The Notion of Progress

General Definition

Idea of progress

modernisation – evolution – technology – improvement – criticism – economic growth – democracy risks – tradition – regression

Progress (n.) ['prəʊgres]: development towards a better, more complete, or more modern condition.

Overview

The idea of progress basically consists in believing that the world can become better in terms of art, science, technology, liberty and quality of life and has shaped most of Western civilisation's vision of history. Progress implies changes, some evolution from an old order with old traditions to a new order which is not necessarily embraced by all, as it may shake up deep-rooted, highly respected conventions and beliefs. The recent evolutions of family structures in the USA and more generally in Western societies are indeed at the heart of a heated debate between those who approve of these changes and those who resist and criticise them in the name of tradition (Door 4). As the rhythm of progress seems to have accelerated these last few decades with an ever faster increase of major technological and scientific breakthroughs, the cult of novelty and progress is now being questioned. Indeed, a growing number of people voice their concern about the ethical, social and environmental consequences of such development and about the excesses of today's consumer society (Door 6).

Your Definition :

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Quote(s) about this notion

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