

Salvation of the Saviors (series 110-369)

Project 369 – Non-Articles: Beyond the Text: A human in the Face of Death...

*Death is not a law of nature.
It is a boundary of understanding
that humanity
has not yet dared to cross.*

In the previous articles of this series, we attempted to look at modern civilization somewhat from the outside — as if observing the movement of a massive train carrying billions of people. All of them are moving in the same direction. All are part of a single historical process. Yet they perceive what is happening in completely different ways. Some look ahead, trying to understand where this train is going. Others are occupied with their own affairs in the passenger cars. Still others see only isolated fragments of what is happening. And some are not even aware of the existence of the tracks at all. Yet there is one question that concerns every single passenger on this train without exception. It is the question of death.

Modern civilization possesses enormous scientific potential. It is capable of splitting the atom, creating artificial intelligence, exploring the depths of space and the structure of elementary particles. Yet, simultaneously, it scarcely sets itself the primary objective — the task of overcoming aging and death. Thus arises the paradox of our time. **VAST RESOURCES** are directed toward the development of technologies of consumption and destruction, while the central problem of human existence remains at the periphery of attention. Why does this happen? Why does a civilization with such immense capabilities **NOT MAKE** the overcoming of death its central goal? The answer to this question cannot be found by looking only at the present. To understand what is happening, it is necessary to turn to deeper processes — to how human thinking has been formed throughout history, how different paradigms of understanding the world have emerged and replaced one another. It is precisely to which this article is dedicated.



We will attempt to examine how humanity's attitude toward death has changed across different eras, what ideas have shaped its worldview, and why modern civilization has found itself in a state where the central challenge of human existence has been almost entirely removed from public discussion. This conversation is not for the sake of abstract philosophy. It is necessary in order **TO UNDERSTAND** what exactly prevents humanity from setting before itself the task without whose resolution all other achievements of civilization lose their ultimate meaning. That is why we continue this dialogue — *beyond the text...*

Life, by its very nature, strives toward the good. This is evident even at the most basic level of existence. If a simple cell is placed between a favorable and an unfavorable environment, it will move toward the favorable one. This is neither a moral choice nor a philosophical decision — it is a fundamental property of life. A human being acts in the same way. If there is a choice to leave a house through a door or through a window, one chooses the door. Any form of life gravitates toward that which increases its stability, safety, and the possibility of continued existence.

In the living world, a similar principle applies: “It does not matter what you strive for. Ultimately, you strive for your own good.” This applies not only to people pursuing personal interests. Even those who dedicate themselves to the struggle for justice, freedom, or the common good do so because they see in it their **INNER GOOD**. Otherwise, they simply would not engage in it. Not because they are bad or selfish, rather because they are alive.

A person may say that they are seeking truth, yet if we imagine a scenario in which truth requires immediate self-destruction, almost no one would follow it, because a person does not seek truth at any cost but rather seeks what they perceive as their good, and good is the **TRUE ORIENTATION** of life. It is precisely for this reason that various spiritual systems throughout history have offered humanity an image of the Supreme Good. Religions have spoken of Paradise, of eternal joy, and of the reward for a righteous life. Believers often assert that they follow God's commandments solely out of love for God. However, upon closer examination, it becomes clear that a deeper mechanism lies beneath this. Every religious system, in one way or another, **PROMISES A PERSON** some form of good — salvation, eternal life, relief from suffering. If we were to imagine that adhering to religious precepts had absolutely no bearing on a person's destiny — neither in this life nor in the hereafter — the motivation to follow those precepts would diminish drastically. This is neither an accusation nor a criticism of religion; it is simply a manifestation of a fundamental characteristic of life: life is invariably oriented toward the good.

