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Relationship between renaissance period and medieval period

The Renaissance was a period in European history, from the 14th to the 17th century, regarded as the cultural bridge between the Middle Ages and modern history . It started as a cultural movement in Italy in the Late Medieval period and later spread to the rest of Europe, marking the beginning of the Early Modern Age. The intellectual basis of the Renaissance was its own invented version of humanism , derived from the rediscovery of classical Greek philosophy, such as that of Protagoras , who said that "Man is the measure of all things." This new thinking became manifest in art, architecture, politics, science and literature. Early examples were the development of perspective in oil painting and the recycled knowledge of how to make concrete . Although the invention of metal movable type sped the dissemination of ideas from the later 15th century, the changes of the Renaissance were not uniformly experienced across Europe.

As a cultural movement, the Renaissance encompassed innovative flowering of Latin and vernacular literatures, beginning with the 14th-century resurgence of learning based on classical sources, which contemporaries credited to Petrarch ; the development of linear perspective and other techniques of rendering a more natural reality in painting ; and gradual but widespread educational reform. In politics, the Renaissance contributed to the development of the customs and conventions of diplomacy, and in science to an increased reliance on observation and inductive reasoning . Although the Renaissance saw revolutions in many intellectual pursuits, as well as social and political upheaval, it is perhaps best known for its artistic developments and the contributions of such polymaths as Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, who inspired the term "Renaissance man".

The Renaissance began in Florence, in the 14th century. Various theories have been proposed to account for its origins and characteristics, focusing on a variety of factors including the social and civic peculiarities of Florence at the time: its political structure; the patronage of its dominant family, the Medici; and the migration of Greek scholars and texts to Italy following the Fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks . Other major centres were northern Italian city-states such as Venice, Genoa, Milan, Bologna, and finally Rome during the Renaissance Papacy .

The Renaissance has a long and complex historiography, and, in line with general scepticism of discrete periodizations, there has been much debate among historians reacting to the 19th-century glorification of the "Renaissance" and individual culture heroes as "Renaissance men", questioning the usefulness of Renaissance as a term and as a historical delineation. The art historian Erwin Panofsky observed of this resistance to the concept of "Renaissance":

Some observers have called into question whether the Renaissance was a cultural "advance" from the Middle Ages, instead seeing it as a period of pessimism and nostalgia for classical antiquity, while social and economic historians, especially of the *longue durée*, have instead focused on the continuity between the two eras, which are linked, as Panofsky observed, "by a

thousand ties". The word Renaissance, literally meaning "Rebirth" in French, first appeared in English in the 1830s. The word also occurs in Jules Michelet 's 1855 work, *Histoire de France*. The word Renaissance has also been extended to other historical and cultural movements, such as the Carolingian Renaissance and the Renaissance of the 12th century.

The Renaissance was a cultural movement that profoundly affected European intellectual life in the early modern period . Beginning in Italy, and spreading to the rest of Europe by the 16th century, its influence was felt in literature, philosophy, art, music, politics, science, religion, and other aspects of intellectual inquiry. Renaissance scholars employed the humanist method in study, and searched for realism and human emotion in art.

Renaissance humanists such as Poggio Bracciolini sought out in Europe's monastic libraries the Latin literary, historical, and oratorical texts of Antiquity , while the Fall of Constantinople (1453) generated a wave of émigré Greek scholars bringing precious manuscripts in ancient Greek , many of which had fallen into obscurity in the West. It is in their new focus on literary and historical texts that Renaissance scholars differed so markedly from the medieval scholars of the Renaissance of the 12th century , who had focused on studying Greek and Arabic works of natural sciences, philosophy and mathematics, rather than on such cultural texts.

