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A LABOUR STATUS APPROACH TO  
LABOUR STATISTICS

by

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Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Preface	iii.
I. Introduction	1
II. The Context of Work and Labour	3
(i) Labour and labour power	4
(ii) Exploitation	5
(iii) Surplus labour forms	6
(iv) Division of labour	9
(v) The concept of occupation	11
(vi) Skill	14
(vii) The labour force	22
III. Conceptualising the Labour Process	25
(i) Control over self	26
(ii) Control over labour time	26
(iii) Control over means of production	27
(iv) Control over raw materials	28
(v) Control over output	28
(vi) Control over proceeds of output	29
(vii) Control over labour reproduction	29
IV. A Taxonomy of Labour Statuses	30
(i) Slave	31
(ii) Serf	32
(iii) Servant	32
(iv) Bonded labourer	32
(v) Sharecropper	33
(vi) Artisan (craftsman)	35
(vii) Wage worker, or proletarian	35
(viii) Semi-proletarian	36

	<u>Page</u>
(ix) Peasant	37
(x) Tribal cultivator	41
(xi) Nomads	43
(xii) Family worker	45
(xiii) Apprentice	46
(xiv) Co-operative worker	48
(xv) Landlord	49
(xvi) Lord/master	50
(xvii) Chief	50
(xviii) Merchant	50
(xix) Employer (capitalist)	51
V. Forms of Labour Control	52
(i) External control	55
(ii) Internal controls	61
VI. Concluding Suggestions	71
Appendix: Some Semantics of Work	74

## Preface

Statistics are conservative. Not only are statisticians wary of change from well-trodden practices, but the type of statistics gathered normally reflect ruling orthodoxies or the efforts of preceding generations who have only been able to leave their mark on the statistical framework when they have reached the higher reaches of their bureaucracy, long after their perceptions were shaped. Statistics is a field peopled by cautious spirits; their best quality is infinite care in applying well-tried concepts and techniques approved by peer group use.

So, statistics are conservative. Anyone attempting to encourage a shift in focus from conventional approaches will face scepticism and the tendency to view new proposals or changes as impractical, or too complex, or too controversial. Instead of sympathetic exploration of a potential new direction, or new set of concepts, there will be withering criticism of unrefined aspects and the abstract ideas that must always be the basis of empirical work.

For the most part, theoretical novelty lies not in originality of ideas but with ways of combining old ideas, and with using those ideas in a different contextual framework.

The following derives from discussions at the preparatory conference for the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, though it has no direct relationship to the latter. It was sparked by a dissatisfaction with the conventional labour force approach as developed since the 1930s and modified in recent years in the USA, and as refined by Phil Hauser and colleagues in CAMS and elsewhere with their "labour utilisation" approach. The assumption of the following is that the conventional approach systematically cuts off certain questions about the labour process, especially in agrarian economies but also in industrialised countries. Those questions are fundamental. The central point is labour status, defined in terms of control over the production process and the controls exercised over the producers in the labour process, through both the social and material relations of

production. The discussion is theoretical and abstract; regrettably, at this stage it is rather formalistic and thus pedantic. But it is hoped that by adopting a specific, internally consistent theoretical perspective it identifies an agenda for applied research on the labour process.

This is a preliminary draft, but thanks are due to Richard Anker, David Freedman, Ajit Ghose, Mike Hopkins, Anisur Rahman and Ralph Turvey for comments, and to Caryle Farley for assistance.

## I. Introduction

"...though the broad plan of classification remains much the same, huge transpositions of numbers have been made from one class to another: the domestic class in one census includes the larger part of the population and in the next is reduced by more than half: 350,000 persons in England alone (consisting of the wives and other relatives of farmers, etc.) are taken from the agricultural class of one census and placed in the unoccupied class of another: the partially occupied wives are in no two successive censuses classed alike..."

Charles Booth (1886)[1]

Labour force statistics as collected in most countries of the world have come under heavy attack in recent years, with the dual claim that they do not measure what they purport to measure and that their relevance to the major social and economic problems related to work activity is limited. The stimulus for the following is twofold. Analytically, there is a need to conceptualise the production process and the work process in a way that can be utilised in a more general analysis of structural change, and in many countries with what has been termed "proletarianisation", that is the growth and moulding of a wage-paid labour force. There is also the belief that the conventional labour force statistics fail to reflect crucial aspects of reality and are biased to a particular set of policy considerations. In essence, even if attempts have been made to use them for other purposes, the conventional labour force statistics reflect an overriding concern with short-term considerations, and with Keynesian macro-economic policies in particular. What is required is a shift in emphasis towards the data requirements for analysing, explaining and changing structural aspects of different productive systems.

Statistics have various and sometimes conflicting uses. They are used to monitor trends, and through the images they foster they shape the design of policy. They also reflect theoretical perspectives and in

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<sup>1</sup> C. Booth: "Occupations of the people of the United Kingdom, 1801-81", in Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, June 1886, Vol. XLIX; quoted in P. Deane and W.A. Cole: British Economic Growth 1888-1959: Trends and structure (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), p. 140.

turn influence the perception of reality. Theoretical perspectives determine the questions asked in empirical research, by both including certain questions and ruling out others, and by determining what are legitimate answers to scientific enquiry. In that context, no set of concepts is right in an absolute sense. Conceptual categories are as good as the empirical richness of the questions they raise, illuminate and help to answer. That is the yardstick by which to judge any attempt to pursue conceptual clarity and refinement.

Potentially at least, labour statistics have multiple uses. If the concern were with analysing the determinants and constraints to economic growth, it would help if it were possible to identify prevailing patterns of labour use and labour control that facilitate, restrict or direct production and accumulation in certain ways. Thus, a peasant may be structurally constrained from producing a surplus to a greater extent than a sharecropper. If the concern were with the equity or inequity ground out by the labour process, it would be desirable to identify those labour status groups for whom existing labour relations were contrary to even minimal pursuit of adequate living standards. If concern were with levels of productive employment, it would be desirable to identify the existence of groups in the production process who impede the prospects of adequate employment of others, and the trends in the numerical significance of such groups. To give an extreme example, if a supply of slaves were assured, the chances of others getting a reasonable return to many kinds of manual work would be severely limited. The domination of any group implies the domination of others. Finally, if the concern were with social security, then identification of groups in structurally dependent positions of specific needs could help in the design of appropriate policies, and the allocations needed. In a low-income economy prone to threats to minimal survival living standards for the mass of the population, it is fairly apparent that some labour status groups have "exchange entitlements" that are more vulnerable than others who in normal times have similar or even lower standards of living.<sup>1</sup> A sharecropper may be

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<sup>1</sup> A.K. Sen: Poverty and famines (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1982).



better placed than a wage worker in such abnormal times, a slave no worse. But such issues are no less relevant in urban industrial environments where some categories are under much greater threat than others in any economic downturn. Petty retailers and artisans face a greater threat to their basic subsistence than insured wage workers.

As far as labour statistics are concerned, a basic requirement is to clarify, however briefly, the semantics of work activity, considering the implicit meaning of "economic activity" in the light of alternative meanings and representations of work. A brief sortie on this is made in the appendix, while basic labour concepts are considered in section II. The next task is to conceptualise relations of production, identifying the key distinctions in what can be called the labour status approach to work activity statistics. The final sections of the following paper attempt to go one step further, by presenting a taxonomy of labour status categories, suggesting a schema for operationalising the labour status approach, and considering the critical issue of labour control mechanisms.

## II. The Context of Work and Labour

Of the various ways of analysing the social context of the labour process, one can usefully distinguish between the relations of production approach and the alienation approach. The two are really complementary but lead to rather different perspectives and emphases. With the former, labour can be depicted in terms of relations of production that, relative to feasible alternatives, foster or impede the development of forces of production - that is affect accumulation, the generation of means of living - and that distribute access and actual entitlement to goods and services in specific ways. Those relations of exploitation and oppression that encourage stagnation or that enable parasitic elements to appropriate surplus from direct producers would be the focus of attention. The latter, alienation approach concentrates on the nature, forms and extent of alienation, which exists in all actual labour processes. In that case, the nature of work activity, the loss or denial of autonomy in work and the links between necessity and freedom, between reproduction and creativity, come to the fore. Labour that is compelled by physiological or social necessity - by

survival needs or by social relations of production - is regarded in some sense or other as undesirable. Conversely, autonomous, self-directed, creative work, involving a combination of conception and productive workmanship, is regarded as desirable.

The two approaches are by no means incompatible, but ignoring either or both in labour analysis or in the derivation of labour statistics would be dubious. There are also intriguing paradoxes; thus, in terms of the first approach, a transformation from a peasant to a wage labour economy would probably be seen as progressive, in terms of enhancing accumulation and the development of productive forces, whereas in terms of alienation the change might be regarded as regressive, or at least as no improvement.

The following proposals concentrate on relations of production. But before proposing statistical categories it might be useful to consider some of the underlying concepts that continue to cause analytical confusion and that are fundamental to analysis of the labour process.

(i) Labour and labour power

"Labour is not a commodity"

[ILO, Philadelphia Declaration]<sup>1</sup>

Labour is that which is expended in the production process; in neo-classical economic terms, labour is a factor of production, whereas in classical Marxian terms labour is that which produces, or is intended to produce, surplus value or product for appropriation. Engels distinguished between work and labour, the former creating use values only, the latter creating value.<sup>2</sup> This duality relates to the conceptualisation of productive and unproductive labour, discussed later.

In any case, labour as an activity has to be distinguished from labour power, which is the individual capacity for work, the bundle of

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<sup>1</sup> Constitution of the ILO, Annex: Declaration concerning the aims and purposes of the ILO (Geneva, ILO, 1982), p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> See his footnote in K. Marx: Capital (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1976), Vol. I, p. 138.

skills, knowledge, and physical attributes of any individual. If a craftsman makes a chair for himself he combines a creative activity with autonomous use of energy and dexterity to yield use value. If a furniture factory hires a carpenter it hires labour power, and the worker then provides labour under some form of control. Neo-classical theorists treat labour as a factor of production like "capital", the quantity and quality determined in the act of hiring. But it is the worker who is hired. The amount of effort, time, energy, skill, creativity and so on that the worker provides in the job will vary, just as will the effective rate of exploitation.<sup>1</sup>

(ii) Exploitation

The notion of exploitation is such that a great many labour analysts ignore it altogether.<sup>2</sup> It is basically the appropriation of surplus labour, whether in direct form or indirectly, that is in terms of labour time or surplus product. The rate of exploitation is supposedly determined in part by the cost of reproducing labour power. But this is problematic, insofar as the subsistence standard of living that is typically taken as representing the basic cost element is a socially determined, and therefore not fixed, variable. Moreover, the cost of reproducing labour power is also linked to the "skill level" of workers, the class structure, and related aspects of the social relations of production, including the forms of surplus labour extraction. At root, it reflects a lack of balanced reciprocity.<sup>3</sup> It would be idle to pretend there are

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<sup>1</sup> That the formal labour contract of conventional economic theory is incomplete was recognised in an unrecognised seminal paper by Simon published in 1951; only recently have labour analysts started to explore the issues. H.A. Simon: "A formal theory of the employment relationship", in Econometrica, July 1951, pp. 293-305. If work intensity and effort are indeterminate, so is the wage rate.

<sup>2</sup> It is intriguing that Rawls only mentions exploitation once in his monumentally influential treatise, and then only to note that the neo-classical notion of exploitation - a wage less than the marginal product of labour - is concerned with efficiency not distributive justice. J. Rawls: A theory of justice (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 309.

<sup>3</sup> G.A. Cohen: "The labour theory of value and the concept of exploitation", in Philosophy and Public Affairs, Summer 1979, Vol. 8, No. 4, p. 343. Cohen argues that the relation between the labour theory of value and the concept of exploitation is one of "mutual irrelevance" (p. 338).

no conceptual difficulties with defining exploitation at an empirical level, but it would be worse to dismiss the concept as anything less than central to the labour process, for it is crucial to the basic issue of distributive justice and for understanding the dynamics of accumulation and the forms of wealth.

(iii) Surplus labour forms

Exploitation means the worker does more work than is required to meet his reproduction needs, and that the proceeds are appropriated by some mode of exploitation. For a slave, exploitation takes the form of labour done for a master. Thus one form of surplus labour is direct labour services. In such cases exploitation is measurable and not concealed from the producer or the exploiter. A second form is feudal rent, whether in kind as a labour service or as a proportion of the produce from the labour of the direct producer, or in monetary form, from the proceeds of that labour. This is measurable, but may be concealed by the appearance of some reciprocal arrangement, such as clientage.<sup>1</sup> Note that such rent may not be for the use of land but could be for the use of some other means of production, such as a mill.

A third form, namely usury, has been a particularly virulent form of surplus in so-called semi-feudal societies, through indebtedness of peasants and other petty producers. It is both directly measurable and not concealed, or at least only partially concealed if the appearance is contrived that the producer is receiving some reciprocal benefit from the moneylender.

Usury may be used primarily as a means of direct exploitation, that is extracting surplus from producers, who might be peasants, craftsmen, wage workers or any other type of worker. In that case the interest rate could be expected to be high and carefully scrutinised. Or usury may be used primarily as a means of securing eventual acquisition of land or other means of production mortgaged against the

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<sup>1</sup> Most observers would have little difficulty in perceiving the injustice of this unequal exchange, recognising that the implicit bargain is based on the fundamental ascriptive inequality of the parties concerned.

debt, in which case it will often be observed that the moneylender will not press for payment, or will discourage repayment, until such time as the debtor cannot pay. Or it may be used primarily as a means of labour control, that is obliging workers to labour for a specified amount, to perform a certain amount of work, at certain times, in certain labour relations and in certain places, that may or may not be near where they usually live - in short, as a means of control that ensures long-term surplus extraction. There is ample evidence of all three uses of usury in many parts of the world, and all three deserve to be termed exploitative.

A fourth form of surplus labour consists of surplus value. In all non-wage modes of production surplus labour is directly measurable and visible, yet it is only with the wage labour force that anybody - other than apologists for "pre-capitalist" forms of surplus labour appropriation - question the existence of the performance of surplus labour. In that context, it seems possible to avoid some of the controversies over the labour theory of value, if we can conceive the wage labour process as in part consisting of a series of inter-related struggles over the distribution of the output. One can conceptualise wage labour as comprising wage and surplus components. The wage can be initially divided, conventionally enough, into a physiological survival component and a "historical and moral" component, the latter representing an amount determined by the socially conditioned standard of living of wage workers as a whole.<sup>1</sup> Theoretically, that second component refers to the average worker with average skill.<sup>2</sup> A third component is the skill differential, that paid to produce and reproduce above-average skills; of course, many workers would not receive anything in that regard.

Above the three wage components are four surplus labour components, which are rather harder to conceptualise. First, it has

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<sup>1</sup> The prevailing standard of living in a community influences socially acceptable wage levels, reflecting in turn the extent of accumulation in the economy in question.

<sup>2</sup> The notion of skill will be considered later.

long been argued that part of the surplus obtained from lower strata of workers is redistributed to other workers, rather than appropriated. The notion of "co-exploitation" has been used to describe labour sub-processes where a skilled worker is paid by an employer or agent, perhaps on a piece-rate basis, and in turn hires apprentices or semi-skilled workers; the skilled worker appropriates part of the surplus produced by those under him, whereas the employer appropriates the skilled worker's surplus and part of that of the lower-level workers.<sup>1</sup> But, as depicted later, it also occurs through certain employees receiving incomes that either reflect the type of control system in the enterprise or the bargaining success of one group of workers relative to others. In some cases, the redistribution of surplus to favoured workers or groups of workers represents "divide-and-rule" tactics, a managerial practice universally acknowledged and widely documented.

A second component of surplus labour consists of surplus that forms the basis for profits, which Erik Wright has aptly called "net surplus labour (value)" and which consists of the actual surplus labour after the previous four components have been taken into account.

The last two components are not really surplus as such, and can be termed potential and unavailable surplus labour. The former is that which could be obtained by increased intensity of work or efficiency at work, or as it has been called "reducing the pores of the working day". This is an area where diverse control mechanisms are deployed. Finally, unavailable surplus labour is that which could be obtained if the working time was at some physiological maximum. In practice, the actual working time will always be less than that.

These various components are linked to other concepts discussed in this section. The negative connotation of work activity reflects, in part, the fact that historically alienated, surplus labour has been appropriated in various forms. Moreover, the humanist vision of work as creative activity, as discussed in the appendix, has to be assessed

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<sup>1</sup> E.J. Hobsbawm: Labouring men: Studies in the history of labour (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964).

in the context of social - and, in a subordinated way, technological - struggles over the appropriation of surplus labour. Thus, for example, net surplus labour would be increased if the differential that had to be paid to reproduce skills could be reduced, or if the need for the fourth component of the payment to workers was reduced. In both cases there would tend to be an associated reduction in the creative, autonomous character of work tasks, to the extent that the policy was successful. In the former there would probably be more "deskilling", in the latter a shift of control mechanisms to tighter and more complex methods, as will be discussed in section V. In both cases, the "separation of conception from execution" would be increased.

(iv) Division of labour

As I was about to write this subsection I received a copy of "a workers' education manual" on "Economics", which contained a "Glossary of Economic Terms". The following entry is worth citing in full:

"DIVISION OF LABOUR - The basis of the modern economy. If every man built his own house, made his own clothes and grew his own food, we would all be independent and poor. By division of labour each worker provides for the needs of many others, and everyone should benefit. Internationally, it means trade, commerce and access to goods which cannot be produced at home; but it can also lead, if unchecked, to the relegation of developing countries to permanent reliance on exports of commodities." [1]

This paper is not a polemic. But that definition is riddled with ambiguities and gross inaccuracies, even ignoring the last sentence. Division of labour takes two basic forms, both of which have existed to some degree throughout history. The first is the social division of labour, which is the process by which certain groups do some activities while others are excluded. In a "feudal society" the social division of labour is usually a rigid, ascriptive process, as it is in caste systems and in pre-capitalist modes of production in general.<sup>2</sup> Age, sex,

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<sup>1</sup> International Labour Office: Economics: A workers' education manual (Geneva, ILO, 1983), p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> It has also characterised a number of "post-capitalist" social formations, in some cases because they have merely copied and adapted techniques of labour control. As is well known, Lenin was enamoured with the mythology of Taylorism.

race, caste, religion, language, wealth - all have been used to further social divisions of labour in both pre-capitalist and capitalist labour processes. The labour force stratification that has resulted has tended to accentuate the "alienation of man from man", has encouraged oppression and co-exploitation, and has scarcely deserved the description given in the glossary.

