

# Well-being을 위한 새로운 소비와 디자인에 관한 연구

Well-being through New Design System ; scenario building and solution providing from the enhancement of immaterial value

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## 1. Changes in Thought

The American President Truman, who divided the world into two groups; development and underdevelopment areas, conceived the world as an economic arena where nations compete for a better position on the GNP scale. No matter what ideals inspire under-development area, he recognized them only as stragglers whose historical task was to participate in the development race.<sup>1)</sup> After 50 years of this development-oriented world view, we are facing ecological predicament. The environment of our planet earth cannot survive this crisis if we do not achieve a change in our thoughts. A new set of values in life and a broadened world view may be reached by combining the western culture's reasoning and rationality with the eastern philosophy that promotes more spiritual culture. Such change would be the proper position for responding to the crisis in the biological environment.

## 2. Realize the very concept of Well-being

### 2-1. Frugality; enjoy the immaterial value

First, in order to overcome the consumer-oriented society, the developmental goals must be shifted from materialistic things to immaterial things. It is necessary to spread the eastern schools of thought, which focus on improving the spiritual culture rather than maintaining material abundance.

The crisis in environment, biological life and civilization stems from the ordinary human wastes, in other words, the wastes from civilization. The source of this waste is the rapid increase in population and material consumption. In the 20th century, the human lifestyle was expressed as a quest for materialistic values and the explosive desires following those values. However, more important than materialistic values are emotional and spiritual values. In order to solve the problems of environment, it is necessary to realize that emotional and spiritual values are more important than materialistic values. It is necessary to turn away from a greedy lifestyle and to adopt a materialistically frugal lifestyle. The frugality can be a key to well-being. The full value of many goods must be properly used and adequately enjoyed with consumer's experience and imagination requires time and demands involvement. Having too many things makes time for non-material pleasure shrink;

1) Sachs, Wolfgang, 1999, Planet Dialectics, Zed Books, London & Newyork, pp.27-28

an overabundance of options can easily diminish full satisfaction.<sup>2)</sup> One must be able to appreciate the value of things and enjoy them instead of consuming them.<sup>3)</sup>

### 2-2. Positive practices for Well-being

#### 2-2-1 Require the New Design Outlook

In the beginning of the 20th century, Keynes and other economists promoted consumerism in order to have the American economy recover from the great depression. However, various strategies of corporations to speed up the life cycle through intense consumption has resulted in the depletion of natural resources and the shortening of the earth's sustainability. As a result, design has played a great role in bringing about the end of this world through destroying the nature, harming the rain forest, reducing the ozone layer, creating major pollution, increase of automobiles, unemployment rate, increase the disparity between the rich and the poor and globalization.

In the consumer-driven industrial society, designers and corporations have created trends to limit the lifespan of merchandise and to increase consumption. Oscar Wilde<sup>4)</sup> criticized 'popular trends' by saying that they are ugly practices and formalities that require us to change our things every six months. Popular trends supported by high-cost advertisements bring forth sales profits that exceed the advertisement expenditures.<sup>5)</sup> As such, design has not been created to meet practical needs, but to increase the pleasures that one gains from consumerism. Corporations have used it to increase profits, labors have maintained their jobs through it and wealthy consumers have been busy consuming new products as they marvel at the designs that change and improve daily. Considering this, the consumerism of the 21st century must refute traditional theories that promote consumerism. The new consumerism must be based on the new theory that changes the current values of ownership, which allows material ownership to symbolize social identity and wealth. Corporations and designers must lengthen the lifetime of

2) Sachs, ibid, pp. 210

3) Karen, Christensen, 1991, With the earth in Mind, Heretic Books, London

4) Wilde, Oscar, 1988, Suitable dress for women Workers; fashion's pace from OTA, Technology and the American Economic Transition, U.S. Government printing Office

5) Durning, Alan, ibid

products and increase the intrinsic value of merchandise. Consumers must appreciate the materialistic and non-materialistic values of a product. Industrial design must regenerate the content of their lives in the lives of the mass populous as well as replacing the "well-having" with "well-being" to provide joy. We will be able to escape from the material world by using the religious philosophies of frugality in design that can free up the five skandhas<sup>6)</sup>.

