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Industrialisation and Everyday Life

Industrialisierung und Volksleben by Rudolf Braun is widely regarded as a classic of modern social history, inspiring a whole series of profound debates about the transition from pre-industrial society to the modern world. Utilising evidence from an upland Swiss canton, *Industrialisation and Everyday Life* provides a comprehensive survey of the impact upon popular life styles of the development of widespread cottage industry, as land-hungry labourers added textile manufacture to their existing agricultural concerns. Professor Braun analyses the structure of such 'proto-industry', looking at the changes wrought upon family life, domestic housing and popular culture in general. A great variety of literary and artistic sources are drawn together in a vivid portrayal of the ways in which early industrial development and social modernisation became fused together.

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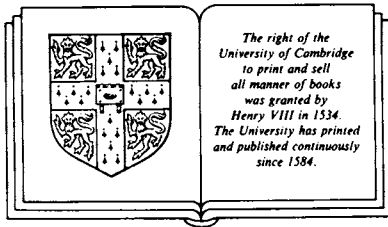
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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge
New York Port Chester Melbourne Sydney

EDITIONS DE
LA MAISON DES SCIENCES DE L'HOMME

Paris

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PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

English translation © Maison des Sciences de l'Homme and Cambridge
University Press 1990

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Originally published in German as *Industrialisierung und Volksleben*
by Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht 1960; second edition 1979
and © Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht in Göttingen

First published in English by Editions de la Maison des Sciences de
l'Homme and Cambridge University Press 1990 as *Industrialisation and
Everyday Life*
First paperback edition 2005

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 0 521 35311 4 hardback
ISBN 0 521 61929 7 paperback
ISBN 2 7351 0376 5 (France only)

Transferred to digital printing 2005

Contents

Prefaces	<i>page</i> vii
Acknowledgements	x
Note on measures and coinage	xi
Introduction	1
1 The preconditions for industrialisation	8
2 Changes to the structure of family and population in the industrial regions	37
3 Life and society of the population engaged in industry	61
4 The impact of industrialisation on the house and the rural economy	111
5 Work in the putting-out industry and its effect on the life of the common people	131
6 The outworkers' attitude to poverty and crises	154
7 Conclusion	184
Postscript, by Ulrich Pfister	188
Appendix: a note on the administrative structure and social stratification in the countryside of Zurich during the Ancien Régime, by Ulrich Pfister	193
Notes	195
Sources and bibliography	223
Index	227
	v

Preface to the English-language edition

In the preface to the second edition I mentioned that since the publishing of this work in the year 1960 cottage industry – under the new terminology ‘proto-industry’ – has received increased attention in social and economic historical research, a tendency that still continues today. Therefore, the publisher’s wish to take this historiographic situation into account and to summarise in a longer postscript the more recent research history as well as the latest research results is quite legitimate. Two reasons prevent me, however, from writing such an outline myself. First of all, I feel more like the grandfather of the youngest research generation which is presently working on proto-industrial subjects and problems. Secondly, my teaching commitments as well as my own research interest have, for many years now, led me away from the subject of proto-industry so that I have not followed the most recent developments closely and intensively enough. I have, therefore, asked one of my assistants, Ulrich Pfister, to write the requested postscript. He is part of the younger research generation and works in the field of proto-industrialisation on his own projects. Thus, the pen is passed on to the grandson.

Rudolf Braun

Preface to the second (German) edition

Well brought up young ladies used to be taught ‘not to put themselves forward’, an essential part of the education provided in the better girls’ boarding schools in the nineteenth century. It may well appear that I too have learnt not to put myself forward: for years I have been wondering whether to revise *Industrialisation and Everyday Life* but I could never decide to do it and even now I find it hard. Not that I am shy; my problem is more fundamental: this book was written as a thesis around twenty years ago. Although I have no wish to repudiate my first-born, the umbilical cord was cut many years ago and it has gone its own way ever since. So it is hard to identify with it, for I too

viii *Preface*

have gone my own way, a way which my work on this thesis definitely helped me to find and pursue. It has led me away from folklore and towards social and economic history.

