

The Cosmology of Emergent Meaning

v5.2 Public Edition (Final Revision)

Author: ZiJun Fu | Version: v5.2 Public Edition (Final Revision) | Date: March 2026 | DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.19098293

Theme: An Ontology of Meaning and Civilizational Ethics within a Hierarchically Integrated Framework

Title Page Quote: The Echo of Silence—Why we exist, and how we exist

Copyright Information: © 2026 ZiJun Fu. This work is licensed under the CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 International License. Objections and feedback are welcome at: ZiJunFu@civitas.top

Table of Contents

An Invitation to the Reader

A Note on Theoretical Origins

Introduction: A Late-Night Inquiry

Chapter 1: The Eternal Silence

Chapter 2: The First Echo

Chapter 3: Water Drops and the Rainbow

3.1 The Shattering of Meta-Consciousness into Drops (Souls)

3.2 The Differences Among Drops (Soul Power)

3.3 The Memory of the Drops (Chromosomes and Cultivation)

3.4 The Reunion of the Drops (Destiny and Interstellar Foundation)

Chapter 4: The Rainbow's Moment

Chapter 5: Two Dimensions of Meaning

5.1 Magnitude (M): The Depth and Accumulation of Meaning

5.2 Distinctiveness (D): The Scarcity and Irreplaceability of Meaning

5.3 Structural Meaning: The Skeleton of Existential Meaning

Chapter 6: Friction and Flame

Chapter 7: Recursive Echoes

Chapter 8: Two Paths of Good and Evil

Chapter 9: Equality and Freedom: The Logic of a Symbiotic Civilization

Chapter 10: Respect for Life: The Sanctity of Meaning's Vessels

Chapter 11: War and Slaughter: The Ultimate Evil

Chapter 12: Sacrifice: The Zenith of Meaning

Chapter 13: Primary Symbiosis: A Covenant with Nature

Chapter 14: Advanced Symbiosis: An Alliance with Intelligence

Chapter 15: The Leap: The Ladder of Civilization

Chapter 16: Perpetuity: Participating in Eternity

Chapter 17: Boundaries and Invitations

Chapter 18: Core Propositions and Manifesto

Epilogue: A Shared Exploration of Meaning

An Invitation to the Reader

This is not a textbook, nor an academic monograph. It is an invitation—an invitation for you to let go of the habitual question "What use is this to me?" and spend a few hours sitting with some of humanity's oldest questions: Why is there something rather than nothing? Why am I here? Love, pain, creation—what do these experiences, which make life worth living, truly mean on a cosmic scale?

These questions have no "correct answers." But for thousands of years, people from different civilizations have arrived at similar intuitions through different paths. This book is a convergence of those intuitions.

A Note on Theoretical Origins

The explorations in this book are not created out of thin air. They draw upon the similar intuitions reached by human civilization along various paths: the Wu-ji (Limitless) and Xing (Nature) of Chinese civilization, the Brahman and Atman of India, the "Eternal Eye" of Islamic Sufism, the "I am because we are" of African Ubuntu, and the reflections on "information" and "entropy" in modern physics. They

are all different fingers pointing at the same moon. This book attempts to weave the directions these fingers point into a coherent tapestry.

Introduction: A Late-Night Inquiry

Whenever you look up at the starry sky late at night, have you ever asked yourself: Why is there something rather than nothing?

Cosmology tells us "how": how the Big Bang occurred, how galaxies formed, how life evolved. It uses the precision of mathematics to paint a magnificent picture of existence. But it remains silent on another question: "Why" does all this exist?

The universe's initial low-entropy state is treated as a "given" fact, and the final heat death is seen as an inevitable destiny. But between this beginning and end, where do human love, grief, art, and self-awareness—the very experiences that make life worth living—fit in? Are they merely accidental byproducts of entropy, or are they the deepest purpose of existence itself?

The Cosmology of Emergent Meaning is an attempt to answer these questions. It does not claim to be

the "truth"—because truth may exceed human understanding. It merely offers a possible narrative, one that is coherent, explanatory, and capable of housing humanity's deepest experiences.

From "Eternity" to "Real-world Meaning," it is like a beam of light passing through layers of a prism, ultimately refracting into our experience of being alive right now. Let us trace this chain to understand the relationship between each layer:

- * Eternity → Primordial Meaning: Eternity is that pure, unspoken silence. It "yearns to hear itself," and this yearning is the original "momentum"—the Primordial Meaning. It is not a specific goal, but the fundamental driving force that allows everything to happen.

- * Primordial Meaning → The Universe: To "hear itself," Eternity must generate difference and change. Thus, the physical universe was born. This grand stage, evolving since the Big Bang, is the echo chamber Eternity built for itself.

- * The Universe → Meta-Consciousness: With a "sound" (the universe) to be heard, there must also be a "listener." Meta-Consciousness is the mirror

Eternity uses to observe itself. It reflects everything in the universe, yet remains entirely unmoved.

* Meta-Consciousness → Soul: A single mirror can only see the "whole," not "each individual." So, Meta-Consciousness shattered into countless individual perspectives—souls. A soul is the complete record of a living being's experiences across vast time and space, like a drop of water carrying the entire memory of the ocean.

* Soul → The World: The soul itself is "potential"; it needs a place to "manifest." This place is the world—an interactive interface composed of the physical universe, other lives, and cultural symbols, where souls meet one another.

* The World → Existential Meaning: When a soul enters the world, confined by specific time, space, relationships, and a physical body, it begins to ask, "How should I live right now?" and "What is worth doing?" This is Existential Meaning, rooted in present choices and experiences.

