

THE TRANSCULTURAL IDEA: GOOD AS HAPPINESS AND BAD AS PAIN

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Summary

Although the possibility of any universal value is widely denied by contemporary philosophers, one meta-theory of value stands out as a perennial answer to the question of good and evil - happiness is good and pain is bad. This essay decodes the fatal errors of this enduring idea in world philosophy, and spells out the unrecognized principles of

good pain and suffering which have been differently overlooked by Buddhist, Utilitarian, Market and Nietzschean theories. These criteria of good and evil suffering are then shown to be the underlying core of moral reason and social justice.

2.1. Happiness without Pain: The Eternal Idea across Cultures

The most ancient and enduring idea of the Good across civilizations is being happy and free from pain. This principle seems to express the desire of all sentient being, and it is first given formal recognition and argument in the *Four Noble Truths* of Shakyamuni Buddha (c.563BCE -483BCE) over 2500 years ago. These Four Noble Truths - of suffering, the cause of suffering, the negation of this cause, and the path to achieve happiness by a Middle Way - constitute the inner logic of Hindu philosophy out of which Buddhism grows as a reform movement repudiating caste, sacrifice of animals, and belief in a supernatural God. Notwithstanding these differences, the shared ultimate goal is emancipation from the pain and suffering of embodied life.

More generally, the elimination of pain and suffering is axiologically presupposed as good *across* Eastern and Western philosophies. One great difference distinguishes them. The Eastern philosophies focus on an inner or spiritual path to happiness (with notable exceptions like the materialist *Carvaka*); while non-religious Western philosophies focus on an outer and secular path - in particular, market utility gain by perpetual technological improvements and increased consumer pleasures.

2.1.1. The Market Utility Calculus

In recent decades, the global market has been the dominant mode of achieving happiness without pain. However misled its goal and method, its “marginal utility calculus” is only the received economic version of a more thoughtful and general moral theory called “Utilitarianism”, whose modern form originates with Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806-73).

The most advanced philosophical statement of this theory is provided by Mill in his work, *On Utilitarianism*, where he famously asserts: “The Greatest Happiness Principle holds that *actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce pain.*” (p. 7). He derives the general idea his theory from Bentham who first originates the concept of the original “utilitarian calculus”. It presumes to count pleasures and debit pains, but founders as a coherent moral calculus because it has no common unit of measure across individual experiences and pain-pleasure types.

The market-capitalist marginal utility theory, however, becomes the ruling answer to this problem from the end of the nineteenth century on. The *money price people are willing to pay* provides the missing common unit of measure. The nature of “the money sequence of value” in which this metric is embedded has already been critiqued in the first Chapter of this Theme Essay, *The Global Crisis of Values*. Now we turn our attention to the much wider and unexamined first major premise of value across the ages - that pain is bad.

2.1.2. Elimination of Pain: A Common Ground of Spiritual and Materialist Value Systems

A striking and fundamental difference between Eastern and Western philosophy in general is that Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian and Taoist philosophies variously proposes *negation of desire* to achieve happiness, while the dominant tendency of Western philosophy - ancient hedonism and modern utilitarianism in particular - propose the opposite path of *fulfillment of desire* to achieve happiness. Yet a deeper common ground and major premise of these otherwise opposing doctrines is not analyzed - to be rid of pain and suffering as such.

This great *via negativa* of human philosophy and common sense is so widely supposed as a natural common ground for all sentient beings that almost no school of thought ever challenges the ultimate assumption. Sometimes, as in the contemporary utilitarian philosophy of Peter Singer (1946 -), elimination of pain becomes the all-important focus in the human treatment of animals - a view whose onto-ethical paradox is defined in the *Bibliography*.

The consensual first principle across all versions of this general philosophy of life, however, is constant - that extinguishing pain is always desirable.

2.2. Moral and Non-Moral Values

At the most general level, the value objective to maximize happiness/minimize pain is simply taken for granted across moral and non-moral theories. What is the difference? While moral values imply an obligation to act or refrain from acting in certain ways, there are many values which do not tell us how to act at all, such as *aesthetic* values (for example, the sublime experience of a wilderness sunset, or Michelangelo's Sistine chapel ceiling in the Vatican). So we straightway confront a meta-issue in the pro-happiness/anti-pain idea as a *universal* theory of value.

2.2.1. The Defining Principles of Moral Doctrines

The same issue, however, applies as much to utilitarianism's main rivals - deontological or duty ethics, emotivism, contractarianism, self-realizationist and virtue ethics, and religious morality. Since morality is by its nature restricted to values which enjoin obligations, values which entail no obligation in themselves - like aesthetic value - fall outside the moral realm of value. Accordingly, a moral principle, even if true, cannot as such satisfy the quest for a universal theory of value with no limit of validity. One's duty as a utilitarian, for example, is to promote the general happiness (a consequentialist ethic); as a Kantian to will the maxim of one's action as a universal law (a deontological ethic); as a Marxist to promote the collective interests of the producing class (a self-realizationist ethic); and as a Mohammedan to submit to the established rules of Islam as the will of Allah (a religious ethic).

Yet however important these values are to their adherents, they cannot extend to values whose nature falls outside the reach of principles telling us how we ought to live. It is in this way that we come to understand how much more demanding a *general* theory of

value is. It must be more encompassing than even a universal morality - and even it is now widely thought to be unattainable.

2.3. Aesthetic Value versus Moral Value

Thinkers as polar opposite as Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), for example, consider the value of art as a freedom from the demands of any moral requirement. For Wilde and others, “art is for art’s sake”. For Kant, art expresses “a free play of the imagination”. For both, art is intrinsic value released from any function.

Although Kant and Wilde could hardly be more opposed in their philosophies, they agree as most theorists do that aesthetic value is wholly value in-itself. That is what makes it *art*, it is supposed, rather than craft, or advertisement, or ideology.

2.3.1. Distinguishing the Beautiful from the Moral

Consider in support of this position, for instance, the purely aesthetic value of hearing a movement of a Beethoven symphony, or seeing snow and ice on trees, or a Quetzal plumage in the forest. These values do not serve a function beyond themselves, and they do not tell one how to act. They are not good because they conform one’s will to one’s duty (deontological ethics) or produce happy consequences (utilitarianism or consequentialism). Their value as aesthetic experiences is to transport us to a realm beyond the obligatory or the functional - beauty and the sublime as an end in itself.

2.3.2. Towards a Synthesis of the Moral and the Aesthetic

Insofar as utilitarianism or Buddhism is a *moral* theory, then, it does what all moral theories do explicitly or implicitly: *it prescribes forms of intention/action, and punishment or guilt for failure to comply.*

That is why Mill writes in *On Utilitarianism*: “We do not call anything moral unless we mean to imply that a person ought to be punished in some or other way for doing it - - - by law, by opinion of his fellow creatures - - [or] by the reproaches of his own conscience” (p. 246). It seems odd to say one ought to have conscience pangs or be punished for bad taste, and that is why taste or aesthetic value is different from moral value. Mill’s criterion of the moral reveals the moral-aesthetic distinction well.

Therefore, the argument concludes, no maximize-happiness-and-reduce-pain moral theory, or any other moral theory, can be adequate as a general theory of the good. It is too narrow by all non-moral value it excludes. This is a feature of moral theories in the strict sense which has led many contemporaries to reject moral doctrines *per se* - as surrealist, relativist and postmodern movements have in fact done.

Conversely, aesthetic value does not cover moral value either. They are distinct realms of value, or so it is supposed. What has been long missing is a principle of *synthesis* of the moral *and* the beautiful by a deeper, unifying principle of value which covers them both and all other values as well. This is the universal axiom of all value whatever which is explained in depth in *The Primary Axiom and the Life-value Compass*.

2.4. Neoclassical Consumer Theory: Man as Pleasure Machine

It might be objected that the happiness concept of the good can itself be extended to non-moral values as a unifying principle without limit of validity. That is, it is arguable that aesthetic and other non-moral values can all be explained as species of the unifying value of happiness.

Consider, for example, market theory and practice which supposes pleasure maximization (consumerism) as the first principle of all value choice. In this globally dominant idea of the good, paying a price is *equated* to the happiness or utility received from it - the primary equation of “marginal utility theory”. Thus willingness-to-pay-the-price confers what value there is on anything and everything. This is the value doctrine of the global market.

2.4.1. Locking in Life-Blind Economics by Mathematical Formalism

Frances Edgeworth, a founder of neoclassical theory, explains in his pioneering work *Mathematical Psychics* (1881) the mechanics of this ruling paradigm in one concise sentence. “The conception of man as a pleasure machine”, he wrote, “may justify the employment of mechanical terms and mathematical reasoning in social science” (p.15). Edgeworth’s principle has since been the first major premise of method and value of modern economics

Although this mathematical mechanist version of the happiness-maximization principle is the theoretical core of neoclassical theory and contemporary economic policy, it is philosophically degenerate - a hyper-reductionist value theory which is ultimately life-blind. No other value but consumer pleasure as measured by price paid registers. Once locked into mathematical numbers and graphs without quality, such a value system can become socially disastrous as explained in other sections of this study.

2.5. Does the Value Maximize Happiness/Minimize Pain Have Unlimited Validity?

One need not be confined to the market-utility doctrine in considering the general value theory of maximization of happiness/minimization of pain. The scenic beauty of nature, for example, one could argue, is of aesthetic value *because* it produces happiness and reduces pain without any money price involved. One could say much the same of music. It is good as art so far as it releases its listeners into a state of spontaneous joy. One could also reason that love and friendship are of value insofar as they bring us happiness, and misery without them.

In this universal form, the maximize-happiness/minimize-pain principle seems to work across all regions of value. Can it be applied with unlimited validity to all value situations whatever? Certainly no other principle of value has been so enduring across East and West, ancient past and global present. From ancient Epicurean philosophy in Greek and Roman societies and the ageless Carvaka of the Indian subcontinent to the hedonist logic of neoclassical and neoliberal doctrine today, all posit pleasure as the ultimate good and pain as evil. Religions themselves, it could be argued, are all variations on the same theme - happiness/heaven conferred by God for our goodness, and pain/hell for our badness.

2.5.1. Sophisticated Utilitarianism versus Market Utilitarianism

There are differences to be sure even within the secular branches of this theory. Epicureanism and Millian utilitarianism, for example, are clear, as consumer hedonism is not, to count mental pleasure as of greater value than consumption pleasure on account of its capacity to increase pleasure through a lifetime. Under this explanation of happiness, thus, learning outperforms external entertainment for happiness gains. Perhaps no distinction is more important, but is lost within the dominant consumer ethic.

So why, given such explanatory power in its sophisticated versions, is more happiness/less pain not an ultimate and universal principle of value by which we can always live better?

2.6. The Unexplained Value: Good Pain

Consider great works of art whose composition is calculated to produce acute anguish in the viewer. One needs only to think of the grotesquely beautiful drawings of Goya, the terror-filled mural of *Guernica* by Picasso, the finalist pessimism of Thomas Hardy's novels, to recognize the thinness of any pleasure account of artistic value.

Pleasure may be a typical effect of good art, but other moods it moves us to are perfectly compatible with art's value. Indeed the value of the work may be inseparable from the fact that it makes us *feel pain* the more deeply we are impressed by it, as with all of the preceding examples.

2.6.1. Art as Liberation from Shallow Normalcy

Then too, theories of art like abstract expressionism and, of wholly different hue, the Hegelian Marxism of Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979), prize art because they claim by different arguments that it negates conventional or established lines of image and thought, liberating us into a more inclusive sensibility than experienced before.

Added pleasure quite misses the value of such horizon-expanding overthrows of what we are habituated to. Such negations of the given may in fact make us very uncomfortable or deeply unsettle us, but that does not take away from the value of the work. It may be its greatest value. Tolstoy's complexly tragic novels, Marx's excruciating imagery of denunciation, Orwell's pessimism (T.S. Eliot would not publish his *Animal Farm* when editor with Faber and Faber) - all of these works are of aesthetic value in large part because of their breaking apart our comfort zones.

2.6.2. First Glimpse of the Value of All Values

The life-value onto-axiology, in contrast, finds the value of all art alike to be, more precisely, in direct proportion to its *opening our senses or emotions to what has not been thought or felt before* - rooting the worth of art in the new range of vital experience - thought and feeling - it arises. As long as the life ranges are more inclusive than before, they are better - whether by release from standard forms of representation, repression of erotic energy, or other confining normalcy.

