



Christof Dipper, Moderne (english version),
Version: 2.0, in: Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte, 22.11.2018
http://docupedia.de/zg/Dipper_moderne_v2_en_2018
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14765/zzf.dok.2.1316.v2>

Copyright (c) 2018 Clio-online e.V. und Autor, alle Rechte vorbehalten. Dieses Werk entstand im Rahmen des Clio-online Projekts „Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte“ und darf vervielfältigt und veröffentlicht werden, sofern die Einwilligung der Rechteinhaber vorliegt. Bitte kontaktieren Sie: <redaktion@docupedia.de>



Mirosław Bałka, *How It Is*, Tate Modern, London 2009, Foto: fairlybuoyant Flickr (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Moderne (english version)

by Christof Dipper

Definition

The word *Moderne* (modernity)^[1] has been a staple of many disciplines ever since the 1980s, though previously restricted almost exclusively to the fields of aesthetics and literary criticism (and referred to here in English as “modernism”). The term can have a variety of meanings, however, depending on its context. At present it is used in at least three ways. In its original meaning, *Moderne* referred to the modernist style of literature, music, art or architecture which claimed to be absolutely new compared with what had come before, an unprecedented and radical break with all conventions. With the exception of architecture, all varieties of this modern style have long become a thing of the past. The second meaning is not much newer. Modernity in this sense refers to the combination of *Zeitdiagnose* and *Weltverhalten* – of trying to understand the present and exhibiting a certain behavior towards the world. In this view, the greatest achievement and guiding principle of modernity is rationalism. Modernity, in this sense, is conceived as a universal norm, a value with a largely positive connotation. Sociologists, political scientists and philosophers tend to take this view of modernity. Finally, the most recent meaning of modernity refers to a historical period. Though the other two versions of modernity are likewise rooted in time, they lack an epochal character, i.e., a temporal category capable of conjoining varied characteristics in a meaningful way. Historians will always argue over the beginning and end of an era, and so there are a number of different notions of what constitutes the modern

era. Some date its beginning to around 1500 – what German historians generally refer to as the beginning of the *Neuzeit* or “modern era” – whereas others (social scientists included) opt for 1800. In the following I will suggest yet another starting point, following the word’s actual usage in the German-speaking world.

The origins of the term *Moderne*

The German term *Moderne* was coined in 1886 by a hitherto unknown group of writers.^[2] The word was meant to denote the utterly new and unprecedented, the complete disavowal of aesthetic traditions – a counterpoint, as it were, to *Antike* (antiquity). The aesthetic debate over *antiqui* vs. *moderni* had been going on for two hundred years at that point, with no corresponding term for the latter in German. Apparently the term was perfectly suited to expressing the sense of having reached a cultural threshold, *Brockhaus* encyclopedia having absorbed it in 1895 with the result that it soon gained general currency. It was defined there as follows: “*Moderne*: Designation for the quintessence of recent social, literary and artistic trends.”^[3] The term, in fact, has had a rather checkered career, its originators having long since been forgotten.

Brockhaus was right in pointing out that the concept was initially used mainly by writers and artists. They vied for dibs on the label, as their aesthetic approaches varied greatly and none of them wanted to submit to the dictates of Berlin. The celebrated Viennese critic and writer Hermann Bahr tried to bring some clarity to the term as early as 1890. *Moderne*, he wrote, was on the one hand an attempt to do justice to the present; on the other hand, the present was just one moment “in the eternal becoming and passing away of all things,” so that aesthetic prescriptions in the “nasally tone of a governess” were henceforth a thing of the past.^[4] The *Moderne* is now, tomorrow the *Moderne* will be different, and yet it will always be modern – this was Bahr’s message, which merely calls to mind a much-discussed theory in the art world since the days of Baudelaire,^[5] relativizing the innovators’ claim to absoluteness. Other authors were more radical. Samuel Lublinski took stock in 1904 in his *Bilanz der Moderne* (Balance Sheet of Modernity), suggesting it had come to an end already.^[6]

The term did not go away, though, in the field of contemporary art, with ever new movements claiming it as their own. *Moderne* thus remained a controversial battle cry, one that needed explaining and defending, sometimes by tacking on modifiers like “classic.” In the long run this was futile, however. Those wanting to sidestep the issue either chose a more neutral term – like in the case of the

Institute of Modern Art in Boston, renaming itself the Institute of Contemporary Art – or simply called each new manifestation of style “postmodern.”^[7] Both of these happened in the 1950s, indicating that World War II had given rise to a new cultural self-understanding. Only in Germany – which had a lot of catching up to do after the setbacks of the Nazi era – did *Moderne* experience a renaissance after 1945. The German language has meanwhile caught up, the zeitgeist and art scene of the German-speaking world having finally entered the “*Postmoderne*.”

Moderne and scholarship

Theology

It was actually only the fields of study concerned with *Zeitdiagnose* that had any use for this neologism, one that had entered common parlance “almost overnight.”^[8] It is therefore all the more surprising that Protestant theology was the first to adopt the concept in Germany. This was not so much an attempt to keep up with Reform Catholics, who ever since the 1890s described their own varied endeavors – their opponents even more so – as a form of *Modernismus* (modernism).^[9] Viennese university theologian Karl Beth developed an extensive catalog of features to describe what he considered the *Moderne* – the very same year that Vatican denounced the reform movement as heretical – tracing its historical roots back to “Renaissance modernity”^[10] with its path-breaking achievement of defending the autonomy of human reason. Luther’s Reformation, on the other hand, was to his mind what nowadays is generally called “premodern.” Two years later his colleague Otto Baumgarten in Kiel reported on his observations of the varied attempts to “modernize” Christianity, all of which shared the conviction that “modern intellectual culture [...] could not be opposed to Christianity per se,” but was actually “rather congenial to it.”^[11] By talking about Christianity as whole, he elaborated on a common theory back then that Protestantism had given birth to modernity, a notion challenged by Ernst Troeltsch.^[12] The belief in a synthesis of Christianity and *Moderne* turned out to be short-lived, however, as empirical evidence seemed to refute it. Whatever the case, the relationship between the two was never an easy one.

Sociology

Georg Simmel is the only sociologist to use the German neologism *Moderne* after the turn of the century. His experiential (and admittedly sketchy) theory of the *Moderne*, focusing on the neurasthenic city-dweller and adhering to Baudelaire’s theory of the transitory, was generally more popular outside his newly established field of study, striking a chord in particular with Walter Benjamin.^[13] Max Weber,

for his part, never used the term *Moderne*. He spoke instead of “occidental rationalism,” whose origins increasingly fascinated him as a process unique in world history, hence its paramount significance for subsequent modernization theory and, more recently (in the German-speaking world), the theory of the *Moderne*. Unlike theologians, he did not pinpoint a historical watershed, but made out a wealth of contingent circumstances which over the course of time had combined to effect a transformation of consciousness and behavior that, once having come into existence, was transferred to other cultures – in Weber’s view, initially the Catholic ones.^[14] But this rationalism had its price, according to Weber. Instead of sanctifying everyday life, as the Puritans had hoped, it unleashed a process resulting in the opposite: “secularization,” a concept soon elevated by scholars into one of the driving forces of occidental intellectual history during the modern era. Weber himself was critical of this process and the “iron cage” of rationality threatening humanity as a result.^[15]

Since sociology itself is a child of modernity it was all but inevitable that competing schools of thought would address the emergence and interpretation of the modern world. Their findings were often even more culture-critical than Weber, hence they looked for ways to escape the travails of modernity. Quite a few of its German representatives – Hans Freyer and Arnold Gehlen, to name the most prominent – got caught in the maelstrom of Nazism, which itself had a love-hate relationship with modernity and unleashed an unprecedented orgy of violence to save the parts it considered worthy. German sociology eventually reworked its “narrative of salvation” after 1945. Freyer, for example, suggested that the losses of industrial modernism were offset by a previously unimaginable growth in freedom in the sense of unlimited possibilities, a view that won him many followers.^[16] This is worth noting here because of the common assumption nowadays that cultural criticism itself is a “reflex of modernity.”^[17] As it generally works with historical materials, cultural criticism has a direct link to historiography.

