

In Philosophical Search of a New Paradigm for Economics in Harmony with the Ecosystem*

생태계와 조화를 이루는 새로운 경제 패러다임에 대한 철학적 탐구

Lee, Ja-Yeon _Hankuk University of Foreign Studies

이자연 _한국외국어대학교

Abstract

The present economic crisis and the environmental crisis can be analyzed as having the same cause, namely, the excessive industrialization which entailed unbalanced value system coupled with the prevailing capitalism and the problem of inequity. Now that we consider the value of justice in connection with economics, in the long run it turns around the matter of designing a new paradigm for economy in future to see to it that every field of human society is incorporated into a unified network as in ecosystem. The purpose of this paper is to deal with various problems coming in the way to design such a new paradigm and to find a possible way for them to converge to eco-social sustainability. The relevance of the matter of designing a new paradigm for eco-social sustainability to the issue of justice in relation to economics consists in my view that the ultimate source of the universal justice is the law of nature.

□ **Key words:** Justice, Paradigm, Ecosystem, economic crisis, sustainability, *Dharma*(Righteousness)

* This paper is a revised version of the paper which was presented at the tenth East-West Philosophers' Conference held in the East-West Center, University of Hawai'i, Manoa during May 16-24, 2011. The topic of the conference was "Value and Values: Economics and Justice in an Age of Global Interdependence". I give special thanks to Prof. R. Ames of the philosophy department of the University of Hawai'i who gave me a chance to make a presentation.

초록

작금의 경제위기와 환경위기의 원인은 동일한 것, 즉 과도한 산업화로 분석된다. 과도한 산업화는 자본주의의 팽배와 불평등 문제를 수반하는 불균형한 가치체계를 야기하였다. 경제적 정의의 가치문제는 장기적으로 볼 때 인간 사회의 모든 분야가 생태계에서처럼 전일적 관계망속에서 통합되도록 미래의 경제를 위한 새로운 패러다임을 고안하는 문제로 귀결된다. 이 논문의 목적은 그러한 새로운 패러다임을 고안하는데 대두되는 다양한 문제들을 다루어 그러한 문제들이 생태-사회적 지속가능성으로 이어지는 길을 찾는 것이다. 경제적 정의의 문제와 관련하여 생태-사회적 지속가능성을 위한 새로운 패러다임 고안문제를 다루는 타당성은 보편적 정의의 궁극적 원천은 자연의 이치라는 필자의 견해에 기초한다.

□ 주제어: 정의(justice), 패러다임(모형), 생태계, 경제적 위기, 지속가능성, 다르마(righteousness)

I. Introduction

This essay does not deal with economic theories, but is rather intended to deal with fundamental and subsidiary problems concerning the task of designing a new paradigm for economics, a paradigm that may be incorporated into the realization of the value of justice or equity. I question "Is there a better principle of equity than that working in nature?" One may say that such a view is just a "romantic worship" of nature as a harmonious whole and raise a question concerning the concept of nature. So, I will consider the concept of nature, here, according to the Hindu systems of religious thought in the section II. It will be stressed that nature in all its diversity and multiplicity is not a chaos but is subject to a basic cosmic-ethical order, *Dharma*(Righteousness) in Sanskrit terminology. Such a law of nature is considered as the ultimate source of justice.

Now the question arises - What is the significance of designing a paradigm for economics in relation to the task of realizing such a principle of equity or justice? We need a vehicle or a certain mechanism in which we human beings living in a society surrounded by a natural environment can realize such a principle of justice or equity in society. Thus, the significance of the project of designing a paradigm for economics according to the principles working in ecosystem consists

in that it will provide us with the mechanics for realizing the value of justice.

I suggest in this paper that we need to design a paradigm for economics in accordance with the principles which operate in the ecosystem. These "eco-principles" will be the constituents for a new paradigm of economic equity. This means that when we consider the matter of designing a new paradigm for the economy of the future, we should see that every sector of human society is incorporated into a unified network, as in an ecosystem. That is, the political and economic boundaries should coincide with the boundaries of the ecosystem. Furthermore, a paradigm constituted by the eco-principles will pave the way to the realization of the value of justice in sustainable society.

It should be noticed that the principles that we are to design a paradigm for economics with are "eco-principles" - not ecological principles - because designing a new paradigm for economics is not simply a matter of collecting scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge is just a "map" of the "territory" and fails to reach a unified realm. How can we, then, discover such principles? We get such principles through our insights into the principles which function in an ecosystem. What we need is the spiritual knowledge obtained through insight into the real realm behind the delusive phenomena. From this point of view, our task does not consist in 'constructing' a new system above the hitherto existing ones, but rather in creating a new paradigm in which human society can function in accordance with the ecosystem. In creating this new paradigm, we human beings are required to eliminate the obstacles that originate from a human-centered perspective, and from human-centered tendencies, and develop insight into the workings of our ecosystem and the law which penetrates nature.

