

WESTERN EUROPEAN HISTORY

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POLITICAL HISTORY

GOVERNMENT

ANCIENT PERIOD

Etruscans. The culture of Western Europe, in the period prior to the birth of Christ, is for the most part close to its archaic roots—in its undeveloped paganism, its readiness to brawl for territory and goods, and its weak sense of organizational administration. In the case of the Etruscans—a deeply rooted and still little understood culture flourishing on the West coast of Italy during the period of the Roman monarchy and the very early Republican Period—we encounter a highly sophisticated but also archaic western European presence which interacted creatively with Roman culture, and which can, with the limited conditions just sketched, be considered part of Western European culture.

Influence on Rome. The coastal cities of Etruria expressed themselves in a language unrelated to Latin, and outside the Indo-European language family. While the Romans appear to have broken from Etruscan overlordship in the sixth century, BC, the Etruscan cultural bridge was responsible for the introduction to the Romans of many pathways to Hellenistic and later Greek culture, as well of many noteworthy traits of Roman culture: the Romans followed the Etruscans in numbering their citizens in ‘centuries,’ groups of one hundred; in the establishing and avid following of gladiatorial games; in the practice of public reading of auguries, in which animal entrails were consulted as a guide to the future—foreign policy in the public square.

POSTCLASSICAL PERIOD

Overview It is worth starting with the sense that the ‘idea’ of nationality’ came only recently into the western world: such an idea was hardly imaginable to a citizen of the Middle Ages in Europe--for that matter, perhaps, to any earlier citizen of West European society, in which tribalism, monarchy, and regionalism--cf. the city-state in Greece--had hitherto provided the available exemplars. Similarly, it was still to be a good three to four centuries, after the end of the Middle Ages, before Mediaeval culture could fall under the organizational spell of the notion of the nation.

The early mediaeval period, in Western Europe The early mediaeval period, let’s say from 400-1000 C.E., brings together many kinds of governmental process--much of it constructed around the institutions of Feudalism, with its regional agricultural underpinnings. During this period there were significant moments of coming-together, when a competent ruler and a cultural milieu coincided, as during the reign of Charles Martel (686-741 C.E.), in what was a proto-France, or of the Emperor Charlemagne (742-814 C.E.), around whom what we call the Carolingian Renaissance of literature and art took shape. There was the fictive Holy Roman Empire, often traced in origin to Charlemagne himself, sometimes to Otto I (dating from 962 C.E.), and nominally existent until the early 19th century, after having survived dynastic episodes of many varieties. In the larger sense, however, the governments of early mediaeval Europe were fleeting operations, rarely far from the kinds of threat posed by Barbarians to the Late Roman Empire, and

frequently harassed almost to death by the incursion of tribal forces like the Huns, Magyars, Vikings, and Anglo Saxons, who appeared out of nowhere and undermined the best efforts of settled life.

The Church It is no surprise that the Catholic Church entered the picture early, by the third and fourth centuries C.E., to provide structure and, increasingly, secular possessions and power. Following on such Church Councils as Nicaea (325 C.E.), in which the Church consolidated its fundamental beliefs, and asserted its primacy as an interpreter, for the civilized world, of the 'mysteries of faith,' the Church in Rome, and its satellite power centers throughout Europe and North Africa, became the firmest structure for communities cut loose, in the earlier centuries of the Middle Age, from any kind of secular governance.

The later Middle Ages The last centuries of the Middle Ages (1000 C.E.-1400 C.E.), while known for such world transforming achievements of mind as Scholastic Philosophy or the Gothic Cathedral, was unfortunately fraught with social-political instability and with such dreadful interventions as the Black Plague, a pandemic thought to have halved the population of Europe in the 14th century. The Frankish Empire pushed its boundaries significantly into northern Europe, as did the equally loosely constituted Germanic empire, which is estimated to have tripled its nominal size during the centuries in question. The expansion of the Franks into Spain, in the 12th and 13th centuries, was directed to (eventually) expulsion of the Moors from Spain.

Observation The history of the centuries that precede the Renaissance, and follow the Greco-Roman, are hard to beat into intellectual shape. Huge cultural achievements there were, the greatest of them powered by the strange risk of faith, and both science and innovation, as well as the explosion of universities, marking new growth points for humanity. However the thread of social-cultural maturing had been snapped, and it would be here, if anywhere, that the word 'dark' could be invoked for these ages.

EARLY MODERN PERIOD

Perspectives. The early modern period may be viewed either as a distinct break from the 'mediaeval,' or as a more or less covert continuation of that earlier millennium. One easily notes—in reviewing the developments of trade, gender relations, or military affairs, during the three hundred year period in question—conspicuous features of change, evolution, of what with the 19th century came increasingly to be called 'progress.' These are the milestones of the future, for sure, and concern our brief survey, but such a survey should not fail to mention the important relics of the past, which cling inside the 'early modern story.'

Vestiges. The corporate view of society, with the conviction that certain classes enjoyed certain legal rights and protections—and the corresponding confidence that an underlying servant class (serfs) were the appropriate underpinning of society—this view prevailed without major challenge through the three centuries in question, centuries (in western Europe) which preceded a truly revolutionary era, in France and the United States, not to mention globe-influencing revolutions in Russia, China, Mexico. In 1800, as in 1500, the Holy Roman Empire (though just a vestige of its old self) still existed, while the Pope still exercised considerable temporal power. A descendant of the Capetians was still King of France. In most European countries it was still assumed that religion and the state were tightly interinvolved with each other, the ruler—typically a monarch—serving as and support to the Church.

'Progress.' To nineteenth century thinkers like Bury, who framed the notion of progress as they surveyed the centuries that preceded them, the drift toward centralized secular government, the secular bureaucratic state as Weber analyzed it, was the keynote of development. The servant state, there to shape policy, administer powers, and guarantee the laws; this state was to be the stepping stone for all post-mediaeval development. (Though the Ottoman Empire was a frequent rival to the European West, during the Early Modern Period, there was no sense of a unity of 'Christendom' activated to preserve 'European culture,' but rather the powerful self-confidence, of the newly self-realizing Western States, served as the perceived bulwark against Islam or the nations supported by it.)

Servant state. It was a hallmark of this servant state, with its power concentrated in a fatherly ruling monarch, that it was able to create the laws it needed and wanted, uninhibited by the Mediaeval

governmental assumption, that God (or our transcendent condition) was the ultimate maker and guarantor of the laws. It should be added that this authority, which the post classical government arrogated to itself, was fortified by the power of the national exchequer. National banks, a generative creation of the early modern economy, became storage centers for vast expendable sums, from which armies could be subsidized, and increasingly heavy bureaucracies subsidized.

19TH CENTURY

The directions adopted by the servant state, in the following century, were intricately diverse; a look at the new century's unfolding patterns of government, in England and France, illustrates the variety of societal shapings the two dominant Western European nations were destined to take.

England. England, it is said, decided to modernize itself through the Corn Laws, the repeal of which the Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel agreed to in 1846, thereby greatly reducing the power of the landed gentry to regulate agricultural practice and policy in this first modern century. This move was part of an important tendency, in British government of the nineteenth century, to consolidate the national respect for traditional solutions, while learning from other countries what **not to do**. (Fear of the French revolution was so widespread, in Britain, that the very notion of democracy had become hated; and order and hierarchy in government were sharply defended, everywhere the British Crown held sway.)

Constitution. Accordingly the British government, as reflected in its Constitution of 1800, was not based on democracy, but on the Crown and its legislative powers, and yet as that foundation evolved it became evident that nineteenth century Britain was attributing increasing power to the House of Commons—a center of legislation with increasing availability to the vote and needs of 'the people.' This legislative approach to 'giving power to the people' was to remain the trademark of the British project of governing, throughout the 19th century, and would, in alliance with the many directed moves by the government—to improve the state of education, of the postal service, to guarantee the integrity of free trade, so essential to the mercantile elements of the society—would bring Britain into the next century liberal enough to satisfy its social constituency but untouched by radicalism.

France. In contrast to the relatively consistent and purpose shaped development of English government, in the nineteenth century, the government of France went through many stages, beginning, of course, with the most rabidly democratic event of the century in Europe, the French Revolution ((1789-92). This violent protest against monarchical indifference might seem to have heralded a century in which French government would come down forcefully on the side of the people, in which the tactical caution of the British, who worked their way through legislation and the vote, would be overturned by direct action. The fact is, however, complicated. There were to be moments of radical ardor, in say the Revolution of 1848, when France joined much of western Europe in a revolutionary mode, and there was to be a staunch growth of Socialism among French intellectuals in the second half of the century, yet by and large France remained more conservative than Britain through the century; in 1850, for example, only one third as many Frenchmen (as Englishmen) could vote for national representatives.

20TH CENTURY

Parliamentary fine points, within the governments of Western Europe in the twentieth century, were destined to be overshadowed—because of the nature of the news, not because of inherent significance—during the eventful first half of the twentieth century. In our remarks on France and England, in the nineteenth century, we found ourselves dwelling on governmental issues like voting participation, parliamentary representation, and the balance of the classes; issues of substantial importance for governments treading into the complexities of a modern state.

Sources of war. These micro issues were not less important in the first decade of the twentieth century, than they were in the preceding century, but the conjunction of macro forces—the Prussian juggernaut forming into the reminiscence-filled German Empire—and the buildup of territorial appetites in a Western Europe widely empowered, increasingly well armed—and fully conscious of the mutual wrongs done one another by the states (in Alsace Lorraine, the Balkans) jammed up against one another in the corner of

Western Europe. Given this set of affairs the conditions for armed conflict, but conflict with unprecedented implications, were satisfied, and needed just the spark of a royal murder to set fire to them. Governments were going to be dependent, for a few decades, on the capacities and endurance of their people, as well as on the potent leadership of their administrators; among whose main actors—Chamberlain, Churchill, Petain, De Gaulle, Adolf Hitler, Joseph Goebbels—were to be cowards, madmen, perverts and visionaries rich enough to people the greatest of Shakespearian dramas.

Government. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, Western European society continued to develop around the governmental issues defining themselves in the previous century—issues of the vote and the processes of political representation, of armaments and their funding, of rights for women, of choices among economic systems—of the government's degree of responsibility to its citizens, its welfare policies. Needless to say, the reigning ideologies of the major nations involved—France, England, Germany—diverged sharply, as did, accordingly, the kinds of governmental style they found themselves choosing. Apart from their seeming agreement on mutual battlefield self-destruction, and their mutual disagreement on major issues of social policy, these mega states continued rendering themselves candidates for an oncoming fifty years in which compellingly global issues seemed destined to consume all local national issues.

Future. The governments of Western Europe recovered from the fury of two wars, to find many cities—especially in Germany and England—flattened, a consumer class in full fervor, hungry for goods that wars had made unavailable, and a population explosion. While coping with the public events that made for this new social cocktail, the governments of Western Europe prosecuted diverse directions—steering through a *Wirtschaftswunder* in Germany, adjusting to the reality of loss of Empire in England, and, in France, taking on the first challenges of the immigration issues (out of Algeria) which were destined—along with nuclear destruction, Cold War, and Integrated Global Technology—to trademark the second half of the century for Western European Governments.

Reading

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Discussion questions

Many causes are given, for the political fragmentation of Mediaeval Europe: barbarian invasions; plagues and famines; the unbalance between Church and State; the Islamic eruptions into European polity. What do you think? Have you other explanations to suggest?

Did human culture emerge enriched from the 'mediaeval experience'? Did that experience stamp a new readiness and openness on the mankind that made its way over the sill into the Renaissance? In a

broader sense, do you see the history of western culture as a meaningful and 'thoughtfully' unfolded plan of human events—what used to be called 'God's hand'—in which one stage opens the way to another?

What role did international trade play, in building a sense of common values and common political will in mediaeval Europe? Did the international alliances, created by such trade, build new and larger political communities?

What do you see as the role of the Catholic Church in the development of western European government? Did the Church, at some periods, function like a state? Or was its 'function' profoundly different at different stages in its development?

How have western European governments reacted to the globalization enhanced in the last century by the internet and by the transportation revolution with its globalizing effects? Has it made the notion of the nation state obsolete? Has it brought a deepening of human relations, and a mutual harmony among peoples?

Do you see the early modern western European state as a bridge to the modern state? If so, what was it we had to cross to, or discover through, the early modern experience, before we could find our way to the 'modern state'?

MILITARY

ANCIENT PERIOD

Fighting, not warfare, is what we see in Western Europe in antiquity. If we are speaking of the Roman provinces that are today's England, France, and Germany, especially on the cusp of the Christian era, at the beginning of the Roman Empire, we are talking about tribes with a capacity for iron-ware fighting equipment, for hand held military weaponry, for chariot fighting, as they would have known it from their relative proximity to the Roman heartland, and quite possibly from conscription into the Roman army. We are not, however, talking about organized military groups, strategic planning, or a military administration. Much of the time we are talking about local conflicts over territory and food. The tribal names blur in our minds.

POSTCLASSICAL PERIOD

Overview Throughout the post classical period in Europe, the Middle Ages, there was a slowly growing development of larger and more coherent social units; not yet states in the modern sense, even at the end of the postclassical period, but coherent language and culture units which resembled the states to be of France, Italy, Spain, England, and Germany. As these coherent units grew, representing as they did coagulations of capital and assets--as in the powerful centers of Feudalism--it became increasingly necessary to provide effective defense machineries for centers of settlement, just as, in the late Mediaeval period, hungry and aggressive nomadic groups--the Magyars, the Huns, the Mongols, the Vikings--staged frequent aggressions against settled communities, thus helping to hone the arts of attack machinery.

Warfare in Theory The military textbook of prime importance, throughout the post classical period, was Vegetius Renatus' *De Re Militari, On Military Affairs*, composed in the 4th century C.E. On the whole--and this betrays the lag time between theory and the growing practice of the period--Renatus formulates a guidebook for successful military practice. He recommends that the infantry be considered the core of the army, and that generals should initiate battle only when they are sure of winning. Pitched battles were to be discouraged, and were in fact rare. In the Middle Ages. This textbook, influential still in the fifteenth century, though long supplanted by skills and materials on the ground, was still being ordered into translation by Henry VII of England, in the fifteenth century--evidence of the distance theory was behind both the growing technologies of defensive and proactive warfare.

Defensive warfare The evolution of walled cities, in the post classical period, made for styles of warfare sharply different from those in the Greco-Roman period. Against invaders it was important to oppose the most impregnable possible defense, which was becoming the *castle*. Throughout Europe castles sprang up wherever there was a considerable Feudal community, and with time these castles became harder to breach. The best engineers of the times were recruited for castle construction, and made regular advances in such technologies as drawbridge construction, the creation of heavily fortified walls, the assurance of a long term fresh water supply within the castle precinct, the construction of hidden wall slits for arrow or crossbow shooting, and the perfection of the resources needed for pouring down cascades of boiling water or hot lava on the heads of the enemy.

Siege warfare The obverse of defensive warfare, of course, was siege warfare, the most common form of organized military aggression in the post classical period. This kind of assault procedure demanded money, time, and expertise, just as did the defensive strategies of the castle. New devices were invented for scaling castle walls, for battering foundations, for hurling catapults, and, in the final centuries of the post classical period in Europe, for employing cannon and gunpowder, with increasing accuracy and effect. While the initial introduction of gunpowder into Europe can be credited to Mongols working from China, by the fifteenth century European gunpowder manufacture was well developed on its own.

Recruiting and soldiery The manpower behind the above warfare forms was throughout the Mediaeval period recruited along lines dictated by the social agencies involved. For a long time there survived the ancient Greco Roman practice by which citizens saw to their own arming, and considered it part of their individual duties to prepare for and enter into the military actions of the community. This involved considerable outlays of personal expenditure for armor, a practice which survived at many points in the Middle Ages, when knights supplied themselves and their feudal retainues with armor and cavalry for a large number of supporters. There were at the same time, throughout the later Middle Ages, occasions on which ever larger communities, small cities, found themselves obliged to finance standing armies, as supports for the entire community.

EARLY MODERN PERIOD

Soldiers. The evolution of the proto modern state, after the transition from the late Middle Ages, with its first steps toward urbanization and an external economy in touch with distant markets, inevitably brings along with it changes in the way new social arrangements protect themselves. During the course of mediaeval military formation, the widespread role of armored knight and cavalry became increasingly incorporated into that of soldier, both citizen soldier and mercenary, the soldier for pay whom we will see prominently, in the service of states and wealthy principalities, especially during the first half of the early modern period.

Navy. In addition to such groupings of soldiers, armies in construction, there was much stress—say in the Franco English Wars—on the exercise of sea power for military protection purposes. As certain navies, like the British and Spanish, became key elements of international economics and foreign policy, the role of ships and sailors gained prominence. The Royal Navy was, throughout the three hundred year period before us, an example of an effective force, indispensable to its mother land, in which the latest in evolving post mediaeval marine technology—120 gunnery emplacements per vessel, copper sheathing for boats' bottoms, facilities for long term food preservation—made life on these floating homes tolerably comfortable, and combat with them maximally dangerous.

Sieges. If any innovation drove the increasing frequency and potency of major wars, in the complex period of European history before us, it will be the ever evolving sophistication of gun powder and gunfire. The Chinese invention of gunpowder, which that nation was relatively slow to use for military purposes—a millennium at least, before lethal military operations, in China, were to employ serious use of powder firing weapons. In the western transition, from High Middle Ages into early modern warfare techniques, we find that gunpowder and appropriate firing weapons have seriously changed the game of states. By the seventeenth century, mobile siege engines were employed by monarchs like Gustavus Adolphus of

Sweden, to undertake (usually successfully) prolonged assaults on enemy fortifications. It was no longer a question of ladder scaling, or thrown catapults, nor was it a question of tall circular castles to wear down, but rather an issue of firing arquebuses or flintlock muskets into low walled, often polygonal or star shaped fortifications, such as studded the newer European landscape through the eighteenth century.

Skirmishes. Both infantry and cavalry were involved in frequent skirmishes, during the second half of the Early Modern Period. One could see, in these death struggles among citizen militias and mercenaries, in the fight for this or that small city state, new fighting styles thrown into action;; while in the 15th century we saw the use of the arquebus and crossbow, which were to be replaced by the bayonet (after 1650) and the flintlock musket (after 1650), which could (with some degree of accuracy) penetrate steel armor at one hundred yards distance. This fact should prepare us for the general discovery, that by the end of the Early Modern Period wars were growing increasingly lethal, involving many more men and vastly more potent weapons.

Armies. Armies, as we know well from observing today's nations' annual budgets, eat up a great deal of the income of a city state or state. By the end of the pre modern period it was common for modern states and mega communities to make extensive bank loans from the Central Banks increasingly crucial to the growth and security of individual polities. This strategy of self-protection for the larger corporate social entity puts us within shouting distance of the contemporary state, which co-exists with its army, and recovers through citizen taxes the costs of 'protecting itself.'

19TH CENTURY

Peace. We wonder at a 19th century Europe, which, following on the early modern network of intricate military alliances, military religious-struggles, and dynastic rivalries, with in conclusion the turbulent Napoleonic Wars, managed to characterize itself as the century of peace, the 'long nineteenth century.' It is in fact not before the reign of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, and the powerful Prussian alliances in the last third of the century—cf. The Austro German Alliance of 1879—that the horizon begins to darken with the war clouds that will become a thunderstorm by the thirties of the following century. There is a steady advance of military technology—paralleling the growing European globalization and trade superiority of the century—which reflects in an advance of details, and which will make its damaging face clear in the following century; advances in naval and fire power led the way:

Steel superseded wooden hulls on ships of the line; battleships like HMS Dreadnought made their competitors obsolete, with turbine engines, ten to twelve inch guns, and techniques for harnessing steam power which grew exponentially.

Breech loading cannon, with rifled steel barrels, replaced muzzle loaders. Infantry rifles replaced muskets, which were slow to load, and inaccurate.

Smokeless high explosives replaced powder in bullets; the modern field gun fired 20 rounds per minute.

On the level of military logistics, the western European world was as a whole taken by the model established by Chancellor Bismarck for the second Prussian Empire. Universal conscription, and mastery of the railways for military mobilization, were brought to new levels of fight-ready efficiency.

20TH CENTURY

Trenches. Wars and the technology of war proliferated in the twentieth century. There were many wars in the century, and with each, especially toward the end of the century, the 'experts' learned more about how to use their weapons. While in the earlier wars of the century, notably the First World War, technology honed in on making trench warfare more endurable and impregnable--improvement in machine guns and artillery--and on the development of nerve gasses, the latter part of the century, the period of the atom and nuclear bombs, was the era of physics.

Bombs. In the latter period, both in Britain and the United States, whose experts were in close collaboration, emphasis was placed on the destructive powers of atomic and nuclear weaponry, with vast destructive powers, as the world saw at Nagasaki. The desired result, of the concentrated scientific effort at defeating the enemy, was the huge number of deaths which resulted from the century's wars:. Samples: WW I 20 million deaths; WW II. 62-78 million dead; influenza epidemic in the United States, brought back by returning GI's after WW II, 50 million dead.

Proliferation. As the hardware of war grew harder, more readily available, and more conveniently packaged inside the marketing system, of the military industrial complex, the number of wars dominating the globe—and some in Western Europe—increased; the two World Wars were unprecedented to their date in casualties and brutality to the civilian population; the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) and the French War in Algeria (1954-1962) were both notorious for ferocity. It was as though the appetite for global war simply whetted the taste for war in general, which—though not all in western Europe—was multiplying across the globe, involving the West with Vietnam, Korea, and China. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were made possible by international efforts involving the top scientists of post war England and Germany.

Why? Why was there so much active warfare in twentieth century Europe—so much more than in the previous century, and so much more devastating than at any time in human history? How was it possible that western European (and global) man would wish to inflict on himself the increasingly devastating damage of modern war? Is it that man does not pose that entire question to himself? That he thinks first of all on what he needs, or wants, or dreads, and that he tries to interpret his actions later, after the war(s), if at all? And that by that time our fellow men and women lie dead on all aides of us? In retrospect we will tot up our losses and gains, lick our wounds while we justify our behaviors, and, now, because we have inextricably entangled ourselves with one another, as nation states, we will start settling down to compromise with one another, and to see how we can turn the other's needs to our advantage.

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Discussion questions

What do you see as the origin of warfare? Is it an effort of the clan to protect itself? An effort to take over other clans' territory or women or wealth?

Was there large scale warfare in the Middle Ages? Were there any armies, in the contemporary sense, in that long period of a millennium, when cities were only beginning to be reestablished, after the breakdown of the Roman Empire?

How long did sieges of individual castles last? What kinds of preparation did the besieged citizens have to make, for prolonged survival inside castle walls?

What was the effect of the introduction of gunpowder into Feudal society? What effect did it have on city planning and defensive protection?

What was the source of funding for the prolonged sieges and intracity battles that marked the Early Modern Era? What role did banks play in these conflicts?

What was the role of the clergy, during the repeated military actions of the Middle Ages in Europe? Was there protest against warfare?

Does twenty first century warfare differ significantly from that of the twentieth century? What new technological directions do you see, in the warfare of our day?

SOCIAL HISTORY

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

ANCIENT PERIOD

The Fall of the Roman Empire, in the fifth century, was long in developing, and contingent on economic, social, and external pressures which had long been building. Consequently, the Fall itself was not as sharp as, say, that of the Berlin Wall, but was a product of gradual erosion. In the wake of the disintegration of long built social structures, there remained pockets of ethnic kingdoms, local governance areas, which were to be developmental areas, out of which emerged regional monarchies, with adherent social structures, in which structures the lives of both Church, which was growing, and the fields—we were in an essentially agrarian society—melded. In such an evolving setting, the formation of a new social world, that of the 'Middle Ages,' was taking a shape which would make history of the Roman practices of the *cursus honorum*, the knightly, administrative and senatorial roles which structured the social setting of the Roman citizen.

POSTCLASSICAL PERIOD

Overview The period of time covered by the Western European Middle Ages is vast, over a millennium by any account, and the societies at play in that period vary greatly from one another. However there is a normative tenor to the social organizations of the period, itself rooted in the inheritance from the Roman Empire, the overwhelmingly agricultural demands of daily life, and the distinctive blend of the Catholic Church with aristocratic values. That normative tenor, traceable through the 'middle period,' is the static quality of the society of the time, a static quality embodied in the notion of 'estates,' or 'social roles' into which all members of civilized western society were divided. It is a static quality we will see yielding, as we move toward the High Middle Ages, 1300-1500, thanks to an increasing interest in commerce, middlemen, investment, and the entrepreneurial life of cities.

The three estates By a broad, and often repeated formula, mediaeval Western European society functioned around three 'estates,' or broad social conditions': the clergy, the warriors, the laborers; the *oratores*, the *bellatores*, and the *laboratores*. The large omission from this more or less indicative triad, which is otherwise intact, is the *nobility*: for European societies were consistently monarchical, depending

on *father-kings* to make and enact the laws, *queens*--not infrequently the power behind the monarch, *princes*--forever jostling for the succession, *princesses*--bait for profitable foreign alliances and land consolidations, and a gaggle of aristocrats, self-interested advisors and ministers forever on the look-out for the good of the kingdom and the good of number one. Depending on the period of the Middle Ages, one would determine how effective the nobles were, and in what way; from the thirteenth century on, at their best, they proved to be exemplars of chivalry and 'elite Christian values of charity and responsibility'; of negligible society-building value in the early centuries of the post classical period.

Labor Ninety percent of both the populations and the GNP of mediaeval states --the first millennium, anyway--was based on agriculture. Mechanization was all the time on the rise--with ploughs, horse collars, horse shoes, and three field planting experiments--yet human labor was the overwhelming fact of life on the feudal estates of mediaeval Europe. It is roughly accurate--the reference is strongly to western Europe-- to divide the providers of that labor into three groups of peasantry: *freemen*, *serfs*, and *slaves*. *Freemen* possessed some land, but worked for the feudal lord under whose sponsorship they owned their land. *Serfs* were landless servants of manorial lords. *Slaves*, less free than serfs, were simply possessions of the lords of the manor, to be disposed of at will. The prominence of one or the other of these groups depended on the region and the century.

The clergy The clergy were the active priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church, which from the early centuries of the postclassical era, as early as the third century C.E. in Rome, had acquired power and high administrative influence within the Roman Empire. The clergy, from Cardinals and Bishops of the Church to the humblest monks and nuns, were charged with the spiritual welfare of their people, and enjoined by Saint Paul to 'pray ceaselessly.' While the Church was by and large patriarchal, and while the highest church positions were usually reserved for the nobility, there were a large number of distinguished women--abbesses, administrators, and writer/mystics--who were enabled to find a voice in societies otherwise essentially deaf to women's inner lives.

The fighters The clergy were deputed to pray for the community, the laborers to feed the community, and the warriors--among whom the horse riding knights were the symbol of mediaeval prowess and protectiveness--were expected to defend the community. There was, of course, a long story to be told, of the development of military skills throughout the Middle Ages, but no other sector of the military won the supreme symbolic attention reserved for the cavalry riding nobility constituting the institution of *chivalry*, from its intimate association with the culture of the *horse*, *cheval* in French. (One can think ahead to Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, in the sixteenth century, for a satire on the conflation of nobility with *chevalerie*; not every nobleman could stick to a horse's back.) From 1170-1220 dates the high period of Chivalry, promoted by Church concerns for moral improvement, fine ladies' longing for finer relations between the sexes, and the nobility's general interest in fine poetry and song, which were products of Chivalry and the cult of woman.

EARLY MODERN PERIOD

Individualism. The very concept of the High Middle Ages, the period bridging from the Middle Ages properly speaking to that long development that leads into the early modern, is fragile and ambiguous. During the Renaissance, say in fifteenth century Northern Italy, there is an explosion of artistic personality, scientific inventiveness, and political astuteness--Cf. Macchiavelli's thought, in *The Prince*--yet the estates of faith, labor, and war were embedded life-concepts which shaped even the most individualistic behaviors. Individualism, within the world of the estates, was won at the cost of stepping into the modern market, with all its risks and challenges.

Markets. As we observe, in the development of international trade, the contact of persons from other cultures, the development of national products under increasingly industrial conditions, and the innovations in agricultural technology, which led to richer crops to feed rapidly growing urban populations—in all these milestones of a new economy and culture the validation of market culture is prominent. The full bloom of the estate-culture, in Western Europe, needed to fade—giving way in the High Middle period to a diversification of wage earning modalities. ‘The general category of those who labour (specifically, those who were not knightly warriors or nobles) diversified rapidly after the eleventh century into the lively and energetic worlds of peasants, skilled artisans, merchants, financiers, lay professionals and entrepreneurs, which together drove the European economy to its greatest achievements.’

The Middle Class. The early modern period is marked by the growth of a mercantile class, for which the old estates, of the Middle Ages, are being replaced by competitive enterprises in business, military affairs, diplomacy, and in which one’s class origins are increasingly irrelevant. At the same time, though, the older world has not been forgotten. Literature, as often, helps us to see what the class climate of the time—the early modern climate—is. Examples drawn from writers like Cervantes, Moliere, Shakespeare, or Ben Jonson bring this point to the stage, where public opinion and taste are most clearly on display; the characters they display for us show us persons enacting the tensions of class change.

