CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Theme

The contemporary literature on human resource management takes labour process as a major area of study. The problem of demotivation of the workforce, according to this branch of the literature, is rooted in the problem of alienation of labour from the organisation. In brief, alienation is a problem arising out of the separation between planning and execution, i.e., between planning the activities (considered as the responsibility of management) and execution of the work programme as decided by the management.

The alienation of labour is reflected in the poor performance of the workforces. The problem is looked in the dissatisfaction with work as a result of which the productivity of labour becomes low. Outwardly, the organisation suffers from absenteeism, wild-cat strikes, sabotage, poor quality products, and a reluctance by workers to commit themselves to their work tasks. Consequently, in human resource management, the problem of alienation of the workforce in the organisation is understood from the point of motivation. It is understood that a manager cannot obtain work from an employee without knowing what motivates a man. There are socio-psychological studies on the motivational aspects of human resource management. Based on these studies, various remedies and reforms have been proposed, and some have been tested among the workers by the corporations. Among the remedial measures, there are job enrichment, enlargement, rotation, workers' participation, group bonuses and profit-sharing. Studies reveal that such strategies have a severely limited capacity to succeed for management. The problem of alienation still exists.

The problem of alienation can be studied from the aspect of political economy that relates the problem with that of labour process under capitalism. The political economy of the labour process has its origin in the economic contribution of Adam Smith. Smith in his An

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1. For a critique of the studies on job enrichment, see Bosquest, M. (1980); for critiques on worker's participation, see Ramsay, H. (1980) and; Mallick, A. K. (1988).
Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of Wealth of Nations (1776, 1961) discussed first the problem of alienation of labour that originates from the detailed division of labour. Karl Marx took up the theme and placed it in the context of his theory of the evolution of societies. In order to understand the present debate on labour process, one shall have to consider first the Smithian and Marxian understanding of the subject and its relevance in the context of the present day reality. In this chapter, this theme along with the post-Marx literature on the subject has been reviewed briefly.

While the literature on the labour process in a capitalist society is quite rich, the problem, however, is with a transitional society in which the elements of pre-capitalism co-exist with those of capitalism. Capitalism, according to Marx, is characterised by the subsumption of labour under capital, the evolution of which takes the route of formal to real subsumption of labour—technological innovations that go hand in hand with capitalism being the agent for real subsumption of labour. When labour is subsumed under capital, separation between planning and execution comes as logical outcome because of the detailed division of labour that the technological development entails.

In the transitional society, complete de-alienation arising out of unity between planning and execution is not logically possible because the transitional society contains the elements of capitalism, particularly the elements of wage labour system that causes the alienation; at the same time there exist areas of economic activity concentrated particularly in informal

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2. According to Smith, the greatest improvement in the productive power of labour, skill, dexterity and judgement with which it is any where directed or applied is the effect of the division of labour. To achieve the division of labour in manufacturing activities, the separation of the total work into a number of operations and the assignment of different operations to different workers are necessary. Alienation of labour, so far knowledge and skill are concerned, is rooted in this detailed division of labour since knowledge and skill are converted into a number of operations. He argues that with the advancement of society in production activities the detailed division of labour will increase. For detailed discussion, see Smith, A. (1961), Book I, Chapter I.

3. Formal subsumption of labour under capital takes place when an individual capitalist purchases the labour power of the labourers who have nothing but only labour power to sell and employs them for generation of absolute surplus value. It is generated by lengthening the working time and/or by increasing the number of workers. The real subsumption of labour under capital is developed on the foundation of formal subsumption. Real subsumption of labour under capital is achieved through the generation of relative surplus value by the conscious application of science and technology in the labour process. With the transformation of formal subsumption of labour into real subsumption, mode of production is completely changed from pre-capitalism to capitalism. According to Marx, with the real subsumption of labour under capital a complete (and constantly repeated) revolution takes place in the mode of production, in the productivity of the workers and in the relations between workers and capitalists (Marx, 1978: 1035). For a detailed discussion on formal and real subsumption of labour under capital, see Marx, K. (1978), Appendix: Results of the Immediate Process of Production.
sector in which the labour market is not developed properly. There exist market-based relations as well as non-market relations effected through the organisation of production based on the rudimentary technology that does not need a detailed division of labour. The political economy of the labour process under such a setting remains under-explored.4

1.1.1 Adam Smith, Karl Marx and The Theory of Evolution of Labour Process

Labour process is a process through which man creates use-value. Human being, having imagination, interacts with material world in a purposive way so that his imagination is reflected in the object that he creates. According to Marx, *at the end of every labour process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement.* (Marx, 1986 : 174). *The elementary factors of the labour process are (1) the personal activity of man, i.e., work itself, (2) the subject of that work, and (3) its instruments* (Ibid : 174). The work includes the combination of conception and execution. The subject of the work is the raw material. Nature may also be the subject of work. Instrument of labour is a thing or a complex combination of things with which man converts the raw material into a new form which has a use-value. Instruments mean tool, machine and technology. The subject of work and its instruments are collectively known as means of production.

In order to explain the evolution of labour process, one should start with the concept of division of labour. When human labour is divided into different occupations to meet the need of the society it is called the social division of labour. Weaver, shoemaker, farmer and a thousand others are the examples of workers working under social division of labour. This develops with the development of economic activities in the society.5 Social division of labour does not necessarily entail a separation between planning and execution to the extent it does not involve the detailed division of labour. Modern manufacturing, however, has given rise to another kind of division of labour. In this case the total work of production is segregated or separated into its constituent elements, and each labourer is required to perform a little part of the total work. This is the detailed division of labour which is the contribution of modern technology that developed with capitalism. In a modern textile or shoe factory the total work of cloth or shoe manufacturing is divided into a number of operations. This has been necessary due to the application of science and technology in the process of production under a complex technological condition in which each worker

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5. For a discussion on social division of labour, see Marx, K. (1986) Vol. I, Chapter XIV.
performs only a part of the total work of cloth or shoe making. In this case, a very few members of the workforce is associated with the comprehensive planning of the entire work which is vested with the management. Each workman in the larger section of the workforce executes the tasks conceived by the managerial staff. Consequently, a separation between planning and execution takes place in the modern manufacturing. Needless to say, this detailed division of labour is different from social division of labour to the extent it creates a separation between planning and execution of a work.

The problem of alienation and the consequent de-motivation of the workforce is associated with the detailed division of labour that developed with the advent of modern technology under capitalism. The theorisation of this problem had been there in a rudimentary form in the works of Adam Smith. Alienation of labour that originates from the detailed division of labour through the separation between conception and execution is well understood from the example which Smith gives in case of pin making. He describes, *One man draws out the wire, another straights it, a third cuts it, a fourth points it, a fifth grinds it at the top for receiving the head; to make the head requires two or three distinct operations; to put it on, is a peculiar business, to whiten the pins is another; it is even a trade by itself to put them into the paper; and the important business of making a pin is, in this manner, divided into about eighteen distinct operations, which, in some manufactories, are all performed by distinct hands, though in others the same man will sometimes perform two or three of them* (Smith, 1961 : 8). The total work and with it the full conception of work is thus out of bound for an individual worker. This brings the separation between conception and execution.

Smith, however, did not assign much importance on this act of separation. The *Wealth of Nations* (1776, 1961), while considering the merits (advantages) of the division of labour, pointed out that the division of labour is conducive to innovations that comes out with specialised knowledge about the tools and machines by implication. This implies a 'reskilling' and not deskilling of the workforce even though the full conception of work is out of bound for an individual worker. As Dugald Stewart pointed out in his lectures on political economy: *Division of labour stimulated the invention of machinery but the way

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6. For a discussion on division of labour, see Smith, A. (1961), *Book I, Chapter 1.11 & III*. Smith, however, was not the pioneer in the discussion on division of labour. In a broad sense, the division of labour had been an integral part of social theory for many centuries (Rashid, 1998 : 19). Rashid also points out that Reverend Josiah Tucker, in his unpublished but privately circulated *Elements of Commerce*, wrote about the benefits of division of labour before the *Wealth of Nations* (1776). It is widely known that not only does the example of pin-making appear to have been taken from the French Encyclopédie but also the three advantages of the division of labour are also distinctly stated there (Rashid, 1998 : 18).
it did so was by acting "not on the inventive powers of the workman, but on those of his employer, or of the speculative observer." ... The entrepreneur who is driven by the lure of profits to improve his machinery continually, and Smith's picture is thus misleading (cited in Rashid, 1998: 22-23).

