

de Gruyter Studies in Organization 17

Organization Theory and Class Analysis

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Organization Theory and Class Analysis

New Approaches and New Issues

Editor: Stewart R. Clegg



Walter de Gruyter · Berlin · New York 1990

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Library of Congress Cataloging - in - Publication Data

Organization theory and class analysis : new approaches and new issues /
editor, Stewart R. Clegg.

p. cm. -- (De Gruyter studies in organization ; 17)

"In July 1987 the contributions represented in this volume were the focus of
discussion in a session of the EGOS (European Group for Organizational
Studies) colloquium" -- Pref.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-89925-567-1 (U.S. : alk. paper)

1. Industrial sociology--Congresses. 2. Division of labor--Congresses. 3. Or-
ganization--Congresses. 4. Social classes--Congresses. 5. Socialism--Congres-
ses. I. Clegg, Stewart. II. European Group for Organizational Studies.
III. Series.

HD6952.074 1989

306.3'6--dc20

89-23778

CIP

Deutsche Bibliothek Cataloging in Publication Data

Organization theory and class analysis : new approaches and new issues / ed.:

Stewart R. Clegg. – Berlin ; New York : de Gruyter, 1989

(De Gruyter studies in organization ; 17)

ISBN 3-11-012003-8

NE: Clegg, Stewart R. [Hrsg.]; GT

∞ Printed on acid free paper.

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may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical,
including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without per-
mission in writing from the publisher. – Printed in Germany

Typesetting and Printing: Buch- und Offsetdruckerei Wagner GmbH, Nördlingen

Binding: Lüderitz & Bauer Buchgewerbe GmbH, Berlin

Cover Design: Johannes Rother, Berlin

Preface

In July 1987 the contributions represented in this volume were the focus of discussion in a session of the EGOS (European Group for Organization Studies) Colloquium on 'Technology as the Two-Edged Sword of Technical Chance.' As will be evident from the contributions, most participants in the session responded rather more to the sessional theme of 'Theoretical and Empirical Linkages Between Organization Theory and Class Theory' than they did to the issue of technological change.

It seemed at the time of the colloquium that the papers presented achieved a degree of thematic continuity which was well developed. This is even more evident from the edited and revised papers included here. It is for this reason that in the introduction to the volume. 'Organization Theory and Class Analysis' above all, I have tried to tell the story that each chapter has to offer, to introduce the themes and issues of each chapter, and to point to the continuities and discontinuities which exist between them, so that the readers will be able to infer for themselves from the introduction whether a particular chapter addresses their interests.

I would like to take the opportunity to use this preface to make some acknowledgements. In particular, I must acknowledge the responsiveness of the contributors to the volume to the many communications which issued from Armidale at frequent intervals. Without the efficient support of Trish Marshall this appearance of rational planning and efficiency would have been impossible to sustain. The Department of Sociology at the University of New England offered material support which facilitated the difficult task of organizing a northern hemisphere conference from the southern hemisphere and I would like to acknowledge that help. More generally, Janet Batchler of the Faculty of Arts has done a cheerful and efficient job of translating my 2B pencilled strokes into neat word processed copy, as have Trish Marshall and Roslyn Mortimer. In West Yorkshire, David Hickson, Lawrence and Alma Bowker were, as ever, considerate and facilitative. In Antwerp, Albert Mok, Kristine De Decker, Mia Phillips and Luc Peters made everything run smoothly. Lynne and Jonathon helped everywhere, as William has more recently. Finally, Bianka Ralle, the editor-in-chief of Walter de Gruyter with whom I have dealt, has been one of the most efficient publishers with whom one could wish to deal. Responsibility for the volume remains with myself and the contributors alone: none of these good people or institutions are responsible for anything to do with the book other than their help in seeing it this far. From now, the responsibility rests here.

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Sociologies of Class and Organization

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1. Introduction

In the European traditions of sociology which centre on the classical forebears of Marx, Weber and Durkheim, issues of social class could not be avoided: for each theorist, one of the most significant features of modernity which required address was the structural transformation that emergent forms of modern organization were wreaking to the more settled communities and economies of pre-industrial society. Of course, each theorist had different concerns and conceptions associated with these changes, but the important thing is that for each of them social relations in and of production were central to their concern with “organization” as a keynote of modernity.

When the modern sociology of organizations began to establish itself, initially around the work of theorists of management (Pugh, Hickson and Hinings 1964) and subsequently around the concerns with “bureaucracy” of Merton and his colleagues at Columbia in the period after the Second World War, it was primarily through the Weberian corpus that obeisance was made to the classical tradition. Oddly, however, perhaps under the assumption that issues of class in Weber were easily dissociated from his concerns with the sociology of bureaucracy and of economic life in general (which contemporary interpretations such as those of Turner (1981) would caution against), the issues of class analysis came increasingly to be a separate enterprise to those of organizational analysis. Indeed, class analysis itself seemed perilously near to extinction at the hands of a more general and multi-dimensional concern with stratification rather than class. In organizational analysis, residual concerns with issues of stratification or class were more often than not to be left primarily to specialists in industrial sociology or industrial relations. Although a schematic representation, this picture would be familiar to those people who came to organization theory in the 1960s.

The picture changed rapidly. The re-appraisal of Marx and Marxian themes which exploded in the late 1960s in sociology seemed destined to create ripples in almost every substantive sociological field, and the sociology of organizations was no exception. By the late 1970s and early 1980s there was a plethora of work in the field looking at issues such as “class and control” or “the organization and control of the labour process” (Clegg and Dunkerly (1980) comes to mind). Despite the strenuous objections of some defenders of a more orthodox conception of Organization Theory (Donaldson 1985) from which the classical sociologi-

cal concern with social relations in/of production has been largely expunged in favour of a focus on "organizational design," the stem of organizational sociology had delivered a great many distinct strains to the more general field of organization analysis. Included in these are those who still persist in the concern with class relations and organization control or design as the inextricable core of any analysis of central features of modernity: the increasingly complex organizations which contain work and social life more generally.

A large part of the impetus to recognize the importance of class analysis was clearly politically driven. In Europe a number of Marxist intellectuals in the 1960s and 1970s were constructing a systematic structural analysis of class to both remedy a crucial lacuna in Marx's own work and to provide some pointers for Marxist political action. The work of Poulantzas (1975), in particular, belongs to this tendency, as do the analyses of Carchedi (1977) (whose recent work is represented in this volume).

The highly theoretical and abstract work by European Marxists such as Poulantzas and Carchedi was concerned primarily to update the categories and logic of class analysis to deal with the far more complex organizational world of the late twentieth century, compared to the rather simple small family factories of the mid-nineteenth century. For such a world as prevailed then, a basically binary characterization of organizational relations as either property owning and controlling or ownerless and controlled, might have seemed sufficient for most eventualities of description, particularly where a rhetorical purpose could be discerned. However, such a "simple abstract model" was in fact hardly adequate, even in the mid-nineteenth century, as Marx recognized (see the account of his "three models" in Clegg, Boreham and Dow 1986, chapter two). It increasingly became less so as the nature of changing organization relations undercut all its assumptions: the development of public as well as private ownership; the separation of financial property ownership from effective financial control; the separation of financial control from actual control of day-to-day organization, and, as organizations outgrew the unity of personal surveillance and direct control, the development of both more abstract, impersonal and routinized controls as well as more personal incentives. Thus, given the renaissance of Marxist analysis in the social sciences in the 1960s and 1970s, the crucial task which writers like Carchedi and Poulantzas posed for themselves was to develop a more complex, abstract model for doing class analysis, one which was still recognizably Marxian but which was also capable of addressing contemporary organization reality (see Johnson 1975, for a sympathetic critique of how the task was approached).

One point should be observed at this stage in the introduction. It has been suggested thus far that the concerns of class analysis were largely evacuated from the arena of organization analysis, as this had developed by the early 1970s. To be even-handed it is just as important to note that in the renaissance of class analysis which occurred with Poulantzas' (1975) and Carchedi's (1977) initial contributions, the very important inputs that should have been derived from the

sociology of organizations concerning the empirical delineation of this changed organization reality were equally absent. Two fields of class and organization analysis, which had been as one in Marx's and Weber's concerns, respectively with the labour process and the sociology of economic life, had become professionally and intellectually differentiated to a very large degree.

Rapprochement between class and organization analysis has not been entirely absent. Both Carchedi (1977) and Wright (1978) drew upon Braverman's (1974) return to Marx's (1976) focus on the labour process and the "labour process debate" is by now well established. However, the majority of recent labour process studies have been conducted as case studies, recalling an earlier industrial anthropology in method, while the case study has for some years now hardly been the most favoured method of organization analysis. Indeed, there is considerable formal similarity between some of the leading studies in empirical organization analysis, such as the structural work of the Aston school, and the structural and empirical class analysis of Wright (1985) and the projects associated with his enterprise. Both work on empirically delineating dimensions of structure initially grounded, in rationalist terms, in a less empirical, sometimes more prescriptive, and certainly more wide-ranging literature. Both produce structural "maps" of the presumed "real" structures of class and organizations, and both use modern multivariate methods to do so. Moreover, both collect data on organization and work design, decision making, centralization of authority, autonomy and control. Yet there has been little effective interchange between the projects on class structure and those on organization structure.

The reasons for this lack of interchange are complex, but one is apparent; due to the differentiation and specialization of knowledge in substantive fields of sociology (let alone between it and young pretenders such as organization analysis and class analysis), there existed little objective opportunity for intellectual traffic. The conduits did not exist, or if they did, they were rarely used. While the density of traffic may be an intellectual market judgement, it may also reflect trained incapacity and indifference bred from the bliss of highly specialized training, as well as the "knowledge interests" of the respective fields.

The chapters represented in this volume were commissioned by way of a response, in the form of preparatory bridge-work, to reconnecting these by now differentiated sub-specialisms. As a strategy, of course, it has an evident weakness: if the situation is differentiated to the extent suggested, and there are many independent labourers commissioned to design a bridge, more than one crossing, of more than one design, is likely to eventuate. As the reader of this volume will discover, this is in fact the case. However, rather than viewing the fertility of the exercise as a weakness one might be tempted to regard it as a strength: in a situation of competitive marketing of similar but differentiated intellectual products, both Lakatos (1970) and neo-classical economics more generally suggest that only the strong seed, sown in the most fertile ground, will survive. Such a volume as this may well serve as a ground-preparing exercise.

2. Classes, Structures and Actors

General theories of class and class structure are a mainstay of sociology (for example, Carchedi 1977; Carchedi 1987; Giddens 1973; Parkin 1979; Poulantzas 1975; Wright 1978; Wright 1985). Typically, they have been dichotomously generated around either a Marxist or Weberian axis. Few attempts at such general theory have tried to systematically link class structures with organization structures and the actors who comprise them. While some exceptions exist, they have not gone in for systematic empirical explanation couched in these terms, but have tended to more macro-levels of theorizing (for example, Clegg and Dunkerley 1980; Clegg et al. 1986).

Broad paradigmatic differences between Marxist and Weberian approaches to class are identified by Val Burris' chapter "Classes in Contemporary Capitalist Society: Recent Marxist and Weberian Perspectives." Marxist approaches to what he takes to be the central issue in recent debate, the problem of conceptualizing salaried intermediate classes, are, he suggests, characterized by an emphasis on objective structures of social positions, production relations, on fundamental class conflict occasioned by a struggle over economic exploitation, and by a prioritization of class as the major social cleavage. Weberians, by contrast, he suggests, regard class as an effect of social action, as a market phenomena, as an asymmetry of power and authority and as just one of several potential bases of social cleavage. Despite these different emphases, an increasing isomorphism between Marxist and Weberian accounts is detected by Burris. Consequently, it is important to identify those debates that transcend the paradigmatic emphases and which preoccupy both Marxist and Weberian proponents.

