

A THEORETICAL MODEL OF GLOBAL VALUE OF HARMONY

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Abstract: We have enjoyed the material happiness that the market economy has brought to us and also suffered and will continue suffering its evil consequence, which would lead the mankind to the edge of world crisis unless we rethink of and rebuild our basic values of existence. Based on the harmony teachings and doctrines developed by Lao-tzu, Confucius, Aristotle, Siddhartha Gautama, and Adam Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments, together with Schwartz's value theory, this paper moulded a theoretical model of the global value of harmony. Within the four-dimensional structure of personal harmony, social harmony, cultural harmony and harmony between man and nature, some universal principles as Doctrine of the Mean and Reciprocity, as well as Impartial Spectators are employed to balance the extreme values of humans.

Keywords: cultural harmony, global value, harmony between man and nature, personal/spiritual harmony, social harmony

WHY WE NEED A GLOBAL VALUE OF HARMONY?

The "Half-built Structure" of Market Economy System

The direct reason for the pressing demand of a global value of harmony is the present economic system which is widely accepted as capitalism or the free market economy. For the past decades, Capitalist system has brought to us the great economic development and in the meantime, serious crisis as well, such as financial crisis, ecological disasters, environmental and peace problems etc. Therefore, some scholars call this theoretical framework "a half-built structure"—one that prevents Adam Smith's "invisible hand" from operating as he

believed it should.^[2] As is known to all, wealth and virtues stand as twin symbols of an economy or a society. However, we have only chosen half of Smith's message by taking his idea of *Wealth of Nations* (WN) while disregarding that of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (TMS), of which the latter could have provided the foundation for the former, missing half of the market — the half of the market that caters to the social consciousness of the people.^[3]

According to Smithian theory, in the free market economy, Self-interest is the nature of man, which has both selfish and selfless dimensions. One dimension carries out people's free will and the other implements the moral control. However, the world has interpreted "self-interest" as equal to profit maximization and makes people as one-dimensional beings, while the *impartial spectator* as what Smith described in *TMS*, the representative of justice is left out of the virtue. As a result, people lose their Self-control driven by the conscience, and make every free effort to gain profit in order to satisfy their endless needs, even if sacrifice the environment or the interests of others. Therefore, if the altruistic motivation that exists in people could be brought into the business world, there would be very few problems that we could not solve.^[4] If we could bring a virtue oriented value to the market and make up the missing moral dimension for the "half-built structure", the market economy would be what it ought to as Adam Smith had originally expected.

The imbalance in the globalized world

As noted above, the imperfection of the free market economy system leads to the great imbalance, such as worsening unemployment, social and economic

inequality, the corruption of society, the economic crimes, the reduced social benefits and welfare, the worsening ecological degradation, the anti-social attitudes and emotions, and the periodic economic crises etc.^[5] These imbalance, especially the huge gap between the rich and the poor or the strong and the weak, further causes peace problems under the wild expansion culture of values. The obvious consequence of the above imbalance can be found in the recent Wall Street financial crisis, Greece and Italy debt crisis, as well as the frequent wars between terrorism and anti-terrorism wars across nations in the past decade.

Since globalization has brought the world to one community, any problems happen any where on this globe is no longer local, or regional and national, but global or international. What we do in one part of the world has a direct impact on another. We are now connected and interdependent in an unprecedented way.^[6] Thus we can draw the following conclusions: (1) The world sustainability is not the duty and responsibility of certain people or certain country, but also every individual, every group and every organization living in this global community. (2) Any kind of terrorism or imperialism not only put themselves in danger, but also slow down the process of the world harmony civilization and (3) Harmony including personal harmony, social harmony, cultural harmony and harmony between man and nature has become the top value above everything else regardless of any countries or any economic and social systems.

The global desire for harmony

The value of harmony was proclaimed in the most ancient civilizations of Egypt, India, Mexico, Africa, China, Greece, and many others. Harmony is an entirely human concept, for which there is evidence in every century of human history and accepted by all cultures, all peoples, groups, cultures, and religions.^[7] For instance, Hindus view it as a sum of duty: "do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you" (Mahabharata 5: 1517); Christianity: "Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Luke 6:3); Islam: No one of you is a believer until he desires for others what he desires for himself; Buddhism: Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful; Judaism: What is hateful to you, do not to your fellow men; Zoroastrianism: That nature alone is good which refrains from doing unto others whatever is not good for itself; and Daoism: Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain, and your neighbor's loss as your own loss etc.^[8] All of these values and norms could be summed up by the principle known as the "Golden Rule": Do not do to others as you would not have them do to you." Or in

the positive: "Treat others as you would expect to be treated."

