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Article

The Myth of Regional Economies' Homogeneity and Human Wellbeing: John Gray's Analysis of Economic Modernization

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Abstract: According to the theory of economic modernization, regional economies will ultimately be harmonized in a global free economy and that this global free market that will ensure the socioeconomic interests of all. Through an inquiry into the development of the free market in the mid-19th century of England, John Gray argues that it is not reasonable to expect that all regional economies will follow the same pattern due to their diverse social and political conditions. For Gray, the idea of homogeneity of regional economies is rooted in enlightenment theory that takes the idea of universal civilization for granted, and he develops a critique of this idea of economic modernization. This paper focuses on his critique and explores how human economic wellbeing through homogeneity of economies is utopic, explaining that fostering mutual cooperation to facilitate regional economic growth is necessary for human economic wellbeing on a global level. Mutual corporation is not possible without legitimate and moral ground, and this paper suggests that a broad-based human values system can serve as this moral ground for mutual cooperation. By constructing an economic system based on this ground, economic wellbeing can be achieved in the true sense.

Keywords: economic modernization, global free market, restraint market, broad-based human values

In contemporary political philosophy, it is widely accepted that there is a process of economic evolution associated with the development of technologies through which regional economies will ultimately be harmonized. It is known as the theory of economic modernization. According to this theory, the process of economic evolution will gradually homogenize the regional economies and lead to a single economic culture of a global free

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market. The presumption is that the culture of the global free market will ensure human economic wellbeing.

In analyzing this theory, John Gray identifies that the philosophical foundation of the idea of homogeneity of regional economies is provided by Enlightenment thinkers who believed that the diversity of culture would not be a permanent condition of human life and that a universal civilization would become a reality.[1] Enlightenment thought influenced many thinkers to believe in the idea of universal civilization. These thinkers believe that universal civilization will emerge as a single economic culture resulting from the evolution of various economic cultures. This evolution will lead to a free market economy.[2] It is also believed that the merging of economies is not only natural and inevitable, but also beneficial for overall human interest.

The idea of a global free market has its origin in the tradition of liberal philosophy, which regards individual freedom as good in itself and therefore emphasizes the economic liberty of individuals to pursue their economic needs. Most of the discourses of economic liberalism follow the idea that the free market mechanism provides liberty to individuals to pursue their economic interests, which eventually align with the overall economic interest of society on a global level through a natural process of economic evolution.

Gray argues that the global free market does not arise from a natural order or process of "unplanned evolution." He disputes the presumption that the economic lives of various regions follow the same pattern of evolution that will finally lead us to a free market economy. Gray critically examines the development of the free market in England in the mid-19th century and argues that it was not a natural phenomenon, but rather the political responses to specific social and economic conditions of that time.

This study examines the idea of economic homogeneity through Gray's criticism of the theory of economic modernization. Here are the following questions that will be thoroughly addressed:

(a) How does economic modernization assume economic homogeneity?

(b) Why don't economies of different regions have the same growth pattern?

(c) Why is the process of economic evolution not a natural process and beyond planned human interventions?

Through Gray's critique of the theory of economic modernization, the concepts of economic evolution, economic homogeneity, and global free markets will be analyzed. Through this study, I work out the implications of

[1] John Gray, *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism* (London: Granta Books, 1998), 2.

[2] *Ibid.*, 3.

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the project of the global free market and explore why achieving human wellbeing through the homogeneity of economies is a utopia. I explain how Gray's analysis leads to the argument that the economic wellbeing of the masses requires a facilitation of local markets, which can only be achieved through mutual interaction and cooperation. Finally, I conclude that different nation-states with diverse cultural backgrounds and heterogeneous economic interests can only cooperate effectively if they have a moral maxim based on a legitimate and moral ground. I suggest that a broad-based human values system can serve as a moral ground for mutual cooperation. If we construct a society based on this ground, true economic wellbeing can be achieved.

