CHAPTER 21

Industrialization and Society, 1800–1850

CHAPTER OUTLINE
I. The Spread of Industrialization
   A. Industrialization on the Continent
      1. Continental European states found that developing their own industries would be more complicated than copying the British model.
      2. Industrialization spread from Britain across the European continent to Belgium, France, Germany, and eastward.
      3. The building blocks of industrialization included good communications by water; raw materials like coal, lumber, and iron ore; a well-trained population with artisans; and a government favorable to industry.
      4. The size of France and the lack of economical transport delayed industrialization in many regions until railroads were built.
      5. The construction of railroads and industry on the continent involved much more state support and regulation than in Britain.
   B. The Revolution in Transportation
      1. New industries required revolutionary new transport of raw materials and goods on rivers, canals, and railroads, beginning in 1829 with George Stephenson’s locomotive, the Rocket.
      2. Harnessing steamships required high efficiency (to limit coal use) and safety (an explosion could sink a ship at sea); both were solved by 1838, when the iron steamships Great Western and Sirius raced across the Atlantic to New York in fifteen days.
      3. There were also improvements in roads, with the macadam gravel surface, and in water transport, with canals such as the Erie Canal in New York State (1825).
   C. The Social Impacts of Industrialization
      1. Industrialization led to urbanization (the rapid growth of cities). Manchester, England, for example, grew from 20,000 in 1750 to 250,000 in 1831, and to 400,000 in 1850.
      2. Cities were overcrowded, polluted, and unhealthy, with expensive food; stinking filth in the streets; heavily polluted air covering everything in black coal soot, which caused respiratory problems such as asthma and tuberculosis; sewage-contaminated outdoor wells causing epidemics of cholera and typhoid; toxic slag heaps; polluted water; high infant mortality; and low life expectancy.
      3. Industrialization changed the human sense of space and time, with the railroad shortening the time between cities and demanding more precise timekeeping.
      4. Society was no longer divided into different legal estates (nobles, clergy, and peasants in France; lords and commoners in England). Now it had classes based on economic difference: wealthy capitalists and the working poor (proletariat).
      5. Industrialization also enhanced the possibility of social mobility.
II. The Middle Classes
   A. A Variety of Middle Classes
1. In the nineteenth century, the middle classes expanded to include lawyers, doctors, professors, other educated professionals, engineers, skilled technicians, foremen, managers, distributors, and salespeople.
2. An example of the self-made man is James Brindley, a craftsman’s son with little education who achieved success in his engineering work on the Bridgewater Canal.
3. The richest industrialists married their daughters into aristocratic families, while the petty bourgeoisie (impoverished clerks, owners of small shops, teachers, and governesses) were in constant peril of sinking in society.

B. Middle-Class Culture
1. The middle-class valued education, hard work, and morality.
2. A secondary or university education almost guaranteed middle-class status, and university enrollments grew steadily in the nineteenth century.
3. The writer, physician, and editor Samuel Smiles provided a formula for success in his 1859 book *Self-Help* that included thrift, hard work, sobriety, self-denial, good habits, the ability to learn from mistakes, and believing that life is what we make it, views echoed by François Guizot in France.
4. Victorians (from the name of the British queen Victoria) had strict views on sexual morality from Protestant Christian traditions. All of the following were taboo: sexual intercourse before marriage, sexual thoughts, masturbation, and homosexuality, which also made them preachy, sexually repressed, hypocritical, and narrow-minded.
5. The temperance movement was a middle-class reform directed mainly at the working class. It involved well-dressed preaching women scolding them about drinking.
6. Jews, including Moses Mendelssohn, Karl Marx, and Benjamin Disraeli, began to assimilate into larger society; this Reform Judaism was strongest in German areas.

C. The Middle-Class Home
1. For the middle class, home and work was increasingly separated into separate spheres. Wealthy industrialists built large houses away from their factories, and their wives created a pleasant haven for their husbands.
2. Marriage was a central institution of middle-class life that men entered when they were older and economically established.
3. A middle-class woman’s role in marriage did not include earning money, just spending it by running the household, supervising servants, educating children, being active in charitable and religious organizations, purchasing clothes for herself and her family, and furnishing her home tastefully.
4. Children in middle-class families were trained through physical punishment to be obedient, clean, respectful, and orderly, although some had free time for play and physical development.

