• Henry manipulated English law to confiscate lands and fortunes from nobles with such success that he was able to manage the government without depending on Parliament for royal funds

• Holy Roman Empire
  o Germany and Italy were the exceptions to the rule when France, England, and Spain steadily began to politically centralize
  o Rulers in the Holy Roman Empire continued to partition their kingdoms, however small, among their sons; by the late fifteenth century, Germany was divided into over three hundred independent political entities
  o Golden Bull, an agreement reached in 1356, established a seventeen member electoral college consisting of the archbishops of Mainz, Trier, and Cologne; the duke of Saxony; the margrave of Brandenburg; the count of Palatine; and the king of Bohemia. They functioned as an administrative body and elected the emperor
  o Reichstag was created in the fifteenth century to bring to a halt the constant feuding. It was a national assembly of the seven electors, the nonelectoral princes, and representatives from the sixty-five imperial free cities
Section Four—The Northern Renaissance

• Section Overview
  o Scholars of the northern Renaissance created conditions that would help spring forth the Protestant Reformation as they read original Latin texts of the Church fathers and realized many discrepancies to the dominant Catholic orthodoxy
  o Northern humanists came from more diverse social backgrounds and were more devoted to religious reform than their Italian counterparts
  o The development of print, or moveable type, gave northern humanists, the Church and state new influence to popularize their viewpoints freely and to a wider audience

• The Printing Press
  o Johann Gutenberg invented printing with moveable type in the middle of the fifteenth century in Mainz, Germany which became the printing capital for all of western Europe
  o Books were rapidly produced on religious as well as practical topics like how-to books on childrearing, making brandies and liquors, curing animals, and farming

• Erasmus
  o Northern humanists who made clear in his many works that devout Catholics wanted the Church to reform
  o He prepared short Latin dialogues for his students to teach them good manners of speech and how to live well, but also anticlerical dialogues, and satires on religious doctrine; this collection of his dialogues were titled Colloquies
  o He also published a book of Adages which included over 5,000 contemporary and ancient proverbs
  o He encouraged what he called philologia Christi: a simple, ethical piety in imitation of Christ and his apostles
  o He translated older Christian texts from Latin and Greek into vernacular languages as to be available to more people
  o In the 1520s a popular saying developed: “Erasmus laid the egg that Luther hatched.”

• Humanism and Reform
  o Germany
    ▪ Rudolf Agricola (1443-1485), the “father of German humanism” studied in Italy under the Italian humanists and introduced these ideas to Germany when he returned
    ▪ Conrad Celtis, the first German poet laureate, and Ulrich von Hutten, a fiery knight, fused humanism with nationalism that spread ideas that were hostile toward people of non-German cultures
    ▪ Reuchlin Affair
      ▪ Johann Reuchlin was Europe’s foremost Christian authority on Hebrew and Jewish learning who wrote the first reliable Hebrew grammar by a Christian
      ▪ Pfefferkorn, a Jewish man who converted to Christianity, supported by the Dominican order in Cologne, began a movement to suppress Jewish writings and Reuchlin came under attack
      ▪ German humanists, in the name of freedom and good scholarship, rushed to defend Reuchlin
      ▪ The conflict lasted for years and produced Letters of Obscure Men, a merciless satire of monks and scholastics to which von Hutten contributed
  o England
    ▪ Visiting lecturers spread humanism to England
      ▪ William Grocyn and Thomas Linacre lectured at Oxford