The central debate transcending "paradigmatic boundaries" is that over the identity and analysis of those intermediate class positions between "labour" and "capital". Burris identifies five basic strategies available for addressing this central debate from proponents of both camps: intermediate class positions may be differentiated from working class positions on the basis of the following: manual vs. non-manual occupations (Giddens and Poulantzas); supervisors vs. non-supervisors (Dahrendorf and Carchedi); productive vs. unproductive labour (Collins and Poulantzas); professionals and managers vs. routine employees (Goldthorpe and the Ehrenreich's); credentialled vs. uncredentialled workers (Parkin vs. Wright). As Burris demonstrates by critically contrasting the first named Weberian position with the second named Marxist position, there are more or less coherent arguments for adopting one position or the other in these five debates.

When confronted by contrasting coherence in intellectually debated and diametrically opposed positions, the exposure of these positions more or less implicit hypotheses to the available data on which they may be tested is advisable. Burris does this by looking at the extent to which the different theories of

class structure correspond to cleavages in the pattern of political opinion, as this is displayed in readily available survey material. Given that a preponderant interest in class structure has always been concerned with the extent to which various models of it can better predict dependent variables such as income or attitudes, then this procedure is a sound one to follow. Using a technique known as "dichotomous cluster analysis," Burris demonstrates that from the five strategies identified, three seem to be consistently more useful for empirical analysis of this kind. These are models that distinguish on the basis of supervision vs. non-supervision; credentials vs. non-credentials; and the distinction between professionals and managers contrasted with routine employees. Burris' chapter concludes with a discussion of the strengths of each of these models as predictors of various dependent variables surveyed, and with a plea for future work to explicitly transcend the Weberian/Marxist divide by strategically theorizing the interaction between production relations and market relations. I would add the observation that to do this adequately would also mean attempting to break down the divide between organization and class analysis, by re-situating the analytical enterprise as an investigation of social relations within labour, capital and product markets as these intersect within concrete organizations, rather than dealing with the abstraction of these involved in national household surveys and the aggregation of individual (rather than organizational) data which this entails.

With the development of recent approaches to "analytical Marxism," which explicitly attempt to ground class analysis in actors' rational choices, it has seemed to some empirically yet Marxist minded sociologists that a nexus between class structure, questions of organizational asset or resource control, and actors' rational choices is capable of resolving some vexed issues of the central sociological concern with class. The prime mover in this regard is the major comparative research effort associated with the "Comparative Project on Class Structure and Class Consciousness," a project developed by Erik Olin Wright.

In their contribution "Analytical Marxism and Class Theory," Raimo Blom and Markku Kivinen, who are members of the Finnish research team engaged in the "comparative class project," introduce us to much of the terrain of recent Marxist debate in the decade since Poulantzas, Braverman and Carchedi first re-invigorated it. Chief amongst the protagonists in moving this debate forward has been the work of Wright (particularly his 1985 book, *Classes*). In their contribution to this volume Blom and Kivinen engage the suppositions of this "analytical Marxism," and in so doing provide a guide to some of the central issues which have structured recent debate in class analysis, concerning the "problem of the middle class" – those organizational agents whose structural position is most ambiguous for Marxist analysis.

It was Wright who popularized the phrase "contradictory class locations" to describe the structural location of certain "middle" class positions within organizational relations concerned with control and supervision of labour power and

resource allocation. On the conventional binary criteria of ownership and control opposed to non-ownership and non-control, deployed as a conceptual mechanism for identifying class location, these positions were inexplicable; they occupied a void, a space unmapped by such elegantly simple abstractions. In his earlier work Wright (1978) offered one resolution of this absence; in his subsequent study of *Classes* (1985) he was to offer both a critique of this earlier solution to the problem of the middle classes and a fresh resolution of it.

Wright's earlier solution was to regard middle class positions as located in the grip of contradictory "real interests"; those of both the bourgeoisie and the working class. In his revised version he is still prepared to concede that managers may have relational properties of both non-ownership and controlling locations in the constitutions of their own positions. However, the position of managers as non-owners who exercise control hardly exhausts the range of class positions which are neither unambiguously bourgeois nor ineradicably proletarian. On the one hand, there are petty-bourgeois positions, which Wright regarded as "survivors" of earlier modes of production (a conception which hardly does the range of petty-bourgeois enterprise full justice: see Clegg et al. 1986, chapter four). On the other hand, there are those "semi-autonomous" employees who are subject to little or no direct-control, control no one themselves, but are still employees. Part of the problem with the categorization of semi-autonomous employees is too great a conceptual coupling of control to personal surveillance as its effective mechanism, a problem which is evident in Braverman's (1974) work. Wright (1985) extends this point further by noting that his earlier work (Wright 1978) centred not, as he believes a Marxist should, on exploitation but on domination. It is this "error" which his "Wright Mark II" commitment to analytical Marxism is designed to address.

The resources for resolving the exploitation problem are found by Wright (1985) in the economist John Roemer's (1982) work, in which he formulates hypothetical games which organization members might participate in under the conditions of different modes of production. Exploitation will occur in games constructed on the basis of unequal resource distribution of productive assets; those who would be worse off if they withdrew from the game are exploiting, because economically oppressing, those whose interests would not be diminished by withdrawal.

By using the notion of there being assets in not only means of production, but also in organization control and in the possession of scarce skills, Wright (1985) extends the binary map of classes formed on simple property owning control to a complex set of twelve class locations, in which various kinds of managers, supervisors and experts are defined in the places previously occupied by contradictory class locations.

Blom and Kivinen take issue with Wright's (1985) "twelve-class" model by noting how it loses the historical dimension of his earlier work (1978), and how that earlier work itself represented a better response, by their criteria, to certain

problems inherent in Braverman's (1974) labour process approach, than the parallel European debates which centred on German contributions to the "capital logic" school (see Holloway and Piccioto 1978). While Wright (1985) rejects the labour process approach to conceptualizing classes, they argue, he has implicitly adopted a "distributional" rather than "production" centred view of exploitation. In the Marxist lexicon this is a case of "one step forward, two steps back." Like Carchedi (1977; 1987), they would insist on a view of classes grounded in actual relations of and in production, the organization and control of the labour process, relations centred on a dialectic of autonomy and control.

Consideration of concrete instances of organization and control of the labour process clearly signals that there are additional forms of autonomy to those simply predicated on a zero sum game of capital control and labour resistance. Of particular importance are those connected with the employment of professionals in organizations and the way in which claims to "tacit knowledge" and "indetermination," based on professionalization, function to construct the "new middle classes" (see Boreham 1983; Clegg et al. 1986). However, professional employment in complex organizations is not the only source of organizational autonomy claims, as Blom and Kivinen outline. Moreover, some of these sources of autonomy are not so much premised on resistance to capital, but are "capital adequate": that is they are not contradictory but are indeed "given" as part of managerial strategy.

On the basis of this more complex conceptualization of autonomy they are able to define various sorts of mental labour on the basis of particular power resources which enter into the structuration of class situation and class consciousness, which they test on Finnish data. Mental labour based on capital, professional, scientific-technical and managerial autonomies are what they regard as the *équipage* of the core of the new middle class; twenty-five per cent of employees in Finland would enter into this category, which they propose is a more coherent construction than that which can be arrived at via either of Wright's analyses. Against his core conceptual mechanism of "given interests" they propose that interests can only be defined on the basis of different collective power resources and strategies, which must in part be organizationally located, having reference to both organization, labour, capital and product market conditions. (This aspect remains underdeveloped but implicit in their chapter.) These will change as the historical processes of the capitalist mode of production change, a historical dimension lacking in Wright's (1985) revised "analytical Marxism." Consequently, they argue, there is no theory of capitalism in analytical Marxism, nor, given the methodological individualism of its premises, they suggest, is there room for one. In this respect, as their excursus on Weber suggests, the latter is in a better position to grasp the relationship between class action and social change than are the analytical Marxists. The theoretical way forward, they suggest, is to return to the revised version of labour process theory which they propose, with its multiple and complex notion of autonomy.

Certainly, in terms of building bridges between organization and class analysis, there is much to recommend this revised route from Wright's (1978) earlier work. Different types of organizations will differ in the autonomous niche-space opportunities that they present for skilful members to turn to their advantage. Moreover, these opportunities for autonomy will have to be seen in terms broader than individual organizations, because of the role that extra-organizational resources can play in entering into class action within specific organizations. However, these theories remain to be explored elsewhere than in this complex critique of one of the most influential strands of contemporary social science analysis.

Most of the running in recent debates concerning class analysis has been made by arguments with clear Weberian or Marxian lineage, to such an extent that the previously dominant status-attainment model of functionalist sociology has been virtually eclipsed in its pure "status" form, as researchers have had increasing recourse to "class" variables as well as those of "status attainment". (Robinson and Kelley 1979). The same renaissance of "class" based explanation is also evident in studies of social mobility (Goldthorpe, Llewellyn and Payne 1980).

The important issue in class analysis, as we have already seen, is the question of which variety of Marxian or Weberian theory is embraced by a given theorist and which is most useful for particular empirical exercises in explanation. Frans Kerstholt, in his chapter "Between Rational Choice and Durkheimian Solidarity," proposes that Weberian class theory is best regarded as an improved Marxist theory, improved because it is stripped of the "metaphysics" of Marxism's commitment to the labour theory of value and the economic determinism which in the past has so often characterized Marxist work. Its claims to be "Marxist" theory are seemingly more empirical than theoretical: research by Weberians such as Goldthorpe consistently demonstrates the applicability of some Marxist precepts but through non-Marxist presuppositions.

Amongst the most important of recent Weberian contributions has been Parkin's (1979) defence of "bourgeois" theory. Kerstholt notes how Parkin's position, with its stress on the social organization of collective strategic action, connects with the concerns of "analytical" or "rational choice" Marxism. In addition, some interpretations of Weber (Ingham 1970) also reformulate his approach in terms which can be explicitly united with rational choice theory.

While Wright (1985) has regarded his earlier theory (Wright 1978) as implicitly more Weberian than Marxian, when comparison is made in terms of the theoretical relative weight of "domination" (a Weberian theme) or "exploitation" (a Marxian theme), Kerstholt would argue that in fact the rational choice Marxism of the later work is closer to a Weberian theory of social inequality, as this would be specified from the "new" interpretation of Weber which rational choice theory provided. This new rational choice theory remains too methodologically individualist, however. It offers no purchase on the organization and formation of collective action. Consequently, it requires supplementation with an explicit

focus on both “the logic of collective action” and the Durkheimian theory of the formation of solidary groups through rituals. From these perspectives, he maintains, the micro-foundations of collective and organization properties can be generated. Rationally operating collective actors will arise through at least two mechanisms: those of Durkheimian ritual solidarity and those of rational solutions to the “prisoners” dilemma as it has been posed by Olson (1965).

While the contributions by Burris, Blom and Kivinen and Kerstholt all propose new ways of breathing life back into the classical corpus of sociology’s concerns with class, the remaining papers in Part One are altogether more sceptical about the wisdom of such an exercise. As Kreckel begins his contribution “‘New’ Social Inequalities and the Renewal of the Theory of Social Inequalities,’ his “opening assumption [. . .] is that classical theories of social inequality have lost a good deal of their explanatory power, as well as of their political relevancy and plausibility in everyday discourse.” Such classical theories, he suggests, are no longer in tune with the changed circumstances of the present. The historical conditions which initially sustained them have been transformed. This is true, he argues, for not only Marxist but also non- and anti-Marxist perspectives, because of their common framework of assumptions, of which three are singled out. These are an assumption, first, of “vertical” inequality; second, that these hierarchical inequalities occur within specific “solitary” societies; third, that the social relations of work or production should be conceived as the basis of social inequality.

Assumptions of the essential nature of “work society” are necessarily based on the reality of only a minority of a given population: all categories of officially defined economically inactive persons are omitted. Consequently, theorists such as Gorz (1982) would redefine the central conflict as occurring not within relations of production, but between those who are already contained within these relations and those who are only marginally, peripherally involved, or excluded altogether from paid work. On the one hand, this produces a process in which employment in organizations, whose conditions and contracts of employment mediate between the capital market and the labour market, becomes more important for analysis. The reason for this is that nearly all paid work has become organizationally located and these organizations are now, in Giddens’ (1973) terms, the major loci of “proximate” structuration of social inequalities within and between categories of labour and capital. On the other hand, to the extent that elements of the costs of social reproduction have been re-located into the public sphere, then an additional major source of distributive inequalities emerges with the formation of more or less stable “welfare classes”, dependent on political dictate, collective provision and organizational delivery of various “public” goods and services.