The basis for a Global Ethic, as Kung (2001) stated, is shared by people of all great religions, ethical traditions and countries with different social and economic systems.^[9] As early as 1950s, China, India and some other developing countries initiated the Five Principles of Diplomacy as mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence; The proposal of building "a harmonious world" was first put forward by Chinese President Hu Jintao (2005) when he addressed the UN Summit marking the 60th anniversary of the world;^[10] President Obama's speech (2009) in Prague about the great American initiative of nuclear zero, the idea of global harmony received a powerful transformative impulse from being an important, but marginal, cultural fact to becoming a preferred value for modern humanity;^[11] The European Union itself could be a good example of harmony: unity in diversity. Further more, a number of NGOs and volunteers have been making great efforts in various international programs at the global goal of harmony, such as The Global Harmony Association located in Russia, The Global Harmony Foundation in Switzerland, Civitatis International in London, First Peoples Worldwide in the US etc.

All the above facts indicate the clear awareness of the present world crisis and intense human aspiration for sustainable existence and development on this globe: the pressing needs of global harmony.

WHAT IS THE GLOBAL VALUE OF HARMONY?

Chinese traditional Culture As a Basic Reference

According to Wikipedia, the word "harmony" derives from the Greek *harmonía*, meaning "joint, agreement, concord"; from the verb *harmoza*, meaning "to fit together, to join"; while in Hyperdictionary, it means (1) The just adaptation of parts to each other... as to produce unity of effect; as, the harmony of the universe; (2) Concord or agreement in facts, opinions, manners, interests, etc.; good correspondence; peace and friendship; as, good citizens live in harmony; Harmony in Chinese is pronounced as *Hexie*, indicating "that everything plays its role, follows certain rules, cooperates with each other and responds to each other; as a verb, indicating to make the family, society, nation and the world harmonious. The term *Hexie* is regarded as the top value of Humans. Confucius defines *Hexie* as *harmony but not sameness*. Buddhism regard it as *the spiritual harmony and compatibility*; For Daoism, *Hexie* is a universal value as what is called *the unity of heaven and man*, including

personal harmony, social harmony and the harmony between man and nature.

Leo Semashko, the founder of The Global Harmony Association (2007) stated that we can and should make human destiny harmonious, and elaborated the principles of harmony as *steps to individual harmony and as strategies to social harmony*, including (1) Know the four basic conditions for harmony: people, their diversity, unity, and mutual consent. (2) Understand the importance of tolerance in conflict and enmity. (3) Comprehend the necessity of limiting extreme desires. (4) Realize that redefining and reestablishing standard measure is a constant task in a harmonious society. (5) Recognize that consent is the conscious and mutual acknowledgement of a standard measure for harmony. (6) Appreciate consent as the key attribute of social harmony that can eliminate conflict and the rationale for war. (7) Believe that consent requires a harmonious peace culture of love, cooperation, dignity, protection of nature and mutual care. (8) Achieve conscious consent and be committed to the value of harmony as a way of life. [12]

Yu Jun (2006) stated that the notion of world harmony is rooted in the time-honored Chinese culture. Harmony, as in the age-old saying "harmony in diversity," is an essential concept in Chinese morality of the past thousands of years. The idea here is that social harmony can be realized by recognizing differences, disparities and varieties. For the Chinese, harmony is the key to self-cultivation and the handling of general affairs. [13] Feng Zhijun (2008) stated, "Harmony" is a precious cultural heritage of China...first, diversity and, second, balance and "arriving at the same destination by different routes, reaching unanimity after taking many things into consideration". When "harmony" is used in interpersonal relations, "magnanimity will win over the public"; When "harmony" is used in politics, then there can be "logical administration and harmonious people"; When "harmony" is used in personal life, "*Doctrine of the Mean* will be a proper constrain of people's aspiration for wealth, power or resource etc"; "Harmony" we use in diplomacy can "make all nations live together in peace"; When "harmony" is used in the relations between Man and Nature, then "each of them can live in peace respectively and can accomplish something through respective support". [14]