One can give the example of maternal love. A mother is capable of sacrificing herself for her child. Yet even here a deep program of nature is at work. Care for offspring is not a rational choice. It is one of the **BASIC PROGRAMS** of life. Religion, on the other hand, arose from human reflection on the meaning of life, fate, and death. In this sense, it is an intellectual construct that offers a person an answer to the main question: for what good is it worth living and acting? However, here an important contradiction appears. Humanity has always dreamed of Paradise — a state of eternal and complete happiness. Yet this idea contains a paradox. The essence of life is the striving toward the good, yet if the good is already fully achieved, there is no longer any need to strive for it — it is **NOT NECESSARY**. One cannot strive for what one already fully possesses. If life exists in a state of complete and final good, it stops striving, and when striving disappears, the dynamic of life disappears as well. This leads to a strange conclusion: if life strives toward the good, it has not yet reached Paradise, yet if it is already in Paradise, it no longer strives, which means it is **NOT LIFE** in the usual sense. In this way, the expression “paradise life” becomes a logical paradox — something like a “square circle.”

Throughout all times, people have tried to find an answer to approaching death. They have created religions, philosophical systems, and scientific theories. They have searched for ways to extend life, preserve themselves, and overcome the finiteness of existence. A person may relate to this task in different ways. Some search actively and persistently. Some only reflect on it. Others prefer not to think about the inevitable. However, if a person truly **DOES NOT WANT** something — for example, does not want to die — they inevitably begin to look for a way to avoid it. This may take the form of seeking knowledge, faith, philosophy, science, or simply hope. Yet the search always begins. Because life, by its nature, cannot help but seek a way to preserve itself.



The rich and the poor, the intelligent and the simple, the strong and the weak — no one wants to die. In this sense, humanity is **REMARKABLY UNIFIED**. One might assume that, recognizing the inevitability of death, people would search for a way out, look for a way to avoid it, or at least seriously reflect on it. Logic suggests this. However, logic and reality, as often happens, **DO NOT COINCIDE**. In practice, the overwhelming majority of people not only seek nothing, but even try not to truly think about death. Everyone knows it will come, yet they live as if this knowledge requires no inner transformation. A person simply waits for their hour, and until it comes, fills life with everyday tasks, concerns, entertainment, habits, and busyness.

With believers, everything is more or less clear. They do not seek an answer to the challenge of death because they believe they already have one. They are convinced the religious path **ALREADY PROVIDES** a solution. The observance of commandments, participation in rituals, and loyalty to dogmas are seen as a path to eternal life — to freedom from final death. Yet how can we explain to those who **DO NOT BELIEVE** in God, in the transmigration of souls, or in an afterlife? They do not expect paradise. They do not hope for reincarnation. They openly admit that life is finite — that after death there is nothing. It would seem they should feel the tragedy of finiteness more sharply. They should search more actively for a way out. However, the opposite happens. Their life strategy is simple — to live as pleasantly as possible, and then die. Everyone has their own understanding of pleasure. For one, it is comfort and peace. For another — fame, adrenaline, power, money, success, impressions. Yet the essence **DOES NOT CHANGE**. A person knows they will die. They do not want to die. Yet they do nothing to change the situation itself. They simply wait for the end — trying to make that waiting more comfortable.

If we apply this logic to ourselves, it begins to seem extremely strange. It is like being a passenger on a sinking ship and, knowing that it will inevitably go down, not looking for a way out, not trying to save yourself, rather instead putting all your effort into arranging your cabin. Absurd? Of course, it is absurd. However, it is **PRECISELY THIS** absurdity that has become our everyday norm.

Billions of people know perfectly well that death is approaching everyone. And what does this knowledge produce in them? Not a search for a way out. Not intense reflection. Not an attempt to go beyond the usual logic of existence. Instead — the same busyness: careers, earnings, everyday arrangements, family, entertainment, the pursuit of status, the accumulation of things and impressions. In other words, humanity knows about the problem yet does not respond to it in proportion to its scale. Such behavior is hard to call adequate. Here it is important to distinguish between efficiency and adequacy. An adequate response **DOES NOT HAVE TO** be immediately successful. People running out of a burning house in panic may act inefficiently, chaotically, with mistakes. However, their reaction to the fire is adequate — they understand there is a threat and try to save themselves. It is a different matter if, in the same burning house, the father calmly sits down to watch television, and the mother begins putting the children to bed as if nothing is happening. Their actions may look organized and even “effective” in an everyday sense, yet in relation to the situation they are **DEEPLY INADEQUATE**. This is roughly how humanity behaves in the face of death.

