

PART VI RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION: FUSION OF THE ROOTS

Chapter 19 The Northern Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation

1. Humanism had spread to northern Europe by 1500.
2. Northern humanism directed its attention to ancient Christian text rather than the classical texts of Roman and Greek antiquity.

I. Erasmus (1463–1536)

1. Desiderius Erasmus was the leading northern humanist and the most important of his generation.
2. Erasmus believed the Church had overemphasized ritual at the expense of morals.
3. Erasmus also disapproved of the high status afforded the clergy compared with the laity.
4. Erasmus prepared an improved, more accurate translation of the New Testament than the *Vulgate*, which had been in use for over a thousand years.
5. Erasmus was the first great European writer to make use of the printing press.
6. Erasmus was very tolerant of differing views in theology but intolerant of evil conduct.

II. The Protestant Reformation

1. A broad spirit of Christian reform prevailed throughout northern Europe and not only with Erasmus and the humanists.
2. Intensive efforts were made to reform monastic orders.
3. Pietistic movements sought to infuse Christianity into the daily life of the laity.
4. Martin Luther was one of many reformers, but Luther not only attacked Church abuses but also Church doctrine.

A. Martin Luther (1483–1546)

1. Luther believed the church had distorted the truth of the Bible for over a thousand years.
2. He believed each person should have the right to read the Bible and interpret it for themselves.
3. Yet Luther was willing to persecute those whose interpretations differed from his own.
4. Luther believed that God predestines some individuals from all eternity to salvation.
5. Luther introduced a German language chorale into the Lutheran service which proved popular in attracting converts.

B. John Calvin (1509–1564)

1. The Calvinists were another important early Protestant sect.
2. Calvin, like Luther, believed in predestination.
3. Calvin focused on the duty of the elect to glorify God.
4. The Calvinists had more of a community spirited desire to fashion the world in a manner pleasing to God than did the Lutherans.

5. A multitude of Protestant sects sprung up which led to civil wars and other social disruptions in Europe for a 100 years.

III. Reform and Counter-Reform

1. There were a variety of reasons for the religious upheavals of the sixteenth century.
2. An expansion of the economy was not seen as having improved the lot of the lower classes.
3. Higher educational attainments overall had led to more questioning of the Church.
4. Humanists had challenged the interpretation and validity of sacred texts, undermining church authority.
5. The church reasserted itself and responded to the Reformation with the Counter-Reformation.
6. The church could count on Spain, the richest and most powerful nation in Europe, for support.
7. In addition, the church implemented a program of institutional reform during the "Council of Trent."
8. Two new agencies were formed to support the Counter-Reformation, the Jesuit Order and the Holy Office of the Roman Inquisition.

A. The Inquisition

1. The most famous inquisition was the Spanish Inquisition.
2. The Spanish Inquisition targeted *Conversos*, Jews, and Moors who had converted to Christianity in name only.
3. Other inquisitions had take place for centuries.
4. The Office of the Holy Inquisition was an effort by the papacy to investigate and prosecute heresy throughout the Catholic world.
5. The inquisition proved effective in keeping Protestantism and other doctrines from taking hold within Catholic populations.

B. The Jesuits

1. Founded by the Spanish knight Ignatius Loyola, the Jesuits were the right arm of the pope in the Counter-Reformation.
2. Their vows included loyalty to the papacy at all times.
3. This elite priestly vanguard promoted papal policies internationally and were the prime educators of the Catholic middle- and upper-classes.
4. The Jesuits were a crucial component of the Counter-Reformation.

C. Spanish Composer for the Roman Church: Cristóbal de Morales (C.1500-1553)

1. Spain was *the* model of Roman Catholic orthodoxy and conservatism.
2. Morales was the greatest Spanish composer of the early sixteenth century.
3. His compositions were brought to the New World by priests intent on Christianizing the natives.
4. Morales composed solemn and sober works for Catholic worship services, enriching them with passionate religious intensity.
5. He worked as a singer and composer for Spanish cathedrals and in Rome as a member of the papal chapel.
6. Hispanic music has been part of the culture of the New World longer than any other musical form except for those of Native Americans.

D. Music and the Counter-Reformation: Palestrina (c.1525–1594)

1. Palestrina was a leading advocate of policies of musical reform put forth at the Council of Trent.
2. The principle issue was the excessive use of counterpoint.

3. Palestrina was a master of composing counterpoint that was acceptable to the church.
4. Palestrina demonstrated that the church's music could and should be reformed but without abandoning counterpoint.

IV. Economic Expansion

1. As with the Crusades centuries earlier, the economic boom of the sixteenth century, combined with the population explosion, found an outlet in religious warfare.
2. One strong explanation for the economic boom was the gold and silver imported to Europe from Africa and the New World.
3. Agricultural and industrial production expanded partly through new technology.
4. Europe still had a large demand for Asian goods but made nothing the Asians needed or wanted.
5. Silver bullion mined by slave labor in the New World was used for trade in Asia.
6. Opium grown in India but controlled by Dutch traders also helped pay for Chinese goods for Europeans.

V. Cultural Relativism

1. The new discoveries and encounters with cultures in Africa, Asia, and America undermined the belief in absolute standards.
2. A small but increasing number of Europeans began to question the superiority of their culture over that of other areas of the world.

A. Montaigne (1533–1592)

1. Montaigne was one of the great minds of the late sixteenth century.
2. He was one of the first to understand and explain the cultural relativism that new discoveries made possible.
3. Of mixed religious heritage, Montaigne was indifferent to the religious passions and rivalries that swirled about him.
4. Montaigne dubbed his writings "essays" by which he meant "trials" or "experiences."
5. Each of Montaigne's essays was on philosophical personal and social topics.

VI. William Shakespeare (1564–1616) and the Late Renaissance

1. Like Montaigne, the world of Shakespeare under Queen Elizabeth I was a dynamic one with religious dissension and New World discoveries challenging cherished assumptions.
2. The dramatic power, philosophical depth, and superb characterization of Shakespeare's plays have never been equaled.
3. Shakespeare's plays are universal, yet many of the cultural and intellectual trends that developed during the Renaissance are synthesized in his work.
4. The whole span of Renaissance-Reformation culture is found in Shakespeare.

A. Shakespeare's Sonnets

1. Shakespeare's literary genius is unsurpassed.
2. Sonnet writing was a popular form for sixteenth-century English poets, including Shakespeare.
3. Shakespeare made the sonnet a vital English form and broke conventions of the form in terms of subject matter.

B. Shakespeare and the Theater

1. It is because of his plays that Shakespeare is regarded as the greatest writer in history.
2. Elizabethan England was a dynamic period in England where creativity could and did flourish.
3. New translations led to a resurrection of classical Greek theatre.
4. In England, actors began to have benefactors among the nobility.

C. *The Tempest*

1. *The Tempest* is believed to be based on a true story of shipwrecked British sailors in Bermuda.
2. Another influence on the play was Montaigne's *Of Cannibals*, which romanticized "primitive" society.
3. The play reflects the spirit of European exploration but also has a fantastic other-worldly quality.
4. The play includes more songs and musical pieces than any other play by Shakespeare.
5. *The Tempest* was Shakespeare's last play.

D. The Madrigal in England

1. The Italian madrigal flourished during the sixteenth century.
2. The compositions were words and music about love, war, birth, and death.
3. Lyrics came from the literati as well as street songs and bawdyhouses.
4. The invention of movable type made the music available to the middle class.