

Church History



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- *Introduction to Church History*
- *The Ancient Church* AD 1st-3rd centuries
- *The Rise of Christendom* AD 4th-5th centuries
- *The Early Middle Ages* AD 6th-10th centuries
- *The Age of Crusades* AD 11th-13th centuries
- ***The Renaissance*** AD **14th-15th centuries**
- *Conquest and Reformation* AD 16th century
- *The Age of Enlightenment* AD 17th-18th centuries
- *The Age of Revolution* AD 19th century
- *The Modern Age* AD 20th century
- *The Postmodern Age* AD 21st century



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- *The Early Middle Ages* AD 6th-10th centuries
- *The Age of Crusades* AD 11th-13th centuries
- *The Renaissance* AD 14th-15th centuries
 - *Welcome to the Renaissance*
 - *Turnovers...*
 - *The Black Death and a Century of War*
 - *Wobbling Out of Control*
 - *Falling Into Spiritual Collapse (part 2)*



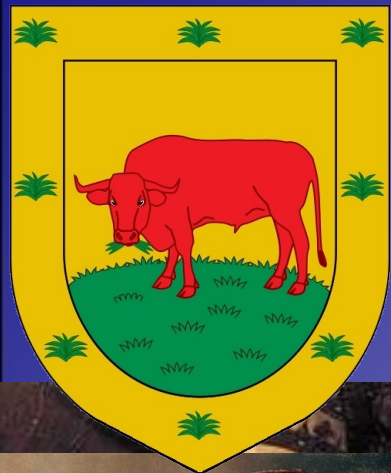
The Renaissance

- At the turn of the century, things got worse
- 1492
 - This was a *huge* year for Spain for 3 reasons
 - Fernando said that 1492 was the most important year of his reign, because it was the year that they finally completed the 780-year Reconquista
 - This was also the year that Fernando and Isabel sent Columbus westward to the New World
 - Spanish Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia became the new Pope Alexander VI...



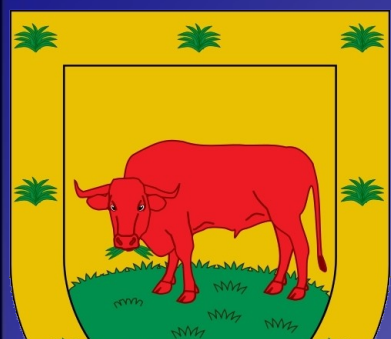
The Renaissance

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - You remember the Borja family from Aragón, right?
 - Pope Callixtus III (AKA Alfons de Borja) elevated his nephew, Rodrigo, to cardinal, angling him toward his own papacy
 - While just a cardinal, Rodrigo struck up a sexual relationship with Giovanna dei Cattanei (whom he then married off to church official Domenico d'Arignano so that she could continue to live near him)
 - (NOTE: Giovanna—AKA "Vannozza"—was no stranger to affairs with cardinals, since she had previously been in a sexual relationship with Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere... the future Pope Julius II)



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 - Giovanna bore Cardinal Rodrigo four children:
 - Cèsar (AKA “Cesare”)—a military conqueror and despot who was elevated to cardinal when his father became Pope
 - Cèsar had one legitimate daughter, and 11 illegitimate children
 - Always the shrewd politician, he invited his rivals to a “let’s bury the hatchet” New Year’s Eve celebration in Senigallia where he had them all strangled
 - He was so ruthless that later writer Friedrich Nietzsche considered him the perfect example of the Antichrist who *should* have become Pope in order to show Christendom how a *wolf* would have herded the sheep



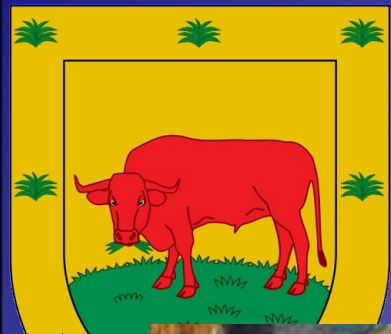
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 - Cèsar (AKA “Cesare”)
 - Juan (AKA “Giovanni”)—who married into becoming the powerful Duke of Gandía
 - He was murdered one night in 1497 (by Cèsar, who wanted to remove him to further his own military career or else by their little brother, Jofré, who was jealous because Juan was sleeping with Jofré's wife, Sancha) (but then again, Cèsar was sleeping with Sancha, too...
...as was Rodrigo—who, by that time, had been named Pope Alexander VI)



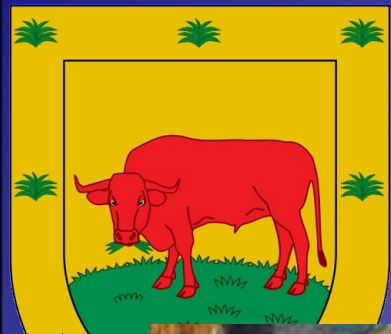
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 - Juan (AKA “Giovanni”)
 - Jofré (AKA “Gioffre”)
 - Lucrècia—whom the now-Pope Alexander married off to the influential Giovanni Sforza when she was only 13
 - When Sforza fell from power, Alexander had the marriage annulled, claiming that the marriage was never consummated
 - Which was unfortunate, since she gave birth to a son that same year
 - The *actual* father was either Cèsar or Alexander himself
 - A Papal bull officially named the child her son and half-brother



