

# In Search of a New Paradigm based on the Organic Ecological World View in the Light of the Early Buddhist World View: With Special Reference to Buddhist Meditation, Vipassanâ

초기 불교적 세계관에 비취 유기체적 생태학적 세계관에  
입각한 새로운 패러다임 탐구하기:  
불교 위빠사나 명상을 특별히 참고하여

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## Abstract

It is said that it is urgently needed to design a new paradigm in order to solve various problems facing us in contemporary times. The purport of this essay is to investigate the possibility of designing a new paradigm which is based on an organic, ecological world view by considering this problem in the light of the Buddhist world view. The reason why the Buddhist world view is taken into account is that it is free from the chronic problem of objective approaches as in Western disciplinary traditions, namely conceptual construction. In that attempt the non-dual character of the Buddhist world view that imply unity in dual correlation between the material object and the mind is brought out to light. In this essay vital energy is stressed as a key concept of the holistic, ecological world view. Buddhist meditation called Vipassanâ is specially referred to in order to bring the divine level of vital energy, namely spirituality relevant to our discussion. For spirituality is what makes human beings differ from other beings on the earth. Another reason for dealing with Buddhist meditation lies in my idea that we need insights into ecosystems in order to design a new paradigm based on the organic, ecological world view and it is an appropriate method for that purpose.

□ Key words: New Paradigm, Organic, Ecological World View, Buddhist World View, Buddhist Meditation, Vipassanâ, Vitality, Spirituality, Sustainability

## 초록

이 시대 우리가 직면하는 문제의 근본적인 해결을 위해 새로운 패러다임의 고안이 절실하다는 지적이 있다. 본 논문의 목적은 유기체적, 생태학적 세계관에 바탕을 둔 새로운 패러다임을 고안하는 문제를 불교적 세계관에 비춰서 탐구하는 것이다. 불교적 세계관이 고려되는 이유는 그것이 서구의 학문적 전통에 나타나는 객관주의적 접근의 고질적 문제인 관념적 구성으로부터 자유롭기 때문이다. 그러한 시도에서 물질성을 띤 대상과 마음 사이의 이원성을 띤 상관관계에서의 통일을 함축하는 불교적 세계관의 불이적(non-dual) 성격이 드러난다. 본 논문에서 생명력이 전일적, 생태학적 세계관의 핵심 개념으로 강조된다. 생명력의 성스러운 차원, 즉 영성(spirituality)에 대한 논의를 위하여 위빠사나라고 불리는 불교명상에 대한 연구를 접목시킨다. 왜냐하면 영성은 인간이 지구상의 다른 존재들과 차이가 나게 하는 것이기 때문이다. 불교 명상을 다루는 또 다른 이유는 유기체적, 생태학적 세계관에 바탕을 둔 새로운 패러다임의 고안을 위하여 생태계에 대한 통찰이 필요하며 불교 명상이 그러한 통찰을 기르는데 적합하다는 나의 생각 때문이다.

□ 주제어: 새로운 패러다임, 유기체적 생태학적 세계관, 불교적 세계관, 불교 명상, 위빠사나, 생명력, 영성, 지속가능성

## I. Introduction

The contemporary civilization can be characterized as pursuing sustainability of this planet and facing numerous problems that arise from the devastation of natural resources and ecosystems.<sup>1)</sup> I am in the mind that all the problems that our planet faces, including environmental crisis and global financial crisis are ascribable to the obsolete world view and lack of morality on the side of human beings. The Newtonian world view and logos-centric modern philosophy are concerned with them. In fact, the Newtonian world view paved the way to technological development and brought about all the benefits we take from the technological and industrial development. In its result human beings became greedy for material things.

1) E. Capra enumerates various problems that we face on the global level as follows: "We have high inflation and unemployment, we has an energy crisis, a crisis in health care, pollution and other environmental disasters, a rising wave of violence and crime, and so on." Fritjof Capra, *The Turning Point* (Bantam Books, 1988), 15.

