

# A History of Europe, from the Renaissance to the French Revolution



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By

Soumen Dhar Choudhury

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## PREFACE

European history, stretching from 1300 to 1789, is one of the world's most engaging periods of history. Commencing with the commotions of the Reformation and ending with the French Revolutions, it was a time of fundamental change in society, religion, ideas and everyday life, but also one of solid continuities with earlier times. It traverses the period of the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. It outlines the early modern period in Europe, opens up how historians have defined and approached it, and analyses the key aspects of the time. Early Modern Europe is complicated to comprehend exactly where to portray the continent's frontiers; even though the northern, southern and western limits are distinct by oceans and seas, no geographical feature marks the eastern boundary of Europe.

Nevertheless, just as we can express the ages of the early modern period by accurate characteristics, we can define Europe by specific common traits—a shared Christian faith (even though there were substantial numbers of both Jews and Muslims in Europe) and an academic practice based on philosophies from ancient Greece and Rome. Significant transformations in thoughts, culture, faith, finances and governments manifest the commencement and culmination of the early modern period. The early current period has been seen as a passage between the medieval and contemporary worlds. The book is a modest attempt to understand far-reaching changes, such as the development of new religious ideas, that sit alongside essential permanence, as in many characteristics of the ecosphere of work.



# INTRODUCTION

The book concisely explains the centuries between the Renaissance and the French Revolution. Further, it introduces significant political, social, cultural and intellectual changes in Europe from the Renaissance in Italy around 1300 to the outbreak of the French Revolution at the end of the 1700s. It focuses on the porous boundaries between theology, magic and science categories. Examines how developments in these areas altered European political institutions, social structures, and cultural practices. This book examines Europe through religious warfare in the 17th century, when society, economics, politics, and culture were guided by a sense of wonder, which held people in awe of their rulers and the divine. Wonder did not imply passivity: from the disintegration of the Roman Empire to the emergence of early nation-states through crusades, the expansion of trade, religious Reformation, and advances in scientific thinking. It introduces students to an age of discovery during which Europeans encountered worlds, real and imagined, far beyond the realm of the familiar.

Between the latter half of the 14th century through the late 18th Century, European society, economics, politics, ideas, and culture were altered in ways that increasingly took on aspects of modernity. It takes through a period punctuated by religious reformations, civil wars, and revolutionary regicides; Europeans steadily adopted more modern attitudes. Europe witnessed an era of dramatic transformations and contradictions: while Europeans enjoyed unprecedented prosperity, technological advances, and social mobility, they also unleashed and experienced empire, terror, total war, foreign occupations, and mass murder. Beginning with the emergence of modern national ideas in the late 18th century, the book traces the complex relationship between European nation-states and empires until the present day. There were significant developments in European culture and thought from the 14th-18th centuries, paying particular attention to the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, and the Enlightenment.

Europe has long been a seed of political, cultural, and economic influence. The power of its countries has stretched far beyond the continent, touching every corner of the Earth. The book deals with the fusion of Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella, its rise to world importance in the sixteenth century, and its decline in the seventeenth. Among the topics examined are the

development of a system of imperial government and the impact on Spain's colonial empire. Further, it studies the French Revolution and its implications for Europe and the world. It considers the social, political and ideological causes of the Revolution in 1789. Things looked brighter after the terrible wars and diseases of the Middle Ages.

Europe reconnected with its historical roots, scholarship and art flourished, and humanity achieved glorious new heights in painting, sculpture, and architecture. The printed word became available everywhere to everyone. The spread of new and rediscovered ancient ideas encouraged people to think and express themselves. People began questioning traditions, especially those dealing with religion. Before long, independent thinkers broke away from established religion and approached it from new perspectives, much to the dismay of the established Church. Just like today, people throughout European history had a hard time accepting new ideas. Revolutions have come in a wide variety of forms. Some have been military and political revolutions. Some have been intellectual and philosophical revolutions. Some have been religious revolutions, and still others have been technological revolutions. Europe is known not only for its revolutions and wars but also for its sociocultural changes, including the Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, and Colonialism. The effects of these changes can still be seen in the world today.

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries CE saw historical change and captivating progress through many areas. In the mid-fourteenth century, significant alterations in climate unleashed epidemic disease on an unprecedented scale across much of Eurasia. Pestilence added to social, economic and cultural alterations. However, the nature and extent of these fluctuated from area to area, giving the chance to draw relations and make contrasts on several hierarchies. The existences of the persons influenced by these progresses were further shaped by gender, (dis)ability, wealth, and cultural values. It was within this outline that provincial political histories spread out. Emerging powers like Burgundy, Muscovy, and the Ottomans offer fascinating case studies of state-building, looking at warfare, legitimization, diplomacy, justice and fiscality. Other political forms, such as city-states in Italy and urban leagues in German-speaking lands, competed with monarchies and empires. At the same time, much of the world experienced little that could be described as state power.

The two hundred years from 1500-1700 CE are among European history's most distressing and disparaging. Yet ironically, they were concurrently a period of extraordinary ingenuity, novelty and knowledgeable alterations.

Martin Luther's 1517 remonstrance produced a cataclysmic encounter not just to the Catholic Church but to a sequence of political, social and cultural traditions that amalgamated the Christian West. Religious disunion and imperial policies provided a volatile recipe, setting in sequence scuffles that peaked in the Thirty Years' War of 1618-1648, a fight that clashed across much of central and Western Europe and carrying destruction, economic displacement and death on a gigantic scale. War was no less an element of political life in Eastern and Northern Europe, where the corresponding political courses of Poland-Lithuania, Muscovy and Sweden were shaped by lasting struggle. The Ottoman Empire posed a territorial threat to Europe throughout this period, confronting Europeans who embarked on global colonial enterprise with the possibility of being colonised themselves.