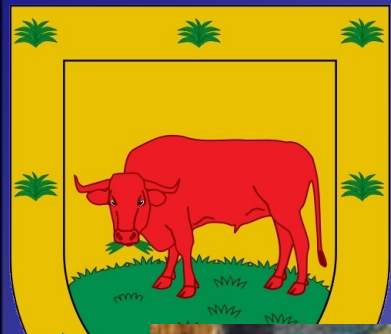
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 - She was then married off to the wealthy Alfonso of Aragón at age 18 (Alexander threatened Federico of Naples—Alfonso’s king—with excommunication if he wouldn’t *force* the marriage between them, since Federico’s daughter, Carlotta, had refused to marry Cèsar)



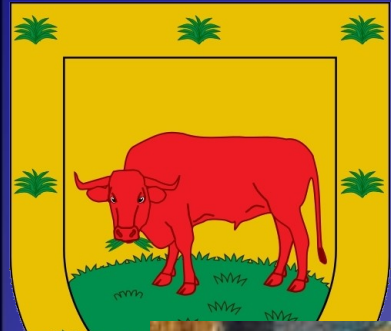
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 - Lucrecia—whom the now-Pope Alexander married off to the influential Giovanni Sforza when she was only 13
 - She was then married off to the wealthy Alfonso of Aragón at age 18
 - She had one son by Alfonso (no, really—he really was the father)
 - But then he ran afoul of Cèsar's political plans, so Cèsar had him murdered

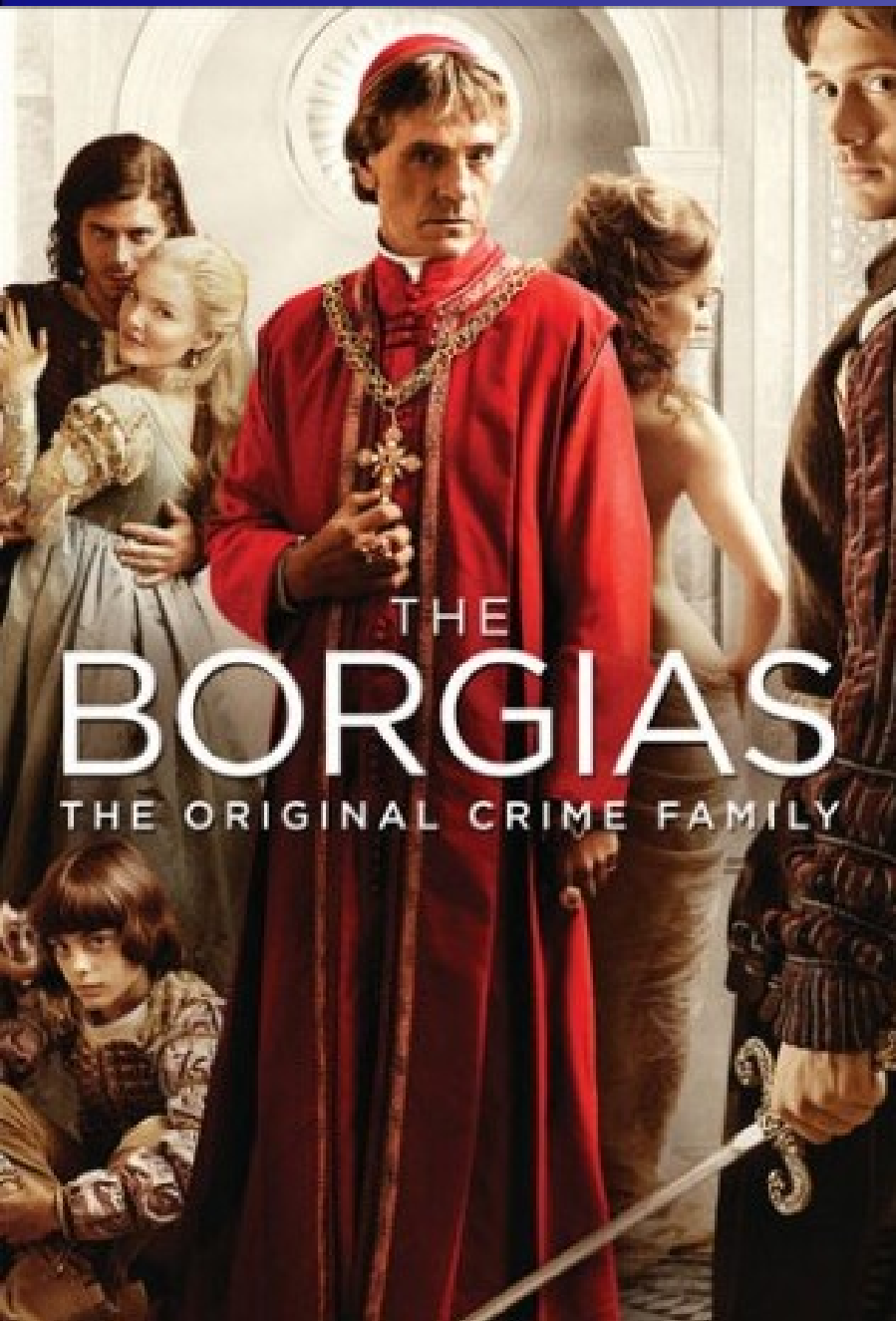


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 - She was then married off to the wealthy Alfonso of Aragón at age 18
 - So she was then married off to Alfonso d'Este, the Duke of Ferrara, at age 22
 - But she had more sex with his young brother, Francesco, than with him (actually, she was famous for having a *ton* of lovers, so it's really hard to tell *who* all really fathered her next six children)



The Renaissance



- Does it surprise *anyone* here that this family became the basis for a sleazy Showtime TV series?



