

# Italian renaissance essay

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The Renaissance period began in the middle of the destruction of the Black Death, where the most effected part in Europe was Italy. During the Renaissance Period art, literature, and the human living was boosted and given much significance. Renaissance brought extreme change more in Italy, than other areas of Europe. Dramatic changes were found in the renewal of classical art and literature. The entire Renaissance era can be divided into three phases: first from 1350 to 1400 where historical texts were discovered and a new approach was given to art, second phase from 1400 to 1500 which brought development in cultural behavior in the society and political matters were resolved and the issue became stable, and last phase was from 1500 to 1550 where the main issues were foreign invasions and circulation of the Italian Renaissance to the other regions of the west of Europe.

During the years 1350 to 1400, a great economic change was brought, which led to the expansion of markets. The wealthy capitalist got a chance to invest in large scales in land, clothes and agriculture. This increased the value of labor, which got a chance to improve their standards of living.

Demand for luxurious items increased and the markets had to expand the products by importing food stuff, art objects, silks and jewels. Hence, the Renaissance revived the culture of Italy. Poor people had been living difficult lives, including the children; and the males had to work as domestic servants or as apprentice workers. Poverty forced the entire family along with grandparents and servants to live in one house. Even the sons had to go for apprenticeship whereas the daughters were married if the parents were able to give dowry otherwise they would become household servants or nuns. They were married at the age of twenty to men, ten or more years or older

than them. After marriage women were only involved in giving birth to children one after the other, till either one of them died. The men could marry only after they get over with the household responsibilities. The delayed marriages in men led to sexual frustration which at times led to homosexuality, but those who got married adopted authoritative member of the family. Death always prevailed in the poor or middle class due to starvation in the Renaissance period. Another issue faced by the people of this era was the recurrent outburst of the plague which was not cured because of medical illiteracy, hence more people died because of the plague than of food shortage or hunger. Later on, the people who survived from the affects of plague lived better lives as they had more food supplies and hence nutritious diets. Moreover, these survivors were given support by various social groups and relatives, where the Church played the major role. The solidarity of the individuals who received support from the society is portrayed in the work of art that expresses civic pride.

Art flourished during the Renaissance era and became a business and great geniuses were created who were experts in architecture, sculpture and paintings. Earning wealth through this business encouraged part of the educational system. Famous artists, sculptors and architects, such as Brunelleschi, Donatello, Masaccio, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and so on have presented the most exhilarating pieces of art using various techniques. Brunelleschi brought forward the idea of the dome and round windows which brought new style to architecture. Donatello's sculptures were considered having supreme expressions of the spirit of the era. Masaccio was the one to bring forwards three dimensional illusions through

his paintings. Leonardo da Vinci was considered a master of scientific speculation, composition and portraiture. Michelangelo produced many masterpieces that were considered to be expressive and majestic. The art of the Renaissance expressed the image of society which had led to its creation. There are a number of arts created by the famous artists in the era, namely, The Last Supper, Mona Lisa, the sculpture of David and many more that are still famous in the modern world. Furthermore, the personality such as Machiavelli, an Italian historian, politician, diplomat, humanist, philosopher and writer is also found in this era. He was assigned military and diplomatic responsibilities in the Florentine government. During 1498 and 1512 he was out of power and wrote “The Prince” in which he describes the characteristics of power politics by the ruling party in the Renaissance Italy. The ruler would do anything, even at times become unethical to restore his power. Through this literary masterpiece he brought religious and military changes. His main aim was to glorify state building.

Italy was divided into city states where every city tried to compete with its neighbors both politically and militarily. The peninsula was divided into five units which politically influenced the affairs of Italy. The three northern units, Florence, Venice and Milan were republics. The Papal States was ruled from Rome and was divided into semi-independent cities. The Kingdom of Naples and the Island of Sicily in southern Italy were ruled by the Spanish monarchs. The political differences, foreign invasions and internal disputes created chaos in Italy. Later in the 15th Century a centralized government brought development and established a new military government in order to seize internal disputes, which led to the alliances of Milan with Florence and

Venice with Naples. Sforza overthrew Visconti in Milan. Venice took control of the western parts of Italy and balanced trade losses which led to the fall of Constantinople. The fourteen century catastrophes came to an end with the rise in Florentine economy and the revival of the families who could take control over public offices and banks.

Renaissance period brought a political, cultural and economic control of Italy upon West part of Europe. Political empires of five Italian states due to tenuousness were vulnerable because of the growth of the Ottoman Empire, who increased their control over Balkan peninsula all the way till Greece. On the other hand the Italian states could not rise above their internal disputes which abolished the balance of the political power. This resulted in successive foreign invasions, such as the Northern areas were occupied by Charles VIII of France in coalition with Milan. The remaining powers allied with Spain and Holy Roman Empire to compensate the French authority. Hence, to conclude, the Italian Renaissance came to an end due to their internal Italian wars.