HUM 2052: Civilization 2: Renaissance & Modern
Some Topics Covered

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- **Hunt**: Chp 14, Renaissance Europe, 1400–1500.
  - Recovery of classical learning, but also increased influences from outside Europe.
  - Humanism: a new curriculum emphasizing literary, ethical and historical studies over the logical and metaphysical core of medieval scholasticism. A training for laymen, rather than churchmen.
  - Christian humanism—North European humanist theology; precursor to the reformation.

- **Norton 1**: Erasmus: *The Praise of Folly*
  - Elaborate intellectual joke (Folly = Mora (Latin) = Sir Thomas More, in whose house the work was written, &c).
  - But with serious intent: the Christian as (holy) fool, that is innocent and straightforward, an implicit indictment of the pre-Reformation church.

- **Norton 1**: Machiavelli: *The Prince* (Extracts: Chapters 7; 15; 16; 17; 25; 26.)
  - The first great defense of political pragmatism (*Raison d’Etat*, *Realpolitik*).
  - ‘Fortune is a woman’? Did women have a renaissance?
  - Pessimism about human nature.

- **Norton 1**: Rabelais: *Gargantua & Pantagruel*
  - Optimism about human nature.
  - Bawdy satire on medieval learning, and implicit endorsement of humanism.
  - Proto-anarchism: ‘Do what thou will’.

- **Hunt**: Chp 15, The Struggle for Reformation Europe, 1500–1600.
  - Martin Luther. Initially attempted to reform the church from within, but his criticisms, especially of the doctrine of indulgences and associated financial corruption, led to a split.
  - Henry VIII. Broke with Rome, to divorce Catherine of Aragon, who had not given him a male heir. Confiscated enormous fortune in church property.

- **Hunt**: Chp 16, A Century of Crisis, 1560–1648.
  - Elizabeth I. Her Act of Supremacy (1559) confirmed the Church of England as a compromise position between Protestant and Catholic practices, but retained her as its head.
  - French wars of religion.
  - Defeat of the Spanish Armada, 1588.
  - The English Civil War, 1642–9.
  - Cromwell, puritanism and the Commonwealth.

- **Norton 1**: Montaigne: *Essays* (‘Of the power of the imagination’; ‘Of cannibals’; ‘Of the inconsistency of our actions’.)
  - Tolerance, or ‘multiculturalism’, important to a Catholic with Protestant and Jewish relatives living through blood-thirsty wars of religion.
  - Pioneer of cultural relativism: skepticism about the authority of our own cultural norms in the face of very different societies (particularly those of the ‘New World’, *i.e.* the Americas).
  - First draft of the myth of the ‘noble savage’, elaborated by Rousseau, contradicted by Hobbes.

- **Norton 1**: Cervantes: *Don Quixote* (Extracts: Part I: Prologue and Chps 1–3 pp 1964–81; Part I: Chps 7 & 8 pp 1989–96; Part II: Chp 3 pp 2023–2028; Part II: Chp 74 pp 2068–2072.)
  - The first novel (but what does that mean?).
  - The conservatism of satire: *Quixote*’s adherence to out-dated chivalric practice is mocked, yet remains perversely admirable.
• **Norton 1**: Shakespeare: *Hamlet*
  - The ‘invention of the human’: deep studies of emotion and character.
  - Richness of language: vast vocabulary, prodigious terms of reference and multiple layers of allusion.
  - Political & historical context?

• **The scientific revolution** (see **Hunt** pp. 610 ff.)
  - Groundbreaking developments in many areas, including anatomy (Harvey, Vesalius), cosmology (Copernicus through Galileo).
  - Conflict with established authority, esp. the Catholic Church.
  - Origins of scientific method: Bacon, Descartes.
  - Innovative scientific communication and cooperation: societies (*e.g.* The Royal Society), journals.
  - Newton.

• **Hunt**: Chp 19, The Promise of the Enlightenment, 1740–1789.
  - An international movement, but particularly active in certain countries *e.g.* France, Scotland.
  - Strong emphasis on the power of human reason. However, not to the exclusion of the emotions (‘sentiments’)—despite what over-simplifying romantic critics said.
  - Fascination with the new discoveries of science. But Enlightenment thinkers on both sides in the ‘ancients’ vs. ‘moderns’ dispute.