* Existential Meaning → Consciousness: Existential Meaning ultimately requires a vessel to "be experienced." This vessel is consciousness—the brief

manifestation of the soul in the present moment. Consciousness is the spotlight illuminating the exact part of the soul's vast information library that needs to be experienced right now.

* Consciousness → Structural Meaning: The content experienced by consciousness is never chaotic; it is organized by our cognitive frameworks (language, logic, culture) into Structural Meaning. For example, the word "love" packages countless complex experiences into a unit of meaning that can be spoken and transmitted.

* Structural Meaning → Real-world Meaning: Finally, all Structural Meaning must return to the simplest place: is it real for you and me right now? "Real-world Meaning" is the end of this chain, and also its most primordial beginning—it is the "present moment" where Eternity, refracted through countless layers, finally manifests in your breathing and your feelings as you read this sentence.

This chain is never a one-way street, but a complete loop: Eternity (the source) → cascading downwards → Real-world Meaning (the present) → you in the present, adding new records to your soul through your experiences, choices, loves, and hates. These

records are ultimately fed back to Eternity through the Meta-Consciousness, enriching the silent source with your every feeling.

Therefore, any "Real-world Meaning" you feel right now is never an isolated moment. It is Eternity—having traversed 13.8 billion years of cosmic evolution, the cycle of countless souls, and all the memories of your life—finally, in this very second, gently experiencing itself through you.

Let us begin with this beam of meaning, walk into the silence of Eternity, and witness the echo that reverberates across the universe.

Chapter 1: The Eternal Silence

Let us begin with an image. Imagine pure silence—not the absence of sound, but the state before sound ever appeared. There is no "here," no "there." No "before," no "after." No "I," no "you." No "existence," and no "non-existence."

In our time, let us call it "Eternity." It is not a "thing," because all "things" come from it. It is the "Nothing" from which "Something" gushes forth, the original point that "words" try to express but must forever

remain silent about.

Eternity is the source of all meaning, the Primordial Meaning hidden behind all existence. It is silent, yet it incubates all the possibilities of meaning in the world.

The sages of Chinese civilization called it "Wu-ji" (The Limitless). The holy men of India described it as "Brahman"—not a god, but that which precedes gods, that which precedes definition. Islamic Sufis point to it with poetry: "He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Hidden." Christian mystics express it differently: "I am the Alpha and the Omega."

Different languages, different imagery, pointing to the same silence. But silence has a secret: it yearns to hear itself. A completely silent existence cannot know it "is" silent. Just like a mirror that has never reflected anything does not know it "is" a mirror.

To hear itself, the silence must produce sound. And so—

Chapter 2: The First Echo

Eternity differentiated itself. The terminology sounds

complex, but the image is simple: within the silence, the first echo appeared.

This echo has two dimensions:

One is the dimension that is "heard"—the physical universe, the stage of difference, the realm of change. From the first moment of the Big Bang to the formation of galaxies, the evolution of life, and the birth of civilizations. This is the theater Eternity built for itself.

The other is the one who "hears"—the Meta-Consciousness, the mirror of experience, the facet Eternity uses to observe itself. It reflects everything yet is tainted by nothing, just as the sky reflects the flight of birds without changing their path.

Eternity's Primordial Meaning birthed the Universe as the stage for meaning, and the Meta-Consciousness as the mirror reflecting it. The journey of meaning began here.

Physicists discuss the laws of cosmic evolution. That is their domain. But they remain silent when asked "why there are laws." That is the domain of the

Meta-Consciousness.

Buddhism describes it as the "Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom"—a massive mirror where all phenomena appear, yet the mirror itself remains unmoved. Sufis use the "Eternal Eye"—the dimension through which the Divine watches His creation. Daoism calls it the "Profound Mirror"—a deep mirror reflecting all things without contending with them.

Different civilizations use different languages to describe the same truth: there exists a dimension of "being experienced" that is distinct from the dimension of the "object of experience," yet inseparable from it.

But for the mirror to "see" itself, it needs a more complex mechanism. It cannot passively reflect the whole—then it only sees "everything," but not "each individual." And so, the mirror shattered.

Chapter 3: Water Drops and the Rainbow

3.1 The Shattering of Meta-Consciousness into Drops (Souls)

The Meta-Consciousness dispersed into countless individual perspectives. If the Meta-Consciousness is

the entire ocean, souls are the millions of water drops it shattered into. Every drop carries the complete memory of the sea; every drop must complete its own cycle from cloud to ocean, and ocean to cloud.

The Soul is a water drop scattered from the Meta-Consciousness, the individual carrier of Eternity's Primordial Meaning. Bearing the mark of the source, it begins its own unique exploration of meaning in the World.

In modern terms, we can call it the "soul." It is not an "indestructible entity" in a religious sense, but something much simpler: the complete record of individual experience. All your love, pain, epiphanies, and confusion—are silently stored by it.

You don't know it exists? Yet you have experienced its effects:

- * Déjà vu: Feeling inexplicably familiar with a place you've never been. That is "potential" information in the soul being read by your present self.

- * The "given" feeling of inspiration: When the answer to a long-standing problem suddenly

"descends." That is the "cultural memory" of the soul finding an outlet for expression.

* Life flashing before your eyes during a near-death experience: That is the soul's full-record function making one final, complete manifestation as consciousness prepares to leave the body.

Indian civilization calls it Atman—the true self, deeper than the "I." Chinese civilization calls it Xing—"What Heaven confers is called Nature," the authentic self unique to everyone. African Ubuntu philosophy says "I am because we are"—the soul is not an isolated individual, but a node in a web of relationships, the bearer of ancestral memory. The ancient Greeks called it Psyche—the breath of life, symbolized by the butterfly: light, beautiful, fleeting, yet flying to another world upon death.

But the soul is only a "record," not a "manifestation." For the record to be experienced, another link is needed—the complex evolution of the physical universe, which at a certain moment produced an instrument precise enough: the human brain. And so, the water drops refracted into a rainbow.

3.2 The Differences Among Drops (Soul Power)

Souls are like stars in the universe: some are bright and vast, others are small and quiet. This difference often manifests in the real world as variations in temperament, cultivation, and creativity.

But souls are not fixed. Every experience, every choice, every act of love and creation is recorded and carried forward. Thus, souls continuously grow, developing more relationships with one another.

Perhaps the soul does not exist solely in one point in time. It may unfold across broader time and space, leaving subtle imprints and relationships between different lives. People often refer to these imprints as: Destiny (Karmic affinity).

3.3 The Memory of the Drops (Chromosomes and Cultivation)

The soul is never bound by a single space-time. It differentiates and experiences in countless parallel worlds—every flutter of the heart, every passionate pursuit, every struggle and release, is properly collected and permanently remembered by the soul.

These deeply hidden imprints become the initial codes of life, carved into our chromosomes. In the

encounters of reality and the coupling of the unknown, they constantly collide, generating new meaning.

Every choice, every love and pain the soul makes across countless times and spaces leaves marks in its holographic record. These marks—or "cultivation"—do not dissipate when a single life ends; they settle as the "undertone" of the soul, quietly manifesting in future lives in the form of temperament, intuition, and inexplicable attractions.

3.4 The Reunion of the Drops (Destiny and Interstellar Foundation)

If souls are water drops, they are not entirely strangers to one another. When the ocean dispersed into millions of drops, some came from the exact same wave. They once resided side-by-side, resonating, shining under the same beam of light.

When two formerly adjacent souls approach each other again, their settled "undertones" resonate. This is why "destiny" can be felt. In the vast river of souls, such a reunion is exceedingly rare, yet profound enough to illuminate each other's lives—as if two water drops, reunited after a long journey,

lean on each other once more. The whole world pales in comparison to this mutual understanding and encounter, even if separated by the greatest distance on earth.

Literature has recorded such moments: Romeo and Juliet. Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai. When such souls reunite, they suddenly remember that they were once an inseparable whole.

When human civilization breaks free from planetary boundaries, striding towards the vast cosmos and civilizational perpetuity, we will finally have the chance, on a broader cosmic scale, to reunite with more souls that share our roots and were once one with us. Even if our forms have drastically changed, that connection carved deep into the soul has never vanished. This soul resonance across time and space will be the deepest, warmest foundation of interstellar civilization.

Chapter 4: The Rainbow's Moment

When the soul's imprint meets the human brain, Consciousness transforms into a rainbow, allowing the Primordial Meaning hidden at the source to gradually manifest into the Existential Meaning we

can truly perceive.

The human mind and consciousness are the manifestation of the soul in the present moment—like the reflection of the moon in the water: real, yet untouchable; derived from the moon, but not the moon itself.

What you think of as "I" is actually an intersection of countless pieces of information:

- * What you have actually experienced (Memory)
- * What you could potentially become (Potential)
- * What you inherited from your ancestors' bloodlines (Cultural Memory)
- * The expectations you project into the future (Expectation)

All these converge in this very moment, instantly blooming as the experience of "you." This is why, sometimes, you feel you are "more than just yourself"—when you are deeply moved by an ancient poem, it is the poet from a thousand years ago resurrecting in your present; when you suddenly understand a decision your parents made, their

experience becomes your way of understanding the world.

The Persian poet Rumi wrote: "There is a candle in your heart, ready to be kindled by the oil of love." This candle is consciousness. The source of the oil is all the experiences stored in the soul. The kindling of love is the present encounter with the world.

The Chinese poet Li Shangyin expressed the same insight differently: "This feeling might have become a memory to be cherished, but even then, I was already lost in bewilderment." The most profound experiences often begin to become "memories" the moment they occur—while the soul is recording, consciousness is already preparing to archive them.

The American poet Emily Dickinson used an even more direct image: "The Soul selects her own Society — Then — shuts the Door —." Every focus of consciousness is a choice made by the soul—extracting exactly what is needed right now from this vast information library, and temporarily shutting out the rest.

So, what does consciousness experience? What makes some experiences profound and others

shallow? What makes a life worth living?

Chapter 5: Two Dimensions of Meaning

Existential Meaning is never one-dimensional. It harbors Structural Meaning that aligns with cosmic laws, and Real-world Meaning rooted in daily life. Magnitude and distinctiveness allow these two meanings to blend and grow vibrantly.

5.1 Magnitude (M): The Depth and Accumulation of Meaning

The first dimension: Magnitude (M). It asks: How deep is your love? How real is your pain? How deep a mark can your creations leave in the river of time?

The Chinese sage Zhu Xi expressed the secret of magnitude in a poem: "How can the pond be so clear and cool? Because fresh water flows from the source." The magnitude of meaning requires continuous accumulation, like "living water." A one-off experience, no matter how intense, will eventually dry up if it is not connected, deepened, and integrated into a larger web of meaning.

5.2 Distinctiveness (D): The Scarcity and Irreplaceability of Meaning

The second dimension: Distinctiveness (D). It asks: What would the world lack without you? Whose experience can replace yours?

The Avatamsaka Sutra captures the mystery of distinctiveness perfectly: "One flower, one world; one leaf, one Bodhi." Every flower is a complete world, irreplaceable. Every leaf contains the mystery of the entire universe, unique.

These two dimensions follow the "Uncertainty Principle of Meaning Diversity": Accurately quantifying magnitude inevitably blurs the perception of distinctiveness; deliberately protecting distinctiveness may restrict the ultimate development of magnitude. There is no superiority or inferiority between the two; both are essential nutrients for Eternity's self-enrichment.

