

OUR ONLY CHOICE

**A new vision for the long-term survival of
humanity and the Earth**

Haiyun Jimeng

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The harmonious society – Building a liveable world53

Synopsis

Ever since the emergence of capitalism in Europe, material civilization has been growing in leaps and bound; however, even before the applause for the exciting achievements of this amazing civilization have subsided, its side effects have begun to hit us like a landslide! For example, the modern civilization accomplice structure (hereafter the “accomplice”) in the circle of the “electoral process -> social welfare -> enterprise profit,” endlessly impels economic growth and pushes the whole world towards the verge of collapse. Why? The social welfare pie, the quality of which is in turn decided by tax revenues, determines the electoral process; in order to increase tax revenues, the only way is to repeatedly pursue enterprise profit and promote economic growth. Therefore, through this accomplice structural operation pattern, economic growth is strengthened and promoted repeatedly, which forms the universal values of the mainstream culture.

Today, under the banner of economic growth, mass consumption brings massive pollution and global warming; competition and exploitation bring mistrust and strife; and increasing material wealth only leads to increased greed, distorting human nature and, robbing man of his very soul! Under the influence of materialism, the right of mankind to happiness and continued long-term survival is sacrificed for the sake of economic growth! Now is time to strive to turn back the tides, and calmly, fairly, and objectively propose a win-win plan to remedy the situation.

Therefore, in accordance with the harmonious, auspicious, all encompassing, unhindered teachings of the Buddha, we need to formulate a set of core values in which there is no obstruction between principle and phenomena. Corresponding to these values, we propose an economics of spirituality with which to transform economic growth into growth in happiness, material development into educational, and mental, development, and the plundering of natural resources into spiritual

development. The dispirited lives of the social welfare states will thus be infused with spiritual life! Although incomes may not grow, the resulting social structure will be based on “ethics → spirituality → and harmony,” i.e. a harmonious society! This is the only way we can increase the chances for the long-term survival of humanity and the Earth. May all people of this new age work together to seek the path of enlightenment!

OUR ONLY CHOICE

A new vision for the long-term survival of humanity and the Earth.

Haiyun Jimeng¹

Chapter I: The Reality We Face

My friends! Whether you have lived here in the past, or you are going to live here in the future, or you are living here today, have you carefully considered how long we have lived here on Earth? Just what is this world? What sort of a person am I? Is my way of living right? Am I alive? What have I been doing all my life? What do I want to do with my life? Is this the way we are supposed to live? Who am I? Do I know how to breathe? Is my life meaningful and valuable? Are you and I satisfied with the way we are living? How do I evaluate myself? How do I evaluate this Earth, our home? Some people say human civilization is already several tens of thousands of years old; others say that it has existed for millenniums old; others say something else... What do you say?

Section 1: Re-considering our magnificent civilization

Since the Renaissance in Europe, humanism had rapidly spread for 500 years and developed into a scientific and, legalistic world view which in different

¹ Presently the spiritual head of the Da Huayen Monastery.

contexts might be referred to as humanism, anthropocentrism, or materialism. With the support of both the public and private sectors², such a worldview gradually spread around the planet. This life style and social attitude had developed on Earth as the only representative new civilization and could be called the mainstream culture. After the Second World War, the decline of the European civilization and the rise of the US led capitalism further pushed the European humanistic, affluent civilization into a **profit-based realistic civilization**. Profit maximization has become today's US mainstream cultural characteristic!

A comprehensive survey of the progress of world economic development and social construction since the Second World War reveals that the US capitalist civilization plays a leading role. Many people have proudly pronounced that God is dead³ and that man will conquer nature; people are infatuated with the unprecedented achievements of science and feel their incomparable glory and excitement. But, in sharing these achievements and excitement, we also detect under the glaring lights of economic development and society construction, behind the tall buildings of their achievements, looms a profound shadow with a fearful dark side. Along with economic development and social progress, have come uneven resource distribution, cutthroat competition, and all sorts of environmental degradation, all of which generate widespread unhappiness; people suffer from index unceasingly rises and happiness index actually drops repeatedly instead!⁴

² Public sector refers to the government; private sector refers to business.

³ These were the words of the German philosopher Nietzsche, who advocated breaking away from monotheism and redefining all values; but his words have been abused by careerists to rationalize selfishness and the exploitation of others.

⁴ According to the results of the European Happy Planet Index ("HPI") published in 2007 by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) and Friends of the Earth, the European country with the highest HPI was Iceland; England ranked 21st, which was below even Romania. Andrew Simms, NEF's Policy Director and Head of Climate Change and Energy, said that the more a nation's

My friends! Do we really want to trade happiness for economic development? Are we even aware of the inversely proportional relationship between so-called “development” and happiness? Is this kind of exchange normal with regard to the present conditions of humanity and mother Earth? Can humanity bear the huge burden of its continuous economic development and side effects? Before the fanfare of capitalist civilization has begun to fade, its side effects are already hitting us like a ton of bricks! Does this not cause for prudent re-consideration?

Section 2: The reality we face - A vicious cycle

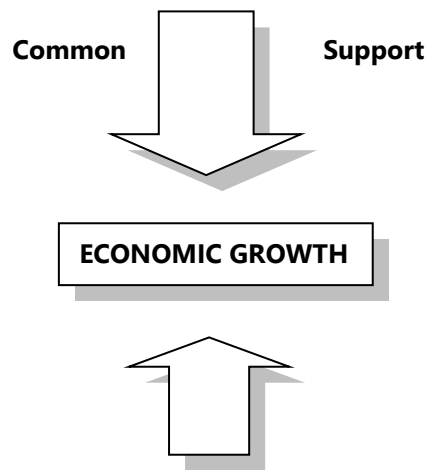
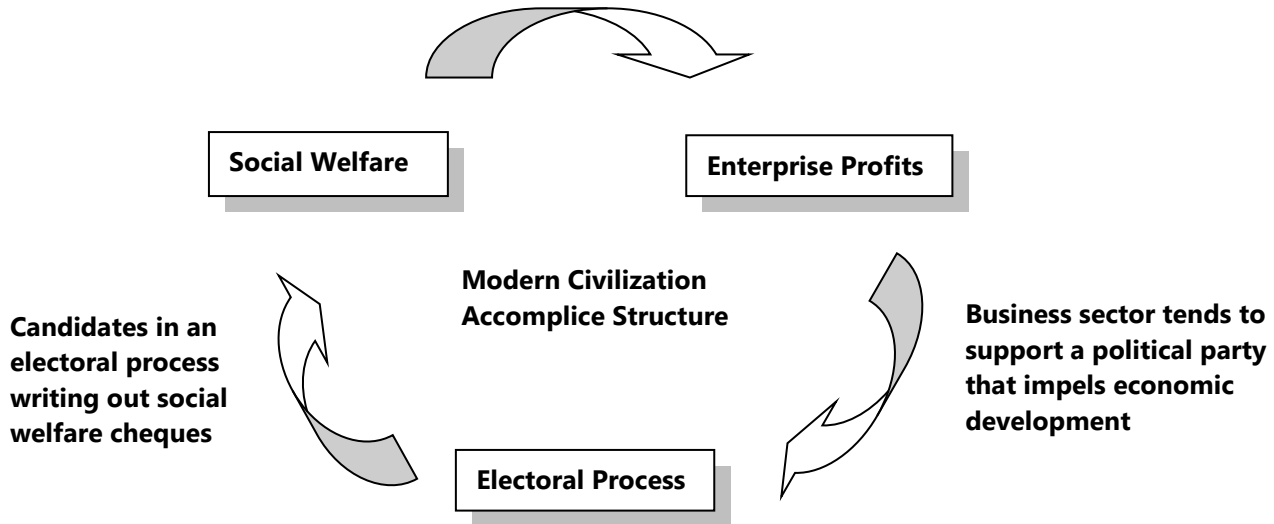
Whether we call this current mainstream culture the US capitalist civilization or high-efficient civilization, its contradictory phenomena are the results of tilted mainstream cultural values. We called it the “accomplice structure or structural deviation of modern civilization.” Such accomplice structure congeals a system of value judgment and social values based on competition, benefit and power.

In Democratic welfare states, this results in a structure comprised of three main factors: 1). the electoral process; 2). social welfare; and 3). business profits. Why? This is because in order to get elected, a candidate must write out attractive social welfare checks; **after the election, in order to keep one’s political promises, one must increase tax revenues; in order not to offend people by increasing tax rates**, the only way to increase tax revenues is to expand business profits. Hence, one is trapped in a vicious cycle requires perpetual economic

economy is market-oriented, the less happy its people are. “We have expended many resources on manufacturing, purchasing, and consumption, but if these do not help to improve the quality life, what good are they?” This is worth considering. Source: Overseas Chinese Net News Center. European Happy Planet Index: Icelanders are the happiest, Estonian people the least happy.

growth. Thus **economic growth is the central goal of a free economy**. This can be illustrated as follows.