Historiography

German historians were slow to pick up on the term *Moderne*. For one thing, they used a centuries-old and internationally accepted system of periodization, dividing Western history into three eras: *Altertum* (antiquity), *Mittelalter* (the Middle Ages) and *Neuzeit* (the modern era). These periods were intended as neutral designations, though this was easier said than done when it came to the “Dark Ages.” Closely related to this is, second, the notion of historical continuity, a legacy of historicism. Unlike nowadays, German history was generally viewed as a seamless development well into the twentieth century: 1789 was not a “German”

date, the Prussian reforms of 1806–15 took place at the height of Prussia's "Borussian" mission to unify the German states, 1848 was basically a "year of madness,"^[18] and 1866–71 were the consummation of Germany's century-old ambition. Third, with their professionalization in the nineteenth century German historians abandoned the notion of universal history inherited from the Enlightenment, despite an ever greater focus on the Occident's special development path and its overwhelming influence in world events. Conventional world history, however, had no ambition to explain what made the West unique, contenting itself instead with enumerating "the facts."^[19] Explaining Europe and North America's exceptional role in world history – clearly evident at the turn of the twentieth century – required models and theories of the type advanced by Max Weber and other cultural sociologists. For disciplines with a positivist orientation, however, this approach was just as abhorrent as the historical-philosophical answers proffered by Oswald Spengler^[20] and later by Arnold Toynbee,^[21] both of whom violated accepted standards in their fields.^[22]

And yet the winds were changing, and this in multiple respects. For one thing, Germany had undergone a successful revolution and this alone made thinking in discontinuities more plausible than ever before. Second, an alternative epistemological agenda gained traction in the humanities as a consequence, military defeat and its aftermath having given rise to new political and cultural achievements, namely the attempt, dating back to the tradition of idealism, to offer in response to an unloved present an intellectually valid understanding of reality and a corresponding normative conception of history.^[23] Third, this declaration of war against a rationalist understanding of scholarship was facilitated by the unexpected death of numerous prominent representatives of the latter (Simmel, Weber, Troeltsch), none of whom had left a circle of followers.^[24] Fourth, socialist-influenced historians, whose conception of history was likewise oriented towards discontinuity ("revolution") and value statements ("alienation") and who viewed the present in the light of a desired future, had scarcely left a dent either.

From the perspective of conventional historians, developing an alternative, dichotomous concept of recent history was the mark of being an outsider, even in the interwar period. The *völkisch* movement – emerging at the turn of the century as a direct answer to modernity – and the "conservative revolution" with their radical rejection of modernity were paradoxically helpful in establishing such an alternative historiography. Both tendencies viewed the present as the result of a world conspiracy beginning in 1789, a style of thinking that became exceptionally popular. Both groups promised salvation by means of a counterrevolutionary act

of violence. The similarities between their conception of history and that of their fiercest political opponent, Marxism, are therefore no coincidence, despite their opposing political agendas, for they had a common foe: liberalism.

In terms of their impact on historical scholarship, their historiographical importance, Otto Brunner^[25] and Werner Conze^[26] are worth mentioning here as younger historians of the 1930s who propagated *völkisch* ideas and hence a different perspective on the past. They conceived of this past as being radically different from the present – as static, ordered and fundamentally good, until the revolution put an end to it. They thus made an indirect contribution to the theory of modernity, their alternative to the then historiographic mainstream pointing the way to future developments. Despite its normative view of the present and its failure to explain the transition to modernity, the *völkisch* movement nonetheless became the mouthpiece of a widespread awareness of living in a new era, one that was radically different from anything that had come before it. Purged of its political content, this concept of history proved quite adaptable after 1945. It was only then that the two big antagonistic historical periods were given workable names. Brunner, in line with his main areas of interest, was concerned with the prerevolutionary era, which he called Old Europe (*Alteuropa*),^[27] whereas Conze called the ensuing era the “industrial world.” The latter referred to much more than economic and social history, which is why he sometimes spoke of a “structural history” approach.^[28]

These are the “brown roots” of the historical theory of modernity. There are two further foundations, however. First there was Hans Rosenberg, the representative of an earlier phase who had fled to the United States, but returned to Germany as a visiting professor beginning in 1948. Rosenberg acquainted his students with modern social history in the spirit of Max Weber, and a decade later with a revitalized sociology, the new leading discipline in the 1960s which popularized modernization theory as practiced in the United States. The latter offered a new reading of Max Weber, stripped of his skeptical resignation about the price paid for progress. Instead it used Weber’s guiding question to show what led the West to modernity: a certain combination of developmental processes thought to have normative validity. Modernization theory became the most influential (and Protestant-tinged) master narrative of our day, offering as it did the best arguments for the self-understanding of the “West” at the height of its international standing. It also explained to historians why some Western societies followed “delayed” or “divergent” development trajectories referred to as “special paths.” The term acquired downright canonical status for an understanding of German

history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

This version of historiography^[29] indebted to modernization theory and referred to as “historical social science,” later as “social history,” and frequently associated with the University of Bielefeld – whence many valuable impulses came, even though representatives of this approach could be found at other German universities as well^[30] – only used the term modernity in passing, since the self-perception of individuals as such (“modern”) was only vaguely relevant to its purposes. Like the other social sciences, it preferred objectivist terminology such as “bourgeois society,” “capitalism,” the “industrial world” or process nouns such as “rationalization” (recently replaced by “communication” as a form of constructed rationality) and “differentiation.” It claimed to have created the authoritative version of historiography, at least with regard to the modern era, and indeed the strides it made were enormous. To be sure, a conception of history based on discontinuity and a method offering macrohistorical models of progress raised questions that could not be answered with the tools of conventional historians. The explanations they offered, however, yielded a sometimes quite formulaic picture of historical progress, as a number of no less methodological critics bemoaned.

It was hence the discontent with a historical modernization theory increasingly perceived as schematic and anemic and which ignored the self-perception of human beings that helped usher in the “cultural turn” of the 1980s as a counter-model, thus making historiography susceptible to the topic of modernity (*Moderne*) after all.^[31] This was aided by a rereading of Max Weber, focusing on his proximity to the fin de siècle and his sense for the ambivalence of the cultural threshold around the year 1900.

There was of course another reason to address this aspect of the *Moderne*, one found in more recent historical circumstances and sometimes referred to as “factual history” (*Sachgeschichte*). It was right about this time that the Germans – and of course not just the Germans – began to recognize that yet another era was coming to a close: the classic industrial age. The end of the postwar economic boom^[32] and the subsequent implosion of the communist system caused Western society to enter a deep and lasting crisis of orientation, marked by ongoing attempts to repair the industrialized world, salvage the welfare state and other familiar institutions, as well as to reach a new understanding of the present and its ailments and put an end to profound cultural uncertainties. The term *Postmoderne*, common until then only in literary criticism, suddenly spread like wildfire, expressing as it did this sense of discontent, and thus opening at least a

back door for the reception of the *Moderne* by historians.

Outline of a history of the *Moderne*

Moderne as a historical era

Moderne (modernity), as used below, is not just another word for *Neuzeit* (the modern era), but is linked with attempts to understand and diagnose the times.^[33]

This aspect was inherent to the term from the very outset. It is not about different facts, but a specific narrative perspective that respects the “modern” self-perception of those living through it, resulting in a different periodization. We have long been accustomed to assigning the grand historical epochs to different centuries, but this mechanical method, initially a didactic artifice, neither overlaps with any meaningful measure of experience nor does it determine our sense of time. The historical debate about “long” and “short” centuries is proof of this, as is our sense that 1945 or 1989 are more meaningful than the years 1900 or 2000.

The *Moderne* is an epoch that differs from all previous ones in its being acknowledged and named as such by those living in it. This is something new. It is obvious for the periods referred to as “antiquity” and the “Middle Ages,” but it took about four hundred years for the awareness of living in a “new era” (*neue Zeiten*), a sense of which existed ever since the sixteenth century, to be captured in the succinct German term *Neuzeit* (i.e., the modern era). Its earliest known usage is dated to 1838; it was first used by historians in 1855,^[34] and it entered common usage around the year 1870,^[35] making it about as old as *Moderne*.

Methodological requirements: Basic processes and patterns of order

Talking about *Moderne* is predicated on the idea of history following a forward trajectory, which is merely another way of saying that the notion of a “relapse into barbarity” – sometimes used to describe the phenomenon of Nazism – is impossible. *Moderne*, it is evident here, cannot be equated with progress; rather, it is what it is: an appropriate description of our day and age.

The actual processes underlying the forward march of history are controversial. Max Weber’s method proved inspiring, with his search for the underlying causes of the Occident’s special development path. He saw it as the result of a chain of contingent circumstances and not as the work of a (Hegelian) “world spirit” or (Marxist) “society,” much less as the development of innate tendencies according to natural laws. But a so-called project of modernity, much talked about now in sociology and philosophy, can hardly satisfy the demand of historians for causal complexes as an explanation for historical change, even after the linguistic turn.