Traditionally, the costs of social reproduction have been loated in households, carried by women. This is subvention both to male labour and for capital, inas-much as some of the reproduction costs of the present and next generation of

workers are privatized. It is no longer the case that sociology can ignore this massive area of unseen, unpaid domestic work, with its inequalities marking not only those women who do not participate in the "formal" economy but also those who do. The women's liberation movement has highlighted one important aspect of the "informal" economy; other components of participants in this "unofficial" world of work should also be counted amongst those marginalized by a classical conception of class relations or social inequality.

Consideration of informal economic actors and of non-formal economic actors must be made, suggests Kreckel, alongside other sources of inequality not rooted in production relations. Amongst these are inequalities arising from citizenship and non-citizenship rights, from disparate identities sustained in civil society, from regional disparities. All these, taken together, weaken the notion that inequalities are necessarily and most importantly vertical. They may be far more pluralistic than this model allows: sexual and ethnic discrimination, for instance, is organized and experienced not only through work, but also through leisure, housing access and so on. Regional inequalities not only occur within nations; they also occur between them. Consequently, Kreckel maintains, it may be insufficient to take a single administrative entity, the nation state, as a focus for analysis. The "new international division of labour" requires consideration of the role of "external hinterlands" of labour for core nation states in the world economy; these states have relations of inequality between them at a global, structural level.

The vertical image of social inequality is historically well embedded, as much because forms of hierarchical organization in the shape of bureaucracies are so constitutive of our experience of what social reality is. Metaphorically, this dominance has been the reason why non-vertical forms of social inequality have evaded adequate conceptualization in terms which are also cognizant of "vertical" sources of stratification, but which do not theoretically prioritize or privilege these vis-à-vis other, implicitly, more residual categories. As candidate for such an alternate metaphorical role he proposes the notions of centre-periphery.

Images of centre and periphery are able to contain the central idea that social inequality is always rooted in relations which constitute asymmetrically structured fields of power. Power relations and forces are more concentrated towards the centre and more dispersed at the periphery, by definition. Such a model, it is proposed by Kreckel, has the scope to be more multi-dimensional than the single vertical axis allows. At the least it should entail an end to those practices whereby male nationals, who are employed within a given administrative entity, form the only social reality in which inequalities occur. Instead, research strategies should, as a matter of theoretical orientation, focus on "peripheral situations," those settings and locations of structural disadvantage in which the disorganization of both action and consciousness will tend to be maximized because the available power resources are largely elsewhere. Of course, any specific centre-periphery relations form a dynamic and shifting field of force when viewed globally: the

centre and the periphery will be such in terms which are always relative, both to issues of spatial and social location.

Kreckel's analysis would admit a complex plurality of social actors to the conceptual arena: men and women having religious, ethnic, sexual, national identities; occupying positions in fields of force constituted by spatial relations, production relations, welfare relations and so on. It is not clear that these actors would be "classes," however, as in the Marxist tradition of vertical analysis. Kreckel affords such putative actors no special place. Nor should they be provided such privilege, according to Hindess' argument.

The central message of Barry Hindess' chapter on "Classes, Collectivities and Corporate Actors" is that classes are not nor can be social actors, despite the conception of them as such which has been institutionalized in both Marxian and Weberian influenced varieties of social analysis. His argument is not made from the auspices of "theoretical humanism," auspices which propose the reduction of all actors to their individual human constituents. Classes are not ruled out of court because they are comprised of people, people who should take analytical precedence as the real social actors. Hindess is prepared to envisage an array of non-individual actors, where an actor is conceptualized as a locus of decision and action. On these criteria, he argues, phenomena such as churches, corporations or courts may unproblematically be considered to be social actors. Classes may not.

As a collectivity, Hindess argues, classes have no identifiable means of formulating decisions nor of acting on them. They lack any organizational mechanisms. In the absence of these they cannot be considered as entities which can act. If they cannot exist as actors then they cannot be said to do the things which have typically been central to the concept of class in Marxism: they cannot struggle, make history, enjoy conflict, have hegemony, develop consciousness, fail to realize their "real interests" and so on.

Classes are not collective actors, he maintains, because there is no locus of decision and calculation which can act as a class: they lack any identifiable means of taking decision. Thus, he would argue, to talk of them as if they were conceptual mechanisms capable of explaining anything is "a kind of fantasy." From this perspective classes could only be viewed as either discursively constituted but polemical entities or as purely categorical phenomena, distributionally differentiated strata of variable outcomes, to be explained by social actors proper, but which in themselves explain nothing. They might function as shorthand descriptions and glosses of more or less arbitrarily distinct distributions of certain social goods such as health, education, credentials, mortality rates and so on. However, a description of how these outcomes are distributed should not be confused with an explanation of them. For that, one must have recourse to some conception of a social actor.

One way of circumventing these objections is to argue that there are in fact objective and structurally given "real interests" which belong to classes, where

the notion of class is less a distributional outcome but more an analytical abstraction to which individuals – or, bearing in mind Kreckel's objections, a limited range of formally recognized economically active ones – can be related. Whether or not individual actors then do things or display attitudes consonant with what one would anticipate they would, given the assumptions of the abstraction, become an object of investigation, in which various inter-mediating social actors, that do have agency and organization form, can function as either conduits or barriers to the expression of these "real interests." Thus political parties, trade unions, employers associations and such become "stand-ins" for the abstractions of class, and their social actions come to be regarded as symptomatic signs of class action. However, the relation between the abstraction and the real through the link of "real interests" (which, confusingly, are usually not realized in any sense that would make them empirically real) ends up being an explanation of nothing – a range of things that do not happen as they ought to happen if the abstraction were to be realized. Hindess regards the idea of objective interests that are real but not recognized as an imaginary problem. Posed in these terms it is easy to see how and why one might agree with him.

A further consequence of this position is resistance to explaining the real actions of actual social actors such as corporate or trade union organizations in terms of the putative underlying abstraction – that of the class struggle. To do this would assume not only an unwarrantable clarity of interest realization in the abstracted entities but also an unsustainable assumption about the homogeneity of interests involved in the social action of their putatively expressive forms.

Hindess concludes his contribution by reference to a recent work by Clegg, Boreham and Dow (1986), *Class, Politics and the Economy*. The arguments of this text are interpreted to support the view that comparative analysis can demonstrate that the development of social policy in the advanced capitalist economies can be understood in terms of a struggle between classes. Such a view is "uninformative," asserts Hindess, noting that from this perspective, what is to be done to improve the provision of policy is left unspecified. Perhaps. This introduction is not the place in which to conduct personal point-scoring, a less than edifying spectacle at the best of times. Suffice to say that on the coherent assumptions of Hindess' definition of a social actor, then his argument follows.

How realistic are the coherent assumptions that Hindess articulates? The assumptions are that *an* actor is a *locus* of decision and action. Thus a corporation or a political party may be a social actor, because they can be said to so act. But can they? Are not such organizational entities rather more arena constituted by diverse locales, in which struggles to command policy outcomes take place, between "natural persons" and other social actors such as factions or departments? If so, then the outcomes themselves – the loci of decision/calculation – are somewhat uninformative if we do not know how they got to be there, what was excluded and how. Moreover, there are many instances of failure to achieve implementation in the literature, because of organizational contestation over

concrete decision and calculation. The view of a social actor as a locus of calculation/decision is overly rationalistic and underplays the ambiguity, plurality, contradiction and differential interests endemic to processes of decision and calculation. There are typically many loci, not a locus. Consequently, unless one is to banish abstraction totally from scientific discourse (which would be a devastatingly iconoclastic move), one may discern a policy drift in such decision and calculation as occurs in terms of some relatively coherent abstraction of what polar types of such policy might look like. Conventionally, such abstractions are expressed in terms of classes whose effects can be displayed structurally in empirical terms of given differential distributional outcomes. Unless one operates with an ultra-empiricism governing the real, immediately apparent nature of phenomena (such as would rule out of court any abstract scientific mechanisms such as germs or atoms), together with some phenomenological dictate that only those things that actors think real are real, one could invoke classes as phenomena just as one might invoke germs or viruses. To deny the scientific usefulness of those would be a peculiar practice. They have been most decisive actors at stages in human history (the 14th century "Black Death" which wiped out a quarter of Europe's population and altered the balance of power within feudal relations between key classes of actors), although they can function neither as loci of decision nor of calculation. Do we thus deny their social effects, visible in distributional outcomes such as mortality? No more than we should classes on the same criteria, one might say. As a heuristic claim and principle class may have its uses, if we can demonstrate that there is a pattern of coherence to the outcomes associated with diverse social actors' calculations and decisions, in families, firms, courts etc. If, in addition, we can demonstrate that politics pursued on this assumption of a putatively class pattern of coherence do have determinate effects which are demonstrable through comparative empirical analysis, and which are different to the effects of other forms of what we might call class politics, then can not the abstraction remain in use?

3. Management, Calculation and Control

The implications of Hindess' argument are immediately apparent from considering the first chapter in Part Two of this volume, Glenn Morgan's "Ownership and Management Strategy." If it is problematic to pose entities called classes as the type of phenomena which have "interests," Morgan suggests that it is hardly easier to establish what organization interests are, other than through close study of the discursive politics which surround their constitution as such.

In discursive conceptions of politics, as has been argued elsewhere, "Politically strategic action consists of coupling calculations, beneficial claims, and discursive

categories in such a way that traffic in these has to pass through the network constructed by the representations of the interests thus secured" (Emmison, Boreham and Clegg 1988: 138). The empirical backdrop to such politics is the interpretation of the ways in which managers, those archetypal new middle class personnel, are influenced and constrained by ownership relations. Morgan's chapter is thus situated at the nub of the organization/class analysis nexus: the interpretation of "interests" is made in an organizational mode, as the outcome of a discursive politics waged over the ownership and control of the corporation. In this chapter the argument proceeds empirically on the basis of a case study of a British tobacco-based group, the Imperial Group, from the mid-1970s to the point at which it was taken over by the Hanson Trust in 1986.

Morgan's point of entry into the linkage between class and organization analysis is through revisiting the ownership and control debate which was initiated by Berle and Means (1932). This debate has been centred on what Morgan refers to as a "dualism" in which ownership and management are regarded as two radically separated phenomena, rather than something unified in the person of a capitalist owner-manager.

Morgan regards this dualism critically, particularly as it has led to the neglect of the interrelationship between ownership and management. Berle and Means' notion of owners directly controlling managers on a day-to-day basis should be replaced with one of influence exerted through institutional, rather than personal, ownership and share dealing on the stock exchange. Such influence is mediated through the rational choices firms as actors must make to secure working capital from other markets in the form of loans, and which other firms make about under-valued takeover targets; under-valued in terms of their share prices relative to their asset values. Consequently, management's interests are at hostage to the day by day judgements of owners as to the share values of the firms they manage. Within this context, different types of management will have different types of interest.

Management types are differentiated by Morgan on the basis of a notion of "circuits of capital," an abstraction used to distinguish financial circuits, where property is produced through the manipulation of profit *per se*, from industrial circuits, where profit derives from valorization – the increase in value achieved by manufacturing activity. Both circuits exit within the same organization setting, maintains Morgan. In some countries these are in tension, due to the nature of institutional arrangements, while in others they are less so. Analysts agree that the tensions are greater in the UK, USA and Australia than they are in Japan, West Germany or Sweden, for example (Armstrong 1984; Higgins and Clegg 1988). At the heart of these different institutional arrangements are variations in national financial, accounting and stock exchange conventions. Where these encourage management to choose to promote high share values, as in the UK, in order to satisfy short-term requirements by institutional investors, then financial manipulation becomes the rational strategy for achieving these objectives. A

consequence of this is to reduce opportunities for management to make long-term investments in manufacturing, with its uncertain and long-term horizons. It is from these rational choices, constructed under conditions in which environmental influence is appreciated, that the tensions between the financial and industrial circuit managers derive. Such tensions are evidenced in the case study of the Imperial Group.