### 2-2-2 Design the product as being in itself

Rifkin contends that ownership of property has become increasingly devalued.<sup>7)</sup> Bup-jung, the Korean Buddhist priest, said that we own things out of need, but sometimes end up being concerned because of the things we own. As a result, owning something also means that we become bound to something. To own many things means to be bound by many things. The human history sometimes appears to be the history of ownership. Humans are endlessly fighting to own more than their share. There is no end and no rest to one's need to own. This is true in individual lives as well as international relations. What would happen if human history would change its focus from ownership to non-ownership?<sup>8)</sup> Park, Kyu-Hyeun insists that the 21st century design must embrace the Buddhist theories. According to Buddhist teaching, people often lose their 'serenity of mind' because they become too focused on what they like and want. This means that people can spend too much and lose their sense of self-control because they become lost in beautiful designs that they like and want. The 'distinction of mind' that separates the good from the bad, the liked from the hated and the new from the old triggers the need to own and the wasteful desires. Depending on whether people have the 'serenity of mind' or 'distinction of mind', people can either see goods as things that "exist" and things that are "owned." This is because the serenity of mind sees things as purely existing, while the separation of mind sees things as impure, owned.<sup>9)</sup> Among the Buddhist theories, emptiness theory allow people to see things as existences. We need more Buddhist thinking to be incorporated into design. Because it can question the problems of our society and ultimately support the 21st century industrial design that promotes the New Consumerism and results in the sustainable society.

### 3. Conclusion

We know very well that materialistic wealth cannot bring about human happiness even though the qualities of goods are

6) Five formative elements for the Universe; 色(form, object), 受(feeling, sensory), 想(thought, ideas), 行(will, volition), 識(consciousness, knowledge)

7) Jeremy Rifkin, 2001, The Age of Access, J.P. Tarcher

8) Bup-jung, 1976, Without Possession, Bumwoosa, Seoul PP. 23-27

9) Park, Kyu-Hyeun, 2002, A Study on the Acceptance of Buddhist Idea in Industrial Design, Journal of Korean Society of Design Science, Vol.15 No.2, pp. 10-11

improved as they are designed to make our lives more convenient. A wrongful materialistic wealth can at times mean emotional and spiritual emptiness. Design must lead a movement to reawaken the conscience of ordinary citizens and begin a New Consumerism. Design must play an important part in realizing a true well-being. There were notable changes in the people's view of design at the end of the 20th century. The table below explores many different dimensions of the new 21st century design.

[Table 1] Changes in the values and ideas of design

	Ordinary Product Design	New Design System
Product & Service	Specialization, uniformity, ustandardization, Single-purpose, mass production, short life-cycle, disuse in cases of malfunction, satisfaction from functional efficiency, the symbols of personal lifestyle and wealth	Generalization, diversity, internalization, Multi-purpose, minimal production, Long life-cycle, functional recovery through repairs, satisfaction from emotional experience, co-existence of humans and environment
Process & Methods	individuality, exclusive, internal, intensive ignorance of corporative value and identity, formal in external values, rigidity	cooperative, inclusive, external, extensive emphasis on corporative value and identity, flexible in external values, fluidity
Designer	distinctive, specialist, create the products only reflect and utilize changes,	collaborative, generalist, scenario building & solution providing lead and promote changes,
Consumer	quantitative abundance, chase the external beauty, consume the products and purchase the aesthetic value possession of products (ownership)	qualitative satisfaction, pursue the internal values, access the products and enjoy the aesthetic value free from ownership (sharing, lease)

Design must provide the new vision for new consumerism and effectively carry it out in order to counteract the severe competition for development of new merchandise and the psychology of greedy consumerism. The most important goal of design is to include frugality, humility, sharing, balance and goodness that arises from self-control of the want to own.

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