

Dylan Blade

Lecture 4: The Renaissance - The Idea

Historiography

- ↳ Annales School - Longue durée, etc.
- ↳ Linguistic turn - ideas differ from words
 - There is no objective reality
 - Even telling someone reality changes it
 - Focus on perspectives, not necessarily TRUTH
- ↳ The question of agency
 - Who moves history?
 - Braudel - geographic stuff, Longue durée
 - Do small individual decisions change history
 - Who's in charge? Structures vs. individuals? Individuals?

Teleological

- ↳ history is a means to an end - generally thought to be a fault, circular reasoning (history doesn't happen to get to the present, not inevitable)
 - Processes aren't A → B

The Renaissance

- ↳ Nature of the term of "Renaissance"
- ↳ What was it?
 - Grand narratives
 - Michlet - coined Renaissance (rebirth), in 19th century
 - Artificial greatness of the period
 - Burckhardt
 - More than arts
 - Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy
 - Individualism + Discovery of Man
 - Renaissance - beginning of modern world

Questioning the Term

- ↳ Heliocentrists - beauty before Renaissance
 - Previous Renaissances
 - Carolingian Renaissance (Charlemagne)
 - capitals, spaces, shared knowledge
 - 12th century Renaissance
 - Return of Aristotle
 - University, translation centers
- ↳ Is the term useful?
 - is it just about art?
 - Not distinctly European?

The Renaissance

- ↳ Self-conscious movement of rebirth, named itself
 - Golden ages disavowed, Renaissance
 - Petrarch - we're on the cusp, 3 tiered system
- ↳ Writings of Plac in the Renaissance are of utmost importance
- ↳ Self awareness gives the Renaissance importance
- ↳ Big set of changes
 - Not just the arts
- ↳ Not just for elites
 - Comes to the fore in Republican Florence, etc.
 - ↳ Growing middle class, common folk participating

Essential Elements

- ↳ Revival of classical forms
 - Roman ruins - how did they build this?
- ↳ Rebirth, a "golden age" vs. "Dark Ages"

Forerunners of the Renaissance

↳ Arguably, changes started in the 14th century

- Boccaccio

- Petrarch - arguably father of the Renaissance

- Christine de Pizan

- Dante

- Chaucer

↳ Vernacular languages arise from translation centers

↳ Late medieval shift - focus on the individual & this world

Dante - ego

Chaucer - everyday people, sexual foibles

Giotto (1266/7 - 1337)

- Late Medieval painter

- Humans looking & acting w/ each other

- The Kiss of Judas - example

Boccaccio

- The Decameron - plague refugees

- Fundamentally based in east - 1001 Nights

- Written in Italian

Petrarch

- Father of Renaissance Humanism

- Critic of Pope in Avignon

- Literary father of the Renaissance

- Laura - Medieval courtly & classical lyric poetry

- Coined the term "Middle Ages"

- Unearthed ancient writings, drawn to Cicero

Renaissance Humanism

↳ rise of the vernacular - religious view is changing

↳ Not a REJECTION of religiosity

↳ Concern w/ the natural world

Printing & Conventions

- ↳ Indulgences
- ↳ Türkenkalender - anti-Turkish, 1459

Studia humanitatis

- Ad fontes! To the sources

Christian Humanism

- Thomas Moore, Erasmus