

Chapter 17 Summary/Notes

Unit 4 Connecting Hemispheres

European Renaissance & Reformation

Chapter 17 Section 1. Italy: Birthplace of the Renaissance

We learned about the development of democratic ideas. Now we learn about modern history, starting with the Renaissance.

Italy's Advantages

The years 1300 to 1600 saw a rebirth of learning and culture in Europe, called the Renaissance. This rebirth spread north from Italy. It began there for three reasons. First, Italy had several important cities. Cities were places where people exchanged ideas. Second, these cities included a class of merchants and bankers who were becoming wealthy and powerful. This class strongly believed in the idea of individual achievement. Third, Italian artists and scholars were inspired by the ruined buildings and other reminders of classical Rome.

Classical and Worldly Values

The new interest in the classical past led to an important value in Renaissance culture, humanism. This was a deep interest in what people have already achieved, as well as what they could achieve in the future. Scholars did not try to connect classical writings to Christian teaching. Instead, they tried to understand them on their own terms. In the middle ages, the emphasis had been mostly on spiritual values. Renaissance thinkers stressed secular ideas. These ideas centered on things of this world. One way that powerful or wealthy people showed their interest in world things was by paying artists, writers and musicians to create beautiful works of art. Wealthy people who supported artists were known as patrons. People tried to show that they could master many fields of study or work. Someone who succeeded in many fields was admired greatly. The artist Leonardo da Vinci was an example of this ideal. He was a painter, a scientist and an inventor. Men were expected to be charming, witty, well-educated, well-mannered, athletic and self-controlled. Women were expected to have many accomplishments too. But, women were not to show them in public.

The Renaissance Revolutionizes Art

Renaissance artists sometimes used new methods. Sculptors made figures more realistic than those from the middle ages. Painters used perspective to create the illusion that their paintings were three-dimensional. The subject of artwork changed also. Art in the middle ages was mostly religious. Renaissance artists produced other views of life. Michelangelo showed great skill as an architect, a sculpture and a painter.

The Renaissance Writers Change Literature

Renaissance writers also achieved greatness. Several wrote in the vernacular. This means they wrote in their native languages. It was a change from the Middle Ages, when most writing was done in Latin. Writers also changed their subject matter. They began to express their own thoughts and feelings. Sometimes, they gave a detailed look at an individual. Dante and others wrote poetry, letters and stories that were more realistic. Machiavelli took a new approach to understanding government. He focused on telling rulers how to expand their power. He believed rulers should do what was politically effective, even if it was not morally right.

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Chapter 17 Section 2. The Northern Renaissance

We learned about the beginning of the Renaissance. Now we learn about the Northern Renaissance

The Northern Renaissance Begins

By 1450 the Bubonic plague had ended in northern Europe. Also, the Hundred Years War between England and France was ending. This allowed new ideas from Italy to spread to Northern Europe. They were quickly adopted. Here too, rulers and merchants used their money to sponsor artists. But, the Northern Renaissance had a difference. Educated people combined classical learning with interest in religious ideas.

Artistic Ideas Spread

The new ideas of Italian art moved to the North, where artists began to use them. Major artists appeared in parts of Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Durer painted religious subjects and realistic landscapes. Holbein, Van Eyck and Bruegel painted life like portraits and scenes of peasant life. They revealed much about the times. They began to use oil based paints. Oils became very popular and their use spread to Italy.

Northern Writers try to Reform Society/The Elizabethan Age

Writers of the Northern Renaissance combined Humanism with a deep Christian faith. They urged reforms in the Church. They tried to make people more devoted to God. They also wanted society to be more, fair. In England Thomas Moore wrote a book about Utopia. An imaginary, ideal, Society where greed, war and conflict do not exist. Shakespeare is often called the greatest play-writer of all time. His plays showed a brilliant command to the English language. They also show a deep understanding of people and how they interact with one another.

Printing Spreads Renaissance Ideas/Legacy of the Renaissance

One reason that learning spread so rapidly during the Renaissance was the invention of movable type. The Chinese had invented the process of carving characters onto wooden blocks. They then arranged them in words, inked the blocks and pressed them against paper to print pages. In 1440, a German, Gutenberg, used this same practice to invent his printing press. He produced his first book, the Gutenberg bible, in 1455 on this press. The technology then spread rapidly. By 1500, presses in Europe had printed nearly 10 million books. Printing made it easier to make many copies of a book. As a result, written works became available far and wide. Books were printed in English, French, Spanish, Italian, or German. More people began to read. The Bible was a popular book. After reading the bible some people formed new ideas about Christianity. These ideas were different from the official teachings of the Church. The Renaissance prompted changes in both art and society. Artists and writers portrayed people in more realistic ways and celebrated individual achievement. In a larger sense the Renaissance opened up a world of new ideas to people and led them to examine and question things more closely.

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Chapter 17 Section 3. Luther Leads the Reformation

We learned about the Northern Renaissance. Now we learn about how Luther led the Reformation.

Causes of the Reformation

By 1500 the influence of the Church on the lives of people had weakened. Some people resented paying taxes to support the Church in Rome. Others sharply criticized the Church for some of its practices. Popes seemed more concerned with luxury and political power than with spiritual matters. The lower clergy had faults too. Many local clergy lacked education and were not able to teach people. Some lived immoral lives. Reformers urged the Church to change its ways to become more spiritual and humble. Christian Humanists, such as, Erasmus and Thomas Moore, added their voices to calls for change. In the early 1500s the calls grew louder.