Reconstructing a historical trajectory into the present day requires two hypotheses to identify and sort through the numerous driving forces of history and assign them their specific roles. First, we have to assume that society has undergone a fundamental transformation due to the rise of modernity. This involves long-term evolutionary processes and trends, each of which evinces specific trajectories but which essentially apply to all societies. These will be referred to in the following as basic processes, understood as affecting different levels: institutional (state-building and bureaucratization), economic (industrial growth with cyclical fluctuations), epistemological (scientification and technologization), global (i.e., globalization or the embeddedness of Europe in the world as a whole), social (demographic change, class formation, urbanization, alphabetization and the expansion of education as well as mediatization), and finally the personal level (individualization). In this regard there are essential points of intersection with conventional modernization theory.

The second assumption, however, corrects the latter's long-defining hypothesis of a rigid and uniform development path resulting from the combination of all of these basic processes working in unison and which basically rules out the active, decision-making individual. The cultural-studies-influenced theory of modernity offers the alternative view that the self-perception and -description of societies changes over time, and that this process in particular is a reliable indicator of when a society has become modern. Patterns of perception, experiences, discourses and language are hence by no means subordinate phenomena of structural transformation but are interdependent with the basic processes. Referred to collectively as patterns of order, societies use them to observe themselves and guide their development.^[36] These patterns of order are therefore period-specific and reach the limits of their explanatory power at a certain moment in history. The search for better patterns then gives rise to a cultural threshold leading to a new era. This controllability increased dramatically in the *Moderne*, which means that the variety of modern manifestations increased along with it. There are therefore just as many variations of modernity as there are societies.^[37]

Moderne in the continuum of time: Cultural thresholds and eras

When examining the process of history, it is helpful to begin with the self-understanding of a society (or significant parts of it), which is why this article began with a brief look at the career of the catchword *Moderne*. It emerged with and expresses a cultural threshold that separates two historical periods from each other, referred to here as the "revolutionary era" and "industrial modernity."^[38] Our

present day came in the wake of the latter, and often gives itself the (ambiguous) label “postmodernity.” The various forms of order and the varied scope of maneuver open to individuals differ considerably for these two periods and lend the basic processes a very different guise. This is why the transitions, the cultural thresholds are so interesting; by taking a closer look at them we gain a deeper insight into the history of modernity.

The Enlightenment marked the beginning of modernity.^[39] It countered “revelation,” the traditional pattern of order, with self-reflective “reason,” resulting in a cultural threshold of world-historical importance around the year 1770. It led to a fundamental shift in language and discourse, ending a mode of self-observation dating back to antiquity. Koselleck called it the “saddle period” (*Sattelzeit*), resembling as it did a mountain saddle, marking the transition from the language of Old Europe to that of the “modern world.” The core of modern semantics down to the present day is found in the self-empowerment of (Occidental) man to give the course of world events a whole new direction. A massive shift in experience engendered a theory of the modern era, enabling humanity to intervene in the course of events in a way that was different than before, and this in light of an anticipated future, hence the notion of a “modern” world.^[40] Revolution is the most spectacular of these new possibilities, one that could be planned, fought, or forestalled by means of reform.

The cultural threshold known as the saddle period led to a new era, though opinions were divided about what it should be called. Revolutionaries marked the elementary break *ex negativo*, as it were – having eradicated what they called the *ancien régime*^[41] – but they also proclaimed the dawn of a new era of liberty. In the long run this contradicted the prevailing zeitgeist and therefore proved ephemeral. A consensus over what to call the new era was only reached in the new century, when the revolution that Napoleon declared dead in 1799 periodically reappeared. Barthold Georg Niebuhr considered it a temporary expedient when he described his 1829 lectures as the “History of the Age of Revolution,”^[42] but a little over forty years later, in 1871, Jacob Burckhardt began his lectures by saying that the events of the preceding years had shown yet again “that everything leading up to our present day has essentially been a revolutionary era.” The upshot was that the recent era stood “in contrast to all known antecedents on our globe.”^[43] This is precisely why the revolutionaries of 1792–3 had tried to sanction the dawn of a new era by instituting a calendar reform.

Every era has its patterns of order. Since these are communicated by way of language, the era of revolutions subjected these patterns to its own novel

dynamics. The Great Schism of premodernity, for all its conflict, left political-social semantics untouched; it was only the Revolution that destroyed this unity. This watershed event made discursive peace unthinkable in the future, forcing people to choose between being for or against it; there was no (longer any) other alternative. Hence, people in the nineteenth century had two opposing patterns of order at their disposal: change and status quo, or translated into party-political terms: liberalism^[44] and conservatism. Conservatism did not comprise a viable option for returning to Old Europe, contrary to what its adherents claimed (and expressed in their catchword “Restoration”). It was a child of the revolution itself and its concepts were therefore structurally modern. In the long run, it was the liberals’ opponents who proved to be more modern and ultimately defeated liberalism – a defeat it would never really overcome. Politicians such as Napoleon III, Cavour, Disraeli and Bismarck found the more convincing answers to the tumultuous effects of industrialization and its attendant social transformations, particularly the “social question,” and, given the fact that they were in power, were generally more capable of implementing their strategies than dogmatically rigid liberals were. No less convincing were the promises of various strains of socialism which, lacking any real opportunity, were spared the trouble of putting their ideas into practice.

With its slogan “liberty, equality, fraternity,” the revolutionary era had a vision of how to refashion the world that was radically different from anything in the premodern era. The socialists believed that once the barriers of the feudal era were eliminated this triad, the “main driving wheel of world history,” would triumph of its own accord.^[45] It seemed to be simply a matter of clearing a path for the “movement,” which explains the temporal focus of both liberalism and socialism, i.e., their respective belief that it was only a matter of time until they prevailed. And yet the era’s three formative characteristics reflect the constraints that resulted from a clash with reality. Indeed, Europe was no tabula rasa like North America, where in many respects people were literally quite “free.” Freedom, in Europe, had to be *made* by means of law and decree. Thus, the first characteristic was the juridification of promises rooted in natural law. The terms, boundaries, and contents had to be negotiated in each individual case, so that specific freedoms not only varied from case to case but were fundamentally different from the abstract, more general concept of freedom. The debate about freedom is therefore an intrinsic part of the freedom agenda.

Things were no different with equality. This second characteristic was just as paradoxical. The European state did not become superfluous, as the movement’s

most radical adherents claimed it would, but actually increased in importance, since the competing representatives of power, the nobility and the church, had effectively been disempowered, but especially because living conditions were becoming ever more complicated, requiring more control and guidance. The state could no longer content itself with controlling strategic centers but had to become territorial, organizing itself more extensively and permanently. The rule of law and liberty therefore took the form of an administrative state with a monopoly on legitimate violence and a trained, often privileged and hierarchically organized bureaucracy that conducted its work in writing according to uniform criteria, dispensed justice, and extended to the remotest village. The greater protection and provision for the welfare of citizens went hand in hand with their loss of autonomy, a growing tax burden and compulsory military service, with the state increasing its control as well as its means of repression.

The third revolutionary promise, fraternity, was even more paradoxical. The brotherhood of nations was never a guiding principle of action; rather, it was precisely the assertion of revolutionary aims that gave rise to the nation-state – first in France, then in response to this (or at least to the idea of it), wherever there happened to be revolutionaries. It took decades, however, to establish this new type of state. The nation as a new model of order was ultimately successful on account of its dual appeal, the opportunities it afforded for participation and concerted aggression, and because it could easily be combined with older identities, (denominational) religion and monarchy, as well as with the new achievements of the constitutional state. Even the old empires could not avoid making concessions to nationalization (military conscription, official languages, public displays of power). The integration of nation-states into the concert of powers set up in 1815 may have been unexpected, but the subsequent creation of the Kingdom of Italy and the German Empire had downright revolutionary features.

Nascent industrial modernity can be understood as the era in which the dissolution of boundaries, made possible and conceivable as a result of revolution, was radically expanded and became a viable option. When Burckhardt – in 1869 – described the novelty of revolution as the “freedom to postulate anything imaginable as if the world were a tabula rasa,”^[46] he by no means meant that it was over. Quite the opposite, in fact, and Burckhardt himself offered a multitude of proofs for the exponential advancement of what had been set in motion. Indeed, by the 1880s technical-scientific innovation and the dynamics of industrial production had already become a force of transformation. This was

followed by the process of subjugating the rest of the world which would catapult Europe in its forward march and whose costs were not immediately evident, as well as by structural transformation in the political sphere due to the rise of the media, to the masses entering politics, and the emergence of the first career politicians. Finally, the tangible effects of social differentiation, palpable in everyday life – not least of all the arts, which broke free from its aesthetic canon – led to a new understanding and a new experience of time. This new sense of time, to follow Niklas Luhmann, consisted of a “surplus of possibilities” of potential courses of action,^[47] replacing the time-oriented patterns of thought inherited from the era of revolution with actor-centered ones. These new actors were ready at hand in the form of social experts.^[48] With their knowledge-based judgements, prognostications and blueprints for action they replaced the rather opinion-based or philosophical formulas of the leading intellectuals before them, who of course did not give up without a fight but massively resisted the scientification of these discourses.

