Seminar in the Italian Renaissance

This seminar will take the form of class discussions based on common reading and individual reports. So that each class can be a collective learning experience, students are asked to e-mail their reports to the other members of the seminar (and/or put them in the digital drop box on Blackboard) no later than noon Tuesday (a day before the seminar meets). Evaluators’ comments should be emailed and/or posted in the digital drop box by 9 p.m. on the same day (Tuesday). For the same reason, reading of assigned books and articles must be completed on time.

The following paperback books, all available in the bookstore, are required reading:
- Brucker, Gene, *Renaissance Florence*
- Machiavelli, Niccolo, *Selected Political Writings*, ed. David Wootton
- Martines, Lauro, *Power and Imagination*

Much common reading will be done in books and periodicals on Honors Reserve. If no other location is specified below, the book or article will be found on Honors Reserve for History 116. (Occasionally, a book will be on reserve for another seminar, as noted below.) Binders and folders containing additional copies of some readings are on the same Honors Reserve shelves. As you will see, many readings are also online on Blackboard. Assignments for reports, which I will distribute at the beginning of the semester, will be drawn from works on bibliographies that are posted on Blackboard.

You should learn to read the shelves in the library and look through current periodicals. Journals particularly useful for the Renaissance include *Renaissance Quarterly*, *Speculum*, *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, and *Renaissance and Reformation*. *Medievalia et Humanistica* and *Viator* also contain some articles. You should also not neglect more general and specialized journals in history and cognate fields.

Useful bibliographies can be found in the Brucker and Martines books that you will purchase, in *Renaissance Quarterly*, and in the annual *Bibliographie internationale de l'humanisme et de la Renaissance* (Z6207.R4B5). For detailed narratives of European and Italian history during the period, consult Wallace K. Ferguson, *Europe in Transition 1300-1520* (D202.4; also on Honors Reserve), while Thomas A. Brady et al., eds., *Handbook of European History, 1400-1600*, 2 vols. (vol. 1: on Art History 151 Honors Reserve; vol. 2: D203.H36 1994), takes a topical approach. Denys Hay and John Law, *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance 1380-1530* (Honors Reserve), treats the peninsula topically, and its notes suggest additional readings.

The history department has implemented the following policy on attendance: Students are required to attend all classes for the successful completion of the course. Unexcused absences will result in a lower grade.

**Schedule of Discussions**

1. **Interpretations of the Renaissance** (24 January)

   Reading:
   - Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* [1860], skim entire
   - Federico Chabod, chap. IV, “The Concept of the Renaissance” [1942] (pp. 149-200) of his *Machiavelli and the Renaissance* or view online at [http://ets.umdl.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=acls;idno=heb01383;aclsbr=1](http://ets.umdl.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=acls;idno=heb01383;aclsbr=1)
   - Erwin Panofsky, chap. 1, “‘Renaissance’—Self-Definition or Self-Deception?” (pp. 1-41) of his *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* [1960]; or view online at [http://ets.umdl.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=acls;idno=heb01276;aclsbr=1](http://ets.umdl.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=acls;idno=heb01276;aclsbr=1)
   - Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination* [1979], preface (p. ix) (also view online via Tripod)
   - William Bouwsma, “The Renaissance and the Drama of Western History,” *American Historical Review*, vol. 84 (1979), pp. 1-15 (Blackboard and online via Tripod)
   - Denys Hay, “Historians and the Renaissance during the last twenty-five years” [1982], in *The Renaissance. Essays in Interpretation*, pp. 1-32 (also Blackboard)
   - Anthony Molho, “The Italian Renaissance, Made in the USA” [1998] (Blackboard)


   Discussion of changes and continuities in understandings of the Renaissance.

