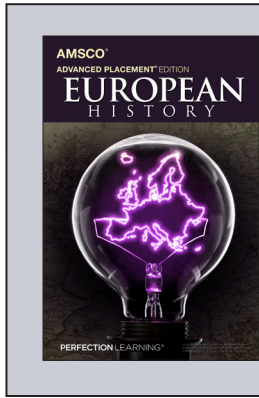


# Perfection Learning® AMSCO® Coursebooks Paired with Open Source Textbooks



## Advanced Placement® European History



**Western Civilization—  
A Concise History II & III**  
*Christopher Brooks*

Libretexts, Web Version last updated April 2020

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### Supplementary Features in LibreTexts Western Civilization—A Concise History II & III

The following ideas show how the content in the AP® *European History* coursebook from AMSCO® can be enriched with features and expanded coverage in the LibreTexts *Western Civilization—A Concise History II & III* texts.

### Chapter Overviews

Provide background information and context to help students understand the content of each chapter. Additionally, a brief introduction is provided for many of the sub-lessons of the chapter.

**3: The Renaissance - Political and Social Setting**

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The Renaissance was the "birth" of culture, art, and learning that took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, starting in Italy and spreading to various other parts of western Europe. It produced a number of artists, scientists, and thinkers who are still household names today: Michelangelo, Leonardo Da Vinci, Donatello, Botticelli, and others. The Renaissance is justly famous for its innovations in art and learning, and even though some of its thinkers were somewhat constricted and off base in dismissing the prior thousand years or so as being nothing but the "dark ages," it is still the case that the Renaissance was enormously fruitful in terms of intellectual production and creation.

"The" Renaissance lasted from about 1300 – 1500. It "ended" in the early sixteenth century in that its northern Italian heartland declined in economic importance and the pace of change and progress in the arts and learning slowed, but in a very real sense the Renaissance never truly ended – its innovations and advances had already spread across much of Europe, and even though Italy itself lost its prominence, the patterns that began in Italy continued elsewhere.

The timing of the Renaissance coincided with some of the crises of the Middle Ages described in the last chapter. The overlap in dates is explained by the fact that most of Europe remained resolutely "medieval" during the Renaissance's heyday in Italy: the ways of life, forms of technology, and political structure of the middle ages did not suddenly change with the flowering of the Renaissance, not least because it took so long for the innovations of the Renaissance to spread beyond Italy. Likewise, in Italy itself, the lives of most people (especially outside of the major cities) were all but identical in 1500 to what they would have been centuries earlier.

**3.1: Background**  
Simply put, the background of the Renaissance was the prosperity of northern Italy. Italy did not face a major ongoing series of wars like the hundred years' War in France. It was not held by the papacy, but no more so than most of the other regions of Europe. One unexpected "benefit" to Italy was actually the Black Death and Great Western Schism because the pope's authority was so reduced, the Italian cities found it easy to cooperate with other regional powers.

**3.2: Economics**  
Italy lay at the center of the incredibly lucrative trade between Europe and the Middle East, a status determined both by its geography and the role Italians had played in transporting goods and people during the crusading period. Along with the trade itself, it was in Italy that the key mercantile practices emerged for the first time in Europe. From the Arab world, Italian merchants learned about and ultimately adopted a number of commercial practices and techniques that

### Chapter Conclusions

Succinctly review the key content for each chapter in the text.

**3.8: Conclusion - Patronage**

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The most memorable, or at least iconic, effects of the Renaissance were artistic (considered in the next chapter). To understand why the Renaissance brought about such a remarkable explosion of art, it is crucial to grasp the nature of patronage. In patronage, a member of the papal or royal court would pay an artist in advance for a work of art. That work of art would be displayed publicly – most obviously in the case of architecture with the beautiful churches, orphanages, and municipal buildings that spread across Italy during the Renaissance. In turn, that art would attract political power and influence to the person or family who had paid for it because of the honor associated with funding the best artists and being associated with their work. While there was plenty of bloodshed between powerful Renaissance families, their political competition as often took the form of an ongoing battle over who could commission the best art and then "give" that art to their home city, rather than actual fighting in the streets.

Perhaps the most spectacular example of patronage in action was when Cosimo de Medici, then the leader of the Medici family and its vast banking empire, threw a city-wide party called the Council of Florence in 1439. The Council featured public lectures on Greek philosophy, displays of art, and a huge church council that brought together representatives of both the western Latin Church and the Eastern Orthodox church in a (doomed) attempt to heal the schism that divided Christianity. The Catholic hierarchy also used the occasion to establish the canonical and in a sense "final" version of the Christian Bible (on question were which books ought to be included in the Old Testament). The entire affair was paid by Cosimo out of his personal fortune – he even paid for the travel expenses of visiting dignitaries from places as far away as India and Ethiopia. The Council cloaked the Medici as the family of Florence for the next generation, with Cosimo being described by a contemporary as a "king in all but name."

Art and learning benefited enormously from the wealth of northern Italy precisely because the wealthy and powerful of northern Italy competed to pay for the best art and the most innovative scholarship – without that form of cultural and political competition, it is doubtful that many of the masterpieces of Renaissance art would have ever been created.

### Expanded Coverage

The LibreText book provides **expanded coverage** of certain topics. Every teacher will decide how much coverage is possible within time constraints and with knowledge of the essential knowledge articulated in the Course and Exam Description. But if a teacher would wish to supplement the content about the Thirty Years' War, for example, covered in Topic 2.4 of the AMSCO® book, the LibreText content would enrich coverage with more detailed explanations in Topic 9.6.

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