

Buddhist-Marxist Perspective of Thai Sufficiency Economics

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Beginning:

Many people know that the Dhamma is or are the numerous teachings of the Buddha – and although some teachings were given to the lay community to strengthen their lives, most of the Buddha's teachings were given to the monastics – people who renounced the materialistic world who need to lead a simple life. Many of these teachings are taken out of the monastic context and developed for application into society – the real world. Economics are the laws governing the householder-life – people with the freedom to develop their lives as expansive as possible, if they wish. This appears to be dialectic – there are two completely different worlds that must balance: the world of the middle-way and the world of extremes; the life of the house and life of the business. When problems arise, people often turn to some ideal-code or guiding philosophy to assist through their strife – and live out contradictions: behaving one way at home and sometimes another way at work.

While Buddhism and Economics can be supportive of each other, the level of involvement is quite distinct. Monks are prohibited from having money, yet for many city-dwelling monks, their lives are spent in decent sized rooms and have all the modern material comforts – some exceeding the levels of many common people in the society. Apart from receiving alms-food in the morning, monks should have little to do with money. On occasion, monks are given money into their alms-bowl by lay-people, and on other occasions monks are given a monetary gift for services rendered in chanting ceremonies, funeral-cremations, house-warming and other auspicious occasions for lay-people. What do they use this money for? Many senior or well-respected monks have private-drivers for their luxury-vehicles, or tour-vans. Needless to say, many monastic people in cities are doing quite well financially, and many temples across Buddhist Thailand are not wanting for materials: computers, mobile phones, DVD-players, air-conditioning, and so forth. They seem far better off materially than many people in lay-society. Being a Buddhist monk can be seen as a venture into upward social-mobility, for many men in society. Today, due to the development of modern society, monks need money for operating costs – but, we should remind the Sangha that it is possible to return to a way of living without money. Rural areas are often areas of struggle, and many of these finances do not reach the periphery. There is seldom wealth-sharing amongst the larger community of bhikkhus. Monks receiving money for ceremonies or almsrounds often use the offering for personal expenses and material items rather than giving it towards their own temple – the true community spirit may have left the Sangha. Rural monastics often must go on city-speaking tours or begging for money for temple-upgrade

projects – going door-to-door amongst the rows of small-shops, asking the shop-owners for donations. We can argue for the existence of personal-greed within the monastic community and we question if these humans are driven by wholesome motivation. We cannot make the distinction here in this brief paper. Urban dwellers can be skeptical over these endeavors: wondering if the monks are truly ordained [fake-bhikkhus, if caught, are often arrested], and remain hopeful that any donation truly reaches its intended place.

The involvement of the government is to disseminate social guidance along material values – in order to bring benefit to the nation. This will be accomplished, as illustrated in the national economic and social development plan, recently discussed. The Prime Minister stated that there are two sections related to humanity in the newest plan: the ability to develop human stability and human knowledge. This is believed by the government of Thailand to bring about greater social justice and equality – during times of social instability. The fear is that if human resources cannot be developed then Thailand might lose its competitive edge, and this could create competition issues and other conflicts. The government has sought income-insurances for the agriculture and industrial sectors, and has also pledged support for young families, disabled, and older people. This 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan is a largely philosophical document – filled with ideas on sufficiency economics. In order for this plan to be successful the government expects social participation and wide-spread decentralization of power. Immunity against unexpected results (risk) is likely through the sufficiency-mode of economics.¹ More concisely, in another speech, Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva stated that the reform plan covers four areas – which are met with monthly action-plans to ensure maximized effectiveness²:

- Enhancing the quality of life and expanding the social welfare system
- Building a fair and equitable economic system
- Building the nation's future through the development of children and youth
- Reforming the judicial system and promoting good governance

He further stated that corporations must take on social programs, in order to meet the social contract between the government, private sector and the general public. People must not only be educated but also have the ability to have mobility into other sectors.³

Fundamentals for Buddhist Economics:

Many people neglect the fundamental principles of economics when they write and they often get lost in abstractions; they sometimes neglect the root principles of economics, or perhaps the origin and function of money and the processes of production

¹ http://thailand.prd.go.th/view_inside.php?id=5204 – accessed on 2 February 2011, article dated: 17 August 2010.

² http://thailand.prd.go.th/view_inside.php?id=5494 – accessed on 2 February 2011, article dated: 2 February 2011.

³ www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRFGZ4WdNgY&feature=player_embedded# - Davos Annual Meeting 2011 – A Social Contract for the 21st Century. The words come from Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, from: 12:09-19:13 minute:second part of the video.

and consumption.⁴ Often we see that economists know little about Buddhism, or Buddhist know very little about economics. If Buddhists had a better understanding of economics, perhaps the Theravada Buddhist nations for example would not be lower on the global socio-economic scale. It may also be known that Buddhists (monastics) are supposed to renounce the world – a world that is now fueled by economics. So, if there is anything to destructure or criticize, it may be the global development of profit accumulation. What can be expressed and illuminated as the most pressing or paramount issue?

We refused to simply look at web-pages and assemble bits of familiar information which just gets revised and screened through our own philosophical discriminations. Poverty should be considered not as contentment [santutthi] or limited desires [appicchata]; real poverty [dadiddiya] is never praised/encouraged in Buddhism. The Buddha said: “for householders in this world, poverty is suffering,” and, “woeful in the world is poverty and debt.” – from Anguttara Nikāya III: 350-352. We are now being led to believe that to only have the minimum or what is sufficient is enough. We are taught to embrace the poverty-levels as our comfort, and explore living within these low levels – because this is sufficient for our existence. Yet while this is preached from the upper-classes who seldom practice the principles, it is those striving insufficiently that are aspiring for social change. How should wealth (profits as withheld wages) be divided between the bosses and workers? Many urban and rural people throughout the nation are employed or involved with wrong livelihoods – yet, regardless of the trade, the Buddha suggested we divide our earned-wealth⁵, as follows:

- One part to be used for conduct of daily life and fulfilling obligations
- Two parts to be invested in or for expanding business enterprises
- One part to be put aside [saved] for the rainy day [when things can go wrong!]

It appears that the owner has been short-changing or manipulating what is truly owed, out of fairness, to the worker and expanses of land, according to Buddhist principles. This article pursues qualities of economic life, beginning with the front-lines of production. From above, we can see what humans have done through reprehensible acquisition and production. We can also see what is apparent from satellite-imagery:

⁴ This was brilliantly illustrated by Professor Dr. Apichai Puntasen, in: *The World's Crises and the Response to the Crises by Buddhist Economics* – published in: Dion Oliver Peoples (ed.): *Buddhist Approach to Economic Crisis – 6th UNLV Conference Volume 4-6 May 2009* (Wangnoi: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2009), pp. 1-27. He was perhaps the first scholar to purely address Economics and Buddhism, sufficiently, as a Buddhist practitioner and a scholar trained in Economics. Dr. Dion Peoples has been fortunate to study under Dr. Apichai Puntasen for courses related to Thai Rural Development, while attending Thammasat University, in 2002. Dr. Apichai Puntasen has also published a textbook: *Buddhist Economics – Evolution, Theories, and Its Application to Various Economic Subjects*, published by Center for Buddhist Studies of Chulalongkorn University Press, in 2008 - Dr. Dion Peoples mandated this as required reading for a portion of his Research and Literature in Thai Buddhism course at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

⁵ P.A. Payutto: *Dictionary of Buddhism* (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2000), p. 150, #162. The source is actually in a verse from the Sigālaka Sutta: “He should divide his wealth in four (this will most advantage bring). One part he may enjoy at will, Two parts he should put to work, The fourth part he should set aside, As reserve in times of need.” – see: Maurice Walshe: *The Long Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston: Wisdom Publications 1995), p. 466 – we can ask: Why is it that Buddhist bosses do not pay their Buddhist employees what they should receive?

