

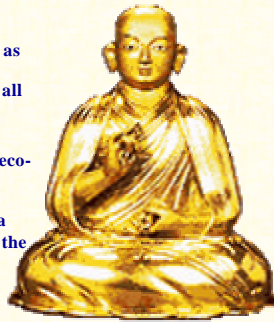
Classical Humanism



Renaissance vs. Gothic

The Renaissance viewed itself as cultured and the Gothic as barbaric. (Renaissance had it all but lacked humility.)

Classical humanism revisits Greco-Roman classicism without necessarily filtering it thru Christianity—thus creating a tension between the sacred and the secular.



Birthplace of the Renaissance

- 12th-13th Paris was the midwife to the Gothic
- Giotto signaled a change that shock art history for all time. The 14th century was the labor pain prior to the birth of a new and wondrous offspring named the Renaissance.
- 15th Florence was the midwife to the Renaissance. Florence was democratic and a trading and banking center for Europe. It was the Wall Street of the Western world. (Banco = table for exchanging money)

Humanism and the Renaissance

- Middle Ages wanted to move away from “vale of tears” to the world beyond. This parallels much of Eastern thought—Buddhism and Hinduism.
- Classical humanism is this worldly—being all that they could be—something typical of the Greeks.
- Humanism got *new* ideas from the Crusades and Byzantine refugees from Constantinople due to the Ottomans conquest in 1453. Many artists and scholar went West.
- Individualism influenced entire culture from art to economics.

Italy's city-state system paralleled that of the Greeks:

- the Duchy of Milan
- Republic of Venice
- Republic of Florence
- Kingdom of Naples
- Papal States
- plus lesser states of Savoy, Urbino, Modena, Genoa, etc.



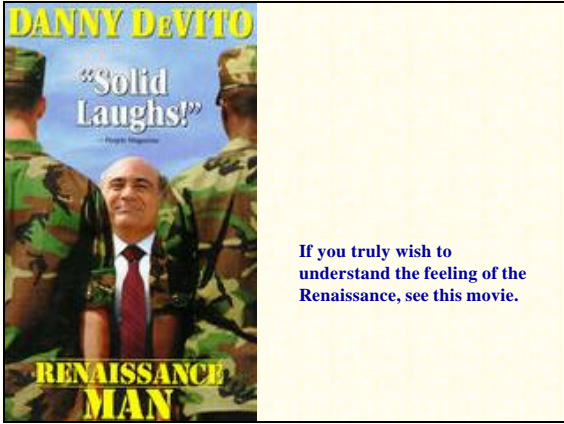
Italian Renaissance Mindset-- Parallels Classical Greece

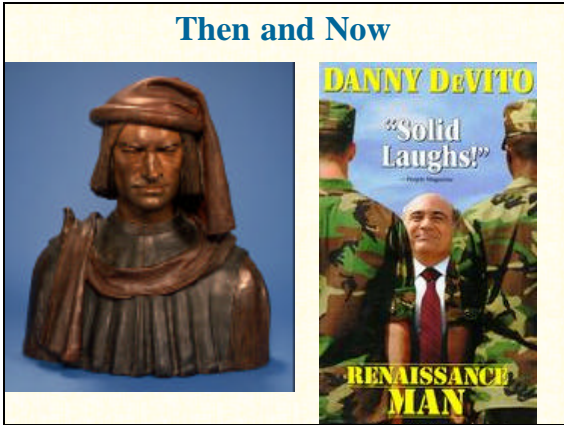
Genoa and Venice were the great trading centers of Italy and of Western Europe even when Europe struggled to survive—thus new ideas were also being “imported”.

Lorenzo de Medici is the poster child for the Renaissance man—make money so that you could enjoy the good life of art and education.

Great religious skepticism—after all at one time there were three popes.

Political disunity and numerous city-states.







Lorenzetti, *Effects of Good Government* 1339



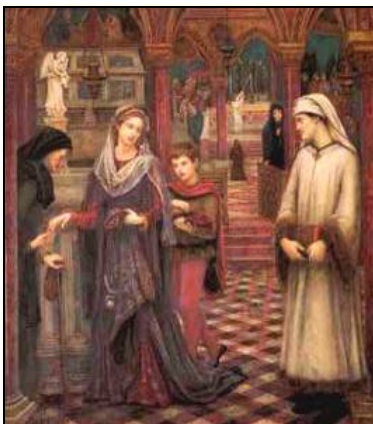
Lorenzetti, *Effects of Bad Government* 1339



Petrarch (1304-74)
“Father of Humanism”

He collected and/or copied nearly everything of cultural value especially from the Greco-Roman period.

