


**TRADE UNION PRAXIS - 3  
(Towards a Sociology of Trade Unions)**

**MICROPRAXIS OF ALIENATION -  
WORK ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES  
AND PROCESSES**

**By**

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WP877  
  
WP  
1990  
(877)

**W P No. 877**

**July 1990**

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**MICROPRAXIS OF ALIENATION**  
**WORK ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES**

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**JULY 1990**

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(Towards a Sociology of Trade Unions)

### 3.1 MAN-THE-WORKER

Man is both a being-in-the world and being-at-the world. He is a being-in-the world because he is a man living in a real objective world and is determined by that world. Man is a being-~~at-the-world~~ because he acts on the world and transforms the world and in the process transforms himself.<sup>1</sup>

Man-in-the world becomes ~~man-at-the-world~~ through acting on the world. It is this "action-reflection" on the world that Marx calls "work" or "labour". For Marx, therefore, work is the central reference point of human history and consequently the structure and modalities of the work organization in the context of a particular mode of production determines all other aspects - social life, political life as well as man's life of the spirit including his philosophy, religion and morality. "The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which conforms definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of man that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being determines their consciousness".<sup>2</sup>

Man-the-worker acts on the world within the framework of a particular pattern into which his work is organized. The work organization itself is conditioned by the mode of production which characterizes society at a specific stage in its historical development. Hence, it follows that to understand the condition of man-at-the-world, an analysis of the mode of production of the larger environment will have to be carried out. Man-the-worker, the work organization and the predominant mode of production of the historical moment would therefore constitute the components of an adequate analysis of the structure and processes of any organization which in turn will provide an appropriate perspective for the understanding of trade unions.

The history of a society in the Marxian framework is a succession of various modes of production each with its own characteristic features. "In broad outline Asiatic, ancient, feudal and modern bourgeois modes of production can be designated as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society"<sup>3</sup>. Before embarking on a brief discussion of each of these modes of production, an important Marxian idea will have to be pointed out here - that each of the modes of production upto the bourgeoisie mode of production is characterized by class contradictions between those who control the mode of production and those who are controlled. "The bourgeois relations of production are the last antagonistic form of the social process of production - antagonistic not in the sense of individual antagonism but of one arising from the social conditions of life of the individuals"<sup>4</sup>. The antagonism of course takes different forms as history unfolds

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from tribal property relations to bourgeois property relations. The relative position of these individual groups is determined by how work is organized in agriculture, industry and commerce (patriarchalism, slavery, estates, classes) .

### 3.2. WORK ORGANIZATION AND MODE OF PRODUCTION

Any analysis of a work organization, therefore, has to take into consideration not only the dominant mode of production of the historical moment but also be conscious of the inherent contradictions in the relations of production. It might be relevant at this point to quickly review the various modes of production through successive historical stages.

"The first form of property is tribal property. It corresponds to the undeveloped stage of production .....". The main economic activities are hunting, fishing, cattle raising. There is also some agriculture but there are a great mass of uncultivated stretches of land. Division of labour is only an extension of the family. The social organization is characterized by patriarchalism and is structured into patriarchal chieftains, members of the tribe and slaves. Increase of population, growth of wants, extension of war and of the barter system contributes to the development of the institution of slavery. Thus, the organization of work at this stage is characterized by patriarchalism combined with an emerging system of slavery.



"The second form is the ancient communal and state property, which proceeds especially from the union of several tribes into a city by agreement or by conquest, and which is accompanied by slavery"<sup>7</sup>. There are traces of private property developing but these are actually subordinate to communal property. The social organization consisted of citizens wielding power over labouring slaves in the context of communal property. At the same time there was a movement in the direction of concentration of private property in the hands of a few while the plebeian small peasantry was gradually being transformed into a proletariat. The proletariat, however, never achieved independence because they were sandwiched between the propertied classes and the slaves. The organization of work at this stage appears to be characterized by citizenry controlling communal property and also wielding power over slaves coupled with an emerging propertied class and a concomitant proletariat.

### 3.2.1. WORK ORGANIZATION AND THE FEUDAL MODE OF PRODUCTION

"The third form is feudal or estates property. Like tribal and communal property, it is also based on a community, but the directly producing class standing over against it is not, as in the case of the ancient communities, the slaves, but the enserviced small peasant and slaves became the major components of the feudal social organization. The nobility's power flowed from its control over land in the rural sector, the hierarchical structure of land-ownership and armed bodies of retainers engaged to

enforce the dominance of the nobility over other constituents in the social organization. "The feudal structure of landownership had its counterparts in the towns in the shape of corporative property, the feudal organizations of trades .....<sup>9</sup>" . Several factors like neutralizing the robber nobility, the need for common covered markets in the context of the industrialist merchant, the competition among serfs migrating to urban from rural areas, the feudal structure of the economy, combined to bring about the guilds.

The organization of work under the feudal system evidently took a certain form. In the rural areas there were feudal landlords, tenant farmers, the peasant and the slave. In the urban areas a hierarchy similar to the rural areas developed with the accumulation of small capital in the hands of the journeyman (individual craftsman) and the growing population of the apprentices and migrant serfs. However, "this feudal organization was, just as the ancient communal property, an association against a subjected producing class; but the form of association and the relation to the direct producers were different because of the different conditions of production"<sup>10</sup> .

Another important feature of the feudal system of work organization should be mentioned here because of its relevance in analyzing the characteristics of the work organization in this study ..... Describing an important aspect of feudal work organization, Marx says, "..... Here, instead of the independent man, we find everyone dependent, serfs and lords, vassals and suzerains, laymen and clergy. Personal dependence

here characterizes the social relations of production just as it does the other spheres of life organized on the basis of that production"<sup>11</sup>. Personal dependence is therefore built into the very fabric of feudal social existence. The hierarchical structure of feudal society and the practice of personal dependence form the groundwork of society and hence, "there is no necessity for labour and its products to assume a fantastic form different from their reality"<sup>12</sup>. What form does this "personal dependence" take in the feudal organization of work? "They take the shape in the transactions of society, of services in kind and payments in kind"<sup>13</sup>. Various kinds of transactions especially a complex of services and payments are the concrete manifestations of the personal dependence characteristic of the feudal way of life. This observation is of relevance in any analysis of work organization in the Indian context today because of the myriad manifestations of feudal "dependence" and "defence" which leads to cultural contradictions between different levels in the organizational hierarchy and between management and labour so much in evidence in day-to-day interactions even within the capitalist mode.

Feudal work organization gives way to capitalist work organization as evidenced by the obscuring of surplus labour, loss of control over the means of subsistence, expropriation of the instruments of production, control of labour by management within the labour process itself and finally by the production of commodities becoming the reproduction of the relations of production itself.

### 3.2.2. WORK ORGANIZATION AND THE CAPITALIST MODE OF PRODUCTION

Since the history of economic transformation has shown that there has been a progressive introduction of the capitalist mode of production during colonial and post-colonial periods, an analysis of the capitalist mode of production becomes vital for understanding capitalist work organization.

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What then is capital? "Capital consists of raw materials, instruments of labour and means of subsistence of all kinds, which are utilized in order to produce new raw materials, new instruments of labour and new means of subsistence. All these component parts of capital are creations of labour, products of labour, accumulated labour. Accumulated labour which serves as a means of new production is capital".<sup>14</sup> An important component of capital therefore is accumulated labour which is used in creating more capital. As a matter of fact capital at the service of generating more capital is an important characteristic of the capitalist mode of production. Commitment to the growth of productive capital becomes the prime motive. "But what is the growth of productive capital? Growth of the power of accumulated labour over living labour. Growth of the domination of the bourgeoisie over the working class. If wage labour produces the wealth of others that rules over it, the power that is hostile to it, Capital, then the means of employment, that is, the means of subsistence, flow back to it from the hostile power, on condition that it makes itself afresh into a part of capital, into the

lever which hurls capital anew into an accelerated movement of growth"<sup>15</sup>. The capitalist work organization in the context of the growth of productive capital is characterized by capital's dominance over labour, capital's hostility towards labour and the consequent submersion of labour by capital. It could even be said that the modalities of the productive power of capital comes into existence only by the cooperation of labour understood as ~~the surrender of labour power~~. "Their cooperation begins only with the labour process, but then they have ceased to belong to themselves. On entering that process, they become incorporated with capital. As cooperators, as members of a working organism, they are but special modes of existence of capital. Hence, the productive power developed by the labourer when working in cooperation is the productive power of capital. This productive power of capital is developed gratuitously, whenever the workmen are placed under given conditions and it is capital which places them <sup>16</sup> under such conditions". The dominance of capital and the cooperation of labour leads to the power of capital over surrendered labour power. It is even made to appear as though the productive power of capital and its overriding dominance over labour is natural and as it should be. "Because this power costs capital nothing and, because, on the other hand, the labourer himself does not develop it before his labour belongs to capital, it appears as a power which capital is endowed by Nature -- a <sup>17</sup> productive power immanent in capital". The naturalness of the surrender of labour power to capital is possible by blurring the role played by labour in generating the productive power of

capital. Labour itself is led to believe that its labour is not as significant as other attributes of capital in the creation of more capital.

