

# Reactions to modernity essays examples

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



The terms modernism and modernity have presented a lot of ambiguity in the literature world. Modernism refers to the reactions people had to modernity. Modernity symbolizes the changes that came about in the world in the 19th century. Most of the major changes that came to the world happened in the years 1890-1960 the period from the occurrence of the First World War to the Second World War (Haferkamp and Smelser 26). The First World War brought about major change in chemical weaponry, rise of wireless communication, machine guns, aircraft and armored vehicles among other changes. The First World War also led to the culmination of imperialism, industrialization and capitalism. However, the war led to a rise in profitability of the industries.

## **Discussion**

Modernity brought about; bureaucracy, rationalization, secularization, alienation, disillusionment of the world, individualization, commodification, nationalism, linear progression, subjectivism, reductionism, universalism, totalitarianism and industrialization (Haferkamp and Smelser 33). Modernity failed to recognize traditions and there was a common belief that technology and science would alter the world for the better. Modernity emphasized carrying out old things in new ways and fostered change in the society. It seemed like a good thing in the beginning but with it came many issues which led to reactions from the people. Modernism emphasized primitivism, radicalism, experimentation and freedom of expression. Many art forms and music now contained unconventional material which was disturbing to the people who embraced traditions. Counter modernism movements hence came up to foster holism, spirituality and connection. The movements see

modernity as reductionist and as a result it fails to see the systematic and emerging effects of its growth.

Modernity brought about developments in technology and decreased mortality rates, decreased deaths due to starvation and better health services. Conversely, while bringing about technological developments, there were developments in the military. Warfare became more advanced leading to disasters like the atomic bomb that was dropped in Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the Second World War. Modernity also brought about degradation of the environment. It saw the beginning in the destruction of climate and land. The many industries which came up at this period disposed their waste without any care for the environment. Movements have come up which aimed at protecting the environment. Industries which use coal were subjected to regular checks on whether they were preventing the exposure of harmful chemicals to the air. The movements came about during the period of the great smoke of Britain. It is a major step which has enabled the present world to have a better environment. The above negativities of modernity were the cause of the up rise of movements to counter modernity which has become menace to the people.

The years after the First World War saw many social changes take place in society. Greece lost in its battle with Turkey and Ireland attained independence in 1922 (Levenson 49). Reactions after the First World War involved the deportation of the populations from Smyrna. Many of the modernists are part of the social transformations that reacted to the mass disillusionment that came about with modernity. Modernity is often viewed in to different faces, the enthrallment of rise in new media and industrialization

and the discontent with modernity.

One of the reactions to modernity was the rise of social political groupings prior to the Second World War. Socio political movements aimed at addressing issues they are discontent about and attempt to alter the perception of political and social bases of that discontent. It began with the meeting of the Fascists. The first meeting of the fascists was in 1919 whereby the fascists came together with the vision of futurism contrary to the liberal economic groups (Winfield 56). Many movements came up led by individuals such as T. S. Elliot and Ezra Pound in order to respond to the eras crises. America authors were waged to document the American culture. Nazism and fascism also rose to react to the crises brought about by modernity and this led to the Second World War. Futurism leaders and Fascist leaders often worked closely to counter the crises. The futurism movement involved a lot of British and American writers but was based in Italy and Germany. In 1935 Italy invade Ethiopia leading to war. It was followed by a breakout of the Spanish Civil war. The Fascists were supported by Italy, Adolf Hitler of Germany as well as Ireland. Sociocultural movements also emerged to react in reaction to modernity. Sociocultural movements aimed at growing their numbers and securing the right to exercise their beliefs. The Russian Revolution started in 1917 and the British policy was required to create a Jewish state in Palestine by the Balfour Declaration. Modernity did not only seek to present new ideas in art forms but also to embed them into the life of the people. As a result artists of modernity were much more creative and more innovative than artists who existed previously. The artists also used their freedom of expression and did not

hesitate on presenting controversial issues. Secularization increased and moral values and ethics were slowly eroding along with cultural and traditional values (Weidhorn 141).

Modernity brought about a growth in behavioral and social sciences. As a result the authors of the 19th century are apt. modern psychology, economics, sociology and psychoanalysis emerged in the 19th century. Sigmund Freud, Max Weber, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim and Friedrich Nietzsche are among the greatest writers. The rise of modernity and the problems it brought about with it was the inspiration behind part of the writings. For instance Sigmund Freud wrote on civilization and its discontents a book about how modernity and civilization has influenced culture.

The rise of the world war caused the authors to change how they write. Many of the people who read literature know that something is wrong with the rise of modernity because of the wars and erosion of moral values. The imagist movement seeks to rejuvenate how the picture fits in with language in a text. Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot began focusing on writing poems that draw attention to the tradition of its basis (Weidhorn 140). Shakespeare was one of the well-known writers in modernity whose literature is still read in present day.

Modernity resulted into large losses of human life in the world wars. Events such as the holocaust which are inspired by the embrace of rational thought and degradation of moral values. During the holocaust, homosexuals, Slavs, communists, Poles, European Jews and Romani were killed (Walz 41). About 17 million people were killed, among them being 6 million Jews. The holocaust was a big blow to the world as a whole and brought to light the

evils that had come about as a result of modernity. Most of the young generation was lost during the war periods. The reason for the great loss of young lives is their lack of immunity to many diseases and the fact that they were the people who mainly participated in the war. The few young people who remained were either psychologically wounded or crippled for life (Winfield 67). The composite relationship between economic instability, warfare, industrialization, technological advancement and high levels of destruction all show that modernism is a cultural movement.

Modernity is frequently categorized by paralleling modern cultures to postmodern or pre-modern ones, and the comprehension of those unmodern social standings is, once more, far from an established issue. It is reasonable for one to doubt that the diverse realities of cultures from the historical period can be sufficiently described. As can be seen above, regularly seemingly conflicting forces e. g. subjectivism and objectivism, nationalism and individualism, totalitarianism and democratization are credited to modernity. In terms of social organization, for example, most of the crucial events and features written above originate from a move from fairly isolated local societies to a more cohesive large-scale society.

## **Conclusion**

Modernity brought about a lot of changes both positive and negative. It has resulted in the loss of cultural values, beliefs and ethics. Religion is another sector of society that has been greatly influenced by modernity. Many of these changes are reflected in the world such as development of the sciences and technology. The advancements of the modernity era have

advanced further with time especially in terms of technology. Despite the major issues of that have risen, modernity has been of great benefit to the world. Nevertheless if the governments at the time had planned strategically, the world wars and events like the holocaust could have been avoided and also the great loss of human life that resulted.

## **Works Cited**

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