He was torn between faith and reason...thus a truly Renaissance man.



Laura de Sade, who was Petrarch's “lover” and Black Death victim.

Laura, Love, and the Renaissance

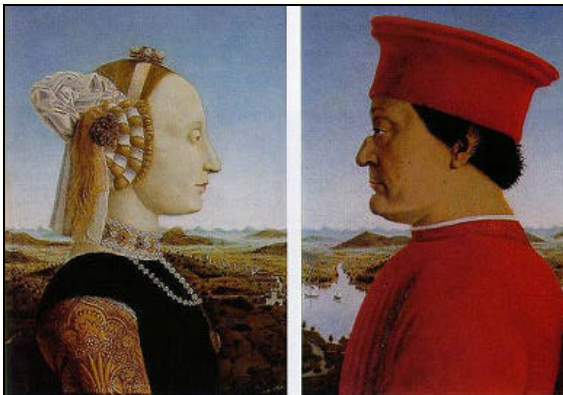
Laura was a real person and also a symbol of the idealized women. Petrarch met her in 1327, and she died in 1348 after contracting the Black Death. She is generally believed to have been the 19-year-old wife of Hugues de Sade. Petrarch saw her first time in the church of Saint Claire.

Laura was the model of feminine attributes and platonic love for the Renaissance. During the Gothic period Mary would have been. Note the change.

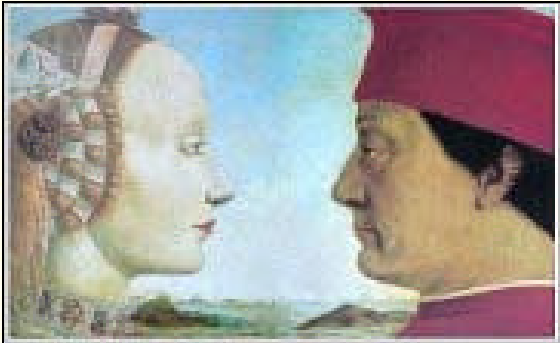
Petrarch's Reflections on Aging

(read this; this will happen to you!)

"In my youth I was blessed with an agile, active body, though not particularly strong; and while I cannot boast of being very handsome, I was good-looking enough in my younger days. I had a clear complexion, between light and dark, lively eyes, and for many years sharp vision, which, however, unexpectedly deserted me when I passed my sixtieth birthday, and forced me, reluctantly, to resort to the use of glasses. Although I had always been perfectly healthy, old age assailed me with its usual array of discomforts."



Duke and Duchess of Urbino, early patrons of art and education.



A German cosmetic surgery advertisement for what they would look like after surgery. <http://www.meine-neue-nase.de/index.html>

Pico (1463-1494)
*Oration
on the
Dignity of Man*

Pico's message concerning human knowledge and ability set the tone for humanism and individualism in the Renaissance.

He was forced to leave Italy after writing his 900 theses—similar to Luther's 95.



Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1474)

On the Family is a defense of the Renaissance's individualism that produces wealth and happiness.

"A man can do anything he wants."

Virtu is the self-confidence created by a Renaissance man.



Castiglione describes the ideal man and women... Today, his generalizing stereotypes seem sexist and superficial. He was more concerned with appearance than with ones inner character.

Castiglione (1478-1529)



Renaissance Women



It is an amazing thing to see in our city the wife of a shoemaker, or a butcher, or a porter dressed in silk with chains of gold at the throat, with pearls and rings of good value....and then in contrast to see her husband cutting the meat, all smeared with cow's blood, poorly dressed... but whosever considers this carefully will find it reasonable, because it is necessary that the lady, even if low born and humble, be draped with such clothes for her natural excellence and dignity, and the man be less adorned as if a slave, or a little ass, born to her service.

--Lucrezia Marinella, *The Nobility and Excellence together with the Defects and Deficiencies of Men* (1600)

Machiavelli (1469-1527)

The Prince was in response to the disunity of Italy. His treatise is a list of suggestions to resolve the problem...ends justify the means.



An interesting site:

<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hm/08/eu/hm08eu.htm>
