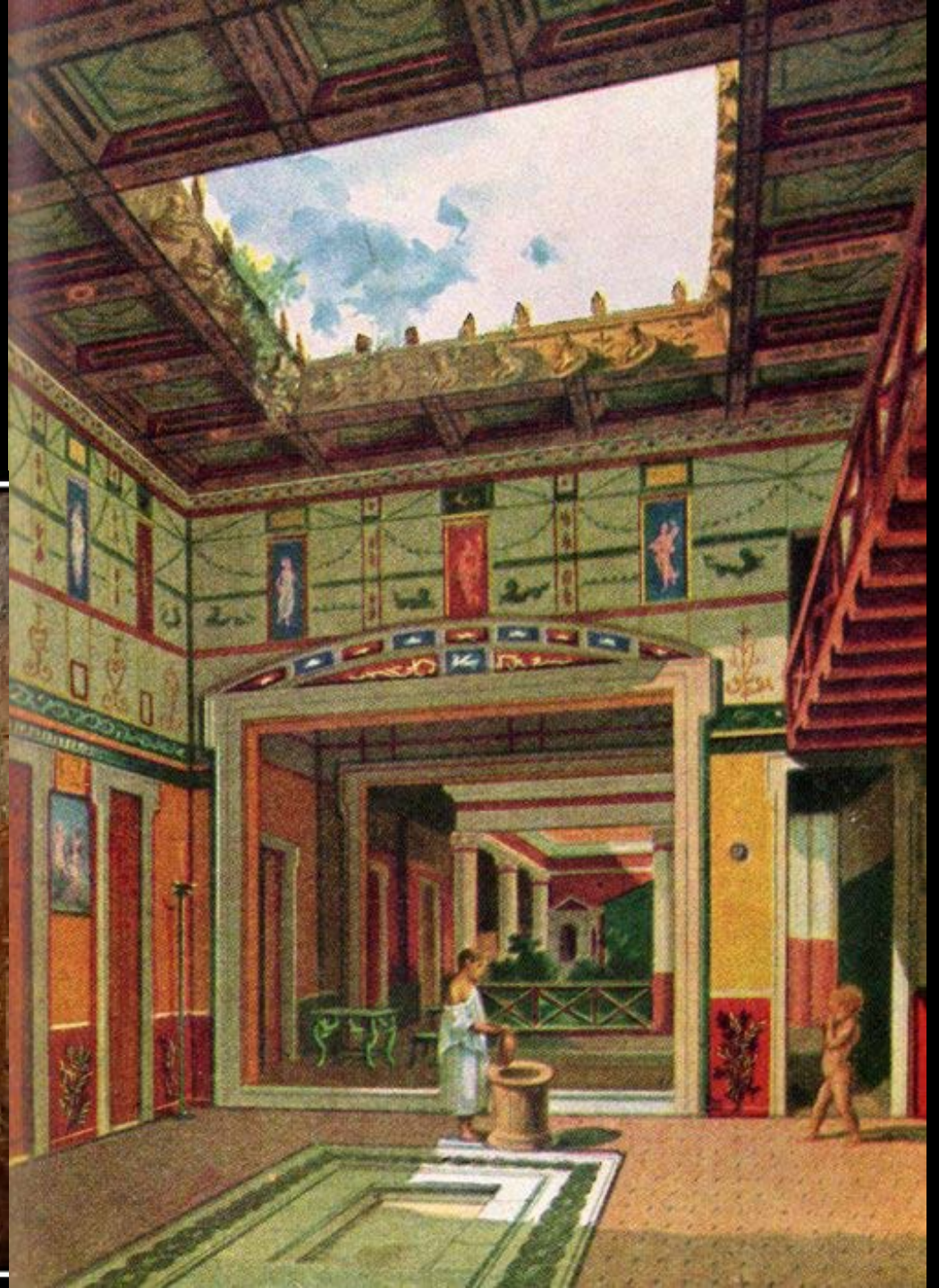
AHST 2331-001 (21573)
Understanding Art
Dr. Charissa N. Terranova
Spring 2019
Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:30-12:45
ATC 1.102

Thursday January 31, 2019

Quiz #2 and Discussion

Quiz #2

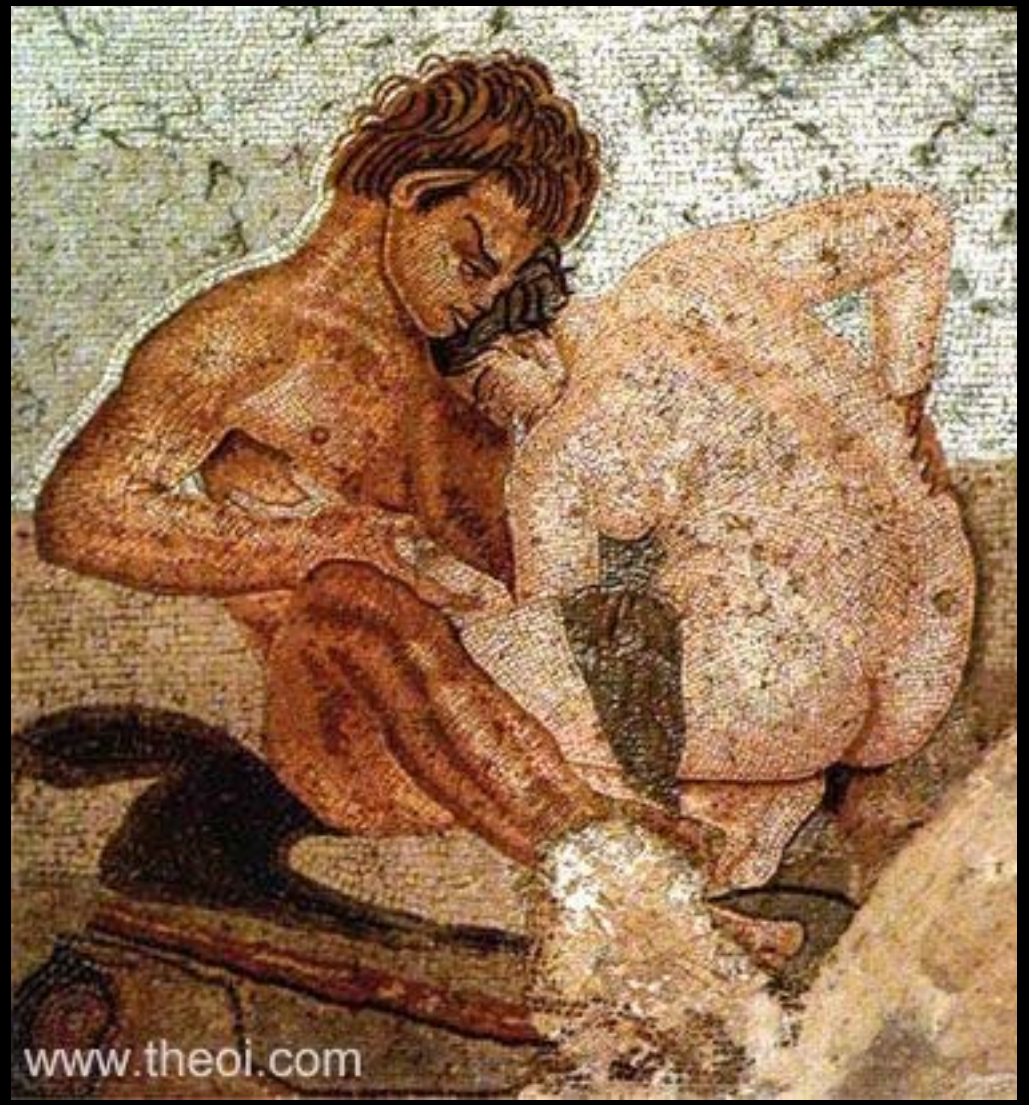
IMMERSIVE INTERIORS IN ANCIENT ROMAN HOMES



Ritual of Dionysus
Maenads: the female followers of Dionysus and the most significant members of the god's retinue.
Their name literally translates as "raving ones."

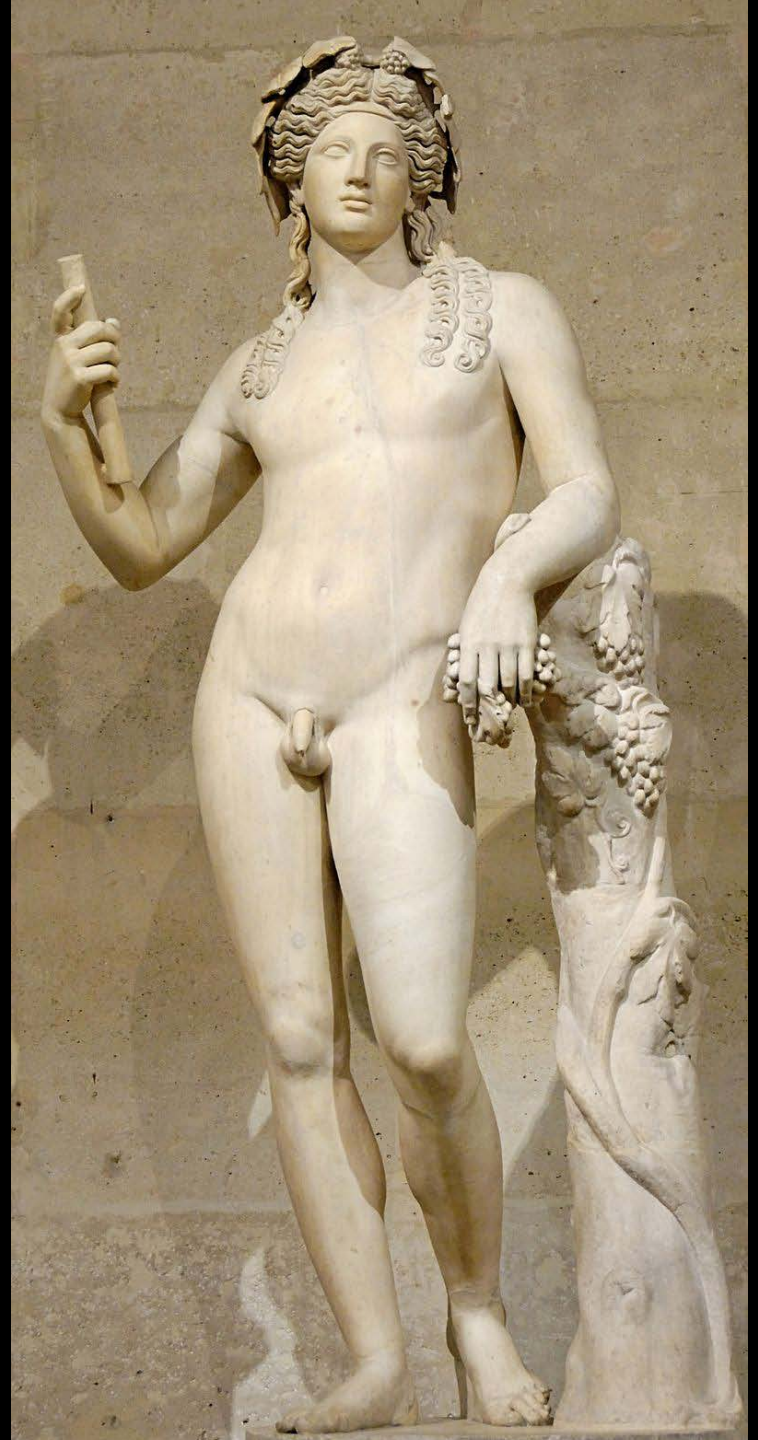
Continuous
space and time;
ground plane

A dancing satyr, fresco from the Villa of the Mysteries, Pompeii, 1st C CE



Satyr and Maenad, Greco-Roman mosaic from Pompeii C1st A.D.

