

CLASS:-11TH,
HISTORY NOTES,
CHAPTER:- 7

The revival of Italian cities:

1. Western Europe was being reshaped by feudal bonds and unified under the Latin Church and Eastern Europe under the Byzantine Empire, and Islam was creating a common civilisation further west, Italy was weak and fragmented.
2. The ports on the Italian coast were revived. From the fourteenth to the end of the seventeenth century towns were growing in many countries of Europe.
3. A distinct ‘ **Urban Culture**’ also developed Florence, Venice and Rome became centers of art and learning. The invention of printing at the same time made books and prints available to many people.
4. A sense of history also developed in Europe. Religion came to be seen as something which each individual should choose for himself. The church’s belief was overturned by scientists.

Printing Press:

- **Johannes Gutenberg invented the first printing press in 1455.**
- The first printing press was set up by Caxton in 1477 in Europe.
- The invention of printing press increased the volume of books. It also helped in the spread of education.

The Arab’s Contribution: In the fourteenth century, Arabs translated Ancient Greek and Roman texts. They called Plato as *Aflatun* and Aristotle *Aristu* in Arabic. Noted Muslim writers during this time were Ibn Sina (‘Avicenna’ in Latin) and Ibn Rushd (‘Averroes’ in Latin), Ptolemy wrote in Greek *Almagest* on

astronomy. Muslim writers were regarded as men of wisdom in the Italian world.

(ii) Rationalism

- **Viewpoint**: It developed the ideas among the people and they abandoned the superstitious beliefs and rituals that prevailed in the entire society. It paved the way for new invention which changed the way of life.
- **Rationalist art**: A thousand years after the fall of Rome, fragments of art were discovered in the ruins of ancient Rome and other deserted cities. Their admiration for the figures of 'perfectly' proportioned men and women sculpted so many centuries ago. Artists' concern to be accurate was helped by the work of scientists. To study bone structures, artists went to the laboratories of medical schools. The anatomy, geometry, physics, as well as a strong sense of what was beautiful, gave a new quality to Italian art, which was to be called 'realism' and which continued till the nineteenth century.
- **Rationalist Literature**: The greatest revolution of the sixteenth century was the mastery of the technology of printing. For this, Europeans were indebted to other peoples – the Chinese, for printing technology, and to Mongol rulers because European traders and diplomats had become familiar with it during visits to their courts.
- Knowledge of geometry helped them understand perspective and that by noting the changing quality of light, their pictures acquired a three – dimensional quality. Anatomy, geometry, physics, as well as a strong sense of what was beautiful, gave a new quality to Italian art, which was to be called 'realism'.