

Introduction a series
of events, including
her



Introduction

The renaissance era refers to the period between the fourteenth century and the seventeenth century when a transformational wave moved across Europe. This paper seeks to discuss the history of the renaissance period. The paper will look at the history of some people and events that took place during the period.

King Arthur's Biography

King Arthur was born in Britain in the region of Tintagel. Information about his time of birth is not clearly defined. It is however agreed that Arthur was the only son to Uther Pendrago and Igraine. With his birth coming at a time when magic was a much developed practice, Arthur's birth is believed to have been prophesied and a product of magic which was enlisted by his father.

Arthur was upon his birth taken away from his parents, subject to the agreement that his father, Uther, made with Merlin the magician, that Arthur would grow as Merlin wanted. Arthur was therefore taken care of Sir Ector who nourished the boy (Cutler, 2009). Even though Arthur was raised away from his father, nature also later dictated this as his father died, in a battle when Arthur was still a child.

Arthur received the help of Merlin to reclaim the kinship of his father. Using his magic, Merlin had "set a sword in a stone" and made a contest out of it from the contenders of the kinship (Caerleon, n. d.). The person who withdrew the sword would become the king. It was Arthur who managed to by chance withdraw the sword thus becoming king after his father.

On taking the throne, King Arthur organized his group and fought Saxons who had been advancing to take over the country. King Arthur then built a strong emperor at Camelot where with his knights (Caerleon, n. d.). Arthur also led the search for the Holy Grail, which they believed would help cure all diseases. A civil war, however, broke in the territory and Arthur was critically wounded. He was sneaked away from the battle and treated though his body is then believed to have mysteriously disappeared (Caerleon, n. d.).

Queen Mary (Bloody Mary)'s Biography

Queen Mary, also known as Mary Tudor was born in the year 1516 to king Henry the eighth and Catherine Aragon. She was the only child who managed to survive past child hood. Mary was accorded a superior education under which she learnt many languages among them: Latin, French, Spanish, and Italian among others. She was also talented in arts and had passion in music apart from embroidery. Mary was forced to live separately from her parents who were to be divorced due to domestic wrangles. Her mother had not been able to give birth to a boy, an issue that did not please the king.

The life of Mary changed for worse as the differences between her parents spilled over to her. She became a victim of her father's harsh treatments. She was for example forbidden from communicating with her mother. The turn of events saw Mary loose her status as a princes and value and respect that was accorded to her reduced. She was later ordered out of her special residence and taken into her step mother's house where she was highly humiliated. In the new residence, Mary's jewelry was taken from her and her

servants withdrawn. A series of events, including her mother's death, occurred before she could be allowed back into the king's court.

At the age of thirty seven, Mary was crowned the queen of England. After being crowned, Mary repealed of her parents' divorce through parliament. Her marriage to Philip, a Spaniard, however shadowed her throne as her subjects never trusted strangers and feared being ruled by external forces. Mary also moved to restore papal supremacy in England. However, there existed resentments and rebellion from protestant churches leading to her move to order the burning of protestant church leaders who led the opposing moves. She later died and was replaced by her half-sister (Home, 2011).

Why King Arthur was Instrumental to Change

King Arthur is credited for peace that was realized in England during his reign.

At the time of his rule and even prior, the territory was under constant attacks from enemies. Arthur undertook missions of war in his steps to defend the British territory from its enemies. Arthur subdued his enemies through the battles using his mysterious sword that he had received from a hand that had come from under water in a lake. It is upon the establishment of his power to crush enemies that Britain enjoyed " a long period of peace and security" (Lacy, 2001). King Arthur was therefore instrumental in the transformation of security and peace that was later experienced in the territory after he instilled fear upon his enemies (Lacy, 2001).

Why Queen Mary was Instrumental to Change

Mary is significantly recognized to have brought about religious changes in England during her time as the queen.

Being a strong catholic faithful, Mary took it as her responsibility to restore the position of the Catholic Church which had been over time eroded. Among the changes realized at the time was the restoration of pope as the head of the church in England. The authority of the pope and the Catholic Church had been compromised by Mary's father and her half brother that was aligned to the protestant churches. Mary reversed the changes that had been done by her father and half brother to favor the protestant churches by reestablishing the catholic mass and banning practices like the holly communion. Those who protested Mary's changes were burned in an act that killed about three hundred people (History, 2011).

The Black Plague

The black plague, also referred to as bubonic plague was caused by a type of fleas that inhabits rat's bodies. When bitten by the fleas, a deadly disease would be injected into a person's body. The disease originated from China through trade interaction, the plague widely spread in Europe and killed many people.

