

Renaissance, focused on the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and the tendency of twentieth-century studies of the Renaissance to focus disproportionately on Florence—a highly conservative society in gender terms—have led to a vast underestimation of the degree to which women may be considered stakeholders in the movement alongside men.

A few technical points, in conclusion. To enhance this book's utility for more specialized readers, I have cited the original text for most quotations from primary sources, especially in those sections of Chapters 5 and 6 which incorporate previously unpublished primary research. Where secondary literature is concerned, I have given preference to works in English where possible; and I have indicated English translations of primary sources where available. All translations in the body of the text are mine, unless otherwise stated in the notes.

Timeline

In addition to events in Italy, this timeline incorporates select material from elsewhere for comparison and calibration.

- 1303 Giotto begins work on Arena Chapel frescoes in Padua, continuing to 1306
- c. 1308 Dante begins work on *Divine Comedy*, continuing to his death in 1321
- 1309 Papacy under Clement V (Raymond Bertrand de Got) transfers from Rome to Avignon
- c. 1314 Albertino Mussato, *Ecerinis*, the first humanist tragedy
- 1320s Petrarch (Francesco Petrarca) begins work on his love poetry, continuing to his death in 1374
- 1337 Beginning of Hundred Years' War between England and France
- 1341 Petrarch crowned poet laureate in Rome, with the support of Robert of Anjou, king of Naples
- 1345 Petrarch discovers Cicero's letters to Atticus in the cathedral library of Verona and launches post-classical tradition of the private, or 'familiar' letter
- 1347 Black Death arrives in Europe, lasting until 1353 and killing at least a third of the continent's population
- 1353 Giovanni Boccaccio completes *Decameron*, which opens with a description of the plague in Florence
- 1360s Boccaccio, *Famous Women* (*De claris mulieribus*), the first humanist treatise on women
- 1376 Catherine of Siena sent by Florence as ambassador to Pope Gregory XI (Pierre Roger de Beaufort) in Avignon during 'War of the Eight Saints' between Florence and papacy

- 1377 Gregory XI returns papacy from Avignon to Rome
- 1378 Start of 'Great Schism' in the Church, with two and eventually three competing claimants to papacy; revolt of the wool-workers (*ciompi*) in Florence
- 1381 Peasants' revolt in England
- c. 1387 Geoffrey Chaucer begins work on *Canterbury Tales*
- 1397 Manuel Chrysoloras invited to teach in Florence by Coluccio Salutati, marking the beginning of humanistic Greek studies
- 1401 Lorenzo Ghiberti wins competition to design the Florentine Baptistery doors
- 1413 Accession of Henry V in England
- 1414 Opening of Church Council of Constance
- 1415 Council of Constance posthumously declares English reformer John Wycliffe a heretic and orders execution of Bohemian reformer Jan Hus; Leonardo Bruni starts writing his ground-breaking *History of Florence*, continuing to 1442
- 1417 Great Schism resolved at Council of Constance; Poggio Bracciolini discovers complete text of Quintilian's *Education of the Orator* and Lucretius's *On the Nature of Things*
- 1419 Beginning of Hussite Wars in Bohemia
- 1420 Brunelleschi begins work on the dome of Florence cathedral, continuing to 1436
- 1421 Gerardo Landriani discovers complete text of Cicero's dialogue *On the Orator*
- 1423 Vittorino da Feltre establishes prototypical humanist school in Mantua
- 1424 Masaccio and Masolino da Panicale begin work on the Brancacci Chapel frescoes in Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence, continuing to 1427–8
- 1434 Return from exile of Cosimo de' Medici marks beginning of *de facto* Medici rule in Florence
- c. 1435 Leon Battista Alberti writes *On Painting*, the first humanist art treatise
- 1438 Delegation sent from Byzantium to papal Council of Ferrara (Council of Florence after 1439), in a failed attempt to negotiate conciliation of Eastern and Western churches