The Theory of Economic Modernization and Its Weaknesses

Economic interest is one of the most basic interests of a society. Historically, regional economies have been protecting the common economic interests of their citizens. However, in the contemporary industrial world under the influence of ideas of freedom and individualism of Enlightenment, it is widely believed that economic benefits can only be increased and fairly distributed through a free market mechanism. In the modern political and economic system, this position is commonly referred to as democratic capitalism. In this system, democracy and free market capitalism are seen as interconnected ideas that regard freedom as good in itself.[3] The advocates of this idea argue that the free-market mechanism is the most efficient way to allocate resources. They believe that any restrictions on the free market could result in social stagnation.[4]

The concept of a free market is a fundamental idea in most of the Western economic philosophies that believe in an individual's freedom and non-intervention in economic preferences. For instance, Adam Smith advocates a free market as he believes that it is compatible with human nature which seeks liberty to pursue its own ends. He argues that there is a system of "natural liberty" in the free market mechanism, where an individual's self-economic interest ultimately aligns with the overall economic interest of society.[5] In liberal economic philosophical discourses, it is presumed that the freedom to pursue personal interests ultimately leads to the natural harmony of interests and, as a result, establishes the economic wellbeing of society. However, there is a question about the justification of the economic liberalist

[3] Lyman Tower Sargent, *Contemporary Political Ideologies: A Comparative Analysis* (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing, 2008), 112.

[4] Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 40.

[5] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. by Edwin Canaan (New York: Random House, 1937), 423.

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principle, that is, how pursuing personal interests ultimately leads to the natural harmony of interests and thus establishes the economic wellbeing of society. Following the economic liberalist principle, democratic capitalism argues that the process of economic modernization ensures the economic wellbeing of human. The supporters of democratic capitalism believe that economic modernization is an evolutionary process through which the regional markets will ultimately merge into a global free market.[6] They believe that universal civilization, which is the goal of Enlightenment, can only be achieved by transforming regional economies into a global free economy.

Gray analyzes democratic capitalism and evaluates the possibility of transformation of regional markets in the global free market. To challenge the idea of transformation of regional economies in the global free market, he develops a critique of the theory of economic modernization. He argues that the idea of economic modernization has the following presumptions:

(i) The economic life of different regions follows a similar pattern of evolution, eventually leading to a free market economy system.[7] In other words, there is uniformity in the evolution of economies of different regions.

(ii) The process of economic evolution is a natural process leading to a free market.[8] (In other words, the theory of economic modernization advocates for "non-interventionist economic evolution.")

There are two main questions that need to be explored. First, on what ground is it assumed that economies of different regions would have the same pattern of growth? Second, for what reason is it believed that the process of economic evolution is a natural process and is beyond planned human interventions? Gray focuses on these questions and works out its limitations.

The Limitation of the Idea of "Uniformity of Economic Evolution"

As far as the question regarding uniformity of economic evolution is concerned, Gray argues that there is no rational justification for this idea. This idea presumes that the growth of economic life in all regions will inevitably follow the pattern of Western capitalism. It is believed that just as the free market emerged at the peak of Western capitalism in mid-19th century England, following the same pattern of Western capitalism will harmonize the economic dynamics of various regions and, when it reaches its peak, a global free market will necessarily emerge.

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[6] Gray, *False Dawn*, 2–6.
[7] *Ibid.*, 3.
[8] *Ibid.*, 17.

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According to Gray, the dynamics of Western capitalism were the result of the dynamics of the Western society of that time. Since different regions have various regional factors, it is not guaranteed that different societies will undergo the same economic evolutionary process. We can better understand Gray's position by examining the relationship of economic growth with that of the regional factors. For example, Gray cites the United States as an example where the economic dynamics have trended towards a free market due to a weak family structure. Therefore, it is not certain that economic dynamics will have the same pattern in societies with relatively strong family structures.[9] Some empirical research on contemporary economies endorses Gray's viewpoint. Ronald Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker, in their empirical analysis of economic development of various societies, conclude that economic development is shaped by the cultural heritages of these societies. They doubt that modernization will lead to a uniform world culture.[10]

According to Gray, one of the misconceptions about the transformation of economies in the global free market is the idea of uniformity of capitalism. It is believed that the dynamics of capitalism is a universal phenomenon that will ultimately ensure a free market. However, Gray disagrees with this idea, arguing that the form of capitalism in England in the mid-19th century was a phenomenon of specific time and social condition. Whatever the economic dynamics and achievements in favor of the free market, they were a response to that specific situation. Gray argues that the free market of mid-19th century cannot be reinvented because economic conditions and the form of capitalism have been changed. In favor of his argument, Gray provides an example of how governments in the 1980s and 1990s attempted to implement policies of the mid-19th-century free market, only to fail in achieving many of their objectives. According to Gray, these failures were due to the change in economic conditions and the form of capitalism had been changed.[11]

According to Gray, the dynamics of capitalism and change in economic conditions are not due to a coherent evolutionary process. Rather, they are a response to the consequences of social and political conditions. For instance, the emergence of the post-war economy was not due to a regular or coherent series of reforms, but rather a response to sociopolitical and military conflicts of that time. Therefore, Gray argues that it is unreasonable to believe that the dynamics of capitalism is a universal phenomenon. Since the regional

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[9] Gray, *False Dawn*, 2.

