

广厦

中国与新世界秩序研究

SOME THOUGHTS ON CHINA AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER

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谨以此书献给

我的双亲 Francis Galt Carter 和 Sylvia Carter,

和岳父母 何燕凌 和 宋琤

长夜沾湿何由彻！
安得广厦千万间，
大庇天下寒士俱欢颜，
风雨不动安如山！
呜呼！何时眼前突兀见此屋，
吾庐独破受冻死亦足！

——杜甫《茅屋为秋风所破歌》

写在前面

我们所在的社会正在从家族、部落、国家逐步演化到达一个世界共同体。无论是否意识到，我们都在为创造这一全球大家庭而努力着。

全球化标志着我们已经开始进入人类向往已久的成熟阶段。

这已经不再是一个梦想。实际上，人类社会是否能健康生存下去，取决于我们是否能建立一个世界新秩序。

如果中国在创造物质、文化和精神方面都有着丰富的潜在资源，那么深入全面地理解中国的成熟过程与潜在贡献就是很重要的，它会有益于我们面对人类向成熟期发展所遇到的挑战。

这样一个画面呈现在大家面前：当对现代化的定义越多地包含了对精神发展的重视（不仅仅着重于物质发展），中国对此的潜在贡献就越明显。

本书包含了我本人的一些想法，同时汇集了他人对于这个题目的论述。我希望本书与我们置身其中的生活一样，日后还有机会不断地丰富、修正和完善之。

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人类的成熟

1.1 一个全球性的过程

在人类成熟的图表（见图 1）中，我们可以看到世界的各大文明如同道道河川，汇聚于同一海洋。它们相对隔绝地流淌了数世纪，历经一个创建国家时期，之后便是近年来的飞速全球化。各文明交汇合流的同时，人类登上了社会演进的阶梯。社会单位已从家庭，演进到部落、城邦、国家，最后则暗示着列国一家。

在各种地域文明的影响下，社会发展的这些阶段展现在世界的不同地区。从家庭、城邦发展到国家的每一步，都提高而非减损了个人的能力。前进的每一步，都为身处其中的个人扩大了机会，这些机会让人类精神得以表现，并将人类精神移植到越来越大的“园地”，直至我们达到了这一巅峰：觉悟到我们的一体性。现在，我们的视线第一次越过同一片水域而彼此相望，带着我们全部的集体经验和文化财富的广博遗产，以供相互探究利用。第一次，你的世界和我的世界融合为我的世界。

这种现象背后是什么力量在发挥作用呢？

英国历史学家阿诺德·汤因比 (Arnold J. Toynbee) 将文明指认为一个过程，一种进取……

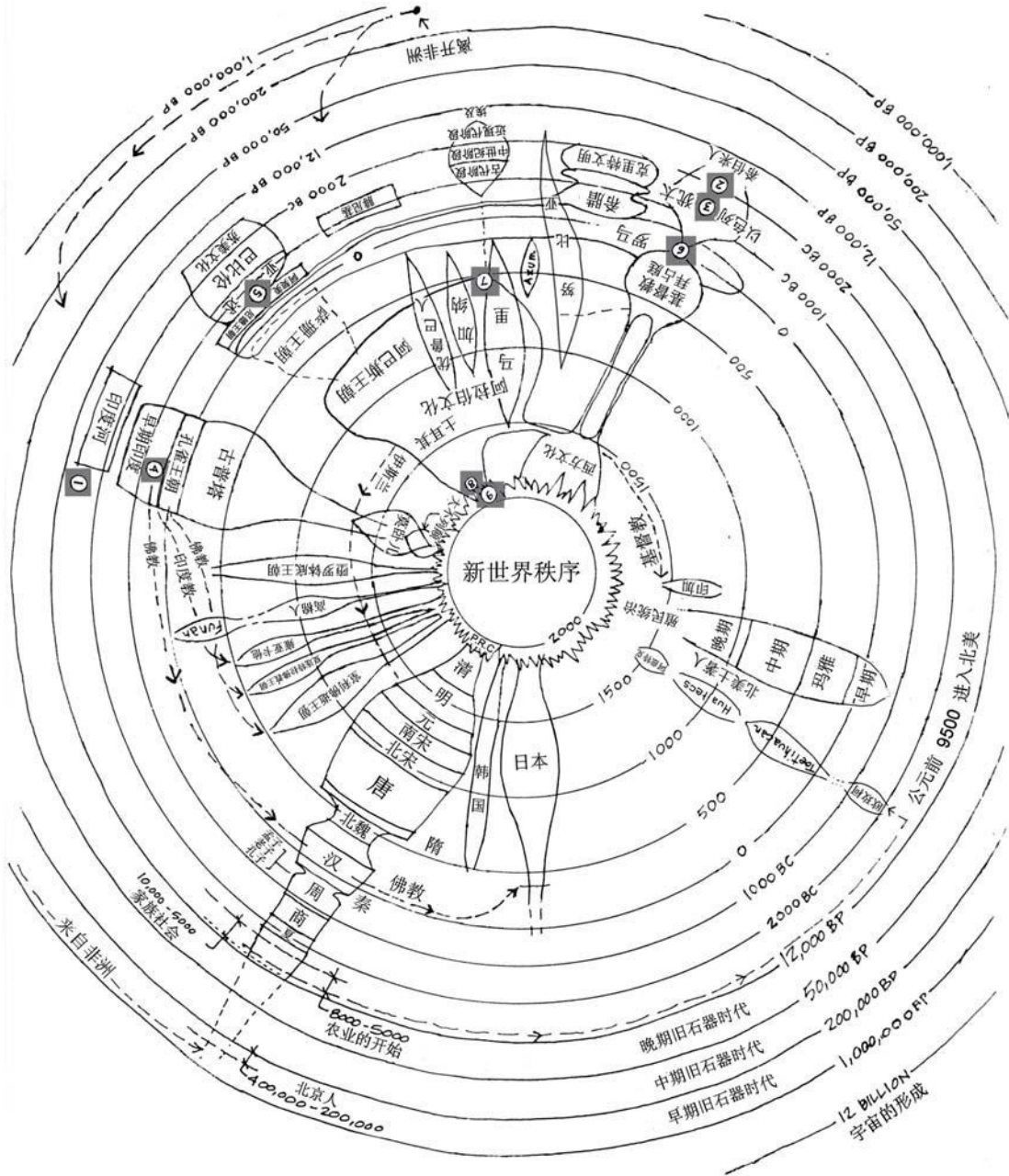


图 1. 人类的成熟图表。在 2000 年的光环大致代表着 254 个国家以及国家的独立日。数字代表各宗教的开始：1. 印度教 2. 塞宾教 3. 摩西 4. 释加牟尼 5. 琐罗亚斯德 6. 耶稣 7. 穆罕默德 8. 巴拿 9. 巴哈欧拉

.....来开创一种社会状态，可让人类全体都能和谐地共同生活，有如一个包容全体的大家庭的成员。我相信，这是迄今所有文明，即便不是自觉地，也是在无意中一直朝向的目标。^[1]

波斯的先知和作家阿博都·巴哈（1844-1921），把人类的成长过程比作个人的成熟过程。他说人类已走过了童年和青年的集体阶段，现在正进入期待已久的成熟阶段。每一阶段都划定了社会群体的边界，及合作互助的边界。而今这些边界已扩至整个星球。它们描绘出我们集体成熟的轨迹：我们社会的幼年、童年期，和当前从青春期的国家、宗教及种族对抗向成年期的过渡。我们现在必须获取“新的道德标准，和新的能力”，以适应我们新的普遍状况——一个包容全体的大家庭。

一切造物皆有其成熟的阶段或时期。一棵树的生命中的成熟期，是其结果之时。.....动物则是达到完全长大的阶段，而在人类王国中，当理智之光获得极致发展并达到最大能力时，人乃臻于成熟.....。类似地，人类的集体生活亦分阶段和时期。一时，它在经历童年阶段，一时经历青年时期，而今它已进入预示已久的成熟状态，其迹象处处可见.....。适用于人类历史早期之所需的，既不符合也不能满足今日这崭新而圆满的时期之要求。人类已从先前的局限状态和初步训练中破茧而出。现在，人必须拥有新的道德标准，新的能力。人在青年阶段所拥有的能力和品格今天已不能满足其成熟期的需求了。

罗马俱乐部前主席欧文·拉兹洛（Ervin Laszlo）说，从进化的观点看，世界作为一个系统，正在迈向更高级的组织秩序，迈向一个全球社会，一个各国协同合作的“大型综合体”。并且，除了像美国、前苏联和中国，这些他称之为“综合体社会”的几个人口和疆土足够多的国家以外，“几乎没有哪个社会发展到了足以独立自主的程度”。

虽然专门型的经济体制当中有几个，像新加坡、香港、韩国和台湾等等，设法为自身找到了能够赢利的小环境，但多数的

[1] Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, abridged one-volume edition, p.44.

专门型经济体制——即约有 120 个第三世界国家，既无大量贵重的自然资源储备，又未掌握发达的科技基础设施——发现自身的境况日益难以为继。

着手向下一阶段，一个超国界的社会演进，正是国家自身利益所在。^[1]

戈尔巴乔夫赞同此观点，他说：

在世界如此相互联系之时，还将国家利益摆在世界难题之上，实在是短视之举。^[2]

虽然中国是一个相对自治的“综合体”社会，并且其在全球觉醒的早期经受了个世纪的帝国主义剥削，其领导人仍然说：

没有一个世界政府，国家间的战争就不可避免，此说毫不为过。设立中央政府将是人类的一大进步。有了这样的政府，一个国家的内部秩序就能得以维护。因此没有世界政府，当今的世界便没有秩序。（意译）^[3]

由此我们可以得出结论：我们一直都在参与着集体成熟的过程；一个我们刚刚觉察到的过程。我们正在参与的有机过程中，一个复杂系统的各种元素极力要组成一个和谐的整体——没有这一整体，各个部分就不能恰当地运作，甚至无法生存。我们正进入成长的必经阶段，一个全球化的动荡时期，社会、政治和精神成熟的前奏。我们可以把人类在文明及其相应信仰体系方面的数世纪的实验，看作是一个训练过程，一个漫长而缓慢的对人类品格的教化，它表现为一个不断前进的文明。

一个全球社会的创建，至少从贸易、交通和通讯方面来说，已然在我们眼前展现。

在这幸运的世纪中出现的科学技术进步，预示着地球上社

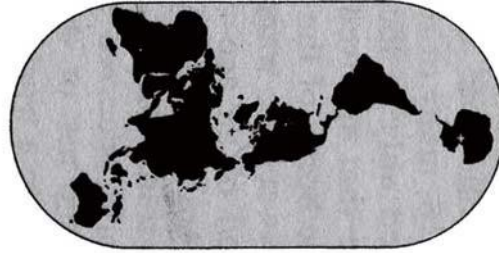
[1] Laszlo, Ervin, *The Grand Synthesis*, p.137-9.

[2] Gorbachev, *Associated Press*, Sat May 8, 9:31 PM E.T.

[3] Yan Xue Tong, *China Institute of Contemporary International Relations*, quoted in *China Daily* editorial, July 28, 1999.

会向前演进的澎湃大潮，并指出了人类的实际问题可能得以解决的手段。确实，科技进步恰好为大同世界的复杂生活提供了管理工具。^[1]

1500 - 1840
陆地马车和海上帆船
的最快平均速度为
每小时 10 英里



1850 - 1930
蒸汽火车的平均速度为 65mph,
蒸汽轮船的平均速度为 36 mph



1950s
螺旋式航空器,
平均速度 300-400 mph



1960s
喷气式载人航空器,
平均速度为 500-700 mph



图 2a, 逐渐缩小的地界地图

[1] To the Peoples of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, The Universal House of Justice, Baha'i Studies Series No. 14, Canada, 1986.

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图 2b. 缩小的地球

同样，还有政治和社会前沿的运动：

有利的迹象包括：初创于世纪伊始的国际联盟，与后来基础更为广泛的联合国组织，其迈向世界秩序的步伐日益稳健有力；第二次世界大战以来，地球上大多数国家纷纷独立，标志着建立国家的过程已告完成，这些初创国家可与老牌国家一道参与共同关切的事务；随后，以往相互隔离敌对的人民和群体，在科学、教育、法律、经济和文化等领域进行的国际合作大量增多；近几十年来涌现的国际人道主义组织数目空前；呼吁结束战争的妇女和青年运动普遍展开；普罗大众谋求借助个人通讯来理解事物，而自然产生了不断拓宽的网络。^[1]

世界和平在过去十年间获得了意想不到的发展，这一理想从形式到内容都在展现出来。长久以来似乎不可逾越的障碍已在人类进步之途上瓦解；看似无法调解的冲突也开始屈服于磋商决议的过程；以统一的国际行动来回击武装侵略的意愿正在萌生。其结果是在一定程度上，唤起了广大民众和世间许多领袖对我们星球之未来的一度几近泯灭的希望。^[2]

除非建立起这一全球社会，至少是达成政治上的停战，否则致力于国际、国内和城市的发展问题，就像是发了洪灾却只管救助溺水者，而不修筑堤坝。既然我们现在已是一副躯体，真正的国家自治唯有在各个器官和平联结、协同运作之后方能实现。

今日，人类已进入其集体的成年期，赋有能力将其发展的全貌视为一个单一的过程。成熟的挑战在于要承认我们是一个民族，要摆脱我们过去受局限的身份和信条，共同建立全球文明的基础。

确立一个既是进步的又是安宁的，既是动态的又是和谐的社会体制，它给予个人施展创造性和主动性的自由，但乃是基于合作互惠。^[3]

[1] Ibid, Introduction.

[2] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humankind, 1995, p.1.

[3] To the Peoples of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, introduction, The Universal House of Justice, October 1985.

要解决的首要问题是：冲突格局积重难返的当今世界，怎样才能变成一个协调合作主导大局的世界。世界秩序的奠定，只能基于对人类一体的不可动摇的认识——这一精神真理得到了人类所有科学的确认。^[1]

我们亦可推想，这是所有宗教创始人所预言的和平年代的开端。它或许也是中国诗人和贤哲曾梦想的大同时代的早期。

“于大同世界，举世趋大同。去国界合大地，去种界同人类。再无战争……。

“众生平等，无荣于地位阶衔。唯倡智与仁。智以举事成业，兴利助民，而仁以广济众生，普度万民，爱人利物。

“……于太平世，人之本性既善，才智既优，则惟以智仁之事为乐。机构日新。公利日增。心智日强。知识日明。举世之民并进仁、寿、极乐、至善与智慧之境。”（意译）

“乾称父，坤称母，……民吾同胞，物吾与也。……”（张载，《西铭》）

[1] Ibid, Part 3.

1.2 内在与外在平衡发展的需要

就在当今时代似乎正要提供技术和制度手段来创建“大庇天下寒士俱欢颜”的广厦之时，腐败、自私和贪婪、国家主义、恐怖主义、宗教和种族偏见，却严重阻碍了其进程。正当全球化培植互惠互利的国际贸易前景之际，恃强凌弱之加剧又见端倪。

我们有理由发问：“世界是否会被强权国家或企业操控而进一步加大贫富之间的鸿沟？”“我们的文化资产，我们对新世界秩序的潜在贡献，是否会被西方喧嚣的物质主义消费至上所扼杀？”“战争的周而复始能否终止？”“在环境破坏封杀了发展的可能之前，我们能否醒悟过来？”“我们真的是处在新纪元的黎明，还是全球灾难的边缘？”

无论前景如何完美，目前的行为模式都不会激发人们对前进过程的信心。产生这些疑问也就自然不过了：全球化究竟是要在保持多样化的前提下统一人类，抑或纯粹是要推动消费主义文化普及全球？它是给大众带来繁荣的体系，抑或仅是持有特权的少数人其经济利益的表达？它将导致一个公正秩序的

奠立，还是现存权力结构的巩固？^[1]

阴暗面的存在，表明我们仍欠缺成熟的行为和原则，以及与我们新的“地球村”状况相应的成熟机制。世界的不平衡，显示出我们“内在的”精神发展，并未跟上我们“外在的”物质发展。

不组成群体来相互支撑，人就无法生存。和动物不同，人不能孤立地生存。没有相应的更高层次的理解、合作与互惠，就没有可能达到更高级、更复杂的组织。合作互助是社团的基本运作原则与社会生活的粘合剂：合作互助表现得越多，内在与外在生活的品质就越高。

合乎道德的知识与行为，给物质的发展标定了方向，并加以强化和保护。道德观是富于效力的；精神品质部分地构成了执行革新项目的能力，而精神视野支撑着实施项目的意志。发展的物质经纱与精神纬纱纵横交织。单以物质福利为目标的发展所带来的繁荣会更加捉摸不定，而非相反。人类是相当复杂的。回避人的精神能力，只把人看作是物质世界中的消费者，就大大局限了发展策略，阻塞了更深刻、更丰富、最终也更富能效的动力源泉。成熟意味着我们拥有潜在的“新的道德标准，新的能力”，并必须加以开发利用。阻滞该能力的发展，会进一步导致不稳定。

我们知道，社会的前进肇发于那些将社会凝聚起来的理想和共同的信念。意义深远的社会变革，有赖于发展品质和态度以助长建设性的人际互动形态，亦等量地取决于技术能力的获得。真正的繁荣——建立在和平、合作、利他、自尊、正直操行和正义之上的福祉——来源于灵性觉悟与美德之光，以及物质发现和进步。

这些品质，诸如可信赖、怜悯、克制、忠实、慷慨、谦卑、勇气和舍己奉公，为社团生活的进步构成了无形但却是根本的基础。^[2]

比较一些强制性的惩罚，威吓或腐败举报热线之类的措施，提高自我节制的能力对社会发展肯定是一种更长远的基

[1] Dr. Farzam Arbab, *The Lab, the Temple, and the Market*, Edited by Sharon Harper, IDRC, Canada, 2000, pp.1-2.

[2] *Overcoming Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity in Public Institutions: A Bahá'í Perspective*, Global Forum on Fighting Corruption II, May 2001, the Hague, Netherlands.

础。这种能力的保持和发展会带来精神与物质的同时增强。

除非个体的物质与精神的需求和渴望得到承认，否则发展的努力大多仍将归于失败。人类的幸福、安全和舒适，社会凝聚力，以及经济正义，并非只是物质成功的副产品。相反，它们是从物质及社会需求的满足，与个体的精神满足之间复杂而动态的相互作用中浮现出来的。

例如，美国的一群社会学家论说其国家的社会健康，因缺乏有意义的生活目标而受损：

没有社会效益的工作，放在任何大的社会或道德背景中，本质上都是无意义的，且必然产生疏离感，金钱报酬对此仅有几分安抚。造成疏离感的结果就是工作丧失意义，没完没了的竞争，自我中心的生活，家庭生活的气质与残酷竞争的工作场所之间的分裂，以及注重功利的既无个人意义也无公民美德的教育。^[1]

经济繁荣和技术发展并非现代化的目标，它们是帮助我们共同生存的新层次上达到内在和外成熟的手段。

除非个体的物质与精神的需求和渴望得到承认，否则发展的努力大多仍将归于失败。人类的幸福、安全和福祉，社会凝聚力，以及经济正义，并非只是物质成功的副产品。相反，它们是从物质及社会需求的满足，与个体的精神满足之间复杂而动态的相互作用中浮现出来的。

这空前的经济危机，连同其所催化的社会崩溃，反映出人性的概念本身存在着深刻的谬误。因为主流体制的鼓励机制，不但没有得到人们的足够响应，而且基本与世界上的主要问题不接轨。我们看到，除非为社会的发展找到一种远远超越单纯物质条件改善的意义，否则就连物质改善的目标也无法实现。这种意义必须在生命和动力的精神维度中找寻，且须超越变化无常的经济景象，以及‘发达社会’与‘发展中社会’的人为分野。^[2]

[1] Bellah, Robert, et al, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, New York, Perennial Library, 1985, p. 288.

[2] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, *The Prosperity of Humankind*, Introduction, 1995.

中国的贤哲也认同，若无正直和正义的滋养，精神活力——气将馁败。并且，获滋养之气可弥满内外世界之间、“天地”之间的差距。

“我知言，我善养吾浩然之气。……难言也。其为气也，至大至刚，以直养而无害，则塞于天地之间。其为气也，配义与道；无是，馁也。是集义所生者，非义袭而取之也。行有不慊于心，则馁矣。”（《孟子·公孙丑章句上》）

1921-22 年间任清华大学校长的曹云祥，对于良好品格的重要性及其与发展的关系，亦有类似的强调。

……我们对世上可以促成人类进步的力量加以检视便会发现，现代文明极其有赖于教育和科学：协同行动的能力取决于平等的原则与服务的精神；在政治、财务与行业关系中谐调合作的才能必然基于诚实无私之美德……。故理所当然，任谁无知，无能合作，不愿无私服务，同时又喜好压迫良弱，而畏惧于强恶以谋一己私利，这样的人很可能在人类进步前行时退却落后。（意译）^[1]

若把阴暗面视为我们向集体成熟过渡之动荡期的一部分，并非是我们固有本性的表达，而是我们尚欠成熟的成长阶段的体现，我们对全球化过程的信心就会增加。

在过去浩瀚的历史进程中，偏见、战争和剥削曾是不成熟阶段的表现，而人类今日所经历的无可避免的骚动，标志着人类正在进入集体的成年——坦率承认这一点，不应成为绝望的理由，而应该是承担建设和平世界这一恢弘大业的先决条件。^[2]

如果我们的信心足够深入，我们就会乐于找寻我们集体成年期所需的“新的道德标准，新的能力”。

[1] Cao Yun Xiang, Head of Qinghua University, excerpt from the introduction to his Chinese translation of Baha'u'llah and the New Era.

[2] To the People's of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, The Universal House of Justice, Baha'i Study Series No.14, pp.-4.

1.3 中国对人类成熟的贡献

人类正面临着建立一个和平的世界的巨大工程。我们正在寻找“一个为了促进全球繁荣的发展范例”，而那需要“考虑个人和社会的精神和物质特征，来应对这个星球上人民和国家间不断增长的相互联系”。^[1]

中国的贡献会是什么呢？

1990年，著名的哈佛大学汉学家费正清 (John Fairbank) 在他的新书《中国：新的历史》的导言中，称中国为现代性的后来者。他还问道：中国从隔绝状态中浮现出来，只是及时地参与世界的终结，还是借其数千载的生存经验以援救世界？

1923年，作家兼国际事务观察家守基·阿芬迪说：

中国，这片土地有其自己的世界与文明，其人口占全球的四分之一（1923年），其在物质、文化、精神资源与潜力方面列居各国之首，其未来无疑是光明的。^[2]

1921年，伯特兰·罗素在北京大学做讲师时，评论中国道：“生产而

[1] Baha'i International Community, *Toward a Development Paradigm for 21st Century*, August, 1994.

[2] Letter from Shoghi Effendi to the Baha'is of the East, 23 January 1923.

不占有，行动而不独断，发展而不主宰。”^[1]

1917年，阿博杜·巴哈（巴哈伊教创始人巴哈欧拉的儿子）说：

中国拥有巨大的潜能。中国人极好追求真理且纯真无邪。……真的我说，中国人免除了任何欺诈伪善，可为理想的动机所激励。中国是未来的国家。^[2]

这些对中国寄予高度期望的说法并没有聚焦在中国的商务能力或辛勤工作的能力上，也没有强调中国在14世纪前科学技术成就领先于世界文明的辉煌时代。相反，他们主要提及中国的品质，她的社会和精神能量与潜力。这就是中国的潜在贡献吗？

……在过去的四十个世纪里，中国在生活之道上必定汲取了许多教训，其思想必定已臻成熟。或许中国要有所贡献。比起相互杀伐，肯定会有更好的方式、更人道的方式来处理国际争端。肯定的，有着四亿民众（1930年）、四千年文化和广阔的资源，中国必将对人类的和平与进步有所贡献。^[3]

如果我们对中国的精神 - 哲学遗产做一个简要的调查，我们就会发现中国的精神教育有道家、儒家和佛家的印记。例如，中国由道家衍生出融合正反和化解矛盾的能力——更多地看到系统整体而非二元分立的能力；借儒家精习了如何把精神贯彻到日常生活中；从佛教获取了高洁的灵性，及对物质和灵性之间契合度的敏锐感知。

我们在中国会发现：

- 诗人和贤哲之言所表达的对正义的热爱；^[4]
- 对和谐、互惠和对立统一的信念；
- “信仰体系是社会秩序的根基”这一悠久的儒家观念；

[1] Russell, Bertrand, *The Basic Writings Writings of Bertrand Russell: 1903-1959*, Edited by Robert E. Egnor and Lester E. Dennon, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1961.

[2] Abdu'l-Baha, Reported in *Star of the West*, vol. 8, April 28, 1917, No.3, p.37.

[3] James Yen, *Intellectual Shock of China*, *Star of the West*, 19, Mass Education Movement in China, SW October 1925, 16:7.

[4] 汉语的“城市”字面意为“有墙的集市”。“市”的字形首先是在金文中由“平”字演化而来的，意为“平等”。其原先的意思，当然就是人们聚在一起进行“公平”的物品交易的地方。”

- “天下一家”的信念；
- 对完美的热爱，产生了诸多世纪的瑰丽文明；
- 好谋求共识而非借助诉讼来解决冲突；
- 服从的能力；思想开明而少偏见；
- 希望“从事实中找到真理”；
- 喜爱实际地运用知识；钦慕行为而非言词
- 注重家庭关系，尤其是孝敬父母。

下文摘自广为人知的儒家四书中的《大学》，它是孔子教义的“概要”。千百年来，学童都会背诵它，其主旨已深深地根植于中国的文化中。简言之，它主张发展的目标应当是昭明美德；其方法包括规范，培养，纠正和调查；此过程将国家内政生活与实现和平发展，将社会福祉与个人精神健康联系起来。“自天子以至于庶人，壹是皆以修身为本。”个人对真理实情的调查（格物）乃是内在与外在的平衡所依靠的支点。

大学之道，在明明德，在亲民，在止于至善。知止而后有定，定而后能静，静而后能安，安而后能虑，虑而后能得。物有本末，事有终始，知所先后，则近道矣。

古之欲明明德于天下者，先治其国；
欲治其国者，先齐其家；
欲齐其家者，先修其身；
欲修其身者，先正其心；
欲正其心者，先诚其意；
欲诚其意者，先致其知，
致知在格物。
物格而后知至，
知至而后意诚，
意诚而后心正，
心正而后身修，
身修而后家齐，

[1] 比如，在 1997 年，在北京鼓楼附近的黑芝麻胡同小学，我儿子的家长会上，老师在谈到教育目的的问题时，她说了这样一句话：“我不怕笨，我怕坏。”

家齐而后国治，
国治而后天下平。

中国人的团结意识和社会责任感，至少部分地可以追溯到大乘佛教的教义：

……普度乃基于众生本为一体之念。……个人可净化自己，从而逃离罪业之苦，然只要还有人尚未觉知全体的灵性交流，则任何人的救度皆非尽善。……度人以度己乃佛教所教诲的普世之爱的训示。^[1]

如果我们要寻找可持续发展的概念支持的话，我们将发现中国提倡的和谐、关系的重要、平衡、中庸、以及集体重于个人的信念等等都给予我们很好的启发。与无限制的扩张、对欲望的满足、获取、消费主义以及个人重于集体等相比，这些不是更吸引人吗？中国艺术的美、她大多数的诗歌、特别是她的园林设计，都体现出人与自然的可持续性与和谐的诸多考虑之一。

迅速审视了中国的社会——哲学——精神遗产后，我们开始明白为什么有如此高的对中国的“资源”与“潜力”的评价。我们在中国的精神基因库里发现了很多活跃和潜藏的因素，都与人类进展到其综合成人期相关。

中国人第一个就会承认他们并没有总是遵循他们的价值观和教诲。他们指出历史上的暴乱。他们也会指出中国当下的问题，如腐败、社会问题、环境恶化，以及不断增大的贫富差距。

当我们去看中国历史上的暴乱时，我们应将其放在这样的背景下：中国在几千年前开始的伟大文明在唐宋时期臻于成熟，随后是长期的没落，直至 1911 年止于末代皇帝。暴乱标志着每一个朝代的兴替，两次领土扩张时期，以及革命和建立中华人民共和国的内战，中国漫长的历史上稳定增长期与分裂混战期交替对比。我们需要注意主要的征服与扩张期发生在元朝与清朝，当时统治中国的不是汉族而是异族。蒙古人（元朝 1268-1368 年）和满族人（清朝 1644-1912 年）均来自北方，他们分别占领中国，执掌中国航船之舵。还需要注意的是，在更近的历史时期，中

[1] E. A. Burt, The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha, A Mentor Book. 1955, p.124.

国不曾参与全球殖民统治，但曾受到他国的殖民统治。

尽管战乱频仍，中国在最长的历史时间养活了最多的人口。因此，我们应该将那些不时出现的战乱期视为文明建设之漫漫长路上的困难——或者说是在当时缺少更恰当的方式或方向，而不应将它们视为中国天生的性格。

同样的，中国当前所遭遇的社会和环境问题，以及逐渐增强的“财富不能带来快乐”的不安，都表明了与其道德标准间的矛盾以及与其精神根源的距离。这种不安同时表明了中国人心理上的价值系统的活跃程度，仍像飞轮一样在不停地转动。中国古代极受欢迎的诗人杜甫的声音仍在回响：

朱门酒肉臭，
路有冻死骨。
荣枯咫尺异，
惆怅难再述。^[1]

如果我们将这些缺点看作是“一个巨大的历史进程中尚不成熟的阶段的标志”，那么极有可能的是，尽管中国的精神遗产目前看来极为贫弱或受到了强大的威胁，它并没有失落。能认识到这些缺点就已经是成熟的标志之一。

对物质与精神必须携手发展的认识是通过一个世纪的疑问、探索、实验以及汲取教训中不断增长起来的。中华人民共和国成立之后，在贫穷和物质匮乏的时代，首要的任务是集中精力改善中国的物质条件，传统的和革命的美德，诸如克己、适度、为人民服务、中庸、服从等等很少

有冲突。中国在“废除长期的不公正和独裁统治方面，为地球上五分之一的人口解除极度贫困方面，以及扫除基于迷信基础上的根源极深的信仰体系等方面”都取得了显著的进展。^[2]

这个进程包括在那场狂热的青春期自我毁灭式的文化大革命中对精神遗产的灭绝，那是一场旨在消灭“四旧”（旧思想、旧传统、旧习惯和旧文化）的运动。在三十七世纪七十年代末期，中国从这种近乎“文化自

[1] Du Fu quoted in *The White Pony, an Anthology of Chinese Poetry*, Edited by Robert Payne, Mentor Books, 1960, p. 183.

[2] *Thoughts on China*, article by Dr. Farzam Arbab, May 19, 1989.

杀”的状态进入了“一个试图与世界其他地方建立起新的关系的实验和改革的进程”。^[1]与自身传统的关系逐渐成熟，能够以建立有“中国特色”的现代化的眼光去翻检这一巨大的遗产。对一切传统的东西过去只是不加分析地一律排斥之，现在的态度渐渐成熟了，能够从中找到未来繁荣和发展的资源。

1978年是一个分水岭，门户开放政策既鼓励了外国人又激发了本国人的个人主动性，来参与国家（首先是经济和科学）的重建。中国现在正不断力争现代化以“赶上西方”，一举一动都透露出变迁或“改革”。中国对其现代身份的探究，并未循行偏狭的民族主义道路；相反，中国自由地尝试非中国式的科学、技术、商业方法、法律等等。成熟的一个重要标志就是从封闭到有意识地与外部世界恢复往来。中国正经历“改革”和现代化的挣扎，以“追上西方”。中国已经从消除绝对贫困，到改革开放，发展成为亚洲新兴的经济力量。短短的30年时间，中国已经进入了经济飞速发展的轨道，世界也随之体验了她的改革开放，并且为它的发展而投资。

今日的中国摒弃了数世纪以来传统的对科学漠视的态度，而给予科学崇高的地位。^[2]科学和高科技现在被视为经济发展的表征和主要方案。中国近来增加了对研究的投资，正摩拳擦掌要成为科学领域中的世界领袖。

可以明显地看到，自从1978年的改革开放政策以来，中国正在走向成熟的道路上迅猛前进，她的能力得到了极大的解放。

中国有意识地奋力前行了一百年。中国没有自满，也没有松懈麻痹。进入WTO，成功申办2008年北京奥运会和2010年上海世博会，均有助于再度唤起对于中国前途的信心和乐观精神。

然而，最近几年，伴随着成功，中国的现代化进程也出现了阴影。腐败、社会和环境问题持续不断，精神状态萎靡不振的标志越来越明显。腐败在一个将领导工作与道德水准相联系的文化背景中更显突出。与个人自私自利的行为相比，对腐败的容忍可能是对稳定更大的威胁。

现在已经实现了相对的富裕，对少数人先富起来的现象也能够接

[1] ibid

[2]“有两千年，中国人在科学技术方面的历史记载极其令人注目。之后从两三百年前开始衰落了。约瑟夫·尼达姆博士在他的巨著《中国的科学与文明》的前言中，评论古代中国人的科技发现和发明时写道，他们‘常常遥遥领先于同时代的欧洲，尤其是到了15世纪。’”自然科学史研究所，中国科学院，汇编《古代中国的技术与科学》，外文出版社，1983年，第1页。

受，人们不知道除了过舒适的生活外该如何处理这些财富。不同的价值观互相矛盾地混在一起。中国传统中平衡个人和集体权利的习惯导致了中国人对现代社会里为追求物质财富而追求财富的倾向保持着一种深刻的怀疑和警惕。人们逐渐认识到金钱并不能带来快乐，认识到缺少“社会生态”和物质与精神的一致性。中国亲身体会到，物质的高度丰富、技术与科学的发展都不是最终的目的，也不能确保“和谐社会”。

在向西方开放的近些年来，中国的精神资源被西方世界消费导向的物质主义发展模式所遮蔽的现象日益严峻。中国越是接受去掉了我们精神能力的发展的“现代化”的定义，就越不能看清自己潜在的精神贡献的价值。她对自身卓越理念的鉴识，不仅因为强调物质发展而被抑制，而且因她自谦的本性而被延缓。“的确，我们国家落后”，很多中国人会点头称是，却加强了西方的自我优越感。

科学的进步，尽管导致了物质的发展，却需要与道德进行对话，以公正地、恰当地发挥它的利益与能力。科学技术既可以施展于和平用途，而在腐败的人或者冷酷的或者不明智的人手里也可以应用于破坏性的目的。例如，全人类所痛心疾首的大量核武器、化学武器等等的过度储备，显然是对科学的误用。而在虽不致命，但其危害性更为隐秘模糊的前沿领域我们遭遇到新时代的电脑盗窃和恶意病毒。

1939年，外国人士朱丽叶·布莱登 (Juliet Bredon) 说道：

虽然所有这些现代的进步尤可钦佩并引人注目，但对于中国来说，北京未来的一大问题，是要让新的标准适应中国人的心理。过渡时期常常带来错误和仓促的现代化冒险，而令一切都丧失了个性。在陈旧和崭新的两极之间，钟摆来回往复。要加快运动又不扰乱平衡，是有思想的中国人已开始着手的一项艰难而精巧的任务，他们确信无疑：要么道德伦理和（科学）知识并驾齐驱，要么丧失一切。^[1]

中国发展道路上的阴影是对精神质量的一个警示，提醒人们需要平衡内在和外在的发展。它们是一个信号。现在已经消除了绝对贫困，已经到了将注意力返回到根源的时候了，即“修身”，以改善道德价值和行为。

[1] Juliet Bredon, *Peking*, pp.54-5, 1931

从历史上看，无论是古代还是现代，中国人都极其明了失去稳定要付出的代价。他们已获得了有意识地谋划透过苦难和成功未来的能力。苦难自有积极的正面价值，它首先是一种能力的资源。中国典籍中高度评价这一过程，如在易经中，还有孟子的描述：

故天将降大任于斯人也，必先苦其心志，劳其筋骨，饿其体肤，空乏其身，行拂乱其所为，所以动心忍性，增益其所不能。^[1]

而近些年来缺少物质、精神间的平衡所带来的痛苦与尴尬将挑战中国对更重要的社会问题的深入探索。

但是如果将我们时代的真正需求与中国传统里的精萃成果相比较，我们会发现中国人承载的许多品质、技巧、态度和能力，正是挣扎着迈向成熟时期并抛掉“积重难返的冲突格局”的世界所需要的。发现中国浩繁广博的文化、哲学和精神遗产与新时代的需求多有合拍之处，发现中国能为人类“真正的”现代化作出宝贵的贡献，这会是一个确认，一份欢欣，振奋着中国人的心灵。也许，如费正清所推论的那样，中国的天命不仅是在自己的国家之内实现物质与精神间更有活力的平衡，而且还要与世界分享其经验。

随着中国越来越多地牵涉到其他国家，它可以，通过其自身的范例及其促进世界和平的协同努力，而在新世界文明的发展中，成为更具效力的参与者。中国不需循行他国踩过的旧径；它可以开辟一条新路，直接迈向新世界秩序中一个赋有尊荣的位置，而中国将亲身协助该秩序的建设。^[2]

[1] Mencius, Legge, bk.6, pt.2, ch.15, art.2

[2] Thoughts on China, article by Dr. Farzam Arbab, May 19, 1989.