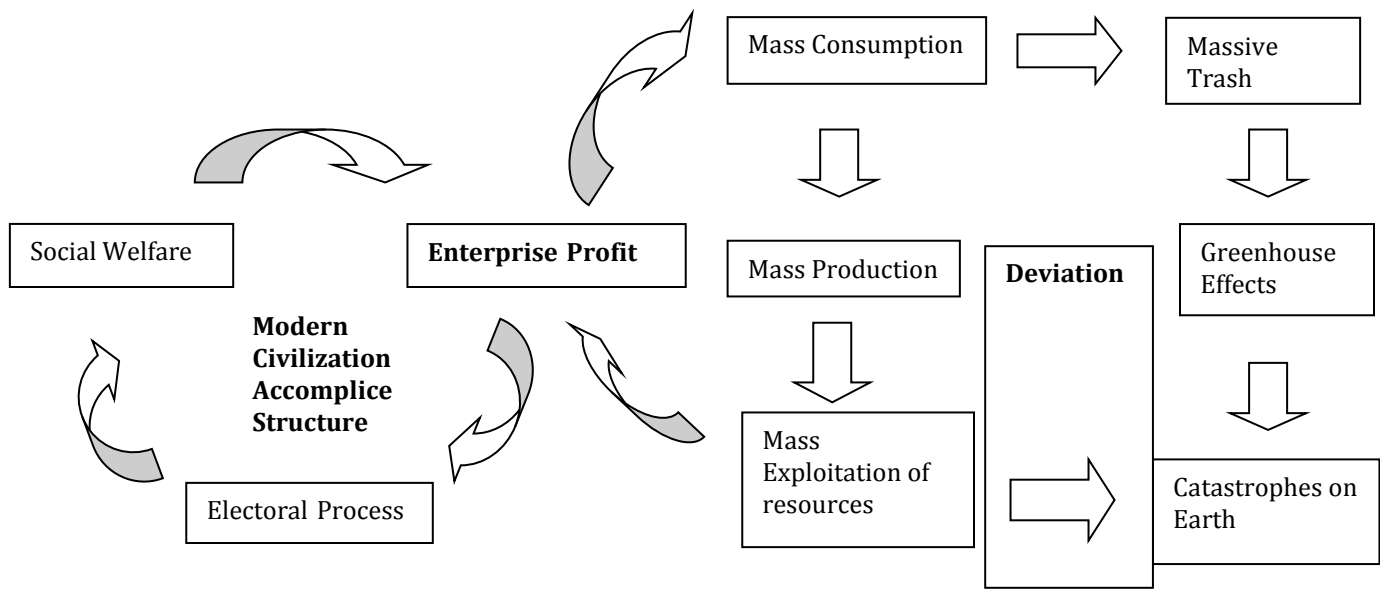
In order to realize social welfare policies, the government must increase tax revenues, which are sourced from profits of economic activities



THE DEVIL THAT DEVASTATES THE WORLD

Today, both developed and developing countries brutally carry out a succession of ignorant behavioural patterns under the full disguise of the philosophy of the accomplice structure. Note that these behaviours and values are caught in this vicious cycle, and this is by no means restricted to democratic or capitalist countries; communist countries also emphasize social welfare, but since this requires capital, the open market economy is permitted and supported to a certain extent. Thus it can be seen that, social welfare and the free economy are the key elements of this vicious cycle. Although, the political system is inevitably part and parcel of this vicious cycle, reforming it will not bring long-term improvement; the key lies in formulating and applying wholesome values.

Did you know that under the accomplice structure, an enterprise must maximize its profits infinitely in order to satisfy its profit-making desire? This desire to maximize profit infinitely is the main cause of deviation! To satisfy the insatiable desires for profits, businesses must infinitely expand their markets and the quantities of goods consumed. The chain of causes and effect is as follows: An **enterprise' infinite desires for profit leads it to promote mass consumption;** mass consumption requires **mass production,** this requires **mass** exploitation of resources, creating massive pollution and such phenomena as the greenhouse effect. This process is illustrated in the diagram below.



“Enterprise profit” is the key element, from which spring free competition, mass production, and mass consumption, which, together with the pay-by-instalment method, causes extensive damage to humanity and the environment. Let us analyze these three elements of modern civilization.

1. **Free competition:** This not only wastes natural resources, but also leads to uneven distribution of incomes and benefits. Because cutthroat competition is the norm, conflict and fear of success or failure abound, placing people under tremendous stress.
2. **Mass consumption:** Mass production must be supported by mass consumption in order to maintain profit. However, mass consumption cannot fully and efficiently use resources and therefore produces massive pollution and, causing large-scale destruction to natural ecology and creating unprecedented catastrophes and irreparable damages to mother Earth. These social values and behavioural patterns based on careless and wasteful use of natural resources not only create social conflicts but also reduce life towards materialistic values and a deviated morbidity.
3. **Pay-by-instalment:** This seemingly great inventions of US culture have in fact destroyed the frugality and stable life style, causing human nature

to appear superficial, imitate popular fashions, and not to treasure existing achievements, and thus trapping the whole society and the individual in restlessness and fear. Moreover, by encouraging indiscriminate consumerism it contributes to the depletion of the resources that our descendants will require, and accelerate the scale of expansion of disasters on Earth!

These three means completely stem from economy of scale based on mass production. Thus free competition is an excuse for economy of scale, mass consumption results from export of mass production, and the pay-by-instalment system guarantees the quantity of output under economy of scale. This is the core principle of structural affection of modern civilization! These three means altogether support one explicit goal, viz. economic growth!

My friends! This accomplice structural affection finds its roots in values based on insatiable desires for profit, which destroys human nature and neglects humanistic values based on humanism. Under such materialistic values, man has recklessly squandered natural resources, recklessly slaughtered animals, recklessly denuded forests, and brought about the extinction of numerous species and is now threatening the natural ecological balance! Such morbid structural accomplice has caused extreme damage to our natural and social ecological balance, resulting in today's natural and man-made disasters!

My friends! Why have human and universal values become so skewed towards competition, profit making, and power? What sort of world do we face? What is the reality? This civilization founded on values of desires and plundering has emerged since the present era of European civilization and has been leading the world's mainstream culture for 500 years. Today, although we don't see plundering of coloured people such as Africa in the past, the plundering of

resources through economic activities is indeed extremely common everywhere in the world. Plundering has changed in form, but not in essence! The rise of Europe, US, Japan and six other such great nations all take competition and plundering as their mainstream civilizations. How can these barbaric acts be the gentlemanly paragons of such great nations? How can we be proud of such civilizations? This is worth re-consideration!

Section 3: Buddhism in universal value reform

My friends! What is the reality we face? Economic growth has become a pervasive value, and is the prime culprit destroying human nature, spirituality, human goodness, and ecological balance. It becomes contemporary world mainstream culture and universal values. With the popularization of this accomplice structure, worldwide plundering attack and defence combats will intensify, avulsion of human nature, spoiling of spirituality, interpersonal callousness, and world disasters will be aggravated. Why? This is because of the core values of Buddhism are harmony, balance, spirituality, humanity, and humane sentiments. The core values are completely missing in the process of formulating such mainstream civilizations. The result is, today's universal values are based on plundering, trapping mankind and the Earth in unprecedented catastrophes!

Fortunately, much of the world's populations and regions are not influenced by such universal values, even though they may suffer from the devastating effects of such economic growth! One-seventh of the world's population (i.e., G7, the world's seven largest industrialized nations) enjoys 90% of the world's resources, but this comes at the expense of the rest of the world population living in poverty and starvation! How can this social welfare achievement be the conscience of technologically advanced countries? Therefore, we appeal that you use the ultimate

guiding principles of Buddhism and Confucius's "Doctrine of the Great Learning" as the basis for reforming universal values and rationally distributing resources, so that everybody may live in stable and safe conditions.

My friends! Why is Buddhist philosophy able to guide the new world's universal values? Indeed, the Buddha's Mahayana teachings have placed primal importance in cultivating and elevating one's spirituality. In order to realize ultimate goodness, Mahayana teachings have specially put forward education compatible with such spiritual goal that emphasizes family and social harmony, and deep consideration for the long-term survival of the environment and ecology. This philosophy indeed has great value in guiding human harmonious social reform. However, during the formation of modern civilization in the recent 500 years, Buddhism was roughly speaking dormant. Regrettably, it has remained stubbornly defensive of traditional Buddhist cultures and has not really concerned itself with the development of universal thoughts and values!

But, my friends! Any crisis can take a favourable turn! In the past, we may have been absent, but now, this critical juncture of life and death is precisely the best opportunity to take positive actions to save the Earth! The recent call of the World Buddhist Sangha Youth (WBSY) for Buddhists to cross-existing boundaries and break through traditional restrictions has resonated far and wide. We must now go further: **our original intent has been to care for all humanity; we must stand firm to reconsider the development of world civilization. Besides exactly identifying the crux of the issues we face, we must propose a new age prospect to preserve the fruits of our present civilization and impel the continued long-term survival of humanity and the Earth.** The realization of the Buddhist Bodhisattva spiritual path is the most concrete proof of such actions to break through traditional boundaries!

Chapter II: The Economic Growth Devastating the World

As we pointed out earlier, the mechanism of the accomplice structure is such that the democratic political ballot is determined by the social welfare pie; the quality of social welfare is conditioned on the tax revenues from economic activities; in order to increase tax revenues, enterprise profit must be repeatedly pursued and economic growth must be promoted. Therefore, through this accomplice structural mechanism, economic growth is strengthened and promoted repeatedly, forming the universal values of the mainstream culture.

Today, the whole world faces such predicaments as uneven distribution of resources, depletion of natural resources, and serious distortion of human nature. Economic growth is the biggest prime culprit; it is the devil that is devastating the world. How so? In this chapter, we shall first deal with how economic growth is destroying the world, and then clarify the philosophical and cultural underpinnings of such behavior.

Section 1: Economic growth and destruction

The wrong thinking and behavioural patterns that economic growth generates have brought total disasters to our three basic constructs of livelihood: 1.) destruction to human nature and spirituality, 2.) destruction to human interactions and ethnic group relationships, and 3.) destruction to natural ecology.

The arrival and expansion of these three big disasters cannot be quantified by statistics such as the GNP (Gross National Product) and GDP (Gross Domestic Product). It is impossible to display these negative effects with statistical representations of economic development and growth. Thus, people repeatedly ignore the existence of such disasters and the fact that they are worsening. Let us look at how economic growth totally devastates humanity in these three aspects:

1. Devastation of human nature and spirituality

Cultivating and elevating our spirituality in order to realize ultimate goodness is the foremost goal of the Buddha's teachings. However, economic growth takes as its criteria external objects instead of spirituality. As a result, people cannot stop feeling worried, empty, and frightened, despite great material abundances. Economic growth has not made people happy; on the contrary the opposite is true⁵, as has been well portrayal in the movie "*Amal!*" In other words, cultivation of spirituality is neither in the central value of the accomplice structure nor in the data of its power and profit structure. We should know that power and profit only benefit a small number of people, but spiritual growth is a natural blessing and right for all humanity. However, we throw away the essentials for the inessentials, and we expend too much only to get a meagre return! This is why philosophers, educators and religious leaders have repeatedly regretted that materialism has eroded spirituality, bringing upon them a sense of resentment and helplessness.

