Chapter 1 : Independent Radicalism in Early Victorian Britain : Michael J. Turner :

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Late Victorian Britain State and society From the s a mounting sense of the limits of the liberal, regulative state became apparent. One reflection of this awareness was the increasing perception of national decline, relative to the increasing strength of other European countries and the United States. Toward the end of the century, the possibility of a violent outcome in the increasingly intractable problem of Ireland brought existing constitutional methods into question. Behind much of this anxiety was a sense that the Third Reform Act of see Reform Bill and changes in local government were precipitating a much more democratic polity, for which the classical liberal state had no easy answers. The example of what was called at the time municipal socialism, especially as it existed in Birmingham under the direction of its mayor, Joseph Chamberlain â€"76 , indicated what the local state could accomplish. German idealism , socialism , and new liberalism see libertarianism all encompassed different ways of rethinking the state. This rethinking revolved around the belief that the operation of the state must incorporate consideration of the collective characteristics of societyâ€"that is, solidarity, interdependence, and common identityâ€"in a much more direct way than hitherto. Notions of a distinct social sphere, separate from the economic and political realms, had emerged much earlier, based upon the idea that the characteristics of this social realm were evident in the biological, vital characteristics of populations, so that society was very often understood in organic terms. From about the turn of the 20th century, the concept of the social realm as autonomous developed alongside and partly incorporated older understandings. The social question became a sociological question, as indeed it has remained until very recently in British history. Society was now understood, unlike in earlier times, to work according to its own laws and to be divorced from moral questions, although, in practice, political interventions were invariably designed to change moral behaviour. One major result of this questioning of the state and of new conceptions of society was the extensive social legislation of the Liberal administrations after , which is widely seen as the foundation of the 20th-century welfare state. The Old Age Pensions Act granted pensions under prescribed conditions to people over age 70, and in the miners were given a statutory working day of eight hours. In trade boards were set up to fix wages in designated industries in which there was little or no trade union strength, and labour exchanges were created to try to reduce unemployment. This act clearly represented a departure from the manner in which government had been carried out, as it began to be executed in supposed accordance with the social characteristics of the governed age, family circumstances, gender, labour. Under this new dispensation, individual rights, as well as the rights of families , were secured not by individual economic action but by state action and by the provision of pensions and benefits. However, much of this new relationship of state and society was still recognizably liberal in the older sense, constituting a compact of social and individual responsibility. At the heart of this compact was the belief that it was necessary to safeguard the individual from the unfettered operation of the free market , while at the same time making sure that there must be an obligation to obtain gainful employment. Contributory pension schemes required individuals to make regular payments into them rather than providing social insurance from general taxation. The National Insurance Act provided a framework within which workers were to practice self-help, and, although involvement was mandatory, the administration of the legislation was largely through voluntary institutions. David Lloyd George , who did most to push the legislation through, himself combined these characteristics of old and new liberalism. At the same time, in practice this new formula of government emerged in a very piecemeal and haphazard way, often driven by the circumstances of the moment, not least the circumstances of party politics. Moreover, the circumstances of war were of overwhelming importance. It was World War I in particular that fostered the idea of the increased importance of the interventionist, collectivist state. The demands of winning the war required an unparalleled intervention in a running of the

economy and in the operations of social life, particularly when the radical Liberal Lloyd George took power in Nonetheless, despite the piecemeal nature of the change, what is striking is how this understanding of the relationship between state and society obtained across the whole political spectrum and how it lasted so long. This increased role of the state was accompanied, after World War I, by the increasing specialization and professionalization of an expanding civil service. Indeed, in terms of political logic, it seemed likely in that the Gladstonian Liberal Party would eventually split into Whig and radical components, the latter to be led by Joseph Chamberlain. This development was already foreshadowed in the cabinet that Gladstone assembled, which was neither socially uniform nor politically united. Eight of the 11 members were Whigs, but one of the other threeâ€"Chamberlainâ€"represented a new and aggressive urban radicalism, less interested in orthodox statements of liberal individualism than in the uncertain aspiration and striving of the different elements in the mass electorate. Many of them were already abandoning the Liberal Party; all of them were nervous about the kind of radical program that Chamberlain and the newly founded National Liberal Federation were advocating and about the kind of caucus-based party organization that Chamberlain favoured locally and nationally. For the moment, however, Gladstone was the man of the hour, and Chamberlain himself conceded that he was indispensable. The former continued the trend toward universal male suffrage by giving the vote to agricultural labourers, thereby tripling the electorate, and the latter robbed 79 towns with populations under 15, of their separate representation. For the first time the franchise reforms ignored the traditional claims of property and wealth and rested firmly on the democratic principle that the vote ought to be given to people as a matter of right, not of expediency. The most difficult problems continued to arise in relation to foreign affairs and, above all, to Ireland. When in the Boers defeated the British at Majuba Hill and Gladstone abandoned the attempt to hold the Transvaal , there was considerable public criticism. And in the same year, when he agreed to the bombardment of Alexandria in a successful effort to break a nationalist revolt in Egypt , he lost the support of the aged radical John Bright. A rebellion in the Sudan in led to the massacre of Gen. Charles Gordon and his garrison at Khartoum see Siege of Khartoum two days before the arrival of a mission to relieve him. Large numbers of Englishmen held Gladstone personally responsible, and in June he resigned after a defeat on an amendment to the budget. The Irish question The Irish question loomed ominously as soon as Parliament assembled in , for there was now an Irish nationalist group of more than 60 members led by Charles Stewart Parnell , most of them committed to Irish Home Rule ; in Ireland itself, the Land League , founded in , was struggling to destroy the power of the landlord. Parnell embarked on a program of agrarian agitation in , at the same time that his followers at Westminster were engaged in various kinds of parliamentary obstructionism. The Land Act did not go far enough to satisfy Parnell, who continued to make speeches couched in violent language, and, after a coercion act was passed by Parliament in the face of Irish obstructionism, he was arrested. Parnell was released in April , however, after an understanding had been reached that he would abandon the land war and the government would abandon coercion. Lord Frederick Charles Cavendish , a close friend of Gladstone and the brother of the Whig leader, Lord Spencer Hartington , was sent to Dublin as chief secretary on a mission of peace, but the whole policy was undermined when Cavendish, along with the permanent undersecretary, was murdered in Phoenix Park , Dublin, within a few hours of landing in Ireland. Between and Gladstone coupled a somewhat stiffer policy in Ireland with minor measures of reform, but in , when the Conservatives returned to power under Robert Arthur Salisbury , the Irish question forced itself to the forefront again. Henry Herbert, earl of Carnarvon , the new lord lieutenant of Ireland, was a convert to Home Rule and followed a more liberal policy than his predecessor. In the subsequent general election of November , Parnell secured every Irish seat but one outside Ulster and urged Irish voters in British constituenciesâ€"a large group mostly concentrated in a limited number of places such as Lancashire and Clydesideâ€"to vote Conservative. The result of the election was a Liberal majority of 86 over the Conservatives, which was almost exactly equivalent to the number of seats held by the Irish group, who thus controlled the balance of power in Parliament. All Conservative contacts with Parnell ceased, and a few weeks later, in January , after the Conservatives had been defeated in Parliament on a radical amendment