成熟的诸方面

怎样自然而恰当地处理人与人、人与自然、个人与社会、及社会成员与机构之间的关系，现今的观念反映了人类在其发展的早期和尚欠成熟的阶段中所达到的理解水平。如果人类真地在走向成熟，如果地球上的所有居民构成了一个民族，如果正义要成为社会组织的主导原则，那么，由于对日渐显露的这些事实的无知而产生的现有观念，就必须加以重构^[1]。

我尝试着从以下方面来描述我们的集体成熟：

- 2.1 个人的成熟
- 2.2 社会的成熟
- 2.3 信仰体系的成熟
- 2.4 与权威的关系的成熟
- 2.5 社团生活的成熟
- 2.6 男人和女人之间关系的成熟
- 2.7 文化的成熟
- 2.8 我们与环境的关系的成熟
- 2.9 决策制定的成熟

[1] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humankind, Part 3.

2.1 个人的成熟

个人品质作为基本的发展目标其所赋有的重要性都蕴含在中国的文化里。例如：

儒家学说将治国追溯到齐家，由齐家追溯到修身……。它把平天下这一最终目的，和修身这一必然起点，逻辑地联系起来。（意译）^[1]

新儒家学派的集大成者朱熹（1130-1200年），希望合乎天理的统治应注重“全民的自我修养”。他强调个人的道德修养是社会秩序和良政的基础。^[2]

自天子以至于庶人，壹是皆以修身为本。其本乱而末治者否矣，其所厚者薄，而其所薄者厚，未之有也！（《大学》）

[1] The Wisdom of Confucius, Edited by Lin Yu Tang, The Modern Library, New York, 1938, p. 22.

[2] John K. Fairbank, China: A New History, Belknap Press, Harvard University, Cambridge, London, 1992, p.124.

在中国，“人的素质”这一说法时常在讨论中出现。缺乏素质往往被归结为问题的根源和发展的障碍。

“自然而和谐”是宇宙的根本特性，亦是人不懈追求的理想状态。然而，裙带关系、自私自利、国家冲突、家庭内部和男女之间的摩擦、宗教间的隔阂，都在人类和谐、进步与团结之道上作梗。因而，要消弭争论，抛却好恶而改进人品就势在必行了。

但这一目的不能靠惩罚来实现，因为惩罚只能矫正外部的，却不能疗治心里的。此即儒家学派思想何以主张，要让民众行止端正、品性高尚，教育乃是关键而有效的途径，因为人性之本质是与天道相合的。^[1]

孟子说：“知其性，则知天矣。存其心，养其性，所以事天也。”天之道是和谐的，人之道亦是如此。人性的基本表现应是和平宁静的，并与自然（宇宙）秩序合一。那些好挑起争端的人既偏离了人道也背离了天道。教育的责任和功能在于改造和匡正那些离失了人道的人，先匡正其心，再使其行止合乎规则，从而达至社会的和谐。按照中国的传统观念，作为改进品性的手段，教育占有重要地位。^[2]

用类似的语汇，阿博都巴哈描述了个人的灵性化，个人的精神成熟可作为矫正犯罪的方法，及社会和谐的基础。

精神文明会训练每位社会成员，除了可以忽略的少数外，无人会从事犯罪行径。人们会把犯罪看成是奇耻大辱，把罪行本身视为最严厉的惩罚。^[3]

之所以确信道德教育能够成功，乃是根据这一假设：人是可以教化的；人有别于动物，是“天”的反映，有组织社团的才智，生来就有爱与正义的能力。

[1] Sun Li Bo, Unpublished paper, 1998.

[2] Sun Li Bo, Unpublished paper, 1998.

[3] Abdu'l-Baha, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p.133.

水火有气而无生，草木有生而无知，禽兽有知而无义，人有气、有生、有知，亦且有义，故最为天下贵也。力不若牛，走不若马，而牛马为用，何也？曰：人能群，彼不能群也。（《荀子·王制篇第九》）

鸚鵡能言，不离飞鸟；猩猩能言，不离禽兽。今人而无礼，虽能言，不亦禽兽之心乎？……是故圣人作，为礼以教人。使人以有礼，知自别于禽兽。（《礼记·曲礼上第一》）

尽其心者，知其性也。知其性，则知天矣。存其心，养其性，所以事天也。（《孟子·尽心章句上》）

确信道德教育能够成功，还须基于这一假设：人究其本性，并非不可救药地自私而有侵略性。这后一种行为，其产生乃是后天学得的，而非先天所固有。

侵犯与冲突成了我们社会、经济和宗教体系的显著特征，以致许多人已屈从于这一观点：此类行为是人的本性所固有的，因而无法根除。

这种观点一扎根，令人束手的矛盾便在人类事务中滋生出来。一方面，各国人民都宣称，自己不仅愿意，而且渴望和平与和谐的到来，渴望结束终日缠身的惶恐忧虑。另一方面又不加鉴别地认同这一主张：人不可救药地自私而有侵略性，因而无能建立一个既和平、和谐，又是进步而动态的社会体系，一个既允许个人自由施展创造性和主动性，而又基于合作与互惠的体系。

对和平的要求日益迫切，这一基本矛盾却阻碍其实现。那么，关于人类古代境遇的通常看法所基于的那些假设，便需重新加以评估。经过冷静检视便可证明，此种举动远非人类真性的表达，而是人精神扭曲的反映。确信这一点，全人类就能开动建设性的社会力量——这些力量符合人性，因而会鼓励以和谐与合作来取代战争与冲突。选择这样的做法并不是要否定人类的过去，而是要去理解它。^[1]

不论是政府的对抗体制，渗透于多数民法的辩护原则，对各阶级和其他社会群体之间斗争的颂扬赞美，还是主导了大部

[1] To the People's of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, The Universal House of Justice, 1985

分现代生活的竞争精神——冲突以各种形式被公认为人际互动的主要推动力。它还在物质主义人生观的社会组织中另有一番表现——两个世纪以来，这种人生观日益得到强化。^[1]

尤为特别的是，对物质追求的美化——它既是所有这些观念形态的起源，同时又是其共同特征——正是在这里，我们找到了“人的自私和侵略性无可救药”这一谬论滋长的根源。正是在这里，必须为建设一个适合我们子孙后代的新世界清理场地。^[2]

孟子也赞同，人的本性并非是恶的。他把人的精神比作山上的树，山被附近乡民垦伐，被牲畜侵蚀。他问，山貌退化是否归因于山的本性？他宣称：“……虽存乎人者，岂无仁义之心哉？”

牛山之木尝美矣，以其郊于大国也，斧斤伐之，可以为美乎？是其日夜之所息，雨露之所润，非无萌蘖之生焉，牛羊又从而牧之，是以若彼濯濯也。人见其濯濯也，以为未尝有材焉，此岂山之性也哉？虽存乎人者，岂无仁义之心哉？其所以放其良心者，亦犹斧斤之于木也，且且而伐之，可以为美乎？其日夜之所息，平旦之气，其好恶与人相近也者几希，则其旦昼之所为，有梏亡之矣。梏之反覆，则其夜气不足以存；夜气不足以存，则其违禽兽不远矣。人见其禽兽也，而以为未尝有才焉者，是岂人之情也哉？（《孟子·告子章句上八》）

富岁，子弟多赖；凶岁，子弟多暴，非天之降才尔殊也，其所以陷溺其心者然也。（《孟子·告子章句上七》）

千年来中国一直明白，对个人的道德教育和训练是发展的基础。在全世界人民和各国奋力建设一个全球共同体时，其重要性再次显现。

[1] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humankind.

[2] To the People's of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, The Universal House of Justice, 1985.

2.2 社会的成熟

加拿大心理学家侯赛因·丹尼什 (Husayn Danesh) 博士把迈向成熟的转变，描述为从专制型和放纵型转向更成熟的“整合型”社会关系的一个运动过程。

虽然专制型的关系曾经并仍然是人际关系中最常见的，不过还有放纵型和整合型两种。……人类成熟时代的莅临，必定与整合型的生活、人际关系的优势相契合。专制型和放纵型展示出童年和青春期发育阶段的特征，而整合型则描绘了一个成熟类型的人际关系，因而，它对于我们理解推动人类由青春期向成年期过渡所需的先决条件来说尤为重要。^[1]

他把这些关系模式演绎为**人格类型**（见下表）。我们也可以把这些类型看作是范围更大的**社会状态**。

[1] H.B. Danesh, M.D., *Unity: the Creative Foundation of Peace*, Baha'i Studies Publications, Canada, 1986.

人格类型 (民族性格)	特征	世界观	情感与理智特征	与他人的关系
专制型	以权力为导向	二元分立的感知	刻板僵化	屈从于专制
放纵型	以享乐为导向	不加分辨的感知	混乱	无法无天的关系
整合型	以成长为导向	存多样求团结	有创造性	负责与合作

图 3：人格与社会类型

如果我们把上表放在中国，我们可以说中国正在从专制型向整合状态成长。据此观点，我们可以认为专制主义不是永久性的状态，而是成长的一个阶段。

中国围绕君权天授的帝王而组织起来的等级森严、中央集权的社会体制有很长的历史。中国展示出了克制和中庸，对“个人意志从属于社会意志”这一原则的尊重，以及服从的传统。儒家思想强调整体福祉的重要性。比如，它提倡当个人与社会或家庭发生冲突时，个人应放弃自己的利益，即舍身取义。西方往往不把这种克制和中庸、注重群体理解为尊重整体团结或是尊重领导制度，而只是从服从专制“政权”的角度来解释。

更成熟的整合模式的世界观是“存多样、求团结”。现在，这一新的世界观已是所有社会不论是专制型还是放纵型的共同目标。如果我们将彼此视为一个社会有机体的细胞，如果我们认同个人可得益于社会整体的组织，那么理所当然的，个人行为要是能加强整体也必定会加强个人。没有这个基本理念，就不会有动力去参与到集体的命运中，或是去服务他人；合作互惠的原则亦难以实行。

虽然人类社会并非纯粹由一堆互不相同的细胞所组成，而是由个个都赋有理智和意志的个人联合而成；但是突显出人的生物学特性的运作模式，也生动地表明了生存的基本原则。这些原则中最首要的就是存多样以求团结。看似矛盾的是，正是人体组织秩序的完整性和复杂性——以及身体细胞在身体中的完美融合——才允许了身体的各个组成部份充分发挥其固有的独特能力。不论是在为身体的功能出力，还是从整体的安

康中撷取养分，任何细胞的存活都不能离开身体。^[1]

个人意志从属于社会意志的同时，个人的修身，正像儒家模式所阐述的，仍然是发展的出发点——“壹是皆以修身为本”。

……当个人意志从属于社会意志，其个性并不会在群体中消失，而是在发展中更被关注，从而在前进的潮流中发现自身的位置；而社会作为一个整体，可得益于个体成员所积聚的天资和才能。这样的个人不单纯是通过满足其自身的要求，而是通过实现其与人类发展目标的完全合一，来将其潜能充分发挥出来。

这种关系对于文明生活的保持极其重要，它要求社会与个人之间极尽理解与合作；因为需要培养一种风尚以便社会个体成员的所有的潜力得到发展，这种关系必须允许“个性”有“自由空间”，通过自发、主动和多样的形式来确保社会的生命力，从而“维护个性”。^[2]

公民权，在一个成熟的社会环境中，意味着个人的行为同时满足两个目的：分享和表达我们独立的、个人的能力和智慧；以及确保整个社会的活力。尽力创造出后者，才能更好地开发前者。

中国要进行这一过渡，也许比西方社会从较为“放纵”的状态转向成熟更为容易。

[1] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humankind, p.4.

[2] Letter from the Universal House of Justice

2.3 信仰体系的成熟

各信仰体系：同一过程的各个要素

我们一览人类成熟的图表（图 1），便会观察到以下模式：

- 文明的“河流”
- 这些河流汇入同一海洋
- 各大文明都和某一信仰体系紧密相关

每个文明周期都能追溯到某个强有力的、催发灵性的影响，究其根源，便是其创始人。事实上，诸如印度教、犹太教、佛教、基督教和伊斯兰，这些文明的称呼和信仰体系的称呼，甚至其创始人的名号，大多是可以互换的。与各文明相关联的创始人包括：克利什那和古普塔文明，摩西和犹太王国，琐罗亚斯德和波斯帝国，佛陀对包括中国在内的许多亚洲国家的影响，耶稣和拜占庭帝国，穆罕默德和伊斯兰文明。西方文明于 1500 年从中世纪的千年黑暗中复兴，当归功于伊斯兰的影响。

与这些伟大文明的成熟时期相关联的，有所罗门、阿育王、康斯坦丁、萨拉丁和阿克巴等伟大的君王。中国早期的一位圣王也许是一个文明的创始人。佛教不是起源于中国，但却在中国扎了根。孔子和老子从

未声称自己是先知，但他们的教义被拥奉为中国内在生命的根本哲学基础。

本文的附录《文明和信仰体系之间的关系》，列举了若干简例，来说明灵性推动力总有“文明”响应紧随其后的现象，特别是源于摩西、佛陀、耶稣和穆罕默德的文明响应。

各个信仰体系都有一位创始人和一本经书。信仰体系的创始人推进爱与团结的大业，并给出关于其所在时代的律法和社会原则（详见附录）。如果我们认同道德思想大多来源于各大信仰体系，如果我们认同互助互惠是文明的根本，我们就可以论证，通过这些体系的影响，人类天生的道德与精神禀赋逐渐得到发展，使得文明的进步成为可能。世界上的各个宗教提供了伦理秩序和精神根源，由此产生了社会秩序，并结出文明之果，整个进程都是由阳光 - 造物者的教化所推动的。

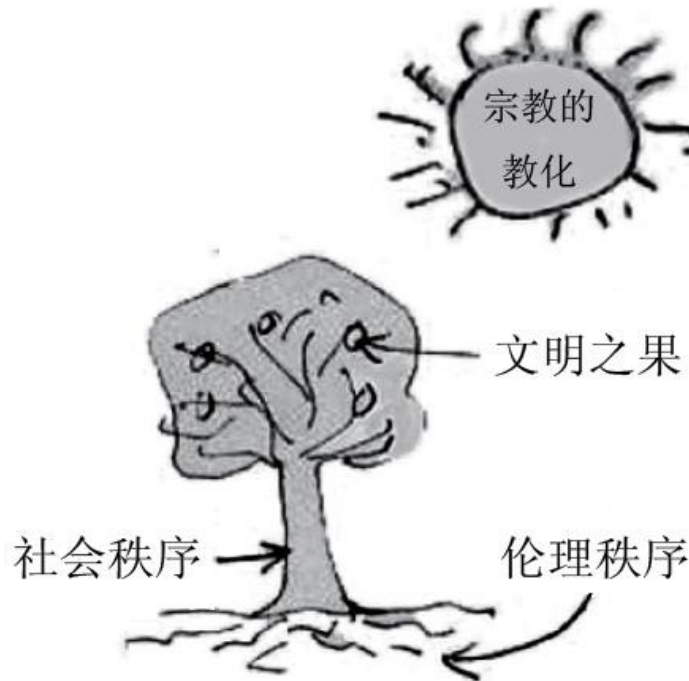


图 4. 文明的元素

只要和现世的生存有关，宗教最大的功绩，多在于品格的教化。通过其教义，并通过这些教义所启迪的人生楷模，历代

各地的芸芸大众都发展出了爱的能力。他们学会克制其本性中的动物层面，学会为共同的利益作出重大的牺牲，力行宽恕、慷慨和信赖，并将财富及其他资源供给文明进步之用。他们谋划出制度体系，从而将这些道德进步大规模地转化为社会生活规范。无论如何被教条增生所遮蔽，或被宗派冲突所扭曲，克利什那、摩西、佛陀、琐罗亚斯德、耶稣和穆罕默德这些卓绝人物所启动的灵性推动力，都对人类品格的教化发挥了最主要的影响。^[1]

他（巴哈欧拉）说，神圣天启是文明的原动力。当天启出现，它对那些回应者的心智与灵魂的转变作用，便复制到新的社会中——这个新社会是围绕他们的经验慢慢形成的。一个人心所向的新的中心浮现出来，它能赢得各种文化背景的民众投效于它；音乐和艺术采用的象征符号，传达出益加丰富、更为成熟的灵感；从根本上重新定义是非观，使得制定关于民法与操作的新法典成为可能；新的机制构想出来，而让前所未知或被忽视的道德责任之驱动力得以表现：“他在世界，世界也是借着他造的……”当新的文化演进为一种文明，它进行大量的更新转换来吸收过去时代的成就和洞见。过去的文化中不能被融合进来的特征就会萎缩，或被民众间的边缘份子所接续。上帝之言既在个人意识里也在人际关系中创造新的可能。^[2]

但是，每一个文明也都有她的寿命。文明过程的每一次显现，都展示了内在的有机循环周期，始为朝气蓬勃，继而成熟随后衰落。起初，其信仰体系是伦理行为的主要根源，为文明的幼年和童年期提供了道德基础。当一个信仰体系的生命力处于巅峰，激发出社会秩序、文化和科学上的巨大成就，安定、繁荣、兴盛的文明便产生了。当宗教教化的澄明和动力减弱，当道德戒律的力量松弛了，文明就从内部溃散了。

中国不同朝代文明的兴盛和衰退与佛教在中国的发展有着紧密的关系。在唐宋时期达到鼎盛的成熟期。中国的建筑历史学家梁思成将不同历史时期形容为，充满活力的汉代，成熟优雅的唐宋和僵硬死板的明清。当信仰系统的创造力进入衰退期，其相应的文明体系的发展也停滞了。

[1] Baha'i International Community, *The Prosperity of Humankind*, Part 4., 1995.

[2] Baha'i International Community, *Statement on Baha'u'llah*, May 29, 1992

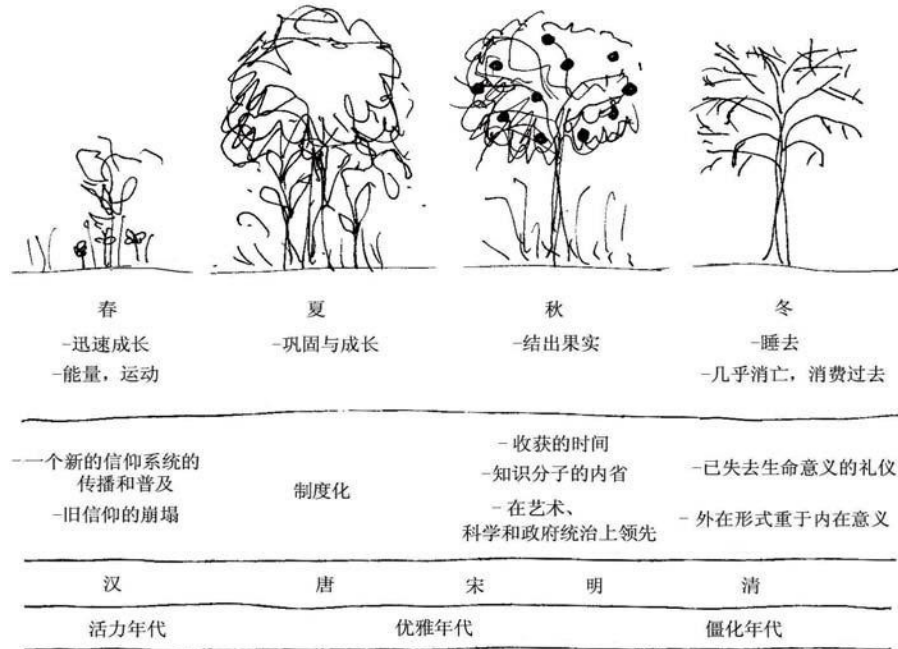


图 5. 一个文明的生命周期

如果我们将一个文明的发明创造和科技成就看作是文明生命循环过程中的必要产品，那么我们就能够回答著名的“李氏问题”了。李约瑟 (1900-1990)，剑桥大学教授，《中国的科学与文明》的主要作者，将其一生投入到发现“中国直至 15 世纪一直是地球上最领先的文明、奉献给人类数百个最广为人知的发明”的工作中。

李约瑟想“探求 500 年前中国突然发生了什么变化，才使得现代科学的发展必需发生在别处，主要是地中海沿岸，而不是中国。现实情况是很明显的：在 15 世纪中叶，中国所有的科学进展基本都陡然停止，欧洲那时却担当起了发展世界文明的领导角色。为什么会是这样？”^[1] 什么中国不能保持她的早期优势和创造优势？”“为什么中国人停止了尝试？”^[2]

十五世纪中期正好与中国由佛教衰退开始引起文明创造力走下坡路是重叠的。很自然的是，当这一循环要结束的时候，其在科学发明进步方面也开始衰退。

[1] Simon Winchester, *The Man Who Loved China*, HarperCollins, New York, 2008, p.190.

[2] Simon Winchester, *The Man Who Loved China*, HarperCollins, New York, 2008, p.260.

感谢李约瑟，他使我们能够认识到中国在科学技术发展史中的重要作用。按照他的研究，中国的发明与科学概念是欧洲农业进化的基础。而农业进化是工业进化的基础，而这些都是现代科技发展的基础。

中国在科学上的领导地位下降与其长期的文明生命的终结相一致，其文明生命在几千年前由宗教所推动，最近的一次由佛教助力。随着这个信仰系统的创造力的亏蚀，它的果实也枯萎了。

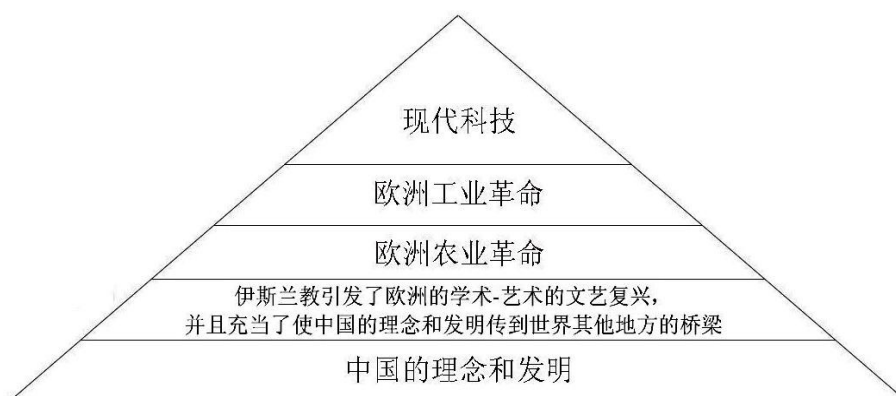


图 6. 科学技术的进化过程^[1]

在中国的生产力也开始走下坡路的同时，伊斯兰的最富创造力的时代也已终结。以穆罕默德开始的文明将其领导者的火炬传递给地中海南岸与欧洲，点燃了文艺复兴之火。如果没有穆罕默德，欧洲还将沉睡在长达 1000 年的黑暗年代。

伊斯兰给欧洲带来的礼物包括来自世界各地也包括中国的文化知识。伊斯兰在将中国的科学及工程技术引入欧洲起到了关键的作用。在很多领域，中国的发明和其在欧洲的应用之间的时间差超过 1000 年。

如果世界上的国家和人民相互间有更清晰地了解就更好了，就能在东西方之间的认知鸿沟上架起桥梁。总之他们是，而且几个世纪以来一直是，建造一个世界文明的紧密伙伴。今天的技术世界是一个东西方合作的产物，直至最近尚无人能想象得到它的发展程度。现在是东方和西方都应该认识并了解中国的贡献的时候了。而且，最重要的是，要让今天学校里的

[1] The diagram is based on evidence demonstrated in Robert Temple's book, The Genius of China.

孩子们认识到这一点，他们这一代人将把这些知识吸收到他们对世界的基本认知里。当如是，中国人和西方人才能平等相看，认识到他们是真正的全面的伙伴。^[1]

贯穿历史，“信仰体系与文明”的过程在各个时期和地域里的相似性，不同信仰体系的伦理信条在本质上的和谐一致，以及我们由穴居先民向世界公民的晋升——都暗示着文明和信仰体系间的关系是一个持续进步、不断前行的过程。该过程的目的，如汤因比所提出的，是要

……来开创一种社会状态，可让人类全体都能和谐地共同生活，有如一个包容全体的大家庭的成员。我相信，这是迄今所有文明，即便不是自觉地，也是在无意中一直朝向的目标。^[2]

我们可以说，没有什么单独的“宗教”，精神教育的过程也从来不是只有一个。我们曾将其各种不同的面貌曲解为相互独立、相互排斥的现象。我们可以把它看作是一所“大学”，以前是在分开的校区里，而今正进入同一个全球“校园”。当我们面向历史上各大信仰体系迄今所达到的地步，我们是在看旧课本，和我们童年与青春期的课堂行为。如果过去的各大信仰体系都是一个前行的、晋升的“内在”教育体系的一部分，则我们要做的不是抛弃该教育过程，而是要进行一番更新，要有一套与我们同一个星球的世界相适应的新的教育课程。

[1] Robert Temple, *The Genius of China*, 1998, p.12

[2] Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, abridged one-volume edition, p.44.

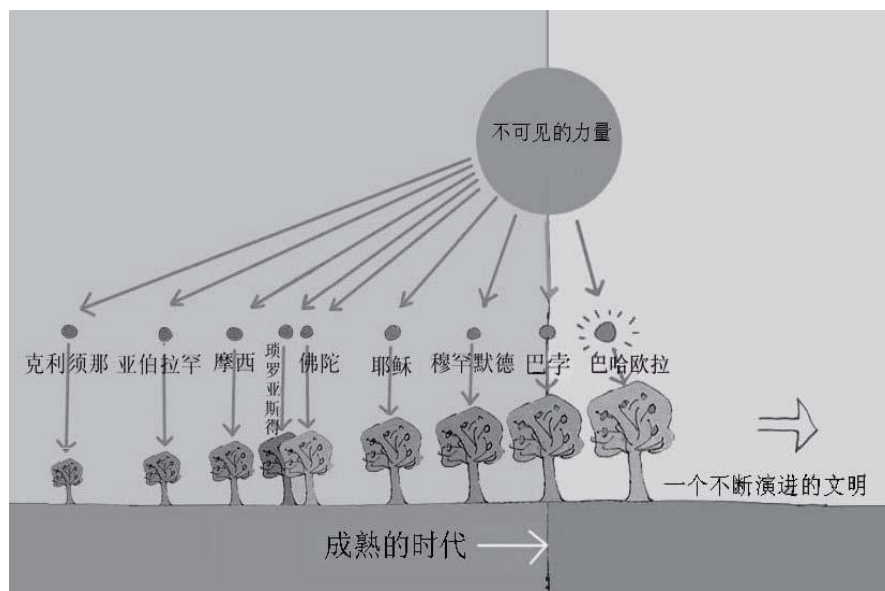


图 7. 同一精神教导的进程

列教皆有其在天之源而从之。溯其源，三圣无异也。（意译）
天下同归而殊途，一致而百虑（《周易·系辞下》）

既然视为一个过程，则任何信仰体系若主张唯我独尊，便毫无根据了。这样的主张并未看到所有体系共通的统合意向。这也是为什么一个旧的信仰体系，一旦其生命力耗尽，便再也无法作为重建的基础。这就需要真理的再生，而不是复述真理，需要一轮新的春天，真实精神的一次复活。虽然从一个“（信仰）周期”到下一个周期，真理会再次回响，甚至是原原本本地重申，但真正的更生力量却已传递给了新出现的信仰体系。

我们称之为文明的整个事业本身，是一个精神性的过程。在此过程中，人类心智不断创造出更为复杂而有效的手段，来表达人类与生俱来的道德和理智能力。……该现象是不断再现的；它没有开始也没有终止，因为它是演进的秩序所固有的基本现象。^[1]

[1] Who is Writing the Future? Baha'i International Community, Part 1, 1999.

纵然从该过程中得到滋养，人类却从未理解过它。相反，人们围绕着自己精神经验的每一段落，都分别构建了一个宗教体系。贯穿历史，宗教推动力一向因矛盾与苦痛冲突的结局，而屡受羁绊。

就如科学和法律总是趋向越来越精确地定义实体而时常被更新一样，宗教也必须获得更新。信仰体系的“生命之水”的效力，具有清洁净化的功能；但是，不断使用也是一个不断污染的过程。比如，刘子健 (James T. C. Liu) 推崇宋代新儒家为“道德先验论者”，但后来他说，“新传统主义完全渗透到文化中，以致它丧失了转化的力量。”

随着信仰体系的生命力减弱，它就逐渐不再管理人们的行动或对人们加以规范了。随着社会的成熟，信仰体系中的社会教义便失去了切实性。范围扩大的科学不再和宗教同声相和。信仰体系降格为外在的形式、外表和仪式，而缺乏内在的意义。它们和发展的新阶段毫不相干以致必须被抛弃。信仰周期这一必要的冬季，把墨守旧时代体系的社团同转向新灵感源泉的社团划分开来。

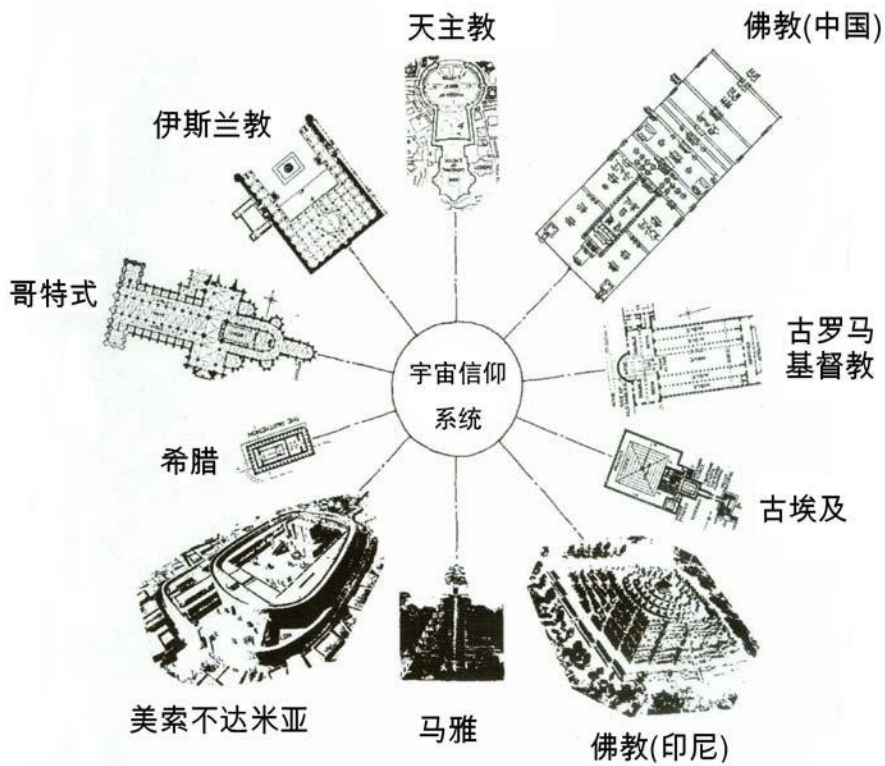


图 8. 人类信仰的汇合

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宗教是神性实质的外在表达。因而，它必须是活的，富于

生机的，运动的，进步的。倘若它没有运动和进步，它就没有了神性的生命；它是死的。神性的法则是持续活动的和演进的，因而，对这些法则的启示必定是进步的和连续的。一切事物都受制于革新。^[1]

以前的信仰体系虽然跨越了国家和种族的边界，但未能成为世界性的。例如，佛教很合中国的口味，而基督教和伊斯兰教却罕能渗入汉人当中。那时人类尚不够成熟以接受世界性的体系，也无交通和通讯等基础设施提供支持。然而，所有这些信仰体系，普世性已潜存其中，让我们为那备受期待的圆满的日子预先做好准备。

今天有许多人，对宗教的第一印象便是偏见、迷信、无理性的盲目服从、暴力甚至战争，都冠以宗教之名。倘若这些就是所谓的宗教的果实，那我们丢掉它岂不是更好？关于这些不无道理的印象其根源何在，以下所作的区分可提供一些解释：

1. 道德教义和社会教义之间的区别

虽然各体系的道德教义都基本相同，例如“爱你的邻人”这一主题贯穿了所有体系；但各体系中关于婚姻、遗产、饮食等等的社会教义则随着人类的发展而发展变化。然而，一个体系里数世纪的积习，使得放弃根深蒂固的传统而迈向新一级的社会律法原则并非易事。

2. 原始经书和人为添加的成分之间的区别

信仰体系创始人的著述，有别于信徒经年累月所添加的非本质的仪式与习惯。后人添加的这些有的已经模糊了甚至歪曲了原始信息，使其主旨更加难以把握，更不用说其总体的演进目的了。这样混淆了真理也就遮暗了进步之途。世界信仰体系的创始人是——

人类的第一位教师。他们是普世的教育者，他们订立的基本原则是环宇进步的肇因和要素。后来漫延开的形式和仿制品无益于那种进步。相反，它们是上天教育者所奠定的人类基础的破坏者。它们是遮蔽实质之阳的乌云。^[2]

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 139.

[2] Abdu'l-Baha, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 85.

3.“经书”和某些宗教领袖的行为之间的区别

进一步加剧混淆的是某些宗教领袖的行为，通常是在文明的后期阶段，他们出于无知或对权力的热衷，固守着不合时宜的制度，这些制度必定要在新周期里升起的太阳面前消散。他们没有指引他们的大众朝向新光源，反而抗拒它，甚至鼓动迫害其创始人及其追随者。例如，犹太宗教领袖迫害耶稣；基督教领袖掀起了对穆斯林的迫害。这些都是明确的表征，显示该周期结果的时期正在逝去。

真正的宗教是人间的爱与契合之源，优秀品质的发展之因；但人们固守着仿制品和伪造品，忽视了那统合一切的实质；他们因此被剥夺而与宗教的光辉无缘。他们尊奉从父辈和先祖那里继承下来的迷信。这迷信盛行若此，以致他们撇掉神明真理的天界光华，而坐在模仿和想象的黑暗中。本是要助长生命的，反变为死亡之因；本应是知识之明证的，现在成了无知的凭据；曾是人类本性崇高之要素的，却表明了其堕落。因此，宗教家的领域渐趋狭窄黑暗，而物质主义者的范围却拓宽并得到发展；因宗教家固守仿制品和伪造品，忽视并丢弃了神性，以及宗教的神圣实质。^[1]

信仰体系名义下的暴力和偏见，是对其原初宗旨的歪曲，并不能抹杀其价值；知识之火在孩童或无知者手里会是危险的。衰落腐朽中的信仰体系无法体现其价值；瓦解是衰落的表征，是一个周期所固有且必需的，周期会翻新而再度开始，聚集起新的强大力量。

衰败时期过后，转折点到来。强光逝而复返。革去故也，鼎取新也；与时偕行，故无害。（《易经》，意译）

如果信仰体系是前后相续的，而前一个体系的生命力业已耗尽，我们就需要一个崭新的开始。倘若我们演进的下一步是人类家庭成为一体，则相应的，我们需要一个世界性的、契合我们时代需求的生机勃勃的信仰体系。

我们的世界近来紧密地熔为一处，以及过去一两百年间学识与发明

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Foundations of World Unity, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1972, p.71.

急剧加速，都暗示着一个新的文明周期——首次以全球规模——已经开始了。倘若信仰体系会驱动人类成长的新阶段，则此突飞猛进的整合与瓦解背后的那股力量必定已然存在。它在哪里？创始人是谁？

这一更新的信仰体系必须是普世的，必须实现世界各地民众的宏愿，并有能力激发文明的全球勃兴，而各文化能在其中“以不断变化的模式相互作用”。它必须给予“人类心智……更为复杂而有效的手段来表达……其……固有的道德和理智能力”。该信仰体系的伦理规范应当是各个宗教所共有的“爱你的邻人”之基本主题的复兴；其社会原则必须涉及世界公民在这全球化的星球上的组织形式。

巴哈伊信仰

1863年，一位波斯要员的儿子巴哈欧拉，在流放于伊拉克巴格达期间，宣称自己就是这样一个更新的信仰体系的开创者。他宣称自己要发出的是一系列递进的启示中最近的一个。他的核心讯息和目标，是人类的一体。

须把世界当作人的躯体，虽于创世之初乃健全完美，但由种种原因，染患了严重的失调与疾病。它未得一日安适，病情反而日渐加剧，因它历受无知医师的治疗，那医师任随己欲，谬误深重。若经一位精干医师的照料，躯体的某一部分一度痊愈，其余部分却罹患如故。全知者，全智者如此告知你等。

主所命定为医治全世界的极效药方与至强工具的，是世界众民联合在一个普世的圣道，一个共同的信仰中。除非经由一位熟练、全能、受启发的医师之力，否则绝无法实现此点。诚然，这是真理，其他皆为谬误。^[1]

1918年，在致海牙和平委员会的一封信中，巴哈欧拉的儿子阿博都巴哈写道：

巴哈欧拉的教义之一是，尽管物质文明是人类世界进步的一个手段，但在它与神圣文明结合之前，想得到的人类幸福这

[1] Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, p. 254.