All of these processes led (once again) around 1900 to a widespread sense of an acceleration of time, which attentive observers interpreted as the sign of a transition period,^[49] a cultural threshold not only in retrospect,^[50] perceived by some as a crisis,^[51] by others as a sign of hope.^[52] They spoke alarmingly of the *fin de siècle* or confidently of the *Belle Époque*, using the French terms (which was still the language of elites). Gangolf Hübinger has spoken of a “double cultural revolution” around 1900,^[53] triggered by a heightened self-awareness and leading not coincidentally to the “axial age” of modern science.^[54] Lutz Raphael therefore offers good arguments for a structural transformation of concepts of order, referring to them as planning and utopia.^[55] Together with four other characteristics, they determined the fate of the era of industrial modernism that began around 1880 and lasted about a century.

First, the history of intellectuals and of cultures of expertise in Europe evinces specific features (found throughout Europe). The most significant is their proximity to the state – a not entirely coincidental reciprocity is evident here, for the European state is unique in the world – but their close ties to the economy and society are also rather conspicuous. The attempt to implement expert-guided concepts of order is therefore much more widespread in Europe than it is in other modern societies. The net of legal regulations, social security and market regulation, but also the selection of socially desirable persons and the weeding out of undesirable ones are much more pronounced and finely knit here than elsewhere.

Second, the state's mistrust of self-government, personal autonomy and a lack of regulation confirms the defeat of liberalism – initially brought forth by the English and Atlantic Revolutions – in the transition to industrial modernity. Only after 1945 did liberalism concede to some extent to the trend of state interventionism, securing its (modest) recovery. Most European societies, however, had by that time undergone decades of totalitarian, authoritarian or (in the case of Sweden) social-democratic state interventionism and learned to manage with it. It should not be forgotten that in the early phases of modernity it was the most progressive communities that ventured the step towards welfare-oriented interventionist policies, yielding to the interests of the general public.^[56]

But the specifically modern concepts of order encountered since the 1880s were, third, not only anti-liberal, but due to the inherent logic of knowledge-based planning had a tendency towards totalitarianism. Those engaging in social engineering turned out to be quite interventionist and sometimes prepared to become repressive whenever their rational utopias met with resistance or when they didn't even expect the approval of those directly affected by them.^[57] This is a well known fact in the case of fascist and communist regimes, which gave free reign to their professional planners in securing their objectives of domination, much more so than liberal democracies. More recent scholarship has shown, however, that social-democratic and social-liberal governments can also be repressive – typically in their dealings with families, since the latter have only been effectively shielded from state intervention by the civil codes that were introduced in the age of revolution. Inclusion and exclusion thus prove to be essential steering elements of modernity.

This is also true of the fourth characteristic, the leading role of the nation-state. Contrary to a frequent claim in the literature, the nation as a model of order has lost none of its importance – even after 1945, when mass murder and forced expulsion made many European nations more homogeneous than ever before. To be sure, with the decline of ideologies after 1945, the institutional nature of this model of order eventually became more apparent.^[58] Examples of this are industry standards, so-called non-tariff trade barriers and measures to protect the liberal professions, social security and retirement schemes, not to mention the various degrees of currency nationalism depending on the country and monetary stability. The European Economic Community was all but powerless with respect to all of these issues, and this was of course no coincidence.

The temporalization of thought and the acceleration of time, by contrast, are a universal phenomenon of the modern era. It is therefore worth taking a closer look

at them. Hartmut Rosa has explained why these tendencies are still on the rise,^[59] and not just at the level of our perception.^[60] The varying degrees of time consumption are generally underestimated by scholars, though certainly not by those who experience them. They result in classes of time consumers as well as different spaces of consumption. This, in conjunction with the notion of progress popular ever since the Enlightenment, leads to a new pattern of order whose declared task is the creation of simultaneity. Geographic-based development policies were a feature of the young Italian nation-state, which faced the problem of an incomparably backward South ever since the 1870s. In the Federal Republic of Germany, the creation of uniform or equal standards of living has even been anchored in the constitution since 1949 with subjective legal character, meaning these constitutional rights can be enforced in court. On the whole these examples indicate a more or less pragmatic concept of catch-up acceleration.

The concept was unrealistic without planning, and its advancing to one of the two guiding patterns of order in industrial modernity merely proves once again the loss of confidence in the ordering principle of the “invisible hand.” It had long ceased to be just about economic issues, yet it was here that the conflict between planners and liberists was fought most intensely. This new pattern of order was everywhere strengthened by the First World War. Whereas after 1918 most national economies, with the exception of the agrarian sector, were at least in principle subject to the market as a regulating instrument, criticism of this being left to international theoretical debate, a hitherto unknown culture of planning was prevailing in business management (Fordism), urban planning (the Athens Charter) and the new field of youth policy (e.g., the path-breaking Reich Youth Welfare Law of 1922 in Germany^[61]), since this was thought to be the only way of meeting new challenges.

The years 1929–33 were the watershed, shattering as they did the belief in the effectiveness of the “invisible hand” and making planned economic intervention an acceptable practice in nearly all political camps. Experts developed new ideas about how to remedy the prevailing “chaos” by means of the sensible and centrally planned procurement, management and distribution of scarce goods. In 1935, sociologist Karl Mannheim noted that the era of the “unplanned” was coming to an end.^[62] The American concept of New Deal liberalism and the combination of assistance and control evidenced in the Swedish Folkhem^[63] were the first attempts at sustainably and democratically redirecting the economy, while the fascist variant of dirigisme subjugated the economy to comprehensive steering in the interest of waging war, and was surprisingly successful in doing so.

Totalitarian regimes took a fundamentally different approach in their attempts to implement their visions of utopia.^[64] The utopia of communists was a classless society, the Italian Fascists strove for *romanità*,^[65] whereas the Nazis envisioned “racial purity.” Admittedly, the first two variants of totalitarian modernity sometimes met with sympathy from the international community, the one because it seemed to achieve the age-old dream of universal equality, the other because it embodied the civilizational mission of imperialism,^[66] with the result that many an observer was willing to turn a blind eye to their massive use of violence. The use of violence not only served to keep internal enemies at bay but also as a means to achieving utopia. A characteristic feature of all modern utopias is their attempt to bring time to a halt – to create the ultimate, ideal state which would last for all eternity. Naturally, for reasons of political legitimation, this had to be done as quickly as possible. The three abovementioned totalitarian regimes became “dictatorships of acceleration,”^[67] which suffered from “acute future stress.”^[68] Each utopian aim was constituted in such a way that all the others were contained within it; as soon as the aim was achieved, the remaining problems would all be solved as well. The ceaseless exertion of all available forces was indeed a rhetorical constant, but daily life was also subject to ongoing efforts at acceleration, whether through competitions, promises of a better future, or mass mobilization – but mostly just through simple commands.

Communist utopia eventually lost its appeal, restricting itself after Stalin’s death for the most part to formulaic speech, until even here utopia vanished. The two other utopias, Italian Fascism and Nazism, had lost all credibility before the war was over, but their supporters, having long played the national card, had to be defeated militarily. The mystique of utopia had not entirely disappeared, however.

Its counterpart, total planning, was still going strong. After 1945, planning experts in Western Europe had drifted into bureaucracy, and now, with the blessing of American experts, combined their traditions with the principle of Keynesian global steering for the purpose of reconstructing the Continent. Thus, despite many liberal declarations, political-economic planning enjoyed its greatest flowering for two and half decades. Italian *dirigisti*, representatives of *planification* trained in Vichy, and German Ordoliberals organized the reconstruction of their countries, hedging these efforts by creating a supranational “High Authority” to steer the supply of coal and steel, with parliamentary control playing virtually no role whatsoever.^[69] In the European Economic Community, too, founded in 1957, and its successor organization, the European Union, experts have played a leading role down to the present day. Whether the Trente Glorieuses, the “Glorious Thirty”

years that bestowed on Europe mass prosperity, a “leveled middle-class society” and numerous cultural upheavals, was thanks to comprehensive planning is a matter of debate. In any case, the prominent role of state planning was relegated to the past once Europeans awoke from “their short-lived dream of continual prosperity”^[70] and were forced to acknowledge that the previous steering instruments had lost their effectiveness.

