

Definitions

ORGANIC AND ORGANISM: Two meanings may be distinguished, a less and a more comprehensive, as follows:

1. Relating to that which has life, and opposed to the inanimate.
2. A totality in which all the parts are reciprocally means and ends to one another and to the whole and all relationships are internal or intrinsic and interdependent.

Note: While the first meaning is primarily biological the second meaning can be and has been employed in a sense that is not exclusively or necessarily primarily biological. Thus it is possible to view the Whole from the perspective of Consciousness, rather than of Life, and yet interpret the part-whole relationship as intrinsic and interdependent.

MECHANICAL AND MECHANISM: Two meanings may be distinguished here also.

1. The science which deals with the effect of force acting upon matter, conceived in the sense of external or non-intrinsic relationships.
2. The theoretical view which eliminates all final causes or teleology and seeks to explain all phenomena as the necessary outcome of the general laws of matter in motion, relationships being external or extrinsic.

Note: Mechanism implies a materialistic rationalism but is not identical with Rationalism as such. Rationalism can be and has been exemplified in both a mathematical and Idealistic form and hence non-materialistic.

From the Holistic standpoint the Mechanical and Organic are viewed as possessing partial and inter-related validities. The Holistic in its purity, or, as such, may be viewed as neither Mechanical nor Organic, or, as both Mechanical and Organic. The underlying principle of the Mechanical is Existence while the underlying principle of the Organic is Becoming.