Origin of Renaissance Period

Many argue that the ideas characterizing the Renaissance had their origin in late 13th-century Florence , in particular with the writings of Dante Alighieri (1265–1321) and Petrarch (1304–1374), as well as the paintings of Giotto di Bondone (1267–1337). Some writers date the Renaissance quite precisely; one proposed starting point is 1401, when the rival geniuses Lorenzo Ghiberti and Filippo Brunelleschi competed for the contract to build the bronze doors for the Baptistery of the Florence Cathedral (Ghiberti won). Others see more general competition between artists and polymaths such as Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Donatello, and Masaccio for artistic commissions as sparking the creativity of the Renaissance. Yet it remains much debated why the Renaissance began in Italy, and why it began when it did. Accordingly, several theories have been put forward to explain its origins.

During the Renaissance, money and art went hand in hand. Artists depended entirely on patrons while the patrons needed money to foster artistic talent. Wealth was brought to Italy in the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries by expanding trade into Asia and Europe. Silver mining in Tyrol increased the flow of money. Luxuries from the Eastern world, brought home during the Crusades, increased the prosperity of Genoa and Venice. Jules Michelet defined the 16th-century Renaissance in France as a period in Europe's cultural history that represented a break from the Middle Ages, creating a modern understanding of humanity and its place in the world.

Characteristics of the Renaissance Period

Humanism

In some ways humanism was not a philosophy but a method of learning. In contrast to the medieval scholastic mode, which focused on resolving contradictions between authors, humanists would study ancient texts in the original and appraise them through a combination of reasoning and empirical evidence. Humanist education was based on the programme of 'Studia Humanitatis', the study of five humanities: poetry, grammar, history, moral philosophy and rhetoric. Although historians have sometimes struggled to define humanism

precisely, most have settled on "a middle of the road definition... the movement to recover, interpret, and assimilate the language, literature, learning and values of ancient Greece and Rome". Above all, humanists asserted "the genius of man ... the unique and extraordinary ability of the human mind".

Humanist scholars shaped the intellectual landscape throughout the early modern period. Political philosophers such as Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas More revived the ideas of Greek and Roman thinkers and applied them in critiques of contemporary government. Pico della Mirandola wrote the "manifesto" of the Renaissance, the Oration on the Dignity of Man, a vibrant defence of thinking. Matteo Palmieri (1406–1475), another humanist, is most known for his work *Della vita civile* ("On Civic Life"; printed 1528), which advocated civic humanism, and for his influence in refining the Tuscan

vernacular to the same level as Latin. Palmieri drew on Roman philosophers and theorists, especially Cicero, who, like Palmieri, lived an active public life as a citizen and official, as well as a theorist and philosopher and also Quintilian.

Art

Renaissance art marks a cultural rebirth at the close of the Middle Ages and rise of the Modern world. One of the distinguishing features of Renaissance art was its development of highly realistic linear perspective. Giotto di Bondone (1267–1337) is credited with first treating a painting as a window into space, but it was not until the demonstrations of architect Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446) and the subsequent writings of Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472) that perspective was formalized as an artistic technique. The development of perspective was part of a wider trend towards realism in the arts.

Painters developed other techniques, studying light, shadow, and, famously in the case of Leonardo da Vinci, human anatomy. Underlying these changes in artistic method was a renewed desire to depict the beauty of nature and to unravel the axioms of aesthetics, with the works of Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael representing artistic pinnacles that were much imitated by other artists. Other notable artists include Sandro Botticelli, working for the Medici in Florence, Donatello, another Florentine, and Titian in Venice, among others.

Science

The rediscovery of ancient texts and the invention of printing democratized learning and allowed a faster propagation of ideas. In the first period of the Italian Renaissance, humanists favoured the study of humanities over natural philosophy or applied mathematics, and their reverence for classical sources further enshrined the Aristotelian and Ptolemaic views of the universe. Writing around 1450, Nicholas Cusanus anticipated the heliocentric worldview of Copernicus, but in a philosophical fashion. Science and art were intermingled in the early Renaissance, with polymath artists such as Leonardo da Vinci making observational drawings of anatomy and nature. Da Vinci set up controlled experiments in water flow, medical dissection, and systematic study of movement and aerodynamics, and he devised principles of research method that led Fritjof Capra to classify him as the "father of modern science". Other examples of Da Vinci's contribution during this period include machines designed to saw marbles and lift monoliths and new discoveries in acoustics, botany, geology, anatomy and mechanics.

