Class

The advent of private property hand in hand with social division of labour in antiquity had eventually given rise to the array of economic categories of value with its surface layer of all various prices. This process alienated and fragmented society into competitive individual owners of self-acquired properties over means and instruments of production and distribution, and finally gave rise to classes and class struggle.

“The separate individuals form a class only insofar as they have to carry on a common battle against another class; in other respects they are on hostile terms with each other as competitors.” – Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, Marx Engels Collected Works, Vol. 5, Progress Publishers, Moscow 1976, p. 77

Distinguishing Classes

“The first stage in distinguishing classes is always the identification of the relations of production peculiar to the dominant mode of production prevailing.” – Ben Fine, *Marx’s Capital*, 1975, p. 68 – “transitional classes”: e.g., the peasantry and landlords under capitalism, and bourgeoisie and proletariat under feudalism.

Within capitalist relations of production classes are to be recognized by the socioeconomic alienation - alienation of the producers from the means of production and distribution, by power of control, property and consciousness, as collectives. The capitalist class comprises those who employ workers in order to exploit them with a view to profit by means of their ownership and/or control over means of production and distribution. The working class comprises those who sell their labour power – any ability to work in exchange for a wage or salary in order to survive under compulsion of being exploited. The capitalist class possesses, but doesn’t produce. The working class produces, but doesn’t possess.

In reality, the capitalist class as a whole exploits the working class as a whole. These two great antagonist classes of modern society are to be better understood as: collective capitalist class vs. collective working class.

Let us come to production. Production doesn't mean production of goods only; it means production of services as well. Under capitalism most goods and services are produced as commodities by workers of all various kinds who sell their only commodity – labour-power for a wage or salary. And in so doing they perform surplus labour in the form of surplus value for the capitalist class which is realized in the market in the form of gross profit to be subsequently shared by all various sections of the collective capitalist class as rent, interest, industrial and commercial profits, philanthropy, subscriptions and budget-taxes . Entire working class of the world work to produce, store, preserve, and protect everything and to defend and secure their masters including the masters’ properties all of which are necessary to run the affairs of society from top to bottom - no matter you call some 'productive' and others 'unproductive' - no matter useful, wasteful or coercive in character. As long as capitalist relations of production remain in force the working class has to perform both necessary labour (for their subsistence) and surplus labour (for their masters’ all various incomes). They do it as a collective working class employed

to work in the interest of their employers – a collective capitalist class. Entire capitalist class exploits entire working class. Therefore surplus value is a collective product of the collective working class. Capitalism is global from its inception; hence classes today are to be understood as global entities; hence exploitation under it is also a global category.

Reserve army of labour

Reserve army of labour is a concept in Karl Marx's critique of political economy. It refers to the unemployed and under-employed in capitalist society. It is synonymous with "industrial reserve army" or "relative surplus population", except that the unemployed can be defined as those actually looking for work and that the relative surplus population also includes people unable to work. The use of the word "army" refers to the workers being conscripted and regimented in the workplace in a hierarchy, under the command or authority of the owners of capital. Marx did not invent the term "reserve army of labour". It was already being used by Friedrich Engels in his 1845 book *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. What Marx did was theorize the reserve army of labour as a necessary part of the capitalist organization of work. – See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reserve_army_of_labour

Students and farm labourers

'Students' are destined to get into both capitalist (a very small minority) and working (immense majority) classes after receiving education for profit and wage slavery. 'Intellectuals' selling their skills as salary earners belong in the working class. 'Farmers' form the agricultural strata of the capitalist class (no matter small or big) since they employ and exploit farm labourers. Most of the 'landless' is actually part of the working class. The 'unemployed' also belong in the working class as "the reserve army" looking for employment. Thus the world population today is broadly divided in the two major antagonist classes - the global collective capitalist class vs. global collective working class. In Marx's words what is going on is, "a struggle between collective capital, i.e., the class of capitalist, and collective labour, i.e., the working class" – Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Progress, Moscow, 1974, p.225

Which class teachers belong to?

"The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers." – Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 38. Also see: http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch01.htm#007

"a schoolmaster is a productive labourer when, in addition to belabouring the heads of his scholars, he works like a horse to enrich the school proprietor. That the latter has laid out his capital in a teaching factory, instead of in a sausage factory, does not alter the relation." Marx, *Capital*, Volume I, Chapter 16 (1867), Progress Publishers, Moscow 1974, p. 477
Also see: http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/subject/quotes/index.htm

“A philosopher produces ideas, a poet poems, a clergyman sermons, a professor compendia and so on. A criminal produces crimes. If we take a closer look at the connection between this latter branch of production and society as a whole, we shall rid ourselves of many prejudices. The criminal produces not only crimes but also criminal law, and with this also the professor who gives lectures on criminal law and in addition to this the inevitable compendium in which this same professor throws his lectures onto the general market as “commodities”.”
Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value* (1861).
Also see: http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/subject/quotes/index.htm