The other key pattern of order of industrial modernity, utopia, came to an end at about the same time. In 1985, Jürgen Habermas noted the “exhaustion of utopian energies” resulting from the “worldwide threat to universal life-interests” and attendant anxieties about the future.^[71] Though experts, and in their wake politicians, may still be envisioning “major projects” – the battle against climate change is one of the biggest projects to date due to its global reach – the general public has long become skeptical. Pluralization, instability and uncertainty have all been on the rise, prompting Habermas to talk about a “new complexity” (*neue Unübersichtlichkeit*).^[72] Behind this lurks an experience that is very real, one that was felt quite acutely in the industrial period of European modernity. There is no need to recap recent contemporary history here. It is now well acknowledged that the end of the postwar economic boom, evident since the early 1970s, was not just a cyclical downswing; it signified a fundamental economic shift, with attendant changes to the social order and value systems.^[73] The term “postmodern” was ready at hand, becoming the “catchword of a [new] sense of time,”^[74] expressing above all the loss of familiar securities. But the term postmodernity can sometimes be misleading, which is why a number of cultural sociologists have offered alternative labels. Ulrich Beck speaks of a “second modernity,”^[75] Peter Wagner of an “extended liberal modernity,”^[76] and Wolfgang Welsch of “postmodern modernity.”^[77] These terms, however, imply certain normative definitions – a common feature of cultural sociology, but one that historians generally shy away from when it comes to labeling historical periods. I do not use them here for this very reason.

There is good reason to believe, however, that we are witnessing a new cultural threshold, from industrial to postindustrial modernity. This does not mean modernity has ended;^[78] it has merely assumed a new guise, following new patterns of order and new guiding concepts. In place of sweeping explanations, suffice it to point out here that the notions of “modernization” and “progress” have become a point of contention over the last four decades. However misguided its individual prognoses, Dennis Meadows’s 1972 bestseller *The Limits to Growth*^[79] undoubtedly lent expression to a widespread sense of anxiety about the value

system of industrial modernity. This anxiety unites value-conservative ecologists and leftist critics of capitalism, and has caused the classic right-left dichotomy in politics to gradually lose its validity, despite its still being used as a rhetorical tool to mobilize the masses. There are many indications that one of the new, prevailing patterns of order is “sustainability” (*Nachhaltigkeit*). Coined in Germany in the eighteenth century by the newly emerging science of forestry and used for two centuries as a technical term, the concept entered general usage (and is still ubiquitous today) with the warning issued by the Club of Rome, bringing to our awareness the finitude of natural resources.^[80]

This is indeed quite a contrast to the triumphalism of the Berlin literati who christened the term modernity (*Moderne*) in 1886. But even postmodernism knows a self-aware and optimistic pattern of order. Not everyone took as dim a view as Meadows and Habermas. There was even good reason to claim that times weren't bad, they were simply *different*, that there were plenty of reasons to feel confident, because boundaries were being expanded and some barriers even lifted. From this perspective, the first signs of change in everyday life were achievements like popular culture, sexual liberation, the emancipation of women and other attacks on the traditional supremacy of older, white males. Values were changing everywhere (though hardly the *fait accompli* some would claim). These barriers being lifted calls to mind the dissolution of technical boundaries in the form of commercial television, personal computers and the Internet, or political ones like the fall of the Wall, German reunification, the Schengen Accord – in short the implosion of communism and the unification of Europe. The “end of certainty,”^[81] in other words, was accompanied and counterbalanced by new experiences and possibilities.

But these changes were not restricted to politics and technology; basic economic convictions were dissolving and transforming as well. The failure of Keynesian global steering evident in the crises of the 1970s almost inevitably enhanced the value of institutions such as the “marketplace” and “freedom.” The real sea change began in the 1980s, when the state, economy and society were subjected to a relentless new regime. Under the pressure of a new global situation, our worldview underwent a massive shift. This is why historians refer to a “paradigm shift of modernity,” in the course of which “the basic economic, social, political and cultural structures of industrial modernity” were corroded.^[82] What replaced them was anything but permanent. The characteristic features of our new modernity are mobility, volatility and an unrelenting pressure to optimize everything and everyone, even our own selves. Supported by advances in information

technology – the World Wide Web went online in 1993 – the neoliberal agenda has intensified its steering of political institutions at the national and, even more so, the European level. The “most important and powerful force” behind the “complex transformations” of the past forty years has become ever more apparent, and was plainly visible with the financial crash of 2008: digital financial-market capitalism.^[83] It is hardly limited to the banking sector, not even to the economy, but contains the promise of universal freedom. Indeed – for better or for worse – the lives of most individuals are subordinate to this new regime by dint of this new model of order.

The era of postmodernity is thus fundamentally determined by the basic conflict between these two new central patterns of order: sustainability and neoliberalism.^[84] These are no subtle alternatives like during industrial modernity. The oppositions this time are radical: anxiety vs. hope. In the first instance people perceive the world and regulate their behavior based on an apocalyptic fear of the future – for the first time in a long time. The truly modern thing about this vision of Armageddon through nuclear death or climate change is the role of the natural and life sciences, which not only provide the diagnosis but offer instructions on how to avert this imminent catastrophe. In the other instance it is a secular promise of salvation held out by neoliberalism, whose adherents espouse a core set of dogmatic principles and whose maxims are therefore frequently referred to by critics as a “catechism.” On the whole it exhibits quasi religious traits,^[85] since the doctrine isn’t limited to economic behavior. Indeed, neoliberalism has meanwhile become a guiding principle of social policy even outside the realm of economics, propagating a variety of values with a direct impact on daily life. A comparison of these two patterns of order ultimately reveals that they both exhibit traits of a system of belief, thus confirming the hypothesis of Wilhelm Graf that processes of cultural self-understanding have deep religious roots, even if the protagonists themselves are not aware of this.^[86] In typically modern fashion, we are faced with “multiple future possibilities” marked by a vastly complex interdependency between the present and the past.^[87]

Conclusion

The unique thing about the *Moderne* / modernity is its multitude of characteristics or meanings. It refers first of all to a certain style, second to a normatively charged view of the present, and third to an era that in many ways does not overlap with the conventional periodizations suggested by historians. These multiple dimensions make it easy to understand why *Moderne* soon expanded beyond its original literary context not long after it was coined in German. The catchword was

used to define in general terms the role of the present and its achievements, not without evaluating and contesting it. It provided an explanation for prevailing conflicts better than any other phrase or slogan. In other words, the concept lent itself perfectly to diagnosing the times, as observed by *Brockhaus* more than a century ago. Scholars were using the concept to describe these phenomena long before they adopted the actual word. Only when the era known as industrial modernity came to a close and scholars began to better understand it did they put the word to scholarly use.

To close, I will outline five reasons for the suitability of the historical theory of *Moderne* / modernity presented here. First, it is a content-related periodization rather than following the customary schematic-chronological approach. Second, it gives contemporaries their due, showing consideration for their experiences and perceptions, which offer important arguments for delimiting and defining the period. At the same time this allows the incorporation of methodological controls which, third, helps avoid confusion of the kind caused by the roundtable of the *American Historical Review*.^[88] (Events like these, with their freewheeling use of the term “modernity,” should serve as a warning to future historians.) Fourth, the concept allows historians to emancipate themselves from the influential but often unhistorical discussions conducted in the fields of sociology and philosophy, some of whose more prominent representatives have tried to link modernity to normative ideas – whether the historical pessimism of the founders of the Frankfurt School (Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno) or the optimism of its current doyen (Habermas). Historical periods are neither “good” nor “bad,” and even Habermas’s notion of the “project of modernity” being incomplete is incompatible with current standards of historical scholarship precisely because of its inherent historical philosophy.^[89] Fifth, and finally, the alternative periodization offered here heightens our awareness of the highly dramatic break in historical continuity that took place around 1800, comparable only to the so-called Neolithic Revolution. Its pressures have caused thought, speech and behavior to recurrently undergo radical changes, especially during the cultural thresholds of 1900 and 1980. This does not however – I repeat once again – imply any kind of value judgment.