for agrarian reform , Salisbury, lacking continued Irish support, resigned and Gladstone returned to power. It immediately alienated him further from most of the Whigs and from a considerable number of radicals led by Chamberlain. He had hoped at first that Home Rule would be carried by an agreement between the parties, but Salisbury had no intention of imitating Peel. Gladstone made his intentions clear by appointing John Morley , a Home Rule advocate, as Irish secretary, and in April he introduced a Home Rule bill. The Liberals remained divided, and 93 of them united with the Conservatives to defeat the measure. Gladstone appealed to the country and was decisively beaten in the general election, in which Conservatives were returned to Westminster along with 78 Liberal Unionists, the new name chosen by those Liberals who refused to back Home Rule. The Liberals mustered only seats, and there were 85 Irish nationalists. Chamberlain, the astute radical leader, like many others of his class and generation, ceased to regard social reform as a top priority and worked in harness with Hartington , his Whig counterpart. In they both joined a Salisbury government. The Liberals were, in effect, pushed into the wilderness, although they held office briefly and unhappily from to He resigned in , to be succeeded by Archibald Primrose, earl of Rosebery , who further split the party; in the general election of , the Conservatives could claim that they were the genuinely popular party, backed by the urban as well as the rural electorate. Although Salisbury usually stressed the defensive aspects of Conservatism , both at home and abroad, Chamberlain and his supporters were able to mobilize considerable working-class as well as middle-class support for a policy of crusading imperialism. Imperialism and British politics Imperialism was the key word of the s, just as Home Rule had been in the critical decade of the s, and the cause of empire was associated not merely with the economic interests of businessmen looking for materials and markets and the enthusiasm of crowds excited by the adventure of empire but also with the traditional lustre of the crown. Disraeli had emphasized the last of these associations, just as Chamberlain emphasized the first. In the middle years of the century it had been widely held that colonies were burdens and that materials and markets were most effectively acquired through trade. Nonetheless, even during these years, as a result of pressure from the periphery , the process of establishing protectorates or of acquiring colonies had never halted, despite a number of colonial crises and small colonial wars in Africa , Asia , and the Pacific. Most of the new acquisitions were located in tropical areas of the world and were populated mainly by non-Europeans. The argument about empire assumed an increasingly popular dimension. So also did the popular press. In consequence, the language of imperialism changed. However, it was difficult to pull the empire together politically or constitutionally. Certainly, moving toward federation was a challenging task since the interests of different parts were already diverging, and in the last resort only British powerâ€"above all, sea power â€"held the empire together. The processes of imperial expansion were always complex, and there was neither one dominant theory of empire nor one single explanation of why it grew. Colonies that were dominated by people of British descent , such as Canada or New Zealand and the states of Australia , had been given substantial powers of self-government since the Durham Report of and the Canada Union Act of The Indian Mutiny of â€"58 was suppressed, and a year later the East India Company was abolished and the new title of viceroy was instituted. Imperial control was tightened too, through the construction of a network of railways. Meanwhile, given the strategic importance of India to the military establishment, attempts were made to justify British rule in terms of benefits of law and order that were said to accrue to Indians. It was difficult for the British voter to understand or to appreciate this network of motives and interests. British-Boer relations in South Africa , always tense, were further worsened after the Jameson raid of December , and, in October , war began. The early stages of the struggle were favourable to the Boers, and it was not until spring that superior British equipment began to count. British troops entered Pretoria in June and Paul Kruger , the Boer president, fled to Europe , where most governments had given him moral support against the British. Thereafter, the Boers employed guerrilla tactics, and the war did not end until May While the war lasted, it emphasized the political differences within the Liberal Party and consolidated Conservative-Liberal Unionist strength. A middle group of Liberals emerged, but it was not until after that party rifts were healed. Salisbury retired in , to be succeeded by his nephew, Arthur Balfour , a brilliant man but a tortuous and insecure

politician. There had been an even bigger break in January when the queen died, after a brief illness, at age She had ruled for 64 years and her death seemed to mark not so much the end of a reign as the end of an age. There were significant changes in terms of the impression organized labour made on politics. The Independent Labour Party , founded in Bradford in , had a more general appeal, while the Fabian Society , founded in â€"84, included intellectuals who were to play a large part in 20th-century labour politics. In February a labour representation conference was held in London at which trade unionists and socialists agreed to found a committee the Labour Representation Committee , with Ramsay MacDonald as first secretary, to promote the return of Labour members to Parliament. This conference marked the beginning of the 20th-century Labour Party , which, with Liberal support, won 29 seats in the general election of Financially backed by the trade unions, it was eventually to take the place of the Liberal Party as the second party in the British state. The return of the Liberals The Liberals returned to power in December after Balfour had resigned. Between the end of the South African War and this date, they had become more united as the Conservatives had disintegrated. He failed to win large-scale middle- or working-class support outside Parliament, as he had hoped, and the main effect of his propaganda was to draw rival groups of Liberals together. In the general election of , the Liberals, led by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman , a cautious Scot who had stayed clear of the extreme factions during the South African War, won seats, giving them an enormous majority of 84 over all other parties combined. The new cabinet included radicals and Liberal imperialists, and when Campbell-Bannerman retired in , H. Asquith moved from the Home Office to the premiership. Social reform had not been the chief cry at the general election, which was fought mainly on the old issues of free trade , temperance reform, and education. In many constituencies there was evidence of Nonconformist grievances against the Balfour-engineered education act of that had abolished the school boards, transferred educational responsibilities to the all-purpose local authorities, and laid the foundations of a national system of secondary education.

Independent Radicalism in Early Victorian Britain by Michael J. Turner Examines the personal, social, political, ideological, and tactical components of radicalism in Britain between the s and s, and casts new light on the meaning, nature, and reception of reform.

The Patriotes estimated, rightly, that it was there that the important decisions regarding their programme would be made and recognised that divisions within both Parliament and the Whig government of Lord Melbourne made it possible to advance the Canadian cause. There were three missions in the s and s: Papineau and Neilson in , Neilson, Viger and Cuvillier five years later and especially the mission of Denis-Benjamin Viger between and In the aftermath of the passage of the 92 Resolutions though the Assembly at the beginning of and growing intransigence of the reform movement in Lower Canada, the Patriote Party decided that it would be better to persist with its strategy in England largely because of the emergence of a group of radical MPs. Electoral reform in led to the appearance of a group of MPs, largely middle class and strongly influenced by the ideas of Jeremy Bentham and David Ricardo. These Philosophic Radicals denounced the political dominance of the traditional aristocratic elite and called for a democratisation of the political life and social reforms. Their electoral failure in July and the departure of Lord Durham, a possible leader of this loose grouping, for Canada at the beginning of led to rapid decline of their importance. Augustin-Norbert Morin was charged with carrying the text of the Ninety-two Resolutions and the petition that accompanied it to England. Roebuck to bring English opinion up-to-date with the Canadian crisis and to inform the Assembly of the progress of the Canadian cause in Great Britain. On 9 March , Chapman and Nelson distributed copies of the text of a petition of Canadian citizens in Parliament. The petition was presented to the Commons the same day followed by a lengthy debate with a second debate the day after in the House of Lords. Nelson was back in Montreal by the spring of , but Chapman remained in London working with Roebuck and supplying the British press with articles on Canada. However, there were already active and well organised special interest groups in England. Wood merchants lobbied vigorously for the maintenance of preferential rates on Canadian wood to the detriment of wood coming from the Baltic. What gave this lobby its strength was an alliance with Society of Ship-owners, one of the best organised interest groups in nineteenth century England. It was fiercely opposed to the reform agenda and Chapman described it as noisy, active and uninformed. Other special interest groups with commercial interests in Great Britain had less influence on the development of colonial policy. Finally, there were family-owned companies that carried out businesses on both sides of the Atlantic. Although, these merchants may have been important in the colonies, they had limited influence at Westminster. During the s, financial companies extend their influence on British North America. In , the Bank of British North America was launched with the support of powerful financial institutions. The large land companies were closely linked to the banks and were beginning to sell their vast land monopolies. The banking and land companies combined with the wood merchants formed a protectionist and elitist group in Canada. Since , these interests had started to meet at Canada Club. In , it became the North American Colonial Association that had interests in finance, land and commerce and controlled three London newspapers: This anti-Patriote lobby could also count on the occasional support from the Church of England. The strength of this network of interests can be contrasted with limited support available to the Patriote lobby whose support came almost exclusively from the radical movement. This relationship went back to the campaign against the union of Lower and Upper Canada in when James Mackintosh defended the position of the Canadian party. From the session of , certain Radicals became increasingly interested in Canadian questions and Roebuck, Hume, Leader and on occasions, Molesworth questioned the government on its Canadian policy. It is often assumed that it was Roebuck who presented the 92 Resolutions to the House of Commons; in fact it was Joseph Hume. A battle took place in Canada over the nomination of Roebuck as official agent of Assembly as the legislative Council vigorously opposed it. The bill appointing an agent in Great Britain was voted on