Greedy human beings are responsible for the ‘excessive’ technological and industrial development. It is excessive in view of the fact that the industrial revolution has led to the contemporary environmental crisis including climate changes etc. Excessiveness in question is also in the sense that material values that we indulge in are not in balance with mental values that we need. The Newtonian world view also led to the advent of modern philosophy. Modern philosophy is, however, responsible for human-centric attitude towards nature that led human beings to do nature harm by viewing her as ‘material’ world.

The Newtonian world view and ‘modern’ philosophy are the same in failing to grasp vitality as the essential aspect of nature as well as human beings. They are also in common with objective approaches. All the objective approaches that seek objective truths pertaining to the external world are bound to be embedded with an inherent problem, namely dichotomy of the subject and the object.<sup>2)</sup> As long as such a dichotomy is not overcome, no one can reach the goal of knowing the world ‘as it is’ or ‘suchness’.<sup>3)</sup> In that case, knowledge that is obtained by the experiencing subject is indirect and is merely a conceptual construction of the mind which is delusive in nature.<sup>4)</sup> In the process of knowing that takes place between the subject and the object there is no room for experiencing immediate insight and vital energy, which are the values that are appreciated with regard to holistic ecological world views. Immediate insight is also the source of ‘absolute knowledge’ that is differentiated from relative knowledge. To the latter belongs rational knowledge including scientific knowledge.<sup>5)</sup>

Capra analyzes in a right way the cause of numerous problems that contemporary global society faces and proclaims “Paradigm shift” in his book *The Turning Point* as a way out of the situation in the post-modern era.<sup>6)</sup> What he

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2) Cf. Capra says about ‘fragmented view’ as in Newtonian world view as follows, but he does not point to the fundamental problem of dichotomy of the subject and the object: “This inner fragmentation mirrors our view of the world ‘outside’ which is seen as a multitude of separate objects and events.” Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics, An Exploration of the Parallels between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed, (Shambhala, 2000), 23.

3) Capra, *Tao of Physics*, 29.

4) R. Puligandla, *Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy*(Nashville, New York: Abingdon Press, 1975), 85.

5) Capra, *Tao of Physics*, 27.

means is the transition from the mechanistic Newtonian world view to the holistic, ecological world view. It is, however, to be pointed out that even the holistic world view can mislead us when it is approached in an objective way. For it is restrictive in terms of validity. Its validity is restrictive because it is embedded with conceptual construction or logical ‘jump’ which is necessary to cover the gap between the subject and the object. Capra finds the holistic, ecological world view similar to the views of mystics of all ages and traditions.<sup>7)</sup> In his book *The Tao of physics* we can see that he focuses on Eastern philosophy in dealing with mysticism. He regards absolute knowledge or higher knowledge which comes from a direct experience of reality or undifferentiated, undivided, indeterminate ‘suchness’ as the core of Eastern mysticism. Furthermore, he goes on to claim that Eastern thought provides a consistent and relevant philosophical background to the theories of contemporary science, which stresses the unity and interrelation of all phenomena and the intrinsically dynamic nature of the universe.<sup>8)</sup> He brings out to light the organic, ecological characteristic of Eastern philosophical world views and analyzes the reason why they have become popular in the West since middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century as follows:

The highest aim for their (Eastern mysticisms) followers – whether they are Hindus, Buddhists or Taoists – is to become aware of the unity and mutual interrelation of all things, to transcend the notion of an isolated individual self and to identify themselves with the ultimate reality...The organic, ‘ecological’ world view of the Eastern philosophies is no doubt one of the main reasons for the immense popularity they have recently gained in the West, especially among young people. In our Western culture, which is still dominated by the mechanistic, fragmented view of the world...many have turned to Eastern ways of liberation.<sup>9)</sup>

As we have seen, the necessity of the investigation into Eastern philosophical world views arises in dealing with the problem of organic, ecological world view. Capra says: “In contrast to the mechanistic Western view, the Eastern view of the

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6) Capra, *Turning Point*, 16.

7) *Ibid.*, 16.

8) Capra, *Tao of Physics*, 26.