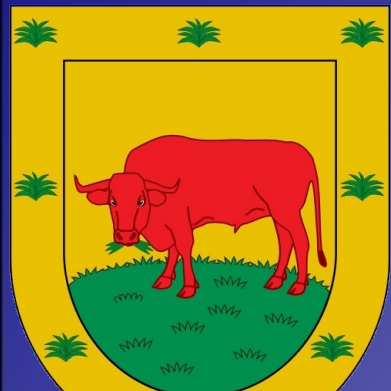
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 - Supposedly, Alexander held orgies in the Vatican itself—including a notorious “Banquet of Chestnuts” on October 30, 1501
 - Fifty prostitutes were brought in to service the cardinals, while the Pope and Cèsar officiated
 - Prizes were given out to the cardinals who could successfully copulate the most times
 - Alexander’s own master of ceremonies said
“There is no longer any crime or shameful act that does not take place in public in Rome and in the house of the pontiff... Who could fail to be horrified by the account of the terrible, monstrous acts of lechery that are committed openly in his house, with no respect for God or man? Rapes and acts of incest are countless, his sons and daughters are utterly depraved, great throngs of courtesans frequent Saint Peter’s Palace, pimps, brothels and whorehouses are to be found everywhere—a most shameful situation...”



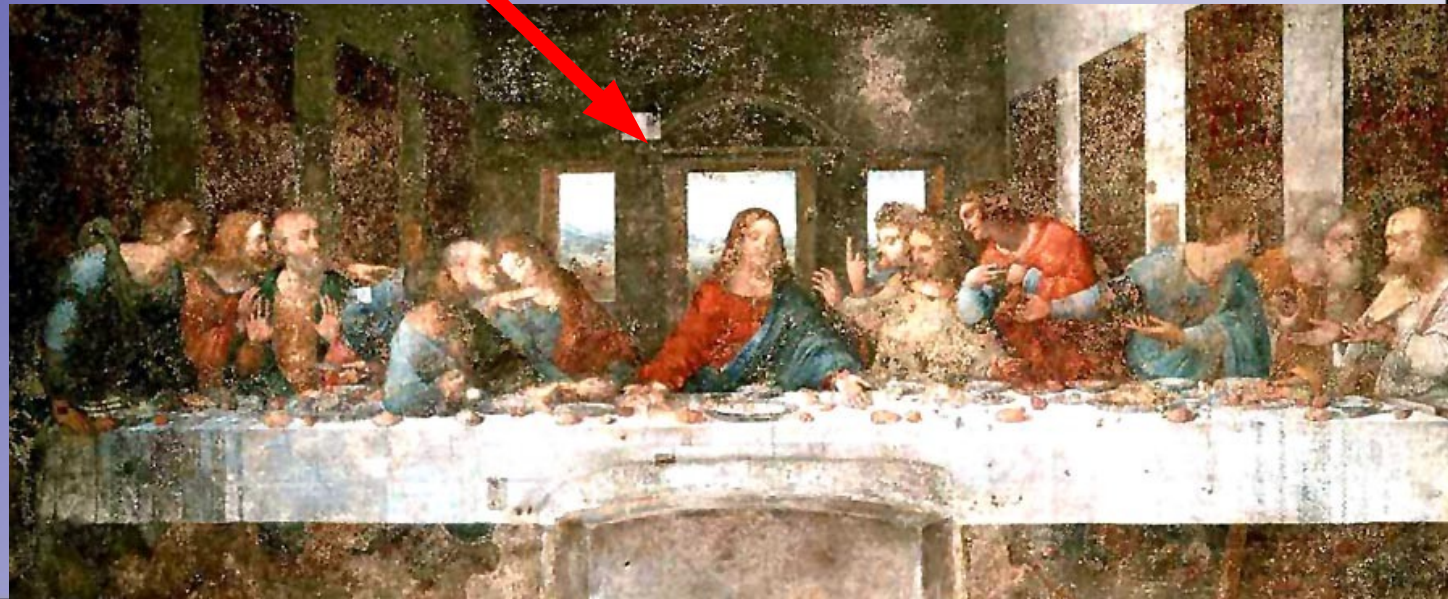
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 - Fifty prostitutes were brought in to service the cardinals, while the Pope and Cèsar officiated
 - This is who was in charge of the Church of Jesus Christ at the turn of the century...
 - (NOTE: On the plus side, he was a patron of the arts—which was all the rage among insanely rich people at the time—and engaged Michelangelo Buonarroti as an architect to rebuild St. Peter's Basilica)
 - And *speaking* of rich guys hiring great artists...



The Renaissance

- At the turn of the century, things got worse
 - 1492 Pope Alexander VI came to power
 - 1494 Leonardo da Vinci painted *The Last Supper*
 - Ludovico Sforza (Duke of Milan) commissioned 44-year-old da Vinci to paint the mural in the monastery of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan
 - He decided not to paint it as a fresco, but to paint it on the dry, plastered wall
 - As a result, the painting didn't weather the humidity well, and has deteriorated badly
 - So *this* is da Vinci's real *Last Supper*...



