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A Beautiful China

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Freedom, Justice, Love

The Symbol of an Era

What is our ideology? What is our strength? The two fundamental forces in human nature: love and fear. Totalitarian regimes promote and rely on fear. Freedom and democracy promote and rely on love.

A great nation needs core values. These values should serve as the mainstream national values to unite the hearts and minds of the people, serve as the ideal consensus for judging the merits of the governing system, and be the spiritual life of a beautiful society. What a society full of division urgently needs is consensus and direction.

The autocrats cannot find this. Their own value system is an abomination that throws together the specter of class struggle, the political scheming of imperial autocracy, and the outward rhetoric of democracy and freedom. They adopt the concepts of modern civilization, brand them as the core values of socialism, plaster them all over the streets and alleys, but never take them seriously. When used by individuals online, these “values” even become sensitive phrases, liable to be censored.

Neither can these values be found in the classic scriptures of our ancestors. Ancient China had many beautiful values, such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, faith, universal love, and non-aggression. However, the philosophers of the agricultural age did not have the concept of freedom, nor did they have the system of fairness and justice under democracy and the rule of law. As the mainstream traditional culture in China, Confucianism emphasizes hierarchical social relations centered on power and blood, where “the ruler is ruler, the minister is minister, the father is the father, the son is a son.”

The habit of instinctively looking to our ancestors whenever we think of “culture” is a painful reminder of our nation’s lack of progress. The culture of our ancestors has been in decline for the last five centuries. Tradition is our past, and those glories belong to our forefathers. We, however, cannot hope to find the guiding light for today’s human civilization in China’s distant past.

Civilization is a constant process of growth and renewal. The core values of France — liberty, equality, fraternity — were not thought up by the ancient Gauls, but were born

during the French Revolution. The core values of America — Christianity and liberalism — are not from the Native Americans, but arose over two hundred years of struggle by immigrants to the New World. Why can't 1.3 billion Chinese people create a new civilization for this era?

This great transformation is not just about ending autocracy; it is about democracy, constitutional governance, and the rebirth of civilization. To summarize our dream in one word, it is this — A Beautiful China. And if we were to describe the values of this Beautiful China, they would be these — freedom, justice, and love.

Freedom

Heaven created a world of difference. Each person is born with a different soul, talent, and environment, and perceives the world uniquely. Every individual's experience is limited, perceiving only a small part of this world. It is the display of these different souls, thoughts, and life stories that creates the most rich and beautiful world.

Living the best version of oneself in this world, experiencing a perfect world and joy, is the meaning of life. Therefore, everyone's freedom is precious. This stems from the nature of the Creator and is an eternal pursuit of humanity; as such, it is the ultimate goal of society and the state.

Freedom (自由) is autonomy. It means having control over one's own thoughts, beliefs, property, and private space. It means having control over one's own speech, actions, and public life. From community to nation, individuals participate in public affairs as masters, united on the foundation of freedom. Except for those laws necessary to uphold justice, citizens should not be subjected to coercion by others and should always be free from servitude under tyranny or the oppression of an unjust order.

Freedom is being at ease and true to oneself. A free life is rich and colorful, shedding the mental burdens imposed by class, ideology, prejudice, and hostility. It means courageously following one's brilliance, expressing oneself freely, engaging in spiritual creativity, embracing one's passions, being comfortable in one's own skin, enjoying pure happiness, living a beautiful life.

Freedom is authenticity. With no fear or oppression in their hearts, individuals do not need to wear false masks, struggle with their conscience, twist their souls, or sully their image. Nothing compels free individuals to speak or act against their will, as they live in the truth.

Freedoms are not absolute. However, this is not a reason for authoritarian power to limit human freedom arbitrarily. Humans need more than food and clothing. There is a universal value inscribed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: freedom of belief, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of association, freedom of assembly, freedom to demonstrate, freedom of movement, freedom of artistic creation... As members of the human race, we have the responsibility to defend the universal freedoms that belong to us.

The boundary of freedom is justice. It means not infringing on the freedom of others.