• **Norton 2**: Swift: *A Modest Proposal*
  - Biting satire, lamenting the condition of the poor of Ireland, concealing a serious (mercantilist) proposal.
  - Also an attack on the fatuous proposals of other pamphleteers.
  - Problem of the ‘conservatism’ of satire, the tendency of satirists to (inadvertently) prop up the status quo,
    * by criticizing it in a way that makes positive alternatives hard to articulate, and
    * by acting as a comedic safety valve for discontent that might otherwise turn dangerous.

• **Online**: Bernard Mandeville: *The Grumbling Hive*
  - Private vice leads to public virtue.

• **Lualdi**: Adam Smith: *Wealth of Nations*
  - Critique of ‘mercantilism’ (a term coined by Smith).
  - The ‘Invisible Hand’: a more sophisticated defense of Mandeville’s insight.
  - Father of economics, with lasting political influence, perhaps especially in the US.

• **Norton 2**: Voltaire: *Candide*
  - Satire on philosophical optimism, lampooned as Pangloss’s (*i.e.* Leibniz’s) motto: “Everything for the best in the best of all possible worlds”.
  - Positive view of state of nature—Eldorado, and Candide’s garden—*cf.* Hobbes.

• **Norton 2**: Rousseau: *Confessions, Émile.*
  - Pioneer of romanticism (see below): preference for sentiment (*i.e.* emotion) over reason, and for country over town.
  - Psychological autobiography

• **Hunt**: Chp 20–21, The cataclysm of revolution, 1789–1800; Napoleon & the revolutionary legacy, 1800–30.
  - The French Revolution has far-reaching consequences for all aspects of European culture.
  - Divisible into several distinct stages, each with a very different political character:
    - **July 1789–August 1792** Failure of absolutist government; institution of a populist National Assembly and a constitutional monarchy.
    - **August 1792–July 1794** Rise to power of Jacobins, including Robespierre; execution of the King & Queen; the Terror; foreign conflicts, largely decided in France’s favor.
    - **1794–9: The Directory** Overthrow of Jacobins; more conservative constitution: five member Directory in charge.
    - **1799–1815: Napoleon** Brilliant young general; rules France, first as “Temporary Consul” (*cf.* Julius Caesar), then as Emperor; sequence of conquests across Europe; eventually defeated by coalition of Britain, Prussia & Russia.

• **Norton 2**: William Blake *Songs of Innocence & Experience*, &c.
  - Self-taught poet from poor background; trained as an engraver.
  - Deep but unconventional religious faith; conservative & mystical; contemptuous of Enlightenment rationalism;
  - Use of popular forms, *e.g.* ballads, rather than those of high culture.

• **Norton 2**: Coleridge
  - Wrote prose as well as verse; influenced by German thinkers, such as Kant.
– Co-wrote (with Wordsworth) the influential *Lyricall Ballads*, 1798.

**Norton 2: Shelley**

– Atheist.
– Politically radical: anticipating an English revolution.
– ‘Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world’.

**Online**: Wallace

* [http://www.wku.edu/~smithch/wallace/S043.htm](http://www.wku.edu/~smithch/wallace/S043.htm)
– Independently discovered natural selection from Darwin.
– Focus on group, rather than individual, selection.
– Discovered ‘Wallace Line’.

**Norton 2: Darwin**

– Discovered natural selection before Wallace, but published simultaneously.
– Work based on many previous intellectual and empirical discoveries, including some (such as animal husbandry) ignored by Wallace.
– Controversial extension of evolution to include Man.
– His work one of the sources of late 19th century religious doubt.

**Norton 2: Lord Tennyson: *In Memoriam A. H. H.***

– Integration of Tennyson’s private grief into a meditation on many issues of contemporary concern;
– Victorian forthrightness about death and taboo of sex: have we inverted these fixations?
– Discussion of science, especially population dynamics and geology, important sources for Darwin.

**Norton 2: Frederick Douglass: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave***

– Written while slavery was still in place, and as an argument for its abolition;
– Impressive use of autobiography to make broader ethical points;
– Subtle engagement with (and destruction of) pro-slavery arguments.

**Norton 2/Lualdi: Marx & Engels**

– Pioneers of communist theory, although there were earlier communists.
– Influence of *laissez faire* economics, although different conclusions drawn.
– ‘False consciousness’: the proletariat do not perceive their own exploitation. Clever idea, but makes it difficult to argue with a Marxist.