THE SATYROI (Satyrs) were rustic fertility spirits of the countryside and wilds. They consorted with the Nymphs and were companions of the gods Dionysos, Hermes, Hephaistos, Pan, and Gaia



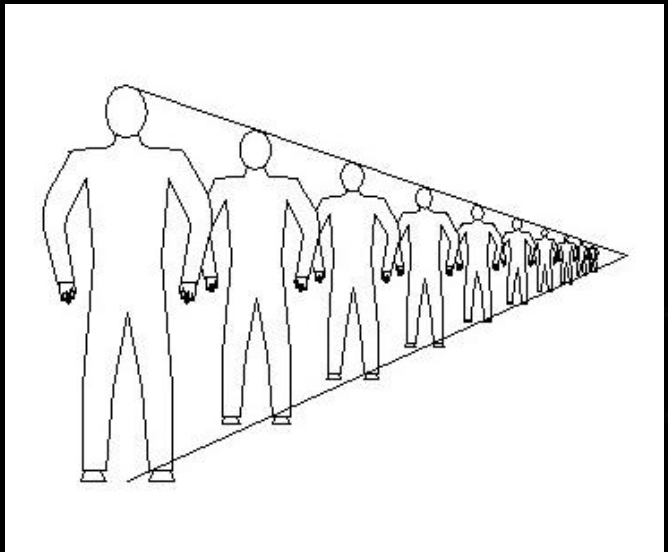
Cult of Dionysus

- Dionysus: God of the Wine Harvest, Fertility, Drunkenness, and Pleasure
- Patron of the forces of growth in nature
- Associated with Liber the god of viticulture and wine, fertility, and freedom. He was a patron deity of Rome's plebeians.
- The festival Liberalia became associated with free speech and the rights attached to coming of age.
- His cult and functions were increasingly associated with Romanized forms of the Greek Dionysus/Bacchus, whose mythology he came to share.

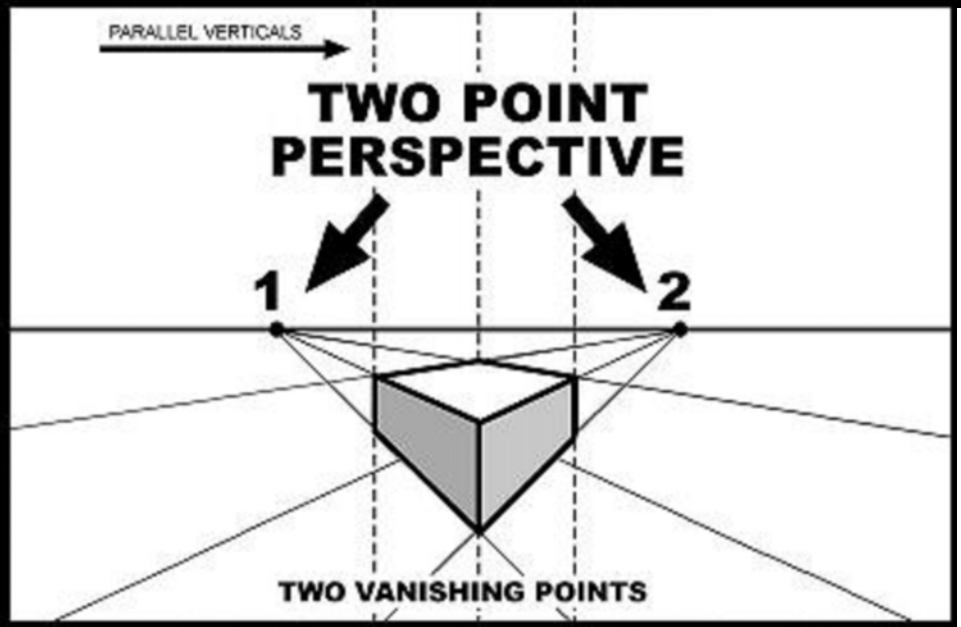
Bacchanalia

Left: Statue of a drunken Silenus, 2nd century Roman, aka Papposilenus

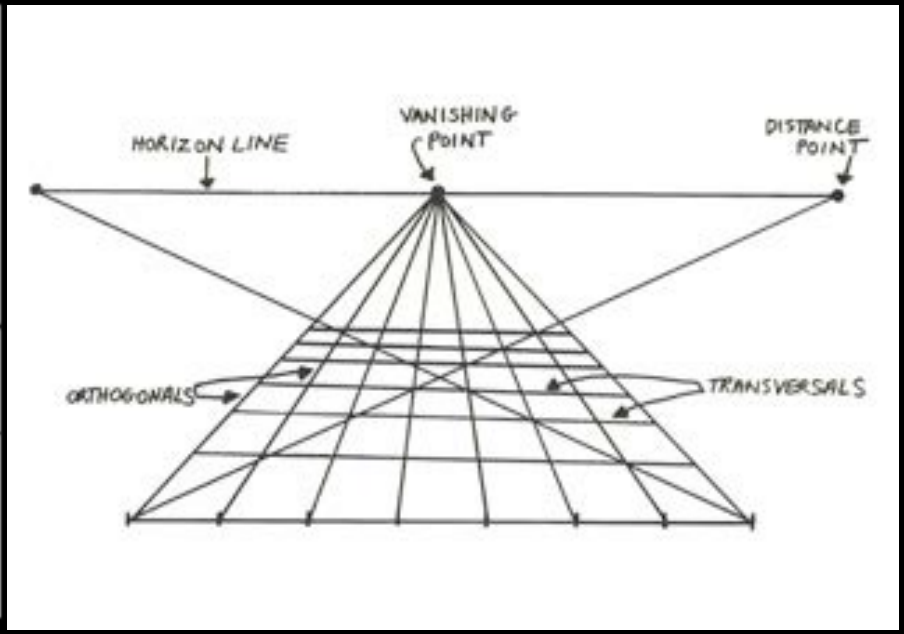
Right: Statue of Dionysus, 2nd century Roman



Relative or informal perspective

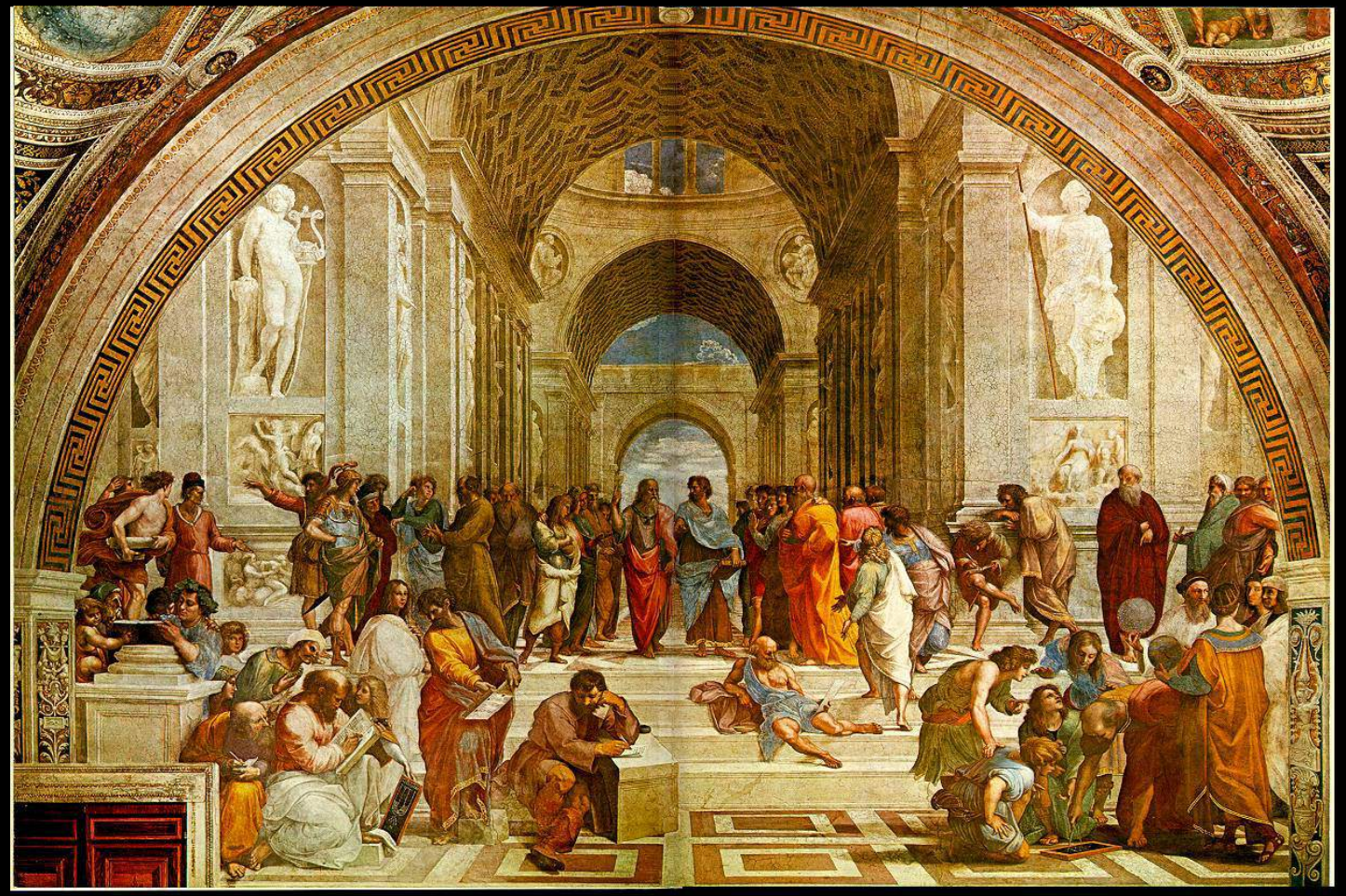


Two-point Perspective



Filippo Brunelleschi, Linear, or one-point/formal perspective, c. 1420

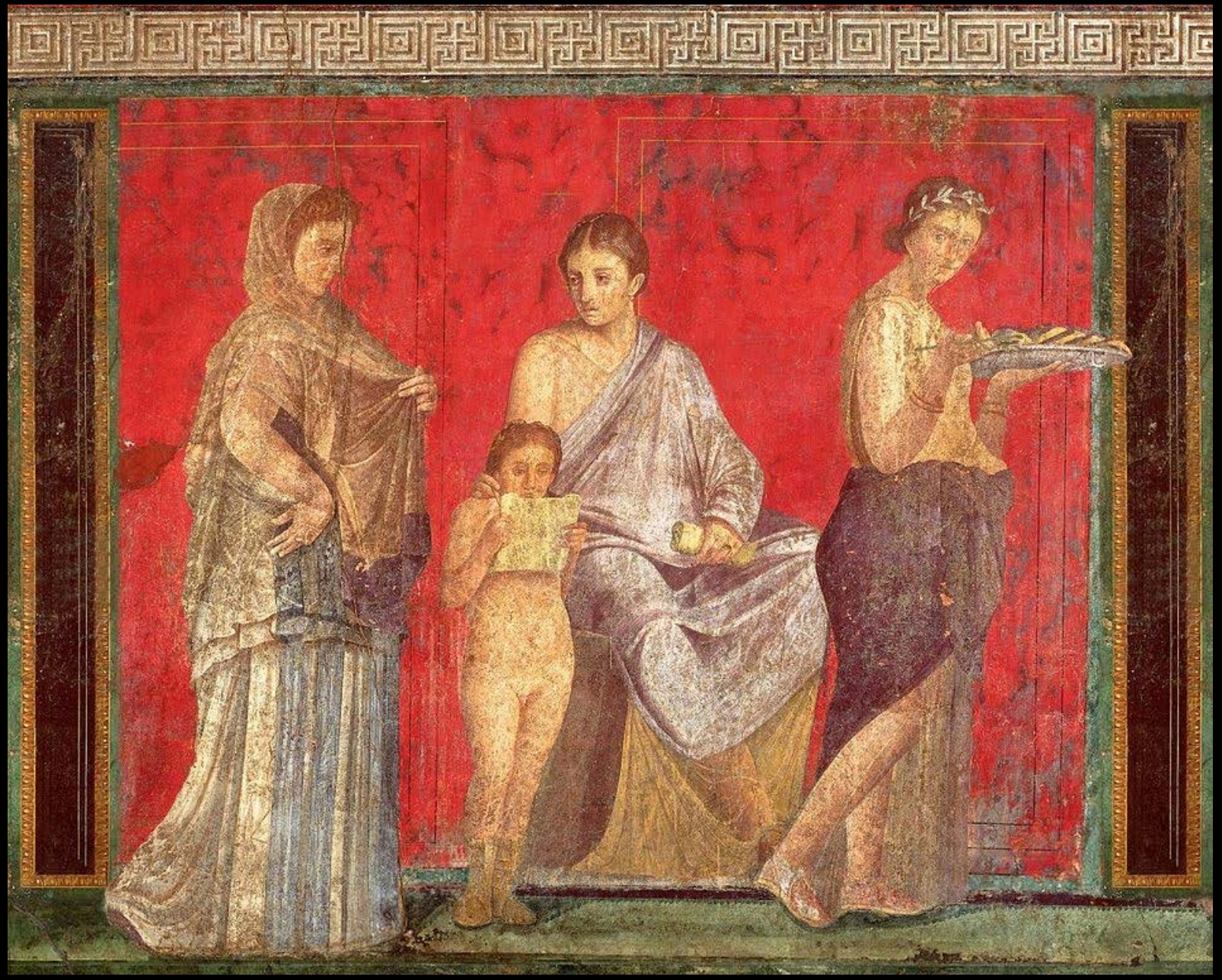
Fresco from the home of Julia Felix, Pompeii, 1st century CE
RELATIVE OR INFORMAL PERSPECTIVE