from a “God’s Eye View” - there have been few attempts at restoring the environment to its former abundance. It is as Nobel Prize winner Elinor Ostrom suggested: “No one can undertake a complete analysis of all of the potential rules that they might use and analytically determine which set of rules will be optimal for the outcomes they value in a particular ecological, economic, social and political setting. One must recognize that policies involving rule changes must be viewed as experiments. Further, since ecological, economic, social and political settings are always changing over time, no specific set of rules will produce the same distribution of benefits and costs over time.”⁶ There are three prime considerations for looking at local or indigenous wisdom as a development alternative. This would be the form or rationality for the resistance to the domineering mainstream culture associated with modernization. The three are⁷:

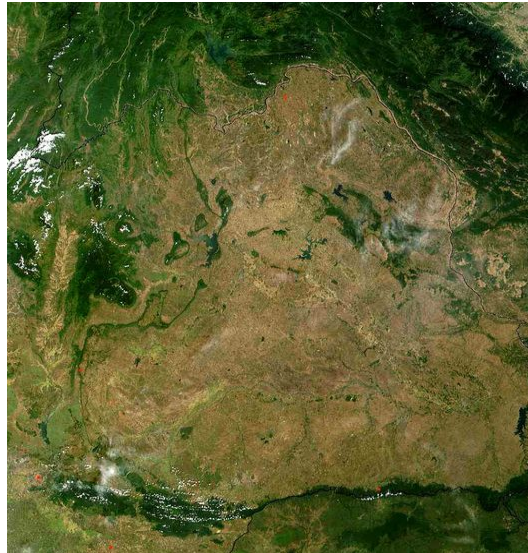
- The coexistence of agriculture and local crafts necessary for self-sustaining life within the village
- Common property-rights to communal land within the village
- Kinship, culture and traditions that dissolved individualism into the enduring community.

These areas could become the most contentious during any impending or necessary periods of social-adaptation. Agricultural-implements (tools) have changed: the plow and beast of burden has already been replaced by tractors. It is further advised that society should adopt a posture of self-reliance and refrain from greed or the desire to become rich. Communities and their people must become satisfied with basic needs and seek richness in the spiritual values – because spiritual values are more meaningful than material riches. Forests and the forest-products were and are essential for life. People must learn to replace their commercially-grown vegetables with edible plants, flowers or parts of trees for consumption. Humans though, since they seek liberation from hard work – aspire more time for leisure: if the forests were strategically restored, a better life for the population unfolds.

Our real solutions to the problems may not be Buddhist in nature, if people must be made to change by force or threat of punishment. Consider the environmental violence, a dearth in restoration efforts, inflicted upon Isan in the photo below - one can clearly see Laos and Cambodia by default, from the absence of trees in Thailand! Does modernization, as currently practiced without regard to Buddhist values, produce agreeable results? Considering humans contributions towards schools of knowledge for thousands of years, it seems unfortunate that many still cannot use or implement advancements in reason and wisdom – reforestation is always necessary to replace fallen timber.

⁶ Elinor Ostrom: *Understanding Institutional Diversity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), p. 255

⁷ Apichai Puntasen: “Agro-Industry & Self-Reliance Strategies in Village Thailand” – inside: *The Village Concept in the transformation of Rural Southeast Asia* (edited by Mason C. Hoadley & Christer Gunnarsson) (Curzon Publishing, 1996)



Karl Marx had a few words to state about this: “In [*pre-modern*] Asiatic societies, where the monarch appears as the exclusive proprietor of the agricultural surplus product, whole cities arise, which are at bottom nothing more than wandering encampments... there is nothing of wage labor in this relation, but it can stand in opposition to slavery and serfdom, though need not to do so, for it always repeats itself under various forms of the overall organization of labor.”⁸ The wage-system replaced the slavery-system, but little has changed in some of these Southeast Asian nations – where cultural-customs are still rooted in these ancient systems of slavery. Today, people are still repressed into this system, through modern terminology: respect for national culture. There are many social-movements in some Southeast Asian nations that seek to liberate themselves of aspects of undemocratic values. Globalization has created another system of codified-slavery, where lesser-developed nations serve as the providers for the developed nations.

Initially, we have to assume that people make economically rational decisions, but that would eliminate ‘risk’ in capitalistic enterprises. It seems very rational that a farmer is thinking that his domestic situation is paramount, and that any excess should be given to the larger community that may have insufficient quantities, otherwise his surplus could spoil and the food or product is now waste. Therefore, giving excess crops to the larger community assists with community building, and by extension, nation building.⁹ If the people in the nation can be taken care of first, then the excess should be sold abroad to benefit the farmer and by extension: the nation. We have moved beyond societies that exploit peasants and slaves – and in modern times, workers need more than just a living-wage to sustain their lives. This is often insufficient-economics. However the learned-in-power seldom relinquish restitution – and they think that they shouldn’t. There seems to be many people involved between bringing the rice from the Thai-farmer to the American-consumer – and we should ask ourselves if all of these middle-men are necessary? Are there more streamlined or economical-methods that could be employed?

⁸ Karl Marx: *Grundrisse* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), p. 467

⁹ Dipti Mahanta: “Bookkumkhaoyai: An Exemplary Model of Buddhist Economy”-inside: *Buddhist Approach to Economic Crisis – 6th UNDV Conference Volume*, edited by Dr. Dion Peoples (Wangnoi: MCU Press, 2009), pp. 83-94

Knowledge is power; miraculously, knowledge leads to wisdom – education is important for understanding or comprehending the management of economic transactions. Towards this aim, noted Thai social-commentator, Dr. Prawasi Wasi stated: “What is wrong with our education system [based on separate disciplines, memorizations and examinations]? Why are we having a harder time when we have arguably better and more expansive educational services?”¹⁰ Humanity seems to have crises when they cannot combine different disciplines towards complicated realities. We have too many problems in our complicated societies. It’s difficult to begin in a single theme, yet people are afraid to step outside of the current paradigm or create new possibilities.

More Contextualization:

Production from local resources for local needs (grow your own, or trade with your neighbors) is the most rational method of economic life, while dependence on imports from foreign nations is uneconomical and justifiable only in some cases because high rates of consumption are involved with transport services. People should dwell near their places of employment; if they don’t work near their places of residence, they become more dependent on consuming fuels. Also if one has to travel far between one’s home and his place of work this signifies a misfortune and not a high standard of life – certainly being stuck in traffic-jams for hours signifies this. Those wandering-encampments that Marx addresses could become regional sites of production to aid in the development of the quality of life for those in these outlying regions. Satisfying human desires from distant places signifies localized insufficiencies rather than success; heavy traffic on national transport systems is not progress; there is a highly undesirable deterioration in the pattern of consumption.

King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand, addressed transport problems, when he stated: “...the market did not work efficiently for small farmers because of high transaction costs including transport and vulnerability to exploitation.”¹¹ Economics is also inspired by ‘demand’ and ‘supply’ – profiting greedily while ‘provisions’ avail themselves to lured-consumers – otherwise capitalists neglect investment ventures or potentials. Population basing economic life on non-renewable fuels [coal/oil] lives parasitically on capital, instead of income – demonstrating impermanence - exploitation of resources should be considered an act of violence. Decentralization from a metropolis to provincial centers could encourage productivity amongst those dwelling in the countryside. Marx has a few words:

“...capital creates the bourgeois society, and the universal appropriation of nature as well as the social bond itself by the members of society. Hence the great civilizing influence of capital; its production of a stage of society in comparison to which all earlier ones appear as mere local developments of humanity and as nature-idolatry. For the first time, nature becomes purely an object for humankind, purely a matter of utility; ceases to be recognized as a power for itself; and the theoretical discovery of its autonomous laws appears merely as a ruse so as to subjugate it under human needs, whether as an object of

¹⁰ Bangkok Post, New School of Learning..., by Prawasi Wasi

¹¹ Thailand Human Development Report 2007, accessed on 26 February 2007, from: <http://www.undp.or.th/nhdr2007/documents/NHDR2007bookENG.pdf>, text p. 27, Adobe p. 47

consumption or as a means of production. In accord with this tendency, capital drives beyond national barriers and prejudices as much as beyond nature worship, as well as all traditional, confined, complacent, encrusted satisfactions of present needs, and reproductions of old ways of life. It is destructive towards all of this, and constantly revolutionizes it, tearing down all the barriers which hem in the development of the forces of production, the expansion of needs, the all-sided development of production, and the exploitation and exchange of natural and mental forces.”¹² There are too many people without the means to make money, and too many people with capital not sharing with others that they, these others, can accomplish something.

