

THE VALUE FIELD OF ACTION: RECONCILING HUMANITY AND THE BEAST

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Summary

This chapter analyzes the third ultimate field of value, the terrestrial life field of action. It shows why relevant theories - action theory, natural struggle for survival, vitalism, will to power, reverence for life, and ideal communication - fail to provide a coherent moral understanding of natural and human action and the common life interest of society.

8.1. From Inner Life to the Value Field of Action

“Axioms in philosophy”, says the poet John Keats in an 1818 letter, “are not axioms until they are proved upon our pulses”. The prior chapter has considered the “proof upon our pulses” of the Primary Axiom of Value - mapping the felt side of being as an ultimate field of value which can be better or worse in marginal or extreme degrees. It

can feel in horizonless harmony with the heart-mind of Buddha, or contract into the hellish pain of the rangeless point. So too we have learned that human consciousness allows for polar value possibilities between brute ignorance and locked dogma, on the one hand, and thought so reaching its conception knows no bound of coherent inclusion. Chapters The Primary Axiom And The Life-Value Compass and Good And Evil Within: Opening The Terra Incognita Of The Felt Side Of Being have thus explained the vast value fields of life within, and why they have been lost. Very well, readers may say, life-value onto-axiology has explained the value fields of inner life, but we must continually act in the world for good or ill. *What of action?*

8.1.1. Delimiting the Life Field of Action

The action field of life-value denotes all levels and types of organic action found on earth, from the insect's miraculous complexity of moving communications, reproduction and inherited food systems to the harmonized actions of co-operating complexes of vertebrates in natural formations of predation, flight and spontaneous freedom; from the movement of our own arms, trunks and legs to the orbits of our opposable thumbs and limitless meanings spoken in symbols; from the faster, stronger and more skilled feats of athletes to the election of citizens to act as governments for societies.

8.1.2. The Externalist Fallacy Repeats in the Life Field of Action

Yet most modern philosophy and science since the founding figure of Descartes (1596-1650) have denied animal action as any more than the unfeeling motions of a natural machine. This is why Descartes did not worry about nailing his wife's dog to a board – its motions were only those of an “*automaton*”.

Descartes is not an exception. Over 200 years later the quintessentially scientific T.H. Huxley (1825-95) eloquently defended Descartes' model of understanding. “What proof is there”, he asked in “On the Hypothesis that Animals Are Automata and its History” (1874), “that brutes are other than a superior race of marionettes, which eat without pleasure, cry without pain, desire nothing, know nothing - - -?”

Descartes and Huxley commit “the externalist fallacy” explained in Section 7.6. So does most of the mainstream of science over centuries since. Yet philosopher Peter Singer has convincingly argued that actions like “writhing, yelping, or other forms of calling, attempts to avoid the source of pain, and many other signs” demand the recognition of pain in animals (1973). They are not automata, life-value onto-axiology adds, because *automata cannot act*. They perform no unprogrammed response *to* actions and can be turned on and off without resistance or withdrawal.

Yet philosophy in general has continued to conceive ‘*action*’ as human only. Behind this assumption lies a epochal devalorizing of animal actions and the infinite field of action value they bear. This is why industrialized humanity can systematically destroy this sublime life field without remorse or inhibition. Life-value that is not recognized does not exist.

8.1.3. The Intrinsic Life-Value of Sentient Action in Nature

Feeling life itself is not directly observable from outside, but there is likely no animate action at all without feeling *of* it. Experiencing the organism's action in some way is what all animate beings have in common - all *do something to keep going and feel this doing at some level*, however slightly - even the most primitive creatures feeling their way and eating rather than not. The meaning and value of *life* here begins with the feeling *of* its actions – what machines cannot do except in science fiction. The boundless biodiversity of it across terrestrial life is the intrinsic value of the whole field.

Each mode of life action is of intrinsic value *to the extent* of its sentient life ranges and the interactions it produces. This is its *measure*. Conversely, all life is reduced by any loss of being *able to act* - which every creature avoids or overcomes in action up the scale of life-value bearing. The value lies not in what the life *wants* (as explained in Section 3.5), but in what it can sentiently do in the fields of life. Life-value loss is in the loss of this life, infinitesimal or vast in meaning. Extinction of a *species'* life is, thus, a permanent disvalue to the extent of the fields of life which have been irreversibly lost. A species extinction spasm is what the global system's actions have together brought, and this destruction is foundationally evil by life-value measure.

We have intuitive ideas of this evil, but no clear principle of its meaning. What is destroyed is not only this experiencing action of whole species, but its countless interactions with other species - as with the “charismatic” species like tigers and polar bears, whose extinction may signal the unravelling of a whole ecosystem of sentient action. This is not a *subjective* issue of value, as the term “charismatic” may mislead us to think. It is profoundly material in nature.

8.1.4. The Issue of Good Extinctions

The value field of action lost by the extinction of a variety of mosquito or parasite, in contrast, may relieve higher fields of action to more inclusive ranges of being – songbirds from cowbirds destroying their young, for example, and harrying the deprived mothers of their free singing lives. At the level of disease-bearing flies or rats which have no end of replacing action fields when gone, the extinguishing of their fields of action can be a significant net *good* for the surrounding fields of life action, and this is a matter which is again an ultimately *objective* issue once life-value principle and measure are recognized.

8.1.5. The Epistemological Bearings

Because the epistemology of the life-value calculus is always a process of more coherently inclusive taking into account, leaving no loss to ecosystem life unrecognized on the value field of action through time, it avoids the absolutism of positions like “evolution is always a process of extinction, so what's the problem?” or, at the other extreme, “one must not ever knowingly kill any life”.

Recognition of these extremes as false *follows from* life-value onto-axiology. Its life-value calculus resolves contending false partialities like “all life is sacred” (including

septic flies), on one hand, and animal life is “only the motions of an automaton”, on the other.