9) *Ibid.*, 25.

world is ‘organic.’”<sup>10)</sup> The purport of this essay lies in introducing the Buddhist world view explained in terms of five aggregates as a ‘new’ model of holistic, organic world view that is free from the problems arising from objective approaches and stressing vitality as the essential nature of human beings as well as nature. I insist that the essential aspect of human beings and nature consists in vitality. And objective sciences are bound to fail to deal with the aspect of vitality practically. In this paper the possibility of adding spiritual quality to vital energy by practicing Buddhist meditation (Vipassanā) will be sketched. When vital energy of human beings is elevated into the spiritual level, it can be differentiated from that of animals.

The significance of investigation of Buddhist meditation (Vipassanā) in connection with the task of designing a new paradigm under consideration lies in that by practicing Buddhist meditation one can develop insights into ecosystems. Insights into the principles that work in the ecosystems are, to my mind, important in order to design a new paradigm that is to work in harmony with the ecosystem. What is more, practicing meditation can help to purify moral attitudes of human beings towards ecosystems. Human beings should discard self-centered egoistic attitude and refrain from doing injustice to other beings on the earth as well as to ecosystems. Morality is an important topic for us since lack of morality is considered as one of the reasons for environmental crisis and global stock-market crisis in 2008, which resulted in on-going economic depression and uncertainties. Serenity of the mind that can be developed through practicing meditation is the cardinal condition for gaining insights into ecosystems. It is also closely related to moral development.

## II.

### 1. The Buddhist World View in the Notion of Five Aggregates

The Buddhist world view is reflected in the notion of five aggregates. Buddha analyzes the existence of human beings into five aggregates (*skandhas*), namely (1)

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10) Ibid., 24.

form (matter), (2) feeling (pleasant, unpleasant, neither pleasant nor unpleasant), (3) perceptions (sight, smell, etc.), (4) impulses (hate, greed, etc.), (5) consciousness.<sup>11)</sup> According to the theory of five aggregates, anything a man thinks he is or has must fall into one or other of these five aggregates.<sup>12)</sup> Buddha denies the existence of any unchanging substance. For him five aggregates are the abode of all things – subjective and objective – that come into being. Form aggregate refers to matter (materiality) and other four aggregates pertain to mind (mentality). According to the Buddhist view every one of the aggregates are subject to the law of Dependent Origination. Among the five aggregates, impulse or volition gives rise to karmic impressions that constitute a causal chain of our past existence and our present life.<sup>13)</sup> It means that there is no ‘I’ that manipulates the grouping of the five aggregates. The present notion of five aggregates shows that the objective world and the experiencing subject are constituted by the law of Dependent Origination that works in a correlation of the object (matter) and the experiencer’s mind. The doctrine of five aggregates and Dependent Origination can be interpreted as having not only epistemological implication but also cosmological one. Its cosmological implication can be explained to the effect that the objective aspect of the collection of five aggregates stands for the emanation of the objective world, which depends upon the functional relation of form aggregate to other four aggregates.

The Buddhist world view reflected in the notion of five aggregates is, in principle, an ideal model of holistic, organic world view to the extent that it is not of an objective approach. It has a dual character which makes the Middle path possible. Our investigation into Buddhist doctrine of five aggregates makes us understand that the correlation of the object and the mind of an experiencing subject is the condition for the world of suffering to emanate on the one hand and it is also the abode of the world of *Nibbana* (end of suffering) on the other hand. The Middle path in Buddhism is possible when we refrain from thinking by taking recourse to the polar nature of concepts, e.g. right or wrong, conservative or progressive etc. What is more, the Middle path in Buddhist sense is what originates

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11) Puligandla, *Indian Philosophy*, 65.

12) Ibid.

13) Ibid., 67.

when intellectual thinking as a whole stops. The Middle path that is intrinsic to the Buddhist world view can be explained philosophically in terms of dual role of correlation. Correlation is purely functional and the two correlates are equal in respect of its function. Correlation unites and separates two things. Where there is not separation, there can be no uniting. However, man lays dogmatic claims to one aspect of relation to the exclusion of the other by being unaware of the dual role of correlation.<sup>14)</sup> Being devoid of intellectual thinking is not a sufficient condition for the Middle path. It is to be pointed out that as long as the absolute level of consciousness which is in the form of unified consciousness is not attained, conceptual construction in subtle form can still remain and the problem of conceptual construction is not solved completely.

