

# Ecosustainability as Ideology

J.A. Nescolarde-Selva<sup>1,\*</sup>, J.L. Usó-Doménech<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Applied Mathematics. University of Alicante. Alicante. Spain

<sup>2</sup>Department of Mathematics. University Jaume I. Castellón de la Plana. Spain

\*Corresponding author: [josue.selva@ua.es](mailto:josue.selva@ua.es)

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**Abstract** In this paper, the authors settle down a systemic theory of the ideologies in one first approach, distinguishing between the Structural Base and the Superstructure, settling down projections and images between both. Distinction between material structure (Structural Base SB) and ideal or cultural Superstructure is common. This dichotomy translates to social sphere the old religious and philosophical dualism between the body and the soul. In fact, such separation between body and soul, between material structure and ideal and cultural superstructure does not exist. It is a cybernetic process with mathematical and logical images and projections. We consider the Eco-sustainability as an ediodynamic ideology in according to Walford's classification.

**Keywords:** connotative significance, denotative significance, ideology, images, projections, superstructure

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## 1. Introduction

The concept of "eco-sustainability" is an ideological (non scientific) concept. An ideology is a system of ideas, ideals, and abstract thought that forms a basis for human action in social matters. Ideologies underlie and operate in many areas of human endeavor. They are central in politics and religion, less important but still represented in science and mathematics. An ideology can be considered a form of social or political philosophy in which practical elements are as prominent as theoretical ones (Cranston, 2003; Mullins, 1972). An ideology therefore aspires to both explain the world and change it.

An ideology is a system of concepts that serve to make sense of the world, and practices serving the social interest. Through relative completeness and internal consistency, ideologies tend to form closed belief and action systems that maintain themselves, even in the face of contradictory ideas and inconsistent experiences.

A political ideology contains ideas about forms of government, an economic ideology about kinds of economic systems, a scientific ideology about ways of objective inquiry, and a philosophical ideology about modes of thought. People are typically faced, not with the problem of differentiating the ideological from the real, but with the problem of choosing between competing ideological versions of the real.

There are seven major forms of ideology according to Walford (1979, 1983<sup>a,b</sup>). These can be classified in order of appearance in the progressive emergence of hierarchically ordered human needs (Walsby, 1947), from primitive needs (physiological, biological), through intermediate ones (safety, love, belonging), to advanced ones (self esteem, self actualization). Walford divides his

ideologies into three developmental stages, progressing from more basic to more mature. The first three (prostatic, epistatic, parastatic) he terms *edistatic*, the second three (protodynamic, epidynamic, paradynamic) *ediodynamic*, and the remaining one *metadynamic*. They have the following characteristics:

1). *Edistatic ideology*. This is elementary, and universal, marked by expediency, domination, and precise application relatively free of constraints like responsibility or understanding. It leads to conservative politics, and in the extreme oppressive political movements, like fascism.

2). *Ediodynamic ideology*. This is non-universal, characterized by gradual change and emergence of independent thought. It leads to endpoints in various domains such as liberalism, atheism, mysticism, and holism.

3). *Metadynamic ideology*. This is also non-universal; it repudiates ideology itself as a set of freedom-restricting beliefs and opinions. Few people are metadynamicists.

The perspective of this paper will be ediodynamic, but with a leaning toward a metadynamic orientation and intent. Walford's three ediodynamic subgroups are as follows:

a). *Protodynamic*, in which society is regarded as a complex whole consisting of classes connected to one another through interaction and not necessarily opposition. This is the first ideology in Walford's sequence not based on positive identification with society, maintaining that society needs to be amended structurally, not merely improved superficially. The political manifestation is *social democracy*.

b). *Epidynamic*, wherein society is considered an arena of conflict between competing classes holding contradictory, unbridgeable views on matters of principle concerning multiple aspects of human reality (sociology, politics, religion). Revolution becomes no longer a

disaster to be avoided, but an inevitable, liberating fulfillment of history. The political manifestation is *communism*.

c). *Paradynamic*, in which the growing negative view of society reaches a conclusion. Social control of the individual is seen as the principal limitation to freedom, deriving from a "principle of authority" the state uses to coerce. It becomes, as a consequence, necessary to destroy the state. The principle underlying the new organization of society, seen as necessary to ensure man's freedom, is the removal of all coercive institutions and their replacement of rule by administration. The political manifestation is *anarchy*.

