

Chapter 23 – Mass Society in an “Age of Progress”, 1871-1894

The Growth of Industrial Prosperity

The “Second industrial Revolution”: steel, chemicals, electricity, and petroleum

New Products

Steel replaced iron – allowed for lighter, smaller, faster machines

Britain was #1 in 1870s, Germany overtook Britain by 1910 (U.S. was #1 by 1890)

Chemicals

France and Germany overtook Britain in producing alkalies used in textiles, soap, and paper

Germany surpassed Britain in dyestuffs (which produce dyes), led in photographic chemicals

Electricity

Incredibly valuable, because it could easily be converted into heat, light, and motion

1870s: first practical generators; 1881: first British public power station

1910: hydroelectric power stations introduced common source of power for business and home

Spawned new inventions

Light bulb (Edison), home and city electrification (Swan)

Telephone (Bell, 1876), wireless telegraph (Marconi, 1901)

Electric streetcar (Berlin, 1879), later subways

Widely employed in factories

Internal Combustion Engine

First engine in 1878, but it waited for the development of liquid fuels: petroleum and its derivatives

Improved by Gottfried Daimler (1886)

Spawned the automobile and the airplane

French were initially the leaders in autos, but the U.S. surpassed it by 1906

Henry Ford’s assembly line (1916) enabled faster production and consequently cheaper cars

Zeppelin airship (1900) and Wright Brothers (1903)

New Markets

World markets were saturated, so industries looked again at Europe

Rise in population and income made it ripe for sales

British and German economies tripled and real wages increased by two-thirds

Costs dropped with improved transportation

Creation of the department store

Desire for more consumer goods created the modern economy

Tariffs and Cartels

Increased competition for limited markets cause opposition to free trade

By 1870s, industrialists and politicians increasingly imposed *tariffs*

Cartels (groups of businesses working together to control prices and limit production) were formed

Larger Factories

Especially in iron and steel, machinery, and chemical industries

Owners called for greater efficiency in their operations

Mechanized transportation in the factories (large cranes, etc.)

Used precision tools for manufacturing interchangeable parts – leading to more assembly lines

New Patterns in an Industrial Economy

“Boom and bust” intensified, occurred more often

Overall, prosperity increased, leading Europe to call the era *La Belle Époque* (“Golden Age” – *Gilded Age* in U.S.)

German Industrial Leadership

By 1870, Germany was the industrial leader

Britain, having started earlier, had older factories, ill-suited to the new technologies

Germans were willing to build, the British were reluctant

Germany had been more enthusiastic about scientific and technical education

Industries needed more specialized scientific knowledge, and Germany was willing to educate (doctorates)

European Economic Zones

Europe was divided (north-south) into primarily industrial or agricultural economies
North: Britain, Belgium, France, Netherlands, Germany, Austria, and Northern Italy
High standard of living, decent transportation systems, healthy and educated populations
South: Spain, Portugal, Hungary, the Balkans, and Russia
Lower transportation costs resulted in lower food prices

Spread of industrialization

After 1870, it spread most noticeably to Russia and Japan
Japan: government invested in industries and railroads, brought in foreign experts
Established national education system based on applied science (technology)
As earlier in Europe, workers fled farms to the cities and worked in horrendous conditions

A World Economy

Economic developments + transportation revolution = world economy
Europeans were importing from around the globe
Partly as a result of investing heavily to develop railways, mines, power plants and banks abroad
Profits overseas were high, creating an incentive for investing
Markets overseas handled the surplus of manufactured European goods
It was a world economy *that Europe dominated*

Women and Work: New Job Opportunities

The issue of “women’s right to work” was debated
Working-class men preferred their women to stay home (for the good of the family)
That made it easier to exploit them when they actually went to work
Desperation for income led to low-paying “piecework” jobs

White-Collar Jobs

After 1870: although locked out of heavy jobs, business created “white collar” jobs
Clerks, typists, secretaries, file clerks, sales clerks
Government service offered new jobs: secretaries, telephone operators, jobs in health and social services
Because they required less training and/or education, these jobs had limited chance for advancement, good pay
Most new white collar jobs were filled by working-class women, and they really didn’t add to the labor force

