

In his re-interpretation of Marx, Poulantzas defines productive labor in the capitalist mode of production as

"...labour that produces surplus-value while directly reproducing the material elements that serve as the substratum of the relation of exploitation: labour that is directly involved in material production by producing use-values that increases material wealth...that valorizes capital and is exchanged against capital...Labor with the same content may be productive or unproductive. And what is productive under one mode of production may not be so for another...The concrete content of labor and its use-value are completely indifferent for productive labor."

In Marx's own words:

"...Every time that labour is purchased, not in order to substitute it as the living factor in the value of variable capital, but in order to consume it as a use value, i.e., a service, this labour is not productive labour and the wage-labourer is not a productive worker...the capitalist does not confront him as a capitalist, as the representative of capital; what he exchanges for the labour is not his capital, but his revenue, in the form of money." 44

According to these theoretical arguments, wage-earners in commerce, advertising, accounting, insurance, and all financing and business services, are not directly exploited in the form of the dominant capitalist relations of exploitation, the creation of surplus value, and therefore, do not form part of the working class.

Even service employees who contribute to the reproduction of labor power (hairdressers, lawyers, teachers, doctors, etc.) remain unproductive labor outside the boundaries of the working class. The same applies to public and community service employees who greatly contribute to the reproduction of capitalist social relations (agents of the State apparatus, civil servants, teachers of State schools, and medical personnel of the public sector, etc.)

In the case of the latter, capital does not intervene directly to