In addition to the difficulties attendant in gaining the insight referred to above, we also face the challenge that the redesigning of society itself will be an endless process. When the process of redesigning society has been undertaken, it will be a tedious job for human beings, who have a chronic tendency to cling to the same thing, whereas things are, allegedly, in constant flux. All these difficulties imply that the difficulties attendant with designing a new paradigm revolve around the ethical problems embedded in the concerned activities. Man, seeking spiritual growth, can contribute to upgrading the mechanics for realizing the economic justice, mechanics that is provided by the paradigm designed in accordance with the

principles working in ecosystem.

In this context, it comes to my thought that animals seem to be more adept in living in accordance with the food chain law of nature and contribute to some extent to the sustenance of nature. What faculties do human beings have in distinction from animals to get answers to questions concerning the matter of designing a new paradigm in order to realize economic justice? These faculties must be reason and spirituality. What is the role of the intellectual faculty of human beings? Human beings should use reason in a righteous way. Otherwise, human beings would be problem makers on earth and destroy the ecosystem as is the case with a modernism that is characterized by anthropocentrism and self-centeredness. The possibility for human beings to use intellect in a righteous way, as is meant by this concept of *Dharma*(Righteousness), depends on getting an insight knowledge of the principles working in nature. For that purpose, we need to develop our spiritual potentials by practicing spiritual disciplines. Through spiritual growth, man is able to grasp what righteousness on a universal level is, and is then able to carry out righteous actions.

In this paper I will also deal with subsidiary problems concerning the problem of designing a new paradigm for the economy of the future. Such subsidiary problems should also be taken into account in this paradigm design, and be solved, to make the paradigm more applicable in real society. In that connection, there is a need for more reflection on the organizational and operational forms and practices needed to move toward regulating ecological resources, reinstating democracy, and reclaiming a sustainable future. The following are examples of such subsidiary problems that are going to be dealt with in this paper: Firstly, money must be returned to its original status as a means to facilitate regenerative exchanges, rather than an end in itself. Secondly, the system regulating commercial advertisement ethics, and even ethics as they pertain to products, will be emphasized. The fundamental aspect of ethical problems to be solved is the still prevalent material-bound hedonism which was ushered in by modernism, even though modernism has given way to post-modernism.

Meanwhile, it is both a top-down and an intellectual process to design a new paradigm for the economy of the future. Thus, it will be worthwhile staging a grass-roots movement with a slogan like "love our planet". When it is motivated

by a pure spirit, it may create such qualities like modesty and balance in a manner in which consumers exercise economic activities, and in the atmosphere of the whole global society. Such a movement would help the masses to get ready to adopt this new paradigm for the economy of the future, an economic paradigm resembling our ecosystem. The role of the consumers, or the masses, as subjects that control the market, is an important role, and their education, including their education in spiritual disciplines, will be emphasized.

II. Nature as the Ultimate Principle of Justice

The views of nature in Hindu system of religious thought are encapsulated in the ancient texts in concepts such as a cosmic principle (*ṛta*), a cosmic-ethical order (*Dharma*), or the ultimate material principle (*prakṛti*) (Jacobsen 2002, 2). According to it, nature is governed by a basic cosmic law (*ṛta*). To this law are subject not only all natural phenomena, such as the movement of the planets and the generation, decay, and death of organisms, but also truth and justice (Puligandla 1975, 194). The concept of *Dharma*, a cosmic-ethical order, is allegedly derived from the concept of *ṛta*, and is more often regarded as religious and moral duty. It is, thus, regarded as 'cosmic-ethical order'. *Dharma* is, then, the regulator of nature and society and is understood as the principal source for the realization of social ethical values. Therefore, *dharmā* in Hindu system of religious thought can be referred to as an ultimate source of justice. For that reason, it is translated as meaning 'Righteousness' in English.

Now we need to take into account the concept of nature that is represented by the Sanskrit terminology of *prakṛti* in Indian dualism of Sāṃkhya-Yoga philosophy in order to bring out its relevance to the ecosystem. It means foremost the ultimate material principle, the primary material substance, and the permanent material substratum of the world. *Prakṛti* is often translated as nature in the sense that it is the source and power from which the things of the world are produced. It is the single substance of which the material constituents of divinities, humans, animals, and plants are transformations and in which everything pre-exists in a subtle form. According to Sāṃkhya-Yoga, nature comprises both mental and gross

matter. It is, however, beyond both mental and gross matter (Jacobsen 2002, 6-7).

