

## Lecture 3

### THE RENAISSANCE

The life of the saint which we just heard<sup>1</sup>, St. Paul of Obnora, gives us an insight into a civilization which is exactly the opposite of the civilization we are studying now -- the Western civilization since the Schism, since the Middle Ages. In the traditional Orthodox civilizations such as that of Russia, very similar events repeat themselves. That is, there are barbarian invasions, monasteries may be laid waste, the monastic life at one time flourishes, at another time it grows lax, and then again it flourishes. Saints rise up, the devil is constantly attacking; there are invasions from outside. And all this happens without disturbing the basic harmony and equilibrium of the civilization. The same thing is true of Byzantium. The same thing is true in the West before the period of the Schism.

There is nothing that we could call "new," because once Christianity had been proclaimed, once Christ came and established His Church, there is nothing more that can be new. This is the preparation for the end of the world, and people who are penetrated by the principles of Orthodox tradition do not expect anything new in this world.

In the West, on the other hand, beginning already, as we saw in the last lecture, with the high Middle Ages, with Scholasticism, Francis of Assisi, Joachim of Flores, the element of romance entering into religion, the new political ideas--there is already the idea that something new is happening. Christianity is being improved upon. There's a search for some kind of "new Christianity" even though they do not use that word yet. And this emphasis is increased in the period we study now -- that of the Renaissance, the period after the Middle Ages, roughly 1300-1600. We will find in this period that what began in the Middle Ages is already now becoming an epidemic. And there are things that happened which are totally new in the history of mankind; or, if they did exist before, now attain some kind of completely new level.

The purpose of these lectures, to repeat, why we should be studying the development of modern mentality, is so that we might understand why the world is the way it is today, what has gone into forming our own minds; so that we can be Orthodox by rising up against all false ideas, all false formation in our minds, and seeing what is the true Orthodox mentality and the true Orthodox teaching.

Unfortunately, the end of this modern period which begins with the Schism has produced a generation of people who are quite unaware of the past, and therefore a person who does not know what is his past, very easily becomes the victim of his environment which is based upon an anti-Christian philosophy. He becomes this by everything which is in the life around him. And we are trying to understand those things which are in the life around us from a deeper philosophical point of view, so that even the music in the supermarket becomes something philosophical. It has back of it an idea which is supposed to give us a certain feeling which takes us away from Christ.

And so the purpose of this study is Orthodox self-defense. This whole course is an examination of modern history from the point of view of Orthodoxy, which is rather a novel way to do it. Because all history books are written from other points of view; either they begin with the idea that there is a Dark Ages and then "enlightened" modern ages. And everything is criticized from the point of view of modern, enlightened scientific world outlook. Or else there's another school which says that Christianity, Catholic Christianity is the standard; and the thirteenth century is the pinnacle, and everything else is a falling away from that. And there are other points of view.

But our point of view is Orthodoxy. And from the point of view of Orthodoxy, it should be said that the period of the

Renaissance is actually much less significant than the period of the Middle Ages. [During] the period of the Renaissance we see the most spectacular changes and differences from the ancient Christianity; but the actual period when the big changes occurred, which were later to lead to the Renaissance and beyond that, occurred, as we saw in the last lecture, in the period right after the Schism.

After this everything else becomes a logical deduction from that first change. Because once Orthodoxy has been left behind, there is nothing but the playing out of the new principles which came in. And all the principles which began in the Middle Ages will be worked out right up to the present day, so that actually today the forces which are shaping history are just the same as they were in the thirteenth century, only they have attained now a more advanced form.

The period after the Middle Ages is called the period of the Renaissance, the rebirth, that is, rebirth of antiquity. It is the age of so-called Humanism. And it's very clear already what is the basis of this new epoch.

We saw that the period of the Middle Ages was dominated by Scholasticism, that is, the reason which becomes autonomous, reason which is placed above faith. And this reason, as Kireyevsky very well saw, in the nineteenth century when he was criticizing the West from the Orthodox point of view, very quickly turned against Christianity. First it was supposed to be the handmaiden of faith and serve Christianity and prove all the dogmas of faith and prove a great many other things also based upon authority, the authority both of Scripture, of some early Fathers, mostly Augustine, and Aristotle, since it was believed that Aristotle had the true view of nature.

But in the age of the Renaissance, this reason turned *against* religion. Because if it's [reason is] autonomous, it's able to develop its own principles; there's no reason why it should be bound to the religious content. And also we saw in the Middle Ages that the great movements -- Francis and Joachim -- were very monastically, ascetically oriented. But in the Renaissance, there was a complete reaction against that. And again, this simple matter of the context in which the new ideas arose changed; and therefore no longer were people interested in either monasticism or having reason serve theology. And so we find in this period that the idea of monasticism and asceticism is treated extremely negatively, because the interest in the world has now been awakened.

And so it was natural that at this period Western man turned away from the Church to pagan Greece and Rome, the monuments of which were all over the West and especially in Italy. And one writer has even said that at this period, pagan Greece and Rome had their revenge on Christianity, because that pagan, antique, ancient civilization had been overthrown by Christianity. The ancient pagan civilization which placed *man* first, was first overthrown by Christianity, and now when reason turned against Christianity, this ancient paganism had its revenge on Christianity, being united with reason. And in its turn this paganism gave a great impetus, a great push to an ideal of total worldliness.

So the ideal of the Renaissance is the ideal of *natural man* and also of a natural religion which is understandable to reason without any special revelation. One of the great humanists in the north, Erasmus, found in Greece what he called the philosophy of Christ, that is, in pagan ancient Greece. "When I read certain passages of these great men,' he wrote of the Greeks, 'I can hardly refrain from saying, "St. Socrates, pray for me.'"<sup>2</sup> Of course he probably did not pray to the saints, and did not pray to Socrates. What he means to say is: these pagan people are taking the place of the saints.

So it is in this epoch that *man* was discovered. And there is a tremendous interest in *oneself*, the individual. There is a very

good book on the subject of the Renaissance in Italy by Jacob Burckhardt, a nineteenth-century scholar. By the way, there are quite a few quite good scholars in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century who developed, who studied quite thoroughly their subjects, which seldom happens anymore. And they, even when their viewpoint is usually quite agnostic or even atheist, because they so thoroughly investigate their subject, you can see quite clearly what's going on. And he treats a lot of the ideas which were prevalent in this period in Italy, which is the first place of the Renaissance, which later spread to the north.

### Fame

And he cites for example, he has one chapter on the modern idea of fame, which now first came out -- the first time, that is, since the antiquity. He notes first of all that even Dante, who has something in common with Middle Ages, is the first one who can be called someone who is after fame. He says, "He strove for the poet's garland with all power of his soul. As a publicist and man of letters, he laid stress on the fact that what he did was new, and that he wished not only to be, but to be esteemed the first in his own walks."<sup>3</sup> Later there was another, elder, a later "contemporary of Dante, Albertinus Musattus, or Mussatus, who was crowned poet at Padua by the bishop and rector, enjoyed a fame which fell little short of deification. Every Christmas day the doctors and students of both colleges at the university came in a solemn procession before his house with trumpets and, as it seems, with burning tapers, to salute him and bring him presents. His reputation lasted until, in 1318, he fell into disgrace...."<sup>4</sup>

"This new incense which was once offered only to saints and heroes, was given in clouds to Petrarch, who persuaded himself in his later years that it was after all but a foolish and troublesome thing."<sup>5</sup> It's obvious this is the lowest kind of worldliness -- the desire to be remembered by, worshipped now and remembered by posterity....