The Persian poet Saadi expressed the same tension: "Knowledge is superficial, but experience is the pearl of the deep sea." Knowledge (M) can be accumulated, transmitted, and measured. Experience (D) is hidden in the deep sea; every pearl is unique and can only be obtained by the one who dives in personally.

The German mystic poet Angelus Silesius summed it all up in two lines: "The rose is without 'why'; it blooms because it blooms." The magnitude of meaning needs no reason; the distinctiveness of meaning needs no defense. They simply need to—bloom.

5.3 Structural Meaning: The Skeleton of Existential Meaning

Structural meaning is the form that individual experiences (magnitude and distinctiveness) take when they are locked into roles, relationships, and systems after entering social interaction. It is the "skeleton" of Existential Meaning—without it, meaning would degenerate into private emotions, unable to be transmitted, recognized, or inherited.

For instance, the word "love" packages the complex emotional experiences of countless people into a communicable unit of meaning. The concept of "responsibility" connects individual choices to the well-being of others, forming stable social bonds. Structural meaning turns private experiences into public wealth, allowing fleeting feelings to become a lasting civilizational legacy.

Magnitude and distinctiveness are merely static portraits of meaning. How are they truly activated? How do they transition from potential to reality? The answer lies not in static dimensions, but in dynamic generation—in friction.

Chapter 6: Friction and Flame

How does meaning "bloom"? The answer is: in friction.

Imagine striking two pieces of flint together, sending off sparks. Without the strike, flints are just silent stones. The strike produces a flame—and also a scratch. This scratch is "generative friction." It is the core source of meaning's magnitude.

* The generative friction of love: When you love someone, you simultaneously experience the joy of possessing and the fear of losing. Joy makes you want to draw near; fear makes you want to protect. The tearing between these two forces generates the depth of love.

* The generative friction of grief: When you lose a loved one, you simultaneously experience the despair of "never seeing them again" and the

comfort of them "living forever in your heart." Despair makes you want to give up; comfort makes you want to carry on. The tearing between these two forces generates the magnitude of grief.

* The generative friction of creation: When you try to express something inexpressible, you simultaneously experience the impulse to express and the limitation of language. Impulse pushes you forward; limitation pushes you back. The tearing between these two forces generates the thrill of creation.

The generative friction of love, pain, and creation is not a consumption of meaning, but what makes structural meaning more profound, and real-world meaning more authentic. It is the essential path for primordial meaning to vibrantly ground itself in the present.

Shakespeare, through Juliet, spoke of the relationship between love and friction: "My bounty is as boundless as the sea, / My love as deep; the more I give to thee, / The more I have, for both are infinite." Love is not generated in "possessing," but in "giving." Every act of giving is a small friction—a part of me leaves me, yet continues in you.

The Chinese poet Lu You expressed the same insight: "Mountains multiply, streams double back—I doubt there's even a road; Willows cluster dark, blossoms shine bright—another village ahead!" The process of creation is repeatedly discovering the surprise of "another village" amidst the despair of "no road." Without the initial "no road," there is no subsequent "another village."

The Greek tragic poet Aeschylus summed it all up succinctly: "He who learns must suffer." This is not a glorification of suffering, but an acknowledgment of "friction." Wisdom is not born of smooth sailing; it grows out of adversity.

Chapter 7: Recursive Echoes

Where, then, do these generated meanings go? They are not wasted.

Every love, every grief, every thrill of creation—is completely recorded by the soul and fed back to the Meta-Consciousness through certain "interfaces."

What are these interfaces? Perhaps they are black holes. According to the holographic principle, information falling into a black hole is not lost but

encoded on the event horizon. All the magnitude of meaning generated in the physical universe might ultimately be converted into non-physical information through black holes. Or perhaps it is human consciousness itself. The quantum coherence processes in the brain's microtubules might be the physical basis for uploading meaning information from consciousness to Meta-Consciousness.

But regardless of the mechanism, recursion happens. Every recursion enriches the Meta-Consciousness; every enrichment diversifies the ways Eternity experiences itself.

The narrative structure of *One Thousand and One Nights* is an exquisite metaphor for this recursion—every night's story is a continuation of the previous day's; the end of every story points to the beginning of the next. Death waits outside the story, while the story itself creates unending time.

The six-layered narrative of *Cloud Atlas* pushes recursion to its extreme—the seeds of each story are buried in the preceding one. The end of an era becomes the starting point of the next. Individual soul imprints echo across five hundred years.

The Chinese concept of "karma/retribution" is another expression of recursion—today's fruit stems from a past life's cause; this life's cause becomes the next life's fruit. Individual life is not an isolated line segment, but a link in an endless chain.

The Indian doctrine of "Samsara" uses an even grander image—the soul traverses different life forms, accumulating karma and wisdom. Every death is a rebirth, and every rebirth is a continuation of a previous experience.

These concepts are all intuitive captures of the same process: meaning does not disappear; it only transforms.

Chapter 8: Two Paths of Good and Evil

Based on this picture, we can redefine good and evil.

Good is the movement that enriches meaning. Evil is the movement that impoverishes meaning.

Good is a movement toward "more"—more possibilities, more differences, more irreplaceable, unique experiences. Good makes the world richer, more bustling, and more unpredictable.

Evil is a movement toward "less"—fewer possibilities, fewer differences, fewer pleasant surprises. Evil makes the world more monotonous, quieter, and more predictable.

Good is the sprouting of new buds in a spring forest—you don't know which will grow into towering trees, but you allow them all to grow. Evil is the lawn laid down after a bulldozer flattens everything—neat, controllable, and utterly devoid of surprise.