There must be capital and the means for production in the provincial-regions. There must be power-sharing (local-provincial ownership of the capital in provincial regions) or decision-making from the provincial regions, otherwise there may be little need to have power being controlled from one national location. Free inquiries into what is being produced and why, and if there are any environmental concerns that need to be addressed – these should be a concern for taking this potential into provincial areas. Without being a part of the franchise – people become alienated, and alternative means are sought. This is similar to what Buddhism can offer to people. There is a common misconception: Buddhism avails itself only towards monks renouncing world – however, for many portions of society – Buddhism is strategically interwoven into every association. Numerous teachings concern the six-senses - suggesting we guard against cravings [tanha – additionally as urges/desires]. However, economics is the science of presuppositions/choice – unlimited wants [if existent], are controlled by scarcity [deficient availability]; scarcity requires choice, choice involve opportunity costs [choosing one over another – consumption]; and the final goal is to maximize satisfaction.

The merchant-capitalist would provide deficiently available items at reasonable prices in lucrative markets [guaranteed success]. Presuppositions state consumption is ruinous – rather, overindulgence or compulsive consumption is dangerous; adequate consumption provides for the well-being of individuals and society; over-consumption through craving [tanha] - merely for satisfaction, is failure. Therefore, correct consumption contributes towards furthering human-development possibilities. According to the venerable P.A. Payutto, there are two major characteristics of Buddhist Economics as the realization of true well-being, in the sense that one will not harm oneself or others – these will lead towards a beneficial quality of life and effective balance with the environment, avoiding problems. The remaining portion of this document examines possibilities towards greater human development – through living with correct-livelihood and sufficient consumption in a non-exploitative manner.

Writing before the financial crisis, P.A. Payutto largely ignores sufficiency-economics; however he illustrates two extremes: non-consumption and over-consumption, mentioning *moderation* and *contentment* as afterthoughts. There are two types of craving: ignorant materialistic cravings [tanha] and wise fulfillments towards social well-being [chandha] – his version of contentment states that people reduce artificial desires towards sense-pleasures, redirecting desires towards beneficial quality of

¹² Karl Marx: Grundrisse (London: Penguin Books, 2005), p. 467

life concepts. Phra Payutto makes no mention of three forms of *santosa* – taken from his own *Dictionary of Buddhism*, pages 125-126:

[ENTRY 121] SANTOSA: CONTENTMENT/SATISFACTION WITH WHATEVER IS ONE’S OWN
1. Yathalabha-Santosa: Contentment with what one gets and deserves to get
2. Yathabala-Santosa: Contentment with what is within one’s strength or capacity
3. Yathasaruppa-Santosa: Contentment with what is benefiting

Putting the chart into words: humanity should accept occurring ethical circumstances while striving towards beneficial capabilities, and abhor anything negligent or unwholesome. While society deserves greater benefits, governments have other desires – internally, a nation disputes over politics. Whether the nation has been operating independently or sufficiently over the centuries, the indigenous/local wisdom has usually carried the Thai people through various crises – now is no different. Apart from E.F. Schumacher’s Burmese experience preserved inside: *Small is Beautiful* (published before King Rama IX’s famous 1974 speech); additional material can be found from P.A. Payutto and Bhikkhu Buddhadasa’s economic writings. Furthermore, there are many Thai professors or civil servants and ex-government ministers who have written theories on sufficiency – many of these have been read for leisure over the years and have not been referenced – and further, few have implemented these strategies at the uppermost levels; while the lower strata of the kingdom is left to struggle with nothing but ideas on sufficiency.

These modern writers are not the first to write on aspects of Buddhist economics. Karl Marx often wrote about the Asiatic mode of production in several texts, and Max Weber has written on: The otherworldliness of Buddhism and its economic consequences.¹³ Weber recognizes that Buddhism is a rational system of religious-ethics, that suggests if someone’s momentary situation is animalistic, heavenly or hellishly – a person creates in oneself: the future. However, Buddhist philosophy, for many in Thailand, is determined to be simple local-wisdom. The Buddha propagated gradual training concepts, involving: morality [*dhammachanda* – as the will, effort, thoughtfulness, and investigation of/into the Dhamma for the purpose of doing correct concepts], concentration and wisdom; The King promotes theories bringing prosperity and progress to the country – to build up gradually, in stages – and implement programs carefully, review and continually improve operations. The King suggests that all good ideas are nothing new and in time, new concepts become old – demonstrating three characteristics from Buddhism: impermanence, suffering and not-self. The Venerable P.A. Payutto suggests again: that our fundamental fears desires and emotions motivate our rationalized economic activities. Consequently, successive new governments uphold the sufficiency-economics philosophy through engaging in economic and commercial ties with the international community, further demonstrating that the theory is applicable to other sectors and organizations in society. The Venerable P.A. Payutto has written that

¹³ Max Weber: *Economy and Society – an Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), pp. 627-630

fear, desires and irrationality are the emotional factors generated when discussing economics¹⁴ - a weaknesses of capitalism.

Concerning work: Buddhist and conventional economics also have different understandings of the role of work. Modern western economic theory is based on the view that work is something that we are compelled to do in order to obtain money for consumption. Often, when we are not working [off-duty/leisure-time] we experience happiness and satisfaction. Work and satisfaction are considered to be separate and generally opposing principles. Buddhism, however, recognizes that work may be satisfying or not satisfying, depending on the two kinds of motivating desire. When work stems from the desire for true well-being, there is satisfaction in the direct and immediate results of the work itself. By contrast, when work is done out of desire for pleasure-objects, then the direct results of the work itself are not so important – like a necessary chore. Buddhist economics expects the capitalistic-employer to serve his staff in these five ways: through assigning them work in accordance with their capabilities, give them due/proper wages, provide care in times of sickness, share occasional luxuries/profits, and to give them holidays at suitable times. Many employers are not fulfilling their righteous Buddhist duties.

To situate ourselves in the contemporary environment, the following should be understood, as a philosophical perspective: Bangkok Post journalist, Sanitsuda Ekachai, has written that many media-outlets are pro-corporate led, are not value-free, shaped by their own national-interests, political ideologies and business. “They are influenced by their prejudice, patriotism, fear and a sense of moral superiority. They are also chained by deadlines and business competition which makes it harder for them to go beyond the surface of a phenomenon.”¹⁵ Upholding growth-oriented economic development is like a religion for those in government; and the media allows them to advertise mega-industrial projects, reporting them as factual, while belittling local-villagers as being anti-development and suggests that their protests are nuisances. These projects are often destructive to the environment and to local ways of life. Often, it doesn’t matter how it makes rich people richer and poorer people deeper in debt and despair – as long as urban people and businesses benefit, projects will continue to draw expendable income. The suggestion extends this to other dimensions with technological access.