The radicalism of the Reformation provoked an arduous political, social and intellectual reaction, whose consequences were felt even at the end of the seventeenth century. A period of heightened religious intolerance was matched by the determination of authorities to impose social, sexual and intellectual conformity within their societies. Rising out of this oppressive ambience were the first rudiments of an alteration of knowledge through a burgeoning print and news culture in which science and scientific observation, philosophical reasoning and scepticism, and new economic and political thinking could be disseminated and discussed. There was the burden of the Protestant and Catholic reformations; this was an era of 'absolutism', a period of the processes of political power in the early modern state, the limitations upon central authority and the persistence of societies based upon limited power and privilege.

In the frantic age of the eighteenth century, Europe and the rest of the world were more firmly constrained together than ever before. Slavery, global trade, scientific exploration, colonial enlargement, and global warfare were all central features of the period. This first age of globalisation was also expressed in the propensity of European thinkers to put together their societies with overseas cultures, not always to the advantage of the former. In the final decades, the French Revolution sped through Europe and the wider world, followed by slave revolts in the Caribbean and the fight for independence in Latin America. In Europe, rapid population growth and the economy gave birth to the most developed commercial civilisation the world had ever known. Economic development and commercialisation, however, involved swelling social dislocation and societal pressures that associated rank with inherited and corporate privilege.

Meanwhile the dominant form of Christianity was under attack from the new, more egalitarian and secular ideology of the Enlightenment. Across Europe, the philosophes and their allies made human advancement in this world the focus of their writing. Since many rulers and their advisors after 1750 took up these new ideas, hoping that the elimination of the corporative society would increase the state's capability to mobilise its subjects' possessions, the stage was set for a battle between many of Europe's governments and the privileged orders. This tension concluded in the American War of Independence and the French Revolution of 1789, both comprehensive actions with sweeping significance.

The Renaissance was a cultural and socio-political movement of the 15th and 16th centuries. It stressed the rediscovery of texts and ideas from classical antiquity. This movement began over a few centuries, occurring as the class and political structures of medieval Europe began to break down. The Renaissance got its start in Italy but soon encompassed all of Europe. This was the time of Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael. It saw revolutions in thinking, science, art, and world exploration. The Renaissance was a cultural rebirth that touched all of Europe. Europeans have conquered, settled, and ruled much of the Earth's land mass. The effects of these overseas empires are still felt today. Historians generally agree that Europe's colonial expansion happened in several phases. The 15th century saw the first settlements in the Americas, extending into the 19th century. At the same time, the English, Dutch, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and other European countries explored and colonised Africa, India, Asia, and the continent that would become Australia. These empires were more than governing bodies over foreign lands. The impact also spread to religion and culture, leaving a touch of European influence worldwide.

The Reformation was a split in the Latin Christian Church during the 16th century. It introduced Protestantism to the world and created a significant division which lasts to this day. It all began in Germany in 1517 with the ideals of Martin Luther. His preaching appealed to a populace unhappy with the Catholic Church's overreach. It was not long before the Reformation swept through Europe. The Protestant Reformation was a spiritual and political revolution that led to several reform churches. It helped shape modern government and religious institutions and how those two interact. The Enlightenment was an intellectual and cultural movement of the 17th and 18th centuries. The prominent thinkers of the Enlightenment stressed the value of reason over blind faith and superstition. A group of educated writers and thinkers spearheaded this movement over the years. The philosophies of men like Hobbes, Locke, and Voltaire led to new ways of

thinking about society, government, and education that would forever change the world. Likewise, the work of Newton redesigned "natural philosophy." Many of these men were persecuted for their new ways of thinking. Their influence, though, is undeniable.

The French Revolution, which began in 1789, affected every aspect of France and much of Europe. Quite often, it is called the start of the modern era. The Revolution began with a financial crisis and a monarchy that had overtaxed and overburdened its people. The initial revolt was just the beginning of the chaos that would sweep France and challenge every tradition and custom of the government. In the end, the French Revolution was not without its consequences. Chief among them was the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802. He would throw all of Europe into war and, in the process, redefine the continent forever. The second half of the 18th century saw scientific and technological changes that would radically change the world. The first "industrial revolution" began around the 1760s and ended sometime in the 1840s. During this time, mechanisation and factories altered the nature of economics and society. In addition, urbanisation and industrialisation reshaped both the physical and mental landscape. This was the age when coal and iron took over industries and began to modernise production systems. It also witnessed the introduction of steam power that revolutionised transportation. This led to a significant population shift and growth, as the world had never seen.

# CHAPTER I

## PROLOGUE AND RENAISSANCE TIMES

### **Political, Social and Religious Structure of Europe in the Thirteenth Century and the Fall of Constantinople**

Between 1100 and 1500 A.D., the nation-system of Europe passed through modifications amounting to their sum-total to a revolution. However, the changes that endured, whether or not they affected political barriers or constitutions, befell through gradual instalments. At no stage of the improvement was there any preferred cataclysm, such as observing the dissolution of the Frankish Empire and changing to comply with the appearance of Napoleon. New ideas matured slowly in medieval thoughts; through the twelfth century, the forces making for social balance had grown till they balanced the ones of disruption.

In the meantime, the vested pastimes of assets and privilege, religious and secular authority, provided the front to the anarchists and radicals. The Jacquerie in France and Wat Tyler's followers in England, the Albireo's of Languedoc and the Hussites of Bohemia had been crushed by armies of conservatives spontaneously banded collectively in defence of the installed order. At the same time, this spirit prevailed; in some of the ruling lessons, there was little fear that a sudden stroke could affect any revolution. In-home politics, too, in international relations; these solidly installed states have been habitually inert, strong in defence, but indecisive and slow in the assault. The age produced no conqueror to sweep through Europe like a whirlwind because the implements of conquest on a grand scale had both been destroyed or had not yet come to life.