[10] Ronald Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker, "Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values," in *American Sociological Review*, 65:1 (2000), 49, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2657288>.

[11] Gray, *False Dawn*, 5.

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factors of a society are not necessarily compatible with another society, it is unreasonable to assume that the economic dynamics of all regions will be the same and eventually adopt a free market economic system. The emergence of the free market in the West was influenced by the consequences of the sociopolitical and economic conditions of Western society of a specific era. It should not be viewed as the peak of so-called economic modernization.

The Limitation of the Idea of "Non-Interventionist Economic Evolution"

There has been a view that the developing free market in the mid-19th century of England was a natural process. This view presumes that economic evolution is a natural process. Gray disagrees with this idea. According to him, the free market in the mid-19th century of England was engineered. He explains that the idea of the free market was itself an idea of a "control economy" based on strategies to secure capital by a specific type of power mechanism. In this way, whatever the idea of a free market had been there, it was engineered, not evolutionary. It was an artifact of power and statecraft.[12]

Bernard E. Harcourt also contends in *The Illusion of Free Market,* that the free market was actually facilitated by the state. He is also skeptical of the idea that the free market is a self-regulating system and believes it is actually a kind of order regulated by state intervention, rather than the result of some kind of natural order. He writes:

> In truth, however, the "liberalization" of markets and "privatization" of industries during portions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries merely substituted one set of regulations, often governmental forms of rule-making, with other regulatory systems that merely favored a different set of actors. There is, to be sure, a sensation of liberation that accompanies the "liberalization" of markets. But it is illusory and serves as a cover that simply renders distributional outcomes more natural. It appears to take the government out of the mix and thereby gives the impression that the outcomes are now based entirely on merit or talent. All the while, the state actually facilitates and makes possible the new order.[13]

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[12] *Ibid.*, 7.

[13] Bernard E. Harcourt, *The Illusion of Free Markets: Punishment and the Myth of Natural Order* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 241.

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Both Gray and Harcourt argue that free market is an artifact of power and statecraft. They contend that the economic development toward the free market in the mid-19th century was the result of state intervention, which involved the execution of power-control to protect capital and its successful accumulation. Gray points out that the transformation of common land into private property during the mid-19th century is a clear example of the state intervention of that time. The state of that time engineered the conditions for a free market through the balance of ownership.[14] That was the use of state power against traditional rights of common land. Moreover, the repeal of the Corn Laws of 1815 in 1846 and the repeal of The Poor Law Reform of 1834 were also tactics for the free market conditions.[15] According to Gray, the cancelation of the act of Corn Law opened the door to agricultural free trade, encouraging free market dynamics. The Poor Law Reform of 1834 amended the old Poor Law, shifting the responsibility to providing relief to the poor from the community level to a centralized state. It was intended to reduce the burden on payers, but ultimately weakened the institution of family, thereby contributing to the construction of a free market regime. Gray concludes that the emergence of free market in the mid-19th century of England was not the result of a long process of social evolution, but rather decisions made by a power structure in special circumstances. Gray writes:

> The removal of agricultural protection and the establishment of free trade, the reform of poor law with aim of constraining the poor to take work, and the removal of any remaining controls on wages were the three decisive steps in the construction of the free market in mid-nineteenth century Britain. These key measures created out of the market economy of 1830s the unregulated free market of mid-Victorian time that is the model for all subsequent neo-liberal policies.[16]

What follows from Gray's analysis is that the free market came about as a result of state intervention in the mid-19th century market economy of Britain. To get a comparative advantage, the state influenced society with

[14] Gray, *False Dawn*, 8.

[15] Before 1846, The Corn Law restricted the agricultural trade so that it could maintain the local needs. But by the repelling of this law, the sole purpose of agricultural trade became the accumulation of capital. That was the first step towards free economy. Similarly, before The Poor Law Reforms of 1834, the old act of 1601 restricted to welfare on local economical basis through community system. While the act of 1834 made the welfare system on the basis of centralized wages system.