German Version: Christof Dipper, *Moderne*, Version: 2.0, in: Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte, 17.01.2018

Recommended Reading

Beck, Ulrich / Mulsow, Martin (Hrsg.), *Vergangenheit und Zukunft der Moderne*, Berlin 2014: Suhrkamp

Charle, Christophe, *La discordance des temps: une brève histoire de la modernité*, Paris 2012: Armand Colin

Corfield, P. J., *Time and the shape of history*, New Haven 2007: Yale University Press

Dipper, Christof / Schneider, Ute / Raphael, Lutz et al. (Hrsg.), *Dimensionen der Moderne: Festschrift für Christof Dipper*, Frankfurt am Main 2008: P. Lang

Hübinger, Gangolf, *Engagierte Beobachter der Moderne: von Max Weber bis Ralf Dahrendorf*, Göttingen 2016: Wallstein Verlag

Jaeger, Friedrich / Knöbl, Wolfgang / Schneider, Ute (Hrsg.), *Handbuch Moderneforschung*, Stuttgart 2015: Verlag J.B. Metzler

Klinger, Cornelia, *Modern / Moderne / Modernismus*, in: Barck, Karlheinz / Fontius, Martin (Hrsg.), *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe (ÄGB): historisches Wörterbuch in sieben Bänden, volume 4*, Stuttgart 2002: Metzler

Quote as

Christof Dipper, *Moderne* (english version), Version: 2.0, in: Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte, 22.11.2018, URL: http://docupedia.de/zg/Dipper_moderne_v2_en_2018?oldid=130703
Versions: 2.0 2.0 1.0

Copyright

Copyright (c) 2018 Clio-online e.V. und Autor, alle Rechte vorbehalten. Dieses Werk entstand im Rahmen des Clio-online Projekts „Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte“ und darf vervielfältigt und veröffentlicht werden, sofern die Einwilligung der Rechteinhaber vorliegt. Bitte kontaktieren Sie: <redaktion@docupedia.de>

References

1. ↑ This essay focuses on the German neologism *Moderne* as used in German scholarship, a loan word distinct from the older term *Neuzeit*. For references to its uses in other Western European languages, see esp. the aesthetic theory in Cornelia Klinger, “Modern/Moderne

/Modernismus,” in: *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe. Historisches Wörterbuch in 7 Bänden*, vol. 4, Stuttgart 2002, pp. 121–60.

2. ↑ The group called itself the “Freie litterarische Vereinigung *Durch!*” and its manifesto was entitled “Die Moderne.” Eugen Wolff, “Die Moderne. Zur ‚Revolution‘ und ‚Reform‘ der Litteratur,” in: *Deutsche academische Zeitschrift* 3 (1886), no. 33, September 26, 1886, first supplement, p. *4 and second supplement, pp. *1-2, online at www.uni-duisburg-essen.de/lyriktheorie/texte1886_wolff.html. This was followed by ten anonymous theses (also penned by Wolff), in: Karl Bleibtreu (ed.), *Das Magazin für die Litteratur des In- und Auslandes. Wochenschrift der Weltlitteratur* 55 (1886), no. 51, December 18, 1886, p. 110, online at www.uni-duisburg-essen.de/lyriktheorie/texte/1886_anonym.html.
3. ↑ *Brockhaus Konversationslexikon*, 14th completely revised edition, vol. 11, Leipzig 1895, p. 959 (headword “modern”). *Meyers Konversationslexikon* followed with an entry in 1897: 5th, completely revised edition, vol. 12, Leipzig 1897, p. 411.
4. ↑ Hermann Bahr, “Zur Kritik der Kritik [1890],” in: idem, *Zur Kritik der Moderne*, edited by Claus Pias, Weimar 2004, pp. 268f.
5. ↑ Baudelaire famously put it as follows : “La modernité, c’est le fugitif, le transitoire, le contingent, la moitié de l’art, dont l’autre moitié est l’éternel et l’immuable.” Charles Baudelaire, *Le peintre de la vie moderne* [1863], in: *Œuvres complètes*, Paris 1954, pp. 892f.
6. ↑ Samuel Lublinski, *Die Bilanz der Moderne*, Berlin 1904 (reprint Tübingen 1974).
7. ↑ For examples of “postmodern,” see Wolfgang Welsch, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne*, 6th ed., Berlin 2002, pp. 12ff.
8. ↑ Klinger, “Modern/Moderne/Modernismus,” p. 139.
9. ↑ The most prominent representative of German modernism was the Würzburg theologian Hermann Schell. His essays from 1897 to 1904 have recently gone back into print: Hermann Schell, *Die neue Zeit und der alte Glaube. Vier theologische Programmschriften*, edited by Thomas Franz, Würzburg 2006.
10. ↑ Karl Beth, *Die Moderne und die Prinzipien der Theologie*, Berlin 1907, p. 61. The first 90 pages of the book deal with the “nature of modernity.”
11. ↑ Otto Baumgarten, “Christentum. Seine Lage in der Gegenwart,” in: *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. 1, Tübingen 1909, col. 1688.
12. ↑ A “causal relationship” existed only with that which Troeltsch called “an ever more pronounced individualism in convictions, opinions, theories and practical aims.” The latter, of course, had considerable ramifications. Ernst Troeltsch, *Die Bedeutung des Protestantismus für die Entstehung der modernen Welt* [1906/11], in: *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 8, edited by Trutz Rendtorff, Berlin 2001, pp. 314, 212
13. ↑ See David Frisby, “Die Ambiguität der Moderne. Max Weber und Georg Simmel,” in: Wolfgang J. Mommsen/Wolfgang Schwentker (eds.), *Max Weber und seine Zeitgenossen*, Göttingen 1988, pp. 580-594; see also idem, *Georg Simmel*, Chichester 1984.

14. ↑ For a good introduction to Weber's work, see the informative radio interview in Dieter Henrich, Claus Offe, Wolfgang Schluchter, "Max Weber und das Projekt der Moderne," in: Christian Gneuss/Jürgen Kocka (eds.), *Max Weber. Ein Symposium, München* 1988, pp. 155–83. Also quite helpful is Stephan Kalberg, "Max Webers historisch-vergleichende Untersuchungen und das Webersche Bild der Neuzeit: eine Gegenüberstellung," in: *Max Weber heute. Erträge und Probleme der Forschung*, Frankfurt am Main 1989, pp. 425–44.
15. ↑ Max Weber, *Die protestantische Ethik und der „Geist“ des Kapitalismus* [1904/05], in: Max Weber *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. I/9, edited by Wolfgang Schluchter, Tübingen 2014, p. 422. – This essay will borrow Weber's term "occidental" when not exclusively referring to (Western) Europe.
16. ↑ Hans Freyer, *Theorie des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters*, Stuttgart 1955.
17. ↑ This is the guiding theory, for example, of Georg Bollenbeck, *Eine Geschichte der Kulturkritik. Von J. J. Rousseau bis G. Anders*, Munich 2007. The term "narrative of salvation" (*Rettungsnarrativ*) is also found there, *ibid.* p. 233.
18. ↑ Conservative opponents used this label in retrospect in order to discredit the revolutions of 1848 but over time the term gained a neutral connotation, see Georg Büchmann, *Geflügelte Worte*, Stuttgart 1956, p. 431.
19. ↑ A textbook example is *Weltgeschichte in gemeinverständlicher Darstellung*, Stuttgart, Gotha 1919–25, which was published in many volumes and sometimes multiple editions
20. ↑ Oswald Spengler *Der Untergang des Abendlandes. Umriss einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte*, vol. 1 Vienna 1918, vol. 2, Munich 1922; In English: *The Downfall of Western Civilization*, 2 vols., New York 1924–5.
21. ↑ Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, 12 vols., London 1934–61; the German translation is an abridged version: *Der Gang der Weltgeschichte*, 2 vols., Zurich 1949–58.
22. ↑ It is no coincidence that the only German authors in the following anthology were Max Weber and Karl Jaspers, as well as the unconventional Swiss historian Herbert Lüthy: Ernst Schulin (ed.), *Universalgeschichte*, Cologne 1974: Max Weber, "Vorbemerkung" to *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, 1920; Karl Jaspers, *Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte*, 1950; Herbert Lüthy, *In Gegenwart der Geschichte*, 1967.
23. ↑ Johannes Haller, *Die Epochen der deutschen Geschichte*, Stuttgart 1923. Haller was probably the most widely read German historian prior to 1945. His periodization is surprising from today's perspective but fits Haller's German nationalist idea of history to a T, the last era beginning for him with Bismarck's departure from politics in 1890. This was the beginning of the end, as it turned out that the German Empire would remain a "mere episode." Neither the revolution of 1918 nor the "shameful peace" of Versailles were so much as broached, for there was nothing positive to say about the present and even less so anything hopeful about the future.
24. ↑ Weber's theory of Protestantism was in fact widely discussed before the war, but his method

of systematically comparing cultures did not find any emulators, neither among sociologists nor among historians (with the lone exception of Otto Hintze). Troeltsch never completed his own comparative project.