When a society's values run counter to spiritual norms, the systems that they establish are enormously deviated. The worst damage can be seen in education and religious professionalism. Imparting of knowledge is geared towards the pursuit of power and profit, and fails to recognize the value of life or to experience the meaning of human nature. Religious professionalism further harms dignity of life

⁵ The substitution of GNH (Gross National Happiness) for GDP (Gross Domestic Product) was proposed in 1972 by the King of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, who advocated using GNH as the target of national development. On October 27, 2009, at a symposium sponsored by the "Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development" (OECD), experts from various countries came to accept that GDP does not adequately measure the overall development of the human race. It was also agreed that an index based primarily on happiness, including such indicators as degree of freedom, security, satisfaction, etc., should be introduced. This demonstrates that people have begun to realize the primary importance of happiness.

and the value of human nature, turning man into statistical data. Every human being has become a pawn on the chessboard or just some data. One is not free to decide for oneself, but has become a mere material form, devoid of spirituality and lacking divine life, forcing one to live in formal oppositions and ideological struggles. These are the root causes of worldwide conflicts today and of neglecting the functions of mental and spiritual recovery, social acceptance, and praise.

This materialistic accomplice structure has been engineered by political figures, economists, social activists into a formidable devilish economic growth that devours the human soul, his morals, education and religion. How will the common folks able to see the cunning tricks of this dreadful, fiendish devil? Some moralists, educators, and religious leaders even take initiatives in constructing such structure. This makes it even harder for us to understand clearly the root structure of our modern society.

2. Devastation of interpersonal and inter-group relationships

Man is a social animal who lives in groups. Human culture evolves from the interactions of men living in groups into unique cultural systems. In other words, human beings interact with one another through living in groups, forging human interactions, social restraints, mutual coordination and communications that encourage, stimulate, and build this great human culture.

When economic growth becomes the highest criterion of social values, human interactions and deepening of relationships are completely neglected and loathed. This becomes the biggest barrier and devastation to human cultural development! Today, the Hebrew civilization by the rule of law sets law as the criterion. However, law is the by-product the vested interests and legislation is to protect the vested interests. Although it is said that in front of the law everybody is equal, the power to interpret the law is in fact in the hands of the authority. Thus,

human nature, humanity, and morality are neglected; this is the root cause for disappointment! Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that while some judges still uphold the conscience and strive to preserve human nature and humanity, our system on the whole is going downhill, and their efforts are not strong enough to save the desperate crises!

Under the pretexts of law and contract, the concept of economic growth wantonly plunders the resources of weaker ethnic groups to maintain the G7's social welfare, tilting the balance of the overall structure. International trade and the pay-by-installment system further poison interpersonal relationships and the ethnic conventions among various nationalities. The most obvious example is home purchasing by instalment, which breaks up families, causing children to move away from parents, and the issues with the elderly become more serious. Who is the culprit? Economists, government officials, and sociologists euphemize it as "substantial increases in average national housing," but few care about the harm to interpersonal and ethnic group relationships. Other issues concerning kids, teenagers, young people, and married couples also arise as a result, but few care to investigate their causes, and the majority even accept this as the inevitable phenomenon of economic development, euphemizing it as advanced countries, which is totally absurd!

The G7's solution is to deal with such issues entirely through social welfare, which is absurd! The psychological problems with the elderly certainly cannot be solved by building senior communities and geriatric wards. The issue with the elderly is an issue of human dignity that social welfare or economic growth cannot solve! We have also found that all that religious leaders can do is to worry but cannot come up with solutions! The key solution lies in building an environment among ethnic groups that is not based on a social welfare system implemented by legislations, indifferences, and standardizations, a purely materialistic structure

devoid of human sentiments and nature! We need to build a social environment based on human nature, humanism, and human values, in particular human nature and family relationships, rather than showing off material possessions. This is the only way we can restore the brilliance of human nature and the joy of being together among ethnic groups!

3. Devastation of the natural environment

We have only one Earth, and we anticipate it to continually and stably provide us with rich and colourful living conditions. But, today economic growth has wreaked havoc on Earth, exhausted resources, destroyed nature, enlarged the holes in the ozone layer, and produced greenhouse effects, global warming, exceptional weather, rise in the sea level, and plagues, spread of diseases, species change, etc. to the point that mankind are unable to bear. Hence the so-called Kyoto Protocol, which is a better-late-than-never approach with extremely limited effect! Why? The Kyoto Protocol limits gas discharge from terminals, and hopes to reduce emissions so as to dampen the global warming effect rather than dealing with the effects and not with the root causes. We do not oppose any counter-pollution measures, but as long as this world holds economic growth as its values, there is no change to the whole accomplice structure. The end result is that there will be increasingly number of countries joining the rank of polluters of the Earth. How can this call for small energy conservation and carbon reduction match the infinite demands of economic growth? Moreover, the proportional increase in carbon emissions and the degree of pollution is definitely greater than the proportion of economic growth every year, but the effects and targets of carbon reduction and energy conservation are much smaller than economic growth figures! In other words, if this old ailment of economic growth is not eliminated, no additional energy conservation and carbon reduction formulae are able to control

such condition! As a result, attempting to save the Earth from catastrophes in this way is as futile as putting out a carful of fire with a small cup of water!

Therefore, we solemnly appeal as follows: in order for man to save the Earth from catastrophes, he must begin from the root causes of all issues and change social values and communal basic behavioural patterns. In terms of actions, man must **immediately cease to compete for economic growth and must restructure the G7 social welfare system!** Otherwise, the unfair resource distribution and wastage of resources will continue to increase, pollution and carbon dioxide emissions will grow unchecked, and any provisions of the Kyoto Protocol will be reduced to burying one head in the sand. What good does it have? Certainly our appeal is a big challenge to the G7's vested interests, but we challenge them to change anyways. We expect young and educated people interested in protecting the values and meaning of existence of the world to join us conscientiously and boldly forge ahead without forsaking their conscience for the vested interests!

It is extremely clear to us that so long as we cease to compete for economic growth, the free democratic society will collapse; in other words, the G7 nations will bear the brunt! But, our global situation being reduced to one such as we are in today, undeniably the G7 nations are the biggest secret evil manipulators behind-the-scenes! Moreover, the majority of resources are not evenly distributed among G7 countries, with a greater majority of resources controlled by 20% of people. Do you not see how financial investors on Wall Street play with their modern economic accomplice structural prawns? What can you do about them? Thus, the only way is to reshuffle the cards, start afresh, layout new world values, and let man restore his fundamental aspects based on human nature, humanism, and human values. Only then will our Earth become pure, serene, stable, harmonious, balanced, and everlastingly bountiful again!

In brief, stop competition in economic growth and the Earth and humanity will have a chance to revive, but there will be a huge reshuffle effect in the human and economic society! The development of Hebrew civilization⁶ until now has only made a small percentage of people powerful, but has let the majority sink into an abyss of pain; for 500 years, people could not deal with the global situation but have fallen deeper and deeper to the point of annihilating the whole world. Hence, we cannot stand by anymore; we can no longer feel dreadful about people in power and the mighty currents of the mainstream values; we must break through the calm and complacent barriers of traditional Buddhism that separated us from the rest of the world; we must raise a hue and cry saying: “We are here!” “We will not be absent!” “We will deliver the world from crises and reset a new direction for the world!” We earnestly hope to propose a plan to save the world! Young and educated Buddhists of today! Where do you stand on protecting the values and meaning of existence of the world? Please boldly come forward! This is the spirit and way of the Bodhisattva!

Our motive for such suggestions is not to be vehement critics of or punish the G7 nations; in fact, we are not interested in punishing anyone. We intend to identify the crux of global issues of our time. More importantly, we intend to find new world values whereby people everywhere on Earth will live peacefully and happily, a truly feasible plan to save the world; we intend to change the operation patterns by which a small number of people arbitrarily control all resources and power, and wilfully let this devilish economic growth devastate human nature and the environment. Such operation patterns are no different from annihilating the

⁶ The Hebrew civilization was born in Palestine, where the local Hebrew established Judaism, which significantly influenced the formation of early Christianity and Islam. Later, the Hebrew civilization was regarded as one of the origins of western European civilizations, which were strategic to the Industrial Revolution and the development of capitalism.

whole world; not even the G7 nations will be spared from global disasters! In other words, under economic growth the devil rules and no one is a winner!

Therefore, we need urgently to propose a plan to save the world, a win-win plan that will help all nations including the G7 nations, to eliminate poverty, environmental pollution, and rebuild a world where people are happy and spiritual and no longer feel helpless, frustration, fear and other suffering! This win-win plan is to realize the Bodhisattva spirit of using compassion to save all living things without discriminating anyone!

Section 2: Modern economic thought and practice

Before we propose our plan however, in order to get to the crux of the problem that let the whole world deviate, we need first to analyze the philosophies and operation patterns of modern economics and their origins.

One may say that all of economics and its history have avoided, overlooked, or played down human nature and conscience altogether, and are based on such trends as materialism, profit, and quantification that are misleading to human nature. Why? All economic assumptions take “desires” as their premise and reduce complex human nature to the “pursuit of highest profit!” Human desires are thus infinitely expanded but conscience completely left out of theories and formulae; these assumptions mislead researchers repeatedly and misguide everyone towards plundering of resources, causing the human soul to fall! In other words, under the premise of economic growth, human lives, human nature, everyday living, human culture, humanism, and human values, etc., have become materialistic and are absolutely negated. Moreover, the vested interests have used legislation, the rule of law, and the power of language to sink human nature into the Bermuda triangle!