The people of Europe had emerged from the nomadic level of culture, and they were no longer yet organised as such a lot of armed camps. The feudal host was tough to mobilise, more challenging still to hold in the area, and at the quality and unmanageable weapon, a status military of mercenary squaddies would have called for taxation heavier and greater normal than any ruler dared to call for, or any humans could have the funds for to pay. The wars of the Middle Ages have consequently, with few exceptions, a

stamp of futility and pettiness. Ambitious businesses have been foredoomed to failure, and powers reputedly annihilated via an invading host recovered strength as soon as it had rolled away. In brief, medieval politics at the European and countrywide stages alike meant the everlasting recurrence of identical troubles and disputes, the unending repetition of identical palliatives and marketing campaign plans. It is authentic that political technology made more progress than war artwork.

However, massive reforms of establishments had been affected handiest in a few tremendous groups—in Sicily beneath the Normans and Frederic II, in England below Henry II and Edward I, and in France underneath Philip Augustus and his successors. Even in those cases, the development generally comprises a few primitive expedients, growing some typical main to the logical conclusion. The extra audacious innovators, a Montfort, an Artevelde, a Frederic II, had stumbled up and overthrown as soon as they stepped beyond the circle of conventional ideas. Consequently, it will suffice for our gift motive to kingdom inside the barest define the leading events of international politics and the chief advances within the concept of the presidency, which signalled the Middle Ages.

Extensive diplomatic combinations, though always planned, seldom came to birth and hardly ever led to a fantastic result. The life of a few commonplace hobbies was acknowledged; no strength considered with indifference any movement threatening the life of the Papacy, which represented religious team spirit, or of the crusading principalities that formed the outer bulwark of Western Christendom; the principle of the Balance of Power, even though now not yet crystallised right into a dogma, has become thus far understood that the excessive increase of any single power alarmed the rest, even though they stood near no chance of absorption. Therefore, every time the Empire won the upper over the Church, each time a new horde of Asiatics appeared on the horizon, each time France seemed about to emerge as a province of England or Italy, a province of France, the alarm was sounded via the publicists, and there ensued a general interchange of views among the monarchies; treaty became piled on the accord, alliance parried with the coalition, as energetically as at any time in cutting-edge history.

However, the people seldom moved, and the agitation of the ruling instructions effervesced in phrases. It is excellent to locate two of the more significant states uniting for the humiliation of a third, as England and the Empire joined in opposition to Philip Augustus of France. Few medieval battles had been so far achieving their effects as Bouvines (1214), to which

England owes her Magna Carta, Germany the awesome and stormy autumn of the Hohenstaufen dynasty, France the consolidation of her lengthily-divided provinces under an absolutist monarchy. In regular instances, there were in medieval Europe businesses of states with separate pastimes and forms of polity. They had been divided from one another by using an extensive belt of debatable territory, extending from Holland to the coast of Provence—the northern lands of the Carolingian Middle Kingdom.

The eastern institution of nations is broadly unique in person. It consists of a wider variety of states. However, we omit from the reckoning the extremely good German principalities, which had been all but sovereign powers by the end of the Middle Ages. It is miles much less homogeneous in lifestyle. The Empire bureaucracy is the centre of the institution and spherical the Empire, and the minor states are grouped like satellites: at the west, Savoy and Provence; south of the Alps, Venice, the Papal States, and the Kingdom of Sicily—the remaining-named impartial until 1194, and the personal property of the Hohenstaufen from that date until 1268; on the east, the kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia and Poland, and the Russian principalities; at the north the three Scandinavian powers. When Naples and Sicily were held using German Emperors, the Empire towered like a colossus above the states of Scandinavia, the Slav and the Magyar. However, even without this support, the Empire might have endured dominating two-thirds of Europe if the imperial assets had not been swallowed up via the wars of Italy and if the emperors who came after the interregnum had given the national hobby priority over those in their very own households. In reality, the mischief of the Mezentian union between Italy and Germany survived their separation; as in Western vital Europe, the path of political development became decided mainly with the aid of a Teutonic's persistent and disastrous efforts to take in a Latin nationality.

Nevertheless, whereas the English attacks on France were directly chargeable for the increase of a French countrywide nation, Germany's failure left Italy half emancipated from the foreigners and more disintegrated than she had been at any length in the past. Moreover, England, through her inability, was reduced to a secondary rank in some international locations; in basic terms, the German Empire of the fifteenth century still became the leading energy east of the Rhine. This changed into partly the result of calamities to neighbouring international locations, which can neither be foreseen nor prevented.

While Western Europe was shielded, within the later Middle Ages, from the inroads of alien races, Eastern Europe felt the impact of the remaining



migratory movements emanating from Central Asia and the Muslim lands. In the thirteenth century, the advance guards of the Mongol Empire destroyed the medieval nation of Poland and decreased the Russian princes' dependence upon the rulers of the Golden Horde. In the fifteenth, the improvement of the Turks alongside the Danube destroyed the Magyar nation, already weakened through the feuds of aristocratic factions. However, apart from these beneficial occasions, the sources of Germany were impossible to resist after they could be concentrated. In the primary event, while Ottocar II had extended his strength into the German lands between Bohemia and the Adriatic, he was overthrown through Rudolf of Hapsburg at the conflict of the Marchfeld (1278).

A new Hapsburg principality was formed out of the reconquered lands to defend the southeast frontier in opposition to future incursions of Czech or Magyar. On the second one, while the Hussite levies carried their devastations and their propaganda into all of the neighbouring provinces of the Empire (1424-1434), crusade after the campaign became launched in opposition to Bohemia until the heretics, uniformly positive in the sphere, have been worn out through the stress of their hard work in opposition to superior numbers, and all of the more incredible mild spirits known that such triumphs have to stop in the break and depopulation of Bohemia. The case turned the same within the Baltic, where they struggle with Danish aims was left to the princes and the unfastened towns. Waldemar II (1202-1241), who had planned to restore the Scandinavian Empire of the exceptional Canute, the conqueror of England, saw his formidable edifice fall apart to pieces at the same time as it became nonetheless inside the making; even the Union of Kalmar (1397), via which the crowns of Norway and Sweden, and Denmark had been vested in a single dynasty, could not shop the wealthy prize of the Baltic alternate from falling into German arms. Even if ill-governed and prey to provincial dynasties' objectives, Germany turned grand as a couple of political adventurers found out to his fee. The strength, intelligence and countrywide spirit of fantastic human beings made precise all the mistakes of statesmen and the defects of establishments.