several times but rejected by the Council. However, following a unilateral vote of the Assembly, Papineau announced on 25 March that Roebuck could now act as the official agent of the Parliament of Lower Canada. It was not until 8 September that Lord Glenelg allowed Roebuck to express the views of the parliamentary majority of Lower Canada. In fact, because of the dispute over subsidies in Lower Canada, Roebuck did not receive anything and it was ten years later following an expensive legal case before he was actually paid. Despite this, Roebuck continued to promote the Patriote cause in England. Though Roebuck was central to the pro-patriot activities in England, other MPs were also engaged in this cause. Among those, the most assiduous defender of Canadian freedoms was Joseph Hume who had been the agent of the Upper Canadian Assembly and had presented, on its behalf, petitions questioning the administration of the governors Colborne and then Head. Hume had long been a defender of colonial freedoms and hoped one day to see the colonies represented in Westminster. The Radicals wanted to promote certain democratic reforms even at the price of an alliance with the Whig government. Like Hume, he accepted the political economy of Adam Smith and believed that independence would be the eventual result of the relations between England and Canada. Henry Brougham was, with Hume, another veteran of the British politics and came from the great Whig tradition of Wilberforce and Lord Holland. Brougham was an important Whig politician under Grey but had broken with Melbourne and acted almost as an independent in the House of Lords where he was virtually the only defender of the Patriote ideas. Born in in London, Chapman was a merchant initially in Amsterdam and, after , in Quebec. Until , each winter he came to England where he attended the radical circles. The drafting of the Ninety-Two Resolutions in February and especially the Patriote victory with the elections, abruptly made him aware of the nature of the Lower Canadian crisis. In What is the Result of the Canadian Election? On the one hand, there was a largely English political oligarchy supported by protectionist merchants and on the other the Patriote party supported by many Canadians. In his many other writings on the question, Chapman had occasion to refine his thought. In his bipolar vision, there is no place for the moderate opinion either in England or in Canada. He attacked the moderate wing of the Patriote party in Canada as much as it attacked the Whig government. Chapman noted that the Philosophic Radicals, who defended democracy, free trade and certain social reforms, were similar to the Patriote movement of Louis-Joseph Papineau. Disowned by his Tory partners, Chapman promptly gave up publication of the Daily Advertiser. As a result, he agreed to act as emissary of the Patriote party in Great Britain. Chapman undertook to write on 29 January , five days after his arrival in England and his letters appeared each week with astonishing regularity, a total of letters were published before the Vindicator closed on 6 November The work of Chapman cannot be disassociated from that of Samuel Revans, his long-standing collaborator. He was born in Kennington in and the two men were close from their infancy. Revans arrived in Quebec in and became involved in the trade of dry goods also making many trips to and from America and Europe. It is from Revans that Chapman acquired the printing equipment in to launch Montreal Daily Adverstiser and who assumed the losses when it closed. After Chapman moved to England as the agent of the Patriote Party, Revans became a sales representative combining this with his work with the Radicals and Patriotes. Lastly, Thomas Falconer came from one of the great families of Bath. Falconer was called to the bar in He was thirty-two years old at the time of the rebellions and, filled with enthusiasm by the resistance of Mackenzie on Navy Island, went to Canada remaining there until The group around Chapman was concerned with other causes than the Patriotes. The most important contribution of this group was the publication of the Pamphlets for the People. Thirty-six appeared at each week between 11 June and 11 February and it was an important medium for Radical writers such as William Allen, Robert Hammesley and Francis Place. Chapman published twenty-seven articles relating especially to universal suffrage, the tax on the press and colonisation and also contributed to The London Review and The London and Westminster Review. The diversity of interest of these individuals shows that their pro-Canadian activities must be seen within their broader aims of transforming society. Hume advocated greater autonomy for Canada while Roebuck warned that, if the government provoked a rebellion, the United States of America would almost certainly intervene against Britain. Constitutional reform was the

only way to create a more workable imperial connection. The remaining resolutions were carried over two further nights of debate and were accepted by both Houses in early May. Gosford was instructed to convene the Assembly in a final attempt to obtain the arrears before parliament appropriated provincial funds. Yet, the death of William IV in June and the need to call a general election, delayed further discussion. The Russell Resolutions occupied many in the House of Commons in February and the organised labour followed discussions in the Commons with great interest. Both the speakers and the tone of the speeches suggest close links with the emergent Chartist movement. The first reports of the rebellions started to arrive to England in mid-December of Chapman and Roebuck were then in London. Samuel Revans was in Lower Canada and had taken part in some Patriote assemblies. However, he went to the United States as the rebellions began and was back in England early in The Radicals were surprised but not disappointed by the outbreak of violence and, in fact, it had an invigorating effect on their work. The English press was suddenly interested in the Canadas and the Radicals contributed a series of articles to The Sun, a London newspaper. Once the rebellions started, communications with Canada became very difficult and subterfuge was used to prevent letters revealing Patriote supporters to the authorities. However, a radical campaign would not be easy to set in motion. He questioned the reliability of Roebuck and Hume, for example, and not without reason. In so doing he had made an insurrection more likely, however much he blamed the government for failing to appease the Patriotes and his main concern subsequently was to obtain the salary that he was owed as agent for Lower Canada. Hume had also encouraged the Canadians to resist. There were other problems for the radicals. They were divided on tactics and losing influence in the Commons. Radical numbers in the Commons had fallen after the general election; Roebuck was among the casualties, as was Thompson. Nevertheless, both in and outside parliament, there were still activists ready to give priority to the Canada question, to denounce the government for causing the rebellion and to campaign against the coercive measures to which the imperial authorities had resorted. On 4 January , the Radicals organised the largest pro-Patriote gathering to have taken place in Great Britain. This meeting will the tone to the country â€¦and I am glad to say that the general feeling of sympathy is growing in your favour. Leader then introduced the main resolution: To cheers, Thompson admitted that he was prepared to go further. He viewed the British government as the original aggressor and believed that the Canadians were within their constitutional rights to stop supplies. To execute rebel leaders, moreover, would be like murdering prisoners of war. Finally, he hoped that the public would forgive the weak part of the resolutions, strengthen the sound part and press the government to change course [11]. Five numbers of The Canadian Portfolio appeared between the 4 and 23 January containing many letters on Canada that the Radicals had written for the British press, as well as extracts of speeches by Roebuck in the Commons. Indeed, the vote on 29 January on the Canada Government Bill that suspended the Constitution of Lower Canada saw radical opposition reduced to eight votes against

Chapter 3 : Radicalism (historical) - Wikipedia

Independent Radicalism in Early Victorian Britain by Michael J. Turner The reasons why people arise to express dissatisfaction with their present situation, and how they imagine and work towards an alternative, have enduring relevance.