   Break: DuPlessis

2. **Communes: Republics, Lordships, and Mixed States** (31 January)

   Reading:
   - Martines, *Power and Imagination*, chaps. I-VII, IX, and XII
   - Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, part I
   - either Frederic Lane, *Venice, A Maritime Republic*, chaps. 8, 9, 16, 18 (also view online via Tripod)
or D. S. Chambers, *The Imperial Age of Venice*, Introduction and chaps. I-III
John Martin and Dennis Romano, “Reconsidering Venice” (Blackboard)
D. M. Bueno De Mesquita, “The Place of Despotism in Italian Politics,” in John Hale, ed., *Europe in the Late Middle Ages*, pp. 301-331 (also Blackboard)
Werner Gundersheimer, *Ferrara. The Style of a Renaissance Despotism*, chaps. I, VIII (also Blackboard)
*The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. T. Dean, Part I, docs. 1-5, 12, 15, 17-22; Part IV, docs. 74-75; Part V, docs. 96-97, 101-104, 106-108 (also online through Tripod)
*Venice, a documentary history*, ed. D. Chambers and B. Pullan, part II, docs. 3b (pp. 46-47), 3d (pp. 50-51), and 11a (p. 63) (also Blackboard)

Suggested:
John Hyde, *Society and Politics in Medieval Italy*, chaps. 1-4 and pp. 124-141 (also online via Tripod)

Papers will focus on 1) Venetian government as republican government and 2) the rise and consolidation of signorial or “despotic” rule. In class, we will also discuss why signorial rule became so widespread, and the similarities and differences between republics and lordships.

Break:

3. Florence (7 February)

Reading:
Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, chaps. 1, 4, Epilogue
John Najemy, “The Dialogue of Power in Florentine Politics,” in *City-States in Classical Antiquity and Medieval Italy*, ed. A. Molho et al., pp. 269-288 (also Blackboard)
Gene Brucker, “Civic Traditions in Premodern Italy,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. 29, no. 3 (1999), pp. 357-378 (Blackboard and online via Tripod)
F. W. Kent, “Ties of Neighbourhood and Patronage in Quattrocento Florence,” in *Patronage, Art and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. D. Kent and P. Simons, chap. 5 (also Blackboard)
Richard Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, “The Framework of Ritual” (pp. 1-8), and chaps. 1 and 10 (also Blackboard)
David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Tuscans and their Families*, chap. 2 (also online via Tripod)
Samuel Cohn, “The Other Florence Within Florence,” in Beyond Florence, ed. P. Findlen et al., chap. 3 (Honors Reserve)
The Society of Renaissance Florence: a documentary history, ed. G. Brucker, Parts Three and Four (docs. 35-64) and Part Seven IV (docs. 113-116)
The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages, ed. T. Dean, Part IV, doc. 76; Part V, docs. 99, 105 (also online through Tripod)

Reports will examine 1) the rise and perpetuation of Medici rule: was it a form of lordship? and 2) the regimes that followed the fall of the Medici in 1494: why was republican rule not durably re-established? In seminar, we will also discuss the ways in which power was constituted, wielded, and resisted in Florence, and compare the Florentine and Venice regimes.

Break:

4. Demography, Family, Gender (14 February)

Reading:
Burckhardt, Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, part II
Brucker, Renaissance Florence, chap. 3
Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, Tuscans and their Families, chaps. 3, 5, 7, 10, 11 (also online via Tripod)
Richard Goldthwaite, Private Wealth in Renaissance Florence, chap. VII (skim other sections)
F. W. Kent, Household and Lineage in Renaissance Florence, introduction and conclusion (skim remainder)
Christine Klapisch-Zuber, Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy, chaps. 6 (“The ‘Cruel Mother’”) and 10 (“The Griselda Complex”) (also Blackboard)
Thomas Kuehn, “Person and Gender in the Laws,” in Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy, chap. 4 (Blackboard)
Judith Brown, “Gender,” in Palgrave advances in Renaissance Historiography, ed. J. Woolfson, chap. 9
Samuel Cohn, “Burckhardt Revisited from Social History,” in Language and Images of Renaissance Italy, ed. A. Brown, chap. 9 (also Blackboard)
The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages, ed. T. Dean, Part IV, docs. 80-84, 88-90 (also on-line through Tripod)
The Society of Renaissance Florence: a documentary history, ed. G. Brucker, Part Two (docs. 16-34), and Part Six, section I (docs. 83-85)
Venice, a documentary history, ed. D. Chambers and B. Pullan, part VI, docs. 1, parts a and b (pp. 243-246), and 4, parts a and b (pp. 263-267) (also Blackboard)

Reports on family formation and gender relations. Additional discussion of family structure and dynamics, and on the social position of women.