Wanxian Li (2010) noted that the Chinese traditional culture was scientifically syncretized of Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism. Each of them have their own view of the world and their own principles: Confucianism created the doctrine of interpersonal relationship to keep the social harmony; Daoism discovered the discipline for the harmony between

man and nature; and Buddhism (originally from India) introduced the sutras for the personal or spiritual harmony of humans.⁴ In spite of their different opinions toward the humans and the universe, they seldom exclude or disparage each other, instead, they respect and even learn from each other to improve their own teachings, and lived harmoniously for over two thousand years. The three teachings are all widely accepted by Chinese people as guidelines for their work and life. Therefore, they were also called *Three Teachings-in-One* in Chinese history to express the unique culture of harmony: unity in diversity. [15]

Therefore, instead of creating a new structure and dimensions of harmony, this paper choose Chinese traditional culture as the base of the structure of global harmony. The fundamental reason is based on two facts. One is that the Chinese traditional culture places *harmony* as its utmost goal for both people and the society, together with all the above harmony principles included. The other fact is that Chinese traditional culture is the only culture in the world continuously lasting over two thousand years and till now still functioning in China that covers one-third of the world population. This unique feature shows that it could be a good reference to world harmony and sustainability.

In view of historical heritage and harmony of both humans and societies, as well as the harmony between man and nature, we employ the three kinds of harmonies that Buddhists, Confucians and Daoists respectively pursued in Chinese traditional culture, namely personal (or spiritual) harmony, social harmony and harmony between man and nature as the three basic dimensions of global harmony.

Culture As A key Dimension of World Harmony.

According to the recent theories of sustainability, many scholars considered culture as an important dimension of sustainability. As Darlow (1996) defined: Sustainability is fundamentally about adapting to a new ethic of living on the planet and creating a more equitable and just society through the fair distribution of social goods and resources in the world. [16] Kari Karanko (1991) considered cultural Cooperation as a dimension of development cooperation and stated that it is culture that determines our spiritual, material, intellectual, civil and emotional features and the very direction and type of development and civilization. [17] Nancy Duxbury and Eileen Gillette (2007) stated that Culture is gradually emerging out of the realm of social sustainability and being recognized as having a separate, distinct, and integral role in sustainable development. Within the sustainability field, culture is discussed in terms of cultural capital, defined as traditions and values, heritage and place, the arts, diversity and social history. (Roseland et al., 2005, p. 12). [18] Jon Hawkes

(2001) viewed culture as The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: incorporates four interlinked dimensions: environmental responsibility, economic health, social equity, and cultural vitality.^[19] And most recently, Leo Semashko (2011) published his book *The ABC of Harmony* as the first world textbook on the theory of global social harmony and harmonious civilization with its main goal "for world peace, harmonious civilization and tetraet thinking", which demonstrates that the ethics of conscious harmonization of thinking of different people from different cultures is the basis for human non-violent will to harmony.^[20] Gordon Wang (2011) advocates in his book *On the Culture of Harmony*, how the globalization of economy and information calls for the dominance of the Culture of Harmony, which should be used to correct human bias, establish core values, lead human spirits, and expedite borderless unions.^[21]

At the sustainability and the world harmony point of view, culture is included as the fourth dimension of the global value of harmony. Among the four dimensions, personal harmony or spiritual harmony of humans provides the base for the other three dimensions. According to Confucius (551-479 BC), "To put the world in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order, we must put the family in order; to put the family in order, we must cultivate our personal life; and to cultivate our personal life, we must first set our hearts straight."^[22] According to the Buddhists, our spiritual world is like the earth. Jin Ding (2009) stated: "Before it gets destroyed, it needs to be well prevented and protected. After being polluted, it needs to be kept clean and well maintained. The harmony of country, society, and world derives from the environmentalism of the individual mind. Harmony starts from a small group"... "When one possesses an altruistic, grateful, merciful, non-oppositional, and non-conflict mind, there will be no violence in the family, no conflict in society, and no invasion among countries. Then the harmonious circumstance will be steadily expanded to the whole world".^[23]

