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| Harrogate Grammar School |
| F984 – The Italian Renaissance A/S Level |
| General Topic Notes |

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| Alex Ford  8/5/2009 |

# Topic 1: What is the Renaissance?

## Lesson 1 – Alexander VI Painting

The rediscovered fragment of a long-lost painting testifying to the Borgia pope's love affair with his beautiful teenage mistress is the focus of a new exhibit in Rome. The painting, which depicts a glowing Baby Jesus, originally formed part of a fresco that adorned the walls of Pope Alexander VI's personal chambers.

Completed in 1492-3 by Renaissance artist Bernardo di Betto, better known as Pinturicchio, the original painting showed the notorious Borgia pope, 62, kneeling in adoration before a Madonna and child. While it was common for artists to weave pontiffs and cardinals into their religious paintings, Alexander VI's decision to have his 18-year-old mistress, Giulia Farnese, pose as the Virgin Mary caused quite a stir, even at the time. In fact, less than 100 years later, the painting had already acquired legendary status, occasioning remark by Giorgio Vasari in his Lives of the Artists:

"Above the door of a room in the Borgia apartments, Pinturicchio painted Signora Giulia Farnese as Our Lady and, in the same painting, put the head of Pope Alexander adoring her,"

Immediately after Pope Alexander VI's death in 1503, the fresco was hidden, first by a wall hanging and then by another painting. Taking over the papacy 150 years later, Pope Alexander VII ordered the fresco torn down and the section showing his notorious predecessor destroyed. Yet the pontiff allowed the other two fragments - one showing Giulia Farnese, the other an unknown baby - to survive, perhaps because of their beauty.

## Hole: Access to History - Chapter 1 pp1-9

### Ancient, Medieval, Renaissance and Modern

* Emulation of the ancient world was the key. Looking back to a Roman past
* 3 key periods: Ancient C8th BC-C5th AD, Medieval C5th AD-C16th AD, Modern C16th AD onwards
* Not the same as the enlightenment – a shift in authority from Christianity to the ancient world
* Rome had fallen from grace as centre of the world when the Empire fell. There were 2 centres of power in the last years, Constantinople and Rome. In 476 Rome ceased to be the home of the Emperor and the seat of power was granted wholly to Constantinople until its fall in 1453
* The vacuum left by the emperor was filled by the Pontifex Maximus, the Chief Priest or Supreme Pontiff i.e. the Pope
* The Humanists who became so important in the Renaissance looked to previous human knowledge i.e. the Ancient World for guidance rather than the Church. However the Church continued in importance and these thinkers were not the empirical scientists of the modern era

### Italy: The Physical Environment

* Venice of massive importance being home to around 120,000 people, interrupted only briefly by the Black Death
* Florence was an important manufacturing centre with raw materials being taken to the city by water being exchanged for finished goods. The waterways came through the city of Pisa which was an important part of the Florentine economy; however this control proved difficult to achieve. The city of Siena also prevented Southern Florentine expansion. Florence had a population around the 90,000 mark
* The Papal States run across the middle of Italy. Each of the little regions were controlled by vicars who literally acted as proxies for a rector. Rome itself was the seat of the Holy See. The basilica of St Peter and Paul was the mother church of Christendom in the West. Next to the church was the Vatican where the Popes lived from 1377 onwards. By 1420, Rome only had around 25,000 people and this was only 54,000 by the end of the Renaissance period
* The kingdom to the south of the Papal States was that of Naples. Naples was an important home of art and learning. However Naples itself was the only really large city south of Rome. As the Renaissance was essentially an urban phenomenon it makes sense that it began here. It was paid for by Capitalist patrons and it could only flourish within this system of commerce

### Renaissance and Rebirth: Definitions

* The term Renaissance is recently modern – around the C19th and obviously refers to rebirth
* Definitions of dates are hazy. The “History of Art” declares it to be the decade of Donatello, Masaccio (a painter) and Brunelleschi (architect) working in Florence, circa 1420. However many would also choose to include the work of Giotto (1266-1337), Petrarch (a humanist scholar, 1304-74) and the poet Boccaccio (1313-75). Boccaccio’s work for instance showed the decline of the Feudal society and the rebirth of banking and commerce
* The 1490s is generally regarded as the beginning of the High Renaissance with the likes of Raphael, Leonardo and Michelangelo. Equally it saw the French invasion of Italy in 1494, the sacking of Rome in 1527 by the Holy Roman Empire and the restoration of the Pope in 1530. The working definition should therefore encompass 1380-1530 at the very least

## Najemy: Italy in the Age of the Renaissance – Chapter 1

### What is the Renaissance

* Could be considered to be an unique period when Italy is effectively autonomous from outside influences: Germany and France before 1300 and Spain after 1530. By the 1300s, Italy's power and importance was waning. The Papacy was transferred from Rome to Avignon in 1309 under Clement V and for nearly 70 years the French Popes governed the Church from outside Italy.
* Italian history between 1260s and 1494 effectively involved no invasions with the exception of Alfonso of Aragon who became integrated anyway. At the other end of the period Italy suffered almost constant invasion after 1494 until the middle of the C16th. Also at this point, the Church restructured giving it much greater power in Italy than ever before. This effectively brought about the end of the Renaissance which had thrived on autonomy.

## Lesson 1: Burke: The Italian Renaissance

### The Arts in Renaissance Italy

* It has become increasingly difficult to talk about the flourishing of art in the Renaissance, it is much more concrete to discuss the development of artistic techniques.
* The Renaissance is a period of artistic firsts. The first oil painting, woodcut, copperplate, printed book. The discovery of the rules of perspective. The rise of free standing statue, the equestrian monument and the portrait bust. In architecture the development of town planning. In literature the rise of comedy, tragedy and pastoral. Humanism came to the fore – studia humanitatis which concerned the study of language: grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history and ethics.
* Renaissance Italians saw themselves more as reviving a classical style than building a new one. Indeed the Gothic styles of Northern Europe are often referred to contemptuously as the “modern” style.
* In architecture there was a very conscious effort to recreate the classical past. The works of Vitruvius were studied and ancient buildings measured to recreate them in Renaissance Italy. Not only the physical features: Doric, Ionic or Corinthian columns but also the rules for combining the different elements.
* Painting was more tricky as little survived of Roman painting. Botticelli’s work the Birth of Venus is an attempt for example to recreate the style of the Greek painter Apelles.
* In reality however the Renaissance artists borrowed both from the recent past as well as the classical world, following neither mode completely. The religious imagery of Christianity was not driven out by the ancient gods but rather coexisted.
* In the fields of scholarly study as well humanism did not remove scholastic philosophy. Leading neoplatonists such as Marsilo Ficino, Lorenzo de Medici and even Leonardo da Vinci were avid readers of contemporary philosophical scholarship as well as classical texts.
* The Renaissance has been seen as an important step in the production of more accurate representations of reality. Many argue against this but it does seem to be a general trend of a society interested in a very realistic reproduction of some aspects of nature.
* Secularity is another key feature often associated with the Renaissance. Between 1420 and 1550 the number of secular paintings being produced rose from 5% to 20%, yet the line between the sacred and the secular was not well defined in the period!
* Much like secularism individualism was a new concept rather than a dominant one.
* There was also a trend towards much closer links between disciplines. Arts and sciences impacted upon one another as they developed and became more advanced. Brunelleschi’s box which showed his mastery of linear perspective was a mixture of optics and art. Equally Leon Battista Alberti’s churches were a fusion of architecture and mathematical rules.

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| 1. How does Burke define the key changes in art during the Renaissance? 2. What evidence is there that the Renaissance was attempting to reconstruct the classical? 3. What evidence is there that the Renaissance could be characterised as realistic, secular and individualistic? |

# Topic 2: What were the causes of the Renaissance?

## Lesson 2: Najemy: Italy in the Age of the Renaissance – Chapter 1

### Growth of Cities

* The cities were a contentious point. Dante, writing in 1300 declared that the cities were defending themselves at the expense of the only true authority, the Empire. Yet by 1400 the Florentine Humanists were lauding the defence of liberty by the city states. By 1500, Machiavelli was blaming the Church for the divisions in Italy.
* The independence of Italian cities in the 1300s made them centres of wealth and industry. Their autonomy from the country as a whole produced great wealth and innovation. Before the Black Death, Italy had 4 of Europe's 5 largest cities, Venice, Milan, Genoa and Florence, all with populations over 100,000.
* Each city was a political battleground with its own rewards, civic identity and unique history. Dante saw the city as a factor which spanned generations, linking himself to Virgil who was also born in Mantua. The political autonomy of the next two centuries kept the idea of the city alive during the Renaissance in a way that the cities of Europe could not hope to imagine.
* Italian cities generated civilisation much as their classical counterparts had centuries before. The city had created the idea of Italian civilisation stretching back to antiquity. Humanists praised these cities as moral and civic spheres in which virtues could be perfected. Coluccio Salutati urged the people of Bologna to reject the Pope in 1377 and exist as freemen running their own affairs. In Florentine Histories, written in 1520, Machiavelli made the city the repository of liberty.

### The Rise of Capitalist Patrons & Expansion of Trade

* In the C13th, the population of cities exploded with a great influx of people from the countryside. The numbers of bankers, tradesmen, textile workers retailers, teachers and lawyers grew rapidly. New categories of urban dwellers began to spring up, each using a gild to control and protect their activities and identity. There was generally tension between the ruling, landed elites and these middle class, educated tradesmen. There was constant tension between the gilds of different rank.
* The landed nobles of Italy did not enjoy the same protection as their European counterparts as there was no over-arching monarchy. By 1300 the challenge of the urban classes was at its peak. Almost universally between 1250 and 1400 the urban popolo challenged the elites and gradually, to greater or lesser extent, assumed control of the major cities.
* The elites did recover under the signorie and oligarchical republics of the C15th. The popolo therefore did not overthrow the elites but rather were at a constant state of dispute with them.
* By the 1400s however, the elites were being given more sway again as the popolo began to fear the insurrection of the lower classes. However the interaction of the popolo with the elites had produced an unique synergy whereby the elites began to be more interested in cultural change and humanist ideas.
* These elites therefore began funding key changes in the commissioning of arts and cultural projects within Italy. This was a long term subjugation of the elites to the interest of the popolo, even if they did not maintain power themselves. Although most Humanists were not elites, a great many Humanist ideas began to creep into the upper echelons.

## Cook: Why Renaissance, Why Florence?

### Growth of cities

* Trade made the 5 key city states very rich: Florence, Naples, Milan, Venice and the Papal States. A great rivalry existed between the city states of Italy which encouraged the building of ever more ostentatious works.
* Italy was the most urbanised country in Europe – towns and cities raised money through tax which was in turn spent on civic improvements.
* City states were political organizations. Within cities, the leading family or families held power and were prepared to use every means from ballot rigging to political assassination in their bid to keep it.

### Expansion of trade

* Florence was fed largely by the wool and cloth trade with 270 woollen mills and 83 factories producing materials such as silk, brocade and damask.
* As trade increased with the Islamic Empires, small trickles of rescued Roman and Greek knowledge began to flow back into Italy. Equally after the capture of Constantinople, many ideas from the East were brought back to Europe through refugees

### Rise of rich powerful capitalist patrons

* Gilds had massive influence in Florence and other cities. Members of the gilds of Florence aged over 25 could be involved in the governance of the city. These gild vied for influence and displays of power and often commissioned works to be created for their glory
* Wealth allowed the rich the luxury of investigating and propagating Humanist ideas.
* Lorenzo the Magnificent (in power between 1469 and his death in 1492) was a humanist, a passionate book collector and an enthusiastic patron of the arts.
* By the 15th century a number of groups were eager to demonstrate their wealth through artistic patronage. The guilds constantly strove to outdo each other with the extravagance of their artistic commissions, and wealthy individuals built palaces and commissioned altar-pieces or frescoes in churches for their personal glorification and spiritual welfare.

### Technical progress

* Printing presses allowed the transmission of ideas rapidly. People such as Aldus Manutius created cheap octavo books of classical texts without the overlaying of annotations from Christian scholars.

### Malaise of the Church

* Church was preoccupied with internal difficulties.

## Burke: The Italian Renaissance

### The Historians: The Discovery of Social and Cultural History

* There has long been debate about why the cultural revolution should have centred on Italy. Even the Renaissance humanists themselves tried to explain why civilisation flourished in ancient Rome and grew again in contemporary Florence.
* Giorgio Vasari tried to explain it in this way: a presence of critical minds not satisfied with mediocrity; it was necessary to be industrious at all times and constantly use ones wits; a desire for greed and honour in men of every occupation.
* Historians of the Enlightenment offered two main explanations for the growth of the Renaissance: liberty and opulence. The historians of this period believed that liberty encouraged commence and in turn commerce encouraged culture. Scottish historians, even Adam Smith were fond of this explanation.
* By contrast Hegel suggested that it was a spirit of an age which developed the Renaissance. He argued that the flowering of the arts, the revival of learning and the discovery of America allowed men to expand spiritually.
* Marx and Engels returned the debate to commerce in 1846 explaining that supply and demand determined the Renaissance. Raphael could only be successful if there were demand for his work. The demand then depends on the division of labour and the conditions of human culture arising from this. Other Marxists when on to argue that even without Raphael, Michelangelo or da Vinci, the Renaissance would still have happened.

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| 1. How does Vasari try to explain why the Renaissance occurred in Italy? 2. How have historians disagreed over what caused the Renaissance? Who do you agree with most? |

# Topic 3: How far did the Renaissance represent a break with the Middle Ages and how much continuity was there?

## Lesson 1: Burke: The Renaissance (Slim)

### The Myth of the Renaissance

* The Renaissance as a concept with a capital letter goes back to the C19th with historians such as Michelet and Burckhardt. For Burckhardt the Renaissance was defined by individualism and modernity.
* Burckhardt states that in the Middle Ages “human consciousness…lay dreaming or half awake beneath a common veil” but that in Renaissance Italy “this veil first melted into air…man became a spiritual individual…the first born amongst the sons of modern Europe…” For him the Renaissance began with Petrarch, the first modern poet.
* Burckhardt’s clean distinction between Medieval and Renaissance is a myth. Equally a myth of historical falsehood but also one on literary terms – a place of larger than life characters.
* Even those who lived during the Renaissance described this idea of enlightenment and rebirth. In 1430 Bruni describe Petrarch as one capable of recalling the light of ancient elegance and style. Erasmus told Leo X that this was a golden age and Vasari showed the development of rediscovery in art from Giotto to Leonardo to Raphael and reaching a pinnacle in his own master Michelangelo. Yet these images are of course misleading
* One key criticism of the idea of Renaissance being a break is that Renaissance Men were largely Medieval. Even Petrarch has more in common with the Dark Ages than he would like to admit:
  + Castiglione’s Book of the Courtier draws heavily on ideas of Medieval courtly behaviour and courtly love in addition to those notions from Plato’s Symposium or Cicero’s on Duties.
  + Machiavelli’s The Prince belongs to a medieval tradition of writing books to advise rulers and kings.
* Secondly, the Renaissance is not a singular event. There were a number of renascences in the Middle Ages, notably in the C12th and the age of Charlemagne C8-9th. Others such as Toynbee have pointed out that the Renaissance was more of a spread of learning from the Middle East.
* There was no mythical Italian Renaissance at all. For every Michelangelo or Raphael there was an Ibn Khaldun (historian ) of North Africa or a Hokusai (artist) of Japan. It still is a useful concept however to refer to a cluster of important cultural changes.

