

Renaissance and its meaning

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The name "Renaissance" meaning "rebirth" is given to a period of big cultural achievement spanning three centuries. The idea of rebirth lies at the heart of all Renaissance achievements: artists, scholars, scientists, philosophers, architects, and rulers believed that the way to greatness and illumination was through the study of the Golden Ages of the ancient Greeks and Romans. The Italian Renaissance was one of the most colorful, vital, and exciting times in history. The Renaissance in Italy flourished in the 15th century and spread throughout most of Europe in the 16th century. Italian life in the 14th and 15th centuries was lived among the vast ruins of the ancient Roman Empire. The cruelty and barbarism of Rome had long been forgotten, and the splendor of that lost civilization's ruins suggested a glorious, golden past. By contrast, the period following the fall of Rome in the fifth century seemed to some Italian intellectuals and artists to be a period of decline and decay. The Renaissance began in Florence, Italy in the late thirteenth century. It subsequently spread to the rest of Italy-particularly Rome-and then to northern Europe, where it developed somewhat differently. The best-known expressions of the bold new Renaissance spirit can be seen in the painting, sculpture, and architecture of the period. New attitudes were also found in education, politics, and philosophy; in Northern Europe new ideas of social reform developed. Although the Renaissance brought some benefits to the masses of people, such as the printing press, it was basically an elitist movement. A negative development of the age was deterioration in the power and position of women in society. Other artists during the Italian Renaissance period such as Giovanni Bellini began to express their art through secular and religious themes and ideas that were

exhibited through landscapes and portraits. As new styles of linear and aerial perspective and pyramid structures came into use by Francesca and Alberti, paintings were able to carry better-recognized religious ideas because the paintings became more transparent and more vivid in detail. Lastly, artists in the high Renaissance such as Da Vinci, Michaelangelo, Titian, and Raphael developed paintings in the narrative style that demonstrated the 'body in a more scientific and natural manner,' thus demonstrating the various aspects of every day life. Moreover, with the combinations of the two beneficiary notions, individualism and humanism, craftsmen were expected by society to be proficient in more than one profession such as literature, sculpture, architecture, and particularly art.