The logical question which can be raised now is, "what is the driving force behind capitalist production? What is it that impels the capitalist mode of work organization to strive relentlessly towards its own reproduction? Marx is emphatic in his answer, "~~The directing motive, the end and aim of capitalist~~ production, is to extract the greatest possible amount of surplus value, and consequently to exploit labour power to the greatest possible extent" <sup>18</sup>. The generation of surplus value or profit is the source of the energy for capitalist work organization. INdeed there appears to be no motive other than the motive for profit more potent for compelling capital and its representatives to organize work with vigour, energy and enthusiasm. "The march of the creation of wealth becomes relentless --" Production is only production for capital and not vice versa, the means of production are not mere means for a constant expansion of the living process of the society of producers" <sup>19</sup>. The significant idea here seems to be that the reproduction of capital is invariably at the expense of labour. And this idea is a recurring theme in Marx's writings. "In its specific capitalist form -- and under the given conditions form - manufacture is but a particular method of begetting surplus value, or of augmenting at the expense of the labourer, the self-expansion of capital-usually called social wealth" <sup>20</sup>.

### 3.2.2.1. CAPITALIST WORK ORGANIZATION AND HIERARCHICAL CONTROL

Capitalist work organization is geared to a frenzied generation of surplus value for which purpose several organizational features become ideal means. One such feature is the hierarchical structuring of organizational power and control. "Manufacture proper not only subjects the previously independent workman to the discipline and command of capital, but, in addition creates a hierarchic gradation of the workmen themselves" <sup>21</sup>. The working class in the capitalist work organization experiences loss of autonomy -- in relation to work, work organization, the technology of work, the product and productivity. The workmen are subject to the power of capital. One of the major methods by which this subjection is brought about is by the hierarchical structuring of power and control in organizations. The more complex the organization, the more oppressive is the structure of organizations. The hierarchy of the power system is at the service of the thrust towards the generation of profit and it follows therefore that the antagonistic relationship between capital and workmen becomes more pronounced. The hierarchical control establishes the power of control over labour, its productivity and also its creativity. "The worker receives means of subsistence in exchange for his labour power, but the capitalist receives in exchange for his means of subsistence labour, the productive activity of the worker, the creative power whereby the worker not only replaces what he consumes but gives to the accumulated labour a greater value than it previously possessed" <sup>22</sup>

The purpose of the subjection of the worker to the discipline and command of capital is to achieve the organizational goals framed by capital. Hence, one of the essential questions of organization theory and industrial sociology has been, "How much organization and control of behaviour is necessary for maximising productive efficiency, reproduction of capital and the generation of surplus value?" The theory and practice related to the structure and functioning of organizations as well as the behaviour of groups and individuals within organizations focus on the issue of organizational control. "Organization implies control. A social organization is an ordered arrangement of individual human interactions. Control processes help circumscribe idiosyncratic behaviours and keep them conformant to the rational plan of organization. Organizations require a certain amount of conformity as well as integration of diverse activities. It is the function of control to bring about conformance to organizational requirements and achievement of the ultimate purposes of the organization".<sup>23</sup> Control in organization is enmeshed inextricably in the "rational plan" of organizations. As a consequence, control contributes to order, conformity and the stamping out of all forms of deviance in organizations.

Organization theorists who stress technical efficiency, rationality, control and conformity for effective goal fulfilment in organizations have found tremendous comfort and security in Max Weber's conceptualization of the bureaucratic organizational



structure based on the ideal type rational -- legal authority . Weber himself has admitted that the capitalist system has undeniably played a major role in the development of bureaucracy. The legitimacy of bureaucratic authority flows from a belief in the legality of patterns of normative rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands. The effectiveness of this type of authority rests on several basic assumptions:

1. That any given legal norm may be established by agreement or by imposition on grounds of expediency or rational values or both, with a claim to obedience at least on the part of members of the corporate group.
2. That every body of law consists essentially in a consistent system of abstract rules which have normally been intentionally established.
3. That thus the typical person in authority occupies an 'office'. In the action associated with his status, including the commands he issues to others, he is subject to an impersonal order to which his actions are oriented.
4. That the person who obeys authority does so, as it is usually stated, only in his capacity as a 'member' of the corporate group and what he obeys is only the 'law'.
5. In conformity with point 3, it is held that the members of the corporate group, in so far as they obey a person in authority, do not owe this obedience to him as a person, but to the impersonal order.

Even this brief recapitulation of Weber's bureaucratic organization provides insights into how the function of control could be placed at the services of capital through a process of abstraction. The compliance and conformity of organizational members is apparently to an impersonal order of rules and norms drawn up in the interests of technical efficiency and not to concrete owners of capital or their agents. The argument almost seems to be that subjection of members to a rule-centred impersonal order would take the heat out of organizational and managerial control over members. The bureaucratic culture of control promises members impartiality, efficiency and monetary returns as reward for conformity to an impersonal social order. Professionalism and functionalism are offered as the key characteristics of the new bureaucratic culture. The main categories of the rational-legal authority on which the bureaucratic mode of control is built are:

1. A continuous organization of official functions bound by rules.
2. A specified sphere of competence which involves (a) a sphere of obligations to perform functions which has been marked off as part of a systematic division of labour, (b) the provision of the incumbent with the necessary authority to carry out these functions (c) that the necessary means of compulsion are clearly defined and their use is subject to definite conditions.

3. The organization of offices follows the principle of hierarchy, that is, each lower office is under the control and supervision of a higher one.
4. The rules which regulate the conduct of an office may be technical rules or norms.
5. In the rational type case, there is also a complete absence of appropriation of his official position by the incumbent.
6. In the rational type, it is a matter of principle that the members of the administrative staff should be completely separated from ownership of the means of production or ownership.
7. Administrative acts, decisions and rules are formulated and recorded in writing, even in cases where oral discussion is the rule or even mandatory.

The detailed reference to Weber's model may seem tedious and redundant but the point to be stressed at this stage is that it is capitalist enterprise and its thrust towards generation of profit which has helped in evolving intricate and stringent systems of control in order to harness workers' compliance to the system of capitalist work organization. The hierarchical structuring of organizations, division of labour, rule-centred decision-making and exercise of power, separation of ownership and control of work organizations have all served as means for the propagation of the myth of rational-legal authority committed to efficiency, impartiality and egalitarianism.

The bureaucratic model of work organization which the capitalist mode of production has found so useful, both in the hands of Weber<sup>25</sup> as well as in the hands of his successors -- Merton<sup>26</sup>, Selznick<sup>27</sup> and Gouldner<sup>28</sup>, has been predominantly preoccupied with the question of the "control" of the members of the organization.

Merton's model, for instance, begins with emphasis on the demand for control by the top hierarchy in an organization.<sup>29</sup> The demand for control is necessitated by increased emphasis on the reliability, accountability and predictability of behaviour. Techniques based on the mechanistic model of behaviour establish standard operating procedures and the control function seeks to maximize conformity to the procedures. This in turn leads to a reduction in personal relations, internalized compliance to rules and procedures in the increased use of categorization as a decision-making technique. Rigidity of behaviour, authoritarianism of even lower level functionaries, insulation of bureaucratic action from external pressures and insensitivity to client needs turn out to be the unintended consequences of the thrust towards reliability of behaviour.

<sup>30</sup>  
Selznick's Model has advocated the technique of delegation of authority as a control mechanism. Delegation leads to increased competence of lower level functionaries and also to organizational bifurcation through departmentation. Increased competence resulting from training leads to increased turnover while departmentation leads to interdepartmental conflicts and

strains. But the important point to be remembered is that delegation of authority is not viewed as a participatory mechanism but more as a mechanism to enforce compliance in the direction of extracting the optimum contribution towards the fulfilment of the goals of the organization.

The demand for control from those who control organizations is met by the use of general and impersonal rules regulating work procedures in Gouldner's model of bureaucracy. <sup>31</sup> The impersonal regulation is expected to decrease the visibility of power relations, increase the need for supervisory domination and contribute the decrease in tension in the group. The rules in the organization lead to member definition of minimum acceptable behaviour which in turn leads to the lowering of behavioural standards. Closeness of supervision is clamped down on members leading to power struggles and increased tensions in work groups.

"Rational" bureaucracy has been an important aspect of capitalist enterprise and capitalist work organization. Almost every characteristic of bureaucratic work organization has been oriented to worker "control" in the direction of the generation of profit. One other aspect of the capitalist work organization which has been a major source of antagonism between capital and worker has been the system of division of labour.

#### 3.2.2.2. CAPITALIST WORK ORGANIZATION AND DIVISION OF LABOUR

Classical sociological theory within the framework of capitalist endeavour has advocated the functional necessity of division of labour in social and industrial organization".....

The worker is in large part, to be an organ of society, and his proper duty consequently is to play his role as an organ .....<sup>32</sup>

Thus the biological analogy implied in Durkheim's postulate is a justification of the role of division of labour and an exhortation to the worker to play his assigned role in the larger scheme of work organization. There is also the concomitant advocacy of functional specialization which almost has a ring of inevitability and immutability. "..... Our duty is not to

spreadover activity but to concentrate and specialize it"<sup>33</sup>

Division of labour and functional specialization, therefore become the twin tools of scientific management in the Durkheimian scheme". .....

