

# 1.1: Context of the Renaissance

## The Renaissance

- It was a period of cultural and intellectual rebirth that began in Italy in the 14th century and spread throughout Europe until the 17th century. It was characterized by a renewed interest in classical learning, humanism, and the arts.
- **Humanism**
  - It was a philosophical and intellectual movement that emphasized the value and agency of human beings, individually and collectively.
  - It was a reaction to the scholasticism of the Middle Ages, which focused on the study of theology and philosophy.
  - Humanists believed in the importance of education, reason, and critical thinking.
  - They also emphasized the study of classical literature, history, and art.
- **Art**
  - Renaissance art was characterized by a renewed interest in classical forms, realism, and humanism.
  - Artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael created works that emphasized the beauty and complexity of the human form.
  - Perspective, chiaroscuro, and sfumato were techniques used to create depth and realism in paintings.
  - The development of printing technology allowed for the widespread dissemination of art and ideas.
- **Science**
  - The Renaissance was also a period of scientific discovery and innovation.
  - Scientists such as Galileo Galilei and Johannes Kepler made significant contributions to astronomy and physics.
  - The development of the scientific method, which emphasized observation, experimentation, and empirical evidence, revolutionized the way people thought about the natural world.
- **Literature**
  - Renaissance literature was characterized by a renewed interest in classical forms, humanism, and the vernacular.
  - Writers such as William Shakespeare, Miguel de Cervantes, and Dante Alighieri created works that explored human nature, morality, and the human condition.
  - The printing press allowed for the widespread dissemination of literature, which helped to spread ideas and knowledge throughout Europe.

## European Society at the time

- Artistic and cultural flourishing
- Scientific advancements and discoveries

- Rise of nation-states and centralized power
- Protestant Reformation and religious conflicts
- Exploration and colonization of the New World
- Emergence of the middle class and capitalism
- Patriarchal society with limited rights for women
- Slavery and exploitation of non-European peoples
- Plague outbreaks and public health concerns.

## **What led to the beginning of explorations?**

- Crusades and the desire for new trade routes to Asia
- Renaissance and the revival of classical knowledge
- Technological advancements in navigation and shipbuilding
- Competition between European nations for wealth and power
- The discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus

## **1.2: Italian Renaissance**

- The Italian Renaissance was a period of great cultural and artistic growth that began in Italy in the 14th century and lasted until the 17th century.
  - It was characterized by a renewed interest in classical art, literature, and philosophy, as well as a focus on humanism and individualism.
- **Emergence of Italian Renaissance**
  - The Italian Renaissance emerged as a result of several factors, including the rediscovery of ancient Greek and Roman texts, the growth of wealthy merchant classes, and the patronage of wealthy families such as the Medici.
  - These factors led to a flourishing of the arts, sciences, and humanities, as well as a renewed interest in humanism and individualism.
- **Impact**
  - The Italian Renaissance had a profound impact on Western culture, influencing art, literature, philosophy, and science.
  - It led to the development of new artistic techniques, such as perspective and chiaroscuro, and inspired the works of famous artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael.
  - It also had a significant impact on literature, with the works of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio helping to shape the Italian language and literature.
- **Famous works of the Italian Renaissance include:**
  - Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa" and "The Last Supper"
  - Michelangelo's "David" and the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel
  - Raphael's "The School of Athens" and "The Sistine Madonna"
  - Dante's "Divine Comedy"
  - Petrarch's sonnets and other poetry
  - Boccaccio's "The Decameron"