The theme had been developed further by Karl Marx7. Marx was the first who explained that the division of labour and exchange are nothing but the alienated expressions of human activity. He further added that under capitalism with the development of technology detailed division of labour intensifies in the factory production system so that it breaks the unity of labour and separates intellectual labour from manual labour. The consequence of this detailed division of labour is the alienation of labour from the labour process.

In an Appendix Chapter (See Appendix 1.1) to this work, we take up the theme as developed by Karl Marx in some details. To put briefly, the detailed division of labour is the typical feature of a capitalist society. This is achieved by breaking up the entire work into simple elements that can be adopted quickly by an ordinary worker. The consequence, from the point of view of the worker, is that the workforce now moves some simple operations that hardly gives any creativity. This is the 'deskilling' of the workforce. The implication of these observations was discussed (independently – not following Karl Marx) by Charles Babbage from the point of view of 'advantage' that the management gets out of the simple operations in the factory system of production. The implication from the point of view of alienation of the workforce — alienation due to which the workforce fails to remain creative, remained under-explored in pre-Marx literature. One may add that Marx himself did not also take up this study seriously in his latter writings on capitalism.

It was Harry Braverman who took up this theme for discussion in the context of present day capitalism. The importance of Braverman's contribution in the study of the labour process in the context of present day capitalism has been highlighted by Paul M. Sweezy who along with Paul A. Baran made a seminal contribution on the political economy of present day (i.e., monopoly) capitalism. Thus, Sweezy observes in the preface of Braverman's Labor and Monopoly Capital:

In the introduction to our book 'Monopoly Capital' published in 1966, ... the approach we had adopted was not calculated to give a complete picture of the form of society under study. ... And we are particularly conscious of the fact that this ap-

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7. For detailed discussions, see Marx, K. (1993), First Manuscript (Estranged Labour) and Third Manuscript (Human Requirements and Division of Labour Under the Rule of Private Property); and see also Marx, K. (1986), Vol. I, Chapter XV.
Braverman, according to the experts in the field, had made a successful effort to fill a large part of the gap that existed in the study of the labour process. Though Marx studied the features of the labour process under capitalism, the evolution of the labour process in the advanced stage of capitalism (monopoly) had not been studied, until the theme was taken up by Braverman in the context of the European and North American economy. We summarise the major findings of Braverman in this regard in the next section of this chapter.

1.1.2 Evolution of Labour Process: Braverman's Study

In the medieval Europe, production was organised in house-premises more often to meet the subsistence need of the producer, not to earn profit. Under pre-capitalism, the economies had chiefly been autarkic in nature, there had been unity between craft and tillage. Production had been based on rudimentary technology that did not need a detailed division of labour. The worker had total knowledge of work and skill. There was unity of conception and execution in the labour process. Since a craftsman owned the means of production, i.e., raw material and instruments (tool) and possessed craft knowledge and skill, he had complete control on the labour process.

The seventeenth century marked the real beginning of capitalist production with the 'co-operation' and 'manufacture'. Under co-operation a greater number of labourers work together in a definite place under the mastership of one entrepreneur either in one and the same process or in different but connected processes. This system was ... both historically and logically the starting point of capitalist production (Marx 1986 : 305). The main advantage of this system is that since the means of production are consumed by the workers in common, consumption of means of production per unit of output is reduced.
Formerly the artisans were required to perform the total work separately. With the increase in demand for commodities, the work was re-distributed and instead of each man being allowed to perform all the various operations in succession, these operations were changed into apparently disconnected, isolated ones, carried on side by side. There thus developed a detailed division of labour. The detailed division of labour deprives the workers of the detailed knowledge of the work. In fact, there develops a separation between planning and execution. Consequently, the worker is deprived of the craftskill based on unity between planning and execution. With the introduction of detailed division of labour there thus developed a deskilling process of handicraftsman. To repeat, this deskilling was the logical consequence of the detailed division of labour that brought about a separation between planning and execution. However, the deskilling had just a beginning at that time. Because, at that stage, it may be noted that each operation had to be done by hand, retaining the character of handicraft. The handicrafts continued to be the basis in manufacture.

In the nineteenth century, a qualitative change occurred with the application of several scientific inventions in manufacturing activities. This was the era of 'factory production'. At the earlier stage of capitalist production, the traditional work of a craftsman was divided into a fewer elements and the detailed division of labour was simple. In this stage, production process changed a little, actual change occurred in the organisation of labour. Though there was buying and selling of labour power, the instrument of labour was 'tool' with which a labourer used to do his job. In factory production system the tool was replaced by 'machine', which became the new instrument of labour in modern industry. As Marx writes, *In manufacture, the revolution in the mode of production begins with the labour power, in modern industry, it begins with the instruments of labour* (Marx, 1986: 351). Modern technology has a role in the development of capitalism. The use of this technology in production brings a radical change in the division of labour. It not only minimises the cost and maximises the relative surplus value but the skill and imagination became mostly dissociated from execution. *The separation of intellectual powers of production from the manual labour, and the conversion of those powers into the might of capital over labour, is, ...finally completed by modern industry erected on the foundation of machinery* (Marx, 1986: 399).

Adam Smith identified the three advantages of division of labour in his famous discussion in the *Wealth of Nations*: *This great increase of the quantity of work which, in consequence of the division of labour, the same number of people are capable of performing, is owing to three different circumstances; first, to the increase of dexterity in every particular workman; secondly, to the saving of the time which is commonly lost in passing from one
species of work to another; and lastly, to the invention of a great number of machines which facilitate and abridge labour, and enable one man to do the work of many (Smith, 1961 :11). In other words, the division of labour improves the quality of labour through a process that may be noted as 'learning by doing'. The point of departure from Adam Smith is that the detailed division of labour does not unleash a process of 'learning by doing'. Rather, the detailed division of labour under capitalism minimises in most jobs the need for learning. This was unfolded first by a managerial theorist, Charles Babbage. In his book On the Economy of Machinery and Manufactures Babbage (1835, 1972) explained this point. For Braverman, as for Marx, the key to understanding the development of such detailed division of labour under capitalism was to be found not in Smith's learning by doing but in an alternative principle first unfolded by managerial theorist Charles Babbage in the early nineteenth century (Foster, 1994 : 6). Babbage principle suggests that the detailed division of labour under capitalism is so organised as to minimise in most jobs the need of learning, and improving dexterity by 'doing': the more detailed is the division of labour, and the more that work is subdivided (which also means the subdivision of the worker), the lower the skill level for most tasks. The craftsill is gradually lost. Modern production thus enhances deskilling. This deskilling process is encouraged because it tends to reduce unit labour costs by: (1) decreasing the total wage costs associated with labour with craftsill, (2) increasing managerial control at all levels with the expressed object of making workers work harder, and (3) so simplifying the individual tasks that the worker becomes increasingly interchangeable with other workers or easily replaceable by machines — thereby depressing wages by creating greater competition among workers. In grasping the fact that by making labour simpler it is also made cheaper, Babbage seemed to have grasped the central logic in the evolution of the division of labour under capitalism. As Braverman wrote, the Babbage principle eventually becomes the underlying force governing all forms of work in capitalist society, no matter in what setting or at what hierarchical level (Braverman 1974 : 81-82).

With the rise of giant corporations in the early twentieth century, to increase the production and productivity by tackling the antagonistic relation between the management and the alienated and hence demotivated workforce there developed the concept of 'Scientific Management' (or Taylorism). The immediate use of this concept was that the detailed division of labour was more systematically utilised in corporations by the introduction of scientific management. Taylor concluded from his experiment in two steel factories that the control over labour process must pass into the hands of management. It could be ensured if the craft-knowledge and the craft-skill of work could be destroyed through a systematic

8. The term is due to Taylor, F. W. For detailed discussion, see Taylor, F. W. (1947).
distribution of work into a number of minute instruction-based tasks and the brain work
(i.e., Planning, Research & Development) into the grip of management. As Braverman
observed, *The separation of hand and brain is the most decisive single step in the division
of labour taken by the capitalist mode of production. It is inherent in that mode of produc-
tion from its beginnings, and it develops, under capitalist management, throughout the
history of capitalism, but it is only during the past century that the scale of production, the
resources made available to the modern corporation by the rapid accumulation of capital,
and the conceptual apparatus and trained personnel have become available to institution-
alise this separation in a systematic and formal fashion.* (Braverman 1974 : 126).