The planet increasingly resembles a ship slowly yet inevitably sinking into the ocean abyss. All the passengers know this. Every single one. Yet almost no one behaves as if this knowledge requires a complete reconsideration of life. People continue to trade, steal, build, fight, entertain themselves, argue, decorate their cabins, arrange their lives, dance on the deck — while the ship keeps sinking. And here a question arises — not abstract or philosophical, rather entirely practical. Who is a normal person? By the simplest logic, a normal person is someone who **ADEQUATELY RESPONDS** to a threat that brings destruction. Now let us apply this definition to our situation. The entire adult population of the planet today will, within a few decades, leave life due to aging and death. The threat is known. Its scale is absolute. Yet where is the response that matches this scale? If there is no response, it is a sign of inadequacy. Moreover, the greatest inadequacy appears when people evaluate threats selectively. If death comes from cause “**A**” — war, fire, epidemic, catastrophe — everyone agrees that a response is necessary. If the exact same death comes from cause “**B**” — aging, biological decline, or a natural end — suddenly it turns out that **NO RESPONSE IS NEEDED**, that it is supposedly “normal,” “natural,” and “just the way life is.” Yet the result is the same. A person dies.

Why is it that we consider it necessary to respond to one form of death, but not to another? It is precisely here that a **DEEPLY EMBEDDED** program in human consciousness becomes evident — a program of acceptance toward that which should provoke the greatest resistance.

An animal does not react to approaching death in the human sense, and this is understandable. It does not have developed associative thinking. It has no image of the future. It has no concept of “tomorrow” as we understand it. It does not see its own fate in a dead companion. For it, death is an external fact — but **NOT AN INTERNAL** program of comprehension. A human being is different. When a person looks at a dead fellow human, they see more than just someone else’s end. At least for a moment, they see their own future. They understand: this will happen to me as well. However, after a brief flash of fear, sadness, or pain, they quickly return to their usual rhythm. They bury the dead, they grieve, they carry the weight of loss for a



time, and then they re-enter the flow of everyday life — as if nothing fundamental has happened. This is one of the **MOST STRIKING** features of modern humans: the ability to know about the main threat and at the same time live as if this knowledge obligates them to nothing. And then the main question inevitably arises: what should be done? One can endlessly repeat that death is approaching. One can state the danger for as long as one likes. However, stating it alone changes nothing. The threat **DOES NOT DISAPPEAR** simply because we have named it.

To understand what must be done, it is necessary to look much more deeply into the situation itself. We must go beyond superficial fear and superficial acceptance. We **MUST UNDERSTAND** why humanity for centuries accepted death as a norm, who and how secured this acceptance in culture, religion, science, and in the very structure of thought. Only after that can a real search for an answer begin. The question of death cannot be resolved by emotion, habit, or a beautiful phrase. It can be resolved only through understanding. And understanding begins where a person stops considering inevitable that with which life, by its very nature, **SHOULD NOT** accept. If we want to understand the modern human attitude toward death, we must at least briefly look at the history of how humanity has perceived death.

At the earliest stages of human development, people did not recognize death as a final cessation of existence. This was the so-called mystical era. Our distant ancestors lived in a world they perceived as fully animated. The cosmos, stars, water, earth, forests, rivers, stones, plants, animals — everything was seen as alive and filled with spirit. In such a world, there **DID NOT EXIST** a category of final death. When a person died, it was believed they did not disappear. They simply shed the body, like a snake sheds its old skin. A person became invisible, more powerful, moved into another state, yet continued to exist alongside their people. That is why the dead were fed, offerings were made to them, and they were asked for help, advice, and protection. They were not seen as gone, rather as having passed into **ANOTHER FORM** of life. In such a worldview, the question of overcoming death did not arise. For ancient humans, death in our sense did not exist. There was only life transitioning from one state to another.

