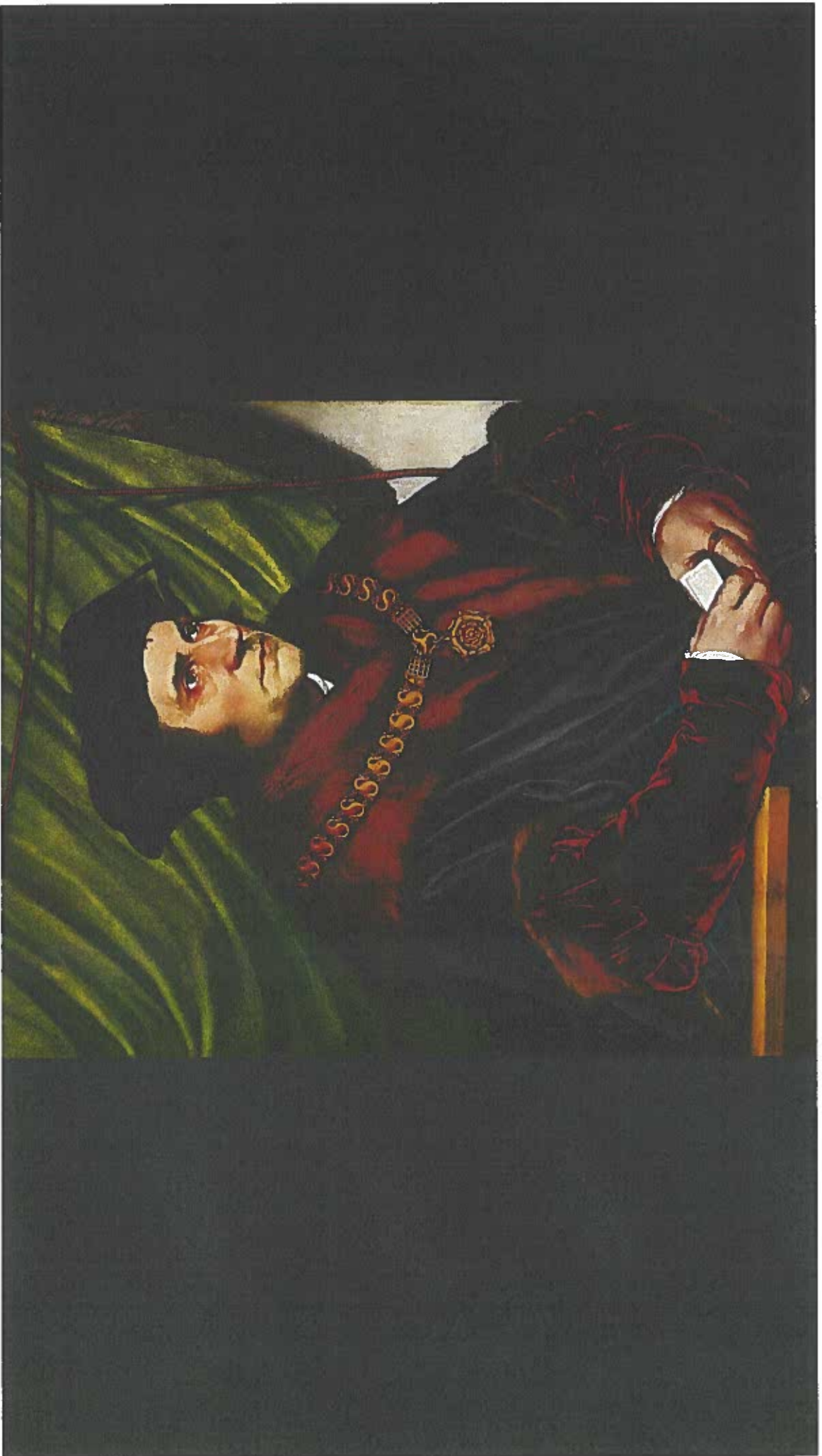




"...he was beheaded in the open space in front of the Tower. A little before his death he asked those present to pray to God for him and he would do the same for them. He then besought them earnestly to pray to God to give the King good counsel, protesting that **he died his faithful servant, and God's first.**"