Early and mid- Victorian Britain State and society The implementation of the liberal, regulative state emerging after the Napoleonic Wars involved a number of new departures. The first of these concerned the new machinery of government, which, instead of relying on patronage and custom, involved an institutionalized bureaucracy. In fact, towns and cities themselves became very important new locations for the expression of the power of the decentralized state. After the Municipal Corporations Act , local government, if developing unevenly, was a major part of the new machinery of government. There was a great flowering of civic administration and civic pride during the early and mid-Victorian period in Britain. This was particularly reflected in the architecture and infrastructure of British citiesâ€"one of the most notable legacies of the period. Magnificent town halls, libraries, concert halls, museums, and, not least, the great civil engineering projects of the time all inculcated the virtues of civic identity and therefore of instituting civic power. Its encouragement of self-supporting actors within the greater scheme of a natural order expressed the mixture of utilitarianism and evangelicalism that was characteristic of the new order. New areas of state action were also evident in education as well as in factory reform, and with these departures a new kind of bureaucratic expertise arose. Expert bureaucrats from outside of government, including the physician and medical reformer James Kay-Shuttleworth in education and the lawyer Edwin Chadwick in Poor Law and health reform, were brought in to advise the government. Figures such as these indicate the permeability of the Victorian state and its closeness to civil society , for they established their reputations and gained their expertise outside the attenuated structure of the state bureaucracy. From the s onward, however, centralized bureaucracy accrued to itself increasing powers. The reforms of â€"54 engineered by Charles Edward Trevelyan and Sir Stafford Northcote instituted, by means of public and competitive examination, a system based not on patronage but on merit. In fact, public examination was designed to create meritocracy of a very particular sort, one based on the classically educated Englishman of Oxford and Cambridge universities. For the first time in British history and the history of Oxbridge the two universities viewed as an institution , though in both cases decidedly not the last time, the ideology of merit was employed to reproduce a particular kind of ruling elite. This elite was built upon the idea of public duty, inculcated by an Oxbridge education , but above all it was based upon the notion that the state and its bureaucracy could be neutral. This neutrality was to stem from the open, competitive examination itself but also from the idea of that the neutrality of the civil service could be guaranteed by the ethics of the Oxbridge-educated English gentleman. Nonetheless, gentleman of an even higher social station than that of these new civil servantsâ€"that is, the aristocracy and gentry â€"were still very much a part of government, and, despite all these reforms, the role of patronage remained important. The mid-Victorian implementation of the liberal state by the government of William Gladstone therefore still had considerable work to do. Gladstone, Whig and later Liberal prime minister, was the major single influence on the 19th-century liberal state and arguably the most gifted British politician of his time. Gladstonian finance, particularly the taxation system, was aimed at encouraging the belief that all groups in society had a responsibility for sanctioning and financing government activity and that therefore they should have an incentive to keep it under control. Economic and social government came together dramatically in the case of the Irish Potato Famine in the late s. The outcome of the famine, a disaster for Ireland involving the death or emigration of millions of people, has to be seen in the context of the long-term agenda of the liberal state, which included Ireland as a sort of laboratory for experimentation in this new kind of government India was a similar kind of laboratory. The experimental methods in the Irish case involved an agenda including population control, the Poor Law relief system, and the consolidation of property through a variety of means,

including emigration, the elimination of smallholdings, and the sale of large but bankrupt estates. The government measured the success of its relief policies in terms of this agenda rather than its effectiveness in addressing the immediate question of need. Culver Pictures However, subsequent implementation of the liberal state—for instance, that of Gladstone—should not be seen simply as guided by the amoral market. This version of the liberal state took the form of an individualism ostensibly based not upon greed and self-interest but upon probity , self-control, and a sense of duty and Christian morality. In this regard, as indeed much more widely in British history, this version of individualism accorded with many of the beliefs of society in general—not least those held by the working classes—so that the attempt to rule through the moral characteristics of society proved in many respects to be an extraordinarily successful venture in government. Rather like the thinking behind the reformed civil service, the moral rule at the heart of Gladstonian economic reform was designed to establish the neutrality, and therefore the high moral ground, of government: This view of liberal government in the period of Tory power instituted after changed little and went unchallenged until the late 19th century, even if Tory administrations had a somewhat more positive idea of the state. The political situation Whig reforms Whig interest in parliamentary reform went back to the 18th century, and Grey himself provided a link between two separate periods of public agitation. Yet, in the country as a whole, there were at least three approaches to the reform question. Middle-class reformers were anxious to secure representation for commercial and industrial interests and for towns and cities such as Birmingham and Manchester that had no direct voice in Parliament. Agitation in the country kept the reform question on the boil between and , while an aloof Grey faced unprecedented constitutional difficulties with both the king and Parliament. Membership change, by county, in the House of Commons as a result of the Reform Act of England only. The Reform Act of see Reform Bill was in no sense a democratic measure. It defined more clearly than ever before the distinction between those who were and those who were not sanctioned to wield power, and it did so entirely in terms of property ownership , entrenching the power of landed wealth as well as acknowledging new sources of power in the middle classes and the consequent claims upon the rights and virtues of their new political identity. The bill entailed a substantial redistribution of parliamentary constituencies and a change in the franchise. The total electorate was increased by 57 percent to ,, but artisans, labourers, and large sections of the lower middle classes still remained disenfranchised. No radical demands were met, even though the manner of passing the bill had demonstrated the force of organized opinion in the country, particularly in the large cities, which were also now given representation. Returned with a huge majority in the general election of December , the Whigs carried out a number of other important reforms. A statute in ended slavery in the British colonies; in that same year the East India Company lost its monopoly of the China trade and became a purely governing body with no commercial functions. The new Poor Law of turned out to be an unpopular measure in many parts of the country, however, and led to violent outbreaks of disorder. All of these contentious issues multiplied after , when a financial crisis ushered in a period of economic depression accompanied by a series of bad harvests. Social conflict, never far from the surface, became more open and dramatic. Chartism and the Anti-Corn Law League As the economic skies darkened after and prophets such as Carlyle anticipated cataclysmic upheaval, the two most disgruntled groups in society were the industrial workers and their employers. Each group developed new forms of organization, and each turned from local to national extra-parliamentary action. The Anti-Corn Law League, founded as a national organization in Manchester in , was the spearhead of middle-class energies, and it enjoyed the advantage not only of lavish funds but also of a single-point program—the repeal of the restrictive Corn Laws. The charter contained six points, all of them political and all with a radical pedigree: These were old demands that would have been supported by 18th-century radicals. Localized Poor Law and factory reform agitations centring on such grievances were subsumed in Chartism because of its commitment to national political action. However, for a variety of reasons—not least that the politicians had been able again to convey the sense that the state was benign and neutral and not, as Chartists perceived it, repressive and sectional—the mass movement of Chartism ultimately failed. It employed every device of propaganda ,

including the use of new media of communication, such as the Penny Post , which was introduced in The formula of the league was a simple one designed to secure working-class as well as middle-class support. Most Chartists were unconvinced by this logic, but, in a landed Parliament, Peel carried the measure against his own party. The results of repeal were important politically as well as economically. Some of them, particularly Gladstone, eventually became leaders of the late 19th-century Liberal Party , which emerged from the mid-century confusion. The protectionists, most of whom abandoned protection after , formed the nucleus around Edward Stanley, earl of Derby , and Disraeli of the later Conservative Party , but they were unable to secure a majority in any election until The minority governments they formed in , , and lacked any secure sense of authority. The Whigs, themselves divided into factions, returned to office in and held it for most of the mid-century years, but they were often dependent on support from radical and Irish colleagues. There was no time between and , however, when extra-parliamentary agitation assumed the dimensions it had between and Courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery, London Matters of religion helped divide the limited mid-Victorian electorate, with the Nonconformists Dissenters encouraging, from their local bases, the development of liberalism and with the Anglican churchmen oftenâ€"but by no means universallyâ€"supporting the Conservative Party. The civil service might be pure, but the electors often were not. The Corrupt Practices Act of provided a more exact definition of bribery than there had been before, but it was not until a further act of that election expenses were rigorously controlled. It was then that, quite emphatically, parliamentary representation became not a matter of communities but of individuals, a process taken a considerable step further in with institution of electoral secrecy by the Ballot Act. The prestige of the individual members of Parliament was high, and the fragmentation of parties after allowed them considerable independence. Groups of members supporting particular economic interests, especially the railways, could often determine parliamentary strategies. Nevertheless, contemporaries feared such interests less than they feared what was often called the most dangerous of all interests, executive government. Palmerston Lord Palmerston , who became prime minister for the first time in , stood out as the dominant political personality of mid-Victorian Britain precisely because he was opposed to dramatic change and because he knew through long experience how to maneuver politics within the half-reformed constitution. At a time of party confusion, when the queen might well have played a key part in politics, Palmerston found the answer to royal opposition in popular prestige, carefully stage-managed. His chief preoccupation was with foreign affairs, and his approach was, on several occasions, diametrically opposed to that of the court. He preferred the British system of constitutional government , resting on secure social foundations, to Continental absolutism, but, like Canning, his predecessor as foreign secretary, Palmerston was anxious above all else to advance the interests of Britain as he saw them. The supremacy of British sea power , British economic ascendancy, and political divisions inside each of the main countries of Europe before and after the Revolutions of gave him his opportunity. His interventions were not confined to Europe. In â€"41 he had forced the Chinese ports open to foreign trade , and, by the Treaty of Nanjing , he had acquired Hong Kong for Britain. In he went to war in China again and, when defeated in Parliament, appealed triumphantly to the country. He also intervened in Russia. The Crimean War â€"56 was designed to curb what were interpreted as Russian designs on the Ottoman Empire and a Russian threat to British power in the eastern Mediterranean. The outcome greatly favoured the British and their main allies, the French and the Ottoman Empire. With efficient military power at his disposal, the Prussian prime minister , Otto von Bismarck , proved more than a match for Palmerston.