8.2. From Intended Doing to the 10,000 Chariots of Life

What contemporary philosophers conceive as “action” simply precludes these onto-ethical issues. Little of the life field of action registers *as* action, let alone as of intrinsic value.

Within philosophy’s field of “theory of action”, only the actions of individual persons compute. There are manifold contesting views of what a person’s action consists in, but all agree on a given general onto-ethical criterion. *Only what a person intentionally does* counts as an action.

8.2.1. Philosophical Theories of Action: Understanding the Limits

“Action Theory” has become a standard specialty of philosophy in which the intentional acts of persons are the limits of conception. In the main, this area analyzes out competing possibilities within this limit, and attaches different theories to different ideas – for example, regarding the distinction of “*actions*” from “*events*” and where the lines of demarcation ought to be drawn.

While all this may seem arcane, there are significant stakes involved - for example, what is the person to be *held responsible for* in the action? Where does her action begin and end in guilt or liability for it? How is the agent’s intention to be prioritized within the set of conditions producing the event? Or is intention merely epiphenomenal within a deterministic material sequence? These questions have challenged philosophers over millennia.

8.2.2. From Individual Acts to the Terrestrial Field of Action and Social Responsibility

Whatever the answers to the questions posed by theories of action, they standardly examine one type of action only, *intentional* action of individual *selves*. Life-value onto-axiology is more holistic and value nuanced. It begins from the *action field* as a whole including natural and social action, and comprehends levels of action by the ranges of sentient motion they bear and enable.

Responsibility too is grounded more widely and deeply than individual actions in social rules and their enabling or disabling of life capacities. Fundamental shifts of understanding follow from these deeper grounds of understanding. For example, the standard assignment of guilt by selecting the individual intention (*mens rea*) which deviates from the norm as the cause of wrongs is rejected as an atomic, contextless reduction which presupposes these norms themselves.

8.2.3. Biodiversity as Ultimate Issue of Value

Global biodiversity is also understood as a foundational value of the world field of

action whose destruction by man-made systems raises the repressed questions of *system evil* and *collective guilt* which received theories of action and moral evaluation avoid or blinker out.

Life-value analysis overcomes this deep-structural limitation by starting with protection and furtherance of the biodiverse world of action as an ultimate value in itself, the more so the richer the biodiversity involved – with good or evil proportionate to its gain or loss. Focus on intentional individual actions, in contrast, blocks out this entire foundational problematic. The value of biodiversity itself, however, is more inclusively and exactly construed than the standard version. It subsumes human biodiversity of created forms (e.g., types of music and play), discriminates between higher and lower biodiversity (e.g., mammalian and insect), and in general follows the primary axiom principle of more coherently inclusive ranges of life action as better. These are all dimensions of a wider life-value ecology of value framed in Section 8.7.3.1.

8.2.4. Regaining the Life-Ground of Value in Understanding the World of Action

Action in the narrow sense, what people intentionally do, is thus conceived by life-value onto-axiology as the crowning tip of the life-value whole, but *not* the only or even central issue of action value. On the other hand, intentional individual action is not rejected as illusory or insignificant, as mechanical determinism and methodological collectivism do. It is recognized in full importance, but placed within a much wider concept of action to include all of the biodiverse planet of action through generational time and social-system determination of it as primary.

Life-value onto-axiology may here be seen as refining primitive intuitions into principled form. “The system is at fault” is often said, but ethics and moral theory do not enter this deepest level of analysis which life-value onto-axiology adopts as foundational. On the level of purely natural action, first peoples have revered what we call “Nature’s action field” as the living body of all value bestowed by the Creator, and demand that human action respect it. Yet anthropomorphic images without scientific analysis and within bio-regional and tribal limits of concern do not provide us with the generic life-value principles we require today.

For millennia across times and cultures, nonetheless, Nature’s immense life field of action has been spontaneously attuned to as of ultimate worth. The great value field of animate life - birds flying, fish jumping, creatures leaping and running - has been long treasured outside of science and philosophy, but usually at a pre-reflective level.

8.2.5. Infinitely Compassable Community of Species Life

Before global civilization became submerged in the subordinating calculations of instrumental reason and industrial technology, the immediate world of life movement seems to have been a vast common life-ground of intrinsic value - good and bad - in myths, legends and epics across peoples. And still today, we can the spontaneous disposition of children everywhere to take on the actions of all other beings as themselves. This great life field of natural action value might be understood as the basic birthright of the human species, but the world factory of modernity has largely

annihilated it, and we remain without a value compass to comprehend it.

The near-prehistoric Lao Tzu, however, uniquely brings the whole of the boundless lost field of life action into positive value understanding. He refers to the Tao, the way of Nature, as a “kingdom of 10,000 chariots” in the *Tao-te Ching* (circa 500 BCE). We may decode his life-value meaning as follows. Human consciousness can be attuned to and one with each and all other forms of action, riding in their chariots of being as enlightened human life in its most coherently inclusive form. The entire world of life action can be enjoyed as symphonically compassable within the horizons of one own fields of thought, felt being and action.

8.2.6. The Fall of Man

Childhood remains a window on this life-ground consciousness which, as the *Upanishads* tell us, we lose by our dividing the world by concepts - and, as life-ground philosophy adds, with no common life interest to unify across the divisions.

This unifying life field of action is metonymically expressed by first peoples when speaking of whales, bears or ravens, in short, other species, as “brothers”. When the chariots of action of other life in Nature are lost to human affiliation, this loss might be thought of as the Fall of Man. Romantic poets like William Blake attribute the lost value realm to the loss of (in Blake’s words) the powers of the “human imagination” which have fallen into “Newton’s single vision and sleep”.

Life-value understanding, in contrast, claims objective value prior to human imagination bestowing it. It understands ‘the Fall’ at an objective level - the loss of the vast kingdom of spontaneous life action and enjoyment in an industrially re-made world denuded of other species within which human beings themselves are reduced to programmed functions.