Braverman summarised the Taylorism into three distinct principles: (1) Dissociation of the
labour process from the skills of the workers, (2) The separation of conception from
execution. All possible brain work should be snatched from the workers and centred in the
hands of management; (3) The use of this monopoly (principle (1) & (2)) over knowledge
to control each step of the labour process and its mode of execution. (Braverman, 1974 :
112-119)

The consequence of this scientific management is the alienation of labour from the labour
process through deskilling. Since the technology lies in the hands of management, with the
development of technology, the brain work or the conceptual work is concentrated, more
and more in limited groups within the management and the hand work is divided into a
greater number of instructions to be executed by the workers. As Braverman pointed out,
the gathering up of all this scattered craft knowledge, systematizing it and concentrating
it in the hands of the employer and then doing it out again only in the form of minute
instructions, giving to each worker only the knowledge needed for the performance of a
particular relatively minute task. This process, it is evident, separates skill and knowledge
even in their narrow relationship. When it is completed, the worker is no longer a crafts-
man in any sense, but is an animated tool of the management (Braverman, 1974 : 136).
The separation between conception and execution becomes necessary because, as he ob-
serves, if the workers' execution is guided by their own conception, it is not possible to
enforce upon them either the methodological efficiency, or, the working pace; derived by

Braverman also observed that the deskilling process is not confined to factory production
only. As he writes, the management experts of the second and the third generation after
Taylor erased the distinction between work in factories and work in offices (Braverman
1980 : 334). In Europe and North America since the sixties of this century the mental
labour for office work has been converted gradually into manual labour through the rapid
mechanisation of office work. A numerous office works such as maintenance and writing of correspondence, filing and indexing of documents, pay roll, billing, inventory control, calculation of pension, insurance and dividend have been getting simplified by the use of office equipment and computers. Consequently it has been possible to introduce scientific management in case of office work, as well. Braverman also devotes (1974, 1980) much of his analysis on these new jobs in service, clerical and non-industrial contexts, arguing that much of this employment could be and should be understood as employment as working class that remains alienated, as it happens in case of factory production.

1.1.3 Evolution of Labour Process : Critique of Deskilling Hypothesis

There is now a considerable research on the labour process in both the Marxist and non-Marxist paradigm that counters the deskilling hypothesis. The non-Marxist arguments are those of the ‘human capital view’ and the ‘reskilling with automation’ view. The human capital view has its theoretical underpinnings in Durkheim’s (1893, 1947) thesis—that specialisation stimulates a diversity of skills and individuals have a wide choice of the skills they would like to acquire depending on their individual preferences. Following Durkheim, the human capital view (Becker, 1964) would argue that specialisation requires specialised skills and therefore specialised conception which is associated with and not separated from the execution of the job in the specialist area. However, this view seems to disregard the distinction between what Marx called the detailed division of labour and the social division of labour. Their argument would be valid for the latter where the entire work is conceptualised by the performer of the work but this is not true with respect to the kind of specialised skill which is devoid of the conception of the work to which the specialised skill is associated. This is rather associated with the work with respect to which there exists a detailed division of labour. In fact, the more the detailed division of labour advances, the more restricted becomes the productive activity of each individual.

The second view (i.e., the reskilling with automation view), that of Blauner (1964) claims that while Marx’s hypothesis is valid for the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, with the advent of process production technologies, which are fairly automated, new skill associated with scientific and technical disciplines has become necessary for the workers. Hence there is a scope for reskilling among the workers. The critics may, however, argue that this reskilling is partial because this work is not planned by the worker himself. He acquires the skill with respect to a part of the work to which he is associated. A skilled worker in the pin factory of Adam Smith is not a de-alienated worker.

9. For a critique of deskilling hypothesis, see Meiksins, P. (1994).
Among the Marxists, whose work are remarkable are Friedman (1977), Edwards (1979) and Burawoy (1979). Friedman's work on the labour process in England stresses the importance of worker's resistance in shaping managerial strategies. He argues that there are in fact two major types of capitalist control strategies in contemporary workplaces: 'direct control' and 'responsible autonomy'. Direct control strategy reduces the discretion that workers can exercise (involving the techniques of scientific management). It is usually applied in times of severe price competition in product markets and in times of excess labour supply. This strategy seems to have similarities with Braverman's hypothesis of a tendency to deskilling. But in just the opposite economic environment when the management is faced with stronger worker resistance, management adopts responsible autonomy in which workers are allowed substantial levels of autonomy and consent at work so that they can enjoy a limited degree of job control and a limited unity of conception and execution.

Richard Edwards has developed a more historicized view of the evolution of labour process, suggesting three forms of control – simple, technical and bureaucratic. The simple form of control was in existence in the 19th century under competitive capitalism and was characterised by management's arbitrary and personalistic domination over the workforce. With the emergence of monopoly capital, after some failures, the first successful form of control that emerged was the technical mode, wherein control was incorporated into the technology itself, epitomised by the assembly line and the drive system. Worker's resistance to this form of control finally gave way to the bureaucratic form of control in which a set of rules are applied to define and evaluate work and apply sanctions when necessary. What Edwards posits is that in the changeover from simple to technical and then to bureaucratic control, the impact on skills is mixed, i.e., some workers are reskilled while others remain deskilled. However, Edwards admits that the majority of the tasks within the bureaucratic form of control are routinised, standardised, fragmented and defined quite explicitly by management which means that Braverman's hypothesis is perhaps valid even in the bureaucratic form (D'Mello, 1992: M-64, 65).

Burawoy has developed the theory of 'Manufacturing Consent' on the basis of his study in Chicago-based US transnational corporation at two points of time, 1944 and 1974. He has pointed out that under monopoly capitalism labour process is not dominative which had been the character of labour process under competitive capitalism. Under competitive capitalism, the despotic form of controlling labour process while securing surplus value, does not sufficiently obscure it. This leads to militant class struggle. Under monopoly capitalism, workers' consent is manufactured in favour of capitalism. With the securing of
surplus value it also obscures the surplus value. Burawoy’s thesis contradicts that of Braverman. According to Braverman, control in labour process is done through deskillling by the application of scientific management – a form of coercion or domination, whereas Burawoy holds that control is hegemonistic in the sense that the consent in favour of capitalist relation is internalised in the minds of the workers\(^\text{10}\), hence deskillling is no longer a necessity for control. Too much deskillling would threaten the securing of surplus value since it would accentuate the class-struggle.

The deskillling hypothesis came under serious criticism more recently when the scientific management is being superseded by flexible specialisation\(^\text{11}\) which is known as Japanese Management technique. Briefly speaking, flexible specialisation is associated with flexible technology with the help of which the mass production of standard goods with inflexible technology, which is typical to Fordism or Taylorism, is being replaced by small and medium batches of production with flexible technology. The flexible production organises the production with a workforce which is trained to make a wide variety of goods with general purpose machine. Flexible production thus reduces the detailed division of labour.

Flexible production involves the application of Just-in-Time (JIT), Total Quality Management (TQM) and Kaizen (continuous improvement) in the production process. The TQM is related not only to product but also to the production techniques and the workforce. It involves the improvement of production methods, by eliminating waste time and, ‘reskillling’ of the workers by continuous improvement of work. The JIT is a method intended to search for time economies based on the method of ‘learning by doing’. The aspects of JIT, such as, reduced set up times, the use of small and simple machine in place of large and complex ones, careful plant layouts contribute to saving and reduction of work time. It can be achieved through a process of continuous improvement of work (Kaizen). This requires a worker par-

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\(^{10}\) The theoretical underpinning of Burawoy is the Gramcian distinction between domination and hegemony. Domination is a form of control based on coercion and manipulation, whereas hegemony is control based on ideological consent and legitimation, i.e., control is internalised by the workforce. For a detailed discussion on domination and hegemony, see Gramsci, A. (1971), Part II, Chapter 2.

