

# Outcome 1: The Italian Peninsula and the Renaissance



‘Imagining and realising the renaissance in Italy’.

*“After the darkness has been dispelled,  
our grandsons will be able to walk back  
into the pure radiance of the past.”*  
(Petrarch)

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# Today's session

- You've invested time and money to be here . . . What do you get?
- Key themes for the session: 'imagining' and 'realising'
  - A range of evidence
  - Identifying the renaissance
  - Focus on the inter-relatedness of the course
  - Important to keep in mind when studying/revising this Outcome and the course.

- ***The Last Days of the Renaissance, T. K. Rabb (2006)***
- ***“Ever since Jules Michelet and Jacob Burckhardt in the mid-nineteenth century made the case for a distinct Renaissance era . . . There has been little agreement, however, about the way the period might be defined.”***

# Why 'imagining' and 'realising' the renaissance?

- Imagining
  - the course as a puzzle . . .
  - the 'broad' context for re-birth to take place.
  - losing knowledge (how can this happen?)

# Why 'imagining' and 'realising' the renaissance?

- Realising

- the renaissance was a phenomenon intrinsically linked to geography, politics and economics.
- Involvement in the renaissance per se, was very limited indeed: “it would be hazardous to put the formative agents of cultural change, as contributors or patrons, at more than a thousandth part of the population of Europe . . . ” (John Hale).
- Historiographically, ‘Renaissance Italy’ is quite different from Revolutions.
- Dynamic study and writing by historians continues . . .
- Outcome 1 exists in every part of the course.
- That the concept ‘renaissance’ is still hotly debated and re-examined.

# Tips for dealing with Outcome 1

- Don't pigeon hole your understanding.
- Look for connectedness between your knowledge – this is complex – but it needn't be confusing (we are after all dealing with real people over a length of time).
- Have a selection of case studies or SPECIFIC examples to use – e.g. knowledge of a particular city-state, knowledge of the contributions and movements of particular artists and patrons.

# Use of a range of evidence

- A range of secondary evidence: Robert Hole, Alison Brown, A Richard Turner, John Hale
- A selection of primary evidence: written primary and as well as visual primary.
- Draw on such evidence SELECTIVELY – passing references NOT HUGE SLABS OF QUOTATIONS.
- Realise that there is also FACTUAL evidence to consider and utilise in your responses.
- In your responses over the course there is a role for ALL of these forms of evidence.

# Unit 3, Outcome 1

- Area of Study 1 – The Italian Peninsula and the Renaissance

## Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to explain the physical, economic and political structures of Renaissance Italian states and the changes to culture embodied in the term 'Renaissance'.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on knowledge and related skills outlined in area of study 1.

### *Key knowledge*

This knowledge includes

- different types of city-states in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: republic, principality, kingdom and papal state, and how they interacted economically, politically and culturally;
- the economic background of Renaissance Italy: trade, industry, products, banking and commercial centres;
- the concept of the 'Renaissance' and the growth and importance of humanist studies;
- changes and developments in Renaissance art and the role of patronage in the development of Renaissance culture.