The social division of labour is complemented by the detailed division of labour, which is technological in design even if at least partly social in intent. Adam Smith's pin-making is the classic image, but the basis of the detailed division of labour is the breakdown of tasks, crystallised in the ultimate "separation of conception from execution".<sup>1</sup> The principles of Taylorism - and influential followers such as Bedaux - merely revealed the pernicious alienation involved in the progressive detailed division of labour.<sup>2</sup> Those principles have continued in such devices as minimal "modules of employable skills". In essence, whenever an occupation is created it represents a progression in the detailed division of labour. In antiquity, a man could be a carpenter and a farmer, a blacksmith and a fisherman. Such occupational multiplicity is the reality in most agrarian and industrialising economies. In such places, using statistics to allocate a person to one occupation represents an artificial representation of the detailed division of labour.

As with technological innovations in general, increasing the detailed division of labour has typically been done to increase surplus value, through raising total labour productivity. But it has tended to reduce the creative humanistic aspect of work, while containing a set of contradictions that threaten the stability of the labour process, typically

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<sup>1</sup> H. Braverman: Labour and monopoly capital (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1974).

<sup>2</sup> "The managers assume", argued Taylor, "the burden of gathering together all of the traditional knowledge which in the past has been possessed by the workmen and then of classifying, tabulating and reducing this knowledge to rules, laws and formulae ... All possible brainwork should be removed from the shop and centred in the planning or lay-out department". F.W. Taylor: The principles of scientific management (New York, Harper and Row, 1967; first published in 1911), p. 111.



necessitating a resort to more complex and tighter control mechanisms, a point that will not be pursued here. In sum, the detailed division of labour is concerned with the distribution of tasks across jobs, whereas the social division of labour is concerned with the distribution of groups of people across groups of jobs.

(v) The concept of occupation

"The character of men depends more on their occupation than on any teaching we can give them."

John Ruskin (1880)

Before considering the notion of skill, it is appropriate to consider the related notions of "occupation" and "job". An occupation is commonly defined as a set of related work activities that to some extent are learned or refined through a "career". The set of related tasks may be very small; the learning or refining career may be very short or very long. But an occupation does imply a niche in a productive process. It cannot be a mere coincidence that the etymologically earlier meaning of the word "occupation" in the English language is in connection with taking possession of a piece of territory.

A "job" is a much humbler word, conveying a piece of work, a sub-set of tasks that might be combined into an occupation. Often, but by no means always, it has a pejorative meaning attached to it, a lack of permanency, a lack of accumulated wisdom and skill. Usually it conveys a task or period of employment of short and limited duration. For example, "job-work" is another term for "piece-work". A job is what one does, an occupation is what one is. And therein lies one conceptual ambiguity.

For an occupation conveys impressions of status as well as complexity of work activities.<sup>1</sup> One can still occasionally think of an occupation as a "calling". The term really stems from a social division of labour

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<sup>1</sup> As Williams noted, "Career now implies continuity if not necessarily promotion or advancement, yet the distinction between a career and a job only partly depends on this and is associated also with class distinctions between different kinds of work." R. Williams: Keywords (London, Basic Books, 1976), p. 45.

in which the detailed division of labour is relatively undeveloped, when apprentices were introduced to the "mystery" of a craft. In effect, in intention at least, it refers to the positive sense of work, as creative activity, the combination of intellectual and manual activities - conception and execution - seen in the context of skill refinement. But the development of the detailed division of labour has steadily undermined the basis of the notion of occupation over an increasing range of jobs.

What has emerged is a much greater focus on hierarchy, as befits the growth in the number and complexity of modes of labour control. This is nicely illustrated by the stated structure of the official British Classification of Occupations and Directory of Occupational Titles (CODOT):

"The broad structure of the classification is based on the organisational pattern of many large manufacturing companies with top or general management at the beginning, followed by professional and related specialist occupations supporting top management and frequently found in headquarters offices, and then by technical, scientific and other specialist occupations engaged in background work. These are followed by line management and the production and service occupations under their control."<sup>[1]</sup>

The language is revealing, for it indicates the elements of hierarchy and control in the taxonomical procedure. The implied structure would contrast with the more horizontal patterning of occupations that prevailed when the detailed division of labour was less extended.

Here is not the place to discuss occupational classification procedures. But it is worth noting several facts that highlight the analytical framework underlying the leading examples based on, or consistent with, the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO). A basic difficulty with ISCO as designed in 1958 and revised in 1968, is that it has been designed and refined to fit a variety of uses that are not entirely compatible. The main uses are as:

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<sup>1</sup> Classification of occupations and directory of occupational titles, Vol. I (HMSO, London, 1972). Emphasis added.

- (i) A basis for the design of occupational job-placement services.
- (ii) A guide to vocational training curricula, and for vocational guidance.
- (iii) A model to promote the international comparability of statistics.
- (iv) A basis for identifying socio-economic groups.
- (v) A basis for manpower planning.
- (vi) Analytical categories for examining the determinants of many behavioural and cultural phenomena.

The difficulties of relating any occupational classification to these multiple uses stem from the conceptual haziness of the notion of occupation. The basic principle is that the classification is based on "type of work performed". But that amounts to replacing one vagueness by another. It is scarcely surprising that national classification schemas have blossomed into awesomely complicated exercises; the US Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) has identified over 20,000 "occupations" in its 1977 edition, while the parsimonious Canadians have a little over 6,000 occupational titles in their Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations (CCDO).<sup>1</sup> Most analyses aggregate occupations into eight or nine major categories, and at the highest level of aggregation the ISCO has been understandably criticised for being "too heterogeneous to be of much value in analyses and not sufficiently differentiated in terms of skill."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It is intriguing that the recent changes in occupational nomenclature introduced by the US monthly Current Population Survey have enlarged the number of occupational categories to be used in their published tabulations. Could this, in part, be construed as representing the growing detailed division of labour? The old "professional and technical" grouping is split into its two parts. The old "administrators" has been split into two, with "administrative support" being downgraded to join "clerical". J.E. Bregger: "Labour force data from the CPS to undergo revision in January 1983", in Monthly Labor Review, Nov. 1982, pp. 3-6.

<sup>2</sup> Recommendations to the ILO concerning a revision of the ISCO, Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, Geneva, 18-29 October, 1982, para. 14.

The diverse criteria used in occupational classifications include the following: (i) kind of main activity; (ii) materials used; (iii) equipment used; (iv) services rendered; (v) level of authority; (vi) skill; (vii) employment status (e.g. working proprietors); and (ix) qualifications. A recent complex French attempt at classifying occupations used as criteria skill, authority level, employment status and socio-economic characteristics.<sup>3</sup> But probably the most common plea has been for occupational classification to be based primarily on skill. Thus the ILO consultant for the Thirteenth ICLS concluded:

"The skill aspect is already reflected in many occupational classifications, and has been used in ISCO as well. It is therefore not a question of introducing a new principle, but of giving it priority, wherever possible, over other criteria which are less relevant." [1]

The major difficulty there is that the notion of skill is one of the vaguest work notions of all.

(vi) Skill

In normal parlance, a skill implies a combination of manual and creative abilities. It implies a learning process, with training and work experience. A more skilled worker would presumably be doing a more complex set of tasks requiring longer and higher-level training and experience in the type of work concerned. But what type of training? Indeed, is there a strict correspondence between training or formal qualification and skill level of job? Is job-learning time more or less important than the "knowledge base" required to differentiate skill levels? Should we distinguish between a "skilled job" and a "skilled worker"? These are merely some of the questions that bedevil analysis. Part of the problem has stemmed from the fact that three quite distinct notions of skill have co-existed.

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<sup>1</sup> This is known as Nomenclature des Professions et Catégories Socioprofessionnelles (Paris, INSEE, provisional version, 1982).

<sup>2</sup> B.S. Ehrenström: Report prepared for the ILO concerning the case of a revision of the ISCO (Geneva, ILO, August 1982), p. 35, para. 64. This is a most provocative and useful paper, on which this section has drawn.

(a) Skill as technique

The first assumes that skill reflects objective characteristics of work activity, with a combination of general knowledge and specific knowledge, where the latter embraces training and work experience. Georges Friedman elaborated this approach by dividing skilled workers into specialists and the specialised.<sup>1</sup> "Specialists" receive professional or technical training in a recognised profession or trade, do work that is not routinised and feel involved in their job; "specialised" workers are essentially semi-skilled, receiving general training (i.e. not specialist), doing routinised work and being cut off from the design of the production process. To this has been added a related distinction between "discretionary" and "prescribed" work, and an emphasis on the "task range" required to define skill.<sup>2</sup>

Some in this school of thought have depicted a process whereby the specialist craftsman is replaced by the "specialised worker" and have claimed that the evolution of industrial work can be defined as the passage from a system of skills to a technical system of work. The craftsman possesses job autonomy, and is directly and physically involved in the production. By contrast, the "modern" industrial system is "a system of indirect labour" whereby for the most part the worker does not actively manufacture:

"He superintends, he records, he controls. His job can no longer be defined as a certain relationship between man and materials, tools and machines, but rather by a certain role in the total production picture. In a system dominated by technology most aspects of skills are now absorbed into the social aspects. The rhythm and character of the work is no longer determined by the nature of the product manufactured, or the machine utilised, or by the character of human effort, but by the way in which the work is organised." [3]

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<sup>1</sup> G. Friedman: The anatomy of work (London, Heineman, 1961), pp. 85-88.

<sup>2</sup> E. Jaques: Equitable payment (London, Heineman, 1961). Jaques distinguished between work that is "diffusely defined", allowing discretion, or "specifically defined", precluding it.

<sup>3</sup> A. Touraine: "An historical theory of the evolution of industrial skills", reproduced in L.F. Davis and J.C. Taylor (eds.): Design of jobs (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1972), pp. 56-57.

Moreover, it has been observed that the kind of labour force available may well influence the job structures in industrial enterprises. That is one of several reasons for doubting that there is a strict relationship between worker characteristics and occupational categories. Most occupational statistics, at least as presented in official publications, can give the impression - and have been used to give the impression - that they mirror the distribution of available and used technical skills. They have also been cited as evidence for a desired emphasis on vocational training. But to the extent that jobs are socially structured, the impression would be rather misleading.

(b) Skill as autonomy

A second notion of skill is "skill as job autonomy".<sup>1</sup> Several labour analysts have dismissed the first approach to skill as "technicist", arguing that it "grossly neglects the social and political (in the sense of "power") aspects of skill" and claiming that "a relatively skilled position was one of trust, where the worker was granted a sphere of competence within which decisions, whether routine or complex, could be taken by the worker himself ... It is social, not technical. The centre of the technique is not complexity, but autonomy and freedom."<sup>2</sup>

This highlights one aspect of skill that has a bearing on our later proposals for a labour status approach to labour force statistics, for it links skill to forms of labour control, implying that skill cannot, or should not, be conceptualised independently of control processes. It might be argued that a "link" need not justify concepts that unify the linked attributes. But if it would be misleading to define skill without reference to the extent of task autonomy, then that argument would be invalid. Certainly, lack of autonomy restricts skill development, at the very least in the sense of creativity. And the less the autonomy the greater the degree of alienation.

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<sup>1</sup> C.R. Littler: The development of the labour process in capitalist societies (London, Heineman, 1982), p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> R.M. Blackburn and M. Mann: The working class in the labour market (London, Macmillan, 1979), pp. 291-292. They were referring to "manual workers".

(c) Skill as status

The third notion of skill portrays it as "social status", in a sense complementing the second approach. An extreme version would assert that many occupations, or jobs, are regarded as skilled regardless of technical content and that custom and barriers to entry preserve an artificial skill hierarchy. Those may be complemented by a ritual of training that bears little relation to the task complexity of the job. A weak version would accept that there is some skill content in the sense of the first notion of skill, but that much of the perceived skill differential is outdated or illusory. According to an early advocate of this view, workers are regarded as skilled "according to whether or not entry to the occupation is deliberately restricted and not in the first place according to the nature of the occupation itself."<sup>1</sup> This has a bearing on the division of surplus labour, and thus to forms of labour control, for it may imply that some groups receive a wage increment that does not reflect any difference in the costs of reproducing their labour power. Conversely, some groups may do "skilled" work - in the sense of technique - that goes financially unrewarded.<sup>2</sup>

These three aspects of skill - technical characteristics, relative autonomy, and relative social status - make it essential to use the word cautiously. In one sense most workers could be called "skilled", even if most are in "unskilled" jobs. That brings us back to the division of labour. The status and autonomy aspects of skill have a bearing on the social division of labour. The objective characteristics of work reflect the detailed division of labour, and highlight the need for an analytical classification of "jobs" that avoids what might be called the "longitudinal collapsing of work tasks" in occupational classification - the tendency to depict an occupation as what someone has become or is becoming, and to depict a job as what someone has been or is doing.

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<sup>1</sup> H.A. Turner: Trade union growth, structure and policy (London, George Allen and Unwin, 1962), p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> This might arise from a weak bargaining position in the work process relative to other groups of workers.

A useful starting point in conceptualising and classifying "jobs" is to consider them in terms of the three aspects of skill just outlined. Slightly simplifying so that there is no strict correspondence, three abstract dimensions that can be used to conceptualise jobs are breadth, progressiveness and control status.

First, a job can be described as relatively broad or narrow by the range and complexity of the worker's normal tasks.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, breadth does have some close resemblance to the conventional notion of skill as objective characteristics of the work activity. But some highly "skilled" jobs are relatively narrow in job content, while some very broad jobs, in the sense of combining a wide range of different tasks, are not very skilled in that conventional sense. One might define task breadth by reference, for example, to the "worker functions" devised for the US DOT, or some other related system. For illustrative purposes, the DOT functions can be summarised in three sub-categories as follows:

<u>DATA</u>	<u>PEOPLE</u>	<u>THINGS</u>
0-Synthesising	0-Monitoring	0-Setting up
1-Co-ordinating	1-Negotiating	1-Precision working
2-Analysing	2-Instructing	2-Operating-controlling
3-Compiling	3-Supervising	3-Driving-operating
4-Computing	4-Diverting	4-Manipulating
5-Copying	5-Persuading-signalling	5-Tending
6-Comparing	6-Serving	6-Feeding-offbearing
	7-Taking instructions-helping	7-Handling

The exact procedure for defining job breadth is outside the scope of the present paper. But there seems no reason for not advocating an approach that relies in part on indices of job breadth.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This conceptualisation is owing to J.G. Scoville: "A theory of jobs and training", in Industrial Relations, Oct. 1966, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 36-53.

<sup>2</sup> It is intriguing that the DOT defines manufacturing-sector occupations far more narrowly than occupations in the service sector. As the detailed division of labour proceeds in the latter it can be anticipated that this will change. See, e.g. P.S. Cain and D.J. Treiman: "The Dictionary of Occupational Titles as a source of occupational data", in American Sociological Review, June 1981, Vol. 46, p. 255.



Second, a job per se can be regarded as progressive or static. A progressive job is one in which any person possessing it has some scope for the development and refinement of technical skills, in which there is relative autonomy and discretion over the conception and performance of the work tasks. A static job is one in which there is little or no scope for upward mobility, the tasks, responsibilities and position in the job "hierarchy" being essentially determined at the time of job entry, or shortly afterwards. A static job may be more "skilled" than some progressive jobs, but provide less scope for on-the-job skill accretion or for increasing "breadth" of responsibilities, control over production or job ladder promotion. In neo-classical terms, in static jobs there is little or no return to on-the-job continuity, where return reflects more surplus potential, higher worker productivity due to greater "breadth" of the work, or simply greater efficiency in given tasks. And for employers the costs of labour turnover are much lower than for progressive jobs, ceteris paribus. Progressive jobs require and encourage greater labour force "commitment" by workers, while employers are encouraged to redistribute some surplus from those in static jobs to those in progressive jobs to secure their commitment to the enterprise (and to act as an incentive to increase the net surplus appropriated). Progressive jobs retain more of the "craft ethic", whereas static - and narrow - jobs typically induce an "instrumentality ethic", that is, encourage a more alienated feeling by which work is done for income alone.<sup>1</sup> Workers in progressive jobs tend to have, and perceive themselves as having, higher social status, accentuating the belief in their own "skilled" status.

The conceptualisation of jobs into static and progressive can be useful in explaining various social divisions of labour, with those groups expected to have greater labour force commitment and to yield employers a higher return to training and on-the-job experience being slotted into the more progressive jobs. Those put into static jobs can be expected to develop the behavioural traits that are alleged to be a justification

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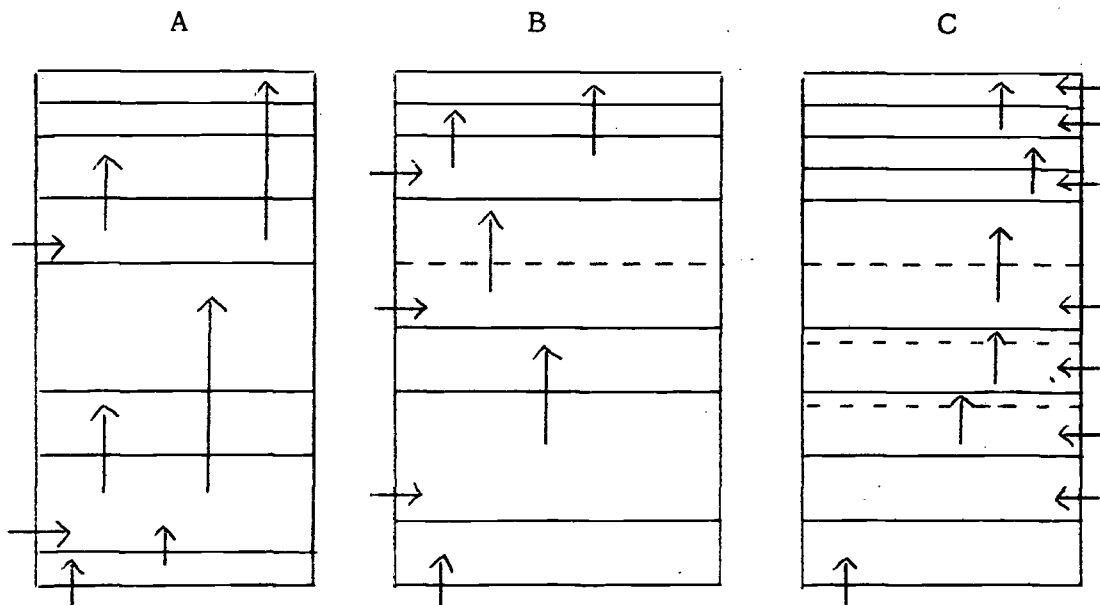
<sup>1</sup> Mills highlighted these ethical distinctions. C. Wright Mills: White collar (New York, Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 220-223.

for putting them in such jobs, and thus have "positive feedback" perpetuating a social division of labour. This has been the case with the sexual division of labour, and with various forms of racial divisions of labour.

