

Late Industrial Society

- Daniel Bell's "Post-industrial society?"
- Jean-Francois Lyotard's "Post-modern society"
- Late industrial society?

Difficulties in seeing clear trajectory

- We are too close to reality
- Multiple, contradictory trends
- Inadequately studied
- Coexistence of old and new features

Major Features

- Changes in social structure
- Changes in organizational features of work
- Changes in technologies
- Globalization
- Industrialization of culture
- Growth of technical reason
- Growth of the consumer society

Organizational trends

- Growth of bureaucracies into larger forms
- Rise of service sector
- Decline of independent, small entrepreneur
- Renewed rise of consultants and small contractors

Changing Technology

- Greater automation
- Mechanization of information & communication
- Greater control & greater flexibility
- Post-fordian manufacturing: decentralized, inter-connected, contract-based, flexible

Major trends in Globalization

- Emergence of a world system with a core, semi-periphery and periphery.
- Polarization between the core with high capital and high skill activities and the periphery with low capital and high labour activities
- Emergence of global bureaucracies, articulating with national bureaucracies
- Role of national elites continues to be crucial

Globalization (contd.)

- Freeing of capital, not yet labour
- Move of capital to cheaper, less organized labour
- Move of capital to newer markets
- Weakening of labour's power
- Globalization of culture

Industrialization of Culture

- Driving force:
 - Profit-making
 - Mass society
 - Homogenization
 - Rationalization
- Negative consequences:
 - Jean Baudrillard: State of excess
 - Frederic Jameson: Depthlessness

Growth of technical reason

- Innovation shifts to research bureaucracies
- Growth of abstracted knowledges, technical reason and knowledges of domination
- Decline of moral, etc. knowledges which are not in demand by the powerful
- Culture and degrees become the new grounds of inequality

Consumer Society

- Symbolic value of goods acquired through commercial exchange acquires much greater role than use value of goods
- Rapidity of obsolescence
- Thinning of meaning

Consumer Society

- Consumerism central to contemporary industry
- Provides an affirmation of humanity
- Provides a sense of identity
- Stabilizes worker in a meaningless bureaucracy
- Shift from a culture of saving to a culture of spending

Consumer Society

- The profit motive influences cultural agendas through advertising
- Consumer goods give happiness, but they have a very short life span. Happiness lasts only so long as the new model does not come out.
- Use and throw culture creates enormous wastage and pollution.

The question of freedom

- Juergen Habermas: Systematization v/s Lifeworld
- Industrialization enables us in many ways
- Present form also leads to deskilling and concentration of expertise in hands of a few
- What is it really doing to power?
- Opportunities as well as problems