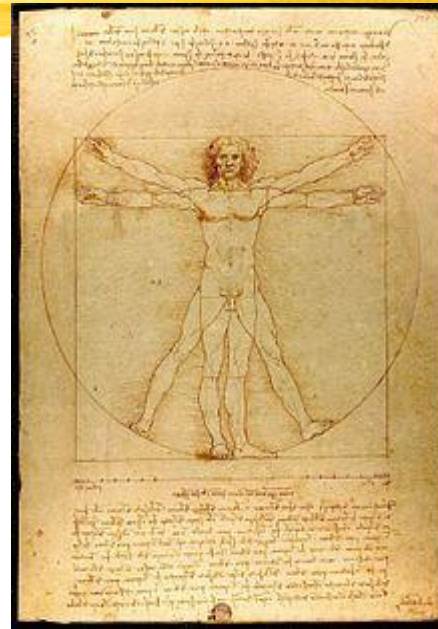


The Italian Renaissance

The Rebirth of Classicism in the West

Birth of the Modern World



Prelude to the Renaissance

⌘ The Middle Ages

⊞ Early—(500-1000) Reorganization after fall of Rome

- ⊞ Feudalism-system of social relations (lords, serfs) based on **land tenure that provided order and stability to the people of Europe. Obligation held society together and warfare was constant, but low level and personal. Feudalism organized Europe in a power vacuum where there was no**
- ⊞ Christianity-the only authority that held Europe together was the Catholic Church. It was the most powerful force in Medieval society.

⊞ High—(1000-1200)height of Medieval Culture

- ⊞ **1215-Magna Carta-1st restriction on government power; basis of constitutionalism**
- ⊞ **Late—14th century calamities-Black Death, 100 Years War, social dislocations due to social and economic stress paved way for major change!**

⌘ Crusades

- ⊞ **12th Century military operation initiated by Pope Urban II to win back the holy land for Christianity. 7 major crusades in all! Most were dismal failures!**
- ⊞ **Opened trade links with Middle East, Central Asia and beyond; led to an economic boom in Europe and a powerful merchant class**



Effect of Crusades on Europe

Routes of the Crusaders

Why in Italy at this Time?



- ⌘ **Revival of Commerce and Town Building was more intense in Italy**
- ⌘ **Feudalism had less of a grip on Italy**
- ⌘ **Presence of antiquity was stronger in Italy than elsewhere in Europe; reminders of classical greatness!**
- ⌘ **Location; perfect for trade!**
- ⌘ **Competition between city-states spurred advancement! Competition was the engine of the Renaissance!**
- ⌘ **Capitalism: economic system that thrived on competition for profits, great wealth developed and was spent on art, literature, scholarly pursuits and scientific inquiries.**
- ⌘ **Venice was richest; trade with Middle East and the Black Sea region**
- ⌘ **Florence was known for art; also the home of the Medici family of bankers!**

Origins of the Renaissance

⌘ Began in Northern Italian (Italian Renaissance) City-States

⏏ Due to:

- ⏏ rise of trade & commerce
- ⏏ location
- ⏏ competition between city-states spurred advancement
- ⏏ great wealth developed
- ⏏ Venice was richest
- ⏏ Florence was known for art



The City-States

- ⌘ Size--200,000: 1,000 are nobles, the rest common
- ⌘ Economy--trade and commerce, banking, moneylending
- ⌘ Culture--patronage of the arts; celebration of man!
- ⌘ Location--center of the Mediterranean: good for trade!



European Economic Recovery



- ⌘ **Dramatic recovery of European commerce at the end of the Crusades**
- ⌘ **Economy--trade and commerce, banking, moneylending spurred economic growth and made bankers the new power brokers**
- ⌘ **The significance of printing and mining as new industries**
- ⌘ **The fifteenth-century banking empire of the Medici family in Florence finances the Renaissance and provides patronage for arts.**



Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY



Renaissance Economics



- ⌘ **Profit-making** became more important than Church doctrine; prohibitions against usury (money lending) were ignored in the quest for profits! Money always wins out over religious principle.
- ⌘ **Economy**--trade and commerce, banking, moneylending, all spurred tremendous growth and increasing wages
- ⌘ To overcome guilt, profit-makers indulge in **philanthropy**; they paid for art and literature:
 - ☑ Patronage of the arts=Culture!
- ⌘ Influence of guilds declined as individual initiative won out in the race for wealth
- ⌘ High profits led to economic diversification and rapid economic transformation into a modern system.

Renaissance Economics; Why Patronage and What was the Role of Capitalism?

