

Preface

The reader may want to read this book more than once, and to read it with unusual care. It contains a comprehensive and coherent distillation of human thought about the making of the human world. It is intended to cause a re-programming and an empowering of our minds, opening up new ways of understanding the human condition. It is offered as a possible intellectual basis for a new and urgent debate about making a *better* human world.

In particular, it is important to internalise successfully the contents of Part One, designed to bring clarity and order to the seemingly hopeless confusion of our ideas about the *human condition*. If we are to rescue and improve the human condition, we have to go back to the beginning, taking up again the task of forming the best possible understanding of what it is to be a human being.

Part Two takes stock of the remarkable *inherent mental powers* of the human species, powers that have made the human world as it is, and will make the human world of the future, as we face an exceptionally challenging and troubling and dangerous human situation in the twenty-first century.

Part Three considers the three great collective instruments – *philosophy* and *law* and *society* – available to the *human will*, in taking power, individually and collectively, over the survival and the flourishing of the human species in the future.

The ‘Other Voices’ quoted at the end of each chapter testify to the fact that the ideas considered here have been thought about by countless thinkers heretofore, including countless other thinkers not cited here.

For the reader, the tension between the text of a chapter and the quotations at the end of the chapter should be a form of Socratic dialogue. The author of the present volume certainly does not agree with all the quoted extracts. The reader may well not agree with the views of the author. Dialogic thinking focuses old ideas and generates new ideas. Isothenia is a means not an end. *Sic et non* is not enough.

The main text of the book is followed by a detailed Synopsis and an Index of Names.