

Summaries

Klaus Tenfelde

Workers, labour market, and communication structures in the Ruhr area in the fifties of the 19th century

By way of introduction, this article intends to illustrate the dimensions of industrial growth in the Ruhr area during the first phase of expansion after the middle of the 19th century, tracing the short-term economic changes and the changes in trade and industry which took place within one decade. Special attention must be paid to the emergence of employment structures in coal, steel, and iron industries which came in leaps and bounds: decrease of rural and agricultural activities, at the same time a shift of emphasis in the crafts and trades, and, above all, an assertion of the production link between coal mining, steel and metal industries which link remained dominant from then on; mining continued to be of first importance and its influence on the industrial landscape increased. An extension of efficient transport and communication systems became the most important requirement both for the enormous expansion of production and sales during a period of prospering economy and for the recruitment of the great and permanently needed number of workers. Therefore, in the second part of the study, the development and use of the railways is considered in context with the emergence of industrial market situations. However, the effects of this rapid and fundamental expansion of communication were not restricted to the development of functioning sales, consumer, capital, and labour markets. Closely linked with it, but frequently also resulting from parallel developments in the industrialisation of the Ruhr area (such as the shaping of large scale coal and steel companies, prosperity and crisis, urbanisation and population growth), a fundamental re-organisation and re-assessment of interpersonal communications took place, as shown, for example, by the social effects of the reform of the mining legislation and of the expansion in mining. Based on the hypothesis that a change occurred from formerly vertical, authority-oriented, isolated, and controlled communication channels towards horizontal, diversified and unrestricted, egalitarian communications of modern industrial societies, the third part of this study attempts to analyze some phenomena of this change, in particular the first beginnings of a class-specific articulation of interests, while, at the same time, highlighting the different points of departure. Hereby the study hopes to, in turn, support the first hypothesis. The change in communication structures is to be understood as a basic phenomenon of the history of society in the industrial revolution, and especially as a condition for the establishment of proletarian interests.

Lutz Niethammer, assisted by Franz Brüggemeier

How were workers housed during the Kaiserreich (Empire)?

The essay – a contribution to the description of reproduction conditions for the workers – raises the question as to what may be said, at the present stage of research and without detailed local studies, about the housing conditions of workers under the Kaiserreich. It first critically reviews contemporary literature on housing and the lack of a statistical tradition concentrated on proletarian conditions of life. Middle-class reform literature remains on the surface of social problems, is oriented towards things (houses, streets, ventilation, etc.) instead of people. But individual statistics give sufficient data for establishing a context between work and housing so that a general assessment, at least, is made possible. Particular points to be noticed are a high density of people per flat and frequent moves as a major consequence of low wages and unstable working conditions. A third chapter attempts a rough regional differentiation of the housing situation following the different types of urbanisation: whereas the industrial areas first suffer from a general lack of housing but later increasingly find ways to overcome it – the problem here shifts from standard of living to quality of life – the agricultural areas remain at a very low level without development perspectives. Finally, the essay examines the housing experiences of workers with the help of autobiographic notes of former »Schlafgänger« (»lodgers«). High density of people per flat, frequent moves, and the acceptance of strangers into the family or early separation from the family acquired a »half-open« family structure, a proletarian adaptation which favoured independent behaviour and solidarity.

Dieter Langewiesche and Klaus Schönhoven

Workers' libraries and workers' reading in Germany under Kaiser Wilhelm

At the beginning of the study, those social, economic, and cultural conditions (e.g. school education, working hours, economic situation) are outlined which have essentially determined any type of education aiming at the workers. In the organisational field, one of these conditions was the creation and extension of libraries. A detailed study is made of workers' libraries which were established since around 1890 by the Social Democratic Party and the independent trade unions, and which, over the then following two decades, developed from small libraries for party and union officials into libraries for the masses. Furthermore, factory and public libraries are included in the study because it can be proved that more and more proletarian readers used these libraries. The study concentrates on an analysis of the workers' reading behaviour in those three types of libraries: workers' library, factory library, and public library. The inclusion of public libraries facilitates a comparison, in terms of quantity, between books read by proletarian and read by middle-class readers. Contemporary material available permits to give a representative crosscut of the percentages of books borrowed, subdivided into groups of literature (light literature, socio-political literature, scientific literature, historical literature, etc.) and into social strata. In the cases of some libraries, additional statistical classifications according to sex and trade may be made. This analysis of the readings of workers gives evidence of a considerable discrepancy between the real reading behaviour of the workers and the far-

reaching aims and ideas of educational experts in the Social Democracy and the independent trade unions: only a small percentage of the proletarian readers borrowed books written by the Marxist classics. These educational experts had to give up the hope that workers' libraries might serve as arsenals for the class struggle. It would, however, be incorrect to describe such libraries as instruments for turning the worker into a »bourgeois«. A statement made by a librarian in a workers' library, to the effect that workers' libraries ought to act as »mediators« between the cultural heritage of the *nation* and the *workers*, appears to be a more adequate criterion for the function of these libraries.