However, a monarchy, but energetic, however public-lively, becomes powerless until primarily based on the firm foundations of an organised government, a professional judicature, and an assembly representative in truth if no longer in form. No medieval kingdom became so uniformly fortunate as Germany in finding kings of incredible man, woman, and talent. However, Germany became severely ruled from the beginning to the end of the Middle Ages. This was not due entirely to the German monarchy's condition to become, in principle, non-obligatory. It is proper that sick-

suggested concessions regularly bought the German crown. Still, an extra supply of weak spots became the incapability of the emperors to make the maximum of the prerogatives they retained, which the country preferred that they have to work out.

Imperial justice changed into dilatory and inefficient because the imperial regulation court docket accompanied the emperor; due to the fact the professional turned into at risk of being overruled by way of the feudal element among the judges; because the policies of the process were unsure and the selections primarily based now not upon a systematic jurisprudence however on provincial custom. The Diet of the Empire became susceptible, each in deliberation and as a legislature, because the towns and the lesser Aristocracy did not admire resolutions in framing which they had no longer been consulted. The government was always inefficient or unpopular due to the fact the very best offices had been claimed as proper through princes who, if laypeople, owed their rank to the twist of fate of start or, if ecclesiastics, could best be exact servants of the State through turning into unworthy servants of the Church. The emperor who confided in his herbal counsellors turned into unwell-served. If he relied upon new men and decided entirely on their loyalty and qualifications, he would have the reproach of tyranny or submission to unworthy favourites. The evils consequently rooted in the German constitution had existed at an advanced date in France and England. To get rid of them became the object of the constitutional adjustments devised using the Plantagenets in England, with the aid of the later Capetian kings in France. Moreover, in necessity, there is a strong likeness among the work of the two dynasties. However, in England, the construction policy was earlier followed, proceeded more hastily, and produced a more durable tower because it hooked up on a broader basis.

The first stage of the policy became to organise the management of the elements of each nation, which, not having been absorbed in privileged fiefs, have been still a problem to the royal justice and contributed to the regal sales. Owing to the foresight of William the Conqueror, there had been few such fiefs in England; handiest in two palatine earldoms (Durham and Cheshire), at the Welsh and northern borders, and on the lands of some prelates, became the king permanently cut off from instant contact with the subject populace. With those exceptions, the face of England was divided into shires and administered through sheriffs who had been nominees of the Crown, dismissible at pleasure. The shires once more were divided into hundreds ruled underneath the sheriff through subordinate officials. However, for the most vital duties of executive routine, the sheriff on my

own became responsible; he amassed the revenue, led the defence force and organised the Watch and Ward, which have been the medieval equivalents for a constabulary in the end, he presided over the shire moot wherein the freeholders collected at stated periods to claim justice and receive it.

The shires have been periodically visited via Justices in Eyre (analogous to the Frankish *missi*) who heard complaints against the sheriff, inspected his management, attempted criminals and listened to those civil suits (especially cases of freehold) which have been deemed sufficiently crucial to be reserved for their choice. These itinerant commissioners had been decided on from the workforce of the royal regulation court (*Curia Regis*- the king's court, which performed all functions of government.), a tribunal which, inside the thirteenth century, became subdivided into the three Courts of Common Law and bought a hard and fast abode at Westminster. The shire courts and the royal courtroom have been alike certain by the statute-law thus far because it prolonged, but, in the larger half of their work, they had no publications save the nearby custom, as expounded via the good guys of the shire courtroom. The choices recorded at the rolls of the royal courtroom and from the latter supply changed into derived the English Common Law, a system of precedents that remain the most striking monument of medieval jurisprudence, notwithstanding curious subtleties and technicalities. In and after the fourteenth century, it changed into supplemented with the aid of Equity, the regulation of the Chancellor's court docket, to which the one's suitors may restore whose grievances could not be remedied at Common Law, however, were held worth of particular redress with the aid of the king in his man or woman of a consumer and protector of the defenceless.

Lastly, on the financial side, the paintings of the sheriffs and the judges were supervised through the Exchequer, a chamber of audit and receipt, to which the sheriffs rendered a half-every-year announcement and in which were prepared the articles of inquiry for the itinerant justices. Initially, a department of the *Curia Regis*, a tribunal, and a treasury, the Exchequer was always closely connected with the judicial machine, considering one of the 3 Courts of Common Law is concerned with fits that affect the royal revenue. Such became the English management scheme, and *mutatis mutandis* (with the necessary changes being made) became reproduced in France. Here, the royal demesne, tiny within the eleventh and twelfth centuries, became noticeably enlarged via the annexations of Philip Augustus and the later Capets, who delivered beneath their instantaneous control the more significant part of the Angevin inheritance, the outstanding fiefs of Toulouse and Champagne, and lots of smaller territories. To offer for the authorities of those acquisitions, there became built up, inside the

direction of the thirteenth century, and administrative hierarchy along with provosts, who correspond to the bailiffs of English masses, *baillie* and *senechaux* who resemble the English sheriffs, of *enquêteurs* who perambulate the demesne making inspections and holding periods inside the same manner as the English Justices in Eyre. From the time of St. Louis, all these functionaries are controlled through the *Chambre des Comptes* and the Parliament, the one economic department, the alternative an excellent court of the first instance and attraction. Within the Parliament, there is a distinction between the Courts of Common-Law and the *Chambre des Requetes*, which offer petitions using the Equity guidelines.