In England alone, and in a span of two years, the plague killed about one and a half million people out of the then four million population of England. Since the plague had no cure, people were grounded with starvation as outsiders were also afraid to interact with the plagued community. After the plague, the demand for laborers to work in farms was high and the local rulers

encouraged movement of peasants from their homes into the lord's fields to provide labor in their farms. Movements of people were by then restricted by feudal laws which provided that peasants were to move from their homes only on permissions from their lords. The movements were further restricted after the plague to enable the lords control the peasants who were their source of labor. The statute of laborers which were introduced to control the movements of people resulted to a revolution by the peasants.

The plague is for this reason perceived to have been instrumental in the revolution (History, 2011).

Battle of Agincourt

The battle of Agincourt was a war fought between the English and the French in the year 1415. The number of the French army was so high compared to the English force. However, the French were not as organized as the English and the abrupt raid by the English gave the French a surprising defeat. The result of the battle was the mass destruction of the French troops who were either killed or held captives by the English.

The war left France a weak territory as most of its royal leaders died in the battle. France then broke into civil war that further weakened it. As a result, a treaty was later signed that recognized Henry, the English king as the heir of the French kinship. There was therefore a change in the French leadership (Gumm, n.

d.).

Impacts of the Invention Of the Printing Press and Telescope

The printing press was invented in the fifteenth century as a result of numerous developments that ranged from trade to other printing elements such as block printing and developments in inks. One of the impacts of the press was the improved communications that enhanced the spread of information among people and places. The effects of the invention of the printing press were the spread of religious views among European religious activists in the fifteenth and sixteenth century. The establishment of the printing press helped to a great extent in facilitating religious revolutions. Europe was predominantly made up of Roman Catholic religion and a small percentage of Jewish religion by the time of the invention.

There was however protestant developments that were fueled by the press and this yielded a number of divisions in the religion arena. By the sixteenth century, more faiths such as the Lutheran, Calvinist among others had spread throughout Europe by the aid of the printing press. The discovery therefore had impacts in the religious developments. The development of the printing press also facilitated the development in science. It enhanced communications of scientific discoveries for comparisons and as well improved the studies in science just like in other academic fields (Crompton, 2004).

The invention of the telescope also had positive impacts on the study of science in astronomy. Before the invention of the telescope, scientists relied on the naked eye to make observations into the space. This put limitations regarding what could be observed. Upon its discovery, the telescope

facilitated a number of discoveries into the space. Telescopes have aided research into the universe revealing properties such as the dark matter.

It has therefore had a significant impact in research science (Melville, 2006).

Biography of Leonardo Da Vinci

Leonardo Da Vinci was born in April 1452 in the Italian town of Vinci. Da Vinci was a key figure in the revolutionary renaissance in Italy.

He was actively involved in a variety of fields such as “ architect, music, anatomy, inventions, engineering, sculptor and painting” (Italian, n. d.).

Leonardo was born to parents with a humble background. He spent his early live staying with his father.

His drawings captivated his father who then showed them to a painter by the name Andrea. Leonardo was then taken by Andrea into school to study painting. Leonardo was later employed in a workshop where he helped develop weapons for a Milan war.

He also served as a “ military architect and engineer” (Italian, n. d., p. 1) in Florence under the rule of Borgia (Italian, n. d.

). Leonardo made landmarks in many places and fields in his lifetime. He later died in the year 1519 in France (Italian, n. d.).

Techniques used in Mona Lisa Painting

One of the painting techniques used in the Mona Lisa painting is referred to as sfumato which was used to develop “ translucent brush strokes” (Davis,

2009). Da Vinci also employed a number of other techniques such as oil layering.

The sfumato technique was used to create the smiling expression and brush strokes. The techniques have helped in the preservation of the picture over a long period of time.

Essence of the Mona Lisa Work

The Mona Lisa picture is a reflection of the fashion that was encountered in Florence at the time.

The dressing style given to the portrait is a characteristic of the then style in that particular town (Gombrich, n. d). The Mona Lisa painting has also been described as that of a woman who is “ simply and conservatively dressed” (Benson, 2001, p. 1). The woman in the figure appears to be “ chaste, reserved, restrained and almost otherworldly” (Benson, 2001, p.

1). In view of Benson’s (2001) description of the painting, the Mona Lisa picture is a reflection of the ancient woman before the liberalization and empowerment of women. The picture described a woman who is not independent but rather submissive to some forces that she allows to control her life (Benson, 2001). The painting at the same time communicates a forecast in to the current time in which women are more confident of their stature. With “ nothing to hide and a direct gaze” (Benson, 2001, p.

1), Mona Lisa is a representation of a confident woman who is a characteristic of the present woman. It can therefore be concluded that the Mona Lisa painting was an integrated art that represented the society as at

that time as well as a projection of the society in later centuries in relation to the affairs of women in the society (Benson, 2001).

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