"Amid all these preparations outwardly to win and secure fame the curtain is now and then drawn aside, and we see with frightful evidence a boundless ambition and thirst after greatness, independent of all means and consequences. Thus, in the preface to Machiavelli's Florentine history, in which he blames his predecessors Leonardo Arentino and Poggio for their too considerate reticence with regard to the political parties in the city: 'They erred greatly and showed that they understood little the ambition of men and the desire to perpetuate a name. How many who could distinguish themselves by nothing praiseworthy strove to do so by infamous deeds! Those writers did not consider that actions which are great in themselves, as is the case with the actions of rulers and of states, always seem to bring more glory than blame, of whatever kind they are and whatever the result of them may be.' In more than one remarkable and dread undertaking the motive assigned by serious writers is the burning desire to achieve something great and memorable. This motive is not a mere extreme case of ordinary vanity, but something demonic,..."<sup>6</sup> This is an agnostic writing. What he means by demonic is something not understandable to human motives.

"...Something demonic, involving a surrender of the will, the use of any means however atrocious, and even an indifference to success itself. In this sense, for example, Macchiavelli conceived the character of Stefano Porcario; of the murderers of Galeazzo Maria Sforza and the assassination of Duke Alessandro of Florence is ascribed by Varchi himself to the thirst for fame which tormented the murderer, Lorenzino de Medici."<sup>7</sup>

Of course we know the history of, something of the history of the Italian princedoms of this period with these, the infamous De Medicis who even had Popes among them who are poisoning each other and killing off other families, and these tremendous rivalries going on. There was even a certain Lorenzino who brooded "over a deed whose novelty shall make his disgrace forgotten," and he was in some kind of disgrace. "And [he] ends by murdering his kinsman and prince. These are characteristic

features of this age of overstrained and despairing passions and forces."<sup>8</sup>

And, of course, we see in our own times people who are assassinating presidents; [they're] unsuccessful in life; they want somehow to make themselves known, even if they have to go to prison, [or] be killed for it. The idea that they will somehow be immortalized, even by some kind of infamous deed, remembered, because they no longer believe in immortality of the soul.

But this attitude of exalting oneself which appears also in the life of Benvenuto Cellini who's an adventurer running all around doing everything to make himself famous, comes directly from the Middle Ages. It comes from what we saw yesterday, in the last lecture, the preoccupation of Francis of Assisi with himself, with his self-satisfaction, with some kind of dramatic demonstration of how holy he is. Once the spirit of the times had changed, this same motive became twisted into a worldly, extremely coarse self-aggrandizement.

And this is extremely far away from Orthodoxy where even the icon painters usually don't even sign their names. And it's not just a matter of complete anonymity, because we sometimes find the hymns in the Church books, for example, say "this is written by a certain Germanus the Monk" or something like that. But there is no desire to establish oneself as a great poet, a great writer, a great icon painter who puts one's [name], so one's name will astonish one's contemporaries. One enters into the tradition and carries on the tradition that has been before.

And now there is the desire that each artist is going to make a name for himself. And in the twentieth century, it becomes ridiculous. As we see, most of these artists have no talent; they think if they splash paint on the canvas as violently as possible to make a name for themselves.

This is a very deep thing because it involves also a deep layer of philosophy and even theology. In the traditional Orthodox world-view one begins with revelation, with tradition, with what has been handed down from the Fathers and ultimately with God. And if you ask someone how he knows something, he will say, "I know because that's the way God made it, that's the way the Holy Fathers have handed it down, that's what Holy Scriptures say, and that's the authority."

In the new age there's a desire to make something else, some kind of a new idea of certainty. And so a little bit after this period there comes the philosopher Descartes who is the first modern philosopher. And he bases his whole philosophy on one thing: "I think, therefore, I am."<sup>9</sup> And everything else that we know for certain is based upon this first intuition which, he says, is the only thing we can know for certain. Because the senses can be mistaken, we can have false revelations; but one knows for certain that "I exist." This shows how this preoccupation with the self becomes already a theological first principle. And later on it attains extremely fantastic development.

### Superstition

It is seldom noticed, because when we think of Renaissance, the books usually say this is the age, the beginning of modern enlightenment when the superstitions of the Middle Ages and the Dark Ages begin to be put away. And so it is seldom noticed what is very significant about this period -- that it is accompanied by an increase of superstition. This is the great age of astrology, of whom Nostradamus is the most famous, of alchemy, Paracelsus and others, and of witchcraft and sorcery.

Burckhardt has a quote on this subject also. Burckhardt notes in this chapter called the "Mixture of Ancient and Modern Superstition": He says,

"...[I]n another way...antiquity exercised a dangerous influence. It imparted to the Renaissance its own forms of

superstition. Some fragments of this had survived in Italy all through the Middle Ages, and the resuscitation of the whole was thereby made so much the more easy."<sup>10</sup> But it was in this period of the Renaissance that it really came out.

"At the beginning of the thirteenth century, this superstition" of astrology, which had flourished in antiquity, "suddenly appeared in the foreground of Italian life." Thirteenth century, that is, this very same period of the high Middle Ages. "The Emperor Frederick II always traveled with his astrologer Theodorus; and Ezzelino da Romano with a large, well-paid court of such people, among them the famous Guido Bonatto and the long-bearded Saracen, Paul of Bagdad. In all important undertakings they fixed for him the day and the hour, and the gigantic atrocities of which he was guilty may have been in part practical inferences from their prophecies. Soon all scruples about consulting the stars ceased."<sup>11</sup>

And it should be noted that in Orthodoxy, the Fathers are very much against [this]. "Soon all scruples about consulting the stars ceased. Not only princes, but free cities had their regular astrologers, and at the universities, from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, professors of this pseudo-science were appointed, and lectured side by side with the astronomers. It was well-known that Augustine and other Fathers of the Church had combated astrology, but their old-fashioned notions were dismissed with easy contempt." That is, there's no longer an authority in these Fathers because they are looking for some kind of new religion. "The Popes commonly made no secret of their star-gazing, although Pius II, who also despised magic, omens, and the interpretations of dreams, is an honorable exception. Julius II," the Pope, "on the other hand, had the day for his coronation and the day for his return from Bologna calculated by the astrologers. Even Leo X seems to have thought the flourishing condition of astrology a credit to his pontificate, and Paul III never held a consistory until the star-gazers had fixed the hour."<sup>12</sup>

"In all the better families the horoscope of the children was drawn as a matter of course, and it sometimes happened that for half a lifetime men were haunted by the idle expectation of events which never occurred. The stars were questioned whenever a great man had to come to any important decision, and even consulted as to the hour at which any undertaking was to be begun. The journeys of princes, the reception of foreign ambassadors, the laying of the foundation-stone of public buildings depended upon the" astrologers' "answer."<sup>13</sup>

One might ask why these superstitions or pseudo-sciences now begin to increase at this time. The answer is because when Orthodox tradition prevails, there is a knowledge of good and evil. There is a knowledge of evil forces, how they operate, a standard to measure them by. And when this standard is abandoned, when you begin to have the idea that there is some new standard coming in, then there is room for ignorance and superstition to thrive. We will note later on about the question of superstition in our own times, which is by no means as simple as people think: the connection, for example, between socialism and spiritualism which is a very interesting one.