8.3. How Can the Rule of Killing Power and Terror Be Good?

The field of spontaneous life action, on the other hand, is haunted by a many-faced terror which industrial society has left behind. In natural society, humanity’s constructions are formed and built to defend *against* natural actions - against being deprived, attacked, predated, eaten alive any moment by the actions of other life, including by other human beings as alien tribes.

Here in reality, one action of life above all is prized - *the power to slay other life*, and the more immensely so, the more heroic. Rg Veda warriors, Ulysses, Beowulf and all the heroes East, West and South are greatly good because their actions can destroy the Other. The supreme value in the field of action lies in powers to annihilate alien life, with the gods worshipped for powers to do it without limit.

“This is the language of the world”, says the Indian *Mahabharata* while pointing to a higher realm of bodiless release. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) leads modern thought in saying that the human condition itself is a “war of all against all” (*bellum omnium contra omnes*) in “the State of Nature” resolvable only by an absolute power of

civilizing sovereignty with powers of life and death over everyone.

8.3.1. The Modern Way: Humanity Must Conquer Nature

We are confronted here by an underlying principle of animal action which Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) rejoiced in - *to subjugate and destroy other forms of life to expand one's own*. For man, this means being at best the beast at the top. For John Stuart Mill (1806-73) in his essay "On Nature", in stark disagreement, this law of the jungle is abhorrent - a perpetual exposure to life maiming, disease and death which he denounces in defense of industrial civilization and against any "return to Nature" or romanticization of it.

Mill puts the case powerfully: "The things which men are hanged for or imprisoned for doing to each other, are nature's everyday performances - - [while] the large proportion of animals pass their existence in tormenting and devouring other animals". "Protracted tortures and suffering - - the instinct for domination - - the wanton cruelty - - the odious scene of violence and tyranny death - - ruin and devastation" all proceed with "the most callous indifference".

Mill thus argues in the face of this condition that there is no reconciliation of human with natural values. Only human intervention in the spontaneous acts of nature and the animal world can release us from a kind of hell on earth. "The arts of human life", Mill argues - and observe that all are intentional and nowhere else found in the action world - must be, "to dig, to plough, to build to wear clothes", "bridges - - wells - - embankments - - - The ways of nature are to be conquered, not obeyed". Spontaneous biodiverse action in Nature bears no recognized value in this world-view. Only "artificial education" so that "good sentiments become so habitual, and so predominant over bad" and "sympathy cultivated to goodness and nobleness" can prevail over the natural "instincts of selfishness" and "brutality".

8.3.2. The Pessimistic Way: The Value Field of Life Action Is to Be Disconnected From

It is certainly true that the life realm of action is the field of life within which all actual destruction takes place. This bleak general fact has caused some thinkers like Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) to condemn the entire action world as an endless round of embodied appetite and dissatisfaction that is intolerable to go on bearing. It would be better in Schopenhauer's view, which adopts strains of Hinduism and Buddhism, to seek past the "will to life" altogether for a detached consciousness without any desire for life at all.

8.3.2.1. Whether or not we agree with the idea of detachment from the life realm, the problem of the planetary life condition that provokes it is undeniable. Underneath all the goods of life which have so far been affirmed in this investigation lies a brutal universal fact that no-one can truthfully deny or escape. *Life destroys itself violently and continuously in its process of reproduction*. That is, the pessimist may plausibly claim, its ultimate ecology of value.

Natural life's pervasive competition for life means and space at every level may thus be condemned rather than celebrated as a system of *unbearable disvalue*. The lower and less offensive life is, the more of it quickly dies by being eaten alive. How, then, in view of all this, can the life field of action be coherently conceived as an ultimate realm of value *in itself*?

8.4. Facing the Ultimate Problem of Terrestrial Life

It is here that the ultimate metaphysical problem of world life is posed. It is beyond human causation, and it appears to be a permanent structure of the life condition. Life itself, many philosophers have implied, is a built-in tragedy and oppression for which philosophy is to be pursued as "the consolation". This is the famous title concept of *The Consolation of Philosophy* by the emperor-condemned Boethius (480-526). He was inspired by Socrates who welcomed his own death by execution for the higher, pure realm of perfect ideas to which he expected to go.

Whatever we might think of such philosophy, which is an ageless subcurrent in the history of civilized thought, the nature of life as embodied action is, one way or another, repudiated as evil by its nature.

8.4.1. The Grounding Challenge to a Life-Value Onto-Ethic

Even if we rule out from consideration the systems of artificial killing deployed by man against man and other life forms and even if we bracket from our view the killing fields of Nature, we are still left with the problem of certain death for every one of us. Inevitable organic degeneration and death for "every moving thing in the moving world" is built into the life condition of the whole material action realm.

All that acts dies. Yet worse, all that dies is first pursued, diseased, starved or in some way deprived of what is most dear to it. Not even the most advanced humanity can escape the fate of knowing certain death is coming, and usually by degeneration of the capacities of life and action which life has been directed to developing and preserving. Herein lies the deepest paradox of value in the embodied condition.

8.4.2. The Idealist Solution: Release from Embodied Life by Thought

The ultimate condition of mortality and pain for all moving beings is ultimately why Mahayana Buddhists, Jains and Vedanta Brahmins seek long before Schopenhauer to be liberated from embodied life itself – to decouple to a realm of pure consciousness free from the horrors that all desiring flesh is exposed to.

This is also why in the West, Gnostics cultivate a vision of a pre-fallen state where the divisions into separate selves have not yet been formed. We might say that all religious thought systems and many philosophies are designed to cope with this division into selves, lonely struggle and certain death. Only by grounding in a state beyond this world, it is believed, can this ultimate problem be faced or resolved. The master skeptic himself, Socrates, supposes this pure ideal realm beyond terrestrial existence for "the release of the soul from the chains of the body", as he says in Plato's *Phaedo*. His

conception has endured for millennia, in Augustinian Christianity most clearly, but also as an ultimate idea of civilized thought.