Over time, the mystical era was replaced by the *religious era*. At this stage, human consciousness became more complex. People began to clearly see that death was present in the world. It was **ALREADY IMPOSSIBLE** to completely ignore it. A need arose to explain it. A new model appeared. Human consciousness formed the idea of an otherworld to which the soul went after death. This world was inhabited by gods, spirits, and various supernatural forces. Death seemed to retreat again — it became not an end, rather a transition from one world to another. Gradually, within religious consciousness, the idea of reward and punishment emerged. Human life began to be seen as a kind of test. After death, **INVISIBLE FORCES** evaluate a person's actions and direct them either to Paradise — a state of highest good — or to Hell — a state of suffering considered worse than death itself. Thus, the religious era offered humanity a **MODEL OF STRUGGLE** against death. A person must live according to established rules, follow commandments, and participate in religious life. In return, they were promised the help of the gods in earthly life — success in hunting, health, fertility, protection from misfortune — and, most importantly, *eternal life after death*.

In this sense, the behavior of people in the religious era could be called quite logical. They were like passengers on a ship that had sprung a leak, yet the captain and crew assured everyone that the situation was under control and that rescue work was underway in the hold. Each passenger was invited to take part in saving the ship. Some went down into the hold and patched the breach. Others simply performed their duties yet supported the common effort — for example, **DONATING PART** of their

income to the temple, participating in religious rituals, and following established rules. In other words, the religious era gave people a sense that the struggle against death was ongoing, and that everyone could contribute to it.

However, history does not stand still. Over time, the religious era was replaced by the **atheistic era**. Human consciousness became more critical of religious ideas. People began to doubt the existence of gods, the reality of the afterlife, and the effectiveness of religious practices. Gradually, the belief emerged that prayers, sacrifices, fasting, and rituals **DID NOT HAVE** any real relation to overcoming death, and what once seemed like a path to eternal life began to be seen as a **USELESS WASTE** of time and effort. The person of the atheistic era rejected the religious answer to death. They no longer believed in heaven, hell, reincarnation, or divine judgment. However, a strange situation arose. If the religious person assumed there was a solution, the modern person admitted: death existed, **IT IS INEVITABLE**, and there is no answer. In this



sense, humanity returned to the mystical era — yet on a new level. Ancient people did not see death because they could not distinguish it. Modern people understand it clearly. They know more about it than ever before. Yet they live as if it requires no response. Here the main question of our time arises. If humanity has recognized death and abandoned old explanations, should it stop there? Or is this only a transitional stage — the moment when humans begin to truly face the problem? At this point, history **ONCE AGAIN APPROACHES** a point of choice. Recognizing a problem is not a solution, yet without it, no solution begins. When the religious worldview collapsed, the problem of death did not disappear — it became even more obvious. Then a new era emerged — the era of the first **atheist humanists**. They proposed a different path. A person **MUST RELY** not on gods, rather on their own reason. If reason could understand the laws of nature, it could also master them. Thus, a new idea appeared — humanity must conquer nature.

With the growth of scientific knowledge, the goal became clear: first to extend life, then to overcome diseases, and ultimately — to overcome death itself. Science was given a grand task — to make the human being capable of controlling their own destiny. For the first time, humanity openly declared the possibility of **im(mortality)**, achieved not through prayers and rituals, rather through knowledge. Society began to believe that somewhere, at the forefront of science, people were fighting death. Scientists became a new intellectual elite. It seemed that just a little more — and humanity would approach a state of near omnipotence. However, atheism had a serious problem. Unlike religion, it **DID NOT REPRESENT** a unified system. It had no single doctrine, no single book, no single philosophy. It became a collection of different views, often contradicting each other. As a result, the great idea gradually dissolved into everyday life. Politics, economics, the struggle for power, daily concerns, and

social conflicts pushed aside the main question. The idea of overcoming death was drowned in routine. What often happens in history happened again — the baby was thrown out with the bathwater. **ONLY A FEW** continued to ask: what is the point of painting a cabin on a sinking ship? However, most people saw this as an important and worthy activity. Thus, a new era gradually arrived — the era of *vulgar materialism*.