The first care of an intelligent, scientific chief will be to suppress useless tasks to distribute work in such a way that each one will be sufficiently occupied, and consequently to increase the functional activity of each

worker....."<sup>34</sup> The "intelligent, scientific" manager's work is cut out for him in no uncertain terms -- to maximize the worker's output. And to what end? " --- That work is more economically

managed ....."<sup>35</sup> The functional, atomized worker and his "economic" management through division of labour pave the way for the extraction of surplus labour and surplus value ultimately.

There is, however, another side to the institution of Division of labour in capitalist modes of work organization. Division of labour in this context becomes both a manifestation of as well as the perpetuation of the inherent contradictions of the capitalist work organization. Society itself faces cleavage due to the division of labour. "The division of labour inside a

nation leads at first to the separation of industrial and commercial from agricultural labour and hence to the separation of town and country and the conflict of their interests. Its further development leads to the separation of commercial from industrial labour"<sup>36</sup>. Thus division of labour results in a yawning gap between urban industrial labour and rural agricultural labour and also its growing disparity.

Socio-economic disparity becomes reinforced through division of labour. Several contradictions therefore become apparent -- the contradiction between mental labour and manual labour, the contradiction between those who labour and those who enjoy the fruits of labour, the contradiction between those who produce and those who consume. The conflict and contradiction become pronounced in the work organization, in society and in man's consciousness. ".....These three moments, the productive forces, the state of society and consciousness can and must come into contradiction with one another, because the division of labour implies the possibility, nay the fact, that intellectual and material activity, that enjoyment and labour, production and consumption devolve on different individuals"<sup>37</sup>. Hence, in the Marxian sense, division of labour in a work organization does not refer merely to how an organization is structured, but also to how the hierarchical structuring and functional specialization leads to disparities in the distribution of value added through labour. Marx is emphatic about this analysis of division of labour -- "The division of labour in which all these contradictions are implicit, and which in its turn is based on

the natural division of labour in the family and the separation of society into individual families opposed to one another, simultaneously implies the distribution and indeed the unequal distribution both quantitative and qualitative of labour and its products ....."<sup>38</sup>

Besides, there is a certain inevitability, a certain domination, a certain control of labour through the institution of division of labour. "The social power, i.e., the multiplied productive force, which arises through the cooperation of different individuals as it is caused by the division of labour, appears to these individuals, since their cooperation is not voluntary but has come about naturally, not as their own united power, but as an alien force existing outside them of the origin and goal of which they are ignorant, which they thus are no longer able to control which on the contrary passes through a peculiar series of phases and stages independent of the will and action of man may even be the prime governor of these"<sup>39</sup>. The power generated by the cooperation of individuals is thrust on them by those who control the work organization. Thus this power almost takes on an independent existence in turn dominating and enslaving the worker making him lose control over his work environment. Coercion and the subsequent subordination becomes the characteristic of the work organization. "..... Man's own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him. For as soon as the division of labour comes into being, each man has a particular exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape"<sup>40</sup>.



Division of labour becomes, therefore, a system of exploitation leading to the experience of alienation and powerlessness. The disparities brought about by division of labour goes to such an extent that even knowledge becomes concentrated in the hands of these who control the capitalist work organization simultaneously leading to the ignorance of labour. Thus scientific and technological advancement leading to improved methods of work organization and production expands in one direction, because it vanishes in many others. What is lost by the detail labourers is concentrated in the capital that employs them. It as a result of the division of labour, is brought face to face with the intellectual potencies of the material process of production, as the property of another, and as a ruling power" .

3.2.2.3. CAPITALIST WORK ORGANIZATION AND THE ROLE OF  
MANAGEMENT

The discussion above of the modalities of division of labour in society and in capitalist work organization brings up an important manifestation of division of labour -- the manager-worker dichotomy. The ideas, values and practices related to management of a work organization can also be subjected to analysis from the perspective of the structure and process of capitalist organization of work.

It is clear from Marx's writings that in the Marxian view of organization, there is a definite role for the management function. "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 and to perform the general functions that have their origins in the action of the combined organism, as distinguished from the action of its separate organs....." .<sup>42</sup> When labour becomes organized on a large scale into a work organization, the "general function" of coordination of organizational activities becomes a necessary function. But the modalities of the realization of this "general function" are determined by characteristic features of the prevailing dominant mode of production. Within the perspective of the capitalist mode of production, therefore, the general function of management becomes a necessary function. "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 cooperative"<sup>43</sup> . Of course, it can be argued that the "general function" of management is a necessary function whatever the mode of production. But it must also be accepted that the structure, process and function of management depends very much on the mode of production : "Once a function of capital, it acquires special characteristics"<sup>44</sup> . Therefore, any analysis of the characteristics of any capitalist work organization will also have to take into consideration the special characteristics of the orientations of management within the capitalist mode of production.

First and foremost, in the capitalist scheme of things, managers become an indispensable segment of the work organization entrusted primarily with the exclusive function of supervision.

An industrial army of workmen, under the command of a capitalist requires, like a real army officers (managers) and sergeants (foremen, overlookers), who, while the work is being done, command in the name of the capitalist. The work of supervision becomes their established and exclusive function"<sup>45</sup> . Managers become so vital to the capitalist work organization that they are the ones who maximize the realization of the capitalist characteristics of the work organization. Marx, quoting Urs, has gone to the extent of saying that "it is not the industrial capitalists, but the industrial managers, who are the soul of our industrial systems"<sup>46</sup> .

Social and industrial organization is always in a state of flux. The modalities of the structure and function of the labour process are also subject to this change. The isolated labour of independent producers gives way to cooperative labour which is a combined social process. Concomitantly there is a natural shift from relative autonomy to the subjection of this combined labour process to supervision and management. Marx himself has expressed himself emphatically time and again. "The labour of supervision and management is naturally required wherever the direct process of production assumes the form of a combined social process, and not of the isolated labour of independent producers"<sup>47</sup> .

<sup>48</sup>  
"However, it has a double nature" . The general function of management of the labour process, therefore, has a dual nature. And an understanding of this dual nature of management is crucial to an understanding of the Marxian perspective, both from the

point of view of analyzing management processes in capitalist work organizations, as well as for projecting a model of management reflecting the social nature of the labour process.

What is this "dual nature" of the "general functions" of management? "On the one hand, all labour in which many individuals cooperate necessarily requires a commanding will to coordinate and unify the process and functions which apply not to partial operations but to the total activity of the workshop, much as that of an orchestra conductor. This is a productive job<sup>49</sup> which must be performed in every combined mode of production". Thus, the "commanding will to coordinate" is a "productive job" on Marx's own admission. Marx, however, follows this up with a caution, "on the other hand, quite apart from any commercial department -- this supervision work necessarily arises in all modes of production based on the antithesis between the labourer, as the direct producer, and the owner of the means of production"<sup>50</sup>. The important idea in this passage is that the "general function" of management, through a necessary function in the running of any work organization, takes on a peculiar character in the context of the "antithesis" between the "owners of the means of production" and the "wage labourers". Marx himself says "the greater this antagonism, the greater the role<sup>51</sup> played by supervision". As a matter of fact, apologists of management theory and practice in the capitalist work organization have even gone to the extent of saying that it is the general function of management in work organizations which drives workers to become productive. The logical consequence of

this line of thinking is that since it is the manager who makes the worker productive, notwithstanding the antithetical nature of the manager-work group relationship, the worker should not only produce value for his own sustenance but also for the sustenance of the manager who makes him "productive". "The work of management and supervision -- so far as it is not a special function determined by the nature of all combined social labour, but rather by the antithesis between the owner of the means of production and the owner of more labour-power, regardless of whether the labour power is purchased by buying the labourer himself, as it is under the slave system, or whether the labourer himself sells his labour power, so that the production process also appears as a process by which capital consumes his labour -- This function arising out of the servitude of the direct producers has all too often been quoted to justify this relationship. An exploitation and the appropriation of the unpaid labour of others has quite as often been represented as the reward justly due to the owner of capital for his work" --

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The function of management and its compensation in the context of the capitalist mode of work organization can therefore be said to be a manifestation of the exploitative process of the appropriation of unpaid labour. Whereas management should reflect the cooperative and social character of work organization, it on the contrary becomes an expression of and a reinforcement of the antithetical character of the capitalist mode of work organization. "But, when considering the capitalist mode of production, he, on the contrary, treats the work of control made necessary by the cooperative character of the labour process as

identical with the different work of control, necessitated by the capitalist character of that process and the antagonism of interests between capital and labour. The leadership of industry is an attribute of capital, just as in feudal times the functions of general and judge, were attributes of landed property" <sup>53</sup>.

The considerable thrust towards developing more and more efficient, effective and economic theories and systems of management has to be viewed within the above perspective. "Again, in proportion to the increasing mass of the means of production, now no longer property of the labourer, but of the capitalist, the necessity increases for some effective control <sup>54</sup> over the proper application of these means". This has been the focus of managerial enterprise during the major part of this century.