III. Working Classes
A. Diversity Within the Working Class
1. For workers, life was harsh, brutal, and short, with fourteen- to sixteen-hour workdays six to seven days a week.
2. Workers’ health suffered from damp and dank workplaces, either overheated or chilled by open windows, and polluted air filled with smells, fibers, and particles of cloth, leading to sickness. If injured, workers were fired instantly.
3. The change from independent, self-supporting artisan to industrial worker was painful and humiliating, with the constant surveillance of foremen and dehumanized skills bent to the tempo of the machine.
4. Servants were divided into classes, with the harried “girl of all work” at the bottom, the cook and chambermaid in the middle, and the housekeeper and butler at the top.
5. The flow of country people to the city was one way because few young people wished to return to the boring village, despite the crowded and unhealthy urban conditions.
B. Working Families
1. In rural areas, parents worked with their children rather than leaving them alone at home, but with industrialization, the working family was increasingly separated by work and laws limiting child labor (Britain in 1833, Prussia in 1839, France in 1841, and Belgium in 1842).
2. Factory owners preferred to hire women because they were paid lower wages and were less inclined toward alcoholism, insubordination, and union activity.
3. Among working women, birthrates declined and child mortality increased because they gave young babies to wet nurses and/or drugged them with laudanum or alcohol to keep them still; malnutrition and the conditions of early factory work had negative consequences for children’s health.
4. Workingmen sought refuge from the conditions of the factory and tenement in taverns; and the lures of the criminal world were real, leading some to pickpocketing, prostitution, and a variety of illegal pastimes.
5. Religion provided comfort and companionship. One example is Methodism (founded by John Wesley), which preached self-control, frugality, hard work, and self-respect.

C. Working-Class Consciousness and Trade Unionism
1. The division of labor was efficient, but it made work monotonous and repetitive; Karl Marx described it as the workers’ alienation from the product of their labor.
2. Increasingly, working people recognized their common interests and joined together to press for political changes that would aid them, a process known as gaining class consciousness. Workers gathered, for example, at St. Peter’s Field in 1819 to protest the Corn Laws. Other examples were the Chartist protests of the 1830s and 1840s.
3. Some workers such as Luddites resorted to violence, destroying their machines.
4. Trade unions, worker organizations that demanded higher wages and better working conditions, were suppressed through most of Europe until after 1850.

IV. Critics of Industrialization
A. Poverty in Industrial Societies
1. Poverty in anonymous industrial societies meant no social safety net, and personal fortunes that fluctuated with the success or failure of industrial enterprises.
2. Sometimes, as in the U.S. Panic of 1819, overproduction caused a general depression throughout the economy, in turn causing factories to close down.
3. There was a sharp difference in conditions of life between factory owners and their workers, an inequitable distribution of wealth.

B. Early Socialists
1. Early Socialists held that the economic and political system itself made it impossible for workers to improve their lives, so while liberalism championed the individual’s right to property, socialism put the primary emphasis on the welfare of society as a whole.
2. Utopian socialists Henri de Saint-Simon, Charles Fourier, and Robert Owen were united in their desire to harness industrialization to improve life for all classes; to avoid social conflicts; and to create a just, attractive, and humane society.
   a) Saint-Simon emphasized social cooperation and planning, led by a dedicated, well-educated elite; his most significant contribution was his linking of industrial growth to general social improvement.
   b) Fourier had the idea of a phalange, a small community where 1,620 individuals would live and work together, each carrying out the tasks best suited to his or her passions and abilities.
   c) Owen attempted to build practical cooperative communities.
3. Fourier’s idea that a unified economic system would create a more efficient and humane society was taken up by Karl Marx and later in the Soviet Union.
4. Fourier was one of the first to advocate total equality between the sexes and to denounce bourgeois marriage as a form of prostitution, ideas that would be further developed by Engels and later Socialists and feminists.

C. Karl Marx

1. Karl Marx collaborated with Friedrich Engels to write the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, after which Marx spent the rest of his life in exile working out the details of his plan.

2. Marx’s program was based on Hegel’s dialectical philosophy of history, but Marx added the materialist element of class struggle.
   a) Marx argued that capitalists had previously played a progressive revolutionary role in history by sweeping away the old aristocratic order.
   b) The next shift would be from capitalism of the bourgeois middle class to rule by industrial workers, the proletariat.

3. Differing significantly from the utopian socialists (who stressed cooperation over violence), Marx argued the working masses would create a just, egalitarian society by violently rising in revolt and taking back the wealth and power the bourgeoisie had taken from workers’ surplus labor.

4. The specific goals for this future society were free education for all children, the abolition of inheritance and landed property, state control of credit and transportation, a progressive income tax, and an end to the distinction between urban and rural by spreading cultural and educational institutions outside cities.