Chapter Guide #14: Late Antiquity Italy

**CONTEXT:**

“The Renaissance art movement began in the city-states of Italy in the late Gothic period at the very end of the Middle Ages. Art was only one component of an ever-evolving world in which the urge to explore, to investigate, and to discover motivated people as never before. The exploration of the globe was one facet of the universal urge to uncover and survey seemingly everything. Humanists began investigating the classical past as never before, restoring life to literary and artistic wonders of antiquity and adapting them to a modern audience.”

* Italy is a collection of powerful city-states ruled by oligarchs or despots over a variety of political structures, which were rife with internal conflicts and instability.
* The Papacy and Church are at the pinnacle of power. The Pope in Rome is a military power in southern Italy in an attempt to unify city-states. The Papacy also is a political force throughout Europe.
* Florence becomes the banking capital of Europe. Textile and wool trade also becomes extremely important to Florence.
* Constantinople is captured by Crusaders in 1204 which results in an influx of Byzantine artists to Italy, especially Sienna (Manera greca – eastern/Greek style)
* Cult of the Virgin continues and is expressed in many paintings of the Madonna Enthroned (Queen of Heaven)
* St. Francis is very active– established preaching order and made a saint in 1228.
* The Black Death begins in 1348 and leads to Europe’s political downfall as a major power.

## VOCABULARY:

**ART WORK CARDS: 3D (Yellow) 2D (Red) Architecture (Green)**

Pisano—Pulpit of the Baptistery (3D)

Berlinghieri – Saint Francis Altarpiece (2D)

Cimabue – Madonna Enthroned (2D)

Giotto – Madonna Enthroned (2D)

Giotto – Arena Chapel (2D)

Duccio – Maesta Altarpiece (2D)

Orvieto Cathedral (Architecture)

Martini – Annunciation Altarpiece (2D)

Lorenzetti – Effects of Good Government (2D)

Florence Cathedral (Architecture)

Pisano—Baptistery doors (Sculpture)

Doge’s Palace (Architecture)

pulpit

stigmata

altarpiece

plague

grisaille

Maestra

chiaroscuro

Trecento

tempera

perspective

allegory

maniera greca

## TIMELINE:

## 1181-1226 St. Francis of Assisi

## 1209 Franciscan Order founded

## 1215 Dominican Order founded

## 1305 Papacy moved to Avignon

## 1348 Black Death

## 1378 Great Schism

**CONTEXT CARDS: Blue**

Late Antiquity Italy / Proto-Renaissance

## CHARACTERISTICS OF FLORENTINE PAINTING:

* Large scale panels that stand on their own (freeing from the wall)
* Usually fresco or the use of tempera
* Cimabue is influences by the Byzantine works referred to as maniera greca
* Giotto moved away from tradition and towards reality that anchored figures to ground line.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SIENESE PAINTING:

* More decorative style and more reminiscent of Northern European art
* Figures are thinner, elegant, and courtly
* Drapery is less defined and is more flowing like ripples
* Imitates marble patterning on thrones or pavements
* Figures are more in proportion to each other vs. hierarchal ordering
* Italian altarpieces reflect Gothic Cathedrals

## CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNATIONAL GOTHIC STYLE:

* Beginning with Martini and continuing into the 15th c with Gentile da Fabriano
* Emphasis on surface details, patterns and textures, especially rich fabrics
* Brilliant color, richly contrasting hues in fabrics, foliage/fauna, landscape
* Elegance in figures with an emphasis on contour and elongation of body proportions
* Expressive gestures, facial expressions of emotion, depicted humanization of religious subject
* Synoptic sequencing of events of a story (several episodes or events within the same painting)
* Use of gold leaf in background areas in details within painting, along with lavishly carved and gilt wood frames using gothic elements such as tracery, pointed arches, and quatrefoils