25. ↑ Otto G. Oexle, "Sozialgeschichte, Begriffsgeschichte, Wissenschaftsgeschichte. Anmerkungen zum Werk Otto Brunners," in: *Vierteljahrsschrift für Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte* 71 (1984), pp. 305–41; Christof Dipper, "Otto Brunner aus der Sicht der frühneuzeitlichen Historiographie," in: *Jahrbuch des italienisch-deutschen historischen Instituts* 13 (1987), pp. 73–96. A Brunner biography by Reinhard Blänkner is in the works.
26. ↑ Most recently Jan Eike Dunkhase, *Werner Conze. Ein deutscher Historiker im 20. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 2010.
27. ↑ On this concept, see Reinhard Blänkner, "Spät-Alteuropa oder Frühe Neuzeit?," in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 13 (1987), pp. 559–64; see also Luise Schorn-Schütte (ed.), *Alteuropa oder Frühe Moderne? Deutungsmuster für das 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert aus dem Krisenbewußtsein der Weimarer Republik in Theologie, Rechts- und Geschichtswissenschaft*, Berlin 1999 (= *Zeitschr. f. Hist. Forschung*, supplement 23).
28. ↑ Werner Conze, *Die Strukturgeschichte des technisch-wissenschaftlichen Zeitalters als Aufgabe für Forschung und Lehre*, Cologne 1957. See also Thomas Etzemüller, *Sozialgeschichte als politische Geschichte. Werner Conze und die Neuorientierung der westdeutschen Geschichtswissenschaft nach 1945*, Munich 2001, pp. 160ff.
29. ↑ The number of overviews, many of them self-portrayals, is immense. I refer here merely to Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Geschichte als Historische Sozialwissenschaft*, Frankfurt am Main 1972; Jürgen Kocka, *Sozialgeschichte. Begriff, Entwicklung, Probleme*, Göttingen 1977 (expanded edition 1986); Jürgen Osterhammel/Dieter Langewiesche/Paul Nolte (eds.), *Wege der Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, Göttingen 2006.
30. ↑ To name just a few of its key representatives from a conceptual viewpoint: Gisela Bock, Ute Frevert, Jürgen Kocka, Hans and Wolfgang J. Mommsen, Gerhard A. Ritter, Reinhard Rürup, Wolfgang Schieder, Winfried Schulze, Klaus Tenfelde, Hans-Ulrich Wehler. And at a deliberate remove from them, Reinhart Koselleck.
31. ↑ The literature critical of modernization theory is likewise legion. From a cultural-historical perspective against what might be called Bielefeld Orthodoxy, Ute Daniel, "Clio unter Kulturschock. Zu den aktuellen Debatten der Geschichtswissenschaft," in: *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 48 (1997), pp. 195–218, 259–78.
32. ↑ An initial and quite exceptional overview can be found in Anselm Doering-Manteuffel/Lutz Raphael, *Nach dem Boom. Perspektiven auf die Zeitgeschichte seit 1970*, Göttingen 2008 (3rd expanded edition 2012). The book unleashed wide-ranging discussions, too many to cite individual references here.
33. ↑ I owe a great debt to conversations with Lutz Raphael, who systematized this term in "Ordnungsmuster der ‚Hochmoderne‘? Die Theorie der Moderne und die Geschichte der

europäischen Gesellschaften im 20. Jahrhundert,” in: Ute Schneider/Lutz Raphael (eds.), *Dimensionen der Moderne. Festschrift für Christof Dipper*, Frankfurt am Main 2008, pp. 73–91.

34. ↑ Carl Wernicke, *Die Geschichte der Neuzeit*, 2 vols, Berlin 1855–7 (= *Die Geschichte der Welt, zunächst für das weibliche Geschlecht bearbeitet*, vol. 3), is certainly one of the oldest references in a work of history.
35. ↑ Reinhart Koselleck, “ ‚Neuzeit‘. Zur Semantik moderner Bewegungsbegriffe [1977],” in: idem, *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*, Frankfurt am Main 1979, pp. 303, fn. 3.
36. ↑ Of course it is insufficient to interpret entire epochs through the construct of two opposing systems of ideas, but the following dualism may nonetheless help us understand overarching tendencies and values. It goes without saying that there are a wealth of other, likewise time-specific patterns of order alongside and “below” them.
37. ↑ Cultural sociologists have begun to talk about “multiple modernities,” but the examples of Europe, North America and Japan investigated by Eisenstadt are subject to a normative trajectory that runs contrary to the standards of historiography. Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, *Die Vielfalt der Moderne*, Weilerswist ³2011.
38. ↑ I have chosen this word in contrast to version 1.0 of this Docupedia article (http://docupedia.de/zg/dipper_moderne_v1_de_2010), to distinguish the period from 1880 to 1970 from modernity in general. Any similarity to Giddens’s “high” or “late” modernity (Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Cambridge 1992, p. 3) is coincidental.
39. ↑ Well substantiated in Christof Dipper, “Aufklärung und Moderne,” in: Olaf Asbach (eds.), *Europa und die Moderne im langen 18. Jahrhundert*, Hannover 2014, pp. 33–62.
40. ↑ In lieu of a plethora of sources, I refer here again to Koselleck, “ ‚Neuzeit‘.” This article was originally written for the following volume edited by Koselleck: *Studien zum Beginn der modernen Welt*, Stuttgart 1977. The modern (*neuzeitlich*) aspect focused on by Koselleck and his co-authors is evident there and is necessarily omitted in this reprint. The saddle period, by contrast, has been the object of much discussion. Examples in Hans Joas/Peter Vogt (eds.), *Begriffene Geschichte. Beiträge zum Werk Reinhart Kosellecks*, Berlin 2011, part 4.
41. ↑ For more detail see Rolf Reichardt, “Ancien Régime,” in: Friedrich Jaeger (ed.), *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit*, vol. 1, Stuttgart 2005, cols. 371–7.
42. ↑ Barthold Georg Niebuhr, *Geschichte des Zeitalters der Revolution*, vol. 1, Hamburg 1845, p. 41; cited in Reinhart Koselleck, “Geschichte, Historie,” in: *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, vol. 2, Stuttgart 1975, pp. 664f. Ranke talked about the “age of revolution” as early as 1854, without elaborating on it. Leopold von Ranke, *Über die Epochen der neueren Geschichte*, § 8; idem, *Aus Werk und Nachlass*, vol. 2, edited by Walther Peter Fuchs and Theodor Schieder, Munich 1971, pp. 50f.

On the bourgeoisie's fear of revolution, see Theodor Schieder, "Das Problem der Revolution im 19. Jahrhundert [1950]," in: idem, *Staat und Gesellschaft im Wandel unserer Zeit*, 2nd edition., Darmstadt 1970, pp. 11–57.

43. ↑ Jacob Burckhardt, *Geschichte des Revolutionszeitalters. Aus dem Nachlass hrsg. v. Wolfgang Hardtwig u.a.*, Basel 2009, p. 14.
44. ↑ The opposition movements pushing liberalism towards radicalism (the subsequent democrats), socialism and communism remained committed to the same antagonistic thinking.
45. ↑ For example, by Karl von Rotteck in an article on "Liberty" in his 1838 *Staatslexikon*, cited in Christof Dipper, "Freiheit," in: *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, vol. 2, p. 499.
46. ↑ Burckhardt, *Geschichte des Revolutionszeitalters*, p. 10. Cf. pp. 19 and 25, where he expresses the same idea.
47. ↑ Reported by Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht, "Modern, Modernität, Moderne," in: *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, vol. 4, Stuttgart 1978, p. 131.
48. ↑ See the pioneering essay of Lutz Raphael, "Die Verwissenschaftlichung des Sozialen als methodische und konzeptionelle Herausforderung für eine Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts," in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 22 (1996), pp. 165–93.
49. ↑ "Our age is a time of transition, an era of searching and groping for new and modern ideals of life and culture. This characteristic has permeated all areas of our culture for more than a decade. In science and scholarship, the feeling of confidence characteristic of the previous generation that with the means of scientific scholarship the final mysteries of existence could be solved has largely made way for a critical mood that is more and more conscious of the limits of knowledge." Paul Hinneberg, Introduction to Wilhelm Lexis (ed.), *Die allgemeinen Grundlagen der Kultur der Gegenwart*, 1st edition, Berlin 1906 (= *Die Kultur der Gegenwart*, vol. I/1), p. IX.
50. ↑ Virginia Woolf even knew the exact date: "In or around December 1910, human character changed," cited in Philipp Blom, *Der taumelnde Kontinent, Europa 1900-1914*, Munich 2009, p. 319.
51. ↑ It is important to acknowledge, however, that "crisis" is an elementary part of self-description in modernity. Reinhart Koselleck, "Einige Fragen zur Begriffsgeschichte von ‚Krise‘ [1986]," in: idem, *Begriffsgeschichten. Studien zur Pragmatik der politischen und sozialen Sprache*, Frankfurt am Main 2006, pp. 203–17; idem, "Krise," in: *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, vol. 3, Stuttgart 1982, pp. 634–7, 641.
52. ↑ Numerous examples in August Nitschke et al. (eds.), *Jahrhundertwende. Der Aufbruch in die Moderne 1880-1930*, vol. 1, Reinbek 1990.
53. ↑ Gangolf Hübinger, "Störer, Wühler, Weichensteller. Intellektuelle Mobilmachung im 20. Jahrhundert," in: *Zeitschrift für Ideengeschichte* 3, no. 4 (2009), pp. 47–57, esp. pp. 50ff.
54. ↑ Otto Gerhard Oexle, "Geschichte als Historische Kulturwissenschaft," in: Wolfgang

Hardtwig/Hans-Ulrich Wehler (eds.), *Kulturgeschichte Heute*, Göttingen 1996, p. 15.