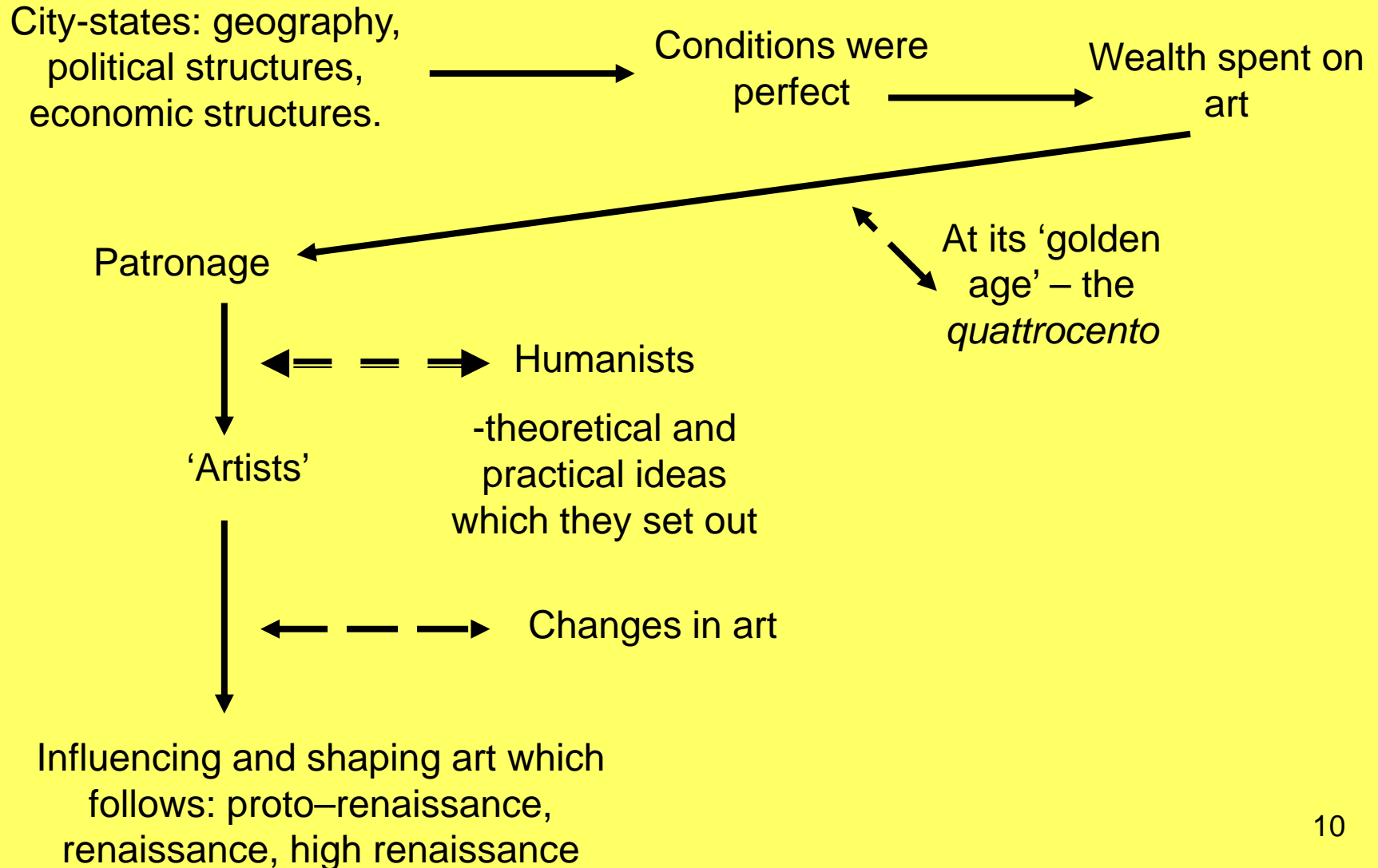
This Outcome is a doozy!!!!



# The concept of the 'Renaissance'

- What does 'Renaissance' mean? (easy?) – historian's ideas?
- Historians typically define the period NOT in terms of strict dates but in terms of changes in social relations, economics and thought.
  1. Historian Kenneth Atchity explains that many consider the Renaissance to represent “a sharp break with the Middle Ages’ because Medieval beliefs and practices underwent a dramatic shift in the Renaissance.”
  2. Historian John McKay believes that “in terms of the way most people lived and thought, no sharp division exists between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.”
- Where did Humanism GROW from and why was it IMPORTANT?

# How Outcome 1 fits together . . .





# Key Knowledge from the 'Preamble'



- Worth a careful and close read IN ADDITION to the dot points . . .
- Other things we can glean:
- Geographical expression
- Ideas and values of classical Greece and Rome
- Links between 'artistic and cultural' changes to areas of financial success: this forces us to see the BIGGER PICTURE

# Ideas and values of Greece and Rome

- “Civic humanism had clearly left its mark, and based on many of the same writings, but with greater use of Plato’s advocacy of government by the elite . . . ” (Paul Balchin, 2008)

# Where else does Outcome 1 appear. . . ?

- Patronage – Unit 3, Outcome 2 (the Medici)
- ‘Art’ – Unit 4, Outcome 2 (visual representations of the ‘Myth of Venice’)
- Classical Learning – Venice and Florence ‘good’ government, civic responsibility.
- Humanism – there are not many areas where it doesn’t appear
- City-States – all Outcomes

- ***The Last Days of the Renaissance, T. K. Rabb (2006)***
- ***“Our concern . . . is not to settle on a definition, but further to identify . . . the distinctive unities of the period: the coherences in thought, creativity, and practice that bound Europe together . . .***  
***“***

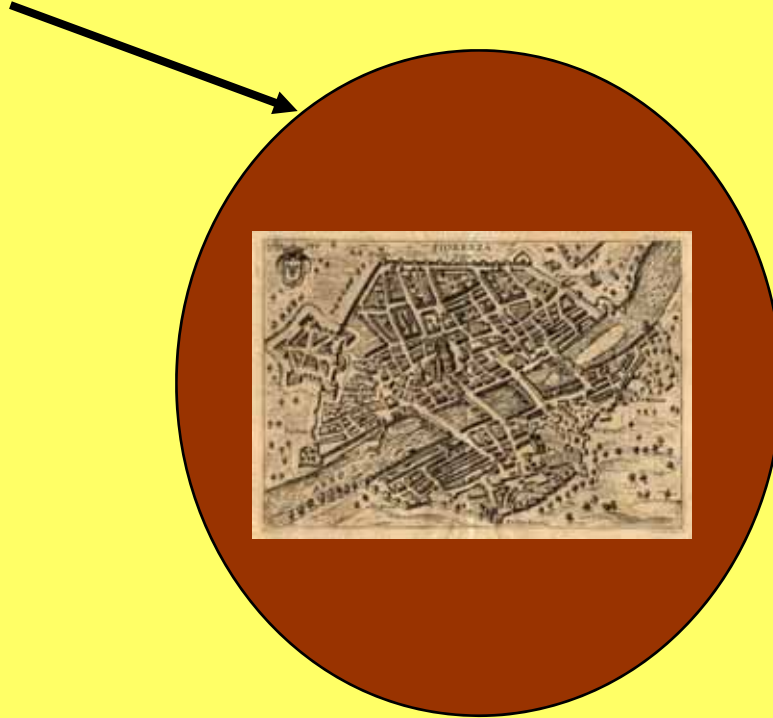
# Identifying the Renaissance

- **Saw changes in:**
  - **Visual arts.**
  - **Architecture.**
  - **Sculpture.**
  - **Music.**
  - **Science.**
  - **Political Thought.**
- **Some helpful labels: Proto Renaissance, Renaissance and High Renaissance.**

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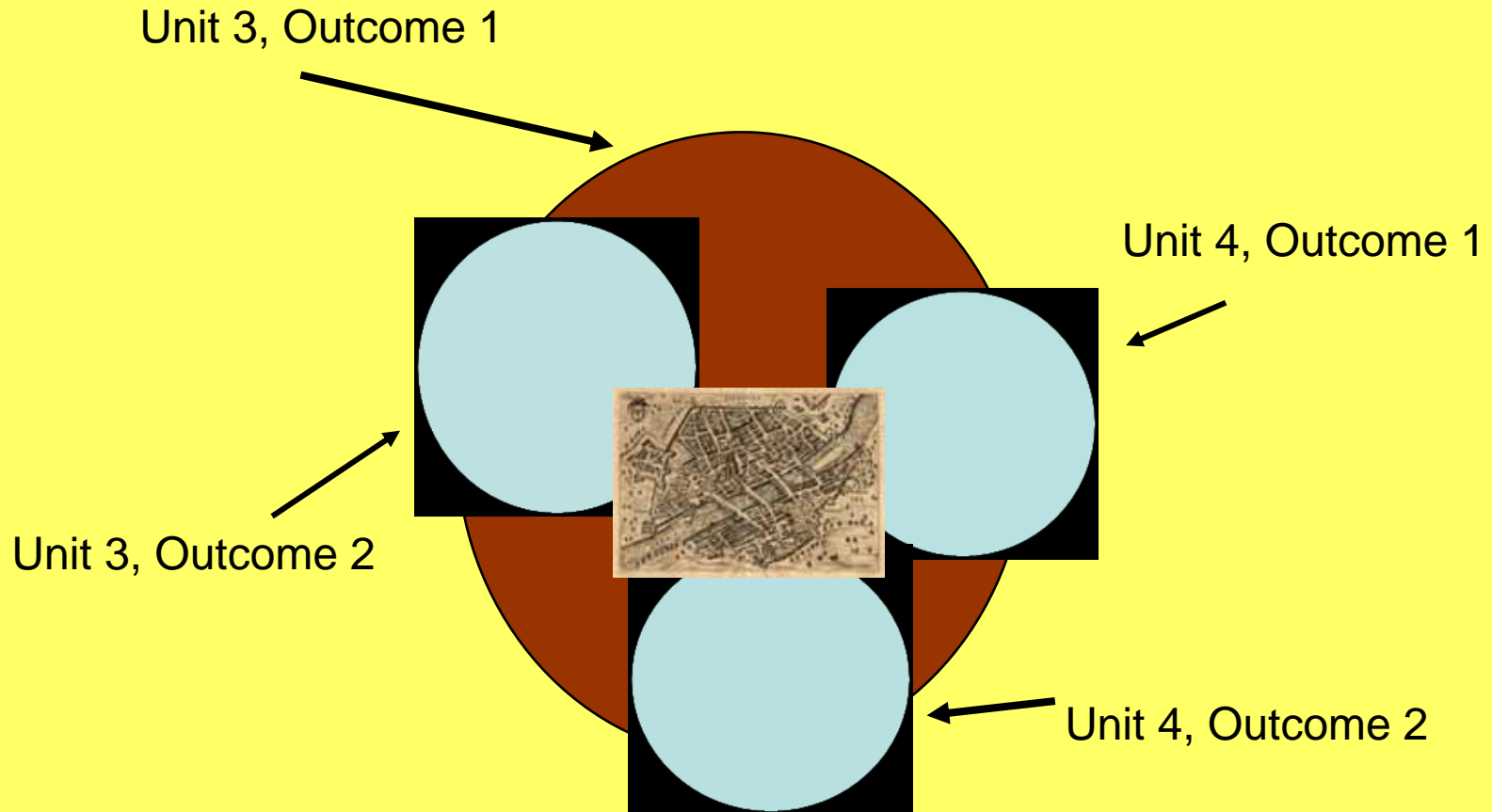
# Placing Outcome 1?