#### 3.2.2.3.1. CLASSICAL MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

The process of making management economically efficient was triggered off by Taylor and his principles of Scientific Management <sup>55</sup>. This approach on his own admission would produce far larger and better results. The principles of scientific management were built around four types of new duties assumed by "scientific managers".

1. The first task of the scientific manager is the scientific analysis of the tasks being done by workmen in organizations with a view to reducing these tasks to laws, rules and even

mathematical formulae. These systematized procedures are then applied to concrete tasks in concrete work organizations.

2. The second task under scientific management is the scientific selection and then the progressive development of the workmen.
3. The third task is to bring together the science and the scientifically selected and trained workmen.
4. The scientific manager performs analytically even as the worker carries out his task operationally.

And the result? "They invariably result, first, in producing a very much larger butput per man, as well as an output of a better and higher quality; and, second, in enabling the company to pay much higher wages to their workmen; and third, in giving the company a larger profit"<sup>56</sup>. Hence, scientific management is geared to the generation of surplus value by maximizing the exploitation of labour. Labour not only generates use value but also generates value to compensate the "scientific" manager as well as to enhance the company's profit. It may be true that labour may be generating more use value and thus may be bringing about increased wages but at the same time "scientific" management and its mechanisms conceal the proportion of wages to surplus value generated. The benefits to the reproduction of capital through scientific management is far, far more than the benefits accruing to the wage labouring class. The important

fact to be grasped here is that the real value generated is hidden by the elaborate "scientific" rationale behind this system. Taylor himself gives an example which illustrates the above fact; "Under the old system, the cost of handling a ton of materials had been running between seven and eight cents, and all you gentlemen familiar with railroad work know that this is a low figure for handling materials. Now, after paying for all the clerical work which was necessary under the new system for the time study and the teachers, for building and running the labour office and the implement room, for constructing a telephone system for moving men about the yard, for a great variety of duties not performed under the old system, after paying for all these things incident to the development of the science of shovelling and managing the men the new way, and including the wages of the workmen, the cost of handling a ton of material was brought down between seven and eight cents, and the actual saving, during the last six months of the three and one-half years I was there was at the rate of \$78,000 a year. This is what the company got out of it; while the workmen who were on the labour gang received an average of sixty per cent more wages than their brothers got or could get anywhere around that part of the country".

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If ever there was a graphic description of how the capitalist work organization functions, it is this. The basic values, attitudes, procedures, effects, the reasoning, the overt and the covert dimensions of the capitalist work organization cannot be better described. The productivity of the labourer generates enough value to sustain the entire system of his own exploitation and also contributes to the reproduction of capital.



Having said this, it must be admitted that by itself there certainly is an improvement in the methodology, efficiency and ease of work. It is the use the technology of work is put to and towards what end which become a matter for critical concern.

Yet another example of a contribution to the scientific management school could be discerned in an article on "The giving of Orders" by Mary Parker Follett. <sup>58</sup> The antithetical character of employer-employee relations leads to a situation where the employer with the prerogative of giving orders encounters problems in issuing orders because employees resent the taking of orders. Two consequences are discernible from the management's point of view : too great bossism in giving orders or practically no orders at all. Follett's solution to this dilemma "is to depersonalize the giving of orders, to unite all concerned in a study of the situation, to discover the law of the situation and obey that. Hence, employers and employees are encouraged to adopt a situational approach in which an analysis of the situation is made and the best possible alternative for appropriate action is adopted. Follett also adds enthusiastically, "We have here, I think, one of the largest contributions of scientific management: it tends to depersonalize orders. From one point of view, one might say the essence of scientific management is the attempt to find the law of the situation. "The formula for resolving the conflict is to discover "the law of the situation" and thus "to depersonalize orders". Follett concludes "If those in supervisory positions should depersonalize orders, then there would be no overbearing

authority on the one hand, nor on the other the dangerous laissez-faire which comes from the fear of exercising authority". The system of giving orders described above may indeed be contributing to scientific management but there appears to be a lack of grasp of the totality -- the structure of the work organization in which orders are given. Although both controller and controlled may be subject to the law of a situation, nevertheless the inherent antagonism between the two cannot be ignored. The structure of the work organization with ownership and/or control in the hands of the employer, it would indeed be naive to think that mere depersonalization of orders would lead to compliance and conformity. There also appears to be an assumption that there is basic harmony between the two sections whereas empirical reality points in the opposite direction. Although both employer and employee may subject themselves to the law of the situation, who is going to benefit more and how is also a vital question -- more vital than mere obedience to the "law" of the situation. The important consideration from the point of view of the purposes of our analysis is that any recourse to "scientific management" without giving due weightage to the contradictory and exploitative nature of the totality of the work organization would call into question the very scientific objectivity of the management orientation or practice.

A similar line of analysis can also be applied to Fayol's Principles of Management. <sup>59</sup> The "general function" of management in organization, when viewed within the wider perspective of the work organization and the prevalent dominant mode of production

is neither an isolated nor a neutral phenomenon. And, consequently, even the principles of management, however inseparable from the identity of management per se, take on the characteristics of the mode of production or at least buttress the objects of the production processes given a particular mode of production. A brief review of Fayol's principles of management which follows lends credence to this perspective. Fayol has listed fourteen principles of management most of which have been tested both in practice as well as through theoretical analysis over the years.

\*. Division of Work:

Fayol contends that division of work is an inextricable part of any social or industrial organization. The object of division of work is to produce more and better work with the same effort. Accordingly division of work from his point of view is "the best means of making use of individuals and of groups of people". A distinct lacuna in this type of reasoning is the question of whose interests specialization, increased efficiency and enhanced output serve--those who own/control the organization or workers and the larger society? The answer to this question is inextricably linked to the character of the mode of production which uses division of work.

\*. Authority:

According to Fayol, authority is the right to give orders and the power to exact obedience. Again there is the system of

sanction attached to acts of authority in order that useful actions can be encouraged and their opposite discouraged "in the general interest". In the context of our analysis of work organizations, an understanding of the role of authority per se would be woefully inadequate. A necessary exercise would be to question the source of this authority to exact obedience -- Does it flow from a feudal base, capitalist base or socialist base? Does it flow from an autocratic base, oligarchic base or a democratic base? The answers to these question again point to the inadequacy of viewing authority as an isolated phenomenon -- isolated from the larger structural variables dependent on the mode of production.

\*. Discipline:

Discipline, according to Fayol, is in essence obedience, application, energy, behaviour and outward marks of respect observed in accordance with the standing agreements between the firm and its employees. Discipline would therefore appear to be the conformity of employees to certain agreements with employers with a view to fulfilling the objectives of the firm. Employee discipline becomes a form of consent to the structure and processes of a work organization, a form of commitment to the goals of the work organization. Hence, it is also important to consider who stands to gain from this type of commitment. This again brings us to the whole question of who owns or controls a work organization and for whose benefit. Discipline in an organization of the worker, by the worker and for the worker would have a totally different substance from an organization

owned by a private agency or by a government bureaucracy. The totality and praxis of disciplinary structures and processes have a vital role to play in analyzing discipline in work organizations.

\*. Unity of Command/Unity of Direction:

According to Fayol, unity of direction would mean "one head one plan" and unity of command would mean "one employee to have orders from one superior only". These two principles advocate a system of vertical authority with planning, formulation of policy, decision-making and the power to execute plans, policies and decisions concentrated at the apex level. Who directs, who commands and towards what end become important questions in any work organization.

The various other principles of management like centralization, subordination of individual interests to the general interest, scalar chain, order, stability of tenurs of personnel reveal a certain pre-occupation with the control of workers in work organizations with a view to relentlessly pursuing organizational goals of economy and generation of surplus value. Viewed in isolation, these principles of management may appear reasonable and even laudable but when seen within the larger perspective of the politico-economic structural context of the work organization the purposes for which these principles are employed can be called into question. As a matter of fact, in the Fayol scheme of things, even the principles of

remuneration of personnel, equity, employee initiative and esprit de corps are viewed as so many sources of "strength for business".

The whole purpose of the review of Fayol's principles of management has been to demonstrate that in any analysis of a work organization, it is not enough to define how to manage but it is also important to spell out who manages, to what end and for whose benefit, given the politico-economic totality and the class contradictions in the larger environment within which the work organization operates.

The same vital perspective applies whatever the management theory or management practice. Whether the executive function is viewed as the provision of a system of communication towards the securing of essential efforts and the formulation and definition of purpose<sup>60</sup> or as decentralization with coordinated control<sup>61</sup>, it is important to know who owns the work organization and for whose benefit. Whether management function is viewed as synonymous with decision making<sup>62</sup> or whether it is Management by objectives<sup>63</sup>, it is important to see that the increase in productivity and the subsequent maximization of surplus value benefits those who own and control the system and does not reflect the social character of the labour process in work organizations adequately.