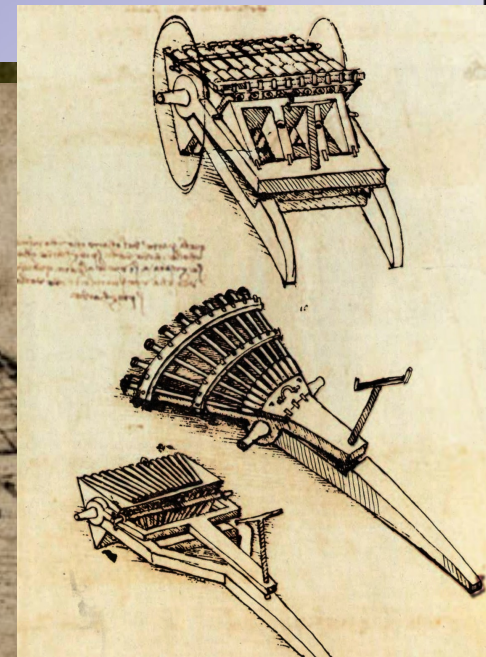
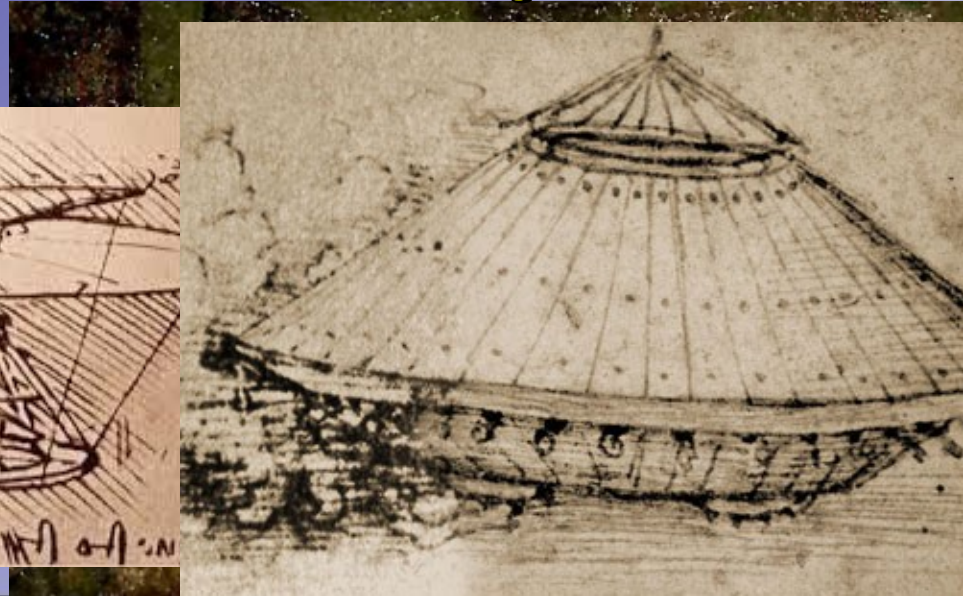
The Renaissance

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - There have been several attempts at restoration over the centuries, but that's not without its controversies
 - Experts have argued that only 20% of the restoration represents the work of da Vinci, and 80% the work of the restorer



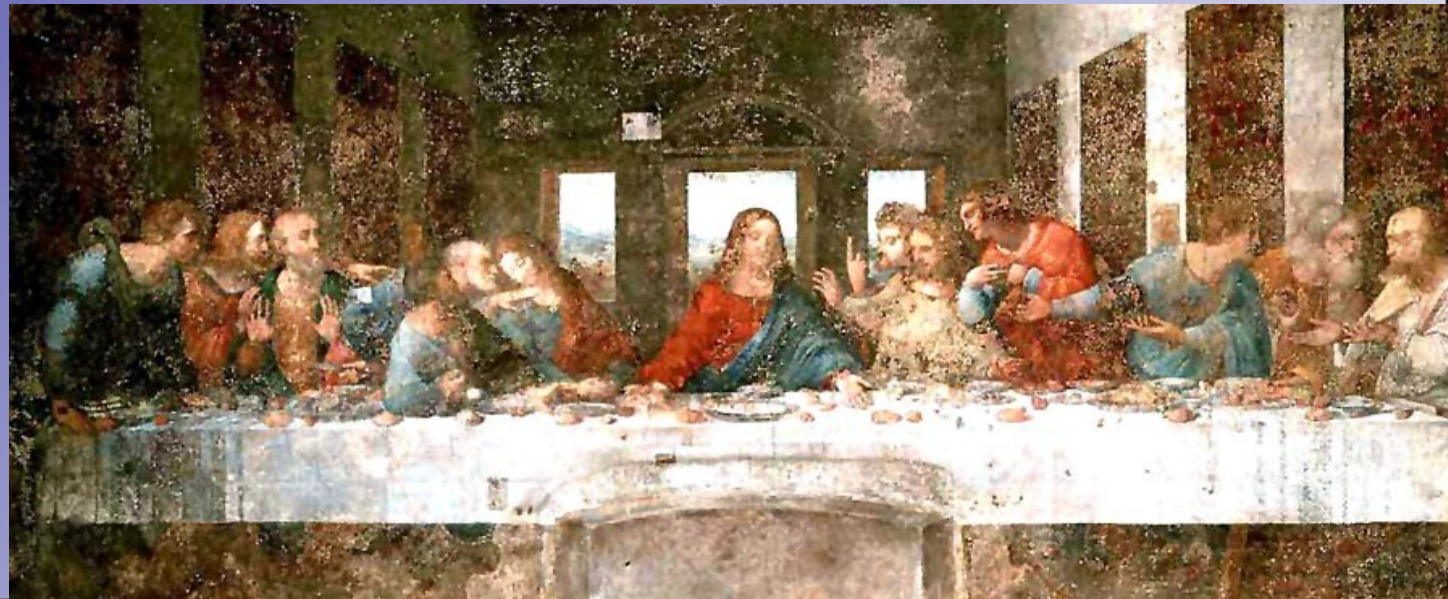
The Renaissance

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
 - There have been several attempts at restoration over the centuries, but that's not without its controversies
 - **Da Vinci himself was disgusted that the work had already begun to crumble by the time he had finished it**
 - In fact, he was disgusted by a lot of his own work
 - For instance, the materials simply didn't exist in his era to create the parachute he'd invented or that helicopter idea, or the mechanical tank or those machine guns...