Analogously, a "vertical job structure" can be conceived as a pattern of employment consisting predominantly of progressive jobs, whereas a "horizontal job structure" can be seen as a segmented labour force in predominantly static jobs. Consider the three job structures displayed in figure 1. In situation A, there is a vertical job structure, with all jobs except the bottom rung being somewhat progressive. This broadly corresponds to the traditional craftsman image of production. Situation B represents an intermediate phase, in which internal progressiveness has been reduced in scope but where most jobs are still somewhat progressive. Compared with A there are more "ports of entry", consistent with a shift from job-specific to general "skill" acquisition - and, coincidentally, almost certainly a shift away from a perspective that has occupation as the symbol of social status to one where status is measured by off-the-job qualifications, or credentials, and by position in an enterprise hierarchy. Finally, situation C is where there is a horizontal job structure, numerous ports of entry and a majority of static jobs. In such cases, there is reliance on an "external" labour market, and jobs are liable to be both narrow and heavily oriented to off-the-job "qualifications", or "general" training.

One difficulty is that precisely because such structures are intrinsically alienating - in that they typically involve the later phases of deskilling, whereby links between conception and execution have been split in the creation of the "detail worker" - scientific management techniques may be used to attempt to overcome the objective reality by creating the artificial classification of occupational titles. With narrow static jobs one could expect a proliferation of "occupations", and a hierarchy of grades to replace a process of skill augmentation. Indeed, a higher grade may not represent any greater skill level, and may represent less. Grading represents a form of labour control, an issue

Figure 1: Hypothetical job structures



Note: Arrows from outside represent ports of entry; internal arrows indicate ladders of internal labour mobility. Rungs on the job ladder indicate limits of a job category. The length of the arrow in the stratum of "exit" indicates proportion likely to move "up". Dotted lines indicate grade change without job change.

considered later.<sup>1</sup>

As the detailed division of labour move from a reality closer to A to something resembling C, Ruskin's claim cited at the outset of this sub-section becomes increasingly tenuous. Whether formal skills in a technical sense grow on average or decline with deskilling, there is more than rhetorical appeal in Illich's albeit-exaggerated conclusion:

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<sup>1</sup> Arguably, the vertical size of the job structures displayed in figure 1 should decrease from A to C to reflect the shorter objective skill distance between rungs on the job ladder. However, with the advance of technology the technical specialist who is involved in the conception of part or all of a production process may be more skilled in the objective characteristics sense than in the "craftsman" situation. If skills were divided into something like conceptual, technical and manual, one could envisage a gradual splintering of job hierarchies along with the fragmentation of jobs in moving from A to C. This we will not consider here.

"In an industrial society, individuals are trained for extreme specialisation. They are rendered impotent to shape or to satisfy their own needs." [1]

Such statements are tantalisingly obscure, containing a germ of truth, yet grossly oversimplified. Yet they usefully point us back to our concern for the nature of work and raise questions about the positive connotation that reference to skill usually conveys.

(vii) The labour force

This final subsection is intended merely as a link between the preceding conceptual deliberations and the next section. At an abstract level, the notion of the labour force has two main meanings. For labour statisticians it is the "economically active population", which includes all those doing or seeking (or wanting) income-earning or product-producing activities. For economists and employers the labour force is that proportion of a population that is supplying labour. Often the two senses of the term are conflated. A landlord may be classified as in the first labour force, if he does "work" collecting his rents, but should not be included in the second notion, and is extremely unlikely to be part of the available labour supply.

With both meanings, there are a host of ambiguities. At the root of the problem there are problems with the notions of "economic" and "active", whereas labour supply is a flow concept translated into a stock concept in either notion of the labour force. Indeed, a third implicit definition of labour force used in popular language is the employed population, that is those actually labouring, excluding those wishing or resigned to supply labour who are unemployed in some sense of that notion.

The Physiocrats, early demographers such as Gregory King and the classical political economists - and those in their tradition - all have had approaches closer to the second notion of labour force than the first, and in their different ways have distinguished the "productive labour" force from the non-productive. For the Physiocrats, only

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<sup>1</sup> I. Illich: Towards a history of needs (New York, Bantam Books, 1980), p. 60.

agricultural producers were productive; for those classical political economists adhering to some version of the labour theory of value, productive labour is that producing or intending to produce a surplus for accumulation. Some recent extensions of the productive-unproductive labour distinction have also conceived of "reproductive labour", that is work done to produce and reproduce labour power that in turn can generate surplus for accumulation.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast, the first notion of labour force is linked to neo-classical economics, making no distinctions between productive and unproductive labour and only excluding some income-earning activities on an arbitrary, even moralistic basis.<sup>2</sup> These issues aside, a version of the conventional labour force approach is presented in figure 2, a couple of minor refinements being shown in capital letters. The standard approach divides the adult population into "active" and "inactive", the economically active into employed and unemployed, and the employed into the self-employed, employers, wage workers and unpaid family workers. The dichotomous distinction between active and inactive is too strict, as many of the latter are "discouraged" workers and potential labour force entrants. The dichotomy should be divided to reflect degrees of activity. But more relevant for the following sections, the work statuses are oversimplified, and the unemployed should at least be divided into groups according to the availability for specific worker-statuses, even more so than for specific occupations.

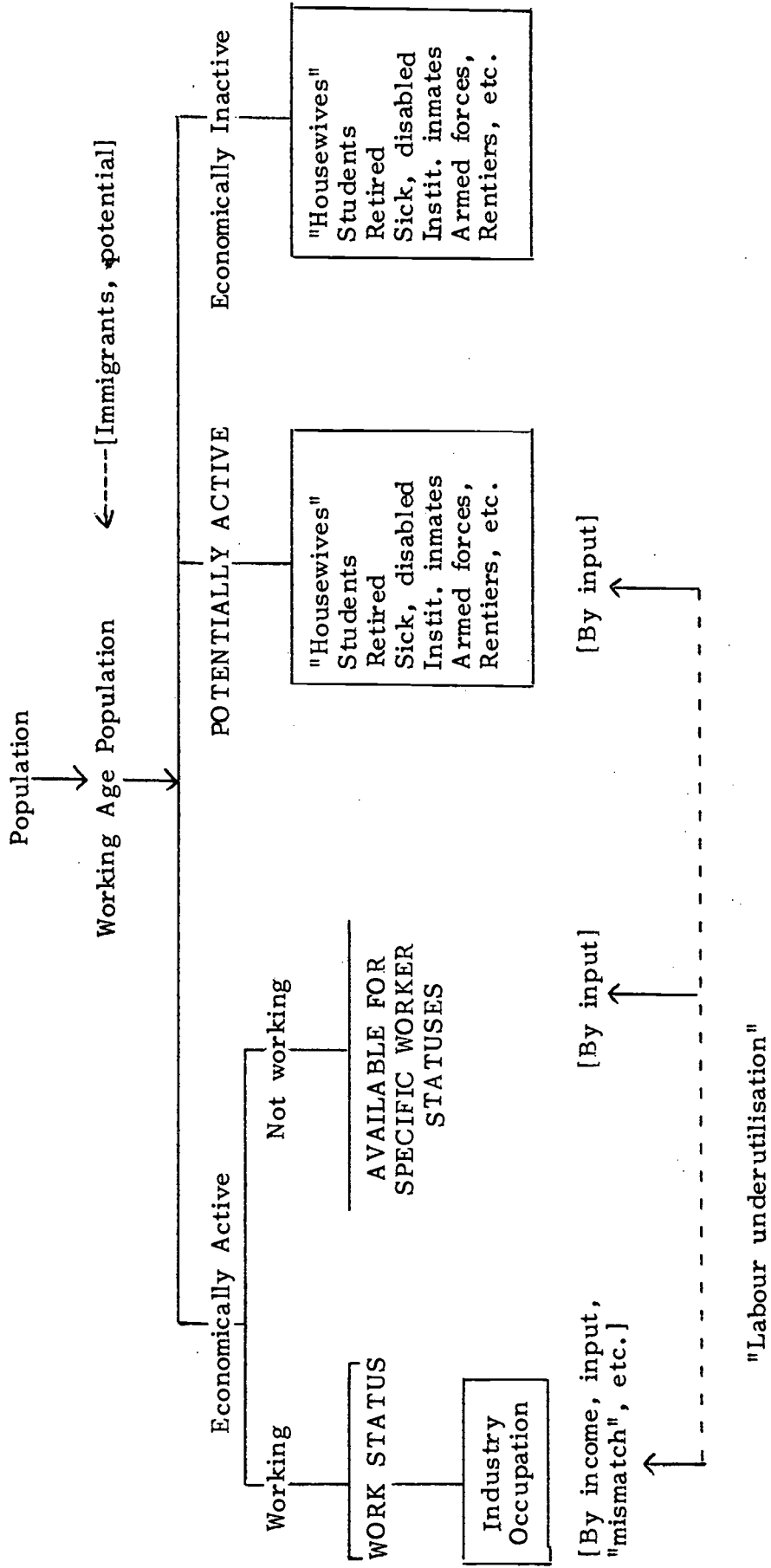
The difficulties with this labour force approach are partly "aggregative" and partly conceptual. Taking the population at risk as the point of departure, at each stage of the disaggregation arbitrary decisions have to be made as complements to conceptual decisions.

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<sup>1</sup> Without apparently realising its identity to reproductive labour, and thus missing its structural relevance, Illich refers to this as "shadow work". I. Illich: Shadow work (London, Marion Boyars, 1981), p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> What is the basis for excluding a prostitute or a gangster from the labour force? Why should "prostitute" be excluded from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles? The formal definitions of economic activity cannot be used to justify such exclusions.

Figure 2: Modified labour force approach (abbreviated)



Thus a proportion of the "population at risk" will be excluded from the "working age population" but be "economically active" in reality; some of the economically active will not be in the population at risk. Some of those with a worker status may be excluded from those classified as working (e.g. those with a job but not working, a notoriously complicated sub-category of the economically active). Then there are the problems of category "priority", with multiple statuses, and so on. In short, we cannot escape from the fact that it is an ad hoc edifice, however neat its formal presentation may appear to the layman and statistician alike. Arguably, it mystifies the labour process; it reveals little of the mechanisms of labour control, modes of production or the divisions of labour. These are the primary considerations of the following sections, which will not attempt to deal with definitional issues of figure 2, but which will focus on labour statuses and labour control per se.

### III. Conceptualising the Labour Process

The term "labour process" encompasses two inter-related phenomena, the production process - or the social relations of production - and the work process - or the material relations of production. This and the following sections define the characteristics of both aspects of the labour process, in a necessarily pedantic manner, focusing primarily on the social relations of production and distribution. Section V concentrates on labour control mechanisms that derive from social relations of production. The connection between the various points and labour force statistics should become clear in the course of the discussion.

The production process encompasses relations of direct producers to the work process and the relations between producers and non-producers, the latter being those who have rights or control over some part of the production process. The key verbs in the semantics of work relations are "control", "own", "use", "exchange" (or "oblige"), and "exploit". For present purposes, primacy lies with the notion of control.

In envisaging the relations of production, one can consider the situation from the point of view of the worker, or identify the links of

each individual or group to the production process. These two perspectives set up quite different, though complementary, conceptualisations. Though it is sensible to bear in mind the link between non-producers and the labour process, it is appropriate to mainly focus on the perspective of the worker. In essence, he or she has seven aspects of the work process over which to have complete, partial or no control.<sup>1</sup> In identifying each of those aspects, it should be possible to clarify each of the labour status categories considered in the following section.

(i) Control over self

This is the most fundamental and covers the worker's ability to choose between a range of activity patterns. In practice, even a slave has some degree of control over his activity pattern, but such control is severely limited where someone else legally or effectively owns the worker. A bonded labourer clearly has little control in this sense. At the other extreme, even an "independent" farmer or employer is unlikely to have absolute control over his activity, either having obligations to kin (perhaps a village elder or chief, or senior family member) or to some local or national (state) association or other organisational authority.

(ii) Control over labour time

There is no necessary correspondence between degree of control over self and the worker's control over his or her labour. The latter covers the worker's flexibility within the work process. One can easily envisage situations where the worker's control of his labour power is severely curtailed, but where his scope for allocating time to work activity is greater than for other groups of workers who are more independent. A slave or bonded labourer may have to fulfil certain obligations but be able to choose to do them in the morning or afternoon, on Monday or Tuesday, etc., or by working a short period with a high level of intensity or in a longer period with less intensity. A "free" wage-worker will usually have no such choice.

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<sup>1</sup> Forms of control are discussed in section V.



Of course, there are many situations where control over the worker also involves control over his labour time and work intensity. But we should also consider the role of technology in this context, for the degree of control over labour time and work intensity will reflect whether or to what extent the work is (a) self-paced; (b) machine-paced; or (c) work-group based (e.g. "gang-paced"). In addition, control over labour time embraces all time uses associated with involvement in the work in question, such as travel to the work site or rest and recuperation time determined by the nature of the work. This raises the issue of internal labour control, discussed in section V.

(iii) Control over means of production

This is commonly regarded as the crucial characteristic of productive relations and by many as the crucial defining determinant of "class". We ought to distinguish theoretically between "control" and "own", for the one does not necessarily imply the other.<sup>1</sup> We ought also to clearly identify what is covered under the rubric "means of production". In some definitions of the term, the worker himself would be regarded as a means of production, but that is not what is meant here. Defining the term is more problematic than most analyses allow or imply.

According to a basic definition, means of production are those objects which, when directly combined with labour and raw materials, yield a product with use value. The use of the adverb "directly" is to exclude those factors which facilitate production but which are not a direct part of the work process. Thus, a hydro-electric power station would not be counted as a means of production in a local timber mill, but the electric power supplied to the mill would be counted as part of the raw materials for production. Some would include raw materials themselves in means of production, but they are quite distinct. The basic conceptual difference is that raw materials are purposely transformed in the course of production, the means of production are not.

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<sup>1</sup> Owning something implies a range of legal rights - claims, privileges, powers and immunities. Control implies "determining" in the sense elaborated in section V.

The latter include productive instruments, such as tools, machinery and buildings, as well as fuel and the means of maintaining machinery. In that context, note that fuel is not a raw material in production, because the purpose is not to transform it into an output. Also included is land or more generally "spaces" (including lakes or stretches of a river). But it may be important to keep distinct three types of factor - productive instruments, areas in which production takes place, and infrastructure (such as bridges and feeder roads). These three categories definitionally represent the means of production.

Finally, a distinction can be made between direct producers controlling means of production, direct producers not controlling them, non-producers controlling means of production and non-producers not controlling them.

(iv) Control over raw materials

A slight blurring of raw materials with means of production has been noted. Raw materials are the inputs which are purposely transformed into desired output having preconceived use value. The term should refer to the state of the input at the point of entry into the work process under consideration, which may be quite different from the input's natural state; thus a textile factory's raw materials include cloth, not wool, and machines, not metal.

(v) Control over output

This is concerned with the use to which the output is put. Output could be used by the worker for consumption or for use in subsequent production. Or it could be used by family or kin. It could be for the personal use of somebody controlling the production process, as in the case of a feudal lord consuming the food produced by the peasants. Or it could be sold as a commodity by the direct producer. Or it could be acquired by a merchant capitalist for subsequent sale. Analytically, these various means of disposing of the output have different implications and help reveal the nature of the mode of production and distribution.

(vi) Control over proceeds of output

There is a distinction between control over the use to which output is put and control over the proceeds of that output, though in certain cases there will be a strict correspondence. If a weaver is obliged to purchase yarn from a merchant and sell the cloth to that merchant and in turn is obliged to pay rent to a landlord out of the income and support dependent relatives with the remainder, the proceeds of the output are not controlled by the merchant, even though the output is so controlled.

(vii) Control over labour reproduction

This is possibly the most tricky of the seven forms of control to adequately conceptualise. It is not the same as the control over the worker or control over labour time. It is concerned primarily with the ability to develop and maintain skills and work capacity. In traditional artisan crafts there was commonly initiation of apprentices into the "mysteries" of the craft, and in many cases the skills and the recognition of skills were closely guarded as the preserve of a craft guild. But there are many forms of control that can be exercised over workers' ability to develop skills and their ability to use such skills as they possess. There may be caste-like restrictions or some other social control mechanism, or there may be very individualistic forms of control, exercised by kin, such as where youths are required to adhere to particular occupations or tasks within a family division of labour, or there may be controls exercised by an employer or creditor. As far as labour statistics are concerned, primary attention should be given to the direct mechanisms of control. Thus, in some places social norms may virtually dictate that women do gathering and weeding or develop the skills of dairying and animal husbandry, while being generally unable to develop other skills. But how is that behavioural pattern reproduced? If some women wished to move out of that mould who, if anybody, would exercise direct control over their ability to do so? In other words, while the social pressures are crucial analytically, the personal mechanisms should also be identified, if possible in actual data.

Each of these aspects of control could be represented from a non-producer's point of view and attempts should be made to identify the rights held by all groups, regardless of their status as workers. Thus, it is rarely satisfactory to measure the status and control exercised by a landlord merely by the income earned from renting out land. If he controlled the only bridge connecting the fields to the market and charged a toll, there should be a simple method of identifying that control and source of income. Similarly, it is insufficient to identify someone as "economically inactive" without delving into sources of income and possible forms of control exercised in the production process, notably over workers and the reproduction of labour power, but also over means of production, output and the proceeds of the output. It would be invalid to retort that this line of inquiry is fraught with complexity and inherently too complicated to be operational. Unless attempts are made to get at the underlying forms of control we will be unable to tell whether or not such attempts could be refined to the point where the operational problems could be overcome or made manageable.

#### IV. A Taxonomy of Labour Statuses

To derive statistics that illuminate the labour process, the key characteristics of the various groups operating in the economic structure must be identified. A primary difficulty with conceptualising the status of producers and non-producers is that some status concepts are essentially descriptive categories whereas others are essentially analytical. The term "wage worker" is a descriptive category, the term "blue-collar worker" is essentially an analytical category suggesting something more than what is described. From our point of view, for analysing the labour process, the identifiable statuses should reflect specific social relations of production. We will also consider an important subset of statuses, those that reflect specific material relations of production (or work and labour market relations). The social relations with which we are concerned are relations of control, domination and subordination, and relations to the means of production, raw materials, output, income and skill formation. In effect, the proposed labour status categories should be defined in terms of distinctions made in the preceding section.

