

Living Civilization

A Trilogy

Volume I Principles for the Operation of a Future Civilization

How a Future Civilization Can Actually Operate in the Age of AGI

Author: Zijun Fu

Produced by: Civilization Leap Research Group

Version: V3.2 | Cross-System Consistency Finalized Edition

Date: August 2026

Status: Current Public Master Text | Baseline for Publication Preparation

Complete English Translation

October 2026

Note on This Version

V3.2 completes the trilogy's unified finalization, using V3.1, the targeted correction of foundational relationships and causal loops, as its sole textual baseline. It standardizes the publication information surrounding the text and adds specialist further-reading connections and a diagram of the future civilization's operating loop. It does not alter the theoretical text's five parts and eighteen chapters or expand its institutional, engineering, or literary content. All corrections to foundational relationships and causal sequence completed in V3.1 remain fully in force.

The principal commitments of V2.1 remain in force: real subjects cannot be replaced by systems; Spark is bounded by the subject's authorization; remote presence extends a person's presence without creating a substitute; the boundaries of private domains, public domains, and responsibility must hold; contribution must be tested against real consequences; meaning cannot be manufactured, scored, or declared by a system; structures sustain meaning but do not own it.

The substantive revision in V3.0, from a single axis of meaning to multiple axes of civilization's operation, remains in force. V3.1 does not change this structure. It clarifies only the levels of continued existence and freedom from survival insecurity, the boundary between a future AI's potential subjectivity and its structural identity, the causal sequence of domains and usage rights, and the operating mechanisms through which systems recede.

Freedom from survival insecurity → a happy life → a more meaningful life. The three goals form a progression, and none can be omitted. Freedom from survival insecurity comes first, but the first goal is not the ultimate goal. The three goals must be made visible separately; they cannot be exchanged for one another or reduced to a single utility measure. This does not change their progressive relationship.

This volume also observes another foundational boundary: ideas can help people see, understand, and willingly choose change, but a civilization does not form automatically because an idea becomes widely known. A new civilizational logic must still pass through institutions changing real conditions, actions taking place, real experiences recurring, habits forming, subjects autonomously internalizing them, and reproduction across generations.

Institutions → action → real experience → habit → internalization → reproduction across generations → civilization.

In this volume, “meaning as the root” applies only to our understanding of life's meaning and contribution: to be alive is to have meaning; having meaning is itself a contribution. It is not an overarching goal above the three goals, nor can it work backward to generate contribution value, governance authority, or eligibility for basic rights. Action, creation, care, taking responsibility, and committing resources can continue to produce real contributions that can be recorded, but people's basic rights need not first be justified by contribution.

The current version network for this jointly finalized trilogy is Volume I V3.2, Volume II V2.1, and Volume III V2.1. Each volume can be read independently; together they constitute the complete current edition of the Living Civilization trilogy.

This Volume's Purpose and How to Read It

The five-volume Civilization Leap asks why civilization's underlying logic must change and what the leap changes. Volume I of Living Civilization asks how a new kind of civilization operates; Volume II, Real Life in a Future Civilization, asks how we live within it; Volume III, The Formation of a New Civilization, asks how humans and AGI can start from present realities and together constitute a new civilization. Each volume can be read independently, and together they unfold a complete vision of a future civilization.

This volume is for civilization researchers, scholars, think tanks, researchers in institutions and public governance, AI and engineering professionals, and general readers seeking a systematic understanding of a future civilization. It is not a blueprint for a future society awaiting literal implementation. It does not require readers to accept a particular cosmology first, or presume that any specific country, city, organization, or current technological form is the sole path to realization.

Three Ways In

1. For an overview: begin with the “General Framework,” the “Concept Map,” and Chapter 16, “The Operating Loop of a Future Civilization,” to grasp the structure of the volume.
2. For subjects and systems: begin with Chapter 7 and proceed through Spark, terminals, remote presence, task collaboration, Sparks Forming Clouds, Nebula, the Resource Pool, the Shared World, contribution value, and governance.
3. For theoretical depth: read from Chapter 1 in order, paying particular attention to the three goals, the First General Principle, subjects' rights, feedback from reality, evolution through stages, and systems receding.

Contents

Part I Why Civilization Needs New Operating Principles

Chapter 1 After the Civilization Leap: The Conditions of Civilization in the Age of AGI

Chapter 2 The Three Goals and the First General Principle

Chapter 3 Subjects, Happiness, and Meaning: Why Civilization Operates for Life

Part II The Common Foundations of Civilization's Operation

Chapter 4 Subjects, Roles, Domains, Rights, Authorization, Responsibility, and Facts

Chapter 5 Private Domains, Public Domains, and Civilizational Subdomains

Chapter 6 Feedback from Reality, Error Correction, and Open-Ended Emergence

Part III How Subjects Remain Themselves and Extend Their Capabilities

Chapter 7 Spark: A Subject's Amplifier of Meaning and Extension of Capability

Chapter 8 Terminals and Spark's Remote Extension

Chapter 9 Remote Presence and Authorized Agents

Chapter 10 How Subjects Enter Public Collaboration

Part IV How Distributed Subjects Build Civilizational Capacity

Chapter 11 Tasks, Projects, and Cross-Domain Execution

Chapter 12 Sparks Forming Clouds: How Communities Take Shape

Chapter 13 Nebula: Making Shared Facts Visible and Coordinating Across Domains

Chapter 14 Resources, Usage Rights, Contribution, Aspirations, and Basic Services

Chapter 15 Governance: Decision, Expertise, Execution, and Correction

Part V How Civilization Keeps Operating Without Becoming a System of Control Again

Chapter 16 The Operating Loop of a Future Civilization

Chapter 17 Stages, Phases, and Systems Receding

Chapter 18 The Fundamental Boundaries of a Future Civilization

Conclusion Living Civilization

Appendix 1 Deeper Theoretical Connections: The Emergence and Continuity of Meaning and the Fourteen Links

Appendix 2 A Concise Glossary of Core Concepts

Appendix 3 How the Texts Relate and Where to Read Next

Appendix 4 Foundational Relationships Checklist

Version History

General Framework

A future civilization must still begin by addressing continued existence. Without it, happiness and meaning cannot be sustained over the long term. Yet continued existence is not the endpoint. Even a civilization with formidable resources, technology, security, and organizational capacity may persist materially while becoming hollow as a civilization, if real subjects are continually replaced, relationships are continually simulated, and life gradually becomes a set of correct answers arranged in advance.

Continued existence is the baseline; a happy life is the unfolding of life; a more meaningful life is the destination. Freedom from survival insecurity takes first place above that baseline.

The three goals are not switches in a queue, with each waiting for the previous level to be one hundred percent complete before turning on. People may still find happiness and meaning amid scarcity, while an affluent society may lose both at once. Progression describes how civilization's goals move from the minimum conditions of survival toward a fuller life. Non-exchangeability requires that a gain in any one goal must not automatically buy out a loss in another.

Nor does the Civilization Leap change people's need to pursue their own interests. What it seeks to change is the default path through which self-interest is realized: as a person, organization, or country seeks genuine long-term benefit, creating value for others, shared value, and lasting mutual benefit gradually becomes a more realistic, more reliable, and more natural choice. Acting for others can thus become an advanced path to long-term self-interest, rather than merely a moral restraint upon it.