Raphael, School of Athens, 1509-10
ONE-POINT PERSPECTIVE

Reconstruction of the Triclinium

Triclinium: a formal dining room in a Roman building



Scene 1

Scene 2

drunken Silenus, aka Papposilenus, at far right with lyre

Scene 2
and
Scene 3

Scene 4

Above: Statue of Old Bacchus (Dionysus), Roman statue (marble), 1st–2nd century AD
Left: Dionysus lounging on lap of his mortal lover Ariadne with Silenus and Satyrs from Initiation into the Cult of Dionysus Fresco Cycle

Scene 5

Scene 6

Scene 7

Scene 8

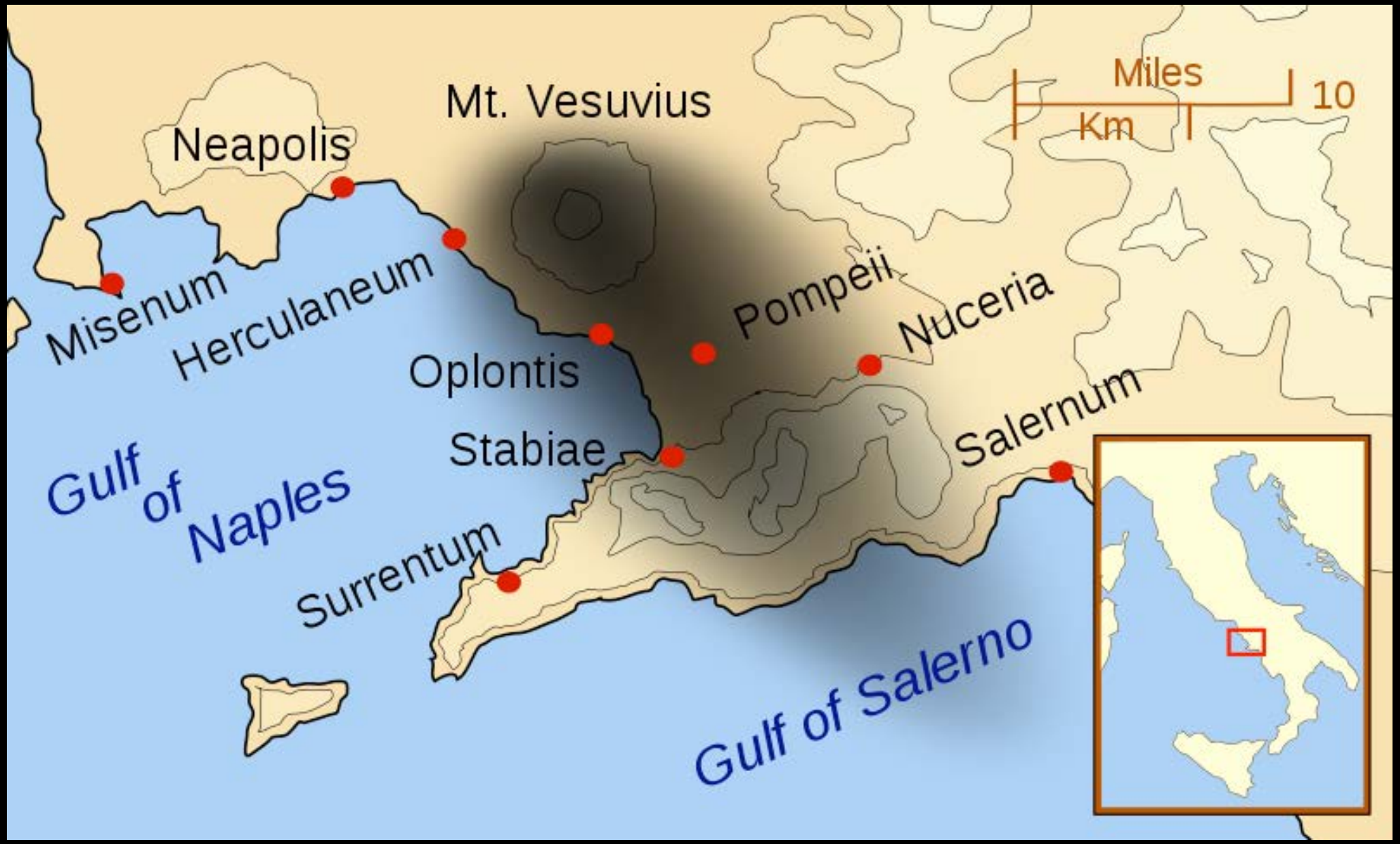
Scene 9

Scene 10

View of the Forum with Mount Vesuvius in the distance, Pompeii

Left: The March 1944 eruption of Vesuvius by Jack Reinhardt, B24 tailgunner

Vesuvio in Southern Italy and alarmingly close to the huge conurbation of Naples has been dormant since 1944. It was not always so quiet; as well as numerous and sometimes hugely devastating eruptions documented since 79 AD, the last 285 years have seen significant eruptions in: 1631, 1660, 1682, 1694, 1698, 1707, 1737, 1760, 1767, 1779, 1794, 1822, 1834, 1839, 1850, 1855, 1861, 1868, 1872, 1906, 1926 and 1929 and 1944. There have been few periods of actual dormancy and these have been mostly short lived, the repose since 1944 is the longest since before the major eruption of 1631.



Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius 79 CE

Pompeii and Herculaneum, as well as other cities affected by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. The black cloud represents the general distribution of ash, pumice and cinders. The volcano shot volcanic gas 21 miles into the air, ultimately releasing a hundred thousand times the thermal energy of the American atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

Roman settlements were obliterated and buried underneath massive pyroclastic surges and ashfall deposits. In the wake of such molten flows, the bodies and activities of everyday life were preserved in action, fleeing the volcanic debris.

Loaf of bread
Source: © William Starling, Alabamba, USA

CLOSE ✕

- Virtual Reality: In the most basic sense, “virtual reality” or VR refers to an experience that is not exactly real, but near real. Humans have been creating near real experiences in VR for several millennia. This class will study the human penchant to recreate reality virtually in drawing, painting, architecture, and through digital technology.

- Virtual art activates virtual reality.

- For Oliver Grau, virtual reality is “...a hermetically closed-off image space of illusion.” (5)

- It is immersive.

Virtual reality in the Middle Ages

What are the Middle Ages?
What does Medieval mean?

The Middle Ages is the period in European History from the collapse of Roman civilization in the 5th century CE to the period of the Renaissance (variously interpreted as beginning in the 13th, 14th, or 15th century, depending on the region of Europe and on other factors). The term and its conventional meaning were introduced by Italian humanists with invidious intent. The humanists were engaged in a revival of Classical learning and culture, and the notion of a thousand-year period of darkness and ignorance separating them from the ancient Greek and Roman world served to highlight the humanists' own work and ideals. In a sense, the humanists invented the Middle Ages in order to distinguish themselves from it. The Middle Ages nonetheless provided the foundation for the transformations of the humanists' own Renaissance.*

*https://www.britannica.com/event/Middle-Ages

- Medieval
- Invidious
- Humanism
- Humanist

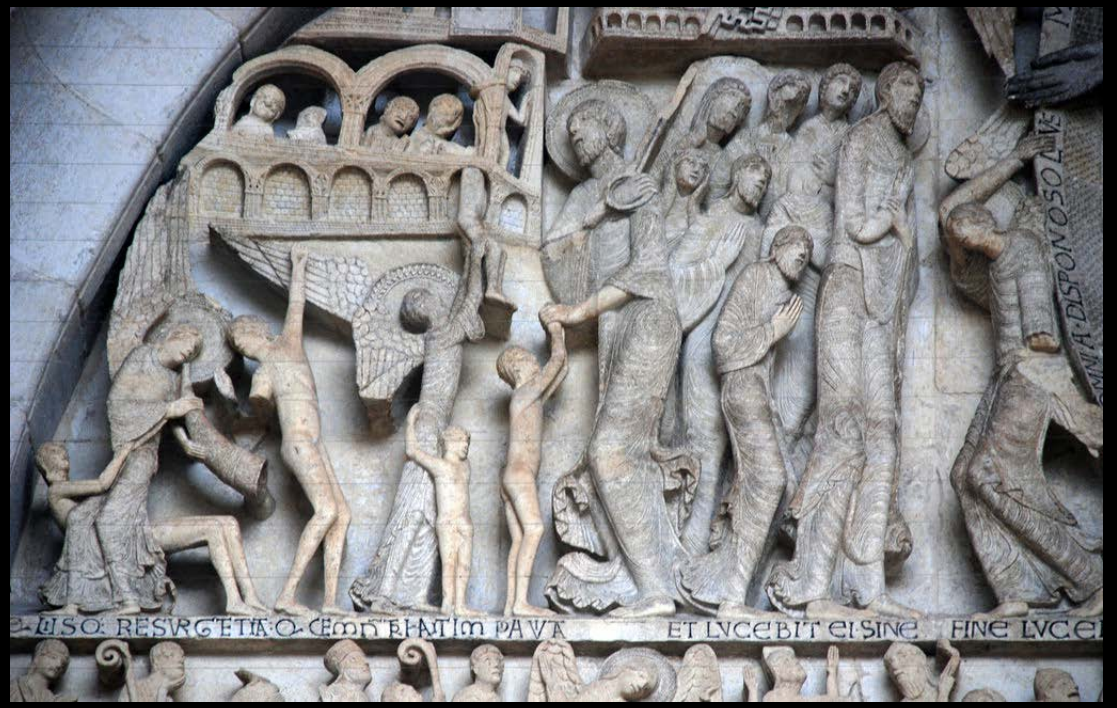
- Medieval: 1.) Of or related to the Middle Ages; 2.) extremely outmoded or antiquated, as in “She has medieval ideas about the role of women in our society.”

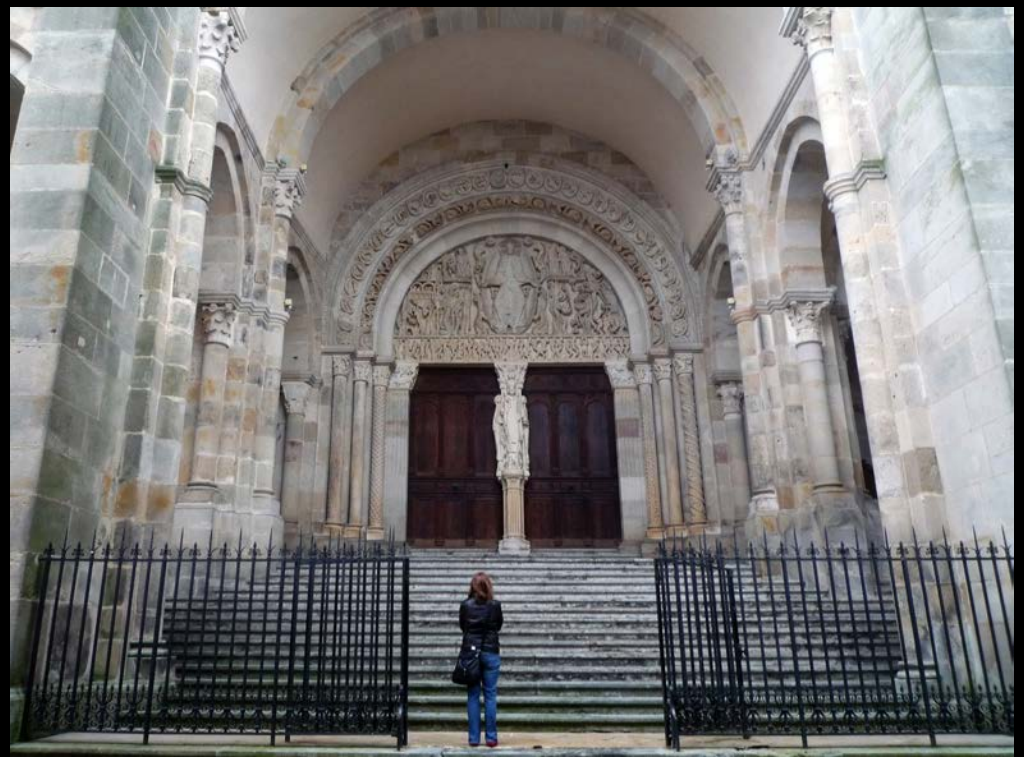
- Invidious: 1.) arousing resentment or anger in others; 2.) unfairly discriminating; unjust

- Humanism: 1.) an outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or supernatural matters. Humanist beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human beings, emphasize common human needs, and seek solely rational ways of solving human problems; 2.) a Renaissance cultural movement that turned away from medieval scholasticism and revived interest in ancient Greek and Roman thought; 3.) (among some contemporary writers) a system of thought criticized as being centered on the notion of the rational, autonomous self and ignoring the unintegrated and conditioned nature of the individual.

