The Industrial Rev.

Overview:
- in last part 18th c when Rev. sweeping France, a different kind of revolution was transforming life in Britain (first there)
- in 19th c, spread to US and Europe
- today encompasses virtually the entire world, everywhere, drive to substitute machines for human labor continues

Back up a bit for context:

Adam Smith: *Wealth of Nations*
old theory: mercantilism – a state’s wealth was measured by the amount of gold and silver it possessed. According to this theory, to build up reserves of these precious metals, state should regulate economy so it could compete with other nations for share of world’s wealth.

new theory (Smith): real basis for country’s wealth was measured by quantity and quality of goods and services, not storehouse of metals. Government intervention *retards* economic progress. When people pursue their own interests, they foster economic expansion, which benefits the whole society. so laissez faire (gov’t should not interfere) becomes core principle of 19th c liberal thought

Contributing development (all over Europe): *enclosure* (land formerly used in common by villagers for grazing animals, subsistence farming, claimed by rich landowners, land fenced off). More efficient, cycled lands instead of fallow fields.

A number of reasons why it happens in Britain first: their natural resources (coal & iron), river & canal transportation system, farm laborers who could no longer live off land b/c of enclosure; expanding middle class, raw materials from overseas colonies.

cotton and iron the pace-setters:
Britain long home of important wool trade, 1760-1785, production expands 10x, 1785-1825, another 10x; series of inventions altered this industry forever
first affected is spinning – several inventions speed up and mechanize this task, in fact causes bottlenecks in weaving until others invent ways to mechanize weaving
early machines, water power, limited where mills could be
1760s – steam engine by James Watt – b/c ran on coal or wood, allowed greater flexibility in location of mills
*whole pattern of work changed b/c weaker, younger and less skilled workers could be taught
the few simple tasks necessary to tend machine
male->female
adult->child

iron:
although steam power allowed more leeway in workers, required stronger, longer lasting machines
1830: first RR in England; shipping changed radically

society transformed:
  • cities expand hugely (e.g. Birmingham 1801-51, 73K to 250K) with little planning or forethought; slums result (no sanitation, lighting, disease, crime)
  • old division of clergy, nobility, commoners gone forever. rise of the middle class. reduced barriers between high and middle; exacerbated middle and low

working class life:
  • usu. recent arrivals from agricultural areas
  • long days in dangerous conditions; maybe not longer days than farming, but no social connections (family, church)

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Marx and Engels reading – for Marx, see group sheet

Engels questions:
origin of family:
what does he say the role of women was in the past?
relevance of Iroquois constitution?
what is the history of marriage?
what about love? (741)
he claims there are three forms of marriage corresponding with development of man (744)
what does he have to say about idea of consent between marriage partners? (743)
suggests monogamy will disappear with the coming of the communist revolution – why?

origin of the state:
how does state come into being (751)
is this similar to anyone else we’ve read?
does modern democratic state take property distinctions into acct? how different from medieval feudal state?
what are 4 stages of commodity production?