Medieval Period

In the history of Europe, the Middle Ages or Medieval Period lasted from the 5th to the 15th century. It began with the fall of the Western Roman Empire and merged into the Renaissance and

the Age of Discovery . The Middle Ages is the middle period of the three traditional divisions of Western history: classical antiquity, the medieval period, and the modern period. The medieval period is itself subdivided into the Early, High, and Late Middle Ages. Population decline, counterurbanisation, invasion, and movement of peoples, which had begun in Late Antiquity , continued in the Early Middle Ages. The large-scale movements of the Migration Period , including various Germanic peoples , formed new kingdoms in what remained of the Western Roman Empire. In the seventh century, North Africa and the Middle East—once part of the Byzantine Empire —came

under the rule of the Umayyad Caliphate, an Islamic empire, after conquest by Muhammad's successors. Although there were substantial changes in society and political structures, the break with classical antiquity was not complete.

The still-sizeable Byzantine Empire survived in the east and remained a major power. The empire's law code, the Corpus Juris Civilis or "Code of Justinian", was rediscovered in Northern Italy in 1070 and became widely admired later in the Middle Ages. In the West, most kingdoms incorporated the few extant Roman institutions. Monasteries were founded as campaigns to Christianise pagan Europe continued. The Franks, under the Carolingian dynasty , briefly established the Carolingian Empire during the later 8th and early 9th century. It covered much of Western Europe but later succumbed to the pressures of internal civil wars combined with external invasions— Vikings from the north, Hungarians from the east, and Saracens from the south.

During the High Middle Ages, which began after 1000, the population of Europe increased greatly as technological and agricultural innovations allowed trade to flourish and the Medieval Warm Period climate change allowed crop yields to increase. Manorialism , the organisation of peasants into villages that owed rent and labour services to the nobles, and feudalism , the political structure whereby knights and lower-status nobles owed military service to their overlords in return for the right to rent from lands and manors, were two of the ways society was organised in the High Middle Ages. The Crusades , first preached in 1095, were military attempts by Western European Christians to regain control of the Holy Land from Muslims. Kings became the heads of centralised nation states, reducing crime and violence but making the ideal of a unified Christendom more distant. Intellectual life was marked by scholasticism, a philosophy that emphasised joining faith to reason, and by the founding of universities. The

theology of Thomas Aquinas , the paintings of Giotto , the poetry of Dante and Chaucer , the travels of Marco Polo , and the Gothic architecture of cathedrals such as Chartres are among the outstanding achievements toward the end of this period and into the Late **Middle Ages**.

The Late Middle Ages was marked by difficulties and calamities including famine, plague, and war, which significantly diminished the population of Europe; between 1347 and 1350, the Black Death killed about a third of Europeans. Controversy, heresy , and the Western Schism within the Catholic Church paralleled the interstate conflict, civil strife, and peasant revolts that occurred in the kingdoms. Cultural and technological developments transformed European society, concluding the Late Middle Ages and beginning the early modern period.

Characteristics of Medieval Period

New Societies

The political structure of Western Europe changed with the end of the united Roman Empire.

