

Week 2

The organisation of pre-industrial manufactures – proto- industrialization

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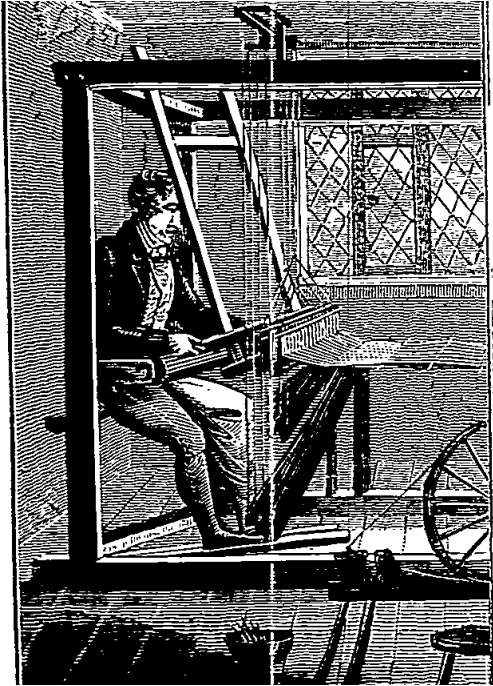
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uk/series/manufactures-
industrial-revolution](https://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/series/manufactures-industrial-revolution)

Week 1 takeaways

- Manufacturing was already a significant part of the economy of England and Wales well before the Industrial Revolution
- Manufacturing employment increased after 1550, by 1700 employed as many men as agriculture
- Key concepts for pre-factory manufacturing are:
 - Economic factors, rising GDP after Civil War and exports of manufactured goods
 - Growth of consumer society
 - Industrious Revolution, especially more work by women and children
 - Development of capitalism
 - Proto-industrialization

Week 2 outline

- History of the idea of proto-industrialization
- Theories of proto-industrialization
- Criticisms
- Other factors
- The Welsh woollen industry – a case study



Straw Hatmaker.

Proto-industrialization - History of the idea

1. Before sixteenth century, craft production mainly in towns, regulated by guilds
2. Joan Thirsk – ‘Industries in the countryside’
3. Franklin Mendels coined the term in ‘Proto-industrialization: the first phase of the industrialization process’ (1972)
4. Concept elaborated by Kriedte, Medlick and Schlumbohm, *Industrialization before Industrialization* (1981) – was European proto-industrialization a distinct phase or ‘mode of production’ in the transition between peasant and capitalist economies?
5. Concept criticized by British historians as not fitting the facts in England



Discussion

1. What are the theories of proto-industrialization?
2. How have they been criticized?

Joan Thirsk – Industries in the countryside



'Wensleydale knitters' from G. Walker, *The Costume of Yorkshire* (1814)

Considered the agricultural and social situations in which industries in the English countryside began

- Handcraft industries for national markets in conjunction with farming
- Wiltshire woollen industry earliest example from 14th century, based in dairying areas
- 15th-century Suffolk woollen industry in dairying area, weak manorial control allowed rapid population growth
- Westmorland cloth industry spread to countryside in 15th century
- Yorkshire Dales knitting industry from 16-19th centuries

Common factors



Lake District spinning gallery

- Pastoral agriculture – dairying or stock rearing
- Weak manorial control – populous community of small farmers with freehold or secure copyhold tenure
- Inheritance customs and size of holdings, sometimes based on access to large areas of common

Proto-industrialization theories



Leeds Coloured Cloth Hall, *Costume of Yorkshire* (1817)

Proto-industrial manufactures in the countryside serving national and international markets paved the way for factory industrialization

CHARACTERISTICS

- Peasant labour previously unemployed or under-employed for part of the year put to work on a more continuous basis
- Manufactures of textiles, leather goods, metal wares etc. combined with farming
- Role of towns in marketing and finishing
- Symbiosis with the regional development of commercial agriculture

Effects

1. *Agriculture*

- As numbers grew, proto-industrial workers no longer self-sufficient in food
- Created a market for agricultural produce – led to development of regional commercial agriculture
- Prime agricultural regions reduced handcraft manufactures and bought more manufactures
- *i.e. increased specialization*



Benjamin Gott and Bean Ing Mill,
Leeds

Effects

2. *Population growth*

3. *Paved the way for industrialization*

- Allowed urban merchant entrepreneurs to accumulate capital for industrial expansion
- Provided merchants with the entrepreneurial skills, connections and organisation needed for factory industrialization
- Industry tended to locate in handicraft areas

A development spectrum?