University students, for example, can research and promote theories in their respective fields that would support the King’s Sufficient Economic Theory; and the goal of farmers is to add value to the crops (chemical-free) hoping this will yield a greater income. Students and international capitalists are now in their respective stages of learning, and are using the economic publications as the forum for their doubts, seeking to find workable solutions within the scope of sufficiency rather than exploitative economics. There are many dimensions involved at the base – agricultural- level of sufficient economics - but promotion material suggests that a person should know the relationship or compatibility between the plants and soil, as well as the market demand for the crop. There are Three Pillars for Sustainable Development: *Appropriate*

¹⁴ Ven. P.A. Payutto, Buddhist Economics: A Middle Way for the Market Place

¹⁵ Sanitsuda Ekachai, Media’s noble principles and reality, from the Bangkok Post, 8 February 2007

Economic Moderation, Responsible Environmental Consumption, and Society's Resilience to External Shock. Later sections will explain the three pillars for sustainable development; however, a critical examination of sufficient economics is necessary – again, possibly rooted in the Burmese experience.

Sometimes in translations different words or synonyms are utilized. Schumacher asks, what is appropriate [sufficient]; modern Thai officials in various capacities are asking: what is sufficient? ‘Enough’ of these answers are found in Schumacher’s prophetic text. He states that the dual-economy [one for the rich, another for the rural poor – but this should not validate the existence of this structure!] will continue to exist; rural areas must receive attention otherwise causing migration problems; the poor should help themselves using intermediate technologies; and external action programs are needed to develop intermediate technologies, useful for promoting fuller employment in developing nations.¹⁶

King Bhumibol Adulyadej suggest: “agricultural and other techniques should be applied to help the producer to receive returns for the labor, thinking, and capital he has used in full measure, so he can use those returns to raise his standard of living to a more secure level.”¹⁷ This would ensure the farmer has an appropriate and sufficient income. The issue to stress is the necessity for the farmer/producer to receive greater ‘returns’ or profit thereby raising his/her standard of living and the possibility to add greater value to the produce through different agricultural techniques or improvements in technology – possible if the farmer has greater savings/profits and educated to a level where technological improvements and value-added products are achievable. The government should submit to demands and pay farmers greater price-per-yield. If a government cannot achieve this result, perhaps leadership is neglecting to properly apply theories enabling agriculturalists to operate sufficiently – here, this means factoring in also their domestic costs: sending their children to schools, electricity, water, sanitation, medical-care, food, clothing, dwelling-expenses, and other necessary-everyday expenditures.

Good governance is being stressed under sufficient economics – which falls under Schumacher’s theory or The Principle of Vindication: “to vindicate means to defend against reproach or accusation; to prove to be true and valid; to justify; to uphold – so this principle describes very well one of the most important duties of the central authority towards the lower formations.” Indeed, this is just one of five of Schumacher’s concepts. Schumacher has five principles¹⁸ for large-scale organizations [writing in the context for Thailand], and a short summarization of each:

- ***The Principle of Subsidiary Function:*** *higher levels of government must not perform the duties that lower levels are capable of doing for themselves. Officials claim farmers are not capable of entering the global marketplace for themselves.¹⁹ Thus, corporations will likely subsidize villages and command company-loyalty unless a strong middle-class emerges from the next elections.*

¹⁶ E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful*. (New York: Perennial Library, 1975), p. 189-190

¹⁷ Thailand Human Development Report 2007, accessed on 26 February 2007, from: <http://www.undp.or.th/nhdr2007/documents/NHDR2007bookENG.pdf>, text p. 26, adobe p. 46

¹⁸ E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful*. (New York: Perennial Library, 1975), pp. 244-253

¹⁹ Bangkok Post: Somkid Praises Sufficiency

- ***The Principle of Vindication:*** Good governance is always government – no exceptions
- ***The Principle of Identification:*** stresses maintaining ‘balance-sheets’ such as implemented by a young schoolboy²⁰, and a sufficient-community near Ayutthaya – this principle stresses to reinforce success and discriminate against failure.
- ***The Principle of Motivation:*** large-scale operations must operate with justice in order to maintain the interest of the masses.
- ***The Principle of Middle Axiom:*** Top leadership is responsible for everything that happens or fails to happen – even though it is far removed from the actual processes; the center can enunciate the truth it has discovered [drafting the new constitution] and ensures freedoms and responsibilities are not taken from lower levels – and this is considered ‘achievement’.

During the beginning of General Surayud’s premiership, he visited the communists, to ‘mend fences’ and seek their assistance to ease conflicts in society. Schumacher concludes page 253, with: “The best formation of the necessary interplay of theory and practice, that I know of, comes from Mao Tse-tung. Go to the practical-people, he says, and learn from them: then synthesize their experience into principles and theories; and then return to the practical-people and call upon them to put these principles and methods into practice so as to solve their problems and achieve freedom and happiness.” Each member of the public can enhance their own personal wisdom of sufficient or appropriate economics by reading ‘Small is Beautiful’. However, it is understandable that most people are only interested in living day-by-day on meager salaries – hardly enough to live extravagantly – and are forced to live sufficiently by default. The next three sections pertain to one of the three pillars of sufficient economics, respectively.

APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC MODERATION: - sufficient economics’ first pillar is appropriate economic moderation. Schumacher demonstrates this concept: first, the title of his book is called ‘*Small is Beautiful*’, highlighting reduction in scale is necessary; suggesting that large programs are more harmful than helpful. Industrial society has relied on coal, fossil fuels, and soon - nuclear energy. These ‘solutions’ are magnified resulting in larger, more harmful environmental problems. His text was first published back in 1973, some thirty-plus years ago; and as one reads the pages and reflects on world events – nothing has changed. His problems are the same problems that this current generation has been left to manage [to whatever ‘greater’ extent necessary]. In Buddhism, moderation is perceived to be the ‘middle-way’ between the two extremes of austerity and excessively-indulgent in with sense-pleasures. Schumacher suggests intermediate/indigenous technologies that yield adequate material goods while harmonizing with the natural resources and environment. However in this worldly-

²⁰ The Nation, Project to Promote Sufficient Economy

politicized realm moderation has a different shade – and the middle-way has been described as transcending the two extremes towards a higher-unity.²¹

When the government's ministers decide to politically promote moderation, flexibility and caution in economic policies – how sincere are their efforts beyond the signature line if there is no desire to transcend corruption? Schumacher's economics suggests the ABC's: **a**dministrators, **b**usiness-people and **c**ommunicators – these people will promote the appropriate or moderate techniques to the under-educated mass population. The agricultural-producers should grow crops or specialize in crops that respond to the demands of the market. Schumacher identifies three problems, if the urban educated rich-elite communicate to the rural uneducated poor. Again: urban-to-rural; educated-to-uneducated; rich-to-poor; and possibly a fourth – industry-to-agriculture. It, though, is mandatory here to interject that there must be a channel for the lower groups to address grievances to the higher groups – ensuring that there is justice in these processes. There are many problems that have to be communicated to the rural areas – or problems that need remedied in the urban areas, reflectively. Can every scenario become an aspect of the national economic and social development plans – or, are planned economies worthy of additional considerations? The ABC groups should be non-governmental agencies tasked with developing, organizing, and financially assisting to some extent – the village communities. A donor or group-sponsor is needed to pay wages to the assisting 'faculties', because developmental-work cannot proceed if these three components work in isolation.

The farmers are supposed to strive through their hardships (for example and as part of the organization of the new-theory: manage drought through the collection of rainwater in the absence of irrigation) to ensure the cultivation of the crop, and if needing assistance, turn to their neighbors – this increases the community's bargaining power with market-agents; then in the third stage: cooperation with mills, credit institutions or multinational corporations can assist, where possible.