Here we find our first full glimpse of the life-value theory as a comprehensive onto-axiology. The artist who succeeds in opening new fields of life experience in others by the art is not merely a pleasure maker. S/he is a creator of a new world which may be fashioned by tongues of fire or explosive visual forms. The test of value is certainly not happiness production.

2.6.3. Poignant Beauty

Those who respond - “but I am filled with the art’s beauty again and again in beholding it, how can one return to the painful?” - help us to recognize that “the opening of the doors of perception”, in William Blake’s words, can timelessly recur - even if unbearably poignant.

According to this logic of aesthetic value, in other words, the value of art cannot be explained by the ruling hedonic calculus. Insofar as intensely painful art can be the most *moving*, its value contradicts the happiness principle. That is, the opposite of pleasure may occur without diminishing the value of the art, but, on the contrary, constituting its value advance.

Happiness, in short, is only one sort of experience the value of the work of art consists in among other opposed possibilities - including anguish, awe, horror. One cannot call emotional anguish a pleasure unless the meanings of concepts are disregarded.

2.6.4. Understanding Good Pain and Suffering

There are moral as well as aesthetic values which the hedonic principle cannot explain. The standard arguments against the maximize happiness/minimize pain principle come from very different quarters. For example, deontological or duty ethics argues that utilitarianism can justify morally repugnant actions like the sacrifice of the innocent to satisfy the majority. And intuitionism as argued by G.E. Moore observes that utilitarians do not recognize there is a value to consciousness *of* being happy as well as being happy.

2.6.4.1. Both these arguments are agreeable, but do not go deep enough. They do not recognize values whose good lies in what the utilitarian and almost all other value theories define as *disvalue* - the experience of pain itself.

2.6.4.2. Think, for example, of the value that the participants in combat sports or other self-breaking activities of stress or bodily blows find in the activity’s often very painful moments. *The pain they feel in these moments is inseparable from the intensity of their experience of the activity which gives value to it.*

2.6.4.3. To seek to reduce or extinguish the pain is a moral project which entails so far as it succeeds the extinction of this very value. For it is the depths of courage and exertion which the activity calls for that is experienced *as pain*, and this pain is an integral part of the most value-charged moments of both.

Without the intense discomfort that challenges the will here, what would remain of the deeply felt value of the overcoming experience itself?

2.6.5. Not the Pleasure of Masochism

It may be rejoined that it is the pleasure of the masochist which is enjoyed here. But this rebuttal is misled because the pain which is involved is not sought, as the masochist seeks pain. Rather, it is withstood and fought through, the very opposite of the masochist's submission. Both the experience and the action involve a conquest of limits, not, as with the masochist, a surrender both to the pain and the other who imposes it.

The moral agent becomes stronger by the struggle, not, as with all bad pain, including that of the masochist, weaker in life capacity.

2.7. The Wrongness of Extinguishing All Pain and Suffering

The worst pain is the felt being of actually losing one's life or life capacities, while the best is in gaining them, feeling the surge through the old limits to the other side. Once we understand this foundational, but long overlooked distinction, an obvious question arises to the utilitarian or hedonist that is nowhere posed.

How can these experiences of the felt side of becoming stronger possibly be recognized as *good* by the anti-pain theory if the goodness it bears is at the same time *painful* by its nature?

They cannot. For the pleasure/anti-pain ethic, pain can never be good. For the pleasure/anti-pain ethic, pain can never be good. It does not matter whether the ethic is Buddhist, utilitarian or epicurean. If it assumes that pain or suffering is always bad, it cannot in principle explain or recognize cases of them which are good.

Since it already presupposes that pain or suffering is bad in itself - an implicit principle of every normalized value theory that exists - it must seek to extinguish it even if it is of profound life value. Yet pain *itself* is bad to all such theories. It is *never* a good by definition. So we are incapable of telling the good from the bad in one of the most basic matters of terrestrial existence.

2.8. The Elastic Pleasure Argument as Vacuous

On both physical and psychological planes, the pain people suffer can have profound value - even although it may not have any consequence of pleasure in the long run for anyone.

Tragic art gives most clear-cut examples. He was permanently affected, we might say, by the inexpressibly deep pain he felt in his experience of Joseph Losey's film *King and Country* or Shakespeare's *King Lear*. There is no question of finding the good here in some later cessation of pain or production of pleasure, because it is precisely the pain that stays with the viewers which bears the art's tragic value. This is the good of *intensifying or deepening* experience, even if the intensification goes the opposite way of pleasure.

It is thus incoherent to think that a tragedy is of value because of the happiness or pleasure it produces, when what maintains the value of the tragic is the power it bears to make one

feel deeply sad, to “break one’s heart”.

2.8.1. The Elastic Pleasure Argument as a Vacuous Circle

A standard form of argument here retreats to what we may call “the elastic pleasure argument”. It claims that the heart-breaking experience is itself just another form of pleasure. Yet the value of such an experience can only be conceived as pleasure if the concept has been made vacuous so that it is consistent with anything at all.

We only see the disorder of such thinking when we press for a meaning which does not allow moving around in an empty circle of words. In such cases, the concept of “pleasure” or “happiness” becomes absurd as well as circular because it admits its opposite as a case of it.

2.9. The Criterion of Good Pain and Suffering

One might object that here that the pain in cases of art is not real pain, and the anti-pain theorist’s concern is with *real* pain. Aesthetic pain, one could argue, as Aristotle famously argues in *The Poetics*, may be *cathartic* by its not being real, but only represented in art.

For this more complex standpoint, real pain is to be eliminated, and fictive pain is one way to do it.

2.9.1. Breaking Through: What Sports, Nietzsche and Zen Have in Common

Pain can be real, reply the martial artists and self-breakers, and still be valuable for the person - that is, to put the matter in formal principle, *pain is good which is intrinsic to the experience of surpassing prior limits of life capacity*. The pain is the felt side of going through them.

This position is not just implied by the martial arts and many sports in which this is what happens with no principled understanding of it. It is also the inner logic of poetic utterances by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), although he does penetrate the distinction between good and bad pain. The idea is most graphically evident in the practice of the student-beating teachers of Zen in Japanese culture, but even here the crucial distinction of principle is lacking. Zen masters’ tireless imposition of pain on aspirants to enlightenment is legendary, but curiously undiscussed *as* preventable pain by anyone. Nor is there any philosophical resource in this tradition to distinguish between good and bad pain imposition - as in bullying lower-rank people versus illuminating consciousness.

We may resolve this problem by explaining that good pain is what is felt as a spur to overcome limiting conditions rather than submit to them. It is good in principle insofar as it is the interiority of contesting normalized limits to enable more comprehensive being.

2.9.2. The Underlying Principle of Good Pain across Cultures

Very different and even explicitly opposed views and traditions - Zen and Nietzsche,

aesthetic perfectionism and warrior sports - have a deep common ground here which is none of these schools of thought spells out. They all affirm the pain which is felt in the seeking to break through settled forms of being, experience and thought. Yet none explains the principle of its value.

The unexplored field of value here widens when one considers the less exotic and familiar concept of “growing pains” - what all go through in finding the wider life space and form than the past given. Yet here too, the everyday concept lacks the principled ground of meaning to distinguish what is said to be “growing”, but is not, and what is truly enabling heightened life capacities.

2.9.3. Knowing the Meaning of Good Pain in Reality and Art

In all these diverse cases, an unstated principle of suffering as value is implied, but with no moral criterion. Yet without the criterion, any suffering at all can be thought good - as in the works of Friedrich Nietzsche. He indiscriminately affirms of pain and suffering, just as the religions he despises fall into it in a opposed way - as God’s will which must ultimately be good.

With the italicized principle of good pain above, however, understanding is able to steer between these extremes. Pain and suffering are only good when they are the interior side of life overcoming past barriers to life capacity - often a choice within the pain and suffering itself. Pain and suffering are thus sites of profound value meaning. But pain and suffering can only be good pain if they are the felt side of this life capacitation. That is, as the narrower shell of being is broken past to make room for the more comprehensive life powers displacing it, it is *felt as pain*. Conversely, if pain is not the felt side of life-enabling experience, its suffering is bad. This very important, indeed life-and-death distinction, is not recognized.

2.10. Overcoming Polar Confusions about Pain and Suffering

What is clear against the happiness-and-reduction-of-pain theory is that pain and suffering are not necessarily bad at all, but can be good *if* they satisfy the life-capacitation principle. What is in common among all the cases which so qualify is that each is the felt experience of overcoming of past limits of being. What is inherently good is that the pain or suffering is intrinsic to the transition to a more coherently inclusive compass of being. Again here, we glimpse the light of the life-value principle which has been so long obscured.

Much pain and suffering qualifies as good under this principle, or *can be made to do so* by the chosen way of the sufferer - as in the case of learning from painful errors or even tragic events. The pain is not extinguished or avoided. It is activated as the felt side of transforming to a wider or deeper life bearing - transformative horizons of possibility which have been little understood in principle, and to which this analysis will return.

2.10.1. Conventionalized Pathological Pains a Major World Problem

Conversely, valuing pain and suffering which is life-disabling is pathological - indeed a

widespread and conventionalized pathology. Accepted religious and ritual practices are often pre-consciously pathological in this way - after all, the distinction is not known. Political movements left and right may glorify pain in the name of achieving a better state of affairs even when it demonstrably destroys and incapacitates people's lives. All these forms of pain and suffering are vicious to the extent they disable people's lives, and mendacious so far as they do so in the name of higher forms of existence - a recurrent pathological streak of history as well as everyday authority, of religious as well as anti-religious doctrines of value.

Herein lies one of the deep problems of the world which neither moral nor social and political philosophy have sorted out even at the most original levels.

2.10.2. Nietzsche's Self-Contradiction

A philosophically challenging case is that of Friedrich Nietzsche. In virtually all his work, he derides the comforts and habits of the herd and their leaders, and glories in the anguishes that the *Übermensch* and others experience in the realization of "the will to power".

Nietzsche affirms the ethics of the predator, but is misunderstood by himself and others as affirming a 'life principle'. In general he confuses two opposed logics of value gain - the self-overcoming creativity of the artist and seer, on the one hand, and the subjugation of other life by the conquering over-man, on the other. This confusion is profound, but is not sorted out by Nietzsche or the industries of scholarship on and influenced by him. Indeed, the principled distinction between good and bad pain is not recognized by even by those who deplore the cruelty and suffering he affirms. While it is true that internal self conquest can involve much pain and suffering in opening more encompassing horizons of felt and thought life, the external overpowering and injuring of others which Nietzsche simultaneously celebrates as extending the power of "the supermen" and "the natural aristocracy" is opposite in moral meaning. It affirms the enslavement and destruction of the life capacities of others in the name of life advance - an enduring depredatory pattern of the human condition which Nietzsche glorifies. While he thus implicitly equates the values of opposite kinds of life overcoming, his internal contradiction is not detected.

Such reversal of life value in the name of it is recognized in authoritarian character and fascist movements by thinkers like Erich Fromm (1900-80) and Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957); but they provide no criterion to tell good from bad painful demands on life. In the wider lens of historical human evolution, the 'Nietzschean error' expresses a very profound and philosophically unresolved legacy of the human condition - the primeval disorder of sacrificing others' lives to 'the gods' in manifold forms.

2.10.3. The Life-Value Antidote to the Sacrificial Pattern

Life-value onto-axiology directly resolves the problem. For it, any pain and suffering in overcoming limits is of coherent life value only so far as it better enables life without sacrificing it - for example, by conquering ignorant forms of consciousness, debilitating diseases, and instituted life oppressions.

This is the challenge which in some form or other is posed to all - the moral imperative of the warrior principle which wars only against what disables life. Conquering or lording it over weaker beings follows an opposite principle, but the life-and-death difference is not decoded. Governments still speak of justice and advance by making war on the powerless or the less armed who are often declared unworthy or enemies for what is merely non-compliance with a life-blind ruling order.

2.11. Nietzsche's 'Life Principle' as Self-Contradictory

This distinction needs to be understood at a depth that known 'life principle' philosophies do not reach - including Nietzsche's best-known commentators from Martin Heidegger to Walter Kaufman. Nietzsche asserts in *Beyond Good and Evil*, Section 215 (emphasis added): "The discipline of suffering - - don't you know that *all* the heightening of man's powers has been *created only* by this discipline?"