Unit 3, Outcome 1





# Placing Outcome 1?



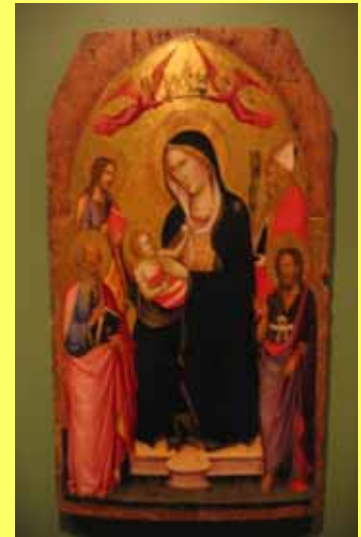
# Changes and developments in renaissance art and the role of patronage in the development of Renaissance culture.

- Changes in the 'arts' (consider more broadly from today) – techniques, materials, subjects, etc.
- The role of a PATRON: different sorts, contracts, associated freedoms and limitations.
- Wider impact of patronage on renaissance culture: art, architecture, music, history writing etc.

Historian John McKay believes that “in terms of the way most people lived and thought, no sharp division exists between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.”

# Some Key Historical Concepts

- Humanism
- Patronage & Client
- Renaissance
- City-State
- Republic, principality, kingdom and papal state
- Disparate, Interact
- Communes
- Duchy
- Prince
- Urban Centres
- Entrepot



■ “The majority of Italians who lived in the 13th and 14th centuries never heard the word ‘Italy’. It was a country in which only the literate lived. Consciousness of its meaning arose from three sources: the classics, xenophobia and exile.” – John Larner, *Italy in the Age of Dante and Petrarch* (1980).

# Proto-Renaissance

- An altar piece by Giotto (c. 1311)
- What are the striking features of this image?



# Renaissance

- *The Visitation* by Ghirlandaio.
- What are the striking features of this image?



# High Renaissance

- *The Holy Family* by Michelangelo (1475-1564).
- What are the striking features of this image?