Literature. Don Quixote is an early modern man playing at being a man of the High Middle Ages, and as he moves among his pretensions and dreams we see both the dynamics of the early modern, and the irrelevance of the now passé estates world. No middle class figure, the Don, and yet in his break throughs of self-awareness, he is enabled to see himself in a newer and freer world than that of the ‘knight’ himself. He is becoming a middle class man in his mind. Jonson, Shakespeare, and Moliere all use the shifting gazes of early modernity to reflect bits of the mediaeval. Shakespeare is the most complex of these depictees of the mediaeval, for he is the least time bound of these great writers. Polonius wants to clear his conscience in confession, before he passes away; the friar *really* wants to guarantee Romeo and Juliet a Christian marriage; Prince Hal truly wants his father to bless him, before he inherits the Kingship. The same vestiges of the mediaeval adhere to the character formations of playwrights like Jonson and Moliere. Think of *Volpone*, or *The Alchemist* or *Every Man in his Humour*, in which stock characters, embodiments of mediaeval humours, play out into stylized (but subtle) plot resolutions; or of Moliere’s *Tartuffe*, say, who ‘embodies’ the idea of the hypocrite, picking it up from the tradition of Theophrastus’ *Characters*, a formative text for the middle ages.

19TH CENTURY

French Revolution. By the nineteenth century a revolutionary war had been fought, which represented all that Britain feared in the way of advanced and disruptive democracy. And yet the British and French joined in the same path of gradual modernization, as the century unfolded into increasing industrialization, urbanization, and the professions of commerce. The mirror of this change can quite expectably be seen again in the novel, which by this stage had become the most sensitive barometer of social change and class mode. The nineteenth century novel, in France and England, provides a lens through which to see images of what daily life really was.

Daily life. The classes had by this time been thoroughly shaken up, and while economic disparity was sharp, in both England and France, and elites, like the Victorian landed aristocracy, the Bloomsbury Circle, or the irrepressible *cercles litteraires*, which continued to circulate the latest literary trends of the Parisian milieu, retained their trademark centrality to their cultures, and while the peasantry, which had

not quite died out, continued to plough and hoe in the corners, the great mass of French and English people had become householders, with insurance and taxes to pay, and considerable freedom in mapping out career, marriage, and reproductive powers for themselves. We were truly in the modern period of class-free mobility, beginning to see our societies in terms of what kinds of skill deserves admiration in them: the dexterous diplomat; the scientific genius, perhaps a hero of vaccines; the poet who takes the age in hand, like Wordsworth; or the unseen Milton, mouldering in a country churchyard. Charles and Emma Bovary belong to many a nineteenth century French family, the *marriages de convenance* who conclude by perishing on their own misunderstanding.

20TH CENTURY

Class structure. From the firm but changeable social class structures, of the Roman Empire, and then the estate-based social classes of the mediaeval period, we have hastily surveyed the advent, in the Early Modern period, of what we would have to consider the dwindling vestiges of a class system, as they morph into a more fluid skill and contribution based society, with, for its historical roots, the industrialization and globalization of the early nineteenth century. Few class rigidities adhere to the twentieth century societies of France and England.

Norms. If Victorian England developed norms of behavior—middle class norms of decency, prudishness, honesty, and uprightness—it was in part because the world in which those norms were being formed was on the whole peaceful and disciplined, even in France, which experienced a wide variety of political positionings. What, conversely, could be expected for the class structures of nations, in the twentieth century, which experienced two World Wars and a great Depression in the course of thirty years, and in the second half of whose century sexual experimentation, women's liberation, incessant global bushfires, unprecedented storms of migration, and a wide tolerance for individuality have thoroughly modified the design of social relationships, both in the world and in the Western European corner of it.

Literature. What better mirror to hold up to the quick kaleidoscope of twentieth century culture than the novel? The Early Modern World reflected bright facets of its inner spirit in Cervantes, Moliere, Jonson. We could equally well have called in Balzac, Flaubert, Jane Austen, or George Eliot to help us clarify the tenor of nineteenth century social classes. When it comes to the century we have just lived, and can see slowly retreating in the rear view mirror, we could find in the world of English and French novelists camera shots deeply reminiscent of the world we have been and the class roles we have been playing in it: *Ulysses*, ourselves fractured into the social role of what we say, ourselves as language; Camus' *The Stranger*, ourselves as our own disorientation; Proust, *Swann's Way*, the wandering corridors of memory as it constructs us, making us citizens of time. The deep class participant I, not simply a rebel but a new birth from language and risk, becomes the social participant to whom I once belonged like the definition of my name.

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Discussion questions

On the whole, would you consider the Mediaeval class structure mobile and flexible? Or stiff and unyielding? Who was able to move up the social ladder--and under what circumstances? What changes did the Early Modern period bring to this Mediaeval structure?

How were slaves acquired in the Middle Ages? Were there regulations, say from the Church, about 'proper treatment of slaves'? What led to the fading away of the mediaeval slave system?

How were ordinary knights converted into 'chivalric gentlemen'? What kinds of efforts did courtly ladies make, to 'civilize their men'? Were courtly ladies also part of the equine culture? Why was the horse such a key player in the drama of the mediaeval court?

What kind of 'pockets of ethnic kingdoms' survived the Fall of the Roman Empire? Can you imagine the process by which the categories of Roman citizenship—knights, quaestors, consuls—gave way to the estates? Walter Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* remains a wonderful evocation of the pagan world of the Roman Empire, after it has yielded to 'barbarian forces,' and returned to its pre classical condition.'

In the fourteenth century Western monarchs conferred many titles of nobility in their kingdoms. (The first English duke, for instance, was created in 1337). The systems of aristocracy, of special privilege and special obligation—*noblesse oblige*—were not born sui generis, but sprang from the monarch's need for cohorts of support in the high altitude of rulership. What is the status today of such honorific class titles? Have they been replaced by new titles, in Western Europe?

GENDER RELATIONS

ANCIENT PERIOD

There are two periods of classical antiquity—the Minoan period in archaic Greece, and the later centuries of the Roman Empire--when something approaching humane standards were applied to the upbringing and training of girls and young women. Such was not the case even of the early Roman Republic and we have to assume, from almost no evidence, that the same is true of the western provinces of the Roman Republic and Empire. Settled life, the condition in which women have the best chance for a social existence, was not common in the provinces—with their occasional migrations, their frequent and brutal health conditions—and even settled life, itself likely to be devoted to agricultural occupations, then food

preparation, and most of all sexual reproduction, hardly provided opportunities for personal or even familial growth.

POSTCLASSICAL PERIOD

Confining ourselves to Western Europe we will need to wait until the Christian factor grows prominent In Rome—from the third century on, perhaps—until we see the potentials of this new and struggling religion, which gradually permeated the Roman provinces, nudging out rural paganism, which was rooted there, and would remain stubbornly, In pockets, throughout the first millennium. Elements of paganism which exalted earth, moon and fertility goddesses were omnipresent in prehistorical Gaul and Britannia, and it was not impossible to graft, onto those elements, a new cult in which a divine Virgin sat next to god, humility and grace were prioritized, and sooner or later opportunities arose for women to play active roles in the new institution.

Church. While men carried out the administrative efforts of the Catholic Church, from the beginning, and in the farther reaches of Empire as the Church spread, there was from early days an opportunity for women to serve In the church, notably as deaconesses—though very specifically not in a priestly function, a bone of bitter contention in the Catholic Church to our day. The role of deaconess, which was available to provincials, and soon the role of Abbess, or directress of a nunnery, were far from the usual aspirations of 'west European provincial' women, and yet in some cases opened purviews and possibilities for women, which had during the early post classical centuries been unimaginable.

Early Middle Ages (476-1000) In general the development of the convent, inside the growing monastic practice of the Church, was providing multiple opportunities for women's occupational lives. The role of Abbess, in particular, became a springboard for women of power and ability to make themselves heard within the increasingly open society. An example would be Hilda of Whitby (614-680), who founded and led the powerful Abbey of Whitby, and proved to be a leader in the formulation of ecclesiastical policy. Short of that kind of female prominence, of course, there was a growing front of occupations in which women could not only provide for their families, but could move into the spheres of commercial production. Spinning was one of these occupations: by the High Middle Ages (1000-1300 C.E.) efficient spinning wheels had replaced the spindle and distaff; brewery was a traditional female occupation, and was a home activity until the introduction of hops; midwifery became an increasingly specialized task, specific to women, and as this science developed, with subsequent benefit for female lives, the mortality of numerous women—especially as nutrition improved--rivalled that of their male counterparts; many women lived into their seventies. For the vast majority of peasant women, however, although they seem to have enjoyed social equality with their mates, the ceiling of life was typically only twenty five years, for much of this early mediaeval period.

High Middle Ages. (1000-1300). The High Middle Ages saw the rise to prominence of a number of powerful and/ or highly literate women throughout western Europe. Eleanor of Aquitaine (1122-1204) was wealthy and much sought after, deeply involved in patronage of some of the most talented writers of her time—like Chretien de Troyes, the author of *Perceval*. Other women of talent and ability emulated the achievements of Eleanor, while in various cases—of queens regnant—artistic and secular power were joined. It is noteworthy that female artisans, like their male counterparts, began in this period to organize in guilds.

Late Middle Ages (1300-1500) Significant female voices, from the late middle ages, echo from figures as widely separated as brilliant mystics (like Julian of Norwich, Catherine of Siena, and Saint Teresa of Avila, all of whom have remained staunch pillars of the Catholic tradition) and social critics like Christine de Pisan, whose books were opinion shapers. Christine came out as a strong opponent of

misogyny in her *Book of the City of Ladies*, and her *Treasure of the City of Ladies* provides life style advice for women of all classes, with an eye to their distinctive needs. In her advice to women of royal status, she offers vigorous advice for the avoidance of conflict, and above all warfare, the consequences of which, for all involved, surpass in horror anything that can easily be anticipated.

Marriage and law. Women's marriage rites (and rights) and economic freedom varied greatly during the millennium under consideration here. In the purely legal sense women were their husbands' property, during the entire period we consider, and yet, as we often see in the cases where the husband predeceases the wife, the wife can take over the husband's property and business, as well as the right to pass on the family inheritance as she chooses. This of course would be an exceptional case, and would in any event in no way apply to women serfs, to which group the majority belonged, especially in the earlier Middle Ages. Women of the lower peasantry had their rights—including rights of the bedroom—and the right to be buried where they liked, apart from their husbands. But from this serfdom to Me Too is a step!

EARLY MODERN PERIOD

Splendor. From the early Renaissance on, there is social space for women to shine, and for women of fortune and character to build strong positions in business, politics, the arts and high society; we are talking the power figures, like Lucrezia Borgia, who step out from the pages of illustrious families and are everywhere—conspicuously in those culture cities of Northern Italy (close neighbor to France), through which the goods and ideas of the Renaissance were beginning to flow. There is that face to the splendor of women in early modern society, just as in the eighteenth century French salon, with Mme. De Sevigne et. al., Parisian ladies of great cultivation were to dominate and shape social/literary trends.

Males. Nevertheless, throughout this early modern period of emergence from the mediaeval perspective, and into the implications of capitalism, there is arguably an inclination toward the male perspective, toward the captains of industry whether in the market place or the battlefields of politics. (Even the Church, or churches, are growing lofty male superstructures, astride which are the power figures of *those* institutions.) The underlying energies of the capital system implicitly superseded those of the feminine. Which is not to say that the element of money, the currency of capitalism, was of no interest to western European women—who were after all on their ways to forming the largest 'consumer market,' the market for 'retail goods,' invented by western need. But it is to say that men had gained frontal position in the conflict between the genders. Whose, after all, were the voices of literature, the spiritual insider voices of the 'early modern period,' except those men—Marlowe, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Jonson, Donne, Racine, Boileau, Descartes—who were the interpreters of the world to the early moderns?

19TH CENTURY

Undervaluation. The narrative we track, here, will be foreknown to all. We write it from the twenty first century, in which the multitudinous cries for gender equality, which have pockmarked the last two centuries, have arguably been heard by those males in the West of Europe who have ears to hear. It is not long, however, since we read (and I think more or less accepted) passages like the following, from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813). Charles Bingley watches the Bennett sisters occupied at their parlor activities, and cannot restrain himself from expostulating:

It is amazing to me, said Bingley, how young ladies can have patience to be so very accomplished as they all are. All young ladies accomplish. Yes, all of them, I think. They all paint tables, cover screens,

and net purses. I scarcely know anyone who cannot do all this, and I am sure I never heard a young lady spoken of for the first time, without being informed that she was very accomplished.

Depreciation. From such a passage we easily look back on a long history of devaluing of women's abilities, and doubtless linger on examples like that of Jean Jacques Rousseau, the prophet of human liberation, who nonetheless found women valuable chiefly for their coquetry, and advised them to shoot no higher than needed to keep their men interested in them. The disparagement history is by no means justified, as we saw in a few spotty references to female mystics like Julian of Norwich, social critics like Christine de Pisan, mothers of the church, military leaders (Joan of Arc) or women of noble birth, cultural sophistication, and large secular influence like Eleanor of Aquitaine. Nor was the enlightenment perspective, of the eighteenth century, likely to miss the needs for an enlightenment of an entire half of their population.

Advocacy. Not only were women, as consumers, proving to be a potentially powerful economic force, but advocates for the wider social and political presence of women were making themselves heard on behalf of their gender. John Stuart Mill, the brilliant parliamentarian and philosopher, fought for women, and in his writing argued for the substitution of 'the rights of the person, 'rather than of 'man.' Olympe de Gouges, in her ironic drama, *The Defence of the Rights of Woman*, 1791, mocked the pretensions of 'man' forever to prioritize his own rights. Mary Wollstonecraft (in 1792) published her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, in which she fiercely defended women's powers of thought and imagination. And of course, if we move to the far end of the century, we come upon the burgeoning of the suffragist movement, which already in the 1890's had its origins among figures like the two 'proto feminists' just mentioned.' While the right to vote was conferred on women in Britain and Germany in 1918, it was not conferred on French female voters until after 1945, and then only if the candidate for suffrage was literate.

Achievements in literature. Simply to respond to our earlier remarks on men, who dominated the western European literary scene, in the Early Modern Period, a note here on the prominence of some of the most effective female writers of the nineteenth century: (France) Mme. De Stael; Georges Sand; (England) George Eliot; Jane Austen; Charlotte and Emily Bronte; Mary Wollstonecraft; Mary Shelley.

20TH CENTURY

Birth. Despite the new century's overwhelming prominence in war, international conflict, genocide; despite the amazing advances of twentieth century 'mankind' in plumbing the atmosphere and the atom; despite world-changing social experiments like Communism and renovation within the Catholic Church; despite these factors of secular change, the overall changes in twentieth century women's lives, in at least the western corner of Europe, were of unique importance, given the central importance of 'the lady who gives us birth.,' and makes it all possible.

Liberation. It has been a cliché of the century, applicable here and there, and since WW II especially in Europe and North America, that women have become relatively 'liberated .' We are, after all, in the century in which, among educated women, European and American, the thinking of such freed and brilliant women as Simone de Beauvoir (*The Second Sex*, 1949) and Germaine Greer (*The Female Eunuch*, 1970) has seemed to point the way to a new and newly realized woman. And this seeming achievement, clearly, was based on the emergence of a technologically upgraded domestic world, in which women (as well as their spouses) were freed from servitude to the sink, the laundry basket, and the soaking pail of baby's diapers.

The world. Milestones of technical and social development have accompanied, and seemed to support , this new perspective: since WW II, especially, women have found themselves employed outside home,

as participants in the visible productive world—not behind the curtains in the living room; women have gained prominence in academia, medicine, and politics—Western European women rising to prominence in all these fields; environmental conditioning, for these dramatic advances, being provided by the introduction of the birth control pill (1960) and in many places the ready and sanitary availability of abortion, one more milestone of seeming advance, on which women have been able to rely, for the creation of independent lives. Western European women, thanks to the wars their men fought for them, have won the right to fight right beside Joe and Bill, to share the burden of defending the flag with your last breath.

Discussion questions

Does the childbearing role of woman limit the freedom she can ultimately enjoy, and which men enjoy by nature of their different biology? Do we see, in the twentieth century, attempts by women to minimize their biological limitations, by sharing with spouses, by insisting on paid leaves at their workplaces, by mental preparation for a fresh new postpartum life? Is there an advocacy, in our time and in areas like western Europe, for stay at home moms, for the 'old fashioned' values, which are not long in the past but seem to have faded?

The Biblical narrative of Adam and Eve gives Eve a bad rap. The snake is the temptress, but Eve is the one who bites the apple, and the Christian tradition—to speak not of Islam or Judaism, who have their distinct but related traditions-- has never tired of shifting the blame for the Fall onto her. Does this thought inheritance underlie a basic conflict between woman and the Church? After all, wasn't the Catholic Church a haven for women, in its earlier centuries? And aren't the pews of your local church—no NOT mosque--largely filled by skirts and blouses?

In 1979 the UN published the *Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women*. This is one of many conspicuous documents and proclamations which pepper our earwaxes, as we try to adjust our western (thus 'enlightened') cultures to high standards of behavior toward the women. In our lives, who after all constitute more than half of the globe's population. Yet right here and now, in the corner of western Europe (and the U.S.), there is a loud outcry from women, bitterly resentful of their mistreatment by men. Are women increasingly victimized in our time, as members of society? Have such movements as Me Too a representative character? Or are they isolated voices expressing highly individualized pain?

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ECONOMIC HISTORY

INNOVATIONS

Ancient Period

Fragments. In tracing the earliest art works of Western Europe we find an abundance of sculptural examples dating from around the time of the cave painting explosion in south western France and northern Spain (that is, ca. 35,000 years ago.) We find these prehistoric sculptures of animals and birds scattered through caves in the mountains of Germany, while other types of sculpture—fertility figures with huge breasts and vaginas—appear throughout Europe, in rockbeds, streams, and on mountainsides. To indicate the diversity and long duration of this ancient western European art tradition, think only of the advent of Celtic metalwork sculpture, which made its way west across Europe, only in the last years of the pre Christian, between 400-100 B.C., and which brought with it metalwork designs which still awe us by their craftsmanship.

Postclassical Period

Growth. Christian art tradition, in sculpture, naturally kept its head low; for as members of a proscribed religion, in ancient Rome, and as themselves a scattered and highly diverse set of religious recruits, the early Christians had little connection with sculpture except through the funereal motifs they carved on sarcophagi. This role expanded with the gradual expansion of the church form, which with the growth of the faith required larger structures for the exercise of their worship, and the early Christians proceeded to re adapt the Roman basilica into auditorium-like spaces where proto Church services could gradually be held. (Thus the beginning of a Christian sense of architecture.) Though these structures could well have served as settings for sculptural decoration, the early Christians, abhorring graven images, refused for a long time to take that path. Around the year 600, Pope Gregory declared that mural paintings should be added to churches, as ways to record sacred history, but sculptures were still avoided as graven images.

Charlemagne. Until the time of Charlemagne, in the early ninth century, sculpture was hardly to be found in Christian culture—give or take Celtic crosses with decorative motifs or the first stages of Byzantine painting. Charlemagne, however, established a vigorous art impulse and sponsored the work of many architectural projects, which inevitably, in his successors, the three Ottonian rulers, led to the gradual incorporation of sculptural work into the work of making Christian churches. The opening out of confident Christian culture was at this point awaiting the Crusades, in which Christian conquests in the Holy Land, and the return of holy relics captured in skirmishes along the way, inspired a period of intense church building in the West, where abbots and priors were competing for the talents of sculptors who could help to decorate the churches of the new Romanesque style (1000-1200).

Gothic. Gothic church construction, and the sculptural work called in for decoration and instruction, took its cues from the Romanesque, with its rounded arches and thick walls. Over time the Gothic cathedral soared gradually out into the narrow nave, high thin intricate walls, high-arching spires, and stained glass windows which we know from the cathedrals at Chartres or Notre Dame. The Cathedral was seen as a microcosm of God's creation, and in time, between 1150-1300, became a treasure house of fine sculptural ornamentations, sculptured tales, statues of holy figures surrounded by images of the great Old Testament prophets. The summit of religious sculpture in the West is to be found on the vast cathedrals we owe to the High Gothic period.

Early Modern Period

Renaissance The early period of Renaissance sculpture was firmly built on the work of the High Gothic period, and reflects the same exuberant historical awareness that had preceded it. If anything, the energy of stone creation is higher than before, and the Renaissance reflects in the greatest names of the early period: Ghiberti, Donatello, and Andrea del Verocchio. The period of High Renaissance Sculpture

(1490-1530) was dominated by the work of Michelangelo (1475-1564), painter, sculptor, poet, and supreme genius of the Renaissance.

Baroque. Growing out from the Renaissance, the Baroque period of sculpture (1600-1700), latching onto the strong Roman Catholic Counter Revolution, with its passion to draw people back to the 'true church,' devoted all its skills to charming and delighting the faithful. Saint Peter's Square was redesigned, under the direction of the greatest sculptor of the time, Bernini, so that the columns embracing Saint Peter's itself seemed to embrace the returning worshipper. Bernini's individual pieces of sculpture, like *The Vanquished Gaul killing himself and his Wife*, captured the sculptural moment in a brilliant instantaneity, an effect both stunning and forward looking—toward increasingly illusionistic work to come in the next centuries. The Baroque, still defining as part of the Renaissance perspective, continues to unfold throughout Europe, as the Renaissance spirit, which took first wing out from north Italy, developed into other cultures which like the Italian were finding new directions in which to win friends spiritually.

Rococo. As a reaction against the severity of the baroque, sculptors in France, especially, found their ways to a lighter hearted treatment of painting and sculpture. 1700-1789 marks out the Rococo period, sophisticated and genial, as was the thinking of the court of Louis XIV at Versailles, and readily settling into academic style solutions. Director of the *Académie Française*, from 1707 on, Guillaume Coustou was the most successful sculptor of the early part of this movement, while a variety of court sculptors, many the favorites of the great ladies of the court, held sway in competition with one another. We might say, in retrospect of the Revolution which was just around the corner, that art was having fun for a hundred years before the blood letting.

Reflection. We have been moving fast, from the Neolithic art explosion, 35,000 years ago, through quiet and almost hidden early Christian art, which only gradually—but then unstoppably—outspread into monumental architecture and highly developed sculptures, both free standing and parts of narrative suites, which were to morph toward the muscular power of Renaissance pluri-genius, culminating, we might say, in the supreme works of Michelangelo's sculpture and painting, only to soften out into Baroque and Rococo stages.

Drivers. This reflection is about the nature of change in art styles. It could be styles of moral value or of domestic architecture: the central question is the same—what is the driver to change? In art historical development it is as though human consciousness initially hooks itself into a project, like that of transforming nature into some of the metaphorical meanings inherent in nature, and then, once engaged in a segment of the challenge—say the challenge to transform the mere coexisting with caves into the depicting of the cave world—from within the cave—the drive of consciousness prosecutes its effort at 'improvement,' at expressing more fully what it feels it is pursuing, until, at some point, the energy of the quest plays itself out, transforming itself, if that is the way to put it, into its replacement, as Renaissance sculpture, for example, replaces High Gothic which has already expressed what it could of the energy supplied it by its culture.

19th Century

Doldrums. With the exception of Auguste Rodin, the nineteenth century, in Western Europe, was a low point in the movement forward of sculpture. In part the reasons are embedded in the historical moment. After the Revolution there was much general uncertainty about the chief directions of society. For one thing, the Church had been severely wounded by the Revolution, throughout Western Europe, and without Church support, need, and commissions, an essential support for sculpture was missing. (Sculpture, it was realized when institutional support was absent, was an expensive art, requiring precise tools and equipment, and much personal time investment, and could not, like painting, thrive simply on the inspiration of brilliant household geniuses. It should be added that, in nineteenth century West Europe there was a marked decline in those kinds of large building projects—courthouses, cathedrals, administrative halls—which had theretofore served as launching pads for sculptural commissions.

Rodin. Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) stands out among the European sculptors of the nineteenth century, in power recalling the greatest works of his ideal, Michelangelo. As an independent spirited, and only

modestly backed by fans or the wealthy, Rodin held powerfully to his conviction—wasn't it that of Michelangelo, also?—that a tenacious attention to the wonders of the human body was the only path to noble sculpture. (In this conviction he also gave his total allegiance to the spirit of such ancient Greek sculptors as Phidias and Praxiteles, whose muscular sculpted bodies are so 'realistic' they are 'ideals.')

It was in accord with this muscularity that Rodin also worshipped the tightly wrought cathedral sculptures of High Gothic.

20th Century

Renovation. It is as if, with the twentieth century, Western European (and American) sculpture finds out how to shed some of its material bulk, and, at the same time, its rather limiting dependence on institutions for commissions. A reconception of sculpture is underway, which will sidestep some of the mass problems that shadowed the traditional sculptor's trade.

Revolution. The 'anthropological' put ups of such sculptors as Constantin Brancusi and Naum Gabo, portable and tactile, often wry, change the weight of the action of sculpture, which becomes less a statement than an offering. Wit is given room to enter the discourse. It might be mentioned, in relation to this turn of lightening in sculpture, that concurrently the *Ecole de Paris*, an influential working crossroads for European sculptors, was actively open to the impact of African sculpture, which was widely on view in earlier twentieth century Paris, and which opened for Western Europeans rare vistas of sculpture as color, humor, and movement.) Such Westerners as would have experienced African sculpture had been readied for such attacks on the expected, by the assaults Picasso and Braque had already undertaken, against all the canons reigning in western European art, at the time when they tossed a truly revolutionary Cubism into the ring of Western European perspectival options. Among those options, seized by many European sculptors, was the path of abstract and super real sculptures, sculptures of breakfast made of fur, mobiles that mocked the traditional weight of the sculptor, or, as in the work of Louise Nevelson, 'assemblages composed of found objects, mostly wood, sprayed in white, black, or gold paint and arranged in box like shelves occupying a wall...'

The horizons. Obvious we have been moving, here, into an horizon unanticipated by the depictive, though very diversely so, prior history of Western European sculpture. We could go on. But the dramatic point makes itself clear before us, that sculpture is only by tradition, not by necessity, limited to the stolid, direct, head on expressions of the human personality. It is clear that what inspires Rodin, in the finest of his work, like 'Balzac' or 'The Thinker,' is a frozen in life—and perfectly and deeply human--representative; it is clear that Naum and Gabo, or the pop art sculptors who follow them, are making artefacts, or letting artefacts form, that will 'make you think.'

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Sculpture was greatly boosted, in the late middle ages, by the need for it expressed by the makers of the High Gothic cathedral. What did those makers want and need from sculpture? Was sculpture needed, after that point, in its trajectory as a major Western European Art? In modern art is sculpture needed? Or is it a function of dialogue, among observers or among the elements of a sculptural complex? Would Naum and Gabo have any interest in the notion of a 'use' for sculpture?

What do you imagine as the origin of sculpture? Does it seem plausible, that the origin of sculpture might be different from that of painting, or of architecture? Is painting about representation, sculpture about presentation, architecture about occupation?

The earliest Western sculpture we have, from the ancient Mediterranean, then from the caves in Western Europe, is regularly connected with the celebration or promotion of fertility. Do you understand what the act of creating sculptures could have to do with the promotion of fertility?

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TRADE

Ancient Period

Backwater. By the time of the birth of Christ, twenty seven years after the foundation of the Roman Empire, there was considerable trade along the Mediterranean basin. We have little evidence, however, for the details of that trade in western Europe, which was still a backwater, local in economy, and cut off even from the centers of energy in the Italian peninsula. Were our topic Italy in the Empire we would find that there was a roaring and mounting traffic around the Mediterranean, and much farther out into the world than that. The Western European lands, however, first come into their own trade life in the period we now call Mediaeval, though for the Romans the West was simply far flung *provinciae* of Empire.

What trade there was, in western classical antiquity, took place largely in, around, or in connection with the commercial power of the city of Rome. The port of Rome, at Ostia, was from the early Empire on bustling with merchant cargo, much of it amphorae (containing wine, oil, and grains), with a diversity of commercial products like leather, woods, and building materials. The far less developed economies, of the provinces to the west of Rome—in France, Germany, and England—were sufficiently—given their then needs and desires—supplied by internal and cross border trading. It was not until the third and fourth centuries, of the Christian era, that we note the first evidence of a coherent mediaeval trading economy.

Postclassical Period

Overview From the early Mediaeval period to the flourishing of cities, cathedrals, and international trade in the thirteenth century, is a long stretch. If we date the breakdown of the Roman economy to the fifth century C.E., we will have to wait five or six centuries before we see the emergence of a vigorous trading economy in Europe. Involved in that development are gradual improvements in transportation--both by sea and land, in agricultural efficiency and know how, in the concentration of capital in banking centers, and in manufacturing processes, which readied foodstuffs, fabrics, and even building materials for long-distance transport.

The early Middle Ages The term 'dark ages,' pejoratively first applied during the Renaissance, but now rarely used, usually designated the period from 500-1000 C.E., when the deterioration of social life, transportation, and trade had replaced the still serviceable vestiges of the Roman Imperial structure, which succumbed to 'barbarism,' both internal and external, by the mid-fifth century C.E. This 'early' period was not without cultural development--think of the Benedictine monastic tradition or the Carolingian Renaissance of the 9th century--but its foundations, in a still pretty stagnant agricultural economy, with little more than local trade, were mired down and unprogressive.

The trade explosion of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Trade, culture, military prowess and urbanization went hand in hand in the Later Middle Ages. One can look at three facets of this development of trade: the maritime explosion of trading networks among interlinked regions; the growth of a commercial and banking culture; the rapid development of cities, with their fairs, markets, and manufacturing centers.

Maritime trade The twelfth and thirteenth centuries saw a rapid expansion of ocean trade. One factor in this expansion was the growing expertise in ship building, commercialization of seaworthy manpower, and establishment of reliable ports and harbors to which to ship the increasingly abundant products of European industry: wool, processed fabrics, wines, foodstuffs, horses. That is not to mention the exponential development of European port systems at which to receive spices and oils from as far away as China, the fruits and fabrics of the Muslim Near East, and wool from the British Isles, ready for the refinements of the Flanders textile industry.