In order to show the characteristics of integraty, compatibility and systematicness of the global harmony structure, we made it a diagram of triangular pyramid as shown in Figure 1. The pyramid harmony system indicates: (a) Personal harmony (ΔABC) at the bottom as the base of the value system, or a starting point toward the whole structure of global harmony; (b) the other three dimensions respectively located on each side of the triangular pyramid, namely harmony between man and nature (ΔACD); social harmony(ΔBCD) and culture hamony(ΔABD), jointly form the global harmony; (c) the pyramid sysetem shows the close relationship among the four dimensions. On one

hand, any one of the four dimensions is absent or incomplete, the whole harmony system will not be perfect. On the other hand, the four dimensions also restrict and promote one another i.e. if personal and social harmony are complete, the harmony between man and nature will be promoted. However, in reality, the four dimensions could be raltively separated from one another, for in some certain situations, each dimension can be indpendently exist. For example, the monks and nuns in eastern countries live "out-of-world", they could only pursue their personal harmony or the harmony between man and nature, without or less caring about the society. On the contrary, the people live "in-world" could only pursue their personal material aspiration without caring about the social harmony and the harmony between man and nature, and as a result, the global crisis will happen as what we are facing today.

HOW TO ACTUALIZE THE GLOBAL VALUE OF HARMONY?

The Dimensions of Values

Schwartz (1992) views values as goals, and explains that defining values as goals supports the argument that values serve the interest of a social entity, an individual, and/or a group.^[24] He further explained that values represent responses to three universal requirements: individuals' needs as biological organisms, requisites of coordinated social interaction, and requirements for the smooth functioning and survival of groups. The crucial content aspect that distinguishes values from each other is the type of motivational goals they express.^[25] Schwartz (1994a) summarize the main features of the conception of basic values implicit in the writings of many theorists and researchers as ten basic values:^[26] (a)

Self-Direction

Independent thought and action; choosing, creating, exploring.

Stimulation

Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.

Hedonism

Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself.

Achievement

Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.

Power

Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.

Security

Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.

Conformity

Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms.

Tradition

Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self.

Benevolence

Preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact (the 'in-group').

Universalism

Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.

According to Schwartz (1994a), the above ten items of values have dynamic relation among them. Actions in pursuit of any value have psychological, practical, and social consequences that may conflict or may be congruent with the pursuit of other values. This structure can be summarized with two orthogonal dimensions. Self-enhancement vs. self-Transcendence: On this dimension, power and achievement values oppose universalism and benevolence values. Both of the former emphasize pursuit of self-interests, whereas both of the latter involve concern for the welfare and interests of others. Openness to change vs. conservation: On this dimension, self-direction and stimulation values oppose security, conformity and tradition values. Both of the former emphasize independent action, thought and feeling and readiness for new experience, whereas all of the latter emphasize self-restriction, order and resistance to change. Hedonism shares elements of both openness and self-enhancement.^[26] Each of the above two dimensions of values are extremes of human preference. To conduct a proper behavior, one needs to find a balance between the two extreme values.

THE UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES**The impartial spectator**

For the balance of thinking or behavior, Adam Smith introduced a special role as what he called the *impartial spectator* (later in this paper we call it "spectator) in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, a third

sense of 'justice', "holding justice within itself the perfection of every sort of virtue" that balance the moral conflicts and the extreme values derived by human nature eg. Selfish and selfless aspirations (TMS II. 2.1).

The concept of the spectator is the central to Smith's moral philosophy. Smith stresses even more that the spectator is a creation of imagination. He stated that *self-examination requires an ability to divide ourselves: Whenever I endeavor to examine my own conduct ... I divide myself as it were into two persons: and that I, the examiner and judge, represent a different character from that other I, the person whose conduct is examined into and judged of. The first is the spectator... The second is the agent...* (TMS III. 1.6).

Raphael (2007) stated: "Smith explains how we come to make these judgments from the point of view of a spectator. When I, as a spectator, judge the feelings and actions of another, I first imagine what feelings would prompt me to act were I in the agent's shoes. I then compare my feelings with the feelings that motivate the agent. I sympathize with the agent if my feelings are the same as his. This gives rise to my approval and the judgment that his motive and action are proper. However, if my feelings differ from the agent's, I disapprove and judge his feelings and conduct to be improper. In this case, I don't empathize with the agent."^[27]

Smithian Impartial Spectator theory provided us a value-balancing mechanism which could lead people, if well-implemented, to the proper thinking and behavior. However, in practice, we need more than just the "propriety", especially some standards or criteria for people to follow.