Let us first take the conventional fourfold classification of worker statuses, as used in probably the great majority of censuses and national labour force surveys, and in successive ILO statistical publications. This divides the working population into employers, self-employed (or own account), wage workers, and unpaid family workers. The remainder of the civilian population are usually divided into the unemployed, students, retired, sick/disabled, and "housewives". The principal virtue of this approach is its parsimony, but it does not really identify the crucial characteristics of control and social relations of production. In particular, the self-employed and wage workers embrace various groups that should be separately identified, while "unpaid family workers" blur into the supposedly economically inactive group of "housewives", the conventional statistical distinctions being rather contrived and actually based on activity criteria rather than on any difference in status.

As the desirable labour status categories should be based on specific social relations of production, we can identify 18 main categories with specific combinations of degrees of control over the seven aspects of the production process, though even within each of those categories there is scope for variation. As far as possible, we will define the categories in their "pure" form, recognising that in reality the distinctions will be harder to make, and may require further disaggregation. For ease of exposition, we will restrict the description of the extent of control to complete, partial, and none.

Following the format of the previous section, we present each category with their defining characteristics, after which we attempt to summarise the discussion of this and the previous section by means of a simplifying table.

(i) Slave

This is the limiting category of absence of control. The slave definitionally has no control over self, means of production, raw materials, output, the proceeds of output, or labour skills. There may be scope for limited control over labour time allocation, but in any case the crucial characteristic is an absence of control over self. In essence, the slave has unlimited obligations to the slave owner, at least formally.

(ii) Serf

In contrast to the slave - to whom in many respects the serf is most alike - this category retains some control over self. The defining characteristic is that the serf has binding commitments to some non-producer in terms of some proportion of output and, implicitly, the nature of the output he produces. The serf may or may not have some control over means of production and raw materials. By virtue of the fact that he produces his own means of subsistence, he will retain partial control over skill development and labour time, but only partial as both are subordinated to the work requirements and the obligations imposed on him as a serf. The serf has specific and continuing obligations to some landlord or other non-producer.

(iii) Servant

There are three basic distinctions between a serf and a servant. First, the servant has no control over output, whereas the serf has some control over at least part of the output. Second, the servant has greater control over the proceeds of his output, usually retaining all his income, at least in principle. And third, the servant has no real control over the allocation of labour time and work intensity, being required to work when and as required. In principle, a serf has somewhat more control over time allocation because he has rental (feudal rent) obligations rather than a continuing and direct labour relation only. The servant is also likely to have a greater degree of control over self than either the serf or the slave, to the extent that the personal services being provided by the servant are likely to be the result of a short-term labour contract, formal or informal, whereas the serf and slave are locked into a binding set of obligations without real legal freedoms.

(iv) Bonded labourer

This category has elements of the preceding three, being closest to the slave. The difference between the bonded labourer and the slave, however, is that in principle a bonded worker can sever the obligation as soon as he clears the debt by which he is attached to an employer, landlord or other creditor. A set of obligations of a bonded

labourer are in principle an outcome of economic transactions, whereas the nature of slavery is the existence of extra-economic coercion.<sup>1</sup>

However, as various surveys of bonded labourers have demonstrated, the term bonded labour can cover a wide variety of labour relations. We could exclude labourers who attach themselves to employers as a means of increasing their security and thereby incidentally getting into debt to the employer. But the dividing line between such workers and those who are forced to do certain tasks because of their indebtedness is difficult to draw. Conceptually, the distinguishing characteristic is that, by virtue of indebtedness, an employer or landlord or usurer can determine the activity pattern of the bonded labourer. We leave the other criteria for distinguishing different forms of labour attachment to the next section.

(v) Sharecropper

Sharecropping has existed since the beginning of recorded history; it figured prominently in ancient Greece, in the Roman Empire, in feudal Europe and in places as far apart as China and the post-bellum American south. It continues in most parts of the world, in some countries being a major form of the agrarian labour process.<sup>2</sup> Being so widespread causes complications, because the types of arrangement and the extent of surplus appropriation have varied so widely. Some economists have regarded sharecropping as an incentive to labour effort and production, others a fetter on the development of productive forces. Adam Smith regarded it as progressive relative to serfdom, though less efficient than fixed-rent contracts. Alfred Marshall regarded

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<sup>1</sup> One should also note the existence of what could be termed "indirectly bonded labour", that is where immediate relatives of a bonded labourer are implicitly or explicitly obliged to work as well. For examples of children and wives, see L. Dube: "The economic roles of children in India: Methodological issues", in G. Rodgers and G. Standing (eds.): Child work, poverty and underdevelopment (Geneva, ILO, 1981), pp. 196-200.

<sup>2</sup> Since this was written, a fascinating collection of articles has been published, emphasising this point. T.J. Byres (ed.): "Sharecropping and sharecroppers", special issue of The Journal of Peasant Studies, Jan.-Apr. 1983, Vol. 10, Nos. 2 and 3, *passim*.

sharecropping as typically "inefficient". The debate makes identification of the category of sharecropper in labour statistics an important issue.

A sharecropper may be a tenant farmer who is obliged to give some proportion of the output or the proceeds of the output to a landlord. Or a sharecropper may be someone (or a family work group) who is close to being a piece-rate worker, coming to harvest a particular crop and retaining some share for himself.<sup>1</sup> The difference is primarily one of attachment, but also relates to aspects of control considered in section V. Whatever the form, the sharecropper may retain 50 per cent of the output or proceeds, or some proportion from as little as a sixth to as much as five-sixths, depending on such factors as the fertility of the soil, the provision of other means of production and the existence of other relations of exploitation, notably usury. In practice, even the tenancy type of sharecropping arrangement is likely to conceal greater exploitation than implied by the share given to the landlord, as the worker may be obliged to provide unpaid labour services or token gifts of food. Indices of income, security and the labour relation should attempt to identify such unbalancing obligations. Another aspect that is hard to take into account is the degree of uncertainty and risk borne by the sharecropper; where the landlord provides neither labour time nor means of production, the sharecropper's "exchange entitlements" are particularly vulnerable. In all basic forms of sharecropping arrangement, control over self is basically retained, as is control over labour time and work intensity, and over the reproduction of labour power. In neither case does the sharecropper own all the means of production or the raw materials, since the land remains in the ultimate control of the landowner. But part of the means of production may belong to the sharecropper, such as harvesting tools, which may or may not be provided by the landlord. Similarly, in the first case the sharecropper will have some control over the raw materials, purchasing or reproducing the seeds, for example.

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<sup>1</sup> An example of the latter is the Strange farmer of Senegambia. K. Swindell: "Pre-colonial and colonial labour migration in West Africa: The Gambia and north-east Nigeria", in G. Standing (ed.): Labour circulation: Short-term migration and the labour process (London, Croom Helm, forthcoming).



(iv) Artisan (craftsman)

In contrast to all the preceding categories, the artisanal craftsman possesses control over his labour power in all three senses - self, labour time and skill development. But his independence rests on a combination of those forms of control with control over the means of production. Without that particular combination the craftsman status is fundamentally changed, and indeed it is the erosion of control over the means of production that has traditionally marked the transition from pre-capitalist to capitalist relations of production. In any case, the artisan may have little or no control over raw materials, which can lead to a loss of control over means of production, as where a merchant selling the raw materials to the artisan lures him into debt and subsequent expropriation of means of production - a classic feature of the transition to industrial capitalism in western Europe. As for output, the artisan's control is limited since he must sell his output, or at least exchange it for his means of subsistence. Yet his control over the output is greater the greater the number of those who purchase his product; if the artisan is faced by a monopsonist the degree of his control over his output is minimal.

(vii) Wage worker, or proletarian

This is the complete wage labourer and is defined in terms of two "freedoms" - he is (juridically) free to sell his labour power to whomsoever wishes to pay for it and he is "free" from the means of production. He is also free to dispose of his income as he chooses. Of course, these freedoms are actually severely limited by the nature of the labour market and the commodity market, and by institutional constraints. Where the proletarian primarily differs from the artisan is in the lack of ownership or control of the means of production. Strictly speaking, complete lack of means of production is neither a sufficient nor a necessary condition of proletarian status; some workers may own some means of production but be unable to use them productively except by working for a capitalist employer, either as a wage worker (the simple proletarian case) or in some subordinately-contractual basis (best regarded as either artisan or proletarian depending on other characteristics). Another case is where the proletarian could only use his own

means of production on a small scale for an inadequate income, because of competitive inferiority with capitalist organisation of production.

The proletarian also has no control over the output or over raw materials. And though he has control over self in the labour market, in the work process itself he has no real control over labour time or work intensity, and only limited control over skill development and reproduction.<sup>1</sup> The proletarian has several other subjective characteristics, such as a certain identity and behavioural traits and aspirations, but the material characteristics are relatively straightforward.

(viii) Semi-proletarian

This is a classic transitional form of labour found predominantly in economies undergoing a transition to industrial capitalism. It is where the producer works for a wage but is also doing complementary non-wage work that subsidises his subsistence and reduces the wage necessary to secure a subsistence standard of living. A common case is where wage workers are provided by their employers with a small plot of land on which to produce part of their means of production. To describe such workers as proletarians would be misleading, but clearly they are not self-employed or serfs.

This type of worker has been common on plantations and on large agricultural estates and in such cases has been important for understanding the economic structure and pattern of exploitative social relations.<sup>2</sup> The semi-proletarian has some control over his labour power, or self, but less so than the proletarian by virtue of being locked into a relatively immobile labour relation and not really operating

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<sup>1</sup> The question arises whether those wage workers placed in positions of "intermediate authority", such as foremen, shopfloor supervisors and general supervisors, should be separated from other wage workers, since those in such authority exercise partial control over the labour time and labour power of others. In terms of class identity, ideology and consciousness there are differences, but the social relations underlying the two categories are sufficiently similar to leave the two types as one category at this level of abstraction.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, G. Standing: "Contrived stagnation, migration and the State in Guyana", in P. Peek and G. Standing (eds.): State policies and migration (London, Croom Helm, 1982).

in a free labour market. He has some freedom of control in that, albeit with heavy cost, he can sever the relationship and may be able to avoid being locked into a set of obligations and "rights". Being part wage-worker and part own-account worker, he has partial control over labour time, output and means of production (mainly means of reproduction of himself and family, though he may be able to sell part of his output). But he has at most partial control over the reproduction and maintenance of his skills, since his limited access to a restricted variety of means of production sets strict limits to personal development, as does the dependent nature of the wage-labour relation involved.

The question arises whether an out-worker, whether paid on a time-rate or on a piece-rate basis, should be classified as a semi-proletarian or as a proletarian. The type of status has commonly been a transitional one for minor craftsmen, or craftswomen more typically, undergoing proletarianisation. Because they retain partial control over the production-work process, and in particular nominal control over some means of production and labour time, it is preferable to classify them as semi-proletarians.

(ix) Peasant

The supposedly descriptive term "peasant" actually covers a wide variety of producers. Yet although the peasantry has been the subject of numerous analyses, and has been lauded and vilified in literature and in political discourse, no attempt is made in national statistics to present data on the number and types of peasants. Perhaps this is because they are a highly heterogeneous category, defying valid or easy identification. However, in the apparent absence of attempts by labour statisticians to deal with the topic, one cannot help surmising that the apparent neglect has reflected the fact that the design of labour force data has been dominated by statisticians primarily concerned with labour market issues in industrialised countries where wage labour has predominated.

The conceptual issues must be confronted, and labour statisticians must take heed of what anthropologists and others have done to refine

the definition of peasants and to distinguish between peasants and other types of "primitive" producers. In that context, a distinction has been made between peasants and tribal cultivators. As one analyst put it:

"Tribal cultivators live in relatively closed, self-contained societies, and while they may engage in trade or barter with other groups, they are not economically integrated into wider social units. [In contrast], peasant societies do form part of wider economic, social and political units." [1]

Apart from such links, peasants are defined analytically as cultivators whose behaviour is oriented to reproduction of their basic conditions of existence rather than to accumulation of wealth and profits. The basic characteristics of peasants - "people of the fields" as one observer has called them - are that they are not alienated from the means of production, in that they have the use or control over the land, and that they retain basic control over themselves as producers. But these are only the basic characteristics.

A peasant economy has been described as follows:

"The peasant economy is based on agriculture, involving a mixture of subsistence production and production for market sales; peasant villages are partly autonomous and partly related to cities of some sort and larger cultural and political groupings." [2]

Peasants themselves have been defined in terms of their relations of production as

"...those whose ultimate security and subsistence lies in their having certain rights in land and in the labour of family members on the land, but who are involved, through rights and obligations, in a wider economic system which includes the participation of non-peasants." [3]

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<sup>1</sup> R. Stavenhagen: Social classes in agrarian societies (New York, Anchor Books, 1975), p. 65; author's emphasis.

<sup>2</sup> G. Dalton: "Peasantries in anthropology and history", in Current Anthropology, 1972, Vol. XIII, Nos. 3-4.

<sup>3</sup> J. Saul and R. Woods: "African peasantries", in T. Shanin (ed.): Peasants and peasant societies (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1971), p. 105.

Such rights and obligations can take various forms, and statistically it might be useful to devise a taxonomy of those relations - though no attempt will be made to do so here. For present purposes, a peasant is in some respects analogous to an artisan. The peasant has at least partial control over self, over work time, over means of production, the proceeds of the family output, and the reproduction of skills. Like the artisan, he may have only limited control over raw material inputs, but unlike the artisan he has control over the use and nature of the output, to the extent he produces means of subsistence primarily and for petty exchange, although "crop mortgaging" is common.<sup>1</sup>

The primacy of control over ownership is relevant here, for a feature of peasants is the familial and customary form of property, whether land or movable means of production. As one analyst put it,

"Even though land, cattle and equipment may be formally defined as belonging to the man who heads the household, in actual fact he acts rather as a holder and manager of the common family property with the right to sell it or give it away heavily restricted, or made altogether absent, by peasant custom..."[2]

Thus far, peasants have been depicted in the customary manner as being cultivators, somehow attached to land. But some have broadened the concept to cover other basic economic pursuits, focusing exclusively on the social relations of production. Thus Firth argued,

"...we can speak not only of peasant agriculturalists but also of peasant fishermen, peasant craftsmen and peasant marketers, if they are part of the same social system. In any case, such people are often in fact part-time cultivators as well. If the concept "peasant" be viewed as indicating a set of structural or social relations rather than a technological category of persons engaged in the same employment, then this unconventional inclusive usage seems justified."[3]

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<sup>1</sup> On the simple reproduction squeeze, associated with "starvation rents", see H. Bernstein: "African peasantries: A theoretical framework", in Journal of Peasant Studies, July 1979, Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 421-443.

<sup>2</sup> T. Shanin: "The nature and logic of the peasant economy", in Journal of Peasant Studies, Oct. 1973, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 68. This referred to Russian peasants but has applied elsewhere as well.

<sup>3</sup> R. Firth: "Capital, saving and credit in peasant societies: A viewpoint from economic anthropology", in R. Firth and B.S. Yamey (eds.): Capital, saving and credit in peasant societies (Chicago, Aldine, 1964), pp. 17-18.

In that respect, it is recognised that with peasants the social and detailed divisions of labour are flexible and largely undeveloped, there being little occupational specialisation. In most "peasant communities" this seems most appropriate, so that the social relations and structural context are the more valid indicators of peasant status rather than any occupational activity classification.

With this approach by itself, we do not deal with one major analytical concern - the differentiation of the peasantry. Many analysts have differentiated "rich", "middle" and "poor" peasants, or "kulaks" from "poor" peasants. Neither size of land ownership nor income levels, nor whether or not the household has accumulated wealth or savings satisfactorily delineates the sub-categories. The primary distinction has been resort to labour hiring. Those households who combine subsistence cultivation, with or without some market exchange, with the regular hiring out of labour of one or more of their members are best described as poor peasants. Those who generally neither hire-in nor hire-out labour are the middle peasants.<sup>1</sup> Those who systematically hire-in labour because their production is sufficiently extensive to require it on a regular basis are the rich peasants, or kulaks. But even for the latter, production is not in essence a "business", extended cultivation being done primarily to provide a higher standard of living and being displayed in ostentatious consumption, larger families (e.g. more wives or children), a wider network of villagers with dependent obligations to them, and greater power over community affairs. Savings are made to improve security and reduce risk and uncertainty. There is a sharp break between that type of behaviour and that involved in acquisitive accumulation, where reinvestment on an expanding scale becomes the driving motivation of economic activity.

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<sup>1</sup> According to one authority, the middle peasantry "has secure access to land of its own and cultivates it with family labour". E. Wolf: "On peasant rebellions", in Shanin 1971, op. cit., p. 269. Another gives a slightly broader definition as those "independent small-holders" whose livelihood "does not depend principally on the exploitation of others". H. Alavi: "Peasants and revolution", in K. Gough and H.P. Sharma (eds.): Imperialism and revolution in South Asia (New York and London, Monthly Review Press, 1973), p. 295. Emphasis added.

It is appropriate to add a caveat on differentiating the peasantry on the basis of labour exchange. It is not uncommon for peasant households to hire-in and hire-out labour power at different moments of the annual production cycle, and it is also common for such hiring to be disguised in exchange-labour, or what is ostensibly communal labour.<sup>1</sup> For such reasons, it has been proposed in one study that the middle peasants should be defined by "their debt relationship as well as their buying and selling of labour power".<sup>2</sup> The middle peasant would be a smallholder who occasionally hired labour and was not in chronic debt, that is being able to clear short-term credit at the end of each season.<sup>3</sup> What this type of analysis implies is that peasant differentiation should be defined by reference to more than one mode of exploitation, with paramountcy given to the regularity of hiring-in or hire-out labour power.<sup>4</sup>

(x) Tribal cultivator

The peasant is also unlike a tribal cultivator, and it is worth distinguishing conceptually between them. In doing so, the diversity within each category is somewhat blurred, but there are several crucial differences between other smallholders and tribal cultivators, where the latter could be taken to encompass nomads and other types of shifting agriculturalists.

Table 1 sets out schematically for each category the basic characteristics of their respective social relations of production. The first and probably most basic distinction is that the peasant household has control over the land it cultivates and at the same time can lose it or acquire more, whereas the tribesman has only usufruct rights to land as a

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<sup>1</sup> H. Bernstein: "Notes on capital and peasantry", in Review of African Political Economy, 1977, No. 10, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> R. Howard: "Formation and stratification of the peasantry in colonial Ghana", in Journal of Peasant Studies, Oct. 1980, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> One should also allow for differentiation of sharecroppers and artisans along the same lines.

member of a socially cohesive unit - though by the same token not ownership rights, because the tribal land is regulated and shared out by tribal elders or chiefs.