# Perspective

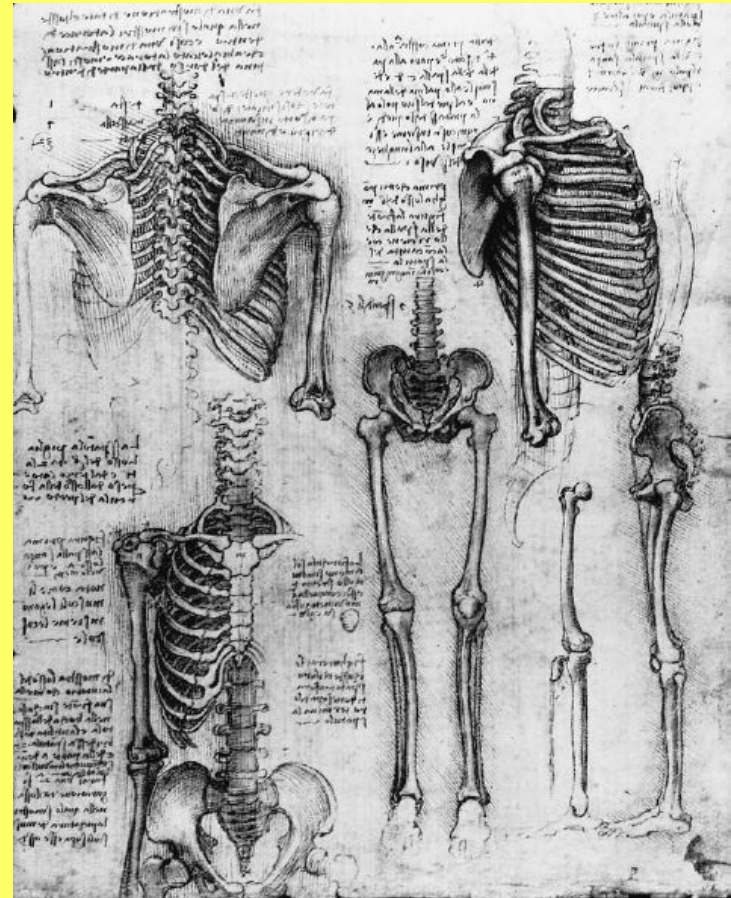
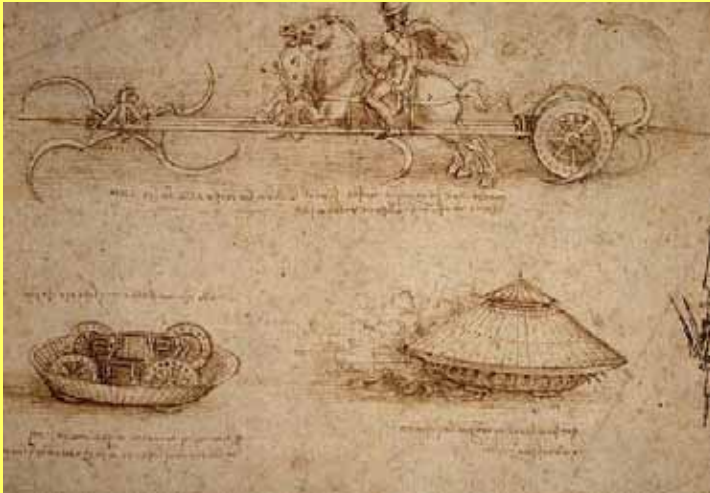
- Montefeltro Altarpiece 1465 by Piero della Francesca.
- The use of depth and a vanishing point in order to create a 3-Dimensional appearance on a flat surface.



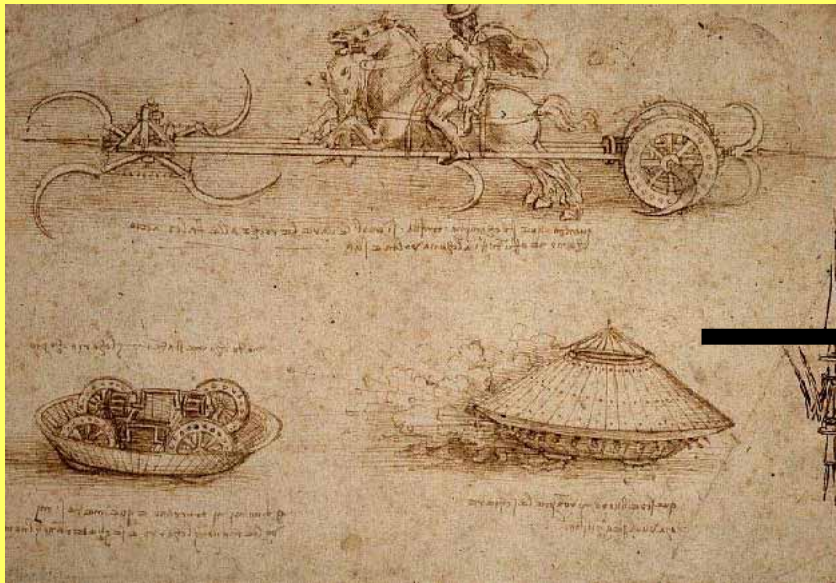


# The study of the Human Form

- Leonardo da Vinci
- What other areas of life did da Vinci excel in?







# Portraiture



- Why might such images be used?
- What do they suggest about the concerns, values and ideas of the time?

# Changes in Renaissance Art - Techniques

- Fresco – The process of painting directly
- Perspective – the painting technique allowing artists to portray objects in such a way that they appear to be 3-dimensional.
- Chiaroscuro – the practice of using light and dark to add shadow, depth, texture.

# Changes in Renaissance Art - Subjects

- An increasing focus on the earthly . . .
- An increasing interest and use of portraiture.
- The portrayal of religious figures/devotional art begins to change.
- The focus on accuracy of portrayal of the human form.

