



The Renaissance

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Introduction

The whole of the *Oxford Bibliographies* Renaissance and Reformation module is devoted to the period 1350–1650, one of the many possible time spans scholars use to denote the Renaissance era, and includes many entries pertaining to people, events, and movements associated with the Renaissance. This bibliography entry limits itself to the concept of the Renaissance: the monographs and articles that define it, debate its nature, and challenge its existence; general overviews of some aspects of the Renaissance; textbooks and sourcebooks suitable for classroom use; and journals and reference works useful for the exploration of the Renaissance as a whole. The concept of the Renaissance needs its own bibliography because its nature is not self-evident. The Renaissance does not have natural boundaries, as does Antiquity, which begins with the first civilizations and continues until the fall of Rome. Renaissance specialists do not agree on its chronological limits, although 1350 to 1650, or the somewhat larger period from Petrarch to Milton, is a designation with which many agree. Use of the term implies an interpretation of the nature of the Middle Ages, and the notion of a shift after 1300 from the main features of that era in the realms of culture, society, and politics. Most of those who employ the concept of the Renaissance see developments in thought and the arts as critical, but not as the sole elements in that transformation. Many medievalists have denied the existence of a Renaissance altogether, finding the roots of all its characteristic themes in the Middle Ages. Many scholars, especially of the later period (16th into the 18th centuries), prefer the term “early modern,” which seems to some more appropriately used when discussing European expansion, gender and sexuality, and even the modern state. But the editors of this *Oxford Bibliographies* module and most of its contributors find the concept of the Renaissance still to be indispensable, as denoting the era when, for the last time in the history of European civilization, the legacy of the Greco-Roman past was integrated with the firmly established Judeo-Christian one, thus reestablishing, on the threshold of modernity, its dual foundation.

Reference Works

The scholarly ferment of the last two generations has left its imprint on major reference projects completed over the last twenty years, which join some classic and still useful compilations. The numerous reference works on the Renaissance can be subdivided into aids that provide information—[Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, and Atlases](#)—and those that are gateways to further sources of information—[Portals, Catalogues, and Bibliographies](#).

Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, and Atlases

Presented here are the encyclopedias [Hale 1981](#), [Grendler 1999](#), and [Bergin and Speake 2004](#); the dictionaries [Bietenholz and Deutscher 1985–1987](#), [Carney 2001](#), and [Campbell 2003](#); the essay collections known as “companions” to study ([Brady, et al. 1994](#) and [Ruggiero 2002](#)); and the cultural atlas [Black 1993](#).

- Bergin, Thomas G., and Jennifer Speake, eds. *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance and the Reformation*. Rev. ed. New York: Facts On File, 2004.

Encompassing all the main centers of European civilization from the 14th into the 17th century in some 2,500 entries in under 500 pages, offers a quick look at major figures and happenings, with strong coverage of literature and the arts.

- Bietenholz, Peter G., and Thomas B. Deutscher, eds. *Contemporaries of Erasmus: A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation*. 3 vols. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985–1987.

Indispensable resource that, in introducing the Erasmian circle, incidentally provides a who’s who of European civilization at the peak of the Renaissance: as Richard de Molen commented (*Catholic Historical Review* 73.3 [1987]: 468), it is “the single most important reference on Erasmus’s contemporaries in existence,” and it is more, as well.

- Black, Christopher F. *Cultural Atlas of the Renaissance*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1993.

Maps assisted by narrative—rather than the usual narrative adorned by a few maps—tell the story of the Italian origins of the Renaissance and its spread through Europe, focusing on literary and artistic trends over the period 1300–1600.

- Brady, Thomas A., Heiko A. Oberman, and James D. Tracy, eds. *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation*. Leiden, The Netherlands, and New York: Brill, 1994.

In two volumes, more than 1,400 pages, and 41 essays, constitutes a comprehensive introduction to European politics, economics, and social and cultural trends during the two critical centuries of the Renaissance and Reformation movements. Neither traditional—humanism, the Lutheran revolt—nor often neglected topics—the Ottoman Empire, taxation—are omitted.

- Campbell, Gordon. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Renaissance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

At just shy of 1,000 pages, a useful reference tool for the period from about 1400 into the early 1600s. Four appendices provide tables of ruling dynasties, dates of adoption of the Gregorian calendar, place-names in imprints, and, unlikely to be the most thumbed, ligatures and contractions in Renaissance Greek.

- Carney, Jo Eldridge, ed. *Renaissance and Reformation, 1500–1620: A Biographical Dictionary*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2001.

Available not only in print but also in several electronic formats (ABC-CLIO, EbscoHost, and Ebrary) to those with access to subscribing libraries, a concise guide by 72 contributors to some 350 major and secondary figures of the long 16th century. More useful for students than for specialists in the field.

- Grendler, Paul F., ed. *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance*. 6 vols. New York: Scribner's, 1999.

A landmark compilation containing nearly 1,200 learned articles by hundreds of experts on themes and issues ("Classical Antiquity," "Parades, Processions, and Pageants") as well as individuals and events. Enhanced by maps, genealogical tables, and a detailed chronology. This is the place to begin.

- Hale, John R., ed. *A Concise Encyclopaedia of the Italian Renaissance*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Thirty years old, but still a beloved handbook for the scholar of the Italian Renaissance, offering in a mere 360 pages a full array of deeply learned profiles of individuals and events, authored by thirty two noted scholars, and prefaced by an intelligent taxonomy of issues and themes.

- Ruggiero, Guido, ed. *A Companion to the Worlds of the Renaissance*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002.

A single-volume collection of essays that lead off with the clarifying discussions of, respectively, the Italian and European Renaissance, and include especially strong explorations of social historical problems such as the concept of honor, violence, civility, family and clan, and social hierarchies. Avoids a focus on individual political units.

Portals, Catalogues, and Bibliographies

Presented here are the bibliographies [Bibliographie internationale de l'Humanisme et de la Renaissance 1965–](#), [Iter Bibliography 1997–](#), and [Travitsky 2010–](#); the catalogue [Kristeller 1963–1997](#); and the web portals [Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento](#), [Iter: Gateway to](#)

[the Middle Ages and Renaissance](#), [The Newberry Library](#), [The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe](#), and the [Renaissance Society of America](#).

- *Bibliographie internationale de l'Humanisme et de la Renaissance*. 41 vols. Geneva, Switzerland: Librairie Droz, 1965–.

A serial article listing, without annotations, published annually since 1965, covering all aspects of European civilization in the 15th and 16th centuries. Produced by a panel of experts from about twenty countries, mostly European. The volumes published lag some years behind the year in which the articles listed were published. Available to subscribers [online](#).

- [Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento](#).

Full web portal of Florence-based National Institute for the Study of the Renaissance (INSR), with links to the organization's own library and other centers; a description of ongoing projects, including conferences, the digitization of documents and studies; and publications.

- [Iter Bibliography](#). 1997–. Iter: Gateway to the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

Associated with the University of Toronto Library, invaluable Internet-only listing of journal articles (nearly 500,000), essays from collections (more than 200,000), and monographs (more than 100,000), pertaining to the study of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance from 400 to 1700. Available online to subscribers.

- [Iter: Gateway to the Middle Ages and Renaissance](#).

Web portal created by the Faculty of Information Studies of the University of Toronto; for subscribers only. Links to the *Iter Bibliography*, the *Iter Italicum* of Paul Oskar Kristeller, and the *Bibliography of English Women Writers, 1500–1640*; other bibliographies, journals, and book series; and to the related Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies at the University of Toronto.

- Kristeller, Paul Oskar. *Iter Italicum: A Finding List of Uncatalogued or Incompletely Catalogued Humanistic Manuscripts of the Renaissance in Italian and Other Libraries*. 7 vols. London: Warburg Institute, 1963–1997.

A unique resource whose exhaustive description of humanist manuscripts makes uncatalogued and incompletely catalogued items more accessible than those previously catalogued. Serves as a guide to the manuscript resources of (mainly) European libraries and to the community of the lettered: authors, translators, dedicatees, and patrons. A searchable online version is available to subscribers at [Iter: Gateway to the Middle Ages and Renaissance](#).

- [Newberry Library](#).

Gateway to the Newberry Library, an independent organization supporting research in the humanities, especially in Europe and America, during the Renaissance period. Resources include the online catalogue of books especially rich in Renaissance titles, manuscripts, genealogical materials, and ongoing programs.

- [The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe](#). 2010–.

Gateway to the series *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe*, Margaret L. King and Albert Rabil Jr., eds. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996–2010 and Toronto: Iter, Inc., and the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2009–2014; Toronto: Iter, Inc., and Tempe, AZ: ACMRS [Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies], 2014–), with Elizabeth H. Hageman as co-editor for English texts from 2011. Site links to Iter:Gateway, Oxford Bibliographies, the Chicago and Toronto Series lists, and to King and Rabil, “Introduction to the Series,” as well as to King and Rabil, ed. and trans., *Her Immaculate Hand: Selected Works by and about the Women Humanists of Quattrocento Italy* (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1983; rev. ed. 1992).

- [Renaissance Society of America](#), 1954–

The premier Renaissance studies organization in the United States and arguably the world, the RSA is the umbrella organization for more than fifty autonomous scholarly organizations. The RSA website links to constituent organizations, a directory of members, publishing ventures, fellowship opportunities, the ACLS Humanities E-Book site, and archives of the journal *Renaissance Quarterly* (see [Journals](#)).

- Travitsky, Betty S., comp. [Bibliography of English Women Writers, 1500–1640](#). 2010–. Iter: Gateway to the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

Comprising over 700 citations and updated regularly by the scholar and bibliographer Travitsky, constitutes a complete and authoritative record of English women writing in England and beyond, in English and other languages.

Textbooks

Given that scholars and faculty are not agreed on the nature of the Renaissance—Does it precede the Reformation or are the two movements parallel? Does it precede or is it the same as the “early modern” era? Is it a cultural movement, or does it encompass all dimensions of European civilization?—the materials are not always suited to the curriculum in place. Yet there are excellent textbooks on the market, including many published decades ago and still in use, and an even greater array of translated sources in convenient anthologies. Titles given here are current with standard book dealers. They are cited in their original edition, with later editions noted. Several of those cited cover the Renaissance and Reformation as a pair, such as [Spitz 1971](#), [Jensen 1981](#), [Wilcox 1975](#), and [Zophy 1996](#); discussion here focuses on their Renaissance coverage. [Kekewich 2000](#) considers the Italian Renaissance mainly from the perspective of humanism, while [King 2005](#) looks at the Renaissance in all of Europe, and discusses the

Reformation as part of that era. Textbooks dealing with “early modern Europe” in preference to “Renaissance Europe” are not included. Some excellent textbooks by master Renaissance scholars—G. R. Elton, Wallace K. Ferguson, Myron P. Gilmore, among others—are no longer available in current editions, although used copies may be found, as well as superficially updated versions by secondary publishers.