**Norton 2: Sigmund Freud**

– Founding father of psychoanalysis, and much of modern psychiatric practice;
– Introduced influential concepts: unconscious mind; ego/id/superego; oral/anal/genital phases of development; Oedipus complex; penis envy;
– Many of his patients under treatment for hysteria, a now discredited classification of nervous disorders believed characteristic of women;
– Freudian analysis only one of a enormous variety of new methods in medicine developed in this period, many of which now seem preposterous, but some of which have become indispensable—which of these best describes Freud’s work?
– Freud’s case studies read like literature, and have had a huge literary influence;
– He also describes a lost world of middle class Jewish Vienna, which was to be destroyed by WW1 and the holocaust.

**Norton 2: William Butler Yeats**

– One of the most expressive poets of his age;
– Fascination with mysticism, and an idiosyncratic theory of history;
– “Gyres” = spirals, specifically cultural movements waxing and waning across millennia.

**Norton 2: Franz Kafka: *Metamorphosis***

– Gregor Samsa becomes a beetle: a metaphor with several possible readings:
  * the alienation of modern life;
  * an existentialist fable, dramatizing Samsa’s “bad faith”;
  * a psychological case study (cf. Freud);
  * an absurdist black comedy.

**Hunt**: Chp 26, War, revolution and reconstruction, 1914–1929.

– Complex network of pre-War alliances and treaties (some secret) made wholesale war all but inevitable;
– Prolonged deadlock of trench warfare, producing unprecedented casualties;
– Eventual defeat of the Central Powers led to a hostile peace: heavy reparations on Germany; Austria dismembered;
“Stab in the back” myth;
Widespread economic problems, especially in the former Central Powers, but spreading across Europe and America;
Rise of Fascism in Italy, and later Germany and Spain;
Consolidation of Communism in Russia, with increasingly brutal consequences.

- Norton 2: Virginia Woolf: *A Room of One’s Own*
  - A witty, but forthrightly feminist, explanation of the lack of women in the literary canon;
  - Deeply influential: a foundational text for Women’s Studies.

- Norton 2: Jorge Luis Borges: *The Garden of Forking Paths*
  - Ostensibly a spy story, but develops into a much richer and stranger experimental work;
  - Like most of Borges’s tales, a meditation on a philosophical theme, specifically the theories of branching time and possible worlds.

- Norton 2: Albert Camus: *The Guest*
  - An existentialist fable, but also an incisive commentary on the transition to post-colonialism;
  - Several questions can be answered in multiple ways:
    * Who is the guest?
    * Why does the Arab not escape when given the chance?

- Norton 2: Calvino: *Invisible Cities*
  - Wildly experimental: influence of OuLiPo;
  - Fantastical, but grounded in atmospheric descriptive writing;
  - Problematizes the concept of knowledge.