Artisan/domestic system

Kauf system



Putting out system

Verlag system

Production by independent craftspeople	Large craftsmen or merchants control various processes
Buy inputs and sell outputs	Putting-out merchant may supply raw materials, collect finished goods
	Later might supply tools and/or premises
Often lower quality standard items	More suited to higher skill and quality production
Less circulating capital required	More circulating capital required
Merchants purchase output, organize finishing and marketing	Marketing organisation varied
Less opportunity to accumulate capital	More opportunity to accumulate capital

Agricultural by-employment



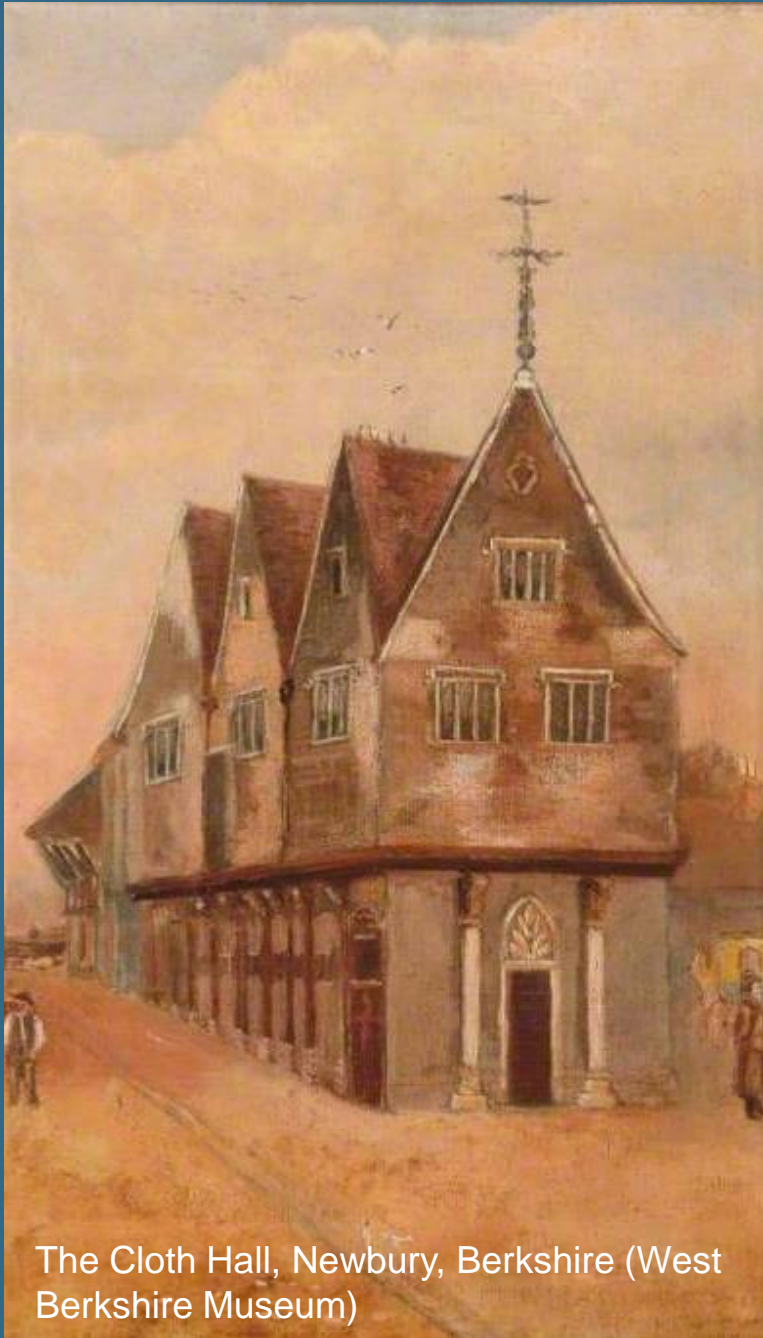
Proletarianization

De-industrialization

Not all proto-industrial areas went on to industrialize. Industrialization was also affected by:

- Access to power, especially water power, then coal for steam engines
- Access to raw materials
- The extent of capital accumulation
- The socio-political framework

‘There was nothing unavoidable or automatic in the passage from phase one to the next.’ (F. Mendels)



The Cloth Hall, Newbury, Berkshire (West Berkshire Museum)

Seeds of its own demise

Proto-industry became a victim of its own success, sowing the seeds of its own demise:

- Growth of demand led to higher wages, putting-out over a wider area increased distribution costs
- Workers worked irregular hours
- Problems with quality control and embezzlement
- Mechanised production in centralised workshops reduced production time and increased quality



Explanatory framework or model of industrial and economic development?

Criticisms of model

- Not all 16-18c manufacturing conforms to the proto-industrial model – activities requiring relatively large-scale investment such as metal-smelting, milling, paper-making, tanning were more concentrated
- Model less applicable to English economic development because commercialization and capitalist organisation already existed before proto-industrialization
- There was not a linear development from artisan to putting-out system (Pat Hudson)
- Proto-industrialization not the only influence on population growth

How far does British experience conform to the proto-industrialization framework?

1. Industry in the countryside

- Not all pre-industrial manufacturing in the countryside, e.g. Norwich worsted industry, London silk.
- Textile finishing processes based in towns a significant part of manufacturing.

2. Industrialization and de-industrialization

- Inability to explain why regions industrializes or de-industrialized:
- Factory industry did not always grow out of proto-industry – some old manufacturing areas de-industrialized, some new ones industrialized. **Need to explain why.**
- Capital for industrialization often came from proto-industry, but proto-industrial capital not always used to industrialize.
- Rural manufacturing workers reluctant to work in factories.
- Profitability of factory industry influenced by a number of factors – high wages, water power or cheap coal.
- Declining areas often lost out to competition from rival manufacturing regions – **WHY?**
- Other factors include marketing, industrial relations, and local politics.

Criticisms - framework



WOOLLEN CLOTH PRODUCTION

1. Sorting	2. Carding
3. Washing, dyeing (spinning)	4. Weaving
5. Fulling	6. Raising nap
7. Shearing	8. Pressing

Drapers' window, Notre Dame, Semur-en-Auxois



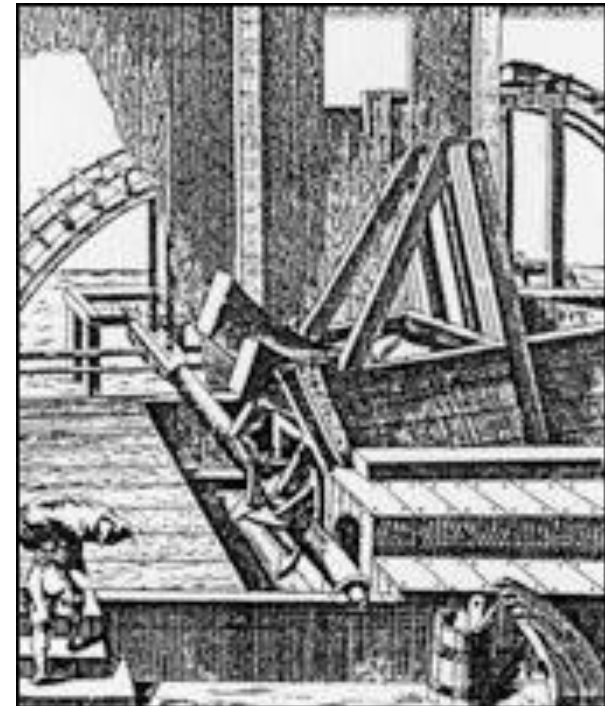
Medieval technology



Spinning



Fulling



The Welsh woollen industry - an archetypal proto-industry

- Emerged as proto-industry serving wider markets in 14th century
- Spread of fulling mills, often manorial control

