

Weal: The Human Core of Well-Being as Attested by Social and Life Sciences

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Abstract : A finite set of cardinal needs define the human core of living well shaped on the evolutionary time scale as attested by social and life sciences of the last decades. Well-being is the purported state of living well. Living of humans akin any other living beings involves the exchange of vital substance with nature, maintaining a supportive symbiosis with an array of other living beings, living up to bonds to kin and exerting efforts to sustain living. A supportive natural environment, access to material resources, the nearness to fellow beings, and life sustaining activity are prerequisites of well-being. Well-living is prone to misinterpretation as an individual achievement, one lives well only and only if bonded to human relationships, related to a place, incorporated in nature. Akin all other forms of it, human life is a self-sustaining arrangement. One may say that the substance of life is life, and not materials, products, and services converted into life. The human being remains shaped on an evolutionary time scale and is enabled within the non-altering core of human being, invariant of cultural differences in earthly space and time. Present paper proposes the introduction of weal, the missing link in the causal chain of societal performance and the goodness of life. Interpreted differently over the ages, cultures and disciplines, instead of well-being, the construct in general use, weal is proposed as the underlying foundation of well-being. Weal stands for the totality of socialised reality as framing well-being for the individual beyond the possibility of deliberate choice. The descriptive approach to weal, mapping it under the guidance of discrete scientific disciplines reveals a limited set of cardinal aspects, labeled here the cardinal needs. Cardinal expresses the fundamental reorientation weal can bring about, needs deliver the sense of sine qua non. Weal is conceived as a oneness mapped along eight cardinal needs. The needs, approached as aspects instead of analytically isolated factors do not require mutually exclusive definitions. To serve the purpose of reorientation, weal is operationalised as a domain in multidimensional space, each dimension encompassing an optimal level of availability of the fundamental satisfiers between the extremes of drastic insufficiency and harmful excess, ensured by actual human effort. Weal seeks balance among the material and social aspects of human being while allows for cultural and individual uniqueness in attaining human flourishing.

Keywords : human well-being, development, economic theory, human needs

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