Prostitution

Often were rural, working-class girls new to the cities and vulnerable
Thousands in London, Paris, and other large cities (perhaps 60,000 in London)
Mostly in their late teens/early 20s; usually left to take other work or to get married
Generally licensed and regulated by the government
Subject to examination for venereal diseases
That was protested as discriminatory (“Why not the men?”) and eventually (1886) repealed

Organizing the Working Classes

Trade unions in the early 1800s were primarily mutual aid societies, focusing on unemployment benefits
In the late 1800s, they moved toward forming political parties and labor unions

Socialist Parties

Germany’s Social Democratic Party (SPD), led by Marxists Liebknecht and Bebel, got some members elected
Worked for improving conditions for the working class
1890: 1.5M votes, 35 seats in the *Reichstag*
1912: largest single party in Germany
France had a variety of socialist parties; they unified in 1905 as a Marxist-inspired party
German-style parties in Belgium, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, and the Netherlands
1898: Russia gets a Marxist Social Democratic Labor Party
1887: The *Second Internationale*, a loose association of national parties formed
promoted May Day (May 1) as a workers’ day, to be marked with strikes and mass demonstrations
divided by issues of revisionism and nationalism

Evolutionary Socialism

“real” Marxists” believed in collapse of capitalism and its replacement by socialist ownership of production
Marxism was challenged by *evolutionary socialism/revisionism*
1899: Eduard Bernstein (German socialist exiled to Britain) wrote *Evolutionary Socialism*

proposed that Marx was wrong:

capitalism and the middle class was actually expanding, proletariat's position was actually improving
proposed working toward voting rights rather than revolution
was condemned as "bourgeois" by Marxists and the Second Internationale

The Problem of Nationalism

Marx and Engels thought that the working class would identify with their comrades, not their countries
They were wrong

1914: in the face of war, they sided with their countries and abandoned any international spirit

The Role of Trade Unions

Began in the 1870s as the right to strike was granted

By 1900: 2M workers in Britain belonged to unions but even by 1914 it was less than 1/5 of workers

Failed to develop as quickly on the Continent

In France they were tied to socialist parties, so they were divided

In Germany, despite socialist affiliations, most success was tied to collective bargaining (not revolution)

By World War I they had gained considerable improvement in the lives of workers

The Anarchist Alternative

The general socialist acceptance of "more democratic" means drove the radicals to *anarchism*

More prominent in less industrialized, less democratic countries

Anarchism wasn't originally violent: it had believed that good people had been corrupted by government

Therefore true freedom would come with the abolition of government and existing social institutions

Late 1800s: if revolution was necessary to abolish the government, then it had to happen

Assassination became their primary instrument of terror

Russian tsar (1881), French president (1894), Italian king (1900), U.S. president (1901)

The Emergence of a Mass Society

Mass society was not just a combination of industrial production, mass consumption, and working-class organization

Larger and vastly improved urban environment, new social structure, gender issues, mass education and leisure

Population Growth

Over the 1800s, population grew by 70% primarily through decrease in the death rate

Caused primarily by medical discoveries and improved environmental conditions

Medical discoveries: vaccination against smallpox

Environment: reduction of water-borne illnesses of diarrhea, dysentery, typhoid fever, and cholera

Nutrition: increased agricultural output and more efficient transportation made foods more accessible

Pasteurization reduced infant deaths

Emigration

Increasing prosperity couldn't support ever-greater populations, especially in overpopulated agricultural areas

Resulted in increasing emigration to the cities

Europe couldn't absorb all the émigrés; booming economies, lower ship fares sent them to North America

Oppressed minorities particularly chose to leave (Poles, Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, Romanians, and Jews)

Transformation of the Urban Environment

Urbanization was one of the most important changes of the 19th C.