Commercial and banking culture To bankroll the exploding maritime undertakings, of the High Middle Ages, required a network of lenders and bankers, who could put their hands on enough venture capital to send fleets of expensive cargo, of hundreds of workers and oarsmen, and often of cattle and cavalry, far across the ocean. The seed ground for this new commercial industry was in large part the wealthy cities of North Italy--Genoa, Venice, Florence--in which high commerce and high culture co-existed at a fruitful level never since attained.

Cities and their relation to trade The two centuries which culminate the movement of Mediaeval Europe, the 12th and 13th, saw the rapid growth of population, of urbanization, and of the centrality of the city to commerce and trade. We talk here of a period during which great fairs attracted the economic energy of the civilized world, bringing together merchants from both the local scene and from as far away as ships could transport goods. We talk also of the atmosphere of the larger cities--say in Paris or Northern Italy or Flanders--where negotiations and deals were the name of the game, and rich and powerful families regularly schmoozed with international bankers. We also speak of the advent of the 'age of discovery,' in which the great European explorers—Columbus, Vasco da Gama—began to open virtually unknown dimensions of the world's oceans, and, with them new shores and continents from which to 'trade' unfamiliar products, ranging from sugar cane to gold, from slaves to rubber.

Shipping. Trade in the earlier mediaeval period of Western Europe gradually fell into a pattern which retained the traditional Roman reliance on shipping—and on the industries of ship building—and which relied on a complex system of transportation waterways, which included local rivers and water passages, as well as everything from bay traffic, hugging the shore, to areas through the turbulence which the Mediterranean can become. In the period before the seventh century, when Romans were themselves losing the authority to manage large shipments of goods, it seems that the most desirable material of transportation was luxuries—precious metals, horses, and slaves—and that Jews and Syrians played leading roles in the dark period between the seventh and the ninth centuries, when with the culture in general a deeper economy and a more diversified set of consumer desires began to reshape the market.

City-states. By the ninth century, and later, certain major Italian city-states—Venice, Pisa, Amalfi, Genoa—took over the primacy of Western European trade, establishing connections with Arab traders in the Levant. (Trade between the above ports took place with such commodities as: spices, gold, perfume, slaves, luxury textiles, animal skins, leather goods, jewels...in other words with high priced commodities for the elite. (Upturned wrecks of oil and wine bearing amphorae, on the bottom of the Mediterranean, continue to turn up in our own time, not infrequently from an age close to the very late mediaeval period we are discussing.) The same kinds of shipped commodity exchange were of course also taking place from productive ports in other parts of the Roman Empire (or former Roman Empire.) In North Western Europe—through the eleventh century—the Vikings carried on a heavy trade in slaves; Scandinavian fish and timber moved south to England and Saxony; after the Norman Conquest of 1066, the British began importing cloth and wine, while exporting cereals and wool, from which the Flemish wove stunning cloths.

Industrial shipping. On a level closer to industrial shipping, and ultimately to urban and infrastructural establishments, there was, by the thirteenth century, a growing volume of transport of materials like iron, copper, and tin, which profited not only from better roads but from better ships, with simpler construction and increased carrying capacity. With the technological developments in shipping followed a lowering of costs, and at the same time a wider use of 'venture capital,' with the expanding nucleus of well to do business man lenders in the cities.

Markets. At the same time that shipping led the way, in lucrative and adventurous trading, there was an increasingly robust inland market life, which continued to prove the backbone of social and economic development throughout the Middle Ages, surviving wars and plagues as it had to, in order that the people could eat. At least until the ninth century, by which time urban growth, more wealth concentration, and improved agricultural conditions had broadened the individual's experience, weekly local markets, or regional fairs were the entrepôts for commodities and foodstuffs that made daily life real, and sometimes even tasty.

Fairs. Such fairs were typically managed, and profited from, by large scale estate owners, town councils, and even churches or monasteries—which provided venues and accounting services for the fair itself. Sometimes these fairs—which assembled produce and goods from a wide radius of local markets, and which typically fell on church holy days, when 'ordinary people' were free to attend—were taken over by whole communities, and specific items like fish, meat, or bread were sold in specific parts of a town, and at specific times. With the increasing organization of these fairs, there developed a class of entrepreneurial hucksters, who frequently appeared at people's doors, peddling their wares.

Shops. In the larger communities of Western Europe, especially after the ninth century, there came the gradual development of fixed market centers working from shops. (Typically a merchant resident would set up his storefront in front of his house, ideally in a position from which he could look down from his front window onto the pulse of potential customers in the street below. Frequently the city would do what was possible to organize these home/shops so that they would be clustered together, facilitating customer browsing, and municipal inspection.

Early Modern Period

Transition. During the high middle ages, and what in the arts we call the Renaissance, the gradually forming nation states of Western Europe were advancing technologically, enriching their international profiles, and bringing great new wealth to the 'mercantile classes,' the new class of trader-businessmen-investors-venture-capitalists, who were the heart of the growing economies of Western Europe. (The older class systems, deeply embedded in the Feudal World, were basically agricultural, prioritizing the Lord of the Manor, and organized around the descending hierarchies of vassalage in field labor, which took its cut off the bottom of the economic pie.) Writing this transitional period requires, however, more than profiling the broad categories of change, for the 'quality of life' in Western Europe was during this early modern period almost eradicated by a series of plagues, weather crises, and disastrous harvests.

Setbacks. The Hundred Years War (1337-1453) put France and England at one another's throats, when they required cooperation, if only to let developing economies take their forward pace. On top of that self-obstructing behavior, and partly because rampaging armies degraded land and society, western Europe was hit by terrible plagues, bad harvests, and famines during precisely the period new 'nation states' were forming. The Black Death plague of 1347, imported by ship from Asia, entered Europe by the port of Messina, in Sicily, and rapidly spread throughout Europe, arguably wiping out a third of the population, conceivably as many as two hundred million victims. The population of France, which was the largest and most development-ready country of western Europe, in the Renaissance, declined from seventeen million to twelve million in 130 years, until, in the 1450's, a cycle of recuperation set in.

Recuperation. That period of recuperation saw the gradual strengthening and emergence of France, the Italian city states, and England, as the forthcoming powers of Modernity in Western Europe: all of them, in fact, bolstered by the growth of the Columbian exchange-- the cultural and biological trade-offs between Old Europe, new America, and West Africa—were beginning to take shape and self-definition.

Columbian Exchange. What we now call the Columbian Exchange is a useful marker for the opening of a new period in Western European trade. As a byproduct of the increasing globality of world trade, in the period of discovery, certain commercial patterns assumed a formal and durable existence, bringing continual advantage to those who conducted it. This particular economic experiment, which brought new crops (tomatoes, potatoes, maize, tobacco) to Europe from the New World, interacted with the trade in slaves between West Africa and the same new world, which took New World produce back to England

and the continent. On the heels of this 'experiment' European cities pursued the monetary and lifestyle advantages of global trade.

Imports. The import of luxury goods (fine fabrics and spices) from East Asia flourished—abetted by the new ability of shipping to pass around the Cape of Good Hope, rather than across central Asia; Spain established the most muscular European trading presence throughout the sixteenth century, mastering the art of terrifying and looting the raw and artificial gold to be gathered aplenty by the Conquistadores, from very much living Aztec and Mayan cultures. The closeness of internal economic conditions to trading practice is evident in the tandem developments, within European nations, in industrial equipment and agricultural equipment, the raw materials of which had often to be imported, while the output, foodstuffs or fabrics, created a steady outflow of products from Western European ports.

France. Prior to 1800, France was the most populated country in Europe, and the most effectively poised for trade. (Population was 28 million in 1789. By 1800 Paris was the largest city in Europe, with a population of 650,000). A number of factors, in addition to population growth, contributed to the marked development of France. There was extensive import of agricultural products from the New World—beans, corn, squash, tomatoes, potatoes—a sharp rise in the production of silk and wool, and the benefit of royal exemption from taxes for many industrial products. With the growth of trade fairs—four times a year—in Lyons, that city took over as the banking capital of France, a home away from home for various prominent Italian monetary families, like the Medicis, but by the following century, when the economy had succumbed to serious inflation, life for the lower income peasants grew seriously difficult, and the crown was forced to make what were (for it) damaging tax and revenue concessions to the masses.

England. The imperial power of England grew slowly, through the mercantile processes already set in movement in the sixteenth century, the time of the great fleet building and adventure sailing, which made of English a fierce competitor to the France we have just mentioned. By the end of the seventeenth century, the British economy had comfortably settled into its pattern of self-enrichment through the mutual interfructuation among the increasingly prosperous British colonies. The modern British Empire was based on the English empire which took flight in the 18th century with the nation's extensive colonization in the Caribbean, Canada, and among the thirteen colonies of America. The mercantile turn of this empire involved the British government working in close collaboration with leading national merchants throughout the colonies, in a trade collaboration which effectively excluded other nations from participation in the advantages of the British Empire itself.

France France was the most heavily populated country in Europe in the Early Modern Period. (The population rose to 28 million in 1789.) The rapid development of this now mercantile-industrial country laid the foundations for an increasing national and international trading capacity. France remained a ninety percent agricultural nation, during this period, but Paris, a banking and commercial capital, by was by the end of the eighteenth Both imports and exports flourished from their mercantile matrix in the capital. Silk, wool, hemp and linen were among the competitive exports, and helped France to maintain a favorable balance of trade over against England and Spain, throughout the eighteenth century. Vast market fairs occurred quarterly throughout France, and among other things promoted were glass, silks, dyes, and spices from the international customers displaying there.

18th Century The British Trade. Mercantilism is the right name for the economic system by which the British, as well as the French, were negotiating themselves into a potent commercial Empire in the early modern period. The spread of that Empire throughout the eighteenth century—which embraced territories as widely separated as India and Ceylon and the Caribbean and Canada—was largely due to the working relations set up among the British government, the major business holders in the colonized area, and business moguls in London, who contributed to the commercial transactions being established in the colonies. Slavery on the Atlantic coast became the lynchpin for the development of this commercial empire, which succeeded in creating a strict monopoly over its possessions, excluding all competition. (Trade barriers, regulations, and taxes on outsiders functioned seamlessly, to build what was essentially a commercial empire.)

19th Century

Industrial Revolution. Britain and France continued in their roles as major trading and (in the case of Britain especially) colonizing powers. For Britain the dominant trading enterprise was in India, which was in different stages deeply incorporated into the commercial and even administrative functions of the British government. Earlier in the century British settlers had been content to be commercial (and very profitable) outliers on the huge raw materials cache, of the Indian subcontinent, but as the century progressed, and Britain's imperial-administrative hold on India tightened—the Anglo-Indian becoming a distinctive cultural type—the value of British imports—initially saltpeter for gunpowder, silk, spices, tea, indigo, rubber—grew until with the consolidation of a commercial empire on the subcontinent Britain was able to complement the trading revenue it continued to receive from its Atlantic colonies. The French relation to its North African colonies, like that of the British in India, became an increasingly intertwined social involvement, with French settlers long dominant socially and culturally, while the products of the Algerian land—from dates to precious minerals—incorporated themselves, as part of daily life, into French culture.

Opposites. It may be surmised, from the above, that in terms of trade along the opposite developments of Britain and France, at the approach of the nineteenth century, an Industrial Revolution was in the offing, which would particularly spike in Britain and its colonies, while doing away with the necessity for social overthrow, which awaited the French at the end of an eighteenth century declining into violence and anarchy.

Iron and steel. The Industrial Revolution in England introduced factories to England, Scotland and Europe, doing so through a series of technological advances, which were destined to modify Britain's world-wide trade. Coal mining, and the exploitation of its power, upgraded a series of railroads, manufacturing plants, and business enterprises, which spread out into migration and trade, from Britain to its world-flung empire. The growth rate of the British GDP was 1.5 percent from 1770-1815, and 3.00 percent from 1815-1831. The advance in rail transportation particularly accelerated the rate of British industrial production, and the transportation of trade-ready supplies. The primitive wooden rails of the early eighteenth century were replaced by wrought iron rails. By 1804 the first steam powered locomotives were hauling iron ore and seventy passengers a load at 5 miles per hour. It was of equal industrial importance, for the growth of the British economy and trade, that by 1860 iron had become the metal of acceptance for industrial projects, while not much later steel replaced iron, while cast iron bridges were being slung across Europe rivers, and iron ships set free on the ocean of trade. 'In 1847-8 railway builders bought three million tons for rolling stock, bridge building, and station building for 2000 new miles, plus the demands of the 3000 previously built miles of railway.'

20th CENTURY

Instability. From the vantage point of the century Western European economies, one would have to say that the first half of the twentieth century, in Western Europe, was unstable, dangerous, and unfriendly to extensive international trading relations, or even to robust trading within countries. Two world wars, which reduced the major European cultures to rubble and distress, were a disaster from the viewpoints of commerce, trade, or exploration. A worldwide depression in the thirties sealed the fate of these cultures, and heralded a crisis point, their fight to the death which ended only in 1945, and which added another major player, the Soviet Union, to the ranks of semi-antagonistic players who faced off against one another by mid-century.

Wars. The shortcut of the present conversation will have brought us in one leap from the formative centuries of west European economy and trade—the signature step forward of late mediaeval France and England—to the Industrial Revolution—especially in 19th century England—which increased national economic power, and readiness for goods trades on a soon to be global basis. This pattern of 'progress,' if one is ready to equate economic trade with progress, is soon enough to run into a roadblock as intransigent as the plagues and civil wars of the fourteenth century, which took their terrible, if temporary, vengeance on the development of early modern Europe. The roadblock is the devastation of the European economy, thus trading power, after two destructive world wars, which brought the growth of

Western European civilization to a halt. We may conclude by drawing attention to a positive dimension to the conclusion of the cruel first half of the twentieth century, as it involved trade among partners—Western European, and now the larger world. I mean the *Marshall Plan*, the predecessor of a number of supra national trade and military partnerships which were to build eventually toward the multiple organizations of the European Union at the end of the twentieth century.

Marshall Plan. The Marshall Plan, 1948-51, was an American instigated post-WW II aid package designed to help postwar Europe rebuild and reconstruct after the war. The argument behind this plan was healthy; it was evident in the United States that only a vigorous Europe could prove itself a creative trading partner in the future. Mutual benefit was at hand here, as the British and French governments cooperated intensively with the American initiative. All the lessons of mutual international trade were implicit in the Marshall Plan thinking and negotiations.

European Union. The European Union will, in different stages, have been developing through the second half of the twentieth century, and will have brought with it a growth in regularized trade among all nations. Trade with a vengeance unites post-1950 Western Europe to the nations and products of previously untried partners: Japan and China, as well as the burgeoning economies of southeast Asia. The natural dynamic of industrial growth has expressed itself at all points in the Western European economy, but we should perhaps mention a trade and economic stimulus package of great effect which in its way underlay the ability of Western Europe to find its new post-1950 modalities.

Discussion Questions

There is a great population explosion in Western Europe, from the time of the Fall of the Roman Empire to the high economic flowering of the 13th century. How would you explain this population growth? Is it related to international trade?

Does the trade carried out by modern western European nations follow traditional patterns—does the trading nation still deal with the same trading partners, or do these relations change often and totally, depending on the 'global context' of the time?

We have been stressing maritime trade. Do the patterns of inland trade, in Western Europe, suggest the same economic growth as maritime trade? What was the state of roads in the Europe of the Middle Ages? Of the eighteenth century?

There was extensive 'manufacturing' in the new cities of 13th century Europe. What were factories like? How many were employed in a large factory? Was there any wage and salary control? Were there unions? Were the products of such factories frequently traded for other goods and services?

Is trade as carried on in the local African market, which is typically held several times a month, in villages, notably similar to the kind of trade modern mega nations, like France, devote to their international trading relations?

Is the history of trade the same as the history of economy? Can the economy of a country flourish, without external trade to fructify it? Would the late mediaeval economy, regional and small scale, be an example of a significant economy without corresponding trade?

Is there a general movement toward globalism in the history of European trade? Does that movement, if it exists, put more money in the pocket of the little man? Or has globalism, in economy and trade, no effect on the individual pocketbook? Is Europe a particularly vivid example of economic development? If so, why did the Western European economies decline in the second half of the twentieth century?

How do you explain the intervention into world history of a development like the Industrial Revolution in Britain? Do you attribute that development to the build up of a critical mass of discoveries and inventions, or to larger patterns of 'meaning' in world culture?

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CULTURAL HISTORY

Ancient Period

VERBAL ARTS

Literature

Western European literature, unlike Western European music, had a life—of a sort—in antiquity, prior to the Christian era. Of a sort, because it was an entirely oral life, had not yet conceded to the force majeure of the written, which is the hallmark of generative culture-- built, urban, economically driving, and historically influential society. But of a sort, for sure, for among the creations of pre Christian oral literature in Western Europe, are versions of some of the world's great tales, epics, and heroic records: epics from Iceland, mainland Scandinavia and Germany, which we know to be at the roots of numerous written masterpieces dating from the centuries after Christ.

Languages

Indo European. Almost all the languages spoken in Europe today are descendants of Proto Indo European, their hypothetical but evidence-supported father language. That proto Indo European is a theoretical language, based on the evidence of language and speech predating the Christian era by many thousand years, and itself part of a distant pre-writing era, and yet we have no better argument evidence, for the diverse but interrelated facts of language history, than a hypothetical language-father origin.

Origins. Evidence from the three main language phyla currently dominant in Europe concentrates on: the *Romance* (215 million European speaker-users); the *Germanic* ('an estimated 210 million Europeans are native speakers of Germanic languages'); and the Anglo-Frisian, most dramatically represented by contemporary English, currently boasting some 60 million native speakers in the United Kingdom and a

difficult to determine number of English speakers in the European Union, where perhaps as many as 100 million speakers now reside. Each of these three huge language phyla tracks its origins to Proto Indo European, as also does Slavic, of which there are 250 million native speakers in south eastern Europe. (We omit the Slavic element in this profile, which confines itself to the three most closely interrelated language families, Germanic, Romance, and English).

The three language phyla named above all passed through their ancient period—that period which, for ancient European philosophy, religion, and science, we have been accepting our weakness in evidence—as vehicles of the experience, and communication-desire, of widely outspread tribal and clan survivalists, who were living in loose bands with gradually thickening bonds of specialized labor. The barbarians to whom the ancient Romans turned, in their various efforts to pin the blame for their fall, were an already fairly developed example of the kinds of new language potential being imported onto the continent of what would later be called Europe. Of the proto languages they brought with them, over the time border into the postclassical age, we can say that they were kin but separate, say, from the Greek or Roman they would have intersected, at those points where the mature impulse of western civilization was already at work.

Script

Latin Script. The Latin script, which English speakers commonly call ‘the alphabet,’ is a writing system based on the letters of the ancient Roman alphabet, and though this script has evolved in many details—of added or subtracted or modified letters; of ‘hands’ or writing styles—it has nonetheless remained remarkably stable for over two millennia. (Does that mean that the script has functioned effectively, with a lot of nursing and caressing here and there, or does it mean that the script is partly a fossil?) The playwright Bernard Shaw, who created his own phonetic alphabet for English, felt that the Latin alphabet was so seriously unable to deal with the sounds of English, and thus so baffling in its spelling, that it needed replacement by a phonetically effective alphabet, the one he proposed.

Origins. The Latin alphabet was itself derived from a form of Cumaean Greek (itself derived from Phoenician)—from the early Greek settlements along the Italian coast—in use by the Etruscan peoples who were the neighbors to the ancient Romans. (The usage origin for the Latin alphabet was thus the seventh century B.C.) In its earliest form—like the Duenos inscription from the Quirinal Hill in Rome, which adorns the flanks of a three-part perfume bottle—the Latin alphabet was an uppercase (all caps) serified set of letters. As it was adopted (and adapted) for use by the Romans themselves, the Romans were naturally inclined to explain this important step in their cultural development, and did not fail to ascribe more than human interventions to the invention of their alphabet, allowing their first century B.C. writer and fabulist, Hyginus, to postulate divine intervention and observations of the flights of cranes, as the triggers to the creation of the Latin alphabet.

Mythology

Old Norse. Old Norse Mythology—to limit ourselves to an example; every part of Western Europe generated its own myths-- is the collection of tales from the peoples of North Germany, tales which have their origins in Norse paganism, and which continue to reach out and multiply into the Scandinavian folklore of the modern period. The ancient Norse mythology has its origins in the stories of various heroes, gods, and beings who came to life in the creative cultural imaginations of the pagan Norse, as well as in their mediaeval manuscripts, archeological materials, and folk traditions—which we will treat elsewhere. It need hardly be said that the stages of development of this mythology are difficult to delineate, and that, as with all mythologies, internal inventiveness, indifference to historical precision, and lack of archival consolidation prevent anything like a definitive chronological picture.

Development. Many languages at many stages of development have gone into the composition of such a mythology as the Norse, which is most prolifically testified by such a language as Old Norse, and in such a removed location as Iceland, where by the thirteenth century a fervent attention was devoted to the collection of old manuscripts, and which generated texts like *The Prose Edda* of Snorri Sturlisson or *The Poetic Edda*, which contained voluminous anonymous materials pertaining to Norse mythology. The best account of such a mythology, we see in surveying a mass of not yet organized myth-growths, is that

which sees myth branching out in multiple forms around the 'believer' or 'user' who is invested in the beauty, wit, or healing good sense of the myth branch in question. Myth does not aspire to heal, save, or necessarily to instruct, but it preserves, entertains, and 'explains,' as when the narrative materials it tracks provide a useful setting for historical events or human behaviors.

Folklore

Dilemma. Once again, when we turn to the cultures of Western Europe, we are faced with a dilemma: we know that the pre-Christian world settings, of what would later be the high cultures of Britain, France, and Germany, were pervaded with tales, superstitions, miraculous lores, and phallic robustness testified to, all of it, by what is left to us of inscriptions, designs, and artifacts. We also know that the state of culture, in the pre-Christian Roman Empire, left us little verbal material of use for 'studying' the folk traditions of pre-Christian Britain.

Painting

Backdrop. In the sequence of profiles of Western European culture, from the viewpoints of various functions—philosophy, religion, music, dance—we inevitably face rebuffs. Taking the notion of *western*, seriously, we time after time discover that Western Europe, in the ancient or pre-Christian phase, was simply a dark and undeveloped appendage of the Roman Empire. We find we have little to say about the area of Western Europe in the pre-classical period, except that it was provincial, undeveloped, and in many ways primitive—in its living units, its folkways among territories still hardly cultivated, its relative vulnerability to the immediate perils of life, from wild animals to wild people.

Amazement. Given this temporal and geographical setting, we are stunned to find that in extensive cave paintings, at least thirty five thousand years before us, in Lascaux, Altamira, Les Eyzies, over a wide area of southeast France and Spain, there are networks of cave paintings, many of them cut sharply into the rock faces of deep caves. Many of the thousands of these sophisticated paintings created onto bare rock depict hunting scenes, rituals for cults we have no way to understand, and landscapes. (Startlingly enough, these profusions of highly subtle art can also be found deep in the Sahara, on cave walls similar to those in Europe. Many of the patterns on the African walls are almost identical to those found in Europe.)

Agriculture. To say more than this, about these paintings is almost impossible, for we have nothing but ill lit caves for evidence. To say less is useless. One direction of response is this: that the purposeful concern of these cave painters seems clearly involved with successful hunts, landscape maintenance, and in many scenes fertility: aren't these all panels of the vast looming human change, toward an upcoming agricultural existence, the Neolithic revolution in agriculture, in which the quality of human life as a whole will be dramatically advanced?

Sculpture

Fragments. In tracing the earliest art works of Western Europe we find an abundance of sculptural examples dating from around the time of the cave painting explosion in south western France and northern Spain (that is, ca. 35,000 years ago.) We find these prehistoric sculptures of animals and birds scattered through caves in the mountains of Germany, while other types of sculpture—fertility figures with huge breasts and vaginas—appear throughout Europe, in rockbeds, streams, and on mountainsides. To indicate the diversity and long duration of this ancient western European art tradition, think only of the advent of Celtic metalwork sculpture, which made its way west across Europe, only in the last years of the pre Christian, between 400-100 B.C., and which brought with it metalwork designs which still awe us by their craftsmanship.

Architecture

Ancient. Ancient western European sculpture provided us abundant examples, from the Neolithic period, of small figurines evidently connected with fertility. (Large breasts resembling the Helladic sculptures from Neolithic Greece.) Paintings from the caves of southern France and northern Spain, dating to 35,000 B.C., similarly prioritized themes of harvest and fertility, quite naturally concerned with

the promotion of the species. Massive architectural complexes, like Gobekli Tepe (in southern Anatolia; ca. 10,000 B.C.) or Stonehenge In central England (3000 B.C.), naturally lead us to suppose that they too have connections with promoting abundance in natural cycles.

Dance

Prehistory. We must imagine a robust prehistory for the dance as well as for religion and art, in the pre-Christian centuries; in those areas we now call France, Spain, England and Germany. Emphasis is due, here, on the robust, for It is easily enough assumed that that those 'wild lands' beyond the Roman frontier were, because without writing, also without fields of art in which to express their emotions. (The simultaneous Roman and Greek cultures, which were so proficient at the language arts, and for whom {especially the Greeks} what could be said or written was the gold standard for depth and value, tend to overshadow the dark pre-Christian ages of West Europe.)

Music

Once again with music, as earlier with literature or philosophy, we have very little to say about the world of Western Europe, in the centuries (millenia?) which preceded the advent of Christianity and the Fall of Rome. There are early—more than 20,000 years early-- archeological remains of musical instruments, scattered through Europe—and there are portrayals of performing musicians on the walls of caves throughout France and Spain, but since music disappears, after having been aired, there are no remains once it has been aired. Whence, then, this thing called music even came from, will therefore remain among the mysteries of the phenomenon. What spurred the making of this 40,000 year old bone flute from 'France,' of which I am presently looking at a reproduction? Was it the desire to communicate, the need to give a warning, the inherent joy of the production?

Theatre

Frontier. Once again we imagine Western Europe, the western frontier of the Roman Empire, to have been barren of literary culture in pre-Christian times, and we can go farther and doubt that there were even non-theatrical performances at the time on the western frontier—it being possible, always, that a non-writing, even non-verbal dramatic tradition could establish itself. Therefore in looking for the origins of western European drama we will need to begin with the dramatic actions of the early Christian Church, as it gradually replaced the declining Roman Empire. We may thus start by reminding ourselves that for the fourth century St. Augustine, one of the culture giants for the values of the early Christian world, the stage was a home of vice and wickedness, and the practice of simulating others' moods and behaviors an inherently wasteful use of the mind. Thus even in the new theater world, Roman theater as it was experienced by the first Christian intellectuals, there was resistance to the notion of the theatrical.

WORLDVIEW

Philosophy

Wilderness. The (later named) nations of Western Europe—vast areas we now call Germany, France, and England—were during the so-called Greco-Roman era relatively uncultivated wildernesses. By the time of Fall of the Roman Empire (5th century A.D.), the wild frontiers of what we now call Europe had begun to be 'tamed,' but nothing like a developed philosophy was to be found in Western Europe during classical antiquity. Awe at the wonder of creation expressed itself in brilliant works of painting, from prehistoric times on, and religious Nature and Great Mother cults had given expression to man's need to feel at home in his universe but, to repeat, nothing like systematic, interpretive thought had been developed. There was no 'philosophy.'

Religion

Pagans. Taking Western Europe to mean the areas of the present countries of England, France, Germany, Scandinavia, etc. in pre-Christian times, we would welcome the chance to discuss Western European *religion*, though hardly pre-Christian Western European *philosophy*, which in fact we passed

over In our discussion of philosophy in the sweep of European cultural history. The area in question was in fact prolific with 'pre Christian religious fervor' though in that historical environment, of almost total illiteracy, infrastructural undevelopment, and an abundance of wild nature, the meanings of religious fervor were quite different from those which, say in the early Christian period, kept Christianity under the rug, hidden and clubbish. The religious practices of pre-Christian western Europe were 'pagan,' in the sense of 'closely tied to the natural habitat, ancient folkways, and distinctive nature deities—earth mother avatars, malign spirits, menacing natural forces—thunder and lightning, the power of oceans; in short, to control mechanisms by which the fragile human person, still as vulnerable as prehistoric man, could make life as secure and comforting as possible. Were we to have included the Greco-Roman orbit within the 'Western European,' which we are not doing, we would have been able to note how advanced the classical god-system was, soaring above the contemporary pagan in its capacity to explain, evaluate, and anticipate the thermodynamics of interweaving deities, in a brilliant tapestry of meanings poised around the awes of belief; a portrayal, this, of the essential constructive power, of ancient Greek religion, in the formation and maintenance of the state; an insight expressed with classic fervor by the French historian, Fustel de Coulanges, in his magisterial *La Cité Antique*(1864).

Science

Transition. We now know that scientific thought and method proliferated in China, millennia B.C. Also in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Central America. But not in Europe—which had no such name, not to mention scientific skills—in the centuries which preceded the Roman Empire. In fact the areas we now call France, Spain, Germany were simple tribal cultures, with little infrastructure or communal development, in the millennia which preceded the Classical Age, and which led into the Fall of a great civilizing event, the Roman Empire.

Postclassical Period

VERBAL ARTS

Literature

Church. As secular literature—think Ovid, Petronius, Horace—waned in the Roman Empire, the world of written literacy and thought morphed into the culture of the early Christian Church. Much of the written work to be created through that Church was written in Latin—such widely separated works as St Augustine's *City of God* (early fifth century), Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (730), King Alfred the Great's (849-899) chronicle of the History of England, the Danish tale of Saxo Grammaticus (1180- 1220)—and reflected the perspectives of the Catholic Church. (Furthermore, almost all works of science, philosophy, or jurisprudence, written throughout the mediaeval period, were created in Latin.) Among those perspectives were two which particularly shaped the development of culture, both theological and literary. There was the notion that the events of human life and history are of symbolic—often the thinking is allegorical, *beyond* symbolical--importance. There was also the notion that human life is a journey—the instance of Jesus Christ would be exemplary—that our true home is in the world beyond, and the church is our vehicle for reaching that home.

