

PART VI [incomplete]

NEW HORIZONS, NEW MOVEMENTS

The French Revolution, to begin with, then the Industrial Revolution and, finally, the creation of meritocratic bureaucracy, changed the nature of political motivation, objectives, and strategy, the constitutional nature and composition of government, and the hierarchical grading of society.

Separately from this - almost independently, although generated by the reconstitution of the political, economic and social structure of European society - there were developments which characteristically began as movements, with no institutional or organisational structure. Some of them did develop an institutional character, but even if their organisational structures were bureaucratic in form, they tended to be shaped and reshaped by alterations in the composition and purposes of their membership - in other words, they retained most of the character of the movements in which they originated.

Most of the rest of this book is devoted to these two sets of consequences of the Great Transformation - short-term and long-term. They are a fairly heterogeneous lot, but the first set does compose itself into three main groups, each corresponding to that feature of the Great Transformation itself in which it originated.

I

1. French Revolution This first group of consequences has to do with the changes in the political structure of the different countries of Western Europe and with the relationships, both friendly and hostile, between them. For while hindsight may give the lead in overall consequentiality to industrialisation, especially after its being coupled with bureaucracy, it was the French Revolution and its aftermath that had the more immediate effect.

There were three long-term consequences. The first - which seemed short-lived to begin with - was the enthusiastic reception of the news of 1789 by both the sizeable number of supporters of constitutional reform which had grown up among the relatively prosperous owners and craftsmen of the north of Britain (see pp. ---) and the liberal-minded coteries of writers and intellectuals in Germany and Italy.

The second consisted of the virtually automatic reaction (though somewhat delayed by their preoccupation with the third division of Poland)) of the leading monarchist states, Austria and Prussia, against the Revolution; they were joined later by Britain. The

succession of wars and the advent of Napoleon meant that the first response was suppressed by the second until well after 1815.

The third consequence was more obviously long-term: a reflection of the divide which opened up in France after the fall of Robespierre between the deprived majority (represented by, but not confined, to the sans-culottes of Paris) and the comparatively well-to-do, who now took (and kept) command of the Constituent Assembly and the swollen Executive. It began almost immediately after the coup of Thermidor (July-August, 1794) with the relaxation, and then abolition (in December), of the price controls set by the law of Maximum (passed in September, 1793), following upon the dismantling the administrative apparatus created by the Committee of Public Safety under Robespierre. The inevitable sequel was a steep rise in prices (bread and meat remained on ration, but the amount of bread per person dropped from one and a half pounds to four ounces during the spring of 1795; on the open market, the price went up in the spring of 1795 16 livres in a single month; meat was virtually unobtainable).

Poverty and starvation continued - even worsened - throughout the following winter. But the Republic had been saved - and the principles with which it had started abandoned.

Yet those principles, and the aspirations the Revolution had initially sought to realise, did survive. After the first quarter of the nineteenth century, many European governments were beset by 'pressures from without', ranging from political movements to riots (and, eventually, revolution), seeking to promote reform - of the constitution, the voting system, education, established churches, the hours, pay and conditions of work.

Pressure groups, or movements, turned eventually into political parties, growing in numerical strength until by the end of the third quarter of the century, there had been forced through a series of constitutional changes. The most significant of these were the succession of extensions of the electoral franchise in France and Britain, to begin with, and other countries during the second half of the century.

None of this was plain sailing. In the years immediately after the 1815 settlement, almost all four Great Powers (Russia, Britain, France and Prussia) set themselves to squash any popular demand - or appeal - for bettering social conditions or for adding to the numbers of persons entitled to participate in government to the extent of having votes to elect members of representative assemblies in the countries in which they existed. Britain, faced with industrial unrest which showed signs of turning political, was one of the worst. But after 1830, the structure of government and its relationship with the people it governed changed - not altogether out of recognition, but enough to render what had gone before a forgotten world. And while the changes were largely the direct consequence of the growth and spread of the new industrialism, the French Revolution undoubtedly served as a perpetual inspiration. Abortive as they were, the 1848 revolution in France and the quasi-revolutionary movements in other countries served as an alarm signal to repressive governments and to a growing concern with public welfare.

2. Industrial Revolution. The second group relates to the social consequences of the spread of industrialisation outside Britain, as well as within it. The process started off

quite early, although rather tentatively, with the adoption of the Newcomen engine in the western part of the major coalfield of Belgium (where the seams were deeper than in the eastern section) as early as 1720, and although there were no more than ten of them at work there ninety years later, they had spread to other coalmining areas. Belgium again was the first country to introduce the Boulton and Watt steam engine, in 1785. Adoption of the new machinery for wool and cotton textiles came later, during the wars - not surprisingly, given the fact that smuggling was so well-established a practice, and that the need for a flourishing textile industry, as well as for iron and steel as the essential foundation of armament manufacture encouraged the French to turn a blind eye. (And not only towards Belgium: Bauwens, a Flemish entrepreneur, set up his first cotton factory (a number of cotton-mules, complete with steam engine) at Passy, near Paris, in 1800.¹

After 1815, most Belgian manufactured goods went eastwards into Germany, until the middle of the century, when Prussia's territories in the western provinces became, rather late in the day, well on their way to becoming the major industrial centre in continental Europe.

