

Module 12: The Renaissance

Topic 1 Content: Northern Italian City-States

Introduction

An interactive map of Italy with the northern region highlighted in yellow. Four green location markers are placed on the map: one in the northwest (Piedmont), one in the north-central (Lombardy), one in the northeast (Veneto), and one in the north-central (Emilia-Romagna). The map is set against a dark grey background.

NORTHERN ITALIAN CITY-STATES

Click each marker on the map to learn about important city-states in Northern Italy.

Exit the interactivity when you are done exploring the content.

The logo for whro EDUCATION, featuring the lowercase letters 'whro' in a bold, sans-serif font, with a stylized leaf icon above the 'o'. Below the letters, the word 'EDUCATION' is written in a smaller, all-caps, sans-serif font.

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Genoa



The image shows a map of Italy with a yellow background. A pink location pin is placed on the Ligurian coast, marking Genoa. Three green location pins are placed in the northern part of Italy, marking other major city-states. The word "GENOA" is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters in the top right corner of the map area.

GENOA

After the events of the Fourth Crusade and the degradation of the relationship between Venice and the Byzantine Empire, Genoa became a Byzantine ally and prospered from trade. Trade, shipbuilding, and banking helped Genoa build one of the largest and most powerful navies in the Mediterranean. It was an independent city-state, initially ruled as a republic.

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Milan



The image shows a map of Italy with several location pins. A pink pin is located in the north, near Milan. Three green pins are located in the north, west, and south of the pink pin. The map is set against a dark grey background.

MILAN


Milan was one of the wealthiest city-states in Italy. Its location placed it along trade routes from cities like Genoa and Venice. In addition, Milan was based near Alpine passes, which were used by traders. This city-state was briefly governed as a republic, but eventually was taken over by Francesco Sforza, who ruled like a king, and employed paid soldiers for protection.

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Florence

A map of Italy with several location pins. A pink pin is placed on the location of Florence in the north-central part of the country. Three green pins are placed in the northern regions of Italy, and one green pin is placed in the northwest. The map is set against a dark grey background.

FLORENCE

Florence grew prosperous under the rule of one powerful family: Medici. At first, they gained wealth from wool production, but eventually, the Medici family expanded their business from cloth production to banking, and built the greatest bank in Europe. While the independent city-state of Florence was technically a republic, it was actually more reflective of a dictatorship under the rule of the Medici family.

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Venice

A map of Italy with several location pins. One pink pin is located in the northern part of Italy, specifically in the Veneto region, indicating the location of Venice. Three green pins are located in other parts of northern Italy. The map is set against a dark grey background.

VENICE

Venice was located at a crossroads of trade between Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Eventually, Venice controlled the sale of spices and luxury goods coming from Asia and the Middle East, and entering into northern Europe. Venice was ruled by a group of wealthy merchants who passed power to their male descendants. These men served on a council to help make decisions for the city-state, and thus initially resembled a republic style of government.

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