

**Book review**

**THE ENLABOURENMENT APPROACH TO CLASS  
ANALYSIS**

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Published by GPS Printing and Supplies in Kathmandu, Nepal, this 164-page text reinterprets class structures through a two-polar system distinct from traditional economic, cultural, and social classifications. Aryal shifts the focus of stratification from conventional determinants to the opportunity for individuals to exchange their capabilities in generating the means of life, thereby redefining the basis of class identity.

This book is like a new religious text, reflecting what the author seeks to establish. Just as chauvinists exist in leftist and other political philosophies, the author appears to be striving for ideological hegemony in the modern world in general and in political and social science in particular. Ideologically, this book represents a paradigm shift or an ideological transformation—a new dimension for analysis or new directions for further political avenues. These questions may seem like jargon to status-quo philosophers who blindly support Marxism (or other “isms”). This is not just a book but an idea to redefine labor in the modern world. Social science, particularly, is (in)directly dominated by Marxism. We can observe a rigid perspective in leftist literature, but this book offers a new way to interpret class and social stratifications.

The current global social hierarchy operates in a unidirectional manner, and while reading this book, I found a new approach to defining class. However, from another perspective, the author’s arguments sometimes appear blunt and overly romanticized. Despite its many factual discussions, this book is not a waste of paper and printing costs. It introduces a new concept to describe the emerging social order—the ‘non-labor’ approach. From my academic understanding, there are different types of Marxists, neo-Marxists, and pro-Marxists. However, this book presents a completely new, “ice-breaking” conceptual collection for studying social class and social stratification. In

*The Enlabourment Approach to Class Analysis (2023)*, Ananta Aryal presents a novel perspective on class analysis and social stratification that challenges conventional frameworks.

## Key themes

Author argues that class divisions must account not only for human labor but also for non-human capabilities such as land, capital, machines, and tools. He contends that these non-human elements are integral to the work process, as their exchange and productive output determine an individual's material status and, ultimately, class identity. This perspective offers a significant departure from established notions of class, grounding its analysis in historical practices and socioeconomic structures.

The book is structured into eight chapters, each systematically building author's argument. The first chapter establishes the background, discussing how societal "context" and "change" contribute to the formation of new social classes within existing structures. In the second chapter, author examines the historical evolution of class division, tracing stratification practices from the *hunting and gathering era* to the *Nufield Class Schema*. He also explores social stratification in Eastern societies, particularly the Indian subcontinent, Japan, and China, though his discussion appears to underemphasize the complexities of caste and class in these regions. His critique of historical class categorizations highlights the limitations of both Western economic classifications, which focus on assigned production roles, and Eastern perspectives, which intertwine social stratification with philosophy and biology.

Chapter three provides an in-depth review of Marxist approaches to social stratification, integrating perspectives from Marx, Engels, Weber, and Bourdieu. While Aryal predominantly engages with Marxist theory, his synthesis of these theorists' ideas occasionally creates ideological ambiguities. Chapter four addresses the "contextual" and "conceptual" shifts in society, seemingly justifying the theoretical ambiguities seen in the preceding chapter.

## The 'enlabourment' approach

In chapter five, Aryal introduces his innovative *Enlabourment Approach* to class analysis, defining "Enlabourment" as the aspiration to transition from "no work" to "perfect work." This model proposes a two-polar classification system consisting of the "worker class" and the "nonworker class." The worker class is further subdivided into "perfect workers" and "imperfect workers," while the nonworker class includes individuals unable to exchange their capabilities for a means of life, such as the

unemployed, underemployed, and those engaged in precarious work. Aryal broadens the definition of work and worker to encompass both physical and mental efforts, provided they achieve a full exchange with maximal returns.

One of the book's most interesting and thoughtful contributions is its incorporation of non-human capital- such as technology, land, and resources- into the class framework. Aryal argues that these factors influence class identity in ways previously overlooked, thereby expanding the scope of class analysis.

### **Reimagining marxist structures**

Chapter six presents Aryal's critique of Marx's base and superstructure model. He introduces an additional foundational layer, the *Root Structure*, positioned beneath the base structure. Unlike the base, which encompasses the means and relations of production, the root structure exists independently but influenced from these elements yet plays a crucial role in shaping both the base and the superstructure. Aryal claims that recognizing the root structure is essential for understanding the contemporary socioeconomic order, as it provides a more comprehensive framework for analyzing class dynamics.

The book's concern lies in its recognition of the nonworker class, a group largely neglected in traditional class analysis. Aryal predicts that future class struggles will revolve around the dichotomy between worker and nonworker classes, challenging the established proletariat-bourgeois framework. His discussion of the root structure further redefines socioeconomic hierarchies, suggesting that the fundamental conflicts of the future will be structured along this revised class division.

### **Final synthesis and implications**

*The Enlabourment Approach* is not merely a critique of existing ideologies but a call to action. Aryal emphasizes that addressing the struggles of the world's non-working population: estimated more than 80%, should be a central focus of socioeconomic reform. Notably, the absence of explicit references to communism or socialism reflects a pragmatic approach, allowing his framework to adapt to evolving conceptual and contextual demands.

In the final chapter, Aryal synthesizes his argument by analyzing six themes drawn from the works of Marx, Weber, Bourdieu, and E. O. Wright. His concluding remarks encourage readers to adopt a new lens for understanding social stratification, urging scholars and activists to reconsider entrenched perspectives on class.

## Conclusion

In spite of its primitive form, Ananta Aryal's *The Enlabourment Approach to Class Analysis* introduces a groundbreaking perspective on class structures, redefining traditional theories with a broader, more inclusive framework. By shifting the focus to the exchangeability of capabilities; both human and non-human, Aryal challenges conventional narratives and offers a novel approach to understanding class identity and socioeconomic inequality. His work is particularly relevant for scholars, activists, and policymakers seeking to navigate the complexities of class in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Dependent societies like Nepal can find reflections in this book. However, the author himself seems unsure about where and how to fit his ideas within his own social structure. In a 157-page book, almost half (pages 1–75) is dedicated to a literature review. If the author intends to establish his own ideas, he should develop a clear logical framework. Perhaps this is his necessity, but from the readers' perspective, it does not seem well-structured. Readers are eager to explore new themes, yet the author does not seem to address this expectation.

This book is a compelling read that not only critiques established paradigms but also proposes a transformative vision for future class analysis. By recognizing the nonworker class and introducing the concept of the root structure, book contributes meaningfully to contemporary debates on social stratification, making this work a valuable addition to the field of class studies.

## Reference

Aryal, A. (2023). *The enlabourment approach to class analysis*. GPS Printing & Supplier. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376486714\\_The\\_Enlabourment\\_Approach\\_to\\_Class\\_Analysis?form=MG0AV3](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376486714_The_Enlabourment_Approach_to_Class_Analysis?form=MG0AV3).