Seeing eco-sustainability as ideology requires the latter to be formalized.

## 2. Ideology: A Formal View

Marx and Engels (1845; see 1976) proposed an economic model of society consisting of a "base" and a "superstructure." The *base* is the means of production, and the *superstructure*, formed on the base, is the social ideology (legal, political, religious) that serves the base. Our approach also contains the concepts of base and superstructure, but somewhat different and more formally expressed than in the Marx-Engels conception. While our eco-sustainable system of focus is ontic, the formalism to be developed is "deontic"—expressed in deontic logic. *Deontic Logic* consists of a denumerable set of propositional variables interrelated by logical connectives—negation ( $\neg$ ), conjunction ( $\wedge$ ), disjunction ( $\vee$ ), conditionality ( $\Rightarrow$ ), permission (P), prohibition (P'), and obligation (O). A deontic system is "pure" if the elements that form their set object are abstract. An ideology will be a pure deontical system, when being formed its set object by substantive beliefs and "impure" otherwise, that is to say, if the elements that form their set object are material and/or energetic beings.

A Structural Base (SB) is a set of combinatorial rules that tie together diverse elements of a deontically determined system, including rules defining the elements' semantic value, or "significance", within the system. The SB is the sum of normative social and economic forces underlying systemic coherence.

A Superstructure (SS) is a set of socio-psychological or semantic configurations that maintains a coherent and meaningful SB in a given deontic impure system, or part thereof. The maintained SB is rationalized and reproduced in human experience.

In Deontical Impure Systems (DIS)<sup>1</sup> approach i.e. human society, the Superstructure has been divided en two

(Usó-Domènech et al. 2009<sup>a,b</sup>; Nescolarde-Selva and Usó-Domènech, 2013<sup>a,b,c,d,e</sup>; Usó-Domènech and Nescolarde-Selva, 2012, 2013):

- 1). *Doxical Superstructure (DS)* is formed by values in fact, political and religious ideologies and culture of a human society in a certain historical time.
- 2). *Mythical Superstructure (MS)* also has been divides in two parts:
  - a). MS<sub>1</sub> containing the mythical components or primigenial bases of the ideologies and cultures with the ideal values.
  - b). MS<sub>2</sub> containing ideal values and utopias that are ideal wished and unattainable goals of belief systems of the Doxical Superstructure (DS).

It is summarized these ideas in the following diagram (Figure 1):

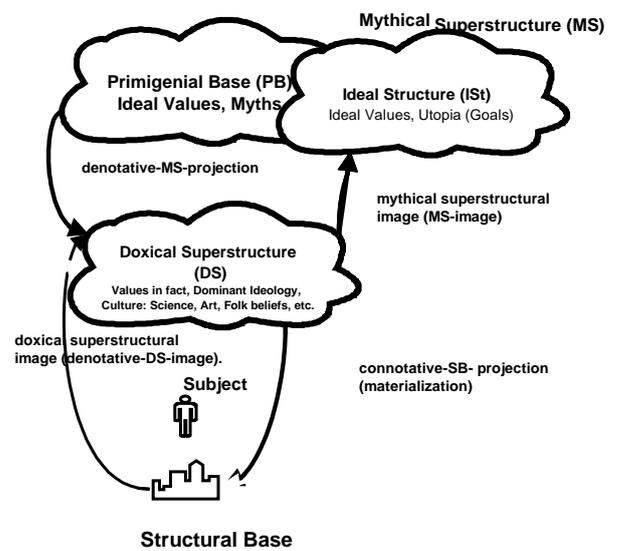


Figure 1. DIS approach. Structural base and superstructures

The "values-in-fact" and "ideal values" referred to manifest values in general: Value (VL) is a mental expression of the importance of specific forms or objects of conduct or action by individuals or their groupings.