Doctrine of the Mean

Contrast Smith's view with that of Confucius, who holds that the appropriate response is the mean. He provides an explanation for why the mean is the appropriate response: it is appropriate because it enables human beings to function. In James Legge's translation and understanding (1893) of the *Doctrine of the Mean*, the goal is to maintain balance and harmony from directing the mind to a state of constant equilibrium and stick to it.^[28] In the view of Confucius, the "Mean" has two levels: When joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure have not yet arisen, it is called the Mean (中-centrality, equilibrium). When they arise to their appropriate levels, it is called "和-harmony". The Mean is the great root of all-under-heaven. "Harmony" is the penetration of the Way through all-under-heaven. When the Mean and Harmony are actualized, Heaven and Earth are in their proper positions, and the myriad things are nourished.^[29]

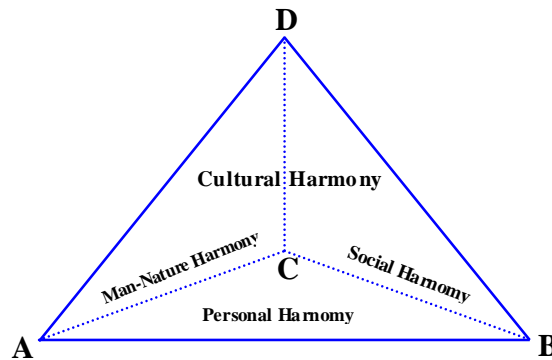


Figure 1: The structure of global value of harmony

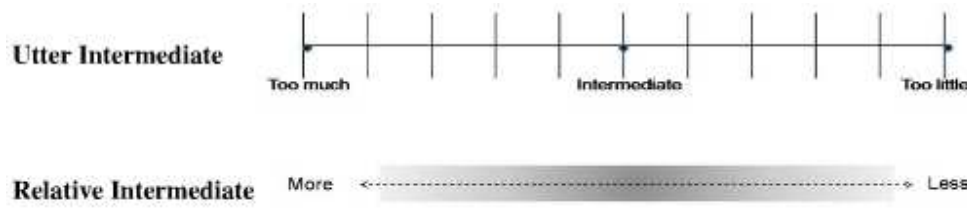


Figure 2: Diagram of Aristotale’s Doctrine of Mean

<u>Vice of Deficiency</u>	<u>Virtue of the Mean</u>	<u>Vice of Excess</u>
1. Aloofness	Friendliness	Obsequiousness
2. Cowardice	Courage	Rashness
3. Undue Humility	Proper Pride	Empty Vanity

Figure 3: Aristotle's Golden Mean

With the similar idea of Confucius, Aristotle (384-332 BC) more concisely and operationally defined his “Golden Mean” as the virtue or excellence which can be simply defined as an arithmetic mean between the two extremes of excess and defect (i.e., too much or too little), in which there’s an uttered intermediate in the middle, while the exact mean between the two extremes is relative to the individual and his circumstances, together with a relative intermediate as shown in Figure 3.

Christopher Lotito (2002) argued that If we take Aristotle's Golden Mean seriously, it would imply that the right act would be a mean between the extremes of *too good* and *too bad*. To attain virtue, excellence, and happiness, one must find the proper

means through experience and practical reason. The example as follows is shown in Figure 3.

Reciprocity

As noted above, reciprocity is kown and practised as the universal “Golden Rule” of bilateral communication and interaction. It was also recognized as a global ethic in the “Declaration Toward a Global Ethic” signed at the Parliament of the World's Religions gathering in 1993 by more than 200 leaders from over 40 different faith traditions and spiritual communities, which declares the commitment to a culture of non-violence and respect for life, of solidarity and a just economic order, of tolerance and a life of truthfulness and of equal rights and partnership between men and women.^[31]