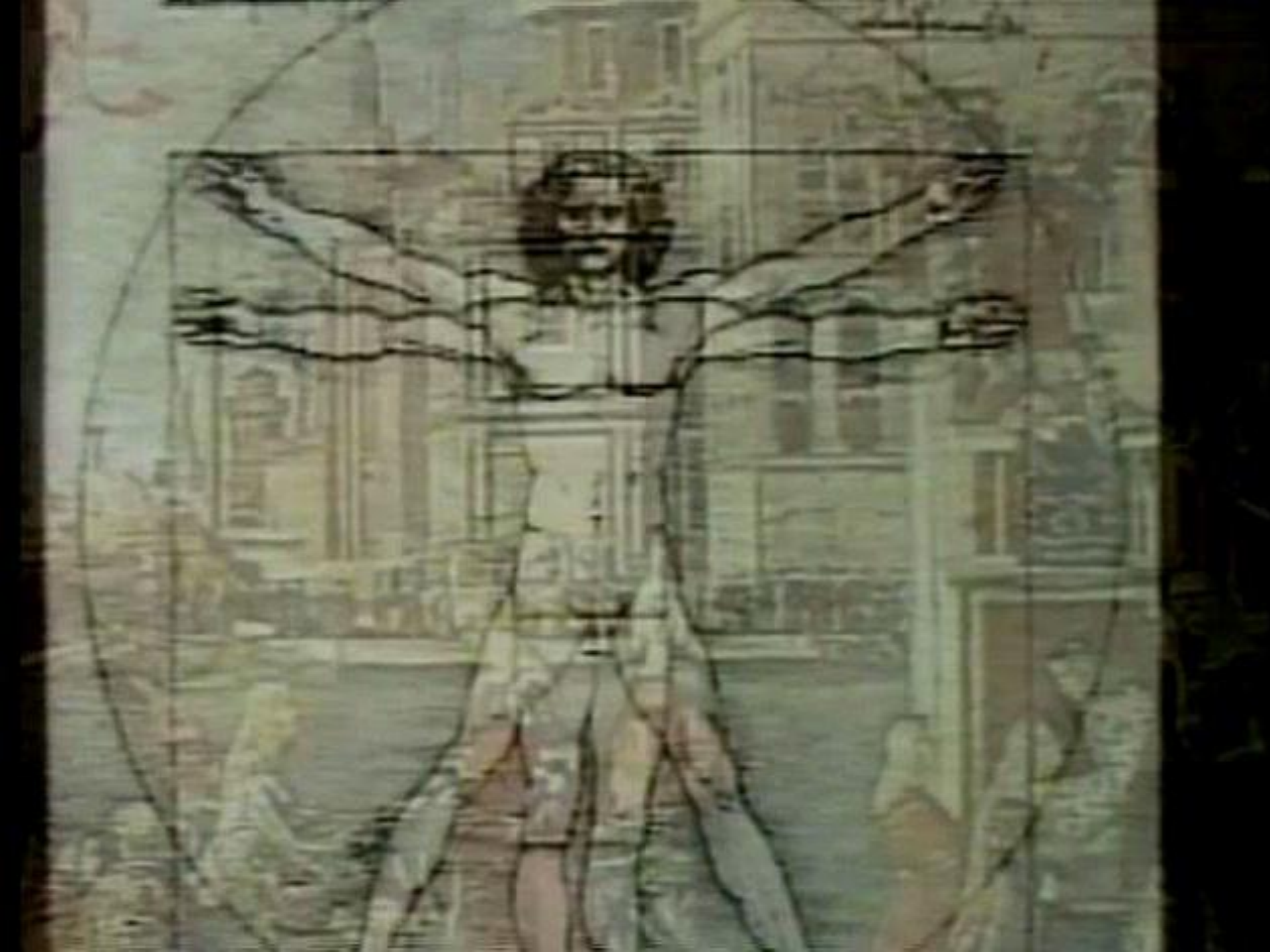


- ⌘ Reason for Patronage: Art became the way to advertise economic success!
- ⌘ Intensified commercial competition created the need to be efficient, which led to innovation and concentration of capital where it could be used most productively!
- ⌘ Capitalism = engine of the Renaissance
 - ⊞ Goal--to make the highest possible profit
 - ⊞ Focus--to better the individual
 - ⊞ Result--rich merchant class, powerful bankers, financial tools, usury, accumulation of money in capital pools; bankers become new power brokers!

Capitalism & The Bankers

- ⌘ **Bankers started as traders: began to lend surplus money in return for interest: usury!**
- ⌘ **Mechanism of Trade--purchase goods in one town and sell in another: middleman status only!**
- ⌘ **Banking concentrated in families; major clients are kings, princes, nobles, large commercial accounts**
- ⌘ **Medici was the most famous of the banking families; Lorenzo the Magnificent the most famous of them all!**
- ⌘ **Bankers were the real power brokers of the Renaissance, they ruled the Italian city-states and they set the course of the Renaissance and paid for the cultural achievements!**





Renaissance Society

- ⌘ **The Renaissance was an elitist historical phenomenon; centered on the wealthy, educated, privileged classes**
 - ☒ Extreme social stratification divided into factions around the wealthiest families
- ⌘ **Northern Italy was urban and commercial while Southern Italy mostly was not**
- ⌘ **Italy of the Renaissance was a very family-oriented society, patriarchal and traditional.**
 - ☒ Father's authority over his family complete; patriarchal!
 - ☒ Some wealthy women played an important role in Italian city-states
 - ☒ Concentration of wealth among great families like the Medici
- ⌘ **Marriages were frequently arranged to strengthen business ties; women were excluded from Renaissance enlightenment and scholarship**

