

# Craft production



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From Craft Production to Mass Production To summarize our readings and writings on the evolution of craft production to mass production, one must start from the beginning of our readings. Throughout history, many different approaches have been taken in order to develop the most efficient and cost effective way to produce material and product. The production of these products stemmed from the division of labor. The subject of division of labor relates to the first reading of Adam Smith and Karl Marx and their opinions and views they believed to be the successful way to produce product. Adam Smith believed of breaking down large jobs into many.

Each worker would become an expert in their own expertise and increases efficiency. Smith describes one man working alone could produce from one to twenty straight pins a day but through specialization and subdivision of labor each working man could make the equivalent of more than one pound per day. Smith recognized that people working in this manner doing repetitious task lead to the worker being very dissatisfied and longing for more of a challenge. He then proposed the opinion that the government had an obligation to provide education to the workers. He felt if people had an education, they would have a choice towards employment.

This way the worker would be assigned a job that suited him best. Marx had a different meaning for the division of labor. Although Marx does not disagree with capitalism, he does believe that self-interest motivates society. He was a critic of capitalism and believed in individual freedom.

Karl Marx believed that Socialism would replace capitalism. He believed that the government should have complete control over industry and production.

He believed that capitalism was inhuman and would only benefit the rich.

The rich would get richer and the poor would get poorer.

This system degraded the workers. Even women and children were hired to do simple tasks. They became a commodity and were basically owned by the rich people. The workers were paid very low wages and had to work under terrible conditions. He felt that the workers found their jobs to be repetitious. This day to day and hour to hour ritual became monotonous for the workers and caused them to lose their self-esteem. The workers became alienated from the social environment.

According to Marx, our work should define us and we should be satisfied in order to gain self-esteem. Marx agrees that capitalism has brought some benefits to society but the effects that it had on the relations between people is not worth the benefits it brought economically. Not only did we learn that the division of labor (explained by Smith and Marx) had an influence on production but the theory of scientific management was to be considered.

Fredrick Taylor considered work to be a science. His invention of the vertical division of labor standardized tasks; by deskilling the tasks and laying out exactly what needed to be done, he was able to make each task take a similar amount of time. ? Taylor wanted the manager to control all aspects of work. This method was a processed used to increase labor productivity. The task was so simple that anyone could be easily trained to do the job. Using this method increased the number of unskilled workers but decreased the number of highly skilled workers that had learned their trade from

tradition. This skill was known as a craft. Craft production was something of the past.

Very few skilled companies survived the customizing process of production. Craft production consisted of high skilled workers, high costs, low value, and little to no technology. Each piece was crafted in its own unique time and was then assembled piece by piece until the vehicle was completed. It was an expensive process and only the rich could afford to purchase a vehicle that could be made to custom fit the needs of the customer. These skilled craftsmen had no time frame and would never make any two cars alike. Only a small amount of cars could be produced per year. There are some companies that have survived over the centuries. Even though these products are still very costly and expensive, there is still a demand for customized cars.

? During the Industrial Revolution however, mass production was discovered and put in place. Ford Motor Company started using mass production in the factory in the early 1900<sup>??</sup>™s. Mass production had no limit to the comparison of craft production as far as an economical growth. With this production in place, large amounts of parts could be produced on an assembly line. The cost of the vehicle continued to go down and so did the purchase price. This made the vehicle affordable for nearly everyone.

Laborers would stay stationary while the parts were brought to them to place on the chassis that was moving along a conveyer belt. This way, the worker would perform simple repetitive tasks over and over and not waste time by running after parts. The worker had to stay stationary for hours unless he

had permission from his supervisor to leave his station. The worker could not even use the restroom without raising his hand and speaking to the foreman.

It was degrading and demeaning for the workers. It was good for the economy side of mass production but not necessarily so for the worker. Not only did the worker get bored and felt ??? machine-like??? but it seemed to lower self esteem. As time went on, the production era was in turmoil.

Workers were working in unsatisfactory conditions. The facilities were filthy dirty, people were working for almost nothing, long hour days at 7 days a week, no benefits and no time off for rest or to spend with their families. The workers began to ??? come together??? and fight for better conditions. There was a power struggle between workers and management.

Management was taking full power to the authority they had over the workers. Workers were treated like children and could not do anything without asking for permission. Strikes began to take place and unions were formed to fight for the benefits of the laborers. Montgomery gave great detail about how the workers struggled to overcome these obstacles in the workforce and how they tried gain respect for themselves as well as from management. Unions were put in place to help the laborers. Negotiations were made between the workers and management. Settlements were made on an established wages per job. Holidays and vacations were permitted by the workers.

Health and insurance benefits were put into play. In conclusion, I believe that there is never going to be a complete satisfaction between management and workers. The management will always be looking for ways to benefit the

company. Their job is to save time and to make the company money. They are paid by the owner and are not represented by the union.

Their productivity is based on job performance and job performance is based on rate of pay. Therefore, the management will always side with the company. The opposite side to that is the worker will always be concerned about his side of the situation. The worker is only human and will always have the need to take care of himself and his family. The conditions of today are much better than before but the union still negotiates terms every few years between the workers and the management.

This will always be the case. The struggle between the two sides will be a continuous battle.