

# MPPSC

## MP State Civil Services Main Exam

*Revised & updated Study Material*

# GENERAL STUDIES PAPERS - I



## **TOPICS INCLUDED AT GENERAL STUDIES PAPER - 1**

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**History & Culture**

**Geography (India & World)**

**Water Management**

**Disaster and its Management**

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# **HISTORY AND CULTURE**

## **PAPER - I**

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# World History

## RENAISSANCE

The term Renaissance, literally means "rebirth" and is the period in European civilization immediately following the Middle Ages, conventionally held to have been characterized by a surge of interest in classical learning and values. The Renaissance also witnessed the discovery and exploration of new continents, the substitution of the Copernican for the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, the decline of the feudal system and the growth of commerce, and the invention or application of such potentially powerful innovations as paper, printing, the mariner's compass, and gunpowder. To the scholars and thinkers of the day, however, it was primarily a time of the revival of classical learning and wisdom after a long period of cultural decline and stagnation.

### Beginning And Progress Of the Renaissance (14th To 16th Century)

The new birth of resurrection known as the "Renaissance" is usually considered to have begun in Italy in the fourteenth century, though some writers would date its origin from the reign of Frederick II, 1215-1250; and by this Prince - the most enlightened man of his age - it was at least anticipated. Well versed in languages and science, he was a patron of scholars, whom he gathered about him, from all parts of the world, at his court in Palermo.

At all events the Renaissance was heralded through the recovery by Italian scholars of Greek and Roman classical literature. When the movement began, the civilization of Greece and Rome had long been exerting a partial influence, not only upon Italy, but on other parts of mediaeval Europe as well. But in Italy especially, when the wave of barbarism had passed, the people began to feel a returning consciousness of their ancient culture, and a desire to reproduce it. To Italians the Latin language was easy, and their country abounded in documents and monumental records which symbolized past greatness.

The modern Italian spirit was produced through the combination of various elements, among which were the po-

litical institutions brought by the Lombards from Germany, the influence of chivalry and other northern forms of civilization, and the more immediate power of the Church. That which was foreshadowed in the thirteenth century became in the fourteenth a distinct national development, which, as Symonds, its most discerning interpreter, shows us, was constructing a model for the whole western world.

The word "renaissance" has of late years received a more extended significance than that which is implied in our English equivalent - the "revival of learning." We use it to denote the whole transition from the Middle Ages to the modern world; and though it is possible to assign certain limits to the period during which this transition took place, we cannot fix on any dates so positively as to say between this year and that the movement was accomplished. To do so would be like trying to name the days on which spring in any particular season began and ended. Yet we speak of spring as different from winter and from summer.

The truth is that in many senses we are still in mid-Renaissance. The evolution has not been completed. The new life is our own and is progressive.

As in the transformation scene of some pantomime, so here the waning and the waxing shapes are mingled; the new forms, at first shadowy and filmy, gain upon the old; and now both blend; and now the old scene fades into the background; still, who shall say whether the new scene be finally set up?

In like manner we cannot refer the whole phenomena of the Renaissance to any one cause or circumstance, or limit them within the field of any one department of human knowledge. If we ask the students of art what they mean by the Renaissance, they will reply that it was the revolution effected in architecture, painting, and sculpture by the recovery of antique monuments.

Students of literature, philosophy, and theology see in the Renaissance that discovery of manuscripts, that passion for antiquity, that progress in philology and criticism, which led to a correct knowledge of the classics, to a fresh taste