- Jensen, De Lamar. *Renaissance Europe: Age of Recovery and Reconciliation*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1981.

Capable text, which attends both to the history of culture and its social and political context in a solid and rather dense presentation. A second edition by the same publisher appeared in 1992 and is still reprinted. Its companion volume on the Reformation is similarly available.

- Kekewich, Margaret Lucille, ed. *The Impact of Humanism*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000.

The first volume of a five-volume series intended to accompany the Open University course “The Renaissance: A Cultural Enquiry,” consists of sections by different authors on the Burckhardtian legacy, the humanist movement and humanism in relation to music and philosophy, and a profile of Machiavelli.

- King, Margaret L. *The Renaissance in Europe*. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005.

A single volume on the Renaissance, stressing the Italian setting but including other Renaissance centers and the Reformation movement. Attentive to social, political, and cultural developments, with strong coverage of gender. Readable prose. Reissued London: Laurence King, 2013.

- Spitz, Lewis W. *The Renaissance and Reformation Movements*. 2 vols. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1971.

The first volume, on the Renaissance, focuses on mainly intellectual history, with little attention to social or political context, but introduces major figures adequately. A revised edition was published in 1987, since reprinted (St. Louis, MO: Concordia).

- Wilcox, Donald J. *In Search of God and Self: Renaissance and Reformation Thought*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975.

Offers an overview of both Renaissance and Reformation movements over the three centuries from Dante to Calvin, with an emphasis on intellectual and cultural history, providing good discussions, for instance, of Augustine, Aristotle, and mysticism. Reprinted in 1987 (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland).

- Zophy, Jonathan W. *A Short History of Renaissance and Reformation Europe: Dances over Fire and Water*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996.

Praised for its concision, surveys both Renaissance and Reformation movements in a single volume of fewer than 400 pages in accessible language that avoids some complex issues. Gives due attention to social, political, and cultural history. Available in its fourth edition (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009).

Primary Sources

Surpassing even the power of cinema to evoke an age, primary source excerpts of literary and documentary texts are indispensable in the classroom, especially for the era of the Renaissance, which abounds in rich, compelling verbal material. The great variety that it presents is a challenge to the editor, who must somehow select and arrange texts for maximum effect. Perhaps the most successful of all text anthologies is the classic [Cassirer, et al. 1948](#), still in print after more than six decades. Right after it comes [Kohl and Witt 1978](#), with a finely chosen selection of humanist works on social and political themes. Less well-known, [Gundersheimer 1965](#) also offers a useful array of humanist works. While these collections focus on humanism, others include a mix of excerpts from official documents and chronicles and literary and learned texts, as do [Bartlett 1992](#), [Bondanella and Musa 1987](#), [Elmer 2000](#), [Gouwens 2004](#), and [Ross and McLaughlin 1953](#). [Brucker 1971](#), finally, provides a unique series of documents which, in the sum, illustrate manifold features of the society of Florence, and of Renaissance society more broadly. Some older collections have been omitted because they are no longer readily available for classroom purposes. For works by individual authors, see their respective bibliography entries, and for the I Tatti, Other Voice in Early Modern Europe, and Early Modern Englishwoman in Print series of volumes of primary texts, see [Texts Series](#).

- Bartlett, Kenneth R., ed. *The Civilization of the Italian Renaissance: A Sourcebook*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1992.

Varied collection of texts illuminating many aspects of society and culture, including excerpts from court documents, memoirs, literary texts, humanist treatises (including women authors), histories, and letters.

- Bondanella, Julia Conaway, and Mark Musa, eds. *The Italian Renaissance Reader*. New York: New American Library, 1987.

Still a favored resource two decades after its original appearance, publishes eleven substantial excerpts from the works of major Italian authors—humanists, poets, artists, critics, political writers—including Boccaccio, Pico della Mirandola, Leonardo da Vinci, Machiavelli, Castiglione, and Vasari. Reprinted.

- Brucker, Gene A. *The Society of Renaissance Florence: A Documentary Study*. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.

In 132 document excerpts, illustrates multiple facets of Florentine society, including taxes, family, crime, witchcraft, sexuality, and heresy. Rightly subtitled “a documentary study,” offers in a concise volume a gateway to the inner workings of Renaissance social

life. Republished in 2001 as part of the Renaissance Society of American Reprint Texts (RSARTS) series (Toronto: University of Toronto Press).

- Cassirer, Ernst, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall, eds. *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man: Selections in Translation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948.

Learned, convenient, and irreplaceable, so vital a tool that after more than six decades it is still in print with the original publisher. Contains important works by Petrarch, Ficino, Valla, and Pomponazzi, among others. Repeatedly reprinted.

- Elmer, Peter, Nick Webb, and Roberta Wood, eds. *The Renaissance in Europe: An Anthology*. New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2000.

Gathers dozens of texts of all sorts from mainly the 15th century, with a large representation of Italian humanist texts (including some by women authors), plus literary excerpts and works pertaining to religious reform and experience in northern as well as southern Europe.

- Gouwens, Kenneth, ed. *The Italian Renaissance: The Essential Sources*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004.

Provides a variety of excerpts from the 14th to 16th centuries, including works by the “three crowns”—Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch; the widows Alessandra Strozzi and Laura Cereta; humanists Valla and Ficino; political theorist Machiavelli; and artist-memoirist Cellini.

- Gundersheimer, Werner L. *The Italian Renaissance*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1965.

Carefully chosen and elegantly presented excerpts from important humanist texts, including works not easily obtained in so convenient a format by Coluccio Salutati, Pier Paolo Vergerio, Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Pietro Bembo, and Leonardo da Vinci. Republished in 1993 as part of the RSARTS series (Toronto: University of Toronto Press).

- Kohl, Benjamin G., and Ronald G. Witt, eds. *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978.

Invaluable collection of substantial excerpts from humanist works, all concerned with the “earthly republic”—political and historical description or analysis, and social criticism to boot. Useful and learned introductions to each item. Still in print by original publisher after three decades.

- Ross, James Bruce, and Mary Martin McLaughlin, eds. *The Portable Renaissance Reader*. New York: Viking, 1953.

Blockbuster collection nearly 800 pages long, still in print in its sixth decade since original publication, with excerpts from more than 100 authors drawn from all over Europe and representing many genres; authors include Boccaccio, Machiavelli, Rabelais, Luther, Calvin, Cervantes, and Galileo.

Texts Series

Many critical editions and translations of major Renaissance figures have been published in recent years, for which see the separate bibliographies for the specific author concerned; for anthologies of texts, see [Primary Sources](#). Here, five major texts series that are publishing works by Renaissance authors are cited: the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies (ACMRS) ([Bjork, 1967–](#)), I Tatti Renaissance Library ([Hankins and Davies 2001–](#)), The Early Modern Englishwoman: A Facsimile Library of Essential Works ([Travitsky and Prescott 1996–](#)), The Renaissance Society of America (RSA) ([Kallendorf 1967–](#)), and The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe ([King and Rabil 1996–](#)).

- Bjork, Robert E. ed. [ACMRS \(Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies\)](#). 1967–.

Editions and translations of a wide range of medieval and Renaissance works, now having incorporated the titles published 1967–1996 by MRTS (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies) at the State University of New York at Binghamton, edited by Mario A. di Cesare, and comprising more than 400 volumes. In conjunction with Iter, Inc., at the University of Toronto, directed by William Bowen, many volumes are also published as ebooks.

- Hankins, James, and Martin Davies, eds. *I Tatti Renaissance Library*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001–.

More than seventy titles published to date of works of Renaissance humanism, philosophy, and political thought. Bilingual editions. Available in e-editions

- Kallendorf, Craig, ed. [RSA \(Renaissance Society of America\) Texts and Studies](#). 1967–.

Consisting of a first series of twenty volumes of editions and translations of mainly humanist texts published 1967–2008 in conjunction with MRTS (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, originally located at the State University of New York at Binghamton, and since 1996, at Arizona State University at Tempe [ACMRS: the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies]); and since 2012, a second series published in conjunction with Brill Publishers (Leiden, The Netherlands), consisting of three volumes to date and ongoing.

- King, Margaret L., and Albert Rabil Jr., eds. *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe*. Series One: The Chicago Series. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996–2010); Series Two: The Toronto Series (Toronto: Iter, Inc. and Centre for Reformation and

Renaissance Studies, 2009–2014; Toronto: Iter, Inc. and Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2014–).

Texts ranging from memoirs to humanist treatises to romances to medical and gynecological texts, most by women authors, translated from French, German, Italian, Latin, Polish, Russian, Spanish, and others; from 2011, expanded to include editions of English texts under English texts series co-editor Elizabeth H. Hageman. The Chicago series comprises sixty volumes; the Toronto series consists of thirty-seven published through 2014, with a further fifty planned.

- Travitsky, Betty S., Patrick Cullen, and Anne Askew, eds. *The Early Modern Englishwoman: A Facsimile Library of Essential Works*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1996–.

Consisting to date of three series, each comprising several volumes, which reproduce, in facsimile, printed works by English women authors from the 16th and 17th centuries, and related contemporary works “essential for the study of early modern women.”

Journals

Hundreds of journals and serials deal seriously with the Renaissance era, among others, including some among the most important and highly reputed journals in circulation. This presentation is limited to those that are specifically committed to the Renaissance era, however defined or named. Among these are the long-respected serials from Western Europe—the [Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance](#), [Italia medioevale e umanistica 1958–](#), and [Rinascimento](#)—to which were added from 1954 in the United States journals specifically framed as vehicles for the understanding of the Renaissance period—[Renaissance Quarterly](#) and the *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* (later transformed with an “early modern” focus into the [Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies](#)). Somewhat later, there followed the American [Sixteenth Century Journal](#), tilted more toward social history and the Reformation than its predecessors; and from Canada and the United Kingdom, respectively, the bilingual [Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme](#) and [Renaissance Studies](#). A recent addition is [Early Modern Women](#), reflecting the full maturation of the study of women during the Renaissance. The diversity of understandings of the periodization and nature of the Renaissance and early modern observed in these journal titles is explored in [Renaissance Concept](#).

- [Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance](#). 1903–.

Variant titles. Published three times yearly (since 1957) by Librairie Droz. A principal source of important articles, documents, and reviews of books pertaining to the 15th and 16th centuries, especially useful for Anglophone scholars who must inform themselves about European ventures. Includes works in French, German, and Italian.