For example, the imperative "Thou shalt not kill" expresses a value for life, "Thou shalt not steal" one for property, etc. LeShan and Margenau (1982) call these "values-in-fact" because they are automatically born of the considerations, as image or reflection of the Structural Base (SB) in the Doxical Superstructure (DS), and do not have innate or outside obligatory validity except for conformity with the imperative norms (SB) that are, to a great extent, arbitrary. Values-in-fact, in other words, lack normative force—projection of DS onto SB. Nevertheless,

<sup>1</sup> *Impure sets* (Maddy, 1990) are sets whose referential elements (absolute beings) are not counted as abstract objects and have the following conditions: a) They are real (material or energetic absolute beings). b) They exist independently of the Subject. c) S develops p-significances on them. d) True things can be said about them. e) Subject can know these true things about them. f) They have properties that support a robust notion of mathematical truth. A *simple impure system-linkage*  $\Sigma \equiv (M, R)$  is a semiotic system consisting of the pair formed by an impure object set M the elements of which are p-significances (relative beings) of entities belonging to Reality (absolute beings) or certain attributes of these, and a set of binary relations, such that  $R \subset P(M \times M) = P(M^2)$ . That is  $\forall r \in R/r \subset M \times M$  being

$$r = \left\{ (x_i, y_j) \in M \times M / x_i, y_j \in M \right\}. \text{ An impure system-linkage}$$

defined within an impure object set M is a simple system  $S = (M, R)$  or a finite union of simple systems-linkage  $\Sigma = \cup_{i=1}^n \Sigma_i$  such that  $\Sigma_i$  are simple systems. This shall be denoted as  $\Sigma \equiv (M, R)$  such that  $R \subset P(\cup_{finite} M^2)$ . A *Deontical system* is an organization of knowledge on the part of the subject S that fulfils the following ones: a) Other subjects (human beings) are elements of the system. b) Some existing relations between elements have Deontic modalities. c) There is purpose (purposes).

their validity establishes correspondences with another set of "ideal values" in the MS superstructure. All normative structure pertaining to SB contains, in addition to norms and reflection in DS as values-in-fact, a corresponding series of projections of ideal values reflected from DS onto MS.

## 2.1. Some Notions of Semantic

In any process, we can distinguish between having a *significant* like inherent property, and having *significance* when it is related to other processes of Reality that the Subject considers like system. The existence of information is independent of the fact that there is a Subject able to decode the message, which it is wished to communicate. This objective information is termed significant. The information in a message acquires meaning if a Subject decodes the message. This subjective information is termed significance. Both distinctions involve the use of learned codes. The significance tends to be multiplied from an individual sign, until it is equipped with many meaning that goes beyond which now the sign says (Nescolarde-Selva and Usó-Doménech, 2013<sup>a</sup>; Usó-Doménech and Nescolarde-Selva, 2012). Different orders from meaning or levels of significance exist:

- 1). The first order of significance is precisely the one of the denotation, at which level there exists a sign  $t$  consisting of significant and significance.
- 2). The *connotation* is a significance of the second order that uses the denotative sign (with significant and significance) as significant, with an additional associate significance.

Significance of a linguistic sign also depends on the code where it is located, since the codes give a scheme, compounded also by belief conventions, within which the linguistic sign acquires sense. This allows interpretation such as text interpretation (*systems*), each one of these being organized in agreement with codes and subcodes reflecting values, attitudes, beliefs, assumptions and practices. This implies a certain stability in the relations between significant and significance, restricting the amount of possible interpretations. This distinction considers the connotation as a sign that is derived from the significant of a denotative sign, so that the denotation takes us to a chain of connotations. Denotation is an underlying and primary significance. The significant  $S$  or significance  $s$  depends entirely on the level in which the analysis operates. Then, what is significance in a level of the context, can be significant in another one. The subject receives two types of semiotic stimuli:

- a). The significant of the person's own processes or being.
- b). The significant of the transmitted semiotic stimulus or the significant of the significance (*connotation*).

The significant coming from the sign becomes significance after passing through a filter or sieve, which we will denominate doxical filter. This filter consists of two essential components: *language and belief system*.