The concept of *prakṛti* can be better understood with reference to the doctrines of three primal elements(*guṇa*-s). The primeval substance(*prakṛti*) is the equilibrium of these primal elements(*guṇa*-s), which is described here according to the quality of the parts of which it consists is 'red and white and black' (Deussen 1966, 252). These three colors are expressions of the three qualities indifference, lust, and blindness; these three compose the essence of three *guṇa*-s, namely *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, respectively. Everything which originates from the primeval substance(*prakṛti*) is threefold. Although the accounts of colors are different, we can find a certain analogy between the theory of three *guṇa*-s and the physical theory of quark. This topic will not be further dealt with in this paper.

This notion of *prakṛti* can be better understood in the light of Chandogya Upanisad 6.3-6.4. According to it, the three constituent elements proceed from the 'one without a second,' and of a mixture of which everything in the universe consists, have been psychologically transformed into the three *guṇa*-s.

Now, of these beings here there are just three origins: [there are beings] born from an egg, born from a living thing, born from a sprout.

That divinity[i.e. Being] bethought itself: "Come! Let me enter these three divinities [i.e. heat, water, and food] with this living Soul (ātman), and separate out name and form.

Let me make each one of them threefold." That divinity entered into these three divinities with this living Soul, and separated out name and form.

It made each of them threefold.

Now, verily, my dear, understand from me how each of these three divinities becomes threefold (Hume 1984, 241-241).

The multiplicity and variation of the things in the natural world have their bases in the differences in proportions of the *guṇa*-s. Furthermore, the things of the natural world from divine gods to the blade of grass are divided threefold: the upper world is dominated by *sattva guṇa*, the middle world is dominated by *rajas guṇa*, and the lower worlds are dominated by *tamas guṇa* (Jacobsen 2002, 331). Beings in heaven, almost free from *tamas*, are without gross bodies, the *tamas* side of egoity that covers and limits the sense capacities. Attachment, non-merit, and power-

lessness are *tamas* qualities and characterize the plant and animal realm. Since plants and animals are dominated by *tamas*, it can be said that their experiences are dominated by blindness. The reason why we human beings feel relieved in natural places may be because we feel appealing feelings which are attributed to the equilibrium of three *guṇa*-s in nature . *Prakṛti in the form of equilibrium of three guṇa-s* means primordial nature in Indian philosophical tradition. It does not mean that nature itself is spiritual, but that it is contributive to develop spirituality on account of its composing effect. In order to attain spiritual growth we need to develop *sattva guṇa* until three *guṇa*-s arrive at equilibrium. Through the investigation of the doctrine of three *guṇa*-s and the doctrine of *Dharma*, a cosmic-ethical order, we learn that all beings in nature are parts of a unified system with a cosmic-ethical order. It is the task left to human beings to realize such an ultimate order in real society with an ethical effort.

III. Questions Concerning the Problem of Designing a New Paradigm for Economics in Harmony with the Eco-system

The reason why human beings have to design a paradigm for economics that incorporates into the ecosystem lies in that nature is characterized by organism or mutual interdependency and we should see that every sector of human society is incorporated into a unified network, as in an ecosystem. That is, the political and economic boundaries should coincide with the boundaries of the ecosystem. I claim that the first step towards realizing such a principle in real life may consist in designing a paradigm for economics according to the principles working in ecosystem. We have to see that such a paradigm resembles the regularity of the material world. A paradigm for economics that resembles the law of nature must provide us a mechanics for realizing economic justice.

It is not a purely intellectualized exercise to explain a new paradigm for economics working in harmony with ecosystem. Scientific knowledge fails to link us to the realm behind apparent phenomena, and the system of scientific knowing is far from being open to the holistic dimension. Scientific knowledge is addressed

in the form of a theoretical or conceptual system that is, by its nature, a closed system. It is closed because it does not help us see what is as it is, but imprisons us in an ideological system. Its perspective and its correlations with objects are all static. Therefore, its methodology is analytic and it relies on statistics. Hence, with scientific knowledge, we are not able to work out a new paradigm for economics, a paradigm in which economics is incorporated into a unified social system (as in an ecosystem). The framework of the new paradigm in question can be, however, constituted by the principles which we find to be at work in the ecosystem. In the following, I will give some examples of the interrelated principles given by Brian Milani, the author of *Designing the Green Economy*. These principles cover some of the key dimensions of such a paradigm.

Waste equals food: In nature there is no waste, as in every process, output is an input for some other processes. This principle implies not only a high degree of organizational complementarity, but also that the outputs and the by-products are nutritious and non-toxic enough to be food for something.

