

HOW DID THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION CHANGE US?

Who hastens too much often remains behind

ONE HATES TO SEE MEN DO IMPORTANT THINGS IN A HURRY Where there are no fish, even a crawfish calls himself a fish

Haste makes waste and waste makes want, and want makes strife between the good man and his wife *When a thing is lost its worth is known*

HE WHO POURS WATER HASTILY INTO A BOTTLE SPILLS MORE THAN GOES IN *What is not wanted is dear at a penny*
That which will not make a pot may make a pot lid

IT IS BETTER TO KEEP OUT OF A QUARREL THAN TO MAKE IT UP AFTERWARDS

Misfortunes when asleep are not to be wakened

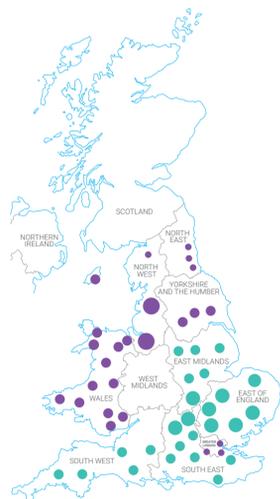
HAPPY IS THE MAN WHO KEEPS OUT OF STRIFE *Never insult people in distress*
It is madness for a sheep to treat of peace with a wolf *Every heart hath its own ache*

Advising is often better than fighting *Shame on those hearts of stone that cannot melt, in soft adoption of another's sorrow*

Evidence from the use of proverbs

Proverbs are concise, memorisable, and metaphorical sentences summarising ideas, arguments, norms, or folk wisdom. They are a universal feature of human languages and cultures that reflects the beliefs, values, and worldviews of a society. Examining broad cultural transformations, such as the First Industrial Revolution in Britain, can be informed by the prevalence and evolution of proverbs.

Researchers are using the newest generation of AI models to interpret a collection of 25,000 proverbs from pre- and post- industrial Britain. Encoding or clustering algorithms are used to group the proverbs into interpretable topics based on their moral and behavioural implications.



Industrialisation by region (average based on share of employment in manufacturing) 1851

- Most industrialised
- Least industrialised

EXPLORING THE COMMON THEMES IN PROVERBS FROM AREAS WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF INDUSTRIALISATION (AFTER 1780)

Most industrialised

Proverbs in purple and blue reflect the two most common themes seen in regions with the highest levels of industrialisation: the importance of **patience and careful planning**; and **conflict resolution**.

Other common themes included humility and pride; the importance of learning from mistakes and taking responsibility; and wealth and its implications.

PATIENCE AND PLANNING
CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Least industrialised

Proverbs in green and yellow reflect the two most common themes seen in regions with the lowest levels of industrialisation: **the value and perception of things**; and **compassion and empathy**.

Other common themes included wisdom and intelligence; happiness and attitude; and poverty and its implications.

Value of things
Compassion and empathy

About the typefaces

Caslon is a serif typeface developed in London in the 18th century by typographer William Caslon. Letter designs at this time are referred to as "old style" because of the organic structure of the letters based on handwriting with a pen.

With the onset of the industrial revolution in the 19th century, typographers such as British typographer, William **Thorowgood**, started to design sans serif fonts (fonts without serifs) which were easier to read and better suited to the mass production of publications such as newspapers and posters.

RESEARCH BY

Dr Melanie Meng Xue
Department of
Economic History, LSE

Dr Elliott Ash
ETH Zurich

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This research is still in development. Find out more about Dr Xue's work:

