

# letter from the publisher

An important aspect of human nature is that people are better able to meet their own needs, realise their own potential and be happy when they cooperate and serve each other. This manifests most obviously in family life but human history, revolving around the fortunes of people gathered together in trading communities, also illustrates how people need the help and company of others to thrive. Where and when a person lives and earns their living also influences the quality of a person's life and the extent to which their unique combination of attributes and tendencies may manifest and their potentials be realised. This influence includes what nature provides and what the society of which they are a part provides, enables, or prevents. A person's attributes, tendencies and their capacity to realise their potential varies as they pass through the life cycle phases of development, growth, maturity, decline and death. How an individual, society or civilisation manages each of these phases matters since, just as the body of a healthy person is not expected grow beyond maturity, (and if it does, it usually indicates disease of some sort, for example obesity or cancer), neither should a state, community, or man-made corporation expect to grow indefinitely. Rather, a wise soul might be expected to cultivate the development and refinement of the mental and spiritual aspects of their being whilst maintaining the physical body in its best possible condition. Likewise an enlightened government responsible for the welfare of a nation, might be expected, not to seek perpetual material or economic growth, but to realise how the just distribution of sufficient material wealth is more important than size, and turn its attention to ensuring that the physical, mental, and spiritual health of all its people are well provided for.

Every person and every place is unique - no two people or places are identical. Similarly every place is better suited to some forms of human activity than to other forms and for every form, some places will be better suited than others. The *fundamental measure* of the value that a person attributes to their exclusive possession of a place is the extent to which they are prepared to give of, or exert themselves for it. Such exertion may involve violent conquest but within a monetised society it is more likely to be expressed by offering money that can be readily exchanged for an item of wealth or service. In this way, even though it is impossible to share land itself equitably, land value may be so shared. Whether or not this is done depends upon the relevant socio economic arrangements a community choses to adopt its domain. A community is most likely to thrive if those arrangements enable every able citizen to access what they need in order to earn their own living and contribute towards the wellbeing of their community. Likewise the opportunity for individuals to develop physically, mentally and spiritually is then improved. In contrast, where a community's social arrangements inhibit such access they are likely to offend their citizen's birthright and the ethical principle not to steal. If they absolutely prevent such access - the offence is murder.

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