### **Protestant Reformation**

The second great movement in this period of the Renaissance, as it is usually interpreted by historians, is the Protestant Reformation. This is only outwardly different from humanism; basically it is a part of the same movement. It is likewise a movement of reason which turns against Scholasticism and tries to devise a simpler Christianity which any believer can interpret for himself. This spirit was, later, as Kireyevsky very well says, of the spirit that was to destroy Protestantism itself. The enlightened observer, Kireyevsky says, could see Luther behind Scholasticism and the modern liberal Christians behind Luther.

Luther himself was what would probably be considered a narrow fanatic, especially in his later years, but he opened the gate to total subjectivism in religion. And thereupon he gives us a key also to today because this same principle, the individual -- whatever I believe, whatever I think has a right to be heard -- then becomes the standard. He himself finally achieved some kind of dogmatic system and tried to force it on his followers. But the very idea which he fought for was that each individual can interpret for himself; and therefore from him come sects.

The religious wars which began in this period, because there now were two religions: first Luther in 1520's who broke off, had already a separate organization, and Calvin and the other Protestants. And therefore these began to fight with the Catholic princes. And the religious wars of the sixteenth century came up, which really ended only about the middle of the seventeenth century. These wars are rather unimportant in themselves, and their main result was to discredit religion altogether, and lead in the next historical period, which we'll discuss in the next lecture, to the search for a new religion beyond *any* kind of Christianity, which is the beginning of modern Free-masonry.

Both Humanism and Protestantism continue the work of Scholasticism and Francis of Assisi -- the search to improve on Orthodoxy, to improve on Christianity as it has been handed down in the tradition. So they are continuing this work of Dostoyevsky's "Grand Inquisitor." Both Humanism and Protestantism are stages in the destruction of the Christian world-view. Later on there are more advanced stages.

### **Science**

Both the Renaissance and the Reformation, though they are the most spectacular movements of this period, are really not the most significant. They are only continuing the work of destruction which the Middle Ages began, the destruction of Orthodox Christianity. And both of them actually stood in the way of the main movement of the Renaissance period, which was that of the *rise of the modern scientific world-view*. Humanism stood in the way of it because it was preoccupied with the ancient texts and was persuaded that the ancients were wiser than the moderns; and Protestantism stood in the way of science by its narrow dogmatism. It is the rise of the new science which is the new and important thing in this period, which will have the great consequences for the future centuries.

Science became important in this period because man, being set free from Orthodox tradition, turned his attention to the outer world. This attention to the outer world sometimes took forms which were notoriously pagan and immoral. But this worldly interest was also expressed in the rise of industry and capitalism and in the movement of exploration -- discovery of America and so forth -- these movements which were to change the face of the earth in future centuries. This one might speak of as the kind of leaven of worldliness which would penetrate the whole world and give the tone to today's world which totally lacks the traditional Orthodox sense of the fear of God, and in fact is possessed by triviality.

Protestantism is full of this tone which can be observed by looking at the behavior of any Protestant minister to compare it with the behavior of an Orthodox priest. The Catholic priest also has this same worldly tone, worldly spirit; and Orthodox priests who are losing the savor of Orthodoxy enter into this very same light-minded, jazzy, up-to-date feeling which is the influence of worldliness, which makes possible such a thing as Disneyland and those things which any sane person in the Middle Ages or the Renaissance and, above all, in traditional Christian civilization, would have regarded as some kind of madness.

Now we come to the most important aspect of this period of the Renaissance, which is the rise of modern science. This is the discovery of a new key to knowledge and truth. And actually what it is, is a new scholasticism. The scientific method replaces the

Scholastic method as the means of attaining truth. And just like Scholasticism it leads to the loss of all truths which do not fit into its framework which is a very narrow and rigid one.

It is extremely interesting that modern science is born in so-called "mysticism," just as we shall see later on socialism was born in a kind of mysticism. This mystical outlook was the Platonism and Pythagoreanism which were revived together with ancient studies, which communicated the faith that the world is ordered according to number. The philosophy, the system of Pythagoras especially is based upon the harmonious order of the numbers which corresponds to the outward world. And we see in the modern world that the union of mathematics with observation has indeed changed the face of the earth, because it is true that the world is ordered according to number. But this in the beginning was known only dimly, and it was this faith of the Pythagoreans and Platonists that the numbers corresponded to reality and the investigation into the mysteries of nature which led to the discoveries which changed the world outlook.

Modern science also was borne on the experiments of the Platonic alchemists, the astrologers and magicians. The underlying spirit of the new scientific world-view was the spirit of Faustianism, the spirit of magic, which is retained as a definite undertone in contemporary science today. The discovery, in fact, of atomic energy would have delighted the Renaissance alchemists very much. They were looking exactly for power like that.

The aim of modern science is power over nature, and Descartes, who formulated the mechanistic/scientific world-view said that man is to become the master and possessor of nature. It should be noted that this is a *religious faith* that takes the place of Christian faith. Even the rationalist Descartes who said that the whole of nature is nothing but a great machine and gave thus the mechanistic/scientific outlook which exists, even today predominates in scientific research -- he himself in his youth had strange dreams and visions, and after he had devised his new science he had a vision of the angel of truth. Descartes. This angel of truth commanded him to trust his new science which would give him all knowledge. And knowledge, of course, had the purpose of making man the master and possessor of nature. This religious nature of scientific faith can be seen today when the breakdown of scientific faith, which has been dominant these last centuries, is leading now to a new crisis in religion. Because now men come to the question: what can one believe if even science, which is supposed to be the ultimate certainty, if it gives no certainty? And so, new irrational philosophies are born and the wish to believe in new gods.

This scientific world outlook which is now breaking down is producing this restlessness which we sense in the air today. And a number of people who are inspired by this restlessness are now coming to Orthodoxy. In fact, that is the position in very much of our converts. And it's very important all the more, therefore, since we are trying to defend ourselves against false philosophies, to understand that if coming to Orthodoxy we do not fully understand the Orthodox world-view and enter into it, we will become the pawns of these new irrational philosophies which will take the place of the scientific faith.

The scientific texts of the Renaissance period are filled with Platonic and pseudo-Christian mysticism and with the conviction that the mystery of the universe is now being discovered. Because before the Middle Ages in traditional Christian times, in Byzantium, in the West before the Schism, in Russia and other Orthodox civilizations, there was no desire to unravel the mystery of the universe because we had the knowledge, sufficient knowledge of God for salvation. And we knew that the universe is -- there are many aspects we don't understand. We know enough to save our souls. And the rest of it is this sphere of magic, alchemy and all kinds of dark sciences. But now the Christian faith is being rejected, the religious interest is projected into the world. And therefore [we see] the idea that there's a mystery of

the universe which, by the way, is very much with many modern scientists.