In Section 259, Nietzsche states the moral implication of his position that all heightening of human powers is by suffering alone. He claims that humans should injure one another to maximize this heightening of life. "To refrain from wounding, violating and exploiting one another - - [as] the basic principle of society," Nietzsche asserts, "[is] the will to negate life, the principle of dissolution and decay."

2.11.1. A Paradigm of Vicious Confusion

One need not disagree with Nietzsche's idea that pain and suffering are interior moments of human striving which is of great value. But his extreme claim that *only* suffering can heighten human powers, and, more deranged, that violating others' lives is "the basic principle of society" is pathologically life incoherent. First, pain or suffering does not "create" the advance of human powers. It is the felt side *of* this advance when the overcoming of past limits demands it. More crucially, "wounding, violating, and exploiting one another" do not heighten life fields, but reduce their vital range in proportion to the wounding, violation and exploitation they inflict. That Nietzsche's various philosophical followers and commentators do not flag this virulent unreason reveals a wider field to its hold than may first appear. Cruel oppression and enslavement are a deep pattern of the species which continue tacitly accepted even in academic philosophy.

2.12. Drawing the Line of Good across Pain and Suffering

By principled understanding of the value of pain, brutal implications which follow from its indiscriminate affirmation are ruled out - for example, claims and practices which falsely approve of pain imposition in the name of virtue, vitality and order. Neither the Nietzschean celebration of suffering nor even the Zen master's rituals of beating students with a swatter identify this value principle of distinction.

Pain and suffering are of constructive value if and only if they are the interior side of their sufferers' surpassing limits formerly confining their life compass. For instance, habit-closed mind-sets can be released into the opening light of more awakened consciousness by "the Zen slap", but - and this is the line of truth of anti-pain positions -

might also be cowed into abject impotence or repressed resentment. The sudden clear pain is at best the feeling of the snap of entrenched blocks and categories of thought into open consciousness beyond accustomed bounds. Yet if this life-enabling versus disabling distinction is not comprehended, dogmatic and sterile extremes result as in absolutist condemnations of “violence” on the one hand, or glorifying violence on the other.

2.12.1. The Good Warrior Principle

The principle of good versus bad pain applies to human life across cultures. Tribal and other initiation rites are a primitive form of the enabling-pain principle, but do not recognize or provide against disabling pain and suffering built into the rites. Where these conventions involve mutilating reduction of bodily powers, disfigurement or psychological arrest, they are pathological to the extent of their reducing life capacities and their enjoyments.

True civilization tells one from the other. Excelling achievements may involve deliberately entered pains of development. Athletes and coaches, for exemplary example, intentionally seek past thresholds of comfort to the felt pain of the body as the value experience of physical limits being challenged and overcome in achieving athletic capabilities. In general, there are many variations on this value logic of extending ranges and skills of life by arduous pains, but they are rarely conscious in principle and so susceptible to perversions.

2.12.2. Telling Good from Bad Overcoming

Intellectual and artistic discovery and creation are open to the same opposed value paths. When good, they test the accepted and accustomed lines of symbolic being and understanding to achieve new forms of expression - whatever the intense difficulties of opposition and winning through to more comprehensively coherent vision. In literatures of the spiritual quest - from innumerable myths to Vajrayana Buddhism and Castaneda’s cycle of Don Juan stories - the same underlying ‘warrior principle’ holds. Enlightenment consists in overcoming the limits of the habituated self through difficult trials and sufferings which, at the most comprehensive, leads to a “oneness without other”.

These are all domains of good pain and suffering, and the principle of confronting and overcoming them for more coherently inclusive life is their shared inner logic of value.

With the boxer as well as the aesthete, the spiritual warrior as well as the learner from the school of hard knocks, the painful experiences make way for the life substance of what they become. The higher powers they gain measure the life-value advance. Conversely, the life capacities sacrificed or lost measure the pathology of the process.

2.12.3. The Meaning of Life as Challenge by Limits

Within or beyond the trials of “the gross physical body” - as the Vedanta and Mahayana traditions call the space-occupying realm of life-organization - the human agent has the value choice of undergoing pains in the overcoming process, or avoiding them from within the comfort of settled convention and routine.

The challenge of the limits distinguishes the value of the achievement of overcoming them. When Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) regrets in his *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* “the fury to distinguish the self” of conventional man, he does not recognize the choice space underlying this impulsion which is not necessarily vain, or as he calls it, *amour propre*. At bottom, the fury to distinguish the self can be the compelling desire of the warrior beyond natural man who seeks to overcome the given in unique human creation.

Perhaps the non-human being feels the same life impulsion to what has not been before - the opposite of what Max Adorno invokes as the tempting relaxation out of striving, “comme la bête” who floats contentedly on the water. The opposing conception is that it is the nature of all life to reach beyond itself - a reaching for what-is-not-yet which becomes conscious in humanity as *projects* that overcome what Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-80) calls the “coefficient of adversity” posed by the world as it is. The pains and suffering of going beyond the given are the felt side of life in the process of higher realization.

In this way, the suffering of almost going under can be understood as the inward experience of life’s opening to advance - the settled limits broken through to another plane of being. This is the painful interiority, perhaps as prolonged as a lovesickness, of the conquest of the self’s constraining form by a wider and deeper body of being in the world. It is the courage of creation.

2.13. Evil Pain and Suffering and their Overcoming

Yet the anti-pain theorists are right that pain and suffering go with the worst evils there are. The pain of the torturer’s victim, of the crucified and the drawn, of nuclear-bombed and napalmed bodies, of children and families starving, of incurable disease, of limb-destroying trauma, of thirst without quenching, of exposure to the elements without any place to go - these are all evils in themselves. All disable and destroy life, and suffering is evil to this measure.

Most such sufferings, however, follow from social value systems which lack the life-protective norms to recognize and prevent them - the measure of their barbarism. Worse still, the terrible sufferings are not an issue for the life-blind norms which allow them. This is why the cruel game seems to go on forever. To the value mechanisms of the ruling systems involved, these heinous sufferings have been invisible or taken for granted as necessary and good.

2.13.1. A Matter of the Value-System Producing It

For deep-structural moral philosophy, any pain and suffering is understood in the light of the value system and choices producing it. The pain of starvation and torment felt by the religious devotee, for example, might appear the same as that of a torture victim. Yet the self-mortifying pain pales beside the helpless and imposed suffering of a torture victim. The devotee can choose in or out of the self-torment regime, while the torture victim has no choice. The direction of the pain then decides its value or disvalue of enabling or disabling life.

2.13.2. Understanding the Lines of Value Meaning

At the more everyday level, athletes, artists and others who deliberately expose themselves to the felt anguish of overcoming past limits can be blind to the value logic of their pains. When the distinction between good pain and bad pain does not regulate the practice, injuries, illnesses and ill effects of all kinds may be suffered. The good pain is the feeling side of breaking a narrower cast to be wider and deeper life, and the bad pain is the opposite - the felt side of being reduced in life capacity even by voluntary imposition. When the distinction is not attended to in the heat of the will to forge victory or new form, we find the early crucible of life-value ignorance.

Life-value ignorance can become instituted. When practices of any kind lead to disabled or ruined lives as intrinsic to their pursuit over generations, and many do - as explained in *Moral Anchor in an Age of Criterionless Relativism* - we see the measure of the practice's wrongness.

Any life at all can be broken on the wheel of being pushed beyond life's carrying capacities. In the age of "brutal global competition", terrestrial life groans under its demands at all levels. But whatever the ruling value order or situation, the line of harm is between breaking limits life coherently, or at irreversible life cost.

2.13.3. History as Choosing Good or Evil from the Circle of Pain

The human condition lacks a life-value compass at this level. Neither those who reject all pain as bad, nor those who court it as ennobling, explain why some pain and suffering is vile, and other of profound value.

The missing bearings of life value, however, can be exactly defined. Pain or suffering is evil to the extent that it is the interiority of life-capacity destruction. It is good whenever it is the felt side of overcoming past limits to life range. When pain is not intrinsic to the deepening or widening of life compass, but the experience of life's being reduced or obliterated with no return, the dead end is reached. Yet an opening past even holocausts can occur by social value-system change which may turn the tide of history against a virulent value mechanism. Sectarian aggression back compounds the evil - a closed circle within which the greatest systems of suffering have long turned (as in the Palestine-Israel conflict), but have also been overcome (as in post-War Europe and Ireland).

Revealingly, massive suffering is the sustainer of the evil or the pedagogy of advance beyond it. The difference is determined by value-system choice.

2.14. The Way between Extremes of Pro-and-Con Positions

Failure to find the resolving principle between pro and con positions on the necessity of pain and suffering has, in general, been a blindness of human thought. It has remained generally locked into one-sided partialities of moral militancy. Life-value judgment provides the resolving moral ground and measure. It recognizes that pain and suffering are good when enabling in process, and evil when the opposite.

This way between the extremes has long been demonstrated behind closed doors - the process of human childbirth itself. Childbirth is Nature's paradigm example of good pain when it enables, and of tragic pain when it disables: with the life-and-death polarity of possibilities largely determined by human value system.

2.14.1. Childbirth as Nature's Paradigm Example

In childbirth, the pangs and deep internal revolutions of the body are as forceful and sustained as pain gets - "like shitting a pumpkin", as feminist thinker, Shulameth Firestone, has graphically described it. Yet the ultimate value lesson that childbirth teaches remains unanalyzed in ethics. The long persecution of midwives and the dominance of the allopathic medical model have led to near-taboo isolation of this domain. In the contemporary cultural context, an ethos of anaesthetizing the painful has reigned in accordance with a ruling ethic of pleasure maximization and pain elimination for profit. Woman's life-creative function and unpriced goods in this transformative crux have thus been variously screened out, while pain in general is marketed for priced solutions.

The overall result is avoidance of this paradigm value site. Even the literatures of feminism rarely celebrate the enduringly creative powers of childbirth as an apogee of transformative human courage; while the moral meaning of pain and suffering for which woman's childbirth is humanity's unsung model remains unexplained in moral thought.

2.14.2. Pain Relieving Drugs versus Life Capacity Building

On the other hand, the utilitarian or marketeer might counter that any general claim of "good pain" conflates the pain with the good outcomes which may follow after it. They might rejoin: "It is better to take something to relieve the pain".

It is interesting how intuition rejects such an option when life capacity creation is at stake. In fact, it may be impossible to increase life-capacity effectively - including in bearing another human being into the world - without the pain in the organic re-setting of life organization.

2.14.3. The Felt Bonds of Being in Creation

Capacity building in the child-bearing case is here paradigmatic. There is not only the felt side of the woman giving birth through prolonged labors, but the suffering of the fetus itself becoming an independent organism which, as Shakespeare observes, "wawl and cry when first they see the world". For King Lear, it is the tragic nature of human life at which the born infant cries out. For life-value analysis, it is the good pain of becoming a whole and breathing person in the world.

The experienced anguish of both mother and fetus-becoming-baby is one in principle: the felt side of their lives' transformation to a higher stage of life capacity. For the mother, having the pangs of the childbirth ensures against possible ill-effects of epidural injection. For the child, forcible propulsion from the comfort of the lightless small world of the womb to independent organic life is the painful transition to an infinitely wider plane of

being - a life-value metamorphosis which the so-called “pro-life” position blocks out. For families waiting, the poignant anxiety forms bonds of fellowship at the life-community transformation which is taking place.

Maintaining the felt side of this transformation is of value to all. As with all pains of growth into new and more advanced state of life-bearing, the suffering pain is good up to the point that it threatens life itself. Here is where the value line is drawn at all levels of life-organization, from childbirth to social revolution.

2.15. Beneath the First Premise of Buddhism and Utilitarianism

When the Buddha declares in his First Sermon that the first truth of life is pain - including, explicitly, that “birth is pain” - his subsequent revelation in the second and third noble truths is that all pain and suffering can be extinguished by release from the desire that causes them.

Whatever the truth of this universal causal claim, the first premise is that pain or suffering is a *disvalue* - the onto-axiological first principle of the Four Noble Truths and the Buddhist thought system. Each of the steps that follows is then directed to extinguish the suffering and pain - “not to speculate on the arrow’s origins or nature, but to pull it out”. The Buddha’s way of enlightenment is the exact path of detachment out of pain and suffering by their “complete cessation” in the desireless ecstasy called “nirvana”, literally a “blowing out”.