Preservation. Not only did the Church establish and bequeath the world view of mediaeval literature, but it was instrumental in preserving the literature that got produced in mediaeval culture, not to mention select texts of those ancient cultures, Greco-Roman, which though only dimly recalled were a hidden wellspring of the mediaeval energy in culture. The work of preserving-- in a world boiling with marauders, outlyers, and foes for prey—was largely carried out by monastic scribes; the first major monastery was established in 529, at Monte Cassino in Italy, and in the following three centuries monastic missions (Irish into Great Britain; Gothic into the upper Danube) preserved both Christian texts and a random assortment of ancient works—both of which assured what little continuity remained, between the 'ancient world,' now a memory, and the self-defining and diverse elements of a mediaeval world. Outside the monastery walls there slowly evolved a vernacular literature, written (or oral) in the languages (Old French, Old English, High German) themselves taking distinctive regional forms from the various late stages of Latin, which they had inherited.

The Vernacular. The vernacular was the area in which the new in both oral and written creativity was being formulated. Yes, there is a firm continuity, flowing on from pre-Christian tale, saga, prayer into the mediaeval period. This oral flow gave birth to great works of imaginative power like the Poetic *Eddas*, the Anglo Saxon *Beowulf*, or the Germanic *Song of Hildebrand*, all of which were later recorded by Christian scribes, who infused this transformed work with the 'Christian perspectives' mentioned above. Among the distinguished landmarks, of literature directly written in western European vernacular, were the French *Song of Roland*, the poems and tales of Boccaccio (1313-1375) and Petrarch (1304-1374) (the first mediaeval writer to present himself as an individual with a daily life—when he describes the view of a beautiful mountain it is without the antique mythological apps mandatory in Hellenistic or Roman praise-poems, but from the perspective of an awed regular guy on a trip); Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (1400)—a mini epic panning a social crosscut of pilgrims making their way to Canterbury; the peak of world experience in language, Dante's *Divine Comedy* (1320), which, in tracking human life in terms of a moral toward perfection, brings the sensibility and the creative light of the mediaeval period to its ultimate clarity.

The unity. From Augustine in the fifth century, to Chaucer, Dante, and Petrarch, there are rough continuities within the vernacular achievements of mediaeval literature. In these writers the blessing of woman—as always a simulacrum of the Holy Virgin—elevates and charms the narration. Every creative voice, behind the vernacular texts, is a penitent sinner on the journey of life. Love of every kind, both licit and austere, and reckless, plays its part in the formation of narratives—whether of Petrarca's about Laura, Dante's about Beatrice, or Augustine's guilty love for Monica.

Languages

The three phyla. The period of a millennium and a half, which we hope to cover with the term 'postclassical', is one in which the phenomenon of language development manifests concurrently with socio-political development, among the tribal units interweaving and mutually conflicting along a wide territorial band, reaching—in the case of our three phyla—from the eastern portions of the British Isles (formative English), through the marches and fortified boundaries of a fallen Rome whose language, a degraded Latin, was falling apart into 'vulgar Latin', the mother of the Romance languages, to the multi-terrained landscape of contemporary Germany north into Scandinavia, and as far offshore as Iceland, in all of which areas formative establishments of a Germanic language were coalescing and growing internally.

Development. Cultural and political developments were doubtless markers of the process by which fairly limited language tools were refined into the potentialities of, say, literary expression and communication. (We have started, in other words, into the 'evolution of culture,' which as we know accelerates incrementally, once established, once the premises of writing, and communicating that writing, and retaining the memory of the past have been widely internalized. On the horizon from the early postclassical we can see the *Nibelungenlied*, *The Canterbury Tales*, Boccaccio's *Decamerone* or the *Chanson de Roland*. The question is what will take us to that horizon? (The perception that languages constantly *grow* takes us back to incisive German linguists like Franz Bopp (1791-1867 and August Pott (1802-1888), who opened up the idea that languages grow like species in the evolutionary schema of Charles Darwin.) A number of different explanations were in the air, by the mid-nineteenth century, to account for the internal drivers that set languages in purposeful motion: the shaping and fine tuning of verbal forms under the pressure of needing efficient communication; the enrichment of individual languages by borrowing from others; the improvement of speakers' locations, from the point of view of accumulating positive new experiences; migrations, in which new pidgins and creoles are invented, which have the power to regenerate or remake old language forms.

Script

Alphabet. The Latin alphabet contained 23 letters, in the form in which it diffused out into the postclassical, and soon mediaeval, European world. As it so diffused, of course, it provided for a rapid increase in the number of users of the Latin alphabet, for example among many former Greek speakers, who were to undergo now this subtle undermining of Hellenism by the Roman spirit. Among the essential

enrichments of the new alphabet, of course, was the growing use of it in cursive or handwriting form, the inevitable usage element in a culture coming to rely increasingly on the message, document, the memoir—all those appurtenances of a newly complex administrative world like that of the Carolingian Renaissance, in the eighth century. In the post classical centuries preceding Charlemagne, and devoted characteristically to prayer and the preservation of ancient texts, the chief modifications of alphabet were those introduced by the handwriting process. It is to be added that the letter forms familiar to us today, in the Latin alphabet we use—as on the screen before you—are close to the forms being worked out in handwriting in the early postclassical years. A touching instance is that the Latin script written by Roman soldiers on Hadrian's Wall, in 100 A.D., is very close to the orthography of the Latin alphabet taught in Western European languages in the twentieth century.

Monasteries. The Christian monks who took it upon themselves to save the texts of classical literature, and especially of the Church Fathers, copied their material onto codices whose material was parchment, and they did so, in the vast monasteries like the Benedict of Monte Cassino, more or less in the Latin alphabet of the Roman Empire—but with many local variations. Italian manuscripts of the seventh and eighth centuries are likely to be written entirely in capital letters, and to assume a formal and aesthetic look, while the manuscripts of contemporary Irish monks are far more workaday, like the hand of Roman soldiers at Hadrian's Wall. Those same Irish monks, however, appear to have been the innovators of the capital letter which begins the sentence, and does even more, by introducing the concept of 'lower case' into European spelling.

Alcuin. From the time of Charlemagne date many of the defining traits of the written Latin alphabet, for in the court at Aachen there was a palace workshop at which many experts in hand-writing exercised their skills. The imported British scholar, Alcuin, performed miracles of direction, leading talented scribes into one book preservation project after another. The turnout from these projects was a large manuscript repository, in a monastery near Tours—of which Alcuin became abbot—of many of the finest examples of mediaeval manuscript illumination.

Ogam. That we not oversimplify, in this rapid survey of script creation for the Latin alphabet, we must at least mention two other versions of Western European alphabet, whose limited period of effect falls within the Postclassical period. *Runic alphabets*, found on stones, trees, or other natural sources, appear to have been used to record documents of Old Irish, and as such were commonly inscribed throughout Ireland and Wales, throughout the postclassical period, at least until the early twelfth century. The *ogham* alphabet, in use from the fourth to the ninth centuries, was a vehicle for writing Irish; it appears, as well as on other venues, on massive stone glyphs found in Wales and Ireland. We must see these two alphabetic efforts as local and cumbersome efforts to work within the Latin alphabet to communicate simple messages, and, especially in the case of runes, to preserve and transmit secret messages—the word *rune*, after all, appearing to derive from an archaic Germanic root meaning 'secret,' or 'whisper.'

CyrillicScript. The primary scripts of Western Europe, in post classical times, have been the Latin and the Cyrillic scripts, frequently called alphabets. The Cyrillic script, which currently is used for a wide spread of languages in Eurasia, is the national script for various Slavic, Turkic, and Persian nations in Eastern Europe, and enjoys its own antiquity, having been founded by Saints Cyril and Methodius (9th century A.D.) and at that time made the official script of the Bulgarian Empire. The Cyrillic script was named the third official script of the European Union—in addition to Latin and Greek—with the accession of Bulgaria to the Union, in 2007. Thus, while not exactly part of the Ur-alphabetic foundation of Western European scripts, Cyrillic deserves mention, before we pass to Latin, the chief script of Western Europe.

Mythology

Mediaeval. When we view the mass of materials that compose Norse mythology, its extensive thirteenth century manuscripts, the great cast of major players, the high drama in which they engaged, we realize that the coalescence point, of all these themes and creations, is clearly the postclassical era, with a peak toward the thirteenth century. It is here—and this 'here' is wide and amorphous—that we find the Norse mythical cosmos (our example of choice in these texts) at its most formed—and presumably belief-sustained.

Characters. The cast of divine figures—every national mythology can be viewed as a psychodrama sustained from within the *Volk*—centers around Thor, the ‘father of the gods,’ their power center, who is married to the beautiful blonde *Sif*. Thor is a force of stability, who is constantly en garde to destroy his many foes. While Thor is a stable, avenger god, fighting always to preserve the good, he is often thought out in relations to Odin, ‘one eyed, wolf and raven flanked,’—in other words partly feral, but at the same time a tragically self-destructive figure like Prometheus, ever hungry for knowledge, ever eager to put that knowledge to the use of mankind. (A characteristic story portrays Odin hanging himself upside down for nine days on the cosmological tree (Yggdrasil) to gain knowledge of a runic (secret disclosing) alphabet, which he can pass on to mankind).

Odin. Odin, this malleable and modern figure, has for wife the powerful goddess Frigg, who can foretell the future but will tell no one what it will be. This couple have as son the god Baldr, who, killed by the brilliant trickster Loki, is relegated to the role of king of Hell. A predator, a body snatcher on Hell, is the sexy goddess, Freyja, who claims a portion of all the slain for herself. Freyja rides into battle, to reclaim whom she can of the slain, and at the same time to continue her search for her husband Odr.

Freyr Freyja’s brother, the god Freyr, is like Odin, a multifaceted god figure, with whom the poetic imagination can work, to transcend the simple—but well nigh endless—network of god-figures and god-relationships through which the creating imagination configures ever new themes of implication. We can say of Freyr, for instance, that where he goes there is a spirit of calm, peace, the pastoral, and sexuality. The consequences of this mood-coloration are that Freyr is love-susceptible, and falls for the beauty, Gerdr, but at the price—and here is the epic bite in the great mythologies—of his own doom.

Njordr. We are on the way to the continuation of the lego puzzle; the mother of Freya and Freyr is the sister of another power god, Njordr, whose moods and strength overwhelm them. The skein of connections passes out farther into the supra local blue, in which the millennial intelligence of the Nordic Volk draws its values together, sets down benchmarks for reflection, and sharpens the raw materials of thinking, for such repositories of tale as the *Poetic Edda*, or, also over in Iceland, for the tragic vision of epics like the thirteenth century *Njalasaga*, in which doom, pride, and honor confect a brutal cocktail of revenge.

Finale. It is in its concluding vision that Norse mythology, in its classical form, transformed the puzzling in it into vision; I mean in the vision of the twilight of the gods (*Ragna rok*), the world-overturning, god-destroying power explosion with which this universe is destroyed. Whereupon, after this catastrophe, the fields of the earth were born anew fresh and green, ready for repopulation by two humans who appear ‘from a wood.’

Cosmology - Networks. The character networks we allude to above were part and parcel of a cosmology, which gave them their *raison d’etre*, as a theology gives to the supernatural figures who play out a particular religion. (In whose mind was such a *raison d’etre* formulated? To whom do we owe the total fabrication of any myth? Is it any wonder that the mystique of the *Volk*, which proved disastrous in the early twentieth century, led the answer to our question into shapeless speculation?) If not the *Volk*, who created a cosmology in which ‘all beings live in nine worlds, that center around the cosmological tree, Yggdrasil’? Who ascribed to the gods the heavenly dwelling of Asgard, while consigning humanity—oh yes, and elves and dwarves-- to Midgard, a region near the center of the cosmos? And who but language consigned personality and gender to the major astronomical bodies of the cosmos? (Sol, a goddess, the sun; Mani, a god, the moon; Joerd, a goddess, the earth...) Rhetorical questions of this sort simply throw us back on our own ‘empiricized’ universe, the personality-less cosmos we have been forging, in the west, since the seventeenth century—Newton, Galileo, Kepler—and force us to wonder whether perhaps our own cosmology may not also be a special kind of imaginative recreation of the universe.

Folklore

Pagans. From the writings of the Christian fathers during the first centuries of our era, we know that Christianity only slowly disengaged itself from the pagan world—*paganus*, *pagan*, being the Latin word from ‘in the provinces, provincial—as cities grew, as imperial power, like that of the Emperor Constantine,

shifted the center of culture to Christianity and in fact to the East—and as the western culture world, increasingly aware of itself with the passage of time, gained deeper insight into the special traits of one's, as opposed to 'the other's', cultural environment. While this kind of understanding was growing—shall we say a proto anthropology—the Christian perspective was increasingly incorporating the notion that it, itself, was in part a construct built on assumptions *inherited* from pre-classical myth and folklore. This notion was evidently accurate, for pre-Christian folkloric beliefs continued 'to exert an influence on popular religion within the late Anglo-Saxon period.'

Casket. On the eighth-century Northumbrian Franks casket, a small whale's bone casket, we find bands of relief ornamentation among whose foci are startling contrasts like that between the Adoration of the Magi and the old Germanic pre-Christian myth of Weyland the Smith. (Among plausible identifications, of the remaining configurations of the ornamentation of the casket, are Hengest and Horsa, the mythical founders of the British nation, and even figures from Homer's *Iliad*. (We see what ornamental company the Adoration was able to keep; a model of the kind of postclassical syncretism available to a certain brilliant Anglo-Saxon scholar-sculptor.) Even in the eleventh century, wrote one historian, 'important aspects of lay Christianity were still influenced by traditional indigenous practices.' The contents of the folklore we know little of, except through its incorporation in postclassical practices. It appears to have survived even after Christianity had tolled its death knoll.

Scandinavia. Pagan folkloric practices persisted right through the eleventh century—practices like veneration of wells, trees, and stones, which were linked to holy mass or sacred scripture through tales and legends. Subsequent folkloric observations, of the remains of the pagan into the Christian era, are numerous but anecdotal; for instance, the claim that the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance, performed every year in a village in Staffordshire, contains sharp elements of pre-Christian paganism. The antlers of the deer who previously performed in that dance have been carbon dated, and found to derive from eleventh-century Norwegian antlers. It is presumed that the antlers were brought from Norway to England—where reindeer were extinct by that time. The folklore of paganism, inside of early postclassical British culture, is supported by any number of such arguable tales.

Literary Folklore. There are many conceptions of what folklore is. In the academic sense we know that the term *folklore* was created by William Thoms, in 1846, and that he intended by the term 'the knowledge and traditions of a particular group, frequently passed along by word of mouth.' The path of that study to its current status as a highly specialized academic specialty, which tracks not only verbal lore but material lore—the objects significant in folk memory—and customary lore, the repository of customs which give their stamp to a particular group, is an example of creative synthesis. The growth of this study, which will concern us below as we approach our own time, was far from suspected, in the postclassical period before us, but in hindsight we can easily extend our sense of the folkloric elements of mediaeval England, out beyond the boundaries of material lore (artefacts), and customary lore (the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance) to the sophisticated achievements of writers (the maker of *Beowulf*), and the preservers of tradition (the transmitters of the Arthurian Legends or the Robin Hood Tales.) Folklore would in time—already in our own recent decades—become a multifaceted academic study, reflecting the light of analysis back onto ages when folklore was created but not yet made an object of conscious awareness.

VISUAL ARTS

Painting

Christian. The postclassical trajectory of European painting—once again excluding the highly sophisticated decorative painting of Rome itself, which we are viewing as part of the classical, not the western European, world—involves the effort to find a new set of visual styles for the quickly self-empowering Christian element in western Europe. Frescos, illuminated manuscripts, and sculptures were the main painted surfaces, on which the early Christians tried to express their distinctive view of the world. Their limits, in the pre-Nicene period (prior to 325), were tight. The Christians were a small community, still despised by the majority, and poor. For a long time symbols such as the peacock, the fish, and the vine were the chief visual benchmark of the growing Christian community.

Development. Visual symbols of the new, and often proscribed, religion were everywhere to be found in the spreading Christian culture-zone, but they were necessarily restrained; one might say for the next four hundred years after Nicaea, a period during which Christian culture and art was slowly merging with the eastern traditions of the Byzantine, as well as spreading throughout Rome—where the papal presence guaranteed a climate for the arts, despite the serious eclipse of all the now abandoned structures of *Romanitas*. In the western 'Roman empire'—say in the courts of Charlemagne, in the monasteries of Ireland and Anglo-Saxon England—painting on manuscripts, decoratable surfaces of churches—these arts continued to be refined, and while remaining in the huge shadow of gothic architecture—construction at the monastery at Cluny began in 911, at Chartres Cathedral in 1194, at Notre Dame de Paris in 1163—the painting arts grew steadily in sophistication and acclaim. Cimabue (1240-1302) and Giotto (1266-1337) were on the horizon, with their Byzantine tinged portraits of Christ—angular, severe, bearded—slowly emerging out of themselves into portraits belonging to all mankind, rather than surges of regional historical brilliance.

Sculpture

Growth. Christian art tradition, in sculpture, naturally kept its head low; for as members of a proscribed religion, in ancient Rome, and as themselves a scattered and highly diverse set of religious recruits, the early Christians had little connection with sculpture except through the funereal motifs they carved on sarcophagi. This role expanded with the gradual expansion of the church form, which with the growth of the faith required larger structures for the exercise of their worship, and the early Christians proceeded to re-adapt the Roman basilica into auditorium-like spaces where proto Church services could gradually be held. (Thus the beginning of a Christian sense of architecture.) Though these structures could well have served as settings for sculptural decoration, the early Christians, abhorring graven images, refused for a long time to take that path. Around the year 600, Pope Gregory declared that mural paintings should be added to churches, as ways to record sacred history, but sculptures were still avoided as graven images.

Charlemagne. Until the time of Charlemagne, in the early ninth century, sculpture was hardly to be found in Christian culture—give or take Celtic crosses with decorative motifs or the first stages of Byzantine painting. Charlemagne, however, established a vigorous art impulse and sponsored the work of many architectural projects, which inevitably, in his successors, the three Ottonian rulers, led to the gradual incorporation of sculptural work into the work of making Christian churches. The opening out of confident Christian culture was at this point awaiting the Crusades, in which Christian conquests in the Holy Land, and the return of holy relics captured in skirmishes along the way, inspired a period of intense church building in the West, where abbots and priors were competing for the talents of sculptors who could help to decorate the churches of the new Romanesque style (1000-1200).

Architecture

Gothic. Gothic church construction, and the sculptural work called in for decoration and instruction, took its cues from the Romanesque, with its rounded arches and thick walls. Over time the Gothic cathedral soared gradually out into the narrow nave, high thin intricate walls, high-arching spires, and stained glass windows which we know from the cathedrals at Chartres or Notre Dame. The Cathedral was seen as a microcosm of God's creation, and in time, between 1150-1300, became a treasure house of fine sculptural ornamentations, sculptured tales, statues of holy figures surrounded by images of the great Old Testament prophets. The summit of religious sculpture in the West is to be found on the vast cathedrals we owe to the High Gothic period.

Architecture

Romanesque. As with all the artistic continuities in Western Europe, the transition from the Neolithic to the post-classical is sharp and abrupt. By 313 A.D., when Constantine had helped to convert the Roman Empire to Christianity, there was already a profusion of structures, around Rome, in which the growing (but still suppressed) Christian community had been meeting and unifying itself. With the adoption of Christianity by the Empire, the Church began to take advantage of certain kinds of *basilica*, large structures constructed by the Romans for official business, which could be converted into larger structures for Church purposes, and which—the basilica form—were to become launching pads for the

great Byzantine churches like Hagia Sophia. The basilica style, as it developed in western Europe, evolved slowly, from the sixth to the twelfth centuries, into the Romanesque style, the earliest mature style.

Gothic. By the twelfth century, a new church style—the Gothic, identical to new church building today—had made its way out through the constructive processes of the Romanesque. Flying buttresses, ribbed walls, and vaulted arches became the trademarks of this new style, which was to generate the greatest of the cathedrals, especially in France, and to recommend itself as an essential adornment to every proud city of believers. The greatest of the patrons of these new cathedrals—like the French abbot Suger—were associates of Kings, major historians of their time, and farsighted students of the development of city life. They were precise students of math and geometry, who valued the classical perfections of the finest cathedrals, who foresaw the perspectival and adorational features of the interiors of the finest cathedrals, and spared no detail of attention—consider the pop fascination of gargoyles—in order to assure that their creations displayed the maximum of the vivid struggle of good with evil.

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance

Erotics. From prehistoric cave paintings, and illustrations of dance, in particular, we assume the artistic sensibility of the Neolithic pre-Europeans who were long term inhabitants of Western Europe. With the decline of the Roman Empire, which set in in the first centuries A.D., and the early Christian struggle toward institutional respectability, then toward such assertively doctrinal power as we see exercised at the Council of Nicaea (325), from those moves in history we assess the gradual disappearance of the prehistoric in Europe, that culture period summoned up for us, in our day, by such evocative novels as William Golding's *Pincher Martin*. We begin to see that an early world, in which dancing styles the Christians were largely to reject, as far too erotic, far too directed to promoting crop fertility instead of the praise of god, was—except among the 'northern heathen tribes'—to be largely purified of its pagan elements. Dance as an expression of the joy of life was on the whole proscribed by the early Christian church, which considered such jubilant dancing the work of the devil.

Two minds. The Christian Church, as it turned out, was of two minds about dancing, an issue which was constantly pressing in the early period of the Church. Apart from the opinions of Saint Augustine, 354-430, who was severely opposed to dancing, there was the opposite view of St. Basil of Caesarea (350 A.D.) who declared that dancing was the most noble activity of the angels, a theory later supported by the Dante of the *Divine Comedy*, a weighty endorsement from a most respected source.

St. Vitus. In the high Middle Ages, itself, there was a prominent kind of dance-- named for a frenzy - afflicted holy man of the third century-- which was accepted by the church for its relevance to social crisis. We are here in the time of the Black Plague, dreadful and unexplained disease outbursts, which itself, is thought to have destroyed a third of the population of Europe. (Popular opinion was that a spider bite was the source of the plague infection, whence the Italian dance name, *tarantella*, has to this day lasted as a reminder of the terrors behind it.) This holy/damned dance would express itself in masses of victims leaping and jumping in the air, with mouths foaming, and eyes red with epileptic terror.

High Middle Ages. In the high Middle Ages, shall we say in the time of Dante and Chaucer, the kinds of dance taking over Western Europe were of three kinds, corresponding to the three chief social classes of the time: the nobility, the clergy, the peasantry. The clergy—with undoubted exceptions-- as can be imagined, were chiefly involved in stately processional dances, employed around the holy mass. (In African Catholic Churches of our day, the group dances at the time of 'Harvest,' circle colorfully around the nave of the church.) Among the nobles, the knights, there was already a courtly tradition of formal

dancing, full of the poetry of restrained love, while among the peasantry dancing meant the round dances, often full of cavorting high jinks, erotic horseplay, and uninhibited sport. The kind of social free for all, on the peasant level, we see depicted in the paintings of Breughel!

Music

Liturgical chant, emerging from the actions of the mass, was the first impulse to a distinctive music rooted in Christianity. Saint Ambrose collated much of this material in the fourth century A.D.; the majority of the church music popular at the time represented the type of chant practiced in Rome. (Real popular music? The music of the streets? We're not talking that always human daily buzz, so dealing with what we have, with what survived, we remain with what we know, what had institutional church status to build it. Yet we have ahead of us, not far, plenty of later mediaeval secular song, itself developing concurrently with the liturgical.) For several centuries, the primary growth within this liturgical music came from the invention of *tropes*, musical or textual enrichments, by which the musical material of the mass became more popularly engaging.

Polyphony. Onto the base of liturgical chant the biggest developmental innovation, emerging during the early Middle Ages, was *polyphony*, 'the simultaneous sounding of two or more melodic lines.' With the development of polyphony, as was made clear by the eleventh century Italian monk and theorist, Guido d'Arezzo, one could enjoy such high octane events as two voices singing over and under one another, and at the same time singing two different songs. The next great development, was *Ars Nova*, which sprang in the fourteenth century from the intellectual milieu of the Church of Notre Dame.

Popular music.

By the early twelfth century there was a fully developed secular/popular current in mediaeval music. Especially in France, first among the so-called *goliards*, itinerant clerics and students, then among the more knightly *troubadours*, these dashing individuals—*meistersingers* and *minne*(love) singers in Germany—became a fixed and romantic factor in regions like southern France, where they commingled with poets in a rich literary/musical symbiosis. (Richard Wagner's 19th century opera, *Die Meistersinger von Nuernberg*, deals with the times of this group.) The master of the art-song was the Frenchman, Guillaume de Machaut, who was especially noted for his dexterity in the polyphonic song form of the *motet*.

Theatre

Division. Two totally diverse forms of theatrical life emerge from the largely empty record of the first five centuries. The Byzantine Empire, in its center, Constantinople, sported two theaters, at which, according to slight surviving evidence, comedies, dances, and tragedies were performed to enthusiastic audiences. (The same, here and there in pre-decline Rome, was to be found, for there the great work of Plautus and Terence continued to live sporadically among the scattered intelligentsia.) The other form of theatrical life known to us from western Europe is itinerant bands of performers of skits or rural plays, of which we know nothing textual now, except that the Church considered them pagan and dangerous.

Church. Already early in the mediaeval period, churches in Europe had begun staging small plays illustrating biblical topics; these plays were performed in connection with the church calendar, and increasingly were coordinated with events in the drama the mass unfolded. Using for stage properties many of the appurtenances of the mass—censers, altars, vestments—the makers of these small dramas developed their own kind of liturgical pre drama, the first written and recorded being *Whom do you seek?*, an Easter trope—see entry on music in Western Europe—composed around 925. By the tenth century formal dramatic work had set in, centered as the surviving work all is, around Church festivals and the appurtenances of the mass. The first vivid theatrical creator was Hroswitha (935-973), a northern German canoness, who wrote six plays modelled on the comedies of Terence, the earliest master of Latin drama. They are the first known plays written by a female dramatist, and the first truly recognizable plays of the Western postclassical period.

High Middle Ages. By the high middle ages liturgical theater—focused on the practice and theology of the Catholic mass—was springing up around every major worship center in western Europe. One byproduct of these theatrical dramas was the Feast of Fool thematic, in which comic episodes would be set aside in which the lesser clergy could mock their pompous seniors, and even the way—though never the substance of the way--the seniors dealt with the mass. It cannot have been long, given this turn to internal critique, that performances of religious plays outside the church began to crop up. Smaller playlets were joined to larger, and before long substantial small plays, still of course built out of Christian thematics, were omnipresent in western Europe.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there was an increase in the number of religious plays performed outside the church, and frequently in the correspondingly growing number of towns in which people could gather for entertainment. A number of twelfth century plays remain, like *The Mystery of Adam* (1150) or a variety of contemporary plays in French, plays on *The Resurrection* or *The Three Magi*.

Cycles. In the following two and a half centuries, to the brink of the Renaissance, there was rapid development of towns, new political structures, intercity and even international trade, and with this growth there was a corresponding growth of mystery plays and morality plays, the former often staged in the form of play-cycles (The York cycle, 48 plays); (The Chester cycle, 24 plays); the Wakefield cycle, 32 plays)—to pick only examples from the British Isles, while the fact was that such large scale dramatic creations were springing up throughout Europe ;at a festival drama cycle in Valenciennes France (1547) for instance, seventy two actors, mostly local, performed in more than one hundred roles. The diversity of roles increasingly included, as we will not be surprised to know, thoroughly secular role intruders—villains, clowns, devils—lest we forget that this drama was on its way to eventual transformation into the secular powers of Renaissance English drama.

The secular. Secular dramatic performances gradually grew up throughout Europe. Many of these 'plays,' like *The Play of the Greenwood* (1276) by Adam de la Halle, were full of satirical scenes, ghosts, and fairies, clearly cutting a path into the real/imaginary world lived by the peasant on the street. Satirical plays were created throughout the continent after the thirteenth century—usually directing their barbs at the corrupt and comical in or out of the church. The best known of these satirists is the German Hans Sachs (1494-1576), to whom we are indebted for 198 satire-plays.

Actors. As the drama gradually passed away from its dependence on the church, professional actors appeared performing both in England and across the channel. The end of the strictly mediaeval period of drama history, in Europe, was approaching, with the decline in the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, with the Protestant Reformation, and in fact—from the mid sixteenth century on-- with the banning of religious theater in many countries.

WORLDVIEW

Philosophy

Christianity. Mediaeval philosophy in Western Europe was one day to be a child of classical antiquity—the philosophers of the Greco-Roman world—but that would be more than a millennium after the death of Jesus Christ, after the dissemination of classical manuscripts and the education of the first classical scholars had made its appearance in the new Europe. By this time the Aristotle central to the thinking of pre-Christian Greek thought would have become a widely translated presence in European intellectual life. In the meantime, what we can properly call western European philosophy had taken off from a growing systematic reflection on the perspectives of the Christian religion, which was the active driver of speculative thought in the millennium that followed the death of Jesus Christ.