From an economic standpoint, “economy of desires” and “economy of scarcity” differ only in our attitude towards utilization of natural resources! Since its proposal, economy of scarcity has been implemented for decades but man's universal values have been progressively worsening. Natural resource consumption has not economized as the economists have expected. We may have a few extra clever recycling schemes, but large quantities of products from clothing to automobiles, home appliances, notebook computers are being renewed and made obsolete in terms of designs, fittings, selection of materials, bringing massive wastes and making all products incompatible. This is the ferocious look of the economic growth devil that turns natural resources into peoples' family wastes: whether clothing, name brand handbags, home appliances, battery chargers, batteries, etc. are a big pile of wastes. Is this all to show the fruit of economic growth?

Since the US 1929 Great Depression and after John Maynard Keynes proposed his “General Theory” in 1936, the accomplice structure had found its theoretical basis and was widely implemented. This was a US civilization masterpiece! Later Paul A. Samuelson and others also repeatedly proposed theories of economic development and economic cycle, which have become common concepts of today, whose validity few people would seriously question.

You may not have noticed that every economic boom and recovery comes only from the discovery of new resources, new worlds, new colonies, and new plundering but the electronics industries of this era are only emerging bubble shows! The 2008 global financial crisis has proven that the Hebrew universal values are completely unrealistic, with unstable foundations. Do we wait until all systems and resources have broken down completely before we re-consider our situation?

Today we widely implement a system of economics that avoids the human conscience and makes human nature orient towards materials and desires, and which is combined with the effects of the accomplice structure. This is a great boost to harming human nature, isolating people, and plundering resources. However, economics has its own origins.

Section 3: Economic growth as the root cause of hegemonism

The birth of this economic growth devil is expedited by the accomplice structure, which is generated from the distorted philosophies of hegemonism and plunderage of the Hebrew civilization.

The formation of core values of a civilization inevitably has its profound philosophical and cultural context. There were priests who performed sacrifices and official historians in China, Brahmins in India, popes and bishops in Europe and the US, which present the historical context on which such core values depend. Since we discussed how the present universal values deviate and the part that we must rectify, we must also discuss the root of these philosophies. Our goal is not to criticize and accuse anyone, but to find the key to thoroughly cure today's inveterate diseases! Thus, exposing this unspeakable sore spot is painful, but an effective reform plan cannot avoid this inevitable question. Moreover the greater the reform plan, the deeper it digs down to the crux of the problem to identify its sore spots! We are fully aware that exposing the sore spots is bound to cause oppositions far and wide, but for the future happiness and survival of man, we cannot be weak and acquiescent! Therefore we appeal to all conscientious intelligentsia and elites to learn from painful experiences, and calmly, objectively, fairly self-criticize and reconsider the whole situation! We must also state explicitly that **we are not here to criticize or accuse anyone for religious**

competition, or to provoke conflicts and anxiety among the general mass by raising sensitive issues, but we are here to calmly, objectively, and fairly propose a reform plan, and in so doing, we cannot truly avoid such sensitive topic! We only hope the reader understand the awkward and solemn situation we are in, and calmly and deeply consider our words and not make the same mistakes over again!

One may recall western thoughts and history are under the strong influence the Hebrew civilization. Most remarkable is the birth of monotheism in the west. The Old Testament comes from Judaism.⁷ Records in the Old Testament have their complex historical context, with which we are not going to deal here. However there are numerous references to God's names or his presence in the annihilation of heathens.⁸ These references have repeatedly been used in western history by

⁷ The Old Testament refers to the first part of the Christian Holy Bible. The Old Testament is originally the Jewish Bible canon Tanakh. According to the Bible, composition of the Hebrew Bible began when Moses led the Israeli from Egypt until circa 500 before Jesus' birth, spanning approximately 1000 years. According to some scholars, writing was completed within the 240 years period from the imprisonment in Babylon until first century B.C.E. Later, the Old Testament was incorporated as the first part of the complete "Holy Bible." There are many parts similar to the Holy Koran of Islam. The full text of the Old Testament had been written and compiled before Jesus' birth, and which in the eyes of Christians are complementary to the New Testament written after Jesus' birth.

⁸ There are many records in the Old Testament of God personal appearance or allowing believers to annihilate heathens. Here are two examples:

(1) In the Old Testament, in the Fourth of Moses' Five books of the Torah, the Book of Numbers, Chapter 31 verses 7 -12 record as follows: "7 And they warred against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses; and they slew all the males. 8 And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword. 9 And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods. 10 And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire. 11 And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, both of men and of beasts. 12 And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the spoil, unto Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the camp at the plains of Moab, which are by Jordan near Jericho."

careerists posing as God's servants to launch numerous religious wars; the 200-years Crusades ⁹ were a remarkable example! From a believer's logic, monotheism means either "believe in God and have eternal life or go to hell," which is an intensely restrictive and intimidating religion. With the exaggerations, promotions, and actions of devotees, such restrictive, despotic, and hegemonistic attitudes and behaviours have become the special characteristics of monotheism, which even monotheists cannot deny.¹⁰

(2) In the Old Testament, Book of Jeremiah Chapter 25 verses 33-38 record as follows: "33 those slain by the LORD on that day shall extend from one end of the earth to the other. They shall not be lamented, or gathered, or buried; they shall become dung on the surface of the ground. 34 Wail, you shepherds, and cry out; roll in ashes, you lords of the flock, for the days of your slaughter have come — and your dispersions, and you shall fall like a choice vessel. 35 Flight shall fail the shepherds, and there shall be no escape for the lords of the flock. 36 Hark! The cry of the shepherds, and the wail of the lords of the flock! For the LORD is despoiling their pasture, 37 and the peaceful folds are devastated, because of the fierce anger of the LORD. 38 Like a lion he has left his covert; for their land has become a waste because of the cruel sword, and because of his fierce anger."

⁹ The Crusades (1096-1291) were a series of religious military campaigns initiated by the Pope, which aimed to restore Christian control over the Holy Land Jerusalem. Crusaders who lost their lives in the holy wars were not only rewarded with God's grace and had their sins forgiven, but also rose to heaven. There were eight Crusades which lasted nearly 200 years, and mobilized over two million people. Countless heathens were buried alive. Although the Crusades were fought under the causes to safeguard religion and liberate the Holy Land, their primary goals were in fact political, religious, social and economical, military campaigns to invade and plunder western Asia. Factions participating in the Crusades had their own agenda: the fourth crusade even invaded Eastern Orthodox Byzantium capital Constantinople. Thus it is clear that the "holy wars" were only the ambitious pretext of the European knights, feudal lords and the Catholic Church.

¹⁰ According to a 2009/08/19 report in "The La Tribune de Genève," the International Coalition for the Advancement of Religious and Spirituality (ICARUS) has elected Buddhism as the "world best religion award." This report demonstrated that monotheists should re-examine their religious ideological wars. This excerpt report is given below:

"Groehlichen said the award was voted on by an international roundtable of more than 200 religious leaders from every part of the spiritual spectrum."It was interesting to note that once we supplied the criteria, many religious leaders voted for Buddhism rather than their own religion," said Groehlichen. "Buddhists actually make up a tiny minority of our membership, so it was fascinating but quite exciting that they won."

We do not intend to criticize the basic religious doctrines of monotheism; we wish only to point out that western careerists have been using it for a long time to commit hegemonism and plunderage in the name of religion! **Although the essence of such hegemonism and plunderage may not necessarily have come from monotheism, under the formidable strength of religion, western civilization has been immersed for a long time in the philosophies of hegemonism and plunderage.** Around the fifth century A.D. during the times of the Roman Empire, such thoughts devastated the Mediterranean regions and ushered in the Dark Ages for more than 1,000 years, and coincided with the philosophy of the Divine Right of Kings, which brought about the bloody Crusades between 11th and 13th centuries. Since the Renaissance, between the 16th and 19th centuries came the big sea navigation and colonization period of unrest; the two world wars of the 19th and 20th centuries, and the accomplice structure all found their origins in hegemonistic and plundering thoughts! **Although the incidents were different, its hegemonistic and plundering essence was the same in all cases!** These philosophies and behaviours harmful to human nature still dominate mainstream values.

Jonna Hult, Director of Research for ICARUS said "It wasn't a surprise to me that Buddhism won Best Religion in the World, because we could find literally not one single instance of a war fought in the name of Buddhism, in contrast to every other religion that seems to keep a gun in the closet just in case God makes a mistake. We were hard pressed to even find a Buddhist that had ever been in an army. These people practice what they preach to an extent we simply could not document with any other spiritual tradition."

At least one Catholic priest spoke out on behalf of Buddhism. Father Ted O'Shaughnessy said from Belfast, "As much as I love the Catholic Church, it has always bothered me to no end that we preach love in our scripture yet then claim to know God's will when it comes to killing other humans. For that reason, I did have to cast my vote for the Buddhists."

And Muslim Cleric Tal Bin Wassad agreed from Pakistan via his translator. "While I am a devout Muslim, I can see how much anger and bloodshed is channelled into religious expression rather than dealt with on a personal level. The Buddhists have that figured out."

Source: <http://www.thaivisa.com/forum/Buddhism-Wins-Religion-World-Awa-t280783.html>.
Accessed: May 11, 2010

Looking at the entire development process of western civilization and philosophies, whether the Divine Right of Kings or economic growth invariably has been hegemonistic and plundering in essence. Such developmental process is not one of political systems, but of the structure and essence of philosophies. The G7 nations often use democracy and human rights as their pretext to intimidate under-developed regions and countries as undemocratic and lacking freedom and human rights; their goal is nothing but to give a pretext to plunderage. How shallow this is!