The case study is complex and there is little point in summarizing it here. The point of Morgan's analysis is to show that the rational choices constituting organization interests are the result of a constant interplay between ownership, control and managerial strategy. What have earlier been referred to as patterns of coherence can be seen in these strategies. Distinct "modes of rationality" (Higgins and Clegg 1988) are at work in the distinct circuits. Ownership does constrain management, not in a static manner but in the way in which the large institutional shareholders frame the rational choices which the managers can make.

Morgan's chapter is a sophisticated example of a complex class analysis, drawing on Marxist political economy in its analysis of circuits of capital, but one which displays an appreciation, from organization analysis, of the complex nature of the organization *qua* social actor. Consequently, it is not so much an analysis of class struggle between managers and workers, as a more orthodox labour process approach might be. Rather, it is an analysis of the different interests that diverse managerial stake-holders can construct an organization as having, which links the level of abstraction – circuits of capital – to the actual locus of calculation and decision which defines an organization as a social actor.

Morgan's contribution deals implicitly with managers as an international class; Jane Marceau does so explicitly. From her perspective on "International Management and the Class Structure," complex organizations may be seen as being composed of elite occupational positions and associated opportunities for resource control. These positions are open for possession by individuals. While all individuals may appear to be born equal, they are clearly not to be regarded as such by virtue of the probability that their occupational and organization destinations will be vertically stratified. Marceau's research demonstrates that elite positions in elite firms are disproportionately open to capture and colonization by the sons of traditional bourgeois families in the nations of Western Europe. Consequently, one can speak of an "international business class" emerging, one which links the national bourgeoisie of Europe through a network initially comprised of nodal points occupied by elite Business Schools, and which is subsequently reproduced through internationally active business organizations. The new organization structures of these firms become conduits for the reproduction of national capitalists. At the apex of these international firms are managers drawn from the ranks of male off-spring of national bourgeoisie. Ownership and control re-merge through these bourgeois sons, who use their organizational positions as a means of reproducing family fortunes based on earlier forms of enterprise, under the conditions of contemporary capitalism. Family fortunes thus can become "port-

folioized." Moreover, they become aggregated through conscious marriage strategies followed by these bourgeois families, as part of the overall "reconversion strategies" that entail the reproduction of bourgeois class advantage.

The decline of national firms and the rise of divisionalized international conglomerates has not spelt the end to the bourgeois dominance that the scions of these smaller, older and more traditional national firms had once enjoyed in their respective national arena. International firms merely provided altered frameworks for such aggregate class action, in which, due to the fact that the families of origin no longer own the firms, the pursuit of profit must be more single-minded. In pursuit of this, the cushion against adversity which family capital affords presents such bourgeois sons with certain comparative advantages.

Comparative advantage takes a visible form in the restricted range of disciplines and institutions in which the international business management class has been educated in Europe. Pathways were clearly marked through traditionally prestigious disciplines of engineering, law, economics, supplemented by some commercial studies, which channelled into elite business schools such as INSEAD. From these locales, fast-track, job-hopping circuitous career paths were the route to success. Family background served not only in financial terms; it also provided an example in which the attitudes, values and expectations appropriate to entrepreneurial action were well understood. Family networks of support and advice also helped in this, not least in securing prestigious positions in the first place. In addition, spatial elements entered into consideration: exposure in and to the elite recreational sites in Europe ensures not only that one can be seen to be a "chap," someone whose social connections and behaviour are impeccable, but also that one can move easily and freely from one such site to another, through the media of familial households maintained there.

Overall, from Marceau's research there emerges a picture of a series of strategic locales occupied by actors who share and are comfortable in a milieu of privilege, a milieu which has a complex but subtle role to play in shaping a recognizably coherent pattern among the members of the "international class structure of business." Although this structure is international, it is nonetheless characterized by precisely those rituals of collective solidarity which Kersholt identifies: in this sense it emerged from a distinct stratum of status, where that intrinsic element is buttressed by other more extrinsic criteria such as credentials and a fast-track. The achievement of the latter is displayed through choices of sector, function and type of company and place of work, which enables these actors to thrive as profit-making managers. It is this entrepreneurialism which leads them either to re-unify ownership and control at the peak of international firms, or, if thwarted, to take over or found new, smaller firms.

The international managers whom Marceau studied are clearly the elite of that heterogeneous category of workers known as management. In fact, in strictly class terms they should rather be thought of as property owners in addition to being strategic managers, a combination which would conventionally lead one to

think of them as capitalists, as members of a "corporate ruling class" (Clegg et al. 1986). Management owes some of its heterogeneity as a category to the process of its genesis as a specific set of functions, as Harri Melin outlines in the introduction to his contribution, "Managers and Social Classes." In recent years two major lines of enquiry have intersected in the study of managers. First, a concern with "managerial strategies" of control and resistance, which has developed out of the "labour process" debate, with the realization that "management" could not be regarded as a simple extension of "capital." Indeed, neither of these simple categories is conceptually very useful, and an acquaintance with debates in organization theory about management, its resources, strategies and power (Mintzberg 1983) is sufficient to remedy recourse to such grand abstractions. Clearly they require further deconstruction, as both Melin and Marceau demonstrate. The second distinct emphasis in studies of management has been carried by a trajectory developing in empirical studies of the "new middle classes," in the wake of earlier theoretical contributions from writers such as Poulantzas, Carchedi and Wright, all of whom sought to accommodate this class within a Marxist model of the class structure of contemporary advanced industrial capitalist societies. Melin's contribution to the book represents work done at the point of intersection of these two trajectories, enabling him in the second section of the paper, "Control of the Labour Process," to raise a number of sound objections to much of the debate that has taken place: it conflates the importance of the labour process; pays insufficient attention to contrasting comparative labour markets, particularly with respect to consideration of union density and power; has generalized from a limited number of primarily US case studies; neglects the role of product markets (and, one might add, capital markets); and has, with a few exceptions, paid insufficient attention to the fact that the conditions of control have been different at the different stages of development (Clegg 1981 was an attempt to do this).

In defining managers, different approaches to the issue of demarcating the new middle class will generate different depictions of which positions are to be regarded as management. Melin systematically reviews the criteria deployed in a number of studies in both Western and Eastern Europe, before concentrating on the major contributions by Wright (1978; 1985). In particular, the focus is on Wright's (1985) most recent attempt to develop a perspective within "analytical Marxism" with which to replace his earlier conceptualization of middle class managers as the occupants of "contradictory locations" in the class structure, subject to attraction from the polar opposites of "labour" and "capital."

The importance of Wright's work cannot be underestimated, if only because of the breadth of the international comparative research effort it has generated. Consequently, research teams involved in this effort have a particular interest in clarifying their own theoretical position and research strategy with respect to Wright's (1978; 1985) changing position. The Finnish team, in particular, as their contributions to this volume indicate, have enjoyed a lively debate, which in

research terms has focused on the conceptual importance of "autonomy" (this has also been at the focus of the Australian project's conceptualization of class: see Clegg and Matheson 1987), as well as that of supervisory authority and decision-making power. It is to gradations in autonomy, authority and decision making that an adequate conceptualization of management should look.

When the composition of managers in the class structure is systematically compared on the same criteria across a number of companies, it becomes apparent that there are consistent variations in the pattern of work organization across advanced capitalist countries. Managers are a higher proportion of the class structure, and thus one would infer of work organizations generally, in the United States than elsewhere. In all countries, however, there is a clear male bias in the gender composition of managers, and in the greater cluster of power (autonomy, authority and decision making) which is available to these male managers. Beyond these patterns, there are many differences between managers' tasks, responsibilities and powers in the six nations surveyed. (The countries reported on are the United States, United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Canada.) Two patterns of organization decision making present themselves: a Nordic pattern and an American pattern, marked in the former by a more extensive participation in decision making while in the latter it is more restricted. The differences are particularly marked with respect to budgetary control. While Nordic managers tend to have greater organizational authority, Anglo-American managers tend to have greater supervisory authority.

Melin's research differentiates between top managers, task managers and nominal or lower managers. It was found that the proportion of top managers was highest in the Nordic countries, while the proportion of lower or nominal managers was highest in North America, pointing to a far more centralized pattern of work organization in the Nordic countries and one which is much lower in the North American cases. As a well-supported finding of the Aston school is that centralization tends to increase as the size of organization increases, this would lead one to hypothesize that the differences can be attributed to industry-structure variations in the size of organizations across the countries (see Pugh and Hickson 1976 for the original Aston studies).

A number of other contrasts emerge which one might be tempted to attribute to major comparative variations in what has been termed the "class politics" (Clegg et al. 1986) of the respective countries. These have to do with the class backgrounds and ambitions of the managers: these are far more homogeneously middle class in the North American pattern, than they are in the Nordic countries, as "class politics" hypotheses would lead one to expect. Countries with strong social democratic parties, which have enjoyed political hegemony and governance, and which are supported by a dense base of union organization, produce a different type of worker, even in the managerial ranks, than emerges from more politically and economically "liberal" conjectures ("liberal" in contrast to "social democratic," it should be clear). Not only are Nordic managers

more likely to have a wage earner background; they are more likely to be unionized.

The heterogeneity of managers is even more evident from this study than it was before, because it adds the important dimension of cross national variation. Management and managers in the United States cannot be thought to be typical for the rest of the advanced capitalist societies, a caution it is well to consider in view of the great weight of United States' teaching, research and case material. The differences that occur can be attributed, in part, it has been argued, to distinct national profiles of "class politics" (see Clegg et al. 1986, chapter 9).

It has been a convention in sociological studies of both class and organizations to differentiate organization positions and their occupants on a "blue-collar"/"white-collar" basis (a convention which Carchedi's contribution to this volume will be seen to question). One consequence of this axial principle is the fact that there has been a steady growth in the advanced societies of white-collar positions and predominantly white-collar organizations. What this means has been a matter for some debate. As on most things to do with class there are broadly Weberian and Marxian positions. The contribution by Chris Smith to this volume on "Technical Workers: A Class and Organizational Analysis" opens with a consideration of this debate as a means of focusing on the theoretical approaches which have been developed for the analysis of one type of white-collar worker – those who do "technical labour."

The Weberian explanation of the growth of white-collar workers stresses changes in power and market relations, attendant upon the increasing bureaucratization of the modern world. The focus is seen to be on market capacities as the criteria for distinguishing class positions, an approach whose outcome, suggests Smith, is conceptual fragmentation. What is being fragmented must be an opposed conceptualization: in this case the determinate and simple (if less realistic) lines of cleavage which result from older binary models such as the "simple descriptive model" found in the "Communist Manifesto" (see Clegg et al. 1986, chapter two, for a consideration of Marx's class models).

More recent attempts at Marxist theorizing have had to abandon any such binary assumptions in the interest of an appreciation of the contemporary complexity of organizational reality, in particular the role of "technical workers". Smith identifies two main traditions in this more recent trend. One is the conceptualization of technical workers as members of the "new working class" developed in France by Gorz (1976) and Mallet (1975).

The second tradition centres around the contributions of more global approaches to the conceptualization of the class structure associated with Braverman (1974), Poulantzas (1975) and Carchedi (1977). For these writers technical workers were to be seen not as "new" members of the working class but as a fraction of an expanding "new middle class". Each of these positions is subject to careful scrutiny by Smith. The tradition of Gorz (1976) and Mallet (1975) overstates the democratizing, collectivizing impact of technology on collective labour

and consequently understates the possibilities for dilution and fragmentation of the attendant skill formation. It is the latter emphasis which is paramount in Braverman (1974), who regards technical workers as an intermediate stratum in an organization hierarchy designed by corporate management to divide and fragment workers. Whether these workers are more or less inclined to the capital or the labour camp will, Braverman (1974) suggests, depend on the extent to which they monopolize technical knowledge of production, or have been excluded from it. Smith suggests that Braverman's analysis is too rigid in its insistence on the downward flow of, and exclusion from, knowledge.