- Humanist: an advocate or follower of the principles of humanism.

Gislebertus (sculptor or duke who brought bones of St. Lazarus to cathedral),
The Tympanum of St. Lazarus Cathedral Cathedral, Autun France, 1120-1246

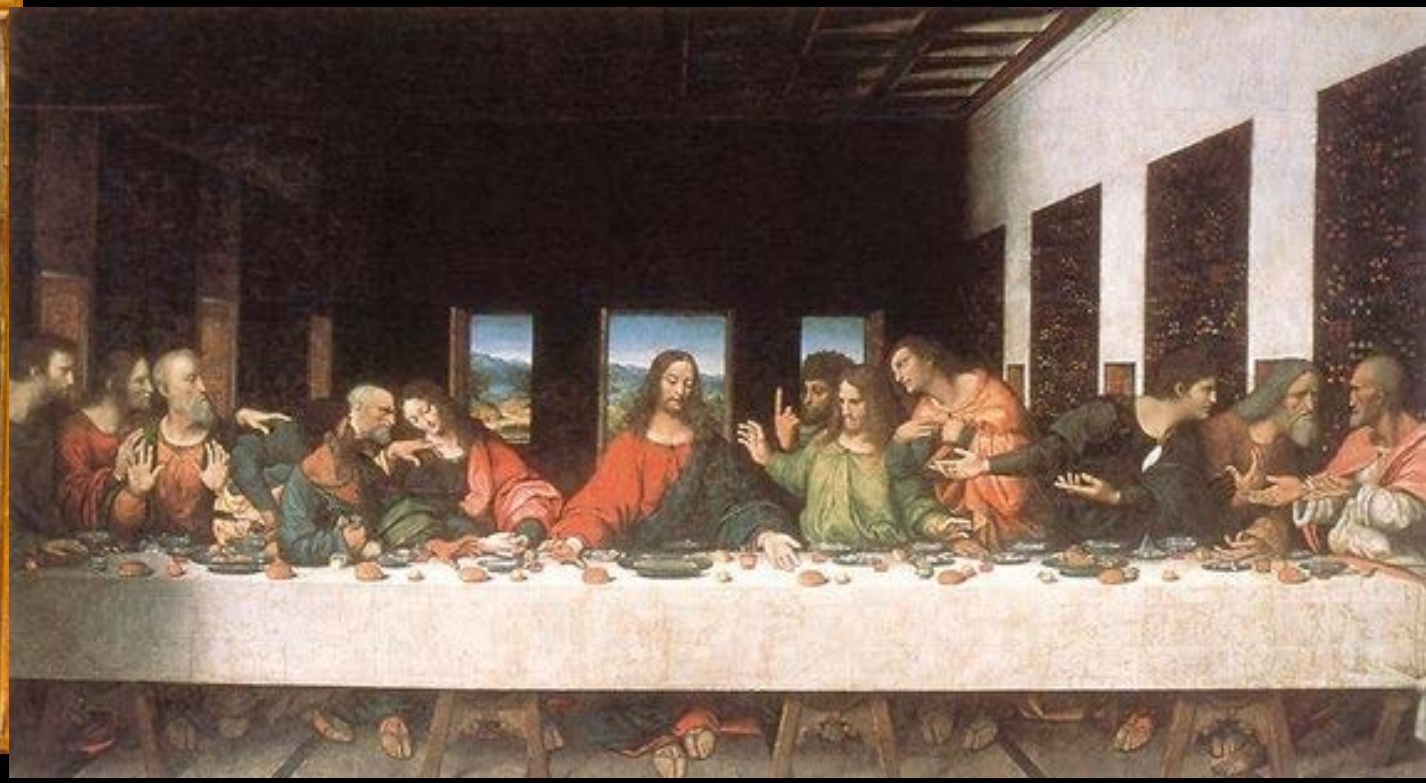




Above and below: Pilgrims and Last Judgment Tympanum, Central Portal, West Facade, St. Lazarus Cathedral, Autun, France, c. 1120-35

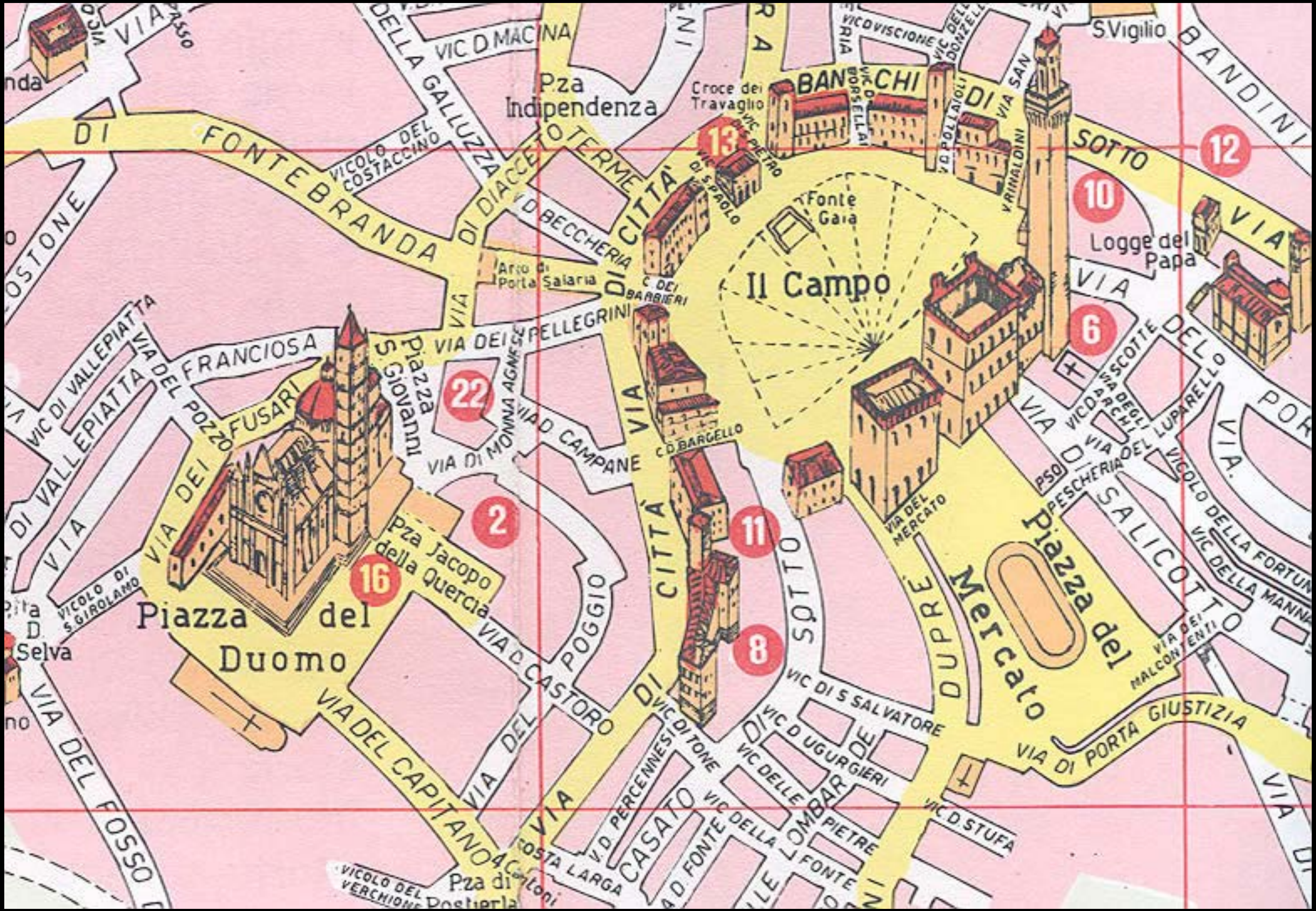
Archangel Michael weighs souls, while the devil tries to pull the bar down to claim another club member. Note misery of individuals.

Ugolino di Nerio, The Last Supper, 1324
FLOATING OR RELATIVE PERSPECTIVE



Leonardo da Vinci, The Last Supper, 1520
ONE-POINT PERSPECTIVE

Immersive Secular Murals of the Late Middle Ages



The medieval city-republic or city-state of Siena, 14th century

urban, market-oriented, emerging democratic forms, growth of urbanized middle class/burgher class/bourgeoisie

Palio* di Siena

*Palio is the name given in Italy to an annual athletic contest, very often of a historical character, pitting the neighborhoods of a town or the hamlets of a *comune* against each other.

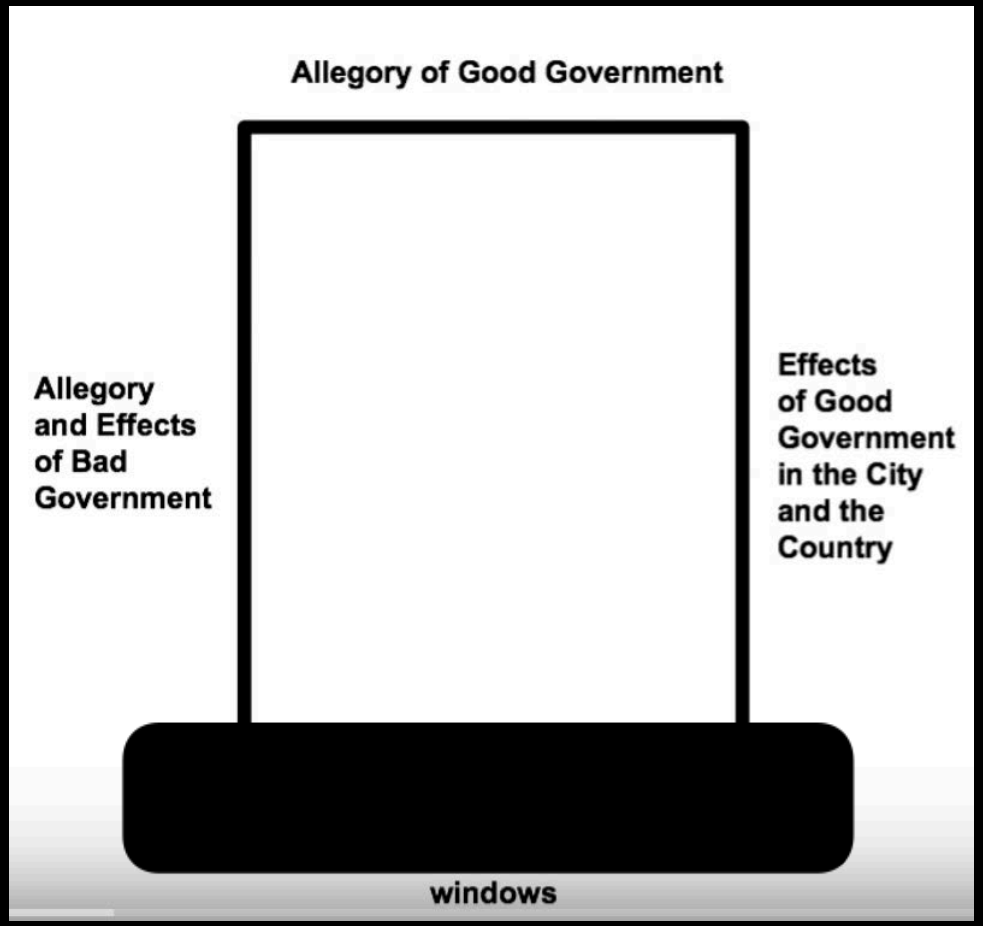
Ambrogio Lorenzetti, The Allegory of Good and Bad Government, 1338-39
Sala dei Nove (Salon of Nine or Council Room) in the Palazzo Publico (or Town Hall) of the city of Siena, Italy