# Investigating 'patronage'

- What was/is (artistic) patronage?
- What different groups might act as patrons?
- What were the responsibilities of the patron?
- What limitations would have existed within the system of patronage? (contractual agreements)
- Why did systems of artistic patronage emerge during the Renaissance?
- What famous patrons have you encountered in your research?
- How did artistic patronage promote advances in the arts?

# Humanism



The ascent of the hill of knowledge, seen in this 15th-century miniature, began at the gate of grammar. Scholars then pursued arithmetic, logic, music, astronomy, geometry, rhetoric, and theology.

‘The ascent of the hill of knowledge, seen in this 15<sup>th</sup>-century miniature, began at the gate of grammar. Scholars then pursued arithmetic, logic, music, astronomy, geometry, rhetoric and theology.’

# The 'Growth' of humanism

- 'Humanism' was a broad movement that influenced art, culture, learning society in a variety of ways during the Renaissance.
- This movement, however, did not emerge from nothing, but instead was part of a tradition and development of human civilisation.
- Life in Europe before the time of the Renaissance had largely been dominated by two major traditions: one was that of classical civilisation of Greece and Rome, while the other one was Christianity.
- Emerging from Greek and Roman civilisation were a range of developments and achievements that Medieval Christendom did not know how to use given that they dawned from a pagan tradition.
- It was during the Renaissance that *humanist scholars* actually set out to redefine the relationship between Christianity and classical civilisation.

# Growth of Humanism

- One of the earliest and most renowned humanists was the scholar Petrarch (1304-74) who located copies of the Roman Cicero who worked to resurrect classical documents and learning.
- The scholars of the Renaissance admired the purity and honour of the Roman republic, rather than hold in esteem the indulgent excesses of the Roman Empire that followed it. Some humanists sought to inspire Renaissance cities with civic virtue of the Roman Republic.
- Humanism grew differently in different locations – a disparate movement.



# Forms of Humanism

- One well known group of humanists studying ancient Greek learning on the Italian peninsula at this time were the *Neo-Platonists* who studied in and around Florence. While their activities were based on the ideas of Platonism, they worked to combine this with Christianity. Perhaps two of the most well known Neo-Platonists were Marsiglio Ficino and Pico della Miranda (1463-94).
- Neo-Platonism – humans having a ‘dual nature’.
- Civic Humanism.
- Humanism – contemplative or active.

