

Renaissance comparison essay



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Renaissance Comparison Essay Tom Barnes HUM/205 3-21-2010 Janet Florick

In the broader scheme of things, the social changes in Italy were inspired, as we've seen, by Humanism. Italian artists, writers and philosophers were driven to study Classical antiquity and explore man's supposed capacity for rational choice. They believed that Humanism led to more dignified and worthy humans. In the north (possibly in part because the north did not have works of antiquity from which to learn), change was brought about by a different rationale.

Thinking minds in the north were more concerned with religious reform, feeling that Rome (from whom they were physically distanced) had strayed too far from Christian values. In fact, as northern Europe became more openly rebellious over the authority of the Church, art took a decidedly secular turn. This plays a major role in how the arts impacted and what type of relationship the arts had in the culture of both the North and Italy. Another common factor of both during the Renaissance was the Guild system.

The Guild system started to arise during the Gothic period, Guilds were the best path a man could go down to learn a craft, be it painting, sculpture, or saddle making. These Guilds were very similar to the trade unions of our modern day. Training in any specialty was long, rigorous and comprised of multiple steps. These Guilds had a self-policing policy, most of the money exchanging hands when works of art were commissioned and paid for went to the Guild members.

These Guild systems seemed to be more in place in Northern Europe than Italy. One last similarity of the two is they both had a definite artistic center.

In Italy it was Florence where all artists looked for inspiration and innovation. In Northern Europe it was Flanders which was part of then the Duchy of Burgundy. This was a thriving city which like Florence made its money in banking and wool. Each of these cultures had their own specific style.

Both cultures with similarities and differences set aside gave a new birth to the social and art movements in the world of that time period. These new movements are part of what has helped shape our modern era of art today.

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