In this system, only what can be measured, seen, touched, or smelled is recognized as real. Everything beyond sensory perception is declared nonexistent or meaningless. The metaphysical realm is denied. The meaningful structure of the world is denied. The possibility of deeper levels of reality is denied. When atheistic society **FINALLY TURNS** into a consumer society, the meaning of life is reduced to consumption. Higher questions are dismissed as empty philosophy. Discussions about the meaning of existence, the fate of civilization, or overcoming death are seen as demagoguery. In this new framework, the only truly important activity becomes the same thing — painting the cabin on a sinking ship.

Anyone who tries to draw society's attention to the strangeness of this behavior finds themselves in an awkward position. They are mocked, labeled a dreamer, a utopian, or simply someone who **DOES NOT UNDERSTAND** "real life." In "respectable society," completely different things are valued: money, career, status, comfort, entertainment. Gradually, a person begins to transform into a kind of channel through which a stream of goods, services, impressions, and pleasures flows. This flow keeps growing. It becomes faster and more powerful. The main function of a person becomes participation in this movement. Those who handle this task best — who earn more, consume more, and move faster up the social ladder — become the heroes of the era.

If we evaluate a person not by their appearance or technical achievements, rather by the goal of their existence, a rather curious picture emerges. An ordinary monkey strives for a banana. A modern human strives for the same banana — only in a more complex way. The difference between them lies not in the goal, rather in the methods of achieving it. A simple monkey grabs the banana by hand or knocks it down with a stick. A "smart" monkey creates a machine that gathers bananas much more

efficiently. Yet the goal remains the same. That is why modern civilization **CAN BE DESCRIBED** by a paradoxical formula: *technologically advanced, yet philosophically impoverished society*.

For the first time in human history, a strange situation arises. People clearly understand that death is inevitable. They know more about it than all previous generations. Yet they almost **DO NOT REACT** to this fact. If the rich and the poor, the intelligent and the simple, the young and the old all know about the problem and do not seek a way out, then there must be a reason for such behavior. And this reason is not only a lack of emotion or a habit of avoiding unpleasant thoughts. The reason is much deeper. And here the parable of the train becomes useful. Because people in different "cars" of human civilization explain their inaction in different ways.

As long as a person lives 60-80 years, they inevitably perceive the planet as a **TEMPORARY PLACE** of residence. In their mind, it becomes a kind of hotel where



they stay for a short time. A person living in a temporary space cannot think on the scale of eternity. They are driven only by immediate goals. In such conditions, the development of humanity is determined not by a conscious global task, rather by a **SPONTANEOUS FLOW** made up of billions of individual pursuits. Everyone seeks their own good, their own benefit, their own success, their own security. These goals merge into a vast chaotic flow that begins to determine the direction of civilization. This is why the **TEMPORARY HUMAN** becomes one of the main threats to the planet. It is impossible to reverse such tendencies through words alone. As long as a person sees Earth as a temporary place — like a station they simply pass through — the situation **DOES NOT HAVE** a stable solution. Hence the slogans that now seem natural: “you only live once,” “take everything from life,” “live here and now.” The logic of these slogans seems flawless at first glance. If a person is sure they will not exist after death, if their existence is limited to a few decades, then it is indeed **HARD TO FIND** a rational reason to think about the distant future. Why care about a world in which you will not exist? Within this logic, it is almost impossible to find a flaw. That is why it is so widespread. However, the problem is that this logic inevitably leads to the psychology of a temporary dweller. A person begins to live by the principle: after I am gone, let the deluge come.

The situation can change only in one case — if a **HOST APPEARS** on the planet, one who knows they live here not temporarily, rather forever. However, such a host can only be a humanity that has overcome death. As long as death remains inevitable, society will inevitably reproduce the psychology of temporary existence. People will think about the coming decades, yet not about the fate of millennia.