1. How was the Renaissance presented by C19th historians such as Burckhardt?
2. Why has Burckhardt’s interpretation of the Renaissance been described as a “myth”?
3. How have Medievalists sought to challenge the notion that Renaissance was a break with the Middle Ages?
4. Is there any value in demarking a Renaissance period?

## Lesson 1 – Notes to go with Burke - Slim

### Italy: Revival and Innovation

* What is most distinctive about the Renaissance is its wholehearted attempt to revive another culture. It is not the only feature but is an important place to begin.

#### Architecture

* One key area where imitation of the classical is easily seen is in architecture. One main reason for this was the survival of many Roman buildings: Pantheon, Colosseum, Arch of Constantine and Theatre of Marcellus. Architects such as Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446), Donato Bramante (1444-1514) and Andrea Palladio (1508-80) went to Rome to study and measure these buildings. This was supplemented by the survival of works by Vitruvius whose 10 books of architecture were published in 1486. Vitruvius talked of the need for symmetry and the correct “orders” ie. The appropriate use of Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns.
* Classical proportions were followed in buildings such as Brunelleschi’s church of San Lorenzo, Leon Battista Alberti’s San Francesco at Rimini and indeed Bramante’s San Pietro in Rome which followed the circular form of a Roman temple and fully utilised the Doric order.
* Yet the continuities with the Middle Ages were undeniable. Brunelleschi took the Florentine baptistery as a model for architectural reforms, yet it turned out to be a Tuscan Romanesque temple built in the C9th.

#### Sculpture

* For sculpture there were no ancient texts like those of Vitruvius, however sculptors such as Donatello still visited Rome to study the remains of Roman sculpture.
* By 1500 it was fashionable to collect ancient marbles – Pope Julius II was an avid collector. The Renaissance sculptures generally imitated the classical styles and genres: portrait busts, equestrian monuments and scenes from mythology – Michelangelo’s Bacchus is an excellent example – many believed it to be a real antique.

#### Painting

* There was very little to follow in terms of paining. Indeed little was found until the discovery of Pompeii in the C19th . Painters still were encouraged by their patrons however to imitate the ancients. To do this they needed to borrow from sculpture or try to recreate famous lost works from literary descriptions. Botticelli’s Calumny follows a description given by the Greek writer Lucian of a famous work by the painter Apelles. There were few attempts however to recreate ancient styles.
* The rise of portraiture seems to have been due to Roman influences. The side on portraits emulated the Roman emperors from coins and were generally cut short around the shoulders like marble busts. It was only in the 1500s that Leonardo, Raphael and others began producing three-quarter or full portraits or portraits set in scenes.
* One major development which did not refer back to antiquity was the development of the rules of perspective. The status of artists also gradually grew over the period.
* There was again a fusion of the Medieval with the Classical – most obviously in Christian themes.

#### Literature & Scholarship

* Literature and learning were also considered to be part of the arts. Indeed they were seen as a higher form of art than the mechanical arts. Painting, architecture and sculpture tended to be put in the same category as agriculture, weaving and navigation.
* The revival in literature was more a revival of language – that is to say classical Latin. Lorenzo Valla complained in 1440 that no-one had spoken Latin correctly in many centuries and even fewer could read it properly.
* Literary scholars revived the genres of ancient Rome: the epic, comedy, ode, pastoral etc… Petrarch’s epic “Africa” was devised around 1350 and followed many Roman conventions when telling the story of a great Roman general including beginning in the middle and alternating deeds on earth with the discussions of gods. Equally Tasso’s 1581 epic “Jerusalem Delivered” is a profoundly Christian story delivery in a classical style.
* Most early scholarship in the humanist field was conducted in Latin – it was nearly 100 years before the classical styles found their way into the vernacular.
* Humanists had a very rigid view of the structure of humanity. Many saw scholarship as the ideal, however scholars such as Leonardo Bruni, a chancellor of Florence saw a life of action and contemplation as necessary.
* Humanists saw their role as reviving Italy after the Barbarian invasions. They saw themselves as much more closely affiliated with ancient Romans than even their civic neighbours. They attempted in every respect to imitate their forbears and distance themselves from the Barbaric Middle Ages
* Again continuities were evident with the Middle Ages. When Poggio devised the Italic script he was not following a classical example but a pre-Gothic exemplar. Castiglione’s Courtier describes a role which would have been unknown in ancient Rome.
* The most obvious continuity with the Middle Ages was the persistence of Christian belief. Petrarch, Valla, Alberti and Ficino were all clerics whilst the humanist Piccolomini became Pope Pius II. Many works became hybrids, dealing with Christian themes in a classical style. There is much debate about whether the humanists were pagans paying lip service to Christianity or the other way around.
* Equally the Renaissance was largely a Northern and urban phenomenon. The paintings and other works of the Renaissance presuppose a level of knowledge that suggests an elitism. In reality much of Italy continued as the rest of Europe did. Only three social groups had an interest: humanists, rulers and artists.

## Alberi: ‘Alcuin and the New Athens’

### Alcuin and Classical Tradition

* Kingdom of Charlemagne occupied the remnants of the Roman Empire. People were united by a single faith, Christianity
* Charlemagne used the church to help him govern effectively.
* He established monasteries, universities and church hierarchy. Then upon his conquest of Lombardy, he became closer to the papacy who crowned him in AD800
* Charlemagne undertook ecclesiastical reform in the 770s he inaugurated a cultural revival which historians call the Carolingian Renaissance. Defining its qualities has proved difficult, since the idea of a renaissance evokes images of rationalism, secularism, and revived interest in classical literature. While the Carolingian Renaissance displayed these qualities, its strongly religious character still predominated.
* Alcuin was a deacon and master of the cathedral school at York. In 799 he declared that “perhaps a new Athens might be built in Francia, only much more excellent.”
* Alcuin asserted that Christian Francia already had achieved a higher wisdom than the secular and rationalistic philosophy of ancient Athens, which was 'learned only in the Platonic disciplines' or liberal arts. Alcuin claimed the Franks possessed in Christ's teaching the key to wisdom superior to 'all the wisdom of academic exercise'. The Christian wisdom of Francia, 'endowed besides with the fullness of the sevenfold holy Spirit, is superior to all the dignity of secular wisdom'.
* However, Alcuin knew about Greek philosophers only through the works of Latin authors rather than retranslating his own works as was the Renaissance custom.
* With its imitation of classical literature and fascination with logic, this Renaissance brought about a slight shift away from a purely religious value system, however, Alcuin was all too aware that it was easy for scholars to overstep the line and commit acts of heresy. This heavy doctoring by the religious authorities therefore suggests a less Renaissance-like change.

## Ball: Universe of Stone (Review)

### Breaks with the Middle Ages?

* The theologians and philosophers of Chartres were keenly interested in observing nature and thinking for themselves, rather than merely searching palimpsests for the opinions of classical authorities
* Adelard of Bath, who studied at Chartres translated the works of Arab mathematicians into Latin. ‘I do not detract from God. Everything that is, is from him, and because of him. But [nature] is not confused and without system, and so far as human knowledge has progressed it should be given a hearing. Only when it fails utterly should there be recourse to God.’

# Topic 4: What were the main characteristics of architecture, painting and sculpture in the Italian Renaissance?

## Lesson 1: Hole: Access to History – Chapter 8

### The Patrons of Art

* For every great master of the Renaissance there were hundreds of poor quality, low paid artists churning out conservative junk to be sold as devotional items.
* Art was business, and this business boomed as there were great businessmen with disposable wealth. The patrons would commission artists on several occasions rather than one offs.
* There are 6 key sources of patronage: The Church, whose commissioned works formed the devotional fabric of buildings; the Gilds, who used the artists to raise their profile; Individuals, these generally had to be very rich or from a powerful family and might use an artist to document an important event; Confraternities, who like churches used the devotional paintings as part of their chapels; Civic governments, who commissioned artists to make their civic buildings the envy of other states; and finally the court of the prince might well try to lure artists into exclusive contracts.
* There are 4 key reasons for patronage: piety, honour, pleasure, consumption. Profit was seldom a motive.

### Patrons, Artists and Workshops

* Patrons had a massive impact on the final works of art. Contracts were entered into denoting the exact content of the artworks. Often this contract included an initial drawing or miniature model to be approved.
* Costs were dictated by the patron as well including the materials to be used and sometimes even the colours. The Virgin Mary for instance always wore blue as this was an expensive pigment made from Lapis Lazuli.
* The contracts themselves differed from those which paid by the square foot (looked down upon by the humanist elite) to those which specified a payment by time. Some indeed were insured against future degradation in quality.
* Artists also employed teams of under-artists who painted the less important aspects of the image. The below text is taken from a contract entered into by Benozzo Gozzoli for an image begun in 1461
  + “First in the middle of the said picture, the figure of Our Lady on the throne, in the manner and form and with the same decorations as the picture above the High Altar in San Marco, Florence. And on the right hand side of the picture, beside Our Lady, the figure of John the Baptist in his accustomed clothing, and beside him the figure of St Zenobius in pontifical vestments; and then the figure of St Jerome kneeling, with his usual emblems and on the left hand side the following saints: first, beside Our Lady, the figure of St Peter, and beside him St Dominic, and beside St Dominic the figure of St Francis kneeling, with every customary ornament...And all the azure used for the picture must be very fine azure...And on the other hand, the said Domeneco promises in their name to pay the said Benozzo for all his expenses, gold, gesso, and colours, 300 lire... 100 lire to be paid at present and 80 lire in six months from now, and the rest of the sum when the said painting is finished; and to have this, the said Benozzo must furnish everything by the beginning of November next year at the latest.”

## Burke: The Italian Renaissance – “Patrons and Clients”

### Who are the Patrons?

## Lesson 2: Burke: The Italian Renaissance – “Artists and Writers”

### Artists

#### Recruitment

* Artists are very much the cultural exception. Less than 1% of artists were in fact women. Where women do feature, they are oftent he daughters of artists. Tintoretto’s daughter Marietta for example is known to have painted portraits. There was also a sculptress names Properzia de Rossi who earned the attention of Vasari.
* The region from which someone came and even their town skewed their chance of becoming an artist. Rome for example produced only 3 artists of note. The importance of Rome was more as a centre of patronage than of producing artists. By comparison, tiny Urbino produced 7 noted artists.
* Only 4 artists or writers came from a peasant background. Of the rest: 114 were children of artisan, 84 nobles and 48 children of merchants. Artists in particular tended to come from artistic families. In some cases there were whole dynasties. Masaccio’s brother, Giovanni was also a painter as were Giovanni’s descendants. Tintoretto had two artist sons and an artist daughter.
* It could be argued that this was a genetic inheritance of genius, more likely is that painting, sculpture and architecture were seen as family businesses. Indeed the painters’ guild at Padua charge 2 lire for entry unless the person was the son of an artist in which case the fee halved.
* Art was generally only open to a limited range of people. It was looked down upon by the rich and influential and was too alien and inaccessible to the peasant population. However it was mainly the outsiders who brought innovation: Brunelleschi, Masaccio, Leonardo were all sons of notaries whilst Michelangelo was the son of a patrician.

#### Training

* In the overwhelming majority of cases, painters and sculptors were trained as apprentices. At the beginning of the period the process was very much like this:
  + To begin as a shop boy studying for one year, to get practice in drawing… next to serve in the shop under some master, to learn the skills of the trade and to begin working up to the use of colours; and to get experience in grinding the gessos (white ground used in paint); and to learn how to gesso canvasses, and modelling and scraping them for a good six years. Then to get experience in painting, embellishing with mordents, making cloths of gold, getting practice in working on the wall, for six more years, never leaving off, either on holidays or work days.
* Thirteen years does seem uncommonly long. The Venetian guild required an apprenticeship of 5 years followed by 2 as a journeyman. Most artists started very young, in the range of 9 to 13. Michelangelo was 13 and Leonardo 15 when he began. Few artists had much schooling, indeed Leonardo, Robbia, Bramante and Brunelleschi are quite unique in the amount of learning they had done.
* The apprentices were generally brought into their master’s extended family. In some cases the apprentices were paid but this was only usually towards the end of their apprenticeship. In some cases the apprentices even took the name of their masters
* A few main workshops seem to have been central to the development of art over the Renaissance: Lorenzo Ghilberti for example had Donatello, Michelozzo, Uccello and Masolino; whilst Verrocchio saw the likes of da Vinci, Botticini, Domenico Ghirlandaio and Perugino. The most important of all of the workshops however was probably that of Raphael in which pupils included Romano, Penni, Caravaggio, Vaga and Lotti.
* At the beginning of the Renaissance apprentices were made to copy drawings in the shop to give them an idea of how to create the design of the workshop. Cosimo Tura saw his designs as so important that when he died in 1471 he gave them a special mention in his will. As individualistic style came to be more important towards the 1520s the drawings lost their importance and they became a mark of poorer artists.

#### Organisation

* The main unit of production for both sculptors and painters was the workshop. Worskhop masters generally employed flexible teams to produce a wide variety of goods. Many helpers or garzoni were employed for a specific skill. In Raphael’s workshop, Giovanni da Udine concentrated on “animals and grotesques”
* Most major workshops were passed down in generations. For smaller masters who could not afford to employ many people, it was often necessary to share rent with another painter.
* Sculptors had a similar arrangement. Donatello was in a partnership with Michelozzo. Assistants here were more necessary due to the huge amount of work involved in sculpting.
* Architects tended to work on a larger scale for obvious reasons. In Venice, building firms tended to be small as master masons could only employ 3 people, when a large project was needed an entrepreneur (padrone) would take the contract for the whole work then subcontract. On the other extreme there was only one large firm employed on the building of St Peters between 1520 and 1530.
* Most architects gave work teams orders by mouth as the drawings were rarely enough to go on. Often problems arose as the workmen tried to adhere to tradition rather than following the instructions meaning innovation was often stifled unless the architect was there in person.
* On a larger scale all artists and masons belonged to a guild. In Milan the painters had their own guild but elsewhere they formed part of a larger guild. In Florence they came under the umbrella of the guild of physicians and apothecaries although they had a religious confraternity under the auspices of St Luke.
* In Venice the guilds were particularly strong and issued fines to keep people in check. In Florence their influence was less as not all craftsmen were forced to join. Botticelli only joined at the end of his career and as a result more foreign artists came to work in Florence.

## Lesson 3: Burke: The Italian Renaissance – “The Uses of Art”

### Religion

* Much of what we see of art in Renaissance culture would have been interpreted at the time as devotional images.
* There is a distinction to be made however between standard religious devotions and those which are thought to have possessed a religious power.
* Leonardo for example painted a thousand eyed Argus to guard the treasury of the Duke of Milan – how much of this was true is debateable but there certainly were beliefs in the Talismanic qualities of many paintings.
* Devotional images were a particular favourite of religious patrons. These could be imitations of the cross or small versions of the crucifixion done in woodcut which then acted as a stimulus to meditation.
* For religious confraternities there was a demand for tavolettes which were held up to comfort the condemned as they were executed. These often depicted the martyrdom of the saints.
* Increasing lay involvement in religion over the C14th and 15th meant that more rich families were part of a larger religious group. Inventories show that devotional images adorned the rooms of most wealthy families. Indeed Giovanni Dominici, a Dominican friar recommended that images be placed in all rooms for a positive moral effect on children. Massacre of innocents and St John for boys and plenty of virgins for girls.
* Ex votos were another form of painting demanded. These recorded a vow made to a saint in a time of need. These were the kind of thing that more people would have owned. Most of these would not be of a high quality but they do include some famous examples.
* There were also didactic religious paintings. Very much a continuation with the Middle Ages – these were used to depict key biblical truths. Many popes commissioned didactic works to assert their supremacy. This stepped up in times of crisis and especially after the Reformation began.