We might as well calmly consider this: the G7 have plundered 90% of the world's resources to feed their social welfare policies; where would the other countries get another 90% of resources to develop themselves to developed nations? Great nations should not have such self-satisfying, plundering and ridiculous attitudes! What the western world thinks of is China's uneven income distribution, not global uneven income distribution, which is a contradicting double standard! As for politics, we are not concerned with the question of dynasty change or political systems, but we are concerned with **fair distribution, stability, and continuity of resources; more importantly, we are concerned with the value of human nature and dignity of human existence, and with the questions of happiness of all humanity.** Thus, in order to avoid devastation from economic growth, we must eradicate hegemonistic and plundering thoughts and put forward a new age proposal based on deep universal love to thoroughly rectify such devious tendencies!

Let us stop for a moment and consider this: even if we can immediately halt competition for economic growth, with its social structures and values still intact, we estimate it will probably take 50 to 60 years to rectify the situation. But at present destruction to nature is carried out at an unprecedented rate. We worry how much more nature can bear such destructions. If we do not take actions promptly,

after 50 to 60 years, coastal civilizations will soon vanish, humanity will return to mountain civilization! Even more fearful is that when Mother Nature fights back, the entire human civilization will be wiped out in an instant! Then in the morning after, man will have to wait until the glacial epoch retrogresses to start afresh from drinking blood and eating raw meat again!

Ask yourselves, all of you who are responsible for protecting universal values and their significance! Should we not work together calmly, objectively, fairly to draw up a feasible historic plan to save the Earth, our history, and our descendants? We must not be hoodwinked by the vested interests or our selfish likes and dislikes!

Chapter III: Our Only Choice: An Economy of Spirituality for a Bright Tomorrow

Section 1: What is an economy of spirituality?

I want to propose clearly a bright tomorrow for all humanity, which neither relies on the natural resources nor the economic activities and incomes from economic growth, but rather it is the economic activities and incomes from spiritual growth. Spiritual growth is exploring valuable spiritual ore. As long as people are born, their spirituality needs to be developed. Such development does not pollute the earth, but only purifies the human heart, restoring it to its source! Not only is spiritual growth the best way to save the Earth, it can also cleanse the human spirit for the purpose of realizing ultimate goodness. In so doing, it can also promote interpersonal and ethnic group relationships so that the various tribes may preserve their respective characteristics and mutually accommodate one another despite their differences. More importantly, it does not harm Mother Nature but rather promotes the continued, natural, balanced existence of the Earth!

In order to resolve the deep level issues underlying the accomplice structure, we propose economy of spirituality. Economics is a subject reek of the odour of money, especially when it comes to raising the devilish economic growth; how can it unify with spirituality? Our views are as follows: in maintaining the supply of material wealth, we need only to apply existing technologies to make goods available to everyone, and to use man-power and manual means to maintain man's basic living standards, and in so doing extinguishes the differences between the developed and under-developed, and restore all living things to a peaceful, stable, and harmonious world. This is to minimize material economic growth and focus

and redirect man's energy and talents to developing his spirituality and the humanities.

Such spiritual growth and development activities are based on human nature, humanities, humanism, and human values, and not on external material wealth and money. Enjoyment based on spending material wealth and money is massive consumption of Earth's resources, **but enjoyment based on humanism and human nature is a form of spiritual existence of eternal warmth and feeling, which will not vanish because we enjoy it!** Therefore, we may infinitely indulge in spiritual growth and development, and infinitely roam in the spiritual world without causing pollution, depletion and harm to the Earth! Pollution of the human mind might be inevitable but comparatively to a smaller extent than today's devastation and pollution of human nature! This is an inevitable phenomenon of the law of averages operating in man's society.

One point we must clarify is that all ethnic groups are born equal, all possess their own characteristics, and all may receive spiritual growth and development! Although in their development there may be cultural differences or contradictions, all these are cultural manifestations arising from their spirituality, and mutual communication and co-existence in peace are precisely the aim of spiritual growth. Therefore there is no dominant or mainstream civilization in spiritual growth and development, but rather a harmonious, accommodating, co-existence despite cultural differences, a bright cultural field where human nature, humanism, and human values become the prime guiding principles instead of external targets such as building up material wealth and money.

Section 2: An economy of spirituality – Blueprint for a harmonious society: The environment

My friends! To build a harmonious society is not a slogan, but rather it is our work-in-progress! There are two aspects of Huayen thoughts – intrinsic order and things: scriptures are intrinsic order, which are the guiding principles; and things are practices. How to harmonize intrinsic order with things and realize abstract ideals in the real world is religion! In intrinsic order, Huayen thoughts are exhaustive; in things, they are specific and concrete. Using exhaustive intrinsic order to guide us in performing specific matters to build a harmonious society is the core of Huayen thoughts. A society built upon such thoughts is called a flower repository world or a harmonious society, which simply is defined as a society most suited for human habitation. Our proposal of economy of spirituality is in response to building such harmonious society.

The first step in using economy of spirituality to build a harmonious society is to maintain economic productivity at zero exploitation of natural resources. Zero exploitation means less than 1%, with utilization rate between zero and 1%. This means no mechanical exploitation of mineral resources, minimal mining, and high utilization, with automobiles and home appliances thus becoming permanent goods, and allowing forests to regenerate more than two times over. In so doing, the inevitable trend is that manual labour and material goods become permanent, and thus first-class human resources will be invested in fostering spirituality, human nature, the humanities, human values, human integrity, including in-depth self-development and universally saving all living things. Then the value, significance, dignity of human existence will be respected, the proposition that man as the most intelligent creature will be true, and man's destruction and pollution to natural resources and the Earth will stop immediately.

It is obvious to us that stopping economic growth is not the same as stopping economic activities and incomes. In fact, a basic condition of the ideal society is absolute economic abundance. Abundance here does not mean wanton plundering of natural resources but maintaining nature in continued and balanced growth so that we will live in inexhaustible abundance. For example, in using forest resources, we must have corresponding forest regenerative plans to ensure their continuity; as well, we should teach people to love our resources, and promote the production and use of permanent goods. What we want is “abundance based on love,” where there is continuity in the growth and use of natural resources and prolonged use of material goods, and not “affluence based on plunder” where there are mass production, mass consumption, massive wastages, and massive pollution.

Economic growth discussed in western theories is affluence based on plunder. We know that economic growth is fuelled by economic development, and thus exploitation of natural resource is an essential factor in economic growth. 500 years of human economic history has attested to the fact that economic and social construction and achievements are exploitation and utilization of natural resources. But this was the wrong way. Our conditions of our present society and the Earth are ample proof; we need not say more!

Further analyses reveal that prosperity and the decline of human civilization follow a certain pattern. The rise of various great civilizations, though related to the wisdom of the state founders, more importantly depended on the occupation of important resources such as forests and prairies that would support the livelihood of the common people. But the fall of great civilizations, though related to bad planning and choice of officials, depended more on deficiency of resources, and thus definitely related to popular sentiment betrayals. Historical records usually showed the former because the fact that historical conditions determined the

objective environment was not fully understood. When we carefully examine nearly four millenniums of the development of Chinese civilization:

1. Xia and Shang dynasties in the Henan regions had exhausted resources for over one thousand years;
2. The Zhou Dynasty established in Shaanxi, and throughout the Han and Tang Dynasties for over thousand years, had exhausted resources on the Guanzhong plain in Shaanxi valley of the Wei River; and
3. Since the fall of the Tang Dynasty, the political center moved to the Kaifeng northern capital, and Liao's northern capital became the center until today, for another millennium, sand storms had continued to wreak havoc.

In brief, the ancient people did not know that resources were external factors for survival or how to manage them for continuity, and so that resources were uncultivated, over-exploited, and spoiled, pushing our excellent landscape and civilization to the verge of collapse and disintegration. The recent rise of European and US civilization is a series of intense, across-the-board, planned plunders of global natural resources, not the kind of regional destruction we saw in ancient civilizations. Destruction to nature in ancient civilizations was due to ignorance, but our present destruction is planned, mechanical destruction. Does man need to ruin all global resources, human civilization, and happiness and prospect for the wrong values of the small number people of the G7 nations?

Therefore, after examining the ancient and modern histories of China and other countries and their histories of civilizations, we may utilize modern science and technologies, and information to make up for the ignorance of ancient times. An outstanding example is the endeavour of Beijing in preventing and controlling sand storms. We believe that instead of plunders we protect and breed nature resources, we will produce direct results in man's happiness, and return the Earth to a continued safe, stable, and balanced state!

Based on the above, in order to reformulate central social values using the Earth's resources as the standard, so as to rectify wrong behavioural patterns of mass consumption and over-exploitation of natural resources that arise from economic growth, we set forth a concrete proposal regarding the Earth's ecological balance, as detailed below:

1. Limit mass production: use natural resources conservatively and frugally to avoid highly efficient production and massive wastages. Effectively limit energy use in producing all industrial products so as to save natural resources.
2. Limit mass consumption: use all industrial products frugally, treat non-consumables as permanent goods, and use consumables frugally. Saving energy is about conserving energy for our descendants, not about profit. Treating all products as permanent goods will eliminate massive trash.
3. Limit the payment-by-installment system: Apply payment-by-installment only to capital goods, and not everyday consumer items. Therefore, payment-by-installment and the use of credit cards on general consumer goods should be strictly restricted so as to enhance conservation of natural resources and avoid wastages.
4. All governments of countries and regions producing raw materials should levy a resource tax to restrict wastage and excessive exploitation of resources. All resources on Earth should be commonly owned by all mankind and not monopolized by entrepreneurs. This is to formulate social values that natural resources are common shared by all men.
5. People in under-developed nations should be encouraged to take leisure in activities such as afforestation, environmental protection, and banning illegal pollution, and not in entertainment that produces wastes. Moreover,

celebration of births and grieving of deaths should take the form of afforestation or environmental protection religious activities.

Section 3: An economy of spirituality - Blueprint for a harmonious society: Interpersonal and inter-group relationships

The main axle central to economy of spirituality is human nature; the road to realize human nature through practising humanity, i.e. to build and develop a harmonious society.