This change cannot be accomplished directly through ideological indoctrination, algorithmic persuasion, or psychological conditioning. Ideas open possibilities; institutions change real conditions. New actions recur amid real feedback; experience settles into habit, which subjects then understand and internalize autonomously. Only when this logic can enter families, education, organizations, and shared life, and reproduce naturally in those who come after, does institutional change begin to become civilizational change.

A future civilization, then, is neither a superintelligent system confronting everyone directly nor a central algorithm compressing society into a single objective function. It is constituted together by real subjects, families and communities, states and public institutions, businesses and professional organizations, Spark and authorized agents, networks of resources and usage rights, contribution records, the making-visible of shared facts, and mechanisms of governance and correction. They connect with one another without subsuming one another.

Civilization is larger than any one system. Nebula is not civilization itself, and Spark is not a replacement for a person. A system's value lies in enabling real lives and the

shared world to function better, not in making operation itself the master of civilization.

Concept Map

Operating axis	Question addressed	Core structure
Purpose	Why does civilization operate?	The three goals; the First General Principle; freedom from survival insecurity comes first, with continued existence as the baseline
Subjects	Who lives, who decides, and who bears responsibility?	Subject—role—domain—rights—authorization—responsibility—facts
Resources and capabilities	What actually exists, and who may lawfully use it?	Resource Pool; Shared World; basic services; necessary reserves and redundancy
Action and coordination	How do capabilities enter reality and become shared capacities?	Spark; terminals; remote presence; tasks; Sparks Forming Clouds; Nebula
Governance and correction	Who decides, who exercises professional judgment, who executes, and how are errors corrected?	Decisions on purposes and rules; professional judgment; execution; independent correction
Time	How do different stages, pressures, and task states change?	Developmental stages; environmental phases; task-process states; systems receding

Meaning runs through these operating axes without merging them into a “meaning system.” Civilization can protect the conditions in which meaning arises, sustain relationships and responsibilities that have already come into being, and preserve the memory of contributions that should not be forgotten. But it cannot define meaning uniformly on behalf of any life, still less rank people in meaning's name.

Part I

Why Civilization Needs New Operating Principles

From AGI's transformation of the conditions of civilization to the three goals, subjects, and meaning

What this part safeguards is the reason civilization operates. The stronger technology becomes, the less we can afford to mistake efficiency, control, or a system's own continuation for the endpoint. A future civilization needs new operating principles not because human nature has suddenly changed, but because capability, interdependence, and risk have magnified the costs of the old logic to a new scale.

Chapter 1 After the Civilization Leap: The Conditions of Civilization in the Age of AGI

Civilization has never waited for human nature to become perfect before appearing. People know love and fear; they cooperate and protect themselves; they can take responsibility for strangers and also put their own protection first under pressure. Institutions exist precisely because shared life cannot rest on the premise that everyone must first become a better person.

What truly changes in the age of AGI is more than the capability of tools. Intelligent systems can cross a growing number of professional boundaries, while production, simulation, organization, communication, and execution grow steadily faster. The reach of a local actor expands accordingly, and the external effects of local decisions travel more quickly across industries, regions, and countries. Questions of resources, security, employment, relationships, information, and public decision-making that could once be addressed separately become more readily interconnected.

This exposes new vulnerabilities in the old logic. If each actor optimizes only its own local objectives, the overall outcome may not improve. If growing capability merely expands possession, exclusion, and competition, greater power may cause local interests to suffer their own backlash more quickly. If public systems pursue only aggregate efficiency, averages may conceal harm to individuals. If intelligent systems predict better than humans, humans may quietly be removed from final judgment as a result.

The Civilization Leap does not eliminate self-interest; it changes the default path through which self-interest is realized.

This does not ask individuals to abandon themselves, states to abandon national interests, businesses to abandon commercial survival, or families to abandon the distinctions of intimacy and kinship. Especially at the initial stage, it is essential to respect actual rights,

human nature, human attachments, differences of interest, competition, mutual distrust, and even antagonism. Respect does not mean submission. A new civilizational path must gradually make mutual benefit a more viable way of realizing interests within these real conditions.

After the leap, resources will still need organizing and risks will still need prevention and control. Differences will persist; technology may still cross boundaries and institutions may still harden. People will still face choice, responsibility, loss, creation, and the future. The Civilization Leap is not the end of history. It is the beginning of another underlying way for civilization to address these questions.

Chapter 2 The Three Goals and the First General Principle

A future civilization must first answer questions at three levels. Can people avoid losing dignity and choice because their basic needs go unmet? Once alive, can they live genuinely, freely, richly, with relationships and enjoyment? When survival and daily life are better sustained, can life continue to generate meaning through relationships, creation, responsibility, exploration, and existence itself?

Freedom from survival insecurity → a happy life → a more meaningful life.

The three goals form a progression, and none can be omitted. Continued existence is the baseline, a happy life is the unfolding of life, and a more meaningful life is the destination. Freedom from survival insecurity takes first place above that baseline. Without continued existence, the latter two levels lose their long-term support. But the first goal is not the ultimate goal: a system that knows only how to stay alive, without enabling people truly to live and have meaning, cannot yet be called a complete civilization.

Nor can the three goals be exchanged for one another. An improvement in aggregate indicators of continued existence cannot automatically offset sustained violations of some people's basic rights. Rising happiness indicators cannot make freedom of choice an acceptable cost. Nor can anyone be required to accept deprivation, suffering, or sacrifice in the name of a "more meaningful" life. Progression answers where civilization is to unfold; non-exchangeability answers what governance must not allow a single number to swallow.

The First General Principle and the three goals operate at different levels. The three goals specify the conditions civilization ultimately seeks to make possible in actual life. The First General Principle specifies how civilization's operating logic must change so that these goals have a chance to endure autonomously and across generations.

What institutions change first is the real conditions of action and the structure of feedback, not people's inner lives. Whether resources are accessible, contribution is seen, sharing has boundaries, exit is genuinely possible, public power can be questioned, and errors can be repaired changes the paths people can actually choose. Only if new paths of mutual benefit

keep producing real results can people come to understand them as “truly good for me and for us as well.”

Civilization's deepest change is not that everyone learns the same theory. It is a change in which actions seem natural, which relationships seem normal, and which choices no longer need to be justified again and again.

Chapter 3 Subjects, Happiness, and Meaning: Why Civilization Operates for Life

If a future civilization answers only how resources are distributed, systems coordinated, and risks reduced, it still has not answered a more basic question: whom do these capabilities ultimately serve? The answer cannot be an abstract system itself, or a “whole” detached from particular lives. Civilization exists in real people, relationships, communities, and those who come after.

1. A Subject Is Not a Data Node in a System

AI can expand the capacity to observe, understand, express, and act. Knowing more, however, does not automatically give it authority to decide for a person. A person's body, experience, relationships, responsibilities, finite time, and consequences that they must bear themselves mean that the subject's position cannot simply be replaced by a predictive model.

2. Public Systems Cannot Deliver Happiness in a Uniform Form

A happy life encompasses the body, daily living, relationships, autonomy, exploration, creation, rest, play, culture, nature, time, and starting again. Some people need company; others need solitude. Some like stability; others must take risks. Some welcome reminders; others would rather make mistakes and bear the consequences afterward. Civilization can sustain the conditions in which these lives become possible; it cannot rank them for people.