- [Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal](#). 2006–.

Published annually by the University of Maryland Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies. The product of a generation of conferences and collaborations on early modern women, which also produced a number of collections of essays. Intends to publish studies on all aspects of women's experience in the era of the Renaissance. Full text available online, by subscription, through the [H.W. Wilson databases](#).

- *Italia medioevale e umanistica*. 1958–.

Published annually by Editrice Antenore, Padua, Italy. Publishes learned articles on all aspects of the later Italian Middle Ages and earlier Renaissance, in multiple languages. Full text available online, by subscription, through the [Casalini Libri](#).

- [Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies](#). 1996–.

Previously the *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* (before 1971). Published three times yearly by Duke University Press. Publishes articles in English on European and western Asian arts, literature, philosophy, theology, and history, on all periods since Antiquity through the 17th century. Full text available online, by subscription, from a variety of journal databases.

- [Renaissance Quarterly](#). 1954–.

Incorporating *Renaissance News* (1954–1967) and *Studies in the Renaissance* (1954–1974), *Renaissance Quarterly* (RQ) is published quarterly by the University of Chicago Press for the Renaissance Society of America (RSA). The premier journal of Renaissance studies, publishing articles, review essays, and book reviews (of works in multiple languages) pertaining to all aspects of the Renaissance from 1300 to 1650 and featuring interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approaches. Full text available online, by subscription, from the RSA and a variety of journal databases.

- [Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme](#). 1964–.

Published by a consortium of Canadian Renaissance Studies organizations based at the University of Toronto. A multidisciplinary and bilingual (French/English) journal offering studies on all aspects of the Renaissance period, including history, arts, literature, science, and philosophy. Full text available online, by subscription, at [Iter: Gateway to the Middle Ages and Renaissance](#).

- [Renaissance Studies](#). 1987–.

Published five times yearly (since 2005; previously quarterly) by Oxford University Press for the Society for Renaissance Studies. Publishes historical studies, as well as book reviews, pertaining to the society and culture of the Mediterranean and northern Europe during the Renaissance era. Full text of recent issues available online, by subscription, from [Wiley-Blackwell](#) and other journal databases.

- [*Rinascimento: Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento*](#). 1950–.

Superseding *Rinascita*, 1938–1944. Published annually by Leo S. Olschki for Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento (INSR). Foremost Italian journal of Renaissance studies, with articles and forums in Italian, French, German, and English; also publishes previously unpublished documents and texts. Full text of very recent issues available online, by subscription, through the [Casalini Library](#). The *Bibliografia italiana di studi sull'Umanesimo ed il Rinascimento* is published as an annual supplement.

- [*Sixteenth Century Journal: The Journal of Early Modern Studies*](#). 1969–.

Incorporating *Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies* (1969–1972). Published quarterly by the Sixteenth Century Journal Press for the Foundation for Reformation Research. Originating as a journal focused on Reformation history, has expanded to encompass all areas of European culture and beyond (more historical than literary), primarily in the 16th century. Full text available online, by subscription, through a number of journal databases.

The Renaissance Concept

Everyone, it seems, has a different concept of the Renaissance. The following sections show the concept evolving from a grandiose 19th-century abstraction to, by the beginning of the 21st century, a more modest and contested construct losing ground to the alternative, but still not wholly satisfactory, locution “early modern.”

Origins

The modern understanding of the Renaissance first took form from the 1850s through the 1930s, in a series of works by French, Swiss, German, and English authors, of which the principal exemplars are given below. In 1855 the French nationalist historian Jules Michelet first employed the term “Renaissance” to describe the cultural shifts of the 16th century in two component volumes, titled *Renaissance et Réforme* (Renaissance and Reformation), of his nineteen-volume *History of France*, on which he labored from the 1830s to 1867 ([Michelet 1978](#)). Five years later, the Swiss historian and critic Jacob Burckhardt elaborated on the concept, situating a period of the “discovery of the world and of man” in Italy of the 14th to 16th centuries, characterized by bold individualism in thought and action ([Burckhardt 1958](#)). With these formulations begin the modern discussion of the Renaissance as an era in European history. A year before Burckhardt, in 1859, Georg Voigt defined the renewal that took place in 15th-century Italy as primarily cultural and centered on the humanist recovery of classical antiquity (see [Voigt 1893](#)). There followed [Geiger 1882](#), marrying the conceptions of “Renaissance” and “humanism,” and [Burdach 1926](#), which, like Michelet, added the Reformation as well, while [Sabbadini 1905–1914](#) is limited more precisely to the Italian arena and the humanist investigation of classical texts. The leisurely overview of [Symonds 1935](#) stays largely in the Burckhardtian mold, while [von Martin 1963](#) sharply departs from it, offering instead a class-based analysis of the Renaissance surge.

- Burckhardt, Jacob. *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*. Translated by S. G. C. Middlemore. 2 vols. New York: Harper, 1958.

Classic translation (1878) of the original 1860 German *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*, frequently reprinted, and available online through [Boise State University](#). The foundational statement of the modern conception of the Renaissance as an era of aggressive individualism and creativity in the political, social, and cultural realms.

- Burdach, Konrad. *Reformation, Renaissance, Humanismus: zwei Abhandlungen über die Grundlage moderner Bildung und Sprachkunst*. 2d ed. Berlin: Gebrüder Paetel, 1926.

Originally published in 1918 immediately following the humiliations of World War I, German historian Burdach defines the international and civilizing effect of three related cultural movements in two influential essays on, respectively, the meaning of the words “Renaissance” and “Reformation” and the origins of humanism. Reprinted in 1963 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft) and subsequently.

- Geiger, Ludwig. *Renaissance und Humanismus in Italien und Deutschland*. Berlin: G. Grote, 1882.

A generation after Burckhardt, German historian Ludwig Geiger extends the Renaissance (which Burckhardt had seen as Italian) to Germany, and attaches it to his special area of interest, the study of humanism (a secondary concern for Burckhardt)—an association that endures.

- Michelet, Jules. *Histoire de France au seizième siècle: Renaissance et Réforme*. Edited by Robert Casanova. Vol. 7 of *Oeuvres complètes*. edited by Paul Viallaneix. Paris: Flammarion, 1978.

Originally published as part of the nineteen-volume *Histoire de France* (completed 1867); now incorporated in the modern edition of the complete works. Writing in 1855, Michelet identifies the 16th century as a period of profound cultural transformation, employing the term “Renaissance” in the sense soon after adopted by Burckhardt.

- Sabbadini, Remigio. *Le scoperte dei codici latini e greci ne' secoli XIV e XV*. 2 vols. Florence: G.C. Sansoni, 1905–1914.

One of a scholarly cohort that investigated the Italian past during the post-Risorgimento generations, Sabbadini reconstructed the experience of the humanists who newly encountered the classical past in the 14th and 15th centuries, thus extending and concretizing the work of Voigt. Reprinted in 1967 (Florence, Italy: G.C. Sansoni), annotated by Eugenio Garin.

- Symonds, John Addington. *Renaissance in Italy*. 2 vols. New York: Modern Library, 1935.

Originally published serially (seven volumes in eight) from 1875 to 1886, English historian Symonds considers the political setting, cultural developments, and the Catholic response to the challenges of Renaissance and Reformation. The widely circulated 1935 edition propels the Burckhardian vision, which Symonds largely accepts, into the middle decades of the 20th century.

- Voigt, Georg. *Die Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums oder das erste Jahrhundert des Humanismus*. 3d ed. Edited by Maximilian Lehnerdt. 2 vols. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1893.

Originally published in 1859, one year before Burckhardt's *Civilization of the Renaissance*, the German historian Voigt also describes a "*Wiederbelebung*," or "Renaissance," but perceives it more narrowly as a revival of classical Antiquity begun in Italy and extending throughout Europe, accomplishing a new consciousness of the human self, or "humanism." Reprinted in 1960 (Berlin: de Gruyter).

- von Martin, Alfred W. O. *Sociology of the Renaissance*. Translated by W. L. Luetkens. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.

First published in German in 1932 (Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke Verlag) and in Luetkens' translation in 1944 (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner; New York: Oxford University Press), this slim volume won renown after its 1963 reprinting, when its decades-old Marxist interpretation found an audience among American neo-Marxist academics. Traces the surge of cultural creativity in the Renaissance to the unleashed energies of a capitalist class.

The 1940s to 1960s

In the postwar years, with a new awareness of the fragility as well as the achievement of European civilization, American scholars (and several Old World immigrants) took up with new vigor the study of the Renaissance. From the 1940s to 1960s, the Burckhardian Renaissance strode on, now in the hands mainly of American scholars, who described the period with broad brushstrokes, displaying a preference for intellectual and cultural history. [Mommesen 1942](#) and [Panofsky 1960](#), two brief but electrifying essays, zeroed in on the contemporary consciousness of a decisive break with the medieval past. In these decades as well, [Haydn 1950](#) and [Artz 1962](#) offered quite different syntheses of the Renaissance era, while the contributors to [Helton 1964](#) reaffirmed the fundamental components of the prevailing Renaissance concept, and [Rice 1958](#) and [Weiss 1969](#) provided concise, elegant explorations of two different aspects of Renaissance culture: the evolving understanding of wisdom and the renewed awareness of the material remains of ancient civilization. [Haskins 1957](#) offered a first loud protest against the Renaissance concept, only a few years after [Ferguson 1948](#) had surveyed the field and constructed a historiographical account of the fortunes of the Renaissance.

- Artz, Frederick B. *From the Renaissance to Romanticism: Trends in Style in Art, Literature, and Music, 1300–1830*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962.

A broad history of styles across the range of the arts in Europe for the entire Renaissance period, with Classicism and Romanticism to boot, this thoughtful overview by an intellectual historian offers a synthesis not readily found elsewhere—while omitting, as it is not in his purview, anything about Renaissance society, economy, or politics.

- Ferguson, Wallace K. *The Renaissance in Historical Thought: Five Centuries of Interpretation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948.

An exemplary work of historiographical analysis, arguably the best in any field of European history. Traces the birth and development of the concept of the Renaissance from Renaissance times into the 20th century. Boldly conceived and indispensable. Regrettably, it has no successor for the period 1948 to the present.

- Haskins, Charles Homer. *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*. New York: Meridian, 1957.

Like a clarion call, this pioneer study challenges the conception of the European Renaissance as a singular phase of the 15th and 16th centuries by delineating an indisputable and multifaceted revival of classical thought and sensibility in the 12th century, undoubtedly belonging to the Middle Ages.

- Haydn, Hiram Collins. *The Counter-Renaissance*. New York: Scribner's, 1950.

