WHI.13 The Renaissance

**The Renaissance: A Rebirth**

Europe first emerged from the darkness of the Dark Ages in Northern Italy

The Renaissance literally means “rebirth”

Return to trade, commerce, literature, and art

The three key Italian city states were Florence, Venice, and Genoa

Today part of the country of Italy, though at time of the Renaissance were their own separate city-states governed as republics.

**Florence, Venice, and Genoa**

Center of the Renaissance because they had access to, and were in the middle of, trade routes between northern Europe and the Middle East

Cities became rich because of all of trade taking place there

Many of the rich citizens put their money into art & architecture within their towns

**Cause of the Increase in Trade**

When Crusaders (Christian fighters) were in the Middle East fighting the Crusades, they were exposed to all sorts of trade goods they didn’t have in Europe- silk, cotton, spices, and others

Upon their return to Europe, they desired those spices to perk up their bland meals, and cotton and silk clothing over wool.

This led to an increase in trade, especially with the Middle East.

**Renaissance Era Economy**

All of this increased trade led to new ways of doing business, including banking and letters of credit.

Banks were created for the first time, an organization where you would deposit your money for security, and then that bank would then loan your money out to other people for them to make purchases or investments.

Those loans made by banks were called letters of credit. Basically, they were an old fashioned credit card. A letter of credit was a document from a bank that promised the seller of goods that a bank would pay them back, instead of the buyer. The buyer would then pay the bank back separately.

**The Church’s Objections**

The way banks make their money is through charging interest on the money they loan out.

So, you borrow $10,000 to buy a car. The bank isn’t going to just give lend you the money to be nice, they need to make something off it. So they charge you 5% interest, meaning when you pay them back, you actually give them $10,500. That extra $500 is where the bank makes money.

Today, we call that interest. During the Renaissance it was called usury.

The Roman Catholic Church objected to usury.

Meaning, if you charged interest, or usury, you were going against the church.

People in Northern Italy decided they liked making money more than listening to the church, so that area became more secular- or less religious.

**Machiavelli’s *The Prince***

Early modern treatise (instruction manual) on government still used today

How to get and keep power

Supports absolute power (absolute rule) of the ruler

Maintains that the end justifies the means

Advises that one should not only do good if possible, but do evil when necessary

**Renaissance** **Art**

There were a lot of new ideas that came out of the Renaissance (art, philosophy and literature)

Patrons were rich citizens of the cities who sponsored artistic work that bettered their cities

Medieval art and literature focused on the Church and salvation, while Renaissance art and literature focused on individuals and worldly matters, along with Christianity.

**Leonardo da Vinci**

Was an artist, inventor and man of many talents

Painted some of the most well known paintings ever, the Mona Lisa and The Last Supper

**Michelangelo**

Artist and sculptor around the same time as Leonardo da Vinci

Painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican and sculpted the statue of The David

**Humanism**

Humanism is a type of philosophy, or way of thinking that rose up during the Renaissance

Humanism is about focusing on the individual or human, rather than divine or supernatural matters. Humanist beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human beings, emphasize common human needs, and seek solely rational ways of solving human problems, not relying on God

Throwback to old Greek and Roman literature

Supported by wealthy patrons

**Petrarch**

The Italian Petrarch is thought to be the Father of Humanism

Wrote sonnets, a type of poem, talking about the greatness of man and his potential to do great work

**The Northern Renaissance**

The ideas and themes of the Italian Renaissance moved north into Europe along with trade

These ideas changed a little as people of different cultures (Germany, France, England) adopted and adapted Renaissance ideas.

We call this the Northern Renaissance

As trade moved from Italy into areas in northern Europe, so did money

This wealth allowed for Renaissance ideas to take hold

Northern Renaissance thinkers merged humanism with Christianity

Ideas were spread thanks to the invention of the printing press

**The Printing Press**

Invented by Johannes Gutenberg in Germany in 1440

Has movable type to print multiple pages at once

First major printing was a bible, referred to as the Gutenberg Bible

Revolution in communication

**Northern Renaissance Writers**

**Sir Thomas More**

Wrote *Utopia*

Book about the perfect society

**Erasmus**

Wrote The Praise of Folly

Pointed out problems in the church