Chapter 4 : Victorian era - Wikipedia

This book examines the personal, social, political, ideological, and tactical components of radicalism in Britain between the s and s, and casts new light on the meaning, nature, and reception of reform during this period.

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: Edward Royle Lords of Misrule: As the British government dismantles the historic House of Lords, and traditional pursuits associated with the landed classes such as hunting are abolished or under attack, an examination of the historical background to these events is to be welcomed. This is a territory he knows well, with his interests in the persistence of independent radicalism in the mid-Victorian years and in outbursts of anti-monarchism during this period. Unfortunately, his attempt to appear relevant defeats his more serious historical aim. Baker was the embodiment of "many of the correct military and social values" p. The verdict and sentence produced outrage among radicals who compared such lenient treatment with what those of a lower social class were accustomed to receive for lesser offences. The movement, it is argued, was neither Liberal nor proto-Socialist but ambiguously occupied an independent ground in posing a radical challenge to the economic power of the landed classes. From the vices of the aristocracy and their control of the land, the argument next passes to a consideration of hunting—opposition to which excited yet more moral outrage among anti-aristocratic radicals. Such moral opposition to the economic and social activities of the aristocracy then provides the context for chapter 4 on the campaign against political privilege in the House of Lords. Aristocracy was an essential part of monarchical display and the exercise of power by the few. Yet, although the Liberal governments of and took up aspects of land and parliamentary reform, especially in Ireland, Mr Gladstone resolutely refused to legislate against the power of the House of Lords, however obstructive it was to other Liberal measures of reform. Opposition to the Lords was to remain a part of the extra-parliamentary radical movement as it had been throughout much of the century until parliamentary and popular criticisms of the Lords were briefly united in In the twentieth century, the aristocracy became a plutocracy, but many of the [End Page] same criticisms remained—the image of the debauched elite persisted even as the old aristocracy lost its economic power, its houses and its land. Between the wars the aristocracy sank in the sands of nostalgia and right-wing politics, only to be revived after the as custodian of the national heritage, protector not despoiler of the countryside, the symbol not of debauchery but of gracious living and civilisation. This is a rich and fertile book, full of provocative ideas. And yet it also disappoints. Are we dealing with the peerage and peerage families alone? Do we include the You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

Chapter 5 : Independent Radicalism in Early Victorian Britain by Michael J. Turner - Praeger - ABC-CLIO

Pp. $ Thompson's radicalism seems, at least in part, to have been a consequence of early brushes with authority. A career in the army and the patronage of William Wilberforce and the "Saints" resulted in his becoming, in , the first crown-appointed governor of Sierra Leone, a.

In , Fox declared for a "radical reform" of the electoral system. This led to a general use of the term to identify all supporting the movement for parliamentary reform. Initially confined to the upper and middle classes,[citation needed] in the early 19th century "popular radicals" brought artisans and the "labouring classes" into widespread agitation[citation needed] in the face of harsh government repression. More respectable[citation needed] " philosophical radicals " followed the utilitarian philosophy of Jeremy Bentham and strongly supported parliamentary reform, but were generally hostile to the arguments and tactics of the "popular radicals". By the middle of the century, parliamentary Radicals joined with others in the Parliament of the United Kingdom to form the Liberal Party , eventually achieving reform of the electoral system. Origins[edit] The Radical movement had its beginnings at a time of tension between the American colonies and Great Britain , with the first Radicals, angry at the state of the House of Commons , drawing on the Leveller tradition and similarly demanding improved parliamentary representation. These earlier concepts of democratic and even egalitarian reform had emerged in the turmoil of the English Civil War and the brief establishment of the republican Commonwealth of England amongst the vague political grouping known as the Levellers, but with the English Restoration of the monarchy such ideas had been discredited. Although the Glorious Revolution of had increased parliamentary power with a constitutional monarchy and the union of the parliaments brought England and Scotland together, towards the end of the 18th century the monarch still had considerable influence over the Parliament of Great Britain which itself was dominated by the English aristocracy and by patronage. Candidates for the House of Commons stood as Whigs or Tories , but once elected formed shifting coalitions of interests rather than splitting along party lines. At general elections , the vote was restricted to property owners in constituencies which were out of date and did not reflect the growing importance of manufacturing towns or shifts of population, so that in many rotten borough seats could be bought or were controlled by rich landowners while major cities remained unrepresented. Discontent with these inequities inspired those individuals who later became known as the " Radical Whigs ". William Beckford fostered early interest in reform in the London area. The " Middlesex radicals" were led by the politician John Wilkes , an opponent of war with the colonies who started his weekly publication The North Briton in and within two years had been charged with seditious libel and expelled from the House of Commons. The Society for the Defence of the Bill of Rights which he started in to support his re-election, developed the belief that every man had the right to vote and "natural reason" enabling him to properly judge political issues. Liberty consisted in frequent elections and for the first time middle-class radicals obtained the backing of the London "mob". Middlesex and Westminster were among the few parliamentary constituencies with a large and socially diverse electorate including many artisans as well as the middle class and aristocracy and along with the county association of Yorkshire led by the Reverend Christopher Wyvill were at the forefront of reform activity. The writings of what became known as the " Radical Whigs " had an influence on the American Revolution. Major John Cartwright also supported the colonists, even as the American Revolutionary War began and in earned the title of the "Father of Reform" when he published his pamphlet Take Your Choice! In , a draft programme of reform was drawn up by Charles James Fox and Thomas Brand Hollis and put forward by a sub-committee of the electors of Westminster. The American Revolutionary War ended in humiliating defeat of a policy which King George III had fervently advocated and in March the King was forced to appoint an administration led by his opponents which sought to curb Royal patronage. Pitt had previously called for Parliament to begin to reform itself, but he did not press for long for reforms the King did not like. Proposals Pitt made in April to redistribute seats from the " rotten boroughs " to London and the