Construes the Renaissance as having three interrelated phases: a classical Renaissance (of the humanists); a Counter-Renaissance (the key period for the author), repudiating both classical and earlier scholastic outlooks in an antirational critique; and an age of scientific reformation. Provocative and plausible at times, but not widely accepted.

- Helton, Tinsley, ed. *The Renaissance: A Reconsideration of the Theories and Interpretations of the Age*. Papers presented at the Symposium on the Renaissance, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, 13–14 November 1959. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964.

Publishes six essays by prominent authors—including Paul Oskar Kristeller, Garrett Mattingly, and Edward Rosen—presented at a conference marking the century since the appearance of Burckhardt's and Voigt's works on the Renaissance. The contributors generally affirm, with qualifications and new recommendations, the traditional view of the Renaissance.

- Mommsen, Theodore E. "Petrarch's Conception of the 'Dark Ages.'" *Speculum* 17.2 (1942): 226–242.

Classic article pinpointing the moment at which and the figure by whom—the humanist Petrarch—the “modern” age, the opening of which would later be called the “Renaissance,” was distinguished from the period of stagnation that came before: the

“Dark Ages,” which had succeeded upon the golden age of Antiquity. Frequently reprinted.

- Panofsky, Erwin. *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1960.

Distinguishing between the 15th-century Italian Renaissance and those that came before, declares the latter “limited and transitory” and the former, because of its consciousness of a historical break between antiquity and the present, “total and permanent.” Classic monograph a mere 100 pages long, republished by Harper & Row (New York, 1972), with an edition reprinted by Westview Press (Boulder, CO).

- Rice, Eugene F. *The Renaissance Idea of Wisdom*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958.

Traces the concept of “wisdom” from the Middle Ages, when wisdom consisted in apprehension of the divine, to the 16th century, when wisdom had become a moral virtue dependent on the exercise of human reason. A subtle analysis of trends in thought, detached, however, from social or cultural context.

- Weiss, Roberto. *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1969.

The summation, in brief, of Weiss’s work, published shortly after his death. Traces the quest for the tangible remains of the ancient world, and the documentation in scholarly works of their recovery and significance, thus centering squarely on the key issue of the reception of classical antiquity. Republished in a second edition in 1988.

Festschrift

Valuable essays on the Renaissance also often appear in the Festschriften written to honor the most eminent scholars in the field, as in the case of [Carter 1965](#) for Garrett Mattingly, renowned for his work on the Spanish Armada and Renaissance diplomacy.

- Carter, Charles H., ed. *From the Renaissance to the Counter-Reformation: Essays in Honor of Garrett Mattingly*. New York: Random House, 1965.

Twenty essays by friends and former students of the British historian, including an overview of his contribution by J. H. Hexter and contributions by Denys Hay, John R. Hale, Robert M. Kingdon, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and Cicily V. Wedgewood, among others.

The 1970s and 1980s

While [Dannenfeldt 1974](#), [DeMolen 1974](#), and [Kingdon 1974](#) carry on the discussion of definitions of the Renaissance from an earlier generation, [Breisach 1973](#) offers a synthesis of the

European Renaissance tilted toward its earliest centuries, not surpassing 1517. [Kinsman 1974](#) probes the irrational and pessimistic aspects of the Renaissance, and both [Gilbert 1977](#) and [Trevor-Roper 1985](#) provide exemplary essays and personal reflections by masterful historians of both the Renaissance and modern periods. During the 1980s, even as social history predominated in investigations of the European past, as is evident from other entries in this bibliography, propelled by Marxist theory and the example of the historiography of the French Annales school, that perspective little affects considerations of the Renaissance as a concept, with the major exception of [Ferguson, et al. 1986](#), an influential rereading of Renaissance texts from a feminist perspective; [Kerrigan and Braden 1989](#), in contrast, with little reference to social context, offers a coherent neo-Burckhardtian understanding of the Renaissance.

- Breisach, Ernst. *Renaissance Europe, 1300–1517*. New York: Macmillan, 1973.

Considers Europe in entirety, focusing on the development of the territorial state; the treatment of Renaissance thought and the arts is sparse. Striking for its placement of modernizing economic, social, and political trends somewhat early, so that a new order is achieved by a date that other historians might see as a beginning.

- Dannenfeldt, Karl H., ed. *The Renaissance: Basic Interpretations*. 2d ed. Lexington, MA: Heath, 1974.

In a second, expanded edition of the 1959 original, Dannenfeldt takes up the challenge of introducing the Renaissance debate to students. Includes excerpts from Burckhardt himself, as well as from a series of familiar scholarly luminaries, including Hans Baron, Charles Homer Haskins, Johan Huizinga, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and Alfred von Martin.

- DeMolen, Richard L. *The Meaning of the Renaissance and Reformation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974.

After DeMolen's introductory characterization of the Renaissance as a revolutionary, but primarily intellectual, movement, seven essays map out broad topics, including the Italian and northern Renaissance, the continental and English Reformation, developments in politics and diplomacy, and European expansion.

- Ferguson, Margaret W., Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers, eds. *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.

Sixteen essays presenting a pathbreaking reconceptualization of the literary product of the Renaissance achieved with the theoretical tools of Marxism, deconstruction, psychoanalysis, and above all feminism, disclosing the patriarchal attitudes that lie embedded in literary texts and their interpretations; plus two important historical essays on women textile workers in northern and southern Europe.

- Gilbert, Felix. *History: Choice and Commitment*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1977.

Gathers eighteen of Gilbert's essays on Italian and European political thought, history, and historiography from the Renaissance to modern times, including four on Machiavelli and Machiavellianism, two on contemporary Florentine political discourse, and three on Venice. Gilbert's own reflections "on the history of the professor of history" close the volume.

- Kerrigan, William, and Gordon Braden. *The Idea of the Renaissance*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.

On the verge of the 1990s and the fragmentation of the Renaissance concept, Kerrigan and Braden offer a unifying vision grouped around the concepts of "Power," reviewing and revising the Burckhardtian thesis; "Thought," focusing on the philosophical narcissism of the era; and "Love," which for the authors marks the culmination of the Renaissance enterprise.

- Kingdon, Robert M., ed. *Transition and Revolution: Problems and Issues of European Renaissance and Reformation History*. Minneapolis, MN: Burgess, 1974.

Collects essays on the intersecting Renaissance and Reformation movements, mostly during the 16th century, with contributions by Kingdon himself, Eric C. Midelfort, and Elizabeth Eisenstein, raising questions about the radicalism of the Genevan Reformation, the existence of witches, and the impact of print technology that point to newer approaches ahead.

- Kinsman, Robert S., ed. *The Darker Vision of the Renaissance: Beyond the Fields of Reason*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

Collects nine conference papers looking at the darker side of the Renaissance, including discussions of insanity, mysticism, the devil and witchcraft, Hermeticism, Luther's *deus absconditus*, and the oddities of Bosch. No overall synthesis is offered.

- Trevor-Roper, H. R. *Renaissance Essays*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.

A writer of essays rather than monographs, Trevor-Roper looks at courtly society, political crisis, and intellectual leaders, among other ventures in social and cultural history of the 15th through 17th centuries. The thirteen studies gathered here were originally written between 1961 and 1985.

Festschriften

As the preeminent crafters of Renaissance studies from the 1930s to 1960s reached the apex of their careers, Festschriften in their honor appeared. The 1970s saw important collections in honor of the two scholars who had sought refuge in the United States from Nazism in Europe: Hans Baron ([Molho and Tedeschi 1971](#)), architect of the hypothesis of "civic humanism," and Paul Oskar Kristeller, who grounded the phenomenon of humanism in the stream of ideas from classical antiquity through scholasticism to the beginnings of modern philosophy. Four tributes

to Kristeller (of a total of six) are listed here: [Oberman and Brady 1975](#); [Mahoney 1976](#); [Hankins, et al. 1987](#); and [Selig and Somerville 1987](#). Festschriften also honored Italian historian Eugenio Garin ([Chastel, et al. 1982](#)), author of several fundamental works on Renaissance humanism, philosophy, and civic consciousness, and British historian H. R. Trevor-Roper ([Lloyd-Jones, et al. 1982](#)), whose range of interest extended to English and continental history from the Renaissance to modern times.

- Chastel, André, et al. *The Renaissance: Essays in Interpretation*. London: Methuen, 1982.

Nine preeminent scholars in the 1940s through the 1970s—including Chastel, Denys Hay, Paul Oskar Kristeller, Cecil Grayson, and Charles B. Schmitt, writing on the arts, Renaissance historiography, humanism, Italian literature, and philosophy—present brief visions of the Renaissance from their various viewpoints, in a volume honoring Eugenio Garin. First published in Italy in 1979 as *Il Rinascimento*.

- Hankins, James, John Monfasani, and Frederick Purnell, eds. *Supplementum Festivum: Studies in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller*. Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1987.

A collection of twenty-two essays offered by his former students on the occasion of Kristeller's eightieth birthday, focused mainly on 15th-century humanism and philosophy. Includes an exhaustive bibliography of Kristeller's work from 1975 to 1985.

- Lloyd-Jones, Hugh, Valerie Pearl, and Blair Worden, eds. *History and Imagination: Essays in Honor of H. R. Trevor-Roper*. New York: Holmes & Meier, 1982.

Introduced and closed with reflective essays by the honorand on the historian's mission, presents twenty-four essays mainly on problems in English social and intellectual history during the Renaissance era.

- Mahoney, Edward P., ed. *Philosophy and Humanism: Renaissance Essays in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.

Offers an assessment of Kristeller's scholarship to date, followed by more than thirty essays mainly on philosophical topics in Renaissance civilization. Includes an exhaustive bibliography of Kristeller's work from 1929 to 1974.

- Molho, Anthony, and John A. Tedeschi, eds. *Renaissance: Studies in Honor of Hans Baron*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1971.

A collection of thirty-six essays analyzing different aspects of humanism in its Italian and European context by major scholars of the next generation, including William J. Bouwsma, Eric Cochrane, Cecil Grayson, Paul F. Grendler, Lewis Spitz, Eugene F. Rice, Donald Weinstein, and Ronald G. Witt.

- Oberman, Heiko A., and Thomas A. Brady, eds. *Itinerarium Italicum: The Profile of the Italian Renaissance in the Mirror of Its European Transformations: Dedicated to Paul Oskar Kristeller on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1975.

Includes seven substantial contributions by major authors (including William J. Bouwsma, Myron P. Gilmore, Denys Hay, Lewis Spitz, and the editor, Heiko A. Oberman), mainly on the diffusion of Italian Renaissance to other European centers.