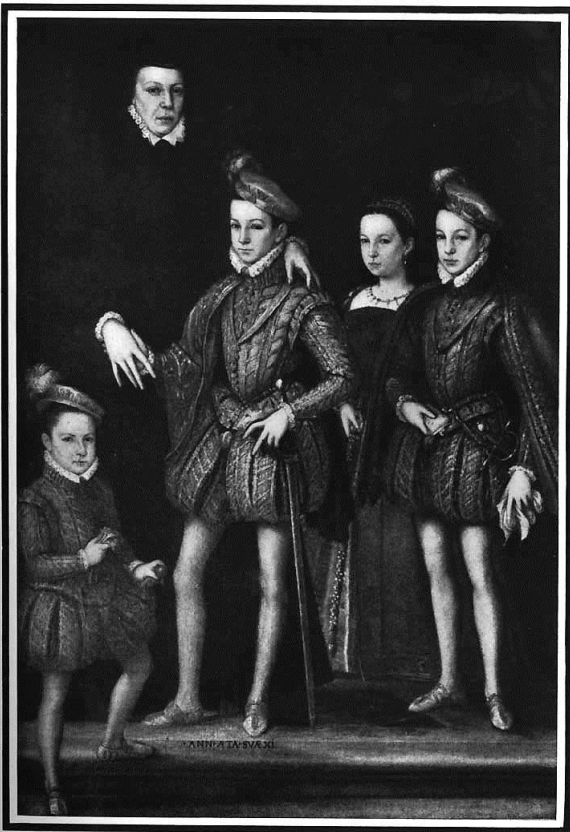
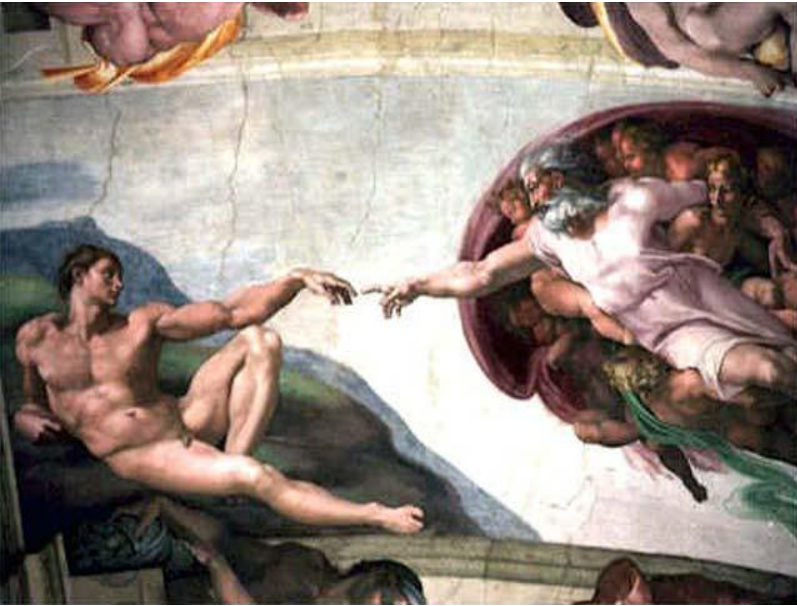


PLATE XXXV. CATHERINE DE' MEDICI AND HER FAMILY, 1561
Shottesbrooke Park. By kind permission of Miss Oswald-Smith

Renaissance Society Portrayed in the Culture



- ⌘ **Number of portraits painted during this era illustrates focus on the individual and the dignity of man**
- ⌘ **Growing humanism and secularism in a Christian context will lead to increase in desire for knowledge**
- ⌘ **Focus on man's free will and power of the individual**
- ⌘ **Rewards for living a moral, upright existence came in this life, not after death. This leads to a weakening of Church authority and the establishment of secularism in public life.**

Renaissance Politics



⌘ **Same pattern and problems as those of the Greek city-states, competition and political struggle lead to war**

☒ **Rome, Venice, Milan, Florence, and the Kingdom of Naples**

☒ **Renaissance Venice**

☒ **Renaissance Florence**

-- **Lorenzo the Magnificent (1449-1492)**

☒ **1300's republicanism became 1400's despotism—with the exception of Venice**

⌘ **Inter-city warfare led to new advances in diplomacy; modern statecraft is born**

-- **"balance of power"-goal of diplomacy**

Renaissance Political Theory: Realism in Practice!

⌘ Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527)

-- "The Prince"

- ⌘ *The goal of the prince must be power; Machiavelli was a political realist.*
- ⌘ **Cynical view of human nature; saw the worst in people**
- ⌘ **Fear is a better motivator than affection ("It is better to be feared than loved")**
- ⌘ **Politics as the art of deception**
- ⌘ **Prince has the right to lie, cheat, steal, kill. The ends justify the means and the goal of power is to stay in power.**



Renaissance Political Structure

- ⌘ **Statecraft**--the art of building and operating political systems develops; political science is invented!
- ⌘ Secular authority is supreme over religious authority
- ⌘ Diplomacy is refined and practiced internationally
- ⌘ Beginnings of modern nation-states and internationalism



Adrian "Ace" Williams/Archive Photos

Warfare and Politics during the Renaissance

- ⌘ *End of Private War; too expensive for kings, now it is a national endeavor!*
- ⌘ Rise of the mercenary (soldiers who are hired to fight)
- ⌘ New role for banker: financing wars and governments
- ⌘ War becomes a profit-making enterprise, a business venture
- ⌘ Benefits of war:
 - ⊞ political cohesion
 - ⊞ improvements in infrastructure
 - ⊞ scientific and technological advancements adaptable to consumer markets
 - ⊞ major profits to fuel the Renaissance!



Utopianism in Politics

- ⌘ **Thomas More (1478-1535)**
councilor to Henry VIII
- ⌘ **Wrote "Utopia"-- plan for a perfect, egalitarian world**
- ⌘ **Similar to Marxism in that there would be enough for all, no money and perfect harmony**
- ⌘ **Utopia represented an attempt to engineer a perfect world**
- ⌘ **More was beheaded by Henry VIII**