The vices of both systems had been equal. The local officers had been too effective inside their respective spheres; neither inspectors nor royal courts proved good enough as safeguards towards corruption and abuses of authority, which had been extra frequent because the vicious expedients of farming and selling places of work had become an established exercise. Otherwise, the English machine became superior to that of France, specifically in making use of sure functions of local representatives as an additional check upon the servants of the Crown. In truth and law, the English shire turned into a community with a real corporate character and possessed a public meeting, which turned into a law court and a neighbourhood parliament in one. Though the average suitor counted for little, the secondary landowners, united by ties of neighbourhood sentiment and private dating, took an energetic hobby and an energetic proportion inside the enterprise of the shire court docket, upholding the local custom towards sheriffs and judges, serving as jurors, as assessors of taxes, as guardians of the peace, and (from the fourteenth century) as petty magistrates. Whether elected via their fellows or the nominees of the Crown, those functionaries had been unpaid and seemed themselves as the defenders of nearby liberty towards authentic usurpations.

In France, the district that is the *bailli*, and nevertheless more significant that of his subordinate the *prévôt*, changed into an arbitrary advent without herbal unity or corporate sentiment; there was consequently no organised resistance to executive authority and no purpose because the Crown ought to court the goodwill of the landed gentry. In the decreased grades of the Plantagenet device, a powerful centre class served a political apprenticeship; under the Carpets, all energy and responsibility have been jealously reserved to the expert administrator. In England, the following step in constitutional improvement, the addition to the countrywide meeting of a Third Estate, was a success because the House of Commons was mainly recruited from households that had long been active companions in local

administration. In France, though continuously summoned in the fourteenth century, the Third Estate proved itself politically impotent.

Both in France and England, the countrywide meeting commenced as a feudal council composed of the prelates and barons who held their lands and dignities at once from the Crown. However, that of France was, before the twelfth century, seldom convened, carefully attended, and usually unnoticed through the greater feudatories, a convention of partisans in place of a parliament. In England, the Great Council of the Norman dynasty, inheriting the prestige and the claims of the Anglo-Saxon Witenagemot, held a more respectable role from the primary. Even William I or Henry II carefully adhered to the precept of consulting his magnates on projects of regulation or taxation; underneath the sons and grandson of Henry II, the pretensions of the assembly have been enlarged and extra pertinaciously asserted—the difficulties of the Crown where the possibility of Church and Baronage. The Great Council now claimed to appoint and brush aside the royal ministers to withhold pecuniary valuable resources and military providers until grievances had been redressed, to restrict the prerogative, or even to position it in commission whilst it changed into habitually abused. The English nobility of this era thwarted their goals of territorial power and found their collective capacity as individuals of the opposition inside the Council, a brand-new discipline of agency and self-aggrandisement.

In France, there has been no such parliamentary movement because the essential presupposition of fulfilment became looking as it became hopeless to appeal to the public opinion against a successful and revered monarchy inside the call of the meeting, which had in no way commanded popular admire. Under these situations, it becomes natural that very different consequences should occur inside the two international locations, whilst the reformation in their national assemblies changed into taken in hand by Edward I and his modern, Philippe le Bel. The problem earlier than the two sovereigns changed into the equal—to create the meeting which needs to be acknowledged as able to tax the state. The answers they adopted had been closely alike; representatives of the loose towns had been delivered into the Estates General, of open cities and shires into the English Parliament; in every case, a Third Estate turned into grafted upon a feudal council. However, the goods of the two experiments had been one-of-a-kind in mood and future.

The Estates General, practically a brand-new advent, neither knew what powers to say or how to vindicate them. They became the energy of the purse to minimal account; they discredited themselves within the eyes of

the kingdom by giving proof of feebleness and indecision inside the first exceptional crisis with which they had been called to deal, the interruption of anarchy and conspiracy that ensued upon the capture of King John at Poitiers (1356). The result turned that the Estates General, every so often summoned to recommend the coverage or register the decrees of the monarchy, remained a decorative function of the French charter. In England, on the other hand, the Commons every day the location of auxiliaries to the advanced Estates in their contests with the Crown, and the new Parliament pursued the goals and the approaches of the antique Great Council, with all the benefits conferred through a specific right to furnish taxation. For over a hundred years, it turned into a famous meeting in shape and pretension alone. The liveliest members of the Lower House were drawn from the decreased ranks of the territorial aristocracy, and the Commons have been ambitious in their demands whilst they might attack the prerogative behind the defence of a faction quartered within the House of Lords. However, the alliance of the Houses converted the person to English politics. Before Parliament had been in existence for two centuries, it had deposed five kings and conferred a felony name upon three new dynasties; it had indicated to posterity the strains upon which absolutism may be fought and ruined without a civil battle, and it had proved that the consultant element in the charter might overrule each monarchy and aristocracy if it dared to hold prevalent standards to their logical conclusion.

Even in England, a medieval Parliament became a legislature scarcely in our feelings of the word. Legislation of an everlasting and general kind became an occasional expedient. New legal guidelines were generally made in solution to the petitions of the Estates; however, the legal procedures had been framed by way of the King, and the Crown attorneys regularly took a form that never expressed the dreams of the petitioners. The most vital changes within the land law had not been made; however, they grew through the amassed impact of judicial selections. After the vote casting of elements, the chief characteristic of Parliaments became to criticise and complain, to suggest the shortcomings of a policy they had not helped to make. Except as the guardians of man or woman's liberty, they cannot have made medieval government extra medical or efficient. In the fifteenth century, the English Commons criticised the government of the Lancastrian dynasty with the utmost freedom; however, it became left for Yorkists and Tudor despots to diagnose the disorders of the body politic right. Englishmen and Frenchmen alike had been well cautioned when, at the end of the Middle Ages, they dedicated countrywide reconstruction to sovereigns who overlooked or circumvented parliamentary establishments. A parliament became admirable as a check or a balance, an image of famous sovereignty,

and a college of political intelligence. However, no parliament introduced collectively in any medieval country becomes suited to take the lead in shaping policy or reforming governmental institutions.