There are many sources to draw from on the Buddha’s four noble truths, but it does not matter what source one draws from. Pain or suffering is always supposed as the self-evident disvalue proclaimed in the first truth. Understanding begins with “birth is pain”, and then catalogues the many pains and sufferings of embodied life which are to be ultimately transcended by desireless non-attachment.

2.15.1. Abstracting Out the Objective Disorder

But what if one completely succeeds in this non-attachment of consciousness in which *no* pain or suffering has any place to grip?

A philosophical question is not asked. Is the cessation of pain and suffering a good thing? What if instead of paying attention to the alarm signal of my pain accompanying a disorder such as a disease, I am instead released from its pain and disease by an “inward serenity divorced from observation” (the words of Buddha’s *Dhammapada*).

Although one may be relieved from the suffering of the disorder and even transported into yogic bliss, one may nonetheless remain with an underlying disorder having only conquered its *felt symptoms*.

2.16. The Missing Life-and-Death Value Distinction

What is not distinguished here is the pain or suffering that is of disvalue and the pain or suffering that is of value. The distinction is in fact unknown. Life-value onto-axiology

understands, in contrast, that there is enabling pain which is intrinsic to life's flourishing - not all pain, as in the Nietzschean extreme, but two specific kinds of pain: (1) the felt side of life-capacity growth and (2) the communication of an underlying physical disorder. Extinction of either of these kinds of pain or, conversely, celebration of any other kind is life-value ignorant.

On the other hand, if pain and suffering serve neither of these life functions, their elimination is truly beneficent. This principle of conscious valuation has been missing across both pro- and anti-pain positions.

2.16.1. Going under Utilitarianism and Buddhism to the Life-Ground

The profound value difference has been just as undiscerningly overlooked by Western utilitarianism and the global-market ideal of pleasure maximization. Desires are maximized in fulfillment, not minimized or extinguished as in wisdom literatures. At the same time, pain or suffering teach not desirelessness, but, on the contrary, having more commodities to satisfy desires. Pain is pure value debit, and so again principles (1) and (2) are ignored.

Once value judgment recognizes the distinction between good pain and suffering, it moves fundamentally beneath the first premise of both Buddhism and Utilitarianism. While each of these presupposes that pain is always a disvalue (with opposite ways of treating the problem), life-ground onto-ethics always affirms life-enabling pain with transformative implications for how to live.

2.16.2. The Set-Point of Value Judgment

Since the measure of the good or bad pain is always the life-range increase or decrease it is the feeling side of, the more life range is enhanced by pain and suffering, the better. Conversely, the more it is reduced, the worse. Suffering is intrinsic to life's enabling transition, including at the social level of life organization. While neither Eastern wisdom nor reigning Western utilitarian theories recognize this crucial value principle, all can agree on one baseline value which is unstated - that pain and suffering are always bad when no life capacity is protected or enabled by them. This life-value set-point and criterion has long been missed by moral theory in general.

2.16.3. Life-Value Literacy: Beyond Unthinking Pain and Numbing Pleasures

Not only the pain-extinction principles of Eastern wisdom and the happiness-maximization theories of philosophical utilitarianism miss the boat on this life-and-death difference in principle. In the global market consumerism of everyday life, the problem is pervasive.

A deep question arises. Is there here a masked flight from life itself, an unseen decadence of which Nietzsche warned from an opposite value extreme? More exactly from the life-value standpoint, is there a blindness to life's grounding processes of need and growth which is built into contemporary culture at both consumer and theoretical levels? Has indeed the very concept of life's development and growth been replaced by greater

magnitudes of priced things? These are profound and disturbing questions to which we will return.

Traditional societies, in contrast, are typically life-blind in another way. Their initiation and other practices of organic mortification imply a value system that approves of serious pain and suffering as necessary for the young to graduate to full human being. Many of these flesh-tearing conventions are thus life-value illiterate in an opposite way to cosmopolitan decadence. Insofar as they destroy life tissues and organs by intended actions, they are worse (e.g., genital mutilation of the female young). Yet strangely even in industrialized societies, desensitizing and injuring the young in violence entertainments are spectacles which draw countless millions in paid support.

Wherever we look, in sum, we seem confronted by unthinking conventions of depredatory pain or pleasure numbing with no life criterion of value.

2.16.4. The Problem of Collaboration with Cruel Norms

Life-coherent moral principle steers between these various normalized extremes - by a value calculus which will become metrically exact as explanation unfolds. Yet collaboration with cruel norms may reach deep and wide. Modes of tacit collaboration with vicious norms have many variations, including of the inlooking yogin or scholar in withdrawal from the world's problems. What is not clarified even at the cutting edges of moral thought is that the trials and demands of life's reconstitution into higher forms is painful and good at social as well as individual levels. In contrast, the felt side of normality may paralyze people into unseen complicity with evil. Fear of suffering, especially one's own, holds the form of oppression intact, normalizing it as inviolable.

This is one of the world's great problems across the ages.

2.16.4.1. Plato's Story of the Cave

Plato's Myth of Er in the *Republic* implies that the chains of social conditioning can be so strong that people are fixed facing the other way so as not to face the light in their rapt attention to the passing shadows of appearance dancing on the cave's walls. The source of light, the sun, "the visible form of the Good", cannot be seen.

If we deconstruct Plato's myth, told by Socrates in the dialogue, we can discern four moments of the philosopher's vocation as they describe it in allegory: (1) to be the midwife of the mind's labors to emerge to light, (2) by questions which open past received images to (3) behold the luminosity of principled understanding which (4) bridges across the divisions of selves and things to unifying truths which cannot age or die.

No story is more famed in philosophy - unless it be Socrates' own execution by an Athenian court for "believing in gods of his own invention" and "corrupting the young" - what his fellow-citizen jurors accused him of for his relentlessly exposing questions. Socrates was the first known martyr of critical thought. Yet even the greatest of thinkers, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle - one eternal great line of thought teaching the next - never

follows the light so far as to question the innermost order of their own society. Mass slavery upon which their luxuries depend is assumed or justified as necessary and good. No problem of social injustice is discussed. At the same time, any more life coherent form of how to live remains elided from discussion - perhaps in fear of social ostracism, the insurrection of the slaves, or other painful consequence too great to face and overcome. Even in the *Republic* which is an explicitly utopian argument for the ideal state, slavery is included as necessary for the luxuries of Athenian life.

2.17. Communicative Pain: The Life-Value Signal of Life Gone Wrong

The most elementary pain in life, however, is pain that signals something is wrong.

This kind of pain can be terrible pain in proportion to the breaking, tearing, burning, coming apart of life that it signifies. Such a pain does not mark a growth beyond a person's past limits of life range, but signals the opposite - a violation of life-organization of which the pain is the alarm marker.

This might be called "biological pain" because it requires no input of its sufferer's desires to occur in the severest forms - what we experience when fire catches to our skin, when a central joint stays dislocated, or when the assault of a deadly disease destroys organic capacities. Or, we need to add in the light of felt bonds of being with other life, the suffering of the many under cruel oppression communicates something gone very wrong at the social level of life-organization.

2.17.1. Pain as Exactly Instructive on Individual or Social Levels

Whenever pain is a communicative good, it is a red flag of a life-endangering problem which the pain expresses and transmits - at social as well as individual levels. It cannot be detached from without imperiling the life-host. *Communicative pain* is the way in which all life-organization protects and heals itself. It has no substitute of exact marker of life problem.

If, on the other hand, it is *non-communicative* pain which cannot assist in cure by the further feeling of it, then it is bad pain. The great contribution of opiates is to relieve the body of such suffering. At the social level, however, there is no such local remedy. Only reordering of the oppressive value system can relieve the bad suffering. In either case, pain and suffering are an essential communicative good so far as they are the feeling side of the need to protect life from what assaults it, relaying the attack on life bearing to its host. Without this pain, there cannot be the decisive arousal of the life organization to the life insult it is endangered by. Pain is thereby the exactly instructive friend of life when it calls attention to the place and nature of what has gone wrong, discloses harm by the measure of life-value, and is tracked to the exact disorder it signals.

The *pedagogy of pain* is the turning moment of overcoming at both organic and social levels of life organization.

2.17.2. Individual and Social Forms

The maimings of the neurological leprosy victim reveal the value of pain's constant and necessary function *as* communicative. The terrible disfigurements which typically follow from neurological leprosy are exact reminders of why loss of pain capacity can be profound hazard to life. Without pain, the limbs can be burnt, crushed or severed with no notice of the destruction of life. With the capacity of pain as the natural ally of life, there is system alert against assault on life organization, and the problem does not disappear until it is resolved.

Pain and suffering are for this reason the frontline of the life-host's immune defense-system - not only for the individual, but more deeply, for social life-organization itself. Understanding and healing response to the felt suffering is the mark of healthy life at both levels. Life-value onto-ethics might be said to begin at this ground level.

2.18. Ignored Social Suffering: The Measure of Inhuman Social Order

Pain and suffering are thus misunderstood markers of life need - that without which life capacity is reduced or destroyed. In this way, they stand guard over life systems, calling attention to what must be paid attention to for breakdowns and problems of life-organization to be met. Yogic extinction, pharmaceutical pleasures, displacement onto spectacle contests, or aversion by distancing are forms of numbing their life defense functions at both individual and social levels.

Thus to respond to that which the pain communicates by extinguishing or ignoring it is not desirable. It is a life-system disconnection and, at the social level, a measure of inhuman response.

2.18.1. Psychic Numbing: Social as Well as Individual

Robert Jay Lifton in his *Explorations of Psychology* (1962) and *The Nazi Doctors* (1993) is concerned with such "psychic numbing". Lifton shows how overwhelming homicidal events like Hiroshima caused this closing off, and how Nazi doctors in the death camps could be normalized within "a mechanism of socialization to evil".

Yet empirical research into alien orders demonstrating psychic numbing does not lay bare the generic principles of normalized blindness to suffering within one's own social order itself. Consider how in the new world order, "shock treatments" to whole societies across continents have been demanded and implemented, "brutal global market competition" has been affirmed, and "slashings of jobs and social programs" - people's livelihoods and means of life - have been zealously advocated as "necessary sacrifices". Throughout, extreme human sufferings have been normalized as beneficial to the ruling value order, a psychic numbing on a world scale. But it is not recognized as that within its own value regime.

When Hannah Arendt writes in the *Origins of Totalitarianism* (1956) of "the banality of evil" in the Nazi and Soviet regimes, and identifies the "negative solidarity of atomized masses" as a social pathology, she recognizes the profound derangement of each's value

order. Yet she does not explain the ultimate principles of dehumanization which are at work which can be generalized to her own surrounding society. As elsewhere, exposure of dehumanization in enemy social orders keeps it undetected at home. This is a deep structure of unseeing across cultures.

At the level of social life-organization, this disassociation from others' felt pain and suffering deadens any society's capabilities of effective response. The communicative value of the suffering is thus suppressed. This is a social derangement which religious fatalism, casteism and commodity-addicted culture have shown in different ways across epochs - but it is rarely observed from within its reigning order. It is not by accident that the pain-extinguishing philosophies of India long co-existed with lack of social infrastructures to prevent diseases, and that the global market pleasure machine of today coexists with cumulative life-infrastructure despoliation. Disconnection from the suffering of others can reverse human evolution itself.

2.19. Freedom from Pain: The Missing Life-Ground of Eastern and Western Wisdom

Life-value onto-ethics argues against the advocacy of release from all pain and suffering that such "cessation of all pain" would be, if it succeeded, a planetary life disaster. It would remove the primary protective system of life-organization. Yet not only religious wisdom is implicated on this point. The pagan Socrates and Plato posit a realm of pure supra-sensible Forms of which all that exists in the world is an imperfect and transient copy. Indeed Socrates prefers the hemlock which takes him from the embodied plane of suffering and illusion to a pure and perfect ideal realm.

Platonic and Augustinian Christian philosophies follow a similar path in principle; but conceive the disembodied realm as God's kingdom of heaven, not a mathematico-rational realm of Pure Forms. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) so loves the pure moral law as self-subsistent that in his definitive *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, he judges life's needs expressed in wants as "so lacking in worth that the universal wish of every rational being must indeed to free himself completely from them". In one way or another, thus, "nirvana", "ideal forms", "heavenly bliss", and "transcendental pure moral laws" are concepts for otherworldly realms of pure consciousness preferred to "the prison-house of the body" and the "vale of suffering of life on earth".