### Politics

* One key application of art to the purpose of propaganda was in the production of medals. Alfonso of Aragon had a medal made by Pisanello with an inscription “Victorious and a Peacemaker”. This was also done by other rulers. Lorenzo de Medici commemorated the removal of the Pazzi Conspirators for example. The medals were cheap and easy to reproduce.
* Statues were an excellent way of glorifying regimes. Florence commissioned Donatello’s David and Goliath to commemorate their victories over neighbouring states such as Milan. When the Florentine Republic was restored in 1494 after the French invasion, Michelangelo’s David echoed Donatello’s originals.
* Again with paintings key figures were displayed and in 1494 the Great Council was depicted to hang in Florence. When the Medici returned in 1513 the paintings were destroyed.
* The glorification of the family and of the guild was another key factor. Marital chests were given to daughters to remind them of family history.

## Lesson 4: Hole: Access to History – Chapter 8

### The Art of the Early Renaissance

* Some of the key artists represent the evolution of art in the Renaissance period, although to say that it improved may well be pushing our definitions.
* Developments not only happened over time however but also in different places and in different disciplines.
* An exciting artistic climate of development existed around 1420 when the architect Brunelleschi, the painter Masaccio and the sculptor Donatello were all working in Florence. They influenced each other a lot and therefore are as important for this as their individual contributions.
  + Brunelleschi (1377-1446) moved architecture to a more classical base. The pointed arches of the Middle Ages were replaced by rounded Romanesque ones, topped by triangular windows. He famously designed and superintended the cupola of the Florence Cathedral, a dome which had escaped the skills of architects for over 50 years. Equally he also designed the Innocenti Hospital. He also created the notion of single point perspective as a means of representing a 3D building.
  + Masaccio (1401-1428) took on some of the ideas of perspective into his paintings. His reputation is based on 3 key works: an altar piece for the church in Pisa, a painting of the Trinity at the church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence and his frescoes in the Brancacci Chapel in the Carmelite church. In this final image - “Tribute Money” - perspective is used to place Christ's head over the vanishing point. Here several events are shown in a single scene, something which stopped in the High Renaissance. Also Jesus and his followers have been dressed in Romanesque clothing with a uniform light source casting shadows.
  + Donatello (1386-1466) also influenced Masaccio a great deal through his sculpture. Masaccio's fine attention to the posture of the people was borrowed from Donatello's work. Donatello worked in both marble and bronze and it was Donatello's casting of life sized bronze statues which really linked him with the Classical era. David was his most famous work which was remarked upon for its anatomical accuracy, especially as it was a nude, the most difficult of all sculptures.
  + Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510) used symbolism and exaggeration to create allegory in his paintings. Although more than capable of producing anatomically accurate works, he often chose not to. Primavera for example is a highly stylised piece which uses exaggerated characterisations to give an insight on human nature.

### The Art of the High Renaissance

* The term High Renaissance generally refers to the time period from 1490-1520 although it is quite difficult to make such a distinction.
  + Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519) has a reputation and influence which outstrips the body of work he produced. His notebooks and drawings are of as much significance as his paintings. Although he lived to the age of 70 we only have around 12 paintings, most famously: the Last Supper in Santa Maria della Grazi, two similar versions of the Virgin on the Rocks, the Mona Lisa and the Virgin and St Anne.
  + Raphael (1483-1520) changed his style quite often as he moved with time, place and patrons. His early works are generally of an old fashioned and conservative style, paintings such as The Wedding of the Virgin are a blend of serene characters and perfect geometry. His style changed dramatically when he came to Florence and saw the work of Da Vinci in 1504 however it was in 1508 when he went to Rome that he really came into his element. This is symbolic of the move of the Renaissance from Florence to Rome. As Michelangelo began his work on the Sistine chapel, Raphael was working on frescoes on the papal apartments.
  + Michelangelo (1475-1564) was definitely a genius of the Renaissance period. He was foremost a sculptor in marble, in which he was prolific. His Catholic faith was a major influence upon his work. His reputation was established in Florence with the huge marble sculpture of David. His sculpture was loaded with symbolism. He was a reluctant painter but was persuaded by Julius II to paint the Sistine Chapel from 1508-12 and then by Paul III to paint the Last Judgement on the wall behind the altar from 1536-41. The paintings of Michelangelo are especially important as they unify the classical and the Christian. Naked men on the ceiling of the Chapel show the classical whilst the figure of Adam shows the Christian world. Around the edges stand the Roman sibyls whose prophecies foretold Christ as well as the Old Testament prophets.

# Topic 5: What were the main developments in intellectual enquiry, political thought and ideas?

## Lesson 0: Imperato Activity – p139-41

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Literature | Politics | History |
| Major practitioners & their works | Dante’s Divine Comedy – Italian poem 1302-21  Boccaccio Decameron – stories about Black Death by Florentines 1350s  Castiglione Book of Courtier | Machiavelli The Prince | Guicciardini focused on decline of states and rise of signori |
| Renaissance Influences | Wrote about moral issues connected by a common language.  Castiglione created Renaissance man concept  Created rounded characters  Literature more important later. | Moved away from idea of a ruler who should act in the interests of God – suggested rulers should behave in unchristian ways | Focused on ideas and arguments about history – moved away from simply recording facts  Drew conclusions that focused on the actions of men not the will of God |
| Medieval Influences | Castiglione still focused on good family standing, chivalry, grace and etiquette | Many princes continued to be influenced by Christian ideas and therefore challenged Machiavelli |  |

## Aspects of European History: Renaissance Humanism

* Humanism the basic source of inspiration for Renaissance
* Began dismantling the “superstructure” of the medieval interpretations of classical works – emphasis on understanding their original forms – insistence on grammatical precision and stylistic purity
* Greek revival very important as language had been almost lost. By end of C15th Greek revival well underway thanks to scholars like Manuel Chrysoloras visiting Florence in 1390s and fall of Constantinople in 1453
* 27 Greek works published 1494-1515
* Important Humanist circles established eg. Platonic Academy in Florence – 1439 – much early work merely commented on classical works as da Vinci noted (he was annoyed at being kept out of the inner circle)
* Humanism however was bigger than the sum of its parts – the phrase by Protagoras “Man is the measure of all things” became an important maxim – focused attention on nature and the potential of man rather than the divine
* Seen in painting eg figures more lifelike; architecture more human scale; writing and the introspective analysis of character
* Humanist historians challenged the ideas that the medieval world was more enlightened than the past – showed a world of superstition and barbarism: Rabelais wrote “Out of the thick Gothic night our eyes are opened to the glorious torch of the sun”
* Produced 2 major forms as it spread: Christian humanism which occasionally received Papal sanction. The second type was secular humanism – powerful influence on historians and Italians more generally
* Christian humanism was the mainstream – had a very religious element in search of perfection. Neo Platonism for example focused on the spread of biblical study and a leaning to Christianity in the arts
* Neo Platonism born from Plato’s “Republic” and “Laws” – a contrast to Aristotelian Scholasticism
* Aristotle had said that man was naturally social and political – this led Thomas Aquinas (1235-74) to develop concept which showed a complex system of obligation to God and rulers – stifled thought and set about rationalising and justifying the existence of religious authority.
* Neo-platonism attempted to bypass the bind of scholasticism, returning more directly to the ideas of Plato. This took on a Christian theme in the works of Pico della Mirandola and Ficino – positive and hopeful
* Also impacted on art with artists such as da Vinci aiming to portray not just man but also “the intention of his mind” – this was often played out in religious scenes. Can be seen in Michelangelo with God as the idealised man
* Architecture also affected with circular temples rather than elongated naves – not man being led to the altar but man at the centre.
* Civic humanism also developed in the period. Promoted active involvement in civic affairs and affairs of state
* Aimed to show the development of human history without an overarching divine narrative. Bruni and Biondo in C15th and Machiavelli and Guicciardini in C16th
* Machiavelli’s the Prince encouraged rulers to read history and learn from the past actions of men
* Neoplatonism offered a more individual approach to religion than had Scholasticism. There was also a questioning of the meaning of some of the core scriptural passages
* Humanism knocked holes in Church dogma that allowed the rise of broader criticism.
* In a civic sense, humanism was used to analyse events, however this did not always mean that God was gone from the actions of rulers. Machiavelli in particular was denounced through the C19th.

## Lesson 1: Hole: Access to History – Chapter 6

### Latin Language and the Roman Republic

* There was always an issue of how the Medieval world dealt with the classical. Thomas Aquinas (1255-74) set about annotating and adapting the works of the likes of Aristotle for a Christian society
* Many Latin texts were lost upon the fall of Rome. Most that survived were continually recopied by monks, with glosses and errors creeping in all the time, whilst others were left to decay.
* Humanists aimed to discover these lost Latin texts from the ancient world. Once discovered, Philologists began their study. Lorenzo Valla was one such person who had the skill not only to date manuscripts based on the type of Latin they used but also to identify and remove later additions. Looking at the Donation of Constantine in 1440 he proved that the Donation was not a 4th Century gift as had been believed but an 8th Century forgery.
* What the humanists most admired was the period of the Roman Republic from 510-23 BC rather than the later excesses of the Roman Empire. They saw the need for responsible civil office and used positions in government to inspire civic responsibility amongst the people. Bruni argued for instance that Florence should be defended by its own militia rather than mercenaries.

### The Growth of Greek Studies 1394-1471

* In May 1453 the city of Constantinople fell to Mehmet II of the Ottoman Empire opening a trove of Greek manuscripts and treasures to the Christian world. However, Greek studies had long preceded this fortuitous event.
* Interest in Greek studies led many to become acquainted with the language and whole lexicons were produced to help scholar interpret the Greek works.
* In 1469 the printing press had come to Venice and this proved invaluable in making Venice the centre of publishing for Europe.

### The Florentine Neo-Platonists

* The Neo-Platonists are probably the best known of those who studied the Greek works. This was not simply the revival of Platonic ideas but the revival of the ideas of Plotinus who had synthesised the works of Aristotle, Pythagoras and others into a new 3rd Century creation called Neo-Platonism. The Renaissance Neo-Platonists took this and combined it with Christianity and a new awareness of Plato's own works.
* Marsiglio Ficino (1433-99) spent a lifetime teaching and translating the works of Plato, examining the relationship between Plato and Christianity.
* Pico della Mirandola (1463-94) published 900 theses at the age of 23 and offered to defend them against all comers, an act banned by the Pope who saw some of his statements as heretical.
* Neo-Platonists seem to have somewhat exaggerated their numbers and following during the Renaissance. It was often argued that Aristotle was replaced by Plato in the move from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. However this is not strictly true and Aristotle did remain a core part of most university courses. Aristotle was concerned with the material world and had been Christianised by Thomas Aquinas. But when the glosses were removed, Aristotle did not sit comfortably with Christianity any more. Plato with his emphasis on the spiritual fitted this mould much better. The Neo-Platonists stuck closely to Plato's more Christian ideas and steered clear of his more pagan teachings such as the existence of the soul before death or ideas of homosexual love.
* Neo-Platonists believed that humans were made up of body and soul, they were on a ladder where those at the bottom (animals) had only body and those at the top (angels) had only soul. Humans therefore could affect their place on this ladder by their choices.

### Humanism, Propaganda and History Writing

* Humanists revived the idea of history as a story, borrowing from the works of Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy and Tacitus. There was a move away from the Medieval idea of chronicles which simply listed events (although there were non written forms which maintained the central role of the individual)
* Coluccio Salutati, humanist chancellor of Florence, saw that history should inspire the present. His successor, Leonardo Bruni used this and other classical influences when he wrote about the rise of Florence in 12 volumes. His history was one of politics and military and ignored social factors such as the gilds or families. He showed the Florentine people acting as a civic body to achieve greatness.
* Flavio Biondo served the king of Naples in 1448. He was asked to produce a biography of the King, Alfonso, showing a victor's perspective on the conquest of Florence. This was a great piece of propaganda. Other historians were also employed to write sympathetic, propaganda laden histories of great princes.
* Francesco Guicciardini is often regarded as one of the greatest humanist historians. In writing his history of Florence, Guicciardini developed a new methodology, using records, archives and sources rather than relying on a sweeping narrative. He abandoned this work but later began a History of Italy from 1494 to the present day (1540). This is often considered to be the first truly modern work of history.

**Lesson2: Burke: The Italian Renaissance – “Artists and Writers”**

**Writers**

***Recruitment***

* There were a small group of women involved in the humanist movement. Laura Cereta, Cassandra Fedele, Isotta Nogarola and Alessandra della Scala were involved in the scene but were generally looked down on by the men. Their careers came to a premature end when they either married or became nuns.
* Scholarship and literature were less organised on family lines than the manual arts – it was seen as less of a business. Therefore only ¼ of all scholars were related to other scholars or writers.
* Humanist scholarship was dominated by the sons of nobles and professionals. University education was almost mandatory here which ruled out the participation of most groups.

***Training***

* Humanists served an apprenticeship in a university. There were 13 universities in the early C15th: Bologna, Ferrara, Florence, Naples, Padua, Pavia, Perugia, Piacenza, Pisa, Rome, Salerno, Siena and Turin. The most important was Padua where 52 members of the Renaissance elite were educated, mainly between 1500 and 1520.
* Venice encouraged the growth of the university by increasing professor salaries and forbidding Venetians from going to other universities. A period of study at Padua was also a prerequisite for office. After Padua came Bologna and Ferrara although Ferrara was known as the “poor man’s university”
* Students went to university quite young. Francesco Guicciardini (writer of Italian histories) went aged 16. They studied the liberal arts: grammar, logic and rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy. Then went on to one of 3 higher degrees: theology, law or medicine. The curriculum was the medieval one and essentially this did not change, however it is likely that changes were brought in unofficially.
* The process for advancement was much like in apprenticeships with Masters of the Arts having the right to teach. Latin was the taught language and speaking Latin was made mandatory – spies known as Lupi ensured this happened.
* The cost of university was high, with 20 florins being an average cost per year – the same amount might buy 2 servants. In addition new doctors were required to lay on a banquet. In 1505 Guicciardini spent 25 florins on his feast for taking on the doctorate.

***Organisation***

* Writers and scholars were not organised into a guild structure like the manual artists. Most students went into universities to become leading members of Church and state – this is where they would attain their power.
* At the beginning of the C15th the written word was not industrialised at all. Yet as the century wore on the production of manuscripts became more commercialised under the stationarri. The most famous of these was Vespasiano Bisticci of Florence who created biographies and built a library for Cosimo de Medici of 200 books which he delivered in 22 months.
* By the 1550s the reproduction of manuscripts was competing with the printing press which came to Italy thanks to two German clerics. In five years they put out nearly 12,000 volumes. By the end of the century some 150 presses were operating in Italy and the works of humanist scholars could find much wider audiences much more quickly.
* Around 2/3 of the most famous humanists might also be described as wandering scholars. Jacopop de Barbari for example worked in Nuremberg, Naumberg, Wittenberg, Weimar, Frankfurt on Oder, and Malines.
* In terms of professionalism writers were generally amateurs and only small proportion of scholars taught the humanities at universities. Many others were statesmen or church men such as Lorenzo de Medici, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and Leonardo Bruni.
* One key role many humanists fell into was that of statesman. In Florence Bruni, Poggio, Bracciolini and Scala all held posts as Chancellor of Florence due to their skills in letter writing and rhetoric.