## 1.3: The Northern Renaissance

- The Northern Renaissance was a cultural and artistic movement that took place in Northern Europe during the 15th and 16th centuries.
  - It was a period of great intellectual and artistic growth, characterized by a renewed interest in classical learning and a focus on individualism and humanism.
- **Key Characteristics**
  - **Humanism:** The Northern Renaissance was characterized by a renewed interest in classical learning and humanism.
    - Humanists believed in the importance of individualism, reason, and the study of classical literature and philosophy.
  - **Religious Reformation:** The Northern Renaissance was also marked by the Protestant Reformation, which challenged the authority of the Catholic Church and led to the establishment of new Protestant churches.
  - **Artistic Innovation:** The Northern Renaissance was a time of great artistic innovation, with artists experimenting with new techniques and styles.
    - Northern Renaissance art was characterized by a focus on realism, attention to detail, and the use of light and shadow to create depth and texture.
  - **Scientific Advancements:** The Northern Renaissance was also a time of great scientific advancement, with scholars making significant contributions to fields such as astronomy, mathematics, and anatomy.
- **Key Figures**
  - **Albrecht Dürer:** A German artist known for his engravings and woodcuts, which were highly detailed and often featured religious and mythological themes.
  - **Jan van Eyck:** A Flemish painter known for his use of oil paint and attention to detail. His most famous work is the Ghent Altarpiece.
  - **Desiderius Erasmus:** A Dutch humanist and scholar who was a leading figure in the Northern Renaissance. He was known for his critical approach to religion and his belief in the importance of education.
  - **William Shakespeare:** An English playwright and poet who is widely regarded as one of the greatest writers in the English language. His works, including Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet, are still performed and studied today.

## 1.4: Printing Press

- The printing press was invented by Johannes Gutenberg in the mid-15th century and revolutionized the way information was disseminated during the Renaissance period.
- Prior to the printing press, books were copied by hand, making them expensive and rare. With the printing press, books could be produced quickly and cheaply, allowing for the widespread distribution of knowledge and ideas.

- This led to an increase in literacy rates and the spread of new ideas, which in turn contributed to the intellectual and cultural flourishing of the Renaissance.
- Some of the important books that were disseminated through the printing press include:
  - **The Bible:** The printing press made it possible to produce multiple copies of the Bible, which helped to spread Christianity and promote religious reform.
  - **The works of William Shakespeare:** The printing press helped to disseminate the plays and sonnets of William Shakespeare, making him one of the most widely read and influential writers in the English language.
  - **The works of Galileo Galilei:** The printing press helped to disseminate the scientific works of Galileo Galilei, which challenged the prevailing views of the universe and helped to usher in the Scientific Revolution.
  - **The works of Martin Luther:** The printing press helped to disseminate the writings of Martin Luther, which played a key role in the Protestant Reformation and the development of modern Christianity.
  - **The works of Johannes Gutenberg:** The printing press itself was a revolutionary invention, and the works of its inventor, Johannes Gutenberg, helped to promote the spread of printing technology and the dissemination of knowledge and ideas.

## 1.5: New Monarchies from 1450 to 1648

### New Monarchies

- **New Monarchies** refers to the period of European history from 1450 to 1648, during which the monarchies of Europe underwent significant changes in their political, economic, and social structures.
- This period saw the emergence of powerful monarchies in Europe, which centralized power and established strong, centralized states.
- The new monarchies were characterized by the consolidation of power, the establishment of bureaucracies, the expansion of armies, and the growth of national economies.

### Factors that led to the emergence of New Monarchies

- **Decline of Feudalism:** The decline of feudalism in Europe led to the emergence of new social and economic classes, which challenged the traditional power structures of the feudal system.
- **Growth of Trade and Commerce:** The growth of trade and commerce in Europe led to the emergence of a new class of wealthy merchants and bankers, who supported the monarchies in exchange for political and economic privileges.
- **Renaissance:** The Renaissance brought about a renewed interest in classical learning and humanism, which led to the development of new ideas about government and society.

- **Religious Reformation:** The religious reformation in Europe led to the emergence of new religious and political ideologies, which challenged the authority of the Catholic Church and the traditional power structures of Europe.

### **Characteristics of New Monarchies**

- **Centralization of Power:** The new monarchies centralized power in the hands of the monarch, who became the ultimate authority in the state.
- **Establishment of Bureaucracies:** The new monarchies established bureaucracies to manage the affairs of the state, which allowed for more efficient and effective governance.
- **Expansion of Armies:** The new monarchies expanded their armies to maintain their power and protect their territories.
- **Growth of National Economies:** The new monarchies promoted economic growth by supporting trade and commerce, and by establishing policies that encouraged the development of national industries.