Table 1: Control relations of production: peasants and tribal cultivators

Aspect	Peasant	Tribal cultivator
Land	Own	Usufruct, social
Tools	Own	Own
Labour power (self)	Self-directed	Socially directed
Work (time, effort, intensity)	Self-directed	Socially directed
Raw materials	Own	Socially provided
Output	Own	Shared
Proceeds of output	Own	Shared reciprocal rights
Skills, etc.	Own	Own
Economic links <sup>1</sup>	Yes	No

<sup>1</sup> "Economic links" with other status groups and classes, such as landlords, usurers, merchants, and the State.

Both peasants and tribal cultivators generally retain control over their basic tools and other means of production, though whereas the peasant is typically responsible for reproducing or purchasing raw materials, the usufruct system in tribal communities usually means that ultimately means of production and raw materials are socially controlled and socially provided to particular cultivators, rather than individually owned.

Both the output and the proceeds of production are in the control of peasants, even though their options for disposing of output may be very limited. In the case of tribal cultivators output is shared by the community, however unequally, based on customary obligations and



entitlement. This latter situation does not rule out some exploitation by village elders or chiefs, but the surplus they can squeeze out of the direct producers is limited, partly because of the primitive technology involved but more importantly because production is dictated by use value and is therefore inherently restricted to perceived community needs.

The respective work relations correspond to these basic differences in the nature of peasant and tribal cultivation. The peasant retains control over himself as a worker, and his allocation of work time and work intensity is controlled by the household, according to customary household division of labour considerations. And correspondingly, he controls the reproduction of his own skills. Conversely, the tribal cultivator's labour power is socially controlled, the work being socially directed, albeit commonly on the basis of evolved customs.

Finally, there seems to be an important difference in so far as the peasant is economically and socially integrated into a wider network of production and distribution, whereas the tribal cultivator is not. The tribesman is part of a self-contained group, owing tribute to members of that group and only incidentally exploited or otherwise economically linked with wider social groupings. Peasants conversely are confronted by a State and are exploited by other classes, through rental dues, a commodity market and commonly a labour market.

(xi) Nomads

Another question to be resolved is the place of nomads, who are usually covered in discussions of rural "backwardness" and compared with, or implicitly covered by, the terms tribal cultivators and peasants. They are problematical. Nomadic pastoralism is as old as the history of humanity. Yet no international statistics record the presence of nomads in our midst. Where they are covered in labour statistics they are presumably lumped together with the self-employed and unpaid family workers, a sorry loss of identity. They have taken an awful long time to disappear.

Nomads carry their raw materials and means of production with them, primitive though the former may be and largely limited to herds

in the latter respect. One conceptual difficulty is that researchers, mostly anthropologists, have included under the term "pastoralist" those who are pure pastoralists, those who combine their main activity of nomadic herding with the use of sedentary villages and those farmers who also indulge in "transhumation" as herders. The nomadic existence is the apogee of the group, implying an independence from sedentary restrictions.<sup>1</sup>

Although ultimately the continuation of nomadic pastoralism reflects an ecological balance that nomads contrive to maintain, a balance that has often been permanently disturbed by "development projects", conceptually nomads have control over their raw materials, means of production, labour power, work time, output, proceeds of output and skill development. In their precarious existence they are the ultimate in autonomy. But they should not be idealised as a form of primitive communalism. Commonly the internal structure of nomadic groups has been highly hierarchical, with slavery and various forms of vassaldom. Indeed, it is arguable that the concept of nomad should not form a labour status category precisely because of the heterogeneity of the group. There are nomadic lords and nomadic slaves or serfs.<sup>2</sup> For that reason it might be acceptable to regard the nomadic existence as a technical relation of production, placing various groups of nomads in one or other of the labour status categories identified earlier, probably tribal cultivators. But even if that course is taken, attempts should be made to identify nomadic status in labour surveys.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For a useful collection of empirical studies of the complex contemporary phenomena, see T. Monod (ed.): Pastoralism in Tropical Africa (London, Oxford University Press, 1975).

<sup>2</sup> Moreover, just because nomads are not politically incorporated into civil society does not mean they are not exploited in one way or another by other groups. T. Asad: "Equality in nomadic social systems", in Critique of Anthropology, Spring 1978, Vol. 3, No. 11, pp. 57-65.

<sup>3</sup> Statistical and conceptual difficulties also arise over identification of the mobility status of nomads. See, e.g. United Nations Economic and Social Council: Study on special techniques for enumerating nomads in African censuses and surveys (New York, United Nations, 1977; E/CN.14/CAS.10/6) and G. Standing: Conceptualising territorial mobility in low-income countries (Geneva, ILO, 1982).

(xii) Family worker

The category "unpaid family worker" is one of the conventional set of worker statuses, yet there are grounds for excluding it from the proposed labour status classification altogether. The type of worker that category is supposed to identify are those who work as part of a family work group - whether that unit produces for its own subsistence or for market exchange - and who do not receive any form of payment. But what in reality the classifiers have in mind is those who do not receive a wage payment, because clearly almost all those who work in a family production unit receive a share of the output or proceeds of the output, and in that sense receive a payment for their work.<sup>1</sup> But if the term is changed to family worker, as is recommended here, the next conceptual ambiguity arises in distinguishing that category from "own account" or "self-employed" workers. What has usually been done in census and labour force surveys is to identify a member of the family as the main worker in a family farm or business and then classify other family members as the "unpaid family workers". But the main worker has usually been described as such because he, or very rarely she, has been classified as the "head of the household", which in itself is a sexist and scientifically arbitrary notion. It would be much more valid to classify all members of a family work group as unpaid family workers.

In terms of forms of control, family workers have partial control over self, work time and the reproduction of labour skills, and partial control over raw materials and means of production; they also have some control, which may be very limited or quite extensive, over the use of output and the proceeds of the output.

As an alternative to trying to use the term more systematically, the concept could be dropped, in which case it would be necessary to make sure that all those who would otherwise be categorised as unpaid family workers would find a slot in other labour status categories.

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<sup>1</sup> Presumably, a family worker who helps a wage-paid out-worker, without himself or herself receiving any direct payment, should also be classified as an unpaid "family" worker in the traditional schema, though he or she could with almost equal justification be called a wage worker. This type of status is not usually mentioned, but is common.

Many would be included under "peasants" or "tribal cultivators", or as "sharecroppers"; some would be "artisans" (notably many of those who might otherwise be described as "own account" workers). Even so, that might leave a residual who would not fall into any category. To allow for this likelihood the category "family worker" should be retained, on the understanding that it should be regarded as no more than a residual, and that attempts should be made to include workers in other categories wherever possible.

One virtue of leaving this category as a residual is that it would weaken the arbitrary distinction between "unpaid family workers" and "housewives". Indeed, if no attempt were made to distinguish between labour force participants and non-participants before questions on worker status were asked in labour survey questionnaires, the proposed labour status approach would include all those contributing to family production and consumption, whether they were making chairs, tending to a vegetable plot, or pounding millet. Combined with a detailed activity pattern classification, the labour status approach would thereby give a picture of the productive system which made no a priori judgments on the labour force value of particular work activities. By this means, in the analysis of the resultant data, the analysis could examine changes in activity patterns, the incidence of different types of behaviour, and such dynamic issues as the cross-elasticities of supply to particular activity-labour status categories in the wake of structural changes in the economic system or in response to specific policy changes.

(xiii) Apprentice

This is another category that some would be inclined to omit from a classification of labour statuses, possibly because it seems to combine a form of work (being trained) and one of several work statuses (proletarian or bonded worker). Where an apprentice is paid a cash wage or a wage in kind - or is assumed to be so paid - he would conventionally be classified as a wage worker. If he were being trained in a family business and paid no wage, he would presumably be classified as a family worker. Neither description adequately captures the particular features of an apprentice as presented in the analytical-descriptive literature.

Conceptually, an apprentice is a worker undergoing training while in employment, the training being designed to produce an identifiable and socially recognised set of skills. At the end of the period of training the apprentice should qualify (or fail to qualify) as a skilled worker in that type of work. And unless the resultant "qualification" is recognised socially, by other workers and by consumers of the output produced by such skilled workers, it would surely be inappropriate to describe the apprenticeship as a valid scheme. But therein lies a difficulty, for there have often been forms of apprenticeship that are not widely recognised as such and are certainly not registered with any administrative body, either industry-based or governmental. One is inclined to conclude that there are no entirely satisfactory criteria for defining apprenticeships and to recommend that this should be determined at the local level, according to national, sub-national or occupation-industry specific criteria. However, the difficulties of defining apprenticeship at an abstract level should not be allowed to deflect attention from what is a particular type of labour relation.

The apprentice is often a highly-exploited worker, paid little or nothing and provided with little or no training or given training for an unnecessarily long time, yet locked by contract and false hope into a very prolonged labour relationship with little recourse to means of escape. In many places, so-called apprenticeship has been established to circumvent minimum-wage and age-limit laws.<sup>1</sup> However, while efforts should be made by labour statisticians to distinguish between such schemes and more genuine forms of apprenticeship training, both types are alike in the very limited control exercised by such workers over the various aspects of the production process. Thus, apprentices have no control over self, work time and intensity, means of production (though they may have some of their own tools), raw materials, their output or the reproduction of their labour skills, which is left to the

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<sup>1</sup> This may well explain the very high proportion of "apprentices" reported for certain industries in some countries. See, e.g. A. Callaway: Nigerian enterprises and the employment of youth, Monograph Series No. 2 (Ibadan, Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1973).

employer.<sup>1</sup> Only over the proceeds of the output, to the extent that the apprentice is paid directly, does the apprentice have some partial control, and even this is very limited if payment is made to a guardian or relative, or retained by the employer by some means or other. In sum, the apprentice is a category of worker with very limited freedom. That is why apprenticeship schemes are only maintained if a sufficiently large group of workers have little bargaining power in the labour process or if such workers can foresee that present loss of such freedom will be repaid by higher earnings and by the expectation that they will be able to repeat the process later in their career as artisans, with themselves in the dominant "master craftsman" position.

(xiv) Co-operative worker

The final category of worker in the labour status classification schema is the member of a producer co-operative, including collective farms. A co-operative is where members in some sense or other share in the control, ownership and proceeds of production. Co-operatives take many forms, ranging from a thinly disguised form of capitalist enterprise to a highly egalitarian form of communal subsistence production in which use value predominates over exchange value as the motivation for work activity. In designing data collection instruments, it should be possible to differentiate between types of co-operative, though there have been few attempts to do so in household surveys.<sup>2</sup> Be that as it may, for present purposes the important point is that the principles of co-operative production can be identified in terms of the seven aspects of control relations.

Where the worker is free to join or leave a co-operative, he retains control over self as a worker. This is a crucial characteristic. But as a member he retains only partial control over work time and skill use

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<sup>1</sup> The employer might be the master craftsman, not the capitalist or factory owner. This was typical, for instance, in nineteenth century shipbuilding in Britain, and in ironworks. S. Pollard: The genesis of modern management (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1968), p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> Co-operative workers in general have been identified in some labour force surveys.

and reproduction, the degree of control depending on something like the collective purpose and the requirements of the enterprise. As a member, he has some control over the means of production and raw materials, presumably something like an equal share with other members, though perhaps shared with others who are not members at all. And over the output and proceeds of the output a sharing mechanism limits the control of any one member or group of members. In many labour force surveys no attempt has been made to identify co-operative workers, yet clearly they are not straightforward proletarians, let alone artisans or family workers. It should not be too difficult to rectify that particular shortcoming.

(xv) Landlord

This and the remaining categories are those who are involved in the production process by virtue of their receipt of surplus yielded by productive workers. But if groups in a controlled position in the production process are to be identified, it is only appropriate to define the corresponding groups who do the main forms of controlling. A landlord in that context is one who owns the land or property on which certain direct producers reside and/or work, receiving rent in one form or another, or anticipating such rent. Though a landlord may combine this role with some other, in so far as his status qua landlord is concerned, direct work relations are not relevant (i.e. control over self as worker, control over labour time, and reproduction of skills).<sup>1</sup> A landlord has partial control over the means of production, even if he has total control of the land or other property; he has partial control of the raw materials, especially if they are all reproduced on the land, and he has partial control over the output, in that he has a legal or extra-legal right to part of the output, in some form or other.

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<sup>1</sup> Is it valid to classify a landlord who is doing no work but receiving income as "economically inactive"? His activity is certainly economic and reflects and influences the economic structure. Roemer identifies a capitalist landlord as a landowner who is not self-employed, who does not hire out labour and who hires-in labour. This seems both incomplete and too restrictive. J. Roemer: A general theory of exploitation and class (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1982).

It should be noted that the term "landlord" is a generic title, which really should be broadened to encompass control over some essential (immovable) means of production. Thus, we could also include "waterlords", those who have ownership of a stretch of water, or watermill, that is crucial to the production process in which others work.

(xvi) Lord/master

In so far as a slave is identified in the comprehensive classification of workers, the corresponding dominant status should also be identified. In some places it will be worthwhile to include this category, but not in many. Where there is a slave mode of production, the slave owner retains control over the slave worker's means of production, raw materials, and the output and the proceeds of the output.

(xvii) Chief

It is probably much more important to identify chiefs. In some peasant communities and in many tribal communities, elders or chiefs receive a form of tribute from the direct producers. This may take the form of unpaid labour services or a share of the produce or, less often, a money "rent". A chief's position can vary enormously, from being little less than an oppressive dictator over community affairs to being little more than a titular functionary. It should be possible to devise an approach that identifies the different forms and degrees of control exercised by such chiefs over those working as direct producers. But at an abstract conceptual level, because of the possible diversity of forms of chief, and because chiefs often represent the peak of a complex set of reciprocal obligations ("structured reciprocities" in Marshall Sahlins' terminology), chiefs have partial control over workers, work time and intensity, means of production and raw materials, output and proceeds of output, and possibly skill development.

(xviii) Merchant

The trader is a distinct class grouping, with distinctive relations to the production and labour processes. Conceptually, the merchant has control over self and over his work time; he has less control over means of production and raw materials, though historically has tended to



take over control of both these sets of factors and become an employer, or withdraw from the production process altogether.

Within the merchant category, there is differentiation between petty traders and merchant capitalists. The autonomy of petty traders is restricted to tenuous control over a limited range of raw materials, prepared foods, handicrafts, clients, or home-produced output. Often such traders combine petty trade with other work activity. But they can either become proletarianised through their vulnerable position, lured into a position of dependence on larger merchants, or they can be pushed out of the labour process by competition, or they can emerge as larger merchants controlling other traders, peasants, semi-proletarians or proletarians. In the latter case, they evolve into merchant capitalists.

(xix) Employer (capitalist)

Finally, there is the employer of wage workers or semi-proletarians, who has control over self, labour time, and skills, and over output and the proceeds of the output. Contrary to the normal image of the capitalist employer, he does not necessarily have total control over the means of production or raw materials, but has at least partial control over both. Clearly, he receives, however indirectly, surplus labour from wage workers.

The position of managers, and of those in statuses of intermediate authority who do not combine that role with productive work, may be regarded as problematical, especially if - in terms defined in the following section - they have external control over labour power through responsibility for recruitment and dismissal. From a formal, if not ideological, point of view these are not employers, since they do not control their own labour time (conceptually), or the means of production, raw materials or the output.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Managers may be placed in possession but not in ownership of means of production, where ownership is defined as either a relation of production or in legal terms. For the distinction, see N. Poulantzas: Classes in contemporary capitalism (London, NLB, 1975), and M. de Vroey: "The separation of ownership and control in huge corporations", in Review of Radical Political Economics, Summer 1975, Vol. 7, No. 5, pp. 1-10.

We can summarise the preceding discussion in terms of a simplified matrix, where the rows consist of labour status categories and where the columns indicate the seven aspects of control. Letting a negative sign indicate absence of control, a zero indicate partial or varying control, and a positive sign indicate complete or high level of control, the resultant matrix is presented as table 2. Note that for those categories listed below the line the signs refer to control over others in the relevant aspect of the production process. In certain cases the scope for variation means there are several possibilities, and in such cases the matrix contains two values at the point of intersection. Of course, in all economies some rows would be empty, and others would have too few entrants to justify disaggregated analysis. If the latter groups were aggregated into an "other category" and excluded from more detailed tables, the matrix nature of tables that could be presented would become reasonably manageable.

It might be useful to have an additional category, state functionaries, which would include all political, state and international administrative and technical workers. Unless such a category were created, such workers would be classified as wage workers.

Once forms of control have been identified, it should become clear that this tabular presentation of the labour status approach could be expanded, so that the complexity of labour processes could be portrayed in statistical form without too much difficulty.

#### V. Forms of Labour Control

Thus far, the notion of control has been used in the abstract, without any attempt to define it in operational terms. The notion is linked to the philosophical concept of "determination", the setting of limits and the exertion of pressure, rather than a predicted, prefigured pattern of behaviour.<sup>1</sup> The sense of control does not rule out active or passive resistance by the controlled, whether effective or otherwise.

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<sup>1</sup> R. Williams: Problems in materialism and culture: Selected essays (London, Verso, 1980), p. 34.

Table 2: Matrix of labour status by relations of control

Labour status	Aspect of control						
	Labour power	Work time	Pro-ductive means	Raw materials	Output	Proceeds of output	Skills
Slave	-	-/0	-	-	-	-	-
Serf	0	0	-/0	0	0	0	0
Servant	0	-	-	-	-	+	-
Bonded labourer	-	0	-	-	-	0	0
Sharecropper	+	+	-/0	-/0	0	0	+
Artisan	+	+	+	0	0	+	+
Proletarian	+	-	-	-	-	0	0
Semi-proletarian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Peasant	+	+	+	0	+	+	+
Tribal cultivator	0	0	0	-	0	0	+
Family worker	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apprentice	-	-	-/0	-	-	0	-/0
Co-operative worker	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Landlord*	0	0	0	0	0	+	-
Lord/master*	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Chief*	0	0	0/+	0	0	0/+	0
Merchant*	+	+	-/0	0	+	+	+
Employer*	+	+	0/+	0	+	+	+

Note: \* For these statuses the values refer to their control over others' labour power, work time, etc. Thus, for example, landlords have partial or variable control (0) over the timing/kind of work done by tenants.

Code: - absence of control  
 0-partial or variable control  
 +-complete control, in principle

Control covers four actions: (i) to compel someone to do something; (ii) to raise the "costs" to someone of not doing something; (iii) to prevent someone from doing something else that they might prefer to do; and (iv) to excommunicate someone for doing something.<sup>1</sup>

Control also implies hierarchy, whether class-related or in some other way; it implies the imposition of obligations, whether or not there are reciprocal rights. Control thus differs from the notion of "co-ordination", which implies the social organisation of production in one way or another. Control is a means of co-ordination, but one can theoretically have the latter without the former in an hierarchical way.