8.4.3. The Onto-Axiological Contradictions for Life-Value Philosophy

This idea of human life and action as “fastened to a dying animal”, in poet W.B. Yeats’ immortal figure, poses a metaphysical problem to life-value onto-axiology most of all. Whether recognized or not, one great underlying paradox of all embodied life is posed: *All are condemned to suffer the opposite of what they are impelled by nature and ethic to protect.*

If this-worldly life is structured such that all individual lives, who normally seek above all to live, are most of all made certain to die, and all of Nature as well as past civilizations are ordered by a logic of killing and subjugating other life for means to carry on doing so, and all decline and die in *any* case, how can one *not* value release from this world?

8.5. The Counterarguments of Life-Value Theory

The question appears unanswerable on the face of it. Yet if we apply the ultimate principle of distinction of life-value understanding - that which enables more comprehensive ranges of life versus that which does not - we discover the answer by posing a deeper question that it entails: *What change of any regulating principle of the terrestrial life system can be conceived by which any of the natural laws of non-human predation and individual death for all could be made better enabled through time?*

The question answers the problem from within the life realm itself. No better way can even be conceived. What *law of nature*, including of certain death for humans and predation for most other life, can one rewrite to make terrestrial life better? If one can think of none, and no-one has, rejection of what cannot be naturally better is incoherent. Repudiation of what cannot be better in principle on the basis of “another life” elsewhere has no evidence for it. Moreover, rejection of embodied life is self-contradictory as long as one continuously chooses to keep one’s life going every moment in countless ways. Denial of any value to what one has continues so protect and serve every moment is absurd.

These arguments are not met, however, from Socrates through Schopenhauer to the present.

8.6. The Life Values of the Predatory System of Nature

Yet is it really true that none of the “natural laws of non-human predation and individual death” can be improved on? Let us consider the harshest law of nature, the predation cycle wherein, as Mill puts it, “the large proportion of animals pass their existence in tormenting and devouring other animals”. Certainly there can be no doubt that Mill is right. Almost all life lives by feeding on other life, and much of this is terror for the prey.

Yet there can also be no doubt that it is by *nature's cycles of predation that the plenitude of biodiverse life in active interconnection is produced.*

8.6.1. Nature's Value System and the Primary Axiom

Let us explain this meaning. The predator chasing and, in the normally small percentage of instances, actually catching its prey, is not only a universal form of action which enables the *predator's* reproduction, but also stimulates in the present and through time the very flourishing varieties of action of all animate life, *including the prey.*

Consider the action life of any small or prey animal in Nature. Whether it is a mouse, a songbird or a deer, it is perpetually alert to possible predator presence, and the flashing speed and dexterity of its body movements are beyond any found in civilization. If we compare corresponding domesticated animal life, the action value and experience internal to it is an anaesthetized caricature in comparison.

What largely explains the difference is that the experiencing animal action in the wild is of the prey looking out for its predators; while the predators themselves have greatest action value in being life capable of catching the prey. Myriad moments of every life-action process within and outside the red moment are thus enabled by the law of predation in Nature. In this light, we may consider its governing form of action as a natural system of life value expressing the primary axiom of value.

8.6.2. Biodiverse Action Value Created by Predator-Prey Order

Reflection on this regenerative and creative principle of the natural life-value system will not easily find exception. Careful observation of the songbird, for example, cannot discover one element of the bird's motions, colors, postures, flights, landings, and calls - all constituents of its action life-value - which does not also enable it to escape predator seizure.

While human images and conceptions fix on the relatively rare ratio of bloodshed in the awesome life field of action, this fixation occurs by closure to the life-action whole. How many times have we even seen predation occur in Nature, as distinct from what is shown in typically orchestrated entertainments? One might say that not Nature but perception has come to select for action violence because it is more exciting to watch at a primeval level, and so its presence has been multiplied while screening out the richer field of action in its symphonic infinitude of modes.

8.6.3. Rethinking the Pacification of Nature

An ultimate onto-axiological question may be posed. Is there in fact any moment of life action in the great animal kingdom of calls, sounds, and colors in infinite self-moving modes which is *not* generated by the intertwined predator and mating patterns in the vast plenum of natural action? This is not a question posed by Mill or other known value theorist. It can only arise from a standpoint which first recognizes in principle the great and intrinsic value field of natural action as such.

The ancient pacific vision of the “lion lying down with the lamb” overlooks this inner logic of life-value in Nature. At the same time, the progressive industrial breeding and domestication of animal life on earth eliminates this life-value field on the ground. Behind a rising reduction of wildlife and biodiversity in the world lies the general failure to recognize the ultimate value in itself of the life action field. “The law of the jungle” is a generic term which already preconceives it, on the contrary, as evil in nature.

8.6.4. The Ecocidal Implications

Finding an elaborated and reproducible food supply for innumerable predators to substitute for their innumerable prey is not viable in any case. Nonetheless the phenomenon of *predator as pet* has redirected more food to this silent transformation than scores of poor countries have to eat at the very same time as the wildlife world is cumulatively erased. The ruling value system again governs beneath individual intention as ecocidal.

On the other side, geometrically multiplying populations of former prey animals without predators to consume them have - and this is known - become plagues on natural life support systems and biodiverse life. Goats, pigs, rabbits, deer have deracinated the soil, vegetation and tree covers and habitats in formerly thriving bio-regions, from Asia and ancient Greece to modern Australia and Muskoka. Without understanding of the life action field as a whole, much can go very wrong.