St. Augustine. The central issues of mediaeval philosophy gathered around the nature and existence of God, the nature of faith, ethical questions and their special relevance to salvation. For the greatest of the western thinkers, during this period, philosophy was considered a handmaid to theology, although the greatest of those thinkers--Saint Augustine (354-430), Boethius (477-524), Saint Anselm (1093-1109) and Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)-- all contributed powerfully to the basic literature of philosophical analysis.

Saint Augustine opened the individual as a person in direct spiritual connection with God, and lay the foundations for inquiries, active today, into the psychology of religious experience. (His *City of God* reads human civilization as a diminished mirror of the divine presence; in *The Confession* she makes his own weaknesses and sinful nature the core of a self-scrutiny that reduced him to his mortal weakness.

Aquinas. Saint Anselm (1033—1109) has been credited with formulating the ontological argument for the existence of God, and for having given philosophical underpinning to the doctrine of the Atonement. His leading formula, in which he digs back into the thought of Augustine, is that we believe in order to understand, while understanding is nonetheless an essential achievement for testing the full character of belief. Saint Thomas Aquinas systematized the consequences of faith in God, applying rigorous argument--logic, epistemology--to the salvation structure of Christian belief. His *Summa Theologiae*(1265-1274) is widely considered a Bible of mediaeval Christian thought.

Religion

Evolution. The threshold dividing pre-Christian religion from the early movements toward a new institutional religion embracing the followers of Jesus Christ, was only slowly definable, and in fact the life of the *pagans* persisted far into the so-called mediaeval period of the Christian faith. (Walter Pater's novel *Marius the Epicurean*,1885, depicts the life of a young man growing up a typical aristocratic *paganus* in the mid second century, the period of the Antonine Emperors in Rome. The picture of this young man's aristocratic sensibility, his aversion to the Christian ascetic world, gives us a vivid insight into the kinds of culture clash the early Christian view of the world provoked around it. From the Christian standpoint, we would be reading this threshold very differently, the way Saint Paul read it, as a barrier of fire crossed into a new salvational world, or in the way Saint Augustine (354-430) read it, as a metaphor (virtually) for a point at which the soul crosses into new territory, faces its own interior terrors, and sees an inner light which gives meaning to life. Around these highly varying views, of the new world painfully under construction by the still minority of outside the law Christians, the institutionalized figures of Roman myth were being gradually bled of their once robust claims on morals and belief.

Development. The development of the Christian religion, during the century which followed the fall of the Roman Empire, 476, is most easily traced by the landmarks of public achievement—things written, thoughts thought, cathedrals built—and yet we can be sure that the real 'development,' that assured the very rapid growth of Christianity in Western Europe was due to the relevance of this belief-set to people's lives, was, on the whole, the pragmatic play-out that the religion realized in the lives of small people in small parishes—not to minimize, of course, the importance to the religion of high-level power moves; the conversion of the Emperor Constantine (312) and the elevation of Constantinople to the Capital of Christendom; the Council of Nicaea (325), which consolidated Church doctrine to that date, and 'confirmed' the Church; the establishment of the influential monastic orders--Benedictines (6th century), Cistercians and Franciscans (12th and 13th centuries); the outfitting of eight major crusades to the Holy Land between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries; the outlays of funds and faith needed to cover the landscape of Europe with noticeable places of worship, ranging from country church to metropolitan basilicas, from modest arched Romanesque structures to the high vaulted Gothic masterpieces of Notre Dame (1163) or Chartres (1200). By the time of Chaucer (14th century) and Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) it was acceptable to speak of Western Europe as essentially Roman Catholicism.

Other religions. It is not supposed, of course, that the pagan theme simply vanished from European religious consciousness, or that other major religions than Christian Catholicism were absent from mediaeval Europe.

Muslims. Not an historical factor in Europe before the death of the Prophet Mohamed (571-632), and the rapid emergence of Islam into North African and Western Europe, Islam did in fact root deeply in Europe, and from 711 until 1492 established an influential rule in Spain, where for a significant time Muslims, Jews, and Christians coexisted, exchanging ideas and exercising fertile mutual respect. Besides that European presence, Islam was from its earliest historical outreach widely distributed throughout the Balkans.

Jews. Jews were settled in Italy even before the rise of the Roman Empire; they were widespread in Greece and on the Greek islands, and maintained a substantial colony in Rome until their expulsion in 139. Jews prospered in many of the developing European states of the mediaeval world, but at the same time suffered continuing persecutions—loss of citizenship rights in Rome, recurring pogroms throughout Europe, and subjection to Islamic rule during the Islamic caliphate in Spain.

Science

Empire. Thus it is that with the advent of that Empire, and of the Greek science it accumulated into its own, the Romans found themselves falling, at just the time when they were faced with ‘foreign barbarians,’ like Alaric, who were quite unprepared to value the cultural heritage of Rome. Out ahead of Roman science, in the wilderness of a shaggy empire full of foes, there lay lands in which the main concern was inevitably survival and not much more. From the considerable science Rome was itself ready to pass on, the new ‘Christian’ communities on the collapsed Roman frontiers were barely in a position to inherit much richness.

Rationalists. The major thinkers, of the early post Roman acculturation, were rationalists, people of cultivation and disciplined mind like Isidore of Seville (6th century), the Venerable Bede (7th century), or Jean Buridan (14th century) who lived their relatively provincial lives from whatever scientific advances the Greeks and Romans had bequeathed them, but with nothing like scientific theory to guide them; unless it be the one overruling ‘theory,’ that the universe was shaped by the hand of God, and that the universe consequently shows order and harmony within it, if the observer looks carefully enough.

Necessity. By the later mediaeval period, the Renaissance of the 12th century, when art, architecture, and philosophical theory were maturing to a world level, the exercise of scientific intelligence was largely confined to the thinking of monastics whose interest in nature was, if keen, not analytical. That interest was driven by present need, to figure out what herbs had medicinal properties, the need to plot the movements of the stars, so that the date of Easter could be fixed. This latter need lay behind the inquiries of the Carolingian Renaissance, in part the result of an enlightened and inquiring ruler, Charlemagne. Under his inspiration, decrees were promulgated, authorizing the foundation of schools of learning, monastic or under the protection of a cathedral. Fresh and original concerns for science got expressed in such institutions. A new era was at hand, of intellectual readiness, for rich discussions from ancient Greek and contemporary Arabic texts.

Universities. In the last centuries of the mediaeval period the birth and spread of Universities proved the most effective seedbed of new ideas. By the year 1200 scholars and students possessed Latin translations of many major Greek authors—Ptolemy, Galen, Aristotle, Euclid—plus the available in-Latin works of Averroes, Avicenna, and Maimonides—all of which Muslim and Jewish material lay ready to hand in the rich Islamic caliphate of occupied Spain. A synthesis of talented Latin scholars—Robert Grosseteste, Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus, Duns Scotus were at the center of a matrix of fresh conceptions of the natural world. The most notable of these twelfth and thirteenth century intellectuals was Thomas Aquinas. (1225-1274), declared ‘a doctor of the Church,’ whose rethinking of both Aristotle and Saint Augustine generated both the method and the sensibility required for a full understanding of the natural world. Two of Aquinas’ contemporaries, Robert Grosseteste—the founder of the Oxford Franciscan School—and Roger Bacon, laid great stress on mere observation, watching and thinking about the natural world.

Empiricism. While all these theologian scholars were empiricists, who directed their attention to observation of the natural world, Bacon laid out what they considered the operative method for interpreting natural phenomena. Observation, hypothesis, and experimentation were the three stages of a methodically effective account of nature and its phenomena. While the fruits of this method remained limited—equipment was rudimentary, and constructed experiments, as opposed to direct observation—intentions aligned with the increasingly effective work that lay just ahead, at the close of the mediaeval period.

Early Modern Period

VERBAL ARTS

Literature

Mindset change. Renaissance literature expresses diverse aspects of the new mindset that stage by stage replaces the main features of the mediaeval literary mind.

Rebirth. Rediscovery of the literature of ancient Greece and Rome was a principal driver of the period of Western Culture we know as the Renaissance. The tales of Homer, the histories of Herodotus, the dialogues of Plato, and the moralities of Seneca: all these works shone with a fresh secular life in which the citizen of the new Western European states was able to taste and hear the pleasures offered by the dramas of the fallen world, radiantly fallen and unredeemed. That this enriched new perspective began to find itself spread was due to diverse enabling causes. Two demand attention: the growth of energetic and viable cities, and the emergence of the movable type printing press, which owed its vigor to the genius of Johannes Gutenberg (1400-1468).

Economy. Throughout Europe a quickening economy intertwined with a new spirit of travel, wider spheres of personal contact, and a growing trade in commodities which 'spread the wealth,' and with it the investments-- in institutions (like Universities, Banks, and Exploratory Undertakings—through which culture as well as capital evolved.) Included in the cultural opening were startling discoveries in (for instance) astronomy, especially in the study of planetary motions and the centrality of the sun in our galaxy, the mind adventures of Galileo and Copernicus. Urban life itself began to configure—especially in centers like Genoa, Florence, Pavia, but also in Spain, France, and England. We are at the moment of Shakespeare's London and the social intellectual life that gathered around the Globe Theater!

Printing. The invention of a practical way of printing, with to us today such cumbersome manipulations of moveable type, was a lightening powerful discovery, which vastly increased the inter-cultural communicative powers of Renaissance culture. The very discovery of the classical world, after all, was based on the new facilities for recording, preserving, and distributing 'ancient texts.' Contemporary writers—imaginative tellers, poets, jurists, moralists and churchmen—now found a venue to which to bring their thoughts and opinions. The opening of a new industry, the book making business, began gradually to add its dynamic to that of the whole society.

Writers. Most relevantly, for the history of western European literature, the printing press gave to the emerging body of 'modern' writers, a way in which to embody and share a corporate sense—the community of writers—and to give substance to the beginnings of a culture of readers. By contrast with this opening Renaissance perspective, the mediaeval writer can barely have thought of himself as a 'writer,' and certainly not as a 'mediaeval writer.' The notion of the 'medium aevum,' of the middle age,

was not coined and refined until the early Renaissance, by which time writing had become a widespread action in society.

Diversity. The great writers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries worked on all the major genres, maintained a classical fervor for the epic, especially as it celebrated new nationalisms, opened powers of drama which spoke to a newly gregarious and literate public, and coaxed the lyric into new self-reflective postures.

Lyrics. For examples of the latter move, the lyric, we can recall the intimate declarations of love, death-fear, and sense of place, which glisten around the French *Pléiade*, in particular pervading the mid-sixteenth century French work of Ronsard, DuBellay, and Marot. John Donne, a 'metaphysical' as T.S. Eliot called him, proved the power of lyric intricacy to talk its way through love and death.

Fiction. If only to introduce the name of Cervantes, it would be essential to peek into the ripe origins of early Western European fiction. With the *Don Quixote* (1612) Cervantes makes fun of the chivalric hero of late mediaeval romance, and yet he does his job so well that we fall for the humanity of this dreaming idealist. Montaigne's self-awareness is replicated by Don Quixote's inability to act, without thinking of himself as at the same time a comic figure extracted from history.

Epics. Gone the Homeric days when the 'epic' was as natural as God's own creation. Present the days when, reaching back to the great Roman self-glorification, Virgil's *Aeneid*, an 'anointed' court poet gives voice to the praises of some majestic leader. From *Os Lusíadas* of Camoens, celebrating the grandeur of the Portuguese Empire in the fifteenth century, to the vast attempt to 'justify the ways of God to man,' in Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) is a century comfortable with grandeur of concept and the technical afflatus necessary to carry it through, to the level of centuries bursting with new aspirations, and a taste for the glitter of gold.

Drama. The sixteenth century is pregnant with significant plays, not only by Elizabethans (Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson)—risking and imaginative in their particularly triumphant century—but by Spaniards like Lope de Vega and Gil Vicente—the latter the Plautus of modern comedy. One can look back from here, over the shoulder, to the miracle and morality plays that served as drama for the Church, for a thousand 'mediaeval' years, and take deep measurement of the distances separating dramatic moments in culture. Not since Athenian tragedy in the fifth century B.C., had there been such intense understanding of the stage, as raised the curtains within the Renaissance theater.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY LITERATURE

Inquiry. In an essay from the middle of the sixteenth century Montaigne asks 'que sais-je?', 'what do I know'? He thereby heralds his skepticism—though far it is from cynicism—which is a probing inquiring look at the perplexing world we are placed in. More or less in a similar vein, the other towering intellects of high 17th century literature—Donne, Descartes, Pascal, Bacon, Hobbes—raise searching inquiries into the nature of both nature and of human nature. (One might say that the early modern phase, of western European literature, is a way of restoring reason and balance, after the effervescence of Renaissance culture.).

Reason. Montaigne pries apart the secular human person. Reformation and counter-Reformation, swirling around him, raising questions about man's essential nature, broke like waves against a critical mind like Montaigne's, which always raised, about questions of faith and doctrine, examples, questions, and doubts drawn stylishly from everyday life; stylishly, drolly, modestly/immodestly. Descartes and Pascal, writers of great finesse, were at the same time affirmers of the supreme being, God, around the conception of whom they wrote some of their most telling meditations. In a famous riff within his *Pensées*, Pascal invites the thinker, in each of us, to choose between the meaningfulness of a god filled universe and the emptiness of a universe deprived of god. Descartes, like Pascal one of the forwarding geniuses of modern mathematics—worked a sublime god, the perfection of whose being was indirectly substantiated by the formative axioms underlying the algebraic-geometry of its precocious author. Francis Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* accompanies these advances in human and empirical inquiry, by

declaring the essential importance, for man in society, of a broad and humane rationalism, which thinks us ahead to the progressive rationalism of the following century—the ‘good sense’ of a Voltaire or Diderot.

La Querelle. The benchmark argument, of this age of new perspectives, and great science, is the quarrel between the Ancients and the Moderns, a running dispute, among the writers and intellectuals of the century, over the relative merits of Ancient literature and culture, and Modern trends in literature and culture. The split comes down to style, in the widest sense. In Spanish, French, and English the Moderns --the *conceptismo* partisans in Spain, the Royal Society in England, the Descartes-followers in France—spoke out for clean language, clear thinking, and an accompanying ‘modern perspective’; the supporters of the *Anciens* sustained a traditional view of the Greco Roman heritage, the origin of good thought and solid culture.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY LITERATURE

Split. Two major themes divide the literature of the eighteenth century in Western Europe. On the one hand, there is a clear continuation, in ‘progressive’ and modern thinking, from the daring scientific advances of the previous century into the rationalism that marked much of the literature and thought of the eighteenth century: the thinking of Diderot, de Lamettrie, Voltaire and ultimately Jean Jacques Rousseau, in whom scientific modernism blends with the rare sentimentality we have learned to call Romanticism. On the other hand there are developments in fiction and poetry which can be seen as trends toward Romanticism, thus toward the fierce adulteration of the Enlightenment mode.

The Encyclopédistes; Rousseau. Denis Diderot, Voltaire, Jean d’Alembert picked up on the empirical/scientific/social thinking of the previous century. The faith centered perspective of great scientific thinkers like Descartes and Pascal yielded to atheism (or militant skepticism) in the creators— Denis Diderot was the editor in charge-- of the *Encyclopédie* (1751-1772), the compendium of human knowledge to that date, and viewable as an *Encyclopedia Britannica* with a strong anti-clerical and populist slant, expressing the views of many of the leading liberal thinkers of Europe’s then most idea-driven country, France. The ‘rationalism’ dominating this seventeen volume text—the *Encyclopédie*-- was by no means sectarian or doctrinaire, and in fact it led creatively, in Jean Jacques Rousseau, a fellow spirit (1712-1778) registering the tenor of the age, into new horizons in pedagogy, psychology of human development, and the origin of human passions.

Sentiment. Rousseau blended high sensibility—to nature, to beauty, to curiosity—with a strong literary sense of passion and especially feminine wisdom of the heart. (We might think Goethe --1749-1832—at this point, for in his youthful shock classic, *Die leiden des jungen Werthers*—1774—he portrays a romantic young man, Werther, for whom the passions of unrequited love lead straight to suicide, and who has the Rouseauian character stamp written all over him. In the earlier part of the century, especially in England, the relatively new literary form of the novel was budding forth to meet a new literate reading public—a rarity still, in European culture—and from that garden of imaginative texts rose innovative and socially oriented works—Fielding’s *Tom Jones*, Defoe’s *Journal of the Plague Year*, Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*, not to mention the acid and erudite social sweeps undertaken in poetry and memoir by Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson, and Jonathan Swift.

Languages

Diversity. With the advent of all the Renaissance meant to western Europe—cities and their packing in of verbal thinkers; Universities and soon printing press facilities, which abet language invention and transmission, even translation; public conflicts of language, such as those touched off by the conflict between the Protestants and Catholics in the Reformation; a great widening of the audience for imaginative literature, and uptick in the population of literary creators, whose business is enriching and reinterpreting language—it is no surprise that the three language phyla we are tracking should have with the climate of the Renaissance confirmed and refined their distinctive characteristics.

Nationalism. Another byproduct of the Renaissance, which was certain to shape the way languages evolved during the period, was the growth of nationalism, which involved, in its desire for integrity and independence, the languages central to the nation in question: France and England, especially, were by 1500 administratively independent and proud functioning entities, with armies, universities, law systems; and with all those appurtenances these social power horses prided themselves on a national language and all that went with it. Nothing could more fully have satisfied this ambition than the *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) which was compiled and published by Samuel Johnson, and which was devoted to standardizing both English as a language and the ways English 'should be' used. Both England, and France through the *Académie française* (founded 1634), moved to reify the language central to their culture, and thus to establish the national language on a throne.

Script

Type. By the time of the Renaissance the Latin alphabet had diffused widely, proving itself the central vehicle for communication, business, international trade, and the arts of writing. The rapid spread of universities of course promoted the need for an effective alphabet, as well as for the tools that go with it--- paper, parchment, pens, notebooks. In all of these services the Latin alphabet evolved into a global usage pad. Nothing was so central to consecrating this alphabet as the printing press, which in the mid-fifteenth century set Europe on fire with new things to do with its collective intelligence. (One struggles still to encompass the implications of movable type, and will struggle longer and harder to understand the implications of the internet.)

'Hands.' Within the elite style making fraternities of printers, illustrators, and textual scholars, of Renaissance Italy, followers let's say of the poet Petrarca, there was a turning back to ancient 'hands' in an effort to restore the true classical style, instead of what these modernists considered the dark Gothic writing style of the late Postclassical period. By an accident, however, the Renaissance writing stylists mistook the fine light hand of the Carolingian scribes for the ancient, with the result that the new script forms generated during the Renaissance came to resemble the finest work accomplished at the court of Charlemagne.

Florence. Two Florentine friends, secretaries at the Papal Court from 1403, set an enduring style. Poggio Bracciolini blended the rounded lower case letters of the Carolingians with square capitals, images taken directly from the style of inscriptions on Roman monuments. Niccolo Niccoli, Poggio's friend and fellow stylist, made two innovations: by sloping the pen of the stylist he invented a comfortable script angle, at which it was convenient to establish a bridge from one letter to the next, creating a newly useable *cursive*. The style established by Bracciolini, upright but rounded, morphed into the fifteenth century style called *roman*. Another great Italian printer of the time, Aldus Manutius, seeking for a small sized font in which to print a 'pocket' edition of Virgil, developed a style called *italic*, still in common use at our time. We were, in other words, at a time of high inventiveness for the Latin script. (Our finest historicizing poet, Ezra Pound, makes seminal use of the workshop of Aldus Minutius, in the *Cantos*.)

Mythology

Retrospection. The culture and mythology generated by the early Christian centuries in Scandinavia were longer and more deeply pervasive than, say, the similar cultural products of ancient Greek mythology, which segued fairly neatly into the categories, if never exactly the *espíritu*, of the Roman mind. Thus it was when Scandinavian intellectuals and scholars stepped into the tradition that had been hailed in the two thirteenth century *Eddas*. In 1514, just as the craft of printing was sharing out its transformational energies, the culture of the northern nations was prepared to offer an eager audience for news of the Norse past. In 1514 appeared the first printed edition of the *Gesta Danorum* (*Deeds of the Danes*) written by Saxo Grammaticus in the thirteenth century; in 1555 Olaus Magnus' *History of the*

Northern People was printed (in Latin). In Britain, which had during the later middle ages been victim of savage attacks and oppression from Norse invaders, there had long been an awareness of the presence of Norse Runes on the British landscape, as well as of innumerable smaller archeological evidences of a former Norse presence. (Among the interesting mistakes of British antiquaries, in their search for Norse relics, was the attribution of such a structure as Stonehenge to the Norse, or the confusion of Iron Age artefacts with the Norse.)

Folklore

Shakespeare. While the folklore repository of postclassical Britain rested heavily on oral tales and customary rituals, the increasingly literate-verbal period of the Renaissance shifted a lot of the verbal materials of folklore to the brilliant dramas of writing. We need look no farther than Shakespeare, for a verbal world oozing with the juices of the folklore of his time, turned into words: it seems as though Shakespeare never failed to find just the illustration he required in the popular lore for which he had a native instinct. He takes out his pen and it gives birth to fairies, witches, ghosts and demons; birds, animals, plants, insects and reptiles; folk medicine, calendrical customs; rings and precious stones, sports and pastimes; dances, punishments, proverbs; the entire repertoire of the nameable lore of the British folk. Does Shakespeare know he is a folklorist, or is he just a folklorist, from his own brilliant presence to his time?

Painting

Renaissance

Awakening. The Renaissance, as we know, is often described as the period of the rediscovery of the ancient classics, and in fact it was a time when, with the advent of the printing press, the growth of cities with their libraries and universities, and the rise of international trade and commerce, new ranges of achievement for the human imagination were swimming into sight. How such ambient circumstances blend with imaginative painting achievements on the ground—Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519); Michelangelo (1475-1564); Raphael (1483-1520); —*is the mystery of a fructuant culture* at its high period—Athens, St. Petersburg, San Francisco, Florence-- when a culture is, as we say today, at its hottest. Let's just say, *something happens*, and within a century painting has become, not just an ancillary art to monumental architecture, certainly not just a stiff posture of hieratic fidelity (the Byzantine saint) but a full expression of a culturally enabled genius, replacing his life with art. Leonardo enables our thinking of the whole perfection of the human body, updating thereby the deep humanism of a Greek sculptor like Praxiteles, who was part of the background being discovered through the Renaissance; Michelangelo—say in the Sistine Chapel, where he painted out his high period—was devoted to the complex and colorful world of proportions and etherealities that made up his divine faith; Raphael, with a faultless sense of movement-color, was above all a visual master of the Holy Family, but above all of the human face, his portraits compacting in themselves all that his French contemporary, Montaigne, wanted to say about both the nobility and the baseness of the human condition.

Baroque. A slider concept, like early modern, may help to carry us over to the deeply different painting world of the Baroque, say 1660—1800. Arrival on those shores will leave us breathless with new scenarios—not only the deep and dark of antiquity expunged, but the struggle of paganism with Christianity on its last legs. A whiff of the great names may have to suffice—Caravaggio, Rubens, Claude Lorrain, Nicolas Poussin, Greuze, Watteau—the names of masters of grace—yes, of course, also violence to the fulness of life--grace in the sense that the art which invested these geniuses in lives of artifice, was in fact truly a life in which life and art were intertwined. The tribute to artifice, always implicit in this Baroque period work, always inflects the painter's interest in the real world. One thinks of antique scenes in Lorrain, ports and harbors and misty evening landscapes, or of vast historical conflict of armies

and men, in which every tree seems to proclaim *I am a tree Claude painted*; the history of art seemed one with history in actuality.

Question A slider concept is useful, but what in fact was going on between Leonardo and Lorrain. Can we say that in those one hundred and fifty years something like a modern world view was being sketched.? By the baroque period, the existential immediacy of the Renaissance is absent, that fury of excitement that emerged with the rediscovery of the classical, that is with the energies of an open and intense cultural zone not hampered by religious strictures or social niceties. In place of that immediacy there is now a pulling back from the requirement that the painter should say all and look everything in the face. The pulling back may simply be 'forgetting how to do it,' and needing time, which could be code language for needing revolution, which was not far away.

Sculpture

Renaissance The early period of Renaissance sculpture was firmly built on the work of the High Gothic period, and reflects the same exuberant historical awareness that had preceded it. If anything, the energy of stone creation is higher than before, and the Renaissance reflects in the greatest names of the early period: Ghiberti, Donatello, and Andrea del Verocchio. The period of High Renaissance Sculpture (1490-1530) was dominated by the work of Michelangelo (1475-1564), painter, sculptor, poet, and supreme genius of the Renaissance.

Baroque. Growing out from the Renaissance, the Baroque period of sculpture (1600-1700), latching onto the strong Roman Catholic Counter Revolution, with its passion to draw people back to the 'true church,' devoted all its skills to charming and delighting the faithful. Saint Peter's Square was redesigned, under the direction of the greatest sculptor of the time, Bernini, so that the columns embracing Saint Peter's itself seemed to embrace the returning worshipper. Bernini's individual pieces of sculpture, like *The Vanquished Gaul killing himself and his Wife*, captured the sculptural moment in a brilliant instantaneity, an effect both stunning and forward looking—toward increasingly illusionistic work to come in the next centuries. The Baroque, still defining as part of the Renaissance perspective, continues to unfold throughout Europe, as the Renaissance spirit, which took first wing out from north Italy, developed into other cultures which like the Italian were finding new directions in which to win friends spiritually.

Rococo. As a reaction against the severity of the baroque, sculptors in France, especially, found their ways to a lighter hearted treatment of painting and sculpture. 1700-1789 marks out the Rococo period, sophisticated and genial, as was the thinking of the court of Louis XIV at Versailles, and readily settling into academic style solutions. Director of the *Académie Française*, from 1707 on, Guillaume Coustou was the most successful sculptor of the early part of this movement, while a variety of court sculptors, many the favorites of the great ladies of the court, held sway in competition with one another. We might say, in retrospect of the Revolution which was just around the corner, that art was having fun for a hundred years before the blood letting.

Reflection. We have been moving fast, from the Neolithic art explosion, 35,000 years ago, through quiet and almost hidden early Christian art, which only gradually—but then unstoppably—outspreed into monumental architecture and highly developed sculptures, both free standing and parts of narrative suites, which were to morph toward the muscular power of Renaissance pluri-genius, culminating, we might say, in the supreme works of Michelangelo's sculpture and painting, only to soften out into Baroque and Rococo stages.

Drivers. This reflection is about the nature of change in art styles. It could be styles of moral value or of domestic architecture: the central question is the same—what is the driver to change? In art historical development it is as though human consciousness initially hooks itself into a project, like that of transforming nature into some of the metaphorical meanings inherent in nature, and then, once engaged in a segment of the challenge—say the challenge to transform the mere coexisting with caves into the depicting of the cave world—from within the cave—the drive of consciousness prosecutes its effort at 'improvement,' at expressing more fully what it feels it is pursuing, until, at some point, the energy of the

quest plays itself out, transforming itself, if that is the way to put it, into its replacement, as Renaissance sculpture, for example, replaces High Gothic which has already expressed what it could of the energy supplied it by its culture.

Architecture

Mysteries. The Renaissance, or rebirth, of Classical Culture introduced a significant revision of the Gothic mode in European architecture. As we explore high gothic cathedrals, like Notre Dame or Chartres, we see that they are all about mysterious spaces, dark naves and nooks, places where the spirit can indulge itself in that sense of mystery which for so many Christians, then as now, was an essential part of the religious experience. When we say that the Renaissance was a turn back to classical sensibility—remember the Parthenon, the Zeus temple at Olympia, the temple at Agrigento in Sicily—we mean in part that the clear and balanced lines of the ancient Greek temple were rediscovered, as were the open and sculptured spaces which were transparent to all in the interior of the Renaissance structure. We talk here, then, of a wide variety of building types—under the category of Renaissance—great Basilicas like St. Peter's (construction begun 1506); palazzi, great homes for noble families like the Medici; elite living quarters for people of high substance in the Catholic hierarchy.

Textbooks. The repercussions of the printing press made themselves felt throughout the Renaissance of architecture. The order and classical discipline we treasure in Renaissance building construction had its roots in texts which were widely studied, and which established models for architecture. In 1562, Giacomo da Vignola published the influential *Canon of the Five Orders of Architecture*, which was a textbook study designed for the use of architects. Vignola, who had worked on St. Peter's and the Palazzo Farnese in Rome, was a practical architect whose book featured how-to-do examples of column and balustrade construction. A second, and even more influential text of the time was Antonio Palladio's *The Four Books of Architecture*, published in 1570. (Palladio was one of the most accomplished practitioners of his time, and his work in the 1550's in Venice, on the churches Il Redentore and San Giorgio Maggiore, establishes Palladio's own principles with stunning clarity.) The windows, doors, and floor plans, on the typical Palladian structure, share an openness, lightness and clarity which forged new directions in architectural history. A particularly well known example, of the rage for the Palladian, was Thomas Jefferson's home in Monticello, based on Palladio's own home, La Rotonda.

Dance

Dancing masters. We often think of the Renaissance as the rebirth of awareness of the ancient classics, which is part of the story. But in subtle ways the Middle Ages, too, became parts of the Renaissance. By the end of the Middle Ages—say the early fifteenth century—the jongleurs of the mediaeval period, who were men of all skills where entertainment was wanted, as dancers, jokesters, stealers, cut ups—think of Jof in Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*—these jongleurs were morphing into a new profession, needed from them by the new dance-loving and often quite secular-erotic Italian noblemen, who were ready to employ. This was the profession of dancing master, which will be influential throughout the development of Western European dance history. Throughout the fifteenth century many of these dancing masters, who were often highly educated, wrote manuals on the art of dancing—exercises to improve the dance skills of the nobility. Many of these instructors, incidentally, were Jewish, and brought with them, into Western culture, what we could call the harmonies of today's klezmer band music.

France and England. While Italy was the leading force in Renaissance dance development, there were separate and rich traditions developing in France, where from the simple *branle*, a country round dance, there emerged versions of the ballet, and of the pantomime—instance: a dinner ballet, featuring the story of Jason and the Golden Fleece, was performed at the wedding of the Duke of Milan, in 1489. In England the peasant tradition of bumptious round dances was persistent, while the court showed a thorough

understanding of European dance styles, to which they hewed in grand masques or royal festivals. Queen Elizabeth I was an enthusiast for English country dance, and was gifted at dancing the galliard and the volt, leaping country dances in which the two dance partners clung tightly to each other. It was not long, be it said, until France itself opened the new direction for dance, the ballet, in courtly performances, often including the Royal Majesties, danced to the celebration of its own harmony, and of the harmony for which France—then torn apart by civil wars—had great need.

Ballet, as it happened, was a rich point of departure for the development of dance in Western Europe. Slipping into the seventeenth century we find that not only ballet, but house-party entertainments, and show-off occasions for debutantes were all surrounded by the display of dance. It was in this environment that Moliere's dancing master mocks himself, when addressing M. Jourdain, in *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* (1670):

There is nothing so necessary to human beings as the dance...Without the dance a man would not be able to do anything...All the misfortunes of man, all the baleful reverses with which histories are filled, the blunders of politicians and the failures of great leaders, all this is the result of not knowing how to dance...

Minuet was the dance form most ready to follow the preparations laid for it by the country dances of England and France, by pantomimes such as flourished at the courts of England and France, by great balls and festivals in the courts of the Italian nobility during the Renaissance. The minuet, a gentle-stepped position-exchange among the powerful and elegant; what could better have typified the stability of the old order, a stability toward which the court dancing of the fifteenth century was a prelude; what could more fatefully have symptomized the Falling of the old Social Political Order, which was to be manifest in Western Europe by the end of the eighteenth century?

Music

RENAISSANCE

Cities like Dijon and the court of Burgundy were by the fifteenth century rich centers of musical entertainment—that is essential parts of cultured living among the higher, and more sensitive, aristocracy; generally centers where an acclaimed musical group would take up temporary residence, bringing its instruments with it. It is hard to locate a Renaissance for Western European music history, in the senses in which it applies to a rather distinct period for the history of European painting or literature; and yet the growth of cultural matrices like the two mentioned sites above is so widely spread, throughout the Europe of the late fifteenth century, that we can usefully call this period the Renaissance. It was the foundation for a rapid uptick in secular music—of course the mass-centered music of the High Christian period was no longer hot—with much of singing madrigal, and finally the wonderful new discoveries among instruments, and the ways in which the technology of making new instruments—organ, stringed keyboard instruments—led to the discovery of new musics for the mind to do with those instruments.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Baroque. The baroque era (1600-1750) introduced a critical turn in musical practice in Western Europe. In short, the system of musical modes, which was based on the eight principal church services of each year, was replaced, as the wear and tear of time and new expressive needs pushed it aside; that mode system found itself replaced by a system of tonality which would shape Western music until at least 1900, a new system based on 'contrasting keys, or sets of interrelated notes and chords deriving from a major or minor scale.'

Opera. Opera, a manifestation both of ancient text, and new tonality, was one of the first dramatic expressions of what we would be most comfortable calling the Renaissance in Western Music, for the opera forged in that period of discovery and risk has remained one of the vivid hallmarks of our entire musical background. The impulse into opera was given by the early seventeenth century Camerata group in Florence. Foremost among the composers close to this group was Monteverdi, who himself wrote two operas—*Orfeo*, 1607; *L'arianna*, 1608—before returning to Venice. The masters of French opera, which

characteristically exploited dance sequences and strongly emotional episodes from Greek mythology, were Jean-Baptiste Lully and Jean-Philippe Rameau. England gave the world Henry Purcell, with his *Dido and Aeneas* and other masque-like opera forms. Important to say, in this context, is that other singing and instrumental forms—like the cantata and oratorio—were simultaneously pulling in widening audiences, from among the newly moneyed middle class that was starting to announce itself throughout Europe, in the mid-seventeenth century. The same groups, baptized now into a taste for the new kinds of composition made possible by new kinds of instruments, proved now equally susceptible to those new forms of instrumental composition, the *sonata* and *concerto*, which were beginning to feature in many public venues, and which were to feature as major cultural display cases until our day. Antonio Vivaldi was among the many geniuses of this new form of growingly personal (but infinitely shaded) instrumental entertainment.

Bach and Handel. With these two German composers, each born in 1685 in the same part of Germany, both reared as organists in the Lutheran Church, the brilliance of the baroque became both intense and mature: Handel, because of his training in Italy, went into dramatic works—secular cantatas, opera, oratorio—especially after he moved his life to England; Bach, who was lifelong employed as an organist, by the Lutheran Church, tended to work within those spiritual terms, excelling in ‘passions, cantatas for church services, liturgical organ pieces, and harpsichord compositions, many instructional in purpose.’ This last rider takes us to the mysterious heart of the work of Bach, arguably (the humble editor opines) the climax of Western musical achievement. One might say that the rigor of the originally mediaeval effort to adjust tropes and scrutinize notational values falls, with Bach, into the more advanced tonal system that had developed with the Renaissance, and that had opened the expressive ground for the finest of spiritualities working in the confines of an immaculately precise productive system.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Rococo. The Rococo style, thriving on the increasing richness of instrumental possibilities, and the growing finesse of audience attention, opened out into the eighteenth century with particular aplomb in Germany, where one of Johann Sebastian Bach’s son, Carl Philip Emmanuel, helped to motivate the ‘sentimental style’ movement, within the framework of what was coming to be called Rococo. This style foregrounded the subtle dance impulses coming from France, and the inheritance of Father Bach’s rich spirituality. The German century of genius, out and around this growing rococo tradition, was to bring to full expression the work of German composers who were flourishing by the second half of the eighteenth century; for the first time in western music history instruments, and not human voices, were serving as the main drivers of new work. In the at that time highly favored movement within German musical creativity, we were already familiarizing ourselves with creators like Joseph Hayden, and with the young Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), who (like his literary contemporary, Johann Goethe) was to overlap the classical and the romantic expressions of his time, if not erase the release of time-bonding altogether, in the case of the greatest music.

The symphony. In a music creativity world in which sonatas, trios, piano concertos, and symphonies were the chief attention, the symphony gradually moved to front rank, for social relevance, and availability to deep and complex expression. It was not long before the symphony, in the hands of powerful conductors, and composers like Beethoven, took over the task of representing large cultural waves, and at least aspired to providing a voice for its time. (It was for this kind of claimed grandeur of articulateness that the philosopher Hegel admired the Beethoven symphony as a true historical action.) At the same time the symphony rises to the eighteenth century’s highest level of claim and aspiration, intimate counterpart forms, like that of the originally eighteenth century chamber music quartet, to our day remain a factor in in-house musical entertainment in Europe.

Theatre

RENAISSANCE

Commedia dell’ arte. From 1575 on, originating in Italy, the *Commedia dell’arte* was a loosely organized actor-centered kind of theatrical movement, which made its way across Europe—let’s say a far more urban and sophisticated folk theater move than that of the fairly disorganized and folksy bands of

jongleurs and comedians who had for centuries provided a base level of entertainment for country Europeans. The *commedia* plays utilized stock characters—the *lover*, the *master*, the *servant*—involving a cast of thirteen or fourteen, who took a share of the company's profits—whose fortunes and slapstick misfortunes became stock material for 'the masses' in the following centuries, and who remain til today reminders of the great comedic traditions of Plautus.

Playhouses. Building on many native theatrical traditions, and meeting entertainment needs in the more cohesive and sophisticated cities, 'companies of players'—or equivalents in other countries than Britain—were formed, attached to the households of leading aristocrats—as inhouse performers. So much appreciated were these relatively proficient actors, something new, that the older acting groups, were banned and labelled 'vagabonds.' In this case the special patronage of the Queen, Elizabeth I, was important in supporting the new acting companies. Theaters sprang up in the suburbs of major cities, from London to Paris. The popularity of this new form of entertainment—after all we're talking about Elizabethan drama in England, and one of the world's most creative stage moments—was high throughout the sixteenth century. It was a period during which Shakespeare and Marlowe, to name only two of many brilliant writers, showed how to be both a popular dramatist and a complex, erudite, and potently imaginative playwright, touching the farthest limits of human thought in speech. It was a period of seeming incandescent power but it ran out into the roadblock of the Puritan Revolution, and of the powerful contempt of Charles I for anything like public entertainment; in 1642, at the outbreak of the English Civil War, the performance of all plays was banned within the city of London.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Restoration. With the end of the Civil War (1642-1651) the Restoration Theater—Congreve and Wycherley will spring to mind—was ready to make its own of the thriving British theater of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At that point-- the greatest period of truly people-based, genius-led, widely ranging theater in British history comes to a sliding transition. But it is at that point that we need to step back, for there is no limiting ourselves to the story in England.

Spain and France—whose theatrical greatness belong to the same brilliant rush of discovery which had bowled us over when we discovered Shakespeare, Marlowe, or Kyd—were deploying their theatrical mastery at the same time that the British were creating a new dramatic world around the Globe Theater, in the sixteenth century. In France, Moliere, (1622-1673), Corneille (1606-1684), and Racine (1639-1699); in Spain Lope de Vega (1562-1635) and Calderon de la Barca (1600-1681): both sets of names reference powerful theatrical minds which share with Shakespeare their intrepid grasp of the whole strange human adventure, and do so in poetic language which is at the same intertwined with the rough hewn street base of the writer's language. Never before, since ancient Athenian audiences gathered In outside theaters for awe of their great tragedians, has civic culture aligned so deeply with artistic power.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Bourgeoisie. The middle class began to replace the aristocracy—which was itself declining as a social force—and to require entertainment that reflected its own values. Hundreds of new theaters were built across Europe at this time--Milan's La Scala opera house, completed in 1778, provided room for more than 2000 spectators--and in lieu of great dramatists there was a fervent theatrical industry, with acting companies, distinguished actors, and various kinds of popular spectacle, to meet the leading requirements of the time. Spectacles—what were called 'English opera'--were immensely popular, and enthralled audiences with their carnivalesque showmanship, magic tricks, flying actors and fireworks; the Disneyesque crowd pleasers of the eighteenth century stage throughout Europe.

Audiences. (Many audiences—higher In class and education—who had sucked in their breath at the elegance, or the careful irony, of Moliere, were now content with the *drame bourgeois* of Diderot the encyclopédiste, the sharp edged satirical dramas of Voltaire, or the tearful, and ultimately feel -good comedies of Colly Cibber in England. What may have fallen short in inherent artistic power, on the eighteenth century stage, was compensated by the great acting of geniuses like David Garrick, the greatest of interpreters of Shakespeare, who became Manager of the Drury Lane Theater in London,

setting as he did demanding new standards for stagecraft and décor—and, in a move typical of the time, clearing the spectators off the stage, as Voltaire had also done in France.

Sturm und Drang. Achievements were boiling on the German stage where the *Sturm und Drang* movement was taking the sentimental turn of French and English drama into far deeper and nobler perspectives, frequently harking back to the Greek foundations, and making the verse theater of such as Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller into masterpieces of world theater.

WORLDVIEW

Philosophy

EARLY MODERN PHILOSOPHY

Renaissance. The Renaissance, 14th-17th centuries, introduces a new set of perspectives into Western European philosophy. By this time—a time when the actual manuscripts of Greco Roman thought are being unearthed, when major universities are introducing higher culture in the new cities, when secular world views are proliferating, and the Church is compromising or being ignored—by this time a range of new philosophies is spreading throughout western Europe. Travel becomes easier, There is more money to spend on personal development, and the first steps toward scientific experiment are being taken.

Humanism. In the thinking of such men as Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and Michel de Montaigne (1533--1592) we meet the Humanistic vigor of a fresh period in thought: both men fully committed to a human universe--sceptical believers you might call them--and restlessly inquiring into man's possibilities for self-understanding and social coherence. Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* (1605), for example, is an ardent plea to the King of England, to support scientific and artistic inquiry among his people. The Church is no longer, for such a thinker as Bacon, the main shaper of thoughts, as it had been in the Middle Ages. Nor is Church doctrine intimately involved with the evolution of thought, or the life and teaching of Jesus taken so singly as the example for human ethic and social behavior. Montaigne, in his essays, looks at himself as an historically conditioned creature, with intermixed faults and virtues, and in the same way looks outward like an anthropologist, to take an interest in other men in other cultures, even to dandle fascination with the noble savage, a cultural import from Europe's growing 'understanding' of the Americas.

Mind. Many factors contribute to a new and vigorous flowering of philosophical thought in the West, during the centuries we call the Renaissance. These centuries saw the reawakening of interest in the secular classics of the ancient Greco Roman world, in the actual reading of those texts, and in the incorporation of them into University curricula. The replacement or reshaping of Christian theology marks much of the most forceful thought of the time, as does the turn toward 'science,' which in the seventeenth century leads the way to fundamental new perceptions of the cosmos.

New philosophies. The determinant philosophies, of the mature passage into early modern thought, are those that kick in toward the end of that seventeenth century which was opened by such as Montaigne and Bacon. We come onto the moments of Rene Descartes (1596-1650.) or Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), who exposed self, thought, and society to lucid scrutiny as free as they could make it from 'inherited prejudices.' Descartes, for whom 'je pense, donc je suis' heralds the inroads of epistemology, over against the ghosts of theology, brings together the genius of mathematical reason with brilliant inspection, seeking to know 'myself or the great book of the world.' Hobbes turns a pessimistic and searching insight onto the nature of the state, and of man's greed for power.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY

Enlightenment. The eighteenth century has commonly been designated The Enlightenment. During that period in Europe the liberation of thought, from inherited 'prejudices,' became a banner for the fresh breezes of 'progress.' Far in the past was the recourse to holy scripture, or to theology based on it. Spinoza (1632-1677) and Leibniz (1646-1716) created vast intellectual structures in which to formulate

scientifically and mathematically coherent images of the human universe and our prospects in it. Locke (1632-1704), Hume (1711-1776), and Kant (1724-1804) all addressed the human mind from the view point of its limitations and potentials, wishing us well as minds reshaping a meaningful universe without the direct impact of its creator.

Kant. For each of these three thinkers is the critical climate so maturing, that they bring into view comprehensive glimpses of the power locked in the very limitations of man's mind as knowing. (Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* is an ultimate in this adventure of learning blended with intellectual strictures. Immanuel Kant devoted his three *Critiques* (*Pure Reason*, 1781; *Practical Reason*, 1788; *Judgment*, 1790) to the issue of the possibility of knowledge, and carried us to an altitude from which we can perceive both our limitations and our ultimate powers of understanding. So rich is the development of philosophy, in these western generations, that the West (and by increments the global community) is manifestly starting to feel a new synthesis on the horizon. Such a synthesis—universal perspectives on the human condition—is already adumbrated in the *Encyclopedia* of Hegel (1817), with its effort to synthesize all human knowledge as living philosophy.

Religion

By the time of its fullest mediaeval development, more than a millennium after the death of its salvation figure, the Catholic Christian church had elaborated its theology, down to the fine points, deeply remodeled the structure of daily life for its believers, and in important ways modified (or distorted) the teachings of its founder and of its most luminous apologists. With the opening up of the early modern world, with its broad and competitive perspectives, it was to be expected that the capital conflicts which drove society would also find their expression in new religious directions within that society. The most vivid proof of that justification was to be found in the Protestant Reformation, which attempted to redirect the essentials of the Christian religion.

Dissatisfaction. Early modern religion in Western Europe comes down to a long drawn out conflict between the Catholic Church and the protests raised against it, for corruption, complacency, and immodest manipulation of its flock. Church reformers, both within and without the Catholic Church, had abounded in western Europe for more than a century prior to the date by which we mark the 'formal beginning of the Reformation, the posting of ninety-five theses by Martin Luther, in 1517, or the Catholic response to that hammer attack, the Holy Roman Emperor's *Edict of Worms*, 1521, condemning and threatening Martin Luther for his Theses. (Among the names of the earliest protestors we should mention Arnold of Brescia, Jan Hus, John Wycliffe, and Girolamo Savonarola—churchmen all, from diverse communions, joined in a demand for house cleaning in Rome.

Protest. Martin Luther himself was an Augustinian monk—also a professor of theology—whose highly critical views of the Catholic Church of his time were intended as critiques from within. (The critiques he raised were simply protests, over a wide variety of abusive profit-making offers-- the sale of indulgences (reduced time in purgatory,) the priority given to law and sacraments, over against scripture; the mistaken emphasis on good works, rather than faith alone, as the path to salvation). Luther had for a long time no desire to overthrow, but only to reform, and yet the sharply reprimanding response of the Catholic Church—in its *Edict of Worms*, 1521, set the battle lines between Pope and Reformers, lines which would string out into the nineteenth century, as Catholics and soon-called Protestants would by turns diversify and then mollify their causes for disagreement. In other words, a demand for housecleaning, from within the Catholic Church, was to prove a recruiting move for all kinds of dissension against the institution which had been the backbone of Western European religion, since the conversion of the Emperor Constantine in the fifth century.

Counter-reformation. From within the Catholic Church there came a Counter-Reformation movement, which developed sharply by the mid-sixteenth century. The Augsburg Confession (1530), the Council of Trent (1535); both hierarchy-heavy pronouncements doubled down on the issues of reform from within, and hostility toward, the rigidifying position of the 'Protestants.' On the geopolitical level Europe was to remain largely Catholic until the 19th century—northern Europe largely shifting toward the new Protestant sects of Christianity, while Catholicism dominated the South. Catholicism, as we soon see, found itself in

continuing inner conflict, over its response to the ever more complex and secular demands of society, while Protestantism generated a variety of new sect-faces—Baptists, Lutherans, Methodists, Pentecostals—as new faith and attitude groups made space for the distinctive versions of Christological Christianity to which they remained true.

Science

EARLY MODERN PERIOD

Transition. The period we leave, at this point, is carelessly called ‘the dark Ages,’ a misnomer given the energy of study, not to mention the splendor of art and music, expended during the ‘mediaeval’ period, the ‘period in between antiquity and the modern,’ as it was viewed by many historians, from the eighteenth century on. The period we enter, correspondingly, is only by convention described as a Renaissance, a rebirth for the energetic opening out of the classics, the construction of real cities, the advancement of a nascent urban economy with ever more active trade—for indeed the makings of this situation were already to hand in the Late Middle Ages—for just those areas of trade, economy, international interactions, empirical investigation, which typically characterize the Renaissance.

Issues. Many of the questions of natural science, which concerned late mediaeval thinkers, flowed into the thought of the early Renaissance: one packet of concerns involves the trajectory of moving bodies, and the ambience of projection, resistance, and diversion which wants describing in any account of those bodies. Early Renaissance science, along with Grosseteste and Bacon, was one in excluding, from an account like the above, any reference to supernatural causality. The continuity of ages was just starting to weld together when the Black Plague (1348) came along and wiped out one third of the population of Europe. The thinking through of scholastic issues, such as the above, gave way after the disaster of plague to what we identify as a typical Renaissance fascination, with the wonder of mankind in a world no longer as directly shadowed by its creator.

Sequences. By the fifteenth century the Arab and Greek cultural wealth of Byzantium had begun to pass the Bosphorus heading west, into the hands of Western European scholars, especially in Northern Italy. And there was other, and abundant, evidence that the world was changing, that man’s capacity to analyze and contextualize natural phenomena was growing. The seventeenth century willingness to think along the edges of new concepts was startling, and self-generating; with the increasing subsidization, and effectiveness of scientific undertakings—Vesalius *On the Workings of the Human Body*; *On planetary revolutions*, by Copernicus; Newton’s *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*; Galileo, *Dialogue concerning the two chief world systems*. Wherever the observant student turned, by the end of the seventeenth century, there were active investigations into realms of nature which required access by increasingly refined methods and tools.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Advances. Diderot’s *Encyclopédie* (mid eighteenth century) incorporated his century’s headlong fidelity to the achievements of the preceding two centuries, and ushered in a period of mathematics, physics, and technology—Euler (infinitesimal calculus); Lomonosov, (conservation of mass in chemical reactions); d’Alembert (fluid mechanics; musical tonality)—these men were simply part of a phalanx of eighteenth century thinkers who were to herald in the evolved mathematical, biological, and cosmological thinking of the following two centuries.

Society. By the eighteenth century the major advances of science—in astronomy, medicine, physics—were not only factors of seemingly endless promise, but were diffusing into society, and meeting with a new audience of (in nascent form) popularized consumers. By an oversimplification, we might say that eighteenth century science, in Western Europe, was less original than seventeenth century science—the age of the worldview-changing studies of Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton—or than will be the giant astronomical and medical strides made by the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; but then we would need to add that eighteenth century Western European science was a period of absorption, of the huge strides of its predecessors, and of plateau laying for its future. Broadly speaking the West European

society was in the eighteenth century being acculturated to the new world of experimental science, of a universe orderly but god-free, of institutions—like monarchy and the Church—which were essentially fossils, and of course relatively 'understood' at last, so that man and society could be as enlightened as allowable for them.

Advances in scientific theory and practice were of course not stalled, during the century which preceded the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era. Those significant advances—in math and physics, in medicine and biology, in the understanding of electricity—were themselves fed into the growing *awareness* of the sciences, which was finding its way out to a broad public—a public of rapidly growing literacy, of increased mutual interaction, and of ever higher expectations, for the quality of its daily life. This growing public was one in which university level education was increasing rapidly, in which Academies of Learning were springing up throughout Europe, in which public lectures—widespread, from coffeehouses to municipal centers—were becoming a part of civic life, in which dictionaries and encyclopedias were available in bookstores and libraries, and in which popular books on Newton's laws of physics were available around the corner.

Universities. Science (physics, chemistry, geology, zoology, anatomy) was typically taught, in 1700, under the heading of natural philosophy—in the one hundred and five Universities open in Europe. In these Universities not only were 'the sciences' taught, but the lectures given were typically—as had not prior to 1700 been the case—accompanied with lab demonstrations, part of the bringing home to the culture the actual practices of the sciences. Throughout the nations of the continent, Universities began to assume specialized roles: in France the instruction in science was increasingly carried out by Academies, like the French Academy of Sciences; in England Newtonian physics became a favored topic at the University of Cambridge, while the Scottish universities were renowned for medical studies; German universities became renowned for the liberty they provided their science faculty to plan their own courses: in return for which there was already a strong implicit demand for faculty research and writing in the sciences.

Academies and Journals. Mention was made of the French Academy of Sciences. The fact is that academies of and for scientific learning and sharing were surging upward in all the major capitols and university strongholds throughout Europe. With that rapid growth developed a market and taste for learned journals, by which by century's end every branch of science was able to find specialized expression, and to introduce itself, so to speak, to the ever larger reading public.

Dictionaries and encyclopedias. As with journals, encyclopedias and dictionaries began to occupy the shelves of bookstores, as well as of privileged private homes. (The same comfortable residents were by this century likely to be daily readers of the newspapers which were now the talk of the town in the cafes of all large European cities.) For sake of example, and because the example was of worldwide importance, one can think of the *Encyclopédie* (*Encyclopedia or explanatory dictionary of sciences, arts, and crafts*), which was edited (and in part written) by Denis Diderot and Jean d'Alembert, and which began publication in 1751. The final publication consisted of 71,000 separate entries, and was distributed over thirty five volumes. Many of the entries dealt with specifics of sciences and crafts, so that the work as a whole could be used both as a scientific reference work and as part of a continuous text dealing with the acquisition of knowledge by the animal man.

19th Century

VERBAL ARTS

Literature

Romanticism. This dominant movement, of literary sensibility in the early 19th century, is Romanticism, a product of great poetry of feeling and imagination—in England, think Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth's *Prelude*—but also an heir, of the kind of *Sturm und Drang* poetry with which Goethe and Schiller, especially in their dramas, topped off the eighteenth century. The Romantic poet turns to self, the engine of passion, to nature, the true giver of meaning to humans, and to love—for all its dangers—as a source

of depth. In the poetry of the romantic genius find simplicity of statement and feeling, separation from the metrical and verbal strictures of the poetry of 'antiquity,' and addiction to the visionary or dreamlike, a zone where Shelley famously captured the poet serving as one of the 'unacknowledged legislators of the world.'

So powerful was the impulse of Romanticism that for the first thirty years of the century it drove its literary power across the continent of Europe, and beyond it, to Slavic lands where Dostoyevsky's *Underground Man*, Lermontov's *A Hero of our Time*, or Alexander Pushkin, in *Eugene Onegin* carried the cult of the passionate hero; carried further the image given a presence even in 'wild America,' where visionaries like Thoreau and Whitman, or transcendental philosophers like Emerson burned with a hard Romantic flame—to rephrase a renowned line of Walter Pater.

Post-Romanticism. In France, among the movements succeeding Romanticism, Parnassianism brought solace to the aesthetes, for whom Romanticism seemed inappropriately close to life, and not sufficiently close, as the Symbolist poet Mallarmé wished it, to the forms of abstract and severe consciousness which sustain 'true poetry.' Poets like Rimbaud and Baudelaire, in France, enter here with life-style poetry of great power, poetry through which the torturous soul of the poet airs its wildness, its complicity with the fallen wherever it asserts itself. In the fiction of post-Romanticism, where the novel is being hard driven to account for vast changes in life world—maturing industrialism, daring capital investments, ever faster moving urban environments, social experiments like Communism, increasing freedom for women to shape their half of reality—and to lift from readers life burdens to which fictional conceptions offered noetic ballast. Is it not as though Emile Zola, Gustave Flaubert, George Eliot, or Thomas Hardy would have been auto-generated by history, had they not been flesh and blood offspring of progenitors immersed in the ups and downs of turbulent cultural innovation?

Languages

Germany, England, France. While the nineteenth century in Germany was slowly pulling itself together as a nation-concept, and there found itself speaking a scattered and regional tongue, both England and France found 'themselves' as budding, and soon colonial 'nations,' with ambitions for glory, and an increasingly carried narrative, to which the country could turn as its 'proud past.' 'Having colonies' was no small part of these industrial nations' strategy for disseminating its products, its culture system, and the regal dignity of its language. To this latter end, the British were careful to provide for colonial school systems in which, for example, the proper usages of English would be appropriately emphasized by the choice of grammar texts sent out from the home country. Higher education in Britain centered around a canon of the great texts of British literature—same in France, where the *gloire de la patrie* was celebrated in the iconic brilliance of the French academy and its heralded intellectuals. In both Britain and France efforts were mounted to protect the King's English or the language of Racine, to which reference was constant in France.

Empire. The Industrial revolution and the spread of colonial empire were both keys to the spread and power of a national language. (Colonialism will have provided the same support for linguistic self-promotion among all the major partners in the colonial enterprise: Germany, Portugal, Italy.) The industrial revolution was one of the many epochs of transformative experience, to which the British people have found themselves subjected: the Norman Invasion, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the adventures of Englishmen and women of all ages, in the explorations of Africa; and yet no epoch could have outdone the Industrial Revolution in fertility of neologisms (*train, revolver, pulley, camera, telegraph, and many more.*)

Europe. The point is not that England is the benchmark of language development in Western Europe's nineteenth century, but that the kinds of social experience the British and French had were emblematic of the ever evolving foundation of the languages of these two countries. The Baltic, Scandinavian, and

Portuguese cultures were also in their own unique ways growing from the times they were placed in, their decisions about how to shape their futures, and the distinctive hungers of their enemies.

Mythology

Matthew Arnold's long narrative poem, *Balder Dead*, was published in 1855, and can be taken as a sample of the Victorian read on Norse mythology. The poem, we know from the start, is dedicated to a god illustrious for his purity and joy.

I. SENDING.

So on the floor lay Balder dead; and round
Lay thickly strewn swords, axes, darts, and spears,
Which all the gods in sport had idly thrown
At Balder, whom no weapon pierced or clove;
But in his breast stood fixed the fatal bough
Of mistletoe, which Lok the Accuser gave
To Hoder, and unwitting Hoder threw—
'Gainst that alone had Balder's life no charm.
And all the gods and all the heroes came,
And stood round Balder on the bloody floor,
Weeping and wailing; and Valhalla rang
Up to its golden roof with sobs and cries;
And on the tables stood the untasted meats,
And in the horns and gold-rimmed skulls the wine.
And now would night have fallen, and found them yet
Wailing; but otherwise was Odin's will.
And thus the Father of the ages spake:

Poetry. How would we describe the language? Multiply generously the tenor of the language, and you come on what seems to the twentieth century ear a monotonous, if highly literate, attempt to restore the Norse tone for contemporary English ears. (English, and then German, were in that order the languages entering the translation and retelling narratives of the nineteenth century, as they strove for an archaic that they fast felt slipping from them.)

Nationalism. Throughout nineteenth century Scandinavia, the nationalist urge to feel one's past was directing attention 'back' into the Norse mythical world, which was by this time seen as a deposit of valiant warriors, all enduring men of the sea, and buyers-in to the national image. 'Viking' ships were beginning to surface; in 1867 the Tune ship was unearthed in Norway, and with artifacts of its kind promoted a new knowledge of the Norse past, as did the discovery of items like the Gjermendbu helmet, inside which archeologists could easily imagine the bearded visage of a Viking sailor. Already in 1837 Carl Christian Rafn had expounded the view that the Vikings had explored the North East Coast of America long before Christopher Columbus, a thesis which had naturally captured the Norwegian imagination.

Folklore

Pickwick. By the eighteenth century, as we know from the cultural history of Western Europe, a perspectival change was sweeping over the ideology-makers of England, France, and Germany. Do you remember the gusto with which Dickens' Mr. Pickwick—with his three best friends-- establishes a series of outings into the British countryside, to observe the curiosities of the people, and the environment in which the Volk led their lives. A proto scholar, Pickwick and his friends were interested in the 'antiquities' and curious folkways that enriched the British countryside. That spirit, of genteel curiosity, was widely spread in the Europe of the eighteenth century and in England and France, especially, has much to do with the curiosity that drives the growth of folklore. Scholars can easily take us through the eighteenth century, in any Western European country, to the point, a century or more in the future, where innocent delight and curiosity, in the peculiar customs and feelings of one's national peasantry, would morph into the first of those academic lenses we now so instinctively apply to the study of popular behavior.

Nationalism. From the early eighteenth century we see that the new readership of the time—printing has taken hold, publishing is an industry, urban culture is sharpening its separation from the life of fields and village—is beginning to adopt a self-conscious awareness of the cultural world in which it has grown up. No longer does one perform the rituals that others will look back on as folklore, no longer does one (like Shakespeare) become the names of the culture that is living folklore around him, but now one—the middle to upper class intellectual, arguably with a university education behind him, and some personal leisure—begins to look around him at the curiosities of his culture. He (and almost she, by 1750), will be buying a copy of Percy's *Reliques* (1765), reading MacPherson's *Ossian* (1765) and quite possibly being enthralled by it, reading Gray's *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* (1751) and reminding his son not to become a 'mute inglorious Milton, or perhaps, depending on his or her level of education, reaching across the channel to read Herder's *Journal meiner reise im Jahre 1769*, which will at once be seen to have raised the stakes of folklore collection studies to a level of anthropological philosophy, and thereby to have gained remarkable pan-European recognition. We are following our educated guide along a path that will eventually lead to Wordsworth's *Guide to the Lakes* (1810), and from there into a new century, the nineteenth, in which even the greatest poet-lovers of landscape and simple people, Shelley and Keats, write poetries touched with the sophistication and self-awareness of the modern.

Folkloristics. In the nineteenth century, the still amateur, and 'literary' interests of folklorists were gradually to be replaced by more academic attentions, as universities and their scholars developed their own analytic tools for understanding the folkloric backspace of their country. Antiquarians like John Brand (1744-1806) and Henry Bourne—a brilliant contemporary of ours—took the academic step of publishing books of standards for the study of national folklores. (This was a step into the professionalization of the study of the folklore industry, and threatens to double back on itself, and generate a new breed of folklore objects, the very students of folklore themselves.)

Sculpture

Doldrums. With the exception of Auguste Rodin, the nineteenth century, in Western Europe, was a low point in the movement forward of sculpture. In part the reasons are embedded in the historical moment. After the Revolution there was much general uncertainty about the chief directions of society. For one thing, the Church had been severely wounded by the Revolution, throughout Western Europe, and without Church support, need, and commissions, an essential support for sculpture was missing. (Sculpture, it was realized when institutional support was absent, was an expensive art, requiring precise tools and equipment, and much personal time investment, and could not, like painting, thrive simply on the inspiration of brilliant household geniuses. It should be added that, in nineteenth century West Europe there was a marked decline in those kinds of large building projects—courthouses, cathedrals, administrative halls—which had theretofore served as launching pads for sculptural commissions.

Rodin. Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) stands out among the European sculptors of the nineteenth century, in power recalling the greatest works of his ideal, Michelangelo. As an independent spirited, and only modestly backed by fans or the wealthy, Rodin held powerfully to his conviction—wasn't it that of Michelangelo, also?—that a tenacious attention to the wonders of the human body was the only path to noble sculpture. (In this conviction he also gave his total allegiance to the spirit of such ancient Greek sculptors as Phidias and Praxiteles, whose muscular sculpted bodies are so 'realistic' they are 'ideals.')

It was in accord with this muscularity that Rodin also worshipped the tightly wrought cathedral sculptures of High Gothic.

Architecture

Presence. If we review the continuing stream of Western European architecture, we see that by and large what is understood as the classical remains a persistent theme. In the early Renaissance the notion of the classical dominates architectural style, and that because, in Western Europe, the actual presence of Greco-Roman lands and cultures is right beneath your feet. (That depends, of course, on just where you live, but may be possible anywhere in Western Europe, giving the material-ware saturation of an area the size of Western Europe, subject for centuries to Roman and Greek boots and buildings.

Travelers. A decisive turn, within this native classical tradition, in Europe, was given by such factors as developments and discoveries within archeology, by a rage for continental travel, which took Western European art connoisseurs to every corner of Europe—often to places like Southern Italy or Greece—by trade and by commerce, which by the eighteenth century were clogging the Mediterranean—even by rediscovered ship wrecks, which were beginning to be uncovered from the ocean floor, as often as not laden with massive loads of commercial amphorae, intended for the wine or grain trade.

Neoclassical. The Neoclassical style, as a continuation of the stages of Renaissance style, is manifestly linked to its predecessors, favoring the Palladian styles when it comes to domestic architecture, and leaning toward the Gothic in general slant. The Gothic of 18th and 19th century architecture is not the dark and obscured Gothic of the high middle ages, or of mysteriously dark places hidden away in such structures. The new Gothic we are looking at is if one might so express it, the Palladian Gothic, the sharp outlines and clear paced form Palladio himself proposed. The neoclassical of this New Gothic ramps up constantly, through the eighteenth century in England and France: Winckelmann's *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (1776), Herder's *Journal meiner Reise im Jahre 1769* (1769), Goethe's *Italienische Reise* (1786-1788) —all these classics are drawing sharp attention around Europe, as the actuality of such stunningly painted interiors as those of Herculaneum and Pompeii burst free of their ash.

Napoleon. In 1806 Napoleon wishes to build a memorial church to his victories, and his immediate thought is of the Greek exemplars he can turn to. In 1806 he turns to his first choice, a version of the ancient Greek Parthenon, and though it morphs in process, eventually becoming La Madeleine, he has found the track of his time. In Edinburgh, in 1822, another Parthenon is started—after all what better inner image to work from—as a memorial to the Scots who have died in the Napoleonic Wars. When it comes to choosing a design for the new British Museum, in 1823, an extended Parthenon is the first model that occurs.

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance

Waltz. While its origins antedated the 19th century, the growing and soon overwhelming popularity of the waltz, an originally German dance form, rooted in *the Sturm und Drang* cultural energies of late 18th century Germany, opened a turn toward the future, the individual, and the cultures of nascent democracy, which were profiling themselves across the backdrop of 19th century Western Europe. The waltz, a one on one dance involving freedom, character, and expressiveness, all the characteristics implicitly sought by the Romantic Movement, and the French Revolution, which had turned its back on the rigid formalisms of court dance, spread into the 19th century in all directions, populist and noble alike, to the greatest extent possible exemplifying that power of the dance form which Werther expressed, in Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther* (1779):

Never have I moved so lightly. I was no longer a human being. To hold the most adorable creature in my arms and fly around with her like the wind, so that everything around us fades away.

Ballet. Latent as a growth direction throughout the pre-revolutionary era, was the ballet form, which, as we have seen, had its origins in court, yet spread from there into popular entertainment. Schools of ballet sprang up in all major capitols, and spokesman scholars of ballet—like Jean-Georges Noverre, an influential reformer and scholar of the ballet movement—competed with one another, throughout western Europe, for the prestige of the ballet companies which they themselves led. Among the dancers of the Romantic ballet scene, ballerinas imperceptibly took over as principals, having been better instructed and better equipped—looser garments, open toed slippers—than their male counterparts. Voila the origins of the ballet *prima donna*. During the first half of the nineteenth century there was a rage for 'spiritual' and

filmy ballets, like *La Sylphide* (1836) which biopsied the crossing over points between the spiritual and the real worlds.

Theater and ballroom. The hunger for public entertainment grew in the second half of the nineteenth century, beginning to manifest itself in the dancing in ballroom halls and theaters. For a while it was female can shows with their much enjoyed displays of legs and genitals. Then, as public culture grew ever more in your face, there were minstrel shows, music hall reviews—Jacques Offenbach's *Gaieté Parisienne* was not staged until 1938, but think how vividly it summons up the atmosphere of nineteenth century music hall life, and of the pleasure loving (and wan) girls who sought that life, in the paintings of Toulouse-Lautrec.

Music

Romanticism. The Romantic period opens here, though in musical development it is in many ways hard to distinguish from the so-called classical brilliance of the preceding century. With the development of the century three main kinds of musical presentation crept into dominating attention: the symphony orchestra; the piano (which had squeezed out such earlier formative instruments as the clavichord); the solo voice with piano accompaniment. The distinctive new features of performance in the period were length—symphonies lasting typically more than an hour; and 'instrumental color and variety', that is to say a great new power of emotional expressiveness. Once again, periodization by centuries is particularly difficult when it comes to the history of music; and seemingly easier when one approaches the development of the history of literature, where, to stick with our present example, the eighteenth century poetry of Western Europe breaks sharply to be replaced by the Romantic poetry of Wordsworth or Heine or Lamartine.

The opera, with the free range it gives—not for the fulness of historical expression like Beethoven, but for the fulness of individual passion—as we find it in the Romantic heart-builders of Verdi (*La Bohème*; *La Traviata*) and Puccini (*Madame Butterfly*)—the opera becomes a benchmark achievement for the popular passions of the nineteenth century. The operatic achievements of Richard Wagner (1813-1883) in Germany were perhaps representative of the best and the worst developments of nineteenth century music, as they touch on nationalism, the passion of the group, and the power of the Volk to elevate and pervert thought. In works like *Die Meistersinger von Nuernberg*, to which we referred earlier, Wagner takes us back to the cultural texture of the Middle Ages, and for the only time in his creative life writes comedy in music. Nor does he touch the specific issues of German nationalism, for which the Nazis wished to appropriate him, though Wagner was on paper an opponent of Judaism, and in his exaltational tempos, which impels us into the wind, he provides quasi visionary passages of sublime beauty which carry us to the ultimate good or bad of our souls.

Theatre

Feeling. The distinguished *Sturm und Drang* movement in Germany, which straddled the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, brought to the European theater a new stress on *Empfindsamkeit*, feeling or sensibility, as well as on the new elements of melodrama, which had entered the western theatrical scene with Kotzebue's *Misanthropy and Repentance* (1789). In Germany, especially, there was a move toward new realism and accuracy in historical stage settings and costumes. As the century—not the greatest for either drama or theater—wound on, two kinds of taste began to make their claims, and to speak for distinct publics: these were the claims of realism, the attempt to reestablish on stage the mood and actual properties of another historical moment, and, on the other hands, the taste for symbolism and expressionism—which were just beginning to acquire their voices

Self-awareness. While actual staging practices, for example those promoted by Georg II, Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, brought increasing historical fidelity to staging, and laid the groundwork for Wagner's highly dramatic scenographies of Teutonic scenes of love and war, another kind of realism, that of Henrik Ibsen in Norway, made for a major addition to work theatrics. In the twenty five plays he wrote at the end of the century, he covered the realities of marital break up, personal disintegration, shame, gross ambition, cynicism, and did so in a way that captured not only the fascination of the new middle class, but

its developing sense of self-awareness. Toward the end of the century, a number of other urbane playwrights, some British, showed the middle class how to laugh at the unstable pendulum of the human condition.

WORLDVIEW

Philosophy

Proliferation. By the 19th century the narrow streams of mediaeval philosophy, and even the growingly secular epistemology and science of the late seventeenth century, seem ground laying steps toward a full fledged curriculum of highly developed 'areas of philosophy,' the ethics/aesthetics/ logic/epistemology outlay with which the modern University tames the irregularities of a growingly undisciplinable discipline. As in politics, economics, and government, nineteenth century western philosophy too finds itself sprouting out in every direction.

Idealism. The idealism of a philosopher like Schelling (1775—1854) spins from the earlier thinking of Hegel, though the two clash sharply over whether the Absolute, God, can be thought and understood. Out of the brambles of dispute, between these two men, emerge the outlines of the most influential philosophies of the century, German—and academic. From Germanic traditions, but splaying out in varied directions, come the philosophies of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1908), a German Professor of Classics, and Karl Marx 1818-1883). Each of these activists—Marx believed that the philosopher's job is not to 'understand the world' but to 'change it'—diverged sharply from the tendencies of idealism.

Marx. Marx turned his insights on to the injustices of the social system, which was so constructed that the workers enjoy little of their fruits of labor, and the employers (the capitalists) run away with the profits. The philosopher as social critic, in this case, is a product of his century's newest uses of the self-reflective action of the mind in philosophy. No less the critical acerb, and a bleak foe of the mediocre in mankind, Nietzsche too is a condemner of ills: of man as pompous fool; of god as illusory soft soap; of bourgeois sentimentality, with all its false hopes and simplicities.

Philosophies of Existence. The diversity of the period—for which the nature and construction of society, and of social behaviors, has become a target of attention—is evident in the thinking of the Danish philosopher, Soeren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), with whom we can see how unexpectedly the religious impulse we began by ausculting, can return in a modified guise—one that Marx and Nietzsche would scorn. Kierkegaard, whose thinking directly presages that of the European Existentialists of the following century, puts heavy emphasis on the life presence (and historical condition) of the thinker—as distinct, say, from the mind as naked knower (Descartes) or from the mind as concept forming and reason testing (Kant). God, for Kierkegaard, factors back into the center of thought, when once we have entered ourselves as the anxiety of why, why are we here?

Religion

Nationalism, secularism, Liberalism, the missionary movements, the retreats and then the resurgences of Roman Catholicism, the birth of multiple new Protestant sects, the opening up of interest in Africa, as a field for Christianization: all these complex trends, so fundamental to 19th century religious history, tumble forth as we make an effort to put our minds around this most formative and unsettled century of cultural development in Europe.

Nationalism. The fortunes of Christian belief—still the dominant religious presence in the region, although the numbers of the disaffected, disbelieving, and hostile were steadily growing—rose and fell with the development of nationalism in the major Western European countries. The story of 19th century religion, in western Europe, will be different in Britain, France, Germany, and on around the continent. In Britain the dominant trend, within Christianity, involved returning to the Anglo-Catholic roots which had been kept alive through the Anglican High Church. Anglican Sisterhoods, revived religious orders, and self-expression in Catholic masterpieces like Newman's *Apologia pro vita sua* all played into a Christian revival distinctive to the British Isles. In Germany the Prussian King William III insisted on taking direct

and full control of the Protestant churches in his domain-- impressing them all with a single liturgy, and a rigid hierarchy, at the head of which he governed. In counter response, ordinary Protestants and Catholics, elsewhere in the German Empire, retreated in great numbers into private spiritualities, and into the 'holiness' of Pietism, whose influence came to be felt far outside Germany. France, for its part, remained essentially Catholic throughout the nineteenth century. During the French Revolution the French Catholic Church lost most of its power, but in a Concordat (1801) signed by the Pope and Napoleon, after the war, most of the powers of the Church were restored—with the important exception that the Church could communicate with the Vatican only through the French government. The rest of the century saw a continual power see-saw of Catholics with Protestants and with the State. The barometer for the power of the Church, at any given time, was the number and influence of wealthy conservatives on the cultural landscape, for this persistent elite gentry remained faithful to the Catholic faith and its institutions.

Modernism. The Christian churches as a whole, and above all the intellectuals among them (especially in Germany as it turned out) were diligent in their efforts to reconcile science (the keyword of the Enlightenment) with Christian doctrine. Against the 'scientific' thinking of Enlightenment philosophes, the bold anti-Christian arguments of men like Diderot and Condorcet, in the preceding century, and the anti-clerical Higher Criticism of the Bible the Christian Churches foregrounded the thinking of luminaries like the Danish philosopher, Soeren Kierkegard, and the German liberal theologians Friedrich Schleiermacher and Adolf von Harnack. The result was a renaissance of theological reflection, which represented a large step forward in self-confidence for the Christian position. Arguments were skillfully shaped, to reconstruct the essential narratives of Christian scripture, and thus to represent the long scriptural tradition in its undoubted existential presence, while sidestepping the claims of 'scientists,' that religion was superstition.

Missions. It was a trademark of 19th century nationalist spirituality that nations competed vigorously for missionary presence in lands where belief was 'undeveloped,' or 'primitive.' The mindsets of this excursus of helpful people were in the highest degree diverse, and though the movement did much to spread knowledge and sometimes love for the Christian religion, it also stirred hostility among those who saw it as covert imperialism, patronizing head-patting—Dr. Albert Schweitzer referred to his African flock, at Lambarene, as my 'brothers, my little brothers'—or even ignorance, of the time-tested ways in which sub-Saharan Africans care for themselves.

Science

Science. In 1833 William Whewell coined the term *science*, a term wrapping up the bundle of inquiries—chemistry, physics, astronomy, biology, anatomy—which had formerly fallen into diverse categories, with particular favor toward 'natural philosophy,' a term linking this set of inquiries to the broad categories of human investigation congenial as far back as the Middle Ages. We were in 1833 still far from today's *strivium*, which includes humanities and social sciences, along with the natural sciences, as the framework for our knowing of the world.

Harvesting. If the seventeenth century opened vast inquiries into the skies, the movements of the planets, the relation of earth to the cosmos, the movement of the blood within our bodies; and the eighteenth century brought these bold methodological inquiries into *social awareness*, the nineteenth century can be characterized by its probing of specific realms of natural and mathematical inquiry—its concern with evolutionary biology, higher math and its application to physical processes, electrical currents, their structure in electromagnetic processes and their ultimate uses. In such devices as the telephone, and such beneficent insights as the germ theory of disease. Through its multiplying and ever better equipped facilities—labs and institutes—the science of nineteenth century western Europe was harvesting hard won discoveries and disseminating them through the increasingly democratized and prosperous middle class of a rapidly growing western Europe.

Darwin and Pasteur. Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*, which combined extensive world travel and observation, with the highest grasp of data-implications, offered mankind a glimpse of his developmental history, and inspired a reorientation, disorienting to many of the orthodox for its implication that we are

'higher apes'. Pasteur took us into the germ theory of disease, instructing us proactively how to take care of ourselves. He also invented a vaccine against rabies.

James Clerk Maxwell, and a host of fellow investigators, made advances in understanding the properties of electricity, among them electromagnetism and, with the input of brilliant mathematicians, the laws of thermodynamics and the principles needed for the construction of all manner of electrical motors, the basis for everything from our fans to our cars.

Gauss, Boole, Cantor. The study of mathematics grew increasingly abstract, and at the same time unpredictably practical, in the course of the nineteenth century. Carl Friedrich Gauss contributed to a fundamental understanding of algebra and geometry. Georg Cantor laid the foundations of set theory, which would play a creative role in symbolic logics. George Boole thought through to what we call Boolean algebra, which has proven essential to the construction of the personal Computer.

20th Century

VERBAL ARTS

Literature

Introduction. Into a century concealing within itself the forecast of two massive wars, the global threat of nuclear annihilation between two 'super powers,' and the civil extravaganza of the internet, with its startling possibilities (and threats) for the human community—into this apocalyptically pregnant century the preceding century made a fairly stately entrance. Novels, both experimental and technically daring, were offering promise of an upgrade in artistic expressiveness, an upgrade still not toxified by the odor of gasses and the stench of trench warfare: we talk Marcel Proust, whose *Remembrance of Things Past: Swann's Way* (1913) celebrates memory and the intricate hold it has, on the elaborate mini-ceremonies that compose upper middle class life; James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), the verbal tapestry constituting one ordinary guy's single day in Dublin, a day filled with the ordinary but as unordinary as any construction in language pushed to the point where it plays ruthlessly with its own meaning; Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* (1924) in which room still abounds for reflection on man's nature and destiny, albeit under the shadow of a war still being anticipated. If these texts herald a stately entrance, it is not that they do not have, behind them, a peace-shattering World War I, but that total war, globally comprehensive, is still (probably) unimaginable to these inheritors of a quieter century; inheritors still swathed in the intellectual disputes and inspirations generated by such as Nietzsche and Freud, and joined by poets of the greatness of Eliot (*The Waste Land*, 1922), and Rilke (*Sonnets to Orpheus*, 1923).

We have already named, in introducing the first quarter of the 20th century, some of the literary creators who most shaped the imaginative work of the entire century. Taking the pulse of the century, many critics have gone on from the point where we were simply introducing it, and opined that the literary greatness of the century headed for decline by the thirties. To claim this would of course have meant ignoring splendid writers who speak to our lived condition as eloquently as (and often more interestingly than) Homer himself. We are in the biggest of leagues, however, when we jump into the present calculation, and had best watch our words, before including with the greatest even a sturdy list like Huxley, Sartre, Grass, Kundera, Beckett, and Camus.

Where we are. Actually we have this time added another century, possibly, by a certain perspective, further depicting the chart of decline. We are deeply invested, now in a twenty first century dominated by the internet, the internet publishing business, the vulgarization of the creative literary process, which has been entrusted to innovators with little foundation, and the hot blooded industry of the best seller. An old fogey perspective, this, but meant to provoke, while shaking the dust off the lumpy bodies of anitiquity.

Language

Evolution. Nothing we have said about language evolution in the nineteenth century would not apply to what we have to say of the twentieth. Of the twentieth century in Western Europe, however, we will want to make the global statement that television, radio, the internet and its social media have greatly intensified the presence of language in the world of the individual citizen. The Western European is saturated with language, from waking to sleeping, or arguably while sleeping. The language he/she is constructing him/herself of is not the static challenge posed by written symbols to the monk in mediaeval Rouen, the shimmering word-tumult that a Renaissance dramatist like Marlowe might adore to see emerge from his pen, or the hewn marble of academic prose that a scholar like Peter Brown offers us as he dissects the mindsets of early Christian intellectuals like Augustine or Cassiodorus; the language the West European of our time is made up of the language of opinion surveys, podcasts, twitter feeds, ten minute read politics surveys, and then, over on the more personal side of the ledger, of the language of daily life, his daughter's upcoming trip, his mom's arthritis, and then of course the news, the news which is basically language and which forever constitutes and reconstitutes us.

Babel. If the above makes sense, it touches the way the language of Western Europe varies from the languages of the same area in the past when verbal symbols had the weight of execution and initiation behind them. It also touches the multiplication and diversification of identified and studied components in the makeup of western Europe. Not only is population explosion decisive for the issue in question, but also nationalism and the social self-awareness that goes with the mindset, the pleasure of being a located culture in a jigsaw puzzle of verbal schematics. (Is this not an identity gratification—think Estonian or Albanian, or the Turkic or Uralic components of the western European maze, languages as glad to be part of the whole verbal achievement of mankind as they had been assured, on the Tower of Babel, would one day be the case.)

Literature. And from the midst even of these twentieth century drivers of language change comes the fertile and tireless imagination of man, which in turns of skill like literature sets itself the challenge of inventing new ways for language to remake itself. To illustrate by a single case, what could be a continent wide instance of how imaginative language builds language itself, consider what James Joyce did for English by dismembering, reestablishing, and then representing the English language in the form it assumes in *Finnegans Wake* (1939), or even in Molly Bloom's soliloquy in *Ulysses*. In the latter instance Joyce makes us discover a kind of new language inside language, and through that discovery makes us restore the life giving sense of language as free possibility for mankind—always a tonic for writers, and eventually for new users; from whom even newer readers emerge, whether or not they read this or that particular text. So much for wide scale enrichment through language, as we find it in *Finnegans Wake*. The offering up of Joyce's *Ulysses* to his culture, to his language, and then, through translation, to every written language in Europe, was a much less recondite example of enabling. *Scandal* creating by its subject, a lady having an orgasm, the soliloquy of Molly Bloom lived, at its time, as the once unspoken possibility of saying it all out, of breathing forth your life through the energies of your language. Whether in high brow examples, like Joyce, or in high brow pop culture examples like those Jerry Seinfeld created—in christening *regifit*, *lowtalker*, *Jimmy legs* or *anti-dentite*—the growth points of language will continue to self-regenerate, like dendrites, from their own follicles.

Script

Typefaces. By 1900 there were two main typeface alternatives, for the Latin alphabet, in use in Europe. These were *Antiqua* and *Fraktur*. *Fraktur* was in use for German, the Baltic languages, Norwegian and Danish, while *Antiqua* was prominent in English and the Romance language speaking nations. Hitler banned the use of *Fraktur*, as a Jewish form of lettering. The simplification of formats—though they proliferate on the editing drop-down bar of my Mac—is evidence that for the majority of script users today the message has decisively conquered the medium, to circle back on Marshall McLuhan's thinking. In an age when the learning and use of cursive have sharply declined, when the writing act has been stripped of most of its existential features, and when the printed script loses all visual identity, and becomes simply a vehicle of thought (thought?) construction.

The aesthetic. Or is it so simple? Edward Johnston, an English designer working in the milieu of the Bloomsbury Group at the end of the nineteenth century, and well into the twentieth, carried into his philosophy of calligraphy the spirit of traditionalism and authentic care, which he felt being drained from

the script-instruction of his own time. In his *Writing and Illuminating, and Lettering* (1906) Johnston created a manifesto of traditionalism in the practice of the finest traditions of cursive writing, and proposed ways in which the youth of his culture could once more write with style. That plea came out of the world of Bloomsbury, and yet it falls still today on the ears of the beleaguered proponents of cursive in the elementary schools of Western European democracies.

Mythology

As puzzling as is the meaning of many ancient Norse tales, even more puzzling is the explosion of Norse culture into twentieth century popular culture in Europe—and worldwide, for such cultural waves don't even pause at national borders. We are speaking both high culture and low culture. Low culture might refer to the hundreds of video games now dominated by the figures—Thor, Odin, Freyja, Freyr—who slip easily into the tracer-violent scenarios that drive a wired youth culture into frenzies of simulated emotion. High culture could carry us all the way to the deep engagement with the Norse in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, or Rowlings' pick-ups on the werewolf Fenrir Greyback, in *Harry Potter*, or Ingmar Bergman's pained reflections onto Norse paganism in *Virgin Spring*. We will have to conclude, on this one, that the superheroes of Norse legend are among the world's greatest gifts to pop culture.

Folklore

Revival. The British folk revival (first version, 1890-1920; second 1945-1969) was one direction taken by folklore studies in the twentieth century, while a quite different direction was taken by the scientific classifiers working out of University studies.

Rock. The folk revivals of British traditional music illustrate a new phase of folklore studies, in which the students are becoming participants in the original work, as they study. The second phase of revival, in fact, leads us to focus on major British rock groups, who were working through their inspiration by traditional British folk music. The Beatles, as one startlingly successful example of this trend, worked their way through traditional British music traditions, enriched as we know it was by such diverse themes as Hindu chants, in order to become, themselves, some kind of folk legends of their own.

Aarne-Thompson. So profoundly different was the academic scholarly route, into and then becoming folk legends of their own, that one might rightly deduce that the presence of folk issues was uniquely fructifying to a nation's intellectual culture. For at the same time, in the early to mid twentieth century, that the second version of the British folk revival was exploding, so was the systematic study of folk lore motifs, initially the classificatory theme-index made by the Finnish scholar, Antti Aarne, and then translated and reclassified by the American folklore scholar, Stith Thompson, whose thematic folk lore index, the Aarne-Thompson-Uther index, was published in its first version in 1928. Criticisms of the system have abounded, but to this day we live with a feasible classification for identifying and inter relating patterns of world, not just British, folklore.

Folk museums. It might finally be noted, in connection with the living relation between culture and its lore, that there has long been an active movement, among British museologists, to increase the number and quality of folklore (or folkways) museums in Britain. The very vigor of this discussion, growing as it is from an already vibrant British museum culture, underlines the importance of folklore, in any of the senses we have given it, to the self-understanding and imaginative projections of a people.

VISUAL ARTS

Painting

Revolutions The rash of revolutions, which from the late eighteenth century were to tit-tat across the face of the industrialized world, from Mexico City to Saint Petersburg, by way of Paris and Washington, was to be part of yet another mind set reshape—postclassical, Renaissance, Early Modern, Modern—which have had their repercussions in painting, an art which prides itself on its inability to hide anything. This new world, which to the parents of a child born in 1930 seemed the 'modern world,' was to contain as many surprises in the art gallery as in the streets or the battlefields, and those surprises were all

interconnected. Let's think of a few of the things we saw in the gallery, while we were watching the news (or listening to it) with increasing astonishment. Let's call those things by the names of their painters: Ernst, *Ubu Emperor*, 1923; Picasso, *Guernica*, 1937; Chagall, *I and the Village*, 1981; Hockney, *A Bigger Grand Canyon*, 1998.

Paintings Is there anything revolutionary about the four paintings chosen above? Ernst, because he was a wit as well as a social critic, chose to make his parody of the grand dictator fit the comic mode of a top spinning in the sand. Nuff said. He mocks authority. In 1923 that might still have seemed naughty, but hardly dangerous. And yet there was a danger, for sure, involved with the statement Ernst was making. If you were a fellow mocker you were headed for political danger down the road. Look out! Picasso strikes out at the dictators, as Ernst mocked out. Ernst worked a cartoon, Picasso presented a torn and bloody screen covered with the ruins of a bombed Spanish village. Chagall, in 'I and the Village,' fills us in on the gentler side of political harshness, but in the way he makes the eyes of a man and of a goat fuse, he makes it clear that the modern painterly eye must be at home in the full range of imaginative settings. Hockney tweaks. Like Chagall he wants a revision of perception, but he does not give it to you, he proposes it. Bigger Grand Canyon, eh? Always adroit and at an angle, Hockney makes us see a strange world in a familiar way. Four small revolutions.

Modern. Modern goes on, demanding reasons why it should exist, at the same time that the immense ocean of visual symbols, the mirrors mirroring mirrors effect of our time, keeps slurping up the latest shocker with no apparent indigestion. True while it is, that painting— good painting-- reflects its time, it is nonetheless true that the historical categories in which painting develops are not fixed, even in hindsight. Where we are going in painting now, will to some extent depend on where we are going as a culture. Is it plausible that painting might, given its embeddedness in a world made of camera images and instant digital copies—not to mention competitor arts like the video—that painting might be replaced in the repertoire of human creations? The opposition will cry that nothing could replace the visual imagination, as a maker of worthy images of man. The journey charging forward at Lascaux, by that account, is destined to continue, by some creative mandate that is part of being human. A selfie and a self-portrait have nothing to do with one another.

Sculpture

Renovation. It is as if, with the twentieth century, Western European (and American) sculpture finds out how to shed some of its material bulk, and, at the same time, its rather limiting dependence on institutions for commissions. A reconception of sculpture is underway, which will sidestep some of the mass problems that shadowed the traditional sculptor's trade.

Revolution. The 'anthropological' put ups of such sculptors as Constantin Brancusi and Naum Gabo, portable and tactile, often wry, change the weight of the action of sculpture, which becomes less a statement than an offering. Wit is given room to enter the discourse. It might be mentioned, in relation to this turn of lightening in sculpture, that concurrently the *Ecole de Paris*, an influential working crossroads for European sculptors, was actively open to the impact of African sculpture, which was widely on view in earlier twentieth century Paris, and which opened for Western Europeans rare vistas of sculpture as color, humor, and movement.) Such Westerners as would have experienced African sculpture had been readied for such attacks on the expected, by the assaults Picasso and Braque had already undertaken, against all the canons reigning in western European art, at the time when they tossed a truly revolutionary Cubism into the ring of Western European perspectival options. Among those options, seized by many European sculptors, was the path of abstract and super real sculptures, sculptures of breakfast made of fur, mobiles that mocked the traditional weight of the sculptor, or, as in the work of Louise Nevelson, 'assemblages composed of found objects, mostly wood, sprayed in white, black, or gold paint and arranged in box like shelves occupying a wall...'

The horizons. Obvious we have been moving, here, into an horizon unanticipated by the depictive, though very diversely so, prior history of Western European sculpture. We could go on. But the dramatic point makes itself clear before us, that sculpture is only by tradition, not by necessity, limited to the stolid,

direct, head on expressions of the human personality. It is clear that what inspires Rodin, in the finest of his work, like 'Balzac' or 'The Thinker,' is a frozen in life—and perfectly and deeply human—representative; it is clear that Naum and Gabo, or the pop art sculptors who follow them, are making artefacts, or letting artefacts form, that will 'make you think.'

Architecture

Modernity. A brief summary can hardly cover the culture gaps that lead from Neoclassicism, the late Gothic, to the international modernity which had swept over Europe by the early nineteenth century. The best we can do is to let contrast underline the intensity of the transition, throughout western Europe, from a culture working off a classical base to a culture winging it with experiments in all the arts—sculpture, architecture, and painting.

Experimentation. Architecture's version of the Expressionism which moved Western painting was expressed—for example in the *Goetheanum* of Rudolf Steiner (1923)—by the use of new natural materials for construction, and by the incorporation of broad natural forms, often associated with broad socialist agenda. So called Art Déco was taking off in the mid twenties, with its reinforced concrete skyscrapers, vertical lines, and geometrical forms attached to the outside of the structure; buildings like the Art Déco Chrysler Building, in New York City (1930), put such public structures right in the public's eyes, where one hundred and fifty years earlier there would have been a sleek neo gothic cathedral. By the end of the decade of the nineteen thirties—and this indicates how rapidly 'modernist' styles were changing—the Great Depression and the critiques leveled by architects like LeCorbusier, had concluded that Art Déco was far too 'fancy'. This verdict and hinted at the speed with which, in the late thirties, the German Bauhaus movements—Gropius, Mies van der Rohe—was promoting a newly convincing streamlined style of public architecture, the style that marks the wonderful skyline of Chicago.

Philosophies. Some critics, tired of the self-conscious sparseness of Modernism, drifted in the direction of Regionalism—an effort to create historically lodged buildings inside universal settings; to follow Paul Ricoeur's question of 'how to become modern and to return to sources, how to revive an old, dormant civilization, and take part in universal civilization.' (An outstanding ideologue of this quest was Kenneth Frampton, whose 'phenomenological architecture' sought for the philosophical underpinnings of his constructions.)

Frampton. One might say that Frampton was concerned chiefly with reference in architectural structure, and thus came up against the then newest movement to deepen and change the presence of architecture in fast changing urban societies. *Postmodernism*, in the mid twentieth century sense, was broadly concerned with 'wit, ornament, and reference,' in architectural style. With Postmodernism enters the architectural debate about historicism and newness in architecture. On the horizon of this debate lie movements like New Classicism and New Regionalism, and ultimately—but there is no such thing in architecture—the wide movement of Deconstruction, which counts on careful undermining of classical structures, from within those various structures, and which thus explicitly invokes the collaboration of philosophers, like Jacques Derrida, with architects interested in buildings as works of thought.

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance

Ballet, immense and popular, was the strongest of the art forms to address the western dance public, at the outset of the 20th century. Many of the fresh impulses renovating Western ballet were Russian. The influx of dances and dancers from Diaghilev's Ballets Russes were felt most stunningly on the Paris stage, from where they spread throughout the continent, giving Western European ballet a glimpse of such transcendent dancing as that of Nijinsky, or directing on the level of that of Michel Fokine (1880-1942). (Interestingly enough the dancers of the Ballets Russes never performed in Russia, where they were seen as worse than bourgeois.)

Jazz. As the twentieth century unfolded, Latin-American and Jazz dances, imported from Afro-American and African cultures, and passing often through Spain, whose native culture was receptive, entered into the European dance world. That world was already opening out from inside into such civilized, and calmly bourgeois pleasures as tango teas, dance clubs, family style dance holidays. The English Style of dancing, as it came to be called, sanctioned five standard dances, which would be the hits of the first half of the century: quick step, waltz, foxtrot, tango and blues. My Mt. Vernon Iowa, U.S.A., neighbor, Dale—and his wife, Eileen—are my age; their chief recreation is trying to figure out how to handle these steps at dance night uptown every Friday. I can't hold a candle to them; scary octogenarians.

Folklore. The urbanization of major European cities, the invasion of radio and eventually television, into the sphere of the man on the street's musical life; all these factors militated against the traditions of folkdance which were rapidly enough fading in the Europe ripped from its roots by two World Wars. There were pockets of historical resistance, throwbacks reminding us of the old world—Basque country, Hungary—but soon (like right now) they had little left except to be 'picturesque.'

Academia. Interestingly enough, although there is much more to say about the explosions in dance theater, ballet ensembles, and intercontinental blending of ballet companies, bringing to the hometown in Europe strands of another and usually fascinating performance culture, it is less observed that in University cultures, from one point in Europe to another, there have been hitherto little noticed experiments, researches, and historical inquiries into the nature and history of dance that 'Departments of Dance' have become broadly staffed and innovative origin points for new understandings of dance in our lives. Does the work carried on in those centers suggest the kind of pause for rethink, of the nature of the Humanities, that the Enlightenment century offered to the European cultural conscience in general?

Music

Contrasts. With the modern period a great diversity of musical styles wins public favor. The contrast between them can be illustrated by a pairing off the Romantic tone poem composers, Debussy and Ravel, against the atonalists Schoenberg and Stravinsky.

Schoenberg; Stravinsky. Arnold Schoenberg stands out for his adoption of a twelve tone scale, in which all tones of the octave are serialized. The result is instrumental music which to the ear trained on the classical octave, seems harsh and discordant. Stravinsky, daring both in atonal experiments and in unprecedentedly brilliant and dashing collisions of sound and color, is the man whose *Rite of Spring* drove Parisian audiences dashing into the streets—so chromatic and surprising was that operatic work. By contrast with these two experimenters—and allies like Hindemith, Berg, Bartok—there were dream like composers of infinite charm—like Debussy and Ravel—who enchanted audiences with romantic inner poem landscapes. Multiple varying cultural milieux and ever wider choices for instrumentation both contributed to the broad palette of new experiences awaiting the growing musical audience during the first half of the twentieth century.

Johnny. Your son, Johnny, with his ear phones and his smart phone is not likely to be listening to Stravinsky, when his face fills with that distant look. For between the tonalists we cited here, as heralds of the new century, and the world of jazz, bepop, rock, and their innumerable offspring, there runs a gamut of 'modern music,' which is as different from Stravinsky as is the electronic and now digitalized world of our society and culture. Johnny is listening to the echoes of the digital revolution, as they play out in the difference between him and say his granddad, who may still enjoy opera, may even—possibly—enjoy Beethoven or Mozart, but who has no clue, and wants no clue, of the exquisite musical journey that has brought him to where he is.

Theatre

Change. Twentieth century rebellions in stagecraft, and in the very conception of what theater is, remind us that the 'performing arts' dimension of western drama has, until the twentieth century, and throughout such vivid changes as that from High Mediaeval to Renaissance theater, based itself on a fairly stable concept of what a theater is: a centrally focused tableau for representations of narrative

action—no different from what the earliest Greek playwrights presented to their avid audiences. By the twentieth century, in Western Europe, it was clearly time to reconsider this ancient notion of stage and performer; in the poetic dramas of Yeats and the later Ibsen, for instance, there was already abundant evidence of the readiness for change in stage, narration, and acting. We move into an era, starting in the late nineteenth century, in which new techniques of stagecraft, hostility to theatrical realism, and directorial inventiveness have started to remake the theater. In a twentieth century risking all on the battlefield, opening up and revaluing all its social assumptions, and inventing a technological framework for its self-image, it is no wonder that the performance arts of theater reflected the new world creating them.

Stagecraft. Daring new stage designers—the Swiss Adolph Appia, the British Edward Gordon Craig—led the way into a new theatrical aesthetic: according to Craig's *Art of the Theater* (1905) 'the stage director alone would be responsible for harmonizing every aspect of the production—acting, music, colour, movement, design, make up, and lighting...' The path was henceforth open for a wave of new conceptions of stage and what occurs on it. In what turns out to be the century of the director—as far as the theater is concerned—we see a succession of brilliant experiments: Max Reinhardt's sense of the open theater, which led him to stage some of his finest Berlin work out in the air, in circus lots or empty urban spaces; the openness of Italian Futurism, in which Pirandello could reclaim existential mystery for the very thing a play is, and the stage itself, among some of its directors, could become a playground for acrobatics; Erwin Piscator's expressionist theater in Germany (1920's), with its use of expensive machinery like escalators and moving stairways, or cantilever bridges moved up and down; the new (mid-century) French theaters which surrounded the audience on three sides. This is not to say that the century that created Beckett and Brecht, Pirandello and Shaw, was all about technique, but that the European theatrical tradition had settled down to review and revise some of its major characteristics.

Cinema

The Years of Launching.

EARLY STAGE: LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY TO WW II

Light. Already as early as 1802 Humphrey Davy had experimented with electric light bulbs, and had devised a practical way to illuminate a room. There were experiments galore, throughout the century, leading up to what is acknowledged as the birthday of the movies, the Lumière Brothers' presentation of the first paying film, on December 28, 1895. The film was entitled *Workers leaving the Lumiere Factory*, and was shown in the basement of the Grand Café in Paris. What had in effect been an army of scientific workers and brilliant tinkerers (like Thomas Edison), in Europe and the United States, had achieved a result with consequences which none, even at the end of the nineteenth century, had been able to imagine—the launching of an industry which would prosper at least through the next century—who knows how much longer—and would enrich/modify/and exploit the possibilities of human artistic expression. It was not long, of course, before the greed of an industry in formation had taken charge of the destiny of an invention.

France. The essential inventions, for establishing the new industry, had been mastered by the first World War, and the Europe which had settled on the path of nationalism, and war, was quick to lay its diverse claims to film mastery. The French patriotism, to which Napoleon had long before given the go ahead, had been sharpened by advances in math, physics, and biology, in the course of the nineteenth century, and was a natural launching pad for French cinema, in which the founding achievements could reasonably be claimed by Paris. Prior to WW I, consequently, French cinema dominated the European scene, making itself particularly known for brilliant comedy, as well as for the *Film d'art* movement, founded in 1908, which produced a large flurry of films dealing with everyday life in France.

Competition. Before the start of the First World War, almost seventy per cent of global films derived from studios in Paris. Importantly enough, though, the War itself depleted the growing French film industry, which was gradually pushed aside both by Hollywood, which was not screening seventy percent of its films in Paris, and by the burgeoning German film industry. We are on the cusp of a film world in

which national competition will drive many of the gestures, of what is in itself a kind of world war for public attention. We are still in a film world, however, in which the prestige of the French film achievement is highly respected, even by its competitors. Between 1920-1930, and despite the exhausting aftermaths of WW I, French cinema (the so called New Wave) had been making quiet and forceful advances: with jump cuts that gave the director new freedom, with wide lenses and hand held cameras, that reduced cost and maximized 'the sense of actuality,' and with new freedoms in shortcutting narrative developments—freedoms from too much 'telling the story.'

Italy. From 1922-1943, Italy developed under the thumb of a rigid dictator, Benito Mussolini. It was the promotion of a national film industry, under Mussolini, that led Italians into the streets, in the thirties and forties, not simply to view and film, but to size up the ravages of war torn cities, the kind of sizing up that was to lead into the world-influential Neo realism of Italian cinema. Pre WW II Italian realism was on the street realism, the results of free inquiry with hand held cameras, into the many impoverished areas of Italy, and, after the second War, into the culture of the streets which we see so unsparingly (and often touchingly) outspread before the lenses of Rossellini, Fellini, and Antonioni. To these great directors the working class is the only cinematic hero, and a tough one at that. In 1932 the Italian cinema elite established the first Venice Film Festival, while *Cinquecitta* was active, throughout the 1930's, as the first film studio complex, and the working milieu for Italy's star directors.

Germany. Expressionism—which has such forefathers as Edvard Munch, August Strindberg, and Sigmund Freud—emerged as the dominant practice of German film in the early part of the twentieth century, as well as one of main modernist thrusts of German music, painting and poetry. Where French film of the twenties highlighted the realism of the streets of France, and Italian Neorealism discovered the unique beauty and pathos of those streets, and of many of the people who live in them, German film—check out Fritz Lang and his *Dr. Mabuse*—was fixated on film noir and horror (of the *Nosferatu*, vampire sort).

FROM THE END OF WWII TO 2100

Classics. It is not easy to wrap and package a living tradition like that of Western European film, especially at a particular period in its development. We have made some initial notes on the early stages of Western European film, through the cataclysmic World Wars that both allowed for rapid film development, and left conscientious auteurs—Godard, Bergman, Fassbinder—wondering how to deal with the individuals who have come out on the other side of war. Perhaps we should take this second stage, of our observations, to reflect on the directions adopted by national film industries in the years from 1950-2000. We find that the influence of Hollywood has grown in Europe, far out of proportion to the smaller budgets of the European national film industries, that we live, today, in a cinema climate in which most of the well heeled filming in the world is bankrolled out of California, but in which independent (and nationally backed) European film industries consistently generate the highest level of auteurship.

Germany. Fassbinder and Herzog are living sensibilities of the postwar. Close up to their societies, these auteurs live as awareness of the hurt around them—drug trafficking, purposelessness, alienation, sexual dysphobia, infinite loneliness; the whole package of post war urban ills for which we have to blame a half century of large scale wars—and for which we are still paying the penalty in our contemporary world. Take a run of five films, for example: 1969 (*Katzelmacher*, Fassbinder); 1969 (*Gods of the Plague*, Fassbinder); 1973, *All Fear eats the soul*, Fassbinder; 1974 (*Kaspar Hauser*, Herzog); 1975 (*Fox and Friends*, Fassbinder). Unemployment, immigration pains, social maladjustment, underworld corruption on the bar stool and police raid level, blank social disorientation: the ills of the post war bust in central Europe. There is much else of high value: the salutes to the America of trends and dreams—Wim Wenders' *Kings of the Road* (1976) or *Alice in the Cities* (1977)—a salute which flashcards the dreams and hopes of a society still on its knees from defeat, and looking to potential. There is the off the charts dreaming of Werner Herzog, who in *Fitzcarraldo* (1982) or *Heart of Glass* (1976) evokes heroisms, tragic senses of human evil, and transcendent moves in soul which dwarf the social evils that surround them.

France. Grab a seventeen year period out of French film, from the second half of the twentieth century. Isn't there a consistency, as we suspected there was among the grab bag of terrific German films we

highlighted in the previous section? Cocteau, *Orphée*, 1950; Bresson, *Diary of a Country Priest*, 1951; Bresson, *A Man Escaped*, 1957; Resnais, *Hiroshima mon amour*, 1960; Godard, *Week End*, 1967. In the crush of post war anomie, the individual thrashes through a life looking for identity points, for 'what he is.' Unsatisfied with viewing himself as a set of information points in a bureaucratic file, condemned to death for an answer, he claims his *Existenz*, as the war time French existentialists cared to put it: he is that evanescent soul inside us, which is looking for reassurance. Bresson hits it on the head—as does Bergman in *Winter Light* (1963)—when he takes us inside the mind of a believer, in fact a pastor, who can no longer summon his faith clearly. (In literature he reminds us of Unamuno's priest, in *San Manuel Bueno Martir* (1931), who has lost his faith but cannot bring himself to confess it to his congregation, and therefore has to live a long priestly life as a lie.) The world crushing the individuals in these five films is a world Godard stares in the face in *Week-end*, the portrait of a society in a sustained downspiral, the highways no longer functional, personal values no longer operative, societies reduced to armed camps.

Italy. Three films from 1949: Rossellini, *Germany, year 0*; *Bitter Rice* directed by De Santis; de Sica's *Bicycle Thief*. Only four years after the end of the war that left Italian cities in conditions ranging from rubble to chaos. And add two films from a little later: *La Strada* (1956) and *Amarcord* (1974), both directed by Fellini. A five film sample of the Italian turn in postwar suffering. Just look at the urban streets in three of these films. Just look at the havoc of time for the little guy or gal on those streets, just look at the working man or woman's condition, if he loses a precious bicycle, if she is broken down to working in the literally killing rice fields of the north. Fellini flavors this bitter historical sociology with a retrospective film like *Amarcord*, which rehearses his own boyhood. The sweetness of time is greatly spread across us, as we walk again the streets and familiar practices of his own home town.

Sweden. Sweden means Bergman (1918-2007), and Bergman means a voluminous statue of strong, searching, daring, experimental films, a few of them turned on a spit of wit, a few tragic, very few that do not surprise and provoke. 1951 *Summer Interlude*; 1955 *Smiles of a Summer Night*; 1940 *Virgin Spring*; 1962, *Winter Light*, and *The Silence*; 1966, *Persona*. Bergman is capable of a light turn—*Summer interlude* evoking a summer of young love, but one overshadowed by the sense of doom, and by the death of the protagonist's lover—a film thus about the interhatching of tragedy and joy-- while Bergman's *The Silence* arrates the trip of two sisters and a child through a mysterious post war city, with which they cannot communicate, while the sisters' alienation from one another grows silently toxic, in the halls of a vast and almost unoccupied hotel. These films are Bergman, his step into the dark regions his time was opening up to him. *Persona* takes the adventure into the mysteries, and terrors, of personal identity, while *Virgin Spring* is a kind of mediaeval horror tale, about the rape of an innocent girls, and the long trip grace must take, to restore beauty to a destroyed world.

The Launching of great art. Western European postwar cinema, like world cinema, is of global extent and power. It expresses nationalisms, gives a voice to spokespeople who are far ahead of their time's insight, opens up opposition view points, and performs all of these achievements in a public arena—a film is not a book that you take into your study and meditate with—which is a full time scenario for debate. Without question the post war European film serves all of these essential functions, opens all these avenues for social growth and intelligence. It stops nowhere, and in our latest time, the productive time engulfing us we inscribe these words on screen, Western European cinema, which has long felt the financial support of the Hollywood Industry, feels the dramatic breath of new technologies—shall we say **digital cinema**, for shortcut—and more broadly for streamlined ways to guarantee the commercial profitability of film distribution. One point to be made, in the face of this inevitable economization of an Industry, which is more directly a public commodity than is literature, is that great film looks to be created into an existentially pressing situation. This is no prophetic weisheit, but still it appears to be borne out by the example of the major postwar cinema sampled above. The special roughness of the twentieth century clearly demanded existential art, and got it. The same cannot be assumed for today's western European (or any other) cinema, that gets involved with itself as technique, and loses its status as a deep response to life.

Science. Film has its deep origins in the electricity experimentations of such British scientists as Michael Faraday and Humphry Davy, in the nineteenth century. These men opened up the processes by which eventually, around 1900, photography would be made possible in all its fantastic ramifications. Is film

essentially tied to its mechanical facilitation processes? Is its destiny more closely related to technique and materials than to 'movements of spirit'? How does film relate to literature in this regard?

Nationalism. What is the relationship of nationalism to the development of film in Western Europe? Was nationalism a stimulus to competition, or a drag against cooperation and alliance?

What is the relation of the film industry in Europe to the formation of the European Union in 1993? Is the quality level of the Western European film closely involved with the members' relation to the EU? On a broader level, would you say that independent film enterprises are more likely to succeed than institution-backed efforts?

WORLDVIEW

Philosophy

Themes. Many themes share high prominence in twentieth century philosophy; themes with ample but intertwined roots in the thought of earlier centuries. Among these themes are *analytical philosophy*, particularly practiced in England, and *existential philosophy*, prominent in Western Europe with our previously discussed Kierkegaard and Nietzsche among its antecedents. Movements like *Thomism* pronounce their continuing energy, rooted in the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, while both *phenomenology* and *poststructuralism* play unexpected riffs on the classical problem of how we know. It is worth note that the issues arising, in most of these 'movements,' find language at their center., and time and again revert to the question of 'what language is.'

Existentialism. Existential philosophies take it as their starting point that the engagement of the thinker's self is already, from its thought act, a powerful component of the thinker's position. We always think, Existentialism puts it, 'in a situation,' as historical beings fraught with unsureness but impelled to formulate. We have linked Kierkegaard and Nietzsche to the foundations of this kind of philosophy as action; for both men the discovery of personal authenticity, in the knowing act, has much to do with the quality of that thought. Of the western European thinkers, whom we would link to this movement, are the French Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1960), Albert Camus (1913-1960), and Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973).

War. It will be no surprise, given the thrust of this philosophy and the fact that it was particularly generated by participants in the second World War, who were by definition engaged by their situation in the actions of their minds, that the participants in this movement were also writers—in whose novels they embedded individuals faced with the basic conditions of daily life—boredom, anxiety, and hope.

Analytic philosophy. The movement we now call Analytic philosophy takes its impulse from German philosophy, but for the most part, after it finds its power, remains on the British side of the channel. At the roots of the movement lies the thinking of the Logical Positivists, much of it generated in Berlin and Vienna in the first quarter of the twentieth century, fundamentally aligned with the assumptions of empirical science, and in particular with the niceties of verification. Such logicians and mathematicians as Rudolf Carnap and Bertrand Russell led the way to the use of symbolic logic and mathematics to dissect thought structures. The analytic movement was given great impetus by the work of the Oxford professor Ludwig Wittgenstein—*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1922)—which laid the foundations for what became called 'ordinary language philosophy,' and was furthered by British thinkers like Gilbert Ryle and J. L. Austin.

Phenomenology was developed by Edmund Husserl (*Ideas*;1913), who generated many precise and original innovations in the study of consciousness and doing, attaining new levels of analysis of the phenomena of mind. The phenomena of mind capture the central attention of many productive successors: Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) whose *Being and Time* produced a lucid and detailed analysis of the role of mind in formulating the position of thought in Being; Maurice Merleau-Ponty, whose *Phenomenology of Perception*(1945) continually blends innovative perspectives in empirical psychology with precise methods for examining phenomena in mind.

Post structuralism, whose deepest triggers lay in the work of the Frenchman Jacques Derrida (*On Grammatology*, 1967), came onto a continental scene in which Structuralism (Levi-Strauss; de Saussure) had barely completed its renovations of the ways we format the structures of our thinking, stressing the constructive manners in which sign and signifier are interwoven for the construction of meaning. Deconstruction reversed the implications of Structuralism, positing a reality in which mind never reaches the signified, but in each quest for the stability of the signified ends up generating new signifiers, placing the object to be known at the end of an ever unreached quest. In this quest, man the *maker* of language is converted into man the *product* of language.

Thomism. Though the revival of Thomism, a contemporized remodel of the thinking of Saint Thomas Aquinas, is hardly a full scale movement, within twentieth century thinking, it is worth attention for two reasons. Its proponents—both theist and atheist—have advanced stunning philosophical perspectives. And, reason two, by attending to this development we can illustrate the richness by which the Western European philosophic (and in this case Classical) tradition can at times return onto itself enrichingly. In the present instance, a variety of thinkers, both British and American (MacIntyre, Anscombe, and Foote) work with the thought of Saint Thomas Aquinas to reformulate a world-explanatory account, by which to give the meaning inherent to it, to a world-view that orthodox Christian theology established long in the past.

Religion

The 20th century proved dangerous, eventful, and full of new moves, within the religious orbit of Christianity. It also bore abundant testimony to the presence of other faiths than the Christian—Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish-- in the formation of the Western European religious landscape.

Danger. It was the stated goal of Soviet Communism, after the October Revolution of 1917, and until the Fall of the Berlin Wall, in 1989, to eradicate religion from society, and to this end the Russian government applied its full force, for much of a century, to reduce the number of priests and churches in Soviet held territories—which included many of the countries of Western Europe—and to suppress religious thought and expression in every possible way. (Many of the surviving victims of this policy emigrated to Western Europe.) At the same time—from the 1920's to the end of WW II in 1945—persecution of Christians who defended the Jews advanced harshly under Nazism, many of whose foes, in this matter of genocidal survival, were Christians, often martyrs to their faith by saving individual Jews, or on the official level, and especially through the proclamations of Pope Pius XI, whose actions saved hundreds of thousands of European Jews.

Events. Secularism, as would be expected given its growth in 19th century Europe, continued apace, with polls abundantly verifying the facts, that the majority of Europeans were neither believers in God, Christians, nor church goers, a state of affairs which provoked serious theological and liturgical rethinking throughout the western European Christian world. At the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) Pope Pius VI and the Eastern Orthodox Patriarch, Athenagoras, met to repair the historically strained relations of their two churches—a defensive move for the traditional Christian community, as it prepared itself to resist the ever rising tide of secularism. The Second Vatican Council itself went on to implement a number of the changes, in Catholic liturgy and international relations, which were directed at enriching the interface between the Church hierarchy and its worshippers: the text of the mass itself was freshly translated/edited for user clarity; permission was given for the mass to be given in vernacular languages—at the decision of the local bishop; the position of the priest, in offering up the mass, was changed, so that, with his face to the congregation—instead of to the altar—he was in direct contact with the congregation, as he carried out his sacrifice. This example is offered as an indicator, of the details into which the Catholic Church was prepared to reach, in its efforts to stem the tide of religious indifference in Europe. The Protestant Churches, faced with the same issues of secularism, may be said to have responded with particular brilliance in the abundance with which they opened to new versions of evangelical fervor, as well as in the creation of a body of theological writings—by such brilliant thinkers as the martyred pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and by daring academic thinkers like Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Rudolf Bultman.

Science

Globalism. The omnipresence and often culturally modifying presence of science, and of what science makes possible, is perhaps the determining characteristic of the history of Western Europe. (We will stick with European examples, here, but it should be noted that the scientific achievements of the United States—and many other developed countries—were by the twentieth century completely intertwined with those of Europe.) The internet, one of those creations of science, is one forceful reason why work in the sciences is no longer confined to any single nationality.

Immersion. The immersion of the twentieth century citizen, in the complex discoveries and creations of science, can for our purposes divide into two categories of experience: ‘discoveries’ and ‘technologies,’ where technologies will mean tools, and ‘discoveries’ will be new knowledges or programs of understanding.

Technologies. For the ancient Greeks, *techne* (art, skill) and *technologia* (technology), denoted lesser accomplishments, like the makings of the person who works with his hands. This kind of labor, readily contrasted with work of the mind (*nous*), was expected of subordinates, or at best of what at the time would have passed for engineers, who worked with the face of nature, to modify it. The work of wisdom, theory or *philosophia*, was devoted to gaining intellectual grasps of the human condition or of the broad world of the human. In the terms of our own day, which has revalued the relation of tech to wisdom and understanding, both theory and tool are treasured, but what strikes us most is the proliferation of the tool—which of course impacts us where it counts, in our adjustment to the practical uses of ‘being-in-the-world.’ As we sit plucking at our laptops, reaching out for a sip of powdered java from our plastic cup, then rise to turn off the light in the study and to toddle upstairs to our nylon pajamas and processed cotton bedsheets, we harvest the labor of many cunning ‘technologists,’ the men and woman paid for their labor, in our time, to fashion matter into useable new life-tools for a facility-loving new version of *homo sapiens*.

‘Higher sciences,’ ‘Discoveries.’ Experiments devoted to ferreting out the human genome and tracking DNA; observations and conclusions concerning the nature of time and the relativity of time to the position of the observer; the exploration of the foundations of geometry and algebra; the parsing of the implications of quantum mechanics which, like relativity theory, requires readjustments of perspective even on the ‘common sense’ level of daily life-interpretation: all these upgraded expectations, for those who want to understand and in many instances to employ, the world we’re in, derive from great scientific pioneers, the majority European, who in the twentieth century carried their post-Renaissance history to formerly unimagined limits.