- Paris Newsletter (1535)



Res publica

“Thing of the people”

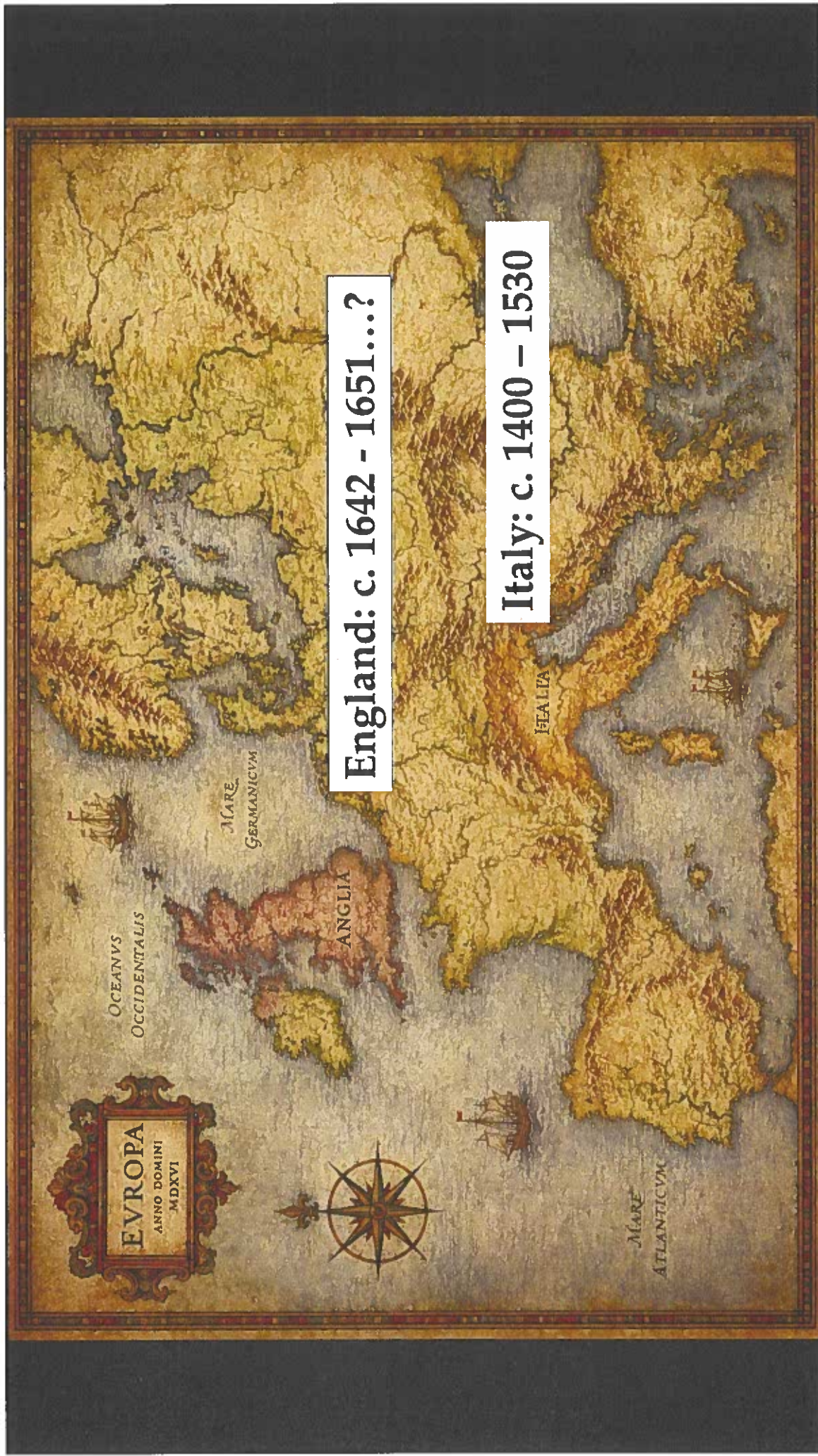
- Designates constitution, commonwealth
- Roman “republic”: c. 509 BCE to 27 BCE

Italian republicanism:

- *Res publica* = anti-monarchical
- Designates civic participation, rule by plurality
- Civic participation develops **virtue**
- **Virtue**, not heredity, is criterion for rule
- Glory through service

Virtus vera nobilitas est

“Virtue is true nobility”



England: c. 1642 - 1651...?