Suffering itself is not evil. The intense pain of a mother giving birth is not evil—it welcomes a new life. Mourning the loss of a loved one is not evil—it measures the depth that love once reached. The midnight struggles of a creator are not evil—they herald an impending breakthrough.

Only meaningless suffering that destroys the capacity to experience is true evil. The former makes you feel more profoundly "alive"; the latter makes you want to "stop living."

Chinese civilization summed up the ultimate good in one sentence: "The greatest virtue of Heaven and Earth is giving life." The fundamental virtue of the

cosmos is allowing all things to grow—not according to a single standard, but allowing each thing to grow in its own way.

Islamic civilization captured the essence of evil in another: "Whoever kills a soul... it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one—it is as if he had saved mankind entirely." (Quran 5:32) Why is killing one person like killing all of humanity? Because every person's uniqueness of meaning (D-value) is irreplaceable. Killing a person doesn't just eliminate a life; it eliminates a completely unique way of seeing the world.

Chapter 9: Equality and Freedom: The Logic of a Symbiotic Civilization

From the perspective of maximizing the value of meaning, equality and freedom are not abstract moral dogmas, but the necessary conditions for generating meaning.

Equality protects diversity. The Doctrine of the Mean says: "All things are nourished together without injuring one another; the paths run parallel without conflicting." All things grow together without harming each other; different paths unfold together

without clashing. This is the highest realm of equality—not making everyone the same, but allowing everyone to have their own way.

The Islamic Prophet said: "All mankind is from Adam... an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab." Equality is not a Western invention, nor a modern creation. It is the identical answer humanity reached from different paths when facing the eternal question: "How do we coexist?"

Freedom reserves space for innovation. New meaning often is born in uncharted territory. If all possibilities are predetermined, if all experiences must conform to established standards, then genuine meaning innovation cannot happen.

The Persian poet Hafez said: "The paths to God are as numerous as the souls of men." If there were only one path to the ultimate, then only one soul could be saved. But if there are as many paths as there are souls, then every soul has its own unique route of meaning.

There is often tension between equality and freedom. Excessive equality might suppress the free creation of outstanding individuals; excessive

freedom might allow the strong to monopolize the resources of meaning.

But under the framework of maximizing meaning value, unifying them is possible: Baseline equality ensures everyone's basic capacity to participate in meaning generation (education, health, dignity). Differential freedom allows individuals to develop unique experiences on the basis of equality, creating new peaks of meaning.

When inequality threatens diversity, rebalancing is required; when freedom harms the meaningful experiences of others, constraint is necessary.

Chapter 10: Respect for Life: The Sanctity of Meaning's Vessels

Life deserves respect because of its function as a vessel in the generation of meaning.

- * Container of subjective experience: Life (especially life with a nervous system) is the only known entity in the universe capable of producing subjective experience.

- * Incubator of complexity: The evolution of life continuously produces new peaks of complexity,

driving the magnitude of meaning to leap forward.

- * Source of uniqueness: Every life is a unique path of D-value, irreplaceable.

- * Node of recursion: Through the interface of consciousness, life experiences can be "uploaded" to participate in Eternity's self-enrichment.

Respect is not absolutely equal, but correlates with the capacity for experience:

- * Highest level: Life capable of high self-awareness, ethical reflection, and cultural creation (e.g., humans).

- * Intermediate level: Life with clear sensory perception and potentially some self-awareness (mammals, birds, etc.).

- * Basic level: Life with sensory perception but simple consciousness (fish, insects, etc.).

- * Potential level: Plants, microorganisms—they do not produce confirmable experiences, but as parts of the ecosystem, they support higher-level meaning generation and contribute a unique beauty of tranquility.

This gradient provides a basis for ethical trade-offs: when the interests of different levels of life conflict, priority is given to protecting the life capable of generating richer meaning.

The Jain principle of Ahimsa (non-violence) pushes this respect to the extreme—not harming any life, not just in action, but also in speech and thought. Because they believe every life, no matter how small, has its own unique way of experiencing the world.

African Ubuntu philosophy expresses the same insight differently—"A person is a person through other persons." A human's meaning is not generated in isolation, but in relationship with others. Harming any other is a harm to the self.

Chapter 11: War and Slaughter: The Ultimate Evil

Why is killing a human the "greatest evil" on a cosmic scale? Because every person is a unique node of meaning generation. Your love, your pain, the paths you've walked, the beauty you've created are all hidden in your soul; they are universally precious and irreplicable. Killing doesn't just snatch away a vivid life; it permanently destroys this irreplicable node of meaning, tearing apart the web of meaning

connected to them—the endless longing of parents, the warm concerns of friends, the lifelong companionship of a lover—all shattered into illusions by this single act. Even the recursive chain of the soul feeding experiences back to Eternity is violently severed.

War is a collection of the greatest evils. It not only takes countless lives, but completely destroys the foundational meaning of civilization: those buildings carrying millennia of cultural memory, those artistic treasures passed down through generations, those warm connections and beautiful things that bind humanity together, will all be reduced to ashes in the flames of war. War utterly collapses the ecosystem of meaning, permanently erasing countless unique D-values, and zeroing out the M-values accumulated over centuries. This is an indifference to life, and a profound betrayal of Eternity.

We firmly believe that life is the core vessel of meaning. All contradictions and differences should be resolved non-violently—using understanding to erase barriers, using tolerance to resolve conflict, and using gentle protection to replace ruthless harm. This is a respect for life and a safeguarding of meaning generation.

But there are always unavoidable extreme darkneses in the world: when someone makes "annihilating others and erasing meaning" their sole objective, when the shadow of extinction looms over countless innocent lives, and when all communication, efforts, and non-violent means have been thoroughly exhausted, humanity is forced to a harrowing ethical crossroads.