When the freedoms of individuals conflict, the law balances these boundaries. Behind the law is democracy, a scientific system.

Justice

We are born unequal. The differences between individuals are innate, and despite our best efforts, people will never be the same. However, in the eyes of God and in the scope of one's eternal life, these differences are so small as to be nonexistent. Therefore, it is human nature to pursue the equality that once belonged to us in the world beyond the mortal realm. In this world, we acknowledge our differences and establish systems aimed at providing equality in an unequal world.

Justice (公义) is the powerful fairness and righteousness of the nation and society. It reflects our ancestors' beautiful ideal of a harmonious society: equal opportunities, checks on the strong, protection for the weak, with everyone fulfilling their roles, each contributing according to their ability, and everyone finding their place.

There will always be differences in this world, but these need not be the differences of oppressive hierarchy. There will always be disease and suffering; the fortunate should feel gratitude for their blessings. There will always be crimes and punishments, but the foundation of responsibility lies not in hatred but in redemption.

Justice is equality. Equal opportunities for everyone, from children to adults, from education to work. A dignified life for each person, regardless of intelligence or wealth. As humans, we stand with equality and dignity before our Creator. Justice is the balance between equality of opportunity and equality of outcome.

Justice is responsibility and delineating the reasonable boundaries between individuals. Pursuing ideals starts with the individual working to uphold the moral bottom line of a good society. Pursuing freedom also means respecting others' freedom: "Do not unto others what you would not wish done unto yourself." Maintain your own personal space, but also care about the public good and the rights and dignity of strangers.

Justice is the great way of the human world, the unifier of differences. There is a natural moral law rooted in the depths of every soul, restraining the powerful and freeing the oppressed. The law of the jungle belongs to the past; the future of humanity belongs to freedom, justice, and love. There are many peaceful ways to resolve territorial disputes, much hatred rooted in conflicting beliefs that can be dissolved, and many common responsibilities must be shouldered together.

Justice is powerful. Evil must be punished to ensure justice in society to restrain the evil in human nature and to foster compassion. Authority must be restricted by institutions to guarantee freedom and equality.

Justice shall prevail in this world. Let hunger, slavery, war, and tyranny become history forever. In the new era of civilization, let humanity share a beautiful home.

Love

With freedom and justice, there must be love too for a society to be happy and beautiful.

Love (愛) includes universal love — friendship — something richer and deeper. Love is life and the source of happiness. There is familial love, the love for one's children and parents, who are one's own flesh and blood. There is romantic love, a mutual attraction and desire to become one. There is friendship, involving mutual sharing and helping. There is admiration evoking one's dreams and desires. There is compassion, the ability to empathize with others' sorrows.

Love is trust. It involves facing someone openly without guard and fear. This world has deceit, theft, murder, robbery, conflict, and war, and many other evils. But none of us are true devils. Many people have committed many wrongs, but no one acts for the purpose of doing evil. Human nature is fundamentally good, and deep within every soul is a yearning for truth, goodness, and beauty.

Love is understanding. Each of us can perceive only a small part of the world, and from this arise different systems of knowledge and value judgments. People talk about putting oneself in another's shoes, to look at things from others' perspectives, understand their knowledge and logic, and grasp why someone is angry or acts a certain way. The more we are able to understand each other, the less confusion and resentment there will be.

Love is humility. Wealth and power, as well as the differences between people, are insignificant in the eternity of space-time. The world is home to myriad things large and small, dazzling in their variety. Diamonds and charcoal are merely differing configurations of the same particles. That one enjoys favor in this life does not warrant pride. Residing on this speck of dust in the vast universe, what is there ultimately for humanity to be proud of?

Love is compassion. Life is a process, involving aging, illness, and death. Some endure more suffering: the poor, the disabled, and those born into misfortune. There are also those impoverished in spirit, tormented by jealousy, anxiety, and anger. Because of love, there is no rejection, only empathy. With love, there is no rejection, only empathy.