Poulantzas (1975) and Carchedi (1977) are characterized by Smith as "structural Marxists" – writers who concentrate on the conceptualization of class in terms of structural models. In these models, explanatory focus is given neither to the conditions of work (as in Gorz and Mallet) nor the "skill structure" and "positive ideological qualities" which Braverman stresses. Instead, the focus is on the functional location of positions as agents of either capital or labour.

Although Poulantzas (1975) regards technical labourers as productive labour, because they create "surplus value," he does not regard them as members of the working class because of their function of supervision and control of other manual workers. Thus, whether they know it or not, Poulantzas would argue that such workers fulfil the function of capital, not of labour. Consequently, they are on the "mental" labour side of a mental/manual labour divide by virtue not of their economic but their political and ideological functions within organizations, according to Poulantzas. Problems abound with this analysis, as has been argued in detail elsewhere (Clegg et al. 1986, chapter 6). Smith concentrates on two particular problems. One is the fact that Poulantzas generalizes a formal model from the particularities of the French industrial scene, while the other is that it ignores completely the situational conditions within diverse organizational settings. It theorizes by fiat. Consequently, the facts of specific national or organizational conditions fail to fit the general model.

Carchedi's (1977) analysis is the original locus of a conceptualization of the new middle class as occupants of simultaneously contradictory class locations. They are defined as agents who perform both the "global functions of capital" concerned with surveillance and control of the "collective labourers" as well as the "collective labour functions" which define the proletariat. Technical workers will thus be functionally defined as new middle class workers where they supervise and control the "collective labourers." The problem that Smith sees with this analysis is the lack of any contextual reference to specific conditions of organization culture which constitute the meaningful context in which these functional relationships occur. Once more the problem is one of the articulation between a formal model and the specific conditions within which the model is to be applied. Where the model does not correspond to the meaningful grasp of the situation enjoyed by those whose relations it formally expresses, does this mean that the vagaries and particularities of time and place, expressed through case studies,

should be used to invalidate the model or should the model be used to “invalidate” the contextual meaning? As Hindess observed in his earlier chapter, there is indeed a strong tradition of the latter in Marxism’s emphasis on “false” consciousness. On the other hand, if we do not “privilege” a model but instead grant priority to the privilege of others’ interpretations of reality, is there not the danger of letting mundane forms of (mis)understanding over-rule analysis?

Smith resolves such issues by coming down in favour of an approach in which, with due regard to the comparative and historical context, the “cultural legacy” which constitutes workers’ identities is understood in terms of the processes of training, skill formation, organizational locale and work which have generated the predominant understandings. It is these contingent factors, Smith maintains, which will determine the resolution of their contradictory class location by technical workers. Thus, he follows Carchedi (1977) to the extent that he regards his conceptualization of the class structure to be a realist depiction of generative tendencies for class formation. However, he would want to refer to organizational particulars in order to see to what extent, how and why these tendencies for class formation have been realized.

What technical work is will vary nationally, depending on national variations in the institutional frameworks in which such skills are constructed. National variation as well as organizational contingencies thus enter into the process of class formation, so that distinctly British, French and American models of “technical work” are identified. General models of capitalism have to be seen in the variable context of institutionally distinct capitalist nations, within whose specific organizations structural tendencies which are inherent in the nature of capitalism will be mediated by particular managerial strategies. Whereas Marxist analyses have overstated the determinants of the general model of class structure in capitalism, Weberian approaches, suggests Smith, have understated these while focusing far too much on the micro-organizational particulars, a tendency which in studies of technical workers he identifies with Whalley’s (1986) work. The outcome of this approach is a social constructionist or phenomenological-view of class, one with which Smith takes issue.

The remainder of the chapter proceeds through a detailed critique of Whalley’s work to an empirical analysis of technical workers at the confectionery division of the Cadbury-Schweppes corporation, based in the Bournville factory in Birmingham, England. The occasion for the research was a re-organization of technical work under a major capital investment programme. Through an analysis of the processes involved in this re-structuring Smith develops a framework for locating class in an organizational context. Corporate management strategies are at the focus of his analysis. Such strategies may be related to internal controls over technical workers as well as being designed to externalize transaction costs by replacing the hierarchical organizational relationship between management and technical workers with one mediated by market, sub-contracting relationships. The changes eventuating from the implementation of managerial strategies

changed not only the nature of technical work but also the technical workers' ideological disposition toward it and the other social relations within the organization. Technical workers lost some of their autonomy, not through processes of de-skilling, but as a result of their central functions becoming subject to market exposure. Consequently, technical workers were subject to a process in which their "contradictory class location" was resolved in terms of their managerial agency.

By contrast, with the move to managerial agency which was occasioned by changing internal controls, the strategy of externalization redefined technical workers as petty bourgeoisie. In the past the predominant organization method for securing technical work was to employ technical workers. However, Smith suggests that increasingly this work will be "bought in" from outside, independent, sub-contracting agencies. These small businesses would redefine the owners as technical petty bourgeoisie rather than workers. Again one would anticipate a quite different set of ideological dispositions to characterize this type of technical work.

With this contribution Chris Smith does achieve a real *rapprochement* between organization and class analysis. The organization analysis stresses the institutional structuring of organization contexts, and within these fosters an approach which combines a realist view of class as a structure of underlying tendencies with a consideration of the role that knowledgeable agents and rational action can play in realizing these tendencies in one form or another. In this way the extremes of either de-contextual general formal theory or non-formal, specific and contextual reportage may be avoided.

4. Class Restructuring and Organization

Class restructuring through organizational development is, as Smith suggests, an ongoing feature of capitalism as a dynamic economic system. While proletarianization may have seemed a dominant tendency in the 1960s, by the 1970s it was class decomposition which preoccupied the structural Marxists as they sought to conceptualize the rapidly changing reality in terms which preserved the ordered totality of Marxist analysis. In the 1980s Smith identifies new organization tendencies, which we might call "marketization," which are currently re-structuring class relations. As Marx and Engels said in that memorable phrase, re-called in the introduction to John Urry's discussion of "Disorganized Capitalism and Social Class," under capitalism "All that is solid melts into air..." Indeed. The dynamism of capitalism on a world scale is such that class relations never stand still. Even as the form of the relation appears recurrent in its opposition of labour and capital, its expression is subject to changing tensions. As we have seen

already in the contributions to this volume, these tensions form the infrastructure upon which organization and class analysis construct their accounts. Examples of this have been the “managerial revolution” of the 1930s, the “proletarianization” of white-collar workers in the 1960s, the “deskilling hypothesis” of the 1970s.

Capitalism as the harbinger of modernity, the permanent vehicle of transformation and change: this is the theme for John Urry’s contribution to this volume. Marx and Engels outlined the form of this modern epoch in the “Manifesto,” in a development which Urry terms “organized capitalism” (also see Lash and Urry 1987; Offe 1987). Against the conventional views of both Marxists and Weberians, however, Urry does not argue that this is an epoch whose ethos of organization is still increasingly evident in the ascendancy of monopoly capitalism or the rationalization of the world. On the contrary. Since the end of the Second World War, Urry argues, the advanced societies have become increasingly host to an era of “disorganized capitalism.”

Academic consensus has it that the era of organized capitalism began in the late nineteenth century. Its features are familiar: we know them as increasing centralization and control both organizationally and in the economy; the rise of cartels; finance capitals’ dominance; the rapid rise of a bureaucratized intelligentsia and its allied occupations; the rapid development of interest organizations such as unions and employers associations; an increased role for the state in mediating with peak organizations of these bodies; forms of “imperialism” and economic “neo-imperialism”; an increase in what the French call “plannification” in the state sphere, together with an increasing technocratization generally; increasing sectoral and national concentration of industrial capitalism; increasing dominance of extractive/manufacturing industry employment; regionalization of national economies based on these industries; increasing plant size in employment; increasing dominance of very large industrial sites over particular regions through the provision of centralized services (especially commercial and financial).

Together these form an interactive matrix within which capitalism in various countries becomes increasingly organized. Three factors, suggests Urry, determine the timing and extent of national variations within the matrix: the “take-off” point – the earlier it is, the less organized capitalism will be because of the costs of late development; the survival rate of pre-capitalist organizations into the capitalist period – the more of these survive, the greater the degree of organization; the size of country – smaller countries, in order for their industries to compete internationally, it is hypothesized, had to become more organized. On this basis Urry accounts for the distinct patterns of capitalist organization which developed in Germany, Britain and the United States. It is a bold and imaginative sketch of a theory of modernity whose lynchpin is the central concept of organization.

The corollary of this theory of modernity is an equally dramatic sketch of post-modernity whose *leitmotif* is disorganization. It is manifested, suggests Urry,

through de-concentration of capital; increasing relative importance of a “service” or “new middle” class compared with the diminishing de-instrumentalized working class and an allied rise in “new social movements” as its members increasingly forsake the politics of class for those of civil society; a decline in centralized collective bargaining in favour of company and plant-level negotiation; a series of structural gaps and “crises” opening up between state and capital: – multinationalals vs. nation states; fiscal crises; the crisis of the welfare state; the crisis of neo-corporatism; the internationalization of organized capitalism into the Third World and of some of the latter’s surplus population into the First World; a decline of class politics in favour of aggregative “catch-all” parties; the “post-modernization” of culture; increasing national and sectoral participation in capitalism; diminishing importance of manufacturing/extractive sectors and increasing importance of service industry; declining regionalization; “downsizing” in plants and a shift of labour intensive activities through a new international division of labour to Third World sites; the decline of industrial city dominance.

The factorial lists are somewhat overwhelming, but they do relate to widely perceived structural changes within the advanced societies. Urry’s hypothesis is that, *ceteris paribus*, “the greater the extent to which a nation’s capitalism was organized, the more slowly and hesitantly its capitalism will disorganize.” On this basis, he sees disorganization occurring in Britain and the USA from the 1960s, France from the late 1960s/early 1970s, Germany from the 1970s and Sweden from the late 1970s/early 1980s. The hypothesis is then argued for each of the three main classes of contemporary capitalism: the capitalist class, the “service” or “middle” class and the working class. With this elaboration the argument is expounded at greater length and in greater detail.

Without entering into too many points of discussion of this provocative and bold argument, one may note the following in passing. First, the perspective developed is one which is remarkably centred on Britain, certain European countries and the United States. Notably absent is any discussion of East Asian capitalism in Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea, for example. A number of striking counterfactuals to the broad sweep of the argument could be located in the relative “disorganization” of Hong Kong and Taiwan and the relative “organization” of South Korea and Singapore. All are “late developers” of diverse size and have a strong element of survival of pre-capitalism. This introduction will not enter into these debates in any detail, as the editor has done so elsewhere (see Clegg, Dunphy and Redding 1986; Clegg and Redding 1989). Suffice to say that there are important matters of the interpretation of East Asian capitalism which require consideration for such a broad synthesis to be sustainable.

A second point of controversy is the temporal articulation of the organization/disorganization hypothesis. Recently, in respect to theories of modernity and post-modernity (with which the hypotheses advanced by Urry have considerable elective affinity), Bauman (1987) has argued that these tendencies (towards mo-

ernity and post-modernity) are less to be considered as temporally successive and more as co-present. Organization and disorganization may thus be similarly co-present tendencies, polar opposites around which some countries will tend to cluster while others will display contradictory tendencies which might resolve either way or merely muddle through, despite the price to be paid, economically, for doing so. (This is an argument I have developed at length elsewhere and it would not be appropriate to re-iterate it in this introduction. However, interested readers may wish to consult Clegg, Higgins and Spybey (1989) for an argument which proposes such an interpretation in the context of a consideration of not only Western but also Asian capitalism.)

If the interpretation of organization/disorganization were to be sustained as one of co-present tendencies, then this would necessarily make specific national outcomes an object of political calculation and struggle, particularly of those countries least coherently articulated on either pole. As Urry acknowledges, major actors in such struggles would have to be states, multinational enterprises and labour unions, irrespective of other interested actors. In approaches to the literature on multi-national enterprises, as Harvie Ramsay and Nigel Haworth outline at the outset of their argument in "Managing the Multinationals: The Emerging Theory of the Multinational Enterprise and its Implications for Labour Resistance," there has been a tendency to regard multinationals as social actors easily able to defeat other protagonists such as national states and labour unions.