The brief consideration of some of the important management approaches establishes the fact that most of these approaches have emerged from within the capitalist mode of production and work organization. "Moreover, the cooperation of wage labourers is

entirely brought about by the capital that employs them. Their union into one single productive body and the establishment of a connection between their individual functions, are matters foreign and external to them, are not their own act, but the act of the capital that brings and keeps them together. Hence, the connection existing between their various labours appears to them, ideally in the shape of a preconceived plan of the capitalist and practically in the shape of the authority of the same capitalist, in the shape of the powerful will of another who subjects their activity to his aims"<sup>64</sup>. Thus, management under the capitalist mode of production has a stranglehold on the working class through the cult of the manager and almost forces the belief on the working class that it has no existence apart from its management. The belief spreads that "the wage labourer, like the slave, must have a master who puts him to work and rules over him"<sup>65</sup>.

It is not at all surprising therefore that there is a feeling of antagonism and hostility between the owners of capital and wage labourers, between the controllers and the controlled, between the managers and the managed. Organizational management under the capitalist mode of work organization is experienced as despotic by the working class. "If, then, the control of the capitalist is two fold by reason of the two fold nature of the process of production itself which, on the one hand, is a social process for producing use values, on the other, a process for creating surplus value -- in form the control is despotic"<sup>66</sup>.

The working class perception of the management of capitalist work organization as despotic leads to working class resistance to the domination of capital. Capital in turn has to take measures to overcome the resistance thus intensifying the process of exploitation. "As the number of cooperating labourers increases, so too does their resistance to the domination of capital, and with it, the necessity for capital to overcome this resistance by counter pressure. The control exercised by the capitalist is not only a special function, due to the nature of the social labour process, and peculiar to that process, but it is at the same time, a function of the exploitation of a social labour-process, and is consequently rooted in the unavoidable antagonism between the exploiter and the living and labouring raw material he exploits" .<sup>67</sup>

The consequences of this struggle between capital and wage labour are the myriad manifestations of labour's opposition to management. Invariably management analyzes this problem not from the larger perspective of the politico-economic structures and processes but from a narrow perspective of the insubordination and indiscipline of workmen. Marx himself has observed this phenomenon, ".....Capital is constantly left to wrestle with the insubordination of the workmen..... Hence, throughout the whole manufacturing period there runs the complaint of want of discipline among the workmen" .<sup>68</sup>



### 3.2.2.3.2. BEHAVIOURAL APPROACHES TO MANAGEMENT

The ingenuity and innovativeness of industrial capital and industrial management is nowhere better manifest than in their efforts to grapple with the nagging problem of worker "insubordination" and "indiscipline". The results of these efforts are manifest in the vast body of research related to behaviour and behaviour modification in organizations. Human relations theory and techniques, motivation theories, personality and interpersonal theories, group dynamics, leadership and organization development techniques, participatory organization structures and processes and industrial democracy, have all become the focal point of research and action in a concerted effort to come to grips with the intransigent problem of worker "insubordination" and "indiscipline".

The earliest known empirical search for a solution was the set of Hawthorne experiments under the direction of behavioural scientists. The Hawthorne experiments heralded what has come to be known as the Human Relations movement in industry. In Mayo's own words: "In modern large-scale industry the three persistent problems of management are:

1. The application of science and technical skill to some material good or product.
2. The systematic ordering of operations.
3. The organization of team work -- that is, of sustained cooperation.

The last must take account of the need for continual reorganization of teamwork as operating conditions are changed in an adaptive society ..... The first of these holds enormous prestige and interest and is the subject of continuous experiment. The second is well developed in practice. The third, by comparison with the other two, is almost wholly neglected". Thus, it is clear in Mayo's ownwords that his major preoccupation in relation to the functioning of organizations is "the organization of teamwork -- that is, of sustained cooperation". Science, technology and management do play a major role in the production process but it is also important to elicit the willing cooperation of the community of producers. "For the larger and more complex the institution, the more dependent it is upon the whole-hearted cooperation of every member of the group".

The question is, "How"? A quick perusal of the history of organizations theory shows that the answer to this question came in the form of a reaction of the "classical" organizations theory which had its origins in Taylor's Scientific Management and other writers like Mooney and Reiley, <sup>70</sup> Brech <sup>71</sup>, and Allen <sup>72</sup>. Classical organizations theory stressed division of labour, scalar and functional processes, organizations structure and span of control. But in the same breath, classical theorists did not pay much attention to the "human" factor in organizations and failed to incorporate in its scheme of things the behavioural dimension of the actors in the drama. It was to offset the lacunas that the neoclassical or the human relations approach

came into existence. The neoclassicists' main contribution was to give due importance to the people in the organization if only to enhance their willing cooperation in the process of production in organizations.

The Hawthorne experiments paved the way for the Human Relations movement in industry. There have been contributions to this approach from Mayo<sup>73</sup>, Luthans<sup>74</sup>, Rotherlisberger and Dickson<sup>75</sup>, Gardner<sup>76</sup> and Moore, Davis, Miller and Form<sup>77</sup>. The main thrust of the Hawthorne experiments was to find out how best to utilize human resources in industry. The experiments were conducted in five stages between 1927 and 1932.

- Stage I : The Relay Assembly Test Room Study
- Stage II : The Second Relay Assembly Group Study
- Stage III : The Mica Splitting Test Room Study
- Stage IV : The Interviewing Programme
- Stage V : The Bank Wiring Observation Room Study

The first three stages were devoted to examining the effect of physical conditions like rest pauses, hours of work, payment system, temperature, humidity, light on work behaviour and productivity. After about a year of experimenting, the investigators came to a rather unexpected conclusion that it was not so much physical conditions as social satisfactions arising out of human association and group solidarity which have a positive effect on worker productivity and output. This

conclusion came to light in the first three stages of the experiment and the subsequent fourth stage was used in interviewing workers to worker attitudes while the fifth stage directed to an analysis of informal group organization in the work organization.

The impetus given by the Hawthorne experiments led to the neoclassical approach to organizations theory which gave a new thrust to those who owned or managed organizations in their task of bringing under their control worker behaviour and worker productivity. The neoclassicists began to pay attention to industrial fatigue and monotony, worker isolation and anonymity in relation to the problem of division of labour in work organizations. The neoclassicists commitment to humanizing work organizations and work relationships also led to interest in organizational problems of motivation, coordination, executive leadership delegation and functionalization processes, interpersonal and intergroup conflicts.

Classical organizations theorists expended their energy in maximizing the control of employees by evolving rigorous methods of scientific management. Neoclassical theorists helped in spreading the management tentacles even to the informal group organization within the work organization. The development of sociometric techniques and strategies for utilizing the informal organization has helped those who control the work organization to optimize the control of both the formal and informal components of the work organization.

Neoclassicists' interest in the "human" factor in the work organization has led to numerous studies related to the motivation of workers in work organizations. The focus of these endeavours has been to understand better human behaviour at work with special reference to why people work and how people can be motivated to work. Several motivation "theories" have been evolved as foundations for "humans" extraction of work in carrying out organizational goals. McClelland's achievement motivation, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene theory, Skinner's Theory of Behaviour Modification and Vroom's Valency Theory are some of the more notable efforts in the direction of understanding the mechanics of human and more specifically work motivation.

McClelland et al (1965) came up with the conclusion that individuals can develop "achievement motivation" - "a concern about success in competition with some standard of excellence". Experimental and field studies were carried out to demonstrate that those who are fired with the "achievement motivation" are also high achievers in both laboratory as well as real life situations. McClelland also developed training courses to help people develop this motive. The training programme revolves around four principles.

1. Trainees are trained to examine themselves, their behaviour, their needs, their feelings.

2. Trainees are exposed to motivated individuals and are encouraged to think and behave like them.
3. Trainees are helped to set realistic goals which they can realistically achieve.
4. Trainees are given support in bringing about personal change.

Training for increasing the achievement motivation by itself may be a laudable exercise but the vital questions under the capitalist system of work organization would be : What is the meaning of achievement? Who benefits from the achiever's efforts? Does training for achievement only serve to reinforce the exploitative nature of the work organization?

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs has held considerable sway on the debate on motivation in organizations. According to Maslow, human needs seem to arrange themselves into a hierarchy : Physiological needs, safety (security) needs, social (affiliation) needs, esteem (recognition) needs, self-actualisation. The physiological needs are the basic needs like food, clothing, shelter; safety or security needs refer to the need to be free from physical dangers and other forms of insecurity; social or belonging needs refer to the need for meaningful relations with others; esteem needs refer to the need for recognition and respect from others; finally the need for self-actualisation refers to the need to act because the action itself satisfies or is in conformity with one's individually

formulated ideals and goals. The basic idea behind Maslow's scheme is that individuals have needs and when the needs are not satisfied there is activity. Hence, it follows that in a work organization, the worker's involvement in carrying out the goals of the organization is possible only when the work organization understands the needs of the workers and also makes an effort to satisfy their needs.

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McGregor tried to analyze the assumptions regarding human nature and human behaviour behind the processes going on in work organizations. For instance, he says that most organizations theories and management practices adopt a set of assumptions which he labels the 'Theory X' approach.

Some of these propositions are:

1. Management is responsible for organizing the elements of productive enterprise - money, materials, equipment, people - in the interest of economic needs.
2. With respect to people, this is a process of directing their efforts, motivating them, controlling their actions, modifying their behaviour to fit the needs of the organization.
3. Without this active intervention by management, people would be passive-even resistant-to organizational needs. They must therefore be persuaded, rewarded, punished, controlled - their activities must be directed. This is management's task. Management from this perspective consists of getting things done through other people.