\(^{11}\) The scientific management is, in fact, superseded as early as in 1920s by the Fordist model of manufacturing. Briefly speaking, this is the organisational form adopted by Henry Ford by the introduction of assembly line of production. We are of the opinion that basically this model does not do away with the fragmentation of tasks and standardisation of components which is typical to the scientific management. As a result there exists the separation between the conception of total work contained in a production and its fragmented executions. Fordism, in fact, increases the intensity of labour pertaining to the deskillled workers. Fordism, however, tried to take care of the problem of alienation by developing stratifications among the workers determined in strict accordance with a technical function and corresponding new forms of morality and personality of the workforce (for a critique of Fordism, see Gramci, A. (1971a), Part II, Chapter 3).
ticipation in the production process in which the intelligence of the workers is mobilised, and
the worker has the power to make suggestions and implement changes as a part of the process
of continuous improvement. Tasks such as simple machine repairs, housekeeping, materials
ordering, and so on, do not add value to the final product. Firms thus have an incentive to
reduce such tasks. They can be reduced if production line workers incorporate them into the
labour process, thereby eliminating the need for separate departments dedicated to them. Pro­
duction line workers thus must become 'multiskilled'. It is therefore argued that flexible pro­
duction brings about the end of detailed division of labour, in which each worker is assigned
a single task to perform repeatedly which leads to deskilling in the labour process.

The whole basis of JIT/TQM system is to produce what the customer wants, when it is
wanted. A consumer order provides the signal for a delivery to be made, a delivery order pro­
vides the signal for final assembly, a final assembly order provides the signal for a finished
part to be delivered – this is the sequence of flexible production in which the initial act of
production is undertaken by a customer. The goal of this production system is to reduce in­
ventory costs to the greater possible degree. However, the lack of inventories may make flex­
ible production fragile. Without the buffer provided by the inventories, a stoppage in one part
does mean that production in the plant as a whole soon comes to a stop. This vulnerability can
only be dealt with if the workforce is diligent. In flexible production, workers are expected to
maintain the degree of diligence necessary for smooth production.

The defenders of flexible production argue that it is a system that removes the alienation of
labour due to deskilling. However, this claim is not without criticism. First, there are cases
where technologies characteristic of flexible production are consciously selected in order to
deskill the workforce. Secondly, the reskilling in flexible production is nothing but
'multitasking' in most cases.

The proponents of flexible production view that the workers become multiskilled because the
detailed division of labour is reduced to a large extent. While it is true that under the flexible
specialisation a typical worker performs multitasks, it is in no way true that performing
multitasks generates the quality of having multiskilled of a de-alienated labour. Performing

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12. For critiques of Japanese Management technique, see Smith, T. (1994); Delbridge, R. at. al. (1992);

13. Many researchers seem to take evidence of job expansion as evidence of reskilling, but simply attaching
more responsibilities to production jobs does not equal reskilling. A survey of changes in technology
and work organisation in North American car plants, conducted for the Canadian Auto Workers Union
was less sanguine about the claims made for job enhancement than are some researchers (Tomaney,
1990:43).
multitasks may be taken up under a situation when the worker is not allowed to participate in the decision making process with respect to major issues in production activities, such as, what to produce, how to produce, where to sell, what materials to be used in production, etc. Consequently, with respect to each task that the worker performs there is hardly a scope for applying the creativity of mind. Since the tasks are not performed in a creative way, performing multitasks does not give rise to multiskilling and thereby reskilling of the workers. This point is elaborated in the next section.

1.1.4 Workers' Participation and Reskilling

It appears that the contemporary critics of Braverman missed the central point at issue. Nobody denies that technology specific specialisation enhances the skill, but this is 'skill' in the restricted sense of the term. Detailed division of labour in capitalist society gives rise to specialisation but creativity still remains arrested for the workers even with this specialisation because the conception of the work in totality is denied. Under present day capitalism, work in totality means not only the manufacturing activities that the workers are entrusted with. Work in totality includes the understanding and analysis of the strength, weakness, opportunity and threats with regard to the activities of the organisation within which an organisation operates and which work as constraints on creativity in the sectional areas of activities. The contemporary critics of Braverman did not consider this aspect of the 'work'. The major areas of strategic issues which constitute the crucial part of the work of the organisation belongs exclusively to domain of the management. These are never shared with the workman whatever be the level of excellence of the worker in the specific area of his specialisation. In the modern Corporate Governance, policy issues are decided by the Executive-Directors who also belong to the Board of Governors and who are supposed to be accountable to the Board of Governors only — and not to the workmen who remain in the receiving end. The conception is that the Executive-Directors and the other members of the Board of Governors are responsible to the shareholders (substantive shareholders such as financial institutions). However, the worker is nowhere in the scenario.

Reskilling with the present division of labour can be achieved only if the decision making process with respect to the major issues is decentralised. With respect to issues in which

14. Now-a-days the Board of Governors often try to restrict the power of the Executive-Directors. Following the publication of Cadbury Committee Report (May, 1992) the nature of the Corporate Governance is changing in U.K.-based corporate houses. The material point, however, is that the importance of workers' participation in the Board of Governors remains under-focused. For a discussion, see The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (1997).
the decision shall have to be taken at the central level, there should have in these central bodies (Board of Governors) elected representatives of the workmen who are accountable to workers so that the general workers get themselves involved in the decision making process of the central issues of the organisation, although in an indirect way. If the democratic functioning is ensured, the issues become transparent, every worker becomes aware of the real work (work in totality) of the organisation and even can express his opinion as regards the planning of this work. Since modern capitalism does not ensure this, the detailed division of labour leads to deskilling whatever corrective measures are taken in the name of participatory management of the workers. It seems that in the debate on Braverman, this particular point remains undiscussed.

1.2 The Focus of the Present Study

1.2.1 Labour Process in a Transitional Economy

The contemporary debate on labour process centred around the observations of the features of the labour process as they appear in the developed hemisphere of the globe. Braverman had his thesis in the context of 'Monopoly Capital', i.e., the modern corporate sector of the developed economies. Whatever study on the impact of the labour process on the sociology of the workers had been taken up in the context of the entire economy — these have been concentrated on the developed economies, in the main.

More recently, however, a section of the scholars is trying to develop the theme in the context of the Third World economies—that is the economies in which the labour process contains the elements of a transitional society. As one may recall, the labour process in a transitional situation had been an important area of study for Karl Marx who described this labour process under transition while developing his theme on the evolution of the production system from pre-capitalism to capitalism (simple co-operation to factory system). But then, Marx's study did not incorporate the features of a transitional economy in which pre-capitalism is both preserved and destroyed — a feature which is typical to the Third World in the era of imperialism. In the Third World, the preservation—destruction syndrome describes the course of economic development as imperialism operates as an unconscious tool of history in shaping the production process in a Third World economy. Although Karl Marx outlined the consequence of colonialism, the features of this economy particularly the labour process in the dependent countries had not been taken up for a detailed discussion in his study. This

was only expected because the study of Karl Marx precedes the development of modern imperialism. The new features which could not be studied by Marx should constitute the area of enquiry in research on the labour process in the Third World which betray the features of transition with a difference from what had been there in the European societies in transition in the pre-imperialist era.

1.2.2 The Background of The Present Study

In the present study, we concentrate on this aspect of the study on the labour process. The limited objective is to lay bare the features of the labour process in such a sector of the economy that capture the elements of transition in the Third World perspective in a meaningful way. In our judgement such areas of the small scale sector which contain the features of co-operation as well as the elements of factory system as revealed through wage labour system, would contain the features of the transitional labour process in the most revealing way. The manufacturing in Small Scale Industry (SSI) which is in the halfway between the traditional and modern system of production and which are operating in the general ambit of the market economy could be the area of study that may suit our purpose. This explains the selection of the handloom sector in the rural area of a province of India that contains one of the major metropolises of the country (Calcutta) – an important seat of monopoly capital, both endogenous and exogenous (i.e., the foreign capital).