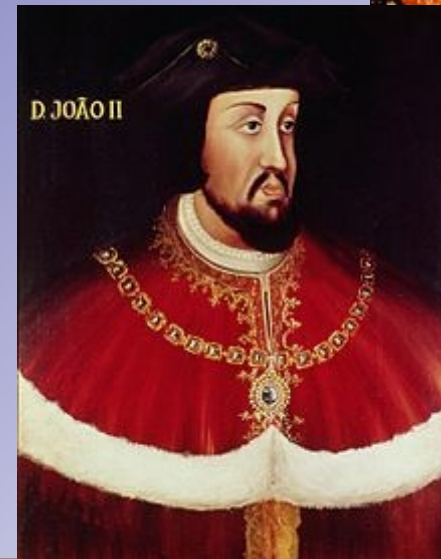
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 - In fact, he was disgusted by a lot of his own work
 - **He wrote about how frustrated he was, believing that much of his life was basically a failure...**



The Renaissance

- At the turn of the century, things got worse
 - 1492 Pope Alexander VI came to power
 - 1494 Leonardo da Vinci painted *The Last Supper*
 - The Treaty of Tordesillas was signed
 - Spanish Pope Alexander had given large chunks of Africa to Spain, and Portugal didn't like it
 - Portugal claimed that the Treaty of Alcaçovas back in 1479 said that any lands south of the Canary Islands belonged to *Portugal*—including Cuba and the New World
 - Spain, of course, claimed that it all belonged to *Spain*, since Portugal didn't take Columbus up on his expedition



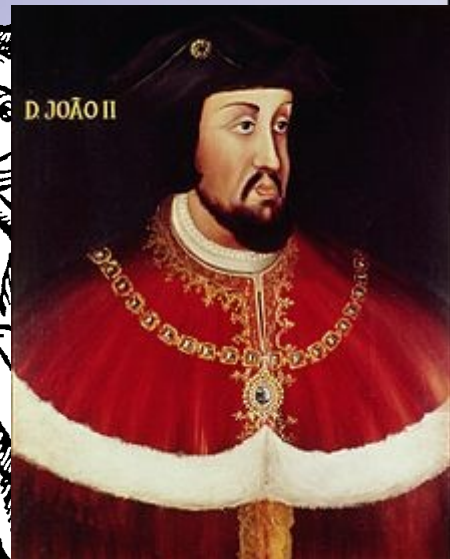
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 - So João II of Portugal and Fernando of Spain signed the Treaty of Tordesillas, re-dividing the world one more time
 - Again, this only worked for the New World—things got much more interesting once *Asia* came into the picture...



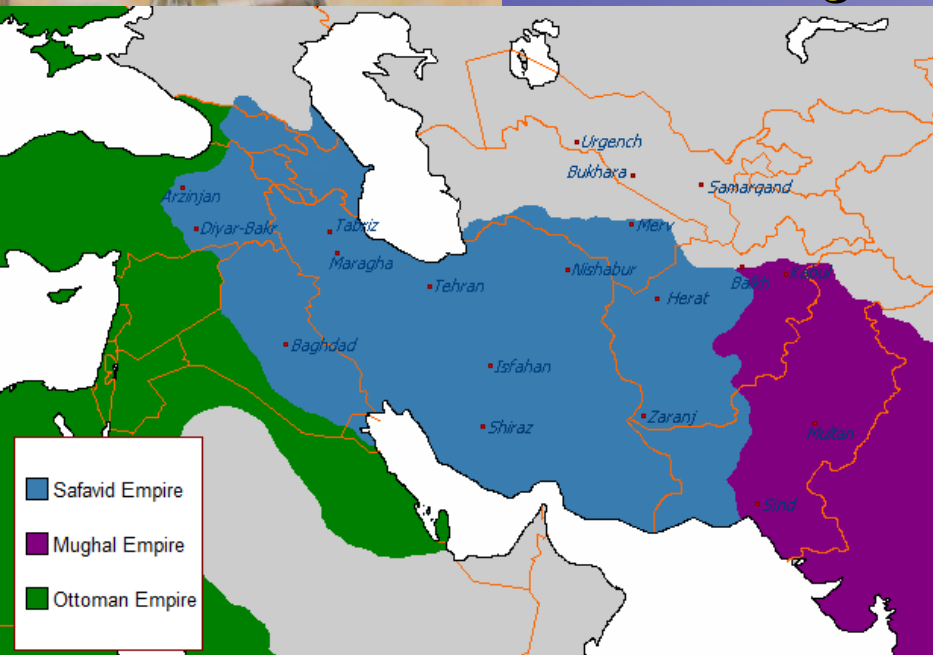
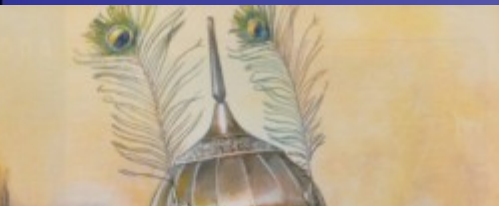
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The Treaty of Tordesillas was signed
 - 1496 Portugal expelled its Jews
 - João took a lesson from Spain, and demanded that all Jews must leave Portugal, convert, or die
 - Unlike Spain, Portugal made two caviats—
 - 1) All Jews had to leave *within a few days*
 - 2) They could only leave on approved ships
 - At the docks, they were met by Catholic priests, who kept them from the ships and forced thousands to convert (or die)