At the present day, scientific knowledge is felt to be almost an intolerable weight upon men. And many people feel that the rise of modern science has as its ultimate aim the bringing of mankind to total slavery. And even today we have people seriously in American universities teaching that man is entirely determined, that scientists must sort of govern his future, that you can put a little calculator of some kind in the pocket, hook it up to the brain; and whenever anyone performs an act which is anti-social, against whatever the leaders want, they will get an impulse from the brain which will give them such a pain that they will stop acting contrary to society.

Student: You're talking about Skinner?

Fr. S: Yes. Skinner and those people.

And so this scientific faith, this scientific knowledge is felt to be very cold and heavy today. And therefore it's very interesting to understand how the first scientific, the ones who were discovering the new scientific view felt. And there were some at that time who felt a mysterious exaltation at this new religion of science.

A very good example of this is the astronomer and philosopher, Giordano Bruno, who was one of the typical wanderers of modern times. He was a Dominican monk who ran away from his monastery. He went to the north; he met Luther. He was very much attracted by Lutheranism, then by Calvinism. Then he became disillusioned. He was excommunicated by Luther. He was excommunicated by Calvin. He went to England and fell in love with Queen Elizabeth, and then discovered that he wasn't so popular, and he cursed Oxford. Then he went to France, and the king invited him there to give lectures. He had special kind of techniques in memory training that people thought were something close to magic. But he was also teaching the new astronomy; that is, he was one of the first followers of the Copernican theory. But nowhere did he feel any kind of rest. He was full of this restless spirit of the age; but nowhere did he find peace.

But he was one who felt the consequences of the Copernican revolution, about which we'll talk in a minute. That is, the fact that the earth goes around the sun and not the sun around the earth was for him a definite discovery which had religious consequences. He said as a result of this: "Man is no more than an ant in the presence of the infinite, and a star is no more than a man."<sup>14</sup> That is very contemporary feeling that man is lost in the immensity of space. But he did not feel it to be something cold. Today we think of something horrible and cold, and man is lost in space. He did not believe that because he saw everywhere God, his idea of God. He said that nature is God in things. He had a kind of mystic pantheism. And he said that matter is divine. He said God, which has been lost because the Orthodox world-view has been rejected, is now projected into matter. He found God everywhere in the life of the universe. He believed that even the planets were alive -- maybe not personal intelligence -- but some kind of life was glowing through these stars and through these creatures. And perhaps this is not too far away from Francis of Assisi.

When the earth is dislodged from the center of things, he saw, or thought he saw, all boundaries vanish. He believed that the universe is infinite. There's an infinite number of worlds and an infinite number of intelligences upon these worlds, other kinds of humanity, these ideas which modern people very much are intrigued by.

According to him, to know nature is to know God. Each advance in science and the knowledge of nature is a new revelation, that is, something religious. He himself said that he was attracted by the darkness of the unknowable in the same way

that a moth is drawn to the flame which devours it. And he, by that, unwittingly prophesied his own end, because he was arrested by the Inquisition and burned at the stake as a heretic. But he died like a martyr. He was very calm and said that he would not change his views; he believed what he believed.

Later on he was almost totally forgotten until around 1870 [when] his writings began to be published, and now he's becoming more and more known, and books in English came out about him. There's a pillar was built in Rome on the site of his burning.

This mysticism of nature which he had at the very beginning of modern science is very interesting because it is echoed by another kind of mysticism of science which occurs now when the scientific world-view has collapsed or where it is coming to its end, that is, the so-called "mysticism" of Teilhard de Chardin -- [which we'll look at in] a later chapter.

## The Copernican Revolution

The key moment in the rise to power of the scientific faith, the scientific world-view, is the so-called "Copernican revolution."

Giordano Bruno died in 1600. Copernicus died 1543, and his book came out in the year of his death, 1543. Before this time medieval astronomy and astronomy from ancient times had been based upon the geocentric theory that the earth was in the center of the universe and everything revolved around it. But there were certain irregular motions of the planets, in order to explain which, the astronomers developed all kinds of cycles within cycles to show that they were making irregular movements. And the new faith in Platonic mysticism -- that the numbers correspond to reality, that God does things, nature does things in the simplest possible way -- made some people dissatisfied with this. And Copernicus made all kinds of calculations and finally came to the discovery -- which was based not on observation; it was based upon mathematical faith -- that, to make the simplest possible explanation of the movements in the sky, one must assume that the earth goes around the sun together with the planets.

About this one should say two things: the discovery of this new truth -- which seems to be true because you can aim a rocket and get it to the right place in the sky by believing this -- the discovery of this new truth does not refute the fact that the heavenly bodies *do* in fact go around the earth because anybody can observe that every day. The scientific truth of heliocentrism, that the earth goes around the sun, only explains, on the scientific level, the complex movements which the heavenly bodies and the earth make with regard to each other in order to create the effect we see every day, which is that the sun goes around the earth.

In the same way the scientific explanation of greenness, as the joining together of sun, eyes, and a configuration of molecules in a plant, does not change the fact that I see a green forest. And if I am sound in mind and soul, I delight in it. I still see the forest. You can explain it on some kind of technical level and maybe even get a deeper understanding of the causes which produce this effect; but the effect is the same. And this failure to distinguish between these two things caused a lot of confusion at this period; because the scientific theory of heliocentrism does not explain the very essence of things; it only explains that some kind of complicated interrelationships which produce certain effects. And the effect remains the same.

And so the Copernican theory does not explain away either the Book of Psalms which talks about "the sun knoweth his going down" (Ps. 104:19) and does not contradict our daily experience of seeing the sun go around the earth. People who change their minds and think only in terms of this -- that the earth going around the sun as a fact of everyday experience -- are mixing up what is some kind of technical explanation with everyday experience. There are two different spheres.

The second thing to say about this Copernican revolution is that the so-called "new universe" which is opened up by the Copernican revolution, is not incompatible with Orthodoxy. Kireyevsky, in fact, says that Orthodox people can only be astonished that they wanted to burn Galileo at the stake for the fact that he said the heresy -- they even called it the heresy -- that the earth goes around the sun. And Kireyevsky says it's incomprehensible to an Orthodox person how this can be a heresy. Because Scholastic rationalism had so taken possession of Western minds that all the syllogisms of Scholasticism whether based on Scripture or based on Aristotle were of equal value, and so the theories about whether the earth moves or stands still become on the level of dogma. Whereas Orthodoxy carefully distinguishes the truths which are of faith -- the dogmas -- from those which are outward and are open to various interpretations and speculations.

And in the writings on Hexaemeron of St. Ambrose Andrew the Great, St. Basil the Great and other Holy Fathers, they are very careful to distinguish what is revealed by God and what is only the speculations of men. And he says it's unimportant for us to speculate about how all these things come to pass, what stands still, what moves, how the comets can be explained; all that is very secondary and does not effect our faith.

The Copernican revolution gave rise to new religious views of man dethroned and alone in a cold and infinite universe. But these religious views are not deducible from the new facts. The new facts themselves do not change anything in one's religion. They only show that the primary impulse in this new scientific world-view was a *religious* impulse, that men were searching for some new faith which can be found by looking at the outward world. Men wished to have a new faith, and they used the facts which they discovered to help bring this about. The same thing happens all the time from then on in the history of the modern West.

