

# Italian Renaissance

## Location

- Italian City States
  - o Birthplace for the Renaissance
    - 1401 Official Beginning
      - Bidding on doors of Baptistery in Florence
  - o Rich and wealthy
    - Each one jealous of the other
  - o Trade
    - Connection with Mediterranean
  - o Crossroads of ideas
  - o Golden Age of arts
    - Only when there is extra wealth to invest in the arts
  - o Each had different governments
    - But mostly ruled by *Merchant Oligarchies*
    - Merchants = most powerful / ruling class
- Peace of Lodi
  - o 1454
  - o Peace between Venice and Milan
    - Venice's allies were Florence, Naples, and Rome
    - Milan's ally was France
  - o Allowed for 40 years of peace
    - Allowed Renaissance to flourish



Italy c. 1494

## Power

- Popes
  - o Power severely limited
  - o Strengthened Again until Rodrigo Borgia
    - Pope Alexander VI
      - 1492-1503
      - Gained power through Simony
        - o Later outlawed it
        - o Pope known for fighting corruption
      - Used children Juan, Lucrezia, Jofre, and Cesare as pawns
        - o Cesare successful and brutal military general
          - Conquered Romagna, Umbria, and Emilia
      - Made alliances with other influential Italian families
        - o Sforza (Milan)
        - o Medici (Florence)
        - o Farnese (Parma)
        - o Orsini (Naples)
        - o Portugal
        - o Spain
      - Also made many enemies
        - o Della Rovere (Savona/Rome)
        - o Orsini
        - o France



Portrait of a Gentleman, By Altobello Melone 16<sup>th</sup> Century

- Julius II
      - 1503-1513
      - Giuliano della Rovere
      - “Warrior Pope”
        - Fought to keep French out of Northern Italy
      - Patron of the Arts
        - Rebuilt St. Peter’s Basilica
        - Hired Raphael and Michelangelo
- Families
  - The Medici’s
    - Wealthy merchant family in Florence
      - Bankers
    - Bought influence
    - Patrons of the arts
      - Hired Botticelli, Michelangelo and Da Vinci
      - “Civic glory”
    - Lorenzo “the Magnificent”
      - Presided over Florence’s glory years
        - 1478-1492
      - Political tyrant
        - Afterwards city and area declined into stability
- Military
  - Cities’ armies were small
  - Needed to protect city states from neighbors
  - Relied mostly on Condottieri
    - VERY Unreliable



*Portrait of Lorenzo de Medici  
By Agnolo Bronzino 16<sup>th</sup> century*

## Philosophy of the Renaissance

- Secularism
  - Ideas outside the church
  - “Here and now”
  - Paintings still carried certain religious themes
- Individualism
  - Applauded differences
  - Personal credit for achievement
  - Portraits, autobiography
  - “Renaissance Man”
  - Spend money to enjoy life
- Classicism
  - Interest in the culture of the ancient Greeks and the Romans
  - Renewal of arts and sculpture
  - Rejection of the Middle Ages
    - *Scholasticism* = philosophy of the Middle Ages, reason to prove religious ideas
- Humanism
  - Interested in the 7 liberal arts (rhetoric, etc....)
  - Outlook of philosophical schools of the Renaissance
  - Away from scholasticism
  - Man is the measure of all things
    - Man as opposed to God

- A theme of the renaissance
- Petrarch
- Worldliness
  - Interest in material rewards
- Education
  - Grades in school, age groups
  - Rejected universities due to scholasticism
  - Book of etiquette
    - Castiglione and *The Book of the Courtier*
- Niccolo Machiavelli
  - 1st political scientist
  - Reacting to chaos in Italy
    - City-states were losing power
  - Admired and studied successful rulers
    - Ideal = Cesare Borgia
  - Separated politics and religion
    - What strong rulers do, not what they should do
  - *The Prince*, 1513
    - Most lasting book of the Renaissance
  - Strong rulers
    - Act in their own self-interest
      - Both ruthless and merciful
      - Both forthright and sly
      - Both feared and loved
      - Break promises and treaties
  - Significance of Machiavelli
    - 1st political scientist
    - Paved way for absolute monarchs
    - Similar to *realpolitik* of 19th century
    - Interested in the ends and not the means
- Castiglione
  - The Book of the Courtier
    - How men should behave
    - Book of etiquette