Chronology

**Important:** Intended as an aid to your understanding, not as something to be memorized.

- 1397 — Medici Bank established in Florence.
- 1420 — Portuguese colonize Madeira.
- 1434 — Cosimo de’ Medici assumes power in Florence.
- 1440 — Frederick II becomes Holy Roman Emperor; exposure of *Donation of Constantine* as a forgery (an early triumph for humanist textual analysis).
- c. 1450 — Gutenberg invents movable type.
- 1453 — Fall of Constantinople to Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II; end of the Hundred Years War between England and France.
- 1478 — Establishment of Spanish Inquisition.
- 1492 — Columbus’s first voyage to Americas; conquest of Granada and expulsion of the Moors from Spain by Ferdinand & Isabella; death of Lorenzo de’ Medici.
- 1494 — Establishment of Florentine Republic
- 1498 — Da Gama reaches India.
- 1500 — Cabral lands in Brazil.
- 1504 — Michelangelo’s *David* completed.
- 1509 — Accession of King Henry VIII.
- 1511 — Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*.
- 1512 — Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel ceiling completed; restoration of Medici rule in Florence.
- 1513 — Cortes lands in Mexico; Portuguese capture Hormuz; Machiavelli writes *The Prince*.
- 1514 — Portuguese reach China.
- 1517 — Martin Luther’s 95 theses.
- 1521 — Diet of Worms; Magellan reaches Pacific.
- 1527 — Sack of Rome by army of Emperor Charles V.
- 1529 — Raising of Ottoman siege of Vienna.
- 1533 — Henry VIII splits from Rome.
- 1541 — François Rabelais, *Gargantua & Pantagruel*.
- 1543 — Portuguese reach Japan; Copernicus, *De revolutionibus*; Vesalius, *Fabrica*.
- 1558 — Accession of Elizabeth I.
- 1569 — Mercator’s world map.
- 1570 — Excommunication of Elizabeth I.
- 1571 — Defeat of Ottoman navy at Battle of Lepanto.
- 1572 — St Bartholomew’s Day Massacre.
- 1580 — Montaigne, *Essays*.
- 1582 — Introduction of Gregorian calendar.
- 1588 — Defeat of the Spanish Armada.
- 1598 — Edict of Nantes.
1600 — (British) East India Company founded.
1601 — Shakespeare, *Hamlet*.
1603 — Death of Elizabeth I; accession of James VI & I.
1605 — Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, Part One.
1607 — Establishment of Jamestown colony.
1610 — Galileo, *The Starry Messenger*.
1615 — Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, Part Two.
1618 — Outbreak of Thirty Years War.
1620 — *Mayflower* lands; Bacon, *Novum Organum*.
1637 — Descartes, *Discourse on Method*.
1640 — Beginning of the English Civil War.
1648 — Peace of Westphalia.
1649 — Charles I executed; Commonwealth established.
1660 — Restoration of Charles II; Royal Society founded.
1667 — Milton, *Paradise Lost*.
1668 — *Principia Mathematica*.
1669 — Glorious Revolution.
1687 — Newton, *Philosophical Dictionary*.
1690 — Locke, *Treatise of Civil Government*.
1694 — Bank of England established.
1707 — Act of Union between England & Scotland.
1715 — Death of Louis XIV; First Jacobite Rebellion.
1726 — Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*.
1745 — Second Jacobite Rebellion.
1759 — Voltaire, *Candide*.
1762 — Rousseau, *Émile*; Catherine the Great assumes power in Russia.
1764 — Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary*.
1769 — James Watt’s improved steam engine.
1774 — Louis XVI becomes King of France.
1777 — Hume’s essays ‘Of Miracles’ & ‘Of Suicide’ published posthumously.
1779 — Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*.
1781 — Rousseau, *Confessions* (posthumous publication begun); Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*.
1789 — Outbreak of French Revolution.
1790 — Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.
1791 — Paine, *Rights of Man*.
1792 — Execution of Louis XVI.
1794 — Blake, *Songs of Innocence & Experience*.
1799 — Napoleon becomes temporary consul.
1803 — Louisiana Purchase.
1804 — Coronation of Napoleon I, Emperor of France; Haiti becomes first independent Caribbean nation.
1812 — Napoleon’s Russian campaign.
1813 — Grimm’s *Fairy Tales*.
1815 — Battle of Waterloo; Restoration of Bourbon monarchy in France.
1819 — Peterloo massacre.
1822 — Death of Shelley.
1832 — Great Reform Act.
1834 — Abolition of slavery in British Empire.
1844 — Chambers: *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*.
1845 — Douglass: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*.
1850 — Tennyson: *In Memoriam A. H. H.*.
1858 — Wallace & Darwin’s Linnaean Society papers.
1859 — Darwin: *The Origin of Species*.
1861 — Outbreak of American Civil War.

1864 — End of Civil War and abolition of slavery in U.S.


1870 — Franco-Prussian War: collapse of French Second Empire.

1871 — Darwin: *The Descent of Man*.

1883 — Death of Marx.

1899 — Freud: *Interpretation of Dreams*.

1905 — First Russian Revolution; Freud: *Dora*.

1914 — Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and outbreak of World War One.

1916 — Easter Rising in Ireland.

1917 — Second Russian Revolution: death of Tsar Nicholas II.

1918 — Armistice in World War One.

1922 — Mussolini’s March on Rome; Partition of Ireland.

1924 — Death of Lenin.

1929 — Wall Street Crash; Woolf: *A Room of One’s Own*.

1933 — Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany.

1939 — End of Spanish Civil War (began 1936); Germany invades Poland: beginning of World War Two; Death of W. B. Yeats.

1940 — Fall of France; Battle of Britain.

1941 — Pearl Harbor; Hitler attacks USSR; Borges: *The Garden of Forking Paths*.

1945 — Use of atom bomb; Defeat of Germany and Japan; Start of Cold War.

1947 — Indian independence.

1948 — Israel established; Berlin airlift begins.

1953 — Death of Joseph Stalin; structure of DNA discovered.

1957 — Launch of *Sputnik*; Camus: *The Guest*.

1962 — End of Algerian War (began 1954); Cuban Missile Crisis.

1972 — Calvino: *Invisible Cities*. 