# The 'Importance' of Humanism

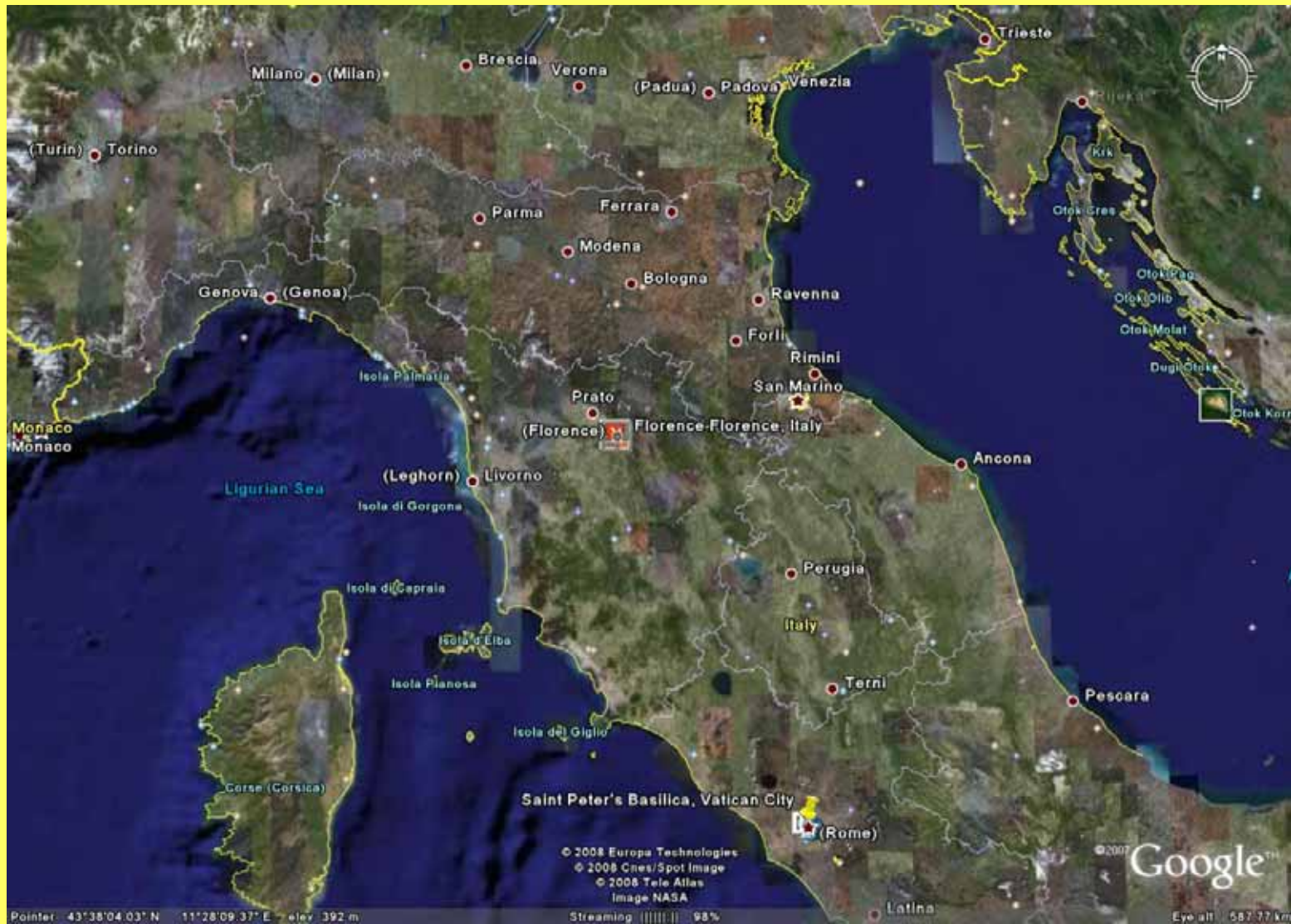
- The sort of syllabus of Renaissance schools (for arts/*studia humanitatis* degrees) and universities consisted of the study of Latin (for some students Greek), texts dealing with grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry, moral philosophy and civic patriotism. As Robert Hole states, “At its heart, the Italian renaissance was about Christian humanist scholars reading Latin and Greek texts.”
- Inspiring good government.
- Feeding changes in the arts.
- Civic humanism – encouraging patronage.

# City-States

# Knowledge of City States

- Focus on a range of different City States.
- Ensure that you have illustrative factual evidence for POLITICAL, ECONOMIC and CULTURAL activity (understanding the PHYSICAL structure can also be helpful here).
- What could be said for each of these for say, FOUR different City-States?
- Consider reasons for DISPARATE development.
- How might this have influenced the 'development' of the renaissance?
- How might this have influenced the 'spread' of humanism?