- 1439–40 Lorenzo Valla writes *On the False Donation of Constantine* in Naples, proving the main document underpinning the papacy's claim to temporal sovereignty to be a fake
- 1442 Alfonso V of Aragon crowned Alfonso I of Naples, confirming Aragonese rule there after a long power struggle with the Angevin dynasty
- 1443 Alberti begins writing *On Architecture*, continuing to 1457
- 1447 Election of the first humanist pope, Nicholas V, who begins to plan the architectural reconstruction of Rome; Leonello d'Este, duke of Ferrara, plans first princely decorated *studiolo* in the palace of Belfiore, completed c. 1463
- 1450 Sforza dynasty established in Milan
- 1453 Fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks, resulting in an exodus of Byzantine scholars to Italy
- 1455 Johannes Gutenberg completes printing of the Bible in Mainz, the first major work to be printed in Europe using moveable type
- 1465 First books printed in Italy, at the monastery of Subiaco, near Rome (Cicero's *On the Orator* and Lactantius's *Works*)
- 1468 Byzantine-Italian Cardinal Basilios Bessarion donates his remarkable library to the senate of Venice, forming nucleus of the Biblioteca Marciana
- 1469 Marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, uniting the principal powers of Spain; Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici ('Lorenzo the Magnificent') assumes *de facto* control in Florence after the death of his father
- 1475 First female-authored books printed in Italy (works by Saints Catherine of Siena and Catherine of Bologna); first dated Hebrew book published in Italy (a commentary on the Torah, published in Reggio Calabria); Angelo Poliziano begins his epic *Stanzas for the Joust* (*Stanze per la giostra*), abandoned in 1478 after the murder of its protagonist Giuliano de' Medici in the Pazzi conspiracy; Vatican Library founded by Sixtus IV (Francesco della Rovere)
- 1476 First Greek book published in Italy (a grammar text by Constantine Lascaris)
- 1478 Pazzi conspiracy in Florence; murder of Giuliano de' Medici and attempt on the life of Lorenzo de' Medici in Florence cathedral; Inquisition introduced in Spain

- 1480 Ottoman siege of Otranto in Puglia; threat of Ottoman invasion of the south of Italy, cut short by death of Sultan Mehmet II in 1481
- 1482–3 Publication of the first two books of Matteo Maria Boiardo's romance, *Orlando innamorato* (*Orlando in Love*), generally considered the greatest vernacular poem of the fifteenth century, together with Poliziano's *Stanzas*
- 1484 Marsilio Ficino's Latin translation of Plato's dialogues printed in Florence
- 1485 Accession of the first Tudor monarch, Henry VII, in England
- 1488 First secular work by a female author printed in Italy (an oration by Cassandra Fedele)
- 1492 Columbus's first voyage to New World; fall of last Muslim stronghold in Spain, in Granada; expulsion of Jews from Spain; death of Lorenzo de' Medici; accession of Pope Alexander VI (Rodrigo Borgia)
- 1494 Charles VIII of France invades Italy, marking beginning of Wars of Italy; Medici family exiled from Florence and republic restored
- 1495 Naples falls briefly into French hands; French expelled by a league formed by Alexander VI; Leonardo da Vinci begins painting *Last Supper* in Milan; Aldo Manuzio begins publication of complete works of Aristotle in Greek in Venice
- 1497 Vasco da Gama embarks on what is to prove the first sea voyage from Europe to India, via Cape of Good Hope
- 1498 Execution of politically influential fundamentalist preacher Girolamo Savonarola in Florence; Cesare Borgia, son of Alexander VI, renounces cardinalate to become leader of his father's troops
- 1499 Louis XII of France occupies Milan, ousting Lodovico Sforza; Cesare Borgia begins his campaigns in the Romagna, capturing Imola and Forlì
- 1500 Louis XII and Ferdinand II of Aragon agree in the Treaty of Granada to split Naples and southern Italy between them, after forcing out the king of Naples, Federico IV d'Aragona
- 1501 Aldo Manuzio launches first small-format (*octavo*) series of literary classics with an edition of Virgil; Michelangelo