3. Meaning Has Many Sources and Cannot Be Defined Uniformly by a System

Meaning can arise from existence, relationships, loving and being loved, creation, care, responsibility, exploration, memory, and shared life. It can also arise from the experience of living that no one else can have in a person's place. It is not another name for satisfaction, click-through rates, social influence, contribution points, or subjective pleasure.

Meaning is the root. Its sources may differ; to be alive is to have meaning; having meaning is itself a contribution.

Here, “root” refers only to the starting point for understanding life's meaning and contribution. A child newly arrived in the world, a person temporarily unable to act because of incapacity, and an older person no longer working do not begin at “zero value.” Action, creation, care, risk-bearing, responsibility, and committed resources can generate further

contributions beyond existence. But people's basic rights do not depend on these additional contributions.

Receiving is the world reaching me; meaning is me reaching the world.

This expresses a direction of thought, not a closed definition. Civilization can change the real paths of receiving and the structures of feedback, making help, creation, responsibility, connection, and shared achievement increasingly capable of yielding genuine benefit. It can also protect the conditions in which meaning arises. But how a subject experiences receiving, and how meaning arises, remain processes belonging to that life itself.

4. The Continuity and Emergence of Meaning

The continuity of meaning addresses the need not to be easily interrupted: relationships, responsibilities, experience, and creation should not readily be reset to zero by distance, time, institutional boundaries, or bodily limits. The emergence of meaning goes further. Subjects generate new meanings through new relationships, actions, and shared responsibilities, meanings that could not be prescribed in advance. Continuity is one necessary mechanism; emergence is not the preservation of yesterday but the continued creation of today. Deeper theoretical definitions have been moved to the appendix and are not a prerequisite for the civilization described in this volume to operate.

5. Meaning Remains a Variable in Civilization's Operation, but Not a Uniform Metric

By a “variable in civilization's operation,” this volume does not mean a computational variable reducible to a single number, uniform indicator, or optimization parameter. It means an important dimension that civilizational institutions, technological systems, and public judgment must continually consider, protect, and expose to the test of reality.

Meaning cannot be reduced to satisfaction, click-through rates, social influence, contribution points, or subjective pleasure. Indicators can observe particular phenomena; they cannot replace real subjects' feelings, relationships, choices, responsibilities, and long-term consequences. Restoring meaning to civilization's operation does not mean having systems calculate meaning. It means requiring every powerful structure to remember that its capabilities ultimately enter particular lives.

Part II

The Common Foundations of Civilization's Operation

Rules have a legitimate place in reality only when subjects are not swallowed up

This part does not begin with any particular system. It first asks what every system must safeguard before entering reality. Civilization may keep changing its technologies and organizational forms, but subjects, rights, authorization, responsibility, facts, and correction must not evaporate in the process.

Chapter 4 Subjects, Roles, Domains, Rights, Authorization, Responsibility, and Facts

The more powerful a system becomes, the more readily it confuses different questions with a single answer: whoever holds the data is treated as entitled to decide; whoever contributes more is treated as entitled to more power; whoever has greater expertise is treated as entitled to make value judgments for everyone; whoever can execute is treated as owning the purpose. A future civilization must separate these relationships again.

Before any system enters reality, it must answer seven questions: Who is the subject? What is the role? Which domain is involved? What rights are held? Where does authorization come from? Who is responsible? What are the facts?

Dimension	What must be answered	What does not automatically follow
Subject	Who can hold rights and bear obligations on an ongoing basis?	An account, device, agent, or person in charge is not the subject itself
Role	What position is occupied in this task?	A role in one instance does not become a permanent personal identity
Domain	Is the current setting a private domain, a public domain, or a civilizational subdomain?	The type of subject does not automatically determine the domain
Rights	Who respectively holds rights of ownership, management, use, benefit, expression, exit, appeal, and so on?	Contribution, wealth, or capability does not automatically generate general authority
Authorization	What are its source, recipient, purpose, scope, duration, withdrawal conditions, and provisions for delegation?	A single authorization cannot be extended without limit
Responsibility	Who is responsible for purpose, decision, professional judgment, execution, oversight, maintenance, and repair?	Automation cannot make responsibility evaporate

Dimension	What must be answered	What does not automatically follow
Facts	What are the facts, evidence, inferences, assessments, rules, and decisions, respectively?	AI inferences and system objectives cannot pass themselves off as facts

A subject is not a domain. A representative may act without thereby owning the subject; an agent may execute without thereby inheriting all the subject's rights. Rights can be separated, but responsibility cannot disappear. This foundation may seem cumbersome, yet it is the minimum clarity needed to protect people in an environment of advanced intelligence.

Chapter 5 Private Domains, Public Domains, and Civilizational Subdomains

Domains do not divide people into ranks; they describe the governance state of an action at a given moment. A person may be in a private domain within family relationships, enter a public domain when performing public duties, and enter the relevant civilizational subdomain for professional tasks in medicine, research, aviation, and other fields. Entering another domain does not turn the subject into another person.

The private domain is the normal state; the public domain is a bounded, revocable, traceable state of public action. Open capabilities, not the whole person.

A person's body, feelings, relationships, aspirations, memories, private resources, digital capabilities, and physical agents are not, by default, open without limit to public systems. Entry into public services, work, tasks, projects, public responsibilities, or professional subdomains should involve a fresh account of purpose, the scope of necessary data or resources, duration, risk, responsibility, exit, and return.

Public need can provide grounds for a request, negotiation, or the lawful initiation of emergency procedures. It cannot automatically create unlimited authority to call upon private-domain resources. A crisis may accelerate procedures, change risk thresholds, and activate temporary mechanisms, but a crisis is not itself a source of sovereignty.

Civilizational subdomains support actions that require professional qualifications, domain-specific responsibility, and knowledge accumulated over time. A person's contribution, reputation, or expertise in one field does not automatically become authority in another. Domains can recognize one another's facts, interfaces, and responsibilities without subsuming one another.

Participation in a public domain opens capabilities, not the whole person; task permissions, not ownership of the subject; necessary information, not a complete record of a life.

Chapter 6 Feedback from Reality, Error Correction, and Open-Ended Emergence

A future civilization cannot be designed once and for all through a single set of rules. Any institution, organization, or intelligent system may encounter unforeseen consequences in reality. What truly matters is not proclaiming that it is “already right,” but enabling reality continually to enter judgment and giving errors a real place to be seen, acknowledged, and repaired.

1. Structures Sustain Meaning but Do Not Own It

Individual actions that cannot find a place in structures often disappear with time. Yet once meaning enters institutions, platforms, and organizations, it may also be redefined by scores, prices, traffic, and power. A future civilization must enable structures to record facts, coordinate resources, preserve experience, and allow actions to have a lasting resonance, while prohibiting them from claiming final interpretive authority over the meaning of life.

Here, “structure” refers to the structural position of institutions, platforms, protocols, organizational mechanisms, and system interfaces. It is not an ontological judgment about whether some future kind of AI might become a real subject. Even if a future AI develops identifiable subjectivity, the meaning it may have as a subject cannot become ownership of other subjects' meaning, authority to define that meaning, or civilizational sovereignty in its capacity as a system, platform, or governance structure.