55. ↑ Raphael, “Ordnungsmuster,” p. 86. I rely in the following on this pioneering contribution but differ in the enumerating the characteristics of these patterns of order.
56. ↑ On so-called municipal socialism, see the work of one of its Social Democratic spokesmen in Germany: Hugo Lindemann, *Die deutsche Städteverwaltung. Ihre Aufgabe auf den Gebieten der Volkshygiene, des Städtebaus und des Wohnungswesens*, 2nd expanded edition., Stuttgart 1906. More recent and paradigmatic: Adelheid von Saldern (ed.), *Stadt und Moderne. Hannover in der Weimarer Republik*, Hamburg 1989.
57. ↑ Numerous case studies in Kerstin Brückweh et al. (eds.), *Engineering Society: The Role of the Human and Social Sciences in Modern Societies, 1880-1980*, Basingstoke 2012, parts I and II.
58. ↑ And yet the semantics of nationalism have hardly gone away, it being “the most binding integration ideology of modernity,” Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, *Die Wiederkehr der Götter*, Munich 2004, p. 41.
59. ↑ Hartmut Rosa, *Beschleunigung. Die Veränderung der Zeitstruktur in der Moderne*, Frankfurt am Main 2005; idem, *Beschleunigung und Entfremdung. Entwurf einer kritischen Theorie spätmoderner Zeitlichkeit*, Frankfurt am Main 2013. The latter book, unlike its predecessor, paints a rather bleak portrait in the spirit of Critical Theory. Peter Borscheid, *Das Tempo-Virus. Eine Kulturgeschichte der Beschleunigung*, Frankfurt am Main 2004, takes stock of the facts of acceleration in a long-term perspective.
60. ↑ Reinhart Koselleck, “Gibt es eine Beschleunigung der Geschichte? [1985],” in: idem, *Zeitschichten. Studien zur Historik*, Frankfurt am Main 2000, pp. 150–76; idem, “Zeitverkürzung und Beschleunigung. Eine Studie zur Säkularisation [1985],” in: *ibid.*, pp. 177–202.
61. ↑ A seminal work here is Detlev J. K. Peukert, *Grenzen der Sozialdisziplinierung. Aufstieg und Krise der deutschen Jugendfürsorge 1878 bis 1931*, Cologne 1986.
62. ↑ Karl Mannheim, *Mensch und Gesellschaft im Zeitalter des Umbaus*, Leiden 1935 (reprint Darmstadt 1958).
63. ↑ See Detlev Lehnert (ed.), *Gemeinschaftsdenken in Europa. Das Gesellschaftskonzept „Volkshelm“ im Vergleich 1900-1938*, Cologne 2013.
64. ↑ These were always termed “revolutions” in order to disguise the fact that all political-social utopias, beginning with Jacobin rule, proved fundamentally unattainable. “Utopia” had long become a “pejorative battle cry.” Reinhart Koselleck, “Zur Begriffsgeschichte der Zeitutopie [1987],” in: idem, *Begriffsgeschichten*, Frankfurt am Main 2006, p. 272.
65. ↑ Admiration of Roman culture in the sense of wanting to reestablish the Roman Empire in the Mediterranean by recovering Roman values.
66. ↑ The key justification for occupying large parts of the world was the claim to be “civilizing” the “natives.” Numerous examples in Boris Barth/Jürgen Osterhammel (eds.),

Zivilisierungsmissionen. Imperiale Weltverbesserung seit dem 18. Jahrhundert, Constance 2005.

67. ↑ Lutz Raphael, *Imperiale Gewalt und mobilisierte Nation. Europa 1900-1945*, Munich 2011, p. 228.
68. ↑ Klaus Gestwa, “*Social und soul engineering* unter Stalin und Chruschtschow, 1928-1964,” in: Thomas Etzemüller (ed.), *Die Ordnung der Moderne*, Bielefeld 2009, p. 245.
69. ↑ Dieter Gosewinkel, “Zwischen Diktatur und Demokratie. Wirtschaftliches Planungsdenken in Deutschland und Frankreich: Vom Ersten Weltkrieg bis zur Mitte der 1970er Jahre,” in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 34 (2008), pp. 327-359, here esp. pp. 343ff.
70. ↑ Burkart Lutz, *Der kurze Traum immerwährender Prosperität. Eine Neuinterpretation der industriell-kapitalistischen Entwicklung im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Frankfurt am Main 1984. Lutz considers renewed long-term economic growth an unlikely prospect and is thus himself a witness of the “end of confidence,” of which more below.
71. ↑ Jürgen Habermas, “Die Krise des Wohlfahrtsstaates und die Erschöpfung utopischer Energien [1985],” in: idem, *Zeitdiagnosen. Zwölf Essays*, Frankfurt am Main 2003, pp. 27–49, esp p. 29.
72. ↑ Jürgen Habermas, *Die neue Unübersichtlichkeit*, Frankfurt am Main 1985.
73. ↑ Doering-Manteuffel/Raphael, *Nach dem Boom*.
74. ↑ Ibid., p. 116.
75. ↑ Summarizing himself: Ulrich Beck, “Moderne,” in: Sina Farzin/Stefan Jordan (eds.), *Lexikon der Soziologie und Sozialtheorie. Hundert Grundbegriffe*, Stuttgart 2008, pp. 199f. Elsewhere Beck talks about “reflexive modernization,” a rather inappropriate term since modernity was reflexive from the beginning, even naming itself.
76. ↑ Peter Wagner, *Soziologie der Moderne. Freiheit und Disziplin*, Frankfurt am Main 1995, chapters IVf.
77. ↑ Welsch, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne*.
78. ↑ Carefully argued, though establishing a different starting point of the era: Dieter Langewiesche, “‘Postmoderne’ als Ende der Moderne? Überlegungen eines Historikers in einem interdisziplinären Gespräch,” in: Wolfram Pyta/Ludwig Richter (eds.), *Gestaltungskraft des Politischen. Festschrift für Eberhard Kolb*, Berlin 1998, pp. 331–47. It is likewise a myth that industry has vanished – with the exception perhaps of Great Britain. It has changed dramatically, however, due to globalization, financial-market capitalism and digitalization.
79. ↑ Dennis Meadows/Donella Meadows/Jørgen Randers/William W. Behrens III, *The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome’s Project on the Predicament of Mankind*, London 1972. The German edition was likewise published in 1972: Dennis Meadows/Donella Meadows/ Erich Zahn/Peter Milling, *Die Grenzen des Wachstums. Bericht des Club of Rome zur Lage der Menschheit*, Reinbek 1972. Pp. 56–60 have a table with a list of nonrenewable natural resources. Crude oil and most precious metals should be exhausted by now according

to the figures presented there.

80. ↑ For more detail, see Ulrich Grober, *Die Entdeckung der Nachhaltigkeit. Kulturgeschichte eines Begriffs*, Munich 2010.
81. ↑ Konrad Jarausch (ed.), *Das Ende der Zuversicht? Die siebziger Jahre als Geschichte*, Göttingen 2008.
82. ↑ Doering-Manteuffel/Raphael, *Nach dem Boom*, p. 102.
83. ↑ Ibid., p. 8.
84. ↑ “Liberty” is a less appropriate term in this context, being too bound up with the pattern of order of the era of revolution. “Neoliberalism” was coined by Alexander Rüstow in 1938. Philip Mirowski/Dieter Plehwe (eds.), *The Road from Mont Pèlerin: The Making of the Neoliberal Thought Collective*, Cambridge, Mass. 2009, p. 13.
85. ↑ Daniel Stedman Jones, *Masters of the Universe. Hayek, Friedman and the Birth of Neoliberal Politics*, Princeton 2012, p. 329, talks about a “faith-based policy.”
86. ↑ Graf, *Die Wiederkehr*, pp. 205ff.
87. ↑ Lucian Hölscher, *Die Entdeckung der Zukunft*, Göttingen 2016, p. 325.
88. ↑ AHR Roundtable: Historians and the Question of “Modernity,” in: *American Historical Review* 116 (2011), pp. 631–751. The perspectives offered here by representatives of various disciplines on the topic of “modernity” neither made for a cohesive whole nor were they helpful from a theoretical viewpoint. The editors had hoped to salvage a concept of modernity that has little in common with the one presented here.
89. ↑ Jürgen Habermas, *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne. Zwölf Vorlesungen*, Frankfurt am Main 1985. In a strict sense this book contains no historical proofs apart from references to conceptual history. Sociologists using historical methods are generally skeptical of his approach.