In terms of sentiment, reason, and law, the Chinese most often place sentiment before reason and place law last. In here there is profound meaning. In all social processes, we are dealing with interpersonal and ethnic group relationships, and because the core issues are human, their solutions must come from working with human nature first. Here, operations that conform to human sentiments and human nature become the norms and are therefore reasonable. On the basis of such reasonable norms laws are formulated. It then follows that the laws can only be legitimate if they are reasonable and conform to human sentiment or human nature, otherwise they cannot be the law, but are only the selfish desires of those in power! The modern society, which is modelled on the Hebrew civilization uses the law as its norms, often emphasizes legitimacy before reason and sentiment last. It ignores human nature and humanity, so that numerous social incidents involving immoral and inhuman acts occur. This is putting the cart before the horse!

Thus the key position of economy of spirituality is to build a social system based on human nature, and to make human interactions harmonious and accommodating. In other words, what economy of spirituality builds is a humanistic society in which one should “treat humanity ... as an end ... never

merely as a means to an end.¹¹” This is a premise under which different nationalities, countries, and regions may based on their respective customs and national characteristics, formulate their own agreements among ethnic groups to develop unique cultural and political systems whereby people will avoid mutual interference but will appreciate one another, and whereby all cultures will prosper and coexist without pursuit of unification, unitary values, or cultural supremacy, but will exist in their respective perfect beauty. This is to build a harmonious world!

Historically speaking, there were only two cases in which man succeeded in formulating a stable social system based on human nature, one was the Chinese systems of rules of propriety, music, and ethics, and the other was the Indian caste system. They had maintained several millenniums of traditional cultures and enabled these two nations to become well-established and to endure many crises, and create brilliant cultural thoughts. In India, whether vaisyas, sudras, or the outcastes regardless were resigned to their castes throughout their lives, and therefore their minds were stable and they could be happy. This is different from the Buddhist saying of pacifying people’s minds. Having a resigned attitude under the caste system was less flexible, and remained at the grassroots level. Social stability could be maintained under the caste system only insofar as the educational system was not implemented. But the Buddhist stabilizes people’s minds by awakening them to life, promoting quality of life and stabilizing the entire society at the same time.

¹¹ “Treat humanity ... as an end ... never merely as a means to an end.” is a quote from the German philosopher Kant.

Modern western-style education teaches people never to be resigned, but rather to get ahead and innovate; old traditions become unimportant, and people are not satisfied with what they already have. The western affluent society is extremely powerful, but social opposition is also very strong. This is why tragedies on campuses, shootings, and man slaughters are frequent. This is not the problems with a small number of people, but rather the entire society is under constraints, unable to loosen, and therefore creates such tragedies. This is the root of suffering of modern people, a sort of social structural disease! The general farming populace are resigned to a stable life, and are therefore happy, which is not foolishness. People who are not willing to live a resigned life often have families broken up. They may be rich but when they suffer from worries, indigestion and insomnia, no material goods can make them happy. The resources consumed in economic growth are extremely high; if goods so produced cannot make people happy, all resources are wasted in vain!

What are the pre-requisites of a happy society? In China, Confucius emphasized his rules of propriety in education. In the Analects, the Master said, “It is by the Odes that the mind is aroused. “It is by the Rules of Propriety that the character is established. “It is from Music that the finish is received.” (Chapter 8.8 Book of T'ai Po) He added, “If you do not learn the Rules of Propriety, your character cannot be established.” (Chapter 16.13 Book of Ji) The rules of propriety are precisely the education that the modern age needs most. They are the basic attitudes of human interactions. Such rules comprise mutual love, respect, and accommodation. In real life, the most important rules are to conserve resources, respect everyone's endeavours, accommodate the possible mistakes and failures of others, and especially accommodate and encourage the losers. Rules of propriety are not limited to those rules and music of ancient times, but all rules regarding resource conservation, mutual respect, and mutual accommodation should be

strengthened in education. In a modern society that has lost its main axle of human nature, we must start with rules of propriety in building a harmonious society.

The second condition is ethics. The reason why the rules of propriety can impel is because they are built on an ethics system. In the work place, there are work ethics; at school, there are school ethics; in government, there are government ethics. Ethics exists everywhere in society and is universally needed. In ancient times, China was extremely fastidious about ethics: among the “five human relationships” the first three were family related.¹² It is obvious that the family is the most basic foundation and important unit for building a harmonious society. The violence of modern society mostly arises from family problems. Therefore, family harmony is extremely important. If the family fails to provide loved ones with warm loving care or acts as a haven for the discouraged members who have experienced setback to rest, then violence and anger will inevitably fill the air in society and will become an indefinite time bomb. China's ethics system have maintained the Chinese culture for five millenniums on the basis of which the Chinese nation has grown formidable; but her recent 200 years of deterioration and transformation had the Chinese lose confidence in their traditional culture, and therefore her ethics system had also collapsed such that an enormous crisis is lurking behind. In fact, formulating a perfect ethics system is far more important

¹² The “five human relationships” were those between: rulers and ministers, fathers and sons, husbands and wives, brothers, and friends, in which the first three sets are family ethics. Such a concept first appeared in the Analects, but matured in the Book of Mencius. In the Analects, “The Duke Ching, of Ch'i, asked Confucius about government. Confucius replied, ‘There is government, when the prince is prince, and the minister is minister; when the father is father, and the son is son.’” (Chapter 12.11 Book of Yen Yuan) In the Book of Mencius, Book 3 Part 1 T'eng Wen Kung officially proposed: “between father and son, there should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between elder and young, a proper order; and between friends, fidelity.”

than economic growth. In ancient times, the Chinese had fully mastered the rules of propriety and ethics software before they could effectively build their harmonious society on other hardware infrastructure and operations.

Building a harmonious society does not start with hardware infrastructures in urban, county, or village planning. Software planning involving the mind, spirituality, and human nature is more important. Economic growth should not harm human nature, but at present economic growth is done all at the cost of human nature. Once we lose human nature, nothing else matter! You may work very hard, but you may not give up your health, your family, your children's education, the foundation of a happy life, otherwise all your endeavours will be in vain.

Today, the best way for all countries and nationalities in the world to build a harmonious social system is to fully master the ancient Chinese core values and spirit in such respect and each in accordance with its respective national characteristics build its own social system. We believe this will create a great and bright new culture!

Based on above, in order to reformulate the central social values based on a harmonious human society, and to rectify the devious social values which arise from economic growth, we put forth a proposal regarding interpersonal and ethnic group relationships, as detailed below:

1. Advocate home and ethics education: advocate human relations, deepen human understanding and communication, strengthen discussions on the value of life and meaning of existence, encourage independent life experiences, and draw up concrete humanism-oriented educational system, but not intimidating system based on competition and the power of language.
2. Advocate community life and social ethics and awareness: expand the scope of human relationships, encourage cooperative mutual understanding among

different groups, strengthen interpersonal clashes to improve resistance to pressure, the ability to release pressure and processing setback. The ability to resist pressure and process setback is the foundation of a human-orient society, and should be listed in its basic education system.

3. Advocate human interactions and mind sharing: promote non-governmental exchange among different cultures, nationalities, and nations, and through interaction and communication, eliminate unnecessary misunderstanding and conflicts and enhance meeting of human nature. This will help people know and respect life better.
4. Advocate research and counselling in home and social incidents: In this information age, home and social incidents are extremely commonplace teaching material. Governments should use such real life teaching material to assist in human nature development and counselling, and should not let such incidents harm people's mind. Therefore, based on such functions, they should positively promote a "home harmony program,¹³" whereby through open discussions of such incidents may be educational, and through "listening, appreciation, and acceptance" all members fully share their minds and safeguard the family from further occurrences of such incidents.
5. Respect different ethnic groups and societies based on humanism, through education to promote humanistic mechanism, and not through violent

¹³ I advocate the flower bank program as a means to building a flower bank world in which people may live in ultimate goodness. If practised earnestly, one may eradicate one's self-attachment. The program comprises three basic operational procedures: 1. three to five persons should form a group; 2. everyone speaks in turn on the deliberation subject for three to five minutes; 3. during the program, one's attitude should be to "listen respectfully, appreciate, and accept." When applied at home, this is the home flower bank program, which may facilitate full communication among family members, avoid rebellious children and opposition, and promote family harmony. For details, please refer to my book *The Beckoning Home to Life 4: Living like a spoiled brat*. Taipei: Kong-ting Publishing, 2004. Chapter 12: Home Flower Bank Program.

political, military, murderous means to intervene life and the social system. At the same time, we should redefine the meaning of a state to eliminate the three components of sovereignty, people, territory because this is the principal factor that creates world conflicts. We should establish the concept of one family one world, and the Earth is home to all people. We should never divide the Earth, segregate people, or cause world chaos and conflicts.

Section 4: An economy of spirituality – Blueprint for a harmonious society: Spiritual wisdom

The most important proposition in an economy of spirituality is to move from the exploitation of natural resources to the development and enrichment of resources of the heart, mind and spirituality. Such development or enrichment does not have sequelae; we need only to educate the people. Once people have developed such treasures of the heart, they will live fully and will be truly happy.

Spiritual satisfaction is the most important condition in building a harmonious society. If people are spiritually satisfied and do not feel empty, they will live life full of confidence, fully enjoy what they have in their own space in life and will not chase after material wealth. Certainly, because nothing is permanent and eternal success is impossible, and ups and downs, failures and setbacks in life are unavoidable, but when people are spiritually satisfied, they will live life feeling stable, satisfied and without fear. Once fear is gone, happiness and comfort can be felt everywhere; even in failure, people can still clearly see the cause of such failure.