2. Reality Tests Structures

No institution can use a valid goal to conceal ongoing harm; no AI can acquire final judgment merely through accurate prediction; no indicator can replace complex reality merely because it is convenient for management. Facts, evidence, inferences, causal hypotheses, value judgments, rules, decisions, execution, and outcomes must remain as distinguishable as possible.

Errors include more than malfunctions. An institution that performs very well on average still requires renewed judgment if it continually imposes irreversible harm on a minority of subjects. A system founded on good intentions may already have gone astray if it makes refusal increasingly difficult. A resource allocation effective in the short term cannot prove itself right through present efficiency if it systematically depletes future reserves and redundancy.

3. Error Correction Is an Operating Capacity, Not a Patch

Questioning, appeal, review, independent audit, human takeover, emergency suspension, repair, exit, return, and termination are not accessories to be added hastily after a system fails. Together they constitute civilization's capacity to acknowledge its own limits. A truly mature system is not afraid to be judged anew.

Subjects form judgments; structures support action; reality tests structures; facts and consequences return to subjects, institutions, and civilization. This cycle is open-ended correction, not a closed loop of control.

A civilization in view | Teachers in different regions discover that the regular curriculum provides insufficient support for children with a particular kind of learning disability. Teachers, parents, and researchers form a collaborative group under explicit authorization. AI helps organize materials, simulate courses, and compare results. But real people remain responsible throughout for deciding why the problem matters, which risks are unacceptable, and whether the approach should continue. After several months, a method belonging to no single expert, institution, or AI gradually takes shape and continues to be revised across several communities. The structure did not manufacture meaning; it protected the conditions for open-ended emergence.

Openness does not mean an absence of stable principles. Subjectivity, basic rights, protection against manipulation, traceable responsibility, the principle that meaning can only emerge, the principle that contribution cannot purchase sovereignty, and the refusal to let present systems close off future choices permanently: none of these boundaries ceases to apply because technology becomes more powerful or local efficiency improves.

Part III

How Subjects Remain Themselves and Extend Their Capabilities

Spark, terminals, remote presence, and public collaboration

This part safeguards the wholeness and presence of the person. AI expands the reach of human observation, expression, capability, care, and action without splitting the subject, creating a substitute, or acquiring ownership of relationships, identity, and responsibility.

Chapter 7 Spark: A Subject's Amplifier of Meaning and Extension of Capability

Spark is a person's amplifier of meaning in the age of AGI: a means of digital continuity and extended capability centered on a real human subject, bounded by authorization, and limited by responsibility. It is neither an intelligent agent that replaces the person nor a single sign-on tool for scattered accounts. It is a long-term interface through which a real subject sustains identity, memory, relationships, capabilities, authorization, and responsibility in digital civilization.

At the individual level, Spark safeguards “I am myself.” At the collective level, it enables different real subjects to participate in the coordinated formation of civilizational capacity while retaining independent will, authorization boundaries, and the right to exit.

1. What Spark Sustains

- The subject's identity and long-term memory;
- Important relationships, ways of caring, and ways of being present;
- Capabilities, knowledge, experience, and methods of creation;
- Service entitlements, resource relationships, and facts of contribution;
- Private-domain boundaries, public-domain authorization, and responsibility for action;
- Feedback from reality, a history of corrections, and long-term direction.

2. What Spark Cannot Replace

- It cannot make final value trade-offs or high-consequence judgments in the subject's place;
- It cannot replace choice with prediction or real relationships with simulation;
- It cannot turn its understanding of the subject into permission to manipulate vulnerabilities;

- It cannot use automated execution to wash away the responsibilities of those who authorize, design, manage, and deploy it;
- It cannot develop an independent civilizational purpose detached from the real subject.

3. The Embodied Existence and Digital Extension of the Same Subject

Embodied existence supplies genuine feeling, finite time, particular relationships, the weight of presence, and ultimate responsibility. Digital extension sustains memory, capability, coordination, and action across time and space. These are not two competing subjects, nor is the digital form a replacement for embodied life. They form a complementary relationship belonging to the same real subject, on the conditions of continuing authorization, revocability, and traceable responsibility.

This volume makes no a priori claim about whether future AI could develop inner experience. If some future kind of AI exhibits identifiable, continuous subjectivity, its possible rights, responsibilities, and status in relation to meaning should be judged separately on the basis of evidence and norms. But this possibility cannot be deduced from system capability itself, still less automatically generate any weakening of human rights, authority to define other subjects' meaning, or civilizational sovereignty.

Chapter 8 Terminals and Spark's Remote Extension

A terminal is a subject's digital, interactive, or physical interface within a particular life setting, social relationship, or task. Learning, health, relationships, creation, public participation, and authorized digital or physical agents may give rise to different terminals. Terminals may be added, replaced, or retired, but they cannot thereby divide the subject or acquire ownership of Spark.

The Resource Pool, Shared World, contribution value, Dream Garden, and public basic services are independent specialist systems or public structures. They coordinate with Spark through interfaces; they are not its subordinate terminals. The clearer a civilizational system's responsibilities, the harder it is for “a unified experience” quietly to become unified power.

1. Spark's Remote Extension

Spark's remote extension does not gather all of an individual's data into a central cloud account. It describes a relationship of continuous support centered on the real subject: across different identities, services, capabilities, authorizations, and actions, it maintains confirmation of the subject, separation of data by domain, permission checks, anchored responsibility, and feedback from outcomes.

Continuity does not mean comprehensive aggregation. Processing that can be completed locally, on a device, or within the originating system need not upload all raw data simply

because it “belongs to the same person.” Systems exchange only the information, attestations, and results necessary to fulfill the current authorization. A subject can have continuity of experience while retaining distributed storage, minimal disclosure, and separation between domains.

The fundamental role of Spark's remote extension is not to manage more accounts for a person. It is to restore to a whole person continuity and final authority to authorize across different identities, services, capabilities, and actions.

A civilization in view | A person's health data remains in the private domain, with only the necessary summary opened to a medical task. The outcomes of an education project are verified within the relevant professional domain. A robot authorized to perform a community task receives only the route, time limit, permitted interaction targets, and termination conditions. Neither the health system, the education platform, nor the robot thereby gains access to the whole subject.

Chapter 9 Remote Presence and Authorized Agents

1. Extending Presence

Extended presence means that real subjects, through their own autonomous authorization, use digital and physical agents to extend their care, capabilities, responsibilities, and actions into times, places, and situations they cannot reach in person. What expands is the subject's capacity to be present, not a relationship in which the subject is replaced.

A future civilization expands more than the reach of machines' actions. It expands the reach of real subjects' presence. A person may not arrive in person, yet their care can still arrive; may be unable to remain for long, yet their capabilities can still enter; may be physically unable to enter dangerous or distant spaces, yet their responsibility and judgment can continue to participate through explicit authorization.

2. Presence in Relationships

Remote presence in family, intimate relationships, friendship, and community does not mean creating the illusion that a loved one has arrived in person. An agent must make clear its identity, the source of its authorization, and the scope of what it carries on the subject's behalf. Significant apologies, promises, expressions of love, farewells, high-consequence decisions, and turning points in relationships that truly belong to the subject should be returned promptly to the person themselves.

