COURSE DESCRIPTION

Renaissance Studies form a connecting link between medieval studies and modern history, just as the Renaissance is often referred to as the "early modern" period between the Middle Ages and modernity. The familiar labels attached to the Renaissance since its first historical construction by Jacob Burckhardt, such as "the birth of the individual," "the rise of rationalism and the scientific revolution," "the human-centered universe," etc. all indicate that the Renaissance was not only one of the historical periods but a specific epoch which bears direct importance for the self-definition of our present age, too. It is not by chance that some important post-structuralist trends of cultural theory (New Historicism, e.g.) evolved from a theoretical-methodological revolution in Renaissance Studies in the 1980s and have become paradigmatic modes of critical discourse.

After having looked at the medieval antecedents (the Carolingian Renaissance, the rise of medieval Italy and the important role of medieval urbanization), this survey course introduces the Renaissance as an important transitory period of great epistemological (from an organic to a mechanistic world view), ideological (individualism, "man-centeredness"), social-psychological (the Reformation) and artistic (from emblematic to a representational style with perspective) paradigm shifts. Special attention is given to new or radically reformed socio-cultural institutions (courts, universities, academies, art collections, patronage, etc.).

The goal of the course is to make students aware of the continuity of European cultural and institutional trends from the time of the Renaissance through the Enlightenment up to the 19th and 20th centuries, even our own present. While looking at Europe in a wide geographical context, it will also be emphasized that the Renaissance and early modern Europe was forged through vital extra- and intra-European encounters, such as the colonization of the Americas, the interactions with the Ottomans, the Reformation and the role of the Jews.

The learning outcome should consist of 1/ an accumulation of historical knowledge about the connections of political and social history and premodern/early modern ideology, education, and art in Europe; 2/ A better understanding of the complexity of Europe in the given period; 3/ And a better understanding of the complexity and interconnectedness of culture, representations and institutions in general. 4/ Based on the readings and assignments, students should develop their ability of processing scholarly ideas and argumentation and expressing themselves in an argumentative and scholarly way.
SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

1. [SEP10 – Zero Week lecture]
The Renaissance – Introduction.
   Reference: Loys le Roy, "The Excellence of this Age" (Ross 91-109, Reader); Giorgio Vasari, "Barbarism, Antiquity, Rebirth" (Hay 11-13, Reader); Burke, *The European Renaissance*; Voegelin, *Renaissance and Reformation*.

2. [SEP17]
   Text: Giorgio Vasari, "Barbarism, Antiquity, Rebirth" (Hay 11-13, Reader); Loys le Roy, "The Excellence of this Age" (Ross 91-109, Reader).

3. [SEP24]
The Renaissance – Medieval or Modern? Discussion: From the historiography of the Renaissance.
   Text: Burckhardt, "Italy in the Renaissance: A Synthesis" (Hay 35-57, Reader); Szönyi, "The World of the Italian Renaissance" (Reader).
   Reference: Dannenfeldt, *Basic Interpretations*.

4. [OCT01]
From the Fall of the Roman Empire to the Expansion of the Medieval Cities in Italy. Discussion: Life, economy and politics in the Italian Renaissance cities.
   Text: Benedetto Dei, "The prosperity of Florence" (Ross 165-67, Reader); Arnold von Harff, "Venice, Mistress of the Seas" (Ross 168-74, Reader).

5. [OCT08]
The Renaissance Outside Italy. Discussion: City versus court.
   Text: "The Habsburgs and the Fuggers" (Ross 175-80, Reader); Maximilian I, *Weiskunig* (Reader); Marino Cavalli, "Charles V and Philip, His Son" (Ross 294-305, Reader).

6. [OCT15]
Discoveries – Antiquity And the New World. Discussion: Humanism – Profession or a world view?
   Text: Marsilio Ficino, "The Golden Age in Florence" (Ross 79-80, Reader); Erasmus of Rotterdam, "An Age of Gold" (Ross 80-84, Reader); Paul Oskar Kristeller, "Classical Antiquity and Renaissance Humanism" (Hay 98-111, Reader).

7. [OCT22]
Literature – Latin and Vernacular. Discussion: Sonnets and the Petrarchan paradox of love.
Text: Petrarch, *Rime 140* as translated by Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (Reader); Castiglione, "A Theatrical Performance" (Reader).


8. [OCT29]  
**A New Perspective On the World – Revival of the Arts.** Discussion: The Italian and the Northern Artistic Renaissance: Leonardo and Dürer.


9. [NOV05]  
**A New Perspective On the World – the Geographical Expansion.** Discussion: From Discovery to Colonialism.