It is possible that the importance of multinational corporations (MNCs) has of late been underemphasized in the literature, suggest Ramsay and Haworth, in contrast to the often exaggerated fears and anticipations of the earlier literature from the 1950s to mid-1970s. (The work of Wheelwright (e.g. 1978) represents a typical version of this response in which MNCs were cast as the villains of late capitalism, an analysis which was of considerable influence in the labour movement in Australia at this time: see AMWSU (1977) *Australia Ripped-Off*, for an example.) Developments in MNCs since the mid-1970s suggest that there are still good, if less exaggeratedly extrapolatory, reasons for concern over their role in the world economy: the volume of world trade within and between MNCs, their increasing dominance of the service sector as well as of manufacturing and extractive industry; the development of "marketization" strategies for organizing relationships, sometimes referred to as "Japanization" (see Wilkinson and Oliver 1988 for a British overview). Ramsay and Haworth see these developments as important reasons why MNCs should not disappear from analytical focus, nor simply be castigated as the villains of an abstract drama between "capital" and "labour", one in which their rationality is assumed to be all-conquering. By contrast, they argue, MNCs may sometimes be seen as sites of uncertainty and contradictory decision making, an insight better sustained by management theorists than by radical analysts of a Marxist persuasion.

MNCs have problems reconciling three types of factors, it is suggested. These are: location-specific factors; ownership-specific factors, and internal manage-

ment perceptions and interests. In contrast to the views of either functionalist Marxists or functionalist organizational theorists, organizational design is hardly such a well-developed "science" as some of its promoters would have (Donaldson 1985) that problems of co-ordination, communication and control within international organizations are able to be relegated to the status of easily manageable contingencies. As Mintzberg (1983) would instead insist, power and conflict are more the norm in and around organizations.

What comes through strongly from Ramsay and Haworth's contribution is that MNCs are a complex of arena and locales in which diverse social actors, with different stakes and interests in the corporation, are involved in political as well as rational organization. In particular, they identify local or functional managers as a political interest group who are in a position in MNC information circuits to be able to strongly represent their views. Outside agencies, from the consulting networks of Business Schools and Management Consultants, are also an influential group who have ample opportunity to wreak political mischief with their organizational fads. A central issue in the political organization of MNCs is the structuring of their operations as more or less centralized, an issue of considerable complexity and uncertainty, given the diverse nature of subsidiaries, divisions and host countries with which MNCs may have to deal, and the issues these pose for a rational business strategy. A highly centralized strategy can easily come to grief in the context of local particularities, as Ramsay and Haworth outline in their example.

National governments are not simply passive bystanders or obedient lap-dogs of MNC strategy. Within the indeterminacy of political calculation within their own arenas, they may well seek to constrain MNCs' strategies with respect to their national economies, both in terms of existing companies and in terms of procuring further national investment. Centralized, overly globally rational strategies on the part of the MNC may not be the best way to face this indeterminacy.

Ramsay and Haworth argue that this more realistic appreciation of MNCs' indeterminate organization around the uncertainty principle of politics opens points of potential leverage for strategists representing the labour movement, particularly to the extent that they are able to coerce, coopt or otherwise use aspects of state power in pursuit of their objectives. A key point of leverage is the general area of Human Resource Management, where the employment of labour will always pose a potential for resistance which may be inimical to the best strategic analyses derived from elsewhere in the global corporation. Overall, the thrust of Ramsay and Haworth's conclusion is to ensure that analytical fatalism does not overawe a realistic assessment of the opportunities for engagement and leverage on the part of labour strategists. However limited these points of pressure may be, they will never be entirely absent, except in the fantasies of radical pessimists on the left or radical idealists on the right. This chapter stands as a counter to the attribution of "superagency" which such rationalist extravagances presume.

The response of structuralist Marxists to the organizational consequences of class restructuring was typically that represented by Braverman (1974). It was anticipated that there would be a widespread de-skilling and degradation of working conditions as capitalist relations of production were consolidated at ever higher levels of efficiency. In particular, such theses ought to apply to workers in those positions most exposed to "proletarianization" tendencies, the intermediate strata of "white-collar workers". Moreover, in a country such as West Germany, which has been at the forefront of efficient capitalist restructuring, these effects should be particularly visible. The contribution to this volume by Wolfgang Littek and Ulrich Heisig suggests that one should be sceptical about such structuralist Marxist hypotheses.

"Work Organization Under Technological Change: Sources of Differentiation and the Reproduction of Social Inequality in Processes of Change" reports on empirical research conducted by Littek and Heisig into the impact of restructuring on male white-collar professional workers in the early 1980s, in three industrial firms in West Germany.

Weaker versions of labour process theory than Braverman's (1974) have spoken not of tendencies to de-proletarianization so much as of a "dialectic of resistance and control" (Littler and Salaman 1982). However, not even this version, with its stress on resistance to re-structuring, was corroborated in the responses of the white-collar workers who were studied. (However, we do not know to what extent this sample was typical of such workers. In the context of the detailed theoretical argument which follows this is not a major concern. The contribution that the chapter makes is not simply to hypothetical disconfirmation but the generation of new theory and hypotheses for explaining the discrepant finding – discrepant in terms of received labour process theory, that is.)

White-collar workers, rather than resisting re-structuring, seemed to welcome and support it. Opportunities for strengthening, rather than weakening, their occupational position within the micro-politics of organization life were the reason for this reception. White-collar workers perceived restructuring in such favourably opportunistic terms as a result of the managerial strategies employed to hasten the restructuring attendant on technological changes within these organizations. Consequent to these strategies, rather than white-collar workers being levelled down to the conditions which prevailed for blue-collar workers, the structural gap between these groups of workers was deepened further. The high trust relations which characterized the work context of white-collar workers were supported rather than undercut by the technical changes underway. In the "terrain of struggles" which is the organization, white-collar resources, coalitions and game strategies prevailed over those of blue-collar workers, within the strategic game which management action initiated.

Littek and Heisig's argument is developed within the framework of a segmentation perspective, one which implicitly draws on a framework developed by the British industrial relations writer, Alan Fox (1974), in the same year that Braver-

man's (1974) much better known but far less insightful model was published. Segmentation contributes to the overall social stability of the organization by recasting opportunities for hierarchical conflicts into a competitive lateral game of struggle between different groups in which advantaged groups seek to reproduce their advantage and in which weaker groups are obliged to participate, if only not to lose further organization ground.

Differences in work games and their outcomes are attributable to the degree to which the qualifications claimed by the various work groups are grounded in knowledge or skill. (Knowledge equates with prerequisites to perform more or less complex work in which personal decisions and flexibility are required, while skill may be seen in the ability to carry out more or less complex prescribed work.) The latter is the preserve of blue-collar workers far more than it is of white-collars: knowledge characterizes the base of their relationship with management to a much greater extent, propose Littek and Heisig. Management consequently depends to a great extent on the personal commitment and cooperation of knowledge workers to an extent to which it does not for skill workers.

Within each bloc of white- and blue-collar workers internal stratification occurs. Within each group these articulate around formal qualifications and relationships to "arena of uncertainty". Within the knowledge workers group of white-collar workers, marginal increments to personal resource control may be achieved on the basis of small group or individual control of uncertainty (see Crozier 1964 for the classic formulation; Hickson et al. 1971 for its systematization into an intraorganizational theory of power; Clegg 1975 for some critical comments on this exercise). For blue-collar workers, leverage over control of uncertainty can only be achieved by collective action. Such an explanation relies not only on differences between the labour market conditions of the two groups distinguished but also on the nature of the trust relations which constitute these. This key distinction is outlined in a series of schemata in the chapter which elaborate how the trust/uncertainty relations intersect and overlap with the credentialling process that generates types of skill and knowledge.

Consent is the desired by-product of high trust organization interrelations, as far as management is concerned, while for knowledge workers it is traded for control over working conditions and social exchange relations which will deliver prestige, status and influence. Cooperation and participation are thus strategies of self-interest for knowledge workers as much as defensive behaviour, resistance and insubordination are for skill workers. Marginal white-collar workers are caught between the two strategies. They will tend to be excluded from intimate fellowship by self-interest on the part of core knowledge holders in not diluting their knowledge base, while, in their own interest, they will tend to be reluctant to define their own *declassé* fate by seeking solidaristic fraternity. Hence the intimate fellowship of management and high trust workers tends to exclude and marginalize not only blue-collar workers but also less credentialled white-collar workers.

Recessionary conditions of restructuring serve to strengthen the knowledge class/management ties, because the more competitive conditions of such times place a greater premium on creative, positive and adaptive abilities, and their efficient use by management. This is not true across the board in organizations: it does not apply to relations with low trust blue-collar workers who become more rather than less dispensable in these conditions, argue Littek and Heisig. Any analysis which extrapolates only one aspect of these changes, either increasing high trust or tightening low trust relations, into a tendency, will miss the overall picture, conclude Littek and Heisig.

If increases in the proportions of knowledge workers, or new class employees, is one aspect of the global tendencies identified by Urry as capitalist disorganization, the other class which it is predicted will swell with these processes of restructuring is that of the petty bourgeoisie: those own account and small employers whom Marx and Engels in the "Manifesto" had confidently expected to wither away. It is this class (carefully defined in terms of available data) which is the focus of Timo Toivonen's "The New Rise of Self-Employment and Industrial Structure", a study of non-agricultural self-employment in nine OECD countries.

The comparative data since 1970 suggests that there is a strong U-curve relationship in the proportion of self-employed to total employment outside agriculture, with the decline halting or stagnating during the mid-1970s. The function fits best for Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the USA, with Denmark and Japan being exceptions. The percentages of self-employment vary markedly. Within Japan and Italy the percentages are over 20%, whereas in the three Nordic countries they are only 5-7%.

A comparison was made for all those countries for which data was adequate (which excluded Belgium, Italy and the United Kingdom) to contrast the lowest year of self-employment with the subsequent highest year of self-employment. During the same broad period changes in industrial structure were also studied. What changes occurred were small, but all in the same direction: an increase in the services sector and a decrease in the manufacturing sector, as Urry had noted earlier. Large differences in self-employment are found between different industries and different countries, with, in general, the highest concentration in trade, construction and services, while the smallest is generally in mining and energy production. Japan and Italy have the highest percentage of self-employment, while the USA; Finland and Sweden had the smallest, the range being from around 2-3% to almost 13%.

Using an analytic technique known as shift-share analysis, it is possible to determine to what extent the changes in percentages of self-employment are attributable to changes in the distribution of employment across economic sectors, or to compositional changes within industries. In every case except France, change can be more readily attributed to internal shifts of a compositional kind

within industries than to structural shifts across sectors. Why should these changes have occurred?

One hypothesis for the changing composition of self-employment argues that the push factor of increasing unemployment in a national economy is likely to increase self-employment, as the latter becomes a rational choice for people who would otherwise be unemployed. Against this, however, it has been proposed that the generally stagnatory conditions attendant upon recession will serve to decrease small business. Toivonen does not consider that the available evidence supports the push hypothesis, although a more mediated "anticipatory economic climate" variable might be more plausible.

Another factor to consider in the rise of the self-employed class and their organizations is government policy. On the assumption that conservative governments will be more facilitative of small business and self-employment, an index of right influence on government over the period in question may have a significant correlation with the rise of self-employment and thus contribute to an explanation.

The data supports the assumption that unemployment rise, and a rise in self-employment, are connected positively, while of course it can say nothing about why this happens, and what the meaningful connections in the correlation are. Little in the way of strong support can be adduced for the government policy variable, expressed in terms of conservatism, at least in the simple correlation coefficients. Nor do regression equations shed much more light. What might some of the other influencing variables be? Toivonen considers that a number of organization level variables may be the causal factors at work, such as the growth in sub-contracting (which both Urry and "Japanization" writers have seized on as symptomatic of contemporary capitalist restructuring), growth in franchising and the opportunities opened up by new technology. For the latter, at least, there is indirect, if limited, support in Toivonen's comparative data.