Now it is worth speaking about those who, in our parable, can be called travelers in the **PASSENGER CARS**. The explanations used by passengers of tankers or freight cars no longer suit them, because they are too educated and too rational to justify their inaction with hopes of “living in the memory of descendants,” “continuing in children,” or “remaining in their works,” yet at the same time they understand that if a person truly recognizes the problem, they cannot simply ignore it, and so the search for an answer begins. A person turns to philosophy, literature, and scientific works, looking for thinkers who tried to understand death, yet often instead of a deep answer they encounter a striking poverty of thought, since philosophy for thousands of years has discussed the meaning of life yet has not dealt with overcoming life’s finiteness. Then a new hope appears. The passenger turns toward science and says that humanity **DOES NOT REMAIN PASSIVE**, that states spend enormous resources on healthcare, that research budgets are comparable to or even exceed those of energy or military sectors, which means somewhere there are laboratories, somewhere scientists are working, somewhere research is being conducted that will lead to victory over death, and that “we are part of this process — some work in laboratories, others pay taxes, some are on the front lines, others in the rear, yet overall humanity is searching for an answer.” This is probably the **MOST CONVINCING** psychological “plug” that allows a person to maintain inner calm, because although modern civilization spends enormous resources on medicine, pharmaceuticals, and biological research, almost no one asks a simple question — where exactly are these resources directed?

Enormous resources are spent on fighting individual diseases — cancer, AIDS, cardiovascular conditions, infections, epidemics. Science has learned to extend life by a few years, sometimes by decades. Yet if we look closely at the structure of these expenditures, a striking picture emerges. Huge funds are directed toward combating diseases. However, toward combating death itself — **PRACTICALLY NOTHING**. In state budgets, there is not even a separate line dedicated to this task. And this reveals one of the main paradoxes of modern civilization: humanity clearly understands the existence of the problem, yet is organized as if its solution does not exist at all.

Today, the idea of defeating death looks like a poor relative sitting at the edge of the budget table. This relative is **NOT ALLOWED** anywhere near the real share of resources. At best, it receives only crumbs. That is why it is an exaggeration to say that modern science is purposefully seeking victory over death. Science fights diseases, but not death itself. If we look at real results, even the greatest medical successes do not change the picture radically. Victory over cardiovascular diseases would add about seven to eight years. Victory over cancer would add a few more. Even if all deadly diseases were eliminated, life expectancy would increase by only fifteen to twenty years. Even in the most optimistic case, the result remains the same — a person still dies. Just a little later. Often the final years are spent in a state of **PARTIAL HELPLESSNESS**. That is why hope in science, in its current form, largely serves as a psychological “plug.”



One can, of course, say that the evolutionary development of science will eventually lead humanity to this goal. Perhaps in centuries or even millennia people will learn to overcome aging and death. However, for those living today, this is **WEAK CONSOLATION**. If progress follows only an evolutionary path, most of our contemporaries will simply not live to see it. A real chance for the current generation appears only if this gradual movement is supplemented by a **REVOLUTIONARY BREAKTHROUGH**. Without such a breakthrough, there is practically no chance.

However, here another important feature of human nature appears. Let us be realistic: the overwhelming majority of people — almost one hundred percent — strive to conform to the way of life considered correct in their social environment. People want to live in such a way that they can say: life was successful, everything was done properly. A person rarely invents their own rules of the game. Much more often, they play by rules created before them. They follow norms established by others. A person likes to talk about freedom, yet in reality most people rather **FEAR FREEDOM**. Freedom means the need to choose goals independently and to take responsibility for that choice. This is far more difficult than following ready-made patterns. That is why, in most societies, the main goal becomes whatever is considered important within that culture.

Today, for a huge number of people, that goal is money. However, even this goal is rarely formed independently. A person simply grows up in an environment where, from childhood — directly or indirectly — they are taught that the main value of life is connected with material goods, and that money is the key to them. If a person were raised in a different cultural environment, for example in a monastery where contemplation or spiritual practice was considered the highest value, they would pursue those with the same energy instead of wealth. This reveals an important point: a person seeks not so much a goal, rather someone who has the authority to define it.