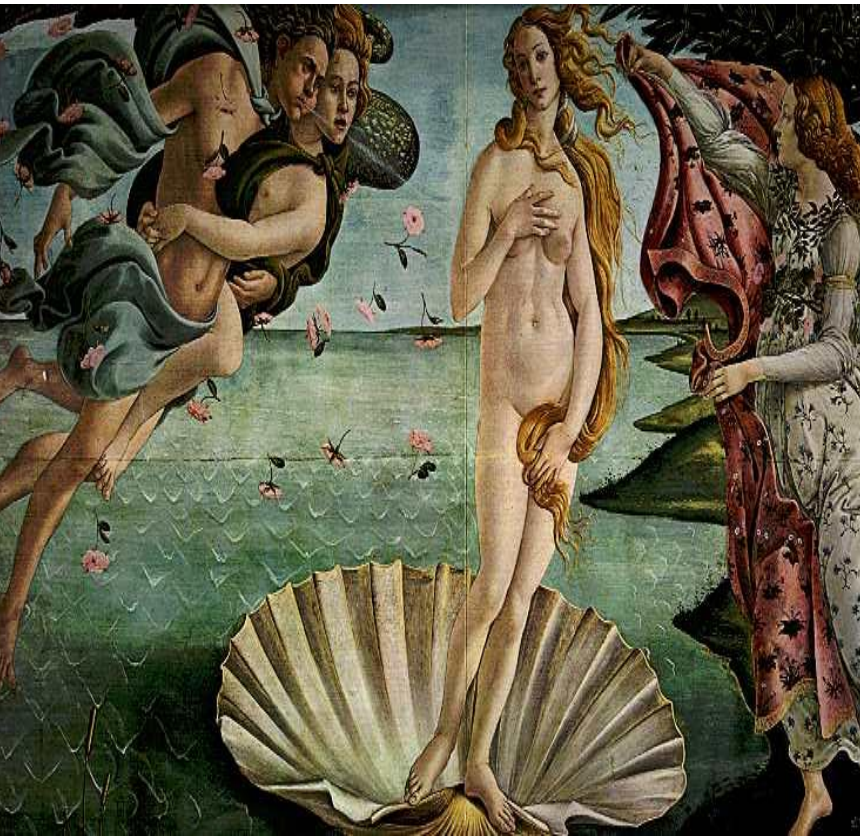


Renaissance Art and Architecture: Celebration of Man



- ⌘ The proliferation of portraiture and its significance in celebrating both man and the importance of the individual**
- ⌘ The depiction of nudes—realism celebrates the beauty of the human body**
- ⌘ Imitation of nature was a primary goal; nature was the highest perfection**
- ⌘ Pagan scenes and myths were popular subjects with no apologies to the Church**
- ⌘ Evocation of secularism and humanism in art that celebrates the centrality of man in the universe is popular as the Renaissance gives humanity the freedom to explore and expand the frontiers of human endeavor**

Renaissance Art: Celebration of Humanity!



- ⌘ **Boticelli's "Birth of Venus"**
- ⌘ **Status of artist is elevated to cultural hero; artists are superstars of the age!**
- ⌘ **Renaissance art stressed proportion, balance and harmony—and was not otherworldly**
- ⌘ **Artistic problems of perspective and composition addressed**
- ⌘ **Realism and classical themes abound.**
- ⌘ **Renaissance art celebrates the human form and the dignity of man!**







Renaissance Art: Northern v. Southern Europe



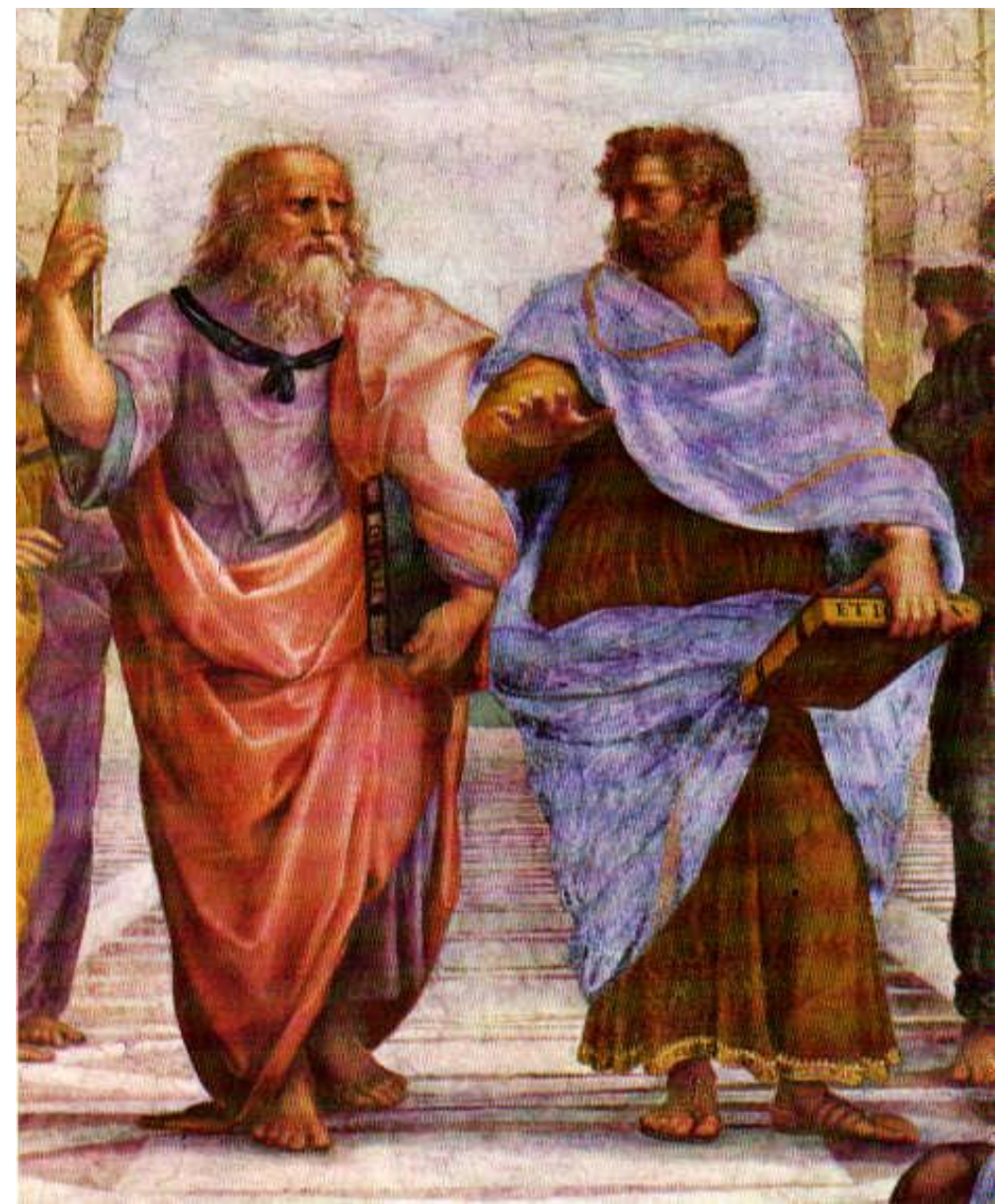
- ⌘ Differences between Italian and Northern European painting
 - Italian frescoes vs. Northern European altar pieces--darker, more introspective
- ⌘ Van Eyck's oil paintings—earth tones and indoor scenes
- ⌘ Rome became the center of the High Renaissance (1480-1520)

Renaissance Art: Raphael and the School of Athens

Neoclassicism at its Best!