Italy: c. 1400 - 1530



“Unlimited power has a tendency to weaken good minds, and that even in the case of very gifted men...”

- Thomas More
Coronation Ode for Henry VIII (1509)

“Court life and the friendship of princes were formerly not to his taste, for he has always had a special hatred of tyranny and a corresponding love for equality. ...[and] the court of Henry VIII he could not be induced to enter except by great efforts...

By nature he has a great love of liberty and leisure; but dearly as he loves to enjoy leisure when he can, no one displays more energy or more endurance at the call of duty.”

- Desiderius Erasmus
Letter to Ulrich von Hutten (1519)

“virtue makes you like Christ, but virtue, in that it is praised, makes you unlike Christ, who, for His virtue, received the *opprobrious* death of the cross.”

- Thomas More, *Life of Pico della Mirandola*

“My other humble request, most excellent Prince, is this... considering that in your high court of Parliament nothing is discussed but weighty and important matters, many of your discreet commoners will be hindered from giving their advice and counsel, to the great hindrance of the common affairs, unless every one of your commoners is **utterly discharged of all doubt and fear** as to how anything that he happens to say may happen to be taken by your Highness....

It may therefore please your most abundant Grace... to give to all your commoners here assembled **your most gracious permission and allowance for every man freely, without fear of your dreaded displeasure, to speak his conscience and boldly declare his advice** concerning everything that comes up among us. Whatever any man may happen to say, may it please your noble Majesty, in your inestimable goodness, to take it all with no offense.”

- Thomas More, free speech petition (1523)



"You boast to me that you have the king's ear and often have fun with him, freely and according to your own whims. This is like having fun with tamed lions—often it is harmless, but just as often there is the fear of harm. Often, he roars in rage for no known reason, and suddenly the fun becomes fatal."

- Thomas More, "To a Courtier"
(1518)

Discourse as mode of reform

- ~~Subject~~ (*subiectus*)
- Leading citizen - *princeps*
- Citizens – *ciues*
- People – *populo*
- Liberty – *libertas*
- Senate – *senatus*
- Republic – *res publica*

More's republican principles:

1. Rule of law
2. Authority of public consensus
3. Free exchange of counsel
4. Constitutional division of authority
5. Elective versus hereditary rule
6. Critique of monarchy

“You ask which governs better, a king or a senate.
Neither, if (as is frequently the case) both are bad.
But if both are good, then I think that the senate,
because of its numbers, is the better
and that the greater good lies in numerous good men.

...

An evil senator is influenced by advice from better men than
he;

but a king is himself the ruler of his advisers.

A senator is elected by the people to rule;
a king attains this end by being born.

In the one case blind chance is supreme;

In the other, a reasonable agreement.

The one feels that he was made senator by the people;

The other feels that the people were created for him

So that, of course, he may have subjects to rule.”

- Thomas More, epigram no. 198: “What is the best state of a republic?”

“Any one man who has command of many men owes his authority to those whom he commands; he ought to have command not one instant longer than his people wishes. Why are impotent kings so proud? Because they rule merely on sufferance?”

- Thomas More, epigram no. 121: **“The consent of the people both bestows and withdraws governing authority”**



“If you cannot cure long-standing evils to your heart’s content, you must not therefore abandon the commonwealth. Don’t give up the ship in a storm because you cannot hold back the winds...

Instead, by an indirect approach, you must strive and struggle as best you can to handle everything tactfully – and thus *what you cannot turn to good, you may at least make as little bad as possible.*

For it is impossible to make everything good unless all men are good, and that I don’t expect to see for quite a few years yet.”

- Thomas More, *Utopia* (1518)