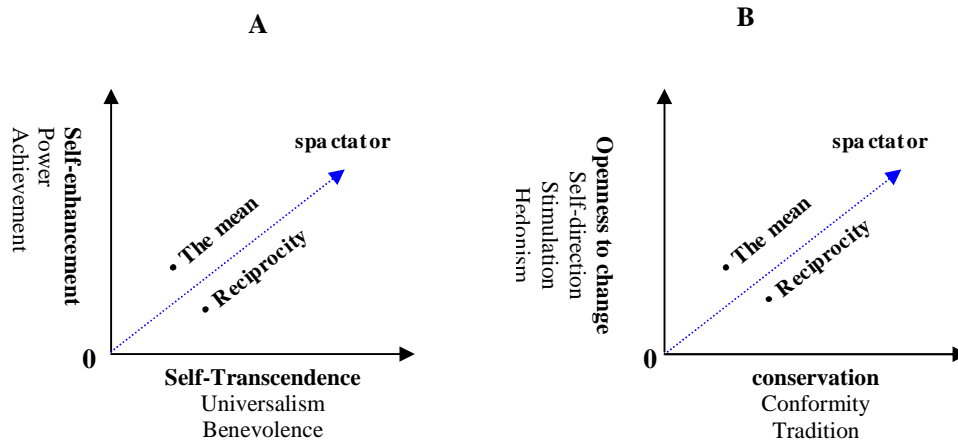


Figure 4: Diagram of Value Balance Principle

According to Marshall Sahlins (1972), there are three types of reciprocity: Generalized reciprocity is the exchange of goods and services without keeping track of their exact value, but often with the expectation that their value will balance out over time; Balanced or Symmetrical reciprocity occurs when someone gives to someone else, expecting a fair and tangible return - at a specified amount, time and place, and Moral reciprocity refers to the general tendency of humans (and, some argue, other animals) to reciprocate both assistance and harm in relation to the subjective interpretation of that assistance or harm as moral or immoral.^[32]

Reciprocity originally derived from social interaction and to a larger extent it was a "moral" term. However, since the second half of the 20th century, research on reciprocity has been mostly directed to economic exchanges and individual's utility maximization such as the "non-cooperative" game theory etc. In fact, there's something more important to focus on reciprocity. According to Daoism, reciprocity principle functions far more than that in human society. To some extent, it works in the whole universe. Besides, there are many examples demonstrated in western literatures, such as Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911) depicted the reciprocal relationship between man and nature in his famous book *The Secret Garden*.^[33] Mark Dowie (2009) wrote in his book *Conservation Refugees*, "indigenous cultures ...continue to see themselves and their cultures, as they always have, deeply

embedded in nature, and nature even more deeply embedded in themselves and their culture."^[34]

Just as the First Peoples Worldwide advocates "...Indigenous Peoples participate in a process of "cultural-ecological reciprocity" that could not be further from the domineering, man-against-nature model. Nor could cultural-ecological reciprocity be more central, more sensible, to the restoration of our planetary habitat in times of climate change and environmental degradation."^[35]

Thus, the conclusion could be drawn: as a universal principle, reciprocity not only contributes in forming social harmony, cultural harmony and also works in the balance of contradictions between man and nature.

THE BALANCE OF EXTREME VALUES

According to Schwartz (1994a) there are two dimensions of human values: Self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence and Openness to change vs. conservation. The former includes two dichotomies: power and achievement values oppose universalism and benevolence values, and the latter covers three dichotomies: self-direction, stimulation and hedonism values oppose security, conformity and tradition values. In order to disclose the inner mechanism of the value balancing principles, we put each dimension as well as their subordinating dichotomies of values in the rectangular coordinate system, with the horizontal dimension representing respectively Self-transcendence and Conservation, and the vertical

dimension respectively representing Self-enhancement and Openness to change, and the crosspoint “0” representing the original harmony of values as shown in Figure 4 (A) and Figure 4 (B). We introduce the angular bisector starting from the crosspoint “0” as the “Impartial spectator” that Adam Smith named in his book *TMS*. As any of the dichotomy values grows, the “spectator” will carry out his duty of balance according to the principle of the Doctrine of Mean and Reciprocity. Therefore, the “spectator” always keep the dichotomy values around the angular bisector so as to prevent any one of the two values from going extreme, and keeping them compatible and harmonious.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

At the sustainable point of view, we proposed the the theoretical diagram of Global Harmony with its four dimensions: personal harmony, social harmony, culture harmony and harmony between man and nature. However, to actualize the global harmony or any of its dimensions requires implementing the universal principles such as Doctrine of the Mean, Reciprocity as well as the introduction of the Impartial Spectator. In fact, to complete the modle of Global Harmony has much to do in the future. First, the theoretical model of the globe harmony is, after all, a simple and elementary idea generated from the teachings and works of ancient and modern great thinkers and theorists, as well as the author’s personal observation and experience. Its scientificity and utility still requres theoretical examination and empirical demonstration. Second, the terms put forward in this paper, such as personal harmony, spiritual harmony, social harmony and cultural harmony, as well as the harmony bewteen man and nature still call for elaboration and conceptualization. Third, as the global value of harmony, it should be universally identified and interculturally accepted. However, as facing the pressing demand for the human value transition for the rescue of the world crisis, this paper is written in an attempt to *throw a sprat to catch a whale*.

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