Today

• Renaissance rhetoric

• Early Italian humanism

• Erasmus
Rise of Renaissance Rhetoric

- Rhetoricians find and translate previously lost works
- Rhetoric combines vita activia and vita contempliva
- As previously, rhetoric is the mark of the educated person
Rise of Renaissance Rhetoric

• Rhetoric reemerges as an important political skill

• Machiavelli 1469-1572

• Hobbes 1588-1679
On a separate sheet

• What do we now hold to be the traits/marks of a “cultured” person? Are these socially desirable/socially rewarded traits?

• Is there a single educational discipline that can provide the basis for all education? What is it? If there is none, what has changed since the Renaissance to eliminate the possibility of this happening?
Early Humanism

• Rhetoric (in Valla) becomes the chief form of study because it unites wisdom and eloquence (as in Cicero)

• Students studying rhetoric could start meaningful civic careers
- From Callepa’s Marriage of Mercury and Philo
• From Justus of Ghent’s series of seven liberal arts paintings (about 1480)
Margarita Philosophic about 1507
The Print Revolution

• By 1700, 1,717 authors with 3,842 titles going through a combined 12,325 printings published in 310 towns across Europe

• There is a flood of translations and commentaries

• Rhetoric begins to be translated into vernacular languages
Erasmus

- 1466 Born in Rotterdam
- 1483 parents die
- 1492 admitted to the priesthood
- 1495 studies in Paris
• 1499 travels to England

• 1506-1509 Studies in Italy

• 1509 returns to Cambridge

• Dies in 1536
• Publishes on the New Testament

• Wrote satires of the church, but remained devout

• Writes De Copia in 1512 as a Latin textbook

• Fought with Martin Luther
De Copia

• A bottom-up response to Rhetorica ad Herrennium

• De Copia shows that language can go delightfully crazy.

• In some ways the need to expand one’s language resources was a religious duty to be able to better understand God
This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this
England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings.

Richard II, II, i