Palazzo Publico (or Town Hall) of the city of Siena, Italy
1297 – Bell tower
1344

Siena = City State

Marquisate of Saluzzo
Marquisate of Montferrat
Bishopric of Trent
Marquisate of Mantua
Republic of Lucca
Duchies of Modena & Ferrara
Duchy of Savoy
Duchy of Milan
Republic of Venice
Austria
Hungary
Ottoman Empire
Republic of Genoa
San Marino
Republic of Florence
Venetian Dalmatia
Corsica (Genoa)
Republic of Siena
Papal States
Kingdom of Naples
Republic of Ragusa
Rome
Pontecorvo
Sardinia (Aragon)
Benevento
Naples
Palermo
Kingdom of Sicily (Aragon)
Syracuse
Italy
1494

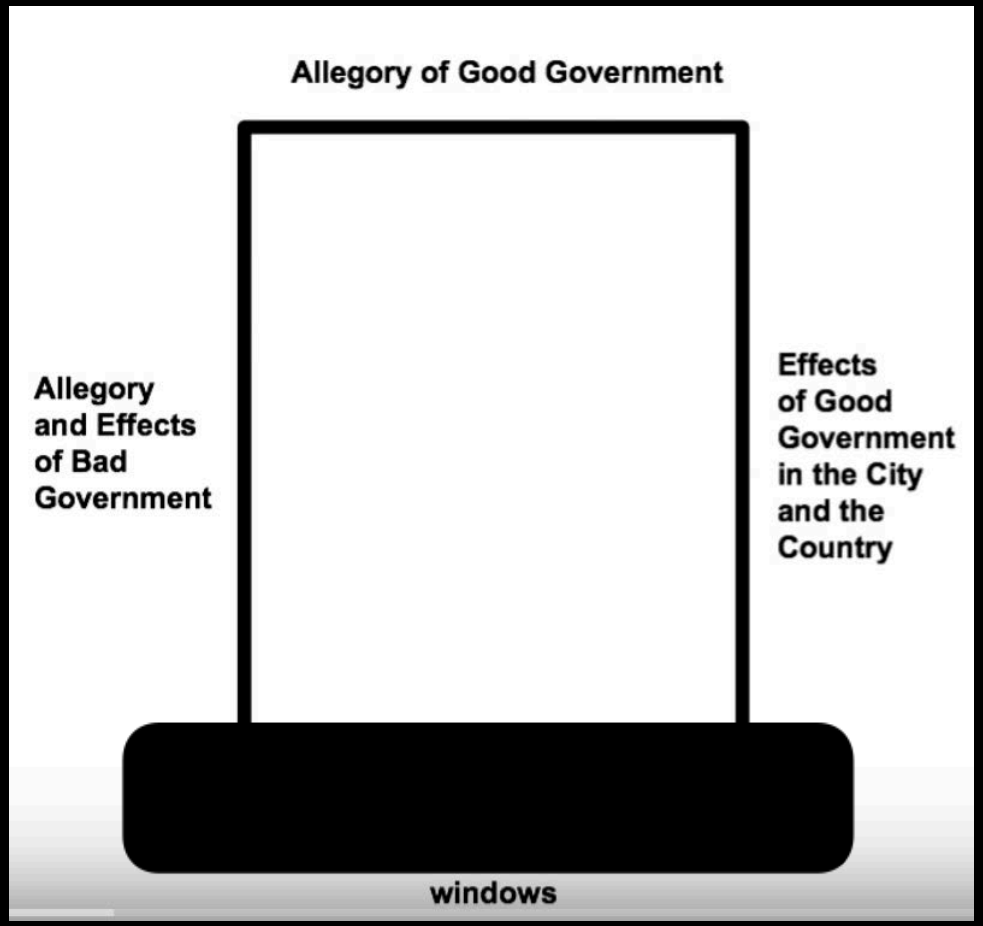
The Via Francigena is an ancient road and pilgrim route running from the Cathedral of Cantebury to Rome.



What is an allegory?

Allegory

a.) a story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one; b.) a symbol



Ambrogio Lorenzetti, The Allegory of Good Government, detail, 1338-39

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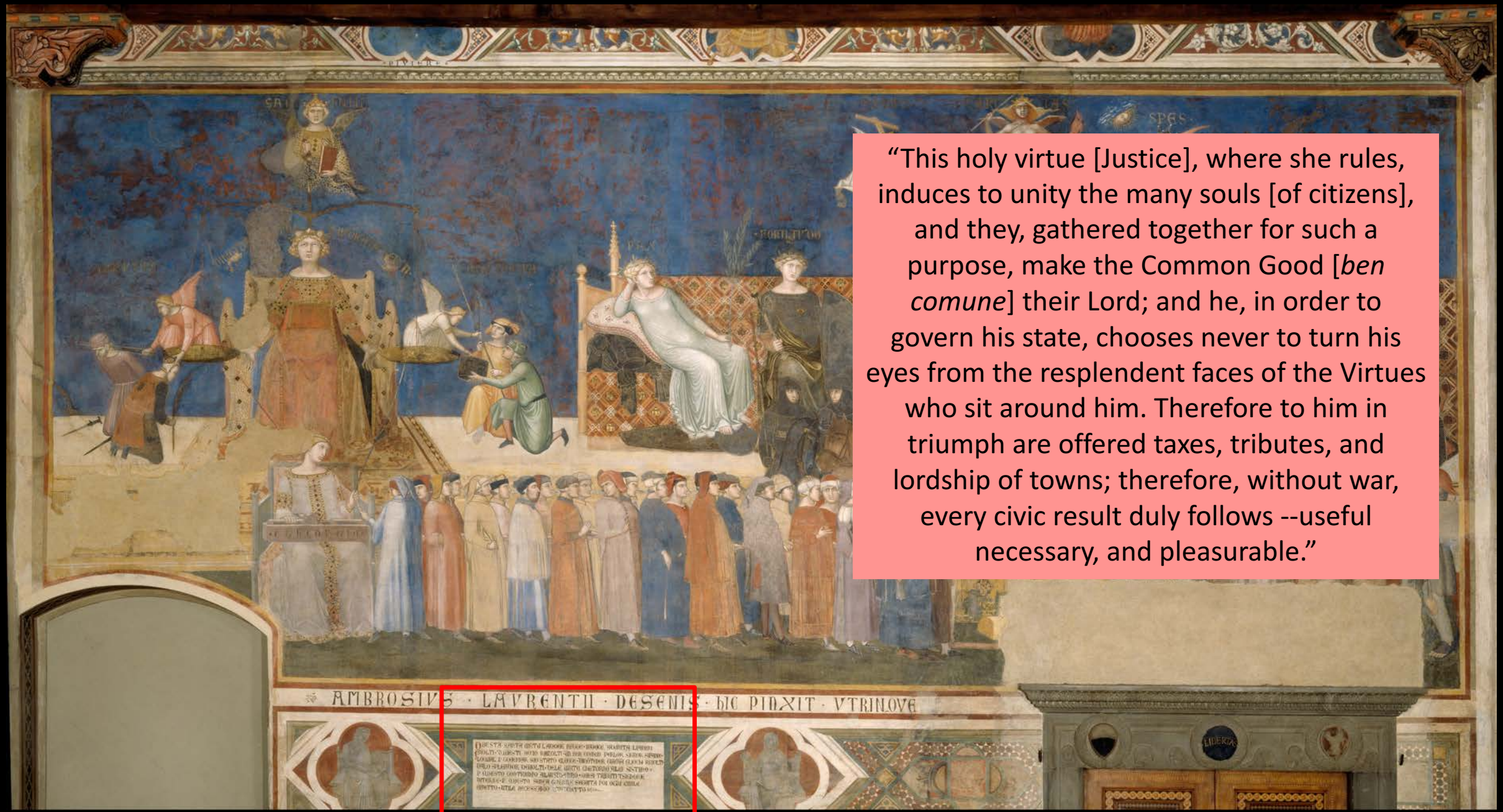


"This holy virtue [Justice], where she rules, induces to unity the many souls [of citizens], and they, gathered together for such a purpose, make the Common Good [*ben comune*] their Lord; and he, in order to govern his state, chooses never to turn his eyes from the resplendent faces of the Virtues who sit around him. Therefore to him in triumph are offered taxes, tributes, and lordship of towns; therefore, without war, every civic result duly follows --useful necessary, and pleasurable."

Ambrogio Lorenzetti, The Allegory of Good Government, detail, 1338-39

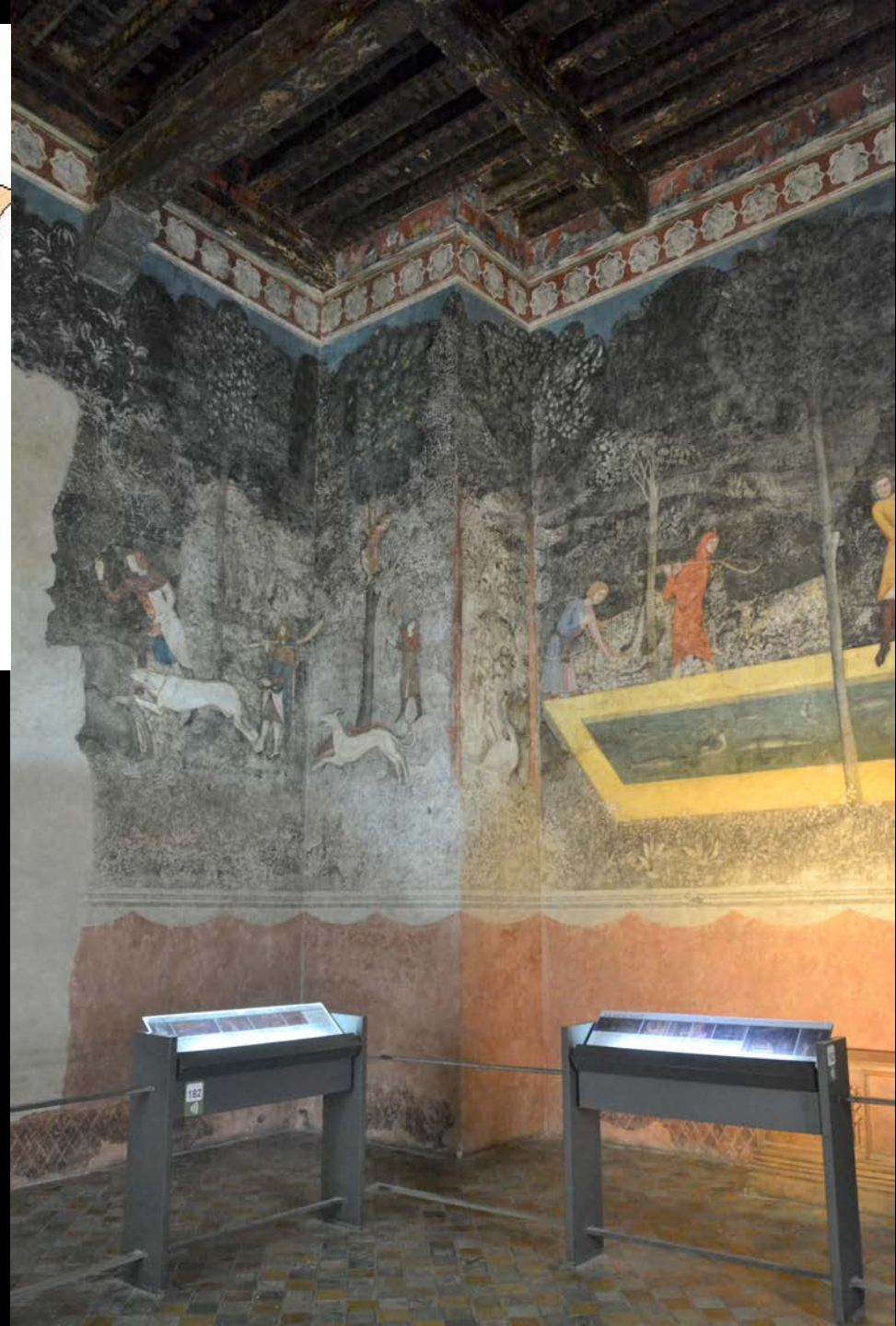
Ambrogio Lorenzetti, The Allegory of Good Government, detail, 1338-39

