

INDUSTRIALIZATION, CAPITALISM AND ALIENATION

Humanities 324

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I. THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: CENTRAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Rapid Technological Change: Invention and Innovation
The Textile Industry: 1764--Spinning Jenny, James Hargreaves; 1771--Frame, Richard Arkwright; 1779--Mule, Samuel Crompton; 1784--Power Loom, Edward Cartwright
- Use of Inanimate Power: 1760--Steam Engine, James Watt.
- Specialization and the Division of Labor
- Economies of Scale and the Factory

II. THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY

- Natural Law in Economics: Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations, 1776
- Individualism and Economics: Laissez-Faire
- Economists, Philosophers and Politics: Laissez-Faire as Ideology

III. MARXISM, CAPITALISM, AND ALIENATION

- Method: Historicism; Organicism; Dialectics; Materialism
- Marx's Theory of History: Dialectical materialism
- Analyzing Capitalism: Alienation
- A necessary stage in economic and human progress?

IV. LASTING IMPACTS: SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND ECONOMIC

- The Workplace: Wage Labor, Mechanization, Child Labor
- Modern Class Structure and Class Conflict
- The Family and Consumer Society
- The Industrialization of Society
- Global Impacts: Imperialism

V. CONCLUSIONS: AN ASSESSMENT

- Despite working conditions and other negative consequences, standards of living rose for nearly everyone during the period.
- The Industrial Revolution was not just about our form of production, but transformed social and cultural institutions.
- The Industrial Revolution continues--it lies behind the continuing economic growth we are experiencing today on a global basis.
- Individualism and freedom of economic activity became a social and political ideal during the Industrial Revolution as an extension of the Enlightenment.
- As with other revolutions, there was a backlash to industrialization, later apparent in the development of Romanticism and Marxism.

"The man who accepts the laissez-faire doctrine would allow his garden to run wild so that the roses might fight it out with the weeds and the fittest survive." John Ruskin

LONGER QUOTATIONS

Harriet Martineau, from *Illustrations in Political Economy, Summary to #18 (1832-34)*

"Free competition cannot fail to benefit all parties: consumers, by securing the greatest practicable improvement and cheapness of the article; producers by the consequent perpetual extension of demand; and Society at large, by determining capital to its proper channels."

Edward Baines, from History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain, 1835

"It is by iron fingers, teeth, and wheels, moving with exhaustless energy and devouring speed, that the cotton is opened, cleaned, spread, carded, drawn, roved, spun, wound, warped, dressed, and woven . . . All are moving at once--the operations chasing each other; and all derive their motion from the mighty engine. . . Men, in the meanwhile, have merely to attend on this wonderful series of mechanisms, to supply it with work, and to check its slight and infrequent irregularities--each workman performing, or rather superintending, as much work as could have been done by two or three hundred men sixty years ago. . ."

Alexis de Tocqueville, 1835, describing Manchester:

"A thick black smoke covers the city. The sun appears like a disc without any rays. In this semi-daylight 300,000 people work ceaselessly. A thousand noises rise amidst this unending damp and dark labyrinth ...the footsteps of a busy crowd, the crunching wheels of machines, the shriek of steam from the boilers, the regular beat of looms, the heavy rumble of carts, these are the only noises from which you can never escape in these dark half-lit streets"

Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations, Book V, Ch. 1, part III, Article II (1776)

"In the progress of the division of labour, the employment of the far greater part of those who live by labour, that is, of the great body of the people, comes to be confined to a few very simple operations, frequently to one or two...The man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple operations, of which the effects are perhaps always the same, or very nearly the same, has no occasion to exert his understanding or to exercise his invention in finding out expedients for removing difficulties which never occur. He naturally loses, therefore, the habit of such exertion, and generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become...His dexterity at his own particular trade seems, in this manner, to be acquired at the expense of his intellectual, social, and martial virtues."

Karl Marx, preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (1859)

"The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation, on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness."

Karl Marx, Capital, Chapter 32 (1867)

"Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolize all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working-class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organized by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labor at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. Thus integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."

from a Cutlers' Song against Watkinson, Sheffield, 1787 (reprinted in Paul Mantoux, The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century, p. 444)

*"Then may the odd knife his great carcass dissect,
Lay open his vitals for men to inspect,
A heart full of black as the infernal gulf,
In that Greedy, Bloodsucking, Bonescraping Wolf."*