Any conception of Reality, after passing through the doxical filter is a model, formal or not. The construction of such a model has inherently a language (formal or not) and the corresponding linguistic aspects such as the syntax and semantic components are something implicit. Due to the fact that grammar is a theory for a language and that

every elaboration of a theory must include as its main objective ease and generality, it is natural to formulate a theory of linguistic structure which allows the most revealing general statements to take place

## 2.2. Formal Theory

Let  $\rho_i^j$  be a connotative chain<sup>2</sup>. Index  $i$  expresses a connotative chain and supraindex  $j$  expresses a connotative chain after passing through a certain doxical filter. Let  $L$  be a language. The experience of the individuals or social groups moves in a double land; all it is articulated linguistically by mediation of a set of the connotative chains  $P = \{\rho_i^j\}_{i=1, \dots, n}^{j=1, \dots, m}$ , and can, at any moment, by poor who are the invoked significant, to be translated to an organizing language. Language  $L$  is surpassed always and the possibility of a linguistic structuring is outlined permanently. This exteriority is real; the individual is in front of diverse sublanguages  $L_i \subset L$ , formed by the different connotative chains or those they do of crucible of his experience and so that  $\rho_i^j \in L_i$ .

These sublanguages  $L_i$  are supported by social groups, associations, individuals that update them with their behaviors, giving a social dimension assuring its coherence and permanence. Therefore, all social experience is located inside a semantic field of connotative significances. By definition, it can never be the corresponding one of the language  $L$ , which includes it. The individual finds a sublanguage  $L_i$  constituted that it seems apt to translate all the sense of his history; it enriches him yet what his existence can have of specific, but at the same time, this existence loses his chaotic sense, is ordered, completed in an intelligible place with the other human lives. Community and difference are overlapping closely. In addition, suddenly, this dissymmetric and heterogeneous environment is reconstructed. Sublanguage  $L_i$  explains, gives a sense, and fixes the identity of the condition. By this only fact, it is validated and reassumed in its generality. The encounter with the sublanguage  $L_i$  is rare time theoretical or abstract. It happens through an individual mediation that is conscious vehicles and that they incarnate it in his existence. They appear as unified forms with which the others could be identified. Peculiarly, they are the true connotative significances for this one sublanguage. The contingency of the encounter is not for that reason less evident. Moreover, although it is contingent, this encounter does not let have irreversible effects. Individual is marked by the sublanguage  $L_i$  that has totalized his experience; here significance is pronounced the quasi-biological incidence of the connotative significances on the human being. The better proof is the fact that

<sup>2</sup> Connotation is the sum of all the cultural units that the significant can evoke institutionally in the mind of the addressee Subject whose only psychic possibility is cultural availability. The connotation of socio-cultural and individual associations, are the ideologies derived from the belief systems, and the emotional ones belonging to the psychology of the Subject, and that is the indirect function of the Semiotic Environment (context) in which is immersed. Changes in the form of the significant  $\rho$  can generate different connotations. Sequence of connotations is a chain of connotations or connotative chain (Nescolarde-Selva and Usó-Doménech, 2013<sup>a,b,d,e</sup>).

sometimes a other sublanguage  $L_j$  cannot be sufficient. Nevertheless, how it is arrived at this selection of sublanguages? By mediation of a technique of persuasion defined as *Rhetoric*. Ideological rhetoric and action comprise an elaborate dialectical structure, reflecting the beliefs, tensions and ambivalences that flow from social inequality and conflicting interests.

### 3. Eco-Sustainability as Ideology

Eco-sustainability (ES) is a 'contested concept' (Connolly 1974). In social science one has to live with contested concepts like power, freedom, interest, ideology, democracy and this is not necessarily a disadvantage. The existence of more definitions and opinions than one is a starting point for dialogue and clarification. And clarification of different points of view may lead to new thinking. I will here point to three conceptual and ideological interpretations of ES:

1) Business-as-usual. For some actors ES does not mean anything new. It may refer to "*sustained economic growth*" in GDP terms at the national level and "*sustained profits*" in business corporations.

2) Ecological and social modernization. Here it is believed that present challenges to sustainability can be dealt with through modification of the present political economic system. Minor social and institutional change processes are encouraged provided that they do not threaten essential structural aspects of the present political economic system. Environmental charges or taxes, environmental labelling, Environmental Management Systems, voluntary codes of conduct in business are examples of such minor institutional adjustments.