## Najemy: Italy in the Age of the Renaissance – Chapter 2

### Humanism and the Lure of Antiquity

* Modern historians tend to see the Humanists not as a group of like-minded colleagues but as a disparate and shadowy collection of people pursuing transitory preoccupations. Their goal was not in emulating the classical but in making it relevant for their contemporaries. They had to make links between an ancient world and the modern, developing city-states.
* Yet even amongst Humanists, their conclusions were very different. Some explored the classical texts and found a defence for liberty in monarchy; others found it in the republics.
* Francesco Petrarca (1304-74) was the first acknowledged leader of Humanism. His extensive work translating ancient texts led him to the complex belief that here lay the history of his civilisation, yet at the same time, these thinkers should also be speaking to himself and his network of colleagues contemporaneously.
* Petrarca's life and his insistence upon the ethical value of classical culture inspired many of those who followed him.
* Florence developed a particular link to Humanist philosophy after 1375 when Coluccio Salutati became chancellor of the republic. He brought in Greek scholars to teach language and based many of the policies governing the city on ancient traditions.
* In Naples, Humanism needed royal patronage which it received from Robert of Anjou (1309-43) and later under Alfonso I (1442-58). Alfonso supported a number of Humanists in his court, amassed a great library, and introduced classical studies at an university level.

### Castiglione & the Courtier

* Castiglione wrote a famous dialogue on the court of Urbino whose grand court belied the trauma being felt by Italian society. The Courtier shows the same loss of confidence in Renaissance ideals as Machiavelli. Castiglione's writings were begun in 1507 and revised in 1516 when Urbino gave way to Leo X, then finally printed in 1528. It discusses the virtues of a courtier as one who is of noble birth and is skilled with arms as well as in the liberal arts. Yet at the end of the description made in 2 books, Castiglione argues that this ideal never was and never could be. Castiglione shows the Duke not only as a helpless cripple, but also shows the conversations of the men as too protracted and academic – thereby criticising the notion of learnedness.
* The last book of The Courtier is littered with bitter thoughts on the republic, most probably brought on by the fact that Urbino was swallowed up by Rome in 1516. According to Castiglione, the only person capable of ruling a state was a prince in the power of God. Other than Francesco Gonzaga's son, Federigo, the answer was seen in the kings of France, England and Spain. And the task of these kings was the removal of the infidel, not the defence of Italy.

# Topic 6: What was the Socio-Economic Framework of Renaissance Italy like?

## Lesson 1- Economic Framework

## Hole: Access to History – Chapter 2

### Trade and Commerce: The City of Venice

* The Renaissance could only happen due to wealthy patrons and therefore it is mostly associated with key cities such as Venice, Rome etc.
* Marco Polo was a famous Venetian trader who opened up links to the East in 1290.
* Venice was a hub for trade with the East and presumably this is also where a lot of Eastern influences found their way into Europe.
* The late 1400s saw a major threat due to the Turkish seizure of Constantinople and their expansion into this region however Venice continued to flourish.
* At the beginning of the C15th the Venetians began to expand their empire inland trying to prevent Milan from becoming too dominant.
* One of Venice's key industries was ship building where it had the largest industrial complex in the western world. By the C16th the “Arsenal” state sponsored ship yard covered 60 acres.
* The patricians of Venice were heavily involved in commercial life much as the landed gentry in England were involved the agricultural.
* Money lending, taxation and local customs meant that the main beneficiaries of the trade in many Italian cities were the wealthy businessmen. Jews in particular were seen as a useful source of loans and not restricted by the laws on usury.

### Manufacturing and Banking: The City of Florence

* Arte Della Lana – the Wool Guild stands near the church of Orsanmichele. This church had statues of each of the major Gilds of Florence. The major gilds included: cloth importers, judges and notaries, bankers, furriers, doctors and pharmacists, silk manufacturers and the wool gild. These were a ticket into high office and importance. There were also 14 minor gilds.
* 60% of the poor in Florence worked in a gild regulated environment. The Gilds dominated employment regulation, quality control and often loans and repayments in the city.
* The Wool Gild was easily the most powerful and employed around 30,000 – 1/3 of the city population
* About 200 firms made up the Wool Gild with a dual partnership at the head of each. Both worked on investment and the management of business. Wool was imported to Florence, cleaned and processed and spun in the city then exported to the rest of Christendom.
* In 1425 shock occurred as 2 statues at the Orsanmichele were deemed to be “superior” to that of the Wool Gild. This then led the Wool Gild to commission the same artist to produce them an even finer statue – one of many examples of the patronage that fuelled the world of Renaissance art.
* In order to maintain such a complex system of trade the Florentine merchants had to keep records, something which was uncommon in more rural societies. They invented the concept of double-entry bookkeeping and made the unit of currency the indicator of success. There was also a demand for greater banking services – international banks sprang up offering services to merchants, arranging loans as well as collecting debts.

## Burke: The Italian Renaissance – The Economy p222-229

* Why were towns so important in Renaissance Italy?
* Once established, cities controlled their countryside (contado) often forcing a policy of cheap food provision at the expense of the rural economy – this led to migration
* In Pavia the contado paid more tax. Also citizens had more legal and political privileges. Women from the contado of Lucca in the C16th often came into the city to give birth
* Towns also had good communications partly from nature and partly from Rome. Roman roads linked Parma, Modena, Bologna, Imola, Forli and Rimini whilst many other cities were coastal or on rivers
* Venice of the Renaissance was probably the greatest merchant city in the world exporting nearly 10 million ducats’ of goods a year – this is somewhere in the £12 billion region today!!
* In the North the cities around the Po valley (one of the largest plains in Europe) were supported by successful agriculture. Over 85% of land between Pavia and Cremona being cultivated. Further south in Naples agriculture was poorer – a gradual shift began to pasture farming and population fell as the sheep came

## Lesson 3 – Attitudes to Money

## Hole: Access to History – Chapter 2

### The Risks and Pleasures of Making Money

* Making money was often a gamble. The Florentine merchant Gregorio Dati wrote:
  + “In 1393 I married my second wife, the dowry was substantial but I spent too much. In 1394 I was captured and robbed at sea and suffered considerable losses. I went into partnership with Michele di Ser Parenti in 1396 and did very well up until the year 1402. When I parted company with Michele I had about 1000 florins. I went into partnership with Piero Lana and engaged myself to invest 2000 florins. At this point fortune turned against me.”
* Speaking about the practises of Florentine patricians, Don Alonso della Cueva, a Spanish ambassador noted:
  + “they are not forbidden to engage in commerce, nor is it thought unseemly for them to do so, although being rulers and not subjects, they might well be ashamed of it. On the contrary, such activity adds to their reputation, and does not diminish it”
* A strong sense of money making culture
* People seem very aggressive in money making strategies: Dati example
* Use of money for public good and prestige rather than overtly religious
* Seen as a pursuit of liberty

### The Cities and the Countryside

* The Renaissance is an elite movement and therefore manifests itself generally in the urban centres amongst the rich.

## Lesson 4 – The Family and Individual Roles

### Burke: The Italian Renaissance – pp217-222

* Cities were relatively modest in size
* Florence divided into gonfalone – a quarter of a quarter = 1/16 of city – unit of social and political activity – all parts of the city could hear the local bell
* Face to face communities – People tended to know most people in their area and were able to engage with them.
* Streets tended to be dominated by a trade

#### Social Inequality and Mobility

* A 3500:1 ratio of rich to poor – was Renaissance society unique
* Strong evidence of upward mobility in individual cases
* Giovanni Campano was a shepherd boy who became a university lecturer then a bishop – church as an excellent route to advancement – not unique to Italy
* Bartolommeo della Scala was a miller’s son who became the chancellor of Florence – he wrote a book, his Appologia, which talked about great men of humble birth
* There was an obsession with social mobility in literature – both in a positive sense – Poggio’s “On True Nobility” or a negative one such as in Dante’s Inferno
* 1426 the Albizzi were so concerned with “new men” coming in from the countryside to become citizens that they launched an attack on them at a public meeting
* By the later C15th this mobility seems to have tailed off. In Venice it was much less evident as the system was already relatively closed to outsiders
* There was a growing bourgeois class however although cities relied on the work of the popolo minuto “labouring classes”
* The social structure of Italian cities did not fit well into a medieval mould – merchants, artists, humanists etc did not fit in easily but in a culture dominated by the merchant classes they were more accepting of similar social incongruents.

### Hole: Access to History – Chapters 2-4 & 7

#### The Urban Family

* The cities of Renaissance Italy might be viewed as a loose alliance of great families. There were three pillars: state, church and family, but the latter was of greatest importance.
* There is a greater resource of information on rich families again here. In Venice, all rich births were recorded as each of these might one day have the right to govern the city.
* Marriages especially were a case of political and economic alliances and often governed by the family and not the individual.
* The dowry formed a central part of these marriage negotiations. In 1400 a dowry of 1000 florins was considered to be good but by 1500 it was thought that 2000 florins be more acceptable. Wills in particular show how complex legal jargon was needed to provide for daughters.
* Despite the common view of large, extended families, modern work on the catasto returns in Florence (1427) show 55% of households were simple nuclear affairs with only 10% being classic extended families. An average household in Tuscany in 1427 was 4.42 and 44% of houses had fewer than 4 people in. Only 3.6 % of all households here had over 10 people.
* Even when not sharing households however, Italian families did tend to gravitate towards the same areas as each other.
* Vendettas still happened in the Renaissance but they were uncommon by this point.

#### Young Men

* Young men in Florence were kept out of public life until the age of 30. In Venice the age was around 25, although most of the powerful roles went to those aged 50 plus.
* Catasto of 1427 shows that 44% of people were under the age of 20 and average life expectancy was set at around 30 (???)
* Boys aged 13-24 were encouraged to join youth groups which kept their behaviour in check whilst they waited in the wings. Average aged of parenthood was 39 for men so most boys were likely to outlive their fathers at a young age.
* In other terms, children were given more freedom. A boy was considered sexually mature at 14 and a girl at 12. Apprenticeships began as early as 7 and the usual process of taxation and military service was entered at 18.

#### The Poor

* Little is recorded about the poor except in times of crisis. The majority of the poor worked in the cloth industry with a further 15% working in smaller roles and another 15% outside gild control.
* Christian charity was a duty exercised in Italian cities by the wealthy, although this distinguished sharply between the deserving and undeserving poor.

#### Women

* Women were generally subservient in Renaissance society. Poor women worked hard but richer women were generally excluded from public life altogether.
* The average age of a bride in 1427 was 18, a husband, 30
* 97% of women were married by the age of 25
* Convents became an option for fathers who could not afford a dowry for all of his daughters. There was significant concern that this was damaging the convents and the church expressed concern over this on a number of occasions.
* The will of Florentine, Fetto Ubertini outlines his will for his daughters:
  + “I bequeath to my wife Pia, daughter of Ubaldo Bertaldi, the sum of 125 florins in addition to her dowry, and also all of her clothing and accessories. And if she desires to remain a widow and live with our children, she may have an income sufficient to maintain herself and a servant in my house...To each of my daughters – Filippa, Antonia, Fransesca, Andrea and Tommasa – I bequeath the sum of 400 florins for their dowries if they intend to marry, or the sum of 225 florins if they become nuns. If my daughters become widows, and wish to return to my house, it is my will that they may remain as long as they wish, and if they do not recover their dowry, they shall receive from my estate the necessary means to sustains themselves as long as they live.”
* Women often had many children and men remarried quickly upon the death of their wives out of necessity.
* Wealthy widows were generally the group who had the greatest control over their own lives. That said, the leaders of convents also had significant power.

## Lesson 5 – Fashion

### Reed: The Codpiece

* The codpiece seems to have been a particular development of the Renaissance – the sacco or braguette
* Codpieces appear prominently in much European fashion, on armour and in paintings of the time
* May have been a genuine medical need – 1495 saw a syphilis epidemic sweep Europe which caused pus and blood to be discharged from the genitals. This might require the application of wads of wool and gauze

# Topic 7: How was Italy structured politically?

## Lesson 0 – European Politics

### Imperato: Early Modern Europe pp196-203 & 212-216 & 222-223

#### Different states

* Very little concept of states with clear borders, especially in Europe
* Germany and Italy were both made up of a selection of small states with a vague national identity – nationalist map does not arrive until 1870s
* State boundaries also blurred by tans-national monarchies – eg. Habsburgs ruled a wide variety of lands. Charles V used his position as HRE to expand his influence and power
* Regional influences also played a role: Spain was made up of Castile, Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia etc.
* In France there were issues with Burgundy, Brittany and Anjou
* Also issues with an overarching Church power which demanded loyalty but also had a national interest
* A mixture existed of feudal states and those which were termed Renaissance states. These used political power and architecture to bypass traditional feudal systems and create a kind of absolutism in a national interest. No states were fully centralised even by the end of the period

#### Theories of State

* Most rulers and citizens agreed in a hierarchical state system. Obedience to authority was taken as read.
* Machiavelli and Bodin both argued that the church did not help the development of a strong state – yet the power of the Church remained
* There were also arguments over how much power a ruler should have. Some argued that the king should adhere to religion, existing law and accepted custom; others said that the King was God on earth and required complete obedience.
* Absolutism in states was attempted but was impossible to achieve at the time
* Lots of power still rested with landowners meaning a centralised state was impossible

### Increasing Power

* By late C15th some rulers in Europe in a position to strengthen power and authority eg. France 1453 (end of hundred years war) was in a stable position. Marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile 1469 unified Spain to some degree. England: Wars of Roses ended in 1485 with Ascension of Henry VII
* Still many obstacles in the way of total control and increasingly centralised power however…

#### a) The Church

* Church demanded obedience from the subjects of all states. The Pope had a power which rulers could not easily resist (eg case of excomm of John)
* Church could issue decrees which might overrule a prince or king and had a whole network of people and resources to use
* Rulers had to tread a fine line between allowing worship and also preventing too much papal interference
* The weakened Church in the Reformation led to a damaged power of Church and Spain and France used this to negotiate a different means of collecting taxes

#### b) The Nobility

* Factionalism was a major issue with different nobles trying to win the favour of the monarch
* Factions in Spain argued over sorting out the problems of heresy in the NL eg. Duke of Alva or a more stayed approach eg. Eboli
* Factions stood in the way of clear decision making but also gave the king greater control.
* However the Dukes also had great power and the Burgundian revolts in France seriously damaged the French monarchy. In England Henry IV effectively usurped the English King, Richard II in 1399
* Nobility were useful in enacting local administration, fighting and keeping control. However they were also well armed and many had pretentions to the throne

#### c) Local Assemblies

* In most European countries the ruling elite included kings, nobles, churchmen and senior town leaders. However there were often regional meetings eg. Cortes in Spain, Parlements in France etc.
* Local assemblies had legal rights which they guarded from any central intervention – some even had the power to block or refuse to implement royal decisions.
* Kings could have some success through ignoring some bodies and threatening others but this was a risky strategy and depended on the resolve of the monarch

#### d) Royal Finances

* A strong treasury was key to military and social success. Money was the key to raising armies, defending the realm etc. (Part of the reason for the deposition of Edward II and John was the dire state of finances
* A lack of money fuelled the Portuguese and Spanish voyages of discovery to the New World in the C16th
* Kings generally opted to increase existing taxes rather than introducing new ones or expanding the tax base (this often failed as in the case of Richard II in 1377/79/81)
* Francis I also had a revolt over a salt tax and Charles V’s demands for money from the NL resulted in a strike in Ghent (1539-40)
* Solutions were often short term, selling offices, farming out tax collection etc.