A domestic industry



- Initially combined with farming till late 18th century
- Produced low-quality cloth
- 1601 Merioneth wage assessment included rates for carding and spinning, weaving kersey, plain cloth, best frieze and linen
- Flannel from 17th century
- Used own wool or bought in local markets
- Weaver took cloth to mill for fulling



MARKETING AND FINISHING

- Weaver took cloth to market in Shrewsbury
- Trade dominated by Shrewsbury drapers from 16th to late-18th century
- Finished cloth by raising nap, shearing and dyeing
- Cloth sold through Blackwell Hall in London

How far does the Welsh woollen industry fit the proto-industrial framework?

1. **Organisation** – remained artisan/domestic industry till 19th century
2. **Capital formation** – most profit went to Shrewsbury drapers, but they were in steep decline by late-18th century
3. **Industrial relations** – no guilds or trade unions to form organised opposition to machinery, but growth of Chartism in 1830s
4. **Marketing** – backward through dispersed rural production and reliance on Shrewsbury drapers

Industrialization several decades behind Yorkshire, never as successful

Summary

- Proto-industrialization theories give us some useful concepts for studying specific pre-factory manufacturing industries
- More a framework than a predictive model
- Artisan systems did not necessarily develop into putting-out systems
- Proto-industry contained the seeds of its own demise
- Although factory industrialization often grew out of proto-industry in the same area, some areas de-industrialized and industry spread to new areas
- Other factors needed to explain changes, including marketing, industrial relations, and local politics

Prep for Week 3 - The woollen and worsted industry up to 1780

Discussion topics:

- How were the woollen and/or worsted industries organised before 1780 in West Yorkshire, Norwich or the West Country? (E.g. artisan or putting-out system.)
- How did this organisation affect the success of the industry?
- How well did different regions respond to changing fashions and demand?

Week 4A The growth of cotton

	General	Regions
Shorter reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Berg, <i>The Age of Manufactures</i>, pp.198-211. Conted Library, 2 class copies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hudson, 'From manor to mill: the West Riding in transition', in M. Berg, P. Hudson and M. Sonenscher (eds.), <i>Manufacture in Town and Country before the Factory</i> Conted Library, 2 class copies.
Longer reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sugden, K., and Cockerill, A., 'The wool and cotton textile industries in England and Wales up to 1850', in <i>The Online Historical Atlas of Occupational Structure and Population Geography in England and Wales 1600-2011</i> https://www.campop.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/occupations/outputs/publications/published/ 	<p>NORWICH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sugden, K., 'Clapham revisited: the decline of the Norwich worsted industry (c. 1700-1820)', <i>Continuity and Change</i> 33 (2018), pp. 203-224. In Conted. Library, 2 class copies. <p>WEST COUNTRY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Randall, A., <i>Before the Luddites: Custom, Community and Machinery in the English Woollen Industry 1776-1809</i> (Cambridge, 1991), Ch.1. 2 class copies. <p>YORKSHIRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hallas, C., 'Cottage and mill: the textile industry in Wensleydale and Swaledale', <i>Textile History</i> XXI (1990), 3 class copies. Hudson, P., 'Proto-industrialization: the case of the West Riding wool textile industry in the 18th and early 19th centuries', <i>History Workshop Journal</i> 12 (1981). Online in Conted Library or student resources room, 2 class copies.

Week 4A The growth of cotton

Discussion topic:

Why was the Lancashire cotton industry the first proto-industry to industrialize?

Reading

Shorter Reading

- Aikin, J., *A Description of the Country from Thirty to Forty miles around Manchester* (1795), pp. 157-184. <https://archive.org/details/b28404555/page/157>

Longer reading

- E. Baines, *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain* (London, 1835), Chapter VII. <https://archive.org/details/historyofcottonm00bainrich/page/n10>
- Walton, J. K., 'Proto-industrialisation in Lancashire ', in P. Hudson (ed.), *Regions and Industries: A Perspective on the Industrial Revolution in Britain* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 41-68. 2 class copies.