一结果，是不会达成的。思之，一小时的光景，这些战舰就能把一座城市变为废墟，这是物质文明的结果；同样，克虏伯炮、毛瑟枪、炸药、潜艇、鱼雷艇、武装飞行器和轰炸机——所有这些战争武器都是物质文明的恶果。如果物质文明结合了神圣文明，这些猛烈的武器就决不会发明出来。不，人类的精力会完全投入到有益的发明中，集中在有益地发现上。物质文明就像玻璃灯罩。神圣文明才是灯本身；没有光，玻璃罩便是黑暗的。物质文明就像躯体。无论它如何绝顶优美，典雅极致，它也是死的。神圣文明就像是灵，躯体由灵获取生命，否则它就成了尸体。因此显而易见，人类世界需要圣灵的气息。没有灵，人类世界就是无生命的；没有这灯光，人类世界就是一片黑暗。因自然界是动物的世界。除非人再次从自然界出生，即是说，超脱于自然界，否则人本质上还是动物；正是上帝的教义将这个动物转变为有灵魂的人。^[1]

根据巴哈欧拉曾孙守基·阿芬第所言，我们的成熟不仅仅是在阐明一个理想。它是人类社会的一场深刻的有机改变，带来与其新状况相匹配的机制，亦即人类演进必然的圆满成就。

不要有任何误解。人类一体的原则——巴哈欧拉所有教义所环绕的轴心——绝非无知的激情主义之爆发，或模糊的虔诚希望之表达。不应把它的呼吁仅仅视同于再度唤醒人间兄弟情谊和亲善精神，它的目的也不单单是培育个别民族和国家之间的和谐合作。较于任何古代的先知所得以提出的，它的内涵更为深刻，它的主张更加伟大。它的信息不仅适用于个人，它更首先牵涉到必定连结所有国家和民族为同一个人类大家庭成员的那些基本关系之性质。

它并非只构成了一个理想之阐述，而是不可分割地联系着：

- 一个充分体现其真理、表明其有效性、并永保其影响力的机制。
- 它意味着当今社会结构的一次有机改变，这一改变世界从未经历过。

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Foundations of World Unity, p. 27.

- 它构成了一个大胆且遍及全球的，对国家信条之陈旧口号的挑战——这些信条一度盛行，且必将按照天尊所设计并控制的一般情形，让步于一个根本不同于并无限优越于世界所曾构想之事物的新福音。

- 它所要求的不啻为整个文明世界的重建与非军事化——该世界在其政治机关，灵性抱负、贸易金融、文字语言等生活的所有重要方面有机统一，而其联邦单位的民族特征依然无限多样。

- 它代表着人类演进之圆满——该演进最初始于家庭生活的诞生，随后的发展达成了部落的团结，接着导致城邦的建立，再后扩展为独立的主权国家制度。

正如巴哈欧拉所宣示的，人类一体之原则恰如其分地赢得这一郑重声明的支持：达至这惊人演进中的这最后阶段，非但必要而且不可避免；其实现正快速临近，并且，缺少源自上帝的力量，无任何事物能成功地确立这一原则。^[1]

巴哈伊信仰承认上帝的一体和祂众先知的一体，坚持无束缚探索真理的原则，谴责一切形式的迷信和偏见。巴哈伊信仰教导，宗教的基本目的是促进和谐一致，宗教必须和科学并行不悖，宗教构成了和平、有序而进步的社会唯一而终极的基础。

“反复教诲两性享有均等的机会、权利和特权的原则，提倡义务教育，消除极端贫富，将本着服务精神进行的工作提高到崇拜的等级，推荐采用国际辅助语言，为奠立和维护世界永久和平提供了必要的机构。”^[2]

巴哈伊信仰是世界独立宗教中最年轻的一个。其创始人巴哈欧拉，被巴哈伊信徒视为上帝使者系列中最近的一位，该系列一直延伸到有记载的历史以前，包括亚伯拉罕、摩西、佛陀、克利什那、琐罗亚斯德、基督和穆罕默德。

巴哈欧拉的讯息其中心主题是，人类是一个单一的种族，其统一在一个全球社会中的日子已届临。巴哈欧拉说，上帝已启动历史性的力量，正摧毁着传统的种族、阶级、教条和国家间的樊篱，并将适时引发一个世界性的文明。地球众民面临的首要挑战，是接受其一体性这一事实，并

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*, p. 42.

[2] Shoghi Effendi, *Guardian of the Bahá'u8217Xí Faith*.

协助统一的过程。

巴哈伊信仰的目的之一，是帮助这一点的实现。体现着地球上大多数国家、种族和文化的约五百万巴哈伊组成的全球社团，正在为巴哈欧拉的教义付诸实施而工作。他们来自 2,000 多个不同的部落、人种和族群，生活在 235 个国家和附属地区。大不列颠年鉴（1992 年）称巴哈伊信仰是世界上地理分布第二广的宗教，仅次于基督教。

他们的经验将成为一个源泉，鼓励着所有同样把人类视为一个全球家族，把地球视为一片故土的人们。

2.4 与权威的关系的成熟

随着人类的成熟发展，大众与领导者之间的关系也在发展。我们需要逐渐地摆脱以权威崇拜为导向的社会体系，走向以合作，承担社会责任为特征的成长型社会体系。从历史角度看，中国与西方存在于两种完全不同的体系中：西方以个人自由为基础的体系和中国以中央集权为基础的体系。长期以来按照西方的观点，中国和“东方社会主义阵营”迟早都要向西方的“民主方向”发展。但过去三十年的历史来看，中国人运用东方的哲学理念，平稳地完成了经济体制的改革，保持了社会的基本稳定。现任政府更是直接提出建立“和谐社会”的目标，尽力化解各种社会力量的冲突。这使我们看到，基于不同的历史发展轨迹，东西方在未来可能做到殊路同归。

在这里，我们仅从个人自由和党派制的角度来探讨这个问题

个人自由

如果在一个成熟的社会中，人际关系是基于相互负责和合作，那么这就意味着个人的自由必须受到限制。我们在 2.1 一节中提到，“如果我们接受个人能够从社会整体组织中受益，那么符合逻辑的推论就是，

个人行为在强化了社会整体的同时也强化了自己。”

为了保证整体的利益，团体的权益应大于个人的权益。因此，个体的自由应基于了解社会整体关系并由此调整自己的行为去适应社会的能力。

自由的质量与个人的知识和训练有关，中国人很明白这一点。对以下这段引文，中国人已是耳熟能详，乃至常常不用岁数来识别一个人的年纪，而是看一个人和自由的关系有多成熟。

三十来岁称为“而立”之年——立足坚稳的发展阶段；四十来岁称为“不惑”之年；五十来岁则“知天命”——明白命运的意义；六十来岁“耳顺”，能明辨优劣；七十来岁，“从心所欲”却不逾越规矩。人们懂得，真正的自由是经过毕生的学习过程之后才能达到的。自由有界限，它不应“逾矩”。

这种对自由的理解使中国人具有冷静应对生活中的矛盾冲突的能力。尽管当今的中国的年轻一代非常崇尚“自由”，但根深蒂固的克己理念使他们对很多其他国家，尤其是和宗教组织成员有牵连的国家所发生的自我毁灭的暴力冲突大惑不解。同时也对美国允许个人携带枪支的法律很惊讶。

比如，中国大多数城市人遵守一个子女的法律，因为他们认为需要这种严厉的措施来预防人口过多的后果。有谁感谢过中国的克己，因为中国控制了世界人口的数量？如果你在中国的城市里，在高峰时段挤过公共汽车，你就会切身体会到人们为什么能够理解计划生育政策的逻辑。尽管会有棘手的副作用，即一个子女的政策会助长溺爱孩童，并且会减少照顾年迈父母的子女，但中国依然坚持不懈。缺少社会福利体系，要在农村生存是很艰难的。生活要靠养儿子，因为儿子将来会留在家里。这一需求和一个子女的政策相冲突，导致了女胎的流产。这个问题还会持续，直到教育水平提高了，以及有更多的退休金规划就位。

中国人的克己遏制了那种会导致社会不稳定的颠覆行为，这种克己并非只是畏惧外部的威吓。中国人把领导者看作是由“水”即人民所支撑的船。人民懂得，水的目的应该是载舟的，而非覆舟。

西方往往不把这种做法看作是维护自由之举，却认为这种做法缺乏自由。尽管如此，我们仍然认为这些中国的传统经验更符合人类走向成熟的的方向。中国的克己文化在当今金融危机中，对比无限度消费的西

方文化更显得“可持续”一些。

当然，我们并不是说中国数千年形成的以封建家长，长官意志为主宰的文化已经消亡，

实际上，中国通向理想社会的道路还很长。

党派制

在成熟的社会中，我们将从一种充满对立意识的体制转换到另一种和谐统一的体制。在新的体制中，取代对立竞争，自我利益最大化的是通过公众参与，磋商调和，达到团体利益最大化。正如一对争吵不休的父母不能管好一个家庭，一个成熟的社会不可能由一个时时处于对立争斗的政府机构管理。

西方对民主的定义通常是指民选政府，以及多党制和不受约束的对政府行为加以批评的自由。多党制是出现于已追逐权利为目的的不成熟社会体系中。这种带有相互监督制约的体系在防止滥用权力时是有必要的。但当我们的重点转移到建立以公正和团结统一为原则的新体系时，这种以对抗为基础的政府机制就改淘汰了。

对于中国人来说，千百年来适应的是一个不可分裂的权力中心。政治体制中的“在野党”或“反对党”的概念是与其传统道德及知识系统相矛盾的。多党制对中国不单是一种外来的概念，而且可能引起国家分裂，甚至内战，造成适得其反的效果。在中国向成熟社会发展的进程中，没有必要重复西方的对抗性多党制过程。中国应该沿着自己的传统道路，扩大和改进目前的各级人民代表的选举，强化民众参与和磋商的过程，使之更具有民选的意义。

2.5 社团生活的成熟

在社会组织中有一个层面大于家庭而小于城市，我们称之为“社团或社区”。我们在村庄、街区和中国的“单位”里能够体验到社团生活的一些方面。因为世界大多数地区是从权威式社会结构转变过来的，这些初级的“社团”是由村里的头面人物、有权势的人或者指定的人所领导的。朋友的圈子、共同利益集群、校友会、网友组织等都是一些社团的特征，但是没有实际的存在地点。

所有上述提到的组织都曾经或者仍然正在增进人类的成长和进步，但是现代世界的一些现状需要创造更成熟的形式。当我们的能力和教育不足时，为了满足我们的需要，我们可以被领导者——好的或坏的——由上至下地管理。

随着教育的改善以及知识的迅速传播，我们每个人的能力获得了快速的提升。相应的“参与和要求进步”的能力的增长需要一个新的环境，以便每一个社会成员的未知的潜能都能够被拓展，而新的社会和管理形式能够安全地导引这股新兴的能量。

随着社会模式更加地整合，我们需要身边有个地方，在那里我们可以表达和体验创造力、责任感以及携手合作。

社会发展由于从多方面吸取营养变得更加负责，高层次的社会单位如城市、国家和全球需要更广泛的草根阶层民众的参与。

根据上面的这些现状，我们可以将社团重新定义为一个由个人、家庭和各类组织自发形成的团体，这个团体会创办各种机构和活动，其目标是大家一起为圈内和圈外的人提供服务以改善综合的生活质量。

中国习惯于群体意识，常常会说“集体”。虽然其渊源还在佛教进入中国之前，但这一观念由于大乘佛教强调通过救度群体来救度个人，而得到了强有力的推动。中国的集体感与和平倾向是构建社团的宝贵基础。

集体感针对的通常是家庭、朋友和全体中国人。目前的社会结构从较大的范围，如族群、国家和城市，一下子跳到了工作场所、家庭和个人这些较小的范围上。工作单位一度也是某种社团，但这一机制正在消失。城市、区政府、街道委员会等等各有一级行政单位，但它们更多的是行政的，而非社会的。还有一些小型社团，但仅限于老同学、同事以及家庭的圈子。

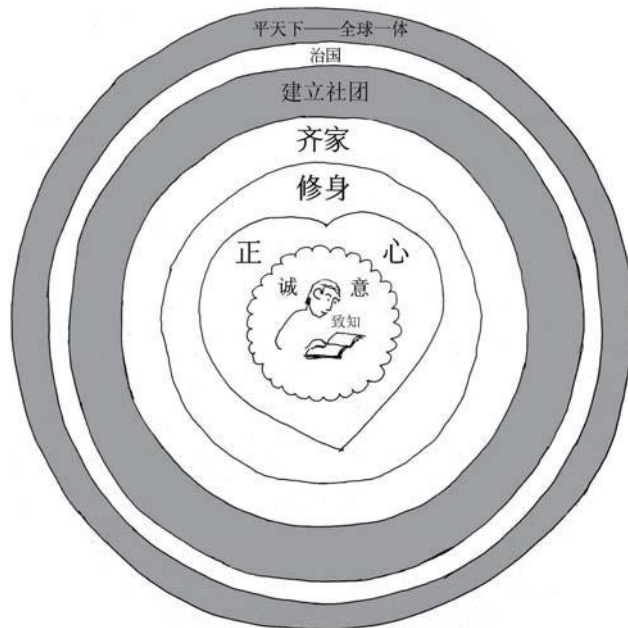


图 9. 社会与个人的关系。本图在《大学》的描述框架中增加了“社团生活”一环

1935 年，林语堂 (1895-1976) 在他的《吾国与吾民》一书中指出，儒

家教义《大学》，贯穿了各层次的社会组织，独漏掉了社团。从国家到家庭的跳跃即可为证。团结和忠诚在这两个层次上还能发挥作用，但在中间层次上意义就弱了。

古之欲明明德于天下者，先治其国；
欲治其国者，先齐其家；
欲齐其家者，先修其身；
欲修其身者，先正其心；

也许在过去，这些社会结构已经足够。孔子应该也会同意在社会的阶梯上再增加“社团生活”一环，因为当代社会和社会中的个人已经成熟了。

中国开放以来最明显的特征之一就是个人能力的增强，不论男女。随着中国超越了专制型的社会结构而趋向成熟，亿万民众在自行决定如何将其能量和天赋疏导出来。人们自择教育和职业，自创生意，国内国外哪里有工作机会就去哪里。专业的服务态度开始取代家长作风。一个巨大的能量库正在形成，只待引流。

如果我们能够找到一个社会和管理机制来导引这股不断增强的个人的潜能，城市就会变得更有效率，城市生活也会极大改善。目前这种在家庭和朋友圈子外隐匿身名的状况，越来越多的城市区域被高墙和保安隔离开来，反映了对陌生人的恐惧，也是缺乏社区 / 社团的结果。我们需要离家较近的机构和外围来提供相互的支持与合作，就像家庭内或朋友的圈子内的相互支持和相互关系带来利益和安全感。同样，在一个友好的、管理完善的社团层面扩展相互支持和相互关系的界限，将更大的拓展利益和安全感的范围。

对我来说，发展规划和策略的一个主要挑战便是，怎样创建一个全球化社会的机构群，一个将社会各个阶层联结在一起、它们之间也能够互相联系的结构网络，使之逐渐成为全球所有居民都能够方便使用的共同财产。否则，我担心，全球化对大多数人来说恐将沦为边缘化的同义词。^[1]

[1] 法赞·阿柏博士，《实验室、庙宇，以及市场》IDRC, 2001.

就这一社会层面的接触有很多怀疑和提防。即便是好人也会迟疑。隔绝和匿名的渴望主要来源于害怕我们所不认识的人会提出无边的、不可控的要求；一旦你开始帮助某人也许就再也无法中止他对你的要求。

这种恐惧是有道理的；在居民小区这个层面没有相关的管理机构来应对这种情况。如果没有相关的机构的发展以及社会质量和技巧的成熟，此类社团的延伸就不可能出现。信息的分享、需要和服务间的对接、信任的扩展，都需要在社团层面有新的组织形式和领导力。

如果参与社会真正是生活的一部分，则城市的孩童可以参与社区服务，作为学校课程的重要部分。让他们更亲密、更实际地做开面对周围的社会，能开阔他们目前的“学习 - 家庭作业 - 电脑游戏”的活动范围。这反过来又会给他们的学习带来更明确的目的感。孩子们更容易想象如何把他们所学的应用到周围世界的需要上。对这种社会教育多加重视，还会让孩童有更多的代理兄弟姐妹可以交往，从而减轻独生子女家庭的困难。在服务中成长，这样的氛围也会减少自我中心。

青年能为社团的建设作出宝贵的贡献。目前在中国，青年人的大部分时间都是为了在强调分数的学习中取得好成绩。这很容易把他们与生活隔绝开，而限制了他们的社会性成长。如果社团服务能够被认可，青年人可以参与到诸如低龄人的教育中，他们也会力行真正的服务，负起某种程度的责任——其实他们已经为这种责任做好了准备，只是从未付诸使用。如果教育体系包括社团建设的参与，一些人力资源亦可从较强的学校向较弱的学校流动。这就将与现在这种过分强调学科分数而分裂各学校的状况有一个鲜明的对比。学校间并不互相交流，反而是根据各校考入大学的人数来排名造成学校间的竞争。参与社团工作还会给予青年人以机会，不靠约会来了解异性。当你看到一个人怎样工作，怎样与他人互动，怎样行使责任等等，你会更了解他。

在基层社会里，创造和参加社团活动不仅给人们提供了服务与接受服务的机会，更会大大增强人与人之间的相互了解和了解的深度。人们也会通过丰富活泼的社团活动，发现他们当中富有领导才能的人物，从而使日后的社会选举更为深入和更有成效。

中国的“集体”意识和和平的处世态度将是社团建设的宝贵基石。信任的圈子需要扩大。一个成熟的信仰体系的标志就是它能够有助于创建成功的社团生活。

到目前为止，我们还是在固定的范围内讨论社团问题。

在今天互联网与快速交通迅速发展的时代，不同地方的社团可以有很多新的渠道相互交流。而社团给人们带来的收益则逾越了它的地理范畴，从同一城市到世界任一城市。

从始于 1844 年的电报的发明开始，城市迅速地成为遍布全球的网络中的结点。主要的构成现代城市的技术因素出现于 1877 至 1889 的 12 年间。通过这些发明，城市得以朝着水平和垂直方向扩展；城市的工作、娱乐和家庭生活时间能够轻易地延长到夜晚；人们在城市里或城际间的相互接触也大为快捷简便。

蒸汽机	1781
铁路	1800
电报	1844
电话	1877
白炽灯	1880
摩天楼	1880
有轨电车	1885
地铁	1886
汽车	1889
电梯	1889
无线电通讯	1901
飞行器	1908
电视	1920
计算机	1930
互联网	1980

图 10. 各种发明及其诞生的时间

尤其是随着国际电讯的普及，城市有了新的维度和目的，城市正变成整个星球网络的一部分。它们正在成为全球化文明的基础设施。城市，及其内部的社团成为所有个人据此获取世界资源的基础，同时为建立一个全球社会努力。从理论上讲，城市越是发挥这种功能，城市的潜力就越能得到开掘和提升。

2.6 男人和女人之间关系的成熟

妇女能顶半边天。^[1]

世界过去一直由武力所统治，男人因身体和心智的品质更为强悍好斗，而凌驾于女人之上。但天平在移动，武力正失去份量，而女人所擅长的心智的机敏、直觉、爱与服务的灵性品质，正获得优势。因而，新的时代将是少些男性气质，而更充满了女性理想的时代，或者更确切地说，是男性与女性的文明要素更为均衡的时代。^[2]

只要专制型主导大局，妇女，就像少数群体一样，不得不去更了解男人，而胜过了男人对女人的了解。男人公然或无意间表露的专制的、传统的态度，会让女人受挫。对于中国妇女的高自杀率，这会有几分解释^[3]。妇女正在幕后等待，比其他人更迫切地要求得到更好的机会来施展她们的潜能。中国有许多非常成熟精干的单身妇女，她们似乎不大可能找到

[1] 中华人民共和国开创者毛泽东主席的著名口号。

[2] Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'u'llah and the New Era, 1976 U.S. edition, p.156.

[3] 北京，1991年的一天早上，我离开我在宣武门的家，看见人行道上有具女尸盖着塑料布，手伸在外面。她是从12层楼上跳下来的。人们说是因为她生了女孩，而她家人要的是男孩。

一位好丈夫，尽管男人的数目比妇女多。许多妇女嫁人好像是甘心要默默无闻地做丈夫的教育者。

男人假想的优越性还会继续压抑妇女的雄心。^[1]

这种不幸，其部分原因在于，妇女更多地认同人类生存的性质基本上是合作的。男人还处于专制型的时候，妇女已经展示出整合型的某些特征了。

男人更被竞争、控制这些更属于青春期的态度和习惯所累。男人的成熟是自治、脱离他人、独立和个人成就。顾及人际关系与合作，好像是软弱的表现。^{[2][3]}

女人的确更有一种精妙的才能，可涵容他人的需要且轻而易举。我的意思是说，女人较男人更善于首先看出他人的需要，而后又深信能满足他人的需要——这让女人既能回应他人的需要，又不会觉得有损她们的身份感。

……服务他人是一项基本的原则，女人的生活就是围绕着它组织起来的；男人就远非如此了……。

尽管任何社会都有竞争的一面，但社会要存在，就必须有起码的一点合作。（我把合作定义为扶助并增进他人的发展，同时推动自身发展的行为。）当然很清楚的是，我们尚未达到很高层次的合作生存。就现有的范围来说，妇女已承担了更多的责任来维持合作生存。尽管她们不会为此大事张扬，但妇女在家庭中会坚持不懈地努力，以缔造出某种合作体系，能照顾到每个人的需要。虽然作为我们家庭基础的不平等前提大大阻碍了她们的作业，但总是妇女在笃行努力。^[4]

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, US edition, 1982, p.76.

[2] Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, Harvard Press, 1982.

[3] 要在北京乘公共汽车的时候玩一种游戏，我从来不会输。那就是不看司机，猜猜司机是男是女。如果车子停了还往前倾，停车时刹车很猛，而且速度很快，我就知道司机是男的。如果加速减速平缓，速度适中，我就知道司机是女的。女司机不觉得自己是在赛车，非得争先；她们会考虑到站在过道里的乘客。刹车或启动太猛会把他们晃得站立不稳。

[4] Dr. Jean Baker-Miller, *Towards a New Psychology of Women*, Beacon Press, Boston, Second Edition, p.62-3.

为家庭生活和子女教育肩负了数世纪的责任，使得妇女作好了准备，来为人类的进步做出关键的贡献；她们更为推动当今世界的专制型向整合型过渡的社会而装备起来。建设更加亲和的社团生活，这一需求将为发展自我同时服务他人提供更多机会。妇女很有可能成为这一事业中的领导者。

……直到最近，发展自我同时服务他人的机会还鲜有存在；实质上没有哪个社会形态可以将二者结合并举……。对于男人来说，发展自我兼顾服务他人的情景，似乎复杂得无法可想。但对于女人却没有那么复杂。

传统的经济模型中，世界被看成是一个充满了自我意识为中心的独立的消费者，这已过时了。新的模型会将环境因素和社会因素综合考虑。群体的利益，家庭与社团的重要性都应在经济活动中兼顾到。而在这些方面妇女的经验恰恰可以做出出色贡献。^[1]

在我们成熟的新阶段，女童教育具有了新的重要性。经由母亲传给下一代，合作与服务的态度更容易传播开；如古谚所言，“教男教一个，教女教一家。”^[2]如果财力短乏而不得不做一个选择的话，女孩应比男孩更有优先受教育的权利。

即使纯粹从经济的观点出发，世界银行首席经济学家也说，为培训下一代而培训妇女“……和世界上任何其他投资相比，很可能获得更高的回报率……。打破贫困循环最有效的方式是投资女童教育。在低收入国家，让女童也和男童一样受到中级教育所花的费用，比起这些国家国防经费的 10% 还要少。低收入国家的父母未能在女儿身上投资，是因为他们没有指望女儿能为家庭做出经济上的贡献。”在中国农村，女儿会离开娘家住到丈夫家里。在短期内

女孩不像男孩那样宝贵——于是女孩要留在家里做家务

[1] Dr. Jean Baker-Miller, *Towards a New Psychology of Women*, Beacon Press, Boston, Second Edition, p.62-3.

[2] Agnes Jung, *Unveiling India, A Woman's Journey*, 1987, p.92.

而让她的兄弟上学——这一预言就自圆其说了，却让妇女陷入了被忽视的恶性循环中。另一方面，受过教育的母亲更有能力出去赚钱，而能面对完全不同的一番选择。她很有可能少生孩子，但她能让孩子更健康，注重每个孩子的发展，保证女儿也有公平的机会。她女儿的教育又使得女儿下一代的女童更有可能和男童一样受到教育而且健康。恶性循环就这样变成了良性循环。^[1]

妇女的解放，两性间全面平等的实现，是和平的最重要先决条件之一，虽然对此少有公认。

否认这种平等便是对世界半数人口施行不义，并助长了男人的不良态度和习惯——它们从家庭被带到工作场所和政治生活，并最终带进国际关系中。从道德、从实践或是从生物学上，都找不到任何依据能证明否认男女平等是正当的。只有当妇女在人类进取的所有领域里被迎入全面的伙伴关系中，才会营造出能让世界和平得以出现的道德和心理风尚。^[2]

教育妇女是消除和终止战争的有力措施，因为妇女会施展全部的影响力来反对战争。妇女抚养孩童，教育青年长大成人。她们会拒绝交出儿子去牺牲沙场。确实，她们将是促成世界和平与国际仲裁的最大因素。肯定，妇女将废除人间的争战。因为人类社会由男性和女性这两个互补的要素构成，除非二者都得以完善，否则人类的幸福与安定便无保障。因此，男人和女人的地位和标准必须达到平等。^[3]

如果“中国在物质、文化和精神资源和潜力方面列居各国之首”，如果妇女在迈向服务与整合型人际关系范例时首当其冲，则整个世界都应侧目于中国妇女——首中之首！

[1] Lawrence Summers, Chief Economist, World Bank. Essay for Scientific American, The Most Influential Investment, August 1992.

[2] To the People's of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, The Universal House of Justice, Baha'i Study Series No.14, p. 13.

[3] Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, US edition, 1982, p.104.

2.7 文化的成熟

当下的历史暗示着，一个世界共同体不仅是不可避免的，甚而它正是世界被创造的目的。伴随着新信仰体系的到来而兴起的文化，曾把先前相互分离的民族联系起来。例如，佛教连接了中国和印度；基督教在黑暗时代（欧洲中世纪）之前连接了中东和罗马属地；伊斯兰教连接了希腊、罗马属地和阿拉伯、波斯、印度以及中国。今天，全球各处都浸没在世界性的剧烈的文化交汇中，概莫能免。并且，在社会演进的每一步——从家庭、部落、城邦到国家——个人表达的机会和能力都得到了扩展，这暗示着随着我们进入世界文明的这个阶段，又有可能产生进一步的扩展。

那将是协同增效的创造性的交互作用，还是适者生存？中国文化将会怎样？

很像基因库在人的生物性的生命及其环境中所起的作用，数千年来形成的文化财富浩瀚的多样性，对于正在经历集体成年的人类其社会与经济的发展是至关重要的。这一财富所代表的遗产，必须得以在一个全球文明中结出果实。一方面，各

种文化的表现形式需要受到保护，以免被时下当道的物质主义势力所窒息。另一方面，各种文化必须在不断变化的文明格局中得能以交互作用，且不受党派政治目的所操纵。^[1]

中国革命成功地“废除长久以来的非正义的统治结构，为地球五分之一人口战胜赤贫，并扫清了根深蒂固的迷信习惯。”正如鲁迅所说的，有些东西是要抛弃的。

要保存我们的民族性，须先确定它们能否保存我们。有特色的东西未必就好，为何非得保存呢？因为是中国的痼疾就要留着吗？（鲁迅，意译）

这一过程，时而猛烈，对中国文化的各个方面都加以质疑。

从文化大革命的极端恢复过来之后不久，正当旧帐被一笔勾销，正是在这一脆弱的转折点，中国向西方敞开了大门，外国文化随即涌入。中国的现代化得到了明显的收益，可是她在文化、传统和精神生活方面付出了怎样的代价？对于和其他文化交互作用，中国人的感受是复杂的。中国的文化表现形式正在“被时下当道的物质主义势力所窒息”吗？进入全球共同体和全球文化的行列既引起了恐惧也唤起了希望。

比如，李道增教授的以下言论就表达了前者。他们这些博学者的特殊贡献包括保存和研究了体现在中国古典和乡土传统里的广阔的民居资源，他们是文化基因库的一个重要部分的看护人。李道增教授虽然希望古代文化能得到创造性的转化，但他看到目前的文化全球化过程只导致了“冲突和妥协”。

“全球化”正在成为最新的思想潮流。随着经济、金融、科学和技术的发展，全球化的意义似乎比较容易被人们理解。可是，“文化全球化”在任何意义上都是站不住脚的。将来世界的文化发展很可能是“全球化”和“地方化”之间冲突和妥协、互动和对话的结果。……地方文化是城市的“灵魂”。我们要从上述的三个不同层面来理解传统的地方文化，并对我们的古

[1] The Prosperity of Humankind, Baha'i International Community, 1995.

代文化进行创造性的转化，这样才能有助于我们目前的实践。^[1]

他和同事们相信，中国的文化资源中蕴含着很多物质和社会可持续发展的法则和解决办法，蕴含着一个浩瀚的精神激发和意识觉悟体系。到传统的乡镇和少数民族村寨旅行调研，为他们提供了一个放松和灵感的资源。在这里，文化“基因库”的密度令人精神一振。其中还包含着手工技艺——它在现代建筑运动之前，一直是成熟的建筑语言不可或缺的成分。以进步的名义丢弃或毁坏这一财富令他们极为痛心。

在现代的语境中重新诠释中国古代建筑和城市风格，这个过程必定需要该文化基因库的资源。当研究要深入下去的时候，基因库的资源还会留下多少呢？

艺术家和音乐家也有同样的担忧。例如，中国从事金属雕塑和油画的年轻艺术家杨冕，说外国的影响是一种文化压迫形式，并导致了感觉的钝化。

不崇尚历史，不参与文化圈子，建筑在中国到处都是一个模样。没有个性，没有地方文化传统。这不能归咎于政治力量。是我们的文化在受压迫并且变得迟钝，才导致了这种情形。我们城市的建筑工艺规程，只是开发商在不违反什么规定的条件下他们个人喜好的产物。开发商追求的是利润，要利用市场销售伎俩。我们只需要看一看我们城市里的所有房地产项目，就能发现它们全是一样的筒子楼，出现在广告里却打着“欧式”、“欧陆风格”、“罗马花园”、主题社区、高尚住宅、亲水园林等等旗号。（意译）

音乐家谭盾痛惜传统的消失，他要寻找一幅精神地图，以藉此挽回脆弱的民间乡土文化。尽管他看到现代化切断了中国的魂和根之间的联系，他还是在技术中看到记录和传播的手段，而有助于保存正在湮没的脆弱的文化元素。

北京【法新社】1981年，谭盾作为音乐学院的学生访问

[1] Li Dao Zeng, From an article called Global Localization and Creative Transformation, published in World Architecture Magazine January, 2004, p. 85.

他的出生地湖南时，看到一位老人以石奏乐，对风而歌，这种萨满式的音响令谭盾颇为着迷。“他在进行他原始的歌唱：对天地风云倾谈，与往世来生对歌，”这位曾获得奥斯卡奖的作曲家说，“我惊呆了。”20年后当谭盾作为著名的作曲家再次来到村子寻找那位老人时，他伤心地发现，老人已过世了。“那老人给我的记忆太深了，美妙绝伦。可是突然间它就消失了，我意识到其他的每一样东西也在消失。”谭盾在一次采访中对法新社说。

这位居住在纽约的作曲家说，正在湮没的中国乡土民族传统，让他汲取了音乐灵感，也令他魂牵梦萦。谭盾说，在中国危玄的经济发展面前，乡土传统的泯灭迅如摩天大楼的拔起。“在每个地方，传统都在消失，”他叹息道。“这非常严重，因为在中国，发展来得太快了。发展令人目炫的时候，我们必须非常小心地保存文化和传统。”

为村里那位老人的离世所触动，谭盾决心用他的音乐来帮助保存他所热衷的脆弱的乡土民间文化。“肯定有什么办法可以挽回即使已经失去的东西，就像一幅精神地图一样，”他说。

谭盾深切的失落感激发他创作了多媒体作品《地图》：为大提琴、录像和管弦乐队而作的协奏曲，古老和现代、视觉和音响的混合。去年由大提琴家马友友和波士顿交响乐团首次公演的这部鼎新之作，意在唤起对湖南少数民族濒临灭绝的音乐文化的关注。协奏曲展示了土家族、苗族和侗族演奏的传统笛箫和铙钹，吹树叶和轮唱——一种远距离传递人声的技法。

“《地图》是很个人化的旅程，……试图把东西追回来，试图让声音永恒，试图让传统永恒，”谭盾说。“我希望，技术要是能和传统结合起来的话，技术会变得人性化，并且能寻回传统。”谭盾说该作品也是他寻根的一次精神之旅。他说，“我试图找到另外的道路，一条看不见的途径，回到我在湖南的家”。

“在古代，你要凭借听声音来试着找出道路：那种感觉给人以强大的灵感。”他告诉北京的观众，他希望中国人在置身于快速现代化的时候，也能找到途径与他们古代的根相连。“我希望通过《地图》，人们能找到另一条回家的路，不是靠自行车，船或者飞机，而是循着看不见的道路回家——这条路连接着我们

的魂和我们的根，”作曲家说。

农村人得不到鼓励去做别的，一有机会去附近正在发展的市镇上打工，他们往往会首先丢掉他们的传统。比如，在富一点的村子里，人们常常抛弃木头框架、砖墙和土瓦做的传统房屋，而要粉刷过的或贴了琉璃瓷砖的混凝土砖建筑。虽然结果既艳俗又拙劣，但他们的选择很明确：新型房屋更宽敞、干燥、暖和，能通电还有室内水管。并且，对他们来说，这看起来更“现代”。

我们还有什么理由抱持希望呢？在历史早期，约公元 200 至 800 年间，外来影响曾一度渗入中国，但其结果迥异。从印度传来的佛教，有数百年的时间不但没有窒息中国的精神，事实证明它反而解放了中国的精神。公元 800 年以后，它屈服于其物质上的成功，滥用其权力，并受到压制，它的影响就衰退了。以下论及的是佛教的正面影响时期，虽然说的是建筑艺术，但也同样适应于当时中国文化的各个方面。

中国著名建筑设计师戴念慈教授描述了这一过程。

始自公元四世纪，东方和西方的文化进行了一次碰撞融合，由于佛教东传导致了中国建筑的可观巨变。在印度和西亚文化的影响下，中国建筑翻开了新的一页，进入了建筑文化的唐宋时期（6-13 世纪）。当时的建筑大师，在接受外来影响方面，并未采取机械移植外国有生力量的方式。相反，通过消化吸收，他们创造出他们自己的一些新东西。……接着，“……日本的许多古建筑强烈地受到了中国的影响，但他们假装这就是日本的特色。”（意译）^[1]

“佛教传入中国大概是在基督纪元伊始。虽有记载，早在公元三世纪之初就有佛塔建造，但我们今天已经没有五世纪中叶以前的佛教遗址了。然而，从那时起，直到十四世纪后期，中国建筑的历史便主要是佛教（和少量道教）寺庙和宝塔的历史了。”（意译）^[2]

因早期的这番交互作用颇具创造力，戴教授希望它能再度发生。

[1] Professor Dai Nian Ci, Paper presented at Qinghua conference, Modernization and Traditional Culture – One of the problems confronted by the Asian Architect, September 1989.

[2] Liang Se Cheng, A Pictorial History of Chinese Architecture, MIT Press, 1984, 31.