3) More radical transformations of institutional arrangements. SD is then understood as an essentially multidimensional and ethical concept. In addition to "*modernization*", radical changes in political economic system have to be considered to counteract present unsustainable trends. It is not easy to state more precisely what those institutional changes should be but we can start by referring to the values or ideological orientation that could guide us in the transformation process.

ES, as belief or ethic, has specific characteristics. It requires implementation by the state, by the powerful, by elites. It almost inevitably requires that power is retained by those who already hold it. It requires experts: sustainability policies cannot be implemented by revolutionary masses, or by mullahs. It tends, therefore, to reinforce existing social-political structures. More specifically, official sustainability policy requires that power to enforce it be held, or even returned, to certain sectors. It needs the automobile industry, the energy sector, transport, the construction sector. In fact, the industrial sectors of past generations now take on a central importance for future generations. These are exactly the sectors which had been written off for the future, Tofler's "*second wave*". Paradoxically, ES policies restore their importance - and offer the prospect of subsidies. The logic of ES is also inherently globalist: it is comparable to the doctrine of universal human rights. Apparently neutral models that allow one state to claim another state's policies are part of its internal affairs (van de Bergh and Nijkamp 1995) can provide the basis for intervention,

even military intervention. As with human rights, general acceptance of the underlying ethic makes it difficult to politically oppose specific interventions. Too much consensus makes sustainability a dangerous belief for those who reject it. Its supporters are convinced of their own logic and right, and convinced that they are entitled to impose it on nations, and on the world. That is remarkable for an ethic without any genuine ethical basis.

Sustainability is an ethic of duration. It says, at its most basic:

- to last, humanity must be inside the constraints of the natural world.

It says that in opposition to other possible conclusions about duration:

- to last, humanity must conquer nature, or
- nature must last, so humanity must disappear.

It is also an ethic which assigns value to duration. There are at least five possible variants here:

1. "*A situation of long duration is better than one of short duration*".
2. "*A situation which has lasted long is better than one which did not*". This is the basis of radical traditionalism: return to traditions proved by age.
3. "*The continuance of the existing situation is better than its termination*" - the basis of political conservatism.
4. "*The continuance of an entity is better than its termination, so that those entities which can continue must have priority*". This is the basis of radical conservatism: change society until it can totally withstand change, and last longer.
5. "*All situations/entities must last forever*" - a hypothetical variant only.

Sustainability is obviously not a clear guide to human action (the presumed function of an ethic). In addition the question remains: who or what must last? Is it humanity? or civilization? Or culture? Or "*our culture*"? Or Nature? Or the Earth? Or the ecosystem? or the relation humanity-nature? or the cosmos? or something else?

The ethic of sustainability cannot itself indicate a choice between all these possibilities. There is no ethical basis for any duration preference. The use of sustainable policies in Europe corresponds most closely with the options (4) and (5) above. In turn, they correspond with pre-existing ideologies of conservatism. This is an "ethic" only in the sense of a preference or statement: it cannot be constructed on the basis of any self-evident truth, or universally accepted value. The conclusion is, simply, that no moral argument can justify the continued existence of the existing.

In agreement with the classification of Walford (1979, 1983<sup>a,b</sup>), eco-sustainability is an eidodynamic ideology and depending on its believers and associations that carry it.

1. Eco-sustainability is an *ediodynamic ideology*, although those that work in it does not recognize like so. This ideology can use a well-known strategy of validation *using empirically relevant beliefs to validate an empirically nonrelevant thesis* (Borhek and Curtis, 1983). The empirically relevant beliefs will prove out if anyone bothers to check and empirically nonrelevant thesis must be true as well. Few people are able to determine whether an inference from data is true or false and, under

conditions in which beliefs are presented to audiences, even those who are able to do so are unlikely to take the time. That a given body of data may be interpreted in a number of ways is no secret. The point that needs making is not the questionable inference takes place but the data, because of their empirical relevance, can be used to validate almost any inference, no matter how unearthly, in a sufficiently context of meaning.