[16] Gray, *False Dawn*, 11.

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market forces and played a role in transforming traditional society into a market society. The statecraft created a free market mechanism where market values dominated whole life.[17] He points out that in Europe, the several countries had market economy, but their societies were not market societies because they were not brought under control of market forces. Therefore, it is unjustifiable to believe that the free market phenomenon or the emergence of market society is a necessary outcome of the market economy. The free market was constructed in a special context and with specific motives. That is why, as Gray mentions, it was abandoned because of the emergence of new circumstances from 1870 to 1903.[18]

As far as free market policies of 1980s England and others are concerned, Gray points out that they were implemented in response to the social and industrial conflicts arising from British corporatism.[19] The decision to return to the free market system was also a result of political decision making of the power structure of that time rather than a long process of social evolution. He explains that the period of corporatism in England from 1945 to 1980 led to the imposition of regulation, which in turn sparked social and industrial conflicts. That was the drawback of postwar Keynesian economics. Thatcher's Government responded to the problem and adopted the policies of deregulation and marketization. In this perspective, some of the market dynamics of 1980s England were similar to those of the mid-19th century of England. However, due to the social change in 1980s England, reinvention of the free market was more challenging compared to mid-19th century. What Gray makes clear here is that the political stability of free market in the 1980s has been a problem due to the economic inequalities at both national and global levels. The issue of contemporary economic inequalities is the new political context that ultimately requires new policies rather than just free market management.

Gray is skeptical of free market policies because they are artificial. His analysis makes it clear that there is no rational ground on the basis of which the free market can be established as a natural phenomenon. It was not the result of "non-interventionist" economic evolution, but rather of state interventions. There is a convincing ground for Grey that the free market dynamics of the mid-19th century were shaped by the state power and the free market policies of the 1980s were also designed by the power structures in place to address political problems rather than to protect economic needs in the broader sense.

[17] *Ibid.*, 12.
[18] *Ibid.*, 14–15.
[19] *Ibid.*, 16.

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Regional Economic Needs and Restraint Markets

When we look at the history of economic life, we can see a trend of protecting regional economic needs. To protect regional economic needs, markets are managed and restraints are imposed. Gray argues that restraint markets, which are regulated based on the needs of society, play a crucial role in protecting regional economic needs. They are natural. He believes that statecraft should limit the markets by considering social evolution as social needs are the result of the process of evolution. These needs should be a criterion for restricting the market. According to him, a restraint market corresponds to the "norm of a society," which represents the collective needs of a society:

> Encumbered markets [restraint markets] are the norm in every society, whereas free markets are a product of artifice, design and political coercion. Laissez-faire [free market] must be centrally planned; regular markets just happen. The free market is not, as New Right thinkers have imagined or claimed a gift of social evolution. It is an end product of social engineering and unyielding political will. It was feasible in nineteen- century England only because and so long as, functioning democratic institutions were lacking.[20]

What Gray makes clear here is that encumbered or restraint market can properly be called natural because it emerges as a result of the evolution of the social needs of respective regions. In contrast, the global free market is centrally planned and engineered. He explains that due to the incompatibility of social needs of different societies, global free market policies are imposed. However, the possibility of reinvention of a global free market in the contemporary world is far reaching. Gray argues that in the contemporary world, participation in a democratic process is stronger and more effective than that of the West in mid-19th century. Therefore, the construction of a global free market in the contemporary world has failed. The efforts to implement the policies of transnational organizations, which are designed to keep away the rule and regulation of the free market from interventions of democratic deliberations, have been unsuccessful. The effective role of transnational organizations has become problematic due to the intervention of democratic deliberation in the contemporary world.[21]

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[20] Gray, *False Dawn*, 8.
[21] *Ibid.*, 18.