In this context, one may raise a question whether the Buddhist world view coupled with Buddhist view of human existence as is seen in the notion of five aggregates does not give rise to the problem of subjectivism or solipsism, whether it leads us to right understanding of the objective world. In my view, the problem of subjectivism or objectivism is closely related to the objective approach that presupposes dichotomy of the subject and the object. The Buddhist world view explained in terms of five aggregates as a holistic world view does not entail the problem of subjectivism since the doctrine of five aggregates is based on the principle of correlation of the object and the experiencing mind. The notion of correlation is, as is explained above, free from the problem of polarity of concepts that pertains to objective approach. What is more, the notion of five aggregates is referred to as explaining our feeling of continuity and unity of our experience.<sup>15)</sup>

Now the question arises whether the Buddhist world view represents ecosystems. As is mentioned in the introduction part of this paper, the foremost task facing us is to design a new paradigm in which every section of our society – social, political, economic etc. – functions in harmony with the ecosystem which is holistic in character. In short, we are set out to investigate of the problem of designing a paradigm based on the organic, ecological world view in the light of the Early Buddhist world view. Buddhist doctrine of five aggregates shows that the object becomes divulged in correlation with the mind. This can be referred

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14) Cf. Capra, *Tao of Physics*, 91.

15) Puligandla, *Indian Philosophy*, 65.

to as the microcosmic level of the relation of ecosystems and human beings in case that we interpret the concept of ecosystem as the fundament of the objective world. Our investigation into Buddhist meditation will help us to understand how human beings can become more sensible to changing ecosystems and obtain insights into them by purifying the body and the mind.

## 2. Necessity of Investigation into Buddhist Meditation in the Studies of the Buddhist World View

### 1) A new model of the holistic world view

The ultimate reality is simple. It is referred to as the One. The starting point of philosophy is, however, a bipolar relationship or the distinction between the subject and the object. The One, i.e. the ultimate reality is treated as the problem of world view in an objective approach to reality. The problem of world view is basically concerned with the objective approach to the external world. It presupposes the dichotomy of the subject and the object. The reason why the unified reality is treated as the problem of world view on the one hand and the problem of pure self on the other hand is because the starting point of our philosophizing consists in the dichotomy of the subject and the object. That is to say, the problem of world view and that of the self are not separate. In Buddhist doctrine of five aggregates we find the problem of world view and that of human existence interrelated. They are like the two sides of the coin. The world becomes constituted in the constitution of human existence as is explained in terms of five aggregates, i.e. form (matter), feeling, perception, volition, and consciousness. However, we have to take into account that the problem of logical jump or conceptual construction, the chronic problem in objective sciences, remains unsolved as long as the unity of the subject and the object or the absolute level of consciousness is not attained. In this context we need to conduct an investigation into the Buddhist meditation in order to take a close look at the holistic, organic aspect of the collection of five aggregates. Our references to meditative experiences will help us to divulge the organic aspect of the continuum of changing aggregates that go through transformation in correlation of the object and the mind of the



experiencing subject. In the following I will give a brief account of Early Buddhist meditation called Vipassanâ and go on to explain the possibility of attaining the unified level of consciousness in correlation of matter and mind by practicing Vipassanâ meditation.

*Sati* in Pali language refers to the core of Vipassanâ meditation. It indicates a key skill of Vipassanâ meditation. Rhys Davids coined the term “mindfulness” about a century ago. It is generally understood as connoting attentiveness, awareness, and remembering.<sup>16)</sup> Remembering, in this connection, does not mean dwelling in memories, but reorienting our attention and awareness to current experience in a wholehearted, receptive manner.<sup>17)</sup> Nyanaponika, a Theravada Buddhist monk, defines it as meaning clear and single-minded awareness of what actually happens to us and in us at the successive moments of perception.<sup>18)</sup> According to Buddha’s teaching on the meditation which is later labeled as Vipassanâ meditation, in the compendium of requisites of enlightenment there are four foundations of mindfulness: (1) the foundation of mindfulness in contemplation of the body; (2) the foundation of mindfulness in contemplation of feelings; (3) the foundation of mindfulness in contemplation of mind; (4) the foundation of mindfulness in contemplation of mind-objects or mental objects.<sup>19)</sup> In short, according to *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*, the four foundation of mindfulness form a complete system of meditative practice for the development of mindfulness and insight.<sup>20)</sup> To be more explicit, a practitioner practices being aware of objects mindfully that come and go in his mind and body in order to develop insight-wisdom. These objects can be understood as objects in the four fields of human existence. Detailed explanation of the Vipassanâ meditation called “four foundations of mindfulness”