2. Ecosustainability is an *emergent ideology*, but depends on the association that carry it that becomes an *opposite ideology* and from place to a polarization process. Polarization of ideologies implies that the criterion of validity in any activity can be summarized in the polarizing continuum. This is the substitution of social for intellectual criteria par excellence.
3. Ecosustainability can become a *totalitarian ideology* depending that the association that carry it belongs to epidynamic or paradynamic groups. Turned dominant ideology and lead by radical associations exerting politician power, it can exert top-down control, a ruling principle that affects nearly every aspect of our lives, including; the kind of homes we may live in; water policy that dictates the amount each citizen may use in a day; drastic reductions of energy use; the imposition of public transportation; even the number of inhabitants that may be allowed inside city borders; creation of ecological political commissioners; resigns of certain considered opposite knowledge, and so on. The historical experience of the previous century can give good examples of it.

Principal components of this ideology are the following:

**Structural Base:** A certain human society.

**Mythical Superstructure:** The ideological foundations of the Ecosustainability physical are the duality between a state of idealized nature and a seen human being like a parasite.

**Ideal values:** Peace, solidarity, respect to all class of life, limitation of the private property, limited and responsible consumption, popular democracy, etc.

**Myth:** The *myth* of a nature that is spontaneously harmonious and protective, the nature of the *good savage* enshrined by J.J. Rousseau. It denounces the predatory man who ravages nature, destroys it and "denatures" it.

**Utopia:** Reduced and self-sufficient urban groupings, soft technologies, assembly democracy, collectivism, democratization of Science and Technology, exchange of the familiar structure, multiculturalism, etc.

**Significants:** Phenomena pertaining to the *physical environment*: climatic exchange, reduction ozone layer, ice melting, desertification, etc. On the other hand, belonging to *social environment* are wars, poverty, social, racial, religious or sexual discrimination, consumption, etc.

**DS-images (denotations):** Interpretation of the significances coming from physical and social environment.

**Doxical Superstructure:** Concrete ideologies based in Ecosustainability: Today's society is not sustainable by the simple standard that humanity is only maintaining itself by expending natural capital. The most important components of that capital are deep, rich agricultural soils, ice age water stored in aquifers, and biological diversity.

The current human enterprise is steadily degrading natural resource stocks and flows and using up the capacity of ecosystems to absorb the inevitable wastes that result from those flows. Those processes can only lead to a steady deterioration in the lives of most people, followed, if the trends are not reversed, by a collapse of civilisation. Building of associations, those carry them with political and normative immediate goals.

**SB-projections (connotations):** Changes in normative substructure. Consensual validation there is in many social and physical environmental problems. Lumping process may be found in the controversy over the issues of war, social inequality whether racial, cultural or sexual, poverty an environmental problems. The logical conclusion of lumping is an attack on the entire economic or political system.

**MS-projection:** Abstract ideology, theoretical foundations, and substantive beliefs.

**MS-image:** Utopia. (Last goals)<sup>3</sup>

## 4. An Ecological Case

Let us suppose that the significance represents " $\alpha$  = *energy consumption*" (Usó-Doménech and Nescolarde-Selva, 2012). We will name  $\alpha$  the signal "*minimum of energy*" and  $\omega$  the signal "*maximum of energy*". Each one of these two signals would correspond to two denotative significances  $s^D_\alpha, s^D_\omega$  that would correspond to two images  $\varepsilon_\alpha, \varepsilon_\omega$  in IDS. The connotative projection of  $\varepsilon_\alpha$  can suppose " $c - \bar{s}^D_\alpha = \text{minimum well-being}$ " and the one of  $\omega$ , " $c - \bar{s}^D_\omega = \text{maximum well-being}$ ". Why a certain addressee does choose a connotation and not another alternative? The experience has taught him what  $\alpha$  may be hoped from the denoted situation and the patrimony of knowledge has become stabilized. This cultural patrimony represents a extrasemiotical remainder until it becomes occasional or idiosyncratic, not communicating with anybody. However, without the experience it has been socialized, the cultural data happens to be an element of a semantic system, with a connotative subcode that establishes an imprisonment of prefixed references, from the significant one, by mediation of its denotation, so until arriving at the connotation "*suitable energy*". The mechanism we can see it in Figure 2.