Love is kindness. It can be a warm smile exchanged between strangers, a serene look amidst a bustling crowd, a sincere greeting to someone down on his luck. It means holding a kind thought for everyone. This kindness is conveyed through smiles, glances, greetings, and care; it benefits oneself as well as others. The face that time carves should not show suffering and darkness, but purity and happiness.

Love is giving. Sharing wealth with the poor, sharing knowledge with those who seek it, and sharing happiness with all. Giving does not always mean losing; a sincere smile can bring happiness to others and also change one's own heart, bringing happiness to oneself.

Love your family and friends, love strangers, and even love your enemies — love

those who harbor hostility and hatred towards us. There is no innate evil, no essential wickedness. The “devil” is an imagined construct borne of ignorance and misunderstanding toward others. Only love can redeem a soul filled with rooted resentment and bitterness. To love is to view life and humanity from a higher perspective, looking back on the long river of history with a heart of compassion.

Love is not weakness. Love never betrays justice. Those who infringe upon others' freedoms must be stopped, and evil must be punished. However, punishment ordained by law is not for revenge, but redemption. Love belongs to the truly strong.

Only love can fundamentally dissolve the fear, hatred, and hostility lurking deep in people's hearts. Only then will tyranny truly come to an end.

Citizen's Spirit

This is what everyone longs for — freedom, justice, and love. Yet our society is so lacking in these.

In this land, where freedom is oppressed and destroyed, how many people have had their posts deleted, accounts banned, been "invited for tea," illegally detained, or even pursued across provinces just because of the things they said? How many films and works of art have been censored and banned?

In this land of injustice and unfairness, privilege and corrupt interests abound, leaving the powerless and hopeless in despair. Violent forced demolitions take place every day as the wealth gap widens. While enormous sums are spent on maintaining stability, the poor and infirm are still impoverished by illness; many elderly are left uncared for.

On this land, enshrouded by hatred and fear, people are cynical, wary, and calculating towards each other. Behind the facade of prosperity, there is coldness and darkness everywhere.

When a nation lacks core values and society crumbles in confusion, when a country loses direction and the powerful stifle the hope for change in the name of stability, when elites put on masks and extinguish their conscience to adapt to the savage jungle, what can we do for this country?

We are determined to start with ourselves and change our own country and society.

No matter the obstacles and hardships, we will uphold freedom, justice, and love. We give this nation new hope. These are our core values, our civic spirit.

We are free citizens, standing tall, facing our conscience honestly. This is the era in which countless citizens follow the belief in freedom. Determined to pursue justice in this life and armed with boundless love, we have no fear. We awaken the suppressed conscience, reclaiming the autonomy, dignity, and noble spirit of free individuals: Our genuine and natural selves, rich and colorful lives, a happy and beautiful society.

We are defenders of justice and defenders of universal values. We defend the freedom, rights, and dignity of every individual. We take action to resist the trampling of

freedom by tyranny, the plundering of private property, the suppression of historical facts, and the degradation of morality and rule of law.

We shall forever preserve a heart of justice in examining ourselves, others, and the history of our nation. We shall not fight lies with lies, or counter schemes with our own treachery. False “truth” shall never be used to pursue justice. Never shall we allow our hearts to be clouded in hatred and enmity.

We are emissaries of love. We love ourselves, and even in this fallen age, cherish the pure spirit, beautiful dreams, and compassionate kindness; we protect our hearts from numbness, impatience, and guilt. We love our family and friends; grateful for the blood ties and shared moments around us, we repay those who have given to and sacrificed for us. We love our compatriots who have lost their freedom in pursuit of their ideals. To help the families of prisoners of conscience is not only an act of justice, but also of love.

We love strangers. Let go of ignorance, misunderstandings, and hostility, we shall be generous, open, kind, and warm towards each other. Whether in case of sickness or disaster, be it near or far, we shall lend a helping hand to the extent of our ability; to help others is to help oneself.

We love our enemies. Every person needs and is worthy of love. Those who hate and oppose us do so out of their ignorance and narrow-mindedness. We cannot forever live in the shadow of historical wrongs. On the basis of truth and justice, we demonstrate mercy and forgiveness.