- Selig, Karl-Ludwig, and Robert Somerville, eds. *Florilegium Columbianum: Essays in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller*. New York: Italica, 1987.

Thirteen essays by Columbia University colleagues on philosophical, historical, literary, and artistic topics ranging from Antiquity through the Renaissance.

The 1990s

The 1990s saw both a summing-up of the consensus views of the Renaissance emerging from the scholarship of the previous two or three decades (of which [Brown 1999](#), [Burke 1998](#), [Hale 1994](#), and [Holmes 1996](#) are examples) and a conspicuous veering away from that consensus (in [Jardine 1996](#)). [Porter and Teich 1992](#) offers a valuable overview of the Renaissance in its national settings, countering the tendency to view it as a monolithic and homogeneous phenomenon.

- Brown, Alison. *The Renaissance*. 2d ed. London: Longman, 1999.

A synthesis in a mere 152 pages, reviewing the social and political background of the Italian Renaissance, while attending to the resurgent interest in the classics and the eventual diffusion of Renaissance culture throughout Europe.

- Burke, Peter. *The European Renaissance: Centres and Peripheries*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.

An original synthesis that follows, in under 300 pages, the movement of the Renaissance from its Italian center to the peripheries of Europe—Ireland, Scandinavia, the Slavic fringe—stressing the profound impact of the classic revival but denying the inherent modernity of the Renaissance posited by Burckhardt.

- Hale, John R. *The Civilization of Europe in the Renaissance*. New York: Macmillan, 1994.

A popular overview in sparkling prose that, atypically, focuses more on the 16th-century Renaissance as it unfolded in Europe north of the Alps than on 14th- and 15th-century Italian origins, and more on modernizing and secularizing trends than on the religious conflict that undoubtedly characterized the age.

- Holmes, George. *Renaissance*. New York: St. Martin's, 1996.

A synthesis under 300 pages in length, stresses the importance of commercially vibrant cities, both Italian and northern European, for the nurture of Renaissance art and civilization.

- Jardine, Lisa. *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance*. New York: Nan A. Talese, 1996.

A brash reinterpretation of the Renaissance that sets aside the visions of humanists, philosophers, and artists to look at the outrageous abundance of material things that circulated in the 15th to 17th centuries, substantiating the claim that the Renaissance was about good things to have, taste, and enjoy, rather than any abstract conception of the good.

- Porter, Roy, and Mikulás Teich, eds. *The Renaissance in National Context*. Cambridge, UK, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Overcoming the bias toward seeing the Renaissance as either international or essentially Italian, examines that cultural episode in the Low Countries, Germany, England, France, Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia/Poland, as well as the three Italian cities of Florence, Venice, and Rome (plus an overview by Peter Burke)—but not Iberia or Dalmatia/Croatia.

Festschriften

Festschriften also appeared in these years honoring three historians whose principal work dates from the 1960s through 1990s: Eugene F. Rice ([Monfasani and Musto 1991](#)), Lewis W. Spitz ([Fleischer 1992](#)), and Charles E. Trinkaus ([O'Malley, et al. 1993](#)), all scholars in the fields of Renaissance and Reformation intellectual history.

- Fleischer, Manfred P., ed. *The Harvest of Humanism in Central Europe: Essays in Honor of Lewis W. Spitz*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1992.

Presents thirteen essays whose themes reflect the honorand's specialization in northern humanism and its intersection with the Reformation, followed by laudations and response.

- Monfasani, John, and Ronald G. Musto, eds. *Renaissance Society and Culture: Essays in Honor of Eugene F. Rice, Jr.* New York: Italica, 1991.

Contains seventeen essays on various topics in mostly 16th-century social and intellectual history, plus one on the origins of Columbia University's collection of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts. Introduced by tributes from senior Columbia colleagues Paul Oskar Kristeller and John H. Mundy, and a bibliography of Rice's work by his daughter, Louise Rice.

- O'Malley, John W., Thomas M. Izbicki, and Gerald Christianson. *Humanity and Divinity in Renaissance and Reformation: Essays in Honor of Charles Trinkaus*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1993.

Gathers eleven essays focused largely on the honorand's interest in the intersection between religion and thought, with contributions by Michael J. B. Allen, William J. Bouwsma, Paul F. Grendler, and Ronald G. Witt, among others.

Since 2000

In the 2000s, strikingly, two senior scholars, William Bouwsma and Theodore Rabb, turned to the closing phase of the Renaissance as a key to understanding its principal themes (see [Bouwsma 2000](#), [Rabb 2006](#)). [Mignolo 2003](#) looks across the Atlantic to map the intersections between European and American cultures at this key juncture, while [Levi 2002](#), more traditional in focus, seeks to refine the distinction between the intellectual worlds of the Middle Ages and the era of Renaissance and Reformation, and [Johnson 2000](#) provides a capable synthesis for a general audience. In three collections of studies, [Martin 2007](#) pursues many roads and byways of European society and culture, some not often trodden, and [Schiffman 2002](#) offers classic discussions of the Renaissance and humanism and the historical writing about them, while the essays in [Lee, et al. 2010](#) examine a range of continuities and disjunctions among the multiple settings, in time and place, of the Renaissance.

- Bouwsma, William J. *The Waning of the Renaissance, 1550–1640*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000.

Identifies a cultural crisis that marks the culmination of the Renaissance era, characterized by intersecting streams of Stoic rationalism and Augustinian skepticism.

- Johnson, Paul. *The Renaissance: A Short History*. New York: Modern Library, 2000.

In a mere 200 pages or so, this nonspecialist author of many historical works designed for an educated general public offers a neat discussion of the Renaissance concept, precursor renaissances, and Renaissance decline, while setting the literary, artistic, and intellectual products of the era in social and political context.

- Lee, Alexander, Pit Péporté, and Harry Schnitker, eds. *Renaissance? Perceptions of Continuity and Discontinuity in Europe, c.1300–c.1550*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2010.

Eighteen essays focusing mostly on the arts, but also on literature and printing, reconsider what the term “Renaissance” means in a variety of contexts, examining, among other issues, the blurred lines between medieval and Renaissance (or Renaissance and modern), between Italy and northern Europe, and between Renaissance and classical tradition.

- Levi, Anthony. *Renaissance and Reformation: The Intellectual Genesis*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002.

Despite the load of scholarly discussions making the contrary point, poses a sharp distinction between the two cultures of medieval scholasticism on the one hand and Renaissance and Reformation on the other, the latter establishing a more positive view of human nature and moral capacity.

- Martin, John J., ed. *The Renaissance World*. London: Routledge, 2007.

A daringly conceived collection of thirty-four original studies in more than 700 pages encompassing multiple facets of European culture and society; such entries as “The Invention of Europe” (by John Marino), “Humanity” (by Anthony Grafton), and “The Sun at the Center of the World” (by Paula Findlen) give the courageous flavor of the whole.

- Mignolo, Walter. *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization*. 2d ed. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003.

Examines the impact of an imported literate culture on the culture of Spanish America, and the understanding achieved by European authors of Native American culture and its semi-literate or quasi-literate products, primarily in the 16th century.

- Rabb, Theodore K. *The Last Days of the Renaissance and the March to Modernity*. New York: Basic Books, 2006.

Focusing on the transition between the era of the Renaissance and the “Age of Revolution,” identifies the moderating influence of antique models, the ascendant power of the state, and the diminished role of the supernatural as paramount markers of the shift.

- Schiffman, Zachary S., ed. *Humanism and the Renaissance*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002.

Collects twenty excerpts of monographs or self-standing studies presenting classic positions on the humanism and historiography of the Renaissance, including texts by Jacob Burckhardt and Charles Homer Haskins, and studies by Erwin Panofsky, Paul Oskar Kristeller, Charles Trinkaus, and Hans Baron, among others, with an analytical closing statement by the editor.

Festschriften

Three Festschriften also appeared in these years honoring three scholars active over the last four decades: Ronald G. Witt ([Celenza and Gouwens 2006](#)), an expert on humanism; Paul F. Grendler ([Eisenbichler and Terpstra 2008](#)), who writes on education, publishing, and broader issues in social and cultural history; and John Najemy ([Peterson and Bornstein 2008](#)), who studies the Florentine political experience.

- Celenza, Christopher S., and Kenneth Gouwens, eds. *Humanism and Creativity in the Renaissance: Essays in Honor of Ronald G. Witt*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2006.

Collects seventeen studies on various aspects of Renaissance intellectual history, by authors such as Melissa Meriam Bullard, Anthony Grafton, Paul Grendler, and James Hankins.

- Eisenbichler, Konrad, and Nicholas Terpstra, eds. *The Renaissance in the Streets, Schools, and Studies: Essays in Honour of Paul F. Grendler*. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008.

Gathers thirteen studies in the areas of honorand Grendler's principal interest, education and intellectual life in their social context, with contributions by Margaret L. King, John O'Malley, Erika Rummel, and Ronald G. Witt, as well as both editors, among others.

- Peterson, David S., and Daniel E. Bornstein, eds. *Florence and Beyond: Culture, Society and Politics in Renaissance Italy: Essays in Honour of John M. Najemy*. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008.

Collects twenty-five essays on the society, culture, and politics mostly of Florence, with contributions by authors such as Alison Brown, Gene Brucker, Melissa Meriam Bullard, Humfrey Butters, Dale Kent, Anthony Molho, and Edward Muir, and an extensive bibliography of Najemy's work.

Debates, Challenges, and Manifestos

Frontal assaults on the concept of the Renaissance have emerged in recent years, along with more even-tempered reassessments and urgent defenses. Examined here are single-author books and collections of essays. Of these, the essays in [Eisenbichler 2009](#) and [Engammare 2003](#) sketch out a rather complex state of the Renaissance concept, while [Celenza 2004](#) and [Proctor 1988](#) call for greater efforts to reconnect to the Renaissance past, and [Brotton 2002](#), [Bullen 1994](#), and [Goody 2010](#) challenge the uniqueness, or even the existence, of a European Renaissance fundamental in the formation of modern civilization.

- Brotton, Jerry. *The Renaissance Bazaar: From the Silk Road to Michelangelo*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Asserting that many of the key features of Renaissance culture in fact had Eastern and Islamic origins, Brotton challenges the "myth of the European Renaissance." Somewhat overstated.

- Bullen, J. B. *The Myth of the Renaissance in Nineteenth-Century Writing*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1994.

Traces the construction of a "myth" of a rebirth of civilization by French and English writers as a foundation for later European preeminence, from Edward Gibbon and Voltaire in the 18th century to Victor Hugo, Jules Michelet, John Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, Walter Pater, and John Addington Symonds in the 19th.

- Celenza, Christopher S. *The Lost Italian Renaissance: Humanists, Historians, and Latin's Legacy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.

