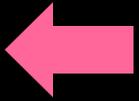
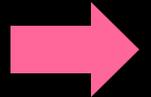


LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD



Plato, Aristotle & Mimetic Imagination
Pico & Rise of Humanist Imagination



The Critical Imagination
Bacon's Idols of the Mind

FROM PLATO TO PICO

RISE OF HUMANISM

1. Reorientation of imagination as a human power
(from mimetic to creative; the idea of “Man”)
2. Expansion of imagination of human society
(textual culture, education; focus on *individual*)

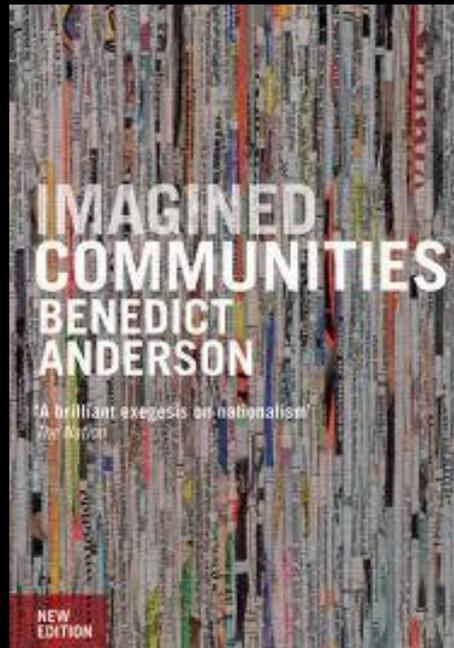
3 IMPORTANT HISTORICAL PHENOMENA

Renaissance Humanism (14 th -15 th C)	[philosophical]
Gutenberg Revolution (1450+)	[technological]
Protestant Reformation (1517+)	[religious]

GUTENBERG REVOLUTION

REVISION OF CULTURAL IMAGINATION

- Printing Press, 1450
- Gutenberg Bible, 1455
- Early mass culture



PROTESTANT REFORMATION

REVISION OF RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION

- 1517, Luther's *The Ninety-Five Theses*
- Criticism of Catholic dogma, institutional corruption
- translation of the Bible into German vernacular

A turn toward the individual: laity have right and duty to read the Bible; another *re-imagined relation to divine*

God
Bible
Church / Papacy
People



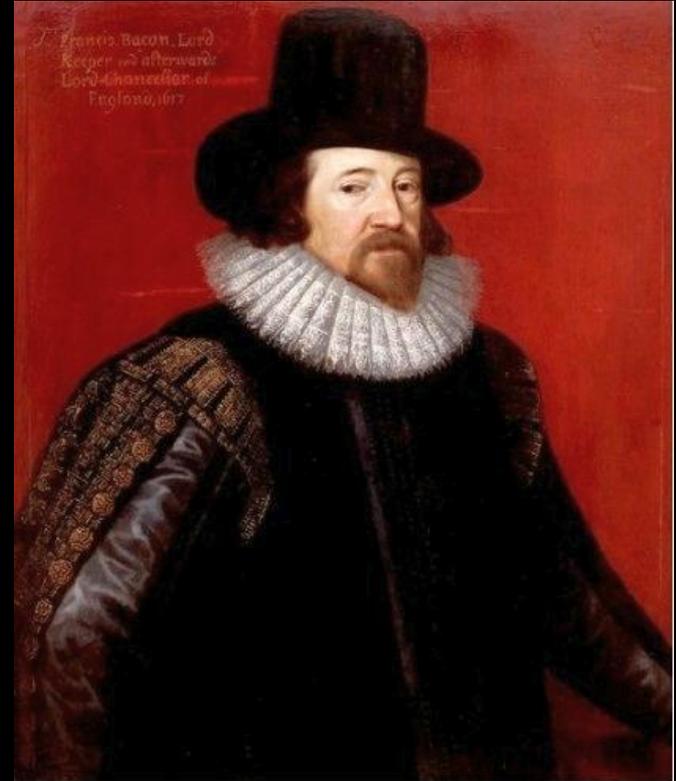
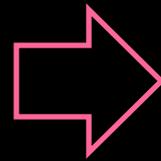
God
Bible
~~Church / Papacy~~
People

EARLY HUMANIST THEMATICS

1. Concept of the human being as having *unique powers*: will, memory, reason, etc.
2. Pico (1463-1494) Fated and Fallen? No, we're "wondrous" and unique in the great "chain of being"
3. Paracelsus (1493-1541): alchemy, imagination as *divine power within the human*
4. Giordano Bruno (1548-1600): idea of *self-development*, imagination as creative source, transformative power, provides access to the hidden forces and cosmic design (cf. Gnosticism)

QUIZ 1: BACON

PICO / REN. HUMANISM VS. BACON



IX. “The cause and root of nearly all evils in sciences is this – that while we falsely admire and extol the powers of the human mind we neglect to seek for its **true helps**”

BACON'S CORRECTIVES

CONTEXTS

1. Scholasticism and dogma; logical “demonstrations”
2. Philosophical criticism; critique of belief & *human* powers
3. Focus on human understanding of *Nature*
4. *Moderns* vs. the *Ancients*
5. New appreciation of *technology*

FRANCIS BACON (1561 - 1626)

1. Instauratio Magna/“Great Renewal”
2. Novum Organum/“The New Organon”
3. Refers to Aristotle’s Organon (6 works on logic)

NOVUM ORGANUM / NEW METHOD

Preface : dismal state of affairs, summary of method

I-IV : Interpretation of Nature, “nature working within”

V-XVIII : Critique of current knowledge, subtlety of nature

XIX-XXXVIII : Anticipations and Interpretations, human understanding

XXXIX+ : The Idols of the Mind

XLV-LII : Tribe (human nature)

LIII-LVIII : Cave (individual)

LIX-LX : Marketplace (language, discourse)

LXI-LXV : Theatre (dogmas, philosophical systems)

THE IMPATIENT HORSE



THE OBELISK ANALOGY

A “mad effort and useless combination of forces.”

The human mind, especially the imagination, is unruly and prone to all sorts of errors in the contemplation of nature **without** “helps”



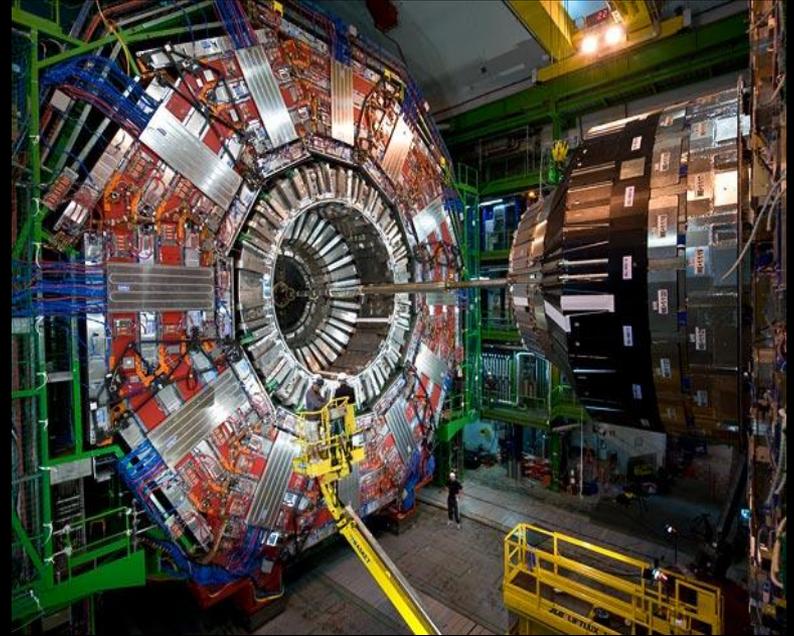
“HELPS” OF HAND AND MIND

HELPS/INSTRUMENTS OF HAND (TECHNOLOGY)

1. Magnifying glass >> LHC
2. Books >> Computer

HELPS/INSTRUMENTS OF MIND (THEORY/METHODS)

1. Pythagorean Theorem >> Standard Model
2. Literacy >> Media Poetics



A SHIFT IN FOCUS / NEW FOCI

1. From **Divine** to **Nature**; interpretations of natural world; “nature working within”
2. Human beings related to nature, not to divine image or idea of “Man”; “**Nature** to be commanded **must be obeyed**”
3. Human **imagination is unruly**, but correctible
4. Relation between **technology** and **criticism** of human powers and limits; (“helps” of hand and mind)
5. Practical orientation, emphasis on **technical invention over contemplation** (Cf. Plato through Pico+, ~2000 yrs)

SOME BACONIAN THEMES

1. We can control and correct human thought through *method and technology*
2. Hard division of Science/Religion:
Religion = revelation of God's Will
Science = contemplation of God's Power
3. Knowledge should improve human life
4. Experience, senses are central (sorry, Plato, Pico)
5. Our powers are limited; our "nature," prone to error