



# Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe (New Approaches to European History)

By Charles G. Nauert

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In this updated edition of his classic account, Charles Nauert charts the rise of humanism as the distinctive culture of the social, political and intellectual elites in Renaissance Europe. He traces humanism's emergence in the unique social and cultural conditions of fourteenth-century Italy and its gradual diffusion throughout the rest of Europe. He shows how, despite its elitist origins, humanism became a major force in the popular culture and fine arts of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the powerful impact it had on both the Protestant and Catholic Reformations. He uses art and biographical sketches of key figures to illuminate the narrative and concludes with an account of the limitations of humanism at the end of the Renaissance. The revised edition includes a section dealing with the place of women in humanistic culture and an updated bibliography. It will be essential reading for all students of Renaissance Europe.

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'One would have thought it impossible to write such a book, but Charles Nauert has done it ... this book presents every important aspect of humanist culture, from Petrarch to Montaigne. All this is accomplished with deft authority and with disarming judiciousness ... His book supersedes any previous attempt at such a synthesis, and each chapter, with its own bibliography, is a key to the several sub-fields included here ... the writing is so clear that absolutely any reader, without any special preparation, can use this book as a first step toward mastering the field.' George Hupper, *The Historian*

'A student reading Nauert will get a comprehensive, intelligent, and eminently sensible discussion of the topic. [Nauert] effectively conveys the sweep of humanism over three centuries. He is notably excellent in discussing the sixteenth century ... in every chapter of the book he convincingly brings out why and how the classical tradition played such an important role in Renaissance humanism.' John Monfasani, *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*

#### **About the Author**

Charles G. Nauert is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Missouri, Columbia. His major publications include several essays on pre-Reformation academic and religious controversies and *The Age of Renaissance and Reformation* (1977).

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