

HOLISTIC SYSTEM AND ENVIRONMENTAL BASE

Goods are material objects to satisfy human needs.

Man obtains these objects from nature around him and expends them or transforms them into products before consuming them or using them to transform other objects from nature.

Production is the conscious activity of men to transform natural objects and forces into products.

Work the set of functions needed to produce.

Work is a process, a repetitive series of actions by man on nature and the reactions of nature on man.

A process that is carried out between man and nature.

Through work man transforms nature and, in as much as he is a part of nature, also transforms himself.

Production is therefore based on work and products are the result of the human activity of producing.

The objects of work are natural resources, the goods that are transformed by man into products or consumer goods, to satisfy needs.

The ground and all natural elements on it can be objects of work because they can be transformed into products.

The means of work are the instruments used to produce. These are, in fact, natural resources transformed into instruments to be used to transform other resources into products to satisfy needs.

For this reason means of work are also called producer goods.

Factories, machinery, roads and everything needed to produce and distribute are means of work.

The distinction between products, or consumer goods, and instruments, or producer goods, is not at a material but at a functional level to satisfy needs.

Any given good can be looked at as a consumer good or as an object of work.

Electricity is a good example since it can be used to satisfy needs or to produce.

Both objects of work, natural resources to be transformed, and instruments of work, are the means by which products are obtained.

In other words, both are means of production.

The former are objects of production and the latter are instruments of production.

The activity of producing is therefore based on two fundamental factors: means of production and work.

Production relationships, those that arise between men who work, are social relationships.

Production is social because work, one of the two fundamental factors of production, is a function that is carried out by means of relationships among a number of individuals in the continual action of man on nature and nature on man.

The productive forces as the method and means by which man acts on nature.

The method is work and the means are the instruments used to work. By changing the means, we change the productive forces.

Distribution is the conscious activity of men to exchange natural and produced resources.

As with production, work is the set of functions needed to distribute.

Distribution is therefore based on work and the exchanges are the result of the human action of distributing.

Distribution relationships are entirely determined by production relationships. The method of distribution depends on the method of production in that the relationships between productive forces, men and means, define the relationships that occur at the distributive level.

Economic activity is made up of production and distribution of products.

But economic activity is not an isolated fact.

The production and distribution activities are repetitive and so we can talk about production processes and distribution processes.

The two processes of production and distribution, therefore, form the economic process.

Permanent relationships between individuals are also formed in the economic process. In other words, social relationships are created.

Productive relationships and economic relationships are social relationships.

They are social relationships quite different from the others.

In the economic process, social relationships are mediated by consumer goods and means of production.

If distribution relationships are determined by production relationships and economic relationships are the set of production and distribution relationships, then production relationships are the basis of the set of economic relationships.

And production relationships, distribution relationships and the set of economic relationships depend on the development level of the productive forces, by the method and the means by which man acts on nature.

The basis of a system is the organizational principle of the system itself, its central element or a part of the elements in the whole from which all the other elements can be obtained.

The basis is therefore both the proposition and the cause that governs a system and produces the behaviour of the subjects forming it.

This rule affects both the relationships between subjects and the relationships between their behaviour.

The effects of a system's basis, of its fundamental rule, are the reality of the system at any given moment.

The productive base is the main rule that produces effects in production relationships and, as a result, also in distribution relationships.

The economic base is the main rule within which economic relationships occur.

The economic base is therefore the central element in economic relations while the productive base is the central element in production relations.

The rule that establishes the ownership of the means of production is the base of productive relationships between means of production and work.

In turn, the rule that establishes production relations that are set up within the context of production between means of production and work, is the basis of economic relations.

Therefore, if the base of production relationships is the ownership of the means of production, the very ownership of the means of production is at the basis of economic relations.

Production relationships cannot be arbitrary.

A defined economic base must correspond to a defined growth level in production forces because a defined level of growth in the productive forces demands corresponding production relationships.

Production relationships, in turn, affect the growth of productive forces.

When they are adequate, they generate further growth. When they are inadequate, they slow down growth.

Now let's take a look at the affect of economic relations on other relationships.