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Gray argues that the reinvention of a free market would require extensive social engineering to create artificial social conditions conducive to such a market. However, it would not be challenging due to the irreversible nature of many social changes and technological advancements.[22] Furthermore, Gray argues that without a single dominant authoritative institution or nation, worldwide social and political changes cannot be controlled. Therefore, the realization of a global democratic capitalism and a global free market in the contemporary world seems unattainable, as Western institutions no longer hold universal authority in this plural world.[23] Thus, Gray concludes that the global free market is a utopia. Similarly, Kenneth S. Friedman, in *The Myth of Free Market*, points out that a purely free market is just an object of faith and has no reality. No country operates with purely free market dynamics. Each country enacts legislations that serve their own regional social and economic interests.[24] Even the dynamics of the European Union countries' economies, which are thought to accommodate or align to the world's economy as a whole, do not fully align with the principle of economic globalization. Alfred Kleinknecht and Jan ter Wengel, in their investigation, shows that the economic dynamics of European Union countries are more regionally focused than globally connected. The trend of import and export in European Union countries clearly shows it is mainly regional rather than global.[25] This perspective is in line with Gray's viewpoint.

Implications of Free Market Policies

When we consider the implications of free market policies, it becomes clear that these policies have not been effective. They are disintegrating regional economic life. Gray argues that the trade policies and tax reforms of WTO cannot maintain world economic dynamics because they do not align with the reality of regional economies. They impose additional burden on regional economies, ultimately leading to increased poverty at the regional levels. The diversity of cultural and political differences and the differences of social needs make it impossible to harmonize various economies in the global economy. Gray rightly identifies that due to the practical hitches of integrating various political and economic interests, free market policies have created conflicts among sovereign states. As a result, there is now a rise in

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[22] *Ibid.*, 19.

[23] *Ibid.*, 20.

[24] Kenneth S. Friedman, *Myths of the Free Market* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2003), 12.

[25] Alfred Kleinknecht and Jan ter Wengel, "The Myth of Economic Globalization," in *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 22:5 (1998), 637–647, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23600459>.

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opposition to these policies in different political regions around the world.[26] Therefore, eventually, they could be counterproductive for economic security and social wellbeing.

Some studies on economic globalization also identify this problem. In his discussion of the relationship between globalization and development, Shalmali Guttal supports the view that globalization is a political phenomenon shaped by transnational corporations and international institutions in an effort to bring coherence to the world.[27] However, this is met with resistance from the majority of the world population as it fails to deliver economic wellbeing to all. Free market policies provide legal ground for corporations to expand their profit making, often at the expense of the majority of the population who live below the poverty line. Therefore, the presumption that a free market mechanism will bring about economic wellbeing for all is wrong.[28]

Gray's analysis suggests that achieving global economic wellbeing through a global free market is not possible because the idea of homogeneity of economies is problematic. For Gray, the global market is not a result of homogeneity of regional markets, but rather it occurs because of differences between economies.[29] The global market creates competition among the states that ultimately aim at securing capital for the sake of capital rather than for the wellbeing of the local masses. The free market mechanism is based on the principle of profit-making rather than an urge to meet human economic needs. It does not take on the responsibility for wellbeing of all humans.

Gray's analysis leads us to conclude that the idea of distributing economic benefit through a global free market is not justifiable on rational grounds. This is because it is impossible to achieve homogeneity of economies. Since the goal of homogeneity of economies is intangible, the idea of universal civilization through the evolution of the economy is also inappropriate. Gray's analysis makes it clear that the economic interests are heterogeneous. It demands us to tackle the problem of delocalization of the economy which is caused by the widespread of technologies. Gray proposes that, in order to ensure the economic wellbeing of the masses, we should facilitate local markets. According to Gray, it can only be achieved by helping regional economies to grow through mutual interaction. Through the interaction of regional economies, we can access valuable resources needed by specific regional society.[30] Obviously, through this mutual corporation, we

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[26] Gray, *False Dawn*, 20.

[27] See Shalmali Guttal, "Globalisation," in *Development in Practice,* 17:4-5 (2007), 352–531, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614520701469492>.

[28] *Ibid*., 523–529.

[29] Gray, *False Dawn*, 57.

[30] *Ibid.,* 195.

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can share technologies and information that will advance mankind. This would lead to a many-centered world, based on the demands of respective cultures, rather than the uni-centered world based on the utopian idea of economic homogeneity.

The question that arises here is why nation-states with different cultural backgrounds and heterogeneous economic interests would cooperate with each other. Without a moral dictum, it is not possible. The moral principle that can motivate us to cooperate with people of various cultures must be one that considers human economic wellbeing by focusing on a broad-based human value system. This system can make us responsible for helping others. We need a human-centered foundation for economic wellbeing.