The conclusions that he reaches are, of necessity, tentative. In fact, they are more in the way of big questions for future research, particularly in terms of their implications. As he concludes, "If unemployment, public sector employment, and self-employment all continue to grow, will we then in the next century be in a situation where a remarkable portion of people of working-age is either outside employment, employed in the public sector, or self-employed? Have traditional theories about classes and organizations gone totally astray?" The question may be somewhat audacious in speculating from a set of tendencies, but it does focus for us the way in which so many of our ideas both about class structure and organization structure are dependent on a set of assumptions about the nature of employment relations. Changes in these may well be radically revising the landscape so familiar to both Marxian and Weberian scholars, with their implicit context of large-scale organizations as the envelope for economic action and activity. One does not expect the disappearance of a Fortune 500, but some of the contractual relations which constitute it may well change, as "Japanization" hypotheses suggest (see Wilkinson and Oliver 1988).

5. The Labour Process, Class Structure and Gender

The focus of the chapter on “Exploring the Class and Organisational Implications of the UK in Financial Services” by David Knights and Hugh Willmott is upon the organization of financial services in the context of changing relations of political and economic power. Prompted by a concern to appreciate the wider significance of an intensive field study of management control within Pensco, a medium-sized UK life insurance and pensions company, the chapter explores the relevance of Marxian insights for understanding the nature of this sector. The relevance and limits of Marxian-inspired debates on ownership and control, the commodity form and the distinction between productive and unproductive labour are considered and addressed in terms of their significance for analysing “class” and “organization” in financial services.

The perspective on “class” and “organization” developed in this chapter is one which focuses upon the reproduction and/or transformation of capitalist relations of production. In particular, it is necessary to emphasize that the term “organization” is not being used to describe an entity. Nor is “class” used to describe a common position or strata within the social structure. Rather, for the purposes of this chapter, organization is considered as a *process* and class as a principle which *structures* this process. In the context of contemporary U.K. society, the authors regard the *dynamic* nature of the capital-labour *relation* as the most significant expression of class. This relation is regarded as one which is articulated in a variety of sites in which it selectively exploits and reforms (and is reformed by) other kinds of power relation and their associated struggles, such as those of gender, age and race. This historical process involves a continuing struggle as individuals, often, though not necessarily, acting collectively, strive to facilitate or resist the dynamics of change – dynamics which are most adequately interpreted through Marxian frames of reference.

Following Marx, the chapter argues that a concentration upon the capital-labour relation provides a most appropriate means of interpreting contemporary UK society in general, and the processes of management control within Pensco in particular. However, the authors are anxious not to subscribe to Marxist analyses which sustain either a “productivist” philosophical anthropology or which fail to appreciate critical interdependencies within the capital-labour relation. In combination, these flaws within Marx’s theory are seen as being responsible for a lack of analytic concern with the importance of other struggles (e.g. gender, race) and for an economistic conception of (objective) class boundaries and (subjective) class formation. In this chapter, the focus is less on various struggles and more upon the broader significance and impact of financial services for understanding continuity and change in capitalist (i.e. class) society.

The chapter is organized as follows. First, the study is situated vis-à-vis a brief synopsis of relevant developments in organizational theory. During the past two

decades orthodox organization analysis, now centred upon contingency theory and population ecology theory, has been challenged and/or complemented by varieties of phenomenology and radical structuralism. In particular, left-radical organization theorists (e.g. Clegg and Dunkerley 1980) have drawn upon both neo-Marxist and neo-Weberian analyses to explore how class and power relations are reproduced through work organization. Accordingly, a brief sketch is made of the key differences between Weberian and Marxian conceptions of the central institutions of capitalist society, concluding in favour of an emphasis upon the latter on the grounds that Marx provides a more effective framework for understanding the role of financial services in the reproduction of capitalist (i.e. class) institutions and organizations. Then, in the following section, a critical review of Marx's understanding of the dynamics of capitalist development is provided in which it is argued his neglect of that interdependence within the structure of the capital-labour relation is reflected in an almost exclusive attention on the contradictory and polarizing features of those relations.

Some aspects of Marx's analysis have particular relevance for the study of financial services. Three questions are raised. First, can the products of insurance and pensions companies be analysed as commodities? Second, is the Marxian formulation of the separation of ownership and control convincing? Third, does Marx's philosophical anthropology provide an adequate basis for analysing the organization and control of the labour process in capitalist society? Briefly, in respect of the ownership and control debate, it is suggested that the contemporary significance of insurance and pensions companies resides not only in their role as mobilizers of diffuse sources of capital. It also resides in their effect upon the constitution of the subjectivity of those who, through their payment of premiums, transform diffuse forms of income into capital through the medium of these companies. These more micro effects are as important as the impact of financial capital upon the structure of ownership and its implications for the autonomy of corporate management.

Financial services are commodities that involve similar processes in their production and consumption as those goods which have been seen by traditional Marxists as central to the commodification of social relations. Within the analysis of management control within the labour process debate, an emphasis upon the antagonism of interests between capital and labour has tended to deflect attention from the existential as well as economic value of workers' investments in existing forms of control. It is argued that the progressive individualization and anonymization of subjectivity in advanced capitalist societies, and especially in work organizations, is inadequately recognized within labour process theory. More specifically, there is a failure to appreciate the historical pressures in contemporary society to privilege the struggle for individual security (e.g. by investing the self in, or seeking to distance it from, existing organizational practices) over and against collective action which is designed to attain politico-economic emancipation.

In the final section, Marx's philosophical anthropology is applied to an interpretation of changes in management control at Pensco, a medium-sized insurance company. The argument reflects the contention that both structuralist (anti-humanist) and voluntarist (humanist) variants of Marxist analysis tend either to minimize or misrepresent the significance of subjectivity in the reproduction of the mode of production. In its structuralist mode, actors are reduced to passive bearers of class interests. And in its voluntarist guise, actors are represented as more or less conscious of their class interests. The basic limitation of both formulations concerns their common privileging of class identity and interests. This leads them to assume the relationship between the structure of production relations and the constitution of actors' identity and interests is free of contradiction. Overlooked is the possibility that the constitution of subjectivity in advanced capitalist society may not, in fact, lead them to identify "interest" primarily with "class."

Overall, the concern of this chapter is to develop a form of organizational analysis which draws from and develops the insights of Marx without becoming blinded or desensitized to other forms of analysis. More specifically, the complexity of organizational practices is appreciated whilst simultaneously their conditions and consequences in the dynamic development of the capital-labour relation are also grasped.

This chapter offers a welcome fusion of what have frequently been quite distinct approaches, particularly with the work of writers influenced by labour process theorists. It is not only in this chapter that this body of work is addressed. It is also the focus of the following chapter.

A number of landmark books have helped to define the "labour process" perspective, such as Braverman (1974). More recently the work of Michael Burawoy (1979; 1985) has received considerable attention, some of which is contained in this volume, in Dennis Smith's chapter on "Organization and Class: Burawoy in Birmingham."

Dennis Smith's focus in this chapter is on Burawoy's (1985) more recent book on *The Politics of Production: Factory Regimes under Capitalism and Socialism*. His interest in this work is in applying aspects of Burawoy's argument about "factory regimes" to the analysis of two quite distinct regions within the same historical place and time, nineteenth and early twentieth century Birmingham and Sheffield (building implicitly, it would seem, on the method used by Foster 1974). The second aspect of his consideration of Burawoy's (1985) adequacy is to make the analytic focus even more specific by concentrating on two distinct and important organizations in the context of Birmingham: the Cadbury chocolate factory at Bournville and the Austin motor works at Longbridge.

Burawoy (1985) develops a global theory of "factory regimes" – the modes whereby production is organized – as situated in the institutional relationship between the ideological and political practices of the factory and state, and the ways in which the state intervenes in the factory regime. The context for consid-

ering these relations must also include a number of other variables. Amongst these are the extent to which the workforce is separated from the means of subsistence, market structure aspects and the nature of subordination in the labour process, considered in Marxist terms of the degree of formal or informal subordination. Three sets of intervention assume a causal power in his account of these relationships: the intervention of the state within the factory regime; the intervention of the factory regime in its impact on the reproduction of labour power; also the intervention of the state on this reproduction of labour power. On this basis he identifies three distinct types of regime which Smith considers relevant for the British case: despotic, hegemonic and hegemonically despotic regimes. In the despotic type the state does not intervene at all directly within the factory regime or upon reproduction; the hegemonic type is characterized by increased state intervention in both spheres. Hegemonic despotism appears to combine strategies of marketization of reproduction by the state, strategies for a "new international division of labour" by capitalists; and a changed balance of power internal to the "factory" in the favour of capital, achieved through a more "flexible" workforce.

Smith notes that Burawoy's theoretical ambition is not modest. It will, Burawoy maintains, explain both English working class reformism and a revolutionary movement in Russia. Comparisons are drawn by Smith with what might be called Barrington Moore's (1969) theory of "agricultural regimes", in less than favourable terms, contrasting the context of their respective global theorizing, rich comparative and historical detail, and dynamics of analysis. In particular, suggests Smith, those factors which are external to the factory are relatively neglected in Burawoy's account.

Problems which an unduly restricted account of a "factory regime" present for historical analysis of organization case studies are evident in Smith's consideration of Birmingham in the early and mid-nineteenth century. In place of "factory regime" the concept of "workplace regime" is proposed as an expanded focus capable of incorporating the linkages which existed between the few factories and the extensive domestic and workshop production which characterized both Birmingham and Sheffield for much of the nineteenth century (and which survived in an attenuated but still significant form in Birmingham into the mid-twentieth century). Economic historians such as Pollard (1959) and Mathias (1983) have stressed how Sheffield and Birmingham enjoyed a number of similarities in their class formation at the workplace level during the nineteenth century, making the comparison one which is aptly chosen.

On Burawoy's hypothesis, similar factory regimes should produce similar outcomes with respect to the ways in which the working class participates in society and politics. The cases of Birmingham and Sheffield prove to be a counterfactual to the claim. Sheffield developed a strong syndicalist tradition in its labour movement and, with the advent of the steelworks, a highly segmented "housing class" structure, one split between middle class suburbs and a large urban working class

core which, from an early period, regularly returned Labour candidates in elections. This was not the case in Birmingham which never developed the syndicalist traditions so evident in Sheffield, nor the same degree of class polarization.

Smith maintains that the Sheffield/Birmingham difference is not attributable solely to the explanatory factors stressed in the "factory regime" account. Smith stresses not only the factory regime but wishes to view it within a broader framework which incorporates reference to men and women not only as actors within a certain social class, but as also having identities and attributes formed in a wider civil society and which find expression in other social movements, in addition to those of labour. This expression takes place within the overall context of class structure, its formation, decomposition and change and the alliances struck between the major actors who define this broader framework.

Application of this framework sketches a tale of two quite distinct cities. A more geographically isolated Sheffield is depicted in which there was a more divided working class with less linkages and alliances in the civil sphere with local bourgeois society. Bourgeois society at its peak was more globally networked into British capitalism than it was locally embedded. By the 1920s the sphere of civic politics had become solidly Labour. Birmingham, by contrast, was dominated by conservative politics and alliances which incorporated the working class; cooptation by "civic liberalism" rather than opposition by "civic socialism" characterized the scene in Birmingham. Smith demonstrates how the working class strategy in each city could be seen to be rational in terms of the different class context of each of the cities. The implication of this, as in the work of earlier writers such as Foster (1974), is that no singular, overall logic of class formation can be demonstrated. As has been argued at length elsewhere, class politics can not be read off from class structure but must be seen as embedded within the complex articulation of civil society (Clegg et al. 1986; Emmison et al. 1988).

In his argument thus far Dennis Smith has established that at a general level of community organization, two similar cities can give rise to quite different political organization. However, this is not yet a sustained critique of Burawoy's position. For that one would have to show, with more specificity, that two similar organizations at the factory level need not respond similarly to the impact of "external" factors on factory regimes. Burawoy's hypothesis would then be undercut in two ways: in the argument from workplace regimes to political organization and in the argument from external factors to factory regime. The latter would be a more providential critique, if only because the notion of workplace regime (while making a useful point about the extent to which organization may be achieved by market relations as well as hierarchical relations) is not, strictly speaking, the concept that Burawoy uses.