# The Geography of the Northern City States

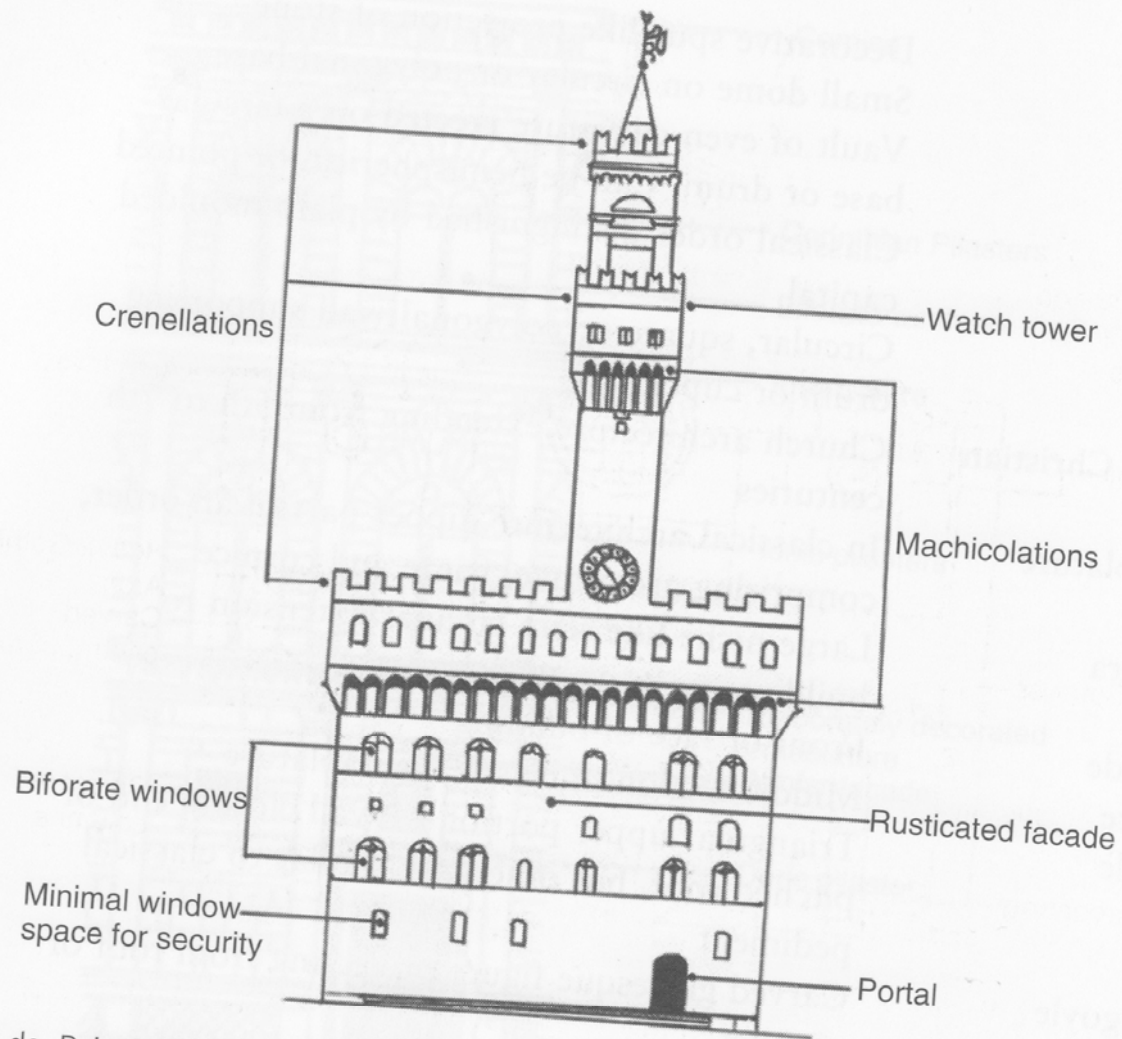


Different types of City-States in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries: republic, principality, kingdom and papal state, and how they **interacted** economically, politically and culturally.

- Important to have a range of case studies on which you can comment – ensure an ability to compare and contrast.
- Be very clear on key historical terms and use them in your responses (appropriately).
- Interacted – How? When? Why?

EXAMPLES





Palazzo de Priori, Florence, 1299. An impressive Gothic fusion of the requirements of a fortress with those of a town hall.

# Outcome 1 on the 2008 VCAA paper

- **Question 1**
- Explain the economic background of **one** Italian city-state. This may include trade, industry, products, banking and commerce.
- **Question 2**
- Explain why humanism involved a renewed emphasis on the knowledge of Latin and an appreciation of Latin texts **and/or** classical scholarship.



# 2008 Examiner's Report

- **Section A**
- **Question 1**
- **Marks 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Average**
- **% 0 1 5 7 7 13 14 18 18 9 7 6.3**
- This question was generally well done. Most students wrote on Florence or Venice, although some chose Milan, Ferrara
- or Naples. Strong answers contained a high level of detail, for example, discussion of the development of a trading
- empire (both land and sea) in Venice, ship building in the Arsenal and the associated industries of the Tana and hemp
- making, lace making, glass blowing and the printing press. The importance of wool and silk making, and banking in
- Florence could have been discussed. A discussion of the accounting procedures and the importance of the florin as a
- means of exchange could also have been included.

# 2008 Examiner's Report

- **Question 2**
- **Marks 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Average**
- **% 2 4 10 6 9 14 12 14 13 9 5 5.6**
- A number of students found this question difficult as they were less certain of the particular appreciation of Latin texts.
- The best answers showed knowledge of specific classical writers and philosophers and the importance of their work and
- ideas. Classical scholarship provided guidance and justification for Italian humanists.
- Following is an extract of a fine answer.
- *Claims that 'the supreme science of governing is rhetoric' reflect most clearly the implications of the rediscovery of classical*
- *scholarship for the humanist education program. Owing to the work of authors like Quintilian, republican politicians like*
- *Salutati were able to 'bring conviction to different minds' (Vergerio) based on their study of classical precedents. In the same*
- *way, the study of the Latin language informed the historical writing of Bruni who had modelled his Panygeric to the City of*
- *Florence on the work of Sallust and Livy so that the style of the medieval chroniclers was replaced by state propaganda:*
- *justifying the success present as a direct product of past triumphs (Martines)*