Jürgen Reulecke

From »St. Monday« to the leave for workers. History and beginnings of leave for workers before the first World War

This essay is to be understood as an attempt to trace some of the starting conditions and ideological implications of what we call »leisure-time society« by taking the example of the workers' leave – still an exception before the first World War. Looking first at the relation between working hours and hours off work in pre-industrial times (e.g. the »St. Monday«) as well as at the changes that took place in this relationship during the early period of industrialisation, the essay then studies in detail prototypes of leave for workers as from around 1870 (e.g. leave for civil servants and white collar workers, travel arrangements for workers, workers' recreational homes, introduction of a day off on Sunday) before going on to report on the reasons why workers' leave – which was granted only rarely before 1900 – was introduced. In these first cases as well as in the cases after the turn of the century when workers' leave became gradually more frequent, it is evident that they were understood almost exclusively as a welfare service granted by the employer, or were even used as a means of disciplining the worker and tying him to the enterprise. It is true that even after the years of economic boom, 1906/07, which mark the first spreading of the idea of leave, only a small number of workers could as yet actually get a leave, it is true that, apart from a few exceptions, there was not yet a legal claim to it, but nevertheless leave began to become »customary«. The awareness on the part of workers that they were entitled to a leave was as yet little developed, and the trade unions made only few attempts to promote such an awareness. The most important spokesmen in favour of leave for workers were to be found amongst socially committed, middle-class social politicians who believed that a general introduction of leave for workers, especially in context with collective agreements, would offer an opportunity to integrate workers more and more into society. In conclusion, the essay attempts to show that certain basic ideas that led to the introduction of leave, e.g. the welfare idea, are still partly to be found in today's legislation and jurisdiction concerning leave.

Peter N. Stearns

The Unskilled and Industrialization. A Transformation of Consciousness

The distinction between skilled and unskilled workers is familiar in labor history. It applies particularly to protest situations, in which the skilled were long more active than the unskilled and operated separately from them. It has also been traced in wage different-

ials. This essay seeks to refine the distinction, with particular focus on the largely unexplored issue of who the unskilled were and what they were about. *First*, it demonstrates contrasting value systems between the two groups; too often the unskilled have been dismissed as valueless. *Second*, it applies a rough periodization to the topic, going beyond the common focus on early industrialization to a decisive if complex set of changes in the later nineteenth century. *Third*, it contends that while skilled-unskilled distinctions persisted and still persist, the unskilled evolved and declined in number with advancing industrialization. Materials are drawn from Britain, Germany, Belgium, France and to a degree the United States. Save for the conclusion which relates the historical findings to the contemporary era, the essay ranges from the advent of industrialization to 1914.

W. O. Henderson

The Labour Force in the Textile Industries

This essay is a comparative study of the way in which the industrial revolution in the textile industries affected the lives of the operatives in Britain, France, and Germany. An examination of the structure of the labour force shows that more workers were employed in the textile industries than in any other branch of manufacture. But in the age of large factories a substantial proportion of the textile operatives were still domestic workers. The skills and responsibilities – and consequently the wages and living standards – of operatives varied considerably. For many textile workers life in the early mills was hard since hours were long, working conditions were unhealthy, piece-work wages were low, and housing conditions were bad. This state of affairs sometimes led to violence – as in the case of the Luddites in England – but gradually textile workers recognised that the strike weapon was probably more likely to be effective than violence. They became organised in trade unions, though such combinations were at first outside the law. By the twentieth century collective bargaining took place regularly in Britain and was beginning to be established in France and Germany. The article concludes with an examination of two controversies concerning the workers at the time of the industrial revolution. One is the controversy between the »optimists« and the »pessimists« as to whether the condition of the workers improved or declined during the industrial revolution. The second is concerned with the extent to which the family life of the textile operatives was disrupted as the result of the establishment of large mills with power driven machinery.

Alfons Labisch

The ideas in health policy of German Social Democracy from its foundation until the split of the Party (1863–1917)

German Social-Democrats realised very early on that most diseases, and especially the most common diseases contracted by people, were caused and influenced by social factors. They considered the existing circumstances of production to be the cause of disease-producing conditions. As a remedy, they at first demanded a general improvement in the workers' situation. After 1870, a detailed socio-economic analysis made by the Social Democrats led to the result that protection of health was part of the general social problem and