Appropriate scale: It means a preference for human-sized living and working environments. The institutions and living environments of the industrialized metropolitan cities are of a gigantic scale. They give us the impression of inhuman anonymity and artificiality. People's minds are influenced by such surroundings, surroundings which include gigantic buildings, gigantic institutions, and an artificial environment caused by excessive industrialization. Such surroundings must make an impact on people's mind-set: They must increase the tendency to put excessive values on material things, and to exercise a preference for big sizes in terms of the necessities of life. Such social tendencies can form new types of class distinctions between the haves and the have-nots, distinctions which are reflected in the terminology of social status. The size of houses, cars and other daily necessities show this tendency to be overtly conscious of social status, to the point of being ostentatious. However, everything in nature is equal, as all parts of nature are subject to a unified law. All kinds of distinctions are attributed to the biased minds of human beings. All these arguments show how human society has become extremely alienated from nature. The tremendous accomplishments of industrialization and capitalism have taken place in an unbalanced way. This is the accomplishment of human-centricity, and it also shows the limitations of human-centeredness. Whereas

in the ecosystem, every regenerative activity has its most appropriate scale of operation. In the ecosystem, even the smallest activities have larger impacts, and truly ecological activity integrates designs across multiple scales, reflecting the influence of the larger on the smaller and the smaller on the larger (Van der Ryn & Cowan, 1996). A reduction of scale can be considered as a means of getting back to basics, the restoration of a more human sense of proportion and perspective to life.

Following natural flows: The economy moves like a proverbial sailboat in the wind of natural processes by flowing not only with solar, renewable energy, but also with natural hydrological cycles with regional vegetation, food webs, and local materials. As society becomes more ecologically conscious, political and economic boundaries tend to coincide with ecosystem boundaries. That is, society becomes "bioregional".

Self-reliance, self-organization, self-design: Complex systems necessarily rely on nested hierarchies of intelligence which are coordinated among themselves in a kind of resonant wave. These hierarchies are built from the bottom up, and, in contrast to civilization's social hierarchies, the base levels are the most important. In an economy which moves in accordance with ecosystem processes, a tremendous scope for local response develops. It is at the local level that design and adaptation must have an opportunity to flourish, although these local and regional domains must be attuned to larger processes. That is, self-reliance is not self-sufficiency, but facilitates a more flexible and holistic interdependence.

Elegance and multifunctionality: This elegance features problem-solving strategies that develop multiple wins and positive side-effects from any one set of actions. The principle-integrated relationships constituting a new paradigm which resembles an ecosystem is antithetical to industrial society's segmentation and fragmentation. Such elegance and multifunctionality are endemic to such complex webs of principle-integrated relationships and the "Waste equals food" principle is thereby implied.

Diversity: In a world of constant flux, health and stability seem to depend on diversity, e. g. diversity of species, ecosystems, regions etc. This applies to all levels of diversity and to social as well as ecological organization.

The next step towards designing this new paradigm under consideration is to

apply the principles apprehended in various sectors of society. The smallness theme touches on many facets of living. It implies that living and working environments as well as supportive institutions (which have grown to enormous levels of scale and complexity) should, whenever possible, be decentralized into more comprehensible and manageable entities. This will enable flexibility and resilience. Moreover, organization with the applied principles which have been gleaned from a close observation of the ecosystem, so called "ecological organization", and new information and communication technologies can provide mankind the means for deeper levels of participation in the decisions that count in society. All these things further imply that people's endeavors should be of such dimensions that each knows what he/she contributes to the whole and, hence, has a sense of shared rewards and shared responsibilities. When it comes to natural resources, they should be displaced from production and turned into the spontaneous productivity of nature. This is presupposed by a reduction in the amount of goods manufactured with natural resources. This also requires a change in our value system. As long as human beings are greedy for material things and money, this trend of industrialization - combined with the exhaustion of natural resources and the contamination of our environment - will go on.

The job of designing a new paradigm for economics in harmony with the ecosystem is an incessant process of applying the principles which are at work in the ecosystem, monitoring the working of systems, coordinating different sectors and organizations, and upgrading tentative models. For that purpose, we need an institutionalized self-regulation system rather than current profit- and power-driven market forces. The sources of such power can be political, commercial, capital, etc. Self-regulation systems pertaining to a new paradigm for economics should provide incentives for the right things. For example, things like promoting eco-friendliness, peace of mind, a sense of balance, and modesty are the right things, in contrast to the hitherto prevailing things like advertisements provoking impulses of extravagancy, luxuriousness, plastic beauty, and materialistic obsession. Things that worsen the inequity between the have and the have-nots should be also subject to the surveillance inherent in self-regulation. An institutionalized self-regulation system can be streamlined to collect 'extra' money and divert it to a social security fund to cover social security expenses for the poor in one country,

or to provide assistance in third world countries. Here, extra money means a possible fund that can be saved from cutting down the extravagant salaries of, for example, CEOs, salaries which amount to several billions of dollars. Such a salary system is an undesirable offshoot of the capitalistic system and is an unbecoming thing for democracy. After all, all that matters is the ethical subject of all activities whether it be the subject controlling a self-regulation system, or a CEO who gives up a high salary.

