



The Renaissance Bazaar: From the Silk Road to Michelangelo

Jerry Brotton

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The Renaissance rang in changes at a breathtaking pace, changes that shape the world to this day. Now Jerry Brotton deftly captures this remarkable age, in a book that places Europe's great flowering in a revealing global context.

It was Europe's contact with the outside world, Brotton argues, especially with the rich and cultivated East, that made the Renaissance what it was. Indeed, Europeans saw themselves through the mirror of the East--it was during this age, for instance, that they first spoke of themselves as "Europeans." Here is cultural history of the best kind, as Brotton muses on the meanings of Holbein's painting "The Ambassadors"--which is virtually a catalog of the international influences on Europe--or on the Arabic influence in the burgeoning sciences of astronomy and geography. This global approach offers revealing new insights into such men as Dante and Leonardo da Vinci and highlights the international influences behind Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Along with fresh and original discussions of well-known figures from Copernicus to Dürer to Shakespeare, Brotton offers a far-reaching exploration that looks at paintings and technology, patterns of trade and the printed page, as he illuminates the overarching themes that defined the age.

From architecture to medicine, from humorists to explorers, the teeming world of the Renaissance comes to life in this thoughtful, insightful, and beautifully written book, which offers us a timely perspective on the Renaissance as a moment of global inclusiveness that still has much to teach us today.



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