2.19.1. Extinction of Pain and Suffering Disables Material Response

Yet the problem remains. If the suffering of the embodied realm is repudiated altogether in favor of an otherworldly freedom from it, then this-worldly suffering has no value meaning to respond to by normative reordering in its light. With no ultimate distinction between good and necessary pain and suffering, on which all healthy and flourishing human life depends, and evil suffering which only reduces and destroys life, humanity remains lost without a life-value compass. The baby is thrown out with the bathwater.

Surely, it may be thought, the logically rigorous and non-theist philosophy of Buddhism has an answer to this problem. Yet here as elsewhere, no such thing as good pain or suffering is conceived. This is because in this idealist onto-axiology, no objective life

organization with objective life necessities is thought to really exist. Organic needs are not distinguished from desires, and the material self is conceived as illusory.

When pressed with this point in a long personal audience in October 1993 with the Dalai Lama, he responded with a metaphysical counter-argument. We must bear in mind, he said, that the Buddhist does not believe in the ultimate value of “the gross [physical] body”, but rather the “subtle [consciousness] body”.

Here the ontology of Mahayana or Vedanta idealism - “consciousness only exists” - has implications which are not followed through in their onto-ethical implications. Extinction of pain for freedom of consciousness and happiness has a down side not engaged - the simultaneous extinction of life organization’s primary feedback loop of signifying that universal life requirements are not being met.

2.19.2. Regrounding in Embodied Life

Here is where the question of the ultimate life-ground of value emerges to view. From the standpoint of the EOLSS and this monograph, the ground of terrestrial reality is organic life and its life support systems. The Buddhist principles of universal interdependency and compassion are shared principles. Yet there is a fundamental difference on the plane of *onto-axiology*. Unlike Buddhism, the life-ground itself and its necessary requirements are the proper value foundation of how we live.

Buddhism, Hindu Vedanta and Western idealisms look, instead, to a plane of unconditioned consciousness and ideals as the ultimate ground of value - with embodied life deemed inferior as such.

2.19.3. The Gross and Subtle Bodies as Value Grounds

What Eastern religious philosophies mean by the “subtle” versus the “gross” body is that the “gross body” needs a spatiotemporal place and sustenance to exist; whereas enlightened consciousness is released to the higher value realm of the “subtle body”, the body of awakened consciousness which has (in the words of the *Madhyamika*) “no [physical] base remaining” - and, therefore, no suffering or death.

2.19.4. Understanding Suffering Not Seated in Desire

The standard counterargument is that there is no evidence for supposing that consciousness is self-supporting without an embodied life-host of it. As far as we know from empirical or scientific evidence, all consciousness requires a nervous system and a brain to exist even if it lives in uplifting visions of nirvana or God. Yet because such idealisms do not regard embodied life as the condition of consciousness, the pain and suffering which signal problems in this world are understood as only subjective desires to be dealt with at this level.

The cause of pain and suffering is thought to be only these desiring states and ego consciousness which suffer when separated from their desire-objects. These desires themselves, it is reasoned, need to be relinquished for people to no longer suffer. While

this psychological wisdom is profound, it leaves out suffering from violated life requirements as such - as in napalmed flesh, children without food, or victims of environmental carcinogens. Life-value onto-ethics, on the other hand, begins with the objective requirements of life capacities which must be met to enable human life to exist and flourish as embodied with universal needs.

2.19.5. Life Support Systems Abstracted Out

The ultimate disconnection of philosophies East and West over three millennia has been that the space-occupying life support systems have are abstracted out of consciousness. Even misnamed “capitalist materialism” has ironically gone a similar route. Its value system is decoupled from any life-ground in money-and-commodity sequences with no steering life coordinates or bases in human life’s necessities across individual consumers.

One foundational error holds across these thought systems. Both spiritual and materialist philosophies of maximizing happiness and extinguishing pain are delinked from the objective and universal necessities of human life - spelled out at the end of *The Lost Social Subject: Evaluating the rules by which We Live?*. Both confine value to states of consciousness - the former to undesiring states of consciousness, and the latter to desiring states. Both are ungrounded in the universal material life requirements underneath self desires. Thus pain and suffering from the deprivation of these objective needs, the signal of life gone wrong at an infra-structural level, are blocked out. Only the symptoms are treated - spiritual systems by renunciation of self desires, consumerism by more objects for them.

2.20. Transcendental Consciousness and the World: The Life-Coherent Connection

In sum, the philosophical de-grounding of consciousness crosses continents, epochs and schools. Post-Socratic Western philosophy too begins with disconnection from the life-ground - as Jeff Noonan explains in his EOLSS essay, *The Embodied Good Life: From Aristotle to Life-Ground Ethics*.

Yet even if there *is* a realm of self-subsistent transcendental mind or a field of pure light consciousness which is eternal and undivided - possibilities not excluded by life-value understanding - the universal life necessities of embodied well-being still remain the basis of all terrestrial value through time and space. This applies to the lives of Buddha, Christ and Mohammed even if they are divine: for their every word and action still takes place in the embodied world on the basis of life support systems without which none can live or speak.

2.20.1. Bridging the Divine to the Embodied

From the side of divine consciousness itself, there is no reason to think that God would not affirm the value of the lives and the life ground S/He has created. That is why for life-coherent religion, life is a holy trust.

On the purely logical level, God’s infinitude necessarily includes the life body of the world, or it is not truly infinite - a point which Aurobindo Ghose (1872-1950) makes in

his *The Life Divine*.

From even the standpoint of theism, then, what is true and good in the world is also true and good for what includes the world as its body of life. No error has been more misleading across cultures than to suppose that a divine or transcendental realm of consciousness negates the value of life. For the divine must include the requirements of life flourishing - and thus good pain and suffering - to be comprehensively consistent.

The age-old question - "how can there be a benevolent and omnipotent God if there is so much suffering?" - is much clarified when we distinguish between good and evil suffering. Since most or all evil suffering is generated by life-blind social ordering, it is the vocation of this-worldly humanity, not God, to prevent it. We will return to this collective issue in chapters ahead.

2.20.2. Pain-Free Existence as Life Incoherent

Any doctrine which regards the extinction of pain and suffering as an over-riding goal is, in sum, de-based. Insofar as it attends only to happiness or pain, it blinkers out the necessities of life whose provision or deprivation determines human well-being/ill-being beneath subjective states. Insofar as any doctrine seeks elimination of pain, it blocks out the internal correlative of humanity's life problems and the life-compass it provides to recognize and solve them.

Without pain and suffering to flag deprived and advancing processes of life, the grounding bearings of life-organization are lost. If pain is not the felt side of overcoming past limits, then it is flagging what life capacities lack or are endangered by - the primary feedback loops of human well-being on both organic and social levels.

2.21. Pain and Suffering as Obligation Routes: The Inner Logic of Social Justice

Disconnection from objective disorders by ignoring suffering symptoms is a profound problem in contemporary society. The extremist suffering may be unresponded to so long as people do not feel afflicted in their own lives - for example, wealthy classes ignoring the impoverished of their own nations and the majority poor of the world.

The pain and suffering may thus continue or grow for the victims, but they too may not connect it to a defective ruling value regime. The standard operation of such social systems, with many variations, is to blame the victims for their immiserization. Reconnection to the underlying causal structures of pain and suffering is therefore obliged of all who would be just or life coherent. More exactly, *the baseline and measure of social justice is defined by the constant principle of its opposite: suffering from need by the life-capacity loss entailed by deprivation of life means*. Whether the deprivation is nutritional insufficiency, lack of educational and health support systems, or other deficit of human life necessity, the italicized principle holds across differences and classes.

The obligation of social justice is, accordingly, to recognize all such suffering from need and life capacity loss, and to work for society's provision of the life means required to overcome it.

2.21.1. Normalized Unseeing: The Subjective Structure of Social Injustice

The nature of an unjust order is, however, that it is life-blind. This is why the lives of the poor and surrounding life fields and life-support systems may be cumulatively polluted, degraded or exhausted with no system indicators of anything gone wrong - as is the case in the global order of today. Even the standard public measure of social well-being - average individual income - blinkers out the deprivations of individual, social and ecological life systems a-priori.

Just as a desensitized leprosy victim becomes crippled because s/he cannot register the savaging of the life-body at the micro level, so – far worse - a social order which is structured to pay no attention to its people’s suffering becomes crippled at the macro level of life organization. With no felt life-value bearings or perceived signals of damage, a normalized indifference to others’ suffering from need occurs. Thus even as countless lives and life support systems degrade or collapse under demands and wastes of the ruling value system, only surface circuits of money-exchanges and aggregates register to the regulating value calculus.

2.21.2. Life-Value Ignorance as System Evil

The life abuse and suffering which are blinkered out are the message of social injustice which is unseen. For life-coherent reason, they are demands to respond to the life violation, the ultimate ground of obligation in even table decorum. Human evolution is near achieving this understanding and the material capacities to enable social justice all the way down. Yet value comprehension and public agency are widely imprisoned within a pecuniary model of social well-being which blocks out both the suffering and its system cause.

On a global scale, vast pain and suffering remain needlessly borne by hundreds of millions of people and their ecological life-hosts - even as the means are available for value-system shift. System evil persists instead by accustomed blindness to it.

2.21.3. True Obligation Follows from the Life Deprivation Which Suffering Expresses

In life-grounded justice, obligation flows from the deprivation of life necessities and goods which pain and suffering express - from day-to-day responsiveness to immediate life need to standing against life-abusive conventions and institutions.

We recognize life duty easily enough at the personal level: for example, the obligation to our health to decline the toxic effects suffered from reckless nicotine, alcohol or junk-food consumption. In terms of the life-value metric, duty is to life requirement which obliges us to stop toxic consumption by the measure of its harm to life system. The logic of obligation which properly binds us is in this way built into life’s organization and development itself.

The same principle applies at the social level. Societies are obliged to provide against the violation and deprivation of their fellow members’ lives without which pain and suffering

follow - for widespread example, when they are deprived of life-protective norms and infrastructures. When, for instance, industrial society pumps carcinogens and toxins into organic and ecological life systems, the resulting diseases are not connected back to the failure of the ruling value system to meet this social obligation. The meaning of the 'ought not to' is not self-standing or philosophically perplexing, as in received moral theory, but has a life-ground base from whose requirements the 'ought' is straightforwardly derived.

2.21.3.1. The Onto-Axiology of Life Duty

It is not easy to think of cases of eruptive pain and suffering which do *not* qualify as a communicative good so exact are their signals of endangering conditions, and so calibrated are their disablings of life to the measure of organic violation.

Yet while life duty to respond follows clearly from the requirements of healthy life function, received value systems are not anchored in life requirements. Wide shelves of theories of morality and justice remain without any life-ground or universal life necessities identified. In direct contrast, life-grounded value understanding recognizes objectively unifying principles of well-being and social justice to meet the age-old problem of pain and suffering in a rational way - neither seeking to extinguish desires, nor to feed them, nor to abstract them out, but rather to provide the means of life they require.

Analogously to the individual level, pain and suffering at the social level are understood as:

(1) the transition to a higher state of life capacity that breaks through a prior confining state in a painful struggles to overcome limiting conditions (e.g., organic deprivation, prejudice barriers, structural impoverishment);

(2) A danger signal of some threat to the life-host's capacities or abilities to function (e.g., a society's life-incapacitating poverty, environmental pollution, or want of universal healthcare) which arouses either:

(i) An enabling response to the pain and suffering which provides against the violations or deprivations of life which degrade and destroy lives and life capacities (social justice); or

(ii) A blocking out of the cause and remedy of the suffering in assuming the ruling order as good and necessary (social injustice).

This explanatory framework is generalizable to all cases. Pain and suffering are thereby decoded in life-coherent principle to explain the inner logic and generic choice spaces of social justice and injustice across cultural differences.

2.22. Understanding Torture and Terror as System Evils

Let us consider a counter-argument to highlight some important implications of this unifying framework of life-ground onto-ethics in resolving the ancient problem of suffering. An eminent misunderstanding of the "good pain" argument is that it can affirm torture as "expanding consciousness to new states". This argument, however, is obviously false since the torture victim's experience is by its nature reduced to an excruciating point, and fixed there so as not to be able to experience anything beyond it. The truth is the opposite of this counter-argument.

