

From the *Grundrisse*

“Production, distribution, exchange and consumption form a regular syllogism; production is the generality, distribution and exchange the particularity, and consumption the singularity *in which* the whole is joined together. ...Production is determined by the general natural laws, distribution by social accident....exchange stands between the two as formal social movement; and the concluding act, consumption, which is conceived not only as a terminal point but also as an end in itself, actually belongs outside of economics except insofar as it reacts in turn upon the point of departure and initiates the whole process anew.”

While this syllogism “is admittedly a coherence,” it is, he says, “a shallow one.” He rejects this weak syllogistic formulation in favor of a dialectical conception of how production, distribution, exchange and consumption might be brought together within the totality of relations comprising a capitalist mode of production. “The conclusion we reach” is that production, distribution, exchange and consumption “form the members of a totality, distinctions within a unity....Mutual interaction takes place between the different moments. This is the case with every organic whole.”(pp.99-100)

From Volume 1

“Labour...as the creator of use values, as useful labour, is a condition of human existence which is independent of all forms of society.” It is “an eternal and natural necessity which mediates the metabolism between man and nature and therefore human life itself.” (p.133) The labor process, he later asserts, must be considered “independently of any specific social formation” because it “is the universal condition for the metabolic interaction between man and nature, the everlasting nature-imposed condition of human existence, and therefore it is independent of every form of that existence, or rather it is common to all forms of society in which human beings live.” (p.290).

Grundrisse:

“production predominates not only over itself, in the antithetical definition of production, but over the other moments as well. The process always returns to production to begin anew. That exchange and consumption cannot be predominant is self-evident. Likewise, distribution as distribution of products; while as distribution of the agents of production it is a moment of production. A definite production thus determines a definite consumption, distribution and exchange as well as *definite relations between these different moments*. Admittedly, however, *in its one-sided form*, production is itself determined by the other moments.”

Distribution, exchange and consumption reciprocally affect each other and they also affect the production of surplus value. “Ground rent, wages, interest and profit figure under distribution while land, labour and capital figure under production as agents of production.” Capital itself, Marx points out, “is posited doubly, (1) as agent of production, (2) as source of income, as a determinant of specific forms of distribution....The category of wages, similarly, is the same as that which is examined under a different heading as wage labour: the characteristic which labour here possesses as an agent of production appears as a characteristic of distribution.”

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