Summary: A Changing World

The Renaissance
The Renaissance started in Italy in the 1300s and spread through Europe. It lasted about 300 years. People mixed ideas from ancient Greece and Rome with new ideas. Artists made paintings look more like real life. Musicians created new kinds of music, such as opera. Writers wrote about real people and events.

The Age of Exploration
Many European countries were monarchies. Their rulers wanted more land. They wanted to trade with places far away. They wanted to teach other people Christianity.

In the 1480s, the king of Portugal sent explorers to sail around the southern tip of Africa. Later, they reached India, China, and Japan. Spanish ships sailed west to find Asia. Instead they found North and South America.

The Spanish met American Indians, such as the Aztecs, Mayans, and Incas. These nations had advanced cultures. The Spanish took their land and enslaved them.

Colonies Around the Globe
European nations started colonies in the Americas and India. Colonization affected the people already living in those lands.

Europeans brought disease and hardship to colonies. They often changed the local economy to help themselves. They forced their beliefs on others. Colonizers also brought new ideas about farming, medicine, and technology.