Chapter 1: Humanism – Detailed Study Notes

Introduction

Roger Bacon's Perspective:

"To neglect knowledge is to neglect virtue... Love is only born of knowledge. Reason is the guide of a right will. It is reason which leads us to salvation."

- Roger Bacon (13th century England): Emphasized rationalism and love through knowledge.
- Faced persecution for questioning feudal and church authority.
- Marked the ideological foundation of the Renaissance.

m Classical Roots of the Renaissance

Aspect	Greek Civilization	Roman Civilization
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Period 12th to 4th century BCE 7th century BCE to 5th CE

Area of Excellence Philosophy, Arts, Democracy Law, Architecture, Administration

Legacy Humanism, Rational Thought Legal Systems, Urban Planning

- These are referred to as Greco-Roman Civilizations the Classical Age.
- Their revival laid the foundation of the Renaissance (rebirth).

Rise of Renaissance in Italy

Factors Responsible:

Factor Details

Urbanization Cities like Florence, Milan, Venice were economically independent and

politically vibrant.

Wealthy Traders Mastered banking, insurance, and bookkeeping (the base of modern

accounting).

Cultural Due to the **Crusades**, Italian cities learned from Islamic and Byzantine

Exchange civilizations.

Plague Impact

The Black Death (1347–1351) led to decline of feudalism and

emergence of secular thinking.

Key Families & Their Cities:

Family City

Medici Florence

Sforza Milan

Orsini Naples

Farnese Parma

Visconti Milan

Humanism: Meaning and Features

Definition:

 A philosophical and cultural movement focused on human beings, their rationality, feelings, and dignity.

Key Features:

Humanism Promotes... In Contrast to...

Focus on Human Life Religious afterlife

Rational Inquiry Blind faith

Emotions, Individualism Collectivist Feudalism

Secular Knowledge Theology-centric education

• **Aristotle's ideas** reintroduced via Arab scholars (translated into Latin and regional languages).

Renaissance Art and Humanism

Painting

Feature Description

Realism Human anatomy and emotions shown realistically

Use of Oil Paint Depth, color, and shading were enhanced

Themes Biblical + human-centric stories

Famous Artists Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian

Famous Paintings Mona Lisa, The Last Supper, The Last Judgment

Comparison of Styles:

Medieval Painting Renaissance Painting

Symbolic, spiritual themes Human-centered, naturalistic

Flat, 2D appearance 3D effect, spatial depth

Lack of emotion **Emotional expression**

Sculpture

Artist Work **Features**

David, Gattamelata Secular heroism, realistic posture Donatello

Michelangelo David, Pietà Divine in human form, anatomical precision

Architecture

Architect Contribution

Brunelleschi Dome of Florence Cathedral

Michelangelo &

St. Peter's Basilica (Rome) **Bramante**

Domes, symmetry, Greco-Roman revival, replacement of Gothic **Features**

arches

Renaissance Literature

Core Traits:

- Written in regional languages
- Valued secularism, individual freedom, and realistic prose
- Rejected medieval scholasticism

Author	Work	Country	Features
Dante	The Divine Comedy	Italy	Human emotions, national pride
Petrarch	Sonnets	Italy	Father of Humanism
Boccaccio	The Decameron	Italy	Satire, realism
Machiavelli	i The Prince	Italy	Realpolitik, secular state
Erasmus	In Praise of Folly	Netherlands	s Critique of Church
Chaucer	Canterbury Tales	England	Society and human nature
Cervantes	Don Quixote	Spain	Idealism vs realism

Author Work Country Features

Rabelais Gargantua and Pantagruel France Humor, satire

Renaissance & Science

Astronomical Revolution:

Scientist Contribution

Copernicus Sun-centered (heliocentric) theory

Galileo Improved telescope, proved Copernican theory

Kepler Laws of planetary motion

Newton Theory of gravitation

Medical Advancements:

Scientist Contribution

Paracelsus Disease causes and cures

Vesalius Human anatomy via dissection

Historiography: Scientific History Writing

Medieval History Writing Renaissance Historiography

Based on religious beliefs Based on evidence

Chronicles by court historians Use of **archaeology**, coins, manuscripts

Events seen as divine acts Focus on human-centered narrative

- Historians: Flavio Biondo, Leonardo Bruni
- Introduced classification into: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern Periods

A Reformation and Counter-Reformation

Reformation

Aspect Details

Leader Martin Luther

Cause Protest against sale of indulgences

Aspect Details

Trigger Event 95 Theses on Wittenberg Church (1517)

Spread Calvin, Zwingli (Switzerland), Henry VIII (England)

Outcome **Protestant Churches**, weakening of Catholic power

Counter-Reformation

Aspect Details

Initiated by Catholic Church

Key Events Council of Trent, publication of Index, reestablishment of Inquisition

Key Figure Ignatius Loyola (Jesuits)

Methods Education, missionary work, internal reform

🔅 Conclusion: Impact of Humanism

Sphere Influence of Humanism

Art Realistic human forms, secular themes

Literature Vernacular prose, satire, drama

Science Empirical methods, astronomy, medicine

History Evidence-based, secular historiography

Religion Critical thinking, Reformation movement