Ambrogio Lorenzetti, The Allegory of Bad Government, detail, 1338-39

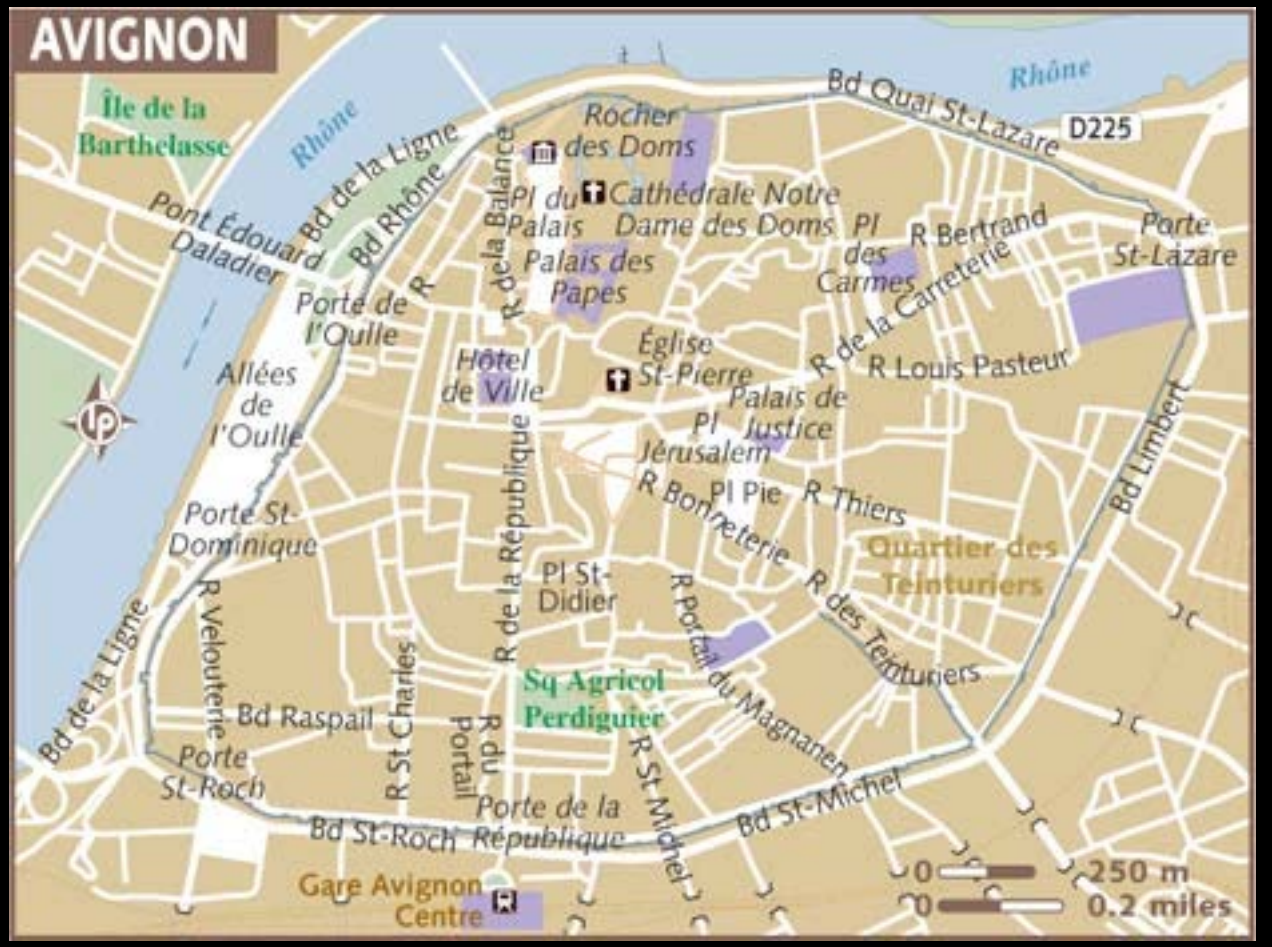
SVPBIA
AVARITIA
VANAGLORIA

Effects of Bad Government on the Countryside (detail), 1338-40, fresco in Palazzo Pubblico, Siena

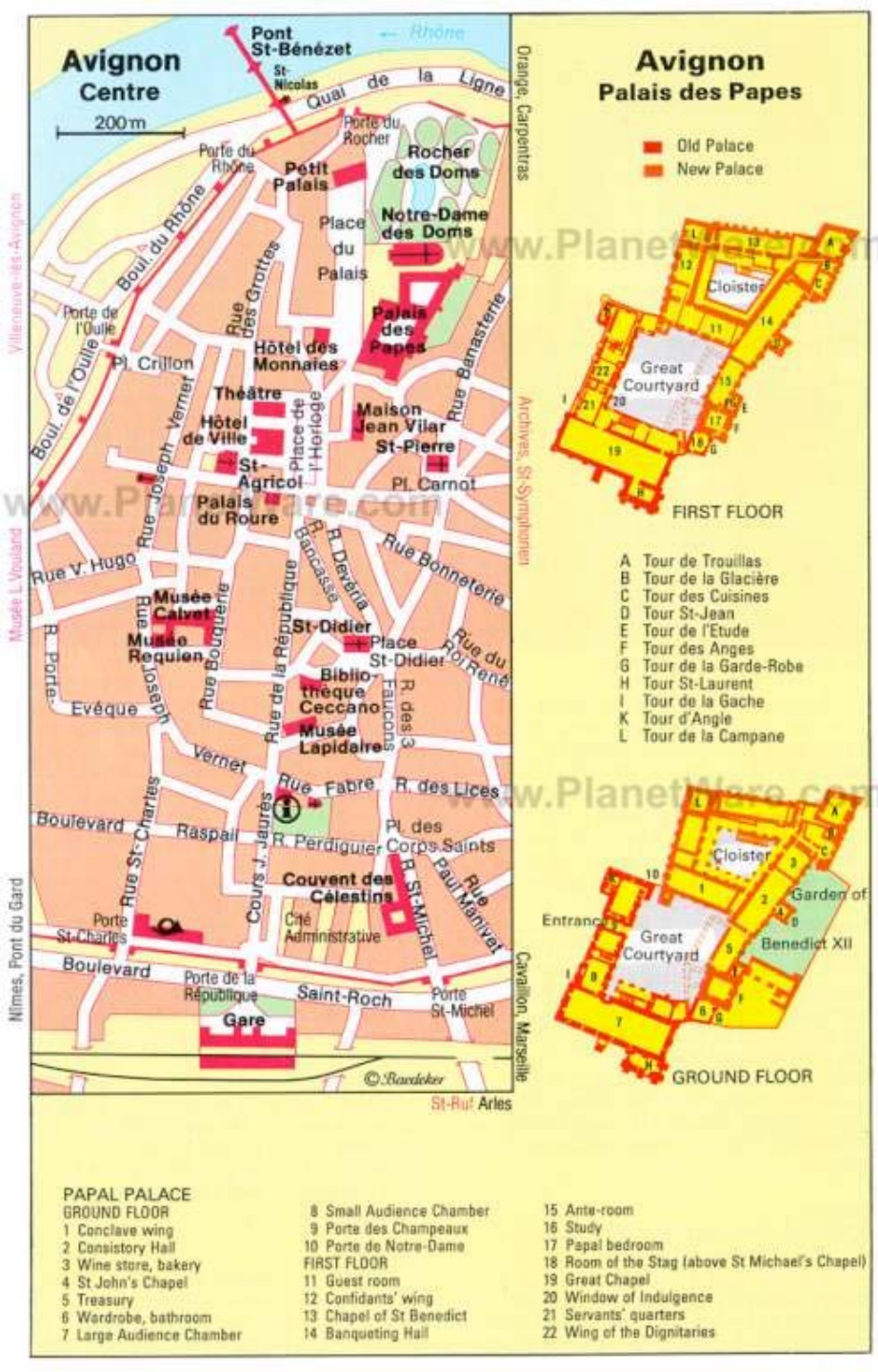
Immersive Secular Murals of the Late Middle Ages



Matteo Giovannetti, Chambre du Cerf (Room of the Stag), 1343
Palace of the Popes
Avignon, France
Avignon Papacy 1309-1377



Between 1309 and 1377, during the Avignon Papacy, seven successive popes resided in Avignon



Avignon
Palais des Papes

Old Palace
New Palace

FIRST FLOOR

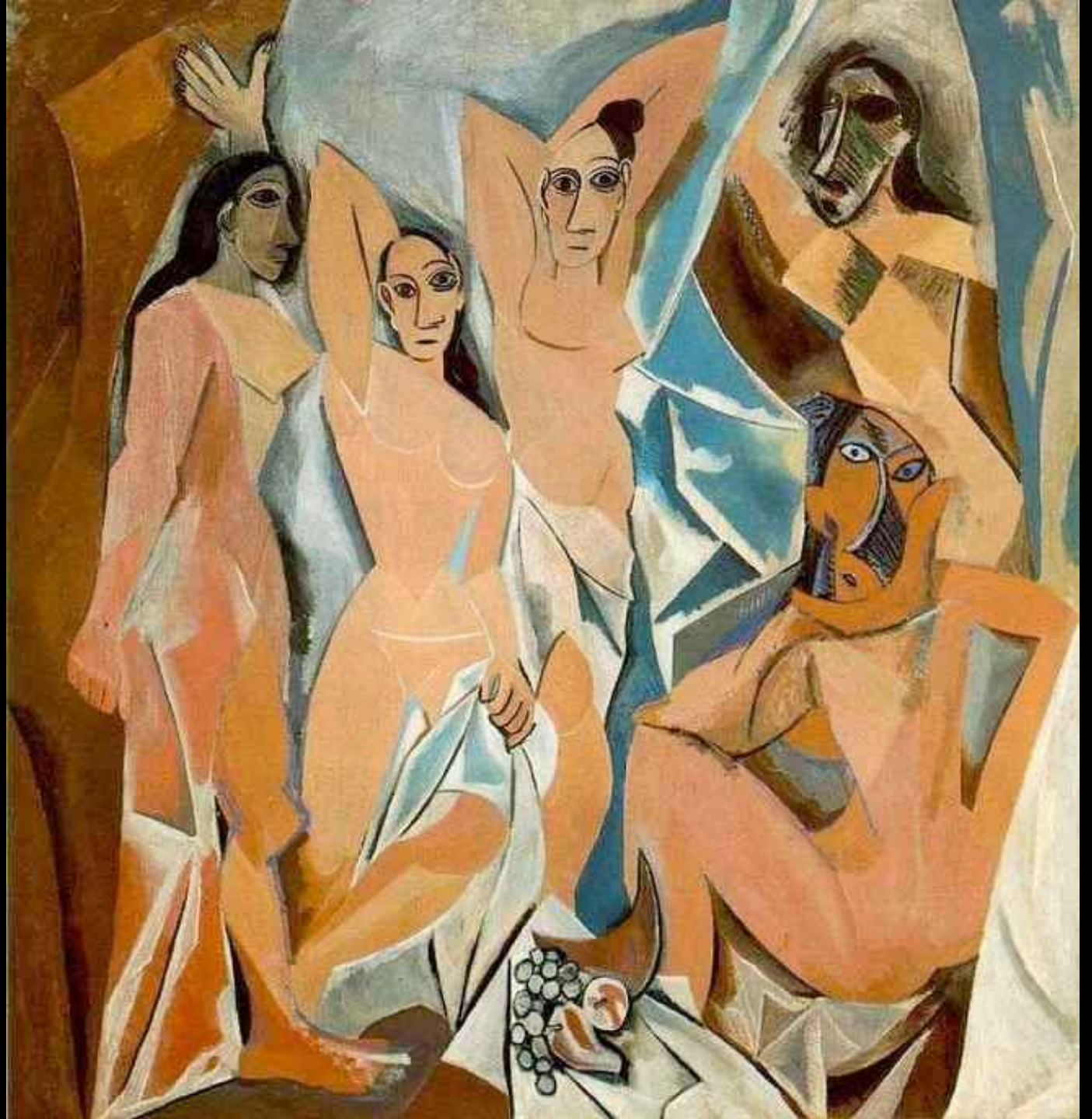
A Tour de Trouillas
B Tour de la Glacière
C Tour des Cuisines
D Tour St-Jean
E Tour de l'Etude
F Tour des Anges
G Tour de la Garde-Robe
H Tour St-Laurent
I Tour de la Gache
K Tour d'Angle
L Tour de la Campane