### **Examples of New Monarchies**

- **France**
  - **King Louis XI (1461-1483)** strengthened the monarchy by centralizing power and reducing the power of the nobility.
  - **King Francis I (1515-1547)** continued this trend by creating a standing army and establishing the Concordat of Bologna, which gave the French monarchy control over the Catholic Church in France.
  - **King Henry IV (1589-1610)** ended the Wars of Religion and established the Bourbon dynasty, which would rule France until the French Revolution.
- **Spain**
  - **Queen Isabella I (1474-1504)** and **King Ferdinand II (1479-1516)** united Spain through the marriage of their kingdoms and the conquest of Granada and the Canary Islands.
  - **King Charles I (1516-1556)** inherited the Spanish throne and became Holy Roman Emperor, creating a vast empire that included much of Europe and the Americas.
- **England**
  - **King Henry VII (1485-1509)** established the Tudor dynasty by winning the Wars of the Roses and creating a strong central government.
  - **King Henry VIII (1509-1547)** broke with the Catholic Church and established the Church of England, further strengthening the monarchy's power over religion.
  - **Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603)** continued this trend by defeating the Spanish Armada and establishing England as a major naval power.
- **Russia**
  - **Ivan III (1462-1505)** united Russia and established the Grand Principality of Moscow as the dominant power in the region.

- **Ivan IV (1533-1584)** further centralized power by creating a professional army and introducing a new legal code.
- **Portugal**
  - **King John II (1481-1495)** established a strong central government and expanded Portugal's overseas empire through exploration and colonization.

## 1.6: Age of Exploration

- The **Age of Exploration**, also known as the **Age of Discovery**, was a period of European exploration and discovery that lasted from the 15th to the 17th century.
- During this time, European explorers sailed across the oceans in search of new trade routes, resources, and territories.

### Causes of Exploration

- **Trade:** European countries were looking for new trade routes to Asia, as the traditional routes were controlled by the Ottoman Empire, making trade difficult and expensive.
- **Religion:** European countries wanted to spread Christianity to new territories and convert the native populations.
- **Technology:** Advances in shipbuilding, navigation, and cartography made long-distance travel and exploration possible.
- **Wealth:** European countries were seeking new sources of wealth, such as gold, silver, and other valuable resources.

### Major Explorers

- **Christopher Columbus:** Italian explorer who sailed for Spain and discovered the New World in 1492.
- **Vasco da Gama:** Portuguese explorer who sailed around the southern tip of Africa and reached India in 1498.
- **Ferdinand Magellan:** Portuguese explorer who led the first circumnavigation of the globe in 1519-1522.
- **Francis Drake:** English explorer who circumnavigated the globe and raided Spanish ships and settlements in the late 16th century.

### Consequences of Exploration

- **Colonization:** European countries established colonies in the Americas, Africa, and Asia, leading to the spread of European culture and influence.
- **Global Trade:** The discovery of new trade routes and resources led to the growth of global trade and the rise of capitalism.
- **Cultural Exchange:** The exchange of ideas, goods, and technologies between Europe and other parts of the world led to cultural diffusion and the spread of knowledge.

- **Exploitation and Slavery:** The colonization of new territories led to the exploitation and enslavement of native populations, particularly in the Americas and Africa.

## 1.7: Colonial Rivals

- **European expansion** refers to the period of time when European powers expanded their influence and control over other regions of the world.
- This expansion had significant effects on the regions that were colonized, as well as on Europe itself.
- The conflicts and rivalries that arose during this period were a result of competition between European powers for resources, territory, and power.

### Effects of European Expansion

- European expansion had a profound impact on the regions that were colonized.
- In many cases, indigenous populations were displaced or enslaved, and their cultures and traditions were suppressed.
- European powers also introduced new technologies, religions, and political systems to the regions they colonized.
- The exploitation of resources, such as gold, silver, and other minerals, led to economic growth in Europe.
- The expansion of trade and commerce also contributed to the growth of European economies.

### Conflicts and Rivalries

- The competition between European powers for resources, territory, and power led to conflicts and rivalries.
- The rivalry between Spain and Portugal over control of the Americas led to the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, which divided the New World between the two powers.
- The rivalry between England and France over control of North America led to a series of wars, including the French and Indian War.
- The competition between European powers for control of Africa led to the Scramble for Africa in the late 19th century.
- The rivalry between European powers also contributed to the outbreak of World War I.

