THE RENAISSANCE : SUMMARY

"Renaissance" means "rebirth." It developed between XIV and XVII century in Italy and then spread in Northern Europe. It consists of a revival of learning and of rediscovering classics of literature, history, and moral philosophy(Greek culture and roman) .

Renaissance was a break from the Middle Ages: during this, life was connected to God. While during the Renaissance life became the center of the attention: people realized that the religious values (God)were not enough to reach interior peace and balance. These old principles weren’t enough to find answers.
Renaissance people needed to find a new source of balance and found it in Greek culture , indeed body’s worship (it was not a taboo) and polytheistic religion were important points. They did not believe soul existed as they gave more importance to body.

During the Renaissance there were new discoveries (geographical and cosmological), thus study of the Renaissance might well center on four interrelated issues.

* Reading classics meant “imitation”; they wanted to learn from classical works and genres (like tragedy, comedy and satire) and they translated the moral vision of the past to capture the spirit of the originals and to master the best models.
* The concept of the Great Chain of Being was a continuity with the Classical period : every existing thing in the universe had its "place" in a hierarchical order. God was on the top, while humans were between animals and angels while at the bottom there were inanimate objects. The hierarchic balance caused fear , because people’s disorder also corresponded to a disorder in politics. So it reinforced rulers’ authority.
* The period between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance is known as Humanism. Humanism thinkers valued an active life more than a spiritual life only dedicated to God and so they valued people’s participation to social and public life: thus the vision of world was not only from a religious point of view.
* Religious values coexisted with the new ones. The Protestant Reformation saw the division of the Church into Catholic and Protestant Christianity. Martin Luther was the major character of this movement, who reacted against Church corruption. People wanted to have a direct contact with God to assure their salvation, thereforethey rejected the Pope