清华大学建筑学院的创始人梁思成，说佛教启发了中国的美术和建筑。他在《中国建筑图画史》一书的序言中说：

读者不要奇怪，这里呈现的绝大多数建筑实例，是佛教的寺庙、宝塔和墓冢。在各个时期各个地方，宗教都为建筑创造，提供了最强大的推动力。

所有这些先例都使我相信，在接受西方建筑技术的同时，亚洲当代建筑师能够凭借消化、吸收和融合东西方文化，创造出他们自己独特的建筑新文化。

亚洲国家大多有着一个共同特征：它们都有自身的古代文明。由于地理和自然条件的差别，民族和种族的不同，及历史进程的迥异，每个文化都有其自身的鲜明特点。它们都有过辉煌的时刻，但后来（也许日本除外）由于各种原因都落后于欧洲国家。随着我们进入 20 世纪，尤其是到了后半叶，我们再次投身于同样的任务：在最短的时间内赶上西方发达国家。为了这个目的，我们必须学习他们现代的科学和技术，以及先进的思想和经验。那么，这就是东西方文化何以在这里交汇；不可避免的冲突之后就是某种程度的融合。

我相信，由这些冲突融合，将呈现出丰富多样的新文化。它们将成为世界文化大家庭中颇具价值的一份子。（意译）^[1]

吴良庸教授痛心于地方文化多样性的消蚀。

在强大的全球经济和文化的冲击下，20 世纪经历了传统文化多样性的消蚀，即地域特征的消蚀，其结果就是城镇的灵魂失去了视觉上的定位。（意译）^[2]

他把文化指称为灵魂，一个地方的精神。虽然文化多样性在消蚀，他也看到了充满活力的建筑家们在受到另一种文化的滋养后回到了他们的本土，创造出杂交以新元素但仍反映着浓厚地方文化的现代建筑。

[1] Professor Dai Nian Ci, Paper presented at Qinghua conference, Modernization and Traditional Culture - One of the problems confronted by the Asian Architect, September, 1989.

[2] Prof. Wu Liang Yong, Looking Forward to Architecture of the New Millennium, Keynote Speech for the XX UIA Congress, Beijing 1999

这种情形令他萌生了希望。

与此同时，20 世纪也看到了根植于地方的建筑勃兴，增添了世界建筑文化的丰富性。20 世纪初，各国营造的建筑师来到北美想做番事业，包括萨里南在早些时候，格罗皮乌斯和密斯·范德罗在战后来到了北美。这新兴的国家对他们的作品产生了持久的影响。美国的一些建筑师，像莱特，来到亚洲领受东方文化的养分，回国后开创了他自己的美国风建筑。同时，亚洲的一些建筑师去西方学习，然后回到本国来发挥自己的天赋，例如，日本的槇文彦 (Fumihiko Maki)，印度的柯里亚 (C. Correa)，和中国的吕彦直、梁思成等等。

这都表明了可以吸收不同的文化来作为地方新文化的成份。同时，他们最优秀的作品也表明他们不是和周围环境相隔离的。所以世界是个大花园，花卉杂交可以创造出时代的新品种来。(意译)^[1]

为了提高这一杂交过程的丰富性和可能性，他建议：

我们应像保护生物多样性一样保护地方(文化)多样性。(意译)^[2]

如同佛教影响中国的情形，哪里有精神性的影响，哪里就有促成中国文化繁盛的那种消化、吸收与融合的过程。当前对全球化的疑惧，是由于发觉了“物质主义消费至上的文化入侵”这一缺乏心灵因素的过程。在相互尊重和吸引的状况下，文化交互能催生出无穷的创造性嬗变。无情的物质主义标准将大量的文化表现形式打入了“落后而毫无价值”的冷宫。

要义在于，没有一个精神的基础，全球化必将导致冲突和妥协，而“文化全球化在任何意义上都是站不往脚的”。如果我们把人类看成是一个家庭，它被一系列诱发文化的信仰体系所驱策而步入成熟之途，或者视作一个有机整体，其生命力仰赖文化多样性的丰富“基因库”，那么，

[1] ibid

[2] ibid

要紧的是要找到谭盾的“精神地图”，作为由精神所激励的发展的一个根基。

就像人体一样，在一个活的系统中，整体维系着部分的生存。用生态学上的协同增效来作比喻，则意味着社会、经济、技术、智力和精神生活都是相互依赖的；任何方面缺少了多样性都会伤害整体的进步。文化景观好似河流和海洋。各种地方风味位于河流的上游；同时，它们哺育着全球文明的海洋。维持生命的水，从海里蒸发后又回来更新地方景观。输入的品种越丰富，整体的美和力量就越宏大。

基于一个世界性的信仰体系，并视人类为一个家庭的一个新世界体制，必将重视其文明的构成要素，并需要发挥成年人相互尊重、欣赏、甚至热爱彼此的差异、以及在创造性的协作中相互信任的能力。动力来源于统一的视景，比如中国人说的“天下一家”，多样和差别只会使一座“花园”更美丽。

中国参与世界文明的创造，不仅会与世界分享她自己的遗产，而且会引发李道增教授所希望的“我们古代文化的创造性转化”。在精神所激励的人类社会中交互作用，最终可能是保存和振兴中国文化遗产的唯一希望。

2.8 我们与环境的关系的成熟

环境危机也表明外部现实和我们内在视景之间需要平衡的动态关系。

……事实证明，正在被复制的经济增长模式是如此有害于环境，必须对其存活能力提出质疑。通过可持续的发展过程来给世界所有民众带来繁荣，这一挑战不能只凭借应用技术和调整当今世界组织结构来应对。它要求彻底离弃物质主义哲学——此类哲学造成了今天潦倒的贫困与不负责任的富裕并存的局面。^[1]

自然的承受力能无限地满足人类的任何要求，基于这一信念的理论，其谬误现已无情地暴露出来。一个极端重视扩张、获取、以及满足人民需求的文化也不得不承认，单靠这些目标本身来导出发展方针是不现实的。

可持续发展所需的一些美德和态度，诸如中庸、平衡与协同，长久以来为中国的哲学家和圣贤所体认。中国的美术家在广阔的山水画里把

[1] Dr. Farzam Arbab, *The Lab, the Temple, and the Market*, Edited by Sharon Harper, IDRC, Canada, 2000, pp.1-2.

人物描绘得很小，反映出对自然的敬畏、谦卑之情，和对美的尊崇。

祸莫大于不知足；咎莫大于欲得。故知足之足，常足矣。
(《老子·第四十六章》)

甚爱必大费；多藏必厚亡。故知足不辱，知止不殆，可以长久。(《老子·第四十四章》)

圣人不积，既以为人己愈有，既以与人己愈多。(《老子·第八十一章》)

虽然后来，中国对生态环境的掠夺式占有大大增多了，但中国还是展示出许多可持续发展的特点。有限的土地资源和中国人的实用、中庸、节俭，产生了土地利用的最佳效果，斯巴达式的生活方式，以及处于食物链低端的饮食习惯。中国城市最重要的一个可持续的特征是其最佳的疏密度（不太密，也没有铺得太开）。自行车广泛地用作了交通工具；几乎都是朝南建房以吸收太阳能；私营的非正规的纸张、玻璃、塑料、器具和家具回收颇为广泛；为初创公司提供了大量的“孵化器”建筑。还有自愿的节育，至少是在城市地区。

然而，这种对可持续发展的暗合，比起自觉之举，更多些侥幸。随着财富的增长，最佳城市结构和节约能源的生活方式还会被侵蚀，除非环境意识和教育增强。“富裕舒适”这样的普通志向，可能会侵蚀并抹除现存的可持续特征。

2.9 决策制定的成熟

磋商

巴哈欧拉倡导的“磋商”程序，是重新构思所有人际关系的中心。巴哈欧拉的忠告是：“凡事必要磋商。……天赋之领悟力通过磋商才变得成熟。”

在追求真理方面，“磋商”所要求的标准，远远超越现在商议时经常采用的谈判及妥协方法。现时在社会上盛行的“抗议文化”，不但不能成功地追求到真理，反而是这过程的严重障碍。磋商的目的是使大家在任何事情上都能对个中的真理达到一致的认识，并在任何时刻能够选择最明智的行动。辩论、宣传、抗衡方法及派别组织等长久以来常常被使用的集体行动方法，都是有损这目标的。

巴哈欧拉提倡的磋商过程要求参与者把自己视为整体的一员，将全体的利益和目标放在个人的观点之上。大家在坦率及礼貌的气氛下进行讨论。各方所提出的意见并不属于某个人而是归于集体所有，任由集

体来决议取舍或改善，谋求能最完善地达到目的。磋商成功的大小，是看在一什么过程上，参与者不论本身在磋商时最初有怎样的意见，而都支持全体的最后决定。在这种条件下，一旦发现一项决议在实践中有缺点，就容易重新考虑。

如此来看，磋商是人类社会事务中履行正义的具体表现。磋商是集体努力成功的关键，因此是所有可行的社经策略不能缺少的基本部分。诚然，只有在每个社经计划上以磋商作为策划原则，人民的参与才能有成效；而社经策略的成功则是有赖于参与者的投入与努力程度而定。巴哈欧拉的明训是：“只有履行正义，人才能提升至其真正地位。只有通过团结，才能拥有力量。只有经由磋商，才能获得福利与幸福。”^[1]

注：以下这些材料是给中国的社会工作者们准备的，着重谈了共同磋商以及家庭生活。我们读这些材料时，可以将文中的“家庭”替换成团体企业、组织、婚姻、议会等，以适合你的需要。

进行共同磋商需要有成熟的素质，它培养和促使人们用成熟的态度来互相对待，并得到逐渐走向成熟的锻炼，要达到这样的成熟磋商，正确的教育和引导是必不可少的。

建立目标对成功的磋商而言是十分重要的。

好的目标应是发掘达到各方利益最大化的行动路径，如果参与磋商的成员动机不在于此，而在于获得或保持他的权力，赢得这场争论或仅仅是为了挽回面子，这些动机只能阻碍磋商的正常进行，而磋商也不可能成功的达到应有的目的。

成功的磋商需要人们具有良好的素质。而进行共同磋商是帮助人们发掘并获得良好的素质。

纯洁的动机，为他人服务的愿望、耐心谦逊、开放的心态（自愿为作出最好的正确决定而抛开个人的喜好恩怨）和训练有素的思维方式（具备识别和及时采用正确原则的能力）。彼此之间正确的尊重可以通过言语和行为表达出来，没有尊重亦就没有信任，没有信任也就不可能很好的利用人与人之间的差别。威胁与恐吓压制了胆小温顺的人。蛮横无礼招致怨恨。同样的一个家庭为了解决家庭成员中出现的问题，不能持僵持态度。团结的思想和行动建立在彼此接受差别的基础上，而不是互

[1] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humankind, Part III.

相否认和反对，家庭成员彼此苛求一致性就和个人身上的那种自高自大，自我中心主义一样不受欢迎。

以下所列是成功磋商必备的几个因素：

- 建立全部的事实
- 决定采用的原则
- 讨论问题
- 做出决定并且使成员团结统一地去执行

家庭中的谈话成过于散漫或抑制。当我们就一个敏感的决定需要磋商时，根据共同磋商的原则及过程，自我约束和合理程度的自由便能达到和谐一致。

因为没有自我约束也就无所谓自由，存在的只是控制与服从的关系。

建立事实

有些家庭的磋商因为一开始大家不能同意所列举的事实而以失败告终。这不是因为他们找不到坚实可信的事实证据，而是参加磋商的家庭成员们仅有自己的行为方式，就会拒绝接受不利于他们的事实情况。

原则

原则上为使磋商顺利进行，成员们必须花费一定的时间对即将采用的原则达到基本统一，在一个团体中执行正义，表达彼此间的关爱，是统一的基础。

讨论

磋商中最重要的是要有正确统一的目标，而不是意见的一致。不同意见的冲撞往往会迸发出真理的火花，因为意见的不同决不是人们性格上的冲突。

每个人都应该充分表达他的意见，并且确信自己的意见对整个讨论是有所贡献，每个人都应坦诚，礼貌、谦逊地表达自己的意见。羞涩的人鼓起勇气直舒己见。而自我滔滔不绝的人应该注意简短和应自我控制。

我们应该以开朗的态度倾听所有的意见并对之做出公正的判断。大声吵闹、冷嘲热讽以致漫骂都只能让彼此产生敌对的情绪并掩盖了真理。妨碍磋商正常进行。选取一位主席来主持磋商保证所有人都参加

讨论认真听取别人意见，且就意见本身讨论，保证无任何人控制或随便转化讨论的方向。这对磋商是大有帮助的。

对参加磋商的团体来说，每一个意见都是朋友呈送的礼物。我们不应该把意见与提出意见的人同一而论。即，这个意见可以被修正，发展甚至于被拒绝而不致于伤害任何人的私人感情。如果参加磋商的朋友采取了正确有效的方法，无论他们最初的意见如何，他们将看到最终采取最有效行为的过程，如此，在磋商的过程中，一个人可能完全改变他最初的意见而不觉得失了脸面。实际上这是一种成熟的反映，同时也是一种最有弹性，敏锐的发掘，解决问题的途径的技巧。

显然，一个正确的磋商目标可以为灵性的发展提供良好的环境，而这种灵性的素质对创造一个美好的家庭是大有帮助的。

做出决定

如果共同磋商的过程进行得顺利，那么做决定则是最容易的一环。这决定必须也是一个一致性的决定。如果磋商中达不到这种一致性，那就应该以大多数的意见为准。每一位成员都应当尊重这一磋商团体所做的决定，即便他不赞成最终的决议，也必须以服从和完全信赖的态度去执行。

统一

统一本身就会使大众受益。假如一个决议不能被统一地服从执行时，我们永远无法确定是这个决定本身的错误还是意见分歧造成的流产；如果大家同心协力的去执行，即便决议是错误的，也会很快被发现，并得到及时的修正；决定是正确的，则它的受益会马上被感觉到。

附录：文明与信仰体系之间的关系

本书曾经简略讨论了佛教和巴哈伊与人类社会文明建设之间的关系。在这里，我们需要回顾一下灵性推动力总有“文明”响应紧随其后的现象，特别是源于犹太教、基督教和伊斯兰教的文明响应。

犹太教

那时，以色列各部落四散漂泊，摩西召集、联合并教育他们，因而他们获得了高度的能力和发展。摩西使他们由卑下转为荣耀，由贫穷变为富有，去其恶行而代以美德，直到他们达至鼎盛——使得所罗门统治的光华展露，他们的文明也名扬东西各方。

比如，苏格拉底从希腊而来，求教于犹太学者。当他返回故国，却因宣扬自己在以色列学到的观念，即“一神”和灵魂不灭的思想，而被迫自杀。^[1]

基督教

耶稣到来之时，犹太文明已然衰败。他说，他来是要：

聚集摩西的那些迷途的部落或离散的羊群。他不仅牧养以色列的羊群，还召聚了迦勒底、埃及、叙利亚、古亚述和腓尼基的民众。这些民族深怀敌意，凶如猛兽，极欲彼此相残；但基督将他们集合起来，凝聚团结在他的圣道中，并在他们之间奠定了爱的联系，以致他们抛弃了仇恨和战争。^[2]

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1972, p.22.

[2] Abdu'l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1972, p.22.

在数百年间，他的教诲所启发的文明显现出来。

那时，基督徒优秀品格的明证之一，是他们献身于博爱善举，并创办了医院和慈善机构。比如，整个罗马帝国第一个建立公共诊所，让穷人、受伤者和无助者接受医疗的是康斯坦丁大帝。这位伟大的君王是第一个拥护基督圣道的罗马统治者。他不遗余力地投身于推广《福音书》的原则；以往罗马政体实质上不过是一种彻头彻尾的压迫体制，而他将其牢固地建立在适度和正义之上。他蒙福的名字如同晨星光芒四射，穿透了历史的黎明，他的地位和声誉归于世上最高贵、最文明的人士之列，至今仍被各派的基督徒所传颂。^[1]

生活在公元二世纪的希腊医生兼哲学家伽林，就国家的文明写过一篇论文。他不是基督徒，却证实了宗教信仰对文明的症结所发挥的非凡功效。他基本上是说，‘我们当中有一群人，他们是拿撒勒人耶稣的追随者，耶稣已在耶路撒冷被杀。这些人确实浸透着令哲学家羡慕的道德原则。他们信仰并敬畏上帝。他们寄望于上帝的恩眷，因此避免了所有不足取的行为举动，而倾向于值得赞美的伦理道德。他们终日奋力以求行为可嘉，以求促进人类福利；故而实质上他们人人都是哲学家，因为这些人已深得哲学的主旨精华。这些人的道德令人赞叹，即使有的还不识字。’^[2]

微观与宏观世界之间存在对应关系，宇宙具有和谐结构，凭借中心、圆形和球体的数学符号可理解上帝……这些信念在文艺复兴时期获得了新生，并从视觉上表现在文艺复兴时期的教堂上。……建筑对于文艺复兴时期的人们来说，其严格的几何结构，均衡和谐的风格，平和安谧的外形，最重要的是其球形的穹顶，都在回荡着，同时揭示着上帝的完美，万能，和仁善。

文艺复兴时期的建筑师……深信，宇宙的和谐，除非在空间上，通过为服务宗教而构思的建筑来加以体现，否则就无法完全展示出来。^[3]

[1] Abdu'l-Baha: Secret of Divine Civilization, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, p. 85.

[2] Abdu'l-Baha, Foundations of World Unity, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1972, p.56.

[3] Rudolf Wittkower, Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism, 1998, Academy Editions, p.39.

伊斯兰教

当耶稣的影响力开始衰退，欧洲进入千年的黑暗时期之际，穆罕默德出现了。其间，在南方，阿拉伯的游牧部落……

四处流散，在没有法律的状况下生活在沙漠里，各部落间冲突流血不断，没有哪个部落能免遭攻伐毁灭的威胁——值此危难关头，穆罕默德出现了。他把这些野蛮的沙漠部落聚集起来，使他们和解，团结一致，因而停止了敌对战争。阿拉伯民族迅即崛起，直到其疆土向西拓至西班牙和安达卢西亚。^[1]

那至高先知之火焰在麦加之灯里燃起以前，未开化的汉志民族在地球的所有民族当中是最粗野蒙昧的。他们凶残，习性顽劣，且世代结仇，在各种历史记录中皆有据可查。那时，世界上的文明民族甚至不把麦加和麦地那的阿拉伯部落当作人类看待。……这些部落如此蒙昧难驯，在无信仰时期，他们甚至会活埋自己七岁的女儿……。然而，在……穆罕默德出现之后，因由完美之矿藏…施与他们教育，神明律法赐予他们福佑，他们在短期内便聚集在神性一体之原则的庇所中。随后这粗野的民族达到了如此高度的人性完美与文明，令他们的同代人大为惊异。一向嘲笑奚落阿拉伯人为毫无见识之辈的那些民族，现在却热切地寻觅阿拉伯人，访问阿拉伯国家以期获得启迪和文化、技术技能、治国之道、艺术科学。……这粗野卑劣的一支，在如此短暂的时间内攀升至人类完美的最高峰，这是穆罕默德先知身份之合法性的最伟大的证明。^[2]

欧洲受惠于伊斯兰教这一事实，而今更为人知并已被公认。伊斯兰教把欧洲带出了黑暗时代，并推向了文艺复兴时期。

以罗马为中心画两条线，一条向东延伸到波斯普鲁斯海峡的亚洲海岸，一条向西跨过比利牛斯山脉，几乎所有位于这两条线以南的地中海国家，在我们所说的时代（约公元 900 年），都生活在“真主独一，穆罕默德是真主的使者”的信条中。现在我得讲讲这两条线是怎样向欧洲推进的：东线是凭借军事力

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Foundations of World Unity, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1972, p.23.

[2] Abdu'l-Baha, Secret of Divine Civilization, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, Pages: 87-8.

量，西线是凭借理智力量。两条线以罗马为轴心转动；时而张开时而夹紧，一时危胁要从两端弯过来，把变异的基督教世界攥在掌心；一时又因它们围起的列国最后的阵痛，而各自退回并全线震颤，但只后退片刻便又夹得更紧了。似乎有看不见的手臂从非洲炎热的沙漠伸出，要把欧洲拢在掌中，试图合起手来给变异的基督教世界以可怖而致命的一压。虽然遇到挣扎抗拒，但那不祥的手最终还是攥紧了。从历史上看，我们说就是那时的压力促成了改革。^[1]

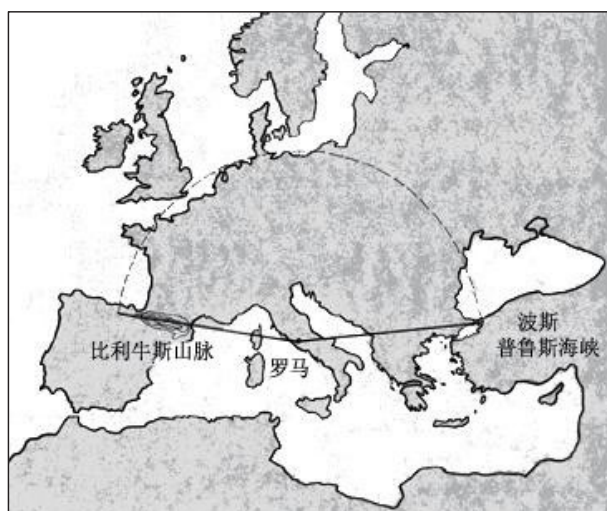


图 11 欧洲与地中海地图

[1] 杜雷波使用了“变异的基督教 (paganizing Chistianity)”一词，意指基督教在穆罕默德的年代里所处的状况，那时，基督教已从康斯坦丁的荣耀时代跌下，约在公元 500 年后，落入实利主义的腐败领袖的掌控中。

“感谢那些起身传扬《福音书》之教义的神圣灵魂的训导，一个何等牢固的优秀品格的基础（在康斯坦丁的时代）奠定下来。多少小学、学院、医院，以及能让失去父亲的穷困孩童接受教育的机构得以创建，多少人牺牲了个人利益而献出一生的时间来教化大众以期获得主的喜悦。”

“然而，当穆罕默德的灿烂美质即将破晓世间之时，掌管基督教事务的权力已落入无知的教士手中。自神恩之域轻拂的天堂微风已然沉寂，伟大福音的律法，奠定世界文明的基石，均荒废无果。这全是由于滥用，以及看似较好而内里污秽之人的行止。”

“欧洲的著名历史学家在全面描述早期、中世纪和现代的状况、风俗、政治、学识和文化时，一致记述道，从基督纪元的六世纪初到十五世纪末的十个世纪所构成的中世纪期间，欧洲从各方面来看都是极端野蛮黑暗的。其主要原因是那些被欧洲民族称作灵性和宗教领袖的僧侣，已丢弃了服从神圣的诫命与天降的福音教诲方可获得的持久荣耀，而与当时暴虐专横的世俗政体之统治者串通勾结。他们闭目不视永恒的荣耀，竭尽全力增进彼此的世俗利益和转瞬即逝的好处。最终乃至大众成了这两个集团手中的绝望囚徒，而这一切导致了欧洲各民族的宗教、文化、福利与文明体系的全面崩溃。”(Abdu'l-Baha, Secret of Divine Civilization, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, Pages: 85-87.)

[2] John W. Draper, The Intellectual Development of Europe, Harper and Brothers, 1905 edition, pp.1-2.

西线凭借理智力量：

在伊斯兰时代的早期，欧洲各民族便从安达卢西亚（西班牙南部）的居民所实践的伊斯兰教中获得了文明社会的科学和艺术。全面细致地考查历史记载，就会确定这一事实：欧洲文明的主要部分来源于伊斯兰教；因为穆斯林学者、神学家和哲学家的所有著作，都逐渐在欧洲得以收集，并在教学中心和学术集会上经过缜密周详的考量辩论，之后便对其中有价值的内容加以利用。今日，大量穆斯林学者的著作在伊斯兰国家已无迹可寻，但却能在欧洲的图书馆里找到。并且，通行于欧洲各国的法律和原则整体上，在相当大的程度上确实来源于穆斯林神学家的法学著作和法律裁决。^[1]

那些熟知欧洲史实，以真实和正义感而特出的欧洲知识分子一致承认，无论从哪一点来说，他们文明的基本要素都来源于伊斯兰教。

……作者（杜雷波）指出了整个欧洲文明——其法律、原则、制度，其科学、哲学、各种学识，其文明的礼仪习俗，其文学、艺术和工业，其组织、纪律和行止，其可嘉的品格特性，甚至法语的许多通用词汇，是如何源自阿拉伯的。他对这些要素逐一详加考查，甚至点出了每项要素从伊斯兰传入的时期。他还描述了阿拉伯人来到西方，来到现在的西班牙，如何在短时间内便在那里建立了发达的文明；他们的管理体系和学术杰出到了何等的高度；他们如何稳固地创建并良好地规范了学校和学院，以教授科学和哲学、艺术和工艺；他们在文明的艺术方面如何携领风骚，又有多少欧洲显要家族的子女被送往科尔多瓦、格拉纳达、塞维利亚和托莱多的学校，以求取文明生活的科学和艺术。他甚至记述了一个名叫格尔伯特的欧洲人来到西方，就读于阿拉伯辖区的科尔多瓦大学学习艺术和科学，并在返回欧洲后如此腾达，最终晋升至天主教会领袖的地位而成为教皇。^[2]

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Secret of Divine Civilization, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, p. 89.

[2] Abdu'l-Baha, Secret of Divine Civilization, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, Pages: 92-4.

东线凭借军事力量：

欧洲文明的开端要追溯到伊斯兰纪元七世纪，具体情况是：回历五世纪将近结束时，教皇或基督教的领袖叫嚣说耶路撒冷、伯利恒、拿撒勒等基督教的圣地已落入穆斯林的统治之下。他煽动欧洲的国王和平民发动一场他所谓的圣战。他的喧嚷激昂甚嚣，使得欧洲各国皆尽响应。参加十字军东侵的国王们率领无数军旅越过马尔马拉海向亚洲大陆挺进。那时，法蒂玛王朝的哈里发统治着埃及和一些西方国家，叙利亚国王也就是塞尔柱王朝的君主大多时候也臣服于他们。简言之，西方的国王们带领无数军队进攻叙利亚和埃及，叙利亚的统治者和欧洲的国王持续争战，为时两百零三年。欧洲援军不断加入进来，西方统率们一次又一次发起猛攻并夺取了叙利亚的每座城堡，而伊斯兰的国王们又一次次地将它们夺回。最后，萨拉丁在回历 693 年（公元 1315 年）将欧洲的国王和军队逐出埃及和叙利亚沿岸。他们一败涂地，回到欧洲。在十字军东侵的这些战争中有数百万人丧生。总之，从回历 490 年（公元 1112 年）至 693 年（公元 1315 年），欧洲的国王、将帅和其他领袖不断往来于埃及、叙利亚和西方之间，当他们最终全部返回家园时，便将他们在两百余年间在穆斯林国家中观察到的一切引介到欧洲，诸如政体、社会发展、学识、学院、学校和雅致的生活方式。欧洲的文明便从那时开始了。^[1]

伊斯兰是连接中国与欧洲的重要桥梁。

穆斯林们在引用一句圣训时充满自豪“学问，虽远在中国，亦当求之”。它指出了寻求知识的重要，即便意味着要远途跋涉直至中国，尤其是在先知穆罕默德的时代，中国被认为是当时最先进的文明。伊斯兰教传入中国在‘Uthman ibn Affan (Allayhi Rahma) 哈里发即第三个哈里发时。打败了拜占庭、罗马人和波斯人后，‘Uthman ibn Affan 在回历 29 年（公元 650 年）先知离世后十八年派了一个使团去中国，在先知的舅

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, *Secret of Divine Civilization*, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, Pages: 90-1.

舅 Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqaas (艾比·宛葛素 Allayhi Rahma) 的率领下，邀请中国皇帝加入伊斯兰教。在此之前，阿拉伯商人在先知在世的时候已经将伊斯兰教带入了中国，尽管不是有组织的活动，尽管只是他们在丝绸之路（陆地与海上）上旅行的分支。

尽管在阿拉伯的历史上对此事件只有零星的记载，在中国历史上有简要的纪录，据《旧唐书·西域传》记载，唐永徽二年（651年）大食国遣使第一次来华，抵达长安（今西安），参见唐高宗李治。中国的穆斯林将此事定为伊斯兰教正式传入中国。

据传皇帝敕建中国的第一座清真寺——位于广州的“怀圣寺”。十四个世纪以来一直保存完好。中国最早的穆斯林聚居区也是建在广州这个港口城市。倭马亚王朝和阿巴斯王朝共派遣过六个使团到中国，都受到了中国人民的热情接待。定居中国的穆斯林最终给中国带来了巨大的经济冲击和影响。

在宋朝（960-1279）它们几乎控制了全部进出口贸易。

事实上，那段时间的市舶使职位一直由穆斯林把持。明朝（1368-1644 CE）一直被认为是伊斯兰教在中国的黄金时代，穆斯林也完全地融入了汉族社会。^[1]

[1] <http://chinese-school.net/firms.com/Muslims.html>

结束语

我来自加拿大，已经在中国（主要是北京）生活了 23 年。我的妻子何红雨是中国人，我的两个儿子 13 岁和 18 岁，都在北京长大，并在当地的学校念书。我最初在天津大学教建筑设计，后来一直在北京做建筑师。

我不是一个职业作家或学者，但在这里的经历促使我将自己关于中国的一些想法写下来。初到时，我见到的是一个感觉陈旧的、较为传统保守和缺乏自信的中国。二十多年来，我和这里的人民一起共同见证了中国向一个更自信更向全球开放的转变过程。中国的崛起和我们所面临的创造和平统一新世界的挑战绝不是一个巧合，而是一个必然。

最近发生的金融危机是一个信号，它显示出人类在成熟过程中面临的深层精神危机。我们必须从不成熟的分裂走向成熟的联合。从我阅读到的中国哲学，诗歌和宗教作品中，从我见到的中国人当中，我感到中国恰恰应对世界走出危机有所贡献。

本书的前一部分主要是陈述了这一观点。后一部分探讨了关于包括中国在内，我们都要经过的成熟过程。当然，关于成熟的很多范畴我们可以添加进来，比如婚姻，家庭，教育等。同时，每一个领域都需要更深的探讨。我在这里提到的想法主要还是在原则层面，

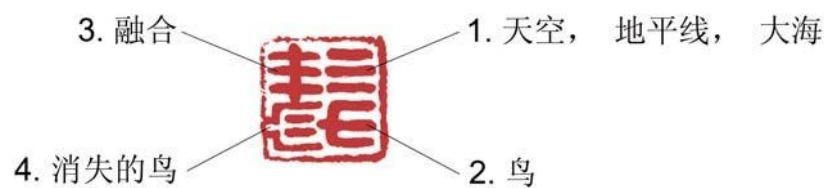
需要有更多的工作来研究现实中的实施策略。我也意识到其他人可能对解决这些重要的社会问题有不同的原则，但我希望我在这里所展示的能对大家的研究提供一些基础性材料。

昨天晚上，我的大儿子，他现在北京大学国际关系学院一年纪新生，给我演示了他和他的小组将要在课堂上做的报告。题目是“核武器：它是避免战争的威慑物吗？”这个题目主要是针对印巴核冲突的。他们的结论是，在理性世界中，应用大规模杀伤武器来避免相互攻击是有逻辑行的。但从太空看，国界是不存在的，是一种人为概念。从这种角度看，依赖于使用武器，特别是核武器，作为解决国际争端的方法是非常荒唐的。如果新一代的想法进化到这种水平，这个世界是有希望的。

Joe Carter

2009-03-01

我的梦：化做天地的鸟



一只鸟沐浴着微风凝视大海。她在寻找着什么。
她朝太阳飞去，但灼热的空气烤炙着她的羽毛。
她又向大海深处俯冲，遇到波涛之下的万物，但它无法呼吸。
她没有放弃。

这一次，微风托起她，升高再升高，她离太阳很近了。

在与地平线重叠的一刻，鸟儿的身体开始变大越来越大，同时翻转过来：

一翼指向天空，一翼埋入大海。

渐渐地，鸟儿的身体变得透明，天空中的羽翼化作万缕金光融入太阳，水中的羽翼化作浪花融入海洋，她的身体则伸长再伸长，化作地平线。

鸟儿消融了。

Joe Carter

1971 年

广厦

中国与新世界秩序研究

SOME THOUGHTS ON CHINA AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER

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Dedication

To my Canadian parents, Francis Galt Carter and Sylvia Carter,
and

To my Chinese parents, He Yan Ling and Song Zhen

The Roof Whirled Away by Winds

Du Fu

*When will this long night of drizzle come to an end?
Now I dream of an immense mansion, tens of thousands of rooms,
Where all the cold creatures can take shelter, their faces alight;
Not moved by the wind or the rain, a mansion as solid as the mountain
Alas, when shall I see such a majestic house?
If I could see this, even though my poor house were torn down,
Even though I were frozen to death I would be content.*

Introduction

The next logical step in our social evolution from family, to tribe, to city, to nation, is a world commonwealth of nations. Consciously or unconsciously, humanity has been engaged in an endeavour to create this world community.

Globalization is a sign that we are entering our long-awaited stage of maturity. We are arriving at what has been variously called the New World Order, the Omega Point, the Global Village, Tian Xia Yi Jia (All Under Heaven One Family), the Grand Synthesis, the Kingdom of God on Earth, and so on;

It is no longer just a dream; the survival of the human race, in fact, depends on constructing this New World Order.

If China is rich in material, cultural, and spiritual resources and potentialities; then it is important to understand China's maturation process and potential contributions as we face the challenges of the adult stage of our collective life.

This book contains my thoughts, and references to those of others, collected so far, exploring this theme.

A picture emerges; the more the definition of modernization and prosperity includes spiritual development - as well as material - the more the collective endeavour humanity faces seems feasible, and the more apparent will China's potential contributions be.

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The Maturation of Humanity

1.1 A Global Process

In the Map of Human Maturation (Fig. 1) we can see the world's civilizations as rivers converging on one sea. Flowing for centuries in relative isolation, they entered a period of nation-building followed by a recent accelerating globalization. Simultaneous with the radial inflow of civilizations, humanity has climbed a ladder of social evolution. There has been a progression of social units from family, to tribe, to city, to nation and finally an implicit family of nations.

These stages of social development have emerged in different parts of the globe under the influence of various local civilizations. Each step (family, city, nation) has enhanced the capacity of individuals not diminished it. Each step forward has expanded the opportunities for the individuals within it, has brought with it greater opportunities for expression of the human spirit, transplanting it to larger and larger "gardens", until we have arrived at this climactic, the consciousness of our oneness. We are now looking at each other, for the first time, across the same body of water with all of our

collective experience and a vast heritage of cultural wealth available for mutual exploration and use. For the first time, your world and my world has become our world.

What forces are behind these phenomena?

The British historian Arnold J. Toynbee referred to civilization as a process, an endeavor...

...to create a state of society in which the whole of mankind will be able to live together in harmony as members of a single all-inclusive family. This is, I believe, the goal at which all civilizations so far have been aiming unconsciously, if not consciously.^[1]

Abdu'l-Baha (1844-1921), a Persian seer and author, compares humanity's growth process to the maturation process of an individual. He says humanity has gone through collective stages of childhood, and youth, and is now entering its long-awaited stage of maturity. Each stage defined the boundary of the social group, and the boundaries of cooperation and mutual helpfulness. These boundaries now extend to the whole planet. They trace our collective maturation: our social infancy, childhood, and current transition to adulthood from adolescent national, religious, and ethnic rivalry. We must now acquire the “virtues and powers, new moral standards, and new capacities” appropriate for our new universal condition, a single all-inclusive family.

[1] Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, abridged one-volume edition, p.44.