The handloom sector belongs to the SSI n India. There are several qualitative and quantitative criteria that are used in determining whether a business firm should be categorised as a small one. Even the quantitative criteria that are used to define small business are many and varied. These include turnover, investment in specific assets, size of the workforce, balance sheet totals, etc. Small business is defined in many countries by using only one criterion while in other countries composite criteria is used for this purpose. The quantitative criteria used to define a small business is purpose oriented, because quantitative definition is used in a country to serve the specific purpose in the context of developing and organising the sector under the governmental assistance programmes. In India, with respect to the government assistance programme, the small enterprises are defined on the basis of investment in fixed assets. At present the small enterprise is defined as an

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18. In *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin observed that the era of modern imperialism is the era of finance capital with capital transcending the national boundaries. Lenin took the clue from Hilferding (1981) and Hobson (1981) to outline the features of the era of imperialism. For details, see Lenin, V. I. (1977), Chapter VIII.

19. In U.K. it is determined on the basis of size of the workforce. The countries that use composite criteria include Japan (investment and employment), Korea (employment and turnover) and Malaysia (investment and turnover).
undertaking with a fixed capital investment upto Rs. 1 crore (Sandesara, 1999 : 829).

The qualitative criteria that form the basis of differentiating a small business from a non-small one rest on factors such as how far management is personalised, how independently key business decisions are taken and how far market prices can be influenced by the organisation. From qualitative standpoint, a business firm could be categorised as a small one if: (i) it is managed by its owners in a personalised way, (ii) it is almost free from outside control in taking principal business decisions under the given market condition and (iii) it is unable to influence market prices or aggregate quantities of goods supplied. According to these criteria, the traditional industries which are mostly carried on in households/cottages using traditional skills (such as, pottery, basket making, hand-spinning and hand-weaving, carpet, toys and dolls, embroidered articles, etc.) can be categorised as small scale. There are, of course, some non-traditional industries that use the modern technology, and have the above mentioned features. These may also be categorised as small industries. These non-traditional or modern small industries produce a wide variety of goods ranging from simple items to sophisticated products such as TV sets, electronic items, etc.

In India, in view of the heterogeneous nature of industries in the sector and variety of developmental problems, the small scale sector has been sub-divided into seven broad groups: handicrafts, handlooms, khadi and village industries, coir, sericulture, powerlooms, and small scale industries (residual). The first five fall under the category 'traditional' where the last two are in non-traditional group of industries.20

We are interested in qualitative definition of small scale because we want to study the internal relations within the organisation of labour and production in a small scale sector, and its relation with the large scale sector. There exists linkage between the large and small units. In some industries, the large units concentrate on marketing leaving production largely or entirely to small units. In most such arrangements, the independence of the small producer is severely curbed. The putting out, tied loans, sub-contracting of various sorts are the features in their arrangements. The relationships are not the 'open' market relationship but 'tied' transactions of various sorts. This has been the essential feature of the ongoing capitalist transformation of the Indian economy since independence, rather than the emergence of capitalist units per se, although that has also been going on. (Kurien, 1992 : 301).

20. Small business is defined in India somewhat narrowly to embrace primarily those business firms that have manufacturing operations. It is only in recent years that certain categories of service enterprises have been brought under the perview of small enterprises. For a detailed discussions, see Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of the present book.
We would choose not a modern small scale sector. Here the capitalist labour process is expected to be dominant because it has little relation with the traditional (pre-capitalist) sector. Among others, we would like to select one in which the features of transition could be studied. It should therefore be a sector which itself is undergoing a transformation. A sector which is linked to market dominated by monopoly but the technology for which is rudimentary so that the separation between conception and execution is not complete should be ideal for such a study of labour process in a transitional situation. It seems that handloom sector in India is one such sector. In handloom, technology is simple. It belongs largely to household sector in which the skill is mostly imparted through a simple process of learning from the master craftsman. Some sort of a master-journeyman relation prevails in the sector. There are tied transactions in both the labour and product market that operate as constraints on the development of capitalist market economy. Hence the handloom sector could be taken up as the area of study for extending the Braverman theme in the context of a transitional situation.

1.3. Chapter Plan

For this purpose, the book will be divided into seven chapters including the present Chapter which introduces the theme in a broad framework. In the Second Chapter, the condition of textile sector in the colonial period and the post-independence period along with the textile policies of the government will be discussed. We find this necessary for understanding the status of the handloom industry in India — one must know the sector in the context of the macro economy before one takes up the study of the labour process in this sector. In the Third Chapter, we plan to describe the field area—its economy and its handloom industry. In addition to this, we shall explain also why we have selected the Nadia district for field study. The Fourth Chapter would contain the features of the handloom industry of the district as we have observed in the field area. In Chapter Five we plan to study the labour process in a transitional situation with reference to handloom industry in the field area of the Nadia district. The features of capital accumulation process in the field area will be studied in the next Chapter. This Chapter will also study the interrelation between the accumulation process and the associated labour process. Chapter Seven summarises the findings of the present study.

1.4. In Lieu of Conclusion

The methodology that has been followed in the present dissertation is that of political economy: much of the study follows the procedure that had been taken up by Braverman et. al. However, some of the sociological and cultural aspect of labour process might remain underfocused in this methodology. This is one of the limitations of the study. One
may submit that this could be a separate project — quite outside the scope of the present
endeavour.

Another point that should be stated at the very outset is that the findings reported in the
present study are based on a field survey in one region of a district. One must not claim
that the findings should be generalised; the study is not robust enough to support such a
claim. One may, however, submit that the findings may help one understand how the
features of pre-capitalism may co-exist with those of capitalist production relations in the
specific labour process in a society which itself is in the process of transition from pre-
capitalism to capitalism.

The survey was carried out in 1993-94. The initial findings was supplemented with the
information gathered from the field survey in 1995-96. The data set may seem to be a bit
dated. But then one may submit that the change in the labour process in any society is
rather slow unless there is a revolutionary transformation in the production relation. Since
the society under study has not experienced a radical transformation even though there
exists a communist government in the State during a period of more than two decades, one
could expect that a repeat survey that one may carry out even at the end of the millennium
will not furnish such a new set of information that may warrant a change in the conclusions
that we have arrived at in the present study.
Appendix 1.1

Division of Labour, the Origin of Management and the Alienation

1.1.1 Introduction

In this academic endeavour we do not start with the so-called ‘survey of literature’ because the general literature on the division of labour, alienation and the associated problems of management is quite vast and has been developed in various directions most of which are not germane to the academic exercise that we have taken up here. We, however, find it necessary to discuss the previous literature on some of the major issues that have taken up here. The central issue is, of course, the concept of division of labour. We discuss first this concept as it was developed in Karl Marx (partly following Adam Smith and partly following Hegel). We then discuss the implication of this concept in the context of the literature on the separation between conception and execution of the work in social production excluding the Braverman theme which has been discussed in the introductory chapter of this book. Finally we discuss the concept of alienation of labour that is derived out of this concept of separation. The philosophical root of alienation and de-alienation has not been discussed in details because this concept has not been utilised in the context of the empirical exercise that has been taken up in the subsequent chapters of the present book.

1.1.2. Production and division of Labour: Smith, Marx, Babbage and Braverman

It is a wrong concept that Adam Smith was the person who discovered the concept of division of labour. The concept is as old as the subject of Economics itself. In fact, in the era of Greco-Roman thought on the subject of Economics, one gets the idea of division of labour.¹ Again one may mention the names of at least two of his contemporary economists

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¹ Henry Maxell discusses the concept of division of labour. Rashid (1998) describes, Henry Maxell touches upon the role of the market in his statements regarding populous countries, and follow his discussion of the division of labor immediately by a statement on the necessity of having nearby markets:

'The next thing necessary to increase of Manufacture, is, Nearness and Number of Market Towns, where the manufacture may have choice of Markets, and those not at a great distance' (cited in Rashid, 1998: 18).
who worked on the concept of division of labour. The great merit of Adam Smith, however, was that he integrated all the concepts of division of labour and very competently linked these with the capitalist economy of the late eighteenth-century Europe. The idea that Adam Smith tried to propagate was that the organisational steps that promote the division of labour in a manufacturing unit would increase the productivity in the manufactory and thereby increasing the economic efficiency of the unit. Smith mentioned the three advantages of division of labour and with his great insight he observed that the division of labour is limited by the extent of market — if the market does not expand the productivity need not be increased and therefore division of labour need not be extended further. Smith was also the economist who discussed the associated problem of division of labour, the problem which was latter developed by Karl Marx and extended further by Harry Braverman, namely, the loss of craftskill due to the division of labour.