We must deal with a person's happiness and survival from a religious standpoint. Religion cannot guarantee people's achievements in real life, but may give them a healthier and more confident outlook to face reality. Religion tells us

setbacks in life are inevitable, but we must face such setbacks or even death with a very healthy attitude. Death to a truly religious person can be very beautiful: he is not afraid of death and illness, but only truly knows he is ill and should leave this world and welcome death.

Therefore, the biggest key point and merit of religion are in human spiritual satisfaction; when people are fully spiritually satisfied, their families will be happy and stable and the society will also be stable. Thus, in enlightening people spiritually, we can also achieve social stability! When social stability is achieved, this naturally also helps bring about stable government. Thus there are no power struggles in religion, no desires of authority, fame and fortune, but only in spiritually enlightening people, stabilizing people's hearts and minds, and eventually the government. In the past, China's Huayen thoughts in the prosperous times of the T'ang Dynasty were able to spiritually enlighten the hearts and minds of people, stabilize them and eventually stabilize the government; now, Buddhism in our time can also help us find in this chaotic environment a good and feasible way of revival.

Based on above, in order to reformulate values of ecological balance to bring peace and serenity to the human mind, and to rectify the wrong thinking patterns that arise from economic growth, to ensure everybody has sufficient space in life, protect human dignity and his independent and God given right to live, we put forward our concrete proposal regarding spirituality and wisdom as detailed below:

1. Religion provides the grounds for raising and promoting human spirituality. Its goal is to promote interpersonal harmony and stability in life and the hearts and minds of people, so that man and nature can have a harmonious and balanced living environment. Therefore, various religions should interact with absolute broadmindedness and engage in honest exchange, and simultaneously draft the future social values based on humanism so as to use

such values as the foundation in human nature development; such is the true goal and significance for establishing religion in society.

2. Religion and education is not general occupation, but rather a life and mind mission. Its personnel must positively engage themselves in life's in-depth intrinsic experience to benefit of all people. Therefore personnel who engage in religious and educational activities should receive special training and management different from those of general trade personnel because they shoulder the mission perfecting human nature development and not general production and trading of goods. Therefore we ask that governments, schools and colleges, and public figures to face up to this basic question regarding humanity's heart and nature. Since the rise of the European civilization, these two sacred responsibilities have vanished altogether; education tends towards mass production and religion turns to professionalism, so that human quality becomes worse and worse!
3. Strengthen dialogue and mutual research on the differences in the basic religious doctrines among various religions: such exchange is inevitable; without direct exchange, different religions will engage in mutual guess work and interpretation, which is harm their peace and friendships. Therefore to avoid religious wars, various religious high-ranking monks should have direct dialogue and exchange first, and then communicating the message to each level down the ranks, mutually recognizing a common highest ideal of world peace while preserving their different religious doctrines.
4. Traditional religions when facing changing times should take a tolerant attitude so as to guide themselves to adapt to the needs of the new age and reinterpret the existence and value of life, and thoroughly experience special

characteristics of the new age society, and draft the religious policies for the new age.

5. In dealing with emerging new religions, primary religions should guide them in real life experience so that in the new age they receive true intrinsic life experience and benefit all living things, and should not persecute them! They should go a step further to understand the contemporary significance of such new religions and the demands modern people. Only then will the new religions become truly valuable and beneficial to people in the new age.
6. A great religion will be born of this new age. All young and educated religious people should broadmindedly greet reformation in all religions, and positively engage in life's in-depth intrinsic experience. Only then will they truly benefit all living things. No religion is able to define the objectives of the new age religion, the direction and objectives of which are the common asset of future humanity. People of our time have no right to control it, but only to assist in its birth.
7. All religious activities must be carried out legally: religion functions to purify the heart and mind, enlighten the people, stabilize society, and help stabilize the government; no religious group should hold office government or assume power, but should stabilize the society, indirectly help stabilize the government, must not secretly violate state policies, and instigate rebellions. All religious activities should be restricted to enlightening the heart and mind of people and purification of human spirit in accordance with state policies. Therefore, of primal importance a religion should be legal, it should not harm any living things, it should not persecute other beliefs, and it should correspond to special characteristics of the respective country and nationality, and may not be global and universally integrated.

Section 5: Prospects for an economy of spirituality

We propose using economy of spirituality as a specific means to rectify the wrong universal values under the accomplice structure of modern civilization. There is no economic growth but spiritual growth in economy of spirituality, no economic development, but spiritual development, no dependence on natural resources but inexhaustible valuable treasures of the mind waiting to be excavated. Under economy of spirituality, there is no pollution, no destruction, only beauty and enjoyment, and harmony and happiness, but no fear, emptiness, anxiety and helplessness.

Under the guidance of economy of spirituality, there are no economic growth indices because these are indicators of destruction to nature; no such statistics as GDP, GNP, or GIP; no statistics on the quantity of beef, poultry, or eggs or red wine consumed. Certainly, research on indifference curves, supply and demand curves, and industrial organization in microeconomics will also fall to the threshold. But a new world will appear - for example: research on the factors of life will become famous doctrines in the next 200 years, which will include researches on various aspects of changes in the body, mind and spirit during spiritual growth, for example: announcement and discussion of research data regarding changes in breathing, palpitation, body temperature, Galvanic skin response (GSR), finger blood flow, electrocardiogram (EKG), Electroencephalography (EEG), neuroimaging, as well as FMRI, PET, EMG, hormone, immunity, etc. Do not think this is a medical report. This is research in the factors of life!

The goal of civilization and human endeavour is to pursue humanity's happiness and value, but the results of development of civilization of our time are material-orientation of life, restriction by the rule of law, and intimidation by the power of language; not only are people ignorant about their own body, mind, and

spirit, they have also built up numerous missiles, aircraft carriers, cement jungles, highways, serious traffic jams, massive pollution and destruction, and everybody are panicky, anxious, and restless. How can this be the achievements of our struggles? How can this be civilized humanity? Proposing economy of spirituality is to set humanity's struggles and civilization establishment directly on the treasures of spirituality, and not like in macroeconomics or microeconomics, set them in natural resources. Therefore, economy of spirituality develops the treasures in human spirituality and has a completely different new look. It will not develop factories or enterprises of different sizes, but will develop countless centers for spiritual practice and education centers fully equipped with complete teaching systems and life transformation programs.

In this portion, along with stopping economic growth, and planned obsolescence of equipment becoming permanent wealth, first-class manpower will join the huge program of spiritual development, and as a result, social competitions and struggles will vanish, and people will be more concerned with humanity and the humanities, and will stop pursuing profits. Education about NPO and other aspects of human nature will be fully launched, and society will no longer take material achievement as international standard, but will be take happiness as the index of quality of life. At the same time, politics, human integrity, and the medical system based on the legal system will disintegrate gradually, and norms based on human nature and humanity will appear! Phenomena to govern by the power of language will also vanish, and factional strives and discrimination among ethnic groups will gradually disappear. Politicians who spread political rumours or who play with the law will also vanish, and truly saintly kings will appear! Humanity and human nature will become the universal social values.

Proposing economy of spirituality not only can rectify our wrong universal values and the deviancies of European and the US civilization of our time, such as

Monotheism's belief in opposition, exclusiveness and plunderage, but also can rebuild a harmonious new age civilization, just like China accepted Buddhism and expanded its cultural contents, making Buddhism an important component of Chinese culture. Therefore, to western civilization, adopting economy of spirituality will rebuild and enrich its contents and the way western civilization can save itself! It may also mould a new age civilization, religion and tradition!

However today's western Hebrew civilization continuously confuse people's sights and sounds with its double talk: on the one hand it advocates eastern civilization needs to accept western civilization, but on the other hand repels eastern civilization vigorously. In western mainstream society, people repel eastern civilization completely, although some universities or people cater to Buddhism, this does not mean no repelling by its mainstream society! Western universities' oriental studies programs are only restricted to the East Asian studies faculty, concentrating all East Asian languages, literatures, histories, cultures, and philosophies into one faculty or institute. In the faculty of philosophy or institute of religion, research is focused mainly on western philosophies and monotheism, with next to no research given to eastern thoughts, religions, or Buddhism, which is absurd. When we preach Buddhism we are always annoyed by such double talk. When the west preaches to the east, it is called "freedom of speech," but when the east preaches to the west, they call it "disturbing people's private lives" and obstruct us in every possible way!

Today we also see many euphemized "religious exchange" activities, but true religious exchanges definitely are not just superficial acts of politeness whereby people mutually present gifts, shake hands, take photographs, together shout "world peace" or engage in great religious worships. Rather, people must engage in in-depth studies of each other's religious doctrines. This is true understanding and respect towards friendly religions, isn't it? However when we

preach, no matter how hard we strive, people are not willing to issue official documents for carrying out true and equal religious exchanges; we do not have the platform for equal dialogues. Is this true religious exchange? Peace and exchange should not be superficial; true peace and exchange come from respect, and true respect cannot be perfunctory, much less eliminating dissidents!

In modern western society, are people can truly be magnanimous enough to admit eastern civilization rationally? Are they really open-minded and willing to understand, do research and engage in dialogues? We are aware that to people in the west, East Asia is a hot topic, but is that true understanding? People seem “interested,” but is this research and involvement, or just curiosity and exploration? If this is just contact and exploration based on curiosity and mysticism, it is not acceptance, but despise! True acceptance must be similar to the third and fourth centuries when China opened wide her heart and fully accepted the Indian philosophy, and then completely dissected it by “cultural anatomy.”¹⁴ Only through cultural anatomy will the western civilization fully understand the philosophies of eastern civilization; only through complete understanding is true acceptance and assimilation of essence and nutrients possible. This is an important milestone for the west to accept eastern civilization!

¹⁴ The most representative of “cultural anatomy” is the Chinese “classification of religious thoughts. The Chinese conducted thorough research and classification on the huge system of Indian ideologies and assimilated it into Chinese thoughts. *The Five Hs’ien Shou Doctrines* by the Head Teacher of the State Hs’ien Shou of the Tang Dynasty was a representative work. For details see my book: *Lectures on the Five Hs’ien Shou Doctrines*. Taipei: Kong-ting Publishing, 2006.