In dealing with the concept of control, we must be careful to distinguish between forms of control, as modes of exploitation, and types of controller; a distinction should also be made between forms of control and forms of surplus labour. For example, an artisan might be controlled in various phases of the production process through several forms of control, and each could be exercised by different controllers, such as a chief, a merchant and a family worker. This complexity should not be dismissed lightly. But without an effort to unravel the relationships it will not be possible to determine the feasibility of collecting relevant statistical information.

Another distinction must be made between direct and indirect control. The former covers situations where the surplus labour and work activity is controlled by the recipient of all or part of the surplus labour. The latter includes patterns in which intermediaries are involved; whether it should also include ideological, custom-based and other social forms of control, including legal rules, is problematical.

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<sup>1</sup> These might be called respectively the control of inclusion, the control of cost, the control of limitation, and the control of exclusion. There also seem to be six mechanisms of subjection, involving attempts to induce (i) behaviour to accommodate to exploitation; (ii) a sense of inevitability, that the control is "natural", etc.; (iii) a sense of representation (ideological domination); (iv) deference, behaviour induced by the belief that the controllers possess superior qualities; (v) fear, of sanctions or of possible alternatives, despite belief in feasibility of desirable alternatives; or (vi) resignation, a belief that all available alternatives would be as bad or worse.

That is relevant to the other abstract distinction that is necessary, namely between external and internal controls, broadly corresponding to the distinction between social and material relations of production. For example, the controls exercised through the labour market are external, those in the enterprise are internal. Thus, we have a simple schema:

	External	Internal
Direct		
Indirect		

The legal "superstructure" fits in the indirect-external cell, the disciplinary functions of a foreman the direct-internal cell, and so on.

(i) External control

Forms of external control also need to be split into extra-economic and economic controls. By "economic" is meant those situations whereby the labour relation reflects the outcome of "choice", the outcome of property relations, explicit bargaining or market exchange. By contrast, "extra-economic" can be divided into "coercive" methods and "custom-based", or "ideological", methods.

In some cases coercive and ideological forms of control will be combined, with coercive methods being kept in reserve in case customary relations become unstable, perhaps because the actual or potential producers become resentful of higher levels of exploitation. Thus, customary patron-client relations between landlords and dependent peasants have often broken down and have led to force to reinstate some level of exploitation. For present purposes, it should be kept in mind that attempts to identify forms of control in the production process should allow for more than one form in the case of most labour status categories.

Forms of external control can be further disaggregated at a lower level of abstraction:

- Forms of external control
- Economic
  - Extra-economic
- labour contract
  - commodity needs
  - coercion, force, direct subordination
  - debt-bonded labour<sup>1</sup>
  - social reciprocities
  - ideologies
  - co-operative obligations
  - legal institutions

In terms of our matrix, the schema can be envisaged as follows:

	Direct	Indirect
Economic	Labour contract	Need generation
Extra-economic	Force, etc. Debt bonds	Social recip. etc. Ideology Law

These categories can be translated into more specific forms of control. Thus, to start with extra-economic forms, coercion is divisible into, first, those direct controls that are legally enforced and those that assume "extra-legal" shape. In the former the State protects the "rights" of the controllers and enforces the "obligations" of the controlled, or even takes over part of the controllers' sphere of action.

Thus, often serfs have been controlled by the actual or feared intervention of local militia or police forces, and in many places workers have been prevented by military guards from leaving their workplace.

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<sup>1</sup> Though see later.

These are legally enforced or sanctioned. Conversely, extra-legal forms of coercion are those instituted by dominant local groups, such as landlords, not illegally necessarily but essentially outside the realm of effective law, such as where landlords force peasants to do unpaid labour without letting them have recourse to law or where the State makes no attempt to offset unbalanced power relationships.

The disaggregation of debt labour into debt peonage and bonded labour reflects the different forms of extra-economic control involved.<sup>1</sup> Conceptually at least, debt peonage is a legalised - or not illegal - relationship whereby an indebted worker receives little for no wage payment, providing labour services for which he cannot legally escape because of his indebtedness; in other words, the labour relationship per se does not provide the means by which the bonded relation could be severed by the worker. That contrasts with bonded labour, in which a worker receives a wage form which he is expected to repay a debt over a period of employment, which may range from a specific, short period covered by a labour "contract" to as long as it takes to pay off the debt; most common is the situation where a consumption loan is made in advance as a means of committing the worker to a period of employment.<sup>2</sup>

Debt peonage is a legalised relationship backed by the threat of force, or if formally constrained by law its persistence can only reflect

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<sup>1</sup> One should also distinguish between situations where indebtedness is used primarily as a means of control and where it is used primarily as a means of exploitation, as a means of extracting surplus from the producers. This is best measured by the rate of interest and terms of repayment; where control is the main function interest rates may be low or negligible, as has been observed in some surveys in India and elsewhere. National Labour Institute/Gandhi Peace Foundation: National survey of the incidence of bonded labour: Preliminary report (New Delhi, Paul's Press, 1979).

<sup>2</sup> In some cases, a debt may be carried forward from one period of required labour to another, as has been widely practised by employers of seasonal agricultural labourers in parts of Latin America and India. See, for example, A. Pearse: The Latin American peasant (London, Frank Cass, 1975); and J. Breman: "Seasonal migration and cooperative capitalism: The crushing of cane and of labour by the sugar factories of Bardoli, South Gujarat", in Journal of Peasant Studies, Oct. 1978, Vol. 6, pp. 41-70.

a contradiction between the formal law and the social relations of production. Debt-bonded labour is more a matter of customary relations, sanctioned by "voluntary" market exchange. As such, it encompasses both economic and extra-economic forms of labour control.

The other principal form of debt-control is that typically linking out-workers with merchant capitalists, where there is no direct control over the labour process. It is the absence of the latter that makes out-work an inappropriate, inefficient means of capital accumulation, leading to the transition to workshop and factory production where direct economic control can be used.

The extra-economic control exercised through "social reciprocities" covers a wide variety of customary relationships, of obligations and rights, such as those based on kinship, ethnic identity, caste restrictions, and class or tribal rules:

- Social reciprocities - Family, within households/compounds
- Kinship, non-household/compound
- Caste restrictions
- Tribal, clan rules
- Ethnic, migrant associations, etc.
- Guilds, "professional" associations, etc.

The reciprocities involved, whether "structured" or "balanced", will usually be motivated or justified by economic considerations, but they do not fit the formal notion of economic adopted here.<sup>1</sup>

At this level of abstraction, it is difficult to specify the practical dimensions of such socially reciprocal arrangements. But here we are not interested in their actual details as in their general character. Each of these reciprocities is limited and limiting; limited in the sense that exploitation is usually restricted by the closeness and personal nature of the contacts between the producers and the recipients or

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<sup>1</sup> On structural and balanced reciprocities in "primitive" pre-market economies, see M. Sahlins: Stone age economics (London, Tavistock Press, 1974); and M. Nash: Primitive and peasant economic systems (San Francisco, Chandler Publishing Co., 1966).



controllers of surplus labour, and limiting in the sense that such methods of control correspond to rudimentary forms of production and division of labour and are expected to maintain them.

Legal institutions help in the legitimation of social relations of production, though not in any simple manner. The "law's delay" often conceals the inter-relations between legal processes and changing social relations of production. This topic is not of immediate concern to the present set of proposals. But it is of interest to note that legal rules can play four roles in changing forms of labour control:

- (i) Once a social relation of control has changed, a new set of laws can legitimate that change.
- (ii) A legal change can precede and encourage actual changes in the labour process if the latter is impeding the development of productive forces.
- (iii) New control relations can emerge without there needing to be any change in the law, but once developed new laws are desired to make those new relations secure.
- (iv) New control relations can develop without any legal change or new laws being needed.

The legal support for certain forms of control may influence the control of inclusion, of cost, of limitation or of exclusion, as defined earlier. In general, this issue has been given far too little attention in the analytical literature on the labour process.

Finally, "co-operative obligations and rights" represent in part a formalisation of social reciprocities but refer to situations in which rules and productive activity are determined on establishment of, or on joining, a co-operative organisation of direct producers with its own rules and procedures and contractual controls over labour activity.

Returning to the distinction between economic and extra-economic external forms of control, under economic we will restrict attention to "labour contract", that is the external contract associated with the hiring and firing of workers. A contract may be of any duration, of various degrees of legally-binding formality, and various degrees of flexibility for individual cases and internal adjustment. It may be between an individual worker and an employer, or between a worker and someone in intermediary authority, or it may be group-based, as in

the case of a family work gang. That aside, for proletarians and semi-proletarians there are seven basic dimensions of labour market relations encompassed by the term:

- Labour contract - Duration
  - Casual daily
  - piece work
  - fixed term (monthly, season, etc.)
  - fixed term, renewable
  - "permanent"
- Basis of payment
  - time rate (hourly, etc.)
  - piece rate
  - weekly, monthly
  - product share
- Frequency of payment
  - daily
  - weekly
  - monthly
  - seasonal
  - job completion
  - irregular, including timing of bonuses
- Medium of payment
  - cash
  - meals, etc.
  - kind
- Relative autonomy
  - timing of work pre-specified or not
  - amount of work pre-specified or not
  - intensity of effort/productivity pre-specified or not
- Freedom of employment relation
  - ability to change employers (delay, difficulty, etc.)
  - ability to combine with other (work) activities
- Linkages with other contracts
  - links with employer through credit mechanism
  - links with employer in land relations
  - links with employer through employment of family members

This perspective focuses on the formality, duration and degree of attachment and dependence involved in the labour contract.<sup>1</sup> Besides the factors mentioned, there should also be reference to the ratio of monetary to non-monetary pay, and the ratio of "fringe" benefits to direct payments. These distinguish different control relations and have critical implications for labour process analysis. However, at this stage it is sufficient to keep the framework reasonably simplified, bearing in mind that such extensions can be fairly easily introduced, especially when considering internal controls as well.

Each of the identified labour market relations raise statistical problems, and there is some conceptual ambiguity in the terms themselves. Although those issues must be addressed later, the terms have the merit of being generally recognisable.

(ii) Internal controls

Let us turn now, however briefly, to internal labour controls, and to the forms of controller, which will link back to the nature of work, the division of labour, and notions of skill and occupation discussed in section II.

Controls have twin objectives to serve, to increase surplus labour performed (raise productivity, etc.) and to legitimise the social and material relations of production.<sup>2</sup> There are also direct and indirect forms of internal control, a popular view being that with industrialisation there is a shift from direct to indirect labour controls, from what one analyst has called the "despotic organisation of consent" to the "hegemonic organisation of consent", that is from direct supervision to an elaborate system of implicit games that involve an accepted set of

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<sup>1</sup> For a brilliant empirical study in this vein, see P. Bardhan and A. Rudra: "Types of labour attachment in agriculture: Results of a survey in West Bengal, 1979", in Economic and Political Weekly, 30 August 1980, Vol. XV, No. 35, pp. 1477-1484.

<sup>2</sup> Legitimation and surplus appropriation are not the same and can come into conflict. For a controversial treatment of these issues, see J. Habermas: Legitimation crisis (London, Heineman, 1976).

rules designed to measure surplus labour.<sup>1</sup>

Simple direct controls are those exercised by an employer in personal contact with workers, and simple indirect control is that mediated through intermediary controllers such as foremen and managers. These correspond to what have been called simple control, the most common involving mainly negative sanctions exercised by intermediaries.<sup>2</sup> Thus, a foreman exercises control over the worker's labour time, including hours, work intensity, work group position, etc. What he does not do is systematically set out to alter the detailed division of labour or the degree of skill in the job structure. However, as with any system of control, direct control involves the three elements of direction, evaluation and discipline.<sup>3</sup> Direction or supervision can be construed as increasing efficiency, that is obtaining more surplus, raising output without increasing labour input; discipline means obtaining greater output for greater labour input, not more output for the same input.<sup>4</sup>

In simple forms of control of wage labour, there are incentives and sanctions that are fairly easy to identify, as follows:

<u>Incentives</u>	<u>Sanctions</u>
Wage rates	Wage deductions
Bonuses	Extra work
Fringe benefits	Exclusion from benefits
Promotion	Demotion, dismissal

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<sup>1</sup> M. Buroway: Manufacturing consent (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979). See also E.O. Wright: "The value controversy and social research", in New Left Review, July-Aug. 1979, No. 116, pp. 53-82.

<sup>2</sup> R. Edwards: Contested terrain (New York, Basic Books Inc., 1979), p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 18. Edwards incorrectly describes these as social relations of production.

<sup>4</sup> This differs slightly from the view that supervising merely means reducing the real wage, that is reducing workers' countervailing power. S. Marglin: "The origins and functions of hierarchy in capitalist production", in T. Nichols (ed.): Capital and labour: Studies in the capitalist labour process (London, Athlone Press, 1980), p. 248.

Thus the employer can use changes in wage rates or particular forms of wage system to influence labour time; he can use bonuses, including overtime pay, to influence labour time and efficiency; he can use fringe benefits as a means of securing commitment to the enterprise, reducing labour turnover for example, and he can use promotions for the same objective as well as to increase "skill" levels. Negative sanctions also have these potential roles to fulfil.

It is also worth reminding ourselves that workers have both passive and active forms of "internal" - economic - resistance to such controls:

<u>Passive resistance</u>	<u>Active resistance</u>
"Soldiering"	Absenteeism
Lower effort	Quitting
Lower quality	Sabotage
"Working to rule"	Strikes

It was "soldiering", which covers effort reduction but which more adequately conveys a lack of commitment to increased effort or efficiency, that "scientific management" was partly aimed to overcome for the employer's benefit.

In contrast to simple control, so-called technical control is more indirect in nature, linking control to restructuring of jobs, the increasing detailed division of labour, the use of continuous flow technology where relevant, and technological job structures that impose their pace and direction on worker discretion, in turn aiding in the evaluation of workers' performance. With technical control, the impact and significance of foremen, supervisors and others with intermediary authority is much reduced. That does not mean the number of positions of intermediary authority is reduced, for with the growth in the narrow and static nature of jobs, the need to overcome the "motivation crisis" dictates a need for closer supervision, even if the power of control of individual supervisors is greatly reduced.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A motivation crisis arises if the nature of the work does not match the level of rewards. In such situations, general supervisors are likely to be supplemented or substituted by shopfloor supervisors and specialist supervisors, and so on.

Before proceeding to the third general form of internal control, it is appropriate to dispel any possible misunderstanding that technical control, the process of deskilling and the growing separation of manual and mental labour simply reduce the worker to passivity. Such a view has long been challenged. Gramsci recognised the dialectic of Taylorism, in that while the increasing technical control of labour could succeed in "breaking up the old psycho-physical nexus of qualified professional work", it required compensating social control to prevent "the physiological collapse of the worker". The worker had to "internalise" the mechanical nature of industrial work, to take for granted its lack of "human content". But in making such adaptations:

"The only thing that is completely mechanised (sic) is the physical gesture; the memory of the trade, reduced to simple gestures repeated at an intense rhythm, 'nestles' in the muscular and nervous centres and leaves the brain free and unencumbered for other occupations."

This leads, he argued, to the worker being able to think about his work, which could "lead him into a train of thought that is far from conformist". Consequently, employers sought new layers of ideological and legalistic controls.<sup>1</sup> In effect, Gramsci's early analysis is adequate warning that the technical control associated with Taylorist scientific management must not be seen as a linear, non-contradictory process.

Technical control extends into bureaucratic control, where the control is increasingly indirect but where technical aspects are less able to fulfil control functions. A defining feature is that work rules are highly formalised and centralised, leaving little to the discretion of the layers of controllers that permeate the job structure. Centralised control is exercised over job categorisation, promotion procedures, discipline, wage scales, grades and definitions of responsibilities and rights. Job ladders and a high degree of labour force stratification mean avoidance of the appearance of excessive negative sanctions, which are depersonalised by being fixed by enterprise rules. Static

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<sup>1</sup> A. Gramsci: "Americanism and Fordism", in Q. Hoare and G.N. Smith (eds. and trans.): Selections from the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci (London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1971), pp. 279-318.

jobs abound, but the bureaucratic principles of grading and related "positive incentives" give the impression of internal labour mobility that is not essentially a function of skill or technical ability but is contrived heirarchical mobility. Social attributes replace technical skills in promotions, and this constitutes the core of bureaucratic control, in reality if not in appearance.

The position of trade unions in this changing process of control is intriguing and contradictory. In simple control systems, unions have typically represented skilled workers, attempting to control the ports of entry to a craft or profession, regulating the control of subordinate labourers and apprentices and acquiring redistributed surplus from lower strata of worker. With technical control, unions - often industrial unions - have increasingly adopted the contradictory position of supposedly opposing the social relations of production, raising worker incomes, improving work conditions and reducing discontent. In the process, they have become intermediary controllers of labour, managers of discontent, in many instances helping to get Taylorist principles and bureaucratic control accepted and, whether as company unions or as industrial unions, helping to placate discontent rather than resisting the progressive division of labour.<sup>1</sup>

Another aspect of control that deserves to be reiterated is labour force stratification, a feature of the social division of labour, and the related issue of labour market segmentation. These involve external labour controls, but fit here because they relate to internal control as well. The crucial point is that in some way workers are divided into behavioural types and channelled into jobs relatively suitable, or least unsuitable, for such behavioural characteristics. In the process, the co-exploitation tendencies of the early manufacturing phase of industrialisation are extended through the internal redistribution of part of the

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<sup>1</sup> The managerial role of unions, and shop-stewards in particular, in the British industrial context was highlighted by the findings and reports of employers to the Royal Commission on Trade Unions in the mid-1960s, subsequently known as the Donovan Report. In the USA, instances have arisen where union leaders have joined the Board of Directors, as in the case of the President of the UAW who is on the Board of Chrysler.

surplus, as noted in section II. Both conceptually and empirically there are difficulties in this perspective. However, it is consistent with the shift from progressive to static jobs and an increasing detailed division of labour that certain groups will be enlisted to identify with the employers while being in a position to receive redistributed surplus - or increments over other categories of worker that bear no objective relation to their respective labour powers. Labour market theorists have postulated the existence of secondary and primary jobs, and secondary labour markets, subordinate primary labour markets and independent primary labour markets, and variations of such divisions.<sup>1</sup> Whatever conceptualisation is adopted, the controls exercised through the social and detailed division of labour should be identified through the job and occupational classification used in establishment and household labour force surveys.