- ⌘ **Raphael (1483-1520)**
- ⌘ **Man of great sensitivity and kindness**
- ⌘ **Died at the age of 37**
- ⌘ **"The School of Athens"**
- ⌘ **Famous for frescoes in the Vatican Palace**
- ⌘ **Realism and emotion in the depiction of the human form. Celebration of mankind!**







Renaissance Man: Wide Ranging Interests

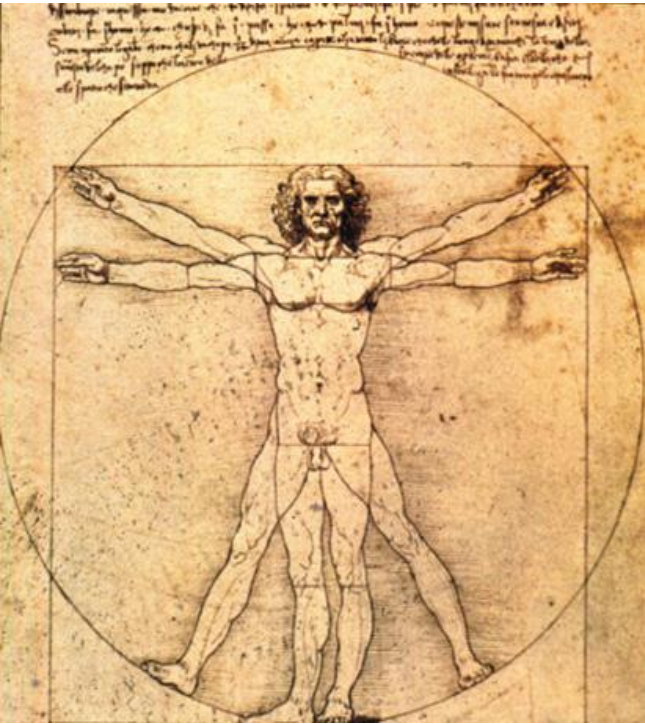
⌘ **Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519)**

⌘ **True Renaissance Man; accomplished in many diversified fields!**

⌘ **Scientist, inventor, engineer and naturalist, expert in all fields**

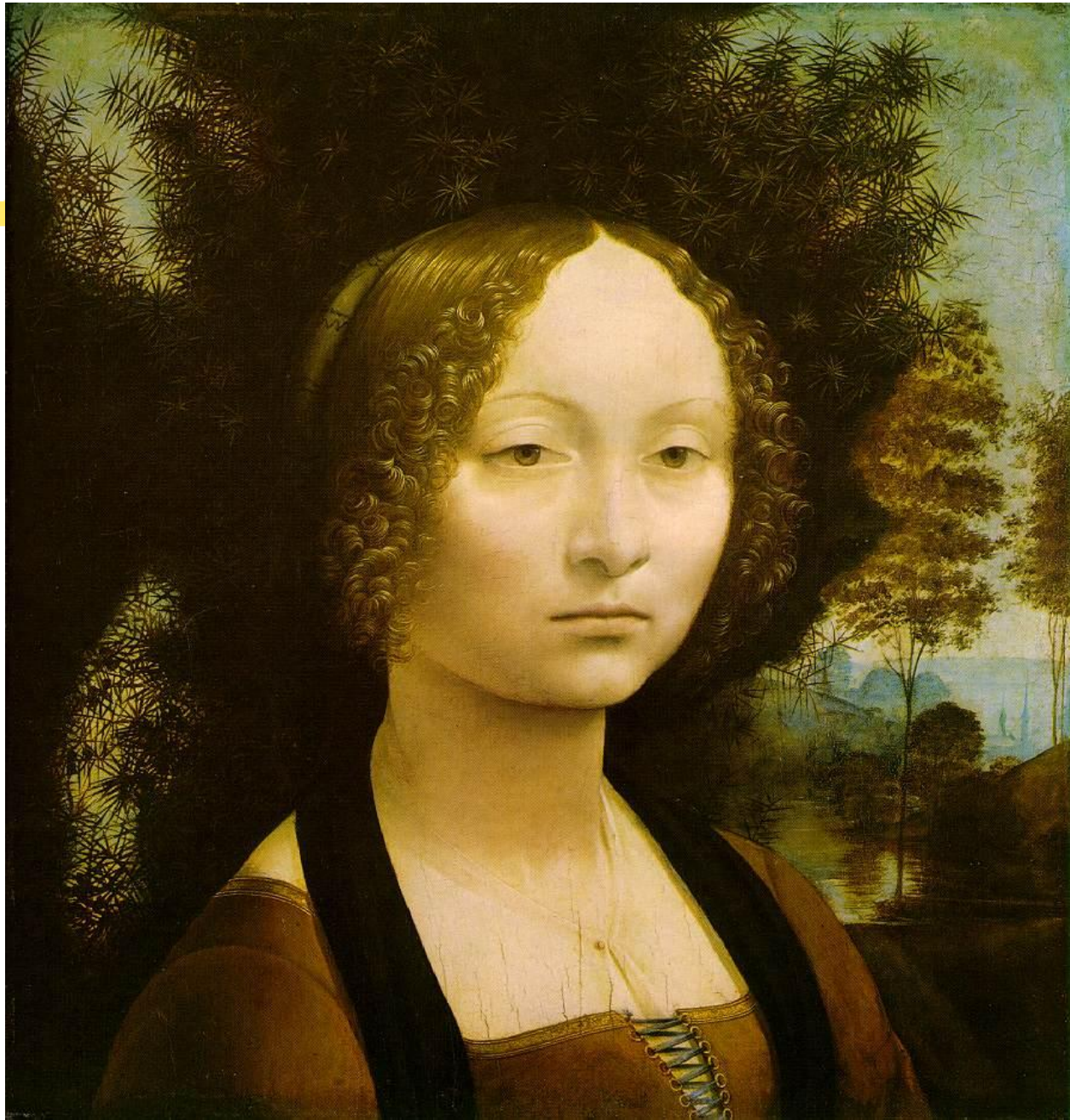
⌘ **Dissected Corpses, expanded human knowledge of anatomy**