Views the peak moment of 15th-century Italian humanism as receding from memory as modern students, intellectuals, and institutions lose the capacity to access the underlying Latin-based civilization.

- Eisenbichler, Konrad, ed. *Renaissance Medievalisms*. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2009.

Returning to the early-20th-century medievalist critique of the Renaissance concept, these fifteen collected essays examine cases of continuity from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance while yet affirming the novelty of cultural shifts from the 15th century.

- Engammare, Max, ed. *L'Étude de la Renaissance, nunc et cras: Actes du Colloque de la Fédération Internationale des Sociétés et Instituts D'étude de la Renaissance (FISIER), Genève, Septembre 2001*. Geneva, Switzerland: Droz, 2003.

Twenty-five conference papers considering the present state and future possibilities of Renaissance studies, including current research practices, the need for interdisciplinarity, ways of looking at texts, problems of periodization, and the underfunding of the study of the humanities, among other issues.

- Goody, Jack. *Renaissances: The One or the Many?* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Denies the uniqueness of the European Renaissance of the 15th to 17th centuries by examining other cases of cultural recovery in Asian and Islamic civilization, thus challenging its identification as the springboard of a distinctively European modernity.

- Proctor, Robert E. *Education's Great Amnesia: Reconsidering the Humanities from Petrarch to Freud; With a Curriculum for Today's Students*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.

Depicts a crisis in the modern university curriculum caused by its lack of a secure grounding in the humanist and classical traditions, for which the remedy is the recovery of the Renaissance humanist understanding of the integral and effective self.

Articles

Challenges to the Renaissance concept have also been voiced on the micro scale in articles by single authors. [Howard 1999](#) and [Tollebeek 2001](#) revisit the classic 19th-century constructions of the Renaissance, while [Monfasani 2006](#) proposes a redefinition of the concept, and [Jouanna 2002](#), [Galasso 2005](#), [Jurdjevic 2007](#) (looking at intellectual history specifically), [Starn 2007](#), and [Grendler 2009](#) consider the present condition and future direction of Renaissance studies. A

small-scale dialogue on the Renaissance concept, finally, is heard in the 171-page “Forum” of the *American Historical Review* ([Findlen, et al. 1998](#)).

- Findlen, Paula, Kenneth Gouwens, William J. Bouwsma, Anthony Grafton, and Randolph Starn. “AHR Forum: The Persistence of the Renaissance.” *American Historical Review* 103.1 (1998): 50–124.

Includes a brief introduction by Findlen and Gouwens, followed by essays by Gouwens and Findlen on humanism and material culture, and briefer reflections by Bouwsma, Grafton, and Starn, the latter promising, in the closing note, that the “phoenix” of the Renaissance is not going away yet.

- Galasso, Giuseppe. “Rinascimento, ora e domani.” *Rivista storica italiana* 117.1 (2005): 179–200.

Notes the precarious state of the concept of the Renaissance, buffeted by historiographical challenges and methodological complexities, yet reaffirms the notion of a “civilization” of the Renaissance, to which humanism was central. Importantly for Anglophone scholars, reviews many Italian, French, and Spanish titles.

- Grendler, Paul F. “The Future of Sixteenth Century Studies: Renaissance and Reformation Scholarship in the Next Forty Years.” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 40.1 (2009): 182–184.

Boldly prognosticating in an optimistic mode, anticipates the return of historiographical diversity, the diminished importance of theory, the renewed dominance of narrative form, and enhanced publishing opportunities.

- Howard, Thomas Albert. “Jacob Burckhardt, Religion, and the Historiography of ‘Crisis’ and ‘Transition’.” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 60.1 (1999): 149–164.

Seeks to explain Burckhardt’s focus on two transitional moments, or historical crises—the time of Constantine and the Renaissance—by the historian’s version of a 19th-century crisis: the loss of religious faith.

- Jouanna, Arlette. “La notion de Renaissance: reflexions sur un paradoxe historiographique.” *Revue d’histoire moderne & contemporaine* 49.4 (2002): 5–16.

First reviews the history of the Renaissance concept from the 16th through 19th century, then explores the “ambiguities,” or contradictions, and the “fecundity” inherent in the concept.

- Jurdjevic, Mark. “Hedgehogs and Foxes: The Present and Future of Italian Renaissance Intellectual History.” *Past & Present* 195 (2007): 241–268.

Distinguishes between hedgehogs, “system-builders” who make broad generalizations about Renaissance intellectual history, and foxes, who, insisting on the diversity and plurality of experience, stick to specialized studies, while finding that both are contributing important insights to a Renaissance concept that is by no means dead.

- Monfasani, John. “The Renaissance as the Concluding Phase of the Middle Ages.” *Bullettino dell’Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo* 108 (2006): 165–185.

Argues, to the detriment of the construct “early modern” for the 15th to 17th centuries, that the Renaissance was a last phase of the Middle Ages that reached into the 17th century, when the fruits of Antiquity had been fully harvested and Latin ceased to be the primary language of the learned.

- Starn, Randolph. “A Postmodern Renaissance?” *Renaissance Quarterly* 60.1 (2007): 1–24.

Seeing a pause in the onslaught of its early modernist opponents, suggests that the Renaissance may be making a postmodern comeback, with all of its complexities, contradictions, and protean qualities.

- Tollebeek, Jo. “‘Renaissance’ and ‘Fossilization’: Michelet, Burckhardt, and Huizinga.” *Renaissance Studies* 15.3 (2001): 354–366.

Argues that the conceptualization of the Renaissance as a period of change and modernization, the constructs of Michelet and Burckhardt, required the conceptualization of the Middle Ages as an era of stasis, or “fossilization,” contributed by Huizinga.

The Early Modern Construct

If the Renaissance were shunted aside, what would remain? Does the “early modern” construct denote a span of years? An isolable era of civilization? A first stage of the modern era? Presented here are exemplary titles from the last forty years that employ a concept of the “early modern” such that, taken together, they serve to introduce a construct that is posed as an alternative to that of the Renaissance. Authors aligning themselves with the “early modern” construction of the era ([von Greyerz 2008](#), [Findlen 1994](#), [Grafton 2007](#), [Wiesner-Hanks 2000](#)) tend to focus on a somewhat later period, maximizing the 16th and 17th centuries and even reaching into the 18th, than do Renaissance scholars, for whom the 14th and 15th centuries have valence. These authors also look at economic and social topics more than textual ones ([Burke 1994](#), [Davis 1975](#), [Muir 1997](#), [Wiesner-Hanks 2000](#)), and may be specifically interested in the modernization process ([Eisenstein 1979](#), [Findlen 1994](#), [Grafton 2007](#), [Rice 1970](#), [von Greyerz 2008](#)).

- Burke, Peter. *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*. Aldershot, UK: Scolar, 1994.

Pioneering investigation of popular culture—an “elusive quarry,” says the author—and eventually its control and reform in an age, for followers of Renaissance historiography,

understood to be characterized by high culture. Reprinted several times; third edition published in 2009 (Burlington, VT: Ashgate).

- Davis, Natalie Zemon. *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975.

Concerned with the behavior of ordinary people, Davis in this classic collection of essays is uninterested in the Renaissance, and attends to the Reformation only insofar as it impacts the lives of her subjects. A pioneering work, remembered especially for its examination of the cultures of women, workers, and the young.

- Eisenstein, Elizabeth L. *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1979.

Pathbreaking study of the consequences of the new print technology for virtually every aspect of life in early modern Europe—and not just in the domain of Renaissance scholars and authors. Published in a revised, abridged edition by the same press in 1983, titled *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*.

- Findlen, Paula. *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

Identifies the activity of the collection of artifacts and specimens, with its attendant intellectual and textual ramifications, as a signal feature of early modern culture in the Italian heartland of what had been called the Renaissance.

- Grafton, Anthony. *What Was History? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Traces the origins of the modern craft of history in 16th- and 17th-century historiographical production and debate, while leaving behind Renaissance historiography, dominated by humanist imitators of classical models.

- Muir, Edward. *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Views ritual not as exotic performance or meaningless extrinsic act, but as a program of activity that infuses many sectors of life, from the operations of the state to the inward life of the believer—in the early modern era, as before and afterwards, and little affected by the high cultural events of the Renaissance.

- Rice, Eugene F. *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe, 1460–1559*. New York: Norton, 1970.

One of the earliest significant works using the “early modern” locution, focusing on key shifts between medieval and modern worlds during one critical century, including technological innovations and their consequences, changes in the church and state, and the reorientation of intellectual culture. A second edition, with Anthony Grafton as coauthor, published in 1994.

- von Greyerz, Kaspar. *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800*. Translated by Thomas Dunlap. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

In a social anthropological analysis of European religious life, avoids not only the concept of Renaissance but largely does without that of Reformation, considering, first, changes in religious life for both Protestant and Catholic adherents; second, the cultural world of the radical sects; and third, the process of secularization. Original German publication (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000).

- Wiesner-Hanks, Merry E. *Christianity and Sexuality in the Early Modern World: Regulating Desire, Reforming Practice*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Sexuality being a topic that does not fit easily into the Renaissance thematic, this study of its relations to Christianity from the 16th through the 18th centuries is happily sheltered under the early modern rubric. Looks at Protestants and Catholics, as well as Europe, the Americas, and Asia.

The Italian Renaissance

The Renaissance had its roots in Italy, and was already reaching its peak at about the time Renaissance currents began to flow full force to the rest of Europe. Consequently, the Italian Renaissance constitutes a distinct entity, which may be considered as the early phase of the European Renaissance or, equally well, as a thing in itself, as do the titles cited here. A description of the political context of the Italian Renaissance phenomenon is provided by [Pullan 1973](#), the pioneer, followed by [Hay 1977](#), and [Hay and Law 1989](#). Reflecting the rich interdisciplinarity of the study of the Renaissance era, the collections [Findlen 2002](#) and [Najemy 2004](#) offer, respectively, topically focused studies of its society, culture, and politics, and classic essays gathered and republished on various aspects of the period, while [Emison 2012](#), concerned primarily with the arts and challenging the prevailing assumptions about the determinants of Renaissance style, sees the period as essentially modern. [Burke 1972](#) and [Martines 1979](#) are imaginative and stimulating attempts to situate the cultural innovations of the Renaissance within their social context, and are among the most valuable of all interpretations of the Italian Renaissance phenomenon. [Stephens 1990](#), finally, presents an original reading of the development and significance of Italian Renaissance culture, while [Witt 2012](#), equally concerned with origins, locates the roots of Renaissance humanism, and thereby the whole of the Renaissance construct, in the Latin cultures of medieval Italy.