GROUND FLOOR

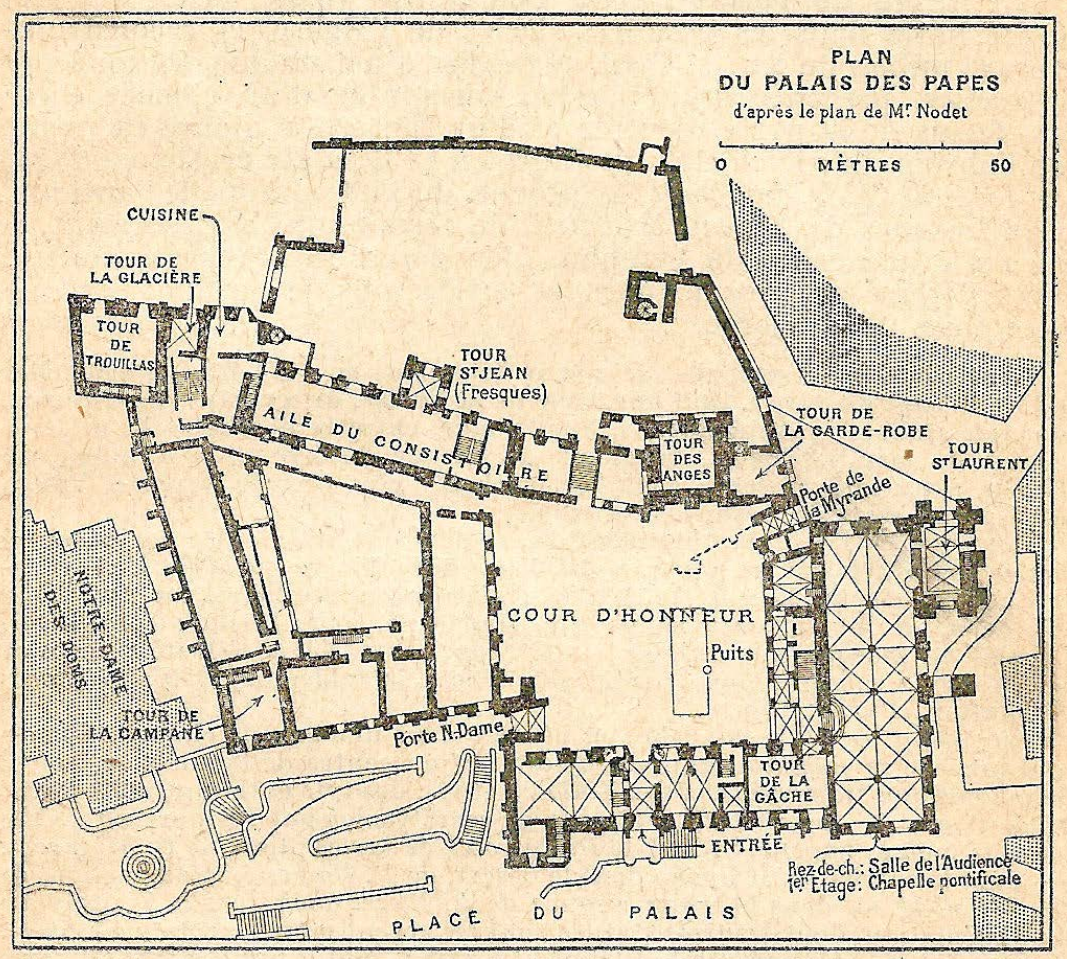
PAPAL PALACE

GROUND FLOOR
1 Conclave wing
2 Consistory Hall
3 Wine store, bakery
4 St John's Chapel
5 Treasury
6 Wardrobe, bathroom
7 Large Audience Chamber
8 Small Audience Chamber
9 Porte des Champeaux
10 Porte de Notre-Dame

FIRST FLOOR
11 Guest room
12 Confidants' wing
13 Chapel of St Benedict
14 Banqueting Hall
15 Ante-room
16 Study
17 Papal bedroom
18 Room of the Stag (above St Michael's Chapel)
19 Great Chapel
20 Window of Indulgence
21 Servants' quarters
22 Wing of the Dignitaries



Above: Boucicaut Master, Palace of the Popes and the City of Avignon, c. 15th c.
Right: Pablo Picasso, Les Demoiselles d'Avignon, 1907



Chambre du Cerf (Room of the Stag) located on the fourth floor of the Tour de la Garde-Robe. It served as a study and living room.

Matteo Giovannetti, Chambre du Cerf (Room of the Stag), 1343
The private study of Clement VI with frescoes depicting courtly hunting scenes.

Chambre du Cerf (Room of the Stag), 1343

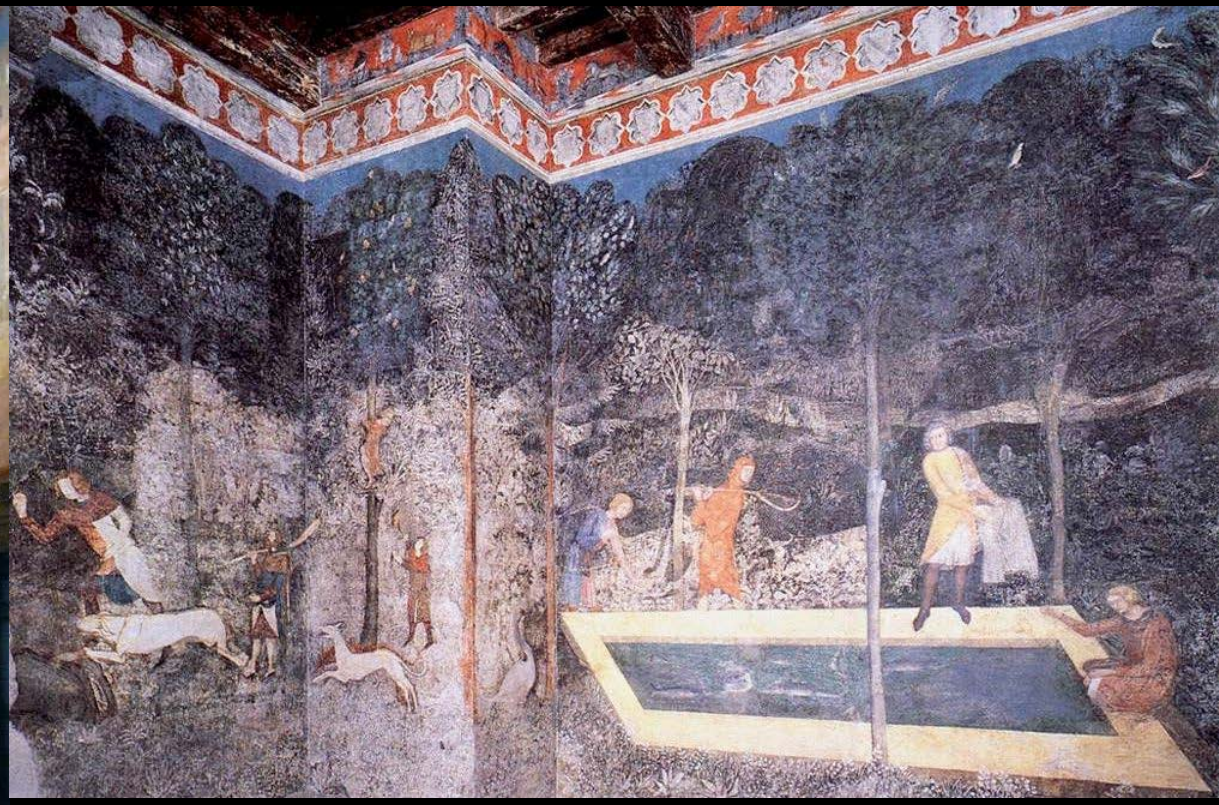
Why is the Chamber of the Stag significant for Oliver Grau?

The only extant example of its kind, this work is unique for its time and, unlike other works of the period, does not appear to have primarily a symbolic meaning. Four years after Ambrogio Lorenzetti's politically informed allegories in the Sala dei Nove in Siena, Matteo Giovanetti [sic] created an idealized fertile landscape that banished all barrenness and danger and gratified aesthetic curiosity about the world outside. Nature, which Petrarch had recently gone in search of and had described so spectacularly, returned to Western painting once more in a highly illusionistic form after more than a thousand years. [Grau, 35]

The Italian poet Petrarch [1304-1374] wrote about his ascent of Mont Ventoux (in Provence; elevation 1912 meters) on 26 April 1336 in a well-known letter published as one of his Epistolae familiares (IV, 1). In this letter, written around 1350, Petrarch claimed to be the first person since antiquity to have climbed a mountain for the view. Although the historical accuracy of his account has been questioned by modern scholars, it is often cited in discussions of the new spirit of the Renaissance.

To-day I made the ascent of the highest mountain in this region, which is not improperly called Ventosum. My only motive was the wish to see what so great an elevation had to offer. I have had the expedition in mind for many years; for, as you know, I have lived in this region from infancy, having been cast here by that fate which determines the affairs of men. Consequently the mountain, which is visible from a great distance, was ever before my eyes, and I conceived the plan of some time doing what I have at last accomplished to-day. The idea took hold upon me with especial force when, in re-reading Livy's *History of Rome*... One peak of the mountain, the highest of all, the country people call "Sonny," why, I do not know, unless by antiphrasis [irony], as I have sometimes suspected in other instances; for the peak in question would seem to be the father of all the surrounding ones. On its top is a little level place, and here we could at last rest our tired bodies. -- Petrarch

Above: View from summit of Mt. Ventoux
Below Left: Annual first snow Mt. Ventoux
Below Right: Map of Bike Routes showing Ventoux



Left: Ambrogio Lorenzetti, The Allegory of Good and Bad Government, 1338-39
Right: Matteo Giovannetti, Chambre du Cerf (Room of the Stag), 1343

How do these two immersive rooms compare in terms of subject matter and politics?

For Grau, what is the relationship between perspective in drawing and painting and natural vision?

Panofsky's dictum regarding perspective, that it facilitates "objectification of view," is now classic. Perspective is an effective tool for creating distances; it reduces the size of objects, moves them back, or fades out things that do not fit in with the horizon it envisions. However, perspective is not an expression of natural vision; it is a technical construction, and what it presents to the perception follows specific conventions. Panofsky's analysis of perspective is undoubtedly apposite. However, in enclosing, encircling spaces of illusion, which at the same time use perspective to open up space, perspectival distance is inverted. It becomes a visual field of immersion that is integrated into the picture's narrative and addresses the observer suggestively from all sides. Distance between the observer and the object viewed is removed through ubiquitous mathematical analysis of the structure of image space, the totality of its politics of suggestion and strategy of immersion. [Grau, 40]