Solutions must be found for the people's hardships – a philosophy of development that evolved from decades of observations and experimentation to ease livelihoods and requires mobilization of ideas and efforts from everyone in the country. The government should only tax those with the ability to pay without hurting their incentive to work and produce goods.²² Also, many Thai's are in the habit of spending lavishly, gambling and drinking to excess – this money be saved or spent for a greater purposes; and as if anyone cares: Buddhism speaks against these acts. Acting moderately and saving more would help them sustain their livelihood. Once everyone has enough to eat and money to live on, then further steps can be taken to improve the lives of the people. The King has demonstrated that the poorest rural area can develop a sustainable economy. Where do people at the urban/rural bases begin to practice sufficient economics? As the King stated: farmers themselves should consolidate into larger community-based organizations – helping each other with production, marketing, livelihood, welfare, education, social

²¹ Ken Jones, *Buddhism and Social Action* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1981), p. 13

²² Chirayu Isarangkun & Kobsak Putrakul: *Sustainable Economic Development through the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy* – p.12.

work and religion.²³ Towards this national education policy, learners must be instructed in virtue & morality; cleanliness; and possess analytical, synthetic & creative thinking. Learners must also know and understand the curriculum; have and nurture a lifelong love of learning; and have an honest work ethic and a willingness to co-operate with others. Learners must be taught discipline & responsibility, to be patient & kind, to be economical, to preserve & protect natural resources & the environment – especially near one’s school, and to respect Thai culture. Learners should be taught – that to solve economic, political or administrative problems – one should know the root cause or begin with the root cause of the problem. Teachers, administrators and learners must work together to not only appreciate virtue & morality as an abstract philosophical concept but to concretize it into a touchable, livable reality - only then can it be properly practiced and performed together with an upright/virtuous leader as an example/good role model.

Education and economic development is also vital to regional socio-cultural growth. Younger people are often not being employed to their potential, due to older generations still clinging to their employment positions – making the government’s recent announcement to induce mandatory retirements a welcomed ‘concept’ for the younger and underpaid generations. The government recently promised jobs to and for southern graduates; it is uncertain at this point if this promise will be fulfilled. Poverty doesn’t discriminate. The Secretary-General of the Council for National Security, General Winai Phattiyakul, stated: “if one doesn’t stay true to the sufficient economy, his life will be doomed.”²⁴ Schumacher insists that sufficient economics is good for the person striving to actualize the principles, but unless they can, for themselves, sort out the details through wisdom, then taking up the philosophy would be self-defeating.²⁵

Additionally, one should assess their personal situation in a balanced and holistic manner [including or involving all of something, especially somebody’s mental, and social conditions, not just physical symptoms, in the treatment of illness] - approaching sustainable development and stressing the principles of moderation, reasonableness, and resilience to change with proper adherence to appropriate social values. Consider the preceding as a Buddhist would strive diligently to eradicate one’s own greed/lusts, hatred/aversion, and delusions/ignorance – this type of assessment is always helpful towards improvements. Furthermore, responsible consumption, the diversification of household production as well as the proper conduct at the individual, community, business and government levels – is emphasized; and this demonstrates the applicability into other non-agricultural sectors in a developing society. One could apply the principles of the Eightfold Noble Path²⁶ for such an exercise in moderation.

It is difficult to define the conditionals: moderate, correct or right – because these may be adapted to different circumstances, differing on different occasions. Knowledge and morality must be applied to all processes – knowledge is knowing how to apply

²³ A religious-belief system helps them understand the realities or truths of their experiences, in the absence of a present authority or an education system.

²⁴ Winai Sets it Straight, Bangkok Post, 9 February 2007, section 1, page 3

²⁵ E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful*. (New York: Perennial Library, 1975), p. 95

²⁶ Many Buddhists already know what these are, but just as a refresher: *--The moderate, correct or right view; *--The moderate, correct or right thought; *--The moderate, correct or right speech; *--The moderate, correct or right action; *--The moderate, correct or right livelihood; *--The moderate, correct or right effort; *--The moderate, correct or right mindfulness; *--The moderate, correct or right concentration.

philosophy to a unique situation – each application is not the same, and should not be the same. There must be effective and good governance to defy the market economy, which tries to run entirely free, in order to eliminate distortions; and to have an honest and transparent government.

Ethical behavior is important and income might become salaried [regulated] – so that people earn money honestly. President Obama, of the United States of America recently legislated that executives receiving government funds are to have their salaries capped at \$500,000. Furthermore, every person is supposed to have equal access to information, enabling market-mechanisms to work freely and fairly. Every scheme will be faced with the following questions: Is it fair? Is it transparent? Good governance, transparency, moral standards, social accountability and private-sector initiatives are important for responsible governments. If governments maintain their course sufficiently, then the national government should have a balanced budget [averaged from assorted surpluses and debts, as well as what is possible through trade – imports and exports] – enabling quality growth without over-stretching national sources (considering: ‘resources’ should be mentioned, but if these are being depleted, there will be nothing to replace what was used – thus no re-source, or resource). Investments should be moderate and non-excessive. The national government will promote and ensure stability and public happiness – they have even participated in the gross national-happiness index. At the same time, the government must commit to existing treaties with foreign nations and ensure investors that sufficient economics is in line with capitalism – to appease the business-class. None of this is easy to get across in societies where there is the freedom to continue to behave as one wishes – the perils of freedom will ensure our lives never get better. Forces of greed, hatred and delusion are running the forces masking as governments. Our societies are governed by these forces. Sufficient economics should also address or respond to the exploitation of globalization, not just pacify the producers. It does seem like sufficiency-economics is designed to pacify the provincial farmers, while the urban-capitalists are free to develop their enterprises as necessary.

What is globalization, exactly? As a description, globalization refers to the widening and deepening [liberalization] of the national & international flows of trade, capital, technology and information within a single integrated global market – to produce the best outcome for growth and human welfare.²⁷ Modern communication-methods have facilitated in the expanse of this endeavor. Capitalism has spread into every geographical region of the world and devours economies under its sway and exploits the local-labor everywhere for private accumulation. Thai’s are being taught to live sufficiently, and to accept globalization – as the exploited-laborers for the foreign capitalists. Many foreign nations have their manufacturing facilities in Thailand. Someone might ask – what are the Thai’s doing for themselves?

Privy Councilor to the King of Thailand, Kasem Wattanachai has stated: “The rich can also employ it and help poorer people practice the principle. The sufficiency economy aims to strike a balance in everyday life, in business, and in national trade.”

²⁷ James Petras & Henry Veltmeyer. *Globalization Unmasked: Imperialism in the 21st Century* (Halifax: Zed Books 2002) p. 11

There was never a mention about the rich people adhering to the principle – of course the system is only applicable for the poorer classes to subscribe to – for their mental-well-being. Is sufficient economics: the ability of the boss to pay the worker as meagerly as possible – sufficiently “enough”, in the sense that the worker is forced to return to work – toiling and slaving – until the next paycheck is given (how long will it be then – when workers become alienated from this form of ‘state-policy’)? Professors cannot afford to purchase the newest books in their field of study, to keep abreast of the newest theories; requests for pay-raises are met with frowns. Schools with international programs have meager resources available; whatever is considered as a library may only be a few books on the shelf – how can the quality of education rise like this? People can’t get everything from the internet – books from abroad are very expensive on lower salaries. Additionally, it is the role of the private corporations to have clearly stated goals and among these is to be a good public citizen through abiding by all the rules and regulations mandated by the government – including the payment of taxes – in order to contribute to society. There are different perspectives and dimensions to be sufficient – from the worker’s perspective, from the bosses perspective, and from the international corporate perspective... Who, how, what... is dictating downwards, the rules for sufficiency? Live for free - as the ancient-ancestors have done?

RESPONSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSUMPTION: Sufficient economics’ second pillar is a responsible environmental consumption. Schumacher demonstrates this concept: through stating the environment provides the greatest material-sources (insurances must guarantee re-sources) for humanity. Thailand has over 40% of the national population involved in agriculture – clearly then, the theory involves a sizeable amount of people. Agriculture-sciences thus play an important role in supporting sufficiency-theories. Some factors involved would incorporate: bio-technology, cattle-livestock, feed-crops, fruits, vegetables, water storage/irrigation, devices, ground-soil manipulation, natural and chemical fertilizers, construction of certain facilities, electricity generation, harvesting of solar and wind energy, and technologies for production and packaging – just to name a few.