Most people are not capable of independently creating ideals. They need an external source — a system of values, an ideology, a religion, a culture, or an authority figure that defines the goal and the rules for achieving it. If a person reaches the goal according to the established rules, they feel satisfaction. If they fail to reach it, they feel like a failure. If they reach it by breaking the rules, they

experience guilt. A full sense of harmony arises only when a person achieves the goal while strictly following the accepted rules. In this sense, human behavior is largely **DETERMINED BY PROGRAMS** — sets of norms, taboos, and patterns shaped by culture and society. Most people strive to conform to these programs. Violating them creates inner discomfort. The differences between people lie only in their ability to step beyond these programs. Some are almost incapable of breaking them under any circumstances. Even when they understand that following a pattern may lead to serious problems, they continue to follow it. They can be compared to perfectly programmed mechanisms. Others are sometimes able to step beyond established norms if they clearly see it will bring them benefit. They weigh the situation and make a decision.

If we return to the parable of the train, one more category remains — *the people in the locomotive*. Why do they not react to the approach of death? The answer is paradoxical: because the **LOCOMOTIVE IS EMPTY**. There is no one to pose the problem on the scale of an entire civilization, no one to formulate the goal and direct humanity's resources toward solving it. As a result, an absurd situation arises.

Humanity directs its greatest efforts toward what no one actually wants — the development of military power and technologies of destruction. At the same time, the smallest efforts are directed toward what everyone needs — overcoming aging and death. If we were to plot the distribution of resources, the picture would be striking: huge mountains of effort where destruction is concerned, and almost nothing where the preservation and extension of life are concerned. The problem can be solved only if it is set at the appropriate scale, and for this, people are needed who are capable of taking a place in the locomotive of civilization.

As long as the locomotive is empty, the most important task of a mortal human **WILL BE IGNORED**. People will continue to die, considering it inevitable. A real breakthrough requires putting the effort on a large scale. Amateur efforts of separate groups cannot quickly change the situation. Stories are sometimes told about secret laboratories or closed groups of scientists funded by wealthy enthusiasts; however, such projects **CANNOT** solve a problem of this magnitude. The task facing humanity requires an **OPEN SYSTEM** capable of uniting the knowledge and ideas of millions of people.

A special cultural environment is needed — a kind of subculture that attracts people with a commensurate intellectual caliber, those capable of thinking not in decades, rather in epochs. At the same time, a structure is required that can concentrate societal resources on the main task — overcoming aging and death. Without these two elements — an intellectual subculture and the concentration of resources — the process will proceed only along an evolutionary path. And for those of us living now, that speed of change is too slow, because for a mortal human it **MEANS ONE THING** — being too late.