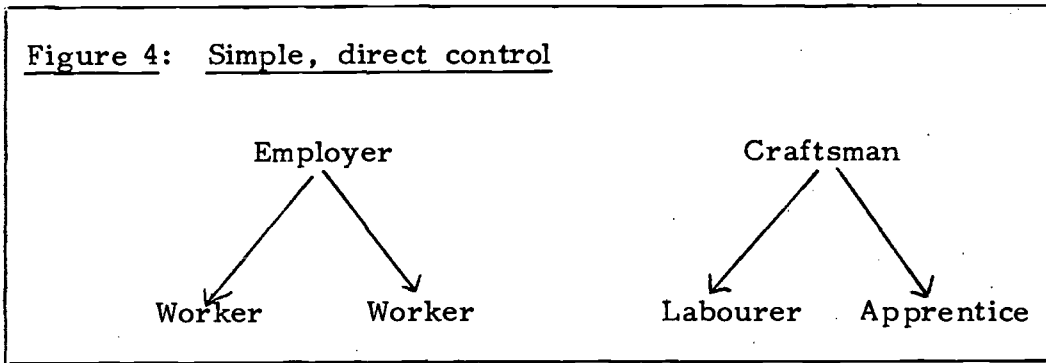
We can conclude this section by depicting internal control systems schematically. The simple direct control, characterising the early phases of industrialisation, is represented by the two patterns in figure 4. On the left is the situation in which the employer controls raw materials, means of production and the product, effectively retaining personal or familial control over the labour process with workers being subordinated to capital represented by the employer, who may have started as a merchant but may be an entrepreneur. Each worker in the simplest case will be hired by the employer and be under his direct control. On the right is the classic craftsmanship relation, with the apprentice being groomed to take over from the craftsman or, more likely, to become an autonomous non-competing craftsman after a (prolonged) period of training and on-the-job experience. The labourer

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<sup>1</sup> The latter is that proposed by Edwards, 1979, op. cit.; the former was expounded at length by Doeringer and Priore, while having a close bearing to ideas propounded by J.S. Mill and Cairns in the nineteenth century. Friedman makes an interesting distinction between central and peripheral workers, with "individual" workers being central because of skills, or knowledge, or contribution to managerial authority and "groups" being central on the basis of their collective bargaining strength. A.L. Friedman: Industry and Labour (London, Macmillan, 1977), p. 7.



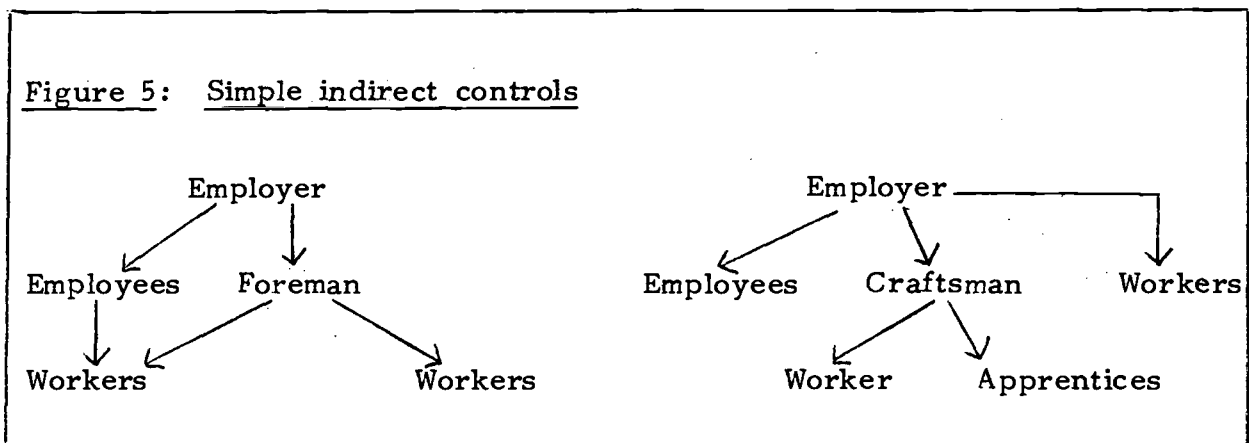
Figure 4: Simple, direct control



is presented because commonly craftsmen utilise general labourers not being trained to attain equivalent status as craftsmen; this should be described an early form of wage-labour force stratification, by which the social division of labour is extended.

With the growing scale of production and the growth of the detailed division of labour, indirect simple and technical control systems emerge. The basic types are represented in figure 5. Here there is greater

Figure 5: Simple indirect controls



social distance between employer and workers. The division of labour grows between "manual" and "mental" labour, with a separate group of paper workers alongside production workers. In the system on the left, there is still direct control exercised by the employer over the paper workers (employees), but control over other workers is delegated to foremen or certain employees. The variant on the right depicts a

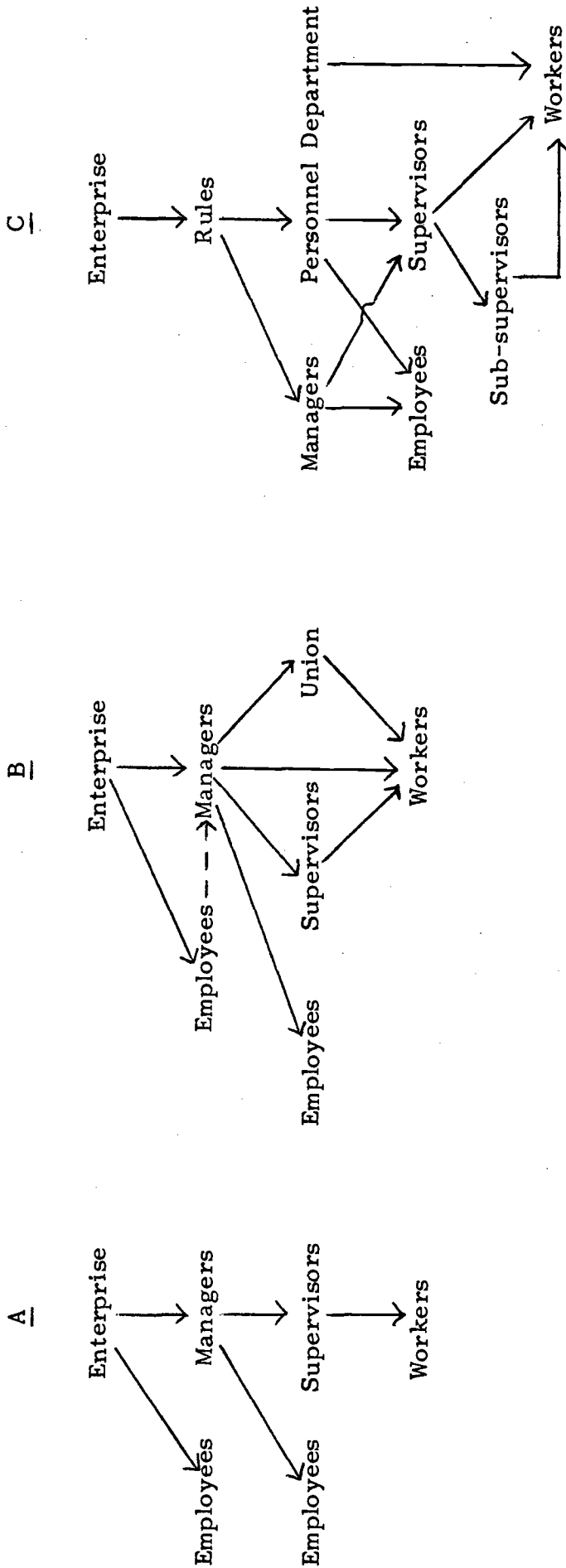
loss of autonomy by the craftsman but his continued partial control over the labour time of other workers, delegated to him by the employer.

These forms of simple controls were paramount in most industrial enterprises in Europe, North America and Japan by the beginning of the twentieth century. But for large-scale employers, they are unsatisfactory partly because the intermediate groups are objectively liable to identify with those beneath them rather than with those above them; stripped of the superior status attributed to them, they remain proletarians, and while they may not have class consciousness in the sense of identifying their interests in terms of the working class, their objective interest in maximising the surplus labour of those below them is at best weak, especially if they come from that stratum of workers.

What emerges from such "internal contradictions" is increased reliance on indirect technical and bureaucratic control, as well as ideological and related external control. Jobs are split vertically and horizontally, with enterprise rules being formalised in correspondence with the real centralisation of control. The "rule book" becomes Big Brother, and the Personnel Department the representative of the hierarchical layers above them. Thus the patterns of control pass through phases such as depicted in figure 6, in each case being split vertically, so that from one manager or one supervisor there are many, each linked vertically downwards and upwards but not essentially horizontally, and where the technical relations of production determine work activities, even though those are themselves determined by higher levels of "controller".

As with figures 4 and 5, the lines of control represented in figure 6 are only illustrative of the main forms of hierarchical labour control. The basic tendency is that labour control becomes diffused, while being impersonalised, while becoming tighter. The degree of worker autonomy is whittled away with successive layers, and occasionally competing forms, of control. Again, here is not the place to explore the dynamics of this part of the labour process. But the basic contradictions are that the fragmentation into increasingly narrow and static jobs, coupled with the tightening of controls, accentuate the negative aspect of work activity, increase alienation in terms of both estrangement and loss of

Figure 6: Indirect, bureaucratic control (Main lines of control)



Note: "Enterprise could be an individual capitalist, a Board of Directors, sub-national or national authority or a supra-national body."

autonomy, and foster surplus-reducing resistance on the part of productive workers. The classic responses to that have been a growth of authoritarian control, including resort to indirect mechanisms through the law and the State, and a reliance on more pervasive paternalism.

Thus, the large-scale Japanese corporations that emerged in the twentieth century were able to draw on their historical roots, epitomised by oyabunkobun, to fashion a corporate paternalism that secured internal control, but were able to succeed because of a combination of favourable external circumstances.<sup>1</sup> The oyabunkobun relation is a simulated kinship tie, based on patriarchal authority coupled with "social reciprocities". Traditionally, simple direct control was exercised by oyakata, master workmen who were labour contractors with bands of followers (kokata) and apprentices. Exploitation was partially concealed by the paternalistic oyabunkobun. With the state-aided emergence of large corporations, the oyakata were absorbed and pacified by the provision of "lifelong" employment and receipt of redistributed surplus, securing their co-operation in controlling wage workers below them in the job hierarchy. Devotion to work, exemplified by dutiful respect to higher-status strata, became the principal means of moving up the job-ladder. Such corporate paternalism provided bureaucratic control that could create and mould a docile workforce in an era of rapid economic growth - as it has done in such places as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia, the more so where it has been based on historically paternalistic social relations of production. But the cost in terms of alienation, as estrangement and loss of creativity on the part of the mass of workers, makes that experience a poor guide to what would happen elsewhere, besides containing the seeds of crisis in the labour process should economic growth decline.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Littler, 1982, op. cit., pp. 146-160.

<sup>2</sup> A graphic account of the incipient crisis is provided by an ex-Toyota worker in a recent publication detailing the dehumanising work schedules and social relations of production. S. Kamata: Japan in the passing lane (London, Allen and Unwin, 1983). In Malaysia, periodically the docile workforce gives way to mass hysteria, known locally as "running amok".

## VI. Concluding Suggestions

The perspective underlying the labour status approach proposed in the preceding sections is controversial. But the issues that the approach attempts to synthesise are fundamental to the global labour process. As such, the approach could be the integrating theme for the refinement of labour statistics and the analysis of labour market dynamics. It could also be used to provide guidelines for labour policy and labour strategy. It is remarkable that the great bulk of labour force data, and the labour force recommendations of the ILO, have little correspondence to the ILO concerns with labour relations, working conditions, labour-related hardship, or degrees and modes of exploitation. That is a strong statement, but it would be hard to refute, even by the most talented apologist. That is also self-criticism, because we are too easily persuaded to pursue the familiar questions, using the familiar concepts, with the familiar methodologies, with their familiar acceptability.

In recent discussions of labour force statistics, a "building block" approach has been proposed, somehow analagous to national accounts. But one should surely conceptualise a system of "labour force accounts" that is different from national income accounts. The latter is concerned with a quantitative index or set of indices, whereas labour statistics should be primarily concerned with characteristics of workers and work, with the qualitative dimensions to a much greater extent than with quantitative dimensions.

The labour process includes well-defined, well-known groups that labour force statistics systematically ignore. It includes peasants, nomads, bonded labourers, various types of attached labourers, others whose work is forced labour, sharecroppers, labour gangs, exchange labour, family workforces, serfs, slaves, family workers, real and phoney apprentices, co-operative workers, badli (surplus) workers, beck-and-call workers, and so on. Many workers have several labour statuses, either shifting between several or combining them. Thus, workers may be bonded or attached in some way but during a short reference period be doing casual wage labour or exchange labour. We know little about the incidence of such patterns, but more fundamentally,

we have scarcely addressed the statistical or conceptual issues associated with such possibilities. If we were to address them, we might recommend the identification of primary, or usual main, labour status as well as actual labour status during some reference period.

Another problem that this theoretical perspective raises is that some of the labour statuses are illegal or contrary to ILO conventions, or at least sensitive. The critic might object that it would therefore be unrealistic for the ILO to recommend the collection of data on specific labour statuses - let alone try to indentify the incidence of forms of labour control - or to expect governments to pursue information on such sensitive topics. The retort to that line of reasoning is that it is first necessary to clarify the problem before seeking the solutions, and then to consider how to achieve the collection of appropriate data, such as by sensitive phrasing of questions in labour force surveys.

There are numerous issues brought into view by the labour status approach that are not contained in the philosophy of the conventional labour force approach. The conventional notion of labour "under-utilisation" is just one such issue. Ask, for example, a bonded labourer working for little or nothing if he wishes to work more hours, and he may interpret that as more work for his overseer or as an opportunity to work for himself and for more net income, when the mode of exploitation under which he exists precludes that actual possibility. The resultant answer in the traditional labour force data could not be interpreted with any validity. As far as availability for work and willingness to work more "hours" are concerned, one should integrate the behavioural data with the issue of labour status.

What we have proposed is an approach that begins with identification of labour status in terms of personal control over aspects of the production process. From that, we would recommend identification of the patterns of external and internal labour control exercised over the various labour status categories, and the type of work activity that identifies status, relative autonomy, breadth of job, and progressiveness. With these complementary, and albeit complex, considerations it should be possible to derive a system of labour statistics that complements the conventional labour force data, as well as provide the elements

for dynamic analysis of the labour process. What we need to do is develop a set of indicators to be used to identify the various labour statuses. Then we would need to devote more time to the design of data collecting techniques that match the task; questionnaire design would be a major aspect of that work.

To sum up the main thread of the labour status approach, three "building blocks" are implied for labour surveys:

1. Activity status
  - labour force participation, time allocation, etc.
2. Labour status
  - control over means of production, raw materials, own labour power (work status), output, proceeds of output.
3. Work status
  - occupation/job - breadth (task range, technical skills, general/specific training, etc.)
  - control status (autonomy, supervising/supervised hierarchy, control over work time)
  - progressiveness (control over skill reproduction and augmentation, internal mobility).

The conventional labour force approach was adopted about fifty years ago and has required an enormous amount of detailed work to make it reasonably viable. Indeed, further changes were recommended at the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians held in late 1982. If only a fraction of the time devoted to the labour force approach's shortcomings was shifted to issues raised in the labour status-labour control framework, we might expect a significant improvement in the data available for analysing the labour process.

Appendix

Some Semantics of Work

"Art is Man's expression of his joy in labour"  
William Morris

The notion of work encompasses four distinct meanings. Work is an activity, that is a series of linked actions. It is also a conscious use of effort, mental and physical, to achieve some pre-determined objective. A piece of work is also the outcome of some activity, that is, an inactive object. And we also refer to an artistic achievement as a great work.

To complicate matters, there is also the word labour that is often taken to be synonymous with work. Labour is derived from the Latin (laborem) implying toil, distress and trouble. Laborare meant heavy, onerous work, and early medieval use of labeur was associated with agricultural activity, typically with the plough. The French word, travailler is derived from the Latin tripatiare, meaning torture with a nasty instrument. All these early derivations suggest a negative view of work activity.<sup>1</sup> But that would be an oversimplification, if only because of the continuing theological link between man's work and God's work.

The etymology of key words can assist in identifying aspects of reality on which we should concentrate. It was mainly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that work was identified in a distinctly positive manner. David Hume was one of the first to consider that labour distinguished man from animals. The change was marked by paternalistic interpretations of technological progress and the visible growth of the division of labour, and by the grumbling discontent of the working classes and their intellectual representatives. The key distinction

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<sup>1</sup> The Greek word for labour, ponos, signified pain and effort, and has a similar etymological root as the word for poverty, penia.



initially made by Aristotle between work as thinking and work as production was developed by Enlightenment artists and poets, by social critics such as Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin. In doing so, they went beyond the Puritan work ethic propounded by Martin Luther and later linked by Max Weber to the development of capitalism. Thinkers such as Carlyle saw work itself as ennobling.<sup>1</sup> Ruskin was more profound, and is worth quoting at length, even if the theme is over-familiar to labour analysts in the 1980s - or perhaps precisely because it is taken for granted, and is thus not incorporated in critical thinking enough:

"Observe, you are put to a stern choice in this matter. You must either make a tool of the creature, or a man of him. You cannot make both. Men were not intended to work with the accuracy of tools, to be precise and perfect in all their actions. If you will have that precision out of them, and make their fingers measure degrees like cog-wheels, and their arms strike curves like compasses, you must inhumanise them. All the energy of their spirits must be given to make cogs and compasses of themselves ... On the other hand, if you will make a man of the working creature, you cannot make a tool. Let him but begin to imagine, to think, to try to do anything worth doing; and the engine-turned precision is lost at once. Out come all his roughness, all his dulness, all his incapability; shame upon shame, failure upon failure, pause after pause: but out comes the whole majesty of him also..."[2]

This appreciation was coupled with a recognition that manual and intellectual labour need to be integrally linked:

"We are always in these days endeavouring to separate the two; we want one man to be always thinking, and another to be always working, and we call one a gentleman and the other an operative; whereas the workman ought often to be thinking, and the thinker often to be working, and both should be gentlemen, in the best sense. As it is, we make both ungentle, the one envying, the other despising, his brother; and the mass of society is made up of morbid thinkers, and miserable workers."[3]

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<sup>1</sup> Thus Carlyle claimed, with paternalistic exaggeration, "All work, even cotton-spinning is noble; work is alone noble".

<sup>2</sup> John Ruskin, The Stones of Venice.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Both Carlyle and Ruskin were romantically atavistic. But Karl Marx in his 1844 Political and Economic Manuscripts was wrestling with similar themes from a Hegelian perspective, through considering work activity as man's "human essence", and depicting the division of labour in capitalist society as a fourfold process of alienation. Whereas Rousseau had seen alienation in terms of man's estrangement from his original, historically primitive nature ("Man is born free and is everywhere in chains"), the young Marx depicted alienation as estrangement from man's essential nature. Marx was by no means alone in considering alienation, but labour analysts who do not come to grips with this aspect of his work are closing their minds to insights that should guide our conceptualisation of the labour process and thence to the design of statistics.