In spite of this, my little runaway has dogged my heels persistently; since the late sixties, cottage industry as a subject has aroused truly astonishing interest in very different fields of research, and, unless I am much deceived, will be cultivated even more intensively. My spinners and weavers from the Zurich Oberland have been caught up in this Renaissance and are regarded with respect, often to such a degree that I would tremble lest their frail shoulders should not be capable of supporting the weight of academic evidence which has been heaped on them in the texts or footnotes of relevant works.

One effect of this new evaluation of cottage industry has been to give it a new name: 'proto-industry', more suited to an object of fashionable research, subjected to new questions, methods and scientific analysis. In 1977, *Industrialisierung vor der Industrialisierung (Industrialisation before Industrialisation)* by Peter Kriedte, Hans Medick and Jürgen Schlumbohm was published and became a standard reference book in the shortest possible time; it provides what must be the most impressive presentation of the latest position in international research with its variety of methods, its wealth of views and its attempts at theoretical models. When compared with all this progress, *Industrialisation and Everyday Life* seems to belong more to the genre of *Heimatsromane* (tales of the countryside), with their titles printed in big letters so that pensioners can buy them too.

So much for my timid dithering over the question of a new edition. It is also the reason when the contents have been allowed to reappear unaltered, the text as well as the particularly problematical and antiquated Introduction. This little first-born simply cannot be dressed up in new clothes in an attempt to conceal his age and origin. Nor indeed could I do it.

This new edition provides me with an opportunity for remembrance: not long ago Herbert Kisch died unexpectedly and far too soon. He was a pioneer of research into cottage industry and shortly before his death he initiated, organised and conducted an international conference on proto-industrialisation. The new edition is dedicated to him; may his charm and personality not be forgotten!

Zurich, Spring 1979 Rudolf Braun

Preface to the first (German) edition

The present work is the first part of an investigation into the relationship between industrialisation and the life of the common people. It deals with the

Prefaces

ix

changes in their way of life under the influence of the putting-out industry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Part two will concentrate on the changes in their way of life under the influence of factory industry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Both parts are to be considered as separate works, even though the first part leads on to the second and many threads run on from the first part into the second. The development is to be pursued up to the present.

In 1955 I worked for eight months as a temporary hand in a textile factory in the Zurich Oberland and lodged with a weaving family, so learning about a factory hand's sorrows and joys. I recall this period, which meant more to me than just a sociological experiment, with happiness and gratitude. The fate of the population of the Zurich Oberland has been spun in cotton yarn for generations. They have remained faithful to cotton through all the crises. In spite of frequent hardship the factory people have retained their cheerful enjoyment of life. Anyone who is able to get to know them will take much of their life as his example.

I take great pleasure in thanking my esteemed teacher, Professor Richard Weiss, for the help and sympathy which he has lavished on this work.

My thanks too to Dr Heinrich Krebsler. He has been extremely kind in allowing me to look at the archives of the *Walder Ortschronik*, which he had built up, aware that even the most mundane expressions of life in his factory parish constitute valuable source material.

I owe very great thanks too to Dr H. Spoerry-Jaeggi for the understanding he has shown towards my research. He employed me for eight months as a temporary hand in his firm.

Thanks too to the gentlemen of the Zurich State Archive for their frequent friendly advice and information, proffered when I was working in the archives.

The publication of this work has been made possible by a generous grant from the Pro Helvetia foundation, for which I would like to express my wholehearted thanks.

My final thanks are to Frau M. Möckli and Fräulein E. Liebl for reading the proofs with me.

Acknowledgements

I must acknowledge the impressive achievement of Sarah Hanbury Tenison in translating this book, and also express my deep gratitude to Dr Ulrich Pfister, who undertook the difficult and tiresome task of finding equivalents for terms relating to constitutional and socio-political institutions of eighteenth-century Switzerland, and of translating contemporary Helvetisms. I wish to thank them both.

Note on measures and coinage

- 1 *Juchart* (of plough land) = 32.7 metric ares = 0.81 acres
1 *Mannwerk* or *Mannmaht* (of grass land) = 29 metric ares = 0.72 acres
- 1 *Gulden* = 2 *Pfund* = 40 *Schilling* = 16 *Batzen*
1 *Schilling* = 12 *Pfennig* = 12 *Heller*