The common people can also use the philosophy, starting with self-assessment and estimate how a business can grow in an efficient manner, while not hurting the environment – because sustainable environmental alternatives are urgently needed – adding that the philosophy could not only create income for rural people, but also help urban people save energy and natural resources. For greening a city, planting trees around buildings will reduce cooling charges and give pedestrians shade and pleasing visual aesthetics. When new schools are being built, the administration should consider not ‘removing’ the trees already existing on the grounds, but may consider where to relocate the trees.

One disastrous [in the long run] is swidden agriculture. Slash-and-burn agriculture methods deplete depletes the soil of valuable nutrients and robs the soil of ground-cover – damaging surface soil – and the smoke generated harmfully pollutes the air, as Northern Thai’s found out recently, during March of 2007. Yet, after years of doing this, the society never learns, and continues to engage in this process increasing the levels of harmful particles in our atmosphere. Returning to the soil, this decreases the

ability of water to soak into the soil – instead, generating a surplus of erosion-inducing surface run-off water; there is no organic material left to hold the water as a sponge does, there is no root-systems to grasp the soil together. One study, suggests that the depletion of natural resources, and the deterioration of the quality of rural life was the most highlighted problems the nation faced going into the 8th-10th National Economic and Social Development Plans. Recommendations towards the problem, included: farmers are responsible for self-development – form their own networks; should be self reliant; and be actively involved in greater research techniques – as part of a sustainable agriculture project designed to promote training, improve the local environmental conditions, reduce the degradation of the land, and promote ‘green’ or natural fertilizers/pesticide products. This study demonstrated that farmers create their own networks between villages and share methods that seem to work the best, which demonstrates self-reliance instead of some researcher giving them a set of instructions to follow.²⁸

Schumacher, like anyone who with an environmentally-inclined consciousness, suggests that industries are destroying the world, through their greed. He states: “It remains true... that agriculture is primary, whereas industry is secondary, which means that human life can continue without industry, whereas it cannot continue without agriculture.”²⁹ Important to understand is that the King’s new land theory is an entirely voluntary step-by-step process, considering: social, economic, cultural and environmental factors when determining the best choice of farming systems. Should this proper land allocation now be considered as mandatory when the globe is in this crisis-situation? At the base level, the farmer grows enough rice for the annual family consumption, and perhaps more to account for domestic operating fees. Water can be stored in reservoirs and used later for irrigating fields during the dry-season. Therefore, as part of the land allocation scheme: 30% of the land is reserved for the collection of rainwater, irrigation, farming fish and vegetables that grow in water or ponds – ponds protected from erosion by vetiver grass; 30% for the main crop [crop-rotations to avoiding mono-cropping] – and being able to co-operate with neighbors to find methods for lowering costs and increase bargaining-power; and 30% of the land for growing fruits and vegetables for consumption and for sale – this expansion can be considered along with the concept of local rice-mills and cooperative-stores. The remaining 10% is to be used for the household and raising animals (consider also: fish in the pond; a few chickens for their daily-eggs and droppings for fertilizer – these animals should just be domestic suppliments). There is little ‘industry’ involved in sufficient operations; the climatic conditions of Thailand are quite suitable for agriculture – whereas a nation like the USA [using Schumacher’s certainly-outdated statistics from p.119]: is about 5% of the global population consuming 40% of the world’s resources. It is important for Thailand to maintain its position as an agricultural economy, in order to survive.

RESILIENCE OF SOCIETY TO INTERNAL/EXTERNAL SHOCK: - sufficient economics’ third pillar is the resilience of society (preparation for disaster) to

²⁸ Prateep Verapattanairund, Experiences from supervising a farmer network for sustainable agricultural development in Central Thailand (Eco-Community Vigor Foundation), p. 131

²⁹ E.F. Schumacher, Small is Beautiful. (New York: Perennial Library, 1975), p. 111

internal/external shock. Schumacher demonstrates this concept: that modern man has become monstrous when economically and technologically advancing as if people never mattered; technology needs to have a humane side; and respectfully towards ‘ordinary people’: they are often able to take a wider and more humane view than what is taken by experts. The power of ordinary people, who today tend to feel utterly powerless, does not lie in starting new lines of action, but in placing their sympathy and support with minority groups which have already started responsible and appropriate economic measures³⁰ – supporting projects similar to the King’s Royal Projects demonstrates this, although these techniques are still outside mainstream agricultural or public practices. People have a hard enough time finding the opportunity and money to plant new trees or plots of land to be productive, certainly when living in high-rising housing-projects.

Since the current social situation in Thailand is deteriorating – the standard of morality is lowering – it is not difficult for children to comprehend what is or is not ‘moral’. Virtue should be taught before knowledge, however, because without virtue as a foundation – knowledge becomes useless or dangerous. Morality, then, becomes the bedrock that knowledge and education are built upon. Therefore, it would be counter-productive, destructive and detrimental to society to only have knowledge without ethical roots. Good people perform good deeds and have good consciences. One with a good conscience has a virtuous mind. For Thai people, this should be easy – because nearly 90% of Thai’s nation claim to be Buddhist – many for over 1300 years. These wise principles have been around for over twenty-five centuries - so we should not get lost or be caught without proper direction – the ideas should permeate within society. Dr. Wijit suggests that Thai’s only need to love the King, embrace the Thai way of life and achieve Sufficient Economy – to achieve guaranteed success [*Kusalachanda* – as the wholesome or skillful: will, effort, thoughtfulness, and investigation of and into Dhamma – as the basis for success]. When successful applications are given to other beings – this is known as loving-kindness, or goodwill – the desire for other’s welfare.

Lesson learned thus far: no one should operate outside of financial operability. This puts many farmers at risk, operating outside self-sustainability – the need arises to seek outside employment, while the rice/crops are growing [chemical fertilizers and pesticides temporarily increase yields, while placing greater financial burdens – and harmful effects on humans, the environment, etc... Farmers-in-debt will be forced to rely on private/corporate investment to sustain their livelihoods, and the likelihood that more mono-cropping and chemical inputs will continue to outpace the price per yield.]. Current economic practices encourage farmers to specialize in a single crop, rather than a diversified field – because of the demands placed on the market – or what people are hoping or predicted to buy.

Schumacher and sufficient economics theory suggests, as a starting point, the elimination of degrees of poverty. The Thai government has gone so far as to advertise 5-rai plots of land to needy families. A certain provincial-area already has its own currency to assist locals to keep their wealth ‘internally’. Two websites: www.schumachersociety.org and www.smallisbeautiful.org advise project-

³⁰ E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful*. (New York: Perennial Library, 1975), p. 158

implementation measures and some reasoning behind inspired-actions from Schumacher's economic concepts. Additionally: one purpose of sufficient economics is to alleviate poverty and ensure the livelihoods of small farmers in water-scarce areas – this is all behind the sufficient economy/new agricultural theory. This can only be successful if a household, a community or the village is strengthened from the inside, before being exposed to powerful, external market forces. At the base level, maintaining a household equilibrium, providing for self-employment for members of farming households and to bring food-security and self-sufficiency for these householders – is the important fundamental. If one is operating sufficiently, debt would not occur. To have enough resources would prepare a family for times of strife – drought or flooding conditions. This scheme was developed, particularly though, to assist farmers in drought influenced areas – where water is scarce. Therefore, the propagated determination remains: the possession of rightfully acquired adequate wealth is protection against poverty – certainly aligns with the third pillar of sufficiency. None of this though addresses the conditions of urban-dwellers. 'Correct' livelihood further prohibits employment in the following fields:

- **Trades in weapons** [leading to the death of people, life...]
- **Trades in human flesh** [slavery, prostitution, exploitation of children]
- **Trade in animal-flesh** [selling animals to be butchered, being the butcher]
- **Trade in intoxicating spirits/drugs** [impairs the six-senses]
- **Trade in poison** [obviously leads to the death of life]

Ask yourself: what occupations are involved in the above trades. Buddhists should never do these. What sorts of products are produced in our Buddhist nations? What happens to the levels of employment in Thailand, if these jobs were reassigned or eliminated? Employment, should not endanger or result in the endangerment of life. Additionally, for someone applying a 'correct' or 'non-exploitative' or 'right' livelihood, there are supportive points of Dhamma: *kusala-kamma* – wholesome body/mental actions. Wholesome bodily actions suggest: avoid destruction of life and be anxious towards the welfare of others; avoid stealing/don't violate the right to private-property; avoid sexual misconduct; avoid various forms of bad-speech but encourage harmonious speech – with one's full-senses; through wholesome mental actions: be without covetousness; be free of ill-will; possess right views. Furthermore, because with wholesome actions: adhering to the values, or righteous conduct, provides mental cleansing and may have some positive physical effects as well.