To state that social, civic, political, moral and religious relationships are not merely the product of economic relationships is to affirm that economic relationships are unimportant for other relationships.

On the other hand, even the social, civic, political, moral and religious relationships not produced by economic relations affect economic relations.

This holistic concept, the entirety of the human system that appears to be formed by as many sub-systems as there are types of human relations.

The sub-systems of the human system are social, civic, political, moral and religious.

These sub-systems are the bases, the principles, the fundamental rules from which the social, civic, political, moral and religious relationships stem.

Human system sub-systems are open, interconnected one with the other.

The environment for these sub-systems is nature that also includes human beings.

The human system, take as a whole, is an open system that interconnects with all the systems of other living and non-living beings that have nature as their environment.

The base of the human system, that we could define as an environmental base, is the evolutionary law of nature.

We can define the environmental base as the fundamental rule within which the relationships between man and things take place.

The close interconnection between man and nature certainly involves, in addition to all natural phenomena, including those we do not perceive, all human relationships.

This environmental base feels the results of the effects it produces and reacts to the actions of the subjects that form it.

Since the base of the human system is the environmental base, nature, the economic base must also be represented by nature.

This means that every rule that is opposition to the environmental base, nature, is destined to disappear precisely because it opposes the fundamental natural law, nature in evolution.

To be in harmony with the environmental base, ownership of the means of production taken as the set of natural resources and the products of mans activity, must remain nature's.

Every attempt to take away from nature what is nature's has been shown to be against the environmental base and therefore, against nature.

Apart from the primitive economic base, all the others that have been tried have proved to be ineffectual.

Thus the slave, feudal, asiatic, capitalistic, socialistic and the various combinations of these systems all proved useless.

Whenever man has imposed a production base on which the economic base rests, to take from nature what is nature's the result has always been conflicts and contradictions between men and, more importantly, between man and nature.

When the human system tries to act separately from nature, it goes against nature.

What we have to create, therefore, is a productive base compatible with man's environmental base to re-establish the natural relationship between man and nature, between human system and the environment.

This productive base cannot but be identified with the environmental base, with nature. Thus we can talk about a natural productive base by means of which production resources and means remain the property of nature.

The natural economic base is derived from the natural productive base. Up to now we have identified two fundamental laws that determine the conditions for equilibrium between social relations.

The first law states that "a necessary agreement must exist between production relationships and the nature of the productive forces".

This means that the relationships between resources, means of production and work must agree with the method and means of production.

The second law states that "human sub-systems other than the economic must conform with production relationships".

This means that social, civic, political, moral and religious systems must be compatible with the relationship between resources, means of production and work.

It would not appear to be correct to define these systems as superstructures of the economic system since it is not true that they are produced solely by the economic system and adapt to it.

The social, civic, political, moral and religious systems feel the effects of the economic system and adapt to this even as the economic system feels their influence and adapts to them.

However, we cannot deny the close ties between these systems and the economic system because both the former and the latter are sub-systems of the human system.

The two laws outlined above have been defined as if the human system were closed, totally separate from the environment and the other systems that form it.

A fundamental law is missing that would establish the relationship between system and the environment in which it arises.

The law of system relationships states that "there must be an equilibrium in open systems between the system itself and its environment".

Since the human system is open, this law becomes its fundamental principle.

The fundamental law in human social relations should state that "there must be an equilibrium between human relations, behaviour and the natural environment". This means that the relationships between men

and the relationships between their behaviour must be compatible with the environment in which these relationships take place.

The law of the progressive growth in productive forces states the need caused by new stimuluses, by continual change in productive forces, in the method and means of producing.

The progressive development in productive forces acts so as not to disrupt the harmony between the productive forces and production relations. It does this by producing, as its first effect, imbalance and, as its second effect so that the first law on social relations can operate, a readjustment in production relationships to the growth level of the productive forces.

This readjustment in production relationships eliminates the harmony between the social, civic, political, moral and religious sub-systems and production relationships. This lack of harmony then affect the economic base.

In the existing social system, contradictions will then arise between the non-economic and economic sub-systems, between social, civic, political, moral and religious relations and the fundamental basis of economic relations - the economic base.