The Renaissance

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 - 1496 Portugal expelled its Jews
 - 1500 The Timurid Dynasty finally collapsed
 - You should remember Timur (Tamerlane), who'd killed over four million Christians as the self-proclaimed "Sword of Islam" 150 years ago
 - His empire finally fell under its own political weight, dividing into two halves
 - The Shi'ite Muslim Safavid Empire (which lasted until 1736)
 - The Sunni Muslim Mughal Empire (which lasted until 1857)
 - That 200-350 years of relative stability in the East became crucially important as time went on
 - Especially since the Safavids had constant friction with the Sunni Muslim Ottoman Empire and thus made alliances with Christian Europe against them



The Renaissance

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - Pope Alexander VI died in 1503
 - He and Cèsar came down with a fever (or were possibly poisoned)
 - No medicines could save the Pope's life though Cèsar's life was saved through a remedy that apparently peeled his skin off and left him severely weakened
 - Alexander's corpse was so disfigured by a bizarre, rapid decomposition that people refused to kiss his hands and feet, as custom demanded for a dead Pope
 - Cèsar died four years later—his face horribly disfigured, his body rife with syphilis, and his body left naked in the streets



The Renaissance

- At the turn of the century, things got worse
1503 Erasmus published his *Enchiridion*
 - Originally from Rotterdam, Desiderius Erasmus was the illegitimate child of a Catholic priest
 - Since he grew up so poor, he entered into the clergy to survive—and had the opportunity to learn Greek and read *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis



The Renaissance

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - Thomas à Kempis was a German scholar and priest (who had copied the Bible—by hand—at least four times)
 - In the process, he came to realize the importance not only of being a good Catholic, but even moreso of having a personal relationship with God
 - He felt that Christianity wasn't just a series of precepts or rules or doctrines, but rather something that needs to be embraced on a deep, personal, devotional level, and then lived out consistently in our everyday lives
 - As he wrote in his *Imitation of Christ*,
“At the Day of Judgement we shall not be asked what we have *read*, but what we have *done*.”



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 - Thus, he emphasized the need for a regular, personal devotional time for *all* Christians, letting the rest of the world fall away so that you can “reboot” yourself in Christ
 - Again, as he wrote in his *Imitation of Christ*, “Make clean the mansions of your heart. Shut out the whole world and all its sinful din and sit as a solitary sparrow on a housetop.”



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 - Thus, he emphasized the need for a regular, personal devotional time for *all* Christians
 - The book became the most-read book in the world—in fact, it has been translated into more languages than any other book ever written, second only to the Bible itself
 - As glowing praise for *The Imitation of Christ*, Friedrich Nietzsche absolutely *hated* it, since it called the believer to calm, peace, and selfless obedience to Christ



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 - Thus, Erasmus wrote extensively on the importance of not just going through the motions of Christianity, but truly, sincerely attempting to be Biblical and God-honoring
 - He decried the sin and hypocrisy that he saw in the leadership of the Church, and called for a major and genuine reform



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 - His *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* emphasized that, like a soldier, the Christian must discipline himself to live like a Christian—
“Charity does not consist in many visits to churches, in many prostrations before the statues of saints, in the lighting of candles, or in the repetition of a number of designated prayers. Of all these things, God has no need... He is charitable who rebukes the erring, who teaches the ignorant, who lifts up the fallen, who consoles the downhearted, who supports the needy. If a man is truly charitable, he will devote, if needs be, all his wealth, all his zeal, all his care to the benefit of others.”



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 - Erasmus is sometimes considered a proto-Reformer by many, but he did later debate *against* Reformers such as Martin Luther, since he despised divisiveness even more than he despised corruption, and because he thought that Reformers were abandoning too many of the *good* things of Catholicism

“You declaim bitterly against the luxury of priests, the ambition of bishops, the tyranny of the Roman Pontiff, and the babbling of the sophists; against our prayers, fasts, and Masses; and you are not content to retrench the abuses that may be in these things, but must needs abolish them entirely... But look around on this ‘Evangelical’ generation, and observe whether amongst them less indulgence is given to luxury, lust, or avarice, than amongst those whom you so detest... The solemn prayers of the Church are abolished, but now there are very many who never pray at all... Confession to the priest is abolished, but very few now confess to God....”



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 - Because Erasmus tried to reform Catholicism from *within*, without abandoning it, he was unfortunately seen by both sides as being lukewarm and non-committal, and thus, he pretty much just annoyed everybody on both sides of the Reformation



The Renaissance

- At the turn of the century, things got worse
 - 1503 Erasmus published his *Enchiridion*
 - 1506 Pope Julius II's papacy kicked into high gear
 - Known as the “Warrior Pope” for personally leading the Papal armies against his enemies
 - (This is a fanciful, but not *entirely* inaccurate modern take on Julius' armor)
 - (and yes, he did tend to favor wielding a mace in battle)



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 - (NOTE: The fact was not lost on many that Alexander may have been poisoned, and that his successor, Pius III—another rival of Julius—died under suspicious circumstances after only 26 days in office... I'm just sayin'...)



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 - Nonetheless, Julius liked Alexander's plan, and re-commissioned Michelangelo Buonarroti to rebuild St. Peter's Basilica
 - (NOTE: Two years later, he also commissioned him to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, so that he could create his own legacy, literally overarching that of his uncle, Pope Sixtus IV)
 - BTW—The reason that no photography is allowed in the Sistine Chapel today has nothing to do with solemnity or with the potential of harming the artwork
 - Instead, when the Church asked for funding to restore the Chapel in 1980, the Nippon Television Network Corporation of Japan gave the highest bid... and demanded exclusive rights to all photos and footage of the Chapel

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 - Julius also hired his own Swiss mercenaries to defend him against his enemies—forming the first unit of the Papal Swiss Guard



The Renaissance

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - Let's face it—the Papal Swiss Guard look kinda silly to us today, with their archaic uniforms
 - And it's not like they've just retained this look the entire time for these last five centuries
 - Their uniforms *used* to just reflect the styles of uniforms of their eras



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 - Their uniforms *used* to just reflect the styles of uniforms of their eras—until, in 1914, when Commandant Jules Repond decided to go all “retro,” arguing that they really ought to reflect the Church of Rome's timelessness
 - (Read: that *everyone's* clothing styles—priests, nuns, soldiers, etc.—should be locked into the style of the Renaissance for all time)
 - Why do you think that is?