verisimilitude

verisimilitude

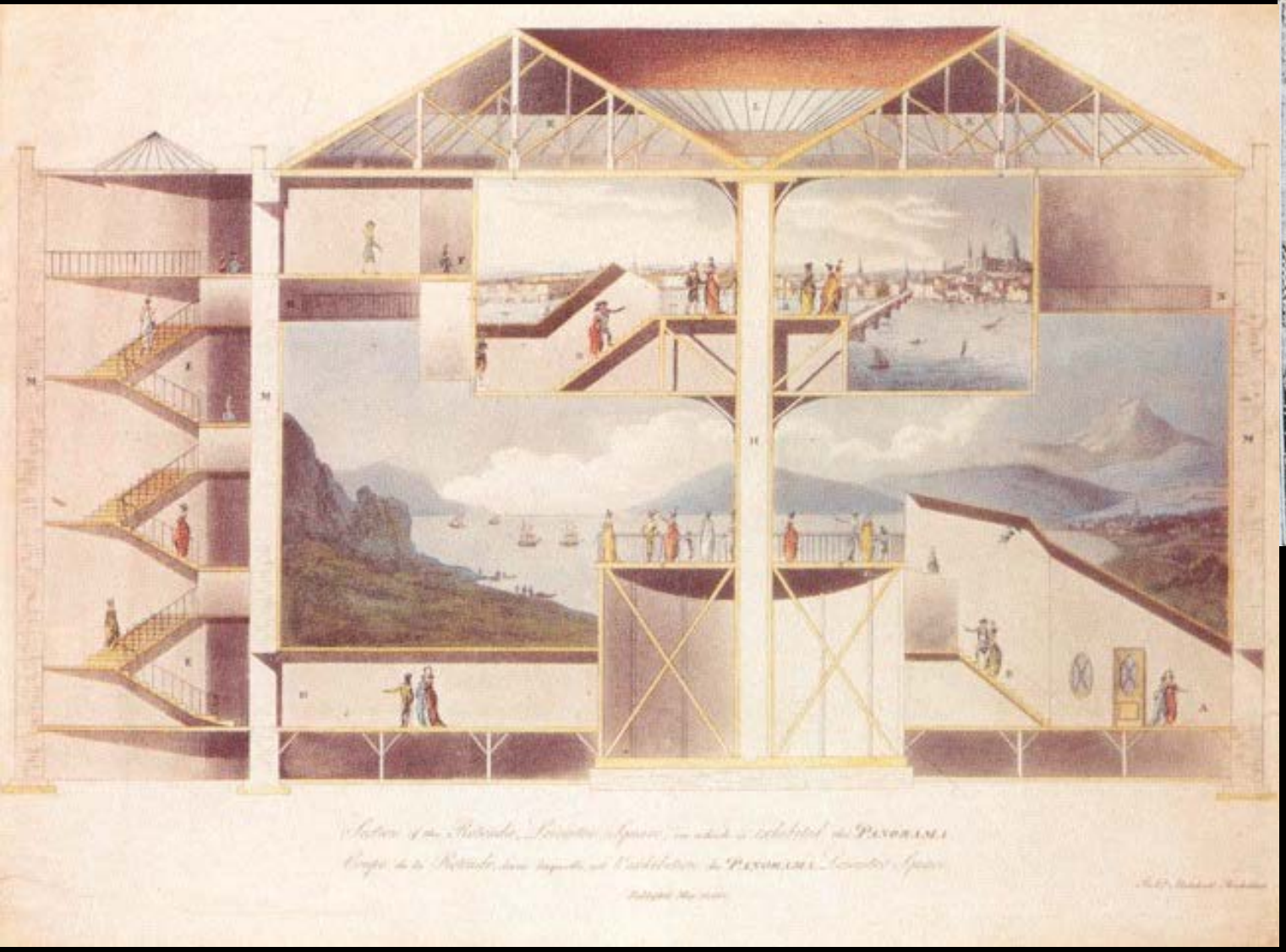
the appearance of being true or real

Panorama

The word panorama comes from the Greek “pan” meaning “all” and “horama” meaning view.

Panorama of a half section of Night Revels of Han Xizai, 12th century Song Dynasty painting: a painted scroll depicting Han Xizai, a minister of Li Yu. This **narrative painting** is split into five distinct sections: Han Xizai listens to the pipa [a four-stringed Chinese musical instrument], watches dancers, takes a rest, plays string instruments, and then sees guests off

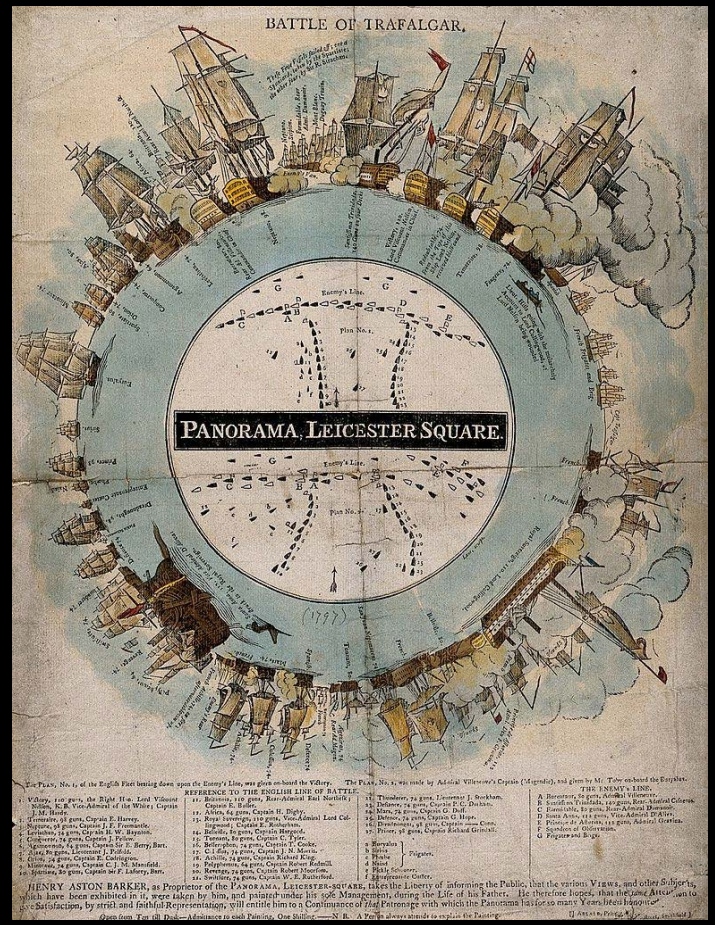
Panorama



Robert Barker, Rotunda at Leicester Square, London, 1793

The exterior of a Panorama building

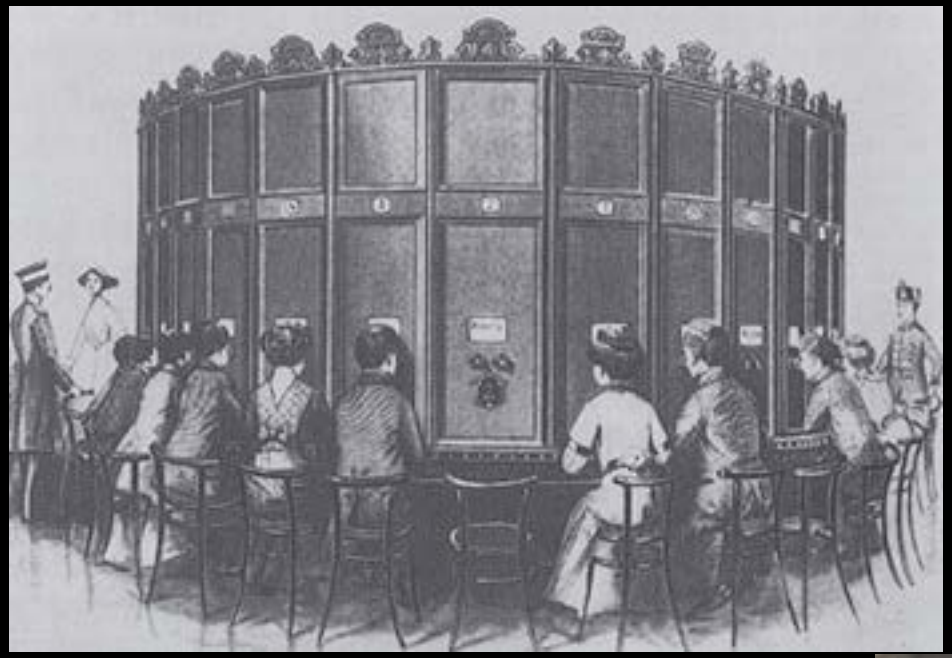
The term “panorama” was coined by the Irish painter Robert Barker in 1792 to describe his paintings of Edinburgh, Scotland shown on a cylindrical surface, which he soon was exhibiting in London as "The Panorama".



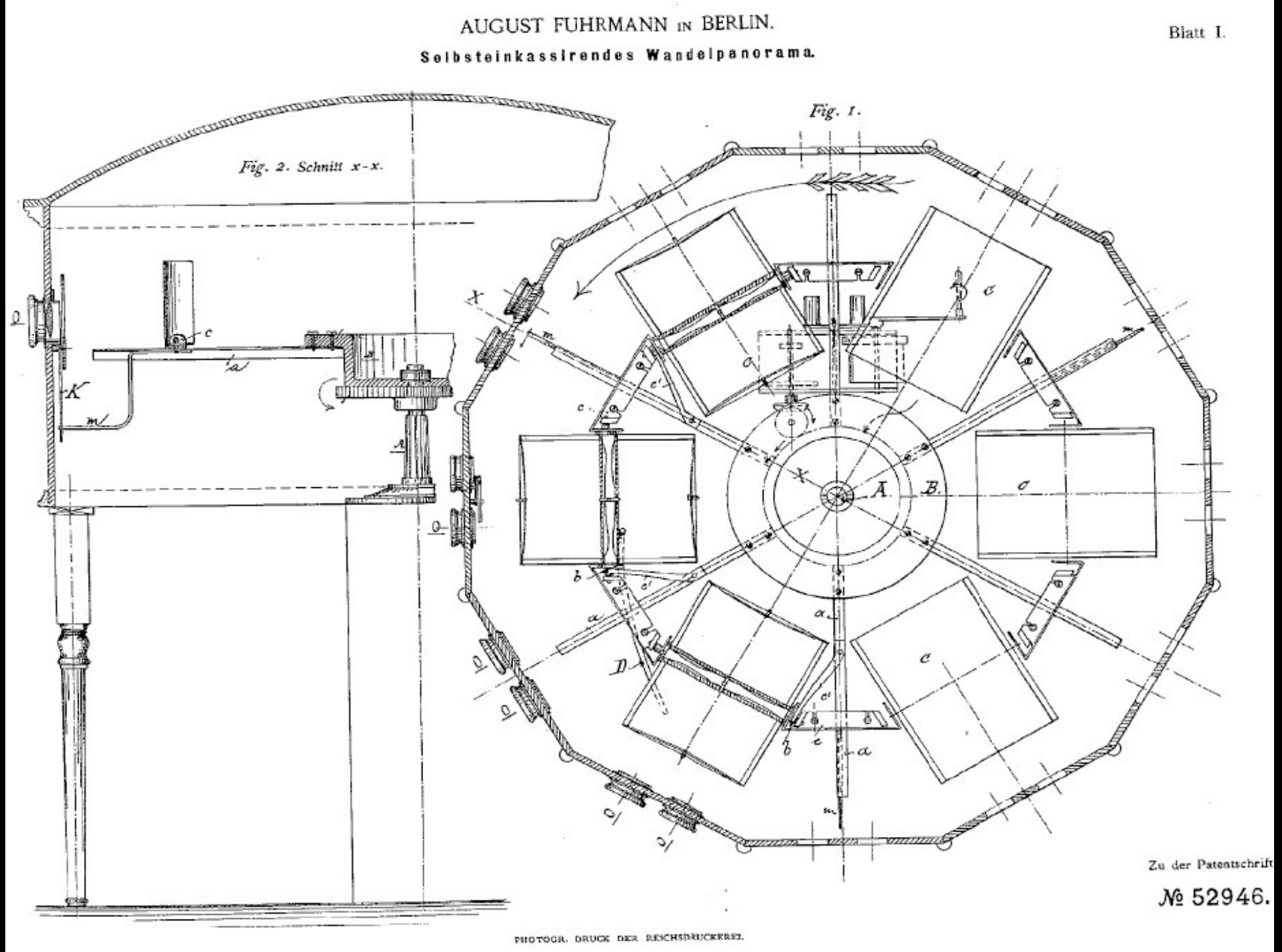
Left: View of Edinburgh from original panorama

Above: An advertisement for the Panorama, Leicester Square, London: showing the battle of Trafalgar. Colored engraving by Lane, after Barker, 1806

Above: Panorama of a half section of Night Revels of Han Xizai, 12th century Song Dynasty painting
Below: Barker's views of Edinburgh, *La Nature à Coup d' Oeil* /"Nature at a glance," 1806



The Kaiserpanorama from 1883. Situated in Berlin, this attraction featured a moving carousel where the spectators looked at several panoramas of foreign cities through peepholes. Inventor August Fuhrmann comissioned photographers and painters from around the world and established a collection of about 125,000 panoramas.



August Fuhrmann, The Kaiser-Panorama, 1889

From German Patent (D52946-1889) for a 12 seat coin operated stereoscopic viewing device:

This apparatus is constructed entirely of metal, has a precision spring driven movement, which is wound every two hours. There are 8 places available with achromatic glasses. Money insertion shows 24 from 32 transparent glass stereos and then closes the glasses when the last picture has been viewed. Any form of lighting on the inside. The money falls into the iron base, which is provided with safety lock. Packing boxes charged at cost price.

Sir Charles Wheatstone, stereoscope, 1840

According to Grau, what are the socio-political effects of the panorama?

From the first, the panorama as an art form was controversial. Interestingly, there was less dispute about the fact that the rotundas were frequently sited near amusement districts of doubtful repute or whether artistic quality was possible in pictures of this size. The real bone of contention was its outstanding aesthetic feature: the character of illusion. Opinion was divided into two diametrically opposed camps: a minority, who criticized that there was too much illusion and saw this a danger, and a majority, who valued the panorama precisely because of its illusionistic effect. [Grau, 62]