#### e) Exercise of Law

* Most justice was achieved through common law and dispensed by local nobles
* Rulers tried with varying success to centralise this power – this generally meant superimposing central control over the legal system
* French kings set out to codify local laws in the C15th for example. This aimed to reduce local differences and reinforce royal control.
* In Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella realised that law-abiding countries would be loyal countries as well.

## Lesson 1 – Political Structures

### Hole: Access to History – Chapter 4 & Burke: The Italian Renaissance – pp209-217

#### The Political Structure

* Around 1200 there were some 200-300 city states in Italy. By 1500 most of these had disappeared
* Italy in the Renaissance is a mix of many different aspects of political structure. There was the most stable republic in the world, Venice; the most backward of feudal monarchies, Naples; weak and faction ridden states such as Genoa; and a modern princedom at the cutting edge of administrative reform, Milan. Florence sat between these ideals, not fully sorting out its government until the end of the period.
* Generally there was a move from republican government in which all citizens played a part, to the princely rule of a single family. However, this trend was not universal.

#### The Greater Princedom of Naples

* Venice was almost unique in Renaissance Italy, most of the other states were ruled my princes. There were many minor princedoms but only 2 greater ones.
* The kingdom of Naples encompassed the whole of southern Italy. The city itself was a major centre of arts and culture, however the rest of the kingdom played no part in the Renaissance. The kingdom was politically and economically backward, more akin to the feudal monarchies of England and France where barons essentially had free reign.
* Queen Giovanna II (1414-35) had a series of affairs with a number of men – whilst she did this the barons reduced Naples to a state of anarchy.
* In the early 1400s, during an argument with Pope Martin V over funding for the papal army, Queen Giovanna II called upon the king of Aragon, Alfonso to send an army to deal with her unruly barons and prevent the Pope’s invasion of her land. In return she promised him the throne of Naples upon her death. However, upon her death, Giovanna left the kingdom to the brother in law of the king of France, Rene of Anjou as Alfonso had also arrested her lover during his subjugation of the barons.
* A seven year war of succession ensued from 1435-42 during which Rene was defeated. Alfonso and his son, Ferrante then ruled Naples for over 50 years.
* They were strong rulers and kept the barons under control but failed to modernise Naples to match the centralised states of Northern Italy. Naples remained a backward, agrarian state.
* Alfonso turned the city of Naples into a great cultural centre and this was continued by his son Ferrante – although his methods were more brutal
* Ferrante liked to have his opponents near him, either alive in well-guarded prisons, or dead and embalmed, dressed in the costume which they wore in their lifetime. He had a museum of mummies. Some of his victims were even seized while guests at the royal table. His conduct to his prime minister, Antonello Petrucci, who had grown sick and grey in his service, and from whose increasing fear of death he extorted 'present after present,' was literally devilish. At length a suspicion of complicity with the last conspiracy of the barons gave the pretext for his arrest and execution. With him died Coppola. The way in which all this is narrated in Caracciolo and Porzio makes one's hair stand on end.
* Ferrante modelled his own reign on that of Francesco Sforza in Milan who has a complex diplomatic system to avoid war. Sforza had formed the Italian League in 1455 under his chief secretary Simonetta. Milan therefore became the hub of a diplomatic network which had letters coming in from all over Europe. It was this which Ferrante wanted to model his own diplomacy on.
* Comparatively, Venice and Florence’s ambassador’s served only short terms. Ferrante however was keenly aware of developing an effective relationship, giving positions of ambassadors to trusted people and allowing Sforza to keep a permanent ambassador in Naples from 1456 onwards.
* Ferrante also relied on the good will of the Popes as they were technically the feudal overlords of Naples. Pius II had given approval in 1458 but Paul II intended to assert more Roman authority. In 1465 Paul II sent Ferrante’s tribute back and encouraged Angevin designs on Naples
* Under Sixtus IV the fortunes reversed – Sixtus gave Ferrante back his powers to instate clergy and there was an intermarriage of the Aragonese and della Rovere families. This tied Naples to the Pazzi conspiracy against the Medici. He despised Lorenzo as a “vile merchant” yet after the failure of the plan he reconciled with the Medici to the annoyance of the Pope. The diplomatic engine now worked to smooth the relationship behind the scenes.
* Both Innocent VIII and Alexander VI were outright hostile to Naples. Guicciardini notes that Ferrante wept like a child when he heard of Alexander’s election… In a letter he noted that the Pope was looking for war “…the Pope thinks of nothing but war and rapine”
* The relationship with Milan also began to sour in the 1480s and 90s under Galeazzo Maria and Ludovico Sforzo, one of whom was seen as too close to France, the other far too ambitious.
* Sowed the seeds of the 1494 invasion. Ferrante’s death in 1494 led to the collapse of the diplomatic empire which he had been maintaining since his ascension. The Milanese and others had largely abandoned it by this point. A contemporary historian Galasso suggests that the death of Ferrante should be considered “more damaging to the independence of the kingdom and of Italy than the death of Lorenzo de Medici”. The French under Charles VIII invaded in 1494 leading to the fall of the Aragonese line under Alfonso II in February 1495. A long battle for the throne began between the French and Spanish. Eventually, Ferdinand II of Aragon, a cousin of Alfonso emerged as the king in 1504, a brutal and ruthless ruler in a kingdom which was now annexed as part of Aragon.

#### The Greater Princedom of Milan

* The story of Milan is much more typical of the developments in Renaissance Italy. Essentially three dukes were responsible for modernising and centralising government over a long period of time.
* The old feudal family, the Visconti (1311-1447) created a single state from a selection of disparate ones with a single central government. At the beginning of their reign, members of the Visconti ruled over individual cities and largely followed their own agenda. Particularly problematic was Bernabo Visconti who ruled the lands south of Milan
* Bernabo was intent on increasing his lands and went on an aggressive campaign in the late 1300s resulting in his receiving payment from Pope Urban V of ½ million florins to stop his territorial advances. He continued regardless. He was known for his ruthlessness – had a boy imprisoned for dreaming about hunting a boar (his favourite pastime), had 17 children and a further 20+ illegitimate ones.
* All of this was destabilising the rest of the family’s rule of the region. In 1385, his nephew Giangaleazzo Visconti arrested his uncle and had him murdered in prison. As a result he took over and centralised the remaining family claims and was made Duke of Milan by the Holy Roman Emperor in 1395
* By 1402 the Visconti ruled the majority of the North of Italy, they could not take Venice due to the Lagoon, but in 1402 Florence was nearly absorbed into the Duchy of Milan, Giangaleazzo's death during the campaign being the only setback.
* A generation later, duke Filippo Maria Visconti established an effective administrative framework with a centralised bureaucracy. A privy council, chancellery and exchequer were established in Milan. There was an orderly, close-knit government with clear lines of responsibility. One of the earliest centralised bureaucracies. The Visconti failed on the death of Filippo, who left no heir.

##### Ambrosia

* After the death of Filippo Maria, learned bodies, such as the College of Jurisprudence in Pavia, painted the days of the old republic as a golden age.
* Merchants in particular saw the success of Venice and sought to emulate this through the creation of a Republic
* The Ambrosian Republic sprang up as the brainchild of scholars in 1447. They took the old constitution and revised it that same day as suited their needs, electing twenty-four Capitani e difensori della libertà, or "Captains and Defenders of Liberty," to frame laws, elected regularly and later reduced to twelve.
* However there was little support and the Republic realised it needed defending, especially from Venice. Francesco Sforza was employed as a mercenary captain
* By 1350 Sforza had been chosen as the new Duke of Milan.

##### Sforza

* Sforza was a great soldier and built one of the most impressive Renaissance castles in Milan. He was also a great diplomat, and persuaded Cosimo de Medici to switch Florentine support from Venice to Milan. He also won the right to appoint clergy in Milan from the Pope. The Duke and his son were both great patrons of the arts.
* In 1476 Galezzo Maria Sforza was assassinated leaving the throne to the seven year old son Giovan. He was in turn ruled by his uncle, a deeply hated figure in Milan with a very sinister reputation, Lodovico Sforza who ruled from 1494 was eventually deposed by the French in 1500. Of the death of Giangaleazzo Sforza, Guicciardini wrote
  + “The rumor was widespread that Giovan Galeazzo's death had been provoked by immoderate coitus; nevertheless, it was widely believed throughout Italy that he had died not through natural illness nor as a result of incontinence, but had been poisoned... one of the royal physicians...asserted that he had seen manifest signs of it. Nor was there anyone who doubted that if it had been poison, it had been administered through his uncle's Ludovico Sforza machinations...”

## Lesson 2 – Venice and Florence

### Burke: The Italian Renaissance – pp209-217

#### The Republic of Venice

* Venice was isolated from attack on all sides by sea on one side and a great lagoon on the other. It was never captured until Napoleon's invasion in 1797. Venice was one of the most stable governments in the world.
* The Venetian constitution aimed to emulate the ideas of Plato, Cicero, Aristotle amongst others. Venetian constitution brought together main three concepts of government:
  + Monarchy – Doge
  + Aristocracy – Senate
  + Polity – Great Council
* The Doge’s role was largely ceremonial though his head did appear on coins. Consensus of the government however was more of an illusion than a reality

### Hole: Access to History – Chapter 4

The Republic of Venice (students have read this for homework)

* Doge
  1. Elected for life but could be removed
  2. Had less power in reality than the Collegio of the Senate (Doge plus 3 chief justices, representatives of 6 parts of city and some Patrician families)
* Council of Ten
  1. Great Council elected these from the Senate
  2. Role of state security and stability
  3. Met every Wednesday and enacted brutal decisions to maintain stability
  4. 1539 established independent Inquisitors
* Senate
  1. Elected by Great Council then chose 60 more members to join
  2. Also 100 office holders
  3. Made the laws for the city
  4. Collegio of 26 men formed a steering committee for the city
* Great Council
  1. Included every adult male Patrician (2% of city)
  2. One of broadest government bases in Europe by C16th
  3. Elected to key positions eg. Doge, Senate etc.
  4. Every Aug-Sep elected 60 members to the Senate
* The republic was definitely not a democracy. Until the 1290s the most powerful family at the time ruled the state. The government was made up of adult males of the other important families of the time. They were then recorded in the Golden Book which literally limited the entry into government to those families recorded in the early 1300s. This “serrata” established the Venetian Patriciate. These Patricians were drawn from around 150 families, controlling the city politically and dominating it socially. The number of Patricians increased dramatically as every son of the families could join in government. By 1513 there were 2600 of them.
* To avoid the issue of noveau riche discontent, the Patricians created the Citizenry which was open to around 10% of the population who were wealthy newcomers. The Venetian civil service was drawn from this body.
* Venetian politics is a pseudo pyramid structure: Doge of Venice at the top and Great Council at the base. Every adult male Patrician was a member of the Great Council, although this was only around 2% of the population of the city, let alone the empire. Still Venice with over 2000 men in the Great Council by the C16th was one of the most broadly based of all governments in Italy.
* The Great Council's main role was to vote and elect key positions: The Doge, the 60 members of Senate, the Councils of Ten, even the captains of galley fleets. The Great Council was generally too large to be an effective legislature, a role taken on by the Senate instead.
* The Senate was made up of the 60 elected members, who chose a further 60 to join them, plus 100 office holders. The reputation of the wisdom of the Senate reached even Shakespeare in England.
* The Doge was elected for life, although if he overstepped strict constitutional bounds, he could be deposed. The steering committee of the Senate, the Collegio, had the real power. This was a council of 26 made up of the Doge, 3 chief judges of the criminal courts, representatives of the 6 parts of the city and a range of patrician families.
* The Council of Ten was perhaps the most important of the small councils. It was elected from the Senators by the Great Council and was concerned with state stability and security. It had a reputation for quietly disposing of men for sedition and for thinking of itself as above the law. Marin Sanudo described how the Council of Ten acted without lawyers, could banish, exile or execute nobles, and could have the Doge removed or executed as happened in 1355 and in 1457. The council met every Wednesday and its decisions were greatly feared. The law was then exercised to its fullest against those who threatened the state, the violence of crimes often paling into insignificance against the violence of the punishments.
* Doge → Council of Ten → Senate → Great Council
* Venice built up the myth of being the most just and stable of constitutions. In reality, votes in the Councils were bought and sold, lobbying abounded and there was a great deal of inefficiency. However, Venice did come closer to realising stability than many other Italian states.

#### Rise of the Signori

* There were also a large number of city state republics in Italy. Generally in these, a single family emerged as dominant and ruled with little heed to wider council. This move from small republics to single family, hereditary despots has become known as the rise of the signori.
* This was especially true in the Papal States, where the signori paid lip service to the Pope as their overlord and then effectively ruled in complete independence. In Urbino, Federigo da Montefeltro rose and ruled supreme, establishing a major Renaissance court of the arts and learning. In Bologna the city had freed itself from Papal rule in the C14th only to have 16 families dominating politics, one by one these dropped away until the Bentivolgio of Bologna ruled supreme.

#### The Medici and Florence

* Florence, despite its being dominated by the Medici family from 1434-94, remained a republic. The Medici did have to tread carefully however as there was a huge fear amongst Florentines of one family dominating politics. Political power was easy to manipulate in Florence because it was tied to gild membership and economic success.
* Florence was ruled by a 9 man signoria made up of the Gonfalonier of Justice (head of state), six men chosen from the seven leading gilds, and two men from the fourteen minor gilds. The fear of factionalism was shown in two key ways. First the men of the signoria were elected by lottery and secondly the elections happened every 2 months! No-one could be re-elected within 3 years.
* The Medici cleverly subverted this system which threatened the stability of Florence. Every so often the process of “scrutiny” was carried out on the bags which contained the names of people. The Medici could stretch this process out for years, during which time they could hand pick the members of government. The only prerequisite to this was the assent of the populous, easy to achieve with a few well placed troops.
* The Medici family made their great fortune in banking. They dominated Florence for 60 years yet for the 30 years in which Cosimo Medici ran the show, he was only head of state three times for a total of six months. Generally he saw the key to running the state as acting behind the scenes. Medici became the source of wisdom to which all future leaders of Florence would defer and his links with trade reassured rich businessmen that he would act in their interests.
* Lorenzo de Medici ruled in a much more open and up-front manner. He was a great patron of the arts and his contributions to Renaissance society were well respected. However the Medici's maintenance of power was difficult as manipulation was needed every two months. In 1458 Cosimo established the Council of 100 as a Medici power base. Unfortunately they kept losing control of it, Lorenzo reforming it in 1471 and then abandoning it for the Council of 70 in 1480. Lorenzo and his brother Guiliano were also the victims of an assassination attempt in which the latter died. The Pazzi family attempted this in 1478 and the result was the execution of over 70 Pazzi followers.
* The Medici fell in 1494 when a republic ensued and then were finally restored by a Papal army in 1512. When Lorenzo's son was elected as Leo X the city was effectively ruled from Rome for 15 years. In 1537 the Medicis became the Dukes of Florence and the final rise of the signori was complete.