Human-centered Foundation for Economic Wellbeing

We have observed that economic liberalism places too much emphasis on individual liberty to compete for self-interest. Proponents of this idea believe that if we do not interfere in individual competition in pursuance of their self-interest in the market mechanism, this "natural liberty" ultimately brings about the natural harmony of interest and thus establishes the economic wellbeing of society. However, we have seen how this idea is a myth. The pursuit of self-interest has not been successful for the economic wellbeing of the masses on the global level. Economic wellbeing requires a mutual corporation among people of a many-centered world. Mere motivation for self-interest cannot provide a ground for mutual cooperation. This corporation is achievable if we focus on a positive view of human nature. Melvin Gurtov highlights this positive aspect of human nature and his potential. Explaining the global humanist alternative paradigm of national and international security, he argues that that despite the cultural and ideological differences, humans are by nature "humanists" as they are innately cooperative and compassionate towards each other.[31] Drawing on these human values, humans can pursue mutual interests and needs across different communities, ultimately establishing a new paradigm of international harmony based on humanism.[32] Thus, we can say that by promoting the positive potential of human nature, the human drive for self-interest can be turned into mutual efforts for the overall wellbeing of humans on a global level.

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[31] See Melvin Gurtov, "Realism, Globalism and Global Humanism in U.S. Policy toward the Third World," in *Asian Perspective*, 7:1 (Spring–Summer 1983), 31–50, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/i40150793>.

[32] *Ibid*., 38–39.

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Those who believe that economic dynamics ultimately results in a harmony between individual interests and bring about the wellbeing of society take market interest as prior and valuable. We see that the interest of the market is based on two basic principles: 1) its self-regulating mechanism for setting prices of goods and 2) the freedom to produce and consume economic goods. However, as Howard Bowen explains, the self-regulating mechanism demands intrinsic "selfishness."[33] It does not consider the human condition, remaining neutral to human values by focusing solely on the relationship between price, production, and consumption. As a result, in this economic system, some individuals become wealthier at the expense of others becoming worse off. Moreover, this system encourages an individual to use more and more economic resources to gain status and power. However, this comes at others' expense, leading to a situation where the profit-seeking of some individuals results in losses for others.[34] Obviously, by doing so, more established markets can diminish or overshadow other markets or economies. This raises the question of how the overall economic wellbeing can be achieved in such a system.

To respond to this problem, Bowen argues that human wellbeing and even a minimum standard of economic wellbeing cannot be achieved without considering human relationships and values that the market cannot recognize. He contends that human wellbeing cannot be achieved solely through market values. Bowen contends that human welfare is possible through a "Humanist Economics," considering human life within the context of human relationship, human freedom, justice, and power dynamics of society.[35]

Thus, there is a need for a human-centered foundation for economic wellbeing. The broad-based human values and positive human potential can provide this foundation. Humans have a positive potential and nature. They are intrinsically cooperative and compassionate. If we promote this aspect of human nature, they can live together by taking care of each other and build a harmonized society. The over-emphasis on striving for self-interest, economic liberty, and free market mechanisms ultimately disintegrates society. This approach constructs an individualistic society where individuals constantly compete and struggle to maximize individual freedom, leading to anxiety and tension. If society is built on the basis of positive human nature and value system, individuals will willingly sacrifice some of their own interests for the sake of others and will experience peace and harmony.

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[33] Howard R. Bowen, "Toward a Humanist Economics," in *Nebraska Journal of Economics and Business*, 11:4 (Autmn 1972), 9, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40472426>.

[34] *Ibid*., 12.

[35] *Ibid*., 24.

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Conclusion

The above analysis leads us to conclude that the theory of economic modernization is problematic. It is based on a mistaken conception of homogeneity of economies. We see how the global free market is not the result of a coherent economic evolution. Instead, it is a political phenomenon created by transnational corporations and international institutions to secure capital for the sake of capital, rather than for the wellbeing of the local population. The idea of achieving human wellbeing through the homogeneity of economies is a utopia. Gray argues convincingly that the overall comfort of human beings can only be achieved by helping regional economies to grow through mutual interaction. Considering why different nation-states having different cultural backgrounds and heterogeneous economic interests would cooperate with each other, we conclude that without a moral dictum, it cannot happen. This study suggests that a broad-based human values system can provide a moral ground for mutual cooperation. If we construct a society on the basis of this ground, economic wellbeing can be achieved in the true sense.

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