The next thing we'll discuss will be something which is perhaps not of direct historical significance, but it is something which is of very deep significance as revealing the philosophy of modern man and a forerunner of later movements. This concerns some of the religious movements of the Renaissance period, besides the Protestant Reformation.

## Chiliasm

One might say that the mainstream of religion at this time was Protestantism and the increasingly secularized Catholicism, both of which were reducing religion to reason and feeling. It might be said that Catholicism tried to preserve something of the past, but it was obviously making great concessions to the spirit of the age, which it itself had started; it was very much bound up with the new age. But in this period there are a number of underground currents in religion which are very symptomatic.

There were movements of chiliasm. And one classic book on this called *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, which is a study of the chiliastic movements of this period from the Middle Ages to the Reformation.

Norman Cohn says: "There seems to be no evidence of such movements having occurred before the closing years of the eleventh century."<sup>15</sup> That is precisely the time when Rome left the Church. That same new spirit revealed itself in the rise of these new sects.

This is also the same period, by the way, that the practice of flagellation began -- after Rome had left the Church. This author is very secularly oriented and says that this is because of the new social conditions, that is, the rise of trade and industry replacing agriculture. But we can say safely that the new mental conditions, the beginning, the opening of the possibility for a new kind of Christianity once Orthodoxy is left behind: this is more likely the dominant reason.

He even talks about this in this book, contrasting the attitude before the Middle Ages with the attitude in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: "...[I]f poverty, hardships and an often oppressive dependence could by themselves generate it, revolutionary chiliasm would have run strong amongst the peasantry of medieval Europe. In point of fact it was seldom to be found at all. A marked eagerness on the part of serfs to run away; recurrent efforts on the part of peasant communities to extract concessions; brief, spasmodic revolts -- such things were familiar enough in the life of many a manor. But it was only very rarely that settled peasants could be induced to embark on the pursuit of the Millennium."<sup>16</sup>

What he's describing is the civilization of a traditional Orthodox place, land -- but under new conditions, both under new outward conditions when trade and industry arise, and many of these new sectarians were in the weaving guilds where they had chance of unemployment when the foreign markets were closed and so forth. The unsettledness of their life had an influence on the religious views also, but also because this new spirit came in, which meant that Orthodoxy was not enough. And there was a beginning of a search for a new Christianity, a new religion.

In the traditional, tradition-oriented society, this same author says, "the very thought of any fundamental transformation of society was scarcely conceivable."<sup>17</sup> And these new movements began to conceive of the idea of a fundamental transformation of society, that is, the beginning of what we will later find out is the movement of the revolution of modern times.

Some of these sectarians were called the Brethren of the Free Spirit, and they flourished from the eleventh century onward with a doctrine that God is all that is; every created thing is divine, that a new age of the Holy Spirit is coming, and when Joachim of Flores already proclaimed his teaching, they followed his teaching that each person has the Holy Spirit and is himself divine and, therefore, he can commit sin and still be pure. There is a certain Sister Catherine in the fourteenth century who had an ecstatic experience and then proclaimed: "Rejoice with me, for I have become God."<sup>18</sup> This is not so far away again from Francis of Assisi.

Another movement is called the Taborite Movement in the fifteenth century which was a movement of communism, a return to the golden age where everyone is equal. There was at this time a certain Thomas Müntzer who was born just a few years after Luther who preached the millennium and the mass extermination of all those who were opposed to his doctrine. According to him all things were to be held in common. But he was captured and killed after a revolt which he tried to lead. Interestingly enough, this very man Thomas Müntzer was idealized by Friedrich Engels who wrote a whole book about him, I believe. And the Communist historians down to the present day in Russia will say that he's a forerunner of Communism, and we'll see later on that his economic ideas have nothing to do with it. He was[, however,] in the same spirit as the Communist movement, which is a millennarian movement, chiliastic movement[, but unlike Müntzer,?] without talking about the Holy Spirit.

Then again in 1534 there are people who called themselves Anabaptists, that is, who were against infant baptism because each person has to know himself what he's being, what he's getting in for. They had an armed rising in Munster, which was preceded by wild men running in the streets calling for repentance; and there were apocalyptic visions right in the streets. This city of Munster was proclaimed to be the New Jerusalem. Most of the Lutherans left. And the Anabaptists through all the towns about came to this city of Munster which had a population of around ten thousand. They went through the monasteries and churches, looted them. And in one night, they got all the paintings and statues and books from the Catholic cathedral and destroyed them.

Two so-called Dutch prophets became their leaders, Matthys

and Bockelson, and they turned this city into a theocracy. All Lutherans and Catholics who remained were condemned to be executed; but then they softened this and expelled them from the city.

After this a new law court was set up in which it was an offense to be unbaptized in the Anabaptist faith, which was punishable by killing. The only ones who were to be left in the city were to be the brothers and sisters, the "Children of God." The Catholic bishop, of course, was opposed to this and besieged the town. At this time a state of perfect so-called "communism" was established. All their property was confiscated by the leaders; all who disapproved of the doctrine or expressed any dissent were imprisoned and executed. And while actually they were executed they sang hymns. A reign of terror was established which is described in this book with some detail:

"The terror had begun and it was in an atmosphere of terror that Matthys proceeded to carry into effect the communism which had already hovered for so many months, a splendid millennial vision, in the imagination of the Anabaptists. A propaganda campaign was launched by Matthys...and other preachers. It was announced that true Christians should possess no money of their own but should hold all money in common; from which it followed that all money, and also all gold and silver ornaments, must be handed over. At first this order met with opposition; some Anabaptists buried their money. Matthys responded by intensifying the terror. The men and women who had been baptized only at the time of the expulsions were collected together and informed that unless the Father chose to forgive them they must perish by the swords of the righteous. They were then locked inside a church, where they were kept in uncertainty for many hours until they were utterly demoralized. At length Matthys entered the church with a band of armed men. His victims crawled towards him on their knees, imploring him, as the favorite of the Father, to intercede for them. This he did or pretended to do; and in the end informed the terrified wretches that he had won their pardon and that the Father was pleased to receive them into the community of the righteous. After this exercise in intimidation Matthys could feel much easier about the state of morale in the New Jerusalem.