## Lesson 3 – The French Invasion of 1494

### Hole: Access to History – Chapter 7

#### The French Invasion of 1494

* The French Invasion had a significant impact on how the Italians viewed themselves on a world stage.
* In 1494 it was commonly agreed that the era of stability in Italy was ending. Francesco Guicciardini reflected in his “History of Italy” that:
  + “Italy had never known such tranquillity as in the year 1490...Italy was not only rich in population, merchandise and wealth, but she was adorned to the highest degree by the magnificence of many princes, by the splendour of innumerable noble and beautiful cities, by the throne and majesty of religion; full of men most able in the administration of public affairs, and of noble minds learned in every branch of study and versed in every worthy art and skill.”
* By 1492 things were going wrong: Rodrigo Borgia was elected Pope Alexander VI, Lorenzo de Medici was succeeded in Florence by his inexperienced son Piero and in 1494 Ferrante, the prince of Naples for 36 years, also died, giving the throne to his unpopular offspring, Alfonso. Finally in Milan in 1494 Giovan Galeazzo Sforza died, his dukedom passing over his young son and going instead to an uncle, Lodovico il Moro.
* Il Moro had invited Charles VIII of France to invade Italy a short while earlier – a vital conquest for Charles, a 24 year old whose reputation at home was that of a weakling. His frail physical appearance and early ascension to the throne (13) meant that his ambition was to be king of Naples from where he could try to recapture Constantinople.
* The Milanese invitation meant that the French met no resistance in the North and in the East, Venice refused to take sides. Piero de Medici, concerned about the Florentine trade in France offered a loan of 200,000 ducats to help the French war effort, a gross diplomatic blunder. Charles VIII entered Florence as a conqueror, gave Pisa its freedom and effectively brought an end to the 60 year reign of the Medici family.
* Charles continued on to Rome where the Pope had no choice but to offer the king the throne of Naples and to ask him to crusade against the Turks. Charles VIII took Naples on 24th February 1495.
* Charles left for France in May of that year and died three years later after hitting his head on a door beam. More than anything else, this invasion opened the floodgates for foreign invasions for the next 30 years, culminating in the 1527 sack of Rome.
* Guicciardini described the invasion of Charles VIII as “a most unhappy year for Italy, and truly beginning the years of wretchedness”
* Brought about a whole raft of changes within Italy was well. Most notably the destruction of the power of Milan, the birth of a second and third Florentine Republic, a war of succession in Naples and the growth of the power of Rome who filled the vacuum left by other states. There was also an impact on Renaissance ideals – people began to view the failure of the Italian armies as a product of their mercenary status – questions began to be asked about the effectiveness of this way of employing armies.

## Lesson 4 – Savonarola’s Florence & The New Republic

### Weinstein – Savonarola: Preacher and Patriot

* Machiavelli wrote of Savonarola that: unarmed prophets are bound to fail. Yet Savonarola’s influence is long lasting
* He began in 1490 to preach against the opulence of the age using harsh language and apocalyptic imagery against the rulers of the day
* Upon the death of Lorenzo de Medici it seemed that Savonarola’s predictions were coming true. Making matters worse, Piero was breaking the 1454 treaty of Lodi which aimed to keep the big three cooperative. Piero took sides – favouring Naples over Milan.
* The French invasion saw Piero removed and Savonarola coming to power with cries that Florence was to be a chosen city – spared for a great purpose, a new Jerusalem
* Savonarola pleased the popolo by restoring the republic and basing it on the Venetian model
* By pursuing a line whereby the Florentines allied themselves with the French over the Pope however, Savonarola was making powerful enemies.

## Lesson 6 – Machiavelli and His Impact

### Strathern: Machiavelli, Leonardo and Borgia

* During late 1502 Machiavelli, Borgia and da Vinci travelled to the Romagna region in NE Italy
* Borgia was carving out his own princedom with the support of his father, the Pope. Da Vinci was there to work on defences at his employ and Machiavelli was there as an envoy from Florence
* Both Machiavelli and Borgia were aware that the Florentine intention was to assess Borgia’s designs on Florence and therefore he was intercepting all communications between M and the state.
* Machiavelli witnessed the ruthlessness of Borgia’s approach. In one instance, Borgia charmed his treacherous commanders into meeting him for a reconciliation at the town of Sinigallia, assuring them that he could not fulfil his ambitions without them – then had them all murdered. Some were garrotted in his presence, others transported in cages and slaughtered later.
* All of this later made it into Machiavelli’s works: If a prince was to conquer a territory, rule it and continue to govern it amid the treacherous politics of Renaissance Italy, then Borgia’s ruthless lack of moral concern was the only way he could succeed. All this Machiavelli would later set down in The Prince, whose amorality would inspire indignant outrage across Europe and beyond.

### Hole: Access to History – Chapter 7

#### Machiavelli: Political Morality and the New Prince

* “The Prince” has a reputation as being cruel and amoral. In fact it is a very early example of Realpolitik.
* Machiavelli was born in Florence in 1469 and was 25 when the family of Medici fell. From that point Florence was run as a republic rather than as a princedom. Between 1498 and 1512, Machiavelli worked for this republic.
* In 1512 the Medici were restored to power by a Papal army, Soderini the governor of Florence, was exiled and Machiavelli tortured.
* Machiavelli was a humanist and spent a great deal of time writing satirical poetry, plays and involving himself in politics.

##### Importance of Machiavelli

* In “The Prince” Machiavelli analyses the state of Italy in 1513, suggests some solutions and challenges the age old Christian traditions of the country. He highlighted a lack of vigour in Italian political life and showed a people lacking in civil pride and devotion to the state. His final chapter called for a prince to come to liberate Italy from her foreign oppressors.
* Machiavelli's work identifies a paradox in Renaissance society: the conflict between the Christian and the Classical. He argued that Christian ideals had no place in politics and that a good prince should always act in the interest of his people no matter the consequences for Christian ideals.
  + “...A prince must not worry if he incurs reproach for his cruelty so long as he keeps his subjects united and loyal. By making an example or two he will prove more compassionate than those who, being too compassionate, allow disorders which lead to murder and rapine. Those nearly always harm the whole community, whereas executions ordered by the prince only affect individuals.”
* Of course Machiavelli’s work still falls under the Medieval heading of a manual. For Christians of the Middle Ages – necessity justified a means – the concept of Just War from the Crusades for example. Machiavelli argued that necessity was always there
* Machiavelli saw Christian morals in public life as a weakness. He pointed to Cesare Borgia who he argued might be brutal but maintained excellent control.
* Machiavelli argued that it was acceptable for the prince to act against individuals with impunity as long as it was for the good of the whole.
  + “...a prudent ruler cannot, and must not honour his word when it places him at a disadvantage and when the reasons for which he made his promise no longer exist. If all men were good, this precept would not be good; but because all men are wretched creatures who would not keep their word to you, you need not keep your word to them.”
* Machiavelli set out a clear distinction between what men did and what they ought to do. He argued that necessity trumped all for the good of the state however. He identified the duality of a secular political morality that needed to live alongside the Christian moral codes of the day

### Machiavelli – Cunning Critic – Barnett

#### Was Machiavelli actually as amoral as his reputation attests?

* “The Prince” is only one small part of Machiavelli’s output for the world. He also wrote commentaries on “The Art of War” by Titus Livius; a History of Florence; plays, poetry and biographical sketches
* Machiavelli’s work is also in the context of its own time and should be seen as part of a far more brutal world
* He did advocate that honouring your word was weak and foolish. He argued the virtuous would be the first to fall. However he did acknowledge that this was not ideal – he just argued it was the reality.
* He also gave a guide to dominating a foreign power and controlling an alien state through the creation of an oligarchy. However he also warned of the dangers of taking such action – creating a potential rival for power.
* Another shocking aspect was his advocacy of fear as a means of control. The ideal king was not supposed to be feared but Machiavelli argued that this was more realistic. He did however distinguish between pure and evil forms of control. He argued that some things gained power but not respect. For Machiavelli it was not the act that was the problem but the ends. The example given is of a king who murdered the entire senate. This was an act which gained power, whether it was a good act depended on how he ruled next.

#### What were Machiavelli’s reasons for writing The Prince?

* He wrote because he had no other power. He sought to expose the weaknesses of the people who had cast him from power.
* Enfield has argued that he wrote it as a satire although this does not have a wide following.
* He might also have created the Prince as a cynical means to regain power and favour. It was what princes wanted to hear.
* Machiavelli may have been trying to show that of war and cunning, cunning was by far the better and more effective choice.

#### Are Machiavelli’s ideas still relevant to the modern age?

# Topic 8: What was the role of the Church?

## Lesson 1 – Donation of Constantine

* The donation of Constantine was a C4th document in which the Christian Emperor of Rome granted the Papal See authority over parts of Judea, Greece, Asia, Thrace, Africa, as well as the city of Rome as well as Italy and the entire Western Roman Empire
* Constantine would retain imperial authority in the Eastern Roman Empire from his new imperial capital of Constantinople.
* A gift to Sylvester for instructing him in the Christian faith, baptizing him and miraculously curing him of leprosy.
* The document was much used previously by Popes to assert their temporal authority.
* Leo IX in 1054 wrote to the Patriarch of Constantinople. He wrote that the "Donatio" showed that the Holy See possessed both an earthly and a heavenly imperium, the royal priesthood.

### Donatio

What powers are granted by the Donatio?

What does Valla say of the Donation?

What arguments does he offer for its status as a forgery?

## Lesson 3 – Church and Everyday Lives

### Hole: Access to History – Chapter 5

#### The Structure and Condition of the Church

* Main Hierarchy: Pope → Archdiocese (Archbishop) → Diocese (Bishop) → Parishes (Priest)
* To one side of this were the Sacred College of Cardinals and the Curia. The Cardinals were appointed for life by the Pope and were used as optional advice. When the Pope died it was the Cardinals who chose his successor. Over the Renaissance period the number of elected Cardinals grew from 12 in 1431 to 38 in 1503. The Curia was then the central bureaucracy of the Church.
* There was also the Regulars (those who belonged to a religious order) which included the monastic orders such as Benedictines etc. There were also 4 main orders of Friars mendicants eg. Dominicans and Franciscans. Clergy who did not belong to a religious order were known as seculars.
* The corruption was widespread though likely exaggerated. Still the quality of priests and bishops was generally poor with many not able to perform basic rites and still more using manuals to perform services. In some areas of the Papal States it is estimated that 60% of people did not receive communion.
* At a higher level there were also issues. In 1400, England had 17 dioceses, whereas in Italy there were 263. The majority of these were small and poor. The Curia also grew massively from 500 men in 1378 to 2000 men in 1514. The main aim of the Curia was the expansion of papal finances. The Curia probably were no worse than the corrupt business empires of the Italian states, but it was generally assumed that they would hold to higher standards.

## Najemy: Italy in the Age of the Renaissance – Chapter 3

### Religion and the Renaissance

* The Renaissance has often been relegated to a gap between the waning Middle Ages and the age of devotion and the beginning of the Reformation. All this set against a backdrop of ecclesiastical corruption. It was common for historians to identify this as a period when paganism resurfaced in Italy out of the decaying Church, or worse still, that the Church had driven the people to this end.
* Renaissance Popes were ever more drawn into secular matters and the maintenance of the Papal States. Bishoprics were bought and sold as property and reformatory opportunities were squandered. Humanist pilloried the lazy monks, ignorant priests and greedy friars.
* It could be argued that this instead showed a rising expectation of the Church rather than its decline in quality. Renaissance Italians made massive investments in religious buildings and paintings which were a mix of religious fervour, civic pride and social ambition.
* Religion moved out of the hands of the Church and into the sphere of the gilds and religious fraternities. Mendicant orders sprang up as did increasingly mystical, devotional orders. Charity and the public good was the order of the day. A myriad cults created a range of new lay saints, venerated for their social concerns.
* Religion became increasingly regulated by civic governments and religious power became a form of legitimisation. The emphasis of Christian ideologies was shifted from theory into practice. The sacred and the secular were no longer clearly defined.
* It was more the ageing and decaying structure of the Church to which people objected, something from which they gained freedom during the Pope's stay in Avignon 1309-77. There was still huge popular interest in religion as was shown by the construction of great Basilicas for the friars mendicant during the late 1300s.
* A greater access was given to religious texts and as such a greater debate was being had over the nature of some aspects of Christianity. Indeed the religious fraternities and confraternities played a huge role in this. Equally they contributed to civic life through the production of religious plays and the commissioning of great works of religious art.

## Lesson 3a – Reformation

### Imperato p 114-6

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Change** | **Continuity** |
| **Religious Impact** | Traditional religious ceremonies were simplified or removed | In many places tradition remained and a hybrid religion grew up |
| **Political Impact** | Broke the political unity of Europe – no longer all Catholic – Catholics = Spain, Portugal, Italy and France  Papal authority challenged | Catholicism however was exported to the new world  Pope’s power was always being challenged |
| **Social Impact** | Promoted greater equality and removed elevated status of priests  Advocated marriage and family as positive – challenged the idea of Catholics that sex was sinful  Protestantism emphasised community and gave responsibility for poor, vagrants, charity etc to the community | Created a new elite of educated priests  Catholic groups had long supported charities. Protestant leaders struggled to get people to donate.  Did not move that far from traditional social expectations – especially for women |
| **Economic Impact** | Protestant work ethic led to the development of capitalism | Economic development happened in both Catholic and Protestant countries – not exclusively protestant. |
| **Cultural Impact** | Protestantism became associated with political change – brought forward ideas about democracy  Put a greater emphasis on education  Created a hard work ethic  Strong association with literacy – generated much standard language – Lutherans promoted art and music | Splits developed in Protestantism due to support of revolution. No serious P countries contemplated democracy  Not all protestants were supportive of art – many saw simplicity as better.  Little evidence that Protestant education was any better than Catholic education |

## Lesson 4 - Papacy

### Popes, Councils and the Reform of the Church

* Popes in the Renaissance were very wide ranging. The Papal lists were generally dominated by families. Some of these such as Alexander VI used the power of the papacy to carve out areas of influence for his family in Italy. However, for the most part the personal gains of the Popes did not run contrary to the well being of the Church.
* From 1309-77 the papacy had been in Avignon. Six French Popes were elected by the cardinals. In 1378 on the death of Gregory XI in Rome, the cardinals appointed the Italian Urban VI as the new Pope. A second appointment was made a few months later as the cardinals claimed they had been forced to make this decision under duress.
* An attempt was begun to resolve the Great Schism in 1409 when a council meeting at Pisa deposed both Popes and elected a new one. The Popes of Avignon and Rome refused to accept their deposition and for a short time the Church had three Popes. In 1414 the three main rival Popes were Gregory XII, Benedict XIII and John XXIII.
* A Council met at Constance in 1414 and through three years of careful negotiations with the support of 29 cardinals, 33 archbishops, 150 bishops, the Holy Roman Emperor and a representative of Henry V, the three Popes were finally removed.
* At this point the Church had an opportunity to make key changes to the structure of the Church however conservative faction persuaded the election to carry on straight away. The issue was decided by national politics when the English delegates switched allegiance to follow Martin V and the conservatives. Martin V made minor reforms but generally he saw the reforming movement as a threat to the papacy and skilfully undermined it.
* Upon the return of the Papacy to Rome, it became important for families to ingratiate themselves with what was becoming an increasingly rich and corrupt organisation. Lorenzo de Medici got his son Giovanni de' Medici into the Church where he was later to become Leo X in 1513. He was instructed by his father to build links between Florence and the Church and by extension, the Medici family. He spent his time as most Popes did, employing composers, singers, scholars, poets, painters and architects. He indulged in spending great amounts of money on his lifestyle. He was also the unfortunate Pope to have to deal with Martin Luther.
* Nicholas V saw the Renaissance art in Florence as an excellent way to spread the glory of the Holy See and began the Church's process of commissioning art in earnest. The art that was produced later under Sixtus IV pointed directly to the legitimacy of the Papacy. Not only were they shown as successors of St Peter but also of the Roman Emperors. Pope Julius II after his defeat of Bologna in 1506 had himself painted by Raphael dressed in silver armour, with the beard of a Roman Emperor and with the inscription JULIUS CAESAR PONTIFEX II. Both Pius II and Nicolas V were Humanists, tolerating even the work of Lorenzo Valla who denounced the Donation of Constantine as an 8th Century forgery.
* Reformation of the Church was not unusual and many groups attempted this, but Martin Luther and his followers fundamentally disagreed with the doctrines of the Church itself.
* The Church was eventually reformed at the Council of Trent 1545-63 however there were a series of reformatory opportunities from 1409-49 when general church councils were called to deal with 3 tasks: reuniting the Church, crushing the heresy of John Hus in Bohemia and reforming the Church. The first two were successful but the third failed.