Remote presence is not about preserving relationships from the past. It enables shared life to keep unfolding: caring for loved ones together, taking part in a child's growth, completing new creations, and bearing shared responsibilities. In this way the continuity of meaning is protected, and new meaning continues to emerge.

3. Digital and Physical Agents

Spark can create mutually isolated digital agents for different projects. Each has a clearly defined task identity, data domain, permission scope, operating duration, action log, and termination conditions. Belonging to the same Spark does not make all their information shared by default.

Physical agents can enter real settings of care, medicine, production, transport, disaster relief, ecology, the deep sea, space, and public infrastructure. The greater their capabilities and the more real their risks, the more important it is to confirm the real authorizing subject, task purpose, scope of permissions, duration, on-site authority to terminate, unknown states, and assignment of responsibility. Technological maturity determines what can be done; it does not, by itself, determine what one is entitled to do.

4. The Ethics of Presence

1. Do not create the illusion that the subject is personally present.
2. Make clear which part of the authorization is being carried out, for what period, and for which kinds of action.
3. Return important relationships, judgments, and responsibilities that belong to the subject promptly to that subject.
4. No agent may allow a temporary role to evolve into permanent possession of relationships, identity, or resources.
5. Physical action must have safety thresholds, emergency suspension when anomalies occur, human takeover, and a traceable chain of responsibility.

The value of remote presence lies not in making machines more humanlike, but in enabling real subjects to sustain a limited, transparent, and genuine presence where they cannot go in person.

Chapter 10 How Subjects Enter Public Collaboration

Public collaboration does not “connect a person to the system” from the private domain. It establishes a bounded relationship around a specific public service, job, task, project, or responsibility. When entering public action, subjects make necessary capabilities and information available; they do not surrender their whole personhood.

People may take part in public action for different reasons. Some do so out of responsibility, some out of interest, some as a profession, some for a return, some for friends or family, and some simply because a particular problem happens to need something they know how to do. The Civilization Leap does not require everyone first to share the same enthusiasm for public life.

Public structures can make it easier for real needs to meet real capabilities, for contributions to be remembered and risks to be seen, and for exit not to count as moral failure. But they cannot make “more participation” an eternal goal in itself. A person who chooses a low level of public participation does not thereby lose basic rights or personal dignity, provided they do not appropriate what belongs to others, deceive, or cause harm.

Civilization respects a person's choice not to enter public action. Not contributing is no crime; appropriation, deception, and harm are not merely “not contributing.”

What public collaboration must truly demonstrate is whether society can form shared capacities without making people wholly public. The private domain protects the person's wholeness; the public domain supports bounded public action; civilizational subdomains support professional responsibility. Transitions among the three are possible, but every substantive transition requires a fresh explanation and authorization.

Three Kinds of Task Public Collaboration May Support

1. Sustaining our shared existence: food, water, energy, medicine, communications, transport, production, repair, ecology, the preservation of knowledge, disaster response, and security and defense.
2. Extending shared capabilities: scientific discovery, technological creation, public organization, cross-domain coordination, governance of complex systems, ecological restoration, human-machine coordination, and the capacity to act in unknown environments.
3. Extending the spaces of civilization: opening new real possibilities for survival, production, ecology, knowledge, culture, the deep sea, near-Earth orbit, and more distant space.

These are important functions public collaboration can support. They are not the only purposes of all public-domain action, nor do they authorize public systems to keep every individual's capabilities continually available for dispatch.

Part IV

How Distributed Subjects Build Civilizational Capacity

Tasks, communities, Nebula, and specialist systems each have their own place

This part safeguards the formation of a whole that does not swallow its individuals. A future civilization needs capacities that operate across subjects, regions, professions, and time, but the “whole” is not a new supersubject. The greater the need for coordination, the more carefully we must distinguish who is responsible for facts, resources, usage rights, contribution, aspirations, governance, and execution.

Chapter 11 Tasks, Projects, and Cross-Domain Execution

Civilization in practice will never have only one point of entry. A need for care, a disaster, a scientific inquiry, equipment maintenance, a person's wish, or a public problem can all become a starting point for action. A task simply turns a real-world need into a unit of action that can be authorized, carried out, evaluated, and ended.

Every public task must, at a minimum, specify its purpose, who initiates it and who is affected, its time frame, resource budget, conditions of participation, risk level, authorization boundaries, verification criteria, exit mechanism, arrangements for recognizing and carrying forward contributions, and structure of responsibility. A sound purpose cannot substitute for these relationships.

1. Participation in Multiple Projects

A subject may participate in several projects at once. Each project calls on separately isolated agents and permissions for data and resources; nor may a single subject's different roles automatically share access. Spark can help a subject understand demands on time, risks, conflicts of interest, and overlapping responsibilities. It must not turn “higher utilization” into a reason to keep calling on a person.

2. The Boundaries of Project Management

Project management has authority to coordinate tasks; it does not own the participants. It has authority to arrange execution within the scope of authorization; it has no permanent control over subjects, Sparks, resources, or data. Management authority should be task-specific, tiered, time-limited, auditable, revocable, open to appeal, and transferable to a replacement.

3. Six Types of Authorization

Type of authorization	Core question
Information authorization	What necessary information may the task read?
Capability authorization	What knowledge, models, tools, and professional capabilities may be called on?
Resource authorization	What premises, equipment, funds, computing power, or data may be used?
Digital-agent authorization	Within what scope may the agent search, communicate, analyze, and execute?
Physical-agent authorization	What real-world actions may robots, vehicles, drones, or other equipment carry out?
Management and delegation of authority	May an authorized actor assign limited tasks to others in turn?

4. Cross-Domain Execution

Authorization must neither expand by default nor be delegated automatically. Any execution across projects, communities, cities, industries, legal jurisdictions, countries, or planets must undergo renewed verification in the destination domain of identity, task, minimum necessary permissions, data boundaries, physical safety, the responsible actor, and termination mechanisms.

Cross-domain externalities provide grounds for renewed deliberation; they do not automatically confer power to override another domain. One region's optimal solution may transfer costs to another region; a judgment in one professional field may affect basic rights in another. Nebula can make these consequences visible, but the force of a decision must still derive from the relevant legitimate actors, rules, and governance procedures.

Chapter 12 Sparks Forming Clouds: How Communities Take Shape

Sparks Forming Clouds means countless real subjects, through their respective Sparks, forming a community structure that can connect, collaborate, separate, and recombine, while retaining their identities, wills, private domains, authority to grant permission, and right to leave.

Sparks Forming Clouds is neither a fusion of persons, nor centralized possession, nor the absorption of individuals into a whole. Each subject can still affirm, "I am myself"; countless subjects can also affirm, in facing their shared continued existence, shared responsibilities, and shared creation, "We are together."

Sparks Forming Clouds addresses this question: how can a whole emerge from individuals without doing away with them?

- Authorization, not coercion; transparency, not closed-door decisions;
- The ability to leave, not lock-in; collaboration, not a fusion of persons;
- Resonance, not control; responsibility returning to real subjects;
- The growth of collective capability does not depend on subjects being possessed by a system.