counties were defeated in the House of Commons by votes to They encouraged mass support for democratic reform along with rejection of the monarchy , aristocracy and all forms of privilege. Different strands of the movement developed, with middle class "reformers" aiming to widen the franchise to represent commercial and industrial interests and towns without parliamentary representation, while "Popular radicals" drawn from the middle class and from artisans agitated to assert wider rights including relieving distress. The theoretical basis for electoral reform was provided by "Philosophical radicals" who followed the utilitarian philosophy of Jeremy Bentham and strongly supported parliamentary reform, but were generally hostile to the arguments and tactics of the "popular radicals". Radical organisations sprang up, such as the London Corresponding Society of artisans formed in January under the leadership of the shoemaker Thomas Hardy to call for the vote. One such was the Scottish Friends of the People society which in October held a British convention in Edinburgh with delegates from some of the English corresponding societies. They issued a manifesto demanding universal male suffrage with annual elections and expressing their support for the principles of the French Revolution. The numbers involved in these movements were small and most wanted reform rather than revolution, but for the first time working men were organising for political change. The government reacted harshly, imprisoning leading Scottish radicals, temporarily suspending habeas corpus in England and passing the Seditious Meetings Act which meant that a license was needed for any meeting in a public place consisting of fifty or more people. Throughout the Napoleonic Wars , the government took extensive stern measures against feared domestic unrest. The corresponding societies ended, but some radicals continued in secret, with Irish sympathisers in particular forming secret societies to overturn the government and encourage mutinies. In , Major John Cartwright formed the first Hampden Club , named after the English Civil War Parliamentary leader John Hampden , aiming to bring together middle class moderates and lower class radicals. After the Napoleonic Wars, the Corn laws in force between and and bad harvests fostered discontent. The publications of William Cobbett were influential and at political meetings speakers like Henry Hunt complained that only three men in a hundred had the vote. Writers like the radicals William Hone and Thomas Jonathan Wooler spread dissent with publications such as The Black Dwarf in defiance of a series of government acts to curb circulation of political literature. Radical riots in and were followed by the Peterloo massacre of publicised by Richard Carlile , who then continued to fight for press freedom from prison. The Six Acts of limited the right to demonstrate or hold public meetings. Magistrates powers were increased to crush demonstrations by manufacturers and action by radical Luddites. To counter the established Church of England doctrine that the aristocratic social order was divinely ordained, radicals supported Lamarckian Evolutionism , a theme proclaimed by street corner agitators as well as some established scientists such as Robert Edmund Grant. Political reform[edit] Economic conditions improved after and the United Kingdom government made economic and criminal law improvements, abandoning policies of repression. In , Jeremy Bentham co-founded the Westminster Review with James Mill as a journal for "philosophical radicals", setting out the utilitarian philosophy that right actions were to be measured in proportion to the greatest good they achieved for the greatest number. Westminster elected two radicals to Parliament during the s. The Whigs gained power and despite defeats in the House of Commons and the House of Lords the Reform Act was put through with the support of public outcry, mass meetings of "political unions" and riots in some cities. This now enfranchised the middle classes, but failed to meet radical demands. The Whigs introduced reforming measures owing much to the ideas of the philosophic radicals, abolishing slavery and in introducing Malthusian Poor Law reforms which were bitterly opposed by "popular radicals" and writers like Thomas Carlyle. Following the Reform Act, the mainly aristocratic Whigs in the House of Commons were joined by a small number of parliamentary Radicals as well as an increased number of middle class Whigs. By , they were informally being called "the Liberal party ". Chartists also expressed economic grievances, but their mass demonstrations and petitions to parliament were unsuccessful. Despite initial disagreements, after their failure their cause was taken up by the middle class Anti-Corn Law League founded by Richard Cobden and John Bright in to oppose duties on imported grain which raised the price of food and so helped landowners at the

expense of ordinary people. The parliamentary Radicals joined with the Whigs and anti-protectionist Tory Peelites to form the Liberal Party by Demand for parliamentary reform increased by with agitation from John Bright and the Reform League. When the Liberal government led by Lord Russell and William Ewart Gladstone introduced a modest bill for parliamentary reform, it was defeated by both Tories and reform Liberals, forcing the government to resign. The Tories under Lord Derby and Benjamin Disraeli took office and the new government decided to "dish the Whigs" and "take a leap in the dark" to take the credit for the reform. The Radicals, having been strenuous in their efforts on behalf of the working classes, earned a deeply loyal followingâ€"British trade unionists from until , upon being elected to Parliament, never considered themselves to be anything other than Radicals and were labeled Lib-Lab candidates. Radical trade unionists formed the basis for what later became the Labour Party. Radical Party France and Radical Party of the Left Following the Napoleonic Wars and until , it was technically illegal to advocate republicanism openly. Republicans therefore tended to call themselves "radicals" and the term came to mean a republican who by definition supported universal manhood suffrage. At Montmartre in , they put forward a programme of broad social reforms. These radicals then formed the Radical-Socialist Party or Republican, Radical and Radical-Socialist Party, to give it its full name in , which was the first French left-wing modern political party. The Radicalâ€"Socialist Party continued to be the main party of the Third Republic â€" , but was discredited after the war due to the role of Radical members of the National Assembly in voting for the establishment of the Vichy regime. Continental Europe and Latin America[edit] This section does not cite any sources. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. September Learn how and when to remove this template message In continental Europe and Latin America , as for instance in Italy , Spain , Chile and Argentina Radical Civic Union , Radicalism developed as an ideology in the 19th century to indicate those who supported at least in theory a republican form of government, universal male suffrage and particularly, supported anti-clerical policies. In Denmark , the left-wing of the Liberal party Venstre was known as the radicals and founded their own party Radikale Venstre in However, by the twentieth century at the latest radicalism, which did not advocate particularly radical economic policies, had been overtaken as the principal ideology of the left by the growing popularity of socialism and had become an essentially centrist political movement as far as "radicalism" survived as a distinct political ideology at all. Serbia and Montenegro[edit] Main article: Liberalism and radicalism in Serbia Radicalism had played a pivotal role in the birth and development of parliamentarism and the construction of the modern Serbian state leading to the Yugoslavian unification. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Serbia that defined it as an independent nation and formalised parliamentary democracy was among the most advanced in the entire world due to Radical contribution and it is known as The Radical Constitution. In , a crack had occurred in which the Independent Radical Party left and "the Olde" remained in the party, leading it to its considerable downfall and veering into conservatism. In the Yugoslavian kingdom, the Independent Radicals united with the rest of the Serbian opposition and the liberal and civic groups in the rest of the new country and formed the Yugoslav Democratic Party as the central, while several Republican dissidents formed a Republican Party. Democrats and Radicals were the dominant political parties, especially since the exclusion of the Communists. Radicalism and liberalism[edit] See also: Liberalism In some countries, the radical tendency is a variant of liberalism. Sometimes it is less doctrinaire and more moderate while other times it is more extreme. In Victorian era Britain , the Radicals were part of the Liberal coalition, but often rebelled when the more traditional Whigs in that coalition resisted democratic reforms. In other countries, these left-wing liberals have formed their own radical parties with various names, e. In the French political literature, it is normal to make a clear separation between liberalism and radicalism in France. In Serbia, both radicalism and liberalism have had their distinctiveness during the 19th century, with the Radical Party being the dominant political party throughout the entire multi-parliamentary period before the unification of Yugoslavia. The Independents had created the Democratic Party , whereas the Radicals of today are a far-right political group.

Chapter 6 : Looking at History: Patriotes and British Radicals in the s

Get this from a library! Independent radicalism in early Victorian Britain. [Michael J Turner] -- The reasons why people arise to express dissatisfaction with their present situation, and how they imagine and work towards an alternative, have enduring relevance.

Her reign lasted for 63 years and seven months, a longer period than any of her predecessors. Definitions that purport a distinct sensibility or politics to the era have also created scepticism about the worth of the label "Victorian", though there have also been defences of it. He saw the latter period as characterised by a distinctive mixture of prosperity, domestic prudery , and complacency [11] â€" what G. Trevelyan similarly called the "mid-Victorian decades of quiet politics and roaring prosperity". The Act abolished many borough seats and created others in their place, as well as expanding the franchise in England and Wales a Scottish Reform Act and Irish Reform Act were passed separately. Minor reforms followed in and Her government was led by the Whig prime minister Lord Melbourne , but within two years he had resigned, and the Tory politician Sir Robert Peel attempted to form a new ministry. It proved a very happy marriage, whose children were much sought after by royal families across Europe. However, a disastrous retreat from Kabul in the same year led to the annihilation of a British army column in Afghanistan. In , the Great Famine began to cause mass starvation, disease and death in Ireland, sparking large-scale emigration; [14] To allow more cheap food into Ireland, the Peel government repealed the Corn Laws. Peel was replaced by the Whig ministry of Lord John Russell. The goal was to ensure that Russia could not benefit from the declining status of the Ottoman Empire, [16] a strategic consideration known as the Eastern Question. On its conclusion in with the Treaty of Paris , Russia was prohibited from hosting a military presence in the Crimea. During â€"8, an uprising by sepoys against the East India Company was suppressed, an event that led to the end of Company rule in India and the transferral of administration to direct rule by the British government. The princely states were not affected and remained under British guidance. Society and culture Evangelicals, Utilitarians and reform The central feature of Victorian era politics is the search for reform and improvement, including both the individual personality and the society. First was the rapid rise of the middle class, in large part displacing the complete control long exercised by the aristocracy. Respectability was their codeâ€"a businessman had to be trusted, and must avoid reckless gambling and heavy drinking. Second the spiritual reform closely linked to evangelical Christianity, including both the Nonconformist sects, such as the Methodists, and especially the evangelical or Low Church element in the established Church of England, typified by Lord Shaftesbury â€" Starting with the anti-slavery movement of the s, the evangelical moralizers developed highly effective techniques of enhancing the moral sensibilities of all family members, and reaching the public at large through intense, very well organized agitation and propaganda. They focused on exciting a personal revulsion against social evils and personal misbehavior. They were not moralistic but scientific. Their movement, often called "Philosophic Radicalism," fashioned a formula for promoting the goal of "progress" using scientific rationality, and businesslike efficiency, to identify, measure, and discover solutions to social problems. The formula was inquiry, legislation, execution, inspection, and report. Evangelicals and utilitarians shared a basic middle-class ethic of responsibility, and formed a political alliance. The result was an irresistible force for reform. Even more important were political reforms, especially the lifting of disabilities on nonconformists and Roman Catholics, and above all, the reform of Parliament and elections to introduce democracy and replace the old system whereby senior aristocrats controlled dozens of seats in parliament. This sketch is from an issue of Punch , printed in November that year. Religion was a battleground during this era, with the Nonconformists fighting bitterly against the established status of the Church of England, especially regarding education and access to universities and public office. Penalties on Roman Catholics were mostly removed. The Vatican restored the English Catholic bishoprics in and numbers grew through conversions and immigration from Ireland. Houghton argues, "Perhaps the most important development in 19th-century