Although the movements of peoples during this period are usually described as "invasions", they were not just military expeditions but migrations of entire peoples into the empire. Such movements were aided by the refusal of the Western Roman elites to support the army or pay the taxes that would have allowed the military to suppress the migration. The emperors of the 5th century were often controlled by military strongmen such as Stilicho (d. 408), Aetius (d. 454), Aspar (d. 471), Ricimer (d. 472), or Gundobad (d. 516), who were partly or fully of non-Roman background. When the line of Western emperors ceased, many of the kings who replaced them were from the same background. Inter-marriage between the new kings and the Roman elites was common. This led to a fusion of Roman culture with the customs of the invading tribes, including the popular assemblies that allowed free male tribal members more say in political matters than was common in the Roman state. Material artefacts left by the Romans and the invaders are often similar, and tribal items were often modelled on Roman objects. Much of the scholarly and written culture of the new kingdoms was also based on Roman intellectual traditions. An important difference was the gradual loss of tax revenue by the new polities. Many of the new political entities no longer supported their armies through taxes, instead relying on granting them land or rents. This meant there was less need for large tax revenues and so the taxation systems decayed. Warfare was common between and within the kingdoms. Slavery declined as the supply weakened, and society became more rural.

Western Society

In Western Europe, some of the older Roman elite families died out while others became more involved with ecclesiastical than secular affairs. Values attached to Latin scholarship and education mostly disappeared, and while literacy remained important, it became a practical skill rather than a sign of elite status. In the 4th century, Jerome (d. 420) dreamed that God rebuked him for spending more time reading Cicero than the Bible. By the 6th century, Gregory of Tours (d. 594) had a similar dream, but instead of being chastised for reading Cicero, he was chastised for learning shorthand. By the late 6th century, the principal means of religious instruction in the Church had become music and art rather than the book. Most intellectual efforts went towards imitating classical scholarship, but some original works were created, along with now-lost oral compositions. The writings of Sidonius Apollinaris (d. 489), Cassiodorus (d. c. 585), and Boethius (d. c. 525) were typical of the age.

Changes also took place among laymen, as aristocratic culture focused on great feasts held in halls rather than on literary pursuits. Clothing for the elites was richly embellished with jewels and gold. Lords and kings supported entourages of fighters who formed the backbone of the military forces. Family ties within the elites were important, as were the virtues of loyalty, courage, and honour. These ties led to the prevalence of the feud in aristocratic society, examples of which included those related by Gregory of Tours that took place in Merovingian Gaul. Most feuds seem to have ended quickly with the payment of some sort of compensation. Women took part in aristocratic society mainly in their roles as wives and mothers of men, with the role of mother of a ruler being especially prominent in Merovingian Gaul. In Anglo-Saxon society the lack of many child rulers meant a lesser role for women as queen mothers, but this was compensated for by the increased role played by abbesses of monasteries. Only in Italy does it appear that women were always considered under the protection and control of a male relative.

The Rise of Islam

Religious beliefs in the Eastern Empire and Iran were in flux during the late sixth and early

seventh centuries. Judaism was an active proselytising faith, and at least one Arab political leader converted to it. Christianity had active missions competing with the Persians' Zoroastrianism in seeking converts, especially among residents of the Arabian Peninsula. All these strands came together with the emergence of Islam in Arabia during the lifetime of Muhammad (d. 632). After his death, Islamic forces conquered much of the Eastern Empire and Persia, starting with Syria in 634–635 and reaching Egypt in 640–641, Persia between 637 and 642, North Africa in the later seventh century, and the Iberian Peninsula in 711. By 714, Islamic forces controlled much of the peninsula in a region they called Al-Andalus. The Islamic conquests reached their peak in the mid-eighth century. The defeat of Muslim forces at the Battle of Tours in 732 led to the reconquest of southern France by the Franks, but the main reason for the halt of Islamic growth in Europe was the overthrow of the Umayyad Caliphate and its replacement by the Abbasid Caliphate. The Abbasids moved their capital to Baghdad and were more concerned with the Middle East than Europe, losing control of sections of the Muslim lands. Umayyad descendants took over the Iberian Peninsula, the Aghlabids controlled North Africa, and the Tulunids became rulers of Egypt. By the middle of the 8th century, new trading patterns were emerging in the Mediterranean; trade between the Franks and the Arabs replaced the old Roman economy. Franks traded timber, furs, swords and slaves in return for silks and other fabrics, spices, and precious metals from the Arabs.

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