## 1.8: Columbian Exchange

- The **Columbian Exchange** refers to the exchange of plants, animals, and diseases between the Old World (Europe, Africa, and Asia) and the New World (the Americas) following Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas in 1492.

### Impact of Columbian Exchange

- **Old World**
  - Introduction of new crops such as maize, potatoes, and tomatoes, which led to population growth and improved diets.
  - Introduction of new sources of precious metals, such as gold and silver, which led to increased wealth and power.
  - Introduction of new diseases, such as smallpox, which devastated Native American populations.
- **New World**
  - Introduction of new animals, such as horses and cattle, which transformed Native American societies and allowed for more efficient agriculture.
  - Introduction of new technologies, such as guns and iron tools, which gave Europeans a military advantage over Native Americans.
  - Introduction of new diseases, such as smallpox, which decimated Native American populations.

## 1.9: The Slave Trade and the Triangular Trade

- The **slave trade** began in the 15th century when Portuguese traders started importing slaves from Africa to work on sugar plantations in the Atlantic islands and Brazil.
- The demand for slaves increased with the growth of sugar plantations in the Americas, and other European powers such as Spain, France, and Britain joined the trade.
- The **triangular trade** involved three continents: Europe, Africa, and the Americas. European traders brought manufactured goods to Africa, exchanged them for slaves, and then transported the slaves to the Americas to work on plantations.
  - The profits from the sale of sugar, tobacco, and other crops were then used to buy raw materials in the Americas, which were shipped back to Europe.
- The slave trade was abolished in the 19th century due to the efforts of abolitionists and the economic decline of the plantation system. However, its legacy of racism and inequality continues to impact societies around the world.

## 1.10: The Commercial Revolution

- The **Commercial Revolution** was a period of European economic expansion, colonialism, and mercantilism that lasted from the 16th to the 18th century.
- It brought about significant changes in the European economy and society.

### Economic Effects

- **Growth of Trade:** The Commercial Revolution led to the growth of trade and commerce. European merchants established trade links with Asia, Africa, and the Americas, which led to the exchange of goods and ideas.

- **Rise of Capitalism:** The Commercial Revolution led to the rise of capitalism. Merchants and traders invested their profits in new ventures, which led to the growth of industries and the creation of jobs.
- **Development of Banking:** The Commercial Revolution led to the development of banking. Banks provided loans to merchants and traders, which helped them to finance their ventures.
- **Emergence of Joint-Stock Companies:** The Commercial Revolution led to the emergence of joint-stock companies. These companies allowed investors to pool their resources and share the risks and profits of a venture.
- **Increase in Prices:** The Commercial Revolution led to an increase in prices. The demand for goods from Asia, Africa, and the Americas led to an increase in prices, which led to inflation.

## Social Effects

- **Growth of Urbanization:** The Commercial Revolution led to the growth of urbanization. The growth of industries and trade led to the growth of cities, which led to the migration of people from rural areas to urban areas.
- **Rise of the Middle Class:** The Commercial Revolution led to the rise of the middle class. Merchants, traders, and bankers became wealthy and influential, which led to the emergence of a new social class.
- **Development of Consumer Culture:** The Commercial Revolution led to the development of consumer culture. The growth of trade and commerce led to the availability of a wide range of goods, which led to the emergence of a culture of consumption.
- **Expansion of Colonialism:** The Commercial Revolution led to the expansion of colonialism. European powers established colonies in Asia, Africa, and the Americas, which led to the exploitation of resources and the enslavement of people.

## 1.11: Causation in the Renaissance and Age of Discovery

- The Renaissance and Age of Discovery were both driven by a desire for knowledge, wealth, and power.
- The Renaissance was a time of great intellectual and cultural change, which laid the groundwork for the scientific and artistic innovations of the Age of Discovery.
- The Age of Discovery was made possible by the technological advancements of the Renaissance, such as the development of the printing press and navigational instruments.
- The Age of Discovery also had a profound impact on the Renaissance, as the wealth and resources brought back from the New World allowed for the patronage of the arts and sciences.
- The Renaissance and Age of Discovery were both shaped by the political, economic, and social forces of their time, including the rise of nation-states, the growth of capitalism, and the emergence of new social classes.