We love humanity. Each person is a life like our own, experiencing his or her own joys and sorrows; each of us harbors an inner light.

We love nature. We love every living creature and the universe’s endless diversity of creation.

Core Values of Chinese Civilization

The revival of Chinese civilization — its core values — springs from human nature. It belongs to this era and is universal to all humanity.

Being rooted in human nature is what gives these core values their enduring vitality. The pursuit of freedom, the longing for justice, the yearning for love — these most fundamental impulses drive the advance of human civilization.

Core values are not the ideology imposed by a dictatorship upon the people. They are not something invented by any individual. Instead, they are the noblest aspirations of human nature, crystallized into the most beautiful language, serving as the flag and symbol of an era, guiding the direction of a nation.

They belong to this era. Human values evolve with the progress of civilization. Each era has its own core values. To rebuild the core values of a nation, these values must adhere to the era and be rooted in the centuries of progress attained in the course of human civilization.

These values are not something already universally achieved, like the right to life — important as it is, it has been codified into law in every country. Nor are they unattainable — two hundred years ago, social welfare was a fantasy. The core values of an era, guiding the great transformations of a nation, are the universal desires of *this particular era* — not distant ideals, but accessible and attainable.

It is universal to all humanity. Every nation has its own traditional imprint, expressed in different customs and cultures. Those ideas and systems that exhibit the greatest vitality and gain the widest currency become universal values. With a broad vision for the future, we shape the core values of our nation with an open heart; we aim to create a new era of civilization, common to all humanity.

What this era desires, what is universal to humanity, is a value system characterized by freedom, justice, and love that is strong, inclusive, and internally cohesive.

It is a tapestry crystallized with the most beautiful language into a community of core values, forming the ideal of a better society. Freedom is about the individual, liberated from bondage and fear, living autonomously, authentically, and freely. Justice is for the nation and society, the fairness and justice of this life on earth, the reasonable boundaries and responsibilities between people, the purpose of democracy and the rule of law, and the standard of governance. Love is life, the source of happiness, and provides freedom and justice with a solid foundation.

Maximum individual freedom includes freedom of belief, expression, and political participation. Maximum fairness and justice for the majority mean equality before the law, constraints on the powerful, protection for the weak, everyone fulfilling their roles and capacities, and everyone getting what they deserve. The happiest society is the one with the fewest barriers and the least resentment, the least misunderstanding and harm — a society in which everyone loves his fellow man. This is our ideal, as well as the ideal of humankind.

It is the system and life of the world we are living in now, which has a foundation that transcends human nature.

Humans inevitably ask about the meaning of life. Every civilization must answer the questions of where people come from and where they are going. The core values of a nation inevitably include philosophical thought that reaches beyond this world.

Love has a profound faith-based foundation. With the discoveries of human science over the past three hundred years, we seek to understand the roots of life in the most micro world. Walking along the path of reason and science, we will see God at the end — our ultimate spiritual home. With scientific systems, new knowledge, and new faith, we shall see the rebirth of an ancient civilization.

It is the exploration and practice of "our generation of Chinese people." Core values are derived from practice. When the raised banner becomes a universal belief in the historical transformation, creating good systems and cultures that are enough to be a model for humanity, values will be universally recognized.

With 1.3 billion people working collectively to create a society with the least enmity and division — a world full of love, this is the ideal life for humankind. Such a China shall make the greatest contribution to humanity.

In a country that has seen thousands of years of authoritarianism and corruption, in a society steeped in enmity, the people's yearning for freedom, justice, and love is boundless. This fervent longing converges into a vast historical trend, breaking through the dam of authoritarianism, cleansing the darkness of the soul, and bearing witness to our China of freedom, justice, and love.

Freedom, justice, and love, through the struggle of our generation of Chinese people, are becoming a new national spirit, leaving a deep imprint on Chinese civilization. In an era when hearts are scattered, our nation is gathering under this banner, and in the long river of history, it shall become an enduring symbol of this era, flying high into the ages.