

THE ROOTS OF MODERNITY

AND POSTMODERNITY

MODERN TIMES

- Ancient Greece is rooted in myth, ritual and Homer
 - Prometheus, Oedipus, Achilles
 - Alexander is modern
- Rome takes pride in its mythical origin
 - Lupa Capitolina
- The Middle Ages are modern
 - There is no ancestral tradition

MODERN TIMES

- “Modern” < lat. *modo*, just recently
- Modern people are recent people
- Germans ~ Alamanni = Alle Männer
 - 40 different peoples in Tacitus, all with their royal lineage (Pirenne)
- Abaelard, *Logica modernorum* (Paul Vincent Spade)
- Being modern is inventing things
- Contractualism in social thinking (Rousseau)

MODERN TIMES

- The Middle Ages reinvent tradition
 - The Brits come from Brutus, the French from Francus, the sanctuaries from Mary Magdalen, the Round Table from Jesus Christ
- Ockham and Duns Scot put an end to realism (Platonism)
- Aristotelism is defended by the Church
- There grows a conflict centre - periphery

VALUES OF THE CENTRE

- Order – the two swords
- Shared knowledge
- Authority = non-questioned power
- Centralized power (Diocletian < Louis XIV)
- Predictability
- Opposition to deviance and alien civilizations
 - Non-violence in Christianity < doctrine of just wars

VALUES OF THE GERMANIC PERIPHERY

- Individual autonomy
- Freedom to dissent
- Legitimation of power through social contract
- Local autonomy
- Tolerance to uncertainty
- A level of “healthy” violence
- Nominalism (Alain de Libera)
- Pragmatism (Dewey, Peirce, Rorty, Brandom)

POST-MODERN TIMES

- Friedrich Nietzsche:
 - perspectivism (< Schopenhauer)
 - transhistorical perspective (*On the Use and Abuse of History for Life*)
 - the necessity to destroy
- Industrialism
 - instrumentalization of the world (Goethe, *Faust*)
 - pure knowledge < conquest (Rimbaud)
 - communication and control (Norbert Wiener)

POST-MODERN TIMES

- The romanticism of the British Empire Kipling
- The uselessness of the British Empire 1947
- Decolonization
- Resentment (Max Scheler)
- Shame and guilt (Dodds, Ruth Benedict)
- Multiculturalism
- Claims
- Cultural rights

POST-MODERN VALUES

- *Umwertung aller Werte* (Nietzsche)
- Rights (natural rights, human rights)
- Contractualism
- Minorities, gender, inclusion
- Autonomy and management of self (Foucault)
- Responsibility and accountability
- Agency (Aristotle, Kant, Korsgaard)
- Frontiers of the person
- Animal rights