Break:
5. Sexuality and Social Issues (21 February)

Reading:
Burckhardt, *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, part V
Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Tuscans and their Families*, chaps. 6, 8, 9 (also online via Tripod)
Michael Rocke, “Gender and Sexual Culture in Renaissance Italy,” in *The Renaissance: Italy and Abroad*, ed. J. Martin, chap. 8 (also Blackboard)
Guido Ruggiero, “Marriage, love, sex, and the Renaissance civic morality,” in *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, ed. J. Turner, chap. 1 (also Blackboard)
Guido Ruggiero, “Mean Streets, Familiar Streets, or the Fat Woodcarver and the Masculine Spaces of Renaissance Florence,” in *Renaissance Florence. A Social History*, ed. R. Crum and J. Paoletti, chap. 11 (also Blackboard)
F. W. Kent, “‘Be Rather Loved Than Feared’. Class Relations in Quattrocento Florence,” in *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence*, ed. W. Connell, chap. 1 (also Blackboard)
Allen Grieco, “Food and Social Classes in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy,” in *Food. A culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*, chap. 24 (Blackboard only)
Steven Epstein, “Slaves in Italy, 1350-1550,” in *At the Margins. Minority Groups in Premodern Italy*, ed. S. Milner, chap. 11 (also Blackboard)
*The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. T. Dean, Part IV, docs. 58-73, 85-87, 94-95 (also on-line through Tripod)
*The Society of Renaissance Florence: a documentary history*, ed. G. Brucker, Part Five, section I, doc. 70, and sections II-V (docs. 71-82); Part Six, section II (docs. 86-87), and sections III-IV (docs. 88-96); Part Seven, sections I-III (docs. 102-112)
one chapter from one of the following:
Guido Ruggiero, *The Boundaries of Eros. Sex Crime and Sexuality in Renaissance Venice*

or
Guido Ruggiero, *Violence in early Renaissance Venice*

Reports on licit and illicit sexuality and on crime. Discussion as well on social structure and on social tensions.

Break:

6. Economy and Consumption (28 February)

Reading:
Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, chap. 2
Martines, *Power and Imagination*, chap. X
Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Tuscans and their Families*, chap. 4 (also online via Tripod)
Judith Brown, “Prosperity or Hard Times in Renaissance Italy?” *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 42 (1989), pp. 761-773 only (Blackboard or online via Tripod)
Samuel Cohn, “Women and Work in Renaissance Italy,” in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, chap. 5 (Blackboard)
Richard Goldthwaite, “The Empire of Things: Consumer Demand in Renaissance Italy,” in *Patronage, Art, and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. F. W. Kent and Patricia Simons, chap. 9 (also Blackboard)
*The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. T. Dean, Part I, docs. 6, 8-10 (also on-line through Tripod)

Reports on the state of the Italian economy and on consumption. Additional discussion on material culture and the social order.

Break:

7. Art and Society (7 March)

Reading:
Martines, *Power and Imagination*, chap. XIII
Richard Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy*, part I (pp. 12-67)
F. W. Kent, “Individuals and Families as Patrons of Culture in Quattrocento Florence,” *Language and Images of Renaissance Italy*, ed. A. Brown, chap. 7 (also Blackboard)
Creighton Gilbert, “What did the Renaissance Patron Buy?” *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 51 (1998), pp. 392-450 (Blackboard or online via Tripod)
*The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. T. Dean, Part I, docs. 6, 8-10 (also on-line through Tripod)

One of the following (all are on Honors Reserve):