"Propaganda against the private ownership of money continued for weeks on end, accompanied both by the most seductive blandishments and by the most appalling threats. The surrender of money was made a test of true Christianity. Those who failed to comply were declared fit for extermination and it seems that some executions did take place. After two months of unremitting pressure the private ownership of money was effectively abolished. From then on money was used only for public purposes involving dealings with the outside world, for hiring mercenaries to fight against the bishop, buying supplies and distributing propaganda. Artisans within the town...received their wages not in cash but in kind...."<sup>19</sup>

"The abolition of private ownership of money, the restriction of private ownership of food and shelter were seen as first steps towards a state in which...everything would belong to everybody and the distinctions between Mine and Thine would disappear." Bockelsen himself expressed it thus: "all things were to be in common, there was to be no private property and nobody was to do any more work, but simply trust in God."<sup>20</sup>

A scholar from Antwerp wrote to Erasmus of Rotterdam, who of course did not like all these irrational movements because he believed men should be rational and liberal and tolerant, "We in these parts are living in wretched anxiety because of the way the revolt of the Anabaptists has flared up. For it really did spring up like fire. There is, I think, scarcely a village or town where the torch is not glowing in secret. They preach community of goods, with the result that all those who have nothing come flocking."<sup>21</sup> You can see, of course, that there will be many secondary motives of people who come, but that also the fact that this movement could spread like wild-fire means there is a deep expectation,

some kind chiliastic new religion. "...In the middle of March Matthys banned all books save the Bible. All other works, even those in the private ownership, had to be brought to the cathedral-square and thrown upon a great bonfire."<sup>22</sup>

Then this Matthys made a mistake. He had a divine command to go out and fight the enemy, and the enemy killed him. So then Bockelson took over and proclaimed himself to be king. His first act was to run naked through the town in a frenzy and fell into an ecstasy for three days. "When speech returned to him he called the population together and announced that God had revealed to him that the old constitution of the town, being the work of men, must be replaced by a new one which would be the work of God. The burgomasters and Council were deprived of their functions. In their place Bockelson set himself and -- on the model of Ancient Israel -- twelve elders...."

"Sexual behavior was at first regulated as strictly as all other aspects of life. The only form of sexual relationship permitted was marriage between two Anabaptists. Adultery and fornication—which were held to include marriage with one of the 'godless'—that is, married, marrying one of the godless, "were capital offenses. This was in keeping with the Anabaptist tradition.... This order came to an abrupt end, however, when Bockelson decided to establish polygamy...."<sup>23</sup>

"Like community of goods, polygamy met with resistance when it was first introduced. There was an armed rising during which Bockelson, Knipperdollinck and the preachers were thrown into prison; but the rebels, being only a small minority, were soon defeated and some fifty of them were put to death."<sup>24</sup> This very city has about 10,000 people in it. "During the following days others who ventured to criticize the new doctrine were also executed; and by August polygamy was established.... The religious ceremony of marriage was" eventually "dispensed with and marriages were contracted and dissolved with great facility. Even if much in the hostile accounts which we possess is discounted as exaggeration, it seems certain that norms of sexual behavior in the Kingdom of the Saints traversed the whole arc from a rigorous puritanism to sheer promiscuity...."<sup>25</sup>

"Bockelson's prestige was at its highest when, at the end of August, 1534, a major attack was beaten off so effectively that the bishop found himself abruptly deserted both by his vassals and by the mercenaries. Bockelson would have done well to organize a sortie which might perhaps have captured the bishop's camp, but instead he used the opportunity to have himself proclaimed king."<sup>26</sup>

There was a certain goldsmith who came now as a prophet. "One day, in the main square, this man declared that the Heavenly Father had revealed to him that Bockelson was to be king of the whole world, holding dominion over all kings, princes and great ones of the earth. He was to inherit the scepter and throne of his forefather David and was to keep them until God should reclaim the kingdom from him...."<sup>27</sup>

"The new king did everything possible to emphasize the unique significance of his accession. The streets and gates in the town were given new names; Sundays and feastdays were abolished and the days of the week were renamed on an alphabetical system; even the names of new-born children were chosen by the king according to a special system. Although money had no function in Munster a new purely ornamental coinage was created. Gold and silver coins were minted, with inscriptions summarizing the whole millennial fantasy which gave the kingdom its meaning." Inscriptions included: "The Word has become Flesh and dwells in us;" "One King over all. One God, one Faith, one Baptism." A special emblem was devised to symbolize Bockelson's claim to absolute spiritual and temporal dominion over the whole world: a globe, representing the world, pierced by the two swords (of which hitherto pope and emperor had each borne one) and surmounted by a cross inscribed with the words: "One king of righteousness over all." The king himself wore this

emblem, modeled in gold, hanging by a gold chain from his neck. His attendants wore it as a badge on their sleeves; and it was accepted in Munster as the emblem of the new state...."<sup>28</sup>

"In the market-place a throne was erected; draped with cloth of gold it towered above the surrounding benches which were allotted to the royal councilors and the preachers. Sometimes the king would come there to sit in judgment or to witness the proclamation of new ordinances. Heralded by a fanfare, he would arrive on horseback, wearing his crown and carrying his scepter. In front of him marched officers of the court, behind him" the chief minister "and a long line of ministers, courtiers and servants. The royal bodyguard accompanied and protected the whole procession and formed a cordon around the square while the king occupied his throne. On either side of the throne stood a page, one holding a copy of the Old Testament -- to show that the king was a successor of David and endowed with authority to interpret anew the Word of God -- the other holding a naked sword.

"While the king elaborated this magnificent style of life for himself, his wives and friends, he imposed on the mass of the people a rigorous austerity. People who had already surrendered their gold and silver"<sup>29</sup> now submitted to a requisition of their food and accommodations.

In the new works which now were written, "the fantasy of the Three Ages" of Joachim of Flores "appeared in a new form. The First Age was the age of sin and lasted until the Flood, the Second Age was the age of persecution and the Cross and it lasted down to the present; the Third Age was to be the age of the vengeance and triumph of the Saints. Christ, it was explained, had once tried to restore the sinful world to truth, but with no lasting success."<sup>30</sup> You see the new Christianity must improve upon the old Christianity.

"Terror, long a familiar feature of life in the New Jerusalem, was intensified during Bockelson's reign. Within a few days of his proclamation of the monarchy, Dusentschur," one of the ministers, "proclaimed that it had been revealed to him that in future all who persisted in sinning against the recognized truth must be brought before the king and sentenced to death. They would be extirpated from the Chosen People; their very memory would be blotted out, their souls would find no mercy beyond the grave. Within a couple of days executions began."<sup>31</sup>

They sent out emissaries, prophet[?] of the Apostles, to arouse other cities to the same revolution. "The aim of all these insurrections was the one appointed by Bockelson, and it was still the identical aim which had inspired so many millennial movements...: 'To kill all monks and priests and all rulers that there are in the world, for our king alone is the rightful ruler.'<sup>32</sup>

"...During these last, most desperate weeks of the siege," -- the Catholic bishop again was besieging them -- "Bockelson displayed to the full his mastery of the technique of terror. At the beginning of May the town was divided for administrative purposes into twelve sections and over each section was placed a royal officer with the title of Duke and an armed force of twenty-four men."<sup>33</sup> They were forbidden ever to leave their sections, so they couldn't have a rebellion against the king.

"They proved loyal enough and exercised against the common people a ruthless terror.... Any man who was found to be plotting to leave the town, or to have helped anyone else to leave, or to have criticized the king or his policy, was at once beheaded. These executions were mostly carried out by the king himself, who declared that he would gladly do the same to every king and prince. Sometimes the body was quartered and the sections nailed up in prominent places as a warning. By mid-June such performances were taking place almost daily.

