Mannerism: The Crisis Of The Renaissance And The Origin Of Modern Art

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A spiritual conscience for modern madness. The crisis of the modern world. Author: René Guénon Publisher: Sophia Perennis (New York), 2004, 120 pages ISBN: 0-900588-24-1. Reviewed by Tengku Ahmad Hazri. Modernity by contrast, is built upon the spirit of opposition to religion (think of the Renaissance, Reformation and the Enlightenment) and therefore hostility to metaphysics and truth. Once the ultimate Truth is denied, the ground is cleared for the manufacture of many different "truths", tending naturally towards relativism and nihilism that are so prevalent in today's world. The arts had quite a difficult time remaining important during the Middle Ages, given all of the territorial struggles that were occurring throughout Europe. People living then had enough to do merely figuring out how to stay in the good graces of whoever was ruling them, while the rulers were preoccupied with maintaining or expanding control. With the large exception of the Roman Catholic Church, no one had much time or thought left over to devote toward the luxury of art. Sixteenth-century Italian Art is a category which contains three separate topics. What we now call the "High Renaissance" was a relatively brief period which lasted from roughly 1495 to 1527. (This is the little window of time referred to when one speaks of Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael.)