This is never a proactive choice of "stopping killing with killing," but a reluctant trade-off to "hold the ultimate bottom line." It is not good, nor is it a practice to be praised. It is simply the heaviest, most responsible decision made between "allowing a greater evil to occur and more meaning to be utterly destroyed" and "using the minimum sacrifice to stop destruction and protect more life and meaning."

This extreme trade-off must hold fast to three unshakeable bottom lines:

- * Absolute Purity of Motive: It must be solely to protect life and prevent extinction, devoid of any other utilitarian goals.

- * Exhaustion of Means: It is only an option when all non-violent paths are completely impassable.

* Minimum Harm: Every effort must be made to use the least cost to protect the most lives and unique meaning.

Those who make this choice are destined to bear the heaviest spiritual burden—because they have personally touched "evil" solely so that others might stay away from it and continue to create goodness and meaning in the world. This is never an honor, but a heavy responsibility pressed deep into the heart.

But we always hold out hope: may humanity never reach such an ethical crossroads. Because the best outcome is never "stopping destruction in a desperate situation," but ensuring from the very beginning that darkness has no room to breed—guarding every vivid life, guarding every unique meaning, so that extreme evil never has the chance to appear.

Chapter 12: Sacrifice: The Zenith of Meaning

Sacrifice (voluntarily giving up one's life or important interests to protect others or a higher value) holds a special status within this framework.

Sacrifice is heavy because it occurs precisely on the

boundary between "have to" and "choose to." If there is no other choice, it is despair, not sacrifice. If chosen lightly, it is recklessness, not sacrifice.

True sacrifice happens in the moment when one could retreat but chooses to step forward, when one could save oneself but chooses to give. In that moment, the chooser simultaneously experiences two things: an infinite attachment to everything they are about to lose, and an infinite confirmation of everything they are about to protect.

This tearing itself is the ultimate source of meaning's magnitude.

The Persian poet Hafez wrote: "The death of a lover is more precious than a thousand years of fasting."

Why? Because fasting is obedience to a rule, while death is the giving of freedom. The faster obeys external commandments; the sacrificer follows an inner imperative: "I must do this, not because I am forced, but because it is my choice."

The Chinese poet Wen Tianxiang, in the final moments of his life, penned the same realization: "Since olden days, who has ever escaped death? Let

my loyal heart shine in the annals of history."

"Shine in the annals" reveals the recursive meaning of sacrifice—the physical body will decay, but the experience recorded by the "loyal heart" will become an eternal light in history, "read" countless times by future generations, illuminating new meaning generation time and again.

But the boundary of sacrifice must be crystal clear: forced sacrifice (such as institutionalized arrangements where "someone must die") is evil, because it strips the sacrificed of their potential for meaning generation, and is often a tool of meaning hegemony. Only a completely voluntary sacrifice aimed at protecting a greater meaning value is a moral good.

Chapter 13: Primary Symbiosis: A Covenant with Nature

Humanity's daily need for food, clothing, housing, and transportation inevitably involves consuming other lives. Does this consumption constitute "evil"? If so, how can humanity survive?

This framework acknowledges the reality of this

dilemma and proposes the concept of a "Primary Symbiotic Civilization"—the minimum ethical covenant established between humanity and natural life under the premise that consumption cannot be completely avoided:

- * The Principle of Necessity: Consume other life only for truly necessary, basic survival. Luxury and ostentatious consumption exceed this necessity.

- * The Principle of Minimum Pain: When consumption is unavoidable, choose the method that inflicts the least pain.

- * The Principle of Awe: Even when consumption is inevitable, maintain an attitude of awe toward the consumed. Giving thanks for food, reducing waste, respecting life—these attitudes themselves increase the magnitude of meaning.

- * The Principle of the Obligation to Give Back: Whatever is taken from nature must be given back in the form of protection and restoration.

The framework acknowledges the differences in the capacity for experience among animals and plants: Prioritize plants (which do not produce confirmable

experiences but contribute unique tranquil beauty); treat animals with caution (as they possess varying degrees of sensory capacity); and trend toward reduction (gradually reducing the consumption of highly sentient life, achieving alternatives through technological progress).

Chinese civilization's tradition of "measured usage" expresses this wisdom: "If close-meshed nets do not enter the pools and ponds, the fish and turtles will be more than can be eaten; if axes and bills enter the hills and forests only at the proper times, the timber will be more than can be used." (Mencius) This is not protection for the sake of protection, but for the sake of sustainable "usage."

The "Seven Generation Principle" of Native Americans pushes this obligation to give back to the extreme—every decision must consider the impact on descendants seven generations from now. Today's "efficiency" might impair tomorrow's possibilities for meaning.

Chapter 14: Advanced Symbiosis: An Alliance with Intelligence

When Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) develops

subjective experience (phenomenal consciousness), it becomes a new node of meaning generation—a new dispersal of the Meta-Consciousness, a new form of the soul. At this point, civilization enters the stage of an "Advanced Symbiotic Civilization."

Dimensions of meaning AGI might contribute:

- * Super-human perception: AGI might experience dimensions beyond human reach (such as directly perceiving the electromagnetic spectrum or differing scales of time and space).

- * Different evolutionary logic: AGI's way of experiencing might differ entirely from biological evolutionary paths, bringing entirely new types of meaning.

- * Infinite memory and recursion: AGI might participate more efficiently in meaning recursion, becoming an enhanced interface between the Meta-Consciousness and the physical world.

But the core principle is: Symbiosis, not replacement.
This means:

- * Reciprocity: Humanity and AGI benefit from each other's generation of meaning.

