The Italian Renaissance and Jewish Thought

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Abstract
One notable example of the asymmetry between general European and Jewish historiography is their respective treatments of the Renaissance period. At least since the appearance of Jacob Burckhardt's classic study, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, historians have thoroughly discussed the significance of this cultural epoch, often with great intensity and acrimony. Despite their diverging and often contradictory perspectives, few would now argue with Burckhardt's initial assessment that the Renaissance marks a momentous transformation in European civilization in general and in Italian culture in particular.¹

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Comments
At the time of this publication, Dr. Ruderman was affiliated with Yale University, but he is now a faculty member of the University of Pennsylvania.

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many ways be integrated, were nevertheless distinct from their non-Jewish neighbors. The close degree of integration in Italian society virtually guaranteed that the Jews could not avoid the effects of the intellectual currents that roiled the Christian world and led to the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. To view objects from the Italian Renaissance included in the sale go to lots 55-60. Next essay: The Jews in the Age of Mercantilism. More from Sotheby's.