## **Fall of Constantinople**

Constantinople is a primaeval metropolitan in contemporary Turkey, now known as Istanbul. First established in the seventh century B.C., Constantinople expanded into a flourishing port thanks to its prime geographic location flanked by Europe and Asia and its natural harbour. In 330 C.E., it became the location of Roman Sovereign Constantine's "New Rome," a Christian metropolis of enormous wealth and splendid style. Constantinople stayed as the seat of the Byzantine Empire for the subsequent 1,100 years, lasting periods of great prosperity and terrible sieges until being filled by Mehmed II of the Ottoman Empire in 1453. The tumble of Constantinople manifests the end of the Byzantine Empire and the culmination of the Roman Empire, a government which dates back to 27 BCE and lasted nearly 1,500 years. The seizure of Constantinople also allowed the Ottomans to invade mainland Europe more effectively, ultimately heading to Ottoman command of much of the Balkan peninsula.

Constantinople's subjugation and the Byzantine Empire's descent was a defining moment of the Late Middle Ages and is believed to be the culmination of the feudal period. The city's fall also stood as a turning point in martial history. Since ancient times, towns and castles have depended upon fortifications and walls to keep away invaders. The Walls of Constantinople, specifically the Theodosian Walls, were some of the most unconventional defensive systems in the world. These fortifications were overcome with gunpowder, specifically bulky cannons and bombards, prefiguring a change in siege warfare. Between 1346 and 1349, the Black Death killed almost half of the population of Constantinople. The general economic and territorial decline of the empire further depopulated the city. By 1453, it consisted of a succession of walled villages detached by vast fields encircled, by the fifth-century Theodosian Walls. By 1450, the kingdom was exhausted and had shrunk to a few square kilometres outside Constantinople, the Princes' Islands in the Sea of Marmara and the Peloponnese by an enlightening centre at Mystras.

The Byzantine emperor at the time of the outbreak was Constantine XI (1449-1453 CE), and he took individual control of the defence along with such prominent military people as Loukas Notaras, the Kantakouzenos brothers, Nikephoros Palaiologos, and Giovanni Giustiniani. The Byzantines

had ballistae and Greek Fire, the highly flammable molten which could be spewed under force from ships or walls to torch an enemy. Still, warfare technology had moved on, and the Theodosian Walls were about to get their sternest-ever test. Byzantine Emperor Constantine XI swiftly understood Mehmed's intentions and turned to Western Europe for help. Still, the price of centuries of war and hostility between the Eastern and Western churches had to be paid.

Before the siege of Constantinople, it was known that the Ottomans could cast medium-sized cannons, but the range of some pieces they could field far surpassed the defenders' expectations. The Ottomans deployed several cannons, anywhere from 12 to 62 guns. They were built at factories that employed Turkish cannon founders and specialists, notably Saruca and one foreign cannon founder, Orban (also called Urban). Most cannons at the siege were built by Turkish engineers and a large bombard by Saruca, while one gun was made by Orban, who also contributed a large bombard. Mehmed prearranged to assault the Theodosian Walls, the complicated series of walls and ditches defending Constantinople from an attack from the West. His army was positioned outside the city on 2 April 1453, the Monday after Easter.

Dreading a likely naval raid along the shorelines of the Golden Horn, Emperor Constantine XI well thought-out that a defensive chain be placed at the mouth of the harbour. This chain drifted on logs and was strong enough to prevent Turkish ships from entering the port. This stratagem was one of two that gave the Byzantines some hope of extending the siege until the probable arrival of foreign help. This approach was imposed because, in 1204, the armies of the Fourth Crusade effectively dodged Constantinople's land defences by penetrating the Golden Horn Wall. Another stratagem engaged by the Byzantines was the restoration and ramparts of the Land Wall (Theodosian Walls). Emperor Constantine deemed it necessary to ensure that the Blachernae district's wall was the most fortified because that section of the wall protruded northwards. The land fortifications consisted of a 60 ft (18 m) wide moat fronting inner and outer crenelated walls studded with towers every 45–55 metres.

The army defending Constantinople was comparatively insignificant, approximately 7,000 men, 2,000 of whom were foreigners. At the onset of the siege, probably fewer than 50,000 people were living within the walls, including the refugees from the surrounding area. Turkish commander Dorgano, who was in Constantinople working for the emperor, was also guarding one of the city's quarters on the seaside by the Turks in his hire.



These Turks kept loyal to the emperor and died in the ensuing battle. The defending army's Genoese corps were well-trained and equipped.

In contrast, the rest of the army comprised small numbers of well-trained militias, armed civilians, sailors and volunteer forces from foreign people, and finally, monks. The military base used a few small-calibre artillery pieces, which, in the end, proved unproductive. The citizens restored walls, stood guard on observation posts, gathered and dispensed food provisions, and amassed gold and silver items from churches to liquefy into coins to pay the foreign militias.

The Ottomans were specialists in arranging sieges in cities. They knew that to avoid sicknesses, they had to burn corpses, sanitarily dispose of faeces, and pay close attention to their water sources. Despite some probing attacks, the Ottoman fleet under Baltoghlu could not cross the Golden Horn owing to the chain across the entrance. Though one of the fleet's main tasks was to avert overseas ships from passing in the Golden Horn, on 20 April, a small flotilla of four Christian vessels managed to get in after some heavy fighting. This event strengthened the defenders' morale and caused awkwardness for the Sultan. Baltoghlu's life was forgiven after his assistants attested to his bravery during the battle. He was most likely injured in the eye during the combat. Mehmed uncovered Baltoghlu's wealth and property, gave it to the janissaries, and directed him to be whipped 100 times.