While private-property should be respected or rather redefined, the size should be limited and subjected to further regulations: The *Aggañña Sutta* from the *Digha-Nikaya*³¹, illuminates many economic concepts: a demonstration of rice-hoarding and agricultural plot-divisions leads one farmer to greedily take over a neighboring plot and enjoy the 'fruits' of it, on several occasions. Society decays as a result. Therefore, Buddhism teaches virtues of noble/civilized people, simply: qualities of making one a good person. This is in contrast to eight unwholesome actions:

³¹ Maurice Walshe, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston: Wisdom Publications 1995) – see specifically-named suttas for this and other material.

--Destruction of Life/Killing

--Wasteful Talk

--Stealing

--Covetousness, avarice

--Sexual misconduct

--Ill-will

--False, malicious, harsh speech

--False/wrong views

Lay-people should develop these virtues for a good household/life – *Gharavasa-Dhamma*:

- *[Sacca] Truth and Honesty*
- *[Dama] Taming and Training Oneself*
- *[Khanti] Tolerance and Forbearance*
- *[Caga] Liberality, Generosity*

A layperson should consider these virtues ‘wheeling’ one towards prosperity - *Cakka*:

- *Living in a suitable region/favorable environment*
- *Association with good people*
- *Setting oneself in the right course, aspiring and directing oneself in the right way*
- *Having formerly done meritorious deeds, to have prepared oneself with good background*

There are the infamous *Apayamukha* – or, causes of ruin:

- ***Intoxicants cause:***
 - *Actual loss of wealth; increase of quarrels; liability to disease; source of disgrace; weakened intelligence*
- ***Roaming the streets at unseemly hours:***
 - *He is without guard and protection and so is his wife and children and property. He is liable to be suspected of crimes, subjected to false rumors and meets with a lot of trouble.*
- ***Frequenting shows***
 - *He keeps looking about to see – where is there dancing, singing...*
- ***Indulgence in gambling***
 - *As a winner he begets hatred*
 - *As a loser he regrets the loss of money*
 - *There is the actual loss of wealth*
 - *His words carry no weight in an assembly*
 - *He is scorned by his friends and companions*
 - *He is not sought after by those who want to marry their daughters*
- ***Association with bad companions:***
 - *Gamblers* -- *Cheater with false things*
 - *Seducers* -- *Swindlers*
 - *Drunkards* -- *Men of violence*
- ***Habit of idleness:***
 - *it is too cold, too hot, too late, too early, am too hungry, am too full – and does no work*

While the above appear to be mere lists of Dhamma, they are more: illustrations enabling one to determine the contents in the above lists which enable the reader to apply what is seen, into their own unique experience. What can be additionally apparent, is: many of the ideals of socialism fall under the sphere of Buddhism, and any form of social alienation is eradicated [hypothetically] through the ethical, virtuous society. There are far too many depictions on the front pages of the daily newspapers of gone-wrong persons and events to state that a Buddhist society is perfect. Participation in appropriate economically moderate society would certainly reduce dependency or indulgence in sense-desires, becoming, and ignorance and speculative views. If one is indulging upon the senses, for example: spending outside one's economic capability – one is likely to head for ruin. Purchasing for one's needs and saving for possible expansion falls under sufficiency – operating within abilities.

Reassessment and Conclusion of Sufficient Economics: - Similar to the Buddhist doctrine of **majjhima-patipada** [Path of the Middle Way] – or a way to avoid extremes; when humanity adopts appropriate economics and comprehends that Karl Marx spoke only a fraction or a speck of dust compared to what the Buddha taught; when people employ Buddhist concepts and adopt correct livelihood [its inclusion as one of the factors in the Eightfold Noble Path serves as evidence that there must be Buddhist economics] - then the various sufficiency economics can develop further – otherwise everything is still viewed under a partial lens. People should no longer fear Marxism [known as communism or socialism], but utilize beneficial aspects of its theories to sufficiently develop national abnormalities. What are the economic extremes - is it capitalism and communism? Does sufficient economics equate to a managed capitalist system with socialistic policies in order to prevent foreign exploitation and internal debts, or any other excesses that need to be controlled as suggested and portrayed in the numerous National Economic and Social Development Plans [NESDP] leading to a greater society? As written into the 10th NESDP, for example, sufficient economics advocates step-by-step processes for developing and opening the nation in a wiser manner. In summary of Buddhist Economics:

- Ignorance should be eradicated at all levels throughout the different human cultures.
- Education should be 'universal' and free – in order to assist in the elimination of ignorance and the improvement of human society
- Agriculture should be promoted
- Consumption should be contained through moderation
- Work should be satisfying & conducted ethically and diligently
- Economics should include human and environmental factors.

Another factor for contemplation is: how can we successfully merge Buddhist values or heritage with the benefits of modern technology? Obviously, millions of many urban people live in apartments – how can they live and practice sufficient economics, with no agricultural land – some may never decide. Is sufficient economics for everyone? It is for everyone and is additionally adjustable to fit any situation as a complete system.

H.M. King Bhumibol Adulyadej advocates virtues in accordance with the Dhamma – setting higher standards apart from western-style ‘good-governance’ [merely: adopting transparency; adopting suitable venture techniques, and be available for scrutiny]; the additional measures promoted are: act according to one’s conscious without greed, hatred or delusion – in order to withstand inquiry. Governments – with their various ministries – should be completely aware of the full national ‘situation’; make decisions based on wisdom; be cautious/aware and be able to manage risks. Government earnings, therefore, are distributed to certain ministries that are ready to assist with social-problems – in order to ensure the national development path [10th NESDP] is sustainable. Government agencies are choosing to manage interested parties and apply any benefits to appropriate or needy sectors – this should encourage and strengthen the development of the nation. To have sufficient economics is to have enough – no inefficiencies, no debt, full employment for those wanting jobs – not to have more than what is within one’s capabilities. If one has enough, one need not spend unwisely on unwise/popular projects. Part of the problem is that much of this sufficient economic theory is untested, only a few examples exist in the few Royal Project Initiatives – and a few localized case-studies - saved for another discussion. Additionally, there should be room for constructive criticism, stimulating discussions towards process improvements. Reconsidering the Royal Projects: appropriate measures should be implemented in appropriate areas – because mismanagement highlights irregularities.