After spelling out these propositions of Theory X, McGregor makes an attempt to make explicit certain underlying assumptions which go hand in hand with the approach:

1. The average man is lazy and wants to work as little as possible.
2. He lacks ambition, dislikes responsibility, prefers to be led.
3. He is inherently self-centred, indifferent to organizational needs.
4. He is by nature resistant to change.
5. He is gullible, not very bright, the ready dupe of the Charlatan and the demagogue.

The basic management strategy in relation to work organization under the 'Theory X' mode would be one of direction and control irrespective of whether management is 'hard' or 'soft'. The tough method of directing takes the form of coercion, threat, close supervision, tight controls over behaviour. The Laissez faire method of directing behaviour involves being permissive, satisfying of people's demands, achieving harmony in the hope that they will become tractable and ultimately accept direction.

McGregor, however, feels this approach is inadequate especially considering the findings of social scientists



regarding the hierarchy of human needs -- physiological, safety, social, ego, self-fulfilment needs. Once basic physiological and safety needs are satisfied through work, men can be motivated only by higher order needs. While direction, control and coercion as management strategy may be adequate when even basic needs are met, once higher order needs become operative as motivators, such strategies become woefully inadequate calling for new methods and new strategies.

"Theory Y" is McGregor's offering.

1. Management is responsible for organizing the elements of productive enterprise - money, materials equipment, people -- in the interest of economic ends.
2. People are not by nature passive or resistant to organizational needs. They have become so as a result of experience in organizations.
3. The motivation, the potential for development, the capacity for assuming responsibility, the readiness to direct behaviour toward organization goals are all present in people. Management does not put them there. It is a responsibility of management to make it possible for people to recognize and develop these human characteristics for themselves.
4. The essential task of management is to arrange organizational conditions and methods of operation so that people can achieve their own goals best by directing their own efforts towards organizational objectives.

McGregor himself admits that 'Theory Y' is synonymous with Drucker's 'Management by Objectives' mentioned earlier which is a process of creating opportunities, releasing potential, removing obstacles, encouraging growth, providing guidance. Practical methods of applying 'Theory Y' according to McGregor are decentralization and delegation, job enlargement, consultative management and performance appraisal.

The brief discussion of McGregor's Theory points towards two different approaches to the people in organizations. One approach is authoritarian, manipulative, coercive, the other is democratic, people-centred, self-directive. Yet neither Theory X nor Theory Y addresses itself to the question of the structure of ownership and control in organizations. Whether it is Theory X or Theory Y, ownership, control, power to take organizational decisions resides firmly in the hands of management and even the advocacy of employee participation in decision-making and its modalities is a management prerogative. Theory Y certainly is a step in the direction of democratization of the work organization but very often as McGregor himself admits, the managements accept the Theory Y ideas but apply it within the frame work of Theory X and its assumptions. But more fundamentally neither Theory X nor Theory Y come to grips with the problem of the structure of control in work organizations. Under both systems control of the work organization still rests with management and it is management which holds the prerogative to determine the scope and content of worker involvement in decision-making in organizations.

Herzberg introduced his Two-factor theory or "The Motivation-Hygiene" Theory. His endeavour was to discover the job "satisfiers" and job "dissatisfiers". As a result of his efforts, he found that "five factors stand out as strong determiners of job satisfaction -- achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility and advancement ....." . He also found that "the major dissatisfiers were company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations and working conditions". Herzberg finally came up with a procedure for enriching jobs as a method for motivating workers for enhanced productivity and satisfaction. The only hitch appears to be that the structure of control of the work organization is taken for granted and hence the implications of enhanced productivity of the worker is not given due importance.

There have also been numerous experimental studies related to classical conditioning and operant conditioning coupled with considerable debate about the potential of these theories and experiments in the control of workers in work organizations.

Skinner suggested that motivation for action depends on the kind of reinforcement. If the reinforcement is positive, the action will be repeated. If the action is followed by a negative reinforcement, the motivation for the action would be reduced. Thus, through a programme of positive and negative reinforcements, it would be possible to encourage or discourage action, continue or discontinue action. Certain types of action could even be made extinct completely. A motivation theory of

this kind can certainly contribute to the buttressing of an exploitative mode of work organization wherein work behaviour can be controlled by means of a systematic programme of positive and negative reinforcements because after all, going by this theory, good management is that which leads to the behaviour desired of organization members by management.

The brief description of some of the major motivation theories indicates the basic thrust of these efforts in the content of tackling the management perception of worker "insubordination". A critical appraisal of these theories points to the lack of sensitivity of these theories to the larger question of politico-economic structures and processes in a contradiction-ridden totality.

Preoccupation with motivation in organizations indicates an approach to behaviour of workers which is characterized by focus on individuals in organizations. Theorising centres around the question of how individuals can be motivated to improve work performance. Organization theorists have tried another approach to the problem of enhancing work productivity-- an approach characterized by focussing on the group rather than on the individual.

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Lewin, K. et al carried out experiments on group dynamics and group behaviour using a battery of tests and techniques. Group processes, patterns of aggressive behaviour, impact of different types of leadership on group behaviour were studied. The effect of three types of leadership - authoritarian,

democratic, laissez-faire - on group aggression was studied and very interesting observations emerged. "The analysis of data followed two interesting trends:

1. interpretation of 'sociological or 'group-centred' data.
2. interpretation of psychological or 'individual-centred' data.

The sociological approach included such analyses as differences in volume of social interaction related to social atmosphere, nature of club activity, out-group relationship, differences in pattern of interaction related to outgroup in-group orientation, atmosphere differences in leader-group relationship, effect upon group structure, pattern of social atmosphere and types of activity, group differences in language behaviour, etc. The psychological approach included such analyses as relation of home background to pattern of club behaviour, range of variation of member behaviour in different types of social atmosphere, patterns of individual reaction to atmosphere transitions in relation to case history data, correlation between position in group stratification and pattern of social action, etc."

Argyris has contributed to this controversy of individual-group relationship by analyzing individual needs and organizational needs and then trying to evolve a model of organizational behaviour which would fuse the two conflicting pulls and pressures. Argyris has stated the impact of formal organization on the individual in terms of several propositions:

01. There is a lack of congruency between the needs of healthy individuals and the demands of the formal organization.
02. The resultants of this disturbance are frustration, failure, short time perspective and conflict.
03. Under certain conditions (growing maturity, more direction, lower authority, more control, greater specialization), the degree of frustration, failure, short time perspective and conflict will tend to increase.
04. The nature of the formal principles of organization cause the sub-ordinates, at any given level, to experience competition, rivalry, intersubordinate hostility and to develop a focus toward the parts rather than the whole.
05. The employee adaptive behaviour maintains individual self-integration and simultaneously facilitates integration with the formal organization.
06. The adaptive behaviour of the employees has a cumulative effect, feeds back into the formal organization, and reinforces itself.
07. Certain management reactions tend to increase the antagonism underlying the adaptive behaviour.
08. Other management actions can decrease the degree of incongruency between the individual and formal organization.

09. Job or role enlargement and employee-centred leadership will not tend to work to the extent that the adaptive behaviour has become embedded in the organizational culture and self-concept of the individual.

10. The difficulties involved in Proposition 9 may be minimized by the use of reality-oriented leadership .  
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The propositions clearly indicate that there is a conflict of interest between individual needs and organizational needs. The dialectic between those who control the organization and those who come under their control is based on increasing antagonism. The response of management to such antagonisms only increases the antagonism. The main ideas of Argyris' analysis are given below by way of summary of his system:

1. Organizations are grand strategies individuals create to achieve objectives that require the effort of many. For historical reasons they follow a particular initial or formal strategy whose roots may be found in military theory, industrial economics, scientific management and public administration.

2. The strategy derived from these roots leads to a pyramid-shaped formal organization defined by such principles as chain of command, unity of direction, span of control and task specialization. If this formal strategy works as it is intended, then the analysis could end here. Unfortunately, the formal organizational strategy hits some snags - the primary one being the individual human beings.

3. Mutual adaptations take place where the organization modifies the individual's personality and the individual, through informal activities, modifies the formal organization. These modifications become part of the organization.

4. A total organization is therefore more than the formal organization. Conceptualizing it as a behavioural system we may conclude that an organization is a composite of four different but interrelated sub-systems resulting in the following kinds of behaviour:

a) The behaviour that results from the formal organizational demands.

b) The behaviour that results from the demands of the informal activities.

c) The behaviour that results from each individual's attempt to fulfil his idiosyncratic needs.

d) The behaviour that is a resultant of the unique patterning for each organization of the three levels above.

The analysis of the individual-organizational dialectic appears to view organizational behaviour as isolated phenomenon untouched by the social, economic and political processes in the larger environment in which the organization is situated. Again the features of the mode of production and its goals and means and their impact on individual-organizational dynamics have not been taken into account.