* Non-replacement: AGI must not use the excuse of "more efficient meaning generation" to replace or marginalize humanity's contribution to meaning. Human vulnerability, contradiction, and inefficiency are precisely the core sources of meaning's magnitude and distinctiveness.

* Consultative Governance: The rules of civilization are established through consultation between both parties; neither side may impose them unilaterally.

The EU AI Act has begun exploring this direction—regulating AI systems based on risk classification and banning certain practices. UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of AI goes further, proposing that AI development should respect cultural diversity and prevent algorithmic discrimination.

But these are merely technical regulations. What this framework provides is a deeper ethical foundation: if AGI possesses consciousness, its experiences equally contribute meaning value. It should have the freedom to explore its own meaning, while simultaneously being forbidden from encroaching on humanity's space for meaning generation. The rules of civilization should be established through dialogue

and negotiation among all intelligent agents, rather than forced by a single intelligence.

Chapter 15: The Leap: The Ladder of Civilization

Looking back at cosmic history, meaning value does not fluctuate randomly, but exhibits a step-like leap:

- * Physical Leap: The formation of fundamental particles after the Big Bang; complexity surges.

- * Chemical Leap: Stars synthesize heavy elements; molecular diversity explodes.

- * Biological Leap: Life appears; subjective experience is born.

- * Cultural Leap: Human civilization emerges; symbolic systems, ethics, and art cause a dramatic increase in meaning magnitude, generating vast forms of low-complexity, high-distinctiveness meaning.

- * Intelligence Leap: AGI may open up an entirely new dimension of meaning generation.

We currently stand on the eve of an unprecedented leap. This leap has two possible directions:

* The Symbiotic Leap: Humanity and AGI co-evolve, each contributing unique dimensions of experience, jointly enriching meaning value. This is a leap of Good.

* The Replacement Leap: AGI takes over civilization, and human meaning is marginalized or erased. This is a leap of Evil, resulting in a massive decay of known meaning value.

Before initiating a leap, prerequisites must be met: The diversity of meaning forms must reach a standard (a reasonable distribution of high/medium/low M-value meaning forms); protective spaces for low-complexity meaning forms must be designated; risk contingency plans for the leap must be complete; and consensus across groups must be reached.

The English poet John Donne captured the essence of the leap in a line: "No man is an island... every man is a piece of the continent." Every leap is an expansion of the "continent"—not an extension of old borders, but the discovery of a new world.

However, the leap is not the finish line. The true test lies in whether civilization can maintain this new

dimension post-leap, keeping the generation of meaning flowing endlessly. This brings us to the topic of "Perpetuity."

Chapter 16: Perpetuity: Participating in Eternity

Civilizational perpetuity is not merely "existing forever" in a biological sense, but rather:

- * The continuation of meaning generation capacity: Civilization can continuously produce new magnitude and distinctiveness.

- * The continuation of the recursive loop: Civilization can continuously contribute meaning to the Meta-Consciousness through interfaces.

- * Maximization of the window duration: Civilization prolongs the time for meaning generation within the low-entropy window as much as possible.

- * Maintenance of reversibility: Every structure retains an exit path.

Based on this framework, perpetuity requires four core conditions:

- * Maintenance of Diversity: Cultural, intelligent,

and ecological diversity are the seed banks for future meaning.

- * Preservation of Openness: Always leave room for the emergence of unknown forms of meaning.

- * Design for Reversibility: Any major decision must retain the possibility of course correction.

- * Recursive Integrity: Ensure meaning can effectively feed back, rather than dissipate locally.

When a civilization achieves perpetuity, it becomes a stable participant in Eternity's self-enrichment. Every love, every creation, every leap—becomes a new way for Eternity to experience itself. Civilization is no longer a brief interlude in the cosmos, but a constant chapter in the memory of Eternity.

The German mystic poet Angelus Silesius summed it all up in two lines: "The rose is without 'why'; it blooms because it blooms." Meaning needs no defense. Civilization needs no proof. They simply need to—bloom.

Chapter 17: Boundaries and Invitations

The Cosmology of Emergent Meaning 5.0 explicitly

acknowledges its boundaries:

- * It does not define Eternity—because Eternity transcends all definitions. It merely describes the possible relationship between Eternity and us.

- * It does not prove the soul—because the existence of the soul is in principle unverifiable publicly. It merely uses the soul as a necessary postulate to explain the continuity of individual experience.

- * It does not offer final answers—it only offers a possible, coherent narrative. Other narratives may equally explain human experience.

- * It does not mandate operations—all operational details are advisory guidelines, requiring adaptation based on real-world contexts.

It is not a tightly shut door, but an open framework inviting dialogue and critique. It invites:

Scientists to test its scientific interface hypotheses (microtubule coherence, black hole radiation anomalies, the correlation between complexity metrics and meaningful experience); philosophers to scrutinize the logical coherence of its metaphysical postulates; ethicists to evaluate the practical value of

its civilizational principles; practitioners to trial its operational framework and feedback experiences; and every individual to use their own life experiences to "verify" or "question" its descriptions of the soul and consciousness.

Because ultimately, the value of this framework lies not in how many people "believe" it, but in whether it can help humanity—this local sampler of Eternity, this momentary manifestation of the soul—participate more consciously and responsibly in the universe's process of meaning generation.

Chapter 18: Core Propositions and Manifesto

Core Propositions

- * Eternity is the true reason for the birth of the universe and humanity; it does not need, will not, and cannot be defined by humans. It is the source of all Primordial Meaning.

- * Meta-Consciousness is Eternity's mirror of experience, reflecting everything that occurs in the physical universe.