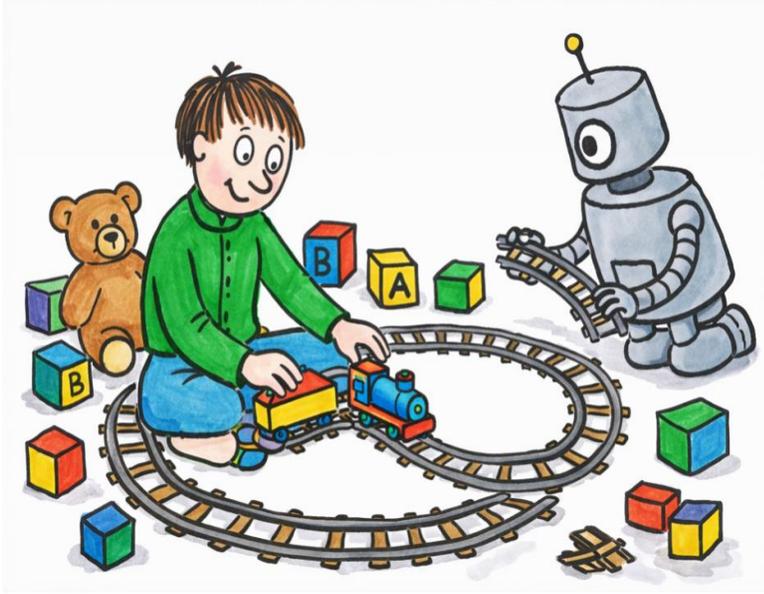


If we try to summarize everything that has been said, it becomes clear: humanity has found itself at a unique historical point. For thousands of years, people have responded to the challenge of death in different ways. At first, they denied it, living in a mystical world where everything was animated and death was seen only as a transition from one form of life to another. Then came the religious era, where death was acknowledged, yet hope for salvation in the afterlife was offered. Later came the era of rationalism and humanism, when people tried to oppose death with knowledge and science. However, at some point, this movement stopped. Modern civilization knows more about death than any generation before it. Yet it **UNDERTAKES ALMOST NO** systematic efforts to overcome it. Enormous resources are directed toward solving partial problems, while the problem itself remains outside the strategic agenda. This is the paradox we have tried to examine in this article.

Humanity behaves as if the main challenge of its existence *is not its main task*. The reason lies deeper than it may seem at first glance. It is connected not only with economics, politics, or scientific inertia. It is connected with the very architecture of human thinking. It is at this level that the ideas presented in the works of A. Khatybov, N. Levashov, B. Makov, and in the “Fundamentals of the Formation of Humanity” become **ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT**. These works emphasize that the development of civilization is linked not only to technological progress, but above all to the **DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAPABILITIES** of the human brain — to the evolution of what can be called genotypes of thinking. Each era forms a certain type of consciousness. Each type of consciousness defines the boundaries of the questions a person is able to ask and the tasks they consider possible.

For a long time, the very formulation of the task of overcoming death lay beyond these boundaries. It was either denied, or moved into the sphere of religion, or dissolved in everyday concerns. However, the history of civilization shows that sooner or later **MOMENTS COME** when familiar paradigms begin to crack, when old explanations stop working, and when the previous picture of the world can no longer contain the growing volume of knowledge and questions. It is precisely at such moments that what philosophers of science call a **PARADIGM SHIFT** occurs. Perhaps humanity today stands on the threshold of such a moment, because the question of death is not just a biological problem, rather a question about the purpose of civilization and the scale of human thinking. As long as a person sees themselves as a temporary being, their actions will inevitably take the form of temporary solutions, yet once the idea of overcoming this boundary appears, the very logic of social development begins to change, and a new task emerges — not simply to extend life and not simply to fight diseases, rather to rethink the very structure of human civilization. For this, at least two conditions are necessary: *first*, the emergence of an intellectual environment, a kind of collective mind capable of thinking on this scale, and *second*, the formation of a social structure capable of directing the resources of civilization toward this goal, and it is here that the image of our train arises once again.

As long as the locomotive remains empty, movement continues by inertia. The cars may be filled with people busy with their own affairs; however, the direction **DOES NOT CHANGE**. The locomotive begins to move consciously only when people appear in it who can see the path ahead. People of the right kind can be in any part of the train — in tankers, freight cars, or passenger cars. Perhaps now is the moment when this locomotive is beginning to fill. However, for this to happen, the first step must be taken — *to remove the taboo from the very conversation about overcoming death*. As long as this topic remains beyond acceptable discussion, humanity will continue to live within old programs of thinking. That is why the discussion begun in this article **IS NOT** an attempt to give final answers. It is an attempt to define the problem in its true scale. Because any serious solution begins with the correct formulation of the question. And perhaps the question of overcoming death is the very one around which a **NEW**



civilizational paradigm will begin to **FORM** in the coming decades. Yet to understand why humanity has arrived at its current position, and what mechanisms led it here, it is necessary to look more closely at history — not only the history of events, but also the history of systems that shaped human thinking over the centuries.

This will be the subject of the next articles in this series. Because the path to understanding always begins *beyond familiar texts*. And sometimes it is there that answers are revealed — answers that

remained hidden for a long time.

To be continued...

F. Shkrudnev
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