At this point the second law on social relations comes into effect. This modifies social, civic, political, moral and religious relations on the basis of the new production relationships and the economic base. It reestablishes the necessary harmony with the new production relations and, therefore, with the new economic base. This concludes the formation cycle of the new human system.

At the same time, the human system produces new actions on the environment and receives new reactions from the environment.

The evolution of man and his system comes about by an uninterrupted chain of events that initiates an evolutionary process between subjects, their behaviour and between subjects, behaviour and nature.

The cause of this evolutionary process is the occurrence of new social, civil, political, moral or religious needs.

These new needs are matched by the development of productive forces and the trend towards improvement in social, civic, political, moral and religious relationships.

The development of these productive forces creates contradictions between the productive forces and production relations. Intolerance for the old relationships, without reference to economic interests, comes from the trend towards improvement in the other relationships.

These contradictions, under the thrust of the productive forces, cause a readjustment in production relations and in the economic base. The trend towards improvement in the other relationships causes a change in individual behaviour.

The readjustment in the production relationships and the economic base have an effect on and change the social, civic, political, moral and religious relationships and, at the same time, the change in these latter, affect the production relationships.

The actions done by man resulting from the changes in the production relationships and the social, civic, political, moral and religious relationships affect the environment which, in turn, reacts.

This reaction launches the productive forces towards new needs and they continue to grow and thus generate new contradictions as new social, civic, political, moral and religious needs are induced.

It can happen that the development of productive forces does not find an adequate outlet in production relationships because the existing

economic base tends to preserve the function it had at the previous level in the development of the productive forces.

It can happen that the social, civic, political, moral and religious relationships try to resist the action of the new production relationships and, hence, the new economic relations.

It can also happen that the production relationships try to resist the needs that come from thrusts generated by the improvement in individual behaviour.

Lastly, it can happen that the environment cannot accept the contradictions between the human system and the environment.

When one of the factors in these four dyads tries to resist the needs of another factor, there will be a split in the human system that will affect the entire human system and its natural environment.

The effects of this split can be an explosion or an implosion of the system in which the split occurred.

There will be an explosion when the more evolved factor expresses more force than the factor that resists. In the opposite situation, we will have an implosion.

Thus, we have an explosion when the productive forces at a defined level of development are stronger than the resistance of the former production relationships and the economic base or the resistance of the former social, civic, political, moral and religious relationships.

In this case, the explosion will topple the old economic base and create a new one. The future will be the product of the past.

We will have an explosion when the new individual behaviour patterns are stronger than the resistance of the old production relationships and the old economic relations.

In this case, though, the explosion will create anarchy until the old production relationships change and become more in line with individual behaviour.

There would also be an explosion if the human system were stronger than the resistance of the environment.

In this latter case, man would be forced to live in a totally artificial environment provided that natural resources could continue to exist in that artificial environment.

We would have an implosion when the resistance of the old production relationships and the economic base or the resistance of the old social, civic, political, moral and religious relationships is stronger than the action of the productive forces.

It would be a concentrating implosion in the sense that it would eliminate every trace of democracy. It would be an involution.

There would be an implosion when the resistance of the old production relationships and the old economic relations is stronger than the new individual behaviour patterns.

It would be a high hierarchically modelled implosion when parts of the system exercise a steamroller effect on the hierarchically lower parts.

There would also be an implosion if the resistance of the environment were stronger, as it would appear to be and as logic would require, than the human system.

In this latter case, an implosion would mean the destruction of the human system and of the subjects that comprise it, of our entire species.

So what can be done? What is the actual situation in social, civic, political, economic, moral and religious relationships?

The productive forces, as a result of the telematic revolution, had undergone a process of accelerated growth. The economic relations have partially readjusted to the productive forces, but each of the two factors have strong points that the other can surmount.

The productive forces are the organizational instrument without which the economic base cannot produce real effects. The economic base, on the other hand, holds and tends to concentrate resources and means of production without which the productive forces cannot achieve a different allocation of wealth.

The situation is a stalemate.

On the one hand, the Marxist solution has deluded the expectations of practically all those who believed in a communist society.