- Burke, Peter. *Culture and Society in Renaissance Italy, 1420–1540*. New York: Scribner's, 1972.

Brilliant analysis of the relation between society and culture through the study of the social origins and circles of a “creative elite” of 600 individuals, including humanists, artists, and others. Frequently reprinted in revised editions over the next three decades under the title *The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy* (rev. ed., Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987).

- Emison, Patricia. *The Italian Renaissance and Cultural Memory*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

The Renaissance style in art has long been a defining aspect of the Renaissance era. Here Emison challenges the assumption that the triggers of stylistic innovation were the imitation of nature and the look backward to classical antiquity, showing that formalist and modern qualities are present from the Quattrocento into the modern era.

- Findlen, Paula. *The Italian Renaissance: The Essential Readings*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002.

Boldly claiming to have identified the “essential” readings to be garnered from the last three decades or so, collects twelve classic studies that shaped the scholarly view of Renaissance society and culture, by such luminaries as Gene Brucker, Diane Owen Hughes, Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, and Edward Muir.

- Hay, Denys. *The Italian Renaissance in Its Historical Background*. 2d ed. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Implicitly rebukes the discussion of the Renaissance as a disembodied cultural event by solidly rooting it in its Italian political, social, and economic context. While underscoring Florentine originality, pays due attention to other Renaissance centers, and to the diffusion of Italian currents beyond the Alps. Updated version of 1961 original.

- Hay, Denys, and John E. Law. *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance, 1380–1530*. London: Longman, 1989.

Comprehensive overview of political structures and events throughout the Italian peninsula; cultural innovations, in contrast, are included almost as an afterthought in the last fifty pages of the volume, with humanism dispatched in a mere twenty. Not an updated [Hay 1977](#), but a work of different conceptualization.

- Martines, Lauro. *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy*. New York: Knopf, 1979.

Brilliant account of the evolution of the cities that, in turn, housed the elites who, in turn, commanded the artists and intellectuals whose creative products constitute the harvest of the Italian Renaissance. Frequently reprinted by various publishers.

- Najemy, John M. *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance: 1300–1550*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Collects twelve essays on the politics, society, religion, and culture of Renaissance Italy—including one on the often-neglected south—intended to provide, in the sum, an introduction to the multiple aspects of the era.

- Pullan, Brian S. *A History of Early Renaissance Italy: From the Mid-Thirteenth to the Mid-Fifteenth Century*. New York: St. Martin's, 1973.

By an expert in the social history, especially of Venice, who surveys the transformation of Italy from the Guelph-Ghibelline conflicts of the 13th century through the political consolidations of the 14th and the first phases of the Renaissance cultural explosion in the 15th.

- Stephens, John N. *The Italian Renaissance: The Origins of Intellectual and Artistic Change before the Reformation*. London: Longman, 1990.

Presents a cultural history from 1300 into the early 16th century, stressing the ethical/anthropological dimensions of humanist thought and the autonomous creativity of the arts, rescued from social-determinist theorization. Argues the importance of the Italian Renaissance achievement for Luther and Calvin and the later development of European civilization.

- Witt, Ronald G. *The Two Latin Cultures and the Foundation of Renaissance Humanism in Medieval Italy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Reaching back to the 11th century and beyond, Witt locates the cultural foundations of Renaissance humanism, the core intellectual tradition of the Renaissance, in the competing and intertwined Latin cultures, the literary and the legal, of northern Italy, which was even in the heart of the Middle Ages a center of intellectual ferment and innovation.

Renaissance and Humanism

No mere epiphenomenon, the intellectual movement of humanism was central to the Italian Renaissance, providing not only the curricular program in which rulers, clerics, and bureaucrats were educated, but also the cultural parameters within which all the events and processes of the period unfolded. Given here are significant treatments of humanism that relate the intellectual movement to the larger phenomenon of Italian civilization during the era of the Renaissance. Paramount are three collections of essays by Paul Oskar Kristeller mapping out the relations of humanism to ancient, medieval, and modern thought, to the arts, and to cultural institutions: [Kristeller 1961](#), [Kristeller 1965](#), and [Kristeller 1979](#). [Witt 2000](#) tells the story of the emergence of humanism in Italy, while [Grafton 2000](#) investigates the polymath Leon Battista Alberti as epitome of Italian Renaissance humanism. [Rabil 1988](#) encompasses forty-one essays in three volumes on multiple aspects of humanism in Italy and in many other European settings, while

[Kelley 1991](#) and [Nauert 1995](#) in different ways characterize the nature of humanism and track its emergence in Italy and diffusion abroad. [Trinkaus 1970](#), finally, engaging the problem of the Renaissance “concept of man,” demonstrates the rootedness of the humanist discussion in Christian thought. For a complete bibliography on these topics, see the separate bibliographies titled “[Humanism](#)” and “[The Classical Tradition](#).”

- Grafton, Anthony. *Leon Battista Alberti: Master Builder of the Italian Renaissance*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2000.

Profiling this elusive personality—an architect, an art theorist, a poet, a humanist, and a bastard—who had also fascinated Burckhardt, Grafton probes the nature of humanism and the Renaissance.

- Kelley, Donald R. *Renaissance Humanism*. Boston: Twayne, 1991.

A concise overview covering the origins of humanism and its urban Italian context; the relations of humanism and philosophy, especially Platonism, political thought, rhetoric, and the arts; the transformations of humanism in new German, French, and English settings; and the nature of “posthumanism,” among other topics.

- Kristeller, Paul Oskar. *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanistic Strains*. New York: Harper, 1961.

Classic essays defining the humanist movement; the reception of Aristotelian, Platonic, and scholastic traditions by the humanists; and the “philosophy of man” in the Italian Renaissance.

- Kristeller, Paul Oskar. *Renaissance Thought II: Papers on Humanism and the Arts*. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.

Classic essays on humanist ethics, Renaissance Aristotelianism and Platonism, the “modern system of the arts,” and the “European diffusion of Italian humanism,” among other topics.

- Kristeller, Paul Oskar. *Renaissance Thought and its Sources*. Edited by Michael Mooney. New York: Columbia University Press, 1979.

Classic essays on the humanist movement, Renaissance Aristotelianism and Platonism, humanism and religion, humanism and scholasticism, Italian humanism in relation to Byzantine civilization, the Renaissance concept of the “dignity of man,” and the relations of philosophy and rhetoric from Antiquity to the Renaissance, among other topics.

- Nauert, Charles G. *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

As the author promises, presents “a comprehensive account of the development and significance of the humanistic culture of Europe.” Discusses the origins and ascendance of humanism in Italy; and the journey of humanism over the Alps to take root in Germany, France, and England. A second edition appeared in 2006, with updated references and additional material on women humanists.

- Rabil, Albert, ed. *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms, and Legacy*. 3 vols. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988.

Forty-one essays in three volumes by the leading experts in the field on the nature of humanism in Italy, in multiple settings beyond Italy, and in relation to the other learned disciplines and the arts.

- Trinkaus, Charles E. *In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought*. 2 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

An immense study based on close readings of a large number of humanist texts; Trinkaus defines the Italian humanist vision of man as uniquely positive and solidly grounded in Christian thought, especially the statement in Genesis that man was formed “in the image and likeness” of God, effectively silencing older notions of the “pagan” or “secular” Renaissance.

- Witt, Ronald G. *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2000.

Finds the roots of humanism in the classical studies of 12th-century scholars, well in advance of Petrarch, whose crystallization of humanist themes then influenced such later figures as Coluccio Salutati and Leonardo Bruni, who, as chancellors of Florence, made that city the home of Renaissance humanism.

Renaissance and Republicanism

The relation of humanism to political forms and thought has been an issue in the forefront of the discussion of the Renaissance, spurred by the momentous statements of [Baron 1966](#), [Pocock 1975](#), and [Skinner 1978](#), all tying modern republicanism and the liberal political tradition more broadly to a stream of political thought from the early “civic humanists,” as Baron labeled them, through Machiavelli.

- Baron, Hans. *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*. Rev. ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966.

Attaches humanism to a moment of political crisis in Italy in which humanist defenders of liberty fought a war of words with its opponents, giving birth to “civic humanism” as the chief intellectual expression of the Renaissance. Read more widely in this revised and abridged edition than in the two volumes of the original 1955 edition.

- Pocock, J. G. A. *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975.

Attributes to Machiavelli and his contemporaries, building on the civic humanist tradition Baron had delineated, the formulation of an ideal of civic virtue that would underlie later English and American republican thought. Reissued in 2003.

- Skinner, Quentin. *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*. 2 vols. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

Like Baron, sees the major thrust of humanism as political and republican, and like Pocock, sees the Italian Renaissance tradition as foundational for modern Anglophone political thought. Exhaustively studies the legacy of major and minor thinkers while remaining attentive to the clustering of ideas formulated by networks of thinkers.

Collected Essays

The issue of republicanism posed by Baron, Pocock, and Skinner in the 1950s to 1970s was taken up in collections of studies published in the 1990s and 2000s, including [Bock, et al. 1990](#); [Hankins 2000](#); and [van Gelderen and Skinner 2002](#).

- Bock, Gisela, Quentin Skinner, and Maurizio Viroli, eds. *Machiavelli and Republicanism*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Gathers fifteen essays on various aspects of Machiavelli and Machiavellianism, with contributions by Giovanni Silvano, Maurizio Viroli, Gisela Bock, Martin van Gelderen, and Quentin Skinner (two) especially relevant to the issue of Renaissance republicanism.

- Hankins, James, ed. *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Gathers ten essays on civic humanism, among them notable contributions by William Connell, Mikael Hörnqvist, James Hankins, Allison Brown, and Harvey Mansfeld.

- van Gelderen, Martin, and Quentin Skinner, eds. *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Gathers fifteen essays concerned, in Part 1, with mainly Italian Renaissance ideas of civility and citizenship; and in Parts 2 and 3 with women and republicanism, and the relation between republicanism and commercial society in 17th- and 18th-century Europe.

Articles

The issue of republicanism posed by Baron, Pocock, and Skinner in the 1950s to 1970s continued to be pursued in significant articles during the 1990s and 2000s, as in [Connell and](#)

[Calvani 2003](#), [Hankins 1995](#), [Jurdjevic 1999](#), [Najemy 1996](#), [Schiller 1998](#), [Witt 1996](#), and [Yoran 2007](#), which address the standing of the Baron thesis after some forty years, as well as the broader issue of links between Renaissance and modern republicanism. [Hankins 2010](#), in addition, offers a comprehensive review of the meanings of the term “res publica” from Roman times through the 17th century.

