SURVIVOR ERROR

By Alexander and Nicole Gratovsky

People have always been attracted to that which seemed (or was) incredible.

Myths, legends, fairy tales and religious texts are full of descriptions of amazing events that go beyond ordinary notions, habitual norms and skills.

The thirst to acquire wondrous possibilities catalysed research, development of technology and invention.

The famous “Seven Wonders of the World”—the Lighthouse of Alexandria, the Great Pyramids, the Hanging Gardens — are man-made. In essence, these are architectural achievements...

Only one or two centuries ago it was impossible to imagine that man would learn to fly, creating aviation, and communicate at a distance, creating mobile technology. But what we are talking about are not technological breakthroughs. The nature of wonders is not technogenic; it lies in the very capacity for invention and not in its specific product. It is sewn into the arrangement of the world and is its (and ours as its part) immanent

consequence. We are not so keen on studying this ability itself, but rather on perfecting its results. With each step we more and more closely associate wonders with the manipulation of material objects or the properties of material objects, we build an increasingly solid wall between them and the field — non-material — component of the world.

The complex of our notions about the Universe is a consequence of a systematic error in selection, which is inevitable if there is a lot of data on one group ("survivors"), and almost no data on the other group ("the perished"). As a result, the general characteristics of the species are described only based on the group of survivors.

For example, if you systematically burn "witches" at the stake, in a vast region (say, in Europe) there will be almost no talented and beautiful women left. If we strictly select literature for the school curriculum, everything that is not included in it will remain outside the cultural context of the respective generation of graduates. If for decades people are educated in the reductionist paradigm, they will have to navigate in a world in which belief in wonders is a sign of dangerous insanity, being able to see only materialistic objects, goals, values, behaviour patterns and ways of life.

There are numerous experiments, for example, with kittens raised in an artificial- lycreated space with a complete absence of vertical lines. Upon reaching a certain age, they are released into the ordinary world, and immediately begin to bump into the legs of chairs and tables, simply being unable to see them.

We are incredibly ignorant.

If the expenses that mankind spends annually on armaments were reduced by an amount equivalent to ten days, it would be possible to finance all school programmes for ten years with the proceeds. A day for a year. We are incomparably better armed than educated. Idiots (in the literal sense of this ancient Greek word, "separated") with nuclear clubs.

We know how to survive in the way we learned in the Middle Ages and, in essence, we do not know any other way.

To such an extent that the question "really, we could have done that?" does not even come to mind.

We are the survivors. And we make errors.

Medieval alchemists called the state of chaos and bewilderment in which most people who are incapable of being self-aware, who are torn apart by internal contradictions without understanding their nature and meaning, find themselves, a MASS OF CONFUSION.

The lack of wonders in the consensus reality cannot completely eradicate the naïve faith in them.

The reduced model of the world weeds the lawns, but unsanctioned flowers sprout on them.

Children continue to read fairy tales, although with each new edition they become more and more politically correct.

In celebrations and carnivals their original function in culture can still be perceived — as ruptures in everyday life.

Art indulges in all kinds of fantasies, which it injects directly into the veins of viewers and readers, if the author is sufficiently talented.

Stories of rare encounters with elders, healers and shamans break cracks in the everyday.

All this, all the wondrousness of the world, everything that cannot be recorded and measured by a voltmeter, is forced into the sphere of the condemned, and official (materialistically-oriented) science increasingly becomes the main gate keeper of the picture-postcard purity of ideas about the world.

The Universe has been sterilised in an attempt to rid it of the questionable (non-digitised and uncontrollable) impurities that make it alive.

The most significant SCIENTIFIC CLOSURES of the era, leaving outside of sanctioned attention everything that does not fit into the system of materialistic explanations of phenomena and events, are equivalent to a breaking of wires, disconnection from the power supply.

Dangerous ideas are buried alive in the ground, without the knowledge that they are seeds.

They are spoken of in a whisper outside universities and scientific institutions, and at some point this whisper becomes deafening.

A paradigm shift is an upheaval on a universal human scale.

It happens when it becomes obvious to a sufficient number of people that what is experienced and observed does not at all fit into the framework of explanations and conventions.

It is traumatic for all of the participants—the rejection of past convictions is always painful.

Something similar happened when Galileo, Bruno and Copernicus proposed a different view on the arrangement of the Universe.

The Earth is round — what could be more scandalous? Vavilov, Einstein and many of their colleagues did not escape a very similar fate. Scandalous new ideas have arisen since the advent of quantum notions about the nature of reality. They germinate and a new picture of the world is manifested in the work of physicists who received a completely orthodox scientific education: Fritjof Capra writes "The Tao of Physics," Amit Goswami "The Self-Aware Universe," James Lovelock creates the Gaia theory. The world is alive? It can think? The world is unified? A field of consciousness permeates it? At the same time, biologists prove outlandish things: animals talk, have feelings, display altruism, humour... It turns out that the complexity and harmony of whale songs is comparable to the greatest writings created by mankind, in particular, brilliant musical works.

Jane Goodall and Giacomo Rizzolatti reveal the mechanisms inherent in human nature in the same way as in the nature of animals: we are connected to each other on a completely different level.

Areas of research appear that were completely unthinkable before: biosemiotics, psychological topology, neurobotany (the latter, for example, showing that the complexity and organisation of the exchange of signals in a forest is comparable to the processes taking place inside the brain).

At the same time, people come forward who prove that we can no longer “create without knowing.”

Large non-governmental associations of thinkers concerned about the fate of mankind are established. The Club of Rome publishes the historical report “The Limits to Growth.”

The need for radical change becomes obvious. Ervin Laszlo proposes the term “quantum leap.”

The new paradigm requires that the discord between science and spirituality be overcome. The Dalai Lama initiates a dialogue and cooperation between them.

Schrödinger, whose cat is now neither alive nor dead and has been given into our care, once said: “I am going against the stream, but the direction of the flow changes as a result.”