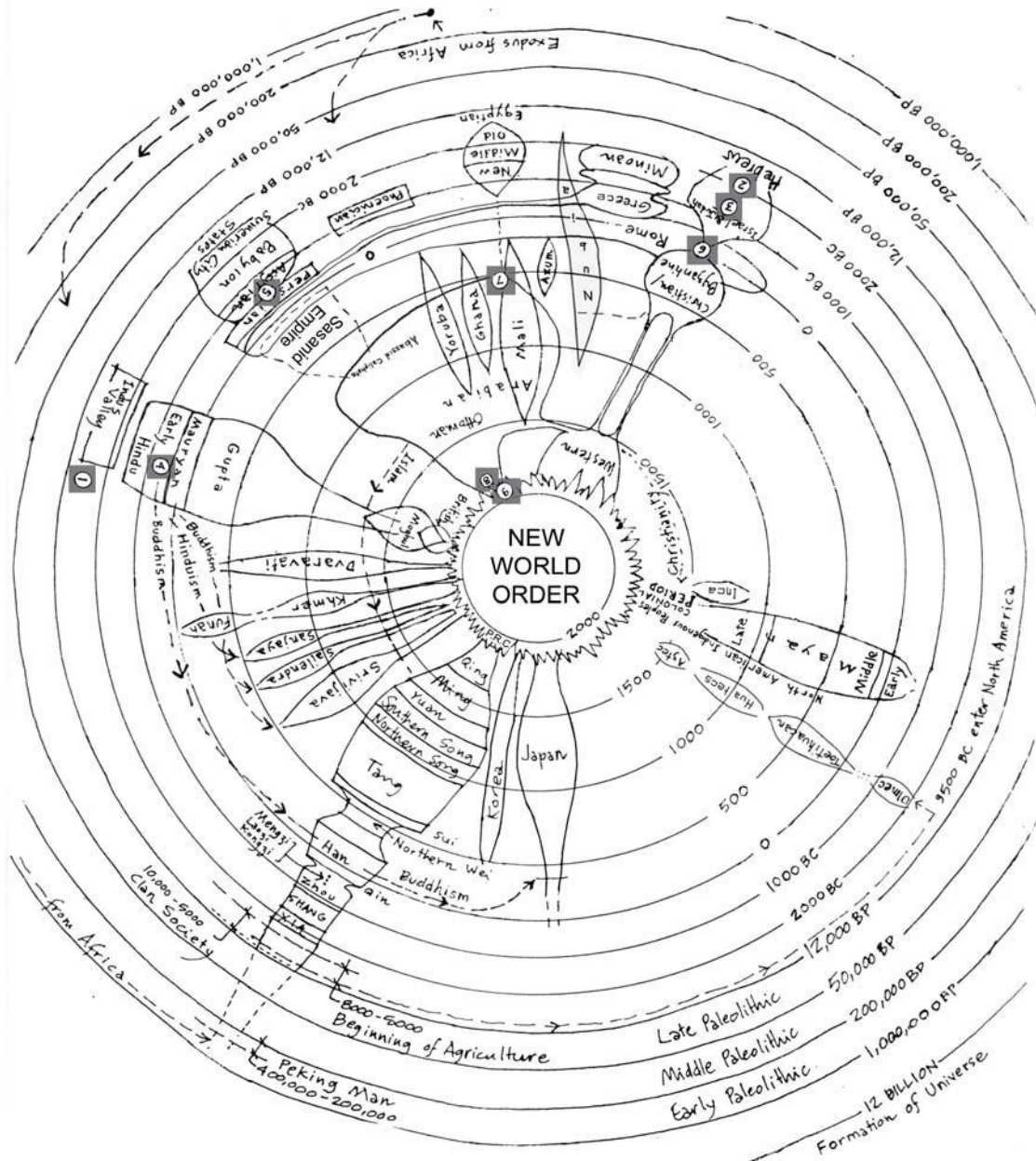


Fig. 1 Map of Human Maturation. The radiant fringe around the year 2000 represents, approximately, the 254 countries in the world and their founding dates as independent countries. Numbers represent the beginnings of religions or the time of their Founders.
 1.Hindu 2.Sabeen 3.Moses 4.Buddha 5.Zoroaster 6.Christ 7.Mohammed 8.The Bab
 9.Baha'u'llah

All created things have their degree or stage of maturity. The period of maturity in the life of a tree is the time of its fruit-bearing...The animal attains a stage of full growth and completeness, and in the human kingdom man reaches his maturity when the light of intelligence attains its greatest power and development... Similarly there are periods and stages in the collective life of humanity. At one time it was passing through its stage of childhood, at another its period of youth, but now it has entered its long predicted phase of maturity, the evidences of which are everywhere apparent...That which was applicable to human needs during the early history of the race can neither meet nor satisfy the demands of this day, this period of newness and consummation. Humanity has emerged from its former state of limitation and preliminary training. Man must now become imbued with new virtues and powers, new moral standards, new capacities. New bounties, perfect bestowals, are awaiting and already descending upon him. The gifts and blessings of the period of youth, although timely and sufficient during the adolescence of mankind, are now incapable of meeting the requirements of its maturity.¹¹

Ervin Laszlo, former President of the Club of Rome, says that from the evolutionary standpoint the world as a system is moving toward a higher order of organization, toward a global community, a "Grand Synthesis" of cooperating nations. And, except for a few countries with large enough populations and territory, such as the United States, the former USSR and China, which he calls generalist societies, "few societies have developed adequate levels of autonomy".

Although a few specialist economies - such as Singapore,

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Baha'i Publishing Trust, USA, 1982, p. 438-9.

Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan, among others - manage to find profitable niches for themselves, the majority of the specialists - that is, the some 120 Third World countries that have neither large supplies of valuable natural resources or command an evolved technological infrastructure - find themselves in an increasingly untenable situation.

It is in the self-interest of the nations to undertake the next stage of their evolution, a transnational community.^[1]

Gorbachev agrees, saying,

At a time when the world is so interrelated it is myopic to set national interests so far ahead of world problems.^[2]

Even though China is a relatively autonomous, “generalist” society, and its experience of the early years of global awakening was a century of imperialist exploitation, its leaders still say.

It will not be going too far to say, that without a world government, it is impossible to avoid inter-country wars. To set up the central government would be big progress for mankind. With such a government, a country's internal order could be maintained. As there is no world government, the current world has no order.^[3]

We could conclude from the above that we have, all along, been involved in a collective maturation process; a process of which we are just becoming aware. It is in an organic process where the diverse elements of a complex system are struggling to become a harmonious

[1] Laszlo, Ervin, *The Grand Synthesis*, p.137-9.

[2] Gorbachev, *Associated Press*, Sat May 8, 9:31 PM E.T.

[3] Yan Xue Tong, *China Institute of Contemporary International Relations*, quoted in *China Daily* editorial, July 28, 1999.

whole, without which the parts can not properly function or even survive. We are entering a necessary stage of growth, a turbulent period of globalization, a prelude to social, political and spiritual maturity. We could view the centuries of experimentation in civilization with their corresponding belief systems as a training process, a long, slow civilizing of human character, expressed in an ever-advancing civilization.

The creation of a global community, at least in terms of trade, transportation, and communication is already unfolding before our eyes.

*The scientific and technological advances occurring in this unusually blessed century portend a great surge forward in the social evolution of the planet, and indicate the means by which the practical problems of humanity may be solved. They provide indeed, the very means for the administration of the complex life of a united world.*¹⁶

[1] To the Peoples of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, The Universal House of Justice, Baha'i Studies Series No. 14, Canada, 1986.

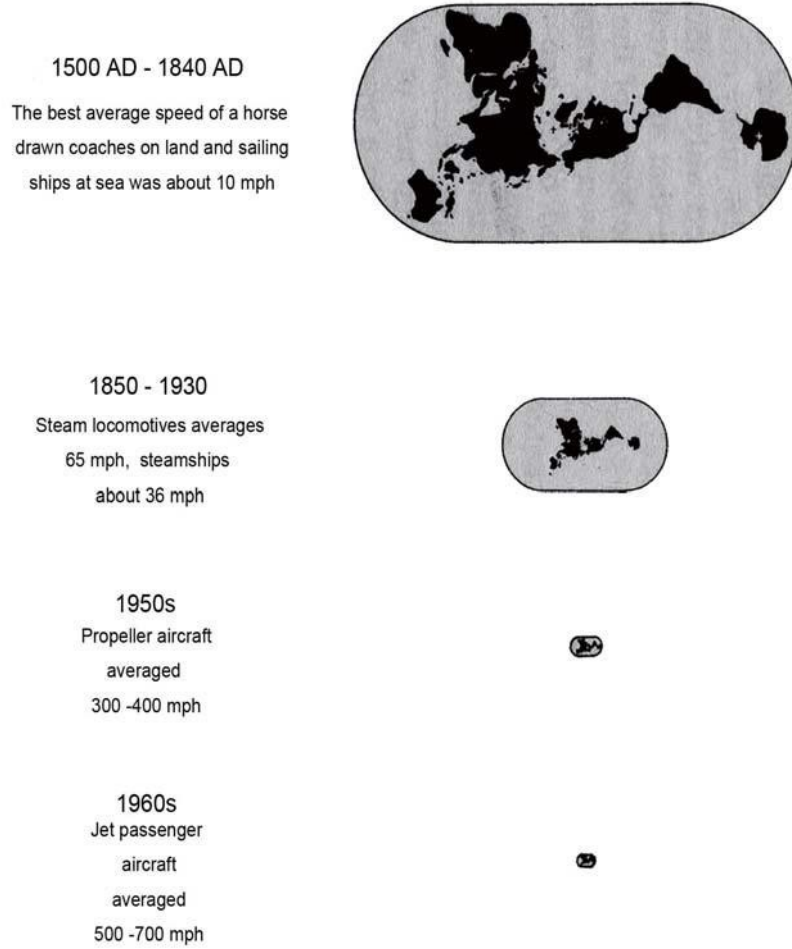


Fig. 2a The Shrinking Planet

YEAR	500,000 BC	20,000 BC	500 BC	300 BC	1500 AD	1900 AD	1925	1950	1965	2008
Required time to travel around the globe	A few hundred thousand years	A few thousand years	A few hundred years	A few tens of years	A few years	A few months	A few weeks	A few days	A few hours	5 hours
Means of Transportation	Human on foot (over ice bridges)	On foot and by canoe	Canoe with small sail or paddles or relays of runners	Large sail boats with oars, pack animals and horse chariots	Big sailing ships (with compass), horse teams, and coaches	Steam boats and railroads (Suez and Panama Canals)	Steamships, trans-continental railways, autos and airplanes	Steamships, railways, autos, jet and rocket aircraft	Atomic ships, high speed railway, and rocket-jet aircraft	Concorde Mach 2 (twice speed of sound), beginnings of commercial space travel
Distance per day on land (Km)	24	24 - 32	32	24 - 40	32 - 40	480 - 1440	640 - 1440	800 - 2400	1600 - 3200	7500 - 10,000
Distance per day, by sea or air (Km)		32 by sea	64 by sea	216 by sea	280 by sea	400 by sea	4800 - 9,600 by air	9,600 - 15,200 by air	300,000 by air	600,000 by air
Potential State Size	None	A small valley near a small lake	Small part of a continent	Large area of a continent with coastal colonies	Greater parts of a continent with trans-oceanic colonies	Greater parts of a continent with trans-oceanic colonies	Full continents & trans-oceanic commonwealths	The globe	The globe and more	The globe and more

Fig. 2b The Shrinking Planet

There is also movement on political and social fronts:

Among the favorable signs are the steadily growing strength of the steps towards world order taken initially near the beginning of this century in the creation of the League of Nations, succeeded by the more broadly based United Nations Organization; the achievement since the Second World War of independence by the majority of all the nations on earth, indicating the completion of the process of nation-building, and the involvement of these fledgling nations with older ones in matters of mutual concern; the consequent vast increase in cooperation among hitherto isolated and antagonistic peoples and groups in international undertakings in the scientific, educational, legal, economic and cultural fields; the rise in recent decades of an unprecedented number of international humanitarian organizations; the spread of women's and youth movements calling for an end to war; and the spontaneous spawning of widening networks of ordinary people seeking understanding through personal communication.

To an extent unimaginable a decade ago, the ideal of world peace is taking on form and substance. Obstacles that long seemed immovable have collapsed in humanity's path; apparently irreconcilable conflicts have begun to surrender to processes of consultation and resolution; a willingness to counter military aggression through unified international action is emerging. The effect has been to awaken in both the masses of humanity and many world leaders a degree of hopefulness about the future of our planet that had been nearly extinguished.^[1]

Until this global community is established, at least at the level of a political truce, working on problems of development, international,

[1] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humankind, 1995, p.1.

national and urban, is like plucking flood victims out of the water and not building a dam. Since we are now one body, true national autonomy can only come after its parts are peacefully connected and co-operating.

Today, humanity has entered on its collective coming-of-age, endowed with the capacity to see the entire panorama of its development as a single process. The challenge of maturity is to accept that we are one people, to free ourselves from the limited identities and creeds of the past, and to build together the foundations of global civilization.

...the earth's inhabitants are now challenged to draw on their collective inheritance to take up, consciously and systematically, the responsibility for the design of their future.^[1] to... "erect.....a social system at once progressive and peaceful, dynamic and harmonious, a system giving free play to individual creativity and initiative but based on co-operation and reciprocity."^[2]

The primary question to be resolved is how the present world, with its entrenched pattern of conflict, can change to a world in which harmony and co-operation will prevail. World order can be founded only on an unshakable consciousness of the oneness of mankind, a spiritual truth which all the human sciences confirm.^[3]

We could also speculate that this is the beginning of the Age of Peace foretold by the Founders of all the religions. It might also be the time dreamt of by Chinese poets and philosophers, the early days of the Great Unity, the Great Harmony.

In the world of Great Unity, the whole world becomes a great

[1] Ibid, Introduction

[2] To the Peoples of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, Introduction, The Universal House of Justice, October 1985.

[3] Ibid, Part 3.

unity. There is no division into national states and no differences between races. There will be no war..

All people are equal, and do not consider position or rank as an honour either. Only wisdom and humanity are promoted and encouraged. Wisdom is to initiate things, accomplish undertakings, promote utility and benefits and advance people, while humanity is to confer benefits extensively on all the people and to bring salvation to them, to love people and to benefit things.

In the Age of Great Peace, since man's nature is already good and his ability and intelligence is superior, they only rejoice in matters of wisdom and humanity. New institutions appear every day. Public benefits increase every day. The human mind gets stronger every day. And knowledge becomes clearer every day. People in the whole world together reach the realm of humanity, longevity, perfect happiness, and infinite goodness and wisdom...

Heaven is my father and earth is my mother...all people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions...^[1]

[1] Zhang Zai (1020-77), a Neo-Confucian pioneer. *The Chinese Religion and the Baha'i Faith*, Phyllis Ghim Lian Chew, George Ronald Publisher, Oxford, 1993, p.73

1.2 The Need for Balanced Inner and Outer Development

Just when the modern age seems to be providing the technical and institutional means to create "an immense mansion... where all the cold creatures can take shelter, their faces alight"^[1]; its progress is severely handicapped by corruption, selfishness, and greed; nationalism, terrorism, and religious and racial prejudice. Just when globalization raises the promise of mutually beneficial international exchange, the threat of increased domination of the strong over the weak raises its head.

We may well ask, "Will the world be dominated by powerful nations and corporations further widening the gap between the rich and the poor?" "Will our cultural assets, our potential contributions to a New World Order, be suffocated by a strident western materialistic consumerism?" "Can the cycle of wars ever be ended?" "Will we come to our senses before environmental destruction makes

[1] Du Fu (AD 713-770)

development impossible?” “Are we really at the dawn of a New Era or on the brink of global disaster?”

*However thrilling the prospects may be, present patterns of behavior do not inspire confidence in the process. It is only natural to wonder whether globalization will, in fact, unify the human race without imposing uniformity or simply propel the universalization of the culture of consumerism. Is it the bearer of prosperity for the masses or the mere expression of the economic interests of a privileged few? Will it lead to the establishment of a just order or to the consolidation of existing structures of power?**

The dark shadows indicate we still lack mature behavior and principles, and mature institutions that correspond to the conditions of our new “global village”. The imbalances in the world are a sign that our “inner”, spiritual development, has not kept up with our “outer”, material development.

People cannot exist without forming groups for mutual support. Humans, unlike animals, cannot exist in isolation. The capacity to obtain higher and more complex levels of organization was not possible without corresponding higher levels of understanding, cooperation and reciprocity. Cooperation and mutual helpfulness are the community’s basic operating principles and the glue of social life: the more they are expressed, the higher the quality of life, inner and outer.

Moral knowledge and behavior orients, strengthens, and protects material development. Morality is efficient; spiritual qualities are part of the capacity to carry out programs of reform, and spiritual vision supports the will to implement them. The material warp of development intersects the spiritual woof. Development with

[1] Dr. Farzam Arbab, *The Lab, the Temple, and the Market*, Edited by Sharon Harper, IDRC, Canada, 2000, pp.1-2.

only material well-being as a goal has made prosperity more, not less, elusive. Human beings are far more complex. Not addressing the spiritual capacity of people, and regarding them simply as consumers in a material world, severely limits development strategy and starves deeper, richer, and finally more productive sources of motivation. Maturation implies we have latent “new virtues and powers, new moral standards, new capacities”, that must be pressed into use. Starving the development of that capacity leads to further instability.

Social advancement, we know, arises from the ideals and shared beliefs that weld society together. Meaningful social change results as much from the development of qualities and attitudes that foster constructive patterns of human interaction as from the acquisition of technical capacities. True prosperity - a well-being founded on peace, cooperation, altruism, dignity, rectitude of conduct and justice - flows from the light of spiritual awareness and virtue as well as from material discovery and progress.

Such qualities as trustworthiness, compassion, forbearance, fidelity, generosity, humility, courage, and willingness to sacrifice for the common good have constituted the invisible yet essential foundations of progressive community life.⁶¹

Self-regulation by people who possess these qualities is a surer long-term foundation for successful progress than regulation by punishments, threats, and corruption hot-lines. Working to preserve and develop them will translate into material as well as spiritual strength.

A group of American sociologists, for example, observing their country's social health suffering from a lack of meaningful life goals, said,

[1] Overcoming Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity in Public Institutions: A Bahá'í Perspective "Global Forum on Fighting Corruption II", May 2001, the Hague, Netherlands.

Work without social utility is intrinsically meaningless in any larger social or moral context and necessarily produces an alienation that is only partly eased by monetary rewards. Alienation from, and lack of participation in, a larger 'social ecology' characterized by 'civic friendship', results in meaningless work, restless competition, a self-centered life, a split between the ethos of family life and the brutally competitive work place, and education focused on careerism with neither 'personal meaning or civic virtue'.¹⁰

Economic prosperity and technological development are not the goals of modernization; they are the means to help attain inner and outer maturity at our new level of co-existence.

Until both the material and the spiritual needs and aspirations of individuals are acknowledged, development efforts will largely continue to fail. Human happiness, security and well-being, social cohesion, and economic justice are not mere by-products of material success. Rather, they emerge from a complex and dynamic interplay between the satisfaction of material and social needs and the spiritual fulfillment of the individual.

By linking material progress with fundamental spiritual aspirations, by appealing to those universal values which enable the individual to transcend narrow self-interest, the peoples of the world can be empowered to translate high-minded ideals and principles into constructive, sustained actions for their own well-being and the betterment of their communities.

Thus, a paradigm of development that seeks to promote global prosperity must take into account both the spiritual and

[1] Bellah, Robert, et al, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, New York, Perennial Library, 1985, p. 288.

material natures of the individual and society, while responding to the increasing interdependence of the peoples and nations of the planet.^[1]

This unprecedented economic crisis, together with the social breakdown it has helped to engender, reflects a profound error of conception about human nature itself. For the levels of response elicited from human beings by the incentives of the prevailing order are not only inadequate, but seem almost irrelevant in the face of world events. We are being shown that, unless the development of society finds a purpose beyond the mere amelioration of material conditions, it will fail of attaining even these goals. That purpose must be sought in spiritual dimensions of life and motivation that transcend a constantly changing economic landscape and an artificially imposed division of societies into 'developed' and developing.^[2]

...unless the moral character of a nation is educated, as well as its brain and its talents, civilization has no sure basis.^[3]

China's philosophers also agree the vitality of the spirit will die unless it is nourished with rectitude and justice. It is the nourished spirit that fills the gap between the inner and outer worlds, between "heaven and earth".

I know how to nourish my vast vital spirit...it is not easy to describe it in words. For it is a spirit extremely great and extremely strong. When nourished by rectitude and kept integral, it fills up all between heaven and earth. It is a spirit that must be mated to justice and natural law. Without these it would be starved. In fact, it is born of an accumulation of justice, not

[1] Baha'i International Community, *Toward a Development Paradigm for 21st Century*, August, 1994.

[2] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, *The Prosperity of Humankind*, Introduction, 1995.

[3] Abdu'l-Baha, *Paris Talks*, Baha'i Publishing Trust, London, 1979, p. 31.

something which justice invades from outside and takes to itself. Its very life depends upon justice. For whenever your conduct does not satisfy your conscience, the vital spirit suffers starvation.^[1]

Cao Yun Xiang, Head of Qinghua University from 1921-22, places a similar emphasis on the importance of good character, and its relationship to development;

.....when we examine the forces that can make for human progress in the world, it will be found that the advance of modern civilization depends vitally upon education and science: that the capacity for concerted action rests upon the principles of equality and spirit of service; that the ability to cooperate harmoniously in political, financial and industrial relations must be based upon the virtues of honesty and unselfishness... Therefore, it follows naturally that wherever a people is ignorant, incapable of cooperation, and unwilling to render service unselfishly, but, on the other hand, is inclined to oppress the good and weak and to stand in awe of the wicked and strong in order to advance its selfish interests, such a people is liable to be very backward in the march of human progress.^[2]

Confidence in the globalization process is increased if we see the shadows as part of a turbulent transition to our collective maturity; and as an expression, not of our intrinsic nature, but as manifestations of less mature stages of our growth.

A candid acknowledgment that prejudice, war and exploitation have been the expression of immature stages in a vast historical process and that the human race is today experiencing

[1] Mencius, Legge, bk. 2, pt. 1, ch. 2, arts. 12-14.

[2] Cao Yun Xiang, Head of Qinghua University, excerpt from the introduction to his Chinese translation of Baha'u'llah and the New Era.

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*the unavoidable tumult which marks its collective coming of age is not a reason for despair but a prerequisite to undertaking the stupendous enterprise of building a peaceful world.*¹¹

If our level of our confidence is sufficient, we may be willing to search for the “new virtues and powers, new moral standards, new capacities” we need for our collective adulthood.

[1] To the People's of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, The Universal House of Justice, Baha'i Study Series No.14, pp.-4.

1.3 China's Contribution to the Maturation of Humanity

Humanity is facing “the stupendous enterprise of building a peaceful world”^[1]. We are looking for “a paradigm of development that seeks to promote global prosperity” and that takes “into account both the spiritual and material natures of the individual and society, while responding to the increasing interdependence of the peoples and nations of the planet”^[2].

What might be China's contributions?

In 1990, John Fairbank, the noted Harvard sinologist, in the introduction to his recent book, *China: A New History*, refers to China as a latecomer to modernity. And, he asks whether China has emerged from isolation just in time to participate in the demise of the world or, with millennia of survival experience, to rescue it?

In 1923, Shoghi Effendi, an author and an astute observer of

[1] To the People's of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, The Universal House of Justice, Baha'i Study Series No.14, pp.-4.

[2] Baha'i International Community, Toward a Development Paradigm for 21st Century, August, 1994.

world affairs, said:

China, a land which has its own world and civilization, whose people (1923) constitute one-fourth of the population of the globe, which ranks foremost among all nations in material, cultural, and spiritual resources and potentialities, and whose future is assuredly bright.^[1]

In 1921, Bertrand Russell, while serving as a teacher in Beijing in the 1920s, observed China's: "production without possession, action without self-assertion, and development without domination".^[2]

In 1917, Abdu'l-Baha (son of Baha'u'llah, Founder of the Baha'i Faith) said:

China has the most great capability. The Chinese people are most simple-hearted and truth-seeking... Truly, I say, the Chinese are free from any deceit and hypocrisies and are prompted with ideal motives. China is the country of the future.^[3]

These statements of high expectation for China do not focus on China's business acumen or its capacity for hard work. Nor do they stress China's great period of scientific and engineering accomplishment which made it, until the 14th century, the most advanced civilization on earth. Instead, they refer, mainly, to China's character, to its social and spiritual capacity and potential. Is this the nature of China's potential contribution to a New World Order?

.....through the last forty centuries China must have matured her thought and learned many lessons in the art of living. Maybe

[1] Letter from Shoghi Effendi to the Baha'is of the East, 23 January 1923.

[2] Russell, Bertrand, *The Basic Writings Writings of Bertrand Russell: 1903-1959*, Edited by Robert E. Egner and Lester E. Dennon, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1961.

[3] Abdu'l-Baha, Reported in *Star of the West*, vol. 8, April 28, 1917, No.3, p.37.

China has something to contribute. Surely there must be a better way, a more humane way of settling international disputes than just by cutting each other's throats. Surely, with China's four hundred million people (in 1930), four thousand years of culture and vast resources, she must have something to contribute to the peace and progress of mankind.^[1]

If we make a brief survey of China's spiritual-philosophical heritage we find China's spiritual education has the imprint of Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism. From Daoism, for example, China derives capacity to merge opposites and resolve paradoxes, a capacity to see systems and "wholes" more than dichotomies; from Confucianism it has learned much regarding the application of spirituality to daily life; and from Buddhism it has received high-minded spirituality and a keen sense of the coherence between the material and the spiritual.

We find in China:

- Love of justice expressed in the words of China's poets and philosophers;^[2]
- Belief in harmony, reciprocity;
- Long Confucian tradition that a belief system is the foundation of social order;
- Belief in "Tian Xia Yi Jia" (All under heaven is one family),
- Love of perfection that generated so many centuries of civilized beauty;
- Appetite for consensus-seeking, not litigation, to resolve conflicts;

[1] James Yen, Intellectual Shock of China, Star of the West, 19, Mass Education Movement in China, October, 1925, 16:7.

[2] An example: the Chinese word for city is 'cheng shi' which literally means 'walled market' has within it the concept of justice. "The pattern of 'shi' (market) first evolved in the Metal Script arising from the character 'ping' meaning 'equal' or 'fair'. Its early meaning was, of course, a place where people assemble to carry out fair barter transactions."

- Capacity for obedience; open-mindedness and lack of prejudice;
- Desire to "seek truth from facts";
- Love for practical application of knowledge; the admiration for deeds not words;
- Importance given to family relationships, especially respect for parents.
- Centuries of wisdom contained in popular axioms that are embedded in the language.

Quoted below is one of the well known Four Books of Confucianism, The Great Learning (Da Xue), an “executive summary” of the teachings of Confucius. Every school child for centuries memorized it; and its theme is embedded deeply in Chinese culture.¹⁰ Briefly, it states that the goal of development is to illustrate virtue; the methods include regulation, cultivation, rectification, and investigation; the process relates the accomplishment of peaceful development with the internal life of the nation, the well-being of society to the spiritual health of the individual. "From the son of Heaven down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of their person as the root of everything besides." The investigation of reality by the individual is the fulcrum upon which the inner and outer balance depends. The Emperor was entrusted by Heaven to maintain this relationship. Failure to do so justified his removal.

What the Great Learning teaches, is – to illustrate illustrious virtue: to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence. The point where to rest being known, the object of pursuit is then

[1] For example, in 1997, at a parent-teacher meeting at my son’s school, Hei Zhi Ma Hu Tong Elementary near Beijing’s Drum Tower, his teacher addressed the issue of the purpose of education. Her presentation included the statement, “Wo bu pa ben, wo pa huai”. Roughly translated it means, “I don’t fear stupidity; I fear bad character.”

determined; and, that being determined, a calm unperturbedness may be attained. To that calmness there will succeed a tranquil repose. In that repose there may be a careful deliberation, and that deliberation will be followed by the attainment of the desired end. Things have their root and their completion. Affairs have their end and their beginning. To know what is first and what is last will lead near to what is taught in the Great Learning.

The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the empire, first ordered well their own States.

Wishing to order well their own States, they first regulated their families.

Wishing to order well their families, they first cultivated their persons.

Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts.

Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts.

Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge.

Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things.

Things being investigated, knowledge became complete.

Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere.

Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified.

Their hearts being rectified their persons were cultivated.

Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated.

Their families being regulated, their States were rightly governed.

Their States being rightly governed, the whole empire was made tranquil and happy.¹⁰

[1] Excerpt from The Great Learning, part of the Confucian doctrine contained in The Four Books, Hunan Publishing House, 1995, pp. 3-5.

We can trace the Chinese sense of solidarity and social responsibility, at least in part, to the Mahayana Buddhist teaching that,

...universal salvation (is) based on the idea of the fundamental oneness of all beings. ...Individuals may purify themselves and thereby escape the miseries of sinful existence, yet the salvation of anyone is imperfect so long as and so far as there remain any who have not realized the universal spiritual communion... To save oneself by saving others is the gospel of universal love taught by Buddhism.^[1]

If we look for the conceptual underpinnings of sustainable development we are well served by the Chinese notions of harmony, the importance of relationships, balance, moderation, and the belief that the group is more important than the individual. Are these not preferable to unrestrained expansion, satisfaction of wants, acquisition, consumerism and the notion that the individual is more important the group? The beauty of China's art, much of its poetry, and, in particular, its garden design all prefigure one of the essential concerns of sustainability, harmony between man and nature.

From just a quick look at China's social-philosophical-spiritual heritage we begin to see why there might be such a high regard for China's "resources and potentialities". We find active and latent elements in China's spiritual gene pool which are very relevant to humanity's transition to its collective adulthood.

Chinese people will be the first to admit that they have not always lived up to their own values and teachings. They point to the violence in its history. They also point to China's present day concerns such as corruption, social problems, environmental

[1] E. A. Burti, *The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha*, A Mentor Book, 1955, p.124.

degradation, and the increasing gap between rich and poor.

When we consider violence in China's history we should set it against the background of China's over-arching achievement of a great civilization, beginning thousand of years ago, reaching maturity in the Tang-Song period, and declining slowly until the reign of the last Emperor ended in 1912. Violence marked each Dynasty transition, two periods of territorial expansion, and the revolution and civil war that established the Peoples' Republic of China. China's long history had periods of stable growth contrasting with periods of disunity and chaos. We should note that the main periods of conquest and expansion occurred in the Yuan and Qing Dynasties, when China was controlled not by Chinese people, but by foreigners. The Mongols [Yuan Dynasty (1268-1368)] and the Man [Qing Dynasty (1644-1912)] tribes from the north, Mongolia and Manchuria respectively, occupied China, steering the Chinese "ship of state". It also should be noted, in more recent times, China was not part of the colonization of the globe, but was violently colonized by others.

Despite the violence, China has managed the largest group of people for the longest period of time. We should see the periodic turmoil, therefore, not as inherent in Chinese character, but as lapses - or lack of better means at the time - on a longer path of civilization-building.

Similarly, the pain China feels from the current social and environmental problems, and a growing uneasy sense that wealth does not bring happiness, indicate the discrepancy with its ethical standards and the distance from its spiritual roots. The discomfort indicates the extent to which the value system is alive, spinning like a flywheel in the Chinese psyche. The voice of China's beloved poet, Du Fu, can still be heard:

Behind the red-painted doors wine and meat are stinking.

*On the wild roads lie corpses of people frozen to death.
A hair breadth divides wealth and poverty.
This strange contrast fills me with unappeasable anguish.*¹¹

If we see these flaws as an "expression of immature stages in a vast historical process", then we can leave open the possibility that, while China's spiritual heritage may currently be weakened or threatened, it is not lost. Acknowledging these weaknesses is already a sign of maturity.

The growing recognition that material and spiritual development must go hand-in-hand comes after a century of questioning, sorting, experimenting, and learning from mistakes.

In the years following the founding of the PRC, it was essential to focus on improving China's material conditions. At a time of poverty and shortages, there was little conflict between traditional and revolutionary virtues such as self-restraint, propriety, service to others, moderation, obedience, etc. China made significant movement towards "abolishing long-standing structures of injustice and domination, conquering absolute poverty for one-fifth of the population of the planet, and sweeping aside deeply rooted belief systems based on superstition"¹².

The process included the near extinction of its spiritual heritage during the passionate, adolescent self-destruction of the Cultural Revolution, a determined campaign to destroy the Four Olds (Old Thought, Old Traditions, Old Habits, and Old Culture). In the late 1970s, China passed from this near cultural suicide, to enter "a process of experiment and reform while trying to establish a new relationship with the rest of the world"¹³. The relationship to the past matured to an on-going sorting out of this vast inheritance with

[1] Du Fu quoted in *The White Pony*, an Anthology of Chinese Poetry, Edited by Robert Payne, Mentor Books, 1960, p. 183.

[2] Thoughts on China, article by Dr. Farzam Arbab, May 19, 1989.

[3] *ibid*

a view to finding modernization with "Chinese characteristics". The negative focus on what society was against matured to a more adult search for positive goals for advancement and prosperity.

1978 was a watershed year, beginning a period of material progress, when the Open Door Policy invited individual initiative, both foreign and domestic, to participate in the reconstruction (economic and scientific) of the country. One of the greatest signs of maturity was to turn away from isolationism and consciously engage with the world outside. China now lived and breathed "reform" with its on-going struggle to modernize, to "Catch up with the West". The search for a modern Chinese identity has not followed the road of a parochial nationalism; on the contrary, China experimented freely with non-Chinese science, technology, business methods, architectural design, law, etc. China has moved from conquering absolute poverty, to opening its doors, to becoming the new emerging economic power of Asia. In a few short years, China has catapulted itself into rapid economic advancement, with the world beating a path to its Open Door to invest in its development.

China abandoned centuries of indifference to science to give it an exalted station.⁸ Science and "high-tech" are now regarded as the signs of, and a major tool, for economic development. With recent increased investment in research, China is poised to become a world leader in scientific endeavor.

China has spent the past 100 years in a conscious struggle to advance. It is not complacent, nor is it languishing in a state of torpor. Recent entry into the WTO, winning the 2008 Olympics bid for Beijing and for the World's Fair in Shanghai in 2010, all contribute to a re-awakening sense of confidence and optimism about China's

[1] "For 2,000 years the Chinese people had a most remarkable record in science and technology. Then from two to three centuries ago a decline set in. Commenting on ancient Chinese technological discoveries and inventions, Dr. Joseph Needham writes in the preface to his great work *Science and Civilization in China* that they were 'often far in advance of contemporary Europe especially up to the 15th century'." Institute of the History of Natural Sciences, Chinese Academy of Science, a compilation, *Ancient China's Technology and Science*, Foreign Language Press, 1983, p.1.

prospects. Since the 1978 Open Door policy there has been a visible rush of growth, a great release of capacity.

However, in more recent years, along with success, shadows have appeared in China's modernization drive. As corruption, social, and environmental problems persist, the signs of a weakened spiritual condition have become more apparent. Corruption is of special concern in a culture that relates leadership with virtue. The tolerance of this practice may be a greater threat to stability than the individual selfish act.

Now that relative wealth has come and it is acceptable for some to get rich first, people are not sure what to do with this wealth other than have a comfortable life. There is a conflicting mix of values. The Chinese habit of balancing the rights of the individual with the rights of the group causes deep reservations about the modern tendency to pursue material wealth for its own sake. There is a growing realization that money does not bring happiness, that there is a lack of a "social ecology", a lack of material and spiritual coherence. China is experiencing first-hand that the advancement of material comfort, technology and science are not sufficient ends in themselves and do not guarantee a "Harmonious Society".

With the opening to the West, China's spiritual resources have been further obscured by a foreign consumer-oriented materialistic development paradigm. The more China "buys into" a definition of "modern" that disregards the development of our spiritual capacity, the less likely it will see the value its potential spiritual contribution.

China's under-appreciation of her transcendent understandings is inhibited not only by the emphasis on material development, but is further slowed by her own self-deprecating nature. "Yes, our country is backward," many Chinese people nod, reinforcing the West's sense of its own superiority.

The advancement of science, while contributing to material development, needs dialogue with morality in order to apply fairly

and appropriately its benefits and power. In the hands of the corrupt, the cruel or the unwise, science and technology can be applied to destructive ends as well as peaceful ones. For example, all humanity is painfully aware of the huge, excessive stockpile of nuclear weapons, chemical weapons, etc., an obvious miss-application of science. On less lethal, but more insidious fronts we have a new age of computer theft and virus vandalism.

The empowerment of humankind through a vast increase in access to science and technology requires a strategy for development which is centered around an ongoing and intensifying dialogue between scientific and spiritual knowledge.^[1]

In 1939, a foreigner, Juliet Bredon, said,

Admirable and interesting as all this modern progress is, the big problem for the future of Peking, as for China, is to adapt the new standards to the psychology of the Chinese people. Days of transition often bring mistakes and “hurry up” modernity risks depersonalizing everything. Between the two poles of the very old and the very new the pendulum swings to and fro. To hasten its movement without disturbing its balance is the difficult and delicate task which the thinking people of China have set themselves to do, well knowing one thing is sure – that morals and ethics have to keep pace with (scientific) knowledge or all is lost.^[2]

The shadows on China’s development drive are an inverse prescription of the spiritual qualities required for balanced inner and outer growth. They are a signal. Now that absolute poverty has almost disappeared, it is time, for the development focus to shift

[1] Baha’i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humankind, Part 4, 1995.

[2] Juliet Bredon, Peking, pp.54-5, 1931

back to the root, to the “cultivation of the person”, to improving moral values and behavior.

From their history, older and more recent, Chinese people are vitally aware of the price to be paid when balance is lost. China has been made stronger and more resilient through hardship. China has gained, through suffering and success, capacity to consciously design its own future. It understands the process described by Meng Zi and in the "I Ching":

When heaven is about to bestow a great mission or charge upon someone, it invariably begins by exercising his mind with suffering, toughening his sinews and bones with toil, exposing his body to hunger, subjecting him to extreme poverty, and frustrating all his plans. All these methods are meant to stimulate his mind, strengthen his nature, and increase his abilities.^[1]

The pain and embarrassment, in recent years, caused by the lack of material-spiritual balance will challenge China to search for deeper solutions to important social issues.