IV. Problem of an Ethical Subject

In the change that can be expected when a new paradigm for economics is ushered in, it is hoped that facets of that change will include harmony with the ecosystem, so that the personal and the political, the social and the ecological, will go hand in hand. In making such change possible human beings play the key role. It does not mean human-centricity, but just means that the success or failure of designing such a paradigm lies in the hands of human beings.

The whole enterprise of designing the paradigm being outlined here consists of applying holistic ecological principles in different sectors of society, and the incessant process of monitoring the functions of the principles applied, coordinating different sectors and organizations, and upgrading tentative models. This enterprise depends upon the capacities of the subjects of all these activities. This series of undertakings requires tremendous creativity. It boils down to all-round human development that brings forth such great qualities of nurturing and spiritual growth, qualities of giving, real service, modesty, balance, insight and wisdom; qualities that have been suppressed by the social and psychological conditioning of the industrial order. As such virtuous qualities are developed; people who are fed up with plastic life will voluntarily choose the simple life of getting inspiration from nature, the ultimate material principle underlying all beings of the world. What is required in connection with the task of designing the new paradigm in question is not theoretical knowledge, but the ability or the power that a whole person can exercise. In comparison with animals, human beings who have been excessively exercising their rational faculties have sense organs (organs used for perceiving reality) which

are much too poor to apprehend natural law. I claim that the way human beings develop the senses and the sensibilities to coordinate with nature, and to pursue the values of the type of life styles they should be pursuing as an indigenous species on the planet, lies in the path of developing spiritual growth.

As we human beings achieve spiritual growth, we become more adept in terms of the economy of the future.

Now we should ask about the ultimate source of justice or equity, because the more we realize the ultimate source of justice in ourselves, the more we can realize the value of justice in real life. I say that the ultimate source of justice or equity consists in the laws working in nature. How can we, then, get access to these laws of nature as a philosophical inquiry? In this context I suggest the orthodox Indian traditional (pre-Buddhist) terminology of *Dharma* (righteousness) as an alternative. According to the Hindu system of religious thought, *Dharma* is allegedly derived from the cosmic principle, *ṛta* in Sanskrit terminology, which underlies all moving things, and is more often regarded as religious and moral duty. It can be, thus, understood as the 'cosmic-ethical order'. *Dharma* is, therefore, the regulator of nature and society and is the source for the realization of social ethical values. Therefore, *Dharma* in Hindu system of religious thought can be referred to as an ultimate source of justice.

When a person is cultivated and purifies his mind, the duty he is conscious of can be in accordance with the cosmic principle. Human beings' consciousness is endowed with the ability to see the real dimension. With an uncultivated and unpurified mind he is, however, ignorant of the cosmic principle or the natural law, because his mind is embedded with fetters due to limiting adjuncts like sense organs, the mind, and the intellect. When his consciousness is purified and becomes a unified state in which there is no dichotomy of subject and object, his consciousness is bound to realize the unity in all. On such a level of consciousness one's will coincides with the universal law of nature. Without self-discipline in order to seek spiritual growth in the path of realizing *Dharma*, one cannot be an appropriate economic agent in view of the new paradigm for the economy of the future.

Now we go back to the issue of designing a new paradigm for the economics of the future. As has been mentioned earlier, there is no end to the job of designing a new paradigm for economics, one that works on the basis of the principles of

the ecosystem, because of the incessant processes of monitoring, coordinating and upgrading. It must be hard for human beings to be patient with such endless processes because human beings have the chronic tendency to desire to have a selfsame or permanent thing. This tendency is rooted in our way of experiencing the external world, and in our linguistic practices. We cognize particular things through sense experiences and the categorical activity of the intellect, and represent them with concepts that are essentially conceptual constructions.

As an alternative to the above-mentioned lay people's world view, the Buddhist world view will now to be taken into account. Early Buddhism accepts the doctrine of impermanence of all things and accept no permanent substratum (King 2007, 20). It accepts the truth of the impermanency, misery or unsatisfactoriness, and non-self(impersonality) of all corporeal and mental phenomena of existence in order for us to be freed of attachment to the existent space-time entities. According to early Buddhism, the world of human experience known as a veritable "sea of change" (*saṃsāra*) (King 2007, 3). Its main characteristics are multiplicity and flux, with the interdependent, cosmic orders of materiality and mentality as 'they truly are' behind the delusive appearances - *dharmic* order - and the personal-moral orders of action - *karmic* order. These two orders provide some uniformity and dependability . Greed, hatred, and delusion are the causes of the rolling wheel of life, which is full of suffering, in accordance with the law of dependent origination. A person is the field in which the transition from the personal-moral order to the social-cosmic order, or vice versa, may take place. Man's life is likely to be a tug of war between the power of *karma* (Pāli, *kamma*) and the power of trying to overcome *karma*, and to realize the laws (*dharmā*) behind delusive appearances. When the spiritual clarity of man's insight into the social-cosmic orders behind the delusive appearances, he/she becomes more spontaneous, and is able to engage in activities in accordance with insight and knowledge.