8.7. The Absolutist Fallacy of Reverence for All Life

Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) expressed an absolute “reverence for life” which famously moved him not to kill the flies in his operating theatre in Africa as a missionary. He describes his life ethic in terms that seems to instantiate life-value onto-axiology. In his 1936 essay, “The Ethics of Reverence for Life”, he powerfully writes:

The man who has become a thinking fellow - - accepts as good preserving life, promoting life, developing all life that is capable of development to its highest possible value. He considers as evil destroying life, repressing life that is capable of development. That is the absolute, fundamental principle of ethics, and it is a fundamental postulate of thought.

8.7.1. The Shared Life Ethics of Schweitzer and Gandhi

On the face of it, life-value onto-axiology agrees with Schweitzer on every point. The life-and-death difference, however, is that ‘reverence for all life’ lacks any principle to identify or explain why mammalian life with a nervous system and consciousness is worth more than a slug or a fly. As other known positions of this principle, the *immense life-value involved in the difference* is blocked out. Schweitzer like Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948) makes his position absolute and indiscriminate without recognizing the problem. Schweitzer says (italics added): “the *absolute* ethics of the will-to-live must reverence *every* form of life, seeking so far as possible to refrain from destroying *any* life, regardless of its particular type”.

Schweitzer acknowledges that “man is subject to the puzzling and inexorable law of being obliged to live at the cost of other life”. For him even killing an indoor fly is “violence against life”. Gandhi and the Jains go further. They hold that even breathing so that “tiny microbial things” may be swallowed is violence against life. Jains who influenced Gandhi thus wear masks. The problem of such life ethics is constant across variations. The lack of any principle of life-value measure is, however, self-undercutting. That is, it rejects positions to *protect* life as violence *against* life, and so ends in absurd conclusions.

8.7.2. Life-Value Onto-Ethics Solves the Problem

Absolutist “life ethics” entails beneath notice a respect for life forms that despoil life *because* it rules out the immensely greater life-value of the beings they plague. Equality of life right leads to bizarre implications. Consider the malaria parasite and its mosquito host reproducing from blood and infection. Is such life sacred? The life reverence principle has no criterion or standard to distinguish at this life-and-death level.

The primary axiom of value supplies this missing criterion of more and less life-value. Unless e, there is some evident thinking or feeling side of being a fly or parasite - as distinguished from mechanical reflex actions - its life-value is unsubstantiated beyond these motions. In contrast, there is a boundless capacity of thinking and feeling evident in human beings and other higher mammals which malaria-bearing mosquitos and other insects and pests bite, infect and infest with no evident life function. Eliminating a near null life-value to protect boundless life-value is, then, *coherent* life reverence and respect while revering any merely parasitical and ecologically unsupportive form of life is not. Life-value onto-axiology recognizes the vast life-field value which lies in the *difference between them* which is not recognized by absolute life reverence. In truth, such life reverence contradicts itself even in the philosophies of such great souls as Schweitzer and Gandhi. What life-value analysis spells out is what they have omitted – the measure of life value itself.

8.7.3. The Life Compossibility Principle

Life-value measure does *not* mean lesser life value can be therefore be sacrificed to greater, or even sacrificed at all. On the contrary, life-value onto-axiology entails that the most inclusively possible life fields and value are to be sustained and furthered. The primeval pattern of blood-sacrifice is well known to us, and we seem to be developing beyond it. Yet in fact we retain its pattern of thinking when we assume that either this or that must be sacrificed to achieve what we want. A life-value must be forfeited or “traded off” - say, animal habitat for homes.

Life-value judgment, in contrast, affirms the life-value of both sides whether or not one form of life is greater in value than the other, and seeks always to sustain both so far as this is life-coherently possible. In the case of human dwellings and habitat, both may become more biodiverse and interesting by both being affirmed in their united management. Birds, for example, love clearings as well as trees, and are drawn to feeders in greater numbers and variety where there is human action enabling this. Far from one being sacrificed to the other, wildlife to human homes, both together become

life richer by intelligent human action. This is an expression of life-value ontology's *compossibility principle*.

Even pests from which human life action requires freedom to flourish do not need to be sacrificed. Life-value logic entails that all forms of life are normally better preserved - even if one is of far greater value than those bothering it. This compossibilist approach is normally possible by separate life niches where they conflict. Thus although sacrifice of rats everywhere in homes is necessary, human-made screen systems with no exposed edibles to attract them overcomes the evil of killing them. The same goes for flies, bugs, and mice. More generally, sacrifice of *any* life form is chosen against so far as this choice is consistent with flourishing higher life. We may bear in mind here the general criterion of '*true development*' explained in Section 5.10.3.1.

8.7.3.1. Life-Value Ecology

The principle of life compossibility goes a very long way. Sacrifice of life value is in fact seldom required once this principle guides decision rather than the either-or sacrificial value regime of contemporary civilization - from pervasive herbicides and pesticides as 'necessary' for human well-being to erasing bird habitat for 'development'. The problem here is deeper, however, than mere anthropocentrism. The either-or sacrificial mindlock applies even more destructively within the human species itself - for example, the assumption that unemployment is necessary for economic advance - "either unemployment or stagnation". In truth, the values of contending life interests are almost always compassable. What is lacking is inclusive life-value judgment.

Development *or* environment, houses *or* trees, pesticides *or* infestation, jobless people *or* no advance, war *or* loss of freedom - these exclusionary disjunctions pervade every quarter, and material holocausts trail in their wake across the planet. The principle of life-value compossibility is opposite. It seeks coherently inclusive possibility in which no life-value is sacrificed by human action, the logic of *life-value ecology* at the human level.

8.8. The Human Turn to Symbolic Life, Self-Made Rules and the Civil Commons

Nature, as Mill argues, is blind to life-value loss, however profuse its life creation. Its ecology is sacrificial in principle - "natural selection" entails destruction of what is not selected. It falls to humanity to develop life-value consciousness as more inclusively coherent by rule and design.