"Rather than surrender the town Bockelson would doubtless have let the entire population starve to death; but in the event the

siege was brought abruptly to a close. Two men escaped by night from the town and indicated to the besiegers certain weak spots in the defenses. On the night of June 24th, 1535, the besiegers launched a surprise attack and penetrated into the town. After some hours of desperate fighting, the last two or three hundred male surviving male Anabaptists accepted an offer of safe-conduct, laid down their arms and dispersed to their homes, only to be killed one by one...in a massacre which lasted for several days."34

We see in the picture this King John of Leyden.35

These Anabaptists have survived at the present time in such communities as Mennonites, the Brethren and the Hutterian Brethren, but of course as an historical movement it lost its influence shortly after this time. But even this agnostic historian says an interesting thing. He finds that these movements he's studying are very similar to the movements in twentieth century of Nazism and Communism. And he notes that: "Some suspicion of this has occurred to Communist and Nazi ideologists themselves. An enthusiastic if fanciful exposition of the heterodox German mysticism of the fourteenth century with appropriate tributes to Beghards, Beguines and Brethren of the Free Spirit, fills a long chapter of Rosenberg's *Myth of the Twentieth Century*;" -- he's the leading apologist for Hitler -- "while a Nazi historian devoted a whole volume to interpreting the message of the Revolutionary of the Upper Rhine. As for the Communists, they continue to elaborate, in volume after volume, that cult of Thomas Müntzer which was inaugurated already by Engels. But whereas in these works the *prophetae* of a vanished world are shown as men born centuries before their time, it is perfectly possible to draw the opposite moral -- that, for all their exploitation of the most modern technology, Communism and Nazism have been inspired by fantasies which are downright archaic."36 In any case, "in many respects," they are both "heavily indebted to that very ancient body of beliefs which constituted the popular apocalyptic lore of Europe."37

Looking at what is happening in the twentieth century, one could say more than that: that that chiliastic expectation, the desire for a new kind of Christianity which we realize in this world, is one of the dominant traits of the modern mentality. And this earlier explosion faded away, but later it on came out in a stronger form. And in fact today some half the world is in possession of people who think very much like these people and have the same elements of terror, of killing off all enemies, the same kind of frantic...

Fr. H: The Gulag.

Fr. S: Yes, the Gulag; the same frantic talking about the enemies who are about to destroy them, the bourgeoisie, the exploiters of the factory workers and so forth.

This man and there's other ones like this, who led these millennial rebellions in the age of the Renaissance, which did not occur in the settled age before the Schism, are precisely forerunners of Antichrist. And now it becomes the case that whole cities, whole groups of people can follow these false leaders who have the most fantastic and wild expectations and descriptions of themselves -- they are the rulers of this world. So this thing which began in the Middle Ages now becomes stronger, the search for a universal monarchy.

### Renaissance Art

The art of this period which is, of course, some of the great art of Western man, reveals -- some things we won't go into: the resurrection of antiquity, the endless naked statues and all that, which are obviously a resurrection of the paganism of the body and this world. We'll look at a few of the religious paintings.

These are, from the Orthodox point of view, blasphemy. We know that for many of the painters, they had a very loose life.

They had their mistresses pose as the Virgin Mary. And you can go through painting after painting of this period and see nothing which is recognizable as a religious, really religious thing. There are a number of them which are simply pagan and even quite indecent. And others are more refined but still the same principles of... You can see the fat chubby child, kind of just naked, and the women are obviously worldly women. Sometimes they're coarse, sometimes refined, but it's the same kind of worldliness. And you can go through all these ones: the Rubens, the Tintoretto, the Rafael -- they all have the same extremely worldly spirit. There are some, oh, we'll talk about him in a minute. But you can glance at some of these pictures that are all sort different themes. Even one here by Caravaggio, it's quite early, a little later, 1600. He has a picture of the ecstasy of Francis, which is very interesting. It fits in with all that...(sound fades)

There are some who tried to revive religious art, the chief of whom was Fra Angelico; but he was very much against all this paganism and tried to get back to real religious art. You can see that in some of these the people are trying to be pious. They aren't just worldly; but if you look at them you can see that the spirit is a little different, but still the same worldly spirit has been entered very much in. The robes are extremely gorgeous. The painting's extremely beautiful. And the attempt to make some kind of piety which is just plain *prelest*. Some of these are very Latin. Some of them like El Greco are just obviously *prelest*, some kind of a distortions which are far from -- he's supposed to be Greek, that's what he's supposed to be. Historians say he has Byzantium influence; and of course, it's nothing of the sort.

Question: Are those supposed to be Mary and Christ?

Fr. S: Yeah. Those are, those are the best of this period.

Some of them, especially the ones in Spain or the north, become more and more bloody and ghastly. And some of them like these -- Botticelli and Botticini, they're very sort of lovely if you don't look at the child, the chubby child. The Virgin and Christ make exquisite creatures. If we look at some of the paintings of Botticelli -- we don't have the one that's in color, but here's this painting of the birth of Venus which is an extremely lovely thing if you look at the colors. Here it's just black and white, but you can see it's extremely finely done. But it's pure paganism; it's the birth of Venus out of a shell. And it's obvious this is some kind of a new religion. It's very close to this thing which we mentioned about Bruno, that matter is divine, that matter is so lovely, the world has been discovered; and it is full of such lovely beauty and such mystery that the painter can somehow bring it out.

And likewise the same thing we feel from Michelangelo. You look at some of these sort of Promethean figures, obviously some kind of new religion, totally unchristian belief that man is divine...trying to capture some kind of beauty in this world. The other world is completely lost. In Da Vinci's "Last Supper," it's all some kind of drama, sort of an arranged pose, very nicely. You can see that whatever Giotto still had and those artists of the Middle Ages, whatever they preserved is totally lost now.

And here's one which is Fra Angelico, who tried to get back to the religious meaning. You can see this is the typical Catholic *prelest*. The people are, it's so lovely -- pink and blue, and all these colors. And if you see the actual painting probably it's stunning. But if you look at the people, such stupid expressions on their faces, so posed, so dramatic. It's Christ crowning the Virgin, but it's very -- no religious meaning at all.

And there's another one here. It shows the Crucifixion already now some kind of realism, the emphasis all on the symbolic. The icon, there's nothing recognizable as an icon; it's totally worldly. And those that are the religious are in *prelest*.

And very likely, there are some which are mixed up with all



kinds of sectarianism. Here's one by Hieronymus Bosch about paradise, Christ with Adam and Eve in paradise which is filled with all kinds of symbolism. He himself was supposed to be mixed up with one of those sects, the Brethren of the Free Spirit. Undoubtedly expresses all kinds of sectarian fantasies about Adam and Eve. We just read about St. Paul, the Life of St. Paul of Obnora, how he lived like Adam in paradise with the animals. And these people [had] lost that idea of the ascetic living like Adam and Eve. We should look at the rest of the pictures.

Some frightful pictures [some of] which aren't very suitable. But this one shows how -- well, it's sort of sectarian. Because the sectarians believed at that time was to get back to the state of paradise, Adam and Eve. And that's why they go naked and they have everything in common and think that they're establishing a new reign of paradise on earth.

Here's another one, a very lovely one by Fra Angelico with peacocks and all kinds of things which are so full of some kind of different religious spirit. It's *prelest*...

Just looking at these paintings already reveals that between Orthodoxy and this, there is already a gulf which is so great it cannot be breached. If one is going to become Orthodox; if he's already Orthodox, he can only be an individual who comes back to the truth and realizes what is truth, how far he's gone astray. But to talk about union with people who have religious paintings like that shows that you don't know what you're talking about. It's a different religion.