As China begins to compare the true needs of our time with the finer fruits of its heritage, they will find China is the carrier of many of the qualities, skills, attitudes, and capacities the world needs in its struggle to mature and leave behind its "entrenched pattern of conflict". It may be a confirmation and a joy, lifting the hearts of the Chinese people, to find so much of their vast cultural, philosophical, and spiritual heritage is in tune with the requirements of the new age, to find they have valuable contributions to make to “true” modernization. It may be, as John Fairbank suggests, that China’s destiny is not only to achieve a more dynamic balance between the material and the spiritual within its own nation, but also to share that experience with the world.

[1] Mencius, Legge, bk.6, pt.2, ch.15, art.2

As China becomes more and more involved with other nations, it can, through its own example and its concerted efforts to foster world peace, become a most effective participant in the development of a new, world civilization. China does not need to follow the same path already trodden by other nations; it can open a new path that will lead it directly to an honored position in a New World Order that China, itself, will have helped to build.^[1]

[1] Thoughts on China, article by Dr. Farzam Arbab, May 19, 1989.

Aspects of Maturation

Present day conceptions of what is natural and appropriate in relationships - among human beings themselves, between human beings and nature, between the individual and society, and between the members of society and its institutions - reflect levels of understanding arrived at by the human race during earlier and less mature stages in its development. If humanity is indeed coming of age, if all the inhabitants of the planet constitute a single people, if justice is to be the ruling principle of social organization - then existing conceptions that were born out of ignorance of these emerging realities have to be recast.^[1]

The following sections explore various aspects of China's path to maturation. Some are written explicitly about China, and other are included as relevant to China's maturation. In the future, more sections could be added and more could be said in each section.

- 2.1 The Maturation of the Individual
- 2.2 The Maturation of Society
- 2.3 The Maturation of Belief Systems
- 2.4 The Maturation of Relations with Authority
- 2.5 The Maturation of Community Life
- 2.6 The Maturation of Relations between Men and Women
- 2.7 The Maturation of Culture
- 2.8 The Maturation of our Relationship with the Environment
- 2.9 The Maturation of Decision-making

[1] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humankind, Part 3.

广厦

2.1 The Maturation of the Individual

The importance attached to the quality of the individual person as an essential development goal is imbedded in Chinese culture. For example,

Confucianism traced back the ordering of national life to the regulation of the family and the regulation of the family life to the cultivation of the personal life.....It makes a "logical connection between a world order as the final aim and the cultivation of the personal life of individuals as a necessary start..."

The Confucian scholar-organizer Zhu Xi (1130-1200), hoped that proper government would rest upon "universal self-discipline". He stressed moral cultivation of the individual as the foundation of social order and good government².

[1] The Wisdom of Confucius, Edited by Lin Yu Tang, The Modern Library, New York, 1938, p. 22.

[2] John K. Fairbank, China: A New History, Belknap Press, Harvard University, Cambridge, London, 1992, p.124.

From the Emperor down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of the person the root of everything besides. It cannot be when the root is neglected, that what should spring from it would be well ordered. It never has been the case that what was of great importance has been slightly cared for, and, at the same time, that what was of slight importance has been greatly cared for.^[1]

The concept of “ren su zhi” (the quality of people) comes up often in discussions in China. The lack of it is frequently referred to as the source of difficulties, a development obstacle.

Natural and harmonious” is the essence of the universe and also an ideal state constantly pursued by man. However, nepotism and selfishness, national conflicts, frictions in families and between man and man, and estrangement between religions -- all stand in the way of human harmony, progress and unity. It is, therefore, imperative to do away with likes and dislikes and improve personality before disputes can be removed.

But the end cannot be achieved by punishment, because punishment can cure only what is external, not what is in the mind. That is why the Confucian school of thought holds that education is a crucial and effective way to make people do what is right to and acquire a lofty personality, because the essence of man’s nature is consistent with the way of the heaven.^[2]

Mencius said: "He who knows his natureknows heaven. To preserve one's mental constitution and nourish one's nature is the way to serve heaven." The way of heaven is harmonious and so is the way of men. The essential display of

[1] Excerpt from The Great Learning, part of the Confucian doctrine contained in The Four Books, Hunan Publishing House, 1995, pp. 3-5.

[2] Sun Li Bo, Unpublished paper, 1998.

human nature should be a kind of peace and tranquility and unity with the natural (cosmic) order. Those who are prone to litigation and stirring up conflicts have deviated from both the way of men and the way of heaven. The responsibility and function of education is to reform and correct people who have strayed from the way of men, correcting their minds before conforming their acts to rules, so as to attain social harmony. According to traditional Chinese ideas, education occupies an important position as a means to improve personality.

In similar terms, Abdu'l-Baha, describes the spiritualization of individuals, the maturation of their spirits as the antidote to crime, as a foundation of social harmony.

Divine civilization.....so traineth every member of society that no one, with the exception of a negligible few, will undertake to commit a crime. There is thus a great difference between the prevention of crime through measures that are violent and retaliatory, and so training the people, and enlightening them, and spiritualizing them, that without any fear of punishment or vengeance to come, they will shun all criminal acts. They will, indeed, look upon the very commission of a crime as a great disgrace and in itself the harshest of punishments.¹⁰

Confidence that moral education can succeed is based on the assumption that human beings are trainable; that they are distinct from animals, are a reflection of “heaven”, with ability and intelligence for organization and community, and have an inherent capacity for love and justice. These views can be found in Chinese philosophical writings, for example:

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 133.

Water and fire possess power but no life, grass and trees have life but cannot know, birds and animals know but are without the sense of righteousness. Man has power, life, knowledge and the sense of righteousness. Therefore, he is the most precious of all species. His strength is not equal to that of an ox. He cannot run as fast as a horse. Yet horse and oxen are used by man. Why? Because man has the ability and intelligence for organization and community.

The parrot can speak, and yet is nothing more than a bird; the ape can speak, and yet is nothing more than a beast. Here now is a man who observes no rules of propriety; is not his heart that of a beast?...Therefore, when the sage's arose, they framed the rules of propriety in order to teach men, and cause them, by their possession of them, to make a distinction between themselves and brutes.^[1]

For a man to give full realization to his heart is for him to understand his own nature, and a man who knows his own nature will know Heaven. By retaining his heart and nurturing his nature, he is serving Heaven.^[2]

Confidence that moral education can succeed must also be based on the assumption that people are not, by nature, incorrigibly selfish and aggressive. These latter behaviors, when they occur are acquired not intrinsic.

....so much have aggression and conflict come to characterize our social, economic and religious systems, that many have succumbed to the view that such behaviour is intrinsic to human nature and therefore ineradicable.

With the entrenchment of this view, a paralyzing

[1] Legge, Li Chi, bk.1, i, pp. 62 ff

[2] Lao, Mencius, 8A:1.

contradiction has developed in human affairs. On the one hand, people of all nations proclaim not only their readiness but their longing for peace and harmony, for an end to the harrowing apprehensions tormenting their daily lives. On the other, uncritical assent is given to the proposition that human beings are incorrigibly selfish and aggressive and thus incapable of erecting a social system at once progressive and peaceful, dynamic and harmonious, a system giving free play to individual creativity and initiative but based on co-operation and reciprocity.

As the need for peace becomes more urgent, this fundamental contradiction, which hinders its realization, demands a reassessment of the assumptions upon which the commonly held view of mankind's historical predicament is based. Dispassionately examined, the evidence reveals that such conduct, far from expressing man's true self, represents a distortion of the human spirit. Satisfaction on this point will enable all people to set in motion constructive social forces which, because they are consistent with human nature, will encourage harmony and co-operation instead of war and conflict. To choose such a course is not to deny humanity's past but to understand it.^[1]

Whether in the form of the adversarial structure of civil government, the advocacy principle informing most of civil law, a glorification of the struggle between classes and other social groups, or the competitive spirit dominating so much of modern life, conflict is accepted as the mainspring of human interaction. It represents yet another expression in social organization of the materialistic interpretation of life that has progressively consolidated itself over the past two centuries.^[2]

[1] To the People's of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, The Universal House of Justice, 1985

[2] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humanity.

Most particularly, it is in the glorification of material pursuits, at once the progenitor and common feature of all such ideologies, that we find the roots which nourish the falsehood that human beings are incorrigibly selfish and aggressive. It is here that the ground must be cleared for the building of a new world fit for our descendants.^[1]

Mencius agrees that people are not bad by nature. He compared the human spirit to trees on a mountain hacked and eroded by nearby townspeople and grazing animals. He asks whether their degraded appearance is due to the nature of the trees? He claims, "...it cannot be said that there is no love and justice inherent in the nature of man".

The trees on Ox Mountain were once beautiful. Being situated, however, in the suburbs of a large city, they were hewn down with axes and hatchets; how could they retain their beauty? Still through the growth from their vegetative life day and night, and the nourishing influence of the rain and dew, they were not without buds and sprouts sprung out. But then came the cattle and goats, and browsed among them. This is why it appears so bare and stripped. When people see its bare appearance, they tend to think that there was no wood from the beginning. But is it due to the original nature of the mountain? Similarly, it cannot be said that there is no love and justice inherent in the nature of man. But the way in which a man loses the proper goodness of his mind is just like the way in which those trees were denuded by axes and hatchets. Hacked at, day after day, how can it retain its excellence? Still, there is some growth between day and night, and in the peaceful air of the morning, the mind feels in a degree those inclinations and aversions which are proper to humanity; but

[1] To the People's of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, The Universal House of Justice, 1985.

*the feeling is very feeble. And then it is fettered and destroyed by what the man does during the day. The fettering takes place again and again; the restorative influence of the night is not sufficient to preserve the original goodness of his nature; and when the still small voice of the conscience is smothered, his nature is scarcely distinguishable from that of the irrational animals. When people see that man is like an irrational animal, they tend to think that from the beginning he had no capabilities for good; but is this due to his nature?**

*In good years the young people often acquire a habit of dependence. In bad years the young people often take to violence. This is not due to the differences in their endowments as conferred by Heaven. It is owing to the different things by which they allow their minds to be ensnared and engulfed.***

The moral education and training of the individual as a cornerstone of development has been understood for millennia in China. Its importance is re-emerging as the forces of greed and corruption undermine social order; and as the deeper happiness based on moral integrity becomes threatened.

[1] Mencius, Legge, ch.8, arts 1-2. See also Chapter 5 for an account of the non-existence of a positive evil.

[2] Mencius, Legge, bk 6, pt. 1, ch. 6, arts 1-7.

2.2 The Maturation of Society

Dr. Husayn Danesh, a Canadian psychologist describes the transition to maturity as a movement from authoritarian and indulgent forms to more mature “integrative” social relations.

Although the authoritarian mode of relating has been and remains the most common in human relationships, there are nevertheless two other modes, the indulgent and the integrative.....the advent of mankind's age of maturity must coincide with the predominance of the integrative approach to life and human relationships. While the authoritarian and indulgent modes display characteristics of childhood and adolescent stages of development, the integrative mode describes a mature type of human relationship, and, therefore, has a special importance in our understanding of the prerequisites for facilitating humanity's transition from its age of adolescence to adulthood.^[1]

[1] H.B. Danesh, M.D., *Unity: the Creative Foundation of Peace*, Baha'i Studies Publications, Canada, 1986.

He presents these modes of relationship as Personality Types. (See table below). We could also consider these types as conditions of the larger society.

Personality Type (National Character)	Characteristics	World View	Emotional and Intellectual Characteristics	Relationships with Others
Authoritarian	Power- oriented	Dichotomous Perceptions	Rigidity	Authoritarian Submission
Indulgent	Pleasure-oriented	Indiscriminate Perceptions	Promiscuity	Anarchic Relationships
Integrative	Growth-oriented	Unity in Diversity	Creativity	Responsibility and Cooperation

Fig. 3 Personality and Social Types

If we apply the above table to China, we could say it is growing from the authoritarian to the integrative condition. From this perspective, we can see authoritarianism, not as a permanent condition, but as a stage of growth.

China has a long history of a hierarchical, centralized social order organized around an Emperor with a mandate from heaven. China exhibits restraint and moderation, respect for the principle of "the subordination of the individual will to that of society", and a habit of obedience. Confucian thought stresses the importance of the well-being of the whole. For instance, it advocates that when an individual comes into conflict with the society or family, he should give up his own interests, that is, to sacrifice himself for the sake of righteousness. The West tends to interpret this restraint and moderation, the emphasis on the importance of the group, not as a respect for the unity of the whole or respect for the institution of leadership, but only in terms of submission to a dictatorial "regime".

The world view of the more mature integrative mode is "unity in diversity". This new world view is now the goal of all societies,

authoritarian or indulgent. If we see each other as cells in an organic social body, and if we accept that individuals can benefit from the organization of the social whole, it is logical that individual behavior that strengthens the whole will also strengthen the individual. Without this fundamental understanding, there is no motivation to participate in a collective destiny or to be of service to others; it would be difficult to exercise the principles of cooperation and reciprocity.

Human society is composed not of a mass of merely differentiated cells but of associations of individuals, each one of whom is endowed with intelligence and will; nevertheless, the modes of operation that characterize man's biological nature illustrate fundamental principles of existence. Chief among these is that of unity in diversity. Paradoxically, it is precisely the wholeness and complexity of the order constituting the human body - and the perfect integration into it of the body's cells - that permit the full realization of the distinctive capacities inherent in each of these component elements. No cell lives apart from the body, whether in contributing to its functioning or in deriving its share from the well-being of the whole.^[1]

While the individual will is subordinated to that of society, the cultivation of the individual is still, as in the Confucian model, the starting point of development – “the root of everything besides”.

...while the individual will is subordinated to that of society, the individual is not lost in the mass but becomes the focus of primary development, so that he may find his own place in the flow of progress, and society as a whole may benefit from the accumulated talents and abilities of the individuals composing it.

[1] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humankind, p.4.

Such an individual finds fulfillment of his potential not merely in satisfying his own wants but in realizing his completeness in being at one with humanity and with the divinely ordained purpose of creation.

This relationship, so fundamental to the maintenance of civilized life, calls for the utmost degree of understanding and cooperation between society and the individual; and because the need to foster a climate in which the untold potentialities of the individual members of society can develop, this relationship must allow "free scope" for "individuality to assert itself" through modes of spontaneity, initiative and diversity that ensure the viability of society.^[1]

Citizenship, in a mature social contract means individuals act to satisfy, simultaneously, twin goals: to share and express their unique, individual capacities and talents, and to ensure the vitality of the larger society. Helping to create the latter furthers the development of the former.

It may be easier for China to make this transition than for the west to move to maturity from its more "indulgent" condition.

[1] Letter from the Universal House of Justice.

2.3 The Maturation of Belief Systems

Belief Systems: Elements of One Process

If we scan the Map of Human Maturation (Fig.1), we can observe the following patterns:

- “Rivers” of civilizations
- Convergence of these rivers in one ocean
- A strong correlation between each civilization and a belief

system

Each cycle of civilization can be traced to a potent spiritual germinating influence, with its root traced to its Founder. In fact, for most of them, such as, Hindu, Judaic, Buddhist, Christian, and Islamic, the name of the civilization and the name of the belief system, even its Founder, are interchangeable. Founders associated with civilizations include: Krishna and the Gupta civilization, Moses and the Jewish Kingdom, Zoroaster and the Persian Empire,

Buddha's impact on many Asian countries including China, Jesus and the Byzantine Empire, and Mohammed and the Islamic civilization. Western civilization owes its renaissance in 1500 AD, from a thousand years of darkness, to the influence of Islam.

Associated with the maturation period of these great civilizations are the great kingly figures of Solomon, Ashoka, Constantine, Saladin, and Akbar. One of China's early Sage Kings may have been a civilization-Founder. Buddhism did not originate in China, but it took root there. Confucius and Lao Zi never claimed to be Prophets, but their teachings were embraced as essential philosophical foundations of the inner life of China.

Each belief system had a Founder and a "Book". The Founders of belief systems promoted the cause of love and unity, and gave laws and social principles relevant to the time in which they appeared. (For more detail see Appendix.)

If we accept that most moral thought derives from these great belief systems, and, if we accept that mutual helpfulness and reciprocity are the basis of civilization, we could argue that, through the influence of these systems, the innate moral and spiritual faculties of humanity gradually developed and the advancement of civilization was made possible. The religions of the world provided the ethical order - the spiritual roots - that allowed the creation of a social order, from which were born the fruits of civilization; the whole process propelled by the light of the "sun", the vision of the Founder.

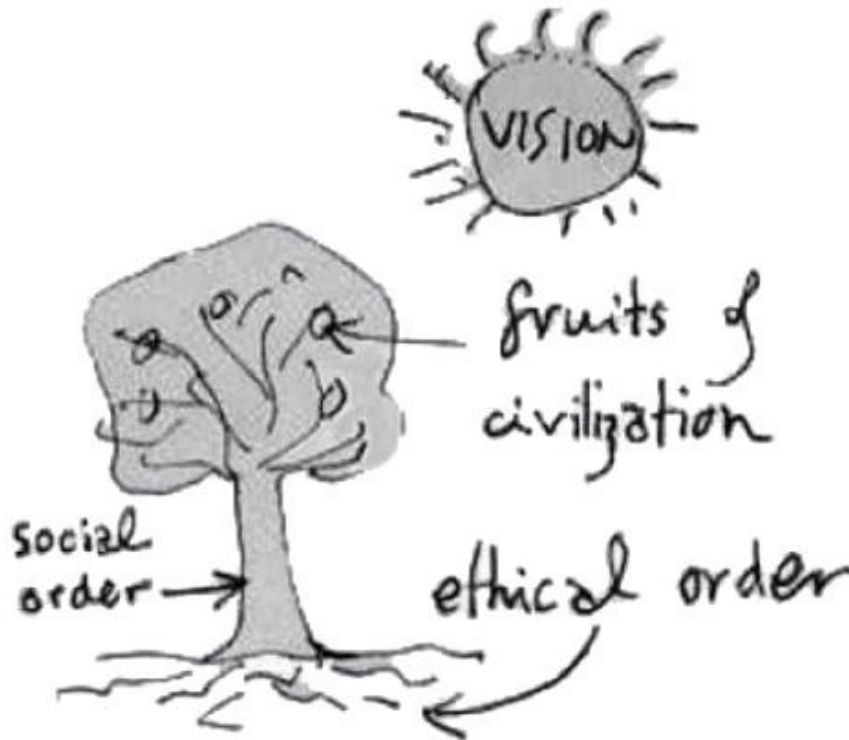


Fig. 4 Elements of Civilization

So far as earthly existence is concerned, many of the greatest achievements of religion have been moral in character. Through its teachings and through the examples of human lives illumined by these teachings, masses of people in all ages and lands have developed the capacity to love. They have learned to discipline the animal side of their natures, to make great sacrifices for the common good, to practice forgiveness, generosity, and trust, to use wealth and other resources in ways that serve the advancement of civilization. Institutional systems have been devised to translate these moral advances into the norms of social life on a vast scale. However obscured by dogmatic accretions and diverted by sectarian conflict, the spiritual impulses set in motion by such transcendent figures as Krishna, Moses, Buddha, Zoroaster, Jesus, and Muhammad have been the chief influence in the civilizing of

*human character.*¹⁰

*Divine Revelation is, He (Bahá'u'lláh) says, the motive power of civilization. When it occurs, its transforming effect on the minds and souls of those who respond to it is replicated in the new society that slowly takes shape around their experience. A new center of loyalty emerges that can win the commitment of peoples from the widest range of cultures; music and the arts seize on symbols that mediate far richer and more mature inspirations; a radical redefinition of concepts of right and wrong makes possible the formulation of new codes of civil law and conduct; new institutions are conceived in order to give expression to impulses of moral responsibility previously ignored or unknown: "He was in the world, and the world was made by him..."*¹¹

*As the new culture evolves into a civilization, it assimilates achievements and insights of past eras in a multitude of fresh permutations. Features of past cultures that cannot be incorporated atrophy or are taken up by marginal elements among the population. The Word of God creates new possibilities within both the individual consciousness and human relationships.*¹²

Each civilization has a life-span. The civilization process, in each of its manifestations, displayed an internal organic cycle beginning with youthful vigor, followed by maturation and decline. Initially, its belief system provided the moral foundation for the civilization's infancy and childhood. The stability, prosperity, and blossoming of civilizations occurred when the vitality of the belief system was at its peak, inspiring great achievements in social order, culture, and science. When the clarity of inner vision and motive power declined, when the sinews of moral discipline weakened, the civilization crumbled from within.

[1] Baha'i International Community, *The Prosperity of Humankind*, Part 4., 1995.

[2] Baha'i International Community, 1992 May 29, Statement on Baha'u'llah, p. 13.

[3] Baha'i International Community, 1992 May 29, Statement on Baha'u'llah, p. 13.

The rise and decline of China's Dynastic civilization was propelled by Buddhism. The time of the Tang-Song Dynasties is considered the period of maturity. For example, Liang Si Cheng, the architect-historian, refers to evolutionary stages of vitality (Han), elegance (Tang-Song) and rigidity (Ming-Qing). As the creative power of this belief system waned, so too did its civilization.

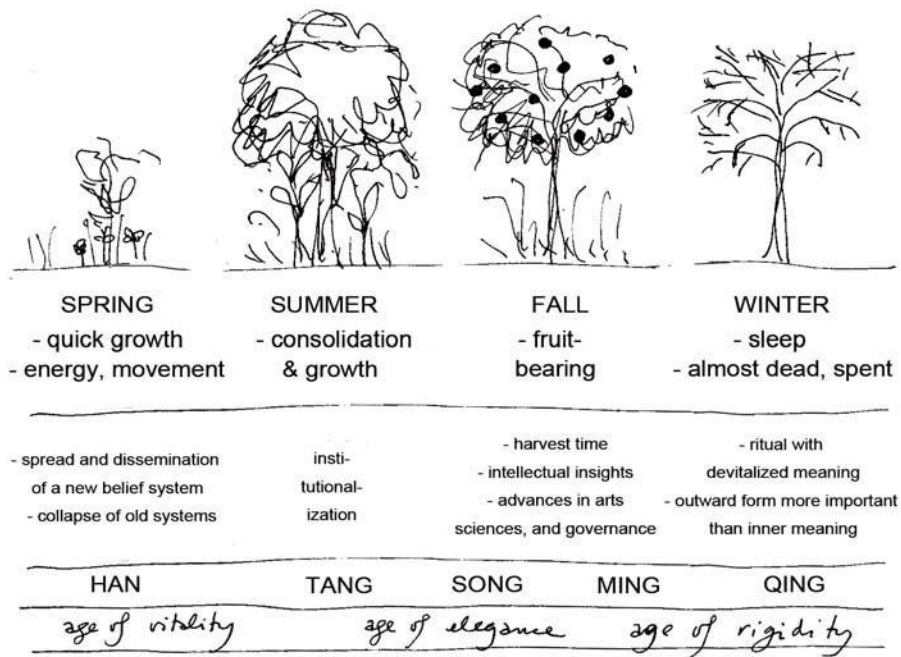


Fig. 5 The Life Cycle of a Civilization

With this in mind we can offer an answer to the “Needham question”.

Joseph Needham (1900-1990), a Cambridge Professor, the principal author of “Science and Civilization in China”, devoted most of his life to demonstrate that China, until the 15th century, was the most advanced civilization on earth, contributing hundreds of mankind’s most familiar inventions. Needham wanted to “fathom what changes suddenly occurred in the China of fi ve centuries ago that made it necessary for modern science to develop not in China

but elsewhere, principally around the shores of the Mediterranean. In the middle of the 15th century virtually all scientific advance in China came to a shuddering halt, and Europe then took the leading role in advancing the world's civilization. Why might this be?"^[1] "Why was China not able to hold on to its early advantage and creative edge?" "Why did the Chinese stop trying?"^[2]

The middle of the 15th century corresponds with latter part of the Buddhist-induced cycle civilization in China; the beginning of the end of its creative power. It was only natural that, as the cycle came to a close, so too was there a decline in invention and scientific advancement.

Thanks to Needham, we can appreciate the vital role China played in the evolution of science and technology.

According to his research, Chinese ideas and inventions were the foundation of the European Agricultural Revolution. This agricultural revolution was the foundation of the European Industrial Revolution, which, in turn, was the foundation of modern science and technology.

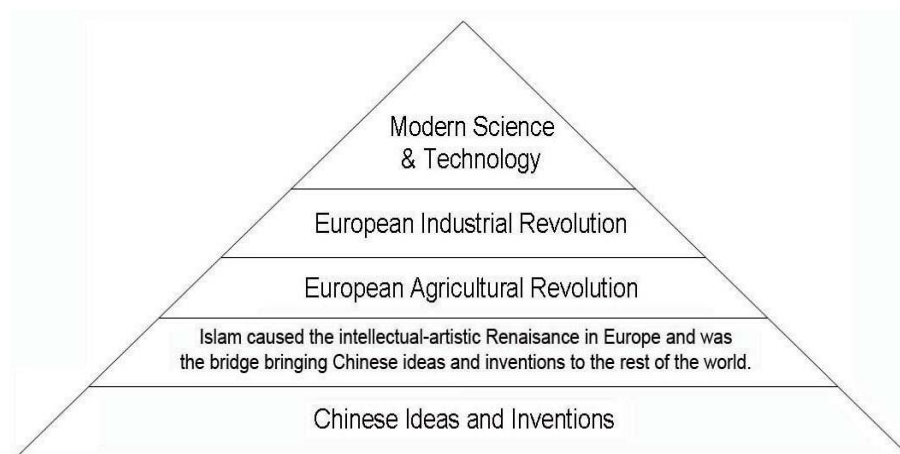


Fig. 6 The Evolution of Science and Technology^[3]

[1] Simon Winchester, *The Man Who Loved China*, HarperCollins, New York, 2008, p.190.

[2] Simon Winchester, *The Man Who Loved China*, HarperCollins, New York, 2008, p.260..

[3] The diagram is based on evidence demonstrated in Robert Temple's book, *The Genius of China*.

At the same time that China's cycle of productivity was beginning to decline, Islam's most creative period was also coming to an end. The civilization inspired by Mohammed passed the flame of development leadership that had blazed mostly to the south of the Mediterranean, to Europe and ignited a "Renaissance". Thanks to Mohammed, the West awoke from a 1000 years of "Dark Ages".

Islam's gift to Europe contained knowledge collected from around the known world, including China. Islam was the critical link bringing China's science and engineering to Europe. In many cases, the time lag between Chinese invention and its application in Europe was over a thousand years.

It would be better if the nations and peoples of the world had a clearer understanding of each other, allowing the mental chasm between East and West to be bridged. After all they are, and have been for several centuries, intimate partners in the business of building a world civilization. The technological world of today is a product of both East and West to an extent which until recently no one had ever imagined. It is now time for the Chinese contribution to be recognized and acknowledged, by east and West alike. And, above all, let this be recognized by today's school children, who will be the generation to absorb it into their fundamental conceptions about the world. When that happens, Chinese and Westerners will be able to look each other in the eye, knowing themselves to be true and full partners.¹¹

The similarity of the "belief system & civilization" process at various times and places throughout history, the essential harmony of the ethical tenets of the various belief systems, and our ascent from cave-dwellers to world citizens; all suggest the relationship between civilizations and belief systems is one, on-going, ever-

[1] Robert Temple, *The Genius of China*, 1998, p. 12

advancing progressive process. The purpose of the process, as Toynbee proposes, is

....to create a state of society in which the whole of mankind will be able to live together in harmony as members of a single all-inclusive family. This is, I believe, the goal at which all civilizations so far have been aiming unconsciously, if not consciously.^[1]

One of the signs of the maturation of humanity is that we begin to see there are no separate “religions”; there is only one spiritual education process. We have mistakenly taken its various appearances as independent and exclusive phenomena. We could see it as a “university”, formerly perceived as separate schools but now appearing as one global “campus”. When we turn to the great historical belief systems extant today, we are looking at the old text books and classroom behavior of our childhood and adolescence. If the belief systems of the past are all part of one on-going, ascending system of “inner” education, then what we need is not to abandon the process but rather to have an update, a new course of instruction appropriate for our one-planet world.

[1] Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, abridged one-volume edition, p.44.

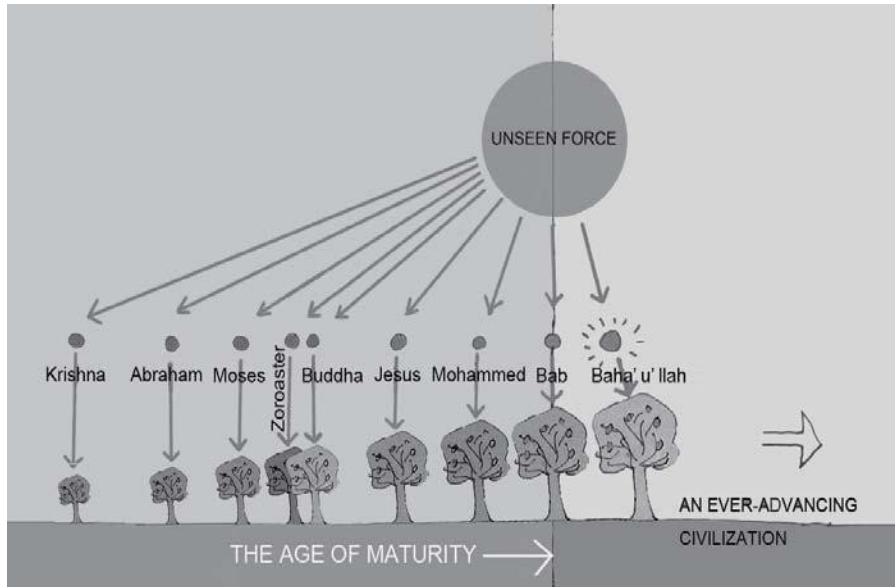


Fig. 7 One Spiritual Education Process

All these religions have their source in Heaven which they obey.

Traced to the source, the three sages are no different.^[1]

In the world there are many different roads but the destination is the same. There are a hundred deliberations but the result is one.^[2]

Seen as one process, there is no basis for the claim to exclusivity for any one belief system. Such a claim misses the common unifying intent of all the systems. Also, this is why, an old belief system, once its vitality is spent, can no longer be the foundation of regeneration. There is need for truth not just re-told, but re-born, a new springtime, a resurrection of real spirit. While there are echoes and even word-for-word repetition of truths from one "dispensation" to the next, genuine regenerating power passes on to the newer appearance of

[1] Poem on the three religions, in the Tao Xuan. Cited in Chan, Religious Pluralism, p.123

[2] The Book of Changes, cited in Legge, The Four Books, pt. 2, ch. 5

the belief system.

the entire enterprise that we call civilization is itself a spiritual process, one in which the human mind and heart have created progressively more complex and efficient means to express their inherent moral and intellectual capacities.....The phenomenon is an ever-recurring one; it is without beginning or end because it is fundamental to the evolutionary order itself.^[1]

Although nurtured by the process, humanity has never understood it. Instead, people have constructed around each episode in their spiritual experience a separate religious system. Throughout history, the religious impulse has been hobbled by the resulting contradictions and bitter conflicts.^[2]

[1] Who is Writing the Future? Baha'i International Community, Part 1, 1999.

[2] E.A. Burtt, The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha, A Mentor Book, p.124.

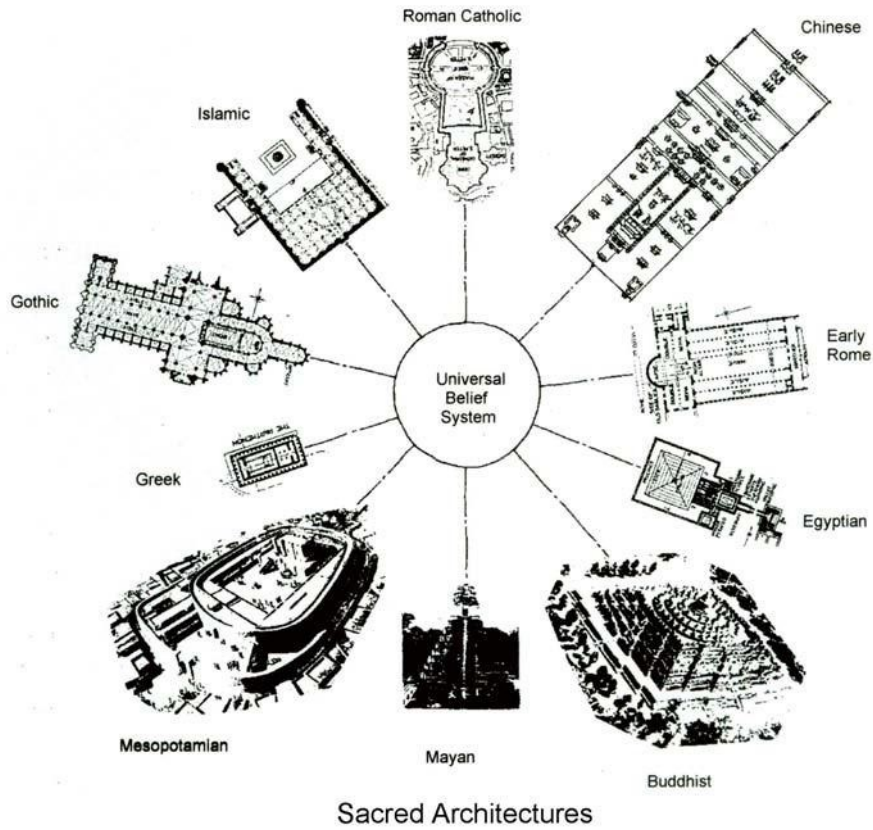


Fig. 8 Convergence of Humanity's Highest Aspirations

Just as science and law move to higher and higher definitions of reality - and are subject to renewal - so too must religion be renewed. The potency of the belief system's "water of life" served a cleansing, purifying function, but, the more it was used, the more it became polluted. For example, James T. C. Liu exalts the Song Dynasty Neo-Confucians to the station of "moral transcendentalists". Later, however, he says, "neo-traditionalism permeated the culture so completely that it lost the power to transform".

As the vitality of the belief system weakens, gradually, the system no longer governs the actions of the people or disciplines them. The social teachings of the system lose relevance as the

society matures. The great spheres of science and religion are no longer in concert. The belief system descends into outward forms, appearances, and rituals, with a lack of inner meaning. They become so out of tune with new stages in growth they must be abandoned. This necessary wintertime of the cycle divides communities into those clinging to a system in its old age and those turning to a new source of inspiration.

Religion is the outer expression of the divine reality. Therefore, it must be living, vitalized, moving and progressive. If it be without motion and non-progressive, it is without the divine life; it is dead. The divine institutes are continuously active and evolutionary; therefore, the revelation of them must be progressive and continuous. All things are subject to reformation.¹¹

While former belief systems crossed national and racial boundaries, they were not able to be universal. For example, while Buddhism was palatable to China, Christianity and Islam made few inroads among the Han people. Humanity was not yet mature enough for a universal system, nor were the transportation and communication infrastructures yet available. In all of these belief systems, however, universalism was latent, anticipating and preparing us for the awaited day of consummation.

For many people today, the first impression of religion is prejudice, superstition, blind and unreasoning obedience, violence and even war, all in its name. If these are the fruits of so-called religion, then are we not better off without it? The following distinctions offered some explanation as to where these justifiable impressions come from:

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 139.

1. Distinction between Moral and Social Teachings

While the moral teachings of each system are fundamentally the same - the theme of "love your neighbor", for example runs throughout them all; the social teachings related to marriage, inheritance, diet, etc, of each system change and progress as humanity progresses. Centuries of habit within one system, however, made it hard to let go of ingrained traditions and move on to the next level of social laws and principles.

2. Distinction between the Original "Book" and Man-made Additions

There is a difference between the writings of the Founders of the belief systems, and non-essential rituals and habits added by adherents through time. Some of these have obscured and even distorted the original message, making it harder to grasp its intent, let alone the overall evolutionary purpose. Such obfuscation of truth darkens the path to progress. The Founders of the world's belief systems are,

the first Teachers of the human race. They are universal Educators, and the fundamental principles they have laid down are the causes and factors of the advancement of nations. Forms and imitations which creep in afterward are not conducive to that progress. On the contrary, these are destroyers of human foundations established by the heavenly Educators. These are clouds which obscure the Sun of Reality.¹¹

3. Distinction between the "Book" and the Behavior of Some Religious Leaders

Adding further to the confusion is the behavior of some leaders of religions, usually in the later stages of a civilization, who out of

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 85

ignorance or love of power, clung to outmoded structures that had to melt before the rising sun of the new cycle. Instead of guiding their flocks to the new source of light, they resisted it and even instigated persecution of its founder and followers. For example, Jewish religious leaders persecuted Christ; Christian leaders led the persecution of Muslims; definite signs that the fruit-bearing period of the cycle was in decline.