In the remainder of his contribution Dennis Smith compares the two factories of Cadbury's and Austin's in the Birmingham suburbs of Bournville and Longbridge. Although they produced, respectively, chocolates and automobiles, there were a number of similarities in their organization, as well as major differences.

Both adopted mass production techniques as the basic method of production organized around the moving assembly line. Kin networks embedded recruitment practices in their respective local communities; in each firm workers built on this communal embeddedness with widespread participation in clubs, both sporting and social.

The differences were acute and manifested themselves in the attitudes of the workers to the management and the works, and vice versa. Where paternalist provision of facilities was the rule at Cadbury, at Austin the regime was far more despotic: works police rather more than works council. Such differences are amenable to an explanation, insists Smith, in which the role of those external factors glossed in Burawoy's account are emphasized. Whereas Cadbury's sought to make working for them a morally rewarding as well as well-paid experience for their employees, at Austin the relationship was constituted far more explicitly in terms of the cash nexus. These differences are not simply between "market despotism" and "paternalism", organizing a "hegemonic" regime. As Smith argues, in fact, the "paternalism", that one might suppose characterized hegemonic managerial strategies, had by the late 1970s become a source of labour's legitimacy rather than that of management, as the latter sought to reconstruct employee relations in the changed conditions that prevailed after a corporate takeover of the old Cadbury's by Schweppes, a multi-divisional food and beverage conglomerate, during the changed economic environment of the late 1970s. In these circumstances, says Smith; "hegemony" becomes a resource for resistance rather than control. In the terms in which he depicts the Longbridge works, the account seems closer to Burawoy's terms.

Smith draws four conclusions from this careful consideration of Burawoy's model against the details of his cases. Each of these serve to reiterate the importance of considering what Burawoy terms "factory regimes" within the indeterminate triangulatory containment of organization relations by not only those of *class structure*, but also of *the state* and the particulars of locally lived and expressed *civil society*.

One of the most evident aspects of any comparison between the Bournville and Longbridge social relations, which Smith does not focus on, are the gender relations which characterized each factory organization. The Bournville factory production line was staffed almost entirely by female production workers in white overall coats, caps and hair nets, while the blue-collar workers at Longbridge were all male. If differential strategies of relatively tougher and more tender management developed at each site, then one might anticipate that an account which stressed the role played by gender relations would be important. It is unfortunate that this element is not only downplayed in Burawoy but also absent from Smith's critique.

In the next paper in this section Rosemary Crompton begins to redress this oversight, one which is by no means a rare occurrence, in her contribution "The Class/Gender/Organization Nexus." At the outset she notes that "organiza-

tions," as a field of enquiry, is an interdisciplinary focus for the majority of its practitioners (although some, to be sure, would probably find offence in this lack of boundedness (e.g. Donaldson 1985) allowing intrusion to the concerns represented in this volume). While conceding that recent enthusiasms for "radical critique" or "critical organization theory" have done something to enrich the multi-paradigmatic flavour of organization analysis, Crompton wants to develop it further by elaborating the proposition that work organizations are significantly structured by gender as well as class relations.

As a proposition, she notes, it is not entirely novel, having been explored most frequently by adherents of what Burrell and Morgan (1979) have termed the "radical humanist" paradigm, contributors to which have explored issues of sexuality (e.g. Hearn and Parkin 1987) and gender (e.g. Collinson and Knights 1986) within organizations. Prior to a consideration of the class/gender/organization nexus within a specific type of organization – building societies – Crompton iterates some recent sociological approaches to "theorizing gender."

Early attempts at this theorization derived from not only role theory but also Marxist perspectives. Both of these tended to be over-deterministic and allowed insufficient specificity to the gender relations they sought to theorize. Instead, the latter were seen as a reflex of action deriving from structures which were conceptually elsewhere, in classically functionalist exogenous accounts of change.

Theories of patriarchy have been developed which seek to articulate the assumption that men, as a category, oppress the opposing category of women. Such crude and biological essentialism deserves short shrift from sociology, as Crompton suggests. However, with forms of functionalism on the one hand, and essentialism on the other, the theorization of gender might be thought to have reached an impasse. A way out of this was proffered by "dual systems" theory, in which an element of each of functionalism and essentialism was combined: capitalism constructs "empty" class positions; patriarchy determines who fills them. Consequently, organizations would be the product of not only capitalistic but also patriarchal structures. However, the essentialist problem of assuming what is to be explained as an outcome, patriarchy, as if it were an explanation, still remains.

In an effort to circumvent these problems but still retain the acknowledgement that patriarchal outcomes invariably occur in fields such as the structuring of organization relations, some writers have sought to develop a "reality" theory of patriarchy, paralleling, as is noted, similar attempts at realism in the sociology of organizations. (For such an attempt see Clegg 1983.) The object of such an exercise is to specify the structural, generative underlying mechanisms which constitute the phenomenal appearance of the world of apparent reality; to go beneath the surface, as it were. Crompton cites Walby's (1986) study of male exclusionary practices in textiles, engineering and clerical work from 1800 to after the Second World War as an attempt at a realist account of patriarchy.

While Crompton would admit of a formal realism to categories of class such as "bourgeois" and "proletarian" (which other contributions to the debate would

deny, such as Hindess' chapter in this volume), she notes that gender relations depend for their reality on the personal interaction of individuals in a way in which class does not. Gender relations simultaneously constitute and are constituted by lived experience. (In this, according to "structuralist" sociologists, they may be no different from many other "social" phenomena: e.g. Giddens 1984.) Consequently, to research gender relations, just as one might research organization relations more generally, theoretically informed case studies are required which can tap into this lived experience that connects personal lives and social structure, history and biography.

In what is an apt sociological pun, Crompton proceeds to a case study of "Building Societies." First she outlines the way in which the building society industry is organized, before developing an analysis of gender relations, labour market practices and their interconnection within the context of changing industry structure, state policy towards feminist issues and the changing credential basis of the knowledge used in the industry. The initial focus is on "cashier clerks," the fastest growing occupation in the industry, and one which is almost entirely female, but was once "a job" predominantly done by men; however, when it was a male preserve it was hardly the same job, argues Crompton. As the workforce was feminized, so was the job.

The underlying mechanism which transformed both the nature of the work and the workforce was organization restructuring contingent upon the adoption of computer technology. It was this which enabled the development of retail outlets in which efficient machine operators could handle financial advice, using terminals connected to a central computing facility at a location remote from the branch. Women were recruited to fill these new cashiering jobs; the work was created and filled as "women's work," to provision the financial services being marketed to working class customers who had hitherto not been recruited as a market by the major financial institutions. On this market basis the industry grew rapidly in the 1960s and 1970s, recruiting many women, for none of whom would promotion to managerial levels, a male preserve, have normally been a career expectation. Management was instead entered via Management Traineeships, where, unlike cashiering, both men and women now compete in the same labour market, as a result of changed state regulation through Equal Opportunities Legislation.

Part of the changed regulatory environment consisted of an Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), a body equipped to investigate possible breaches of the legislation: i.e. exclusionary male strategies. Ample evidence of these are documented with respect to the building society industry. Of more interest is the way in which the archive assembled by the EOC demonstrated that formally rational criteria, which appeared to be the very essence of that universalism so admired in bureaucracy by many liberal observers (e.g. Perrow 1986, in the introductory chapter to his *Complex Organizations: A Critical Essay*), could in practice be constituted in such a way that desired outcomes (i.e. female exclusion

from managerial ranks) were still achieved, but with more difficulty, as Crompton makes clear. Universalistic criteria may not serve to eradicate particularistic prejudice in organizational recruitment and selection, but they do make it much more difficult to legitimate.

A number of conclusions can be drawn from this account, suggests Crompton. First, organization structuring of occupational relations is the major mechanism of the gendering of jobs, seen in the context of specific labour market conditions. Second, in the same way, accountability of this structuring to an outside body charged with legislating specific social policy for equal employment opportunity can, in the context of another but equally specific set of labour market conditions, serve to undermine exclusionary practices by challenging their outcome.

The project reported here has to be seen in the context of other research conducted by the author (Crompton and Jones 1984). When it is, Crompton argues, it becomes possible to see the way in which the impact of de-skilling and work fragmentation attendant on the restructuring of organization relations in white-collar bureaucracies has been "buffered" by female recruitment to the new jobs and the reproduction of an internal labour market for men.

Crompton concludes on an optimistic note, by noting the resistance of women to their exclusion from senior white-collar grades within the industry, in the context of the EOC. However, a caution may be necessary. To the extent that credentialled women may now compete more equally with credentialled men, this may tell us a great deal about changes in the organization/gender nexus. However, it tells us nothing of how this interacts with the class nexus, unless we entertain some notion of a perfect market in "intelligence," untrammelled by class processes and practices, being translated without distortion into credentials. As Crompton has argued elsewhere (Crompton and Gubbay 1977), and as education sociologists have frequently researched (e.g. Halsey et al. 1980), such assumptions would be profoundly unrealistic. Delimitation of gender inequality in the context of "knowledge" labour markets will not effect the reproduction of class and gender inequality in what Littek and Heisig (in this volume) have characterized as those labour markets constructed around notions of "skill" rather than knowledge. Data coming out of the comparative project on class structure and class consciousness suggests that, in fact, the working class across the advanced societies seems to be disproportionately female (see Wright 1985 for the Swedish and US data).

If there were one type of organization in which one might expect structured inequality to be minimized, it would be trade unions, particularly in that most social democratic of countries, Sweden, which, according to some accounts at least, offers an indication of what a more equal and a transformative "class politics" might be (e.g. Clegg et al. 1986). However, as Alison E. Woodward and Hakon Leiulfstrud observe in the final contribution to this section, in a chapter titled "Masculine/Feminine Organization: Class versus Gender in Swedish Unions," this would be to ignore what they term the "male nexus" of politics and

production in which unions are situated. (Notwithstanding this, however, it is the case that almost 90% of the Swedish labour force is unionized, so women in the workforce will hardly be excluded from formal membership.)

In writing of unions as a "male nexus," Woodward and Leiulfsrud are contrasting them to the motion of the family as a "female nexus": the contrast which feminist writing has noted between the masculine, public world and the private, feminized domestic sphere. However, rather than dichotomizing the sphere of reproduction and the sphere of production, they propose to link them in order to analyse female strategies in each. In doing so, as they observe, female union activity has to be seen as actively shaped by a highly integrated set of factors involving labour market structure, "female" job categories and their working conditions as well as the nature of female life in the family. Thus, in seeking to connect consideration of households and workplaces, families and organizations, with employment and union organization, Woodward and Leiulfsrud are involved in a sociological analysis of organizations not as self-contained, bounded and self-evident entities, but as sites in which the interpenetration of life-worlds will be evident.

The chapter begins with a consideration of recent research on gender and union activity and moves on to empirical data on Sweden, drawn from the Swedish project results in the comparative project on class structure and class consciousness. In particular, the interest is in how family organization interacts with union activity in the shaping of political attitudes.

Woodward and Leiulfsrud note that until very recently there has been an academic preconception of the passive working woman. This can no longer be held. Research suggests instead that women's activity, just as men's, is situationally dependent on work sectors, work histories and so on. Women and men in similar situations will probably develop similar attitudes; however, as Crompton's case study suggests, the gendered nature of job construction will frequently ensure that women will rarely be in precisely the same jobs as men. To some extent, that women have appeared to be less active than men in union affairs is in part because the nature of this activity has been defined in ways which align with typically male points of view, or because of the way these points of view have constructed available accounts. To some extent, there may be direct male repression and exclusion of females. It is important to note that this is decreasingly the case: in comparable industries, internationally, female and male unionism rates are of similar frequency, with women providing much of the new membership in newly unionizing sectors. Women's demands for union activity differ from men's: not only do they want equal pay but also better working and welfare conditions, linked to family and community. For married women, participation may be restricted to working hours and contexts spatially close to home, because of family ties and the overwhelming share of domestic labour which is still done by women, despite the fact that the two income family, in which both wage earners' contributions are vital, has become a norm in countries such as Sweden. Consequently,