

FUTURE STUDIES.

1. Sociology and thinking about the future.

- **Auguste Comte: savoir pour prévoir et prévoir pour pouvoir**
- **Anthony Giddens : the consequences of Modernity.**

2. How to approach the future?

3. Unconditional forecasting (post war period)

rise of thinktanks.

Herman Kahn; the Year 2000. 1967.

The notion of : thinking about the unthinkable.

Example: the Societal Consequences of the bio-medical revolution. (cloning, eugenics)

The fall of unconditional forecasting.

4. The historical models for the Future (sixties).

Relationship time and progress.

4.1. the evolutionary model.

Variation: the three stages model:

Example: Pre-industrial, industrial, post-industrial.

(Daniel Bell: the Coming of Post-industrial Society 1965).

4.2. the Dialectical Model (Hegel and Marx).

Progress as result of conflict and struggle.

Variation: the ‘Law’of the stimulating backwardness or the inhibiting progress (Jan Romein)

4.3. The cyclical model:

Oswald von Spengler: the Decline of the West (1923). Der Untergang des Abendlandes.

Topicality of the cyclical model:

Samuel Huntington: The Clash of Civilizations (1993).

4.4. Criticism of the idea of historical stages.

Karl Popper: The Open society and its enemies (1945)

Geroge Soros: the Open Society Foundation.

**Influence of Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution
(the Origin of Species).**

Ekskurs: the Idea of Progress:

- **Post Modernism and the Idea of Progress:
(Bauman: Modernity and the Holocaust)**

- **Progress as error (environmentalism/Ecologism: the Blueprint of Survival 1973.**

- **Declining of belief in progress as tragedy.**

The Projekt der Moderne (Habermas) Giddens.

5. Conditional forecasting : Global Models (Seventies).

The Ecological Problematique.

Quantitative Computer Models for the future

Example: Meadows c.s. : The Limits to Growth (1973) Report to the Club of Rome (Aurelio Peccei)

The early warning function.

6. Scenario's

7. The comparative Prognosis.

Difference with the Historical Analogy.

Example: The future of Central/Eastern Europe.

After 1989: the possibility of a fall back.

- The Post-Authoritarian societies in Southern Europe,

- the societies of Latin America.

The Latin American cycle.

Crucial factor: the relationship with the northern neighbour (EU and USA)

The Debate on Deepening or Widening.

8. the Weak signals: (21st Century).

Compare: the seeds of time: (Shakespeare: Macbeth): the antenna function.

Predictable surprises. (Role of 9/11)

Watkins and Bazerman: Predictable surprises: The surprises you should have seen coming

(Harvard Business Review 2003)

Central Question: Future Studies: Art or Science (De Jouvenel).