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16) Cf. Christopher K. Germer, , Ronald D. Siegel, Paul R. Fulton, eds. *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy* (NewYork, London: The Guilford Press, 2005), 6

17) Germer, *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy*, 6. Cf. Chris Mace, *Mindfulness and Mental Health: Therapy, Theory and Science*(2008), Chapter 1.

18) The above exposition of the terminology of *sati* is cited from my article “Mindfulness Meditation as a Therapeutic Method for Philosophical Counseling”, *Philosophical Practice, Journal of the APPA*, vol. 7 no. 3, 2012, Special Issue on the 11th ICPP, 1063.

19) Maurice Walshe, trans. *The Long Discourses of the Buddha, A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya* ( Wisdom Publications, 1995), 335-341. Cf. Bhikkhu Bodhi, general editor, *Abhidhammattha Sangaha, Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma* (BPE, 2000), 278-279.

20) Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*, 279.

will not be given here.<sup>21)</sup>

While practicing Vipassanâ meditation, a practitioner practices discerning matter (materiality) and mind (mentality) mindfully.<sup>22)</sup> Matter and mind here stand for five aggregates that condition our ordinary experience, being embedded with mental modification producing conceptual construction.<sup>23)</sup> As is explained above, matter is referred to as form aggregate and mind is referred to as other four aggregates. On the basis of this explanation one might claim that Vipassanâ meditation is to practice knowing clearly what takes place between the object and the subject and it is not free from the problem of dichotomy of the subject and the object. In the light of meditative experiences to be obtained through practicing Vipassanâ meditation, mind and matter or the subject and the object are to be unified in the stream of consciousness. Monk Khemavamsa's description of his meditative experience in his *Contemplation of the Mind* unravels us that one can go through a transition from the dual state of mind to the holistic level of consciousness. In the portion of the above e-book which is later omitted, it says: "While phenomena come and go rapidly in distance, consciousness remains still independently of the phenomena."<sup>24)</sup> This is understood as indicating a state of unified consciousness independent of the fluctuation of phenomena that is conditioned by subject-object division. It is to be stressed that in the Buddhist world view mentality (mind) and materiality (matter) are of non-dual character thanks to the organic nature of human beings. The non-dual character of the Buddhist world view reflected in the doctrine of five aggregates can be interpreted as implying unity in dual correlation between the material object and the mind. The aspect of the unity can be ascribable to the organic nature of human existence. The non-dual character of the

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21) The meditation method is expounded in two texts *Digha Nikaya 22 (The Greater Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness)* and *Majjhima Nikaya 10 (The Foundations of Mindfulness)*. *Majjhima Nikaya 118 (Mindfulness of Breathing)* is, to my mind, to be addressed to an experienced practitioner. Apart from these primary texts one can take help from secondary literatures like *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy* edited by C. K. Germer et al

22) The Pa-Auk Tawya Sayadaw, *Knowing and Seeing (Revised Edition II)*(Singapore, 2008), 213.

23) Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*, 328.

24) It is my translation as the above-cited portion is found only in Korean version. Khemavamsa, *Contemplation of the Mind* (심념처), 오원탁 번역, 『쉐우민선원의 수행법』(법보시용, 2004), 188.

Buddhist world view which is based on organic human existence represents the holistic, ecological world view to the extent that it reflects the flowing and transcending character – from the empirical to the transcendental – of vital energy that pervades nature. The transcending aspect of vital energy is to be dealt with further in terms of spiritual quality. It will be investigated in 2. 3).