Text: Christopher Colombus, *Diary* (Reader); Bartolomew de las Casas, *A Brief Account Of The Destruction Of The Indies* (Reader); Michel de Montaigne, "The Old World and the New" (Ross 157-61, Reader).


10. [NOV12]  
**A New Perspective On the World – Scientific Paradigm Shifts.** Discussion: Cosmology and medicine, the cases of Copernicus, Vesalius and Paracelsus.

Text: "The Revolution of the Celestial Spheres" (Ross 589-93, Reader); "The Art of Paracelsus" (Ross 552-58, Reader); Vesalius, "Anatomy and the Art of Medicine" (Ross 563-72, Reader).


11. [NOV19]  
**The Kingdom of God – Renaissance and Reformation.** Discussion: Reformation and Counter-Reformation, Savonarola, Luther, Calvin.

Text: Francesco Guicciardini, "Savonarola, A Portrait" (Ross 647-52, Reader); Reginald Pole, "An Appeal to the Council of Trent" (Ross 665-72, Reader); Luther, "The Faith of a Christian" (Ross 721-27, Reader); Calvin, "Good Christian Discipline" (Ross 738-42, Reader).


12. [NOV26]  
**The Sociology of the Renaissance.** Discussion: Women in the Renaissance.

Text: A mini anthology of women writings (Louis Labé, Queen Elizabeth I, etc., Reader).

13. [DEC03] 

**Renaissance Institutions – Court, Church, City, State.** Round-up discussion.

*Text:* Machiavelli, "The Circle of Governments" (Ross 263-67, Reader); Aldus Manutius, "The Life of a Scholar-Printer" (Ross 396-401, Reader).

**ASSIGNMENTS**

– Participation in classes and in discussions. (25%)
– Journal. Choose 7 out of the twelve topics of the seminar and write 3 double spaced pages about those topics in the following way: summarize the contents of that class, recall the train of thought followed there, add to this some reflections about the readings for the accompanying seminar and indicate also your personal opinion (if you liked that topic/those texts, in what way that theme would relate to your research topic at CEU, etc.). (75%)

**REFERENCES**

**Primary Texts**


**Secondary Sources**


Birnbaum, Marianna D. *The Orb and the Pen. Janus Pannonius and Matthias Corvinus and the Buda Court.* Budapest: Balassi, 1996. (CEULib)


The widespread cultural movement, which began in 14th century Italy advocated for studying and learning the humanities, as seen in works of classical Rome and Greece. Many humanists were priests or church leaders, who felt that enthusiasm for science and its rational discoveries, an interest in geometry and mathematics, understanding of classical ethics and logic, and an aesthetic appreciation of the art and architecture of the classical period would enrich Christian understanding. The Venetian School, or Venetian Renaissance, was a thriving cultural movement with a passion for lush color and a distinctly Venetian adoration of embellishment. The Art Story Podcast. Our first episode on: The Start of the Renaissance. The Renaissance, also known as “Rinascimento” (in Italian), was an influential cultural movement that brought about a period of scientific revolution and artistic transformation at the dawn of modern history in Europe. It marks the transitional period between the end of the Middle Ages and the start of the Modern Age. The Renaissance is usually considered to have begun in the fourteenth century in Italy and the sixteenth century in northern Europe. Much of the foundations of liberal humanism were laid... The Renaissance was a cultural and scholarly movement which stressed the rediscovery and application of texts and thought from classical antiquity, occurring in Europe c. 1400 â€“ c. 1600. The Renaissance can also refer to the period of European history spanning roughly the same dates. It's increasingly important to stress that the Renaissance had a long history of developments that included the twelfth-century renaissance and more. What Was the Renaissance? There remains debate about what exactly constituted the Renaissance. Essentially, it was a cultural and intellectual movement, intimately tied to society and politics, of the late 14th to early 17th centuries, although it is commonly restricted to just the 15th and 16th centuries. It is considered to have originated in Italy. by Alessandro Dani. â€œ 2. Renaissance Culture (Siena), Siena (Middle Ages). R. Bartalini, Il ciclo di eroi ed eroine 'Piccolomini', in Francesco di Giorgio e il Rinascimento a Siena, 1450-1500, a cura di L. Bellosi, catalogo della mostra, Electa, Milano 1993, pp. 462-469. The panel features a striking representation of the patron saints of Gavorrano, Saints Cosmas and Damian, St Julian and St Sebastian, and likely furnished an altar endowed by the commune. The civic statutes of Gavorrano of 1465 recorded that the veneration for these saints was fostered by the local government and was the object of civic as well as religious rituals. The maintenance and production of weapons was still the principal purpose of this institution of the city.