Here and elsewhere, a contemporary philosophical block is attachment to the dogma of pain = bad. The prior counterargument is one expression of it, but the dogma is far more widespread. Pain is bad for the utilitarian by definition. And it is evil for the anti-utilitarian too - a “great positive evil” according to the ethical intuitionist, G.E. Moore, whose *Principia Ethic* is analyzed ahead.

The West is by no means alone, as we have seen. For millennia, the extinction of pain and suffering has been a first moral premise of classical Eastern wisdom without internal challenge. Such value agreement on *pain = bad* across continents and otherwise opposite theories of value is revealing. We see how profound moral confusions can become globally consensual and unexamined dogmas at the highest levels of philosophical analysis.

2.22.1. Understanding Cruelty beyond Liberal Conception

While dismissing any other universal principle of truth, Richard Rorty nonetheless proposes a well-worn universal standard in *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity* (1989): “We liberals are the people who think cruelty is the worst thing we do” (pp. 146, 173). “Humiliation” is one form of it. In his account, however, Rorty follows convention in screening out the most systematic forms of human cruelty and humiliation which exist - namely, the cruelties and humiliations built into the global money-sequence system which Rorty, again following custom, uncritically conceptualizes as “liberal democracy”.

As in the past, masses of people’s lives may be made a living hell with no notice. Mass malnutrition, disease and caging the disobedient poor may go unmarked as cruelty or humiliation. The unseeing of philosophy reflects the unseeing of the ruling value system. Even when cruel suffering and humiliation are declared abhorrent, their ruling value-system cause remains invisible.

2.22.1.1. Liberal State Definition of Torture to Allow It

Torture of individuals by state authorities, in contrast, is generally observed and opposed. Yet here as well, a deep-structural bias of conception holds. The definition of torture provided by the United States Department of Justice has defined cruelty as “equivalent to the intensity of the pain accompanying serious physical injury, such as organ failure, impairment of bodily function or even death” (2002). This definition has, however, permitted violent imprisonment and manacled without *habeus corpus* rights, tying of people’s hands to the ceiling days on end with heavy-metal pounding music throughout, and vicious dogs intermittently gnashing near their genitals - as in fact has occurred in Afghanistan and Iraq for years under armed occupation. Prior bombing of defenseless civilian infrastructures in Iraq with over a million children mortally diseased in consequence has been given little or no public or philosophical attention as a war crime and crime against humanity under international law.

What has gone wrong here so that these cases of torture and terror are blocked out the more systematic and criminal under law they are?

2.22.2. The Missing Life Coordinates Throughout

To overcome such anomalies, life-value measure denotes what is cruel, terror or torture by a precise and unifying criterion of the objective nature and degrees of their evil beneath slogans. Pain and suffering are *evil to the extent to which their cause is by external decisions whose entailments violate the organic requirements of persons unable to escape the violations*: the more extreme the violations and the pain, the more evil the cruelty, terror or torture.

As application of this life measure shows, there is despite public repudiation of torture, cruelty and terror much of both daily allowed within the established decision frameworks of the “liberal state” and “Free World” - for example, the systematic malnourishment, disease and preventable deaths of children of the poor by a system of distribution which is daily imposed, defended, and advocated within these orders. More specifically, while international law such as the United Nations’ Covenant for the Prevention of Torture in recognition of “the universal abhorrence” is a clear advance of life-protective order, only individuals in state detention are covered by it and even here, the “solemn covenant” is intentionally unenforced. Compliance could straightway be ensured by inserting the signed covenant obligation into the terms of international trade agreements as a condition of favored access to other societies’ markets and resources, but is not despite demands to do so by non-corporate agencies.

On a more general level, while the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) binds “State Parties to the Covenant to recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing” (Article 11), this binding covenant remains excluded from international trade and investment agreements as well. Are not, it may be asked, hundreds of millions of children and people living without food, shelter or resource amidst plenty the real victims of “threats to world security” or “global terror”? We may observe here how a presupposed value order, even one deploring gross violations of life and life security, does not does so unless clear life criteria and enforceable constraints by trade law are applied - neither of which is discussed.

2.22.3. Why System Cruelty is not Seen

The underlying problem here is of the ruling value system. The basic value categories of “torture”, “terror”, and “threat to security” lack adequate life criteria. Thus “terror” - normally meaning extreme fear of life or grave injury - comes by legal definition within the reigning value regime of transnational trade law to include even kicking the tires of an official limousine, while countless terrorized people on the dispossessed end of this system’s globalization are not conceived as victims of terror or threat to their security.

Again, we may observe a revealing deep anomaly. While the ruling value order is distinctively sensitive to cruelty and pain in special cases, it is indifferent system-imposed pain and suffering within its rules. This confusion ultimately derives from presupposition of the ruling moral order without examination of the life-coherence of its internal norms and standards. Thus even the most advanced liberal thought cannot penetrate the social system of injustice so long as it assumes, like the judicious Martha Nussbaum in *Sex and*

Social Justice, that “the separate individual” is both the ground of value understanding and the “fundamental fact of ethics” (p. 62). The justice or injustice of the social order itself is once again abstracted out.

2.23 Who is Responsible?

Yet if the reigning value framework into which the individual is born and dies is *not* a fundamental fact of ethical inquiry, then who is responsible for any ruling value order? Or, more specifically here, who can be made accountable for a world system’s life-blind mechanics of growth to modify its systematically life-depredatory operations?

The preliminary answer to these questions is that such a ruling value system cannot begin to be accountable if it is screened out a-priori. If its ultimately regulating order of human welfare and immiseration does not enter into the normative scope of its set-points of moral understanding, any kind of mass torment, terror and cruelty ignored by them is made invisible.

2.24. Facing Disease and Death without a Cure: Bridging the Individual-Social Divide

For life-value morality, a general principle guides judgment. It is an obligation in principle to prevent any disabling pain and suffering caused by deprivation of that without which human life capacities suffer degradation and death. Society’s mutually followed rules of ordering provision and distribution of life goods are the deciding social subject across individual lives, and social justice is the process of this provision - with the nature of this “social subject” spelled out more fully in of the last sections of this study. This morally determining plane of human reality has remained essentially unseen in philosophy and social science. Philosophy instead takes us back to the individual as the fundamental moral fact. And so in conclusion of this chapter, we address the pain and suffering everyone confronts in facing certain death itself. The suffering of death and foreknowledge of it may be the worst anguish people ever experience, and social justice seems unable to prevent it.

2.24.1. When Pain Extinction and Social Justice Are One

Yet here as well we find unseen lines of the individual-society bridge even in the painful throes of organic individual death. People properly desire to be free of all pains and sufferings which have *no life function*. Herein lies the ultimate but undefined truth of all anti-pain theories. It follows from this ultimate moral principle of prevention that even natural pain and suffering from irreversible organic decay ought to be stopped where it can be, including by *nirvanic* pain-relievers. Most people do not fear death so much as dying, nor dying so much as the suffering and pain which may accompany dying. It is at this point most of all that the principle of pain-extinction becomes overridingly good.

In such irreversible degeneration towards organic death, we confront by the life-value criterion unequivocally bad pains and sufferings with no value. Its principle entails their elimination. It is here that the obligation of social justice again enters - to prevent suffering from life-capacity loss entailed by deprivation of life means. In this case,

personal and social life value coincide at the meeting point of life and death, a site of ultimate meaning and shared life process - the bridge across the inevitable abyss. The existentialist fixation on self-death, in profound contrast, locks out this moral bridge by its atomist metaphysic - a major issue to which we will return.

2.24.2. What of the Yoga of Non-Pain? Limits and Possibilities of Life-Ground Ethics

There are claimed cases where people transform biological pain into painless enjoyment. Where this is not merely a practice with a specific form of pain - like walking on coals or spikes - general principles of life-ground onto-ethics guide understanding. Non-enabling pain is resistance. Connection of consciousness to wider coordinates and reference body detaches from the pain site. Dissolving of material ego into boundless fields within and without enables release to a point. These are the generic principle of yoga, and all express the “value of all values” defined in *The Primary Axiom and the Life-value Compass*.

Yet no value ignorance could be greater than to expect people to be above organically determined pain. One general principle continues to guide life-value judgment. Pain or suffering which is instructive or intrinsic to overcoming past confinements, is good pain: all other pain and suffering is bad. Where disabling pain and suffering are from physical disease or injury beyond self-healing, public life standards and universal health-care are the most effective relievers of it - once more connecting social justice to suffering by provision of life means in life need.

2.24.3. The Pain = Healing Equation

At the most life enabling, even irreducible biological pain can be seen as the felt being of life seeking to heal itself all the way to death - with the other side of ‘death’s tunnel’ perhaps a field of light consciousness as esoteric texts of religious philosophies claim along with secular testimonies of “post-clinical death” experiences. Either possibility coheres with life-value onto-axiology which bridges life and death to more inclusive life as its ultimate meaning.

Release from pain and suffering as the felt side of life being irreversibly *disabled* is the bottom line of prevention for life-ground ethics. Where pain is merely personal and volatile, as in the notorious sufferings of sexual involvement - luxuriantly described by Marcel Proust in *Recherche du Temps Perdu* (1926) - the same onto-ethical principle holds, although Proust does not consider it.

Where disabling pain and suffering are from physical disease or injury beyond self-healing, public life standards and health-care are again the most effective relievers of it where required - once more connecting social justice to suffering by provision of life means in life need. In all cases, life-value morality means to enable and not disable enjoyment of life capacities.

2.24.4. Beyond the Pleasure/Pain Principle

Once we recognize that extinction of pain and suffering is life incoherent except when

they disable through time, morality and justice are led beyond symptoms to underlying value meaning. Once understanding so re-grounds, it recognizes that the dominant value systems of the world which variously suppose that happiness is good and pain is bad *simpliciter* are gravely mistaken. What they focus on as bad may be merely symptoms of opposite states of life value, and so demand analysis of the underlying well-being or ill-being they in fact express.

Only what disables life is wrong, and wrong to the precise extent that it does. If pain enables life to be conscious of an underlying disorder, it is beneficial. If it is redundant in stricken moments of helplessness, freedom from it is a great good which obliges relief. Pain and pleasure are subjective byproducts of deeper life realities, which may be evil with pleasure and good with pain. Understanding which and responding accordingly may be the most basic but overlooked moral distinction of the human condition.

Glossary

Agent-relative: A standard philosophical term signifying individual choice as in “agent-relative ethics” which standardly assumes that choice-agency is restricted to individual persons.

Axiology: From the Greek, *axioma*, “what is thought to be worthy”, the ultimate, but under-theorized category of value reason, ideally building from rationally self-evident bases or *axioms* of value a complete system of value (aesthetic, epistemological, moral, etc.) with unlimited validity across domains. Onto-axiology is axiology which grounds in the nature of being.

Civil commons: A unifying concept to designate any and all social constructs which enable universal access to life goods e.g., common life support systems.

Consequentialism: Often equated to utilitarianism, but strictly holding that the good or bad is to be found in its consequences, not its principle of action or intention.

Deontological ethics: Essentially, “duty ethics”, standardly opposed to utilitarianism insofar as it holds that good lies in the principle or duty which action embodies, not its consequences of happiness.

Development: A central term of value in contemporary global discourse which does not distinguish between opposed forms of development or growth - for example, more commodities sold for profit (market development/growth) and more means of life available for people’s lives (human development/growth).

Either-or reduction: A regulating structure of normative thinking which assumes the logical form of *p or not-p* (“the excluded middle”), thereby eliminating the range of other value possibilities including degrees of each and mutual inclusions.

Epistemology: A central field of philosophy concerned with the nature, grounds and limits of knowledge a generally unrecognized realm of value

judgment and theory insofar as judgments rest on elective norms of “true” and “false” and “valid” and “invalid”.