True religion is the source of love and agreement amongst men, the cause of the development of praiseworthy qualities; but the people are holding to the counterfeit and imitation, negligent of the reality which unifies; so they are bereft and deprived of the radiance of religion. They follow superstitions inherited from their fathers and ancestors. To such an extent has this prevailed that they have taken away the heavenly light of divine truth and sit in the darkness of imitations and imaginations. That which was meant to be conducive to life has become the cause of death; that which should have been an evidence of knowledge is now a proof of ignorance; that which was a factor in the sublimity of human nature has proved to be its degradation. Therefore the realm of the religionist has gradually narrowed and darkened and the sphere of the materialist has widened and advanced; for the religionist has held to imitation and counterfeit, neglecting and discarding holiness and the sacred reality of religion.¹¹

Violence and prejudice in the name of belief systems are distortions of their original intent and do not invalidate their worth; the fire of knowledge in the hand of a child or of the ignorant can be dangerous. Belief systems in decline and decay do not represent their value; disintegration is a sign of decline that is inherent and necessary in a cycle, the cycle will start again afresh, gathering

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1972, p.71.

together new and potent forces.

After a time of decay comes the turning point. The powerful light that has been banished returns. The old is discarded and the new is introduced. Both measures accord with the time; therefore no harm results.^[1]

If belief systems are sequential, and the vitality of former ones is spent, then we need a fresh start. If the next step in our evolution is the oneness of the human family; then we need a corresponding, vital belief system that is universal and addresses the needs of our time.

The recent fast-fusion of our world into one place, and the rapid acceleration of learning and invention in the past one or two hundred years suggest a new cycle of civilization - for the first time on a global scale - has already begun. If belief systems impel new stages of human growth, then the force behind this sudden and rapid outburst of integration and disintegration must already exist. Where is it? Who is its Founder?

This renewed belief system must be universal, fulfill the aspirations of peoples everywhere, and be capable of inspiring a global flowering of civilization where cultures can “interact with one another in ever-changing patterns”. It must give “the human mind and heart.....more complex and efficient means to express....its... inherent moral and intellectual capacities”. The ethics of this belief system should be a renewal of the basic “love your neighbor” theme common to all religions; and its social principles must relate to the organization of world citizens on a globalizing planet.

[1] I Ching

The Baha'i Faith

In 1863, Baha'u'llah, son of a prominent Persian official, while in exile in Baghdad, Iraq, claimed to be the inaugurator-founder of just such a renewed belief system. He claimed to deliver the latest in a series of progressive revelations. His central message and goal, the oneness of humanity.

Regard the world as the human body which, though at its creation whole and perfect, hath been afflicted, through various causes, with grave disorders and maladies. Not for one day did it gain ease, nay its sickness waxed more severe, as it fell under the treatment of ignorant physicians, who gave full rein to their personal desires, and have erred grievously. And if, at one time, through the care of an able physician, a member of that body was healed, the rest remained afflicted as before. Thus informeth you the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

That which the Lord hath ordained as the sovereign remedy and mightiest instrument for the healing of all the world is the union of all its peoples in one universal Cause, one common Faith. This can in no wise be achieved except through the power of a skilled, an all-powerful and inspired Physician. This, verily, is the truth, and all else naught but error.¹⁰

In a letter to the Hague Peace Conference in 1918, Baha'u'llah's son, Abdu'l-Baha wrote,

And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is that although material civilization is one of the means for the progress of the world of mankind, yet until it becomes combined with divine civilization the desired result, which is the felicity of mankind,

[1] Baha'u'llah, *Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah*, p. 254.

will not be attained. Consider! These battleships that reduce a city to ruins within the space of an hour are the result of material civilization; likewise the Krupp guns, the Mauser rifles, dynamite, submarines, torpedo boats, armed aircraft and bombing aeroplanes—all these weapons of war are malignant fruits of material civilization. Had material civilization been combined with divine civilization, these fiery weapons would never have been invented. Nay, rather human energy would have been wholly devoted to useful inventions and concentrated on praiseworthy discoveries. Material civilization is like a globe of glass. Divine civilization is the light itself, and the glass without the light is dark. Material civilization is like the body. No matter how infinitely graceful, elegant and beautiful it may be, it is dead. Divine civilization is like the spirit, and the body gets its life from the spirit, otherwise it becomes a corpse. It has thus been made evident that the world of mankind is in need of the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Without the spirit the world of mankind is lifeless, and without this light the world of mankind is in utter darkness. For the world of nature is an animal world. Until man is born again from the world of nature—that is to say, becomes detached from the world of nature, he is essentially an animal, and it is the teachings of God which convert this animal into a human soul.¹⁰

According to Shoghi Effendi, the great-grandson of Baha'u'llah, our coming of age is not a mere enunciation of an ideal. It is a deep organic change to human society with institutions to match its new condition; the necessary consummation of human evolution.

Let there be no mistake. The principle of the Oneness of Mankind - the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve - is no mere outburst of ignorant emotionalism or an

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Foundations of World Unity, p. 27

expression of vague and pious hope. Its appeal is not to be merely identified with a reawakening of the spirit of brotherhood and goodwill among men, nor does it aim solely at the fostering of harmonious cooperation among individual peoples and nations. Its implications are deeper, its claims greater than any which the Prophets of old were allowed to advance. Its message is applicable not only to the individual, but concerns itself primarily with the nature of those essential relationships that must bind all the states and nations as members of one human family.

It does not constitute merely the enunciation of an ideal, but stands inseparably associated with:

- *an institution adequate to embody its truth, demonstrate its validity, and perpetuate its influence.*
- *It implies an organic change in the structure of present-day society, a change such as the world has not yet experienced.*
- *It constitutes a challenge, at once bold and universal, to outworn shibboleths of national creeds - creeds that have had their day and which must, in the ordinary course of events as shaped and controlled by Providence, give way to a new gospel, fundamentally different from, and infinitely superior to, what the world has already conceived.*
- *It calls for no less than the reconstruction and the demilitarization of the whole civilized world - a world organically unified in all the essential aspects of its life, its political machinery, its spiritual aspiration, its trade and finance, its script and language, and yet infinite in the diversity of the national characteristics of its federated units.*
- *It represents the consummation of human evolution - an evolution that has had its earliest beginnings in the birth of family life, its subsequent development in the achievement of tribal solidarity, leading in turn to the constitution of the city-state, and expanding later into the institution of independent and sovereign nations.*

The principle of the Oneness of Mankind, as proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh, carries with it no more and no less than a solemn assertion that attainment to this final stage in this stupendous evolution is not only necessary but inevitable, that its realization is fast approaching, and that nothing short of a power that is born of God can succeed in establishing it.^[1]

The Bahá'í Faith recognizes the unity of God and of His Prophets, upholds the principle of an unfettered search after truth, condemns all forms of superstition and prejudice, teaches that the fundamental purpose of religion is to promote concord and harmony, that it must go hand-in-hand with science, and that it constitutes the sole and ultimate basis of a peaceful, an ordered and progressive society.

It inculcates the principle of equal opportunity, rights and privileges for both sexes, advocates compulsory education, abolishes extremes of poverty and wealth, exalts work performed in the spirit of service to the rank of worship, recommends the adoption of an auxiliary international language, and provides the necessary agencies for the establishment and safeguarding of a permanent and universal peace.^[2]

The Bahá'í Faith is the youngest of the world's independent religions. Its founder, Bahá'u'lláh (1817-1892), is regarded by Bahá'ís as the most recent in the line of Messengers of God that stretches back beyond recorded time and that includes Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Krishna, Zoroaster, Christ and Muhammad.

The central theme of Bahá'u'lláh's message is that humanity is one single race and that the day has come for its unification in one global society. God, Bahá'u'lláh said, has set in motion historical forces that are breaking down traditional barriers of race, class, creed, and nation and that will, in time, give birth to a

[1] Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*, p. 42

[2] Shoghi Effendi, *Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith*

universal civilization. The principal challenge facing the peoples of the earth is to accept the fact of their oneness and to assist the processes of unification.

One of the purposes of the Bahá'í Faith is to help make this possible. A worldwide community of some five to six million Bahá'ís, representative of most of the nations, races and cultures on earth, is working to give Bahá'u'lláh's teachings practical effect. They come from more than 2,000 different tribal, racial, and ethnic groups and live in 247 countries and dependent territories. The Britannica Book of the Year (1992-present) referred to the Bahá'í Faith as the second-most geographically widespread religion in the world, after Christianity.

Their experience will be a source of encouragement to all who share their vision of humanity as one global family and the earth as one homeland.

2.4 The Maturation of Relations with Authority

As humanity matures so too will the nature of the leader-led relationship. We need to gradually leave behind power-oriented authoritarian social structures and move toward more mature growth-oriented social structures characterized by responsibility and cooperation.

In Part 2.2 it was proposed that the West was moving to maturity from a relatively more “indulgent” social condition and that China was moving to maturity from a relatively more “authoritarian” social condition. The West often assumes the rest of the world will follow its model, including its form of government. In the past thirty years since the Open Door Policy began, however, China has effected momentous changes on its own terms, only borrowing selectively from the West. It has always defined and pursued its own course of development, and done so with relatively little turmoil. Its current stated development goal is a Harmonious Society; a goal that is also very Chinese, a concept deeply rooted in Chinese philosophy for

centuries.

A more mature world community is a desired goal, but the East and West need not follow the same path to get there. With these thoughts in mind, we look at only two aspects of this vast topic: individual freedom, and the party-system.

Individual Freedom

If the relationships in a mature society are characterized by responsibility to and cooperation with others, then this implies individual freedom must have boundaries. As mentioned in Part 2.1, “if we accept that individuals can benefit from the organization of the social whole, it is logical that individual behavior that strengthens the whole will also strengthen the individual”. In order to preserve the whole, the rights of the group are greater than the rights of the individual. Freedom of the individual, therefore, requires a capacity to understand social relations and acquire appropriate behaviors.

The notion that the quality of freedom relates to the knowledge and training of individuals is well understood in China. The quotation from Confucius, below, is so well known to Chinese people that they often identify the age of a person not by years, but by the maturity of his relationship to freedom. Confucius said:

At fifteen my heart was set on learning; at thirty, I stood firm in the society; at forty I had no more doubts; at fifty, I knew the mandate of heaven; at sixty, my ear can tell the good from the bad; at seventy I could follow my heart's desire without transgressing the norm.¹ (Another translation of this last part: “At seventy, I could follow the dictates of my own heart for what I desired no longer overstepped the boundaries of right.”)

[1] Conucius, Analects, 2:4 Shandong Friendship Press, p. 216-7, 2005.

[2] Confucius, Analects, 2:4

Someone in their thirties is referred to as being in the “er li” – “stand firm” stage of development; in their forties, the “hu huo” – “not confused” stage; in their fifties, “zhi tian ming” – “understand the meaning of life”; sixties, “er shun”, “can distinguish good from bad”; and in their 70s, “er cong xin suo yu” – “follow desire from the heart without transgressing the norm”. It is understood that real freedom is attained after a life-long learning process, that it has limits. Freedom should not overstep “the boundaries of right”.

This understanding of freedom, reinforced by a capacity to cope with the difficult challenges of life with relative equanimity, is a Chinese characteristic. Although the new generation worships “freedom” there is within them as well the built-in Chinese characteristic of self-restraint. This explains why Chinese people, including the young ones, are mystified by the self-destructive and violent clashes in many other countries, especially ones associated with members of religious groups. It also explains their astonishment that the United States would allow individuals the right to carry weapons.

Most urban Chinese people obey the one-child law because they agree the consequences of over-population require this drastic solution. Has anyone thanked China for its restraint, keeping the world population down? If you've ever been in a Chinese city on a crowded bus at rush hour you would experience first-hand the logic of this policy. China persists despite difficult side effects: namely, the one-child policy helps produce spoiled children, and there are fewer children to look after elderly parents. Lack of a social welfare system makes survival in the countryside difficult. Life depends on having a son who will stay at home. The conflict between this need and the One Child Policy results in the abortion of female fetuses. This problem will persist until the education level is higher and more retirement fund programs are in place.

Chinese self-restraint, more than fear or external threat, has

suppressed the kind of criticism of leadership that would lead to instability. China sees leaders as passengers in a boat held up by the water, the people. The people know that criticism should guide the boat, not sink it.

The West tends to see these behaviors, not as actions that might safeguard freedom, but as a lack of freedom and even as resignation to oppression.

While China still has along way to go to achieve a more mature society - the inertia of thousands of years of authoritarian social structure still lingers - these fruits of Chinese experience may be more in tune with the requirements of our collective maturity than the West would like to admit.

Party-Systems

In a mature society we shift from adversarial institutions and attitudes to systems characterized by unity, consultation, and participation.

Just as a family cannot be governed by a father and mother who are adversaries, so too must a mature society be governed by institutions that are united.

Western definitions of democracy, in addition to representative government, usually add, as additional prerequisites, unrestrained freedom to criticize government actions, and a multiparty system. Multi-party systems were conceived in a time of our collective adolescence when power was all-important. These youthful institutions with their built-in checks and balances were necessary to inhibit the abuse of power. As our attention shifts to more adult organizing principles such as justice and unity, we will begin to discard these adversarial forms of government.

For Chinese people, with a governance system, for centuries, with one center undivided, such institutions and concepts as the "loyal opposition" are a moral and intellectual contradiction. A multi-

party system is not only foreign to China; it would be a divisive and retrograde step. A party system would prolong adolescent rivalry and could even lead to civil war. As China moves toward maturity, it can skip over this adversarial structure of civil government, the party system of the West. It can, instead, continue to expand and improve its current governance model, a system of district, provincial, and national elected delegates, by increasing public participation and consultation.

2.5 The Maturation of Community Life

There is a level of social organization, larger than the family and smaller than the city, that we can call “community”. We have experienced some aspects of community life in villages, neighbourhoods, and the Chinese Work Unit. Since most of the world is emerging from authoritarian social structures, these earlier forms of community were led by village heads, dominant persons, or appointed leaders. Networks of friends, common-interest groups, school-based friendships, web-friends, etc. all have some characteristics of community, but do not have a physical locality.

All of the above have been, and are, conducive to human growth and development, but several factors in our modern world call for the creation of more mature forms of community. When our capacity and education were less, we could be managed in top-down fashion by leaders who - for better or worse - addressed our needs.

With the improvement of education and the accelerating spread of knowledge, we are experiencing a vast increase in

individual human capacity. The corresponding increase in capacity to participate in the quest for progress requires a new “climate in which the untold potentialities of the individual members of society can develop”, where new social and administrative forms can safely channel this surging energy.

With the discovery that material development alone does not bring happiness, a search for more meaningful activity has begun. We need community life where the individual finds “his own place in the flow of progress, and society as a whole may benefit from the accumulated talents and abilities of the individuals composing it”; where the individual “finds fulfillment of his potential not merely in satisfying his own wants but in realizing his completeness in being at one with humanity and with the divinely ordained purpose of creation”.

With the move to a more integrative form of society characterized by creativity, responsibility, cooperation, we need opportunities close at hand to contribute, learn and serve.

With the increased complexity and cross-fertilization of social growth, the larger social units – the city, the nation, the planet - need much greater participation at the grass-roots level.

With the above factors in mind, we can redefine community as ”a comprehensive unit of civilization composed of individuals, families and institutions that are originators and encouragers of systems, agencies and organizations working together with a common purpose for the welfare of people both within and beyond its borders; it is a composition of diverse, interacting participants that are achieving unity in an unremitting quest for spiritual and social progress.”¹

China has a habit of group-consciousness called "Ji Ti" (togetherness). Although its origin precedes the entry of Buddhism to China, this concept was given a powerful boost by the Mahayana

[1] The Universal House of Justice, The Four Year Plan, pp.34-35

emphasis on salvation of the individual through salvation of the group. China's Ji Ti sense and peaceful orientation are valuable foundations for community building.

The "Ji Ti" sense is usually focused on family, friends, and the Chinese people as a whole. The social structure jumps from the larger scale immediately down to the smaller scale of the workplace, the family and the individual. The work unit used to be a kind of community, but this institution is disappearing. There is a hierarchy of administrative units in the city, district government, street committee, etc, but they are more administrative than social. There are pockets of community, but they are limited to old school friends, places of work, and the extended family.

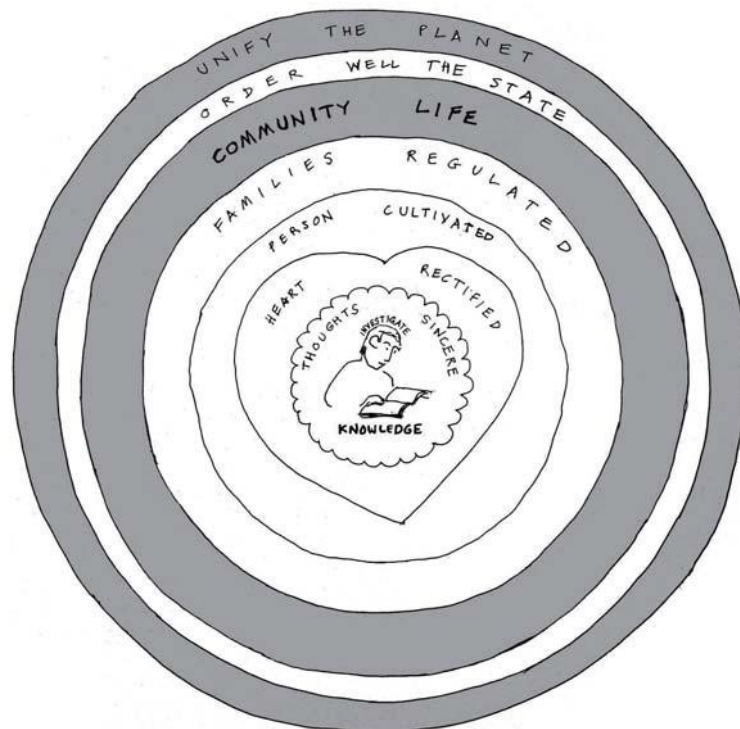


Fig. 9 The Society-Individual Relationship

A ring for community life has been -added between the state and the family.

Lin Yu Tang (1895-1976) pointed out in 1935 in his book, "My Country and My People", that the Confucian teaching, the Great Learning, moves through the levels of social organization and leaves out community. He says that the jump from State to family is indicative. He says unity and loyalty are operative at these two levels, but this sense is weak in between.

The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the empire, first ordered well their own States.

Wishing to order well their own States, they first regulated their families.

Wishing to order well their families, they first cultivated their persons.

Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts.^[1]

Perhaps, in the past this amount of social structure was enough. Confucius might agree to add "community life" to the spectrum of steps in the social ladder, because in modern times, society - and the individuals in it - has matured.

One of the most visible characteristics of China since it opened up is the increased capacity of individuals both men and women. As China starts to mature beyond an authoritarian social structure, millions of people are deciding, on their own, how to channel their energy and talents. They are choosing their own education, careers, starting their own businesses, and traveling to other parts of the country and the world where there are work opportunities. A professional service attitude has started to replace paternalistic patterns. A vast pool of energy is emerging, ready to be tapped.

The city will be more effective and its life improved if we find

[1] Excerpt from The Great Learning, part of the Confucian doctrine contained in The Four Books, Hunan Publishing House, 1995, pp. 3-5.

social and administrative mechanisms to channel the increased latent capacity of individuals. The current condition of anonymity outside the circle of family and friends, with more and more sections of the city surrounded by walls and security guards, reflects a fear of strangers, and is a consequence of a lack of community. We need institutions and outlets for mutual support and cooperation that are closer to home. Just as mutual support and reciprocity in the family or among a circle of friends brings benefits and security, expanding the boundaries of mutual support and reciprocity into a friendly, well-managed community will expand, too, the scope of benefits and security.

The creation of the institutions of a global society, a web of interconnected structures that hold society together at all levels, from local to international institutions that gradually become the patrimony of all the inhabitants of the planet is for me one of the major challenges of development planning and strategy. Without it, I fear, globalization will be synonymous with the marginalisation of the masses.^[1]

There is skepticism and caution about touching this social layer. Even people of "good will" hesitate. The desire for isolation and anonymity mainly comes from the fear of un-ending, unmanageable requests from people we don't know; once you start helping someone there may be no end to the demand.

This fear is justified; there is no coordinating administrative layer at the neighborhood level to manage such an initiative. Such an extension of community cannot arise without a corresponding institutional development, and maturation in social qualities and skills. To share information, to channel the traffic between needs and service, to expand the boundaries of trust requires a new form of

[1] Dr. Farzam Arbab, *The Lab, the Temple, and the Market*, IDRC, 2001.

organization and leadership at the community level.

If social participation were a real part of life, urban children and youth, for example, could participate in community service that could be a vital part of the school curriculum. It would broaden their current activities of study-homework-computer games by exposing them more intimately and practically with the society around them. This, in turn, would give their studies a clearer sense of purpose. They could more easily imagine how they might apply what they learn to the needs of the world around them. Placing value and importance on this kind of social education will also ameliorate the difficulties of the single-child family by giving children more surrogate brothers and sisters to interact with. The atmosphere of growth through service will reduce self-centeredness.

Youth can make valuable contributions to community-building. Currently, in China, most of their time is spent on academic achievement with an emphasis on numerical scores. This tends to isolate them from life and limit their social growth. If youth were involved in the education of the younger ones, for example, they too would have a real service to perform and a level of responsibility that they are ready for but is never used. Involvement in community work would also give them a chance to get to know members of the opposite sex in ways other than dating. You know a person better when you see how they work, how they interact with other people, how they handle responsibility, etc.

China's Ji Ti sense and peaceful orientation are valuable foundations for community building. The circle of trust needs to be expanded. A sign of a mature belief system would be that it helps create successful community life.

So far, we have been looking at the community within its borders. In this age of the internet and easier transportation, local communities have interesting new channels of interaction. The potential for the community to impact the welfare of people beyond

its borders, and to be impacted, has now extended from other communities in the same city to communities in cities all over the world.

Beginning with an outburst of invention that started in 1844, with the invention of the telegraph, cities have increasingly become nodes in an international web spread all over the surface of the planet. The main technological components for the construction of modern cities all appeared in the 12 years from 1877 to 1889. Through them the city expanded horizontally and vertically; its time for work, recreation, and family life could extend more easily into the evening hours; and the speed and ease of mutual access, either within the city or from city to city was greatly enhanced.

Steam Power	1781
Railway	1800
Telegraph	1844
Telephone	1877
Incandescent Lamp	1880
Skyscraper	1880
Electric Trolley Car	1885
Subway	1886
Automobile	1889
Elevator	1889
Wireless Radio	1901
Flight	1908
TV	1920
Computers	1930
Internet	1980

Fig. 10 Inventions and their Date of Creation

The international system of telecommunications has greatly reinforced the cities new dimension and purpose; they are becoming part of an interactive network on a planetary scale. They are

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becoming part of the infrastructure of a global civilization. Cities, and the communities within them, are bases from which individuals have access to the resources of the world and can participate in building a global society. Theoretically, the more cities and communities function in this role; the more their capacity will be nourished and released.

2.6 The Maturation of the Relations between Men and Women

Women hold up half the sky. Chairman Mao Ze Dong

The world in the past has been ruled by force and man has dominated over woman by reason of his more forceful and aggressive qualities both of body and mind. But the scales are shifting, force is losing its weight, and mental alertness, intuition, and the spiritual qualities of love and service, in which women is strong, are gaining ascendancy. Hence the new age will be an age less masculine and more permeated with the feminine ideals, or to speak more exactly, will be an age in which the masculine and feminine elements of civilization will be more properly balanced.¹¹

As long as the authoritarian mode predominates, women, like a minority, have to know the men better than the men know them.

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, *Baha'u'llah and the New Era*, 1976 U.S. edition, p.156.

Women are frustrated by the authoritarian and traditional attitudes, overt or unconscious, of men. This partly explains the high suicide rate among Chinese women¹. Women are waiting in the wings, some pressing more than others, for better chances to apply their capacities. There are many very mature and capable single women in China for whom it seems impossible to find a good husband, even though the number of men is higher than that of women. Many that marry seem resigned to be the unacknowledged educators of their husbands.

*The assumption of superiority by man will continue to be depressing to the ambition of woman.*²

Part of the reason for this suffering is that women have a greater recognition of the essential cooperative nature of human existence. They are already displaying some of the characteristics of the integrative mode while the men are still in the authoritarian mode.

Men are more burdened with the more adolescent attitudes and habits of competition and control. Maturity for a man is autonomy and separation from others, independence and individual achievement. A concern with relationships, and co-operation appear as weaknesses.^{[3][4]}

Women do have a much greater and more refined ability to encompass others' needs and to do this with ease. By this I mean

[1] I left my home at Xuan Wu Men in Beijing, one morning (1991) and saw the dead body of a woman on the sidewalk under a sheet of plastic. Her hand was sticking out. She has jumped from the top of a 12 story building. People said it was because her family wanted a boy and she had given birth to a girl.

[2] Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, US edition, 1982, p.76.

[3] Carol Gilligan, In a Different Voice, Harvard Press, 1982.

[4] When I am on a bus in Beijing, I play a game that I have never lost. Without looking at the driver, I guess whether it's a man or a woman. (There are many women bus-drivers in China.) If the bus lurches forward after stopping, and stops with a hard hitting of the brakes, and the speed is high, I know the driver is a man. If acceleration and deceleration are smooth and the speed is moderate, I know the driver is a woman. The women don't think they are in a race and have to compete; they consider more than the men the needs of passengers standing in the aisle...sudden stopping and starting would throw them off balance.

that women are better geared than men to first recognize others' needs and then to believe strongly that others' needs can be served - that they can respond to others' needs without feeling this is a detraction from their sense of identity.

....serving others is a basic principle around which women's lives are organized; it is far from such for men....Obviously people have to serve each other's needs, since human beings have needs. Who will serve them if not other people?

Despite the competitive aspects of any society, there must be a bedrock modicum of cooperation for society to exist at all. (I define cooperative as behavior that aids and enhances the development of other human beings while advancing one's own.) It is certainly clear we have not reached a very high level of cooperative living. To the extent that it exists, women have assumed the greater responsibility for providing it. Although they may not label it in large letters, women in families are constantly trying to work out some sort of cooperative system that attends to each person's needs. Their task is greatly impeded by the unequal premise on which our families are based, but it has been women who have practiced trying.¹¹

Centuries of responsibility for family life and the education of children have prepared women to make a crucial contribution to humanity's progress; they are better equipped to help the transition from the current authoritarian mode to an integrative mode. The need to build a more accessible community life will offer more opportunities for simultaneous self-development and service to others. It is likely that women will be leaders in this endeavor.

....until recently, few opportunities for simultaneous self-

[1] Dr. Jean Baker-Miller, *Towards a New Psychology of Women*, Beacon Press, Boston, Second Edition, p.62-3.

development and service to others have existed; there were virtually no social forms in which this combination could be put into operation.... For men the prospect of combining self-development with service to others seems an impossibly complex proposition. For women this complexity is not so great.^[1]

Old economic models that regard the world as impersonal markets where individuals behave as self-interested independent consumers are becoming increasingly inadequate. Efforts are being made now to update this model by factoring in environmental capital and social capital. What if the motivation is the good of the group? What if the model recognizes the importance and role of the family and community? What would spiritually mature economics look like where altruism was stronger than self-centeredness? It is in these areas that women, with millennia of experience have a crucial contribution to make.^[2]

Given the vital role of economic activity in the advancement of civilization, visible evidence of the pace at which development is progressing will be the extent to which women gain access to all avenues of economic endeavor. This challenge goes beyond ensuring an equitable distribution of opportunity, important as that is. It calls for a fundamental rethinking of economic issues in a manner that will invite the full participation of a range of human experience and insight hitherto largely excluded from the discourse. The classical economic models of impersonal markets in which human beings act as autonomous makers of self-regarding choices will not serve the needs of a world motivated by ideals of unity and justice. Society will find itself increasingly challenged

[1] Dr. Jean Baker-Miller, *Towards a New Psychology of Women*, Beacon Press, Boston, Second Edition, p.62-3.

[2] Paraphrased from Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, *The Prosperity of Humankind*, Part 5. Cao Yun Xiang, Head of Qinghua University 1921-22, excerpt from the introduction to his Chinese translation of *Baha'u'llah and the New Era*.

to develop new economic models shaped by insights that arise from a sympathetic understanding of shared experience, from viewing human beings in relation to others, and from a recognition of the centrality to social well-being of the role of the family and the community. Such an intellectual breakthrough - strongly altruistic rather than self-centered in focus - must draw heavily on both the spiritual and scientific sensibilities of the race, and millennia of experience have prepared women to make crucial contributions to the common effort.¹⁾

In our new stage of maturity, the education of girls takes on a new importance. The transmission of attitudes of cooperation and service are more easily transferred to the next generation by mothers; as the old adage goes, 'Educate a man and you educate an individual. If you educate a woman you educate a family.'²⁾ If lack of resources force a choice, the education of girls should be, therefore, of even greater priority than that of boys.

Even from a purely economic point of view, so says the Chief Economist of the World Bank, the training of women for the training of the next generation "...quite possibly yields a higher rate of return than any other investment in the world...The most effective way to break the cycle of poverty is to investment in the education of girls. In low-income countries, to make the education of girls on a par with that of boys through the secondary level would cost less than ten percent of what these same countries spend on defense. "Parents in low-income countries fail to invest in their daughters because they do not expect them to make an economic contribution to the family". In rural China, they move out of the home to that of their husband. In the short term,

[1] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humanity.

[2] Agnes Jung, Unveiling India, A Woman's Journey, 1987, p.92.

Girls are less valuable than boys and are kept at home to do chores while their brothers are sent to school – the prophecy becomes self-fulfilling, trapping women in a vicious cycle of neglect. An educated mother, on the other hand, has greater earning abilities outside the home and faces an entirely different set of choices. She is likely to have fewer, healthier children and can insist on the development of all her children, ensuring that her daughters are given a fair chance. The education of her daughters then makes it much more likely that the next generation of girls, as well as of boys, will be educated and healthy. The vicious cycle is thus transformed into a virtuous cycle.^[1]

The emancipation of women, the achievement of full equality between the sexes, is one of the most important, though less acknowledged prerequisites of peace.

The denial of such equality perpetrates an injustice against one half of the world's population and promotes in men harmful attitudes and habits that are carried from the family to the workplace, to political life, and ultimately to international relations. There are no grounds, moral, practical, or biological, upon which such denial can be justified. Only as women are welcomed into full partnership in all fields of human endeavor will the moral and psychological climate be created in which international peace can emerge.^[2]

The education of women will be a mighty step toward its abolition and ending for she will use her whole influence against war. Woman rears the child and educates the youth to maturity.

[1] Lawrence Summers, Chief Economist, World Bank. Essay for Scientific American, The Most Influential Investment, August 1992.

[2] To the People's of the World: A Baha'i Statement on Peace, The Universal House of Justice, Baha'i Study Series No.14, p. 13.

She will refuse to give her sons for sacrifice upon the fields of battle. In truth she will be the greatest factor in establishing Universal Peace and international arbitration. Assuredly women will abolish warfare amongst mankind. Inasmuch as human society consists of two factors, the male and the female, each complement the other, the happiness and stability of humanity cannot be assured unless they are perfected. Therefore the standard and status of man and woman must become equalized.^[1]

If "China ranks foremost among all nations in material, cultural and spiritual resources and potentialities"^[2] and if women are foremost in orienting themselves to a paradigm of integrative human relationships and service, then perhaps the whole world should turn to China's women; the foremost among the foremost!

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, US edition, 1982, p.104.

[2] Letter from Shoghi Effendi to the Baha'is of the East, 23 January 1923.

2.7 The Maturation of Culture

The currents of history suggest a world community is not just inevitable but is even the purpose of creation. The civilizations that rose with the arrival of new belief systems pulled together formerly separated peoples. For example, Buddhism linked India and China; Christianity, before the Dark Ages, linked the middle-eastern and Roman worlds; Islam linked the worlds of Greece and Rome, Arabia, Persia, India, and China. Today, no part of the world is left out; all are submerged in an intense, universal meeting of cultures. Also, the expanded scope and power of expression of the individual in each step of social evolution – family, tribe, city, and nation – suggest further progress is possible as we enter this stage of world civilization.

Will there be synergistic, creative interaction, or survival of the fittest? What will happen to Chinese culture?

Much like the role played by the gene pool in the biological

life of humankind and its environment, the immense wealth of cultural diversity achieved over thousands of years is vital to the social and economic development of a human race experiencing its collective coming-of-age. It represents a heritage that must be permitted to bear its fruit in a global civilization. On the one hand, cultural expressions need to be protected from suffocation by the materialistic influences currently holding sway. On the other, cultures must be enabled to interact with one another in ever-changing patterns of civilization, free of manipulation for partisan political ends.^[1]

The Chinese Revolution succeeded in “abolishing long-standing structures of injustice and domination, conquering absolute poverty for one-fifth of the population of the planet, and sweeping aside deeply rooted...belief systems based on superstition.” As Lu Xun had said, some things should be left behind.

If we want to preserve our national characteristics, we must first make sure they can preserve us. Distinctive things are not necessarily good, so why must they be preserved? Why keep a carbuncle just because it's Chinese?^[2]

This process, at times violent, brought into question every aspect of China's culture.

Not soon after recovering from the excesses of the Cultural Revolution, just when the slate had been wiped clean, just at this vulnerable turning point, China opened its doors to the West and foreign culture poured in. China's modernization received obvious benefits, but at what cost to its culture, traditions, and spiritual life? There are mixed feelings about interaction with other cultures. Is

[1] The Prosperity of Humankind, Baha'i International Community, 1995.

[2] Lu Xun (1881-1936), Chinese author and social critic.

China's cultural expression being "suffocated by the materialistic influences currently holding sway"? Entry into the process of global community and global culture has awakened both fear and hope.

The former is expressed, for example, by Professor Li Dao Zeng, author of the statement below. He is among the learned of China whose particular contribution includes the preservation and study of China's vast human settlement resources, expressed in classical and vernacular traditions. He is one of the caretakers of an important part of the cultural gene pool. While he hopes for the creative transformation of his ancient culture, he sees the current process of "cultural globalization" leading only to "conflict and compromise".

"Globalization" is becoming an up-to-date trend of thought. It seems easier for people to understand its meaning with the development of economy, finance, science and technology. But, "cultural globalization" cannot hold water in any significance. The world cultural development in the future would probably be a result of conflict and compromise, mutual motion and dialogue between "globalization" and "localization".local culture is the "soul" of the city. We should have to understand the traditional local culture from three different layers mentioned above, and to make efforts on the "creative transformation" in our ancient culture, so that it could be of help for our current practice.^[1]

He and his colleagues believe China has, embedded in its cultural resources, many principles and solutions to sustainable material and social development, a universe of spiritual stimulation and awareness. Research trips to traditional towns and minority peoples' villages provide them with a source of respite and inspiration. Here, the intensity of the cultural "gene pool" is

[1] Li Dao Zeng, From an article called "Global Localization" and Creative Transformation, published in World Architecture Magazine January, 2004, p. 85.

refreshing. It includes the craft and hand skills that, until the Modern Movement in architecture, have always been an integral part of a mature architectural language. They feel pain most keenly when we abandon or destroy such treasures in the name of progress.

The process of reinterpreting China's old architectural and urban patterns in modern contexts will need the resources of that cultural gene pool. How much of it will be available when the deeper search begins?

Artists and musicians also share these concerns. For example, the young Chinese artist, Yang Mian, who works in metal sculpture and oil paint, says foreign influence is a form of cultural oppression and has induced insensitivity.

Without paying tribute to history and the involvement of the cultural circle, architecture in China is all the same everywhere. There is no individuality, not or the tradition of regional culture. This is not due to political power. The fact that our culture is being oppressed and has become insensitive accounts for the situation. The construction procedure of our cities is only a product of developers' personal preference on the condition of not breaking any regulations. What developers are after is profit and they take the advantage of marketing gimmicks. We only have to take a look at all the property projects in our city to discover that all of them are the same kind of tube-shaped buildings, appearing in advertisements in the name of "European" and "Continental Style", "Roman Garden", High-profile Community, Ideal Homeland, Waterside Landscape, etc.

The musician, Tan Dun¹, laments the disappearance of tradition and searches for a Spiritual Map through which vulnerable rural folk

[1] Tan shot to fame after winning prestigious awards including an Oscar and a Grammy for his score to the film 'Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon' in 2001 and is acclaimed for his creative repertoire that spans the boundaries of classical, multimedia, Eastern and Western musical systems.

culture can be retrieved. Although he sees modernization severing the connection to China's soul and roots", he also sees in technology the means to record and disseminate, and hence, help preserve, the fragile and vanishing elements of culture.