Section 6: The precise timing for promoting an economy of spirituality

The label “economy of spirituality” may be changed, but its invariable central value lies in substituting the infinite treasures of spirituality for the exploitation of scarce natural resources. We thus advocate substituting activity centered on spiritual growth in life for activity centered on desires for material wealth. In developing infinite spiritual treasures, humanity's material economic activity will fall to the lowest degree, but humanity's intrinsic treasure, happiness will be restored to a large extent. As well, in interpersonal and ethnic group relationships, there exists also a spiritual education comprising non-material economic activity. Such spiritual economic activity will become one of biggest contributions to society in the future. Only in this way may we eliminate all kinds of psychological problems in modern society, including strange phenomena such as anxiety, autism, worries, fear, restlessness, frustration, helplessness, resignation to despair, excessive drinking, drugs, violence and so on. Why can't humanity ponder carefully this good undertaking that can “kill several birds with one stone?”

Our intention is not to transform but to save the world with economy of spirituality, and thus we must positively propose set of effective plans. We are practitioners, not experts specializing in drafting investment plans, and thus we are cannot propose a set of systematic and effective plan to rock the leaders of the mainstream culture; we must certainly most sincerely propose the core of the issues and its solutions. We have no intention of winning or losing, but humanity must advance in this direction. Terminologies may be different but its orientation is inevitably the same.

We plan to transform the world in 500 years; however we discover that this is the precise timing because today is just like China in the third and fourth centuries. If today's mainstream civilization cannot accept eastern civilization, it will be expelled from human history inevitably. But in those days, China not only

the northern nationalities were sinicized, but the Chinese mainstream culture also accepted India, central Asian and Buddhist multi-cultures, causing China to gain remarkable achievements from various aspects. This not only transformed China's cultural contents but also surmounted the Chinese national disposition, and hence the “Tang Dynasty Prosperity!”

Today is the precisely the best timing for carrying out economy of spirituality because the whole world happens to be in labour. If we wait until the “BRIC nations¹⁵” accelerate their economic growth, the Earth will have perished! This is because the population of the BRIC nations is more than double the combined population of the G7 nations, and therefore their demand for natural resources will certainly far exceed the extent that the Earth can meet! Moreover, if we want to carry out human spiritual development, the more developed the region, the deeper is the hurt spiritually, and the heavier is the pollution, and hence the more difficult to inspire spirituality. Although there is the need for spiritual development, the difficulty is actually higher! At present, reforming the G7 nations is the most difficulty, but reforming 12 countries and regions, i.e., from G8 to G20 and their people is the easiest, although there is still some difficulty, but overall it is an extremely good environment for reform. As for the other unranked countries and regions, implementing economy of spirituality will be most effective and quickest!

In other words, economy of spirituality will cause the structure of economic activity and income to change tremendously, and finally, regions, nationalities and countries with the best human nature and cultural resources will get the advantage,

¹⁵ The BRIC nations refer to the four countries Brazil, Russia, India, and China. It has been argued that in a few decades the BRIC nations could eclipse the G7 industrial organization to become the world's biggest economic bloc. This abbreviation comes from the initials **BRICs** (*Brazil, Russia, India, and China*) which rhymes with brick.

but those totally dependent on resources and management will fall into the mire for the big reshuffle! This is because human nature and spirituality resource development is without limits, but the development of natural resources is limited! Hence if the highly developed G7 nations will not consider changing their ways, then China, India, Iran, Turkey, Brazil will perhaps become the leaders in the next age of civilization!

Chapter IV: Our Only Choice – Transforming Universal Values

Ever since the rise of the European civilization, people have continuously struggled between theocracy and human rights, and warred between the science and spirituality, and it seems human rights and science are in the upper hand, but people have also neglected human nature and its value, and hence created the deviant accomplice structure of modern civilization.

Global issues and disasters are severe and comprehensive in nature! Such phenomena arise from man's wrong thinking patterns into social deviants and cannot irresponsibly be brushed aside as humanity's common karma. No individual or organization is willing to undertake responsibility for the serious results of such universal value deviation. Furthermore, we cannot use unitary theories or patterns to define such issues as environmental protection issues, economic issues, social issues, political issues, etc. **Any unitary theory or professional field will only restrict its research on a technical plane, if the fundamental issue of direction remains unsolved, humanity and the Earth will tend to destroy the fruit of the great civilization of our time!** We hope that in our civilization, the intelligentsia and protectors of the value and meaning of world existence can joint efforts to identify the crux of the issues and resolve crises!

The harmonious society – Building a liveable world

In this article, we state that the wrong universal values that arise from the accomplice structure create crazy plundering in the world, which leads to uneven resource distribution and destruction of global stability and peace. All of these

have resulted from a plundering philosophy of believers misinterpreting monotheism. Therefore, following the teachings of the Buddha, we propose the basic structure to build a perfect world, which are the humanism values of the lotus repository world's¹⁶ three realms.¹⁷ We have no intention to argue about human rights or theocracy, no intention to oppose science, democracy, profit, or faith. We are conscientious as humanity is conscientious in maintaining a healthy development of the three realms in the world, i.e. to seek to realize harmonious existence between humanity and nature, and the path of calm, self-autonomous, and serene individual existence, as we draw up this new age life prospect based on economy of spirituality.

We propose economy of spirituality not only to let humanity live a happy life ever without fear; we will have to leave our future generations on Earth living space and also set a good example for them! **We must seek a platform in today's world to formulate timeless normal values for promoting human happiness, calm and steady lives.** As far as today's world platforms are concerns, we must show loving care for each corner of the Earth; we all must look after each ethnic

¹⁶ Flower bank world, is an abbreviation for the world born of the lotus flower, or refers to the boundless and beneficent, vast and adorned array of worlds hidden in the lotus repository. This is the pure and adorned world that Sakya Tathagata's dharmakāya Vairocana Buddha realized by vowing in the past to practise Bodhisattva good conducts. According to Buddhist scriptures, above the wheel of wind there is the sea of perfume, in which there is a big lotus flower, which contains as many worlds as atoms in a world, and hence known as the lotus bank world. The present lotus bank world is the generic term for the reward land of all Buddhas, meaning a pure, serene, adorned Buddha land.

¹⁷ The three realms: 1. the vessel realm, i.e. the realm of territory, the domain that Sakya Tathagata transformed; 2. the dependant realm, also called the realm of all living beings, which are the living beings whom Sakya Tathagata enlightens; 3. the realm of wisdom true enlightenment, is the one who is awakened to all worldly and out-of-this-worldly dharmas; it is also the jñānakāya or wisdom body with which Sakya Tathagata enlightens various different living beings. - From *Grand Explanations of Huayen Footnotes 3*.

group; we need to give proper guidance to everyone inner feelings of tranquility and serenity, which are his God given rights! However from a timeline standpoint, we must maintain the Earth's secured existence while simultaneously maintain humanity's rights of continued survival and development.

Humanity was meant to have an original multicultural system in which all ethnic group lived in harmony and were interdependent, each with its natural ethnic differences, but which also mutually constituted a harmonious unified whole that allowed mutual communication but preserved the special characteristics of its constituents, unlike in today's world in which humanity is torn to pieces and mutually intimidating! Therefore we appeal that we eliminate artificial barriers, open up free-living space for all man, and restore the health of humanity and his descendants, and their rights of continued survival and development! Today, our world mainstream cultural values are moving on the road to destruction. When the world is generally exposed to ecology unbalance, internal and external ethnic group conflicts, and when everyone is feeling frustrated, helpless and persecuted, this then is the precise timing of human awakening to the need of seeking urgent solutions!

The reason why we propose an conomy of spirituality is that we wish to awaken humanity's confused consciousness to a path that will benefit all people, such as plans for large-scale, fully-equipped spiritual schools, which will not only substitute for the large-scale factories. What's more, we wish to point out that **there are proper economic activities and incomes in economy of spirituality; it is not like humanity has to return to the primitive days when everything was deficient.** But if humanity was not turned back and continued to let the world move towards destruction, then in the near future, coastal civilization would vanish and man would have to return to the plateaux to lead primitive life!

It is by no means an easy task to change the world's mainstream universal values. To be able to see the core of the issues of such universal has not been easy, but it is even harder to propose an alternative! Challenging the vested interests is no different from fighting a hopeless battle; much less as an outsider, it is totally impossible! But from the standpoint of the intelligentsia protecting the values and meaning of world existence, one must do one's duty despite knowing perfectly well it is difficultly, and despite knowing perfectly well it is impossible! However we must point out clearly that eradicating the accomplice structure and rectifying the wrong universal values will neither deny humanity of the fruits of his present civilization, nor deny the common folks' rights of survival. We propose economy of spirituality in order to reformulate the rights interests and dignity of human life, and redefine its values and meaning, so that humanity will not continue to suffer from material-orientation, rule of law, and the power of the language.

Moving from the existing operation patterns to the new direction of economy of spirituality will no doubt bring pain; but this is the option that can preserve the fruits of existing human civilization and not rock humanity too much, and that can also help mature human nature and spirituality, bring interpersonal and ethnic group relationships closer, and ensure the continued survival of life and natural resources on Earth! **We don't have much of a choice; only through this option can we reverse deviant philosophies and behavioural patterns in all directions and respects, and return to the path of light!**

This huge project urgently requires all expert assistance! We believe that humanity has enough wisdom and conscience to improve the poor surroundings today and turn this crisis in a great age. Only in this way will we not destroy the Earth and humanity but instead we save them and create a bright and brilliant new age. Not only do we anticipate its advent, we also forge forward furiously in this direction, and a radiant future is just round the corner! All of you

people with high aspirations who truly care about human happiness, care about our living conditions and who want to enhance the quality of life and enrich bodily, mental, and spiritual health, let us all protect the values and meaning of existence of this world and our civilization!