Industrialisation proved to be the overture to a number of changes in the grading structure and the institutional make-up of society. What had been the 'lower orders', the 'bourgeoisie', and the aristocracy now became the 'working class', 'middle class' and 'upper class', all with their appointed places in the societies now becoming industrialised, and all with an apparently predestined place in the political structure. This development naturally coincided with the increasing growth of meritocratic bureaucracy first in government administration and then in industry and business.

Through it all, industrialisation was transforming the nature of economic activity and the meaning of work and of everyday life itself. Science at last became directly involved with technology, leading to what Whitehead famously called the 'Invention of invention'. It is just as significant that of the two dozen occupations listed by Carr-Saunders in his admirable survey first published almost seventy years ago, all but three are treated as becoming recognised and institutionalised after the industrial revolution.²

Not surprisingly, education came to be regarded as an important factor in supplying the literate manpower now needed for industrial development, in preparing the middle classes for suitably rewarding careers in government services and the professions and the upper classes for what seemed now to be the appropriate cultural background for membership of the 'governing class'. Prussia led the way (as early as the first decade of the nineteenth century), although to begin with the main preoccupation was with providing suitable recruits for the new bureaucracy³. France followed suit, after a fashion. England came last.

¹ Most of the details of this account are taken from Sidney Pollard's account of the spread of industrialisation in Europe, *Peaceful Conquest* (O.U.P., 1981).

² A.M. Carr-Saunders and P.A. Wilson, *The Professions* O.U.P., 1933.

³ 'The whole institutional history of the German secondary and higher education during the early nineteenth century must be conceived as a process of bureaucratic rationalization' (F. Ringer, *Education in Modern Germany*, quoted J.S Sheehan, *German History 1770-1866*, O.U.P., 1989, p.514).

England came first, however, with what proved to be perhaps an equally profound cultural transformation: the industrialisation of leisure. It has to be realised that industrialisation, in so far as it involved working in factories, or for some the number of hours, and under the same kind of discipline as became the norm for factory workers, meant the virtual extinction of leisure time. During the period of some seventy years that it took for Britain to become recognisably 'industrialised', the everyday life of workers - men, women and children - became almost totally consumed by work. The working week for factory workers and for others subject to the same kind of control lasted over seventy hours in Britain - followed by France, other European countries, and the United States as they became industrialised.

The primary aim of working-class protest movements in Britain towards the end of the industrialising process (i.e. during and after the second quarter of the nineteenth century) was not higher wages or looser work-discipline but shorter hours. And what emerged as the tide of industrial work ebbed, or was forced back, was not the leisure pursuits of the pre-industrial past but pastimes and activities which were themselves created by industrial institutions and technology, and contributed to its development, growth, and further articulation.

Parallel with, and with implications for society almost as significant as the industrialisation of leisure pursuits, was the rapid erosion of the town-country divide which had been characteristic of western societies since the beginning of history. The creation of factory and mining villages and industrial towns swept a growing proportion of the rural population into them. Industrialisation spread from region to region rather than from state to state, and so political as well as the economic formations tended to be founded on access to the primary materials required by manufacture rather than on agriculture and trade. This was followed up by a transformation almost as momentous as the industrial revolution out of which it came: the coming of the railway age. To begin with, rich landowners bought town houses and rich industrialists built country houses. Later in the century came the suburbs, where the families of the more highly-paid industrial and office workers could live away from the smoke and grime of the towns to which the breadwinner could commute. (Railway managements soon became aware of the profitability of buying land a suitable distance from towns and then building 'suburban railways' to serve the populations that moved into the houses provided by speculative builders.)

3. Bureaucratisation. Modern bureaucracy originated - was 'invented' - in France, but was quickly taken up in Germany, where it was pushed forward as a major part of the effort made by Scharnhorst, Stein, (who is said to have sought, and obtained, support from Queen Luise rather than from King Frederick William III) and others in their efforts at the restoration of Prussia's military and economic strength after the humiliations of 1806, the year of Jena and Auerstadt. These efforts were understandably limited during the years when Prussia, along with every other section of Germany which had belonged to the Holy Roman Empire, was either part of, or subordinate to, the Empire of the French. After 1815, however, administrative reform went ahead, not only in a greatly enlarged Prussia but throughout Germany. More to the point, the lead given by government

administration was followed within business and factory organisation as industrialisation spread throughout Germany in the second and third quarter of the century.

Well before 1900, bureaucracy had established itself in the government systems, local as well as national, of most European countries, incorporated as a meritocratic hierarchy reaching up to immediately below the level of elected government ministers or local councillors. It met however with considerable resistance in the United States, where the executive had been established as the President's affair and made clearly separate from the legislature.