Now let us suppose the case of two ideologies in IDS. We suppose the existence, in SB of two human groups,

<sup>3</sup> Theorem NWET (Usó-Doménech and Nescolarde-Selva, 2012, 2013) prevents reaching the ultimate goal: the utopia. NWET, in summary says: The system produces as response each allowed response of the Reality, but also forbidden responses for the system. That is to say: Any allowed response is produced from the system but that forbidden response is so produced. Forbidden responses produced by the system are nonwished effects. In economics are often called "perverse effects". In the social sciences are unintended consequences (sometimes unanticipated consequences or unforeseen consequences) are outcomes that are not the ones intended by a purposeful action. The concept has long existed but was named and popularized in the twentieth century by American sociologist Robert K. Merton.

believing respectively in each one of the two ideologies (Figure 3).

Nevertheless, signal  $\omega$  may denote, according to the addressee "well-being" or "danger" (degradation of environment), being based on two equally legitimate codes. We are before a series of semantic systems at the secondary level that oppose values of the type "desirable

versus danger". Each unit of these semantic systems " $c - {}^1\bar{S}_\omega^D = \text{maximum well-being}$ " and " $c - {}^2\bar{S}_\omega^D = \text{danger}$ " becomes the connotative significance of the significant " $\alpha = \text{energy consumption}$ " represented by the denotative significance  $\varepsilon_\omega$  of the semantic system in the first level.

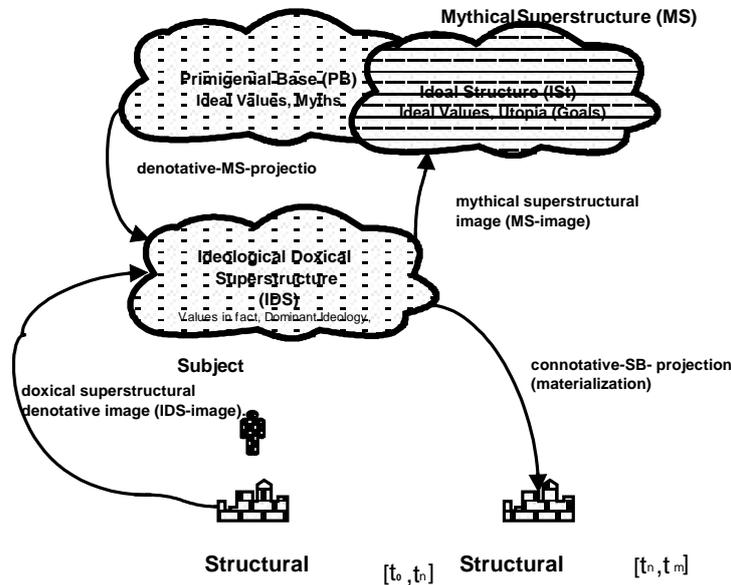


Figure 2. Mechanism denotation-connotation

Thus it may exist for a human group 1 a connotative code for  $c - {}^1\bar{S}_\omega^D$  that establishes /maximum of energy/ = "maximum of the productivity" and other that establishes /maximum of energy/ = "maximum well-being of the society" and finally a subcode that whatever establishes /maximum well-being of the society/ = "justification to any cost". And it may exist for human group 2 an other connotative code for  $c - {}^2\bar{S}_\omega^D$  that establishes /respect by environment / = "elimination of all cost of unnecessary

energy". These systems of values are semantic systems that sometimes are excluded mutually. When this is not the case, they can be included in a more complete code than offers transformation rules to translate the more restricted systems in terms of a more complete system. Now we suppose that somebody, belonging to human group 1, identifying message  $\alpha$  with the connotation "well-being", uses it always in this way.