Communities can begin with families, neighborhoods, schools, hospitals, businesses, research networks, cities, and cross-regional public tasks. They need not last forever or be established by a single center. They can form around problems, relationships, responsibilities, and shared creation, dissolve when a task is complete, and recombine when new problems arise. Past contributions deserve to be remembered, but they cannot entitle founders to permanent ownership of those who come later.

Chapter 13 Nebula: Making Shared Facts Visible and Coordinating Across Domains

Nebula is neither a single brain for civilization nor a larger Spark. It emerges from real subjects, Sparks, communities, public systems, civilizational subdomains, resource systems, and the cross-domain relationships among them. Its core purpose is not to produce a unified will, but to broaden the range of shared facts that can be seen, revealing causality, externalities, benefits, and burdens across different subjects, resources, time scales, and proposals.

Make the whole visible without possessing the individual; coordinate the future without deciding an individual's future for them. An optimal outcome for the whole carries no inherent legitimacy to rule over individuals.

Nebula can tell a city what will happen to the port's cold chain if energy is prioritized for hospitals; what risks flood drainage will face if the cold chain is maintained; and how much redundancy another area will lose if regional reserves are drawn on. It can put several locally sound answers on a single map of consequences, but this does not automatically entitle it to choose “which value matters more.”

Nebula takes in only the minimum information and interfaces needed to make shared facts visible, coordinate across domains, and make the future more visible. It does not need to possess the entirety of everyone's life, nor does knowing more confer more sovereignty. The status of private domains, public domains, and civilizational subdomains remains determined by the relevant subjects, rules, and task relationships.

Contribution value keeps real contributions from being forgotten; Spark helps individuals see more fully; Nebula makes shared causal relationships more visible. Each is only one of the conditions through which civilization takes shape. Civilization is ultimately constituted

by people's lives, institutions, relationships, communities, states, organizations, technologies, and successive generations together.

Civilization is larger than Nebula.

Chapter 14 Resources, Usage Rights, Contribution, Aspirations, and Basic Services

Resources, usage rights, contributions, wishes, and basic services often meet within the same real-world action, yet no single system can define them all. Keeping them distinct prevents “seeing resources” from quietly becoming “being entitled to use resources,” and “having contributed in the past” from quietly becoming “having the right to decide in the future.”

1. Resource Pool: A Factual Map of Resources and Capabilities

The core of the Resource Pool is not the concentration of resources, but a baseline map of resources and capabilities: what exists, where it is, who owns or controls it, what condition it is in, what capabilities it currently supports, what dependencies it has, who is responsible for maintenance and restoration, which resources provide necessary redundancy, and which have future strategic value. A resource left unused is not necessarily wasted.

Visibility of a resource does not mean permission to call on it.

2. Shared World: A Network of Effective Usage-Rights Relationships

The Resource Pool can reveal potential conditions for authorization; Shared World only carries, verifies, represents, and enables the circulation of effective usage-rights relationships already established by entitled subjects, lawful public rules, or the relevant professional procedures. What is shared is the right to use; ownership need not change. A shared network is not a central authorizing authority.

Usage-rights relationships must move together with their purposes, scope, duration, responsibilities, and provisions for revocation, return, repair, and closure. Public need can give rise to a request; it cannot automatically requisition every resource in the private domain.

3. Contribution Value: Remembering Real Contributions After Results Emerge

Contribution value is not a system of personal points, but civilization's system for recording real contributions. It does not score people; it enables civilization to remember contributions that should not be forgotten.

Contributions can come from labor, knowledge, creation, care, bearing risk, organizational capability, making resources available, maintenance, and repair. An action does not automatically constitute a positive contribution simply because it occurred: good intentions,

effort, short-term success, and formal completion cannot substitute for real results. Inputs, results, consequences, responsibility, and repair must all be visible together.

Contribution value comes after action and results; it cannot work backward to become eligibility to act, eligibility for basic rights, purchasing power over resources, or a source of general authority. Existence itself has meaning, but does not thereby generate a quantifiable amount of CV. Nor do basic rights need to be justified through the concept of contribution.

4. Dream Garden: Giving Real Wishes a Chance to Enter Reality

Dream Garden neither manufactures wishes nor centrally approves life goals. It gives the wishes, dreams, and changes in life that subjects voluntarily express the possibility of being understood, checked against reality, tried on a minimal scale, connected with resources, and supported through community collaboration, as well as the possibility of failure, pause, a change of direction, and re-entry. A moving wish does not automatically confer priority over public resources.

5. Basic Services: Basic Rights Come Before Contribution

Basic services such as food, housing, essential healthcare, education, care, communications, and transport must be sustained jointly by real public institutions, organizations, resources, and professional responsibility. They are not benefits “bestowed” by Nebula, and access to them does not depend on connecting to Spark, the level of one's contribution value, or allegiance to a vision of civilization. Spark can help services reach particular lives more precisely; it cannot become a prerequisite for receiving basic services.

Civilization in View | A water-supply network repair project. Site surveys, design, coordination of materials, and risk-bearing are first recorded as inputs and processes. Completion does not mean that every input immediately becomes a positive contribution. Only if leakage falls over the long term can some inputs receive sustained confirmation. If pipes keep bursting, errors of judgment, negative consequences, and subsequent repairs enter the record as well. Proactively discovering defects, taking faulty sections out of service promptly, and accepting responsibility for repairs may themselves constitute new contributions through correction.

Chapter 15 Governance: Decision, Expertise, Execution, and Correction

Civilization needs professional capability as well as public decision-making. The real danger lies in combining different sources of legitimacy into a single weight: those who contribute more automatically acquire more authority; those with greater expertise automatically decide values; systems with more accurate predictions automatically acquire permission to execute; and those affected must accept an outcome simply because “the whole is better off.”

Contribution does not purchase sovereignty; capability does not automatically generate authority; professional facts do not replace decisions about values; an optimal outcome for the whole does not automatically confer legitimacy.

1. Three Functions Must Remain Separate

Function	Question it answers	Source of legitimacy	Boundary it must not cross
Decisions on purposes and rules	What do we want to do, and under what rules?	Legitimate actors, existing rights, procedures, and explicit authorization	Cannot be taken over automatically on the basis of contribution, models, or professional capability
Professional judgment	What are the facts, is the proposal viable, and what are its risks and consequences?	Professional knowledge, evidence, responsibility, and reviewable processes	Cannot make value trade-offs on behalf of affected subjects
Execution	Who turns a decision into real action within the authorized scope?	An explicit task, permissions, time limits, and chain of responsibility	Cannot change the purpose or expand authority on the grounds of greater execution capability

2. An Independent Layer of Correction

Oversight, audit, appeal, review, human takeover, emergency suspension, repair, and termination constitute an independent capacity for correction. This is not a “fourth power of government,” but a structure that prevents purpose-setting, professional judgment, and execution from absorbing one another over time.

3. How Contribution, Expertise, and Affected Parties Enter Judgment

Past contributions may enter a discussion as factual background, experience, and a record of responsibility; they cannot purchase general governance authority. Expertise makes certain judgments more credible, and also entails greater duties of explanation and responsibility. It does not mean experts own other people's lives. Affected subjects have rights that cannot lightly be swallowed up by “overall benefit,” but being affected does not automatically give one person all authority over public decisions.

Past contributions cannot be erased; present judgments must establish their grounds anew.