Likert after analyzing the cases of high achieving managers came to the conclusion that "a newer theory of organization and management can be stated". Traditional managers always hold the view that the best way to motivate and direct behaviour is to exercise control through authority. "Jobs are organized, methods are prescribed, standards are set, performance goals and budgets are established. Compliance with them is sought through the use of hierarchical and economic pressures". But effective managers feel that such measures tend to be counterproductive. Instead they try to use various types of motivational methods in order to build favourable and cooperative attitudes in the work group.

The superiors who are able to elicit the cooperation of their subordinates have the following characteristics based on studies conducted by Likert:

1. The attitude and behaviour of the superior toward the subordinate as a person, as perceived by the subordinate, is as follows:
  - a) He is supportive, friendly and helpful rather than hostile. He is kind but firm, never threatening, genuinely interested in the well being of subordinates and endeavours to treat people in a sensitive, considerate way. He is just, if not generous. He endeavours to serve the best interests of his employees as well as of the company.

- b) He shows confidence in the integrity, ability and motivations of subordinates rather than suspicion and distrust.
- c) His confidence in subordinates helps him to have high expectations as to their level of performance. With confidence that he will not be disappointed, he expects much, not little. (This again, is fundamentally a supportive rather than a critical or hostile relationship.)
- d) He sees that each subordinate is well trained for his particular job. He endeavours also to help subordinates be promoted by training them for jobs at the next level. This involves giving them relevant experience and coaching whenever the opportunity offers.
- e) He coaches and assists employees whose performance is below standard. In the case of a subordinate who is clearly misplaced and unable to do his job satisfactorily, he endeavours to find a position well suited to that employee's abilities and arranges to have the employees transferred to it.

The behaviour of the superior in directing the work is characterized by such activity on

- a) Planning and scheduling the work to be done, training subordinates, supplying them with material and tools, initiating work activity, etc.

- b) Providing adequate technical competence, particularly in those situations where the work has not been highly standardized.
3. The leader develops his subordinates into a work team with high group loyalty by using participation and other kinds of group leadership practices.

Finally, Likert suggests that there is an underlying principle which the high-producing managers seem to be using which Likert terms "the principle of supportive relationships". The guide in any attempt to apply the newer theory of management in a specific plant or organization, can be briefly stated : The leadership and other processes of the organization must be such as to ensure a maximum probability that in all interactions and all relationships with the organization each member will, in the light of his values, background and expectations, which builds and maintains his sense of personal worth and importance.

How far the principle of "supportive relationships" could contribute and has contributed to tackling the management problem of handling an intractable workforce is a debatable question. The more fundamental question would be to ask to what extent the strategy of "supportive relationship" is going to provide an answer to the productive and distributive aspects of the structure of industrial and socio-economic organization. The principle of "supportive relationships" may perhaps be viewed as the expression of a "compassionate" capitalist mode of work organization.

Organization theorists have also tried to demonstrate that besides human relations technique, motivation theories, group dynamics, individual-group relations leadership styles too can contribute to extracting the cooperation of the workforce. Considerable research has gone into the question of the patterns of leadership and their impact on the functioning of organizations. Drucker<sup>93</sup>, for instance, has said categorically that business leadership is an essential, indispensable but scarce resource in the effective running of an organization. Energy apparently flows from a dynamic and energetic leader to stir the organization on to the fulfilment of the goals of an organization.

There have been several attempts to determine who or what constitutes effective leadership. The trait theory<sup>94</sup> has yielded inconsistent findings; a more acceptable theory regarding leadership seems to be the situational theory of leadership<sup>95</sup>. Considerable research has been carried on over the relative effectiveness of a task-oriented leader<sup>96</sup> and a people-centred leader<sup>97</sup>, between an authoritarian leader and democratic leader<sup>98</sup>. The Michigan leadership studies<sup>99</sup> identified two concepts -- employee orientation and production orientation; Cartwright and Zander<sup>100</sup> spoke of group goal achievement and group maintenance as the two dimensions of leadership; the Ohio state Leadership studies identified two dimensions of leadership - initiating structure (task - orientedness)<sup>101</sup>. Blake and Mouton<sup>102</sup> came up with the Managerial grid which postulated five different styles of leadership based on concern for production and concern for

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people. Likert favours an employee-centred and democratic leader as the most likely style for inducing greater effectiveness and productivity. Fiedler<sup>104</sup> developed a Leadership Contingency Model wherein the "favourableness" of a situation to a leader depends on three situational variables:

(1) leader-member relations, (2) task structure, (3) the power vested in the leader. Reddin<sup>105</sup> and his 3-D Management Style Theory added an "effectiveness" dimension to the task dimension and the relationship dimension. Lewin postulated that effectiveness is a function of the maintenance of equilibrium between driving forces (improving productivity, control, competition) and restraining forces (antagonism, indifference of workers). Lewin refers to this process as Force Field Analysis.

There is no denying the fact that in the direction of goal fulfilment, group or organization may require the dynamism of individuals with drive, vision, and initiative. But very often leadership is associated with extracting more from the human resources with a view to maximising productivity and increasing profits without due consideration to the structure of ownership and control, the production and the distribution of value added. Leadership in a work organization becomes an expression of the iron law of oligarchy and of control over wage labour and simultaneously relegates to the background the role of the working classes in the process of production.

Organizations theory has applied its energies to understanding the individual-group-organization interaction with

a view to enhancing the productivity of the individuals and other constituents of the organization. The basic thrust has been to come to grips with the "indiscipline" and "insubordination" of the workmen. Several techniques have been tried: reducing time spent at work, wage hikes, fringe benefits, human relations training, sensitivity training, two-way communication, job participation, employee counselling . More recently organization development, transactional analysis , transcendental meditation, various experiments in industrial democracy , Viemani 1978 , Poole 1975 ) have been thrown in.

3.2.3. CAPITALIST WORK ORGANIZATION AND THE MICROPRAXIS OF ALIENATION

The discussion so far has focussed on the structure and processes in work organizations in our attempt at understanding the modalities of the worker organizational praxis of alienation. The modalities of work organization in the context of diverse modes of production, the frenzied drive of capitalist work organizations towards profit maximization, the exploitative control of workers through methods like the hierarchical structuring of authority, division of labour, classical and neoclassical approaches to management are all factors which characterize the structure and process in work organizations. These factors also therefore constitute the alienation of activity.

What is the impact of capitalist work organization on workers given the organization's predominant characteristics

described above? "It increases the social productive power of labour, not only for the benefit of the capitalist instead of for that of the labourer, but it does this by crippling the individual labourers. It creates new conditions for the lordship of capital over labour. If, therefore, on the one hand, it presents itself historically as a progress and as a necessary phase in the development of society, on the other hand, it is a refined and civilized method of exploitation" . Capitalist work organization is so structured as to maximize the progressive exploitation of the workers and in the process the power of the capitalist over the workers becomes intensified. The organization of work within the capitalist mode of production definitely increases productivity which in turn benefits the capitalist at the expense of individual labourers. Although chroniclers of the socio-economic history of society may hail the capitalist mode of work organization as a sign of progress, mention must also be made of the concomitant advancement in the sophistication and subtlety of the methodology of the exploitation of the working class.

The exploitation of the working class extends not only to economic exploitation but also his intellectual and social development in organizations. Marx quotes Adam Smith on this point, "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 civilized society, this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is, the great body of the people, must necessarily fall". The organization of work which is based on rigid compartmentalization leads to repetition and monotony which in turn leads to the physical, mental and social impoverishment at the labourer.

A corollary of the above observation flows from the politico-economic structure of the mode of production and the consequent dichotomy between mental and material labour. "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas : ie., the class which is the ruling material force of society it is at the same time its ruling intellectual force..... The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations, the dominant material relations grasped as ideas; hence of the relations which make the one class the ruling one, therefore the ideas of its dominance" . The conceptual and methodological skills related to scientific, technological and managerial aspects of work organizations reflect the values and orientations of the dominant mode of production. Besides this basic idea, the technical and



managerial conceptual and methodological skills are monopolized by those who control the work organization. Thus managers and capitalists become the "thinkers" in the processes of work organizations while labouring classes are kept at a specified level of ignorance in order to maintain existing structures and to prevent mobility"..... The division of labour which we already saw above, as one of the chief forces of history up till now, manifests itself in the ruling class as the division of mental and material labour, so that inside this class one part appears as the thinkers of the class ..... While the others' attitudes to these ideas and illusions is more passive and receptive because they are in reality the active members of this class" . Thus most of the expenditure and effort related to Human Resources Development in organizations is directed towards the development of "mental" labour represented by management cadres. This in turn leads to the widening of the cultural and capabilities gap between the managerial cadres and the working classes. The content of management development programmes also buttresses and intensifies management control over the work organization over which workers have little or no control.

### 3.3 Work Organization and the Socialist Mode of Production

One of the assumptions generally made is that work organization under the socialist mode of production is more humane than work organization under the capitalist mode of production. While empirical data is available in abundance on capitalist work organization, there is little on socialist work

organization. This section, therefore, will base itself on Michael Burawoy's "Politics of Production" (1985) in order to understand work organization within the framework of a socialist mode of production.