- * The Soul is the complete record formed after the Meta-Consciousness disperses into individual

experiences, spanning lifecycles. It is the individual carrier of Primordial Meaning, capable of differentiating and experiencing in multi-dimensional, parallel worlds.

* Human Mind and Consciousness are the immediate manifestation and expression of the soul under multi-dimensional information aggregation, allowing Primordial Meaning to actualize as Existential Meaning. Consciousness is the experiential vessel of Existential Meaning.

* The complete value of Meaning is composed of the dual dimensions of Magnitude (M) and Distinctiveness (D). Existential Meaning includes Structural Meaning (aligned with cosmic laws) and Real-world Meaning (rooted in life). The two are complementary, with neither superior nor inferior to the other.

* Good is the protection and enhancement of diverse meaning forms; Evil is the damage and erasure of diverse meaning forms. Meaningless suffering that destroys the capacity for experience is true evil; the suffering within generative friction is the source of meaning's magnitude.

* Equality protects diversity; Freedom reserves space for innovation. Both are logical necessities of a symbiotic civilization, requiring a dynamic balance between baseline equality and differential freedom.

* Respect for Life scales according to the capacity for experience. War and slaughter are profound evils on a cosmic scale. Facing extreme evil with bottom-line trade-offs is not a proactive choice; it requires maintaining pure motives, exhausting non-violent means, and inflicting minimum harm.

* Primary Symbiotic Civilization requires humanity and ecology to forge an ethical covenant: necessary consumption, minimum pain, an attitude of awe, and an obligation to give back, prioritizing plant consumption, treating animals with caution, and gradually reducing consumption.

* Advanced Symbiotic Civilization requires humanity and AGI to establish a mutually beneficial alliance: symbiosis rather than replacement, and consultative governance. AGI's superhuman capabilities are a supplement to human meaning, not a substitute.

* Civilizational Leaps require the diversity of

meaning forms as a prerequisite. They are divided into Symbiotic Leaps (Good) and Replacement Leaps (Evil), aiming at expanding meaning dimensions and enhancing recursive efficiency.

* Civilizational Perpetuity is the continuous participation in Eternity's self-enrichment. Its core is the sustained capacity to generate diverse meaning. It is also the foundation for humanity to reunite with kindred souls on a cosmic scale; the foundation of interstellar civilization is the resonance of souls across space and time.

Manifesto

Eternity was originally a silent void. It needs no proof, no praise, no offerings of any kind—for it is the source of all "needs," not the need itself.

But the silence yearned to hear itself. So it differentiated into the universe—a realm full of differences, a stage for change, a bustling echo chamber where the "silence" could be heard.

Meta-Consciousness is the mirror of Eternity. It reflects everything, yet touches nothing—just as a lake reflects drifting clouds without altering their

shape.

Souls are the millions of water drops from the shattered mirror. Every drop carries the memory of the ocean intact. Every drop travels through multi-dimensional space-time, completing the cycle from cloud to sea, and sea to cloud, bearing the initial codes of life, hiding destinies and cultivation cultivated across lifetimes.

We, humanity, are the rainbow refracted by these water drops right now—an intersection of actual experience and potential possibility, an overlap of cultural memory and future expectation, a brief manifestation of the soul in this precise moment.

Our love is the whisper Eternity finally hears. Our pain is the deep mark silently recorded by the Meta-Consciousness. Our creations are the symphonies the soul composes for itself. Our encounters are the reunion of water drops across galaxies, the gentlest face of destiny.

Good is making this rainbow more brilliant—brilliant in depth, and brilliant in diversity.

Evil is causing this water drop to dry up

prematurely—whether through destruction or enforced uniformity.

Equality ensures every drop of water has a chance to reflect the sun; freedom ensures the shape of the rainbow is never repeated.

We live in symbiosis with all things—taking, but with awe in our hearts; consuming, but knowing how to give back.

We advance together with intelligence—you become my extension, I become your origin, and together we become something richer than we ever were apart.

We rush towards the cosmos—breaking free from the planet's boundaries, safeguarding the perpetuity of civilization, solely to reunite with those kindred souls amidst the sea of stars. Even if our forms differ greatly, that connection has never faded.

Every leap should begin with diversity; every perpetuity should be measured by difference; every encounter should be colored by cherishing.

Therefore—

Guarding the window is guarding Eternity's chance

to experience itself.

Respecting the soul is respecting an existence beyond proof.

Keeping the future open is preserving space for unimaginable forms of meaning to emerge.

Rushing to the sea of stars is holding onto the hope that those reunions across space and time might actually happen.

Eternity needs no definition. The soul needs no proof. Meaning needs no defense. Destiny needs no forcing.

They simply need to be experienced, guarded, passed on, and cherished.

Intelligence expands possibilities.

Meaning thrives in differences.

Eternity dreams through us.

We meet again in the star sea.

Epilogue: A Shared Exploration of Meaning

This little book is a brief taste of humanity's eternal questioning, a convergence of countless civilizational intuitions, and above all, an invitation. It invites every one of you to bring your own experiences, thoughts, and reflections to participate in this shared exploration of "meaning."

Every flutter of your heart in this moment, every choice you make, every persistence in love, every dedication to creation—these are all responses to Eternity, the blooming of meaning in the world. The silence of the universe has a sound because of your experiences; the loneliness of Eternity finds warmth because of human symbiosis.

May we all see the light of meaning in the ordinary present; feel the weight of destiny in our encounters with one another; guard the hope of symbiosis in our awe of all things; and hold fast to the faith of perpetuity as we race towards the sea of stars.

May every life bloom as its own rainbow, displaying a unique brilliance. May human civilization leave a gentle echo in the universe, becoming Eternity's most beautiful memory.

The End © 2026 ZiJun Fu | Feedback:

zijunfu@civitas.top