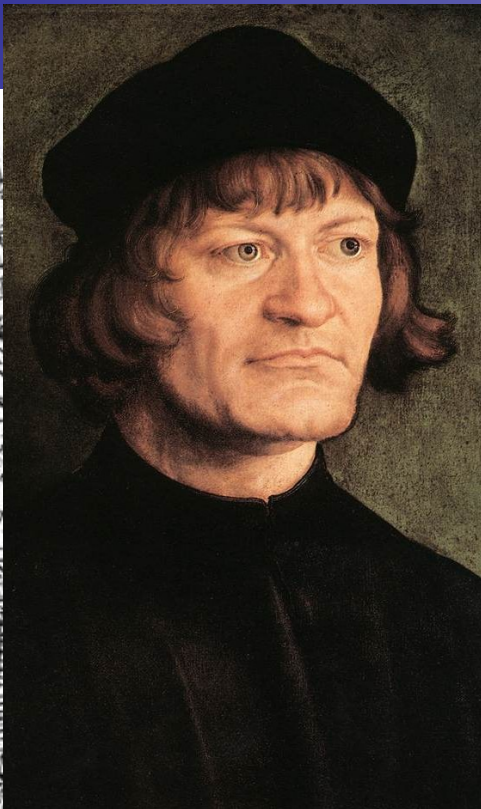
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- **Funky little teaching moment—**
 - Let's face it—the Papal Swiss Guard look kinda silly to us today, with their archaic uniforms
 - **But as silly as they may look to our eyes, they're really, *really* tough**
 - They train hard, with the best instructors, and choose only the “best of the best” to serve in the Papal Guards
 - So think of them like the Delta Force of Europe ... who happen to dress funny...



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 - (NOTE: It was his experience acting as the chaplain for this Swiss Guard that gave Swiss priest Ulrich Zwingli a first-hand look at how rich, greedy Popes had taken over and abused the Church—and thus led to him becoming a leading Reformer)
 - “The Swiss see the sad situation of the Church of God, Mother of Christianity, and realize how grave and dangerous it is that any tyrant, avid for wealth, can assault with impunity, the common Mother of Christianity”



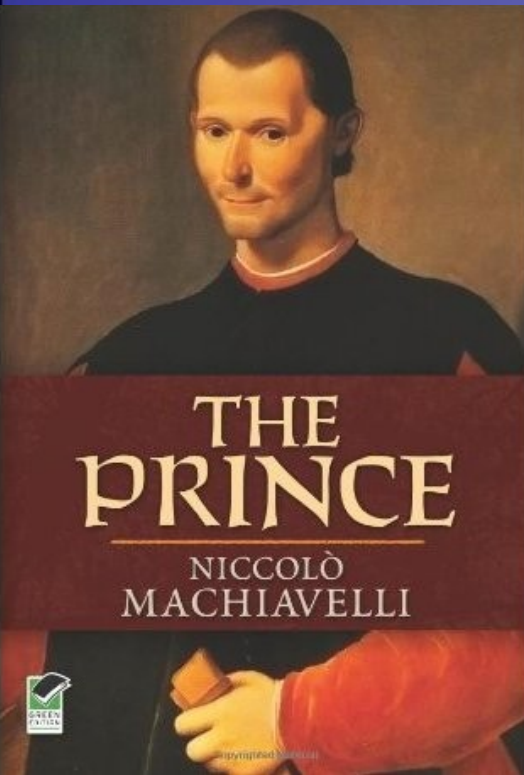
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 - 1506 Pope Julius II's papacy kicked into high gear
 - 1512 The Fifth Lateran Council was held
 - Actually, Pope Julius II had been promising (and failing) to hold a Council for almost a decade, so the cardinals got together to form one of their own in Pisa
 - So Julius immediately disbanded that Council and convened the Fifth Lateran... angrily...
 - The Council clarified that only a Pope can call a Council, and that his word was final law
 - They also decided that no books of any kind can be printed anywhere without the express permission of the local bishop
 - They also called for a Crusade against the Muslim Ottoman Turks
(An action which, by the way, was completely supported by the Muslim Safavid Empire)



The Renaissance

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 - 1513 Niccolò Macchiavelli wrote *The Prince*
 - The book was dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici, the Duke of Urbino, and philosophically laid out the wisest way for a ruler to rule
 - What makes it such a classic is that it's the first political textbook of the modern era to make use of what would be later termed *Realpolitik*—the emphasis not on what *should* work, but what *does* work
 - For instance, Macchiavelli argued that it's better for a prince to be feared than to be loved by his subjects
 - For people to follow you out of love, you have to keep making them happy and keep making them love you
 - (If you ever do *anything* that they don't like, then they'll cease to follow you)
 - For them to follow you out of fear, you just have to make them fear you *once*



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 - For instance, Macchiavelli argued that it's better for a prince to be feared than to be loved by his subjects
 - It stands as the most brilliantly-realized argument for the philosophy of “the ends justify the means”
 - Macchiavelli even lauded Cèsar Borgia for being such a shrewd politician