By 1900, 80% of the British lived in cities; 45% in France, 60% in Germany

147 cities of 100,000 or more (up from 21 in 1800)

London grew from 960,000 to 6.5 million; Berlin grew from 172,000 to 2.7 million

Improving Living Conditions

1840s reformers (Chadwick in Britain, Virchow & Neumann in Germany) urged sanitation improvements

governments created boards of health looking public health hazards

new building codes lessened building shoddily

1875: Public Health Act in Britain required running water and an internal drainage system

government had to find ways of bringing clean water into the cities

dams and reservoirs for storage; aqueducts and tunnels to deliver it

hot water by gas (later by electricity) improved private bathing; showers appeared by the 1880s

waste treatment improved: underground pipes to carry it away for disposal (usually to rivers or oceans)

unfortunately, often the raw sewage severely polluted the lakes and rivers

Housing Needs

Overcrowded, disease-ridden slums seen as not just a physical problem but a moral one
“purity of the dwelling is almost as important for the family as the cleanliness of the body”
middle-class solution left it to private enterprise to solve it
some philanthropists looked to large-scale solution: model villages
“garden city” approach was to build new towns away from the city with green space in between
by 1880s: governments realized private construction wasn’t enough
cities should collect new taxes and build cheap housing for the working class
it wasn’t enough and after World War I larger-scale projects went forward
just one example where government intervention was eventually seen as necessary

Redesigning the Cities

Cities were outgrowing their earlier, walled (defensive) layout
In some cities, the medieval walls were torn down and replaced by a “ring” road
Broad vistas improved the quality of life” with impressive vistas of a city’s symbols (buildings, parks, etc.)
Demolition of slums left real estate open for development of department stores, museums, cafés, and theaters
Tailored in large measure for the pleasures of the newly-expanded middle class
Expansion of city’s borders led to streetcar and commuter train lines to get to work in the inner city

Social Structure of the Mass Society

After 1871, a generally improved standard of living

There was great poverty in Europe and an enormous gap between the rich and poor

The Upper Classes

The top 5% controlled 30-40% of the wealth
Landed gentry (aristocrats) joined forces with the wealthy industrialists, bankers, and merchants (*plutocrats*)
Gradually, the business “class” amassed the largest fortunes
Wealthiest person in Germany was the granddaughter of the arms manufacturer Alfred Krupp
Upper middle class began to purchase grand estates in the countryside
The two groups intermarried (aristocrats got money, plutocrats got titles)
Not always harmonious: anti-Semitism (many businessmen were Jewish) prohibited full acceptance
They assumed leadership roles in the government and military

The Middle Classes

About 15% of the European population
At the top were the professions (law, medicine), civil service, and moderately successful businessmen
Joined by business managers, engineers, accountants, architects, and chemists
Lower middle class: small shopkeepers, traders, manufacturers, and prosperous peasants
Lowest middle class: white collar jobs created by the Second Industrial Revolution
sales reps, bank tellers, telephone operators, salesclerks, and secretaries
Actively advocated the Victorian values of hard work, belief in progress and science, churchgoing, education
Concerned with propriety (the “right way” of doing things)

The Lower Classes

About 80% of the European population
Urban working class: skilled artisans, semiskilled laborers (carpenters, bricklayers, factory workers)
earned about 2/3 of what skilled workers earned
Rural working class: landholding peasants, agricultural laborers, and sharecroppers
But only 10% in Britain, 25% in Germany
Often held middle-class values (due to exposure through the military and schools)
Lowest working class: unskilled workers (day laborers who worked irregularly for very low wages) and domestic servants (1/7 of all jobs in Britain and held mostly by women)
After 1871, even their lives improved – higher wages and lower costs (especially food and clothing)

“The Woman Question”: The Role of Women

Throughout the 19th C., women remained legally inferior, economically dependent, defined by domestic roles
Perpetuated by the ability of a man’s wages to provide for the family’s need (women can stay at home)
Situation not the same for the lower classes, which required multiple wage earners

Marriage and Domesticity

- Throughout the 19th C., marriage was seen as the only honorable career for women
- Reinforced by the poor wages offered to women: that is, economically they *needed* to marry
- Entering convents was unavailable and domestic service (even live-in jobs) was bad
- Increase in marriage rates and decline of illegitimacy

Birthrates and Birth Control

- Birthrates dropped significantly; apparently parents deliberately limited the size of their families
- Many possible explanations: condoms and diaphragms, abortion, infanticide and abandonment
- Emergence of a movement to publicize birth control (1882: first birth control clinic in Amsterdam)
- Some thought lowering birthrate among the poor would solve the problem of poverty
- But the practice more widely used by the upper classes