Luther Challenges the Church

In 1517, a German monk, Martin Luther protested the actions of a church official. That person was selling indulgences. An indulgence was a kind of forgiveness, by paying money to the Church people thought they could win salvation. Luther challenged this practice and others. He posted a written protest on the door of a castle Church. His words were printed and spread throughout Germany. This was the beginning of the Reformation, a movement of reform that led to the founding of new Christian churches.

The Response to Luther

Pope Leo X punished Luther for his views. But, he refused to change them. Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, a strong Catholic, called Luther an outlaw. Luther's books were burned. But it was too late. Many of his ideas were already being practiced. The Lutheran Church started around 1522. In 1524, peasants in Germany hoped to use Luther's ideas about Christian freedom to change society. They demanded an end to serfdom, a condition like slavery. When it was not granted they revolted. Luther disagreed with this revolt. German princes killed 1,000s in putting the revolt down. Some nobles supported Luther's ideas. They saw a chance to weaken the Emperor's power over them. Other German princes joined forces against Luther's supporters. They signed an agreement to remain loyal to the pope and the emperor. Supporters of Luther's ideas protested this agreement. They were called the Protestants. Eventually the term protestant meant Christians who belonged to non-Catholic Churches. War broke out between Catholic and Protestant churches in Germany. It finally ended in 1555 with the Peace of Augsburg. This Treaty granted each Prince the right to decide whether his subjects would be Catholic or Protestant.

England Becomes Protestant

The Catholic Church faced another challenge to its power in England. Henry VIII the king was married to a Spanish princess. She gave birth to a daughter. England had never had a female ruler. Henry feared a Civil War would start if he had no son. He believed his wife was too old to have another child. He tried to get the pope to annul or put an end to the marriage so he could remarry. The pope refused. To remarry, Henry had to get out of the Catholic Church. In 1534, Henry had parliament pass laws that created the Church of England. These laws made the King or Queen not the pope head of the Church of England. Henry no longer had to obey the Pope. Henry remarried five times. His only son was from his third wife. One of Henry's daughters Elizabeth became Queen in 1558. She finished creating a separate English Church. The new church was called Anglican. It had some practices that would appeal to both Protestants and Catholics. In this way Elizabeth hoped to end religious conflict.

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Chapter 17 Section 4. The Reformation Continues

We learned about how Luther led the Reformation. Now we learn about how Reform continued.

Calvin Continues the Reformation

Protestantism arose elsewhere in the 1530s, this time under the leadership of John Calvin. Calvin wrote an important book that gave structure to Protestant beliefs. He taught that people are sinful by nature. He also taught pre-destination, the idea that God determines before hand who will be saved. The religion based on Calvin's teachings is called Calvinism. Calvin created a theocracy in Geneva Switzerland. It was government run by religious leaders. It had strict rules of behavior that required people to lead religious lives. Anyone who preached different religious ideas might be burned at the stake. A preacher named John Knox, was impressed by Calvin's high moral ideals. Knox put these ideals into practice in Scotland. This was the beginning of the Presbyterian Church. Others in Holland, France and Switzerland adopted Calvin's ideas as well. In France, his followers were called Huguenots. Conflict between them and the Catholics often turned into violence. In 1572, mobs killed about 12,000 Huguenots.

Other Protestant Reformers

Another new Protestant group was the Anabaptists. They preached that people should be baptized into the faith as adults. Anabaptists also taught that the Church and State should be separate. In addition they refuse to fight in wars. Many women played key roles in the Reformation. They included Marguerite of Navarre. She protected John Calvin from being killed for his beliefs. Katherina von Bora was the wife of Martin Luther. She supported an equal role for women in marriage.

The Catholic Reformation

Protestant Churches grew all over Europe. To keep Catholics loyal, the Catholic Church took steps to change itself. This was called the Catholic Reformation. One Catholic Reformer was a Spanish noble named Ignatius. He founded a new group in the church based on deep devotion to Jesus. Members of this group, called the Jesuits, started schools across Europe. They sent missionaries to convert people to Catholicism. In addition they tried to stop the spread of protestant faiths in Europe. Two popes of the 1500s helped to bring about changes in the Church. Pope Paul III set up a kind of court called the Inquisition. It was charged with finding, trying and punishing people who broke the rules of the Church. He also called a meeting of church leaders, the Council of Trent. The Council, which met in 1545, passed these doctrines. The churches interpretation of the bible was final. Christians needed good works as well as faith to win salvation. The Bible and the Church had equal authority in setting out Christian beliefs. Indulgences were valid expressions of faith. The next pope, Paul IV, put these doctrines into practice. These actions helped to revive the Church and survive the challenge of the Protestants.

Legacy of the Reformation

The Reformation had an enduring impact on society. In the wake of the movement Protestant Churches flourished. Meanwhile the Catholic Church became more unified as a result of the reforms started at the Council of Trent. The Reformation caused an overall decline in the authority of the Church. As a result, individual Monarchs and states gained greater power. This in turn led to the development of modern nation states. Women thought that their status in society might improve as a result of the reformation. This did not happen, women were still limited to the concerns of house and family.