How utopian! some might reply. Yet this very idea is already implied by the concept of "humanity" - as in "we must show some humanity here". "Humane" is another concept which implies the same ultimate standard of affirming life beyond self and seeking to prevent its suffering or destruction. It is a defining principle of human being found in Confucianism after Mencius (379-281 BCE?) and Jewish prophets like Isaiah (circa 710 BCE) before the Jesus of the Gospel of Thomas and subsequent Christian saints like St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226).

8.8.1. Revolution of the World of Action by Language

Language begins the human turn from the animal's immediate identity with the organism. With cultural transmission of symbol systems across generations, conceptual and image universals become the frame of human action beyond bodily desires and environmental triggers alone.

Human evolution thus develops beyond the blind mechanism of *genetic* transmission and natural selection determining life reproduction at the pre-human level. *Sociobiology*, however, falsely confuses genetic lines with genetic determinism – blinkering out the manifold variations of human forms of life *within* the same inherited gene pool. What is missed by this mechanical reduction is the *cultural* level of evolution which human rules decide beyond genes in radically different ways.

In fact, humanity's cumulative collective inheritances of language and rules of action are not determined by material conditions of even genes and environment *together*. They distinguish the human species as *self creating* on an emergent plane not elsewhere found in Nature. Certainly human beings cannot fall upwards, eat air for nutrition, or (yet) reprogram genes to produce white skin. Yet they can and do imagine these and countless other possibilities, and then organize the world to make them occur in accordance with rules and symbolic plans which they construct themselves.

8.8.2. A Higher Ontological Plane: Life-Enabling Norms Nowhere Else in Nature

In short, human forms of life are no longer directly regulated by genotypes and environmental conditions and cues as in the pre-human world, but by *self-made norms* within the wide limits of physical laws. Certain common human-made forms nowhere else found in Nature's vast world of biodiverse action are revealing of the human creator across cultures: not only shared languages, but the growing and preparation of foods, the making of clothing and external instrumentation of bodies, interfamilial exchanges of goods, the prohibition of excrement in the lived environment, mutual care of some kind across age and gender differences, non-violence to the young and helpless, and ceremonial disposal of bodies at death.

What is most revealing about these *cultural universals* is that all are *life-enabling* by *community-rule constructions*. And yet all vary immensely and unpredictably in their specific rules and actions – thereby revealing unseen *choice spaces* of individual and social self-determination within natural laws which cannot predict either level of human self making.

Each of these community constructions is rule-governed and symbolically transmitted, all extend fields of action, and all are found in every form of human society. Yet *none* is inalterable as physical laws are. All are open to social choice in their construction and reproduction which may be more or less life enabling, that is good or bad, better or worse, in objective life-value terms. These human-made cultural universals not only admit of radical cultural variations, but *perversions* which are directly identifiable by life-value principle – for example, funerals that bury the living with the dead, or life disabling cosmetic adornments and mutilations. Here as elsewhere, humanity makes

itself good or evil by its rules.

8.8.2.1. Civil Commons Forms

These deep structures of human action across times and tribes are non-existent in other species, although there are inchoate forms of them in other mammals with developed nervous systems – for example, elephant graveyards without a life-protective hygiene function. In general, each of these cultural universals provides *common life security* to community members, and may progress to higher levels of enabling the lives of all across classes.

This is the plane of the *civil commons*. Its socially created structures of action are unified by one meta-principle - the *regulating of society to enable its members' universal access to life goods*. The civil commons begin with language, but even it can be subverted through elective enclosure by priesthoods and corporations.

While civil commons are self-evident once made recognizable by a defining principle, they have not in fact been recognized in their unifying elective pattern by even Rousseau, Marx, Polanyi, Chomsky and other great contributors to understanding the elements at work. What is least of all recognized is their evolving realization of the primary axiom of life-value. What is simply blocked out by contemporary economic and philosophical theories is that these civil commons make possible the *individuation* of society's members – the long labor within the human field of action we know as history.

Human life for the individual as well as society advances or regresses by its civil commons constructions. For example, wherever universal access to life goods of any kind develop - from language itself to shared water provision and flood controls, to universal health and education, to knowledge and art commons, to public life spaces and universal pathways, to disability support and old age security - the *action-regulating order* is the civil commons in some form. It is the ultimate but now amnesiac infrastructure of human development across the world's cultures.

8.8.3. Cumulative Human Learning across Age and Death: The Civil Commons Bearer

Cultural evolution is well enough known, but less explicit in understanding is that human life can increase in the cumulative action of learning and continuously transmit it to others despite the radical decline of individual capacities of action by aging and in spite of death itself. Unlike the action world of any other natural being, humanity's distinguishing life capabilities of learning, expression and communication grow long after flight-fight peaks of physical capacity have passed and can continue in symbolic action long after death on the organism level. This is the immortality of learning which distinguishes the human condition, and is one level of the life-value solution to the problem of death which has long haunted philosophy.

The advance of human civilization and the individual at once depends, in fact, on this ever growing commons of understanding. Today, unprecedentedly, universally

accessible knowledge stocks *can* transmit in nano-seconds around the world in ‘cyber-space’ without price barriers. Yet as with the ruling global corporate order itself, criteria to tell truth from falsehood, good from bad - or more exactly, what coherently enables rather than disables human life and life conditions - are absent. This is the challenge which life-value onto-axiology meets.

8.9. Demystifying the Life Principle: From Life Force to Life-Value Axiology

Friedrich Nietzsche is known as the premier philosopher of “the life principle”, but he conceives of the human action field in opposite terms - as driven by the predatory savagery of a natural aristocracy which a slavish moral community seeks to bring down to its level. In works like *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche affirms life as the logic of predatory action for higher humanity and the beasts alike, with the *blond bestie* his heroic archetype. Reconciliation of humanity and the beast occurs not by lifting man up from the law of the jungle, but rather by restoring it at the human level.