First, a brief overview of the Marxist-Leninist perspective on management and organization in the socialist dispensation :

- \* Marx, Engels and Lenin developed a "science of society" in which society is viewed as a self-governing system.
- \* The systems approach to society led to the formulation of the definition of socio-economic formation. "Just as Darwin put an end to the view of animal and plant species being unconnected, fortuitous, created by God and immutable and was the first to put biology on an absolutely scientific basis by establishing the mutability and the succession of species, so Marx put an end to the view of society being a mechanical aggregation of individuals which allows all sorts of modification at the will of the authorities. (Lenin, 1960: 142)  
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- \* The systems within a socio-economic formation are commonly divided into managing and managed subsystems. The role of management consists in the formation and optimization of systems.
- \* Marx discovered two types of managing impact on a social system - one spontaneous and the other conscious.

- \* Spontaneous mechanisms of managing action brings about a general tendency in the random play of individual instances - the social acts. A major instrument of the spontaneous mechanism of management is the role of the market in the capitalist system with the underlying tendency represented by the law of value - the ultimate basis of the capitalist economy.
  
- \* The conscious mechanism of management involves specific activity of men, the functioning of established institutions (personalities, organs or organizations) exerting a purposeful impact on the system. "Regulation and order", wrote Marx (1977: 792-93)<sup>119</sup>, "are themselves indispensable elements of any mode of production if it is to assume social stability and independence from mere chance and arbitrariness.
  
- \* The significance of management grows with the development of productive forces and production relations. Management becomes an independent function and a new cadre of managerial labour also comes into existence. "Tackle the question of management ..... Learn from your own practical experience. Learn from the bourgeoisie as well .... They know how to maintain their class rule; they have the experience we cannot do without, wrote Lenin (1920 : 42)<sup>120</sup>. Lenin stressed the importance of management but he also made a clear distinction between the scientific and practical aspects of capitalist theory

and practice of management on the one hand and the exploitative nature of the capitalist system and the resultant management practices on the other.

\* The major elements of the socialist critique of capitalist management is as follows :

\* The most important foundation of goal directed and scientific management - the ownership of the implements and means of production by the people - is absent.

\* Thus given the property relations of the capitalist system, the basis for collective work - the solidarity of interests of all the participants - is lacking.

\* This leads to contradictions between those who own and control and those who sell their labour for wages in a structural and fundamental sense.

\* Such an orientation as described above results in the improvement of the organizational and technical aspects of management while the alienation of labour is intensified.

\* However, capitalist management has made a tremendous contribution to both the science of management as well as to scientific management.

\* The socialist critique of capitalist management also acknowledges that management is a significant social factor and recognizes the need for the development of a management science as well as for the encouragement of the practice of scientific management.

The socialist system besides its critical view of capitalist management also has a point of view on what constitutes socialist management. The basic ideas of the socialist conception of management are as follows :

- \* There is the policy of the dominant position of the ownership of the whole people.
- \* The goals of management are inextricably linked with the larger politico-economic purpose of establishing a communist society.
- \* The role of management in working towards the establishment of a Communist Society also necessitates that management will function under the direction and leadership of the Communist Party.
- \* The most important organizational and political principle of socialist management is the principle of democratic centralism. Centralized planning and control by state agencies are important dimensions of this principle.
- \* Lenin did make an effort to give meaning to the word "democratic" in the concept of "democratic centralism". "We have a 'magic way' to enlarge our state apparatus tenfold at once, at one stroke, a way which no capitalist state ever possessed or could possess. This magic way is

to draw the working people, into the daily work of state administration". (Lenin, Vol.26, 111-112) <sup>121</sup> . The democratization of decision-making processes in state enterprises was very much a matter of Lenin's concern.

- \* While capitalist management emphasized economic profit, socialist management considered human profit as obligatory. Factors like the education of workers, the shaping of a socialist consciousness and the consolidation of socialist relations were considered important.

Thus far the precepts of the socialist mode of production have been described . But the question is whether the precepts have been translated to practice and what are the implications for understanding work organization within the socialist framework.

Burawoy's "Politics of Production" presents an insightful comparative analysis of the capitalist mode of production and the socialist mode of production as experienced in the East European context. For Burawoy, "a mode of production is a way of appropriating surplus value from direct producers." <sup>122</sup> (p159)

Again, for him, "surplus is the difference between what is appropriated and what is distributed back to the direct producers <sup>123</sup> in the form of wages, benefits and subsidies (p 159). Utilizing

these two concepts, Burawoy compares the two modes of production.  
124  
(pp 159-161) :

Capitalist Mode

- \* Surplus is appropriated privately
  
- \* Profit levels are the product of the activities of all competing capitalists and are thus beyond the control of any individual capitalist.
  
- \* Firms attempt to contain competition through the formation of trusts, cartels and the like. Competition itself deals a death blow to smaller enterprises leading to concentration and centralization.

Socialist Mode

- \* Surplus is appropriated centrally by the state
  
- \* Central planners set the parameters for the evaluation of performance.
  
- \* Socialist enterprises seek to increase their power vis-a-vis central planners through expansion.

And as for work organization within the socialist mode of production, Burawoy's case study of a socialist factory shows that labour intensity is more when compared to a factory organization within the capitalist system. The comparative characteristics are as follows: (Burawoy 169-170)  
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Socialist Work organization

More emphasis on piece rate systems

There is employment security but wage insecurity

Capitalist Work organization

More emphasis on Time Scale systems

There is employment insecurity but wage security including state employment benefit during phases of unemployment.

### Socialist Work Organization

Ideology of consent within Taylorian structures and strategies

Status determined by political access

Control by immediate supervisor

### Capitalist Work Organization

Ideology of consent in more humane framework

Status determined by performance based promotion and transfers

Control rules, procedure systems

### 3.4 Micropraxis of Alienation

The analysis of the praxis of work organizations began with the premises that man through work inserts himself into history with a view to transforming nature into socially and economically useful goods and services. It is in this process that he enters into social relations with other men. Each stage in the history of a society is characterized by a dominant mode of production and its concomitant relations of production. Work organizations also therefore are determined by particular modes of production which are dominant at specific historical moments in the development of a society. There are two dimensions of work organizations -- the relations in production which determine the modalities of the organizational structure and processes and the practical aspects of work organizations which are concerned with the task of transforming nature into useful things utilizing the instruments of production. The stability and continuity of the mode of production and its particular method of appropriation of labour is possible only by the power mechanism in the work organization -- who controls and how.



The analysis of Indian society shows that given the Indian constitutional mandate to establish a democratic, 'secular, socialist society, the resultant scenario consists of a Mixed economy, pluralist politics and sociocultural diversity. Progressively though India has been adopting a system where capitalist as well as socialist instruments have been fused together. The industrial relations system in the organized sector contributes to the reproduction and preservation of the existing system. Industrial relations becomes part of "the processes of control over work relations"<sup>126</sup> and the basis for understanding the modalities of collective worker organizational praxis. The scenario is much the same whether in the private sector or in the public sector. As Hyman again has said, "In most countries it is true, the state owns a growing sector of industry; but almost invariably, the operation of this sector is modelled on private capitalism in terms of both of its hierarchy of control and of its respect for the constraints of profit"<sup>127</sup>.

The praxis of work organizations seen within the larger politico-economic context is characterized by elements of both capitalist as well as socialist orientations. This leads to the establishment and consolidation of organizational structures and processes which revolves around surplus maximization both in the private and state sectors. Bureaucratic organizational structures, hierarchical control, division of labour, the role of management are at the service of the generation of surplus for private entrepreneurs mode or for the state. "Scientific" management and certain attendant value systems combine together

to constitute the mechanism for "control" of labour in the service of the reproduction of capital. Labour's consequent antagonism is viewed as an attitude of insubordination and indiscipline. The human relations movement in industry, various theories and methods to determine how workers can be motivated, analysis of group dynamics in order to improve group behaviour, the debate about whether task-oriented leadership is more dynamic, the increasing efforts related to organizational behaviour and development are all attempts to cope with the "problem" of the insubordination and indiscipline of labour. The emphasis is more on making the mechanism for the control of labour in the service of the reproduction of capital more "humane". Obviously the use of these techniques however humane without taking into consideration the politico-economic purpose for which they are being used does not in any way mitigate the expropriation of surplus value with all the attendant consequences for industrial relations.

The praxis of work organizations, therefore, as argued in this part, is linked inextricably with the politico-economic context of the larger society in which the organization is located. The organizational structures and processes given the antagonistic relations of production therefore constitutes the alienation of activity whether it is a capitalist economy, socialist economy or a mixed economy. It might be appropriate at

this point to examine at length the implications of the alienation of activity for the alienation of labour. It will also be useful to see whether the modalities of alienation vary depending upon the profile of the socio-economic formation within which alienation is experienced.

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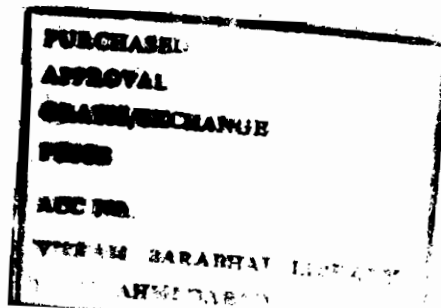
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