- begins work on *David*, the first free-standing colossal nude sculpture of the Renaissance (completed 1504)
- 1503 Death of Pope Alexander VI; election of Julius II (Giuliano della Rovere); first publication of Amerigo Vespucci's *The New World*, a Latin translation of a letter describing his voyage to Venezuela and Brazil
- 1504 Louis XII relinquishes Naples to Spanish rule in Treaty of Lyon; Jacopo Sannazaro's *Arcadia* published in Naples, the first Renaissance pastoral romance
- 1506 Julius II initiates rebuilding of St Peter's in Rome, continuing to 1615
- 1508 Formation of the papal-led League of Cambrai against Venice; Michelangelo starts work on Sistine Chapel ceiling for Julius II, continuing to 1512; Lodovico Ariosto writes *La Cassaria* [*The Play of the Strongbox*], initiating the Renaissance tradition of vernacular comedies based on classical models
- 1509 Venetian defeat at Battle of Agnadello results in complete (though temporary) loss of Venice's mainland empire; Raphael begins work on the Stanza della Segnatura for Julius II, continuing to 1512; accession of Henry VIII of England
- 1511 First edition of Erasmus's *Praise of Folly*
- 1513 Death of Julius II; accession of Leo X (Giovanni de' Medici); return of Medici to Florence; Niccolò Machiavelli writes *The Prince*; first comedy involving a cross-dressed female character performed at Urbino (Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena, *La Calandra*)
- 1515 Baldassare Castiglione completes first version of *Book of the Courtier* (published in a revised version, 1528); accession of François I as king of France
- 1516 First publication of Ariosto's romance *Orlando furioso* (revised 1521 and 1532); publication of Thomas More's *Utopia* and Pietro Pomponazzi's *On the Immortality of the Soul*; accession of Charles I, of the Hapsburg dynasty, to throne of Spain
- 1517 Martin Luther posts 95 theses in Wittenberg, initiating Protestant Reformation
- 1519 Accession of Charles I of Spain as Holy Roman Emperor Charles V; Ferdinand Magellan embarks on voyage of

- circumnavigation of the globe, completed by a handful of survivors in 1522
- 1520 Titian starts work on *Bacchus and Ariadne*, the first of his great mythological paintings for the *studiolo* of Alfonso I d'Este in Ferrara
- 1521 Hernán Cortes completes overthrow of the Aztec Empire in Mexico, following the death of Moctezuma II in 1520
- 1524 First publication of Machiavelli's *The Mandrake Root*, the most famous Italian Renaissance comedy (written c. 1518)
- 1525 French defeat at Battle of Pavia; François I taken prisoner by the Spanish; foundation of Accademia degli Intronati in Siena, the first formal literary academy; publication of Pietro Bembo's *Prose della volgar lingua* (*Dialogues on the Vernacular*), establishing the Tuscan of Petrarch and Boccaccio as the basis for literary Italian
- 1526 Sannazaro's *De partu Virginis* (*On the Virgin Birth*) published, the most important Latin religious epic of the period
- 1527 Sack of Rome by German mercenaries; Medici family exiled from Florence; last Florentine republic, continuing to 1530
- 1529 Siege of Vienna by the Turks under Suleiman I 'the Magnificent', marking the furthest reach of Turkish aggression in central Europe
- 1530 Coronation of Charles V by Pope Clement VII in Bologna; Girolamo Fracastoro publishes the Latin epic *Syphilis*, coining the modern term for an illness that first appeared in Europe in the 1490s
- 1532 First volume of François Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel* published
- 1534 Act of Supremacy in England seals Henry VIII's break with Rome
- 1536 Michelangelo begins work on *Last Judgment* in the Vatican (to 1541); Tuscan architect Jacopo Sansovino begins his transformation of St Mark's Square in Venice
- 1538 Pirated edition of Vittoria Colonna's poems published, the first secular verse collection by a woman to appear in print; Pietro Aretino publishes first volume of *Letters*, the first vernacular letter-collection in print