*Confraternities and the visual arts in Renaissance Italy: ritual, spectacle, image*, ed. B. Wisch and D. Ahl
*Cristelle Baskins, “Cassone” Painting, Humanism, and Gender in Early Modern Italy*
Mary Hollingsworth, *Patronage in Renaissance Italy. From 1400 to the Early Sixteenth Century*
Bram Kempers, *Painting, Power and Patronage*
Dale Kent, *Cosimo de’ Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: the patron’s oeuvre*
F. W. Kent, *Lorenzo de’ Medici and the Art of Magnificence*
Catherine King, *Renaissance Women Patrons: Wives and Widows in Italy c. 1300-1550*
Michelle O’Malley, *The Business of Art: Contracts and the Commissioning Process in Renaissance Italy*
Anabel Thomas, *The painter’s practice in Renaissance Tuscany*
Martin Wackernagel, *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist: Projects and Patrons, Workshop and Art Market*
Evelyn Welch, *Art and Society in Italy 1350-1500* (Honors Reserve: Art History 151)
*With and without the Medici: studies in Tuscan art and patronage 1434-1530*, ed. E. Marchand and A. Wright

Each student will write a critical review of the book she or he has read, focusing on the way that it explores and explains the relationship between art and society during the Renaissance. In the context of the common readings, these reviews will provide the basis for class discussion.

Break:

**SPRING VACATION**

8. Early Humanism (21 March)

Reading:
Burckhardt, *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, part III, chaps. I-III
Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: the classic, scholastic, and humanistic strains*, chaps. 1 and 5 (also on-line through Tripod)
Charles Trinkaus, *In Our Image and Likeness*, vol. 1 Foreword (pp. xiii-xxvi), and vol. 2, pp. 761-774 (skim other chapters according to your interests) (also on-line through Tripod)
Eugenio Garin, *Italian Humanism: philosophy and civic life*, chap. 1
Ronald Witt, ‘In the Footsteps of the Ancients’. *The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni*, chap. 1 and Conclusion (also Blackboard)
Petrarch, “A Self-Portrait,” “Ascent of Mont Ventoux,” “On His Own Ignorance...,” and “Disapproval of...Dialectic,” all in *Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, ed. Cassirer, pp. 34-139 (another copy on Honors Reserve for Religion 106)
Petrarca, *Rerum Familiarium Libri XVII-XXIV*, ed. Bernardo (vol. 3), letters XXII.10, XXIV.6-9 (pp. 232-233, 326-335) (also Blackboard)
Selections from Coluccio Salutati in Ephraim Emerton, *Humanism and Tyranny*, pp. 290-308, 312-341 (also Blackboard)

Suggested:

Discussion to evaluate accounts about the beginnings and definitions of humanism, and to compare and contrast Petrarch’s and Salutati’s humanisms.

Break:

9. Civic Humanisms and Their Accomplishments (28 March)

Reading:
Martines, *Power and Imagination*, chap. XI
Burckhardt, *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, part III, chaps. IV-XI
Lauro Martines, *The Social World of the Florentine Humanists*, chaps. II, VII
Leonardo Bruni, “Panegyric to the City of Florence,” in *The Earthly Republic*, ed. Kohl and Witt, pp. 121-175
Leonardo Bruni, “Dialogues,” in *The Humanism of Leonardo Bruni*, ed. Griffiths et al., pp. 63-84 (also Blackboard)
Albert Rabil, “The Significance of Civic Humanism,” in *Renaissance humanism: foundations, forms, and legacy*, vol. 1, pp. 141-174 (also Blackboard)
Robert Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, Introduction, chap. 1 and Conclusion (also Blackboard and online via Tripod)

Reports on humanism outside Florence and on Renaissance education. Discussion as well on women humanists and on the meaning and importance of civic humanism.

Break:

10. There Was More to the Renaissance Than Humanism (4 April)

Reading:
Burckhardt, Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, parts IV, VI [which one?]
Brucker, Renaissance Florence, chap. 5
Kristeller, Renaissance Thought: the classic, scholastic, and humanistic strains, chaps. 2 and 3 (also on-line through Tripod)
Marsilio Ficino, “Commentary on Plato's 'Symposium',” in Renaissance Views of Man, pp. 31-61 (also Blackboard)
Brian Copenhaver, “Did Science Have a Renaissance?” Isis, vol. 83 (1992), pp. 387-407 (Blackboard and online through Tripod)

Reports on 1) Renaissance Platonism, and 2) magic in the Renaissance. Discussion of Renaissance Aristotelianism and science in the Renaissance.