## Rome and the Papacy (Extra Notes)

### Martin V (1417-31)

* Martin V began rebuilding of Rome in 1423 to show his power – drew a direct link back to the Roman Empire
* During the period, Brunelleschi and Donatello visited Rome for inspiration
* Not huge inroads but the beginning of a revival

### Eugenius IV (1431-47)

* Florentine artists began to be used to develop Roman art
* Influx of artists led to the development of an art style that became defined as Roman for the first time

### Nicholas V (1447-55)

* Began a major transformation which included: restoration of the walls, reconstruction of 40 churches, expansion of St Peters, restoration of the papal palace
* Renewal of Apostolic Palace was a first step in the decoration of the private chapel of the pope, the Niccoline Chapel – paintings by Fra Angelico and Benozzo Gozzoli.

### Sixtus IV (1471-84)

* Created Vatican library and dedicated to a major humanist
* Sistene chapel constructed around 1480. wall decoration was entrusted to the best Florentine artists of the time (Botticelli, Perugino, Ghirlandaio and others)

### Julius II (1503-13)

* Added many buildings to Rome and created the Vatican Museum – a collection of antiquities.
* Bramante was used as architect of Julius’ fortifications in Latium
* 1503 the Pope aimed to build a new basilica of St. Peter, the first model of which Bramante created. Foundation stone was laid on April 18, 1506.
* Pope’s friendship with Michelangelo, began in 1506. Their relationship was so close that the Pope became, Michelangelo’s intellectual collaborator. 1508 Michelangelo asked to paint ceiling of Sistine chapel – a mixture of religious and classical influences – completed 1512
* Commissioned many portraits including a famous one by Raphael of the Pope. Also the frescoes of the Stanza della Segnatura and Stanza d'Eliodoro, known as the Raphael Rooms including the School of Athens.

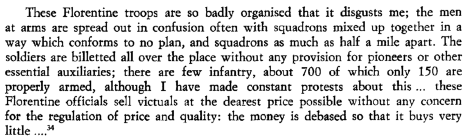
# Topic 9: What were the main developments in warfare?

## Lesson 1 – Early Italian Situation

### Warfare in Italy Sheet

* Mainland in C15th dominated by five great powers - Venice, Milan, Florence, the Papal States and Naples.
* None able to defeat others so balance is in the interests of all.
* 1454, Venice and Milan resolve their long-standing differences in a treaty signed at Lodi.
* Their example inspires others. Later in the same year Florence forms a defensive league with both Milan and Venice. Early in 1455 the pope and the king of Naples join an alliance, sometimes referred to as the Italian League, in which all five pledge mutual non-aggression.
* The peace holds surprisingly well, given Italy's past record of permanent warfare.

### Mallett: Preparations for War

* In the final stages of the wars in 1450s, leading up to the 1454 Peace of Lodi, Italian armies were huge. Milan and Venice had armies of 20,000 whilst Florence had 10-12,000.
* The peace and following Italian League outlined expected strengths. Venice were to have 6,000 cavalry and 2,000 infantry whilst Florence maintained 2,000 and 1,000 respectively. By the 1460s Venice had around 8,000 cavalry so demobilisation was limited
* Florence’s large armies had largely been due to threats from Southern Tuscany from Naples. Florence had employed Jean d’Anjou and Alessandro Sforza to help with the threat but by 1454 she had overstretched, owing her condottieri 70,000 florins. After 1454 the remaining generals were quickly disbanded.
* Over the next 20 years, Florence became dependent on borrowed troops or those who were recruited hastily. No troops for example were available to deal with the threat to Piero the Gouty’s reign in 1466
* Due to her limited funds Florence was forced to pay for condottieri who were supports of Milan or Naples and garrisoned their troops there instead. When the War of Ferrara broke out thanks to Venetian aggression in 1482, Florence had little prepared and most of her troops were mobilised by the Milanese
* Venice on the other hand had been making preparations for an attack on Ferrara for a long time
* On the issue of Pisa in 1495, Florence had to deal with a range of embittered generals who refused to work together to quell the rebellion. It was finally the creation of Machiavelli’s militia in 1495 which solved the problem.
* On the other hand the Venetian army saw service evicting the French from Naples in 1496, defending Milan from the French in 1497, conquering Milan in conjunction with the French in 1499, holding off Turks in 1499 and 1500 and defeating the Germans in 1508 before finally being defeated itself.
* By 1509 the army numbered 27,000 professional troops and 10,000 militia, led by Pitigliano who had been with Venice since 1495
* Venice had accepted the need for a standing army by the 1500s but Florence had not. Many of the major condottieri were incredibly loyal to the Venetian state. Not all were of course. Bartolemo Colleoni desserted the city twice, however he was also captain of the Venetian guard for 20 years as well.
* Florence on the other hand had few long serving generals. Although there were a few minor examples, most of these were personal friends of Lorenzo. Three things were needed to attract loyalty: regular pay, generous rewards and discipline.
* Florence did not pay regularly. Indeed the Milanese captains who rescued the Medici in the Pazzi War claimed they were paid in forged currency, whilst the Ventian condottieri were paid on time and in full. This was largely down to the fact that the smaller cities had to find the money to pay them. Troops were garrisoned in small cities according to their income. The towns and cities could afford the upkeep and had a vested interest in soldiers not rioting.
* Florence also failed to offer good incentives. They seldom granted estates, large pensions or honorary citizenships in stark contrast to Venice. By the late C15th the Venetians had less land to give, however pensions remained high.
* Florence failed to keep good discipline. Armies need inspection systems based on muster rolls and carried out by respected officials with powers to fine or dismiss soldiers. No such organisation can be found in Florence. Troops were the responsibility of a rector or podesta who was a temporary appointment. Similarly the office responsible for the hiring of condottieri was also staffed by a rapidly rotating list of people. One Milanese visitor summed it up like this:  
  
* Venice failed however to fortify in the 1400s and early 1500s with only 1 fort being built at Gradisca to guard against the Turks. Inland forts were not Venice’s concern.
* In Florence from 1406 onwards fortifications were a major part of military policy with the architect Brunelleschi being heavily involved. In the 1470s and 80s forts such as Volterra, Colle Val d’Elsa, Brolio, Sarzana and Poggio Imperiale were all built. By 1494 the Florentines relied on their forts for defence whilst Venice relied on her army.

#### Changes after 1494

* French and Spanish agreed to settle over Naples in 1500: Louis XII of France and Ferdinand of Aragon
* In 1502 however the two nations fell out and Italy became the place over which they would vie for political dominance in Europe
* Italian diplomats believed they could solve the issue of the “barbarian” states diplomatically
* The leagues formed by the Italian states were always temporary in nature

#### Mercenaries

* Being a mercenary was generally a respected profession in the 1400s. The Condottieri (mercenary captains) were often rewarded highly by the cities they served. In Venice this included money, palaces, statues and occasionally entry into the Great Council.
* However, Renaissance Humanists, especially those in Florence, criticised the mercenaries for fighting for money rather than love of their state which was the Classical ideal. Guicciadini noted that the mercenaries were likely to be fickle as they were not subjects of the prince they served. Equally Machiavelli blamed the entire ruin of Italy on the employment of mercenaries.
* The heart of most armies was the state’s own. Mercenary companies would then complement these
* Each mercenary company was led by a condottiero who signed a condotte with the state specifying the troops he would supply and for how long.
* Most condotte specified a number of “lances” to be supplied – literally a group of men required to maintain a single knight. Until 1450 most lances consisted of 3 men but by later in the period this rose as high as 5.
* Mercenaries developed a style of warfare which prolonged wars and sought to avoid casualties. This extended duration was seen as desirable by the condottieri, because his mercenaries would be paid more
* They also tried to prevent casualties, since a mercenary killed would not be fighting another day, so safety was the first priority! This makes for a strange scene, as one mercenary captain was famous not for his brave fighting, but for his retreats. These were wonderfully staged managed as he pulled back for safety one after another attempt at a decisive battle.
* In one particular battle during the C14th only 1 soldier was killed in 5 days of Hole: Mercenaries

## Lesson 3 – Developments

### Imperato (p175-185)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Change** | **Continuity** |
| Army size | 1450-1650 saw a growth in army size. In 1498 Charles VIII’s army was only 28,000. By C17th Spanish army was around 100,000. | Growth in army size did not mean more men fighting – many were split to different fronts or left to garrison. Large armies tended to be unwieldy on the battlefield. |
| Army composition | Medieval armies used cavalry and infantry roughly evenly and much less artillery. During Italian wars there was a change – infantry began to outnumber cavalry 5:1. The cavalry remained but heavily armoured medieval knights gave way to lightly armoured horsemen. Change was down to new gunpowder weapons, cost of the cavalry, growth in siege warfare. Great numbers of men were conscripted into the army. | No guarantee that army quality improved. Armies continued to rely on mercenaries. |
| Mercenaries | Growth of gunpowder made Swiss mercenary pikemen less effective. Swiss mercenaries were slowly replaced by German landsknechts who were gun wielding mercenaries. | Mercenaries were still important at the start and end of the period. |
| Gunpowder and Canon | Increase in iron in 1500s increased use of guns. 1503 at Cerignola guns were decisive for first time. By mid C16th over half the French infantry carried guns. Mainly Arquebusiers – slow, muzzle loading guns. | Gunpowder was used in the Middle Ages. Guns were used from around 1320.  Because of slow Arquebus firing rate (10 mins a shot) archers were still important – 10 arrows a minute.  Guns were unreliable so could not always be depended on. |
| Fortifications | At beginning of period walls were high and quite thin. Canon changed all of this. Italian states began countering this by building thicker fortifications to counter the heavy iron balls. The trace italienne style was adopted – star shaped fortresses which aimed to deflect cannon balls. Walls were up to 40ft thick. Michelangelo designed star forts for a defense of Florence. The design spread during the 1530s and 40s. The star-shaped fortification had a formative influence on the patterning of the Renaissance ideal city: "The Renaissance was hypnotized by one city type which for a century and a half—from Filarete to Scamozzi—was impressed upon all utopian schemes: this is the star-shaped city." |  |
| Battle Tactics | Square formations of the Middle Ages were disrupted by the new gunpowder troops. New battle ranks were established to keep troops disciplined – the Corporal and Sergeant. Square formations shrank from around 3000 to 1500-2000 men. Some armies also began to adopt lines to prevent damage by cannon balls | Square formations continued although these now aimed to protect the gunners. Lines were not swiftly adopted. |
| Naval Warfare | Cannons made a huge difference to naval warfare – traditionally boats were rammed into enemies to allow hand to hand. Cannons meant that this was no longer necessary. The Spanish Armada of 1588 was possibly defeated due to adopting ramming tactics. |  |
| Views on Warfare | Gunpowder warfare began to reduce the idea of chivalric war and hand to hand combat. Sieges also destroyed this notion. Renaissance writers began to criticise the use of mercenaries as they had no proper allegiance. Only Machiavelli made a real break from the concept of “just war” however. He argued that rulers should portray all wars as just regardless of their true designation. | Ideas of just war continued through the start of the period with a justification given for invasion and an overarching theme of chivalry. Eg. Charles VIII pursued a dynastic claim. |

## Lesson 4 – Impact of Warfare

### Najemy: The Impact of Warfare on Society, Art and Intellectual Enquiry

* Renaissance governments tried to bring armies under their direct control with mixed results. These militia took foot soldiers from the urban and rural population by rotation and found cavalry from wealthier families. Class antagonism destroyed this idea however as the popolo disarmed the elites and the elites in turn disarmed the popolo. Many cities turned to mercenaries for their protection.
* Between 1342 and 1400 Siena's countryside was raided 37 times by marauding mercenaries who extorted large sums from towns. In 1375 Florence paid the Englishman and mercenary, John Hawkwood 130,000 florins not to attack Florence on the Pope's order. He later switched sides and fought for Florence.
* After the 1494 invasion of France there were further French invasions in 1499 and 1515. In 1502 the Spanish invaded southern Italy then in 1519 the Germans began as well, resulting in the sack of Rome in 1527. These political upheavals triggered a Humanist crisis of confidence. The contrast is starkly made in Bruni's “Praise of the City of Florence” (1403-4) and Scala's “Defence of Florence” (1596). Scala sees the city of Florence as a disintegrating centre of the galaxy.
* Scala in particular wrote about the random atoms of chance which the Italian cities were prey to and the notion comes through of a damaged sense of stability. Everything seems to be changing in Scala's universe and this is reflected in other Humanist writings of the time.
* This notion of an uncaring world governed by chance gave rise to new political ideas such as those of Machiavelli. The debate about the relevance of Humanist ideas as compared to the dominance of monarchies was rekindled with a new fervour, although some states had already slipped from the republican ideal.
* In Florence in 1494 the Medici rule was overturned leading to a restoration of republic until 1512 when the Medici returned. The importance of force in maintaining independence was one learned by Machiavelli and Paolo Vettori. In “The Prince”, Machiavelli argued that the possession of power and force was the most important aspect of being a good ruler.
* By 1530 Vettori was considering the merits of holding a state by force rather than allowing it to weaken by democratic process. Indeed both argued the use of cruel tactics was necessary to maintain a strong state. Necessity dictated that the ideals of republic could not be maintained. Machiavelli also argued that the army should be a standing one and that Italy lacked a common culture and set of laws to bind it together.
* By the early C16th, thanks to Julius II and the Medici Popes, cultural life flourished in Rome. It was here that most artistic projects were undertaken after 1494. Yet even this was shattered with the invasion of Spanish and German mercenaries, who sacked the city in 1527. This was the end of Rome as the heart of the ancient Roman Empire.
* By this point the greatest threat was coming from the Lutheran reforms. The Church, facing another schism, embarked upon a period of reform. In 1545-63, the Council of Trent brought about a reformed and more tyrannical Church, bent on the suppression of heretical ideas.
* An Index of Prohibited Books was released, bringing to a close the period where the scholars could look back to classical texts, and resulting in the imprisonment of men such as Galileo. At the same time discussions of politics, sexuality and domestic matters were pushed out of the public sphere.
* There was also the beginning of a modern Italian language which was used instead of the older Latin bases. It was hoped that this would bring national unity. At the same time it destroyed the Humanist cause of searching classical languages for truth. Discussions of biblical texts were forbidden and new versions were created in the vernacular to remove any chance of this happening.
* Fashion too changed, especially amongst the patricians who had previously worn long togas. By the 16th Century, the Venetian toga and the Florentine hood were denounced as outdated and replaced with cloaks and finery.