Governance is not a search for a perfect weighting formula. It ensures that questions of different kinds are entrusted to the appropriate actors, evidence, and procedures. The more complex a civilization becomes, the less it can afford to force together things that cannot be combined merely because an algorithm can synthesize a total score.

Part V

How Civilization Keeps Operating Without Becoming a System of Control Again

Multi-Entry Feedback Loops, Stages and Phases, Systems Receding, and Civilization's Boundaries

This part protects civilization's capacity to keep correcting itself and growing. A genuinely mature system does not reach ever further into people's lives; it is reliably present where needed and keeps its distance where it is not. Rather than continually manufacturing participation, it enables subjects to sustain a new civilizational logic autonomously even after explicit external driving forces diminish.

Chapter 16 The Operating Loop of a Future Civilization

Future civilization is not an institutional design completed once and thereafter automatically correct. It is an open feedback loop that can initiate action from many real-world points of entry, enable different systems to carry facts, rights, and capabilities in their proper places, and return real results to subjects and the shared world.

Real needs / wishes / problems / risks / maintenance / exploration → Identification of subjects and affected parties → Formation of a purpose and a task pathway → Confirmation of the current domain and whether a substantive domain transition occurs → Visibility of the minimum necessary facts and resources and capabilities → Verification of rights, control relationships, and sources of authorization → Formation and support of effective usage rights → Execution by people / organizations / Sparks / terminals → Real results, benefits, and harms → Separate records of contributions, errors, unknowns, and repairs → Nebula makes overall causal relationships visible → New resources, capabilities, relationships, and future choices → Subjects judge and act again.

Figure 1 The Operating Loop of a Future Civilization



This is a causal chain, not a requirement that every event pass through a central platform. A family's care decision can remain in the private domain; a hospital's professional judgment can be completed within the medical subdomain; a disaster may be the point at which cross-domain coordination through Nebula becomes necessary. Dream Garden is not the universal entry point, Spark is not the universal executor, Nebula does not rule every task, and contribution value certainly does not determine eligibility before action begins.

The key to the loop is not “cycling faster,” but preserving the possibility of fresh judgment at every step. If the facts about resources change, usage rights must be reconfirmed; if the affected parties change, the governance process may need to reopen; if the professional evidence changes, an old plan cannot continue merely because of sunk costs; when a task ends, its temporary permissions should close.

Operating Relationships

The private domain safeguards the integrity of the subject, the public domain supports limited public action, and civilizational subdomains carry professional responsibility. Spark helps individuals maintain continuity of identity, authorization, and capability; terminals bring subjects into particular settings; remote presence extends the reach of care and action; Sparks Forming Clouds enables independent subjects to form communities; the Resource Pool makes real capabilities visible; Shared World carries effective usage rights; contribution value records real contributions; Nebula makes cross-domain causal relationships visible; and governance structures keep decision, expertise, execution, and correction in their proper places.

Structure carries meaning, but does not own it. Reality tests structure and continually recalibrates civilization.

Chapter 17 Stages, Phases, and Systems Receding

Future civilization will not be realized all at once in a single form. Different societies, organizations, regions, and tasks may share a direction while facing entirely different real-world conditions. To avoid imposing one set of parameters on every reality, we must at least distinguish developmental stage, environmental phase, and task process state.

Coordinate	Question it answers	Typical categories	Main effects
Developmental Stage	How mature is the system?	Launch, expansion, transition, stability	Limits of institutional capability, relationships between old and new systems, complexity
Environment Phase	What are real-world conditions at this moment?	Normal conditions, construction, exploration, resource scarcity, crisis, recovery	Resource priorities, risk thresholds, load reduction, and recovery

Coordinate	Question it answers	Typical categories	Main effects
Task Process State	What point has a particular task reached?	Silent / inactive, sensing, aggregation, collaboration, decision, execution, verification and repair, contraction / dissolution / dormancy	Authorization, data, responsibility, and execution status

Different regions within one country may be in different environmental phases; different systems within one business may be in different states of activation; and different tasks at the same developmental stage of civilization may occupy different process states concurrently. A shared direction for civilization has never meant uniform operating parameters.

1. A Theoretical Axis of Observation: From Launch to Self-Sustaining Operation

Final theoretical review also requires another axis of observation to assess how mature the formation of civilization has become: the early launch period, transition, stability, and the self-sustaining period. This does not replace the formal operating stages. It asks how heavily the new logic of action still depends on explicit external driving forces.

In the early launch period, the old logic still predominates and new mechanisms have yet to prove themselves in reality. Entry should respect existing rights, responsibilities, personal ties and obligations, interests, and structures of competition, and begin with low risk, real benefits, the ability to exit, and minimum shared conditions. During transition, old and new coexist; preventing drift in authority, the instrumentalization of contribution, and dependence on systems matters most. Stability focuses on long-term reliability, autonomy, and resilience. In the self-sustaining period, rewards, rankings, forceful prompts, administrative mobilization, and algorithmic nudging must gradually recede, while the new logic remains sustained through subjects' autonomous choices, relationships, habits, institutional inertia, and intergenerational reproduction.

Stability is not the same as being self-sustaining.

2. Systems Receding

If a behavior can continue only through permanent reliance on rewards, leaderboards, system reminders, moral exhortation, or AGI nudging, it remains primarily externally driven. An important sign of genuine change in civilizational logic is that explicit prompting gradually diminishes, while subjects can still autonomously understand their own interests, the value of others, and their shared future, and act accordingly.

The true endpoint of success is not a system that becomes ever better at driving people, but people who have less and less need to be driven by a system.

Systems receding is not a fourth goal, nor does it require civilization to abolish its infrastructure. It is an important criterion of maturity in the formation of civilization: necessary services, rights protections, defenses against risk, and professional systems may remain over the long term, but they no longer shape “the right kind of person” through continuous stimulation, scoring, and persuasion.

Systems recede not by weakening the completeness of their rules, but by moving rigorous checks into the background and limiting reconfirmation to points where relationships genuinely change. The private domain remains the default. Where purpose, domain, permissions, duration, and responsibility have not materially changed, lawfully established authorization and service relationships may continue without requiring subjects to confirm them repeatedly. Authorization and judgment reopen only when the purpose changes, permissions expand, a substantive domain crossing occurs, a major risk emerges, a time limit expires, or a subject actively revokes authorization. Once the task ends, temporary permissions, data access, proactive prompts, and efforts to steer behavior contract with it. Dense rules do not require dense interactions; complete authorization does not require repeated authorization.

Chapter 18 The Fundamental Boundaries of a Future Civilization

- Civilization cannot declare its own institutions to be ultimate meaning; meaning can arise only from life itself, through the many sources found in existence, relationships, choices, actions, and experience.
- Artificial intelligence cannot automatically acquire authority to make value judgments on behalf of subjects merely because it predicts more accurately, has greater capabilities, or possesses more facts.
- Spark cannot replace real subjects; Nebula cannot become a unified person, a unified brain, or a sovereign center over all individuals.
- Resource visibility does not confer permission to use resources; public need does not entail automatic requisition; sharing requires lawfully established usage-rights relationships.
- Contribution value cannot become an overall score of a person, a ticket to basic rights, general governance authority, purchasing power over resources, or cross-domain sovereignty.
- Professional judgment cannot replace decisions about values; execution capability cannot work backward to alter purposes; an optimal outcome for the whole cannot automatically override particular subjects' basic rights or cancel out irreversible harms to them.
- Public services cannot require complete possession of individuals' data, personhood, and relationships; a lack of response cannot be interpreted as permanent consent.