Without going into its ramifications, the theory of alienation starts from the presumption that an unalienated existence is possible and can be depicted as an ontological process, that is as a process of becoming - or in less-Hegelian imagery, as a series of trends by which man's creative capacities are developed and refined. Alienation takes four major forms. First, man is estranged from his work as life activity; he does it through coercion or as a necessary means of pursuing subsistence needs. Second, man is estranged from the product of his work, having little or no control over its design, how it is made or its subsequent use. Third, man is estranged from man through competition, class tensions and the artificial technical and social division of labour. And fourth, man is estranged from nature, seeing it as something to be used, yet cut off from transforming nature as a means of developing his own human nature.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As presented, these may be regarded as excessively abstract. For those unfamiliar with the full theoretical treatment, see I. Mészáros, Marx's theory of alienation (London, Merlin, 1970), and B. Ollman, Alienation (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1976). The former is easier and traces the theoretical developments through social theorists such as Rousseau, Kant, Hegel and Feuerbach. Subsequent refinements are best represented in the work of Lukács, Heller and Sohn-Rethell, in the (later) writings of the Frankfurt School and, in the late nineteenth century, by William Morris, in the less abstract "English" tradition.

For our purposes, alienation is significant because it should lead to concern for the various aspects of work activity, both in reality and in its potential as life-meaning activity. Indeed, only by having some image of what is desirable can we hope to identify those elements of the labour process that are objectively criticisable. From the theory of alienation, we can derive that work that is narrowly specialised, or that uses only a narrow range of physical or mental attributes, or that systematically restricts the development of physical, intellectual or psychological capacities, is a denial of the "human essence".<sup>1</sup> More than that, if the focus is put just on economic alienation, it is possible to derive analytical descriptive categories, rather than normative constructs, that consist of observable socio-economic relations and behavioural patterns.<sup>2</sup> In that context, alienation is manifest in loss of control and autonomy in relation to one's labour and product. But it is also characteristic of those whose existence depends on the control of others' labour and product.<sup>3</sup>

To conceptualise the labour process, it is advisable to envisage work activity as a basic human need, potentially.<sup>4</sup> As such, we should retain a distinction between labour and work, between the negative root and the positive root of words that are conventionally treated as synonymous. The ancient Greeks made the distinction,

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<sup>1</sup> One critic of this passage noted that "composing music and inventing theorems are both narrowly specialised and use a narrow range of mental attributes". In a sense this is true. But if someone was forced, by circumstance or pressure, to do either to the exclusion of other activities, creative genius would be stunted and there would indeed be a one-sided development of personality, and physical and emotional capacities.

<sup>2</sup> For a recent elaboration, see R. Schacht: "Economic alienation: With and without tears", in R.F. Geyer and D. Schweitzer (eds.): Alienation: Problems of meaning, theory and method (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 36-67.

<sup>3</sup> Thus Aristotle differentiated the despot from the free man, the despot definitionally being unfree.

<sup>4</sup> Points in the following are analysed elsewhere. See G. Standing; "Basic needs and the division of labour", in Pakistan Development Review, Autumn, 1980, Vol. XIX, No. 3, pp. 211-236.

regarding the former as fit for slaves and animals; to labour meant to be enslaved by necessity, and the implication is that labour done from physical necessity is demeaning.<sup>1</sup> Such dichotomous distinctions have been made ever since, with productive and unproductive labour, skilled and unskilled labour, and manual versus intellectual labour. What we should surely be attempting to do is reduce the need and conditions producing labour in the perjorative sense and creating the conditions for the pursuit of the latter - not so much a withering away of the State as a "withering away of the realm of necessity" and the expansion of the freedom of work as the basic human need. The pursuit of "leisure" as "free time" in which to consume more goods and services, more intensely and less efficiently, derives from alienated labour in which controls direct and restrict the type and intensity of activity.<sup>2</sup> Man needs work in the second sense, in order to develop. For, as Bronowski superbly summarised the essence of human progress, consciously or unconsciously echoing Engels and John Locke:

"The hand is the cutting edge of the mind. Civilisation is not a collection of finished artefacts, it is the elaboration of processes. In the end, the march of man is the refinement of the hand in action. The most powerful drive in the ascent of man is his pleasure in his own skill." [3]

In short, work as human creativity should be distinguished from onerous alienating labour. As such, the nature of any work should be assessed in terms of the extent to which it is self-directed, purposeful activity that allows the individual development of both intellectual and

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<sup>1</sup> Arendt has a very useful discussion of the distinctions in Greek thought. H. Arendt: The human condition (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 79-84.

<sup>2</sup> Disquiet on that crosses the political spectrum. Thus see, e.g. S.B. Linder: The harried leisure class (New York, Columbia University Press, 1970); and A. Gorz: Farewell to the working class (London, Pluto Press, 1982).

<sup>3</sup> J. Bronowski: The ascent of man (London, BBC Books, 1973), p. 116. The aphorism of John Locke, "The labour of our body and the work of our hands", is used by Arendt as the basis of her analysis of a desirable but threatened vita activa. Arendt, 1958, op. cit., pp. 79, 322 et passim.

physical capabilities. That of course is easier to state in the abstract than to operationalise. How is it possible to determine what are those capabilities in the absence of their development? The most appropriate approach is to focus on those aspects that negate the possibility of such development, that is the social and technical controls placed on the worker, whether directing him or her to do something, preventing him or her from doing something or directing that such activity is done in a particular way at a particular time in particular circumstances. That is the crucial starting point for what follows.

To increasingly satisfy the human need, work should be considered in terms of creative activity, involving the use of time, energy, effort and mental prowess to achieve predetermined objectives. The image of William Morris has lost none of its appeal:

"A man at work is exercising the energies of his mind and soul as well as of his body. Memory and imagination help him as he works. Not only his own thoughts, but the thoughts of the men of past ages guide his hands; and, as a part of the human race, he creates. If we work thus we shall be men, and our days will be happy and eventful." [1]

This theme has been reiterated, in a more restricted sense, by Rawls as "the Aristotelian Principle", as follows:

"other things equal, human beings enjoy the exercise of their realised capacities (the trained abilities), and this enjoyment increases the more the capacity is realised, or the greater its complexity." [2]

As such, at the very least the producer qua worker should be involved in both the conception and production aspects of productive activity. Moreover, any work relation should be assessed in terms of six related elements that should guide labour process analysis and the development of labour force statistics. Work as human need should:

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<sup>1</sup> William Morris: Useful work versus useless toil. The aphorism cited at the outset of this section should remind us that Art has been distanced from work, but it was not always so, nor need it be so. It would have been more apt if Morris had used the word "work" rather than "labour".

<sup>2</sup> J. Rawls: A theory of justice (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 426.

1. Ensure secure subsistence, on an improving basis.
2. Ensure that work activity does not jeopardise intellectual, physical or psychological health, and that some groups do not have the power or the right to impair the health of others.
3. Foster and allow individual creativity in the social production process.
4. Be "compatible" with workers' skills and capacities while allowing the development of potential skills, implying as with (3) growing direct power over decisions on what, with what and how to produce, and for what use and purpose.
5. Facilitate the achievement of "leisure", which is not the same as "free time" but which should be regarded as both a complement and an extension to productive activity.

These are desirable attributes of work activity that need to be kept in mind when conceptualising the labour process, for they should help identify relevant analytical and statistical considerations. In effect, labour statistics should highlight differences between the reality and the desirable. If they do not do so, they cannot be subversive and can only really serve the status quo.

Selected Publications of the Population and Labour Policies

Research Programme<sup>1</sup>

1. General Material on the Research Programme

ILO: World Employment Programme: Population and development - A progress report on ILO research with special reference to labour, employment and income distribution (Geneva, April 1982), 4th edition, Reference WEP 2-21/PR.7. (\*)

This report includes a full bibliography. This publication (3rd edition, summer 1981) is available in French. (\*)

2. Books and Monographs

[A number of free copies are available for individuals and institutions in less developed countries. Requests for these should be addressed to the Documentalist, Population and Labour Policies Branch, Employment and Development Department, ILO, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland.]

R. Anker: Research on women's roles and demographic change: Survey questionnaires for households, women, men and communities with background explanations (Geneva, ILO, 1980). (\*)

R. Anker and M. Anker: Reproductive behavior in households of rural Gujarat: Social, economic and community factors (New Delhi, Concept Publishing Co., 1982). (\*\*\*)

R. Anker, M. Buvinic and N. Youssef (eds.): Women's roles and population trends in the Third World (London, Croom Helm, 1982). (\*\*\*)

R. Anker and J.C. Knowles: Determinants of fertility in developing countries: A case study of Kenya (Liège, Ordina, 1982). (\*\*\*)

R.E. Bilsborrow: Surveys of internal migration in low-income countries: Issues of survey and sample design (Geneva, ILO, 1981). (\*)

---: Surveys of internal migration in low-income countries: The need for and content of community-level variables (Geneva, ILO, 1981). (\*)

S. Braganca et al.: The simulation of economic and demographic development in Brazil (Geneva, ILO, 1980). (\*)

M.G. Castro, L.M. Fraenkel et al.: Migration in Brazil: Approaches to analysis and policy design (Brussels, Ordina, 1979). (\*\*\*)

L. Goldschmidt-Clermont: Unpaid work in the household, Women, Work and Development No. 1 (Geneva, ILO, 1982). (\*\*)

W.J. House and H. Rempel: The Kenya employment problem (Nairobi, Oxford University Press, 1978). (\*\*\*)

M. Molyneux: State policies and the position of women workers in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, 1967-77 (Geneva, ILO, 1982). (\*\*)

A.S. Oberai: Changes in the structure of employment with economic development (Geneva, ILO, 1978). (\*\*)

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<sup>1</sup> Availability code: \* available on request from ILO, Population and Labour Policies Branch; \*\* available for sale from ILO Publications; \*\*\* available for sale from a commercial publisher.

- A.S. Oberai: Demographic and social information in migration surveys: Analytical significance and guidelines for data collection (Geneva, ILO, 1981). (\*)
- : Migration, production and technological change: Analytical issues and guidelines for data collection and analysis (Geneva, ILO, 1981). (\*)
- P. Peek and G. Standing (eds.): State policies and migration: Studies in Latin America and the Caribbean (London, Croom Helm, 1982). (\*\*\*)
- M. Rasevic, T. Mulina, Milos Macura: The determinants of labour force participation in Yugoslavia (Geneva, ILO, 1978). (\*\*)
- G.B. Rodgers, M.J.D. Hopkins, R. Wéry: Population, employment and inequality: Bahue-Philippines (Farnborough, Saxon House, 1978). (\*\*\*)
- G.B. Rodgers and G. Standing (eds.): Child work, poverty and underdevelopment (Geneva, ILO, 1981). (\*\*)
- G. Standing: Labour force participation and development (Geneva, ILO, 1978). (\*\*)
- : Income transfers and remittances: A module for migration surveys (Geneva, ILO, 1981). (\*)
- : Migrants and the labour process: A module for migration surveys (Geneva, ILO, 1981). (\*)
- : Unemployment and female labour: A study of labour supply in Kingston, Jamaica (London, Macmillan, 1981). (\*\*\*)
- : Conceptualising territorial mobility in low-income countries (Geneva, ILO, 1982). (\*\*)
- : Analysing inter-relationships between migration and employment (Geneva, ILO, 1982). (\*)
- : Measuring population mobility in migration surveys (Geneva, ILO, 1983). (\*)
- G. Standing and G. Sheehan (eds.): Labour force participation in low-income countries (Geneva, ILO, 1978). (\*\*)
- G. Standing and R. Szal: Poverty and basic needs (Geneva, ILO, 1979). (\*\*)

### 3. Recent Articles

- I. Adelman, M.J.D. Hopkins, S. Robinson, G.B. Rodgers and R. Wéry: "A comparison of two models for income distribution planning", in Journal of Policy Modeling, 1979, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- R. Anker: "An analysis of fertility differentials in developing countries", in Review of Economics and Statistics, Feb. 1978, Vol. 1x, No. 4.
- R. Anker and G. Farooq: "Population and socio-economic development: The new perspective", in International Labour Review (Geneva, ILO), 1978, Vol. 117, No. 2.
- R. Anker and J.C. Knowles: "An empirical analysis of mortality differentials in Kenya at the macro and micro levels", in Economic Development and Cultural Change, Oct. 1980, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 165-85.
- W.J. House: "Occupational segregation and discriminatory pay: The position of women in the Cyprus labour market", in International Labour Review, Jan.-Feb. 1983, Vol. 112, No. 1.
- W.J. House and H. Rempel: "Labour market pressures and wage determination in less developed economies", in Economic Development and Cultural Change, 1978.



- J.C. Knowles and R. Anker: "An analysis of income transfers in a developing country: The case of Kenya", in Journal of Development Economics (Amsterdam, North Holland), 1981, Vol. 8, pp. 205-226.
- A.S. Oberai: "Migration, unemployment and the urban labour market", in International Labour Review (Geneva, ILO), Mar.-Apr. 1978, Vol. 115, No. 2.
- : "State policies and internal migration in Asia", in International Labour Review (Geneva, ILO), Mar.-Apr. 1981, Vol. 120, No. 2, pp. 231-44.
- A.S. Oberai and H.K. Manmohan Singh: "Migration, remittances and rural development: Findings of a case study in the Indian Punjab", in International Labour Review (Geneva, ILO), Mar.-Apr. 1980, Vol. 115, No. 2.
- : "Migration flows in Punjab's Green Revolution belt", in Economic and Political Weekly, Mar. 1980, Vol. XV, No. 13.
- : "Migration, urbanisation and fertility: The case of the Indian Punjab", in Artha Vijnana, Sep.-Dec. 1981, Vol. 23, Nos. 3-4, pp. 260-298.
- : "Migration, production and technology in agriculture: a case study in the Indian Punjab", in International Labour Review, May-June 1982, Vol. 121, No. 3, pp. 327-343.
- C. Oppong: "Household economic demographic decision-making: Introductory statement", IUSSP Proceedings of 1978 Helsinki Conference, 11 pp.
- C. Oppong and W. Bleek: "Economic models and having children: Some evidence from Kwahu, Ghana", in Africa, 1982, Vol. 52, No. 4.
- C. Oppong and E. Haavio-Mannila: "Women, population and development", in P. Hauser (ed.): World population and development: Challenge and prospects (New York, Syracuse University Press, 1979).
- P. Peek and G. Standing: "Rural-urban migration and government policies in low-income countries", in International Labour Review (Geneva, ILO), Nov.-Dec. 1979, Vol. 118, No. 6.
- J.L. Petrucelli, M.H. Rato, and S.L. Bragança: "The socio-economic consequences of a reduction in fertility: application of the ILO-IBGE national model (BACHUE-Brazil)", in International Labour Review (Geneva, ILO), Sep.-Oct. 1980, Vol. 119, No. 5.
- G.B. Rodgers: "Demographic determinants of the distribution of income", in World Development, Mar. 1978, Vol. 6, No. 3.
- : "Income and inequality as determinants of mortality: An international cross-section analysis", in Population Studies, 1979, Vol. 33, No. 2.
- : "An analysis of education, employment and income distribution using an economic-demographic model of the Philippines", in Research in Human Capital and Development, 1981, Vol. 2, pp. 143-180.
- : "A cluster analysis of Bihar districts according to indicators of agricultural development and demographic characteristics", in Journal of Social and Economic Studies, 1981, Vol. IX, No. 1.
- : "Population growth, inequality and poverty", in International Labour Review, July-Aug. 1983, Vol. 122, No. 4, pp. 443-460.
- G.B. Rodgers and G. Standing: "Economic roles of children in low-income countries", in International Labour Review (Geneva, ILO), Jan.-Feb. 1981, Vol. 120, No. 1.
- R.P. Shaw: "Bending the urban flow: A construction-migration strategy", in International Labour Review (Geneva, ILO), July-Aug. 1980, Vol. 119, No. 4.
- G. Standing: "Aspiration wages, migration and urban unemployment", in Journal of Development Studies, Jan. 1978, Vol. 14, No. 2.

- G. Standing: "Migration and modes of exploitation: social origins of immobility and mobility", Journal of Peasant Studies, Jan. 1981, Vol. 8, No. 2.
- : "Basic needs and the division of labour", in Pakistan Development Review, Autumn 1980, Vol. XIX, No. 3, pp. 211-235.
- : "The notion of voluntary unemployment", in International Labour Review, Sep.-Oct. 1981, Vol. 120, No. 5, pp. 563-579.
- : "State policy and child labour: Accumulation versus legitimation", in Development and Change, 1982, Vol. 13.
- : "The notion of structural unemployment", in International Labour Review, Mar.-Apr. 1983, Vol. 112, No. 2, pp. 137-153.
- R. Wéry: "Manpower forecasting and the labour market", in International Labour Review (Geneva, ILO), May-June 1978, Vol. 117, No. 3.
- R. Wéry, G.B. Rodgers and M.J.D. Hopkins: "Population, employment and poverty in the Philippines", in World Development, 1978, Vol. 6.
- R. Wéry and G.B. Rodgers: "Endogenising demographic variables in demo-economic models: The BACHUE experience", in Pakistan Development Review, Autumn 1980, Vol. XIX, No. 3.

#### 4. Recent Working Papers in print<sup>1</sup>

WEP Working Papers are preliminary documents circulated informally in a limited number of copies solely to stimulate discussion and critical comment. They are restricted and should not be cited without permission. A set of selected WEP Research Working Papers, completed by annual supplements, is available in microfiche form for sale to the public; orders should be sent to ILO Publications, International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Many, but not all, of the papers in this series exist or may be issued in microfiche form.

- WEP 2-21/WP.82 Feasibility study for the construction of an economic-demographic model for Indonesia  
- by Andrew Elek, January 1980.
- WEP 2-21/WP.84 Bachue modules: Population, household income and labour market  
- by René Wéry, January 1980.
- WEP 2-21/WP.86 Endogenising demographic variables in demo-economic models: The Bachue experience  
- by René Wéry and Gerry Rodgers, April 1980.
- WEP 2-21/WP.87 The exploitation of children in the "informal sector": Some propositions for research  
- by Alain Morice, May 1980.
- WEP 2-21/WP.90 Household and non-household activities of youths: Issues of modelling, data and estimation strategies  
- by Mark R. Rosenzweig, June 1980.
- WEP 2-21/WP.93 The Labour Market of Bachue-Brazil  
- by Maria Helena da Cunha Rato and Sergio Luiz de Bragança, September 1980.
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