Anyone who adopts a term open to so many different interpretations as the key concept for a lecture owes his audience a preliminary explanation. First of all: had I read my lecture in German, I would, at least for the title, have preferred "die Moderne" to "Moderneität". Whereas the latter term calls up associations with the ever-changing topical sense of life, experienced as contemporary by consecutive generations, we mean by "die Moderne" those views and thoughts which have their roots in the period of the Enlightenment. The emphasis there is on the continuity of those factors which determine identity. The Enlightenment saw the rise among the cultural elite of the human type which was conscious of its autonomy towards revelation, tradition, and authority. Its fundamental attitude may be characterized by catchwords such as rationality, critical analysis, independence, and liberty. In the development of thought and action founded on these principles which we call modernity, various forms and several stages may be distinguished. I therefore use the term modernity in the sense of a historical process along rationalist lines of scientific, technical, socio-economic, cultural, and political differentiation.¹

These aspects each follow their own line of development, but are also closely related. In their early phases, the first two gave the initial impetus to the so-called Industrial Revolution. It was not until the 1870s that this process of modernization, including its social consequences, gained momentum in the Netherlands. Political modernity, its specific national-social consequences included, owes its inception to the French Revolution. The cultural developments, especially with regard

¹ This article is the English version of a Dutch article which will appear in the proceedings of the conference on Church and State (The Hague 1996) which was organised by the 'Kerkhistorisch Gezelschap' (forthcoming).

to philosophy and theology, have had significant effects on all fields of life, but were in their turn mainly influenced by the social context. It is to this development, of which the definitive commencement is usually ascribed to the Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant, that German usage prefers to assign the term "Moderne". In accordance with the theme of this congress it is this aspect which I shall emphasize in my lecture.

However much the churches in particular have struggled with it, modernity is not a phenomenon that has only affected them from the outside—for instance, from the side of the state. The process of modernity has developed in different phases and to unequal degrees from and within society as a whole. In the Netherlands, for example, well into our own century most statesmen were members of the church and all leaders of the church considered themselves loyal citizens. In the Netherlands as much as everywhere else, the churches have not withdrawn from certain influences of the Enlightenment and both revolutions, either more or less from conviction or from a sense of self-protection. It is from this perspective that I propose to consider the relation between church and state.

I

The state which stood at the beginning of two hundred years of development was a modern state. In a few years' time the Northern Netherlands had not only made up the lost ground of over two centuries, but had become, together with revolutionary France, the leader in the artificially enforced process of political modernity. This process first of all involved the structure of the state. The constitution of 1798 referred to the "Batavian People, forming one inseparable State". In this way, the opportunities were created to achieve unity in government, finances, and the administration of justice. A revolutionary unitarianism replaced the traditional federalism, which was based on the Union of Utrecht (1579). The process also involved the form of government. A constitution was envisaged which ensured "the one and indivisible and inalienable power of the entire People over all the

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3 Cf. for Germany, for instance, the instructive essay collection: W. Loth (ed.), Deutscher Katholizismus im Imbruch zur Moderne (Stuttgart-Berlin-Cologne, 1991).
4 In the original Dutch: "Bataafsche Volk, zig vormende tot eenen ondeelbaren Staat".