⌘ **Short attention span; innovated quickly and moved on!**



Art of Leonardo da Vinci: Attention to detail



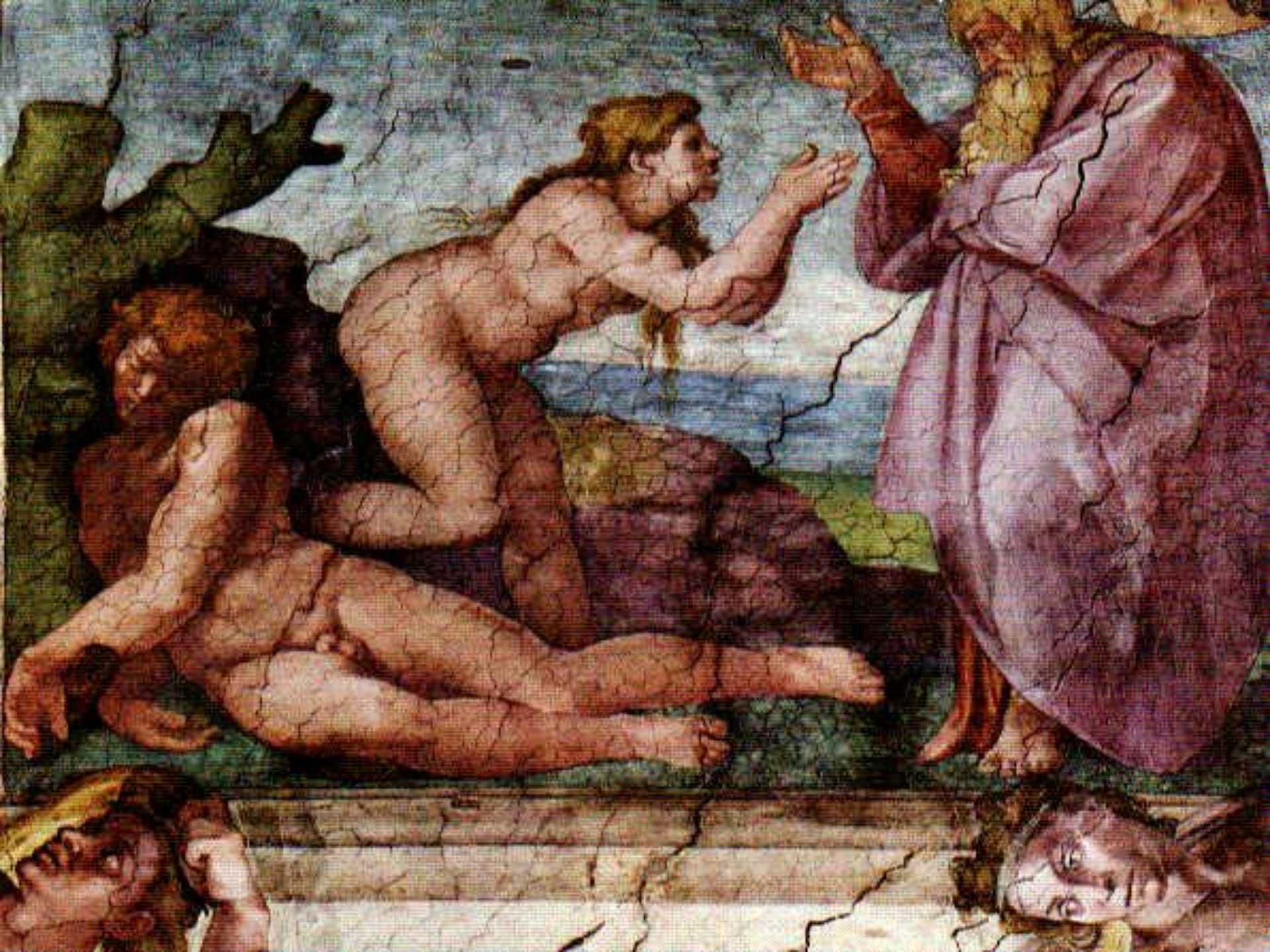


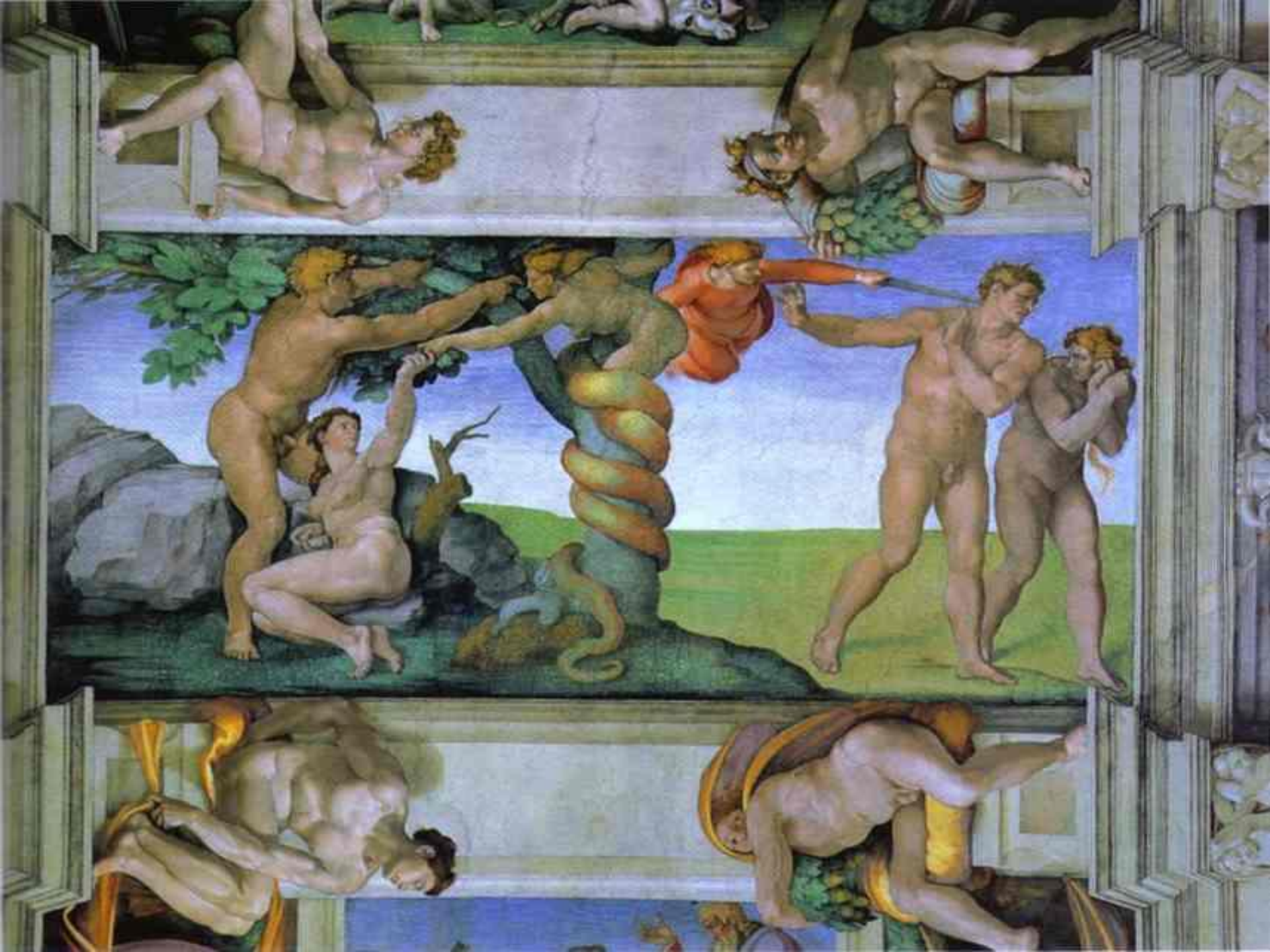
Renaissance Art: Michelangelo

- ⌘ Michelangelo Buonarroti—great artist of the Renaissance!
- ⌘ Known for painting the Ceiling of the Sistine Chapel; humanism!
- ⌘ Conflict with Pope Julius II
- ⌘ Incredible energy and endurance; celebrates the beauty of the human form
- ⌘ “Mannerism”—emphasis on posturing, exaggerations-no firm definition of the term-last form before baroque.
- ⌘ Greatest work was “David”, work of sculpture that is the most perfect representation of the human form and complex emotion.









David: Perfection in Form; La Pietata: Grief in Stone
Mary cradles her son Jesus after the crucifixion



Renaissance Education and Philosophy



- ⌘ **Humanistic age; focus is on the human form and achievements**
- ⌘ **Various types of humanism**
- ⌘ **Great fervor displayed in finding and collecting old documents; the wisdom of the ancients comes alive in the fervor of Renaissance intellectuals to re-learn the knowledge of the classical civilizations.**
- ⌘ **Leads to critical examination of documents**
 - Lorenzo Valla
- ⌘ **Education produces moral uplift; knowledge is it's own reward!**

Renaissance Education and Philosophy

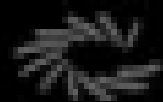


- ⌘ A true liberal education; well rounded curriculum to nurture the intellect
- ⌘ Humanist education for women
- ⌘ Love for the study of history most of all; study of Tacitus, Herodotus, Thucydides and others was popular
- ⌘ A Greek language fad after 1454; intellectuals learned Greek to read the classical texts in the original language.
- ⌘ Petrarch (1304-1374): the Father of Italian Renaissance humanism; popularized the Greek and Roman classics
- ⌘ Focus on the individual and his dignity
- ⌘ Well-rounded free thinking individual was the goal; liberation of man!

Renaissance Philosophy



- ⌘ Renaissance philosophy flourishes during Greek revival after 1450
- ⌘ Giovanni Pico Mirandola (1463-1494)
 - *Oration on the Dignity of Man*: spells out the reasons why Man is central to the universe and why it is appropriate to celebrate his abilities, achievements and ambitions!