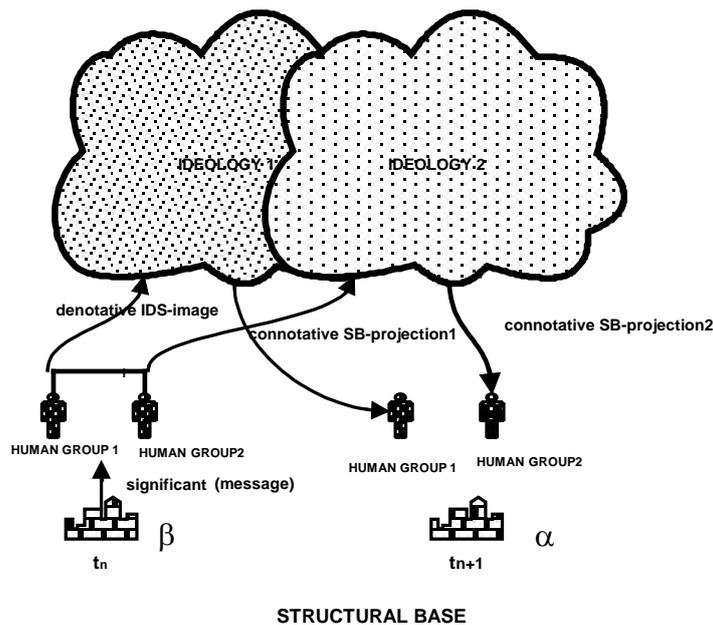


Figure 3. Case of the two ideologies

Then,  $\alpha$  becomes a symbol, it is the emblem of "well-being". The fixed connection between the significant " $\alpha = \text{energy consumption}$ " and *Idea of Well-being* acts metaphorically. Then we were before a *rhetorical artifice* or *rhetorical figure*. We do not consider the case that somebody, with a nonconfesable interest, issues message  $\alpha$  when the situation denoted habitually by  $\alpha$  does not take place in SB. In this case, we would have a *falsification*. In this falsification case, still it is not possible to speak of ideological use of a language L, with the meaning of ideology as a false conscience and camouflage (Eco, 1968). When message  $\alpha$  becomes a rhetorical figure connoting "well-being" automatically, conscientious or unconsciously, the believers of human group 1 reject the possibility of applying the message, possibly with the connotation of "danger". Due to an ampler semiotical system, second connotation  $c - {}^2\bar{S}_\omega^D$  is equally foreseeable, but the use of the first connotation  $c - {}^1\bar{S}_\omega^D$ , optimistic type, is imposed or induced, it gives to the message is a fixed ideological function. The message has become an ideological instrument hiding the other relations. Then the ideology makes the function of a false conscience from the Marxist perspective. According to Eco (1968), from the semiotical point of view there is a message  $\alpha$  that has happened to be a significant unit of a rhetorical subcode. This significant " $\alpha = \text{energy consumption}$ " connotes a significance  $c - {}^1\bar{S}_\omega^D$  or a significance  $c - {}^2\bar{S}_\omega^D$ , like semantic unit of an *ideological code*. In this case, the message hides (instead of communicating) the material conditions that had to express. In addition, it is because it has assumed falsifying functions hiding the different semantic systems in the totality from its mutual relations.

In our system  $\beta - \alpha$  two phenomena happen:

- a) The units of significance = *minimum of energy*; *maximum of energy* are imposed like pertinent by the acquired experience.
- b) The syntactic structure of the code is conditioned by the pertinent elements of the semantic system.

## 5. Conclusions

The origins of sustainable thinking have little to do with planning as such. The general impression - in all the publications and debates - is of a desperate search for every possible argument against change in the existing political social, economic, cultural and technological order. Certainly, that has planning implications. The ideology which goes under the name "sustainability" is a radical conservatism, and it may, paradoxically, lead to changes and restructuring. This is often the explicit intention of radical-conservatives: to change to a change-avoiding order.

Despite Hans Jonas explicit anti-utopianism, any appeal to the future can have similar effects. The standard liberal-democratic criticism of utopianism applies equally to an ethic designed to spare future generations from technological utopias:

Appeals to past generations (as in nationalism), or to God, or to transcendence, or to materialism, or even appeals to not appealing to transcendence (as in liberalism)

- all of these can be used to justify anything. It is better simply to look at what is being justified.

Sustainability should be classified as a "substitutive conservatism" - a term which also avoids the confusion about whether it is ideology, belief, or Weltanschauung. It tries to find something to put in the place of change. It is not even anthropocentric. Hans Jonas (1979) imitated the formula of Kants categorical imperative.

The central value of this imperative is not humanity at all: it is permanence.

What should be clear in the end is that sustainability has very little to do with things like oxide emissions and ground water pollution. Sustainability should be judged on its "hidden agenda" - which in any case is often open and visible. On that political, moral and/or ethical agenda, it is wrong.

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