What we can learn from the Buddhist world view on the basis of the previous investigation can be summed up as follows: First, we just postulate a permanent thing behind the phenomena and cling to things that actually go through constant change. What we know through the cognitive processes is just conceptual construction. Second, we get insightful knowledge of 'things as they are' behind apparent appearances that are delusive in nature and are able to get free from such delusions through

insight wisdom. These teachings given by the Buddha are what he discovered through the *Vipassanā* meditation practice (King 2007). The key to obtaining insight wisdom is the middle way. The Buddha's teachings on the middle way instruct us to avoid both extremes, the extreme of ascetic austerity and the extreme of pleasure. We should not approach the tenet of the middle way conceptually because it is beyond the polar characteristic of concepts. The Buddhist teaching of the middle way gives us the lesson of keeping one's energy in balance, and penetrating to a balance of the spiritual faculties (Nyanaponika et. al, 1999, 168). The virtue of the middle way can be developed through all-round cultivation as is, in Buddhism, given in the form of the Noble Eightfold Path. By practicing spiritual practices that help us to develop all-around, we destroy the taints of our mind, attain a serenity of mind and recover our innate potential to see through the natural law of dependent origination. Such Buddhist doctrines help us comprehend the interdependence of all beings in the world, including human beings, and the fleeting nature of all material things. With the influence of Buddhist world view, we can also contemplate the three characteristics of existence, i. e. impermanency, misery or unsatisfactoriness, and non-self. The cultivation of such a disposition, such qualities, and such spiritual faculties will help us to develop a more balanced value system in contrast to the present, extremely material-and money-oriented value system, and furthermore help us to monitor endless process of redesigning society by applying a paradigm for economics resembling the ecosystem embedded with a certain organism. For the Buddhist world view will definitely help us to overcome a chronic tendency to cling to the same thing, tendency rooted in our linguistic practices in order to refer to an individual things in space and time.

All these facets imply that the difficulties attendant with designing a new paradigm revolve around the ethical problems embedded in the concerned activities. We have seen that the two aspects of human existence expressed in the Buddhist terminologies of *karma* (Pāli, *kamma*) and *dharma* (Pāli, *dhamma*) are common to all human beings of different cultures and religions. The two aspects can be understood generally as meaning the sinful, chaotic side and peaceful cosmic side. *Vipassanā* meditation practices mindfulness and clear awareness of present physical or mental phenomenon as it is in order to obtain insight knowledge of ultimate materiality and mentality and their causes. That is to say, it is something which

can be practiced by people of different cultures and religions. We can pursue the transition from the *karmic* order to the *dharmic* order by practicing *Vipassanā* meditation like any spiritual practices free from sectarianism.

We arrive at the conclusion that the entire enterprise of designing a paradigm for economics in accordance with "eco-principles" depends upon how far human beings as ethical subjects of all concerned activities develop creativity. A source of such creativity is, in my view, spirituality. Spiritual growth will help us to have an insight into the working of an ecosystem and comprehend the eco-principles at work. It will help us to have insight into the realm of uniformity and interdependence of all the constituent elements in the world. Thus, it will make it possible for us to design a paradigm for economics in accordance with the eco-principles and, further, to apply such a paradigm in real society. A paradigm for economics that is to be designed in accordance with the ecosystem is merely a mechanism resembling the regularity of nature as the ultimate material principle which all beings in the world are subject to. We need such a mechanism in order to realize economic justice. By developing spirituality we human beings as ethical subjects of all concerned activities of designing a new paradigm under consideration can, further, contribute to adding ethical values to the mechanism of a economic paradigm.

Spiritual growth will help us to know what we contribute to the whole and, hence, that the individual has a sense of shared rewards and shared responsibilities. Each and every individual would should play the role of controlling over all kinds of markets by developing eco-friendly purchasing habits and an investment force. Ethical subjects can play an important role even in terms of monitoring self-regulation systems in different kinds of markets, in order to prevent manufacturers from producing items which cause environmental and social-political problems in the long run. For example, the manufacture of jet automobiles for cities will create a lot of problems - environmental, social, and political. It will increase the number of vehicles, generate additional carbon dioxide emissions, and make the environmental crisis more severe. It will also create a psychological gap between the very rich and the poor who serve them, and will result in the decline of a middle class. What is required is not an increase in the number of vehicles, but the development of a sense of modesty and economy in the minds of people, and a solution

to the problem of inequity. This solution can come from the development of a new paradigm. I am reminded of the idea of an institutionalized self-regulation system which would play the role of diverting the 'extra' money collected by cutting down the salaries of CEO's. These enormous salaries show shamelessness and a lack of ethics.

