# Lecture 4. How the views of the Europeans about the outer world were changing: a human’s trip in space and time

***The rise of historical knowledge in Europe in XVII century: G. Vico, Chornius and Cellarius. The concept of secularization. — How the vies of people about the Earth changed: from creationism and the creation myths to the first circumnavigation. Barbarians, cynocephals and hyperboreans VS the principal equality of all people on Earth. —The rise of scientific societies and corporations: how the academies, universities and schools became a leading social and cultural project.***

1. ***Secularization*** *is “****1.*** *The abandoning of religious assumptions or practices.* ***2.*** *Deconsecration (for instance, of a building)” – according to Thomas Mautner’s* ***Dictionary of Philosophy****.*

***Saeculum*** in Latin means “generation, kin, age, secular (world)”. Ancient Roman historians thought ***seaculum*** to be a measure of a generation’s life, but ages later (in times of Augustus) by this term they meant 110 years. By the II century AD Roman historians began to use this term for their chronicles’ periodization.

As we had said, the first views about the Modernity and its connections and relations with Antiquity and Middle Ages were formed in 80s of XVII century (mainly by **Chornius** and **Cellarius**). An important milestone in this process became **Giambattista Vico’s** philosophy of history. He (1668—1744) is widely regarded to be the founder of so called civilization approach in history. Being an anti-Cartesian representative of modern thought (as it was for instance put by R. G. Collingwood), Vico formulated the rules of historical investigations, which made significant influence on the later historians and philosophers.

These rules are the following:

* firstly, certain periods in history have common traits; then it becomes possible to conclude by analogy from one period to another;
* secondly, common periods tend to alternate in the same order;
* thirdly, history develops not in a circle, by in a spiral, for it never repeats but enters each new phase in a different form that is defined by the former development.

**R. G. Collingwood** in “The Idea of History” shows that, according to this approach, the Christian barbarism of Middle Ages differs from pagan barbarism of Homer’s Greece in that way that it expresses the Christian spirit. It is because history always creates something new, one cannot foresee the future following the cyclic law of its development. This is how the Vico’s law of cyclic evolution differs from the classic idea of cyclic motion in history (as one might find it in the works of Plato, Polybius and later Machiavelli and Campanella). This gives the basis to the idea that a true historian never predicts the future.

1. *After the Age of Discovery in the Renaissance the image of the Earth and Universe changed drastically.*

Prince **Henry the Navigator** (1394—1460) was he who inspired various voyages and discoveries of XVIth century as well as the Magellan’s first circumnavigation. He encouraged the searches of the new and not discovered lands and establishment of the shipping lanes to the East. Henry arranged 14 expeditions for a dozen of years, however, all of them turned back as far as they reached Cape Bojador (also “cape Non”, he Cape's name in Arabic is "Abu Khatar", meaning "the father of danger"), which is on the West coast of Africa near the Canary Islands. The sailors were afraid of moving further.

A brief history of the Age of Discovery:

1434 — Gil Eanes fisrt moves further than Cape Bojador in Westen Africa.

1487 — Bartolomeu Dias first sails around Cape of Good Hope.

1492 — Pêro da Covilhã visits Mecca; Chistopher Columbus discovers America.

1497 — Vasco da Gama first sails round Africa on his way to India.

1511 — Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar and Hernán Cortés (who was his rival) claimed Cuba to be under the King of Spain.

1519—1522 — Ferdinand Magellan’s first circumnavigation.

1569 — Gerardus Mercator works out the system of latitude and longitudes to depict the Earth’s surface on the maps accurately.

1577—1580 — sir Francis Drake’s second circumnavigation.

Along this all this it was a crucial point of the distribution of knowledge about the world that **Johannes Gutenberg** constructed one of the first printing presses in 1450. By the beginning of XVI century, in Italy there worked 100 presses and 30 did in Spain.

1. *The second part of XVII century shows an increasing growth of academic societies in Europe — from Great Britain to the Russian Empire. This became an important step toward the recognition of science as an international phenomenon and the basis of very culture of Modernity.*

A brief history of establishment of Academies:

1652 – Leopoldina (in the Holy Roman Empire);

1660 – The President, Council and Fellows of the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge;

1666 – The French Academy of Sciences;

1713 – The Real Academia Española;

1724 – The Russian Academy of Sciences (in St. Petersburg);

1782 – The Accademia dei Lincei (in Italy);

1786 – The Swedish Academy.

***Key words***: secularization, history, saeculum, Age of Discoveries, circumnavigation, printing press, university, academy, academic societies, Nobel Prize.

***Key figures***: G. Vico, Henry the Navigator, F. Magellan, F. Drake, G. Mercator, Leopold I, Peter the Great, G. W. Leibnitz, A. Nobel.