Lecture 12: the Renaissance: Humanism and the “Rebirth of Europe”

The Renaissance (1350-1500)
• **Jacob Burckhardt** (1818-1897)
  – *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860)
• **Renaissance**
  – Recovery from the 14th Century
• **Urban society allows**
  – Italian elite
  – Rebirth of the culture of classical antiquity
  – Emphasis on individual ability
  – Secular spirit

The Politics of Italy
• No centralized government would rule Italy
• Gradual replacement of republican governments
• **Venice**
• **Florence**
• **Milan**
• **Condottieri** and **Podestà**

Politics in Italy
• Italy would not become a nation till 1870
• In the 1500’s
• **Conflict lead to the birth of “modern diplomacy”**
• **Niccolo Machiavelli** (1469-1527)

Economic Recovery
• Italian cities
• Post Plague Recovery

The Changing Nobility, 1400-1500’s
• **Nobles still dominated society (go figure?)**
• **Baldassare Castiglione** (1478-1529)
• **Nobles would**

Change from Serf to Peasant
• Decline of the Manorial system and serfdom
• Italian towns increasingly complex
• The Renaissance family

The Printing Press
• *Diamond Sutra* 868
• Rag based paper enters Europe in the 1300’s
• **Block Printing**
• Johannes Gutenberg invents movable type printing in 1440’s
• Printing spread rapidly through Europe
• Development of scholarly research
• Lay reading public (think Shakespeare!)

Literature 1300’s
• **Dante Alighieri** (1265-1321)
  – *The Divine Comedy (La divina commedia)*
• **Giovanni Boccaccio** (1313-1375)
  – *The Decameron* 1353
• **Geoffrey Chaucer** (1343-1400)
  – *The Canterbury Tales*
• **Christine de Pizan** (1365-1430)
  – *The Book of the City of Ladies*

The Importance of Liberal Education
• A person could be dramatically changed by education
• Pietro Paolo Vergerio’s
  – *Concerning Character*
• Liberal studies
  – Individual of virtue and wisdom
• Core curriculum
  – History, rhetoric, grammar
  – Logic, poetry, mathematics, astronomy, music
  – Physical education
• Women learned religion and morals

Renaissance Humanism
• **Petrarch** (1304-1374)
• **Leonardo Bruni** (1370-1444)
  – Civic humanism
• **Lorenzo Valla** (1407-1457)
• **Poggio Bracciolini** (1380-1459)

Humanism and Philosophy
• Cosimo de Medici hires Marsilio Ficino to translate Plato’s major works
• **Marsilio Ficino** (1433-1499)
• There is a revival of Hermeticism
• **Pico della Mirandola** (1463-1494)

The Northern Renaissance
• Christian Humanism
• **Erasmus** (1466 – 1536)
  – *The Praise and Folly* (1511),
• Thomas Moore (1478 – 1535)
  – *Utopia* (1516),
• Corruption and worldliness of Catholic Church

Renaissance Art
• Renaissance art
  – was a search for naturalism and reality
  – It focuses on human beings
  – Realism between figures and landscape
  – Perspective (artists must know math)
  – Correct anatomy
• Masaccio (1401-1428)
  – Strongly influenced
  – Architect Brunelleschi
  – Sculptor of Donatello,

Renaissance Art
Olga’s Gallery
15th-Century Renaissance Art
Mark Harden’s Archive: “Renaissance”
Boston College’s Renaissance Art and Architecture

The Renaissance Papacy, 1417-1600
• The Renaissance Popes neglected their spiritual duties
  – Pope Sixtus IV, 1474-1484
  – Pope Alexander VI, 1492-1503
  – Pope Julius II, 1503-1513
  – Pope Leo X (1475-1521)

Heresy During the Renaissance
• Heresy was not new but it was much “stronger” during the Renaissance
• John Wycliffe (c. 1328-1384) and his Lollards
• John Hus (1374-1415)
• Council of Constance, 1414-1418
• Pope Pius II

End of the Renaissance
• Invasions by French, Spanish, and Holy Roman Empire
• Italy lost its monopoly on trade routes
• The Catholic Counter-Reformation

The German Monarchy
• Failure of the Hohenstaufen dynasty
• Germany was a land of hundreds of independent states
• No real obligation to Holy Roman Emperor
• German monarchy was elective
• Power depended on family possessions

The Holy Roman Empire
  — Salian kings in Germany
    • Weakened kings rely on churchmen as administrators
    • Normans conquer southern Italy
    • Frederick I, Barbarossa, 1152-1190
      – Build German kingdom
      – Opposition of the pope in northern Italy
    • Henry VI, 1190-1197
    • Frederick II, 1212-1250
      – Preoccupation in gaining Italy
      – Contest with the pope