## 2) Vitality as a key concept of the holistic world view

No one would deny that nature is full of vital energy. However, we have neglected its value. I think it is because of the influence of the objective attitude that has prevailed overall since the advent of the Newtonian world view and modern philosophy. We have let ourselves remain isolated from nature which is our original environment and confined to an artificial environment that science and technology created. In such a cultural atmosphere our life energy has often been reduced to physical energy that is merely functional. Everybody shares vital energy that is supposed to be prevalent in nature. However, its quality that is developed by each and every person is different. It can be more in the form of physical energy or psychical energy or even spiritual energy in accordance with each person's life style or mind-set etc. Life energy can be recovered when we are free from stress or psychical problems as well as physical problems.

When we deal with the problem of holistic world view, we should take into account divine level of vital energy. Divine level of vital energy can be characterized by spirituality. Divinity and spirituality are not two different things, but are two labels for two aspects – objective and subjective – of the same vital energy. They can be considered as different verbal expressions for the same essential aspect of vital energy. Ultimate reality is the One in all. It is, however, referred to as objective reality on the one hand and it can be also realized as subjective reality on the other hand. It is because the starting point of our philosophizing is subject-object dual relationship. The former shows approaches in the West and the latter, Eastern approaches. In order to help readers' understanding I bring in this context a reinterpretation of Indian monism of Brahman-Ātman identity that is the central philosophical idea of the Upaniṣads. Brahman is the inexpressible ground of all existence. As a simile, it is like clay, one substance that manifests itself through different forms called with different names. Meanwhile, Ātman is

the inmost Self of man. Puligandla expresses his penetrating insight, “Ātman and Brahman do not refer to two different realities, but are two different labels for one and the same unchanging reality underlying the changing world of phenomena, external as well as internal.”<sup>25)</sup> Vital energy is understood as a complex of the objective and the subjective.

Let us now take into account how Vipassanā meditation comes into the picture in dealing with the problem of vitality as a key concept of the holistic, ecological world view. From the preceding investigation into the Vipassanā meditation it has become clear that the object and the practitioner’s mind are not divided in the stream of consciousness. In this regard we need to focus on feeling. Feeling, one of the five aggregates does not signify emotion, but the mental factor that feels the object. It is, thus, “the affective mode in which the object is experienced.”<sup>26)</sup> The significance of feeling in relation to Vipassanā meditation consists in that a practitioner experiences the object with the whole body so that it leads to integral experiences in the form of feeling of continuity and unit of experience.<sup>27)</sup> To be more explicit, feeling along with sensation is of flowing character. Hence, as a practitioner becomes mature in practicing Vipassanā meditation, his feeling including sensation becomes subtler, his mind becomes serene, and his insight becomes clearer. All these are signs of purification of the mind. In the organic mechanism of a Vipassanā practitioner the functional physical energy can be transformed into spiritual energy as he feels calm and peaceful to fall into the state of concentration (*Samadhī*). Insight is developed with the serene state of mind. The reason why Vipassanā meditation is to be taken into account in dealing with the problem of vitality as a key concept of the holistic, ecological world view is because it helps us to add spiritual quality to vital energy and makes the discussion on the divine level of vital energy possible. Spirituality is what makes human beings differ from other beings on the earth.

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25) Puligandla, *Indian Philosophy*, 203.

26) Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*, 80.

27) Puligandla, *Indian Philosophy*, 65.

### 3) Buddhist Vipassanâ meditation as a means to add spirituality to vital energy

Some may refute that Buddhist tradition has to do with spirituality. In this essay the terminology spirituality is used in the sense of spiritual quality. Early Buddhism of which founder is Buddha is also regarded as a spiritual tradition although it is atheistic in character.<sup>28)</sup> Buddha calls faith, wisdom, concentration, energy, and mindfulness “five spiritual faculties” and says that they lead to the unconditioned, namely Nibbana.<sup>29)</sup> In this context, he explains the unconditioned as destruction of lust, hatred, and delusion. Buddha enumerates various methods leading to the state of the unconditioned, e.g. mindfulness meditation, serenity and insight, the Noble Eightfold Path etc.<sup>30)</sup>

