

Ch. 1-1 Italy: Birthplace of the Renaissance

Essential Question:

Why did the Renaissance start in Italy?

- Italy's Advantage
- Classical and Worldly Values
- The Renaissance Revolutionizes Art
- Renaissance Writers Change Literature

The Renaissance:

A rebirth or revival of art and learning

- ▶ The Renaissance was a cultural movement marked by the renewed interest in classic Greek and Roman culture
- ▶ After suffering through wars, destruction, and the plague of the Middle Ages, people wanted to **celebrate life** and the **human spirit**. This made them **question** the way things were done by authorities in art, literature, religion, government, and science.



Italy's Advantage

- ▶ Educated people in Italy wanted to bring back to life the culture of classical Greece and Rome
- ▶ Eventually, the Renaissance spread from Northern Italy into the rest of Europe
- ▶ Italy had three advantages that allowed the Renaissance to take hold



Italy's Advantage: City States



- ▶ **Overseas trade**, helped out by migrations of people going on crusades and returning, led to the formation of large city-states in Northern Italy
- ▶ **Large towns** are a natural meeting place where people can exchange goods and ideas—allowing an intellectual revolution
- ▶ The bubonic plague killed so many people (60%) that labors could demand **better wages** and a better standard of living
- ▶ Merchants started to look at other interests (art, literature, politics)

Italy's Advantage: Merchants and the Medici

- ▶ Wealthy **merchant classes** developed in each city-state
- ▶ Smaller city states had a higher number of wealthy merchants who dominated politics
- ▶ Merchants had to use their **intelligence to succeed** so they developed a belief in individual achievement
- ▶ Florence had a powerful banking family, the **Medici's** with connections to other city-states
- ▶ **Medici** family influenced art and politics for several generations in Florence (**Cosimo and Lorenzo**)



Italy's Advantage: Looking to Greece and Rome

- ▶ Renaissance artists disliked medieval art and literature—they **questioned why they had to paint and write the same old way**
- ▶ Return to learning of Greeks and Romans
 - ▶ Inspired by Roman ruins
 - ▶ Scholars found and **studied ancient manuscripts** from monasteries (Latin)
 - ▶ Christian scholars from Eastern Roman Empire fled to Italy to escape Muslim Turks & brought more manuscripts
 - ▶ All this **encourage writers and artists to experiment with new ideas**



Classical and Worldly Values

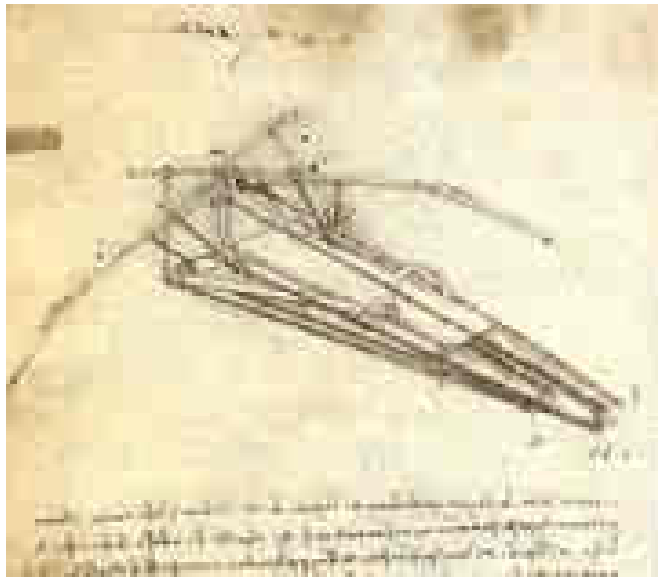
- ▶ **Humanism** - study of ancient manuscripts focused on human potential and achievement. This encouraged scholars and artists to imitate classical culture and studies
- ▶ **Worldly pleasures** - people start to enjoy life's material goods (secular) such as music, art, fine food and clothing
- ▶ **Patrons** of the arts - Church leaders and wealthy Renaissance merchants spent huge amounts of money beautifying their community by paying artists to create works of art - paintings and sculptures
- ▶ **Renaissance Men and Women** - educated, patron of arts, develop total human potential



Renaissance Revolutionizes Art

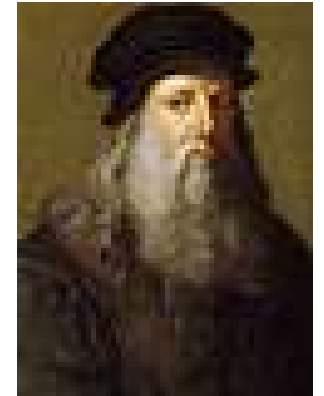
- ▶ Support by wealthy patrons allows **artists to develop new techniques**
 - ▶ **Realism**: a style copied from classical models
 - ▶ **Classical style**: use of columns, etc.
 - ▶ **Perspective**: show 3 D on flat surface
 - ▶ **Religion**: still shown but less dominating in painting and sculpture
 - ▶ **The Individual**: nobles & prominent people: also personality and emotion
 - ▶ **Beauty**: use of details that add beauty





Leonardo Da Vinci 1452-1519

Painter, Sculptor, Inventor,
Engineer, Scientist







Michelangelo Buonarroti 1475-1564

Painter, Sculptor, Architect,
Engineer, Poet



- The David
- The Pieta
- St. Peter's Basilica



Painting on the Sistine Chapel





Donatello 1386-1466

Artist

Sculptor in wood, marble,
and bronze

Famous for small reliefs cut into
sculptures that made them
look more real





Raphael

1483-1520

Painter and Architect



Classical and Worldly Values: Renaissance Women

- ▶ Sofonisba Anguissola and Artemisia Gentileschi



Renaissance Writers Change Literature

- ▶ **Vernacular**: use of native and everyday language instead of Latin
- ▶ **Self-expression**: to portray individual character of subjects
- ▶ **Advice to leaders**
- ▶ Modern writers use these trends





Francesco Petrarca 1304-1374

Father of Renaissance
humanists

Wrote sonnets (14 line
poems)

Wrote letters to important
men of the time





Giovanni Boccaccio 1313-1375

Expressed tragic and comic views of life

Used humor to show individuality and folly

Wrote Decameron, about people trying to escape the plague





Niccolo Machiavelli 1469-1527

Historian and political
thinker

Wrote *The Prince*, a guide
book for rulers

“A ruler must be strong as
a lion and shrewd as a fox.”

Not concerned with
morality but politically
effective

Trickery, deceit, and lies are
OK if it helps a ruler keep
his power



Vittoria Colonna

1492-1547

Writer

Poet

Exchanged letters with
Michelangelo