intellectual history was the extension of scientific assumptions and methods from the physical world to the whole life of man. The "Nonconformist conscience" of the Old group emphasised religious freedom and equality, the pursuit of justice, and opposition to discrimination, compulsion, and coercion. The New Dissenters and also the Anglican evangelicals stressed personal morality issues, including sexuality, temperance, family values, and Sabbath -keeping. Both factions were politically active, but until the midth century, the Old group supported mostly Whigs and Liberals in politics, while the Newâ€"like most Anglicansâ€"generally supported Conservatives. In the late 19th century, the New Dissenters mostly switched to the Liberal Party. The result was a merging of the two groups, strengthening their great weight as a political pressure group. They joined together on new issues especially regarding schools and temperance, with the latter of special interest to Methodists. They could not hold most public offices, they had to pay local taxes to the Anglican church, be married by Anglican ministers, and be denied attendance at Oxford or degrees at Cambridge. Dissenters demanded the removal of political and civil disabilities that applied to them especially those in the Test and Corporation Acts. The Anglican establishment strongly resisted until It was a major achievement for an outside group, but the Dissenters were not finished and the early Victorian period saw them even more active and successful in eliminating their grievances. Only buildings of the established church received the tax money. Civil disobedience was attempted but was met with the seizure of personal property and even imprisonment. The compulsory factor was finally abolished in by William Ewart Gladstone , and payment was made voluntary. Nonconformist ministers in their own chapels were allowed to marry couples if a registrar was present. Also in , civil registration of births, deaths, and marriages was taken from the hands of local parish officials and given to local government registrars. Burial of the dead was a more troubling problem, for urban chapels had no graveyards, and Nonconformists sought to use the traditional graveyards controlled by the established church. The Burial Laws Amendment Act finally allowed that. Cambridge required that for a diploma. The two ancient universities opposed giving a charter to the new University of London in the s because it had no such restriction. The university, nevertheless, was established in , and by the s Oxford dropped its restrictions. In Gladstone sponsored the Universities Tests Act that provided full access to degrees and fellowships. Nonconformists especially Unitarians and Presbyterians played major roles in founding new universities in the late 19th century at Manchester , as well as Birmingham , Liverpool and Leeds. Huxley coined the term. It was much discussed for several decades, and had its own journal edited by William Stewart Ross â€" the Agnostic Journal and Eclectic Review. Interest petered out by the s, and when Ross died the Journal soon closed. Ross championed agnosticism in opposition not so much to Christianity, but to atheism, as expounded by Charles Bradlaugh [42] The term "atheism" never became popular. Blasphemy laws meant that promoting atheism could be a crime and was vigorously prosecuted. The literary figures were caught in something of a trap â€" their business was writing and their theology said there was nothing for certain to write. They instead concentrated on the argument that it was not necessary to believe in God in order to behave in moral fashion. Separate spheres and Women in the Victorian era The centrality of the family was a dominant feature for all classes. Worriers repeatedly detected threats that had to be dealt with: The licentiousness so characteristic of the upper class of the late 18th and early 19th century dissipated. The home became a refuge from the harsh world,; middle-class wives sheltered their husbands from the tedium of domestic affairs. The number of children shrank, allowing much more attention to be paid to each child. Extended families were less common, as the nuclear family became both the ideal and the reality. Instead they should dominate in the realm of domestic life, focused on care of the family, the husband, the children, the household, religion, and moral behaviour. They taught in Sunday schools, visited the poor and sick, distributed tracts, engaged in fundraising, supported missionaries, led Methodist class meetings, prayed with other women, and a few were allowed to preach to mixed audiences. The poem was not pure invention, but reflected the emerging legal economic social, cultural, religious and moral values of the Victorian middle-class. Legally women had limited rights to their own bodies, the family property, or their children. The recognized identities were those of daughter, wife, mother, and widow. Meanwhile, the home sphere grew

dramatically in size; women spent the money and decided on the furniture, clothing, food, schooling, and outward appearance the family would make. This made their work highly attractive to the middle-class women who bought the novels and the serialized versions that appeared in many magazines. However, a few early feminists called for aspirations beyond the home. By the end of the century, the "New Woman" was riding a bicycle, wearing bloomers, signing petitions, supporting worldwide mission activities, and talking about the vote. The public school became a model for gentlemen and for public service. Victorian literature In prose , the novel rose from a position of relative neglect during the s to become the leading literary genre by the end of the era. With the arrival of the railway network, seaside towns became popular destinations for Victorian holiday makers Popular forms of entertainment varied by social class. Michael Balfe was the most popular British grand opera composer of the period, while the most popular musical theatre was a series of fourteen comic operas by Gilbert and Sullivan , although there was also musical burlesque and the beginning of Edwardian musical comedy in the s. Drama ranged from low comedy to Shakespeare see Henry Irving. There were, however, other forms of entertainment. Gentlemen went to dining clubs, like the Beefsteak club or the Savage club. Gambling at cards in establishments popularly called casinos was wildly popular during the period: The band stand was a simple construction that not only created an ornamental focal point, but also served acoustic requirements whilst providing shelter from the changeable British weather. It was common to hear the sound of a brass band whilst strolling through parklands. At this time musical recording was still very much a novelty. The permanent structure sustained three fires but as an institution lasted a full century, with Andrew Ducrow and William Batty managing the theatre in the middle part of the century. Fanque also stands out as a black man who achieved great success and enjoyed great admiration among the British public only a few decades after Britain had abolished slavery. Such activities were more popular at this time than in other periods of recent Western history. Amateur collectors and natural history entrepreneurs played an important role in building the large natural history collections of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Large numbers travelling to quiet fishing villages such as Worthing , Morecambe and Scarborough began turning them into major tourist centres, and people like Thomas Cook saw tourism and even overseas travel as viable businesses. Britain was an active competitor in all the Olympic Games starting in Economy, industry and trade Further information: Much of the prosperity was due to the increasing industrialisation, especially in textiles and machinery, as well as to the worldwide network of trade and engineering that produced profits for British merchants, and exports from[clarification needed] across the globe. There was peace abroad apart from the short Crimean war, â€"56 , and social peace at home. Opposition to the new order melted away, says Porter. The Chartist movement peaked as a democratic movement among the working class in ; its leaders moved to other pursuits, such as trade unions and cooperative societies. The working class ignored foreign agitators like Karl Marx in their midst, and joined in celebrating the new prosperity.