The reader might be startled that such a view of life could be conceived as affirming ‘the life principle’. Philosophers might reply, “He does compared to his philosophical antagonist, Arthur Schopenhauer, who advocates extinction of the will to life altogether”. Readers not trained in philosophy might think that both philosophers speak in extremes. Yet we must bear in mind that the leading contemporary expert of human stories, myths and legends, agrees with Nietzsche’s predatory model. Indeed he affirms it as undeniable in his signature work, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1949): *Man is a beast of prey, that is simply a fact of nature*”.

8.9.1. Predator or Post Predator: The Ultimate Choice of Humanity?

Economic historian Thorstein Veblen and renowned scientist Albert Einstein disagree. They argue that a socialist rise above “the predatory stage of human development” is an imperative of human life survival and advance. Again we see that those holding to a ‘life principle’ of action have altogether contradictory positions. When contradictory positions have the same meaning applied to them, a deep confusion in principle is evident. We might agree with Veblen and Einstein, but they do not provide any unifying explanation of life-value or its measure to ground us in directive principle across situations and times.

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411. [This study moves underneath the phenomena of 'left' and 'right' as primary naming categories of ethico-political opposition to the unexamined principles governing their value-stand meanings since the ancients, and how they provide an explanatory moral compass today.]

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 argued to be a universal but defeasible form of fallacious thought and social life.]

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 [This monograph demonstrates the locked choice-spaces of the military paradigm of war across cultures and times, and explains the onto-ethical alternative of warring for life value and life support systems.]

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. (1999/2002), *The Cancer Stage of Capitalism*, 312 pp. London and Tokyo: Pluto and Springer Press. [This work explains how ruling value systems since the ancients may be life-blind and yet presupposed by the leading critical philosophers of the period, spelling out this pattern in the money-value sequences of late capitalism which are argued to be systematically carcinogenic at the social level of life organization.]

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.]

McMurtry, John (2007), "The Postmodern Voice of Empire: The Metalogic of Unaccountability", *The Postcolonial and the Global*, (eds. Krishnaswamy K. and Hawley J.), 328 pp. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.[This is a systematic life-value critique of postmodern thought system within a representative text of postmodern/postcolonial positions.]

Merchant, Carolyn (1980), *The Death of Nature*, 292pp. New York: Harper and Row.[This work provides a prototype eco-feminist analysis of the images of modern scientific mechanism since Bacon and their violent usurpation of the prior central metaphor of 'earth as nurturing mother'.]

Mill, John Stuart (1963-91), *Collected Works*, 33 vols. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. [These volumes contain the works cited in this essay, *On Liberty* and *On Utilitarianism* and the essay, "On Nature" from his *Three Essays on Religion*.]

Miller, Peter and Westra, Laura, eds (2002), 326 pp. *Just Ecological Integrity: The Ethics of Planetary Life*, Boston: Rowman and Littlefield. [Representative text of original work in environmental ethics by philosophers, social scientists and ecologists on occasion of the Earth Charter 2000.]

Mill, J.S. (1860/1996) *Utilitarianism*, 260pp. New York: Oxford University Press [This volume contains 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".]

Miller, P. And Westra, L (2002), *Just Ecological Integrity: The Ethics of Planetary Life*, 326pp. Boston: Rowman and Littlefield. [This cross-current collection of articles, written for the occasion of the Earth Charter 2000 in Costa Rica, provides state-of-the-art analyses at the interface between human understanding and values, on the one hand, and ecological challenges of sustainability, on the other.]

Mirowski, P. (2000), *Machine Dreams*, 540 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press [This study tracks the machine model in models of applied cognitive science 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 the works in value theory referred to and critiqued throughout the Theme Essay, such as *The Genealogy of Morals* and *Beyond Good and Evil* which explain Nietzsche's master idea that "values are constructs of domination", and that moral will is ultimately a "will to power": with "slave morality" too as a will to power moved by *ressentiment* against the rule of "nature's aristocracy", to whose "free expression" inferior human beings "must be reduced to slaves, to tools". Martin Heidegger and Michel Foucault diversely express the Nietzschean value ontology - the former in a dichotomy of *Sein* (Being) and *das Mann* (loosely, superior and mass man), and the latter in the organizing idea of a ruling knowledge/power alliance with no limit.]

Noddings, Nel (1984/2003), *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education*, 275pp. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. [This work leads in developing a concrete relational morality of *caring* with no onto-ethical ground.]

Noonan, J. (2003), *Critical Humanism and the Politics of Difference*, 189 pp. Kingston-Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. [This study exposes a deep-structural contradiction between postmodern denial of any universal human essence *and* the presupposition of just such a value essence for human life to self-determine differences.] // [This pathbreaking study examines postmodernism in the works of its leading authors (e.g., principally Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard and Iris Young), and exposes a deep-structural contradiction - between postmodern denial of any universal human essence *and* the presupposition of just such a value essence - for human life to self-determine - which Noonan shows is implicit in "the principle of difference" itself, and in submerged humanity's continuous uprisings against ruling systems of oppression.]

Nozick, R. (1974), *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, 367pp. New York: Basic Books. [A very influential work rejecting liberal arguments for equality of rights in favour of rights of private property to trump any kind of redistributive ethic, argument or policy.]

M.C. Nussbaum and Amartya Sen 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'Neill, Hilary Putnam, Charles Taylor, and Michael Walzer, on equality, capability and well-being, gender justice, and standards of living: none of which grounds in 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.]

Olson, M.(1965) *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, 176pp. Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press. [Along with Arrow's Paradox, the classical and more comprehensive statement of the problem of collective action based on individual choice functions alone.]

Ostrom, Elinor (1990) *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, 280 pp. Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press. [Recipient of the 2009 Nobel Prize in Economics, Ostrom confines her study to small-scale commons organized and governed by individuals without government funding, legal enforcement, or life-value criterion.]