The Renaissance

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - What's really interesting is that the book also stands completely, polar opposite to everything that you'd expect from Macchiavelli
 - He was a devoutly ethical government worker in Florence's republic, after they'd thrown out the Medici and brought in a kind of democracy
 - He'd written earlier about finding the Borgias' excess and corruption morally repugnant



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 - He was a devoutly ethical government worker in Florence's republic, after they'd thrown out the Medici and brought in a kind of democracy
 - When the Medici returned and re-took Florence, he was tortured by them for three weeks, and then released—never to hold a government job again
 - And that's when he wrote *The Prince* for Lorenzo de' Medici (whom he'd never met)



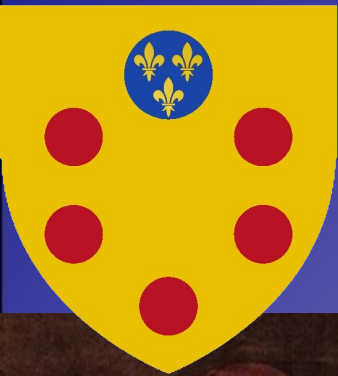
The Renaissance

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 - What's really interesting is that the book also stands completely, polar opposite to everything that you'd expect from Macchiavelli
 - All of this has led some people to wonder if *The Prince* isn't simply the most misunderstood satire of all time
 - “Hey, Lorenzo—if your family is gonna lead like this, then here's the way to *totally* throw morality to the wind and lead simply in ways that treat people like disposable, wind-up mechanisms... y'know, like your rivals, the *Borgias*, would do...”
 - The problem is, if Macchiavelli really was just writing a satire, then he did it too well, because the system he articulated *actually works*, and it's been followed by tyrants for centuries



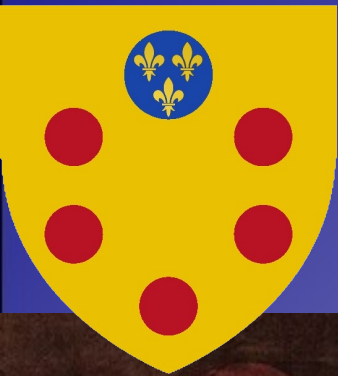
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 - After a few Borgia Popes, the Medici family decided that they needed to buy a papacy for one of their own—the first of four Medici Popes in the span of a century
 - Giovanni di Lorenzo de' Medici became Pope Leo X—without ever even having been a priest (though his father had purchased him a deaconship years before)



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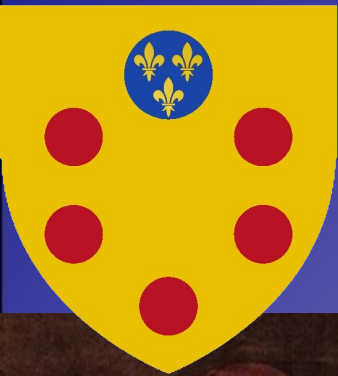


One of his first acts was to cozy up to King Fernando of Spain, who had recently conquered the Kingdom of Naples



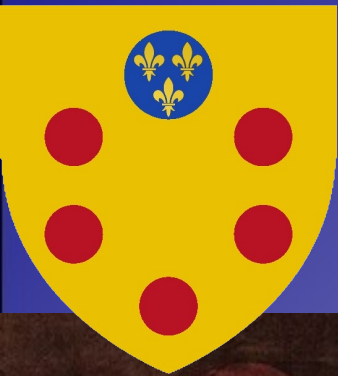
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 - Leo loved being Pope because of the power and luxury that it brought him
 - As he wrote to his brother, "Since God has given us the Papacy, let us enjoy it"
 - Thus, he threw lavish parties and filled the Vatican with pretty young men, and travelled around Rome with his own, personal circus (complete with clowns, panthers, bears, and his favorite—Hanno, the white elephant)



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 - At one of his Good Friday parties, he raised his goblet of wine and announced a famous toast:
 - "How well we know what a profitable superstition this fable of Christ has been for us and our predecessors!"
(sometimes simplified by historians as "It has served us well, this myth of Christ")



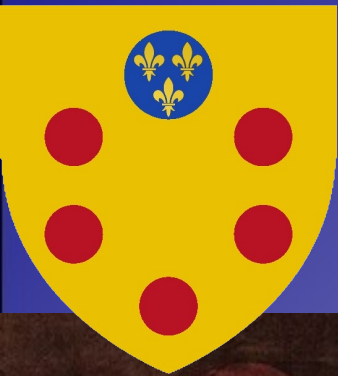
The Renaissance

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - His own secretary, Cardinal Pietro Bembo, said that Leo
 - “was known to disbelieve Christianity itself. He advanced contrary to the faith, and since he condemned the Gospel, therefore he must be a heretic; he was guilty of sodomy with his chamberlains; was addicted to pleasure, luxury, idleness, ambition, unchastity, and sensuality; and spent his whole days in the company of musicians and buffoons. His Infallibility's drunkenness was proverbial, he practiced incontinency as well as inebriation, and the effects of his crimes shattered the people's constitution”



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 - His extravagant lifestyle actually bankrupted the Roman Catholic Church
 - So he began selling off anything that people would buy—statues of the apostles from the Vatican, cardinals' birettas, holy offices, furniture, dishes, silverware, etc.
 - He also sold indulgences by the score
 - A common phrase of the day was, “As soon as a coin in the coffer rings, a soul from purgatory springs...”
 - Some priests got rich—but others just couldn't take it any more



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 - 1517 Martin Luther posted 95 Theses on a door