Karl Marx discusses the concept of division of labour in a bigger perspective. With the orientation of a German Philosopher, he begins with the concept of production which is a social phenomenon; individuals producing in a society — hence socially determined individual production — is, of course, the point of departure. The individual and isolated hunter and fisherman, with whom Smith and Ricardo begin, belongs among the unimaginative conceits of Robinsonades (Robinson Cruso) (Marx, 1973: 83). Noting that production is a social phenomenon, Marx discusses the political economy of production and identifies two types of division of labour, namely, the social division of labour and the detailed division of labour. Since the possibility of a Robinson Cruso economy is ruled out, each individual species of human being cannot perform all the jobs alone to meet all the material requirements of the individual. There is thus the job specific division of labour that originated even in the early society and this is in existence so long as labour is carried on in and through the society.

2. For example, B. Mandeville and Henry Maxell who contributed a lot on the concept of division of labour. According to Rashid, Mandeville is the only author who insisted that the division of labour required only ordinary talents and capacities, and perhaps Smith is carrying Mandeville's arguments to its extremity (Rashid, 1998: 21).
3. The famous example of the pin making unit as described in Adam Smith can be cited as an example (see this chapter of the present text, p. 4.).
4. See this introductory chapter of the present text, pp. 7-8.
One may point out that the social division of labour does not necessarily undermine the craftskill of the individual. So long as the social division of labour does not deprive the individual worker of the whole concept of work and its execution (as it happens in case of the handicrafts in a medieval period), the production is not deprived of the craftskill.

With the development of capitalism, there develops a new kind of division of labour which is known as the detailed or manufacturing division of labour. To follow Adam Smith, this kind of division of labour is associated with the concept of productive labour, i.e., the labour which produces the surplus (value). The labour is then performed under an alien condition — alien in the sense that it is produced under the overall domination of capital that utilises the labour for enhancement of the surplus and the enhancement of the surplus can be done by breaking the production process into various constituent elements and assigning the elements to different workers. This is also a division of labour but this is associated with the same craft; the division is not craft specific but specific to the constituent elements of the same craft.

Detailed division of labour is not the feature of every society. It is typical to the capitalist society. While the social division of labour divides society among occupations, the detailed division of labour destroys occupations in the sense that a worker is inadequate to carry out the complete production process. Under capitalism, the social division of labour is enforced chaotically and anarchically by the market, while the detailed division of labour is imposed by planning and control. Again in capitalism, the products of social division of labour are exchanged as commodities, while the results of the operation of the detailed worker are not exchanged within the factory as within a marketplace, but are all owned by the same capital. While the social division of labour subdivides society, the detailed division of labour subdivides humans.

Division of labour in production begins with the analysis of labour process, i.e., the separation of the work of production into its constituent elements. And then the elements are

5. The labour, whether to be productive or unproductive, depends upon the nature of use. The same kind of labour may be productive or unproductive. Marx gives excellent examples to understand the difference between the two. He describes, Milton, who wrote Paradise lost for five pounds, was an unproductive labourer. On the other hand, the writer who turns out stuff for his publisher in factory style, is a productive labourer. A singer who sells her song for her own account is an unproductive labourer. But the same singer commissioned by an entrepreneur to sing in order to make money for him is a productive labourer; for she produces capital (Marx, 1969: 401).
assigned to different workers. This process creates detailed workers. Each step represents a saving in labour time. First, saving is embodied in the analysis of, and breaking down of the process and secondly, saving is found in the distribution of the operations among different workers. The benefit of both steps depends upon the scale of production. If the appropriate scale of production is realised, the division of labour in the labour process increases production and productivity. The famous example, in this context, is given by Adam Smith. While describing the advantages of division of labour in his discussion in the first chapter of *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith introduces a hypothetical set of pin workers, who were ten in numbers in a manufactory and could produce forty-eight thousand pins in a day when the total process was divided into eighteen distinct operations. Each person, therefore, made four thousand eight hundred pins in a day. It had been possible through a proper division and combination of different operations of pin making. But, according to Smith, if they had all wrought separately and independently, and without any of them having been educated to this peculiar business, they certainly could not each of them have made twenty, perhaps not one pin in a day (Smith, 1961 : 9).

One important point to be noted in this context is the role of the capitalist. The worker may break the process down, but he never voluntarily converts himself into a lifelong detailed worker. Such a conversion is the contribution of the capitalist who combines both the steps, i.e., breaking down the process and assigning each element to different workers. The second step destroys the craft skill and consequently the control over production process tends to shift from the worker to the capitalist.

The advantage of the division of labour, as pointed out by Adam Smith is that it creates productivity. This is well known. There is, however, another advantage of the division of labour that remained undiscovered until a half-century after Smith, it was unfolded by Charles Babbage in his book *On the Economy of Machinery and Manufactures*. Babbage suggests that the detailed division of labour under capitalism can be so organised as to minimise in most jobs the learning, strength, and dexterity required by doing: the more detailed the division of labour and the more the work is subdivided, the lower the skill level for most tasks. This is Babbage principle. Babbage principle is fundamental to the evolution of division of labour in capitalist society. According to him, by dividing the work into different processes, each process becomes cheap and requires less skill so that it can be purchased in exact quantity. If the whole work were executed by one workman, that man
must possess sufficient skill to perform that work and therefore it would have come costlier to the manufacturer. Translated into the terminology of market, this means that the labour power capable of performing the process may be purchased more cheaply as dissociated elements than as a capacity integrated in a single worker.

In capitalism, labour power has become a commodity. As soon as it has become the commodity, its uses are no longer organised according to the needs and desires of those who sell it, but rather according to the needs of its purchasers who are the capitalists seeking to expand the value of their capital. It is the interest of the capitalists to cheapen this commodity for reducing the cost of production. It can be achieved by breaking it up into its simple elements.

The consequence, considered from the point of view of the workforce, is that the workforce now knows only some simple operations that hardly needs any creativity. This is the deskillng of the work force. Since this is typical to capitalism, one may conclude that the capitalist mode of production creates a working population who are deskilled but suitable to its needs of the capital. Total knowledge of the workers are not only unnecessary but a positive barrier to the functioning of the capitalist mode of production. Of course, special knowledge and training are required for relatively few persons who are associated with the management. In this way, a structure is given to all labour process that at its extremes polarises those whose time in infinitely valuable and those whose time is almost worthless. It is the general law of capitalist division of labour. It shapes, as Braverman observes, not only work, but population as well, because over the long run it creates that mass of simple labour which is the primary feature of populations in developed capitalist countries. (Braverman, 1974 : 83). These populations are the alienated mass of the society.