- Ethics:** One of the three recognized basic areas of philosophy that which is concerned with what is good and bad in human action, including competing positions of utilitarianism, deontological/formalist/duty ethics, emotivism/non-cognitivism, evolutionary ethics, intuitionism, naturalism, perfectionism, phenomenological ethics, postmodern ethics, subjectivism/pluralism/relativism, self-realization/teleological ethics, and virtue ethics. Perhaps the most enduring received meta-ethical debate is between consequentialism (judging by consequences, e.g., utilitarianism) and non-consequentialism (judging by the intrinsic principle of judgment and action e.g., Platonism and Kantianism). Moral philosophy is often equated to Ethics, but is in principle more restricted in reference to ought-to statements which entail prescriptions or prohibitions whose violation is thought to deserve guilt or punishment.
- Existentialism:** Classically defined by Jean-Paul Sartre as “existence precedes essence”, which means that human choice of what one does (existence) precedes any set fate, determinism, role or external design (essence) ruling out this choice, with those denying their responsibility of choice as guilty of “bad faith” (*mauvais fois*).
- Intrinsic and instrumental value:** What is a good in itself and what is good as a means.
- Life coherence:** Consistent with the requirements of life
- Life sequence of value:** The process whereby any body of life becomes more life by means of life, measurable by the criteria of more/less fields of life enabled or enjoyed through time.
- Life standards:** Those principles and laws which protect and enable human and ecological life systems.
- Life-blind norms:** A characteristic tendency of the ruling value systems of established societies and of their received ideologies to blinker out the life-disabling effects of their regulating principles.
- Life-ground:** Concretely, all that is required to take the next breath; axiologically, all the life support systems required for human life to reproduce or develop.
- Life-value measure/metric:** Minimally, more/less life range in any domain or degrees of life function.
- Life-value onto-axiology:** General term for a value-system which regards life and means of life to more coherently comprehensive ranges of life as the sole real good, including the life support systems required to enable this process.
- Linguistic** Decoupling language from its referents within autonomously

- idealism:** self-referential discourses.
- Measures of life value:** These refer to the ranges of the fields of life value which are maintained, gained or lost at the margins in reference to a prior or compared state (e.g., at the collective level, literacy rate growth, caloric and protein intake compared to health requirements, and housing ratios per capita to ratios of able-bodied citizens to available meaningful work of value to others). Although life-value measures are not commensurable across fields and domains of life without reduction to fungible monetary units abstracting away all life contents, direct and accurate measure of more or less ranges of life is applicable to phenomena in any life-field or domain.
- Mechanical reduction:** The dominant model of life-systems as mechanical systems which rules out non-mechanical life properties (e.g., the irreversibility of life processes and non-substitutability of its constituents and conditions).
- Meta-Ethics:** The study of the nature of moral judgment conventionally (but not necessarily) preoccupied with the logical status of ought and taxonomies of competing theories in a-priori exclusion of all substantive ethical issues A standard occurrence of divisions into virtue theory, deontology, intuitionism, relativism, utilitarianism/consequentialism, perfectionism, as in **Ethics**, which posits each's distinguishing principle of good in a taxonomy of value systems.
- Metaphysics:** The ultimately regulating principles of existence (ontology) and knowledge (epistemology) which typically lack grounding in universal life support systems of causation, choice and identity
- Money sequence of value:** Using life and life conditions to turn private money sums into greater quantities in reiterated choice paths of money-value adding, the ruling value sequence of "globalization".
- Objective Values:** Values which are independent of individuals' affirming them (e.g., the values of life support systems).
- Onto-Ethics/Onto-Axiology:** A primary concept of life-ground value theory in which the standard and reductionist split between ontology (the philosophy of being) and ethics/axiology (critical theory of good and bad) is overcome in a non-divided unity of understanding such that the analysis of the ultimate structure of being as such (ontology) and of the ultimately regulating principles of good and bad (ethics/axiology) are integrated into one field of philosophical understanding of life value at all levels.
- Postmodernism:** Referring to a wide variety of writers forming a recently dominant movement/school of thought whose unifying characteristic is repudiation of all universal principles of reality, truth, value or interpretation in favor of contingent particularity and perspectival modes of thought. See also **Linguistic turn**.
- Relativism:** A generic term for the view that there are no objective or universal values because all values are by their nature relative to the contingent

cultures, preferences, individuals, practices and world-views in which they are embedded.

Ruling Value-System: A value-system which is normally presupposed and ultimately regulates the decisions and goals of a society's dominant social institutions, the individual roles within them, and the thought structures of those internalizing the regulating assumptions and conclusions as givens.

Social justice: The baseline and measure of social justice is defined by the constant principle of its opposite suffering from need by the life-capacity loss entailed by the deprivation of life means.

Universal life goods or necessities: All goods *without* which human life capacities are reduced or destroyed (eg., breathable air, potable water, means of free communication).

Utilitarianism: Classically defined by John Stuart Mill that "actions are right as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to promote pain".

Validity: From the Latin, *validus*, or strong, validity is narrowly equated in formalist traditions to inferences which are deducible from premises. Life coherent validity also requires consistency with known fact as well as life-enabling rather than disabling purpose.

Value syntax: Organizing principles of pro-and-con meaning, prescription, position and transformation which regulate the value system of a social order, but which are invisible to or presupposed as necessary and good by those it regulates. Insofar as the syntax is locked against change or deviation, it is a *value mechanism*.

Value-system: Values which cohere as a stable set of regulators of judgment and action whether or not the value deciders are recognized.

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Honderich, T. (1995), *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, 1009 pp. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [A comprehensive dictionary of philosophy by experts in the field with useful bibliographies and philosophical maps.]

Hume, David, (electronic), *The Complete Works and Correspondence of David Hume* [The complete written corpus of the widely conceived leading philosopher of the English-speaking world which includes his *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, where he presents the famous argument that no “ought” can be deduced from an “is”; as well as the view, hardly discussed, that advocacy of “the equality of property” is a “crime deserving of the severest punishment” because it would “destroy all subordination” and “weaken the authority of the magistracy”.]

Kant, I. (1992), *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*, 15 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Includes all Kant’s work in value theory in the inclusive sense, whatever is conceived of worth, or not, but *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (148pp), *Critique of Practical Reason* (250 pp.), and *Critique of Pure Reason* (458pp). The first is a central classic of moral philosophy, and explains Kant’s signature concepts of the “categorical imperative” (“act only in such a way as make the maxim of your action a universal law”).]

Kierkegaard, S. (1978), *Kierkegaard’s Writings*, (eds. H.V.and E.V.Hong) 24 vols. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [The most comprehensive collection of Kierkegaard’s work, much of it written under pseudonym, including *Either-Or*, *Fear and Trembling*, *Philosophical Fragments*, and *Sickness Unto Death* which explain his unprecedented exploration of the “infinite inwardness” of human emotional life which he relates to a transcendent and unknowable God.]

Locke, John (1690/1950), *The Second Treatise on Government*, 139 pp. New York: Liberal Arts Press. [One of the founding classics of liberal value theory whose concepts are directly quoted in French and American revolutionary declarations, arguing for private property as the ultimate right of free men and the foundation of their happiness.]

Mackie, J.L. (1977), *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*, 249 pp. New York: Penguin.[This text is representative of the dominant view that ethics and moral principles are merely “preferences”: arguing in what is called the “error theory” of values that any and all moral or ethical judgments of right and wrong, good or bad, are “false”.]

Marcuse, H (1964), *One-Dimensional Man*, 260pp.Boston: Beacon Press [Marcuse’s most famous work which was a central text of the 1968 student uprisings in Europe and America, a penetrating critique of capitalist technological culture and its reduction of life to a totalizing consumer-management culture: to which Marcuse responds with the idea of revolution in accord with the “vital needs” of life for which he refuses to provide any principled criterion.]

Marcuse, H. (1978), *The Aesthetic Dimension: Towards as Theory of Marxist Aesthetics*, 71 pp. Boston: Beacon Press. [Marcuse's most sustained account of his aesthetics.]

Marcuse, H. (1956), *Eros and Civilization*, 209 pp. Boston: Beacon Press [An original philosophical synthesis of Marxian and Freudian thought moving beyond Freud's reality principle of necessary repression to affirmation of the life instinct and unrestricted libidinous possibility enabled in a society which has overcome material scarcity, capitalist repression of labor and remaining surplus repression.]

Marx, Karl and Engels, F. (1975-), *Collected Works of Marx and Engels*, 44 vols. (Eds. R. Dixon *et al*). New York: International Publishers [Complete works of Marx in English, relevant where Marx either presupposes or denies value orientation in an underlying conflictedness between moral and onto-ethical concerns of the profoundest kind, on the one hand, and a rigorously conscious scientific method denying issues of value as objectively significant or merely ideological, on the other.]

McMurtry J. (1986) "The Argumentum Ad Adversarium", *Informal Logic*, VIII.1, 27-36. [Explains the underlying logical disorder of fallacies by diversion (*ignoratio elenchi*) as forms of switching the issue to an accepted enemy or adversary of the community addressed (e.g., "communist", "liberal", "unbeliever"), a track-switch of thought which is argued to be an widely regulating form of fallacious thought and social being.]

McMurtry, J. (1988) "The Unspeakable: Understanding the System of Fallacy of the Media", *Informal Logic*, 41:3,133-50. [This analysis sets out the general regulating framework of the "ruling value syntax" as a system of rules selecting against whatever invalidates the presupposed ruling order of control over society's means of existence, and for whatever validates it - in correspondence to the degrees of each.]

McMurtry, J. (1989), *Understanding War*, 90 pp. Toronto: Science for Peace [A concise philosophical overview demonstrating the locked choice-spaces of the military paradigm of war across cultures and times, and explaining the rational alternative of warring for rather than against life security.]

McMurtry J.(1992), Good Love and Bad Love: A Way of Evaluation, *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, **6**, 326-347 [Applies the primary axiom of value to romantic love spelling out the transformative implications for understanding, emotion and decision.]

McMurtry, J.(1998), *Unequal Freedoms: The Global Market As An Ethical System*, 372 pp. Toronto and Westport CT: Garamond and Kumarian [A systematic critique exposing the unexamined ethical assumptions and assertions of classical, neoclassical and contemporary ethical and political theory as well as policy of the "liberal market order" as a ruling value system.]

McMurtry, J. (2002), *Value Wars: The Global Market versus the Life Economy*, 262pp. London: Pluto Press [This volume explains and tracks the underlying epochal principles of opposing value-systems in the 'new world order' across phenomena of wars, social system conflicts, ecological crises and public-sector meltdowns, with defining constitutional regulators for a life-grounded global order.]

Mill, J.S. (1860/1996) *Utilitarianism*, 260pp. New York: Oxford University Press [This volume contains up-to-date commentary on Mill's classic statement of utilitarianism whose recognition of "higher pleasures" and consistency with a "socialist order" are blocked out of market-all subsequent utility theory: the primary modern statement of value as defined by "the Greatest Happiness Principle" wherein "all actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce pain".]

Mirowski, P. (2000), *Machine Dreams*, 540 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press [Very informed study which tracks the machine model in contemporary market economic theory into the "automaton theater" of economic, military and decision-theory research.]

Moore, GE (1909), *Principia Ethica*, 272 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [This is the classic work of ethical theory of the twentieth century, and exhibits in paradigm form the close analysis of argument and agent-relative premises which have typified the dominant analytic school of Anglo-American moral theory since David Hume.]:

Nietzsche, Friedrich (1964), *The Complete Works of Nietzsche* (ed. O. Levy). New York: Russell and Russell. [Includes Nietzsche unqualified and life-incoherent valorization of pain and suffering, in particular in *Beyond Good and Evil*, against the otherwise blanket philosophical rejection of them: "The discipline of suffering - - don't you know that all the heightening of man's powers has been created only by this discipline? - - To refrain from wounding, violating and exploiting one another - - [is] the will to negate life, the principle of dissolution and decay."]

Noonan, J. (2006) *Democratic Societies and Human Needs*, 265 pp. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's Press. [An excellent critique of liberal theory and the emergence of a needs-based social morality as the foundation of life-coherent democracy.]

Nussbaum, M. and Sen, A. eds. (1993) *The Quality of Life*. Clarendon: Oxford University Press. A major collection of articles and replies to them by leaders in the field including the editors, G.A. Cohen, Onera O'Oneill, Hilary Putnam, Charles Taylor, and Michael Walzer, on equality, capability and well-being, gender justice, and standards of living: none of which grounds in direct life-value criteria, need requirements or life support systems.]

Nussbaum, M. (1999) *Sex and Social Justice*, 476pp. New York: Oxford University Press.[Major work of an outstanding Aristotelian liberal and feminist, revealing in its attention to "separateness", "the separate individual" as the ground of value understanding, the "fundamental fact of ethics", thus entailing abstraction out of life support systems as a methodological given.]