Let us now investigate how Vipassanâ meditation helps us to add spiritual quality to our life energy. Every religion has its own method of spiritual practices. Vipassanâ meditation is totally based on the human mechanism, consisting of the mind and the body. It is, thus, free from religious sectarianism because it has nothing to do with religious beliefs or theistic doctrines. It is of universal character because every human being’s biological and epistemic condition is all the same. If a theist practices Vipassanâ meditation, he will reach the point of observing his religious belief as a mere object and he will perhaps be able to ‘see’ the cause of his religious belief as an object. If he understands that his religious belief arises out of fear or greed for mundane things or whatever it is, his religious belief will become purified.

Vipassanâ meditation practice as is expounded previously consists in practicing being aware of various things mindfully that come and go in four fields of human existence merely as objects in order to develop insight-wisdom. All objects are equal in nature, that is, nothing is agreeable or disagreeable, pleasant or unpleasant, right or wrong etc. Objects are equally existent, but our mind discriminates them as agreeable or disagreeable. Moreover, a Vipassanâ practitioner experiences objects

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28) Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Noble Eightfold Path, Way to the End of Suffering* (BPS Pariyatti Editions Onalaska, WA USA, 2000), 3.

29) Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans., *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, A Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya* (Wisdom Publications, 2000), 1373, 1671.

30) *Ibid.*, 1372-1379.

of mindfulness in the form of sensation or feeling which is of the flowing nature. His mind goes through a transition from a fluctuated state of mind due to distraction by the sensual objects or defilements in the mind to a more peaceful and serene state of mind as he becomes mature in practicing mindfulness.

The lump of five aggregates that constitutes man's existence can be analyzed into four categories of foundations of mindfulness in the context of Vipassanâ meditation. The cause of the lump under consideration is clinging. When a Vipassanâ practitioner practices mindfulness of objects of four kinds, namely body, feeling, mind, and mental objects, wherever the objects in the form of coarse sensation disappear because of the mental force of mindfulness, there appear the objects of subtle sensation. In this way the lump of five aggregates that constitutes man's existence will be dismantled. Dismantling of the lump of five aggregates indicates approaching the unconditioned, i.e. becoming spiritual.

Now arises the question concerning the universal validity of Buddhist meditative experience that culminates in the enlightening Insight Wisdom. My answer is that the content of meditative experience on the absolute level of consciousness that is attained through elimination of the dichotomy of the subject and the object is understandable among people of equal level of consciousness notwithstanding of ambiguity caused by verbal expressions. Being free from the dichotomy of the subject and the object, the content of experience in the state of unified consciousness is knowable by the illuminating power of pure consciousness which is often put in symbolic metaphor of 'light'. As it is not the outcome of activities of reason, it is not a conceptual construction nor a relative knowledge. What we need to develop in order to share understanding of the content of integral experience is sensibility, empathy, intuition as well as reason rather than logical thinking. Logical thinking has its own place.

### III. Concluding Remarks

In an effort to investigate into the problem of designing a new paradigm which is the foremost task facing us living in contemporary times we have involved ourselves with the organic, ecological world view. In so doing, I have especially

brought into the picture the Buddhist world view in order to overcome the problem of conceptual construction which objective approaches of the West are embedded with. It is previously pointed out that when the holistic, ecological world view is dealt with through the objective approach, it can be misleading on account of conceptual construction as a result of the dichotomy of the subject and the object. In sum, we need a model of world view which is not of an objective approach and not subject to the problem of the dichotomy of the subject and object. Therefore, the Buddhist world view according to which the world is constituted in the experience based on the existential condition of a person is taken into account. In other words, the Buddhist world view is constituted in correlation of the object and the experiencing mind or consciousness. Therefore, the problem of dichotomy of the subject and the object does not arise. The Buddhist world view is, thus, introduced as a 'new' model of the holistic world view. It is new because it is not of the objective approach and therefore adequate to deal with the problem of the holistic, ecological world view, whereas the conventional world views in the West are of the objective approach. The benefit we take from considering the problem of designing a new paradigm based on the holistic, ecological world view in the light of Buddhist meditation consists in that we can make spirituality, the supreme value of human beings relevant to our discussion.