The Middle-Class Family

- Its concept of the family was central to its behaviors
- Men provided the income and women focused on the household and the children
- Domestic servants (available at low wages) reduced women's household work
- Fewer children meant mothers could spend more time with children and at leisure
- Family meant "togetherness": modern view of Christmas, 4th of July was created
- Women were educated to provide greater recreational environment for their children
- Childhood was extended; games and toys were invented (dolls, checkers)
- Education of sons was to prepare them to follow their fathers in business
- Separated from girls, taught competitive sports to "toughen them up"
- Discipline (sometimes paramilitary) spawned the Boy Scouts (1908)
- Image of the "model" wife limited some women
- Expected to maintain the image of the "idle" wife supporting her working husband
- Freed from household drudgery and able to pursue "ornamental" hobbies
- Often actually compelled to juggle managing budgets and doing the work (couldn't afford maids)

The Working-Class Family

- Women were often expected to work, usually before and after marriage
- Childhood was over by age 9 or 10, when they became apprentices or worked odd jobs
- As World War I approached, even some working-class families could enjoy a "middle-class" life
- Wages increased for the working class and the price of goods continued to fall
- Some working class families were able to rely on only one income, limit family size
- Children could attend school rather than work jobs
- Strikes and agitation led to shortened work days/weeks (10-hour day and Saturday afternoon off)

Education in the Mass Society

Mass Education

- Early 1800s: secondary education and university were limited to the elites, little government interest in primary education
- After 1850: middle-class families sought public service, professions through scientific/technical schools

Universal Elementary Education

- After 1870: mass education in state-run schools
- Mandatory primary schools for both girls and boys from 6 to 12
- State was responsible for training teachers
- Rationale: liberals believed it was important for personal and social improvement (also aimed at replacing the Catholic Church teachings with more secular values)
- Conservatives believed it would improve the quality of the military recruits and raise social discipline
- Industries expected education would provide more skilled labor
- Politicians believed the expanded suffrage required a more educated population to vote wisely (and it would instill patriotism and a loyalty to the state over the local or regional)
- Curriculum: reading, writing, arithmetic, national history, geography, literature (and singing and drawing)
- Girls were taught "practical" skills: sewing, washing, ironing, and cooking
- Boys were taught "practical" skills like carpentry and military drill
- Values: hard work, thrift, sobriety, cleanliness, and respect for the family

Female Teachers

- Most teachers in elementary schools were women (seen as a “natural” extension of role as nurturers)
- Paid lower wages (saving the government money)
- The first colleges for women were actually teacher training schools
- Universities weren’t open to women until the early 1900s

Literacy and Newspapers

- Mass education led, not surprisingly, to mass literacy
- Illiteracy was effectively eliminated in Germany, Britain, France, and Scandinavia by 1900
- Mass-circulation newspapers grew in response
- Written in easily understood style and tended toward the sensational (crime, gossip, sports)
- Pulp fiction for adults included westerns (“cowboys and Indians”)

Mass Leisure

- Prior to the Industrial Revolution, work and leisure were “related”; after it, they were viewed as opposites
- Industrial rhythms dictated when leisure occurred: evenings, weekends, and maybe a week or two in summer
- Mechanized urban transportation meant workers could venture beyond their own neighborhoods
- Athletic events, amusement parks, and dance halls (not just the neighborhood tavern)

Music and Dance Halls

- Music halls began in Britain in 1849, provided a variety of entertainment acts to be watched while drinking
- Originally for men, but over time they became “more respectable” and attracted women and children
- Dance halls were wildly popular around 1900, providing young people a chance to fraternize (“scandalous”)

Mass Tourism

- With increased wages and paid vacations, the middle class could go touring
- Thomas Cook offered trips to Paris (1867) and Switzerland (1880s) to the middle and industrial classes
- Eventually, with “savings clubs” even the working class could take weekend excursions