After these indecisive attacks, the Ottomans tried to break through the walls by building passageways to mine them from mid-May to 25 May. Many of the sappers were miners of Serbian origin sent from Novo Brdo under the command of Zagan Pasha. An engineer named Johannes Grant, a German who came with the Genoese contingent, had counter-mines dug, allowing Byzantine troops to enter the mines and kill the miners. The Byzantines intercepted the first tunnel on the night of 16 May. Subsequent tunnels were interrupted on 21, 23 and 25 May and devastated by Greek fire and dynamic contest. On 23 May, the Byzantines seized and tormented two Turkish officers, who exposed the location of all the Turkish tunnels, which were destroyed. On 21 May, Sultan Mehmed sent an ambassador to Constantinople and presented to lift the siege if they gave him the city. He promised to let the emperor and other inhabitants leave with their belongings. He would acknowledge the emperor as governor of the Peloponnese. Lastly, he assured the population's security that might choose to continue in the city. Constantine XI only decided to pay more taxes to the sultan and recognised the status of all the occupied castles and lands in the hands of the Turks as

Ottoman properties. The emperor was not willing to leave the city without a fight.

Shortly after midnight on 29 May, the offensive began on the Greek Orthodox feast of Pentecost. The Christian army of the Ottoman Empire attacked first, shadowed by consecutive waves of the irregular zaps, who were poorly trained and equipped and Anatolian Turkmen beylik forces, who fixated on a section of the broken Blachernae walls in the north-west part of the city. This segment of the walls had been built before, in the eleventh-century, and was much smaller. The Turkmen legionnaires attempted to breach this section of walls and entered the city, but the defenders just as quickly pushed them back. Finally, the last wave, elite Janissaries, attacked the city walls. The Genoese general in charge of the protectors on land, Giovanni Giustiniani, was seriously injured during the attack, and his withdrawal from the ramparts caused terror in the ranks of the defenders.

After the initial attack, the Ottoman army fanned out along the city's main thoroughfare, the Mese, past the large forums and the Church of the Holy Apostles, which Mehmed II sought to deliver a seat for his newly appointed patriarch to better control his Christian citizens. Mehmed II had sent an army to defend these key buildings. A few lucky civilians managed to escape. When the Venetians retreated to their vessels, the Ottomans had captured the walls of the Golden Horn. Fortunately for the city's occupants, the Ottomans were not interested in killing potentially valuable enslaved people but rather in the money they could get from pillaging the city's houses, so they decided to raid the town as an alternative. All the plunders and other loot were taken to their camp, and thousands of Christians had been seized. The crosses positioned on the roofs or the walls of churches were torn down and trampled. Women were ravished, and youths were required to participate in shameful obscenities. The nuns left behind, even those who were such, were disgraced with foul immoralities. If any citizens of Constantinople tried to resist, they were thrashed and killed.

The womenfolk of Constantinople grieved from rape at the hands of Ottoman forces. According to historian Philip Mansel, widespread harassment of the city's civilian inhabitants occurred, resulting in innumerable murders and rapes and 30,000 civilians being incarcerated or by force expelled. The vast majority of the residents of Constantinople were forced to become enslaved. Pillaging was carried out on an immense scale by sailors and marines who entered the city using other walls before they had been suppressed by regular troops beyond the main gate. According to David

Nicolle, the people were handled better by their Ottoman victors than their lineages had been by Crusaders back in 1204, affirming that more than 4,000 Greeks died in the siege while permitting to a Senate report, Venetian noblemen and over 500 other Venetian civilians killed during the siege. Many of the city's riches were looted in 1204.

On the third day after the city's collapse, the Sultan commemorated his victory with a great, joyful triumph. He issued a proclamation: the inhabitants of all ages who had escaped uncovering were to forsake their hiding positions through the city and come out into the open, as they were to remain free, and no question would be asked. He further avowed the refurbishment of houses and property to those who had deserted the city before the siege. If they revisited home, they would be treated according to status and religion, as if nothing had changed. The Hagia Sophia was transmuted into a mosque, but the Greek Orthodox Church was permitted to remain undamaged, and Gennadius Scholarius was selected Patriarch of Constantinople. This was regarded as the origin of the Ottoman millet system; nevertheless, it is now believed to be a legend, and no such system existed in the fifteenth century.

The collapse of Constantinople (May 29, 1453) surprised numerous Europeans, who viewed it as a catastrophic event for their civilization. Many dreaded other European Christian kingdoms would agonize over the same destiny as Constantinople. Two possible reactions emerged among the humanists and churchmen of that era: Crusade or dialogue. Pope Pius II strongly promoted another Crusade, while the German Nicholas of Cusa supported conversing with the Ottomans. The collapse of Constantinople has had a profound impact on the ancient Pentarchy (that is, the planned government of collective Christendom by five patriarchal sees, namely, Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, under the auspices of a single universal empire) of the Orthodox Church. Today, the four olden sees of Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople have comparatively few followers and believers locally because of Islamisation.

For some time, Greek academics had gone to Italian city-states; a cultural swap commenced in 1396 by Coluccio Salutati, the Chancellor of Florence, who had asked Manuel Chrysoloras to lecture at the University of Florence. After the subjugation, many Greek personalities like John Argyropoulos and Constantine Lascaris fled the city. They got sanctuary in the West, carrying information and credentials from the Greco-Roman practice to Italy and other regions that further pushed the Renaissance. Those Greeks who remained behind in Constantinople mainly existed in the Phanar and Galata

districts of the city. As they were called, the Phanariotes provided many capable advisers to the Ottoman rulers.

The migration waves of Byzantine scholars and expatriates in the phase following the sacking of Constantinople and the fall of Constantinople in 1453 are considered by many scholars as crucial to the revitalisation of Greek and Roman studies that led to the development of Renaissance humanism and science. These expatriates were grammarians, humanists, poets, writers, printers, lecturers, musicians, astronomers, architects, academics, artists, scribes, academics, scientists, legislators and theologians. They brought the far greater preserved and accumulated knowledge of Byzantine civilization to Western Europe.