G. Outka and J.P. Reeder eds. (1993), *Prospectus for a Common Morality*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. An outstanding collection of original articles by internationally recognized leaders in the field such as Alan Gewirth (a definitive account of human rights as generic directives of action entailing the necessary conditions of their fulfillment) and Richard Rorty (antifoundationalist relativization of truth and freedom prioritizing "liberal democracy"), with no common life interests defined.

Pareto, Vilfredo, (1971 [1906]).*Manual of Political Economy*, New York: A.M. Kelley [Classic of rational choice theory and economic reason whose principle of "opthemality" - since called "Pareto optimality" or "Pareto efficiency", or adjectival variations of these, identifies a logical state of affairs in which no-one can be made better off without making someone else worse, a standard ideal of rational choice theory, based on a pure-type dyadic exchange of assets with no relation to life value or conditions.]

Perry, R.B. (1969), *Realms of Value: A Critique of Human Civilization*, 487 pp. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. [Perry provides the most comprehensive argument for a general value theory yet published: briefly, the good = what is desired. At a second-order level, an axiology to justify the value-system of the market order, and, more generally, the contemporary belief that the good for people in all things is what people themselves want.]

Plato (1961), *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (ed. E. Hamilton and H. Cairns), Pantheon Books: New York. [Includes Plato's most philosophically comprehensive work, *The Republic*, which integrates metaphysics/ontology, epistemology, moral philosophy and social and political philosophy in one dialogue, whose stated aim is a theory of justice symmetrically applicable to the individual soul and the ideal society at once. Plato's "Theory of Forms", positing pure, transcendental and eternal ideas of which all material entities are but inferior, mutable copies is his/Socrates' most distinctive theory, and the primary classical position of philosophical Idealism.]

Parfit, D. (1984), *Reasons and Persons*, 543pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. [The definitive work of this author and of contemporary discourse on "personal identity". Exemplary in the very fine-grained argumentation on this topic, and on the a-priori assumption that "personal identity" means an identical sameness through time rather than what a person chooses to identify with.]

Radhakrishnan, S. and Moore, C. (1957), *Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy*, 683pp. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [This is a definitive collection of Indian philosophy and onto-ethical idealism: including the full texts of the eleven principal Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita, and substantial selections from early and late Buddhism.]

Rawls, J. (1967), *A Theory of Justice*. 542pp. Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press. [Recognized definitive work of the twentieth century political philosophy, complementing Moore's *Principia Ethica* as the two leading classics of normative theory of the era. Its paradigmatic starting point of rational value-judgment is the principle of self-maximizing rationality, "including wanting a larger share for oneself", the starting-point of "the contemporary social sciences" as well. Rawl's "veil of ignorance" to decouple agents from their conditions of life: following the regulating methodological a-priori of the era.]

Rescher, N. (1969), *Introduction to Value Theory*, 205 pp. Engelwood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.[This monograph by the most published analytic philosopher of the last century exemplifies the era's formalist method and symbolic notations from which issues of life value are a-priorieliminated.]

Robert, J.S. (2008), *Embryology, Epigenesis, Evolution*, 290pp. New York: Cambridge University Press

[Critiques the one-way “genomania” which has swept over contemporary evolutionary biology and popular thought, as in sociobiology.]

Rorty, R. (1989), *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, 289 pp. New York: Cambridge University Press. [With his earlier *The Mirror of Nature* which deconstructs the philosophical-scientific correspondence theory of truth, the most prominent text of the anti-foundationalist movement in philosophy, denying any common standard of truth or value].

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1984), *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (trans. M. Cranston), 182 pp. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books [Published in 1755 seven years prior to the Social Contract, a philosophical anthropology known best publicly for its vision of “the noble savage”, Rousseau conceives human beings in their natural state of human language, reason and species sympathy before private property, division of labor and vain desires corrupt and alienate them.]

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1968), *The Social Contract* (trans. G.D.H. Cole), 100 pp. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books [Rousseau’s best known but widely misunderstood work featuring the grounding idea of ‘giving the law to oneself’ to resolve the conflict between individual freedom and state law, with citizens rationally willing “the common interest” to together achieve the “general will” of democratic government.]

Russell, Bertrand (1983-), *Bertrand Russell: Collected Papers*, 29 vols. London: Allen and Unwin. [Includes Russell’s prolific corpus of philosophical and public works, including his of ‘type theory’ of logically higher and lower order classes of properties (e.g., the color property of colored objects is a higher order property than the combination of all of the members of the class of colored objects). His works on denotation and description, the logical foundations of mathematics, sense data and logical atomism, neutral monism, and probability comprise a string of innovative technical solutions and theories to resolve paradoxes, with his theory of types being the most enduring contribution to logic and epistemology. An early leader of Anglo-American technical analytic philosophy, his most substantive contribution may be in his many irreverent popular essays and books which lucidly expose and rout well-entrenched beliefs and dogmatic assumptions on major social issues from sexual morality to nuclear-arms. He regretted twentieth-century philosophy’s wide abandonment of “understanding the world itself , that grave and important task which philosophy throughout has hitherto pursued”].

Samuelson, Paul and Nordhaus W.D. (2005), *ECONOMICS*, 784 pp. New York: McGraw-Hill. [The standard global reference text and classic of neoclassical economics in which the senior author welcomes its currency across continents and educational levels in terms which reveal the received scriptural authority of this school and its assumption of being all of “economics”: “Spread the gospel of economics anyway we can, I say”. Very clear system account.]

Sartre, Jean-Paul (1972), *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. 2 Vols. London: Verso Books. [Sartre’s major work after his earlier 1953 classic of existential phenomenology, *Being and Nothingness*. It is a work which seeks to synthesize individual existential choice with Marxian dialectical reason and class analysis in *The Problem of Method* (published as an independent volume), which explains that a “hierarchical totalization of determinations” show the compatibility of opposed philosophical movements. As with Marcuse’s work, ignored by mainstream philosophers once identification with Marxian thought became evident.]

Sartre, Jean-Paul (1973), *Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions*, 94 pp. London: Methuen [Originally published as *Esquisse d’emotions* in 1962, Sartre’s direct analysis of emotional life in which they are analyzed as agitations.] -7

Sen, Amartya (1977). “Rational Fools: A Critique of the Behavioral Foundations of Economic Theory”, *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 6, 317-44.

Sen, A (1998), *The Possibility of Social Choice*”, 37pp. Trinity College, Cambridge: Nobel Lecture [This lecture provides an incomparably rich documentation of the literature on social choice, demonstrating there is no conception of social choice in received social science or philosophy other than as an aggregation of individual choosers: an atomic metaphysic of choice to which collective agency and responsibility at the level of ultimate principles of value and social regulators cannot compute in principle.]

Sen, Amartya (1998). “The Possibility of Social Choice”, Nobel Lecture, December 8, 1998, published in *American Economic Review*, 89 (July 1999).

Singer, Irving (1966 -1987), *The Nature of Love*, 3 volumes. Chicago: Chicago University Press. [The most

comprehensive study of theories of love from Plato to Sartre, which argues against any unifying principle of value in a richly learned tapestry of analysis which features the “grace” of love as “bestowal of value” on the love object, the implied source of love’s happiness.]

Singer, Peter, *Animal Liberation: Man’s Inhumanity to Animals* (1983). 302 pp. Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: Thorsons Press. [The definitive work by the best known advocate of animal rights, who deploys utilitarian ethics and the pain-reduction principle to argue against the standardized cruel abuse of domestic animals in factory food production; failing to see that this generalized ethic of suffering-free treatment of animals implies that pain-free domesticated animals have better lives within this condition, which further implies that they ought to substitute for animals experiencing much pain and suffering in the wilderness.]

Smith, Adam (1776/1966), *An Inquiry into Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. 2 vols. New York: A.M. Kelley. [Possibly the most materially influential work in history, the full text, which is often expurgated to select out such passages as the following which discloses the suffering linchpin of the “economic laws of supply and demand” upon which Smith builds modern economic theory: “[The] demand for men, like any other commodity, quickens when it goes on too slowly, and stops when advance too fast. It is this demand which regulates and determines the state of propagation in all the different countries of the world”.]

Spinoza, Baruch (1985), *The Collected Works of Spinoza* (ed. E. Curley), 7 vols. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [Spinoza’s greatest work, the *Ethics*, is a deductive system modeled on Euclid’s definitions, axioms and theorems in which God or infinite substance is conceived as the rational system of the universe in its thinking and extended modes and infinite attributes: which can be better (more adequately) or worse (less adequately) comprehended: from vague and emotional experience through general reasoning to scientific intuition (*scientia intuitiva*) of the logically determined whole from the comprehensively rational experience of it - ultimately the true “self interest” of the individual.]

Sumner, Jennifer (2005). *Sustainability and the Civil Commons: Rural Society in the Age of Globalization*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.[A sound and well-informed negotiation of the general theories of Gramsci, Habermas and McMurtry towards understanding sustainability as the “structures and processes that build the civil commons”.]

Suzuki, D.T. (1956). *Zen Buddhism: Selected Writings of D.T. Suzuki* (ed. W. Barrett). 294 pp. Garden City N.Y.: Doubleday [A useful selection of writings of the most widely recognized scholar of Zen, but as elsewhere without a principle of value to rule against life-incapacitating Zen expressions such as beatings of novices and, more seriously, lethal warrior arts in practice.]

Trungpa, C. (1988). *Shambala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior*. 202 pp. Boston: Shambala Press [A leading example of contemporary conception of religious illumination and practice as that of a “warrior path” of happiness, “the vehicle of the thunderbolt”, here explained by a high-ranking Tibetan Buddhist.]

Vico, G. (1724/1984), *The New Science*, 445 pp. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press. [The first modern classic of the philosophy of history in which Vico argues that humanity can only know for certain that which it has created, because it is a human construction - an epistemological claim that seems disproved in the case of the most important human constructions, the ruling value systems of societies, that which is least of all examined.]

Weisbrot, M., Baker, D., and Rosnick, D. (2006). “The Scorecard on Development: 25 Years of Diminishing Progress”, *International Journal of Health Services* 36,2: 201-234.

World Commission of the Environment and Development (1986). *Our Common Future*, New York: Oxford University Press.[Revealing by its endorsement of “five to ten times” more commodity system growth with no life standards identified, making “sustainable development” a household term without life-value bearings.]

Whitehead, A.N. (1938), *Modes of Thought*, 172 pp. New York: Macmillan [Whitehead’s most well known lectures on his “process philosophy” which conceives Nature as “alive”, “feeling”, “purposing” and ever “creative” in the energy flows described by physics (the totality of which processes he conceives as God), as opposed to “dead” and “inert” in the Newtonian tradition: an opposition he brings into his more famous philosophy of education which emphasizes imagination and feeling as well as reason through stages achieving their ordered balance of expression. He concludes this work with a typically arresting apothegm, “poetry allies itself to metre, philosophy to mathematic pattern”.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig (1968), *Philosophical Investigations*. 260 pp. New York: Macmillan. [Perhaps the most celebrated work of twentieth-century philosophy, it leads what philosophers have come to call “the linguistic turn”, disconnecting philosophical problems from the life-ground in preoccupation with linguistic and logical muddles with no reference beyond their “language games”.]

Wollheim, R. (1984), *Thread of Life*, 288 pp. Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press. [A Freudian philosophical critique of the “thread of life” of an individual in which the roots of moral obligation and values respectively are reduced to persecution and depressive anxiety.]

M.E. Zimmerman, J.B. Callicott, J.Clark, G. Sessions, K. J. Warren eds. (1998). *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*. Prentice Hall: London (The most critically wide-ranging text in the field of philosophy of the environment with articles by such well-known figures as Thomas Berry, Aldo Leopold (the pioneer of the Land Ethic), Arne Ness (definitive account of Deep Ecology by the founder), Carolyn Merchant (defining excerpts form *The Death of Nature*), James O’Connor (leader of socialism and ecology movement), Tom Regan, Peter Singer, Paul Taylor (animal rights), Gary Snyder (bio-regionalism), and the editors (covering such fields as ecofeminism and social ecology).

Biographical Sketch

John McMurtry holds his B.A. and M.A. from the University of Toronto, Canada and his Ph.D from the University of London, England, and has been Professor of Philosophy at the University of Guelph for over 20 years and University Professor Emeritus since 2005. He is an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and his many articles, chapters, books and interviews have been internationally published and translated.