Replacing the private economic base with a State economic base, plus political and social dictatorship as experienced in the various communist countries, killed any incentive towards enterprise and limited social, and civil liberty. Man here was turned into an apathetic creature.

On the other hand, capitalism has not succeeded in finding a way to avoid the negative effects built into its production method and its excessive concentration of wealth.

Pure liberalism experienced before the arrival of the welfare state and more recently in Britain and the United States, cannot produce positive effects because it does not solve the contradictions between economic relations and the level of development in the productive forces.

Socio-capitalist policies based of Keynesian economics have shown their limitations in that they bring together the worst effects of both capitalism and socialism. In this system, the economic base has pretensions to decide the allocation of wealth while the State is assigned the task of handling matters of social welfare - but it is not clear what resources it is to use for this.

We must remember that, prior even to the progressive growth in productive forces, there is the law of progressive development in the relationships between nature and man. In other words, there is evolution.

Evolution had an initial instable equilibrium and it had to be steered towards a final stable equilibrium by solving the contradictions between production relationships and productive forces and by directing man's progressive development towards equilibrium with nature. Man is, unless he is expelled or excludes himself, is an integral and indissoluble part of nature.

The goal therefore could be to achieve production relationships in which the economic base, the available resources, is universal and assigned to all living forms and species.

But this is the final goal, the final purpose. The first stage of a strategy to achieve the final purpose, the creation of an economic base in which the resources are available for all living beings, could be the identification of the economic base, the availability of the means of production with the subjects of the productive forces, the worker/producers.

It is a matter of imagining an economic system in which the worker-producer is assigned a share in the producing company for the entire time he works and produces.

In this way the contradictions between the development level of the productive forces and the production relationships would be solved.

This because the productive forces would no longer act as instruments of imbalance towards the production relationships but would constantly involve these latter in their own growth.

The conflict between productive and non-productive relationships - in other words, the conflict between production and consumption still has to be solved. The subjects of the productive forces will tend more to

allocate the wealth produced to themselves than towards the non-productive subjects.

But if this first stage is directed towards a natural economic base, to the awareness that resources must be recognized as belonging to the universality of living subjects and those not yet living, non-productive subjects will not be excluded from this process because we all know and are conscious of the fact that work and production are useful factors if placed at the disposal of all.

Thus we want to state that the stages in any given plan are useful to that plan only if they the problems to be solved with the plan are perceived and recognized, the priorities noted, the origins and causes of the problems identified and detailed, the goals indicated, the solutions thought out, their effects forecast, the instruments produced, the strategy and the praxis applied. In this way, the obstacles that interfere with the accomplishment of results will have been overcome. We can say that the only imponderable obstacle remaining is our insufficient awareness and, hence, our imperfection.

The first stage in a process that directs production relationships in such a way that they can be governed by the environmental base, cannot be determined by anything other than the strategy of needs, the definition of the purpose and the coordination of the means to achieve it.

It does not matter how different this state is from the past and it does not matter how costly it is to accomplish it. The environmental base works, or better yet since we are talking about it, it has already worked to induce the human system to perceive the final purpose to be achieved.

This same environmental base will provoke the needs and, at the same time, provide the instruments to solve them. Nature possesses all the energy to enable us to rediscover ourselves and our role. Or to kick us out.

You will think that all this has been a learned, deeply thought out philosophical treatise. And, in truth, it is a matter of metaphysics, that combination of thought and action that was abandoned when human beings had to produce in order to survive. At that time, defects became supreme and an artificial human system was imposed to replace a far more natural one. this artificial system still rules where many men have become the instruments of the few and an unnatural hierarchy in social relations has been set up.

This fact, this error explains the incessant evolution in productive relationships under the thrust of the process of development in social relations. If the economic base had remained environmental and in harmony with nature, there would have been no need for evolution in social relations. It was madness. Today we have the intellectual resources to overcome that limitation and look towards the future from the starting point of the present and not of the past - exactly as it happen 10,000 years ago. We do not exist to be masters of nature but rather to allow nature to evolve as an instrument of re-equilibrium of the energy that forms it.