could only be solved in this context; it was considered that a basic protection of health was possible only after doing away with class rule. However, the situation of the workers and of their families demanded an immediate intervention with the means available – e.g. through fundamental criticism to be published in social-democratic newspapers and connected with practical suggestions for reforms. Therefore, the introduction of health policy into general revolutionary theory was accompanied by a turn towards practical health policy. Thus, long before the Erfurt Programme, the concept of a deliberately restricted reform policy with a general revolutionary aim was developed in health policy. The theoretical foundations in social-democratic health policy were an assessment of good health as personal property, as a basis for the individual's life, and as a legal entitlement, and the view that it was a task of society to protect health. The Erfurt Programme of 1891 demanded that medical treatment and medicine be given free of charge. Around the turn of the century, arising out of practical municipal policy in direct confrontation with the situation of the workers, the Party developed a health protection programme of its own. It demanded a national organisation of a health service to be rendered free of charge. Preventive treatment was to be in the hands of a separate and independent public health service to be comprehensively organised from ministerial level down to local level. Medical treatment and rehabilitation was to be effected through an equally comprehensive system of medical facilities at local level, doctors were to become civil servants and fulfil a social task in all fields of medicine. The main task of this health protection scheme was to be the prevention of illness. In case of illness, the patient was to be rehabilitated as effectively as possible so that he would be in a position to step back into his social functions.

Eckehart Lorenz

Protestant reactions to the development of the Socialist Labour Movement. Mannheim 1890–1933

German Protestantism reacted to the development of the socialist labour movement with, i.a., the creation of new organisations. Such social-Protestant organisations were founded at times when Social Democracy became visibly stronger and/or when a crisis occurred in the existing governmental system: The Christian-Social Labour Party was founded in 1878 after the united Workers' Parties had received 9 p.c. of the votes in the Reichstag elections of 1877; The Protestant-Social Congress of 1890 when the Anti-Socialist Act ceased to exist; Religious Democrats and Socialists since 1919, after representatives of socialist parties had taken their seats in the executive bodies of Reich and Länder in 1918 but almost at the same time anti-socialist movements on the part of church-oriented workers, which were directed from above. Mannheim, a centre of the labour movement, the biggest industrial town and numerically strongest Protestant parish of Baden (Badenia) has been selected to serve as example of the emergence of social-Protestant organisations, of their activities, their theories and programmes, the significance of their prominent representatives, the social stratification amongst their members and officials, their influence on the various bodies that held power in the church, and their potential impact on the history of Social Democracy. There, in Mannheim, the reaction of the Protestant Church and its members to the development of Social Democracy during the period while the latter was a lawful Party, i.e. from the termination of the Anti-Socialist Act up to the start of Fascism, took mainly

the form of a (social-liberal) »protestant-social« movement started in 1891 and that of a separation into a democratic and socialist wing and a fascistoid wing, under the influence of the events of 1918/19.

Beatrix W. Bowvier

Antifascist co-operation, claim to independence, and unifying tendency. The role played by Social Democracy in the administrative and partipolitical reconstruction in the Soviet occupation zone in 1945, at regional and local levels

The study of the behaviour of Social-Democrats of the intermediate and lower levels during the first few months after the end of the War in 1945 reveals that they participated almost everywhere in the activities of »Antifa« (antifascist) – committees which were characteristic of the time. After the official authorisation of political parties, parties were immediately but separately built up; the leaders of local social-democratic organisations were recruited mostly from amongst the remaining officials of the Weimar time. The Social-Democrats especially at intermediate and lower levels, in contrast to the Communists, were at first isolated and cut off from more extensive political information and communication. Thus, it was often the Communists who approached the Social-Democrats with initiatives for political discussions and who were, therefore, in a position to give such discussions the direction they desired whereas the Social-Democrats found it difficult to develop independent strategies, especially since such discussions started from a basis both had in common: Antifascism. In spite of the centralised approach practised by the KPD (Communist Party of Germany) and the starting difficulties of the SPD (Social-Democratic Party of Germany), the SPD registered considerable success in terms of membership figures. Social-Democrats were decisively involved in the recruitment for administrative posts, and because of their practical knowledge they often guaranteed the functioning of administration. But although they filled a considerable number of posts at the important »intermediate« level, the Communists, by taking the strategically important positions for themselves, ultimately determined the political direction. However, the influence of the Social-Democrats at this intermediate level, at least in the beginning, should not be underestimated; when, later on, the course was re-directed towards a »Party of a new type«, it was particularly members of this group that were most frequently left in the cold.

Kurt Klotzbach

Programme discussions in German Social Democracy, 1945–1959

This essay gives a survey on the theory discussions inside the Party which finally resulted in the Godesberg Basic Programme of 1959. New and essential points of departure developed mainly under the impression of Social-Democratic exile after 1933, were a clear no to historical determinism and economic interpretation of history, the establishment of a tie between Socialism and Democracy, the development of a basic set of values, the abolition of an identification of Socialism with nationalisation, and an understanding and interpretation of the Party as a people's party. A detailed study is made of the programmatic

statements of the first Party Chairman after the War, Kurt Schumacher, and of the commission debates which took place between 1953 and 1959; the preamble of the Berlin Action Programme of 1954 is shown to be an important predecessor of the Basic Programme which was passed and adopted five years later after practically continuous and very intensive discussions and consultations.