Even if the new role-model has a sense of modesty and economy, the hedonism which was ushered in by modernism is still prevalent. Even though modernism had been criticized and gave way to post-modernism, and other philosophical trends have arisen like environmental philosophy, feminism etc., human civilization as a whole is still hedonism-ridden. Commercial advertisements have a tremendous influence on people's value systems, the amount of goods purchased, the scope and size of manufacturing, the formation of great capital, and the like. The driving force behind the commercial advertisements is, however, merely hedonistic in character, and provokes sensual or sensuous pleasures, encourages greed to own more money and to possess more material things, and it fosters luxury and extravagance, etc. Our homes are full of manufactured goods, and the physical condition of our environment at home, as well as at the work-place, must make an influence on our psychological states, and must also influence our mind-set. Human beings have become dry by losing their spiritual potential.

In my view, spiritual growth will help man to develop such qualities as mentioned above, facilitate a self-regulation system in the market, and make possible the design of a new paradigm for economics, a design which resembles and takes account of the ecosystem. In my opinion, what we really need in the aftermath of the economic crisis and in the present environmental crisis is not the pursuit of ever greater economic growth, but the design of a new paradigm for the economy of the future, in order to streamline the redistribution of available wealth, and help people develop a sense of modesty and economy, so that they can accept less abundant material wealth and adjust to a new simple way of life resembling nature. At the dawn of human civilization, people owned material things only on the level of necessity and lived in harmony with nature. We should reflect on our present unbalanced way of life, where we pursue material wealth excessively and have agony and anguish. Are we happier than those who lived in ancient times? Life always has both sides of the coin, happiness and unhappiness, good and bad,

etc. We should develop a sense of modesty and economy and try to share what we have with others, instead of exerting violent will power to conquer the other, a situation which has prevailed with the influence of modernism.

Modernism contributed to the achievement of industrialization and great accumulations of capital. However, the environmental and economic crises can be analyzed as having been caused by primarily the excessive industrialization and some unbecoming practices of capitalism such as money game of the great capitalists. The rich enjoy many privileges and much power, and the inequity problem makes the division between the haves and the have-nots so much more severe. Facing the problem of great accumulations of capital in the hands of a small number of people, we should remind ourselves that money must be returned to its original status as a means to facilitate regenerative exchanges, rather than an end in itself. When this is done in a significant portion of the economy, it can undercut the dominating power of money in the entire economy. Maximizing profit at the cost of reducing jobs, excessively increasing the price of immobile properties due to speculation in real estate, etc. are bad examples of the dominating power of money.

V. Concluding Remarks

The purpose of this paper is to deal with various problems concerning the design of a new paradigm for economics, one that works in harmony with the ecosystem. I started with the intuition that nature can be the ultimate ground of justice. Our dealing with the views of nature was confined to the Hindu views because Buddhism lacks in the treatment of the concept of nature or the objective material world. The concept of nature according to Indian dualism was taken into account and nature is understood as the ultimate material principle to which all beings - organic and non-organic beings - are subject. We viewed *Dharma*(Righteousness), i.e. the cosmic-ethical order, as the principal source of justice. We human beings can have the vision of *Dharma* when we become spiritual. The path to spiritual growth consists in developing *sattva guṇa* in order to attain the equilibrium of three *guṇa*-s. The life of a human being is characterized by the empowering of the *rajas guṇa* and *tamas guṇa* and a decrease in the *sattva guṇa*.

The dynamic relation of three *guṇa*-s should not be grasped through logical thinking. With spiritual practices man can develop intuition and sensibility providing insight into the balance of the three *guṇa*-s.

The significance of designing a paradigm for economics that reflects the ecosystem consists in that we need to design such a paradigm according to the principles that work in the ecosystem in order to realize the ultimate principle of justice. The task of designing a new paradigm for economics according to eco-principles depends on how creative human beings are. We need to have an insight into the principles at work in an ecosystem. Whether we can have such an insight depends on our spiritual growth.

In this paper, the role of human beings is stressed, especially as ethical subjects who carry out all concerned activities in terms of designing and applying an economic paradigm resembling an ecosystem to real society, monitoring the working of systems, coordinating different sectors and organizations, upgrading tentative models etc. All these matters revolve around the problematic of ethical subject. The Buddhist views, especially early Buddhist views, are exhorted with regard to the existential condition of human beings. In an analysis of the Buddhist conception of human existence, *karmic* and *dharmic* orders of human existence were dealt with and human existence was described in terms of the tension between the two orders. Human existence on the planet earth can be described as having a dual aspects: Human beings live in nature which is characterized by interdependency on the one hand and seek liberation from material world of mutual interdependency through spiritual growth on the other hand. Human beings in such a paradoxical existential situation need spiritual wisdom in order to find a way to live in harmony with other beings in nature. In Indian philosophical thoughts, nature has a meaning for human beings only insofar as it can provide the material for the mechanics of liberation (Jacobsen 2002, 334).