1.1.3. Genesis of the Detailed Division of Labour

Before the development of 'co-operation' and 'manufacture', production was organised in housepremises of the producers either independently or under 'putting-out' system. In Europe, putting-out system was found in textile weaving, metal goods (nailing and cutlery), watch making, wood, etc., where the merchant capitalist supplied raw materials to the producers for manufacture in their own homes. In industries where work could not be taken home, such as, coal, tin, copper mines, mineworkers themselves, working at the face, took contracts singly or in gangs, either directly or through the 'butty' or subcontracting
employer of mine labour. But the domestic production and subcontracting system were
barrier for getting benefit from the division of labour since the production quantities were
small under these systems. To get the advantages of division of labour, large scale produc-
tion is necessary. In the middle of 16th century, there developed the 'manufacture' system
where production took place in large quantities compared to the domestic and subcontract
system of production. In manufacture, an increased number of labourers were gathered
under the control of a single capitalist. Division of labour was introduced in manufacture
and that division was further developed in the labour process to increase production. The
deskillning process through the separation between conception and execution in embrionic
form emerged in this system. Marx pointed out the tendency in the mode of manufacture.
He cited an example of the then vehicle manufacturing. He describes, The tailor, the
locksmith, and the other artificers, being now exclusively occupied in carriage-making,
each gradually loses, through want of practice, the ability to carry on, to its full extent,
his old handicraft. But, on the other hand, his activity now confined in one groove, assumes
the form best adapted to the narrowed sphere of action (Marx, 1986 : 318). Historically
capitalist production started with the 'co-operation' and more particularly with the 'manu-
facture'. The system created alienation among the labourers. A worker became alienated
from the production process, because his conceptual ability, that is, craftskill began to lose
gradually and his labour power was now utilised not according to his will but according
to the desire and needs of his employer. When these alienated workers were gathered
together in a definite workplace under a single roof and under a single capitalist, the
problem of management arose in a rudimentary form.6

Before the development of the mode of manufacture, the capitalists (i.e. merchant capital-
ists) disregarded the difference between labour power and labour, and they used to buy
labour in the same way they bought raw materials — as a definite quantity of work, completed and embodied in the product. This practice took the form of a great variety of subcontracting and putting-out systems. It was the manufacture that differentiated the
labour power from labour. Labour power was now purchased by the capitalist and utilised
in production through the division of labour. When the capitalist started to employ labour
power in the production process according to his desire, he needed control over labour

6. A relevant passage of Marx in this regard: All combined labour on a large scale requires, more or less, a directing authority, in order to secure the harmonious working of the individual activities, .... The work of directing, superintending, and adjusting, becomes one of the functions of capital, from the moment that the labour under the control of capital, becomes co-operative. Once a function of capital, it acquires special characteristics (Marx, 1986 : 313).
process. The first effect of such need was to enforce upon the workers regular hours of work, in contrast to self-employed pace in early systems which included many interruptions, short days and holidays and in general prevented a prolongation of the working day for the purpose of producing a surplus under then existing technical conditions.

Within the workshop, early management took a variety of rigorous and despotic forms to create a free labour force who would be habituated to their tasks and kept them working throughout the day and the year. The despotic form for extending the working day took also the shape of legal compulsions in England through the introduction of English Labour Statutes from the 14th to the middle of 18th century. A natural working day for modern industry only dates from the Factory Act of 1833.

Legal compulsions and a paralegal structure of punishment within factories were often enlarged into an entire social system covering whole townships. Quoted from Braverman, Pollard (1965) gives the example of the enterprise of Ambrose Crowley, a large mixed ironworks which carried on both primary processes of iron production and fabricating. In the second quarter of the eighteenth century this firm employed more than 1000 workers, scattered over its central works, warehouses, and company ships. An extraordinary Books of Laws has survived from this enterprise:

The firm provided a doctor, a clergyman, three school masters and a poor relief, pension and funeral scheme, and by his instructions and exhortations Crowley attempted to dominate the spiritual life of his flock, and to make them into willing and obedient cogs in his machine. It was his express intention that their whole life, including even their sparse spare time (the normal working week being of eight hours) should revolve around the task of making the works profitable, (Braverman. 1974 : 66-67).

In this method of total economic, spiritual, moral, and physical domination, a system of total control developed in the United States before the rise of industrial unionism.

In all these early efforts, the capitalists were grouping towards a theory and practice of management. Capitalism created a new social relations of production. It took the form of

7. For a description of regorious and despotc form of management adopted by the managment, see Marx, K (1986), Vol. I, Chapter X.
8. The Act took the amendments and modifications in 1844, 1847 and 1864 on the normal working time of the male, female and childworkers and, the inclusion of the different industries within the perview of the Act.
antagonistic relation between those who carry on the process and those for whose benefit it is carried on, those who manage and those who execute, those who bring to the factory their labour power, and those who undertake to extract from this labour power the maximum advantage for the capitalist. The capitalists confronted the problem of management — the problems to make the workers, who were mentally isolated from the production process, involve in their work. The isolation of the workers from the production process constitutes the alienation of labour. The problems that the capitalists faced were different not only in scope but also in kind from those of earlier production process in which the direct producers worked not in an alien condition — their labour was not forced labour.

1.1.4. The Alienation of Labour

Human labour produces the object. Hence the object of labour is the product of labour. For Marx, productive activity (P) takes place through a dialectical process of mutual interaction between man (M) and nature (N). This process is the 'objectification' of labour. The process may be depicted as follows: $M \rightarrow P \rightarrow N$. Hence objectification is an inevitable dimension of the human condition and is common to all phases of social development and system of economy. Alienation is rooted in the definite socio-economic circumstances. Marx's criticism of Hegel is that he confused objectification and alienation. For Hegel, labour, by creating objects external to man and his consciousness is inherently alienating. He grasps the self-creation of man as a process, objectification as loss of object, as alienation and transcendence of this alienation. Thus, on the one hand, alienation is inevitable in the human condition and cannot be superseded through institutional change. On the other hand, for Marx, alienation can be superseded, within the realm of consciousness, by recognising or designating consciousness as real and object produced by labour as mere manifestations of thought.

For Marx in contrast to Hegel, it is the socio-economic circumstances and institutions under which labour occurs and objects are produced, which generates alienation. When the properties of capitalism (C) interpose themselves between man and nature, man and his productive activity and among men, man becomes alienated man (AM), productive activity becomes alienated activity (AP) and nature becomes alienated nature (AN). The alienating consequences is shown in the following Diagram: 

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10. Ibid.
Since alienation is rooted in the socio-economic condition rather than in the inevitable nature of the human condition, a process of de-alienation in principle is possible, given an appropriate development of society's productive forces, in man's socio-historical life, not merely in the realm of thought.

Alienation, according to Marx, has a number of sources. It is found in commodity production for exchange. It also results from the division of labour, property relations, and exploitation. Marx distinguishes between a simple exchange economy (or simple commodity production) and a capitalist exchange economy (or capitalist commodity production). The simple exchange economy, like capitalism, is characterised by production for market exchange and by private ownership and control of the means of production. Its crucial difference from capitalism is that, under it, there is unity among work, unity between ownership and control. The artisans, who own simple tools and instruments of production and work for themselves, exchange their commodities, but do not employ the labour power of a separate propertyless proletariat. Alienating effects of the market exchange process, according to Marx, occur in both settings. Under capitalism, Marx perceives alienation from this source to expand and reach its peak. First, the exchange process spreads through the development of the world market. Secondly, labour power itself becomes a commodity

11. Marx's reflection on alienation have attracted the attention of numerous scholars. They have raised the debate on Marx's theory of alienation. West (1988) analysed Marx's assessment of alienation as a product of the capitalist division of labour. Roberts and Stephenson (1988) disputed West's analysis. They argued that West's approach was inconsistent with Marx's materialist conception of history. To them, sources of Marxian alienation lies in commodity production — the capitalist mode of production. But their analysis becomes less convincing when they insist that commodity production is the sole source of alienation. Elliott (1988a) made a critical evaluation of the Roberts-Stephenson arguments. He attacked their position, arguing that: (i) Marxist alienation, found to some extent in all economic systems, rises to its highest levels under capitalist and decreases progressively under socialist auspices; (ii) While market exchange is an important source of alienation, other causal factors, such as, property relations and division of labour are interwoven and codeterminant. He also viewed that the process of de-alienation under socialism is a gradual although progressive one, involving changes in ownership and division of labour as well as planning.
and thereby becomes subject to the vagaries of market exchange.

Although the concept alienation has a clear Hegelian and Marxian roots, there are important traces of it in earlier writers also. West remarks, *It still comes as a surprise to many people when they learn that the first writer to make use of the idea in Briten was Adam Smith* (West, 1988: 126). Smith discussed first the problem of alienation of labour that arises out of division of labour. When he explained the advantages of division of labour that an entrepreneur could gain in the production, he was also aware of the possibility of the alienation danger of the division of labour that may arise from the separation between conception and execution. Smith's statement in this regard:

*The understandings of the greater part of men are necessarily formed by their ordinary employments. The man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple operations ...has no occasion to exert his understanding ...He generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become. ...The uniformity of his stationary life naturally corrupts the courage of his mind... It corrupts even the activity of his body and renders him incapable of exerting his strength with vigour and perseverance in any other employments than that to which he has been bred. His dexterity at his own particular trade seems in this manner to be acquired at the expense of his intellectual, social, and martial virtues. But in every improved and civilised society, this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is, the great body of the people, must necessarily fall.* (cited in Marx, 1986: 342).