For Christianity, Mehmed's victory at Constantinople represented a severe shift in its dealings with the East. Now devoid of a long-standing buffer against the Ottomans and access to the Black Sea, Christian kingdoms relied on Hungary to halt further westward expansion. Many modern scholars also agree that the departure of Greeks to Italy due to this event was noticeable at the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Renaissance.

Constantinople was made the new Ottoman capital, and the gigantic Golden Gate of the Theodosian Walls became part of the castle treasury of Mehmed. At the same time, the Christian community was permitted to survive, guided by bishop Gennadeios II. What was part of the old Byzantine empire was engrossed into Ottoman territory after the downfall of Mistra in about 1460 CE and Trebizond in 1461 CE. In the meantime, Mehmed, aged only twenty-one and recognised as "the Conqueror", settled in for a long reign and another twenty-eight years as Sultan. Byzantine culture would endure, especially in the arts and architecture. Still, Constantinople's fall was an earth-shattering occurrence of world history, the termination of the old Roman Empire and the last persisting link between the medieval and ancient worlds.

## **Renaissance: Role of City States Spread of Humanism, Renaissance Art and Architecture**

### ***Renaissance (1330-1550)***

The Italian Renaissance shadowed on the heels of the Middle Ages. It was spawned by the birth of the philosophy of humanism, which emphasised the importance of individual achievement in various fields. The initial humanists, such as writer Francesco Petrarch, studied the works of the ancient Greeks

and Romans for inspiration and ideology, mixing the philosophies of Plato and other ancient thinkers with the knowledge of the Roman Catholic Church. Under the impact of the humanists, literature and the arts were scaled to new levels of importance. In his *The Lives of the Artists* (1550), Giorgi Vasari first coined the term *rinascita*, meaning rebirth. However, the French-derived term "Renaissance" only became extensively used to refer to the historical period later during the mid-nineteenth century following the historian Jules Michelet's *Histoire de France* (1855). Next, Jacob Burckhardt's model of the period, commencement with Giotto and culminating with Michelangelo, outlined in *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (published in 1860), became commonly accepted.

Though it eventually spread through Europe, the Renaissance began in the great city-states of Italy. Italian merchants and political officials supported and commissioned the great artists of the day. Thus, the products of the Renaissance grew up inside their walls. Florence, The Papal States (centred in Rome), Venice, and Milan were the most potent city-states. Each of these states grew up with its distinctive character due to the different forms of government that presided over each. Florence considered the birthplace of the Renaissance, grew powerful as a wool-trading post and remained influential throughout the Renaissance due to the leadership of the Medici family, who maintained the city's financial strength and were intelligent and generous patrons of the arts. The Pope, who was also responsible for running the Catholic Church, ruled Rome. As the authority of the northern city-states grew, the Papacy progressively developed the place of an international politician rather than a religious leader, and many pontiffs fell prey to the immoralities of dishonesty and favouritism that often conveyed a position of such power.

However, Rome, the victim of a decline that destroyed the ancient city during the Middle Ages, flourished again under papal leadership during the Renaissance. Venice and Milan also grew wealthy and commanding, playing significant roles in Italian politics and attracting many artists and writers to their gilded streets. Venice was ruled by an oligarchy in the hands of its Great Council of noble families, and Milan was led by a strong monarchy that produced a line of powerful dukes.

Perhaps the most prominent feature of the Renaissance was furthering the arts and advancing new methods and styles. Through the early Renaissance, painters such as Giotto and sculptors such as Ghiberti experimented with strategies to portray perspective better. Their techniques were rapidly perfected and built upon by other artists of the early Renaissance, such as

Botticelli and Donatello. However, the apex of artistic talent and production came later, during what is known as the High Renaissance, in the form of Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Michealangelo, who remain the best-known artists of the Renaissance. The Renaissance also saw the invention of printing in Europe and the rise of literature as an essential aspect of everyday life. The Italian writers Boccaccio, Pico, and Niccolò Machiavelli could distribute their works much more quickly and cheaply because of the rise of the printed book.

Alas, the Italian Renaissance could not last endlessly. In 1494, during the French invasion of Italian land, Italy was plagued by foreign powers competing for pieces of the Italian peninsula. Finally, in 1527, foreign occupation climaxed with the sack of Rome and the Renaissance collapsed under the authority of the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V. The economic restrictions placed on the Italian states by Charles V, combined with the censorship the Catholic Church undertook in response to the rising Reformation movement ensured that the spirit of the Renaissance was crushed. Italy stopped to be the cradle of artistic, intellectual, and economic prosperity.

The Middle Ages, which continued from the fall of Rome in the late fifth century until the fourteenth century, are (somewhat exaggeratedly and incorrectly) often referred to as the "Dark Ages" due to the relative lack of intellectual and economic progress made during this long period. The Catholic Church presided over the Middle Ages, which preached the denial of worldly pleasures and the subjugation of self-expression. During the Middle Ages, European society was defined by the system of feudalism, under which societal classes were hierarchically divided based on their position in the prevailing agricultural economy. This system produced many scattered, self-sufficient feudal units throughout Europe, comprising a lord and his subservient vassals. These feudal lords were constantly in battle during the early Middle Ages, their armies of peasants facing off to win land for their lords.

However, during the later Middle Ages, this situation changed considerably. The power of the Church declined as monarchies rose to consolidate feudal manors into powerful city-states and nation-states that often opposed the Church in matters of tax collection and legal jurisdiction. Along with the rise of monarchies came the increase of the money economy. As monarchs brought peace to feudal society, feudal lords concentrated less on defending their lands and more upon accruing large quantities of cash, with which they improved their style of living and dabbled in the growing market economy.