The paradigm we are set out to design for future economy is at best a mechanism in which human society functions in harmony with the ecosystem, and human beings can realize the ultimate source of economic justice. That is, creating a mechanism for economics that can be incorporated into the ecosystem itself can never be the goal for human society. Spiritual growth is, in my view, the supreme value for human race that can satisfy human beings' desire for spiritual freedom

and helps us to add to the ethical values on the mechanical system of economic paradigm.

A possible change that we may go through in the process of designing and applying a new paradigm for economics in the real world is that the desired change will be neither fundamental, nor fast. It is a top-down process. So, it cannot be fundamental in its character. Now that the environmental crisis is critical, any possible change that can be brought about can only be sluggish, especially if the grass-roots are not ready to cooperate. A movement with a catch phrase like "love our planet" can be taken into account with a view to taking advantage to the emotional power of such messages. Such a movement can give impetus to a quick change to slow down the environmental crisis. It will also bring about a tremendous efficacy in terms of the implementation of the new paradigm for economics, because the environmental crisis and the economic crisis are inseparable in terms of their causes. Such a movement should be, however, motivated by pure moments. The best way human beings can create such pure moments is by practicing spiritual exercises like meditation or praying. With such spiritual practices, qualities like modesty, balance, compassion, and sympathy will be developed, and people will become more serene, insightful, and wiser. With such cultivated qualities, people as the subjects of all activities will contribute to the design of a new paradigm, and will be involved in its implementation in real life. People's tremendous energy to be enthused about positive change will also slow down the process of decline and forestall our final destruction, a final destruction that has been described as a possibly cataclysmic end of this planet, perhaps along with the destruction of most material universe systems.

Education is the starting point and the core of the entire enterprise of designing a new paradigm for economics, as its success depends upon the ethical comportment of all those who are engaged in related activities. The current education system still remains old-fashioned in its functioning, in the intellectual mode of modernity. With such an intellectual mode, the process of the minds of people becomes ridden with dichotomies such as black-white, subject-object, I-other. The educational process thus encourages its charges to judge between either one of two conceptual poles. The core of education should be to explore the possibility of whether one is 'able' to develop spiritual growth, instead of just dealing with con-

cepts, speculations, and ideologies.

Gandhi is a harbinger of a new vision of education, one which puts stress on practical activities and spiritual training. Such an education would help people develop themselves all-round, and become more balanced and wise. This Gandhian educational vision was suitable for India in those days. Each and every country with its own traditional culture can design an appropriate model for a new educational system. A step to designing a new educational model lies in offering practical methods to develop spiritual potential to the students who have been used to the intellectual mode of the modern education system. For example, one country with a certain conventional religion can adopt a foreign method of meditation practice, and transform this into its own. The mainstream of the *Vipassanā* movement in the United States that appeared in the form of meditation centers like IMS (Insight Meditation Society) in Barre, Massachusetts, and Spirit Rock in Marin County, California, are good examples (Prebish et al. 1998, chapter 9). The first generation Americans who introduced such practices to Americans accepted *Vipassanā* purely as a meditation method, apart from religious practices. The meaning of a human beings' life does not consist in spiritual descending – a situation that was prevalent until the outbreak of the global stock market crisis – but rather this meaning consists of a spiritual ascendance, an ascendance which differentiates humans from animal beings. The core of the enterprise of designing a new paradigm for future economics lies in creating new systems in every sector of human society, systems that will be interdependent. This job requires many creative qualities, and it depends upon the practical capability of human beings to achieve spiritual ascendance.

- ▶ Submitted : 2014. Nov. 12.
- ▶ Reviewed : 2014. Nov. 17.
- ▶ Accepted : 2014. Nov. 28.

References

- Deussen, Paul, *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, A. S. Geden (trans.), Dover Publications, INC., New York, 1966.
- Hume, Robert Ernest, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, Translated from Sanskrit, Second Edition, Revised, Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Jacobsen, Knut A., *Prakṛti in Sāṅkhya-Yoga*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.
- King, Winston L., *Theravda Meditation, The Buddhist Transformation of Yōga*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2007.
- Milani, Brian, *Designing the Green Economy*, Rowman and Littlefield Pub Inc., 2011.
- Nyanaponika Thera & Bhikkhu Bodhi (tr.), *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha, An Anthology of Suttas from the Aṅguttara Nikya*, Walnut Creek etc.: Altamira Press, 1999.
- Sayadaw, Pa-Auk Tawya. *Knowing and Seeing* (Revised Edition II), Singapore: Pa-Auk Meditation Centre, 2008.
- Prebish, Charles S. and Kenneth K. Tanaka, *The Faces of Buddhism in America*, University of California , 1998.
- Puligandla, R., *Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy*, Abingdon Press; Nashville New York, 1975.
- Ryn, Sim Van der, & Stuart Cowan, *Ecological Design*, Island Press, 1996.