Team Sports

The National State

Mass politics were a result of expanding the vote and creating political parties

Western Europe: The Growth of Political Democracy

Parliamentary democracy was found mostly in Western Europe

Reform in Britain

- Two-party parliamentary democracy was fostered by the Reform Act of 1867
- It was expanded with the Reform Act of 1884, giving the vote to almost all men
- 1885: representatives selected from roughly equal populations (no more rotten or pocket boroughs)
- 1911: salaries for the House of Commons (so not just the wealthy could be representatives)
- Reform did not extend to Ireland
- 1801: the Act of union joined the English and Irish parliaments
- but the Irish were fiercely nationalistic and despised their British landlords
- despite Gladstone’s attempts to initiate land reforms, the Irish remained unsatisfied
- they called for *home rule* (a parliament of their own but not independence)
- when Britain didn’t act on home rule, the Irish began committing acts of terrorism
- when the British government responded with force, the Irish demanded independence
- 1886: when Gladstone initiated a bill authorizing home rule, the Conservatives in Parliament voted it down

The Third Republic in France

- With defeat in the Franco-Prussian War (1870), Napoleon’s Second Empire fell
- A provisional republican government was set up, but Bismarck forced a vote by universal male suffrage
- Monarchists won, so radical republicans formed an independent government called the Commune
- The national Assembly decided to crush the Commune and fighting broke out in Paris
- Working class (including women) played an great role in the Commune, but it was to no avail
- Perhaps 20,000 were killed and 10,000 were shipped off to New Caledonia in the Pacific
- The split between the working class and the middle class (begun in 1848-1849) now lasted for decades
- Women were discouraged from trying to improve their situations

The monarchists in the National Assembly couldn't agree on a king

1875: An improvised constitution that called for a republic

Two Houses of parliament: Senate (chosen indirectly) and House of Deputies (chosen by all males)

Created the Third Republic (which happened to last 65 years)

always on shaky footing because of opposition: monarchists, Catholic clergy, army officers

Spain

1875: a new constitution, under Alfonso XII, established a two-party parliamentary government

both parties (Liberals and Conservatives) were made up of wealthy landowners and industrialists

1898: Spanish-American War cost Spain Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines

young intellectuals called for political and social reforms

both parties tried to enlarge the electorate and win support

industrialization radicalized the workers; violence broke out in Barcelona (1909)

military crushed the violence and the conservative forces (Church, landowners, and the army) ruled

Italy

After unification, many Italians still felt more loyal to their town, city, or region

Industrialized north and agricultural south were deeply divided, and most leaders were Northerners

Catholic Church (which had lost the Papal States) wouldn't even recognize the new country

As only 2.5% could vote, most Italians felt empowered

Corruption, disorganization in government plagued the country

Central and Eastern Europe: Persistence of the Old Order

Germany and Austria-Hungary *appeared* to have parliamentary systems, but monarchies and conservatives ruled

Germany

Despite national parliament, some German states kept their own kings – and even peacetime armies

Ministers reported to the *Kaiser* (emperor), not the *Reichstag* (the lower house)

The *Kaiser* also commanded the military, conducted foreign policy, and controlled the bureaucracy

The army was run by a senior staff that responsible directly to the Kaiser

Bismarck (chancellor until 1890) worked to prevent democratic institutions

Joined by liberals, he attacked the Catholic Church (his *Kulturkampf*)

They distrusted Catholics' loyalty

Eventually, Bismarck turned, and he attacked the liberals and socialists

1878: 12 Democratic Socialists elected to the *Reichstag*

Bismarck felt antinationalistic, anticapitalistic socialists were a threat to the empire

He got Parliament to pass antisocialist laws

He tried to woo socialists by instituting social welfare legislation

Sickness, accident, and disability benefits, old-age pensions

Socialism grew, but before Bismarck could find new means of repression, Wilhelm II fired him

Austria-Hungary

Despite establishing a parliamentary system, Emperor Franz Joseph appointed his own ministers

Ethnic minorities (Germans ran the government) continued to trouble the empire

Prime Minister Edward von Taffe's attempts to compromise backfired

German-speaking bureaucracy and aristocracy opposed them and brought von Taffe's downfall

Emperor Franz Joseph was a great unifying force; the Catholic Church was the other

In Hungary, the Magyars tried to impose their culture on the minorities

Russia

No mass politics, because the government made no concessions to liberal and democratic reform

The assassination of Alexander II convinced his son, Alexander III, that reform was a mistake

He instituted special measures, expanding the secret police and persecuting liberals

The powers of the *zemstvos* were sharply cut back

Alexander III instituted a Russification program to assimilate ethnic minorities

It angered most of the groups

Nicholas II, Alexander's son, continued his father's policies, but he was a weaker ruler