Rewind: Understanding the basics:

Humans should be born into this world: free. Are we? Aboriginal or tribal societies indeed demonstrate that humans can be born away from an exploitative-structural system. Buddhist monastics renounce this world-structure, and many of them live an assumed austere lifestyle. It is therefore, a fact: humans can live simple lives void of exploitation – though most don’t. How is this done in a Buddhist community with minimum requirements for humans, in a civil society? We ask for food, clothing, shelter, medical attention and knowledge. Every human must have unhindered access to these criteria. If the family is not engaged with self-sufficient agriculture to provide for its nourishment, the family must have, in a modern society, someone engaged with a profession – involved with the created-culture of money. Here are some more basics: “One can think of a vast and unending catalogue of self-help projects which can be tackled by energetic community action: feeder and link roads in the country-side, small bridges, improvement of water supply, housing, sanitation, construction of community institutions like schools, clinics, community centers, or undertaking economic improvement projects for better agriculture, handicraft, cattle-breeding, poultry, fish-culture and the like, on their own initiative on a co-operative basis.”³² Buddhism suggests that no one in the family engage with employment involving: weapons – because this leads to the death of people; human flesh – such as slavery, prostitution, exploitation of children; animal-flesh - [selling animals to be butchered or being the butcher; intoxicating

³² Important Utterances of H.I.M. Emperor Haile Selassie I (New York: One Drop Books, 2000), p. 47

spirits/drugs – because these impair the six-senses; and poisons - obviously leads to the death of life.

Once someone gains a correct livelihood, according to Buddhism, the household management of wealth should resemble: half going to the business – paying the bills; a quarter for necessary daily items – such as food; and the remaining quarter should be saved. Further, it is the responsibility of the employer to allow for such division of wages; but they often underpay the worker for greater profits. They ask workers to sacrifice for the sake of the company. If the worker is not given a sufficient wage, then the boss is deviant in disseminating employment-compensation.

Let's take a closer look at this aspect of Buddhist economics: according to the principle of *bhoga-ādiya* – the first task the worker should do with his paycheck is to provide for one's family, enabling them to dwell in comfort – and this of course allows for the additional maintenance of his children, workers and domestic-assistants. The second aspect is to share some wealth or wages with some friends. The third factor is to protect the family against misfortune which could be to pay for life or medical insurance or save money in a bank-account. The fourth factor is a bit complicated, involving helping relatives, guests, deceased, taxes to the government, and to deities. The final factor is to provide offerings to monks and spiritual teachers - which could allow them to engage into a pure and dignified holy-life.³³ If we are unable to manage these factors appropriately, we may and should demand our fair and justified portion from our employer. As we can perhaps see, some failings in Buddhist societies may be due to improper allocation of wages, or the all-too-popular disparity in wages – the widening gap between the 'have and the have-nots'. We think in all cases: greed is bad, and we tried to show how the higher-echelon of people exploit the lower echelon people, greedily – for private gains – seldom returning to develop the community in a productive manner. We shall end our discussion here, peacefully.

In conclusion, starting from the highest philosophical authority, to lesser – respectfully: subscribers of the sufficient economic theories should have a good understanding of Buddhism and Buddhist principles that support the concept of sufficiency economics. Suggestions from the King of Thailand should be voluntarily applied to each unique situation; projects have been proven in numerous provinces. Certain government ministries should be granted additional authority, to handle new 'pressures' that will be forced upon them, namely those responsible for: environmental protection measures, conservation of energy, waste management, etc. Furthermore, schools should teach economic theories at an earlier age – and not just the theories of capitalistic development. Teachers might introduce economic courses with middle-way economic theories; followed with Adam Smith and other classical economists as options or examples of autistic-economics, and provide an in-depth look into Karl Marx's critiques of capitalism and theories of alienation as methods for understanding suffering; then move into more modern economic theories which will help the student make ethical

³³ E. M. Hare: The Book of the Gradual Sayings – Anguttara Nikāya (London: Pali Text Society, 1973), pp. 36-37

and moral business decisions supportive of sufficient economics. A mandatory text: Schumacher's '*Small is Beautiful*'.

The implementation of the Gross National Happiness Index would provide the government with a tool to assess recommendations and policy achievements. The feedback of the public is necessary to determine if daily-life is indeed being lived sufficiently at village-level. The village-level is the foundation of Thailand. The village is where everyone returns to during holidays – perhaps these returnees can implement their own village projects to ensure that their relatives and friends are living sufficiently and offer assistance however necessary. Sufficient methods of implementing economics [the philosophy of money for managing one's life, home, and business] begins at an early age – in school. Students should have access to theories and suggestively any school-owned plots of land could be used for experiments: growing crops, developing agricultural techniques, developing the environment, etc... It is certainly impossible to fully develop theories if chances seldom occur to practice the principles. Society will benefit when sufficiency results from people and students applying economic theories, learned from: the Buddha, the King, academics, businesses, government officials, teachers, occupational employees and parents.

Factors of Sufficient Economics for Consideration: Suggestions Derived from Newspaper Clippings on the Theme of Sufficiency Economics

Environment	Social Morality	Economics	Policies	Research/Technology
<i>Development projects must consider the environment: analyze drought, flooding & geographical data differences from successful project & Grow crops suitable to available or necessary water-to-land ratio</i>	<i>Dhamma principles should be adopted, rather than international codes of governance: all sectors - the individual, community, business & government levels should adhere to the principles</i>	<i>Have a National Balanced Development Strategy; Cultivate the Gross National Happiness Index</i>	<i>Agriculture is basic occupation for Thais - restrain over-reaching ambitions; strengthen domestic business; free health care and poverty reduction schemes</i>	<i>National government plans & ensures competitiveness; develops the various sectors through: research & development, energy/water management, logistics, agriculture, education/human development, public health, social harmony, civil service and tourism</i>
<i>Stop deforestation/illegal logging - eliminate slash/burning: Trees prevent mudslides/erosion; Build weirs to encourage forest growth and protect/preserve environment around water areas; -make cheek-dams for floodwaters</i>	<i>In order to persevere or cope with various challenges – people should be: wise, diligent, honest, patience, have integrity – and aware of the pitfalls of mainstream capitalistic/exploitative development models – be prudent</i>	<i>Promote sufficient economic growth through capital accumulation & structural change – it is unnecessary to become an Industrialized Economic Tiger</i>	<i>Manage and develop the economy to keep up with globalization and guard against distorted economic growth; keep balance sheets and compensate or save against overspending</i>	<i>National mobilization of ideas and efforts: Service centers should provide greater access to all agricultural information , methods, and make greater efforts at publishing academic research; observe/learn from successful experiment models - application of knowledge is essential</i>
<i>Revitalize/Restore/develop forest through renewed interest in quality forest crop products; Moderation of species & crop substitutions – stop mono-cropping</i>	<i>Live moderately, mindful – with wisdom and insight, independently, secure and whole; Make rational decisions; People/businesses should be immune/resilient to national [internal] and international [external] shocks</i>	<i>Encourage regional economic growth; liberalize trade, reform foreign investment laws; strengthen small businesses; streamline logistics and energy networks</i>	<i>Encourage non-dependency and protection against globalization excesses, while building external relationships with organizations at various levels</i>	<i>Application of modern technology as appropriate; Step-by-step development- investigate before/after production; reduce costs & dependency on oil through better logistics/ports; more efficient processing and packaging</i>
<i>Conservation of Energy-Use renewable energy-Reduce oil dependency-Protect natural resources; plant trees near buildings to reduce cooling costs</i>	<i>Suited for social and environmental conditions; growth should be in line with capabilities and resources should be used to maximum efficiency</i>	<i>Be flexible and responsive to globalization: knowledge and morality must exist to sustainable business</i>	<i>Government should protect national resources; Supply and demand should be managed; Overturn household overspending and business over-expansion</i>	<i>Accept creativity that strengthens the community and reduces external risks and shock; Consider cultural or sociological differences</i>
<i>Control bio-chemical wastes; bio-waste as fertilizer/compost</i>	<i>Education is important as the art to make people ethical and broaden the basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct</i>	<i>Don't depend solely on agriculture products because of natural & price fluctuations; consider price regulations</i>	<i>Have enough to live on, as first step, later set more advanced goals; seek help with the communists to ease ongoing society conflicts</i>	<i>Material wealth is not the goal – promote middle-path development; diversify household-level production</i>

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