

CHAPTER 16: ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE SURPLUS-VALUE

Body + mind
Aristotle: "A single man cannot operate upon Nature without calling his own muscles into play under the control of his own brain. It is the natural body head and hand unite upon each other, so the labour-process unites the labour of the hand with that of the head. Later on they part company and even become deadly foes." (299)

Explanatory / separation

The product - no longer a direct product of the labourer but a social product of the collective labourer

Capitalist production = production of commodities
→ but "essentially the production of surplus-value" (300)

Productive labourer = produces surplus-value - working for the self-expansion of capital

cf. Generalisation of higher education etc.

E.G. "a schoolmaster is a productive labourer, when, in addition to belabouring the heads of his scholars, he works like a horse to catch 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." (300)

ABSOLUTE SURPLUS-VALUE → from the prolongation of the working day to the point where the worker produces the equivalent of his value (thereafter is absolute surplus-value)

RELATIVE SURPLUS-VALUE → once working day is divided into necessary and surplus labour

Methods to shorten necessary labour - technical processes + composition of society