Chapter 7 : Victorian Socialism. An Introduction

Independent radicalism in early Victorian Britain / Michael J. Turner ; Jeremy Black, advisory editor.

It developed from diverse traditions, ideologies and backgrounds, but intense dislike of the social effects of the Industrial Revolution underlie the various strands of Victorian socialism, which was essentially a middle-class, home-made project with little foreign influence. However, the roots of British socialism can also be sought in more remote times. Origins of British socialism British socialism emerged in the time when Victorian society began to overcome the principles of classical economics, the laissez-faire system, and was immersed in faith crisis. Traditional British liberalism and radicalism played a far more important role in shaping socialism in Victorian Britain than the works of Karl Marx. Although Marxism had some impact in Britain, it was far less significant than in many other European countries, with thinkers such as David Ricardo , John Stuart Mill and John Ruskin having much greater influence. Non-Marxist historians speculate that this was because Britain was amongst the most democratic countries of Europe of the period, where the ballot box provided an instrument for change, so parliamentary reforms seemed a more promising route than revolutionary socialism advocated by Marx. In England socialist ideas were shaped as the by-product of the Industrial Revolution. The rise of working-class radicalism The first political movement of the working-class was launched by the London Corresponding Society, founded in , by Thomas Hardy , a shoemaker and metropolitan Radical. The Society, consisting mostly of working-class members, agitated among the masses parliamentary reform, universal manhood suffrage and working class representation in Parliament. The Society met openly for six years despite harassment by police magistrates and arrests of its members, but was finally outlawed in by an act of Parliament as a result of fear that it made a dangerous challenge to the established government. Robert Owen and co-operative socialism Robert Owen , who was a textile mill owner, philanthropist, social and labour reformer, is considered as the father of British co-operative socialism. He and his followers founded several co-operative communities in Britain and the United States which offered workers decent living conditions and access to education. Although all Owenite communities eventually failed, the communitarian tradition persisted in Victorian England and elsewhere. Owenism exerted a significant influence on various strands of British socialism, including Christian socialism, ethical socialism, guild socialism, Fabianism , and socialist labour movement. Co-operative socialism was perceived by these organisations as a replacement for the unjust competitive capitalist system. Ricardian socialists Another group of thinkers who exerted a direct influence on Victorian socialism were so called Ricardian socialists. They based their theories upon the work of the economist David Ricardo , who claimed that the economy moves towards social conflict because the interests of ownership classes were directly opposed to those of the poor classes. In this aspect Ricardo and Ricardian socialists anticipated the conception of Karl Marx about adversarial class relations. Karl Marx , who lived and wrote his works in London from , was not widely known in England until his death. He met few Englishmen and was not very keen on making acquaintances with English radicals. The only Englishmen who expressed serious interest in the ideas of Marx during his lifetime were Ernest Jones, a revolutionary Chartist , who made a vain attempt to revive that dying Chartist movement, and Henry Mayers Hyndman, the founder of the Social Democratic Federation, the first Marxist socialist party in Britain. However, Marxism hardly appealed to Victorian socialists in its orthodox form. Etching and drypoint on paper. A strong critique of capitalism, which was voiced by various groups of social critics, literary figures and working-class militants, led to the formation of three distinct strands of late Victorian socialism: The Social Democratic Federation , which became the first Marxist political party in Britain in , advocated imminent revolution and nationalisation. Its tiny offshot, the Socialist League, formed by William Morris in after his secession from the Social Democratic Federation, attracted a few social democrats, but in it became dominated by anarchists, which prompted Morris to withdraw from it. The Fabian Society, also founded in , was not radical, but tried to permeate peacefully the existing institutions and Parliament in order

to implement its socialist reforms. Haggard 94 Ethical socialism was not associated with any particular party and overlapped with other strands of Victorian socialism. It included a disparate group of social activists and literary figures who championed the ideas of ethical socialism, emphasising moral development of individuals above economic and social reforms. Ethical socialism emerged in the s, flourished in the s, and inspired the formation of the Independent Labour Party and also the Labour Party. Other important figures included the pioneer labour leader, Keir Hardie, Robert Blatchford, the editor of the weekly newspaper, The Clarion, and the author of the bestselling socialist tract, Merrie England , John Bruce-Glasier, one of the leaders of the Independent Labour Party. As Mark Bevir put it, ethical socialists believed in the ideal of moral fellowship and thought of a co-operative and decentralised civil society where individuals could exercise full control of their own daily activities. McDonald The land nationalisation movement The roots of the British land nationalisation movement, which strongly influenced the mainstream tradition of late Victorian socialism, can be sought in the activity of Thomas Spence , a self-taught militant, who devoted most of his adult life to various forms of political agitation. In the s, he argued that all land must be owned not by individuals but by parochial corporations. Parssinnen In the early s Spence became the leader of a group of radicals who advocated social revolution in Britain. After his death the radical followers of Spence formed the Society of Spencean Philanthropists Land reform was one of the hottest issues among British radicals and social reformers from the s until World War One. The Land and Labour League, that grew out of the National Reform League in , advanced a programme that called for land nationalisation, but it made little public impact. In late Victorian England, Alfred Russel Wallace , the co-discoverer with Charles Darwin of the theory of natural selection, revived the land nationalisation movement. Wallace believed that land should be owned by the state and leased to people. In , he was elected as the first president of Land Nationalisation Society, which devised a plan of State-owned and -leased lands. The Land Nationalisation Society and the Social Democratic Federation gave a full support to land nationalisation programmes. All these schemes strengthened the land nationalisation movement in late Victorian Britain and aroused an awareness for the need of land reform. The Labour Church The last two decades of the Victorian era also saw the emergence of the Labour Church, which was started in Manchester in by a Unitarian minister, John Trevor , and had a distinct socialist message. The Labour Church soon became a nationwide movement and claimed churches with congregations between and Worley The conference held at Bradford in to form the Independent Labour Party was accompanied by a Labour Church service which was attended by 5, people. However, the Labour Church movement began to fade after At the annual conference of , held in Ashton-under-Lyne, the name Labour Church was changed to Socialist Church, but by the beginning of World War I the recently renamed Labour Church had disappeared. Conclusion The term socialism was generally synonymous in Victorian Britain with social reform, collectivism, communitarianism and improvement of living conditions of the working class and it did not bear strong Marxist connotations. In fact, few people were interested in socialist revolution in Victorian Britain, but quite a great number were fascinated by the mystical features of socialism. Unlike Marxism, which criticised liberal democracy and advocated revolutionary class struggle, the main strands of Victorian socialism can be characterised by ethical, non-Marxian, anti-capitalist outlook which combined traditional English radicalism with traditional English respect for democracy. References and Further Reading Beer, M. A History of British Socialism. Bell and Sons, Ltd. His Life and Environment. The Making of British Socialism. Princeton University Press, A Study of British Socialism and the Arts Cambridge University Press, Stanford University Press, Green and the Development of Ethical Socialism. The Origin and History of Christian Socialism, Machinery, Money, and the Millennium: From Moral Economy to Socialism, â€" Politics and Anti-politics in Early British Socialism. The Story of Fabian Socialism. This Little Band of Prophets: The Story of the Gentle Fabians. Oxford University Press, The Persistence of Victorian Liberalism: The Politics of Social Reform in Britain, Greenwood Publishing Group, The Moral Imagination of the Late Victorians. Manchester University Press, The Historical Basis of Socialism in England. Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England. Routledge and Kegan Paul, Fabian Socialism and English Politics Mackenzie,

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Acknowledgements Abbreviations Introducing Independent Radicalism Making and Mobilizing Opinion: The Westminster Review and Reform The Corn Laws and the Politics of Free Trade Correcting the Chartists Liberty for Europe War and Peace Empire The End of Independent Radicalism Index.

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The reform campaigns of 19th-century Britain are of interest not only in their own right, but also because of what they reveal about processes of political and social change. This book examines the personal, social, political, ideological, and tactical components of radicalism in Britain between the s and s, and casts new light on the meaning, nature, and reception of reform during this period.