G. Outka and J.P. Reeder eds. (1993), *Prospectus for a Common Morality*, 302pp. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [This collection of original articles includes internationally recognized leaders in the field with, as elsewhere, 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 famous principle of "Pareto optimality/efficiency" is based on dyadic asset exchange with no relation to life value.]

Parfit, D. (1984), *Reasons and Persons*, 543pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. [The definitive work of this

author and of contemporary discourse on “personal identity”, exemplifying fine-grained argumentation on the idea that “personal identity” means sameness through time.]

Patel, Raj (2009), *The Value of Nothing: Where Everything Costs Much More than We Think*, 250pp. Toronto: Harper-Collins [Useful work on global market failures and commons options.]

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 the general value theory of the good = what is desired.]

Plato (1961), *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (ed. E. Hamilton and H. Cairns), Pantheon Books: New York. [The complete dialogues in which Socrates’ and Plato’s idealist “Theory of Forms” posits pure, transcendental and eternal ideas of which all material entities are but inferior, mutable copies.]

Polanyi, Karl (1944/2000), *The Great Transformation*, 315 pp. Boston: Beacon Press. [This canonical study lays bare the life fabric of violent transition from pre-market village society through the utopian free market cataclysm to the 1944 understanding of community instituted by public institution and the welfare state.]

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

Rawls, J. (1967), *A Theory of Justice*. 542pp. Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press. [This is the leading work in the field whose paradigmatic method assumes self-maximizing rational choice “including wanting a larger share for oneself” and abstract agents and institutions decoupled from life needs and collective support systems.]

Reid, G.B.R. (2007), *Biological Emergences: Evolution by Natural Experiment*, 517pp. Cambridge Mass: MIT Press. [This work by a biologist explains how the “autocatalyzing” organism is a coordinating system which reduces infinite interactive possibilities to predictable pathways of homeostasis but is sufficiently flexible to allow for emergence of new types of life.]

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 purged of substantive issues of value.]

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, with value choice erased.]

Rorty, R. (1989), *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, 289 pp. New York: Cambridge University Press. [With his earlier *The Mirror of Nature* (1979), this work is 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 [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 choosing “the common interest” to constitute 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 regret of 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 contemporary economics in which the preface invokes the value imperative to “Spread the gospel of economics anyway we can”.]

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*, seeking to synthesize individual existential choice with Marxian dialectical reason.]

Schopenhauer, Arthur (1818/1957), *The World as Will and Representation*, 3 vols. London: Routledge. [This is Schopenhauer's definitive work, the classic "pessimistic philosophy" in virtue of its depiction of cosmic life as a round of blind desire, competitive struggle and suffering which leads reason to "denial of the will to live".]

Schweitzer, Albert (1936), "The Ethics of Reverence for Life", *Christendom*, 1, 225-39. [This is perhaps the most crystalline argument for Schweitzer's flagship "new ethics" rebutting prior ethics for "an absolute ethics of will-to-live [which] must reverence every form of life, seeking so far as possible to refrain from destroying any life, regardless of its particular type".]

Searle, J.R. (1995), *The Construction of Social Reality*, 238 pp. New York: Free Press. [Searle argues clearly for the irreducibly symbolic and rule-governed character of objective human reality not possibly explicable by physical particles and fields of force.]

Sen, Amartya (1977). "Rational Fools: A Critique of the Behavioral Foundations of Economic Theory", *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 6, 317-44. [This classic article argues against the purely selfish understanding of self-maximizing rationality.]

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.]

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, it argues for love as "bestowal of value" on the love object without life-value considerations.]

Singer, Peter, *Animal Liberation: Man's Inhumanity to Animals* (1983). 302 pp. Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: Thorsons Press. [This is 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.]

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 influential work in history, the founding work of "the moral science" of modern economics.]

Spinoza, Baruch (1985), *The Collected Works of Spinoza* (ed. E. Curley), 7 vols. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [Spinoza's most studied 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.]

Tompkins, P. And Bird, C., *The Secret Life of Plants* (1973). 402 pp. New York: Harper & Row [This book provides extensive evidence for the sentience of plants.]

Taylor, Charles (1989), *Sources of the self: the making of the modern identity*, 601pp. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. [This is a standard work in what is called "communitarian ethics" for its grounding in historically developed social relations as distinct from abstract liberal selves maximizing in a "value-neutral void", but without any common life interest or base.]

Thoreau, Henry (1965), *Walden, and other writings*. 732 pp. New York: Modern Library. [Thoreau's classic writings affirming a life of harmonious simplicity and awakens in Nature and his explanation of opposition to war by non-violent civil disobedience.]

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, here the Tibetan Buddhist "vehicle of the thunderbolt".]

Vico, G. (1724/1984), *The New Science*, 445 pp. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press. [In which Vico argues that humanity can only know for certain that which it has created because it is directly our construction.]

Weisbrot, M., Baker, D., and Rosnick, D. (2006). "The Scorecard on Development: 25 Years of Diminishing Progress", *International Journal of Health Services* 36,2: 211-234.[Scientific identification of the pattern of degrading human life systems during market-system globalization.]

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.]

Wilson E.O. (1984) *Biophilia* (157 pp.) Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press. [An eminent entomologist proposes the "biophilia hypothesis" of an innate "affinity with nature ingrained in our genotype" to explain "why humans care for other species unrelated to them".]

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" of philosophy with no reference to the world beyond "language games".]

World Commission of the Environment and Development (1986). *Our Common Future*, New York: Oxford University Press.[This famous work endorses "five to ten times" more commodity system "growth" with no life standards of "sustainable development".]

M.E. Zimmerman, J.B. Callicott, J.Clark, G. Sessions, K. J. Warren eds. (1998). *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*. 490 pp. 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.