Bureaucracy was slower to take hold in business and industry, outside Germany, but the growth of 'big business' from the 1880's on speeded its growth. Starting in the U.S., big business also aided its conversion into managerialism, one of the major features of industrialism in the twentieth century. And managerialism in turn furthered the more intensive 'mechanisation' of labour through the widespread adoption of 'time and motion' study, so enthusiastically endorsed by so diverse a trio as Weber, Marshall, and Lenin. And it is well to make the point now that while automation has to a large extent put an end to that kind of discipline, it has been succeeded by the even more enthusiastic reception accorded by management to the electronic devices now available for the surveillance and monitoring of employees - in business and governmental organisations, as well as in industry. It is in ways like these that bureaucracy and managerialism has widened and deepened the divide between 'ruling' and 'working' class, even though it has been masked by the constantly increasing distractions and obfuscation mounted by its chief beneficiaries. But that is a matter for discussion in later chapters.

II

There were other direct consequences of the 'Great Transformation' - the twenty-five years of French revolutionary turmoil and Napoleonic ambitions, which carried with them instruction in the utility to government (and business) of meritocratic bureaucracy. Less clear cut and identifiable than the first set of consequences, their impact on the life of European society was nevertheless just as striking and manifest. I have called them 'movements', although in some cases they did give rise to institutions with their own organisation.

Here is a list (which I am fairly sure is incomplete):

Anti-Industrialisation (and Luddism)	Socialism
Romanticism	Communism
Conservative reaction	Trade-Unionism
Liberalism	Militarism
Nationalism	Imperialism

Belief in Progress

Colonialism

Belief in Social Science

Feminism

'Movement' is not a word granted any technically defined meaning. It is familiar enough, as it should be, since it is encountered from the beginning of history. Christianity began as a movement, as did every other world religion, and most of them were comparative late-comers, so far as recorded history goes. In the beginning, Christianity took its place among a large number of religious sects and heterogeneous assortments of followers of philosophers, devotees of lesser deities, idols, preachers, military and political leaders, hermits, and others, all gifted with what has become familiar, though indifferently understood, as 'charisma'.⁴

It is only in medieval times that one encounters movements which are essentially, or predominantly, secular. The 'Peace of God' movement, for example, while organised, after a fashion, by bishops and other clergy, seems to have begun as a spontaneous uprising in southern and other parts of France, in protest against the unchecked depredations and private wars fought by nobles and their followers. The peasants revolts in France, England, and elsewhere seem to have been 'spontaneous' (i.e., of unknown origin). Later on, the noteworthy movements of Lollards, Hussites and others which preceded the Reformation, reverted to type in being religious, but it is not all clear that they were brought to life by individual 'charismatic' leaders. The same is true of the almost innumerable sects which sprang up in the newly Protestant areas of Western Europe. Leaders of the religious groups in the England of the Civil War and Commonwealth period are either conspicuously absent, or extremely difficult to identify - none of which is to deny the active presence of leading or popular preachers.

Things are beginning to change when we reach the eighteenth century. There are leading figures in the Enlightenment, in the Romantic movement, but their leadership consists entirely in the popularity of their writings. The same is true of the rise of the Conservatism that the writings of Burke and de Maistre generated and consolidated.

1 The enthusiastic reception of the news of 1789 by both the sizeable number of supporters of constitutional reform which had grown up among the relatively prosperous owners and craftsmen of the north of Britain (see pp. ---) and the liberal-minded coteries of writers and intellectuals in Germany and Italy.

2The virtually automatic reaction (though somewhat delayed by their preoccupation with the third division of Poland)) of the leading monarchist states, Austria and Prussia, against the Revolution; they were joined later by Britain. In the years immediately after

⁴ A word popularised by Max Weber. It occurs in many of his writings, but since its definition is inseparably connected with the presence of followers susceptible to the presence or the utterances of someone who embodies charisma, it remains essentially an unknown, perhaps unknowable, quality. See, for example, M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Allen & Unwin, 1930, *Economy and Society*, Bedminster Press, 1968.

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3. The divide which opened up in France after the fall of Robespierre between the deprived majority (represented by, but not confined, to the sans-culottes of Paris) and the comparatively well-to-do, who now took (and kept) command of the Constituent Assembly and the swollen Executive.

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5. Abortive as they were, the 1848 revolution in France and the quasi-revolutionary movements in other countries served as an alarm signal to repressive governments and contributed to a growing concern with public welfare.

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8. Popular press.

9. And what emerged as the tide of industrial work ebbed, or was forced back, was not the

leisure pursuits of the pre-industrial past but pastimes and activities which were themselves created by industrial institutions and technology, and contributed to its development, growth, and further articulation.

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13. Romanticism

14. Anti-Industrialisation

15. Luddism

16. Conservative reaction

17. Liberalism

18. Nationalism

19. Belief in Progress

20. Belief in Social Science

21. Populism

22. Socialism

23. Communism

24. Trade-Unionism

25. Militarism

26. Imperialism

27. Colonialism

28. Feminism _____