Break:

11. Religion, the Church, and the end of the Italian Renaissance (11 April)

Reading:
Burckhardt, Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, parts IV, VI [which one?]
Brucker, Renaissance Florence, chap. 5
Martines, Power and Imagination, chaps. XIV-XVI
Christopher Black, “The development of confraternity studies over the past thirty years,” in The politics of ritual kinship, ed. N. Terpstra, pp. 9-18, 23-29 (also Blackboard)

Samuel Cohn, “Piety and Religious Practice in the Rural Dependencies of Renaissance Florence,” English Historical Review, vol. 114 (1999), pp. 1121-42 (Blackboard and online via Tripod)


Baldesar Castiglione, The Courtier (trans. Singleton), Dedication, First Book; Second Book, sections 6-12; Third Book, sections 3-17; Fourth Book, sections 19-23, 31-33, 51-52, 57, 67-70


The Society of Renaissance Florence: a documentary history, ed. G. Brucker, Part Six V (docs. 97-101) and Part Eight (docs. 117-132)

The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages, ed. T. Dean, Part I, docs. 7, 11, 16; Part II (docs. 26-43); Part IV, docs. 91-93 (also on-line through Tripod)

Reports and discussion on religion in Renaissance Italy and on Castiglione and the late Renaissance.

Break:

12. The Development of Historical Consciousness in Renaissance Italy (18 April)

Reading:


Villani’s Chronicle, at least Book I, chaps. 1, 2, 7, 38, 60, Book III, chap. 1, Book VI, chap. 53 (pp. 1-6, 27-30, 39-41, 59-62, 161-162) and skim the rest

Selections from Bruni’s History of Florence published in Humanism and Liberty, ed. Watkins, pp. 27-91

Niccolò Machiavelli, Florentine Histories (also titled History of Florence), Preface; Book II, chaps. 1, 2, 12, 13, 42; Book III, chaps. 1, 5; Book IV, chaps. 1, 2, 33; Book V, chaps. 1, 33; Book VIII, chaps. 1-9, 36


Felix Gilbert, “The Renaissance Interest in History,” in Art, Science and History in the Renaissance, ed. C. Singleton, pp. 373-387 (also Blackboard)

Mark Phillips, “Machiavelli, Guicciardini and the Tradition of Vernacular Historiography in Florence,” American Historical Review, vol. 84 (1979), pp. 86-105 (Blackboard and online via Tripod)

Gary Ianziti, “Patronage and the Production of History: The Case of Quattrocento Milan,” in Patronage, Art and Society in Renaissance Italy, ed. D. Kent and P. Simons, chap. 16 (also Blackboard)
Reports on 1) humanist influences on historical writing and 2) the contributions of Machiavelli and Guicciardini to historiography. Class discussion: comparison of chroniclers and historians.

Break:

13. Machiavelli and Political Thought (25 April)

Reading:
Machiavelli, *Selected Political Writings*, entire
Martines, *Power and Imagination*, chap. VIII
two of the following (all are on Honors Reserve):
Hans Baron, “Machiavelli: The Republican Citizen and the Author of ‘The Prince’”, *English Historical Review*, vol. 76, no. 299 (April 1961), pp. 217-253 (Blackboard and online via Tripod)
Harvey Mansfield, “Bruni and Machiavelli on Civic Humanism,” in *Renaissance Civic Humanism*, ed. James Hankins, chap. 8
John Najemy, “Papirius and the Chickens, or Machiavelli on the Necessity of Interpreting Religion,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 60 (1999), pp. 659-683 (Blackboard and online via Tripod)
Hanna Pitkin, *Fortune is a Woman*, chap. 6 (Honors Reserve: Political Science 100)
Vickie Sullivan, *Machiavelli’s Three Romes*, chap. 1 or 2
Maurizio Viroli, *Machiavelli*, chap. 2 or 3 or 4

Discussion of Machiavelli's political thought.

Break:

14. Your Renaissance Topic (2 May)

You are to report on an Italian Renaissance subject of your choice that has NOT been covered in the seminar. You should outline the most important questions concerning your subject and create a bibliography of both the classic and the most current scholarship on them. A summary of each report will be given in class.

Break: