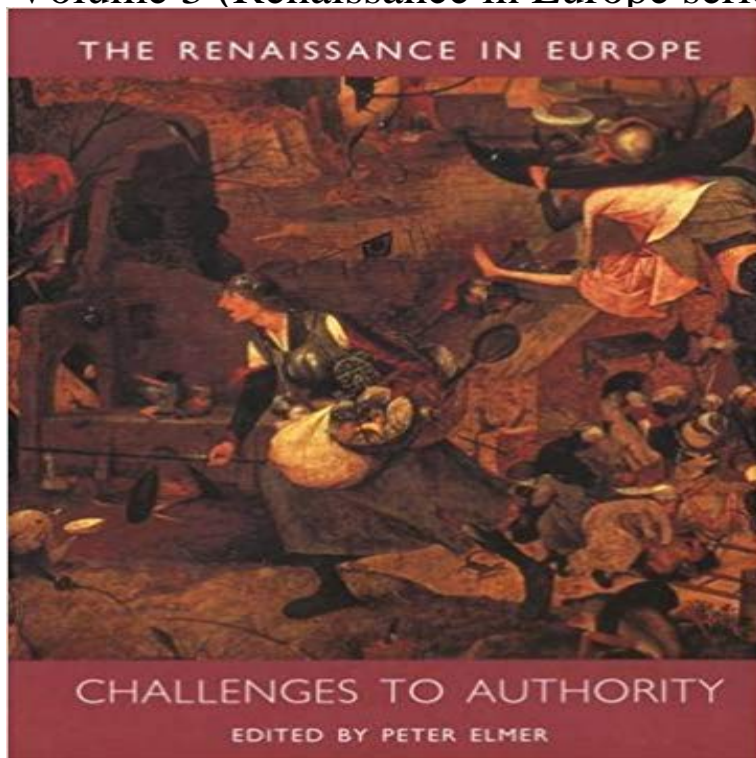


Challenges to Authority: The Renaissance in Europe: A Cultural Enquiry, Volume 3 (Renaissance in Europe series)



The Renaissance, both as a concept and a period, continues to generate lively controversy not only among academics but also among the general public. Ever since the publication, in 1860, of Jacob Burckhardt's classic study of the Renaissance in Italy, scholars have disputed the origins of the movement and its subsequent influence on European culture and thought. This sequence of three course texts and two anthologies, published in association with the Open University, explores the Renaissance from the interdisciplinary perspective of history, literature, drama, religion, the history of art, philosophy, music and political thought. It provides students and general readers with an unprecedentedly thorough analysis of this absorbing stage in the development of Western civilization. The evolution and reception of Renaissance culture was mediated by developments in various other spheres of early modern life and culture. Foremost among these were the religious changes initiated by the Protestant Reformation which form the basis of the first three chapters. Religious and cultural developments in Germany are contrasted with sixteenth-century Spain and further explored through the study of the picaresque novel, *Lazarillo de Tormes*. Alongside the Reformation, the place of Renaissance science or natural philosophy is subjected to critical evaluation. New approaches in this field are illustrated by case studies on the anatomical revolution, Galileo and court patronage, and Paracelsus. Subsequent chapters explore the Renaissance fascination with witchcraft and demonology, in both learned discourse (*Picos Strix*) and popular drama (*The Witch of Edmonton*). The volume concludes with a study of one of the most influential and provocative writers of the sixteenth century, Michel de Montaigne, whose *Essays* provide stimulating material for a reassessment of the impact of the

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