- 1540 Jesuit order approved by Pope Paul III (Alessandro Farnese)
- 1543 Andreas Vesalius publishes *On the Fabric of the Human Body*, the most important Renaissance anatomical work; Veronica Gambara admitted to Bolognese Accademia dei Sonnacchiosi, the first woman to be admitted to a literary academy
- 1545 Opening of Council of Trent to debate reform of Roman Catholic Church (continuing to 1563); first recorded *commedia dell'arte* company formed; Benvenuto Cellini casts the bronze statue *Perseus and Medusa* for Cosimo I de' Medici, duke of Florence
- 1546 First monographic publication of Vittoria Colonna's *Spiritual verse*, the founding work of the tradition of Petrarchist religious verse
- 1548 First recorded instance of actresses appearing on stage, in an Italian troupe performing Bibbiena's *La Calandra* in Lyon
- 1549 First European missionary visit to Japan led by Basque Jesuit Francis Xavier
- 1550 First edition of Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* published (revised edition 1568); Giovanni Battista Ramusio begins publishing *Navigations and Voyages*, continuing to 1559
- 1554 First three parts of Matteo Bandello's *Novellas* published: along with Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, the most influential vernacular narrative work of the period and the source for Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*
- 1556 Accession of Philip II of Spain
- 1558 Accession of Elizabeth I of England; posthumous publication of the works of Giovanni della Casa, author of an influential verse-collection and the conduct text *Galateo*
- 1559 Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis marks definitive end of Wars of Italy; Pope Paul IV issues first papal Index of Prohibited Books
- 1560 First, partial publication of Luigi Tansillo's *Le lagrime di San Pietro* (*The Tears of St Peter*) (complete edition 1585), launching vogue for vernacular religious narrative in the style of Ariosto
- 1561 Posthumous publication of Francesco Guicciardini's influential *History of Italy*, centred on the period of the Wars of Italy

- 1562 Beginning of French Wars of Religion, continuing to 1598
- 1563 Foundation of Accademia delle Arti del Disegno in Florence, the first artistic academy in Italy
- 1564 Jacopo Tintoretto begins painting the Scuola di San Rocco in Venice, continuing to 1588
- 1568 Maddalena Casulana, *First Book of Madrigals*, the first printed volume of music composed by a woman
- 1570 Publication of Andrea Palladio's *Four Books of Architecture*, the most influential Renaissance architectural treatise
- 1571 Fall of Cyprus to the Turks, followed by Christian naval victory at Battle of Lepanto
- 1572 St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in France
- 1573 First performance of Torquato Tasso's *Aminta*, the most famous pastoral drama of the Renaissance (first published 1581)
- 1575 Torquato Tasso completes his great epic of the crusades, *Gerusalemme liberata* (*Jerusalem Delivered*) (first published 1581)
- 1580 First edition of Michel de Montaigne's *Essays* published; Alfonso II d'Este forms the *concerto delle donne* in Ferrara
- 1582 Jesuit Matteo Ricci's first mission to China
- 1584 Tipografia Medicea Orientale founded under the patronage of Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici to publish religious and scientific texts in Arabic translation, and to search out manuscripts in Arabic and Persian
- 1585 Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza inaugurated: the first purpose-built permanent theatre in Italy, built to a design by Palladio
- 1588 Defeat of Spanish Armada; publication of Isabella Andreini's *Mirtilla*, and Maddalena Campiglia's *Flori*, the first two secular plays by women to appear in print
- 1589 Galileo Galilei appointed to his first academic post, at University of Pisa
- c. 1590 William Shakespeare begins career as playwright
- 1598 Jacopo Peri's *Dafne*, often considered the first opera, performed in Florence; Edict of Nantes ends French Wars of Religion; Ferrara devolves to papal rule after the death of Duke Alfonso II d'Este
- 1599 Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio's first major commissions in Rome

- 1600 Philosopher Giordano Bruno executed for heresy in Rome
- 1602 Giovanni Battista Marino's verse published, marking beginning of literary Baroque movement
- 1603 Foundation of Accademia dei Lincei (Academy of the Lynx-Eyed) in Rome, the most important scientific academy of early modern Italy
- 1605 First part of Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quijote* published
- 1607 Claudio Monteverdi's first opera, *Orfeo*, performed in Mantua; initial foundation of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in North America