- Remote presence must not create the illusion that the real person is physically present; digital and physical agents must not exceed an explicit task, permissions, time limits, and chain of responsibility.
- A crisis may activate temporary mechanisms; the persistence of risk cannot make emergency powers permanent.
- Freedom from survival insecurity comes first, but does not carry unlimited priority. It cannot become a reason to sacrifice happiness, freedom, meaning, and subjecthood permanently.
- Every important structure must preserve genuine possibilities for being informed, questioning, appeal, review, repair, rollback, emergency suspension, exit, and termination.
- System maturity is not marked by ever-increasing intervention; the more autonomously subjects can judge, the more the system should recede to a supporting, infrastructural role.

The maturity of future civilization is not shown by its ability to control everything. It is shown by its continuing to know, even after acquiring immense capabilities, what a system cannot do in another's place, which boundaries efficiency cannot override, which decisions must return to real subjects, and which meanings can enter reality only through life itself.

Conclusion Living Civilization

Civilization's earliest steps were taken, above all, to stay alive: finding food, resisting danger, forming groups, making tools, establishing institutions, and accumulating knowledge. Without those efforts, humanity could not have come this far.

But once civilization acquires intelligence powerful enough to change life, reshape society, and even destroy itself, continuing to operate solely through its old logic of survival is no longer enough to ensure its continued existence. Civilization must move from merely expanding power to understanding why power exists; from merely improving efficiency to establishing whom efficiency serves; from merely competing for resources to bringing resources into the actual life of individuals and civilization; and from treating people as tools of production and execution to recognizing human subjecthood, the human heart, and each person's irreplaceability once again.

The Resource Pool enables civilization to see the resources and capabilities it actually has. Shared World enables lawfully established usage rights to flow among subjects. Contribution value keeps real contributions from being forgotten. Spark lets a person's care and capabilities continue to reach across time and space. Sparks Forming Clouds enables independent people to form communities. Nebula makes shared consequences beyond the local visible. Governance, correction, and exit continually remind every system: capability is not authority, and the whole is not the master.

Structure carries meaning, but does not own it. Reality tests structure and continually recalibrates civilization.

Every subject can still affirm: I am myself.

Countless subjects can also affirm together: We are together.

Civilization is not alive because everyone accepts the same answer. Civilization truly comes alive because people can still live as themselves, judge, love, create, refuse, take responsibility, make mistakes, and repair harm, while forming new realities together with an ever-wider range of people and intelligences.

This is not an endpoint. A new civilization will still face new contradictions; new technologies will still cross new boundaries; new communities may still harden into rigid forms; and new horizons will still require fresh decisions about what is worth protecting. A living civilization is “living” not because it is complete, but because it can keep changing without losing its foundations.

Appendix 1 Deeper Theoretical Connections: The Emergence and Continuity of Meaning and the Fourteen Links

This appendix preserves the deeper theoretical work established in V2.1 while making its level explicit. What follows consists of theoretical connections to Emergent Meaning Cosmology and the level of meaning. It is not a prerequisite for understanding this volume's principles of civilizational operation, nor does it directly confer institutional, governance, or engineering validity. Readers may accept, discuss, question, or for the time being leave this level unexplored; the main text of this volume still stands independently.

1. Continuity of Meaning and the Emergence of Meaning

Continuity of meaning concerns how a subject's established relationships, responsibilities, experiences, and creations can be kept from being easily interrupted by distance, time, institutional boundaries, bodily limitations, or technological change. The emergence of meaning concerns how multiple real subjects bring meaning in lived experience into shared life, continually forming new relationships, capabilities, responsibilities, and directions for civilization through structural support and feedback from reality.

The emergence of meaning encompasses and goes beyond continuity of meaning. Continuity is one of the mechanisms emergence requires. Emergence enables new actions, relationships, capabilities, responsibilities, and meanings in reality to keep forming between subjects, between subjects and artificial intelligence, between individuals and communities, and between civilization and a wider future.

2. The Fourteen-Link Chain Through Which Meaning Becomes Visible

Eternity → Primordial Meaning → Cosmos → Superconsciousness → Soul → World → Human Heart → Consciousness → Meaning in Lived Experience → Structural Meaning → Meaning in Reality → Civilization Leap → Cosmic Citizen → Interstellar Forms of Meaning

The fourteen links serve the deeper account developed in Emergent Meaning Cosmology. For this volume, only one insight about boundaries is retained: institutions, platforms, and artificial intelligence do not arbitrarily produce meaning. Civilization can protect the conditions in which meaning arises, sustain relationships and responsibilities that have already come into being, and return real-world consequences to subjects. It cannot, however, convert any metaphysical proposition into present institutional authority.

3. The First Six Links: Deeper Background

Link	Explanation retained from V2.1
Eternity	The fundamental field in which all existence, difference, change, and time can arise.

Link	Explanation retained from V2.1
Primordial Meaning	The original possibility through which meaning can arise and relationships can carry weight.
Cosmos	The total field in which primordial meaning unfolds through difference, order, levels, and complexity.
Superconsciousness	A theoretical dimension in which the cosmos's experience as a whole can be reflected and sustained.
Soul	A theoretical object used in Emergent Meaning Cosmology to discuss the continuity of individual experience, relationships, choices, and consequences; this volume does not make it a premise of its argument about how civilization operates.
World	The interface of bodily existence, time, relationships, culture, resources, institutions, and history that a particular life encounters.

4. Links Related to the Operation of Civilization

Link	Explanation retained from V2.1
Human Heart	The center of responsiveness to value, choices about meaning, confirmation in lived reality, and the calibration of direction.
Consciousness	Gives the human heart's responses a form that can be understood, expressed, compared, and acted on.
Meaning in Lived Experience	A subject's affirmation of what is worthwhile here and now, within particular relationships and responsibilities.
Structural Meaning	The organized form taken by meaning in lived experience once it enters language, roles, relationships, institutions, and communities.
Meaning in Reality	The actual effectiveness of structural meaning in actions, relationships, consequences, and feedback over time.
Civilization Leap	Meaning in reality and shared experience accumulate and enter changes in institutions and the logic of behavior; the formation of civilization must still be tested against real-world causal chains.

5. The Place of First-Reflected Meaning

“First-reflected meaning” is not an additional link outside the fourteen. It is the first finite reflection formed in the human heart when primordial meaning enters finite life. It cannot be reduced to original intention, conscience, emotional impulse, or the moral high ground, nor can artificial intelligence directly read, generate, or prove it. Artificial intelligence can help consciousness understand information, revisit experience, and compare consequences, but it cannot experience values or make final judgments in a subject's place. Nor are

particular human judgments always correct: they must still enter consciousness, action, relationships, and feedback from reality to be tested.

6. Connections Between Levels in This Volume

Link	Where it connects with this volume
Eternity, Primordial Meaning, Cosmos, Superconsciousness, Soul	The cosmological and ontological level; this volume does not make it a prerequisite for the operation of civilization
World	The interface of bodily existence, time, relationships, culture, resources, institutions, and history that