BEIJING (AFP) - When Tan Dun visited his native Hunan province as a music student in 1981, he was captivated by the shamanistic sounds made by an old man who was drumming on stones and singing to the wind. "He was singing his primitive songs: talking to the heaven and the earth, the wind and the clouds, singing in dialogues with the former and next lives," the Oscar-winning composer said. "I was stunned." When Tan returned to the village some 20 years later as a famed composer to look for the old man, he was heartbroken to find he had died. "My memory of that old man was so profound, perfect and beautiful. And all of a sudden it disappeared and I realised that everything else is also disappearing," Tan told AFP in an interview.

The New York-based composer said he was haunted by rural China's vanishing ethnic traditions from which he draws most of his musical inspiration. In the face of China's break-neck economic development, rural traditions are being erased as quickly as skyscrapers are springing up, Tan said. "Everywhere, tradition is disappearing," he said, with a sigh. "This is very serious because in China, development is taking place so quickly. While this is fantastic, we have to be very careful about conserving culture and traditions."

Affected by the death of the old man in his village, Tan became determined to use his music to help preserve the vulnerable rural folk culture he feels passionate about. "There must be a way, like a spiritual map, to retrieve things even though they are lost," he said.

Tan's deep sense of loss inspired his multimedia composition

The Map: Concerto for Cello, Video and Orchestra, a mix of ancient and modern sights and sounds. The innovative piece, premiered by cellist Yo-Yo Ma (news - web sites) and the Boston Symphony Orchestra last year, was intended to draw attention to the endangered musical cultures of minority peoples living in Hunan. The concerto features the Tujia, Miao and Dong ethnic minorities playing traditional pipes and cymbals, blowing leaves and singing antiphonally -- a technique that allows the human voice to carry over long distances.

"The Map is a very personal journey, ... trying to trace things back, trying to make the sounds everlasting, trying to make the traditions everlasting," Tan said. "I hope if technology and tradition can combine, technology can be humanized and can rejuvenate traditions." Tan said the composition was also a spiritual journey to trace his own roots. "I was trying to look for an alternative way, an invisible road, to go back to my home in Hunan," he said.

"In ancient times, you tried to find your way round by listening to sounds: that sensation is a great inspiration," he said. He told his Beijing audience that he hoped Chinese people, amid the rapid modernisation, could still find ways of connecting with their ancient roots. "I hope that through The Map, people can find an alternative way home, not by bike, boat or plane but by following that invisible road home -- the one that connects our souls and our roots," the composer said.

In the absence of encouragement to do otherwise, rural people are often the first to let go of their traditions when the chance comes for wage-jobs in nearby growing towns. In wealthier villages, for example, they often abandon the wood-frame, brick-wall, and clay-tile traditional house for a concrete-brick structure with stucco or glazed tile wall finish. Although the result can be garish and

awkward, for them the choice is clear; the new home has more space, is drier, warmer, and has electricity and indoor plumbing. And, to them, it “looks” modern.

Are there any reasons for hope? There was a time, earlier in its history, roughly 200 to 800 AD, when a strong foreign influence penetrated China, and the result was very different. Buddhism from India, for several hundred years, instead of suffocating the Chinese spirit proved to liberate it. After, 800 AD, its influence began to decline when it succumbed to its material success, abused its power, and was suppressed.

The process is described by two famous Chinese architects, Professor Dai Nian Ci and his teacher, Professor Liang Se Cheng, founder of the School of Architecture at Qinghua University.

Since the 4th century AD, cultures in the east and west had a collision and intermixing due to the eastward propagation of Buddhism causing a tremendous change in Chinese architecture under the influence of Indian and West-Asian cultures, resulting in a new page in Chinese architecture by entering into the Tang-Song Period of architectural culture (6-13th centuries). The building masters at that time, on accepting outside influences, did not resort to mechanical transplantation of foreign forces. On the contrary, they had created something new of their own through digestion and absorption.In turn, “Many ancient Japanese buildings had strong influences from China but they assumed definite Japanese characteristics.”^[1]

Buddhism reached China at approximately the beginning of the Christian era. Though there are records of the erection of a Buddhist pagoda as early as the beginning of the third century A.D, we possess today no Buddhist monument before the middle of the

[1] Professor Dai Nian Ci, Paper presented at Qinghua conference, Modernization and Traditional Culture – One of the problems confronted by the Asian Architect, September 1989.

fifth century. However, from then on until the later fourteenth century, the history of Chinese architecture is chiefly the history of Buddhist (and a few Taoist) temples and their pagodas.^[1]

The reader should not be surprised that the overwhelming number of architectural examples (in China).....are Buddhist temples, pagodas and tombs. In all times and at all places religion has provided the strongest impetus to architectural creation.^[2]

Because this earlier interaction was creative, Professor Dai hoped it could happen again.

All these precedents led me to believe that while accepting the western building technologies, the contemporary Asian architects would be able to create their own new and peculiar architectural cultures by means of digestion, absorption and the intermixing of eastern and western cultures.

Most Asian countries have a common feature: they all have an ancient civilization of their own. Due to variations in geographical and natural conditions, different nationalities and ethnicities, and heterogeneous historical processes, each culture has its own specific character. All of them had their moments of glory, but later on they all fell behind the European Countries from various causes (maybe with the exception of Japan). As we entered the 20th century, especially the latter half, we were again engaged in the same task: to catch up with the advanced Western countries in the shortest time possible. For this purpose, we have to learn from them modern science and technology as well as advanced thinking and experiences. That is why then eastern and western cultures conjoin here, with inevitable conflicts followed by a certain degree of intermixing.

[1] Liang Se Cheng, *A Pictorial History of Chinese Architecture*, MIT Press, 1984, p.31.

[2] Liang Si Cheng, *A Pictorial History of Chinese Architecture*, MIT Press, 1984, p.3.

I believe that out of these conflicts and inter-mixing a variety of new cultures will emerge. They will become worthy parts of the great family of World Culture.^[1]

Professor Wu Liang Yong, laments the erosion of diversity of regional culture.

Under the strong global economic and cultural impact, the 20th century has seen an erosion of diversity in traditional cultures, an erosion of regional identity and consequently a loss of the visual anchors to the soul of the towns and cities.^[2]

He relates culture to the soul, the spirit of a place. Although there is erosion, he derives hope from witnessing what has happened when architects with spirit, nurtured by another culture, have returned to their native lands to create a modern architecture that has been cross-fertilized with new elements, but is still very much reflects local culture.

At the same time, the 20th century has also seen a regionally rooted architectural blossoming which has contributed to the richness of the world architectural culture. Early in the 20th century, accomplished architects from various countries went to North America to make their careers, including Saarinen in an earlier time and Gropius and Mies Van der Rohe in the postwar era. The new country had a lasting influence on their work. Some American architects, including Wright, went to Asia to receive the nurture of oriental culture, returning to create his own Usonian architecture. Concomitantly, some architects from Asia went to

[1] Professor Dai Nian Ci, Paper presented at Qinghua conference, Modernization and Traditional Culture - One of the problems confronted by the Asian Architect, September, 1989.

[2] Prof. Wu Liang Yong, Looking Forward to Architecture of the New Millennium, Keynote Speech for the XX UIA Congress, Beijing 1999.

the west to study and returned to their respective countries to exercise their talents, e.g. Japan's F. Maki, India's C. Correa, and China's Lu Yan Zhi, Liang Se Cheng, etc.

All this indicates that different cultures can be absorbed to become ingredients of the new regional cultures. At the same time, the masterpieces of their work also indicated that they were not isolated from their environment. The world is therefore a large garden where the blossoms may cross-fertilize to create new varieties of their time.¹¹

In order to enhance the richness and possibilities of this cross-fertilization process, he advises,

We should preserve regional (cultural) diversity as we preserve bio-diversity.¹²

Where there was a spiritual influence, as in the case of Buddhism's impact on China, there was a process of digestion, absorption and intermixing that influenced a flowering of Chinese culture. Current misgivings about globalization stem from observing a process without heart, an invasion of a culture of materialistic consumerism. Under conditions of mutual respect and attraction, cultural interaction can give birth to endless creative permutations. Ruthless materialistic criteria condemn much cultural expression to the realm of the "backward and worthless".

The implication is that without a spiritual foundation, globalization will lead to conflict and compromise, where "cultural globalization cannot hold water in any significance". If we regard humanity as one family reaching for maturity, impelled on its path by a series of civilization-inducing belief systems, or as an organic

[1] ibid

[2] ibid

whole whose vitality depends on a rich “gene pool” of cultural diversity, then it is urgent to find Tan Dun’s “Spiritual Map”, a basis for spiritually-inspired development.

In a living system, such as the human body, the whole sustains and nourishes the parts. As the synergistic metaphors of ecology imply, social, economic, technical, intellectual, and spiritual life are all interdependent; the lack of diversity in any aspect hurts the progress of the whole. The culture landscape is like the rivers and the sea. Local flavors are upstream in their respective rivers; at the same time, they feed the ocean of a global civilization. Life-sustaining water, evaporating from the sea returns to revitalize local landscapes. The greater the variety of input: the greater the strength and beauty of the whole.

A new world order, based on a universal belief system, regarding humanity as one family, will value its component civilizations. It will be necessary to exercise adult capacities of mutual respect, appreciation, even love, of differences, and trust in creative synergies. Motivation will come from unifying visions, such as the Chinese “Tian Xia Yi Jia”, a “garden” where variety and differences only make it more beautiful.

China’s participation in the creation of a world civilization could not only be a place to share its own heritage, but could induce what Professor Li Dao Zeng hopes for, “a creative transformation in our ancient culture”. Interaction within a spiritually-inspired humanity, ultimately, may be the only hope for preserving and regenerating China’s cultural heritage.

2.8 The Maturation of our Relationship with the Environment

The environmental crisis also demonstrates the need for a balanced dynamic between outer reality and our inner vision.

...[T]he pattern of economic growth being replicated has proven so detrimental to the environment as to call its viability into question. The challenge of bringing prosperity to all the peoples of the world through a process of sustainable development will not be met solely by the application of technology and the expansion of current schemes of organization. It demands a radical departure from the materialistic philosophies that have created today's concurrence of abject poverty and irresponsible wealth.¹⁰

The fallacies in theories based on the belief that there is no limit to nature's capacity to fulfill any demand made on it by

[1] Dr. Farzam Arbab, *The Lab, the Temple, and the Market*, Edited by Sharon Harper, IDRC, Canada, 2000, pp.1-2.

human beings have now been coldly exposed. A culture which attaches absolute value to expansion, to acquisition, and to the satisfaction of people's wants is being compelled to recognize that such goals are not, by themselves, realistic guides to policy.

Some of the virtues and attitudes required for sustainable development, such as moderation, balance, and synergy, have long been understood by Chinese philosophers and sages. Chinese artists with their portrayal of small human beings in a vast landscape reflect an attitude toward nature of awe, humility, and respect for beauty.

*No calamity is greater than not knowing what is enough
No fault worse than wanting too much
Whoever knows what is enough
Has enough.
Attachment comes at wasteful cost;
Hoarding leads to a certain loss;
Knowing what is enough avoids disgrace;
Knowing when to stop secures from peril.
Only thus can you long last.^[1]*

*The sage does not hoard,
The more he does for others,
The more he has himself.
The more he gives,
The more he gets.^[2]*

While, lately, China has greatly increased its eco-footprint, it still displays many features of sustainable development. Chinese pragmatism, moderation, frugality, and limited land resources

[1] Lao Zi, Dao De Jing, ch. 46 and 44

[2] Lao Zi, Dao De Jing, ch. 8.

result in optimum land utilization, a Spartan lifestyle, and a diet that is low on the food chain. One of the most important sustainable characteristics of Chinese cities is their optimum density (not too dense; not too spread out). There is extensive use of bicycles for transportation. Southern orientation of housing for passive solar heating is almost universal. There is an extensive informal, private-sector recycling of paper, glass, plastic, appliances, and furniture, and a good supply of "incubator" buildings for start-up companies. At least in urban areas, there is self-imposed birth control.

The conformance to sustainable development, however, is more fortuitous than conscious. With rising wealth, the advantages of optimum city construction and energy-saving lifestyles will erode unless there is increased environmental awareness and education. The common aspiration to get "rich and comfortable" could erode and negate existing sustainable characteristics.

The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (The Rio Declaration) recommended each nation create an Agenda for the 21st century. China was the first to complete its own Agenda 21, a broad-ranging strategy and plan for sustainable economic and social development. So far, it is has been mainly a top-down activity. Efforts to mature on other fronts, for example, belief systems, relationship with authority, the participation of women, and the development of communities and cities, all have the potential to give the Agenda 21 program a fresh dose of bottom-up energy and renewed hope for implementation. Agenda 21 should be part of the national school curriculum and a topic of consultation for every community.

2.9 The Maturation of Decision-making

Consultation

Central to the task of reconceptualizing the system of human relationships is the process that Bahá'u'lláh refers to as consultation. "In all things it is necessary to consult," is His advice. "The maturity of the gift of understanding is made manifest through consultation."

The standard of truth seeking this process demands is far beyond the patterns of negotiation and compromise that tend to characterize the present-day discussion of human affairs. It cannot be achieved -- indeed, its attainment is severely handicapped -- by the culture of protest that is another widely prevailing feature of contemporary society. Debate, propaganda, the adversarial method, the entire apparatus of partisanship that have long been such familiar features of collective action are all fundamentally harmful to its purpose: that is, arriving at a consensus about the truth of a given

situation and the wisest choice of action among the options open at any given moment.

What Bahá'u'lláh is calling for is a consultative process in which the individual participants strive to transcend their respective points of view, in order to function as members of a body with its own interests and goals. In such an atmosphere, characterized by both candor and courtesy, ideas belong not to the individual to whom they occur during the discussion but to the group as a whole, to take up, discard, or revise as seems to best serve the goal pursued. Consultation succeeds to the extent that all participants support the decisions arrived at, regardless of the individual opinions with which they entered the discussion. Under such circumstances an earlier decision can be readily reconsidered if experience exposes any shortcomings.

Viewed in such a light, consultation is the operating expression of justice in human affairs. So vital is it to the success of collective endeavor that it must constitute a basic feature of a viable strategy of social and economic development. Indeed, the participation of the people on whose commitment and efforts the success of such a strategy depends becomes effective only as consultation is made the organizing principle of every project. "No man can attain his true station," is Bahá'u'lláh's counsel, "except through his justice. No power can exist except through unity. No welfare and no well-being can be attained except through consultation."¹

Note:

This material was prepared in 1993 for presentation to social workers in China. The focus was on consultation and family life. When we read this material we can replace the word "family" with words such as: group, marriage, enterprise, organization, government council, etc.

[1] Baha'i International Community, Office of Public Information, The Prosperity of Humankind, Part III.

One measure of the progress of a community is the extent to which participation and cooperative methods of decision-making are used. Consultation requires maturity, helps foster maturity, and calls on its participants to exercise maturity. But education about the requirements of consultation is necessary in order for maturation to take place.

Goals are important to the success of the consultation

The best goal is to discover the best course of action to take for the well-being of all. If the individual consultants have any other goal than this - for instance, to gain or retain power, win an argument, or simply to save face - their ambitions will only get in the way and the consultation will not be completely successful in achieving its goal.

Qualities are needed for successful consultation: and consultation can help develop those qualities: pure motive, a desire to serve others, patience, humility, justice and open-mindedness, love, well-trained minds (ability to recognize and apply principles), unity, and willingness to set aside personal dislike for the sake of making good decisions. True respect is manifested through words and deeds. Without respect, there can be no trust-and without trust, it is not possible to capitalize on human diversity. Intimidation silences the meek, and disrespect antagonizes the proud. Families cannot afford such silences if their aim is to solve family problems. Unity of thought and action emerge from an acceptance of differences, not in negation. Uniformity is no more desirable in families than conceit and self-centeredness are in individuals.

The following elements are essential to good consultation:

- Establish the full facts;
- Decide on the principles to be applied,
- Discuss the matter and
- Make a decision with the intention of carrying out the decision in unity.

Family conversation is often undisciplined or suppressed. When there is a conscious decision to consult according to an agreed-upon process of consultation, self-discipline and freedom become possible. For there is no freedom without self-discipline, only domination and submission.

Establish the facts

Often families fail at the beginning of consultation by not being able to agree on the facts. This is not because there are no solid facts to be found, but because the members, if they are only interested in their own way, may reject the facts which do not suit their case.

Facts should include the identification of opportunities.

Principles

Time must be spent researching basic agreement on the principles to be applied before consultation can properly begin.

Justice is the operation of love at the group level. It is essential to unity.

Discussion

Unity of purpose is essential to good consultation, not unity of opinion. The clash of differing opinions can often produce the spark of truth, so long as it is the opinions and not the personalities which are clashing. Everyone should express his or her opinion with the conviction that it will contribute in some way to the discussion. Each should speak frankly, but with courtesy and moderation. Shy people should summon up the courage to speak forthrightly, and talkative people should strive for brevity and self-restraint.

All opinion must be listened to with an open mind and judged fairly. Shouting, sarcasm and name-calling cause feelings of hostility which obscure the truth and make proper consultation impossible.

It is helpful to choose a chairperson who will ensure that everyone participates; that each opinion is listened to carefully and considered on its own merits; that no-one dominates or diverts the discussion.

Each idea must be offered to the group as a gift; it should not be identified in anyone's mind with the person who first suggested it.

This means that the idea can be changed and developed, or even rejected, without anyone feeling hurt. If the participants are adopting the right approach, they will be able to see the best course of action to be taken, whatever their own original opinion might have been. In this way a person is able to change his or her mind completely during the course of the consultation, and even sometimes argue against an idea they originally suggested, without losing face. In fact, it becomes a sign of maturity and skill to be able to be flexible, responsive, and astute in detecting possible new solutions to a problem.

It is not hard to see that the goal of good consultation can produce a good environment for the development of spiritual attributes which will be very helpful in producing good family life.

Making a Decision

If the consultation has gone successfully through the preceding steps, making a decision will probably prove the easiest part. It is likely also that it will be a unanimous decision. But if unanimity cannot be achieved, a majority opinion must prevail. Each member should respect the consulting body enough to carry out its decision obediently and confidently – even if he or she did not vote in favour of it.

Unity

Unity in itself brings benefits. When a decision is not obeyed, it is never certain whether it was wrong in itself or whether sabotage made it fail. When a decision is carried out wholeheartedly, however,

it soon becomes apparent if the decision was wrong, and it can quickly be reversed. But if the decision was right the benefits will be felt immediately.

Appendix:

The Relationship between Civilization and Belief Systems

The question of religion as the main force impelling civilization is one of the main themes of this book. So far, Buddhism and the Baha'i Faith have been mentioned. To illustrate this point further, below are quoted a few brief references to Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

1. Judaism

At a time when the tribes of Israel were wandering and dispersed, Moses assembled, united and educated them to higher degrees of capacity and progress. He transformed their degradation into glory, changed their poverty into wealth and replaced their vices by virtues until they rose to such a zenith that the splendor of the sovereignty of Solomon was made possible and the fame of their civilization extended to the East and the West.

For example, Socrates came from Greece to learn from Jewish scholars. When he returned home he was forced to commit suicide for promoting the concepts he learned in Israel, namely, the idea of "one God" and the immortality of the soul.^[1]

2. Christianity

When Christ came, the Jewish civilization had declined. He said He had come

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Foundations of World Unity, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1972, p.22.

to gather together the lost tribes or scattered sheep of Moses. He not only shepherded the flock of Israel, but brought together people of Chaldea, Egypt, Syria, ancient Assyria and Phoenicia. These people were in a state of utmost hostility, thirsting for the blood of each other with the ferocity of animals; but Christ brought them together, cemented and united them in his cause and established such a bond of love among them that enmity and warfare were abandoned.^[1]

Within a few hundred years a civilization inspired by His teachings began to appear.

One demonstration of the excellent character of the Christians in those days was their dedication to charity and good works, and the fact that they founded hospitals and philanthropic institutions. For example, the first person to establish public clinics throughout the Roman Empire where the poor, the injured and the helpless received medical care, was the Emperor Constantine. This great king was the first Roman ruler to champion the Cause of Christ. He spared no efforts, dedicating his life to the promotion of the principles of the Gospel, and he solidly established the Roman government, which in reality had been nothing but a system of unrelieved oppression, on moderation and justice. His blessed name shines out across the dawn of history like the morning star, and his rank and fame among the world's noblest and most highly civilized is still on the tongues of Christians of all denominations.^[2]

Galen, the Greek physician and philosopher, who lived in the second century A.D., wrote a treatise upon the civilization of nations. He was not a Christian but he has borne testimony

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Foundations of World Unity, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1972, p.22.

[2] Abdu'l-Baha, Secret of Divine Civilization, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, p. 85.

*that religious beliefs exercise an extraordinary effect upon the problems of civilization. In substance he says, 'There are certain people among us, followers of Jesus the Nazarene who was killed in Jerusalem. These people are truly imbued with moral principles which are the envy of philosophers. They believe in God and fear Him. They have hopes in His favors, therefore they shun all unworthy deeds and actions and incline to praiseworthy ethics and morals. Day and night they strive that their deeds may be commendable and that they may contribute to the welfare of humanity; therefore each one of them is virtually a philosopher, for these people have attained unto that which is the essence and purport of philosophy. These people have praiseworthy morals even though they may be illiterate.'*¹

The belief in the correspondence of microcosm and the macrocosm, in the harmonic structure of the universe, in the comprehension of God through the mathematical symbols of center, circle and sphere.....acquired new life in the Renaissance, and found visual expression in the Renaissance church.....For the men of the Renaissance, their architecture with its strict geometry, the equipoise of its harmonic order, its formal serenity and, above all, with the sphere of the dome, echoed and at the same time revealed the perfection, omnipotence and goodness of God.

*Renaissance architects... "were convinced that universal harmony could not reveal itself entirely unless it were realized in space through architecture conceived in the service of religion."*²

3. Islam

When the influence of Jesus began to decline and Europe began to enter a 1000 years of darkness, Muhammed appeared. At the same time, to the south, Arabian nomadic tribes....

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Foundations of World Unity, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1972, p.56.

[2] Rudolf Wittkower, Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism, 1998, Academy Editions, p.39.

were widely separated, living in the deserts under lawless conditions, strife and bloodshed continual among them, no tribe free from the menace of attack and destruction by another, --at such a critical time Mohammed appeared. He gathered these wild tribes of the desert together, reconciled, united and caused them to agree so that enmity and warfare ceased. The Arabian nation immediately advanced until its dominion extended westward to Spain and Andalusia.¹¹

The savage peoples of the Hijaz, before that Flame of supreme Prophethood was lit in the lamp of Mecca, were the most brutish and benighted of all the peoples of the earth. In all the histories, their depraved and vicious practices, their ferocity and their constant feuds, are a matter of record. In those days the civilized peoples of the world did not even consider the Arab tribes of Mecca and Medina as human beings. Here were tribes so benighted and untamed that during the period of the Jahiliyyih they would bury their seven-year-old daughters alive And yet, after..... Mohammad rose over them, they were - because of the education bestowed on them by that Mine of perfections,.....and the blessings vouchsafed by the Divine Law - within a brief interval gathered into the shelter of the principle of Divine oneness. This brutish people then attained such a high degree of human perfection and civilization that all their contemporaries marveled at them. Those very peoples who had always mocked the Arabs and held them up to ridicule as a breed devoid of judgment, now eagerly sought them out, visiting their countries to acquire enlightenment and culture, technical skills, statecraft, arts and sciences.the rise of this brutish and despicable element, in such a short interval, to the supreme heights of human perfection, is the greatest demonstration of the rightfulness of the Lord Muhammad's Prophethood.¹²

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Foundations of World Unity, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1972, p.23.

[2] Abdu'l-Baha, Secret of Divine Civilization, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, Pages: 87-8.

The indebtedness of Europe to Islam is now better known and acknowledged. Islam took Europe out of the Dark Ages and propelled it into its Renaissance.

If from Rome, as a center, two lines be drawn, one of which passes eastward, and touches the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, the other westward, and crosses the Pyrenees, nearly all those Mediterranean countries lying to the south of these lines were living at the time of which we speak, (about 900 AD) under the dogma, 'There is but One God, and Mohammed is His prophet'. I have now to relate how these lines were pushed forward on Europe, that to the east by military, that to the west by intellectual force. On Rome, as on a pivot, they worked; now opening now closing, now threatening to curve round at their extremes and compress paganizing^o Christendom in their clasp; then, through the conclusive throes of the nations they had enclosed, receding

[1] Draper uses the term "paganizing Christianity". He is referring to Christianity's condition at the time of Muhammad, when it had descended from the glory days of Constantine and, after about 500 AD, fell under the control of materialistic and corrupt leaders.

"What a firm foundation of excellent character was laid down (in the days of Constantine), thanks to the training of holy souls who arose to promote the teachings of the Gospel. How many primary schools, colleges, hospitals, were established, and institutions where fatherless and indigent children received their education. How many were the individuals who sacrificed their own personal advantages and 'out of desire to please the Lord' devoted the days of their lives to teaching the masses.

When, however, the time approached for the effulgent beauty of Muhammad to dawn upon the world, the control of Christian affairs passed into the hands of ignorant priests. Those heavenly breezes, soft-flowing from the regions of Divine grace, died away, and the laws of the great Evangel, the rock-foundation on which the civilization of the world was based, turned barren of results, this out of misuse and because of the conduct of persons who, seemingly fair, were yet inwardly foul.

The noted historians of Europe, in describing the conditions, manners, politics, learning and culture, in all their aspects, of early, medieval and modern times, unanimously record that during the ten centuries constituting the Middle Ages, from the beginning of the sixth century of the Christian era till the close of the fifteenth, Europe was in every respect and to an extreme degree, barbaric and dark. The principal cause of this was that the monks, referred to by European peoples as spiritual and religious leaders, had given up the abiding glory that comes from obedience to the sacred commandments and heavenly teachings of the Gospel, and had joined forces with the presumptuous and tyrannical rulers of the temporal governments of those times. They had turned their eyes away from everlasting glory, and were devoting all their efforts to the furtherance of their mutual worldly interests and passing and perishable advantages. Ultimately things reached a point where the masses were hopeless prisoners in the hands of these two groups, and all this brought down in ruins the whole structure of the religion, culture, welfare and civilization of the peoples of Europe." (Abdu'l-Baha, Secret of Divine Civilization, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, Pages: 85-87.)

from one another and quivering throughout their whole length, but receding only for an instant, to shut more closely again. It was as if from the hot sands of Africa invisible arms were put forth, enfolding Europe in their grasp, and trying to join their hands to give paganizing Christendom a fearful and mortal compression. There were struggles and resistances, but the portentous hands clasped at last. Historically we call the pressure that was then made the Reformation.^[1]

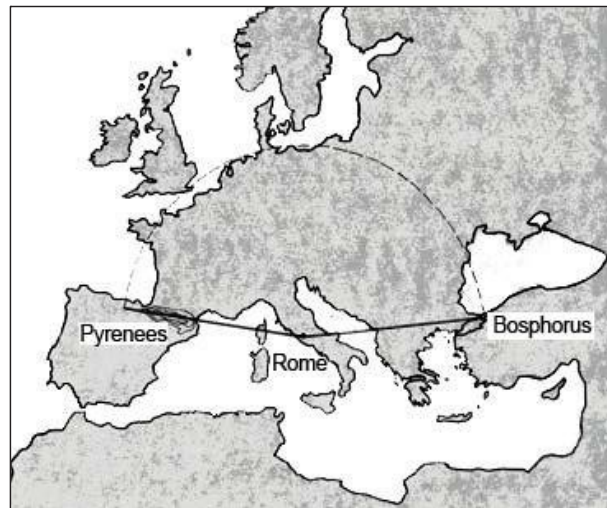


Fig. 11 Islamic Influence on Europe

To the west by intellectual force:

In the early ages of Islam the peoples of Europe acquired the sciences and arts of civilization from Islam as practiced by the inhabitants of Andalusia (southern Spain). A careful and thorough investigation of the historical record will establish the fact that the major part of the civilization of Europe is derived from Islam; for all the writings of Muslim scholars and divines

[1] John W. Draper, *The Intellectual Development of Europe*, Harper and Brothers, 1905 edition, pp.1-2.

and philosophers were gradually collected in Europe and were with the most painstaking care weighed and debated at academic gatherings and in the centers of learning, after which their valued contents would be put to use. Today, numerous copies of the works of Muslim scholars which are not to be found in Islamic countries, are available in the libraries of Europe. Furthermore, the laws and principles current in all European countries are derived to a considerable degree and indeed virtually in their entirety from the works on jurisprudence and the legal decision of Muslim theologians.¹⁰

Those European intellectuals who are well-informed as to the facts of Europe's past, and are characterized by truthfulness and a sense of justice, unanimously acknowledge that in every particular the basic elements of their civilization are derived from Islam.

...the author (Draper) shows how the totality of Europe's civilization - its laws, principles, institutions, its sciences, philosophies, varied learning, its civilized manners and customs, its literature, art and industry, its organization, its discipline, its behavior, its commendable character traits, and even many of the words current in the French language, derives from the Arabs. One by one, he investigates each of these elements in detail, even giving the period when each was brought over from Islam. He describes as well the arrival of the Arabs in the West, in what is now Spain, and how in a short time they established a well-developed civilization there, and to what a high degree of excellence their administrative system and scholarship attained, and how solidly founded and well regulated were their schools and colleges, where sciences and philosophy, arts and crafts, were taught; what a high level of leadership they achieved in the arts of civilization and how many were the children of Europe's leading families who were sent to attend the schools of Cordova and Granada, Seville

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, *Secret of Divine Civilization*, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, p. 89.

and Toledo to acquire the sciences and arts of civilized life. He even records that a European named Gerbert came to the West and enrolled at the University of Cordova in Arab territory, studied arts and sciences there, and after his return to Europe achieved such prominence that ultimately he was elevated to the leadership of the Catholic Church and became the Pope.¹¹

To the east by military force:

The beginnings of European civilization date from the seventh century of the Muslim era. The particulars were these: toward the end of the fifth century of the hegira, the Pope or Head of Christendom set up a great hue and cry over the fact that places sacred to the Christians, such as Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth, had fallen under Muslim rule, and he stirred up the kings and the commoners of Europe to undertake what he considered a holy war. His impassioned outcry waxed so loud that all the countries of Europe responded, and crusading kings at the head of innumerable hosts passed over the Sea of Marmara and made their way to the continent of Asia. In those days the Fatimid caliphs ruled over Egypt and some countries of the West, and most of the time the kings of Syria, that is the Saljuqs, were subject to them as well. Briefly, the kings of the West with their unnumbered armies fell upon Syria and Egypt, and there was continuous warfare between the Syrian rulers and those of Europe for a period of two hundred and three years. Reinforcements were always coming in from Europe, and time and time again the Western rulers stormed and took over every castle in Syria, and as often, the kings of Islam delivered them out of their hands. Finally Saladin, in the year 693 A.H. (1315 AD), drove the European kings and their armies out of Egypt and off the Syrian

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Secret of Divine Civilization, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, Pages: 92-4.

coast. Hopelessly beaten, they went back to Europe. In the course of these wars of the Crusades, millions of human beings perished. To sum up, from 490 A.H. (1112 AD) until 693 A.H. (1315 AD), kings, commanders and other European leaders continually came and went between Egypt, Syria and the West, and when in the end they all returned home, they introduced into Europe whatever they had observed over two hundred and odd years in Muslim countries as to government, social development and learning, colleges, schools and the refinements of living. The civilization of Europe dates from that time.^[1]

Islam is a vital link between China and Europe.

Muslims take great pride in citing a hadith that says "Seek knowledge even unto China." It points to the importance of seeking knowledge, even if it meant traveling as far away as China, especially as at the time of the Prophet Muhammad, China was considered the most developed civilization of the period. Islam in China began during the caliphate of 'Uthman ibn Affan (Allayhi Rahma), the third caliph. After triumphing over the Byzantine, Romans and the Persians, 'Uthman ibn Affan, dispatched a deputation to China in 29 AH (650 C.E.), Eighteen years after the Prophet's (pbuh) death, under the leadership by Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqaas (Allayhi Rahma), Prophet Muhammad's (Salla Allahu wa Allahai wa Sallam) maternal uncle, inviting the Chinese emperor to embrace Islam.

Even before this, the Arab traders during the time of the Prophet, had already brought Islam to China, although this was not an organized effort, but merely as an offshoot of their journey along the Silk Route (land and sea route).

Even though there are only sparse records of the event in

[1] Abdu'l-Baha, Secret of Divine Civilization, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, Pages: 90-1.

Arab history, a brief one in Chinese history, The Ancient Record of the Tang Dynasty describes the landmark visit. To Chinese Muslims, this event is considered to be the birth of Islam in China. To show his admiration for Islam, the emperor Yung Wei ordered the establishment of China's first mosque. The magnificent Canton city mosque known to this day as the 'Memorial Mosque' still stands today, after fourteen centuries.

One of the first Muslim settlements in China was established in this port city. The Umayyads and Abbasids sent six delegations to China, all of which were warmly received by the Chinese.

The Muslims who immigrated to China eventually began to have a great economic impact and influence on the country. They virtually dominated the import/export business by the time of the Sung Dynasty (960 - 1279 CE). Indeed, the office of Director General of Shipping was consistently held by a Muslim during this period. Under the Ming Dynasty

(1368 - 1644 CE) generally considered to be the golden age of Islam in China, Muslims gradually became fully integrated into Han society.¹¹

[1] <http://chinese-school.net/firms.com/Muslims.html>

Closing

I am from Canada. I have lived in China for over 23 years, most of the time in Beijing. My wife, He Hong Yu, is Chinese. My children, now 13 and 18, were born and raised here and attended local schools. I made my living in China first as teacher of architectural design at Tianjin University and then as an architect in Beijing.

I am not a writer or scholar by profession, but my experience in China has moved me to try to put some of my thoughts on paper. When I first came, I caught a glimpse of an older, more traditional, and less self-assured China. I have shared with people here the transition to a much more confident and globally-aware society. The awakening of China, just as we face the challenge to create a peaceful, united world is, I think, no coincidence.

The current economic crisis is a sign of a deeper crisis of the spirit as humanity faces the challenge of its maturation. We must rise from an adolescent condition of divisiveness and move to a more adult condition of unity. From my reading of Chinese philosophy, poetry and religion, and from my experience of Chinese people, it is precisely here that China has much to offer.

The first part of this short book begins with this assertion and attempts to demonstrate it. The remainder of the book explores some aspects of maturation that all of us, including China, must traverse.

Many more aspects of maturation could be added, for example, the maturation of marriage, the maturation of the family, the maturation of education, to name just a few. Also, obviously, each area touched on here could be explored much more deeply. The thoughts shared are mainly at the level of principal; much more work

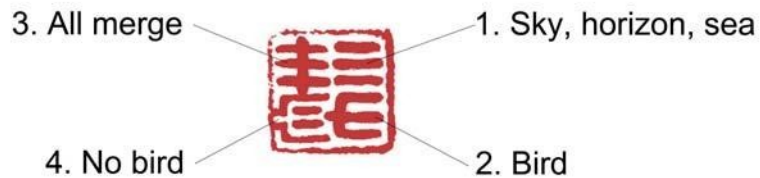
needs to be done to apply these principals to the realities of daily life. I recognize that other people may have different ideas about what principals should be applied to solve important social issues, but I hope my presentation offers some food for thought.

Last night my oldest boy, now in his first year in International Studies at Beijing University, shared with me and my wife a presentation he and others were to give the next day to the rest of their class. The topic was "Nuclear Weapons; Are they a deterrent to war?" They were asked particularly to look at the case of India and Pakistan. Their conclusion was, in a rational world, there is some logic to using WMD to inhibit mutual attacks of any kind. But, viewed from space, there are no boundaries between countries; these boundaries are man-made. From this perspective - one I think his generation shares - the use of weapons, especially nuclear weapons, to resolve international conflicts is extreme ignorance.

If young people have advanced to this level of thinking, then there is hope for this world.

Joe Carter
Beijing, China
21 March 2009

My Bird Dream



The bird stood at the edge of the ocean sniffing the breeze, gazing at the sea.

It started to fly and lifted itself into the air.

It tried to fly high, even up to the sun. Smoke started curling under its feathers and the heat became unbearable.

He turned back and dove into the sea. Bubbles streamed from under his wings as he swooped in a large arc past deep undersea creatures. Unable to breathe, he curved up to the surface.

This time, in the air, he let a breeze lift him. He glided upward without moving his wings.....Higher and higher until he had a good view of the sun, now just over the horizon.

He was moving away toward the sun, but his body enlarged. It rotated to align with the horizon, with one wing covering the sky and another covering the sea. Larger and larger he grew, and more and more transparent; the feathers of his upper wing became the rays of the sun and the feathers of his lower wing became the waves of the sea. His body grew very long and thin until it became the line of the horizon. Finally, there was no more bird.

Joe Carter

1971