Marx elaborated the theme in the context of the evolution of the mode of production from simple co-operation to modern factory system.

Marx extended the concept of alienation from religion to all fields of human activity. According to him, all human products, whether emanating from the mind, like ideas about religion, the state, etc., or from man's practical activity, labour, were subject to alienation of some kind or other. He discusses his theory of alienation in his several writings — from the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* through the *Grundrisse* to *Capital*. In his discussions, Marx distinguishes among three facets of alienation: alienated labour, alienated capital, and alienated needs. We confine our discussion only to alienated labour.

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12. Smith recommends education for the people in order to prevent their complete deterioration under the division of labour. In contrast to Smith, Marx wanted to uproot the causes of alienation from the society through revolution. So it seemed to Marx that Smith wanted to remove it *prudently and in homoeopathic doses* (Marx, 1986: 342). Peter F. Drucker, a noted management theorist, was also aware of the consequence of the separation between planning and execution; and he took, like Smith, a cautious approach in this regard. Thus Drucker, in his critique of scientific management, suggests *...even the lowest human job should have some planning; only it should be simple planning and there should not be too much of it* (Drucker, 1982: 296).
In the Manuscripts, Marx distinguishes four major, interwoven forms of alienated labour:

i) **Alienation of the workers from the product of his labour.** Marx recognises that private property and alienated labour is mutually interwoven. Each serves as cause and effect of the other. In Capitalism, the ownership of the means of production is alienated from the producers and is transferred to others who are the capitalists. Since the direct producers or workers are not the owners of the means of production, the ownership of the product is also alienated from them. Capitalist property relations constitute a system of servitude for workers. Indeed, an enforced increase of wages would be no more than a better payment for the slave and would not win either for the worker or for labour their human status and dignity (Marx, 1993:78).

ii) **Alienation of the workers from his productive activity.** The estrangement is manifested not only in the product of labour but also within the productive activity itself. If the product involves alienation, the productive activity must be alienated activity. What constitutes the alienation of labour? Marx describes,

> First, the fact that labour is external to the worker, i.e., it does not belong to his intrinsic nature; that in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not fell content but unhappy, does not develop freely his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself. He feels at home when he is not working, and when he is working he does not feel at home. His labour is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is forced labour. .... Lastly, the external character of labour for the worker appears in the first that it is not his own, but someone else's, that it does not belong to him, that in it he belongs, not to himself, but to another.... it is the loss of his self (Marx, 1993:71).

As a result human functions and animal functions are reversed. The worker feels human only in his animal functions of eating, drinking and reproducing. In his human functions he no longer feels himself and is reduced to an animal.

In Capital, Marx elaborates the theme. He shows that how an worker is alienated from the productive activity as a result of the application of division of labour in the labour process. The process of step-by-step alienation and separation proceeds through three stages. First, in simple co-operation, large number of labourers are brought together under the control
of a single capitalist and production is based on the division of labour. Historically it is the starting point of capitalist production. The process of production becomes not only the process of producing use value but, also a process of creating surplus value. When the process turns to create surplus value, capitalist's control on labour process becomes despotic. As co-operation expands, the despotism of internal control, with the intensification of antagonisms interests between capitalist and labourer, is extended.

The second stage is 'manufacture'. Manufacture is the typical form of co-operation which is based on division of labour. In manufacture, a labourer is required to perform one and simple operation of a total work and by performing a repetitive job throughout his life, he becomes specialised in that fractional operation. Since each operation, either complex or simple, is done by hand only, it develops the 'detail dexterity' of the labourer in a particular operation. But the worker is alienated from the process of total work. The system converts the worker into a crippled monstrosity.

The third stage is 'modern industry'. In modern industry the instruments of labour are converted from tools into machines and, through this conversion even the detail dexterity of the worker is destroyed. Because the subjective principle of the division of labour in manufacture no longer exists in production by machinery. In machinery system of production, the alienation due to separation between intellectual labour and manual labour of the total process of work is heightened and the worker becomes a mere appendage to the capitalist mode of production.

iii) Alienation of the worker from his species-life. The whole character of a species is contained in the character of its life activity. Free and conscious activity is man's species character. An animal produces only for immediate physical needs. Alienated labour reverses these relationships. The division of labour takes away the conscious activity of man from the work and his activity turns into alien activity, alienated from his species character. His conscious life activity, which distinguishes himself from animals, transforms into a mere means for his satisfaction of needs and the maintenance of physical existence. He is alienated from himself, from his active function and therefore from the species.

iv) Alienation of the workers from the capitalist. Marx derives the conclusion that man is alienated from the other directly from the preceding types of alienation. If man is alienated from his species life, then he is alienated from other members of the species. Through
alienated labour, therefore, the worker not only creates his alienated relation to the product and the production process, he also produces the alienated relation of other men to his production and his product, the alienated relation between himself and other men.

Though Marx took the clue of alienated labour that arises out of the detailed division of labour from Smith, yet there are important differences between Smith's and Marx's treatment of alienation. West (1988) argues that the alienation arising from the feeling of powerlessness and isolation is absent in Smith's writings.

Firstly, the division of labour was seen by Smith neither as an instrument of economic bondage nor as an institution the growth of which was inevitable. On the contrary, he saw it as an available means of man's economic liberation from nature's niggardly environment. Smith's picture of the state of affairs prior to the adoption of the division of labour, was generally one of desperate struggle to survive. Before men had managed seriously to conquer the scarcity problem, they had, in his opinion, little prospect of cultural self-fulfilment. The capitalist division of labour is a necessary condition for such progress.

Smith, of course, did not approach history with Marxist preconception of a dialectic process. He did not, for instance, have any clear convictions concerning the inevitability of the exploitation of one class by another. West observes,

Smith's vision of economic history was in fact quite different. Whereas Marx asserted that: The only moving forces which political economy recognizes are the lust for gain and the war between seekers after gain, competition......'. Smith's whole emphasis was upon the claim that the emerging free market economy provided a means for mutual gain; the vastly improved productivity of the division of labour was to the benefit of all classes; the effect was not to destabilize, but to coordialize society (West, 1988:132).

In Smith's system therefore the worker does not suffer powerlessness alienation, at least not in an acute sense of feeling himself to be at the mercy of a wage-exploiting employer.

Secondly, there is no evidence to show that Smith believed that the detailed workers of capitalism felt isolated. The propensity to barter and exchange leading as it did to the division of labour under one roof towards, not against, the direction of social intercourse. Such communion provided men with the impartial spectators which they needed as a mirror of their actions. The whole process was thus a coherent, possessive, and constructive
social process which led not into but out of a condition of isolation.

Thirdly, Smith gives no evidence that he thinks his workers feels estrangement. The separation from the ownership of the means of production does not appear as a serious problem. Smith's worker is not worried about his inability to influence general managerial policies. To Marx, self estrangement stemmed largely from the fact that the capitalist division of labour forced the worker into activities which were not in accordance with his natural gifts; in Marx's case the worker was transformed into a monster, a cripple because his service was against his natural bent. Smith, on the other hand, did not think that there was much in the notion of natural bents. Smith argued:

*The difference of natural talents in different men is, in reality, much less than we are aware of; and the very different genius which appears to distinguish men of different professions, when grown up to maturity, is not upon many occasions so much the cause, as the effect of the division of labour. The difference between the most dissimilar characters, between a philosopher and a common street porter, for example, seems to arise not so much from nature, as from habit, custom, and education* (Smith, 1961:19-20).

Smith would thus not have favoured the Marxian-type argument that there were, for example, street porters who, because nature had intended them to be, for example, philosophers, were consciously or subconsciously frustrated or self-estranged.

Finally, Smith's alienation refers only to the workers. There is no argument, as there is in Marx, that the capitalists are also alienated and that humanity as a whole suffers injury. In contrast to Smith, Marx's alienation is universal, all-embracing, and uncompromising.
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