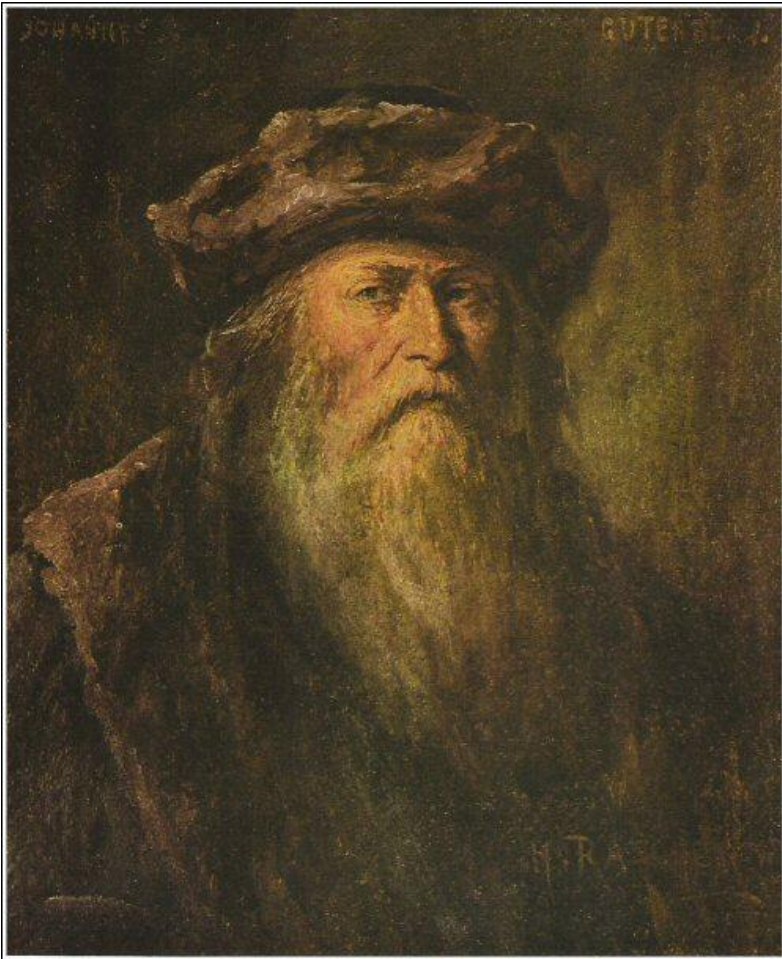


The Renaissance Papacy



- ⌘ **The Church suffered the loss of influence over European nation-states; decline of papal authority!**
- ⌘ **Decline in moral prestige and leadership due to rise of humanism and secularism**
- ⌘ **Popes as patrons of Renaissance art**
 - Leo X (1513-1521)
- ⌘ **Nepotism used to promote family interests!**
- ⌘ **The Church was corrupted by worldliness and wealth; Popes lived like kings, would provoke the Reformation!**

Spread of Humanism to the Rest of Europe



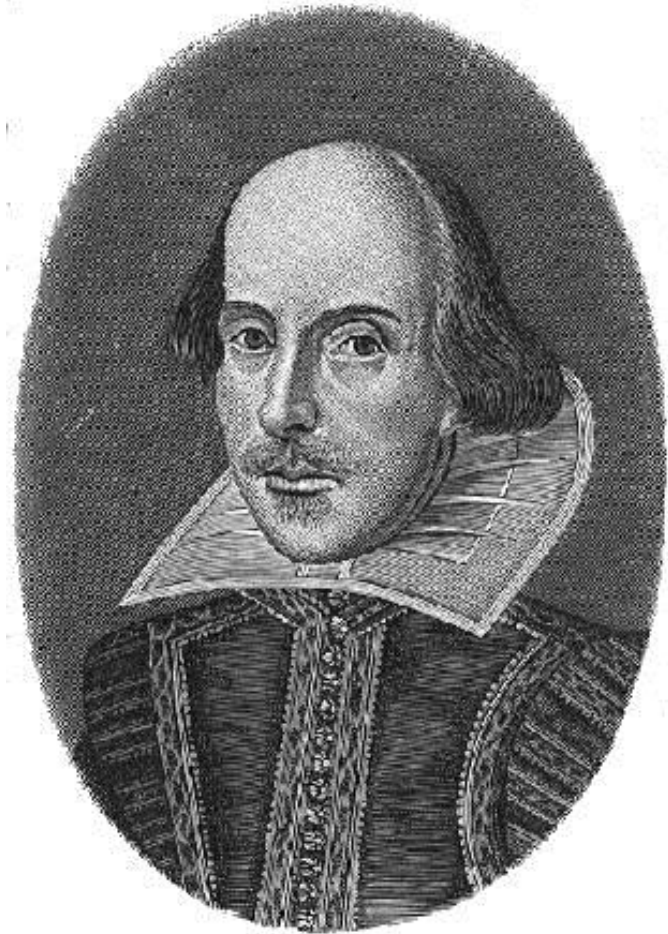
- ⌘ **The significance of Gutenberg's printing press**
- ⌘ **Explosion of printed materials**
 - By 1500, 40,000 titles printed and between 8-10 million copies
- ⌘ **The impact of movable-type printing presses: research and literacy**
- ⌘ **Enlightened Population!**

Spread of Humanism to the Rest of Europe



- ⌘ Popular publications in the early days of the printing press
- ⌘ Thomas More
 - *Utopia*
 - Executed by Henry VIII in 1535
- ⌘ Erasmus—Dutch Christian Humanist
- ⌘ Printing Press spreads ideas over all Europe; transformative change is the result!

Spread of Humanism to the Rest of Europe: The Plays of William Shakespeare



- ⌘ William Shakespeare (1564-1616)
--Globe Theater
- ⌘ Shakespeare returns to classical subjects and genres to explore the human condition
- ⌘ His history plays were the most popular at the time
- ⌘ *Macbeth*: theme was ambition
- ⌘ *Hamlet*: theme was individualism
- ⌘ Keen sensitivity to sounds and meanings of words
- ⌘ Involved and elevated the audience.
- ⌘ Shakespeare is the most well-known and influential of the Renaissance writers.

The Impact of the Renaissance

⌘ The Beginning of the Modern World:

- ☒ modern problems**
- ☒ scientific/rational solutions**
- ☒ secular government**
- ☒ Statecraft and diplomacy**
- ☒ war as business**
- ☒ money=power**
- ☒ businessmen are the power brokers**
- ☒ Modern economic and political systems are created! The Modern World has arrived!**



Galleria dell' Accademia, Venice, Italy/Bridgeman Art Library, London/New York