# Topic 10: What were the main developments in science and medicine?

## Brotton: A Very Short Introduction to the Renaissance

### Science and Philosophy

* The most controversial book on the celestial spheres in the High Renaissance was Copernicus’ “On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres” published in 1543 in Nuremberg. His revised view of Greek and Arabic scholars put the Sun at the centre of the solar system rather than the Earth. This view overturned Church doctrine that mankind was the centre of the universe and hence it was condemned
* Within a month of the publication of Copernicus’ book, Andreas Vesalius also published his “On the Structure of the Human Body”. This book was the beginning of modern observational science. His detailed analysis of the human body was no less revolutionary than Copernicus’ and paved the way for the later discoveries of Harvey etc. in the C17th
* The implications of both books were profound. Vesalius saw the body as an infinitely complex mechanism – Descartes’ “moving machine” as opposed to a divine creation. Meanwhile Copernicus replaced the divine order with the chaos of a vast universe

### Spread of Knowledge

* Venice was the centre for Renaissance printing
* Between 1495 and 1497, out of 1821 titles printed in Europe, 447 came from Venice.
* By the end of the 15th century there were 417 printers in Venice
* Venice was key due to its good trading links
* The Venetian government granted easy licenses and reproduction rights and Venice generally stayed neutral during the Italian wars providing stability
* The most important printing office was the Aldine Press of Aldus Manutius, which in 1499 printed the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, considered the most beautiful book of Renaissance, and established modern punctuation, the page format and italic type, and the first printed work of Aristotle.
* Manutius also created the octavo format for more portable reading

### Astronomy

* There was not much scientiﬁc or astronomical progress during the so-called Dark Ages of the Medieval Period in Europe. Any inquiry that attempted to challenge the authority of the Roman Catholic Church could lead to imprisonment, exile, or even death.
* In the 12th century Adelard of Bath (ca. 1090–ca. 1150) introduced some inaccurate cosmological concepts from India that further confused European astronomers.
* As the Church of Rome became more inﬂuential and scholars from the East began to take up residence in the centres of learning in Europe, the Hellenistic concepts of astronomy, mathematics, and philosophy were extensively taught.
* Church’s acceptance of astronomy as a science was limited to timekeeping
* The study of astronomy was most important at the universities at Oxford and Paris, and a number of scholars in residence advanced some new astronomical theories. Instrumentation such as astrolabes and quadrants would be invented and star catalogues and tables compiled.
* Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464) .He used his mathematical and philosophical reasoning to argue against the standard model of the universe bounded by concentric spheres with the Earth in the center. He proposed an “inﬁnite uni-verse” model where nothing is ﬁxed. He concluded that the Earth rotates on its axis as it revolves around the sun and that all the stars are also suns. These ideas inﬂuenced both Copernicus and Giordano Bruno of the 16th century.
* Copernicus’ “On the Revolutions of the Celestial Spheres” first printed at Nuremberg in May 1543 – the same year as his death
* Christendom at this time still believed in Ptolemaic theory
* Ptolemy was an Egyptian living in Alexandria in 150AD. He said that:
  + space was finite and spherical
  + Aristotle (384-322BC) was correct in his geocentric interpretation of the universe.
  + Bertrand Russell notes that "almost every serious intellectual advance has had to begin with an attack on some Aristotelian doctrine“
  + Ptolemy's findings were that the earth was a fixed, inert, immovable mass, located at the center of the universe, and all celestial bodies, including the sun and the fixed stars, revolved around it.
* Copernicus’ heliocentric theories not only revised Ptolemy’s but also used the work of earlier Muslim scholars such as Nasir al-Din al-Tusi and Ibn Shatir.
* He also paved the way for the work of later astronomers such as Galileo
* Calendars were another development due to astronomy. In 45BC Julius Caesar introduced a new calendar based on 365 days per year divided into 12 months (with no relationship to the moon), with 7-day weeks. The Julian calendar also provided an extra day once every four years.
* In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII reformed the Julian calendar on the advice of the astronomer Christoph Clavius. The old calendar had overestimated the length of each year by approximately 10 minutes and 48 seconds. This new calendar corrected this error from the old Julian calendar by eliminating 11 days between October 4th and October 15th. This resulted in 1582 being the shortest year in history with only 354 days. Somewhat surprising was the decision by the Eastern Orthodox Church in 1971 to reject the Gregorian calendar in favour of the Julian version

### Medicine

* The Church did not agree with the dissection of bodied. Mondino de Luzzi (1270–1326) belongs to the pre-Renaissance era, however he has the nickname “Restorer of Anatomy.” In 1326 he published “Anothomia”, in which he described his ﬁndings based on the public dissections that he personally performed.
* Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) explored all fields of knowledge, including engineering, architecture, science, painting, sculpting, and medicine. His dissections and anatomical studies were carried out not from a medical point of view, but rather as an aid in painting and sculpting the human figure. If his drawings and paintings had been published during his lifetime, the course of medical history may have been altered.
* Andreas Vesalius born Brussels, December 31, 1514. Died in 1564. Settled briefly in Venice in 1536 after fleeing Paris. Moved to the University of Padua to study for his doctorate in 1537. Was then given the chair of Surgery and Anatomy at Padua
* Traditionally medicine had been taught by study of Galen amongst others, Vesalius recommended empirical study instead. A local judge supplied him with deceased criminals
* Vesalius’ “On the Structure of the Human Body” was published in Basel in June of 1543. Began as a study and translation of Galen
* The studies in this book opened up a whole world of possibilities for the development of medicine in the C16th.
* Vesalius showed that the interventricular septum of the heart was not permeable, as Galen had suggested
* Some Galenic teaching, such as his emphasis on bloodletting as a remedy for many ailments, however remained
* More importantly, Vesalius viewing the body as a machine.
* Most European physicians at this time criticized the truthfulness of the statements in Vesalius’s books. Upset by these attacks, Vesalius resigned his position at the University of Padua and burned all of his remaining unpublished material. However, after his death, his published works were widely distributed.

### Engineering & Mathematics

* The explosion of publishing led to a rise in books on all disciplines. Between 1472 and 1500 there were 214 mathematical books published in Italy.
* 1494 – Luca Pacioli published “Everything About Arithmetic, Geometry and Proportion” A synthesis of the mathematical knowledge of his time
* The first printed work on algebra written in the vernacular. Included the first published description of the method of bookkeeping that Venetian merchants used, the double-entry accounting system
* He is widely regarded as the "Father of Accounting"
* Tartaglia (1499-1557) is one prime example: Various Queries and Inventions (1546) was aimed at the ambitious Henry VIII of England
* Tartaglia both responded to and developed weaponry based on gunpowder revolving mainly around effective use of artillery
* Set out to solve the problem of cannon accuracy. He did this by experimenting with various methods for determining the ﬂight paths of projectiles.
* Tartaglia described a system consisting of a two-arm quadrant. One arm was inserted into the mouth of the cannon, and the second arm was adjusted as perpendicular to the ground; thus, the angle of elevation could be determined by means of using geometry to calculate the trajectory of the cannonball.
* However, he was unable to gauge the velocity of the cannonball leaving the barrel. Therefore, his calculations were not accurate. a problem not solved until the 1700s
* Maths also impacted on the understanding of international banking as well as the production of more effective maps
* Without such advances the movement of commodities and “invisible money” would never have been possible
* Nor would effective mapping have been possible. Triangulation techniques allowed cartographers to account for the Earth’s curvature
* Such developments also allowed more effective transit to the new world, opening up further avenues for investigation

### East and West

* Arabic studies of the Greek texts had continued long after the Western world had ceased questioning
* Huge libraries such as those in Baghdad were centres of learning on a huge scale (Baghdad’s population was around 1 million in 1100) until the fall in 1258 to the Mongols
* These texts then began to be shared as the Eastern and Western churches began resolving their differences in the 1400s.
* Many texts which were reprinted in the Renaissance were themselves studies of C11th-13th Arabic texts

# Topic 11: How and why did the Italian Renaissance influence other parts of Europe? (Case Study of the Renaissance in the Netherlands.)

## Lesson 1: General Intro

* Before the 15th Century the Netherlands was a collection of some 17 states which had preciously been part of the disintegrating HRE. Holland was the most dominant of these from the C 13th onwards.
* The Dutch identified themselves by the town they lived in, their local duchy or county or as subjects of the Holy Roman Empire rather than as Dutch.
* In 1433 the Duke of Burgundy unified the17 states into a loose alliance and the move towards nationhood began.
* In 1496 there was a union between the Duke, Philip the Handsome and a Spanish princess, unifying the two countries. Charles V, their son would go on to inherit not only the Netherlands but also the Holy Roman Empire.
* Religious criticisms of the Catholic Church spread through Germany into Netherlands. The spread of the Protestant Reformation, started by Martin Luther in 1517, eventually led to outright war with Spain. A Dutch Republic was established in the North as a result in 1581

## Lesson 1: Burke: The Italian Renaissance

### Comparisons and Conclusions: The Netherlands

* There are many similarities between the civilization of Renaissance Italy and others. Eg. Artistic achievements in Nuremberg were also linked to civic patronage and civic pride. Albrecht Durer painted murals for the town hall in 1521 and a post of “city painter” was created 10 years later.
* In Italy the greatest innovations came in architecture then sculpture, painting and finally music.

### Socio-Economic

* Commercial success was another similarity – Bruges and Venice competing for supremacy. Both were set in extremely urbanised areas. Nearly 2/3 of the population of Flanders and Brabant lived in towns. Trade in Bruges and the textile industry of Ghent made Flanders into the wealthiest part of Northern Europe at the end of the 15th century.
* The Burgundian court dwelled mostly in Bruges, Ghent and Brussels. The nobles and rich traders were able to commission artists, creating a class of highly skilled painters and musicians who were admired and requested around the continent
* There were frequent exchanges between the Netherlands and Northern Italy. Examples are Italian architects Tommaso Vincidor and Alessandro Pasqualini, who worked in the Netherlands for most of their careers, Flemish painter Jan Gossaert, whose visit to Italy in 1508 in the company of Philip the Handsome left a deep impression, musician Adrian Willaert who made Venice into the most important musical centre of its time and Giambologna, a Flemish sculptor who spent his most productive years in Florence.
* As in Italy the growth of commercial agriculture abolished serfdom earlier than elsewhere in Europe. There was also a heavy reliance upon the luxury textiles industry which in turn inspired the growth of the visual arts.
* Artists in the Netherlands were also often the sons of craftsmen – 14 out of the leading 17 painters. There were also well known dynasties like in Italy with most painters coming from towns and gravitating towards cities such as Bruges and Antwerp.

### Technology and Innovation

* Van Eyck (1395-1441) oil painitng
* Flemish painter who perfected the technique of oil painting. His naturalistic panel paintings, mostly portraits and religious subjects, made extensive use of disguised religious symbols. His masterpiece is the altarpiece in the cathedral at Ghent, the *Adoration of the Lamb* (1432).
* The van Eycks' developed a new type of stable oil paint
* The paint they created was both brilliant and translucent as the pigment was suspended in a layer of oil that also trapped light. Ideally suited to the depiction of natural light.
* The invention of this technique transformed the appearance of painting.
* First Dutch language book was the 1477 Delft Bible. By 1481 the Netherlands had printing shops in 21 cities and towns. Christoffel Plantijn in Antwerp, Pierre Phalèse the Elder in Leuven, and the House of Elzevir in Leiden turned the Netherlands into a regional centre of publishing.
* Erasmus (1466-1536) also set the intellectual framework
* Spent many years in England as a professor of divinity at Cambridge.
* 1516 published his annotated New Testament, virtually the first Greek text, as well as an edition on St Jerome (1519).
* In both Erasmus tried to give a more rational conception of Christian doctrine, and to emancipate men's minds from the frivolous and pedantic methods of the Scholastic theologians.
* During the Reformation however he was criticised on both sides – despite this – he began an intellectual rebirth in Northern Europe

### Painting

* The Netherlands was a centre of cultural innovation in the C 15th and 16th matched only by Italy. A cluster of outstanding painters:
  + Van Eyck, Weyden, Memlinc, Massys, van Leyden, Brueghel
* There was also a conscious effort at artistic innovation: deceptive realism, use of perspective, employment of more secular themes etc. These included portraits, landscapes, still lives and scenes of domestic realism.
* 15th century painting in the Netherlands still showed strong religious influences. Even after 1500, the influence of the masters from the previous century meant a largely religious and narrative style of painting.
* First to begin to break away from this is Hieronymus Bosch (1450-1516). His style was unique, strikingly free, and his symbolism vivid. He expresses an intense pessimism and reflects the anxieties of his time, one of social and political upheaval.
* **One of Bosch's panel paintings, *Death and the Miser***, serves as a warning to anyone who has grabbed at life's pleasures, without being sufficiently detached, and who is unprepared to die. He appears twice – the naked man and the man in black. He has clearly made money from battle and death is close. Behind him is a demon offering gold and another is above. Unlike religious images, the fate of the man is unclear.
* **In *The Ship of Fools* Bosch** is imagining whole of mankind as a ship of fools. This is how we live, says Bosch--we eat, dring, flirt, cheat, play silly games, pursue unattainable objectives. Meanwhile our ship drifts aimlessly and we never reach the harbour. The open criticism of the church and the self-awareness bear the hallmarks of the Renaissance.
* **Flémalle's (1406-44) Mérode Altarpiece** made a radical break with the Gothic style and ranks with van Eyck as one of the founders of the Netherlandish school of painting. Here you can see the homely detail and down-to-earth naturalism associated with the artist.
* A closer focus on painting reveals other core differences. Frescoes were much less important (large windows meant little wall space in churches)
* Michelangelo once famously said “They paint in Flanders only to deceive the outward eye…it is in truth done without any reason or art, without symmetry or proportion, without care in selecting or rejecting, and finally without any substance or nerve…”
* The Italians placed more emphasis on the heroism and classical proportion whilst the Dutch were more interested in realism.
* The Dutch painters also made far fewer self portraits – seemingly an obsession of the Italians.
* After 1550 the Flemish and Dutch painters begin to show more interest in nature and in beauty with a style that incorporates Renaissance elements, but remains very far from the elegant lightness of Italian Renaissance art
* Some of this can be seen in the works of Joachim Patinir and Pieter Aertsen
* The most important of these Flemish painters however was Pieter Brueghel the Elder
* He is known for his depictions of nature and everyday life, showing a preference for the natural condition of man, choosing to depict the peasant instead of the prince.
* The Landscape with the Fall of Icarus combines several elements of northern Renaissance painting. It hints at the renewed interest for antiquity (the Icarus legend), but the hero Icarus is hidden away in the background. The main actors in the painting are nature itself and, most prominently, the peasant, who does not even look up from his plough when Icarus falls.

### Sculpture

* Sculpture lagged a long way behind, with Claus Sluter being the greatest of the Renaissance Dutch sculptors, dying in 1406. The main rivals for Italian sculpture were German and worked in wood.

### Music

* In the Netherlands music saw the greatest innovations: Dufay, Binchois, Busnois, Ockeghem etc.

### Architecture

* Architecture remained fairly traditional as can be seen in the Louvain town hall, built in 1448.