- Connell, William J., and Simona Calvani. “Repubblicanesimo e Rinascimento (nella storiografia anglofona del secondo Novecento).” *Archivio Storico Italiano* 161.2 (2003): 343–362.

Identifies for the Italian audience a school of American historiography concerned with republicanism in the Renaissance, beginning with the work of Felix Gilbert and Hans Baron in the 1950s.

- Hankins, James. “The ‘Baron Thesis’ After Forty Years and Some Recent Studies of Leonardo Bruni.” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56.2 (1995): 309–338.

Expresses cautions about the larger claims made for the Baron thesis in the light of recent close analysis of the work of Leonardo Bruni that has revealed his alignment with oligarchy and imperialism as a counterweight to his alleged republicanism.

- Hankins, James. “Exclusivist Republicanism and the Non-Monarchical Republic.” *Political Theory* 38.4 (2010): 452–482.

Offers a comprehensive review of the meanings of the term “res publica” from Roman times through the 17th century, showing that the critical shift to an “exclusivist” view of the “republic” as explicitly nonmonarchical occurred in the 15th century, with Leonardo Bruni and Francesco Patrizi as key agents.

- Jurdjevic, Mark. “Civic Humanism and the Rise of the Medici.” *Renaissance Quarterly* 52.4 (1999): 994–1020.

Seeks to define the role played by civic humanism in the Medicean regime, finding that the ideals of the former and the realities of the latter were not in opposition.

- Najemy, John M. “Baron’s Machiavelli and Renaissance Republicanism.” *American Historical Review* 101.1 (1996): 119–129.

Traces Baron’s evolving view of Machiavelli, at first seen as in tension with the previous century’s civic humanism, and later as in accord with it, thus saving Machiavelli for republicanism.

- Schiller, Kay. “Hans Baron’s Humanism.” *Storia della storiografia* 34 (1998): 51–99.

A massive and definitive exploration of Baron’s intellectual formation and career, illuminating especially the periods before his self-exile from his Nazi-ridden homeland in

1933 and during the unsettled years from 1933 to 1949, when he finally achieved a permanent academic position. Usefully introduces the concepts of a “third humanism” (Weimar Germany) and “Cold War humanism.”

- Witt, Ronald. “The Crisis after Forty Years.” *The American Historical Review* 101.1 (1996): 110–118.

Summarizing the challenges to the Baron thesis requiring qualifications of the latter’s paradigm, nonetheless still finds merits in a revised version, seeing civic humanism as “at least a major tendency of humanism after 1400.”

- Yoran, Hanan. “Florentine Civic Humanism and the Emergence of Modern Ideology.” *History & Theory* 46.3 (2007): 326–344.

Argues that civic humanism can be seen to foreshadow a modern form of ideology that rationalizes hierarchy and inequality.

Renaissance and Women

Arguably no field of Renaissance studies has seen such explosive growth over recent decades as the study of women, whose place in society and culture was virtually ignored before the 1970s, was vigorously investigated in the 1970s and 1980s, and became an autonomous field by the 1990s and 2000s, with its own conferences and journals and a vast bibliography of specialized studies. Cited here are a few of the most significant works that look at the whole problem of women in the Renaissance—or, as many feminist scholars prefer, the early modern era: [Kelly 1977](#), which first raised the problem of women and the Renaissance for scholarly consideration; [Jordan 1990](#) and [Benson 1992](#), which look at the intellectual debate about women’s condition as it crossed from Italy to England; [Ross 2009](#), which establishes the tradition of female intellectual agency in those same settings; [Klapisch-Zuber 1985](#), which brilliantly utilizes both statistical and textual analysis to reveal the social and ritual world of women in the Renaissance and Italy; [Meek 2000](#), offering specialized studies that in their sum illumine multiple aspects of women’s conditions in diverse institutional and regional settings; [King 1991](#) and [Wiesner 1993](#), providing two syntheses of women’s experience focusing, respectively, on earlier (1350–1700) and later (1500–1750) periods; and [Wiesner-Hanks 2008](#), which jettisons the construct of the “Renaissance” as a useful category for feminist scholarship, preferring the construct “early modern.” For more extensive bibliographical materials on women and the Renaissance, see also the articles “[Women and Learning](#)” and “[Women Writing in English](#).”

- Benson, Pamela Joseph. *The Invention of the Renaissance Woman: The Challenge of Female Independence in the Literature and Thought of Italy and England*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992.

Looks at male-authored defenses of women, including those by Boccaccio, Castiglione, Ariosto, More, Elyot, and Spenser, bridging the distance between Italy and England and between literary and humanist texts.

- Jordan, Constance. *Renaissance Feminism: Literary Texts and Political Models*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990.

Close examination of Italian, French, and English texts discussing women's roles and condition, showing an openness to women's greater valuation but no readiness to admit women to participation in the political or public arena.

- Kelly, Joan. "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" In *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*. Edited by Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz, 137–164. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977.

The famous essay that launched the study of women in the Renaissance, suggesting that their status actually declined in the transition from the Middle Ages to modern times, even as men benefited from the cultural ferment of the new era. Reprinted twice posthumously (Kelly died in 1982): in *Women, History and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), and *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, 2d ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), pp. 175–202.

- King, Margaret L. *Women of the Renaissance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

Useful synthesis, ranging from Italy to northern Europe for the period 1350 to 1700, viewing women's condition from the three vantage points of the family, the churches, and learned culture, in which latter domain lie the origins of a new and more positive evaluation of women.

- Klapisch-Zuber, Christiane. *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*. Translated by Lydia Cochrane. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.

Classic essays, the starting point for any understanding of women's lives in 15th-century Italy, with implications for other premodern settings. Innovative use of both statistical and documentary sources to probe the lives of daughters, wives, widows, and servants, and the ritual activities that guided their destinies. Gathers and translates French and Italian essays originally appearing in separate publications.

- Meek, Christine, ed. *Women in Renaissance and Early Modern Europe*. Dublin, Ireland: Four Courts, 2000.

Collects ten essays looking at women's lives in Italy, France, The Netherlands, England, and Ireland, and at representations of women in literature and art, considering such themes as widowhood, female patronage, maternal education, representations of the prostitute, and women and the law.

- Ross, Sarah G. *The Birth of Feminism: Woman as Intellect in Renaissance Italy and England*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Constructs the intellectual history of women from Italy to England based on women-authored works and women's social networks, in contrast to earlier studies that focused on male-authored commentaries and male-dominant institutions. Establishes women's active and prominent role in the cultural life of the Renaissance.

- Wiesner, Merry E. *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Useful synthesis considering multiple aspects of women's lives in all of Europe from 1500 to 1750, including women and family, work, piety, literacy, and the arts, and developing concepts of masculinity and femininity.

- Wiesner-Hanks, Merry. "Do Women Need the Renaissance?" *Gender & History* 20.3 (2008): 539–557.

Argues that the concept of the Renaissance is not useful for understanding gendered historical change, but that the concept of "early modern" is, given that in many areas of modernization—the Reformations, the military revolution, colonialism, education and literacy—women participate as agents and subjects.

Sourcebook

Works by individual women authors have been made available in abundance over recent decades, most accessibly in the series of texts given in [Texts Series](#). Additionally, [King and Rabil 1983](#) provides an early collection of humanist works by women or addressed to them by male authors.

- King, Margaret L., and Albert Rabil Jr., eds. and trans. *Her Immaculate Hand: Selected Works by and about the Women Humanists of Quattrocento Italy*. Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1983.

Although many full-scale works by women are now available in texts series (see [Texts Series](#)), this early collection continues to be a useful introduction. Includes works by the women humanists Isotta Nogarola, Cassandra Fedele, and Laura Cereta; and by men writing for women: Gregorio Correr, Lauro Quirini, and Angelo Poliziano. Revised edition published in 1992; reprinted by Pegasus Press (Asheville, NC) in 1997 and subsequently. Link to [online version](#).

In Popular Thought

The Renaissance has had an enduring hold on the popular imagination, engaging English Victorians for whom the crumbling palazzi of Renaissance cities were an exotic wonderland, as well as modern Americans fascinated with the sumptuousness of Renaissance style and craftsmanship.

The Victorian Renaissance

Testimony to fascinations of the Renaissance for the Victorian audience are the Pre-Raphaelite school of painting, imitative of 15th-century style, as well as Renaissance-themed novels (Alexandre Dumas, George Eliot, Alessandro Manzoni, and Sir Walter Scott), drama and poetry (Lord Byron), and opera (Gaetano Donizetti, Charles Gounod, Giuseppe Verdi). Cited here in the category of prose nonfiction are works by Victorian authors—the critic John Ruskin ([Ruskin 1851–1853](#)) and independent scholar Julia Cartwright Ady ([Ady 1903](#))—joined by recent studies on the Victorian and Edwardian reception of the Renaissance ([Fraser 1992](#), [Law and Østermark-Johansen 2005](#)).

- Ady, Julia Cartwright. *Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua, 1474–1539: A Study of the Renaissance*. 2 vols. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1903.

Exemplifying her meticulous and comprehensive scholarship, one of several works by the gentlewoman-scholar on the history and art of the Italian Renaissance. Until recently, the best work available in English on the learned patron Isabella d'Este.

- Fraser, Hilary. *The Victorians and Renaissance Italy*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.

Shows how classically trained Victorians, even before Michelet and Burckhardt invented the Renaissance, were drawn to the Italian reinvention of Antiquity displayed in visual and verbal texts, which in turn influenced 19th-century English painting, historical writing, and literature.

- Law, John E., and Lene Østermark-Johansen, eds. *Victorian and Edwardian Responses to the Italian Renaissance*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005.

Thirteen essays on the interface between 19th- to early-20th-century England and Renaissance Italy, with profiles of major participants in that dialogue, including Walter Pater, John Addington Symonds, Vernon Lee (Violet Paget), Cecilia Ady, and Lord Acton.

- Ruskin, John. *The Stones of Venice*. 3 vols. London: Smith, Elder, 1851–1853.

Original in its appreciation for Gothic forms and long-forgotten circumstances, permitting an appreciation of the Venetian artistic achievement. Reprinted many times, including in 1981, edited and introduced by Jan Morris (Boston: Little Brown).

The Renaissance in America

Fascination with the Renaissance is evident in American life today in a raft of historical films and novels as well as travel guides, cookbooks, and festival reenactments. A guide through the frenzy is provided by [Grendler 2006](#).

- Grendler, Paul F. *The European Renaissance in American Life*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006.

Discusses Renaissance cities, Renaissance weekends, Renaissance brands, Renaissance fairs, Machiavellian management models, and books and films about the Renaissance, still alive in a 21st-century America that appreciates its bold individualism and entrepreneurial spirit.