When the problem of the dichotomy of the subject and the object is not overcome, even the holistic and ecological world view can mislead us because it cannot avoid mental construction. In my opinion even the latest ecological world view called "systems view" seems to be nothing but an outcome of the objective approach to reality. Systems view regards an organism as a living system and focuses on interconnectedness of parts and the integral aspect of the whole. However, it, analyzing ecosystems comes up with the limited view that systems are intrinsically of dynamic nature.<sup>31)</sup>

In the main part of this essay I came up with the notion that vitality is the essential aspect of living being. Spirituality is what makes human beings differ from other living beings. Systems view doesn't seem to expound the crucial aspect of a living organism, namely vitality and furthermore spirituality. For this reason, I have taken into account the concept of vital energy and the possibility of adding

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31) Capra, *Turning Point*, 266-267.

spiritual quality to vital energy. The possibility of adding spiritual quality to vital energy depends upon attaining unified consciousness in which vital energy of a living organism can be free from barriers to spiritual elevation. For this purpose I have dealt with doctrines concerning Buddhist meditation called Vipassanā. Another reason for dealing with the doctrine of Buddhist meditation lies in the idea that we need insights into the principles working in ecosystems in order to design a new paradigm based on the organic, ecological world view and in this context Buddhist meditation which is intent on developing insight wisdom is quite relevant.

It is to be stressed repeatedly that vitality is the crucial point in searching for a vision of future civilization as our society is prevalent with crimes caused by ignoring the value of life. Such a value can be appreciated when human beings develop sensibility, intuition, creativity as against blind faith in science and technology. In designing a new holistic, ecological paradigm we need not only scientific knowledge but insights into ecosystems. We'd better complement scientific, objective approaches to ecosystems with the insights into them that we obtain through spiritual practices. Designing a new paradigm based on the holistic, ecological world view urges us that all the activities carried out by us in every section of society, whether it is political, economic, or social, should be, in principle, in harmony with the ecosystem. In order to create such a culture majority of people need to pursue spirituality by practicing self-developing methods. Becoming spiritual, one becomes ecofriendly and obtains insights of the principles working in ecosystems that we need in order to design a new paradigm. It will be in line with the enterprise of designing a holistic, ecological paradigm to provide spiritual methods as a part of various educational programs in schools. In that way it can become a part of culture as well.

Considering the holistic, ecological world view in the light of Buddhist world view, I like to point out that when we succeed in designing a new paradigm by way of correlative approach as in Early Buddhism and pursue national development by incorporating it into every section of our society, we will be able to create a unique model of advancement on our own instead of following the suit of advanced countries in the West. In our society various religions are coexisting. Hence it will be hardly possible to take recourse to Buddhist approach alone. Nevertheless,



there is a breakthrough in that the common ground for our discussion on designing a new paradigm based on the holistic, ecological world view as is seen in Early Buddhism consists in spirituality. Spirituality as a value, not as an abstract philosophical concept, is more relevant to “religious” philosophy, i.e. Asian philosophy as Western scholars characterize it. What is more, our discussion on this subject matter should focus on practical methods. Asian philosophies, e.g. Chinese philosophy, Buddhism, Indian philosophy etc. have their own doctrines concerning spiritual life and practical methods to develop spiritual quality. In philosophical circles practical workshops had better be activated more. When it comes to religion, the role of priest, clergyman, monk and missionaries is important. They need to go beyond the level of holding on to verbal meanings of their religious doctrines and should be able to interpret general meaning of their own religious doctrines. Moreover, it will be good if they create an atmosphere for sort of movement of realizing general meaning of each and every religious doctrine in person. Instead of involving with debates, being deluded by verbal expressions we’d better take to realizing divine values in person. In everyday life we find people who don’t clash with someone belonging to other religious circle than his own, in case that he in person appears to be an embodiment of religious doctrines. The more these tasks mentioned above are achieved, the more dialogues between different religions will be streamlined and human societies in future will be more peaceful. The more holistic, ecological world view becomes incorporated into people’s everyday life, the more this planet will become sustainable.

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