### Summary

So in summary we will mention the main characteristics which come out in this period:

The first one is the rise of the self as the new god. It becomes, now it has not become expressed in this way, but in the later period already we will see people talking about the individual as being god. This is the meaning of Humanism and Protestantism: get rid of the religious tradition, the Orthodox tradition so that the new god can be born.

The second idea, very strong, is that just as the individual god is being born also the world now becomes divine. This is expressed by Bruno in so many words: if matter is divine, that God is in the world, the world is an alive breathing of God, that the soul of the world is the Holy Spirit. And you see it in some of these paintings, how much people like Botticelli believed something like this, that nature is divine. A pantheistic view. But something which invests the world with a significance which, according to Orthodox thought, it cannot have. The world comes from nothing; it is to go, it's to vanish away and be recreated by God as a new world. But they want this world to last. And therefore they put a divine meaning into it. And this becomes very important doctrine later on.

Again, the search for the new Christianity results now in much more bizarre religious experiments: the Brethren of the Free Spirit, the new religions of the Third Age of the Holy Spirit, the Anabaptists. And these become stronger as the old religious standard fades more into the background. Later on the attempt to make a new Christianity becomes much less recognizable as Christian.

And finally there are now beginning to arise for the first time some serious candidates for antichrist, that is, forerunners of antichrist. These people like this John of Leyden set themselves up as Christ come back to earth. And this idea of the world monarchy, the world theocracy, although it is still underground, is also getting stronger and is able to move a whole city.

We will see what happens to all these movements in the next age, which is the age of the so-called Enlightenment, which, just like the age of the Renaissance, has, besides its main current of

rationalism, this very distinct current, undercurrent of irrationalism.

This whole movement of the period of the Renaissance, therefore, shows the development of the seeds which were planted in the period of the Middle Ages by the departure of Rome from the Orthodox Church. And already in the period of Renaissance, what results is extremely different from Orthodoxy. If you look at the Middle Ages, there are some things which seem much closer. Outwardly they are much closer, but inside they have the seeds which are to produce all the things which are to come afterwards. So that the difference between Middle Ages and Renaissance is actually less than the difference between Orthodox Rome and Rome of the Middle Ages. And all these movements are growing. Some of them burst up like these apocalyptic movements. Some of them suddenly blaze up and then die down, but they still are part of the mentality which is being formed. And they come up later in extremely strange forms, which if you look at them philosophically, theologically, you can see that they are the same movement.

And so this man [Cohn] here who writes about the millennium is wrong when he thinks that you can show that one is either archaic or that the other is progressive. That's beside the point. The point is they are both there as part of the mentality being formed. Sometimes they show a direct growth, like the growth of science; and sometimes they show, they flare up and die out. But there are certain things which are the basic recurring motives of modern thought, which are the things which we will concentrate on.

The next lecture will be examining the period of the eighteenth century, well, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the scientific world-view becomes dominant and there seems to be some kind of equilibrium established, some kind of harmony. And the history of the world since then is the history of the falling away from this harmony. We will try to show what this harmony consisted of, and why there had to be the falling away from it to produce the world of anarchy in which we live now. And the whole thing from Middle Ages to Renaissance to the Enlightenment Age to the Romantic Age and today, all follows a definite logical progression, showing us that once Orthodoxy is left behind, there is a certain natural process which works. And the devil of course is always there. And we'll see over and over again that great leaders in modern thought will begin with some kind of a vision, and even some kind of -- we can see that the devil is working. And they no longer have any idea that the devil can do things like that. And therefore they are much more inclined to accept their visions as some kind of revelation.

1. Read during monastic meal the day of this lecture.

2. Quoted in Randall, John Herman, *The Making of the Modern Man*, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1926, Boston, p. 134]

3. Burckhardt, Jacob, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, Vol. I*, Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1958, p. 151.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p. 152.

6. Ibid., p. 162.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., p. 162.

9. See note Lecture 2.

10. Burckhardt, *Vol II*, p. 484.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., p. 485.

13. Ibid., p. 486.

14. Randall, John Hermann, *The Making of the Modern Mind*, The Riverside Press, Houghton Mifflin Co., Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1926, p. 243.

15. Cohn, Norman, *The Pursuit of the Millenium*, Harper Torchbooks, 1961, New York, p. 22.

16. Ibid. p. 24.

17. Ibid.

18. *Catherine of Siena: The Dialogue*, transl. & intr. by Suzanne Noffke, O.P., Paulist Press, 1980, pp. 25-26. Catherine dictated *The Dialogue* during a 5-day ecstatic experience, referring to herself in the third person or as "the soul": "A soul rises up...she seeks to pursue truth and clothe herself in it. But there is no way she can so savor and be enlightened by this truth as in continual humble prayer, grounded in the knowledge of herself and of God. For by such prayer the soul is united with God, following in the footsteps of Christ crucified, and through desire and affection and the union of love he makes of her another himself. So Christ seems to have meant when he said, 'If you will love me and keep my word, I will show myself to you, and you will be one thing with me and I with you.' (John 14:21-23) And we find similar words in other places from which we can see it is the truth that by love's affection the soul becomes another himself. To make this clearer still, I remember having heard from a certain servant of God [Catherine referring to herself] that, when she was at prayer, lifted high in spirit, God would not hide from her mind's eye his love for his servants. No, he would reveal it, saying among other things, 'Open your mind's eye and look within me, and you will see the dignity and beauty of my reasoning creature [the human person]. But beyond the beauty I have given the soul by creating her in my image and likeness, look at those who are clothed in the wedding garment of charity, adorned with many true virtues: They are united with me through love. So I say, if you should ask me who they are, I would answer,' said the gentle loving Word, 'that they are another me; for they have lost and drowned their own will and have clothed themselves and united themselves and conformed themselves with mine.' It is true, then, that the soul is united to God through love's affection." p. 57: "The fire within that soul blazed higher and she was beside herself as if drunk, at once gloriously happy and grief-stricken. She was happy in her union with God, wholly submerged in his mercy and savoring his vast goodness.... For her union with God was more intimate than was the union between her soul and her body." p. 85: "You will all be made like him in joy and gladness;... your whole bodies will be made like the body of the Word my Son. You will live in him as you live in me, for he is one with me." Also p. 295 [God speaking to her]: "That soul was so perfectly united with me that her body was lifted up from the earth, because in this unitive state I am telling you about, the union of the soul with me through the impulse of love is more perfect than her union with her body."

19. Cohn, p. 287.

20. Ibid., p. 288.

21. Ibid., p. 289.

22. Ibid., p. 290.

23. Ibid., p. 292.

24. Ibid., p. 293.

25. Ibid., p. 294.

26. Ibid., p. 295.

27. Ibid., p. 295.

28. Ibid., p. 297.

29. Ibid., p. 297.

30. Ibid., p. 298.

31. Ibid., p. 300.

32. Ibid., p. 302.

33. Ibid., p. 304.

34. Ibid., p. 305.

35. Ibid., p. 306.

36. Ibid., p. 309.

37. Ibid., p. 309.