ancient Greeks] came late – hardly before the Turks captured Constantinople, capital of the Greek-speaking Byzantine Empire at the mid-point of the 15C."

— Barzun, Jacques, From Dawn to Decadence, Perennial, 2000, p44.

"Every systematic science, the humblest and the noblest alike, seems to admit of two distinct kinds of proficiency; one of which may be properly called scientific knowledge of the subject, while the other is a kind of educational acquaintance with it. For an educated man should be able to form a fair off-hand judgment as to the goodness or badness of the method used by a professor in his exposition. To be educated is in fact to be able to do this; and even the man of universal education we deem to be such in virtue of his having the ability. It will, however, of course, be understood that we only ascribe universal education to one who in his own individual person is thus critical in all or nearly all branches of knowledge, and not to one who has a like ability merely in some special subject. For it is possible for a man to have this competence in some one branch of knowledge without having it in all."

— Aristotle

"I shall not refrain from including among these precepts a new aid to contemplation, which, although seemingly trivial and most ridiculous, is none the less of great utility in arousing the mind to various inventions. And this is, if you look at any walls soiled with a variety of stains, or stones with variegated patterns [...], you will therein be able to see a resemblance to various landscapes graced with mountains, rivers, rocks, trees, plains, great valleys and hills in many combinations or again you will be able to see various battles and figures darting about, strange-looking faces and costumes, and an endless number of things that you can distil into finely rendered forms. And what happens with regard to such walls and variegated stones is just as with the sound of bells, in whose peel you will find any name or word you care to imagine.... [But] first make sure, however, that you have fundamentally mastered the depiction of the parts of the things you would like to set down."

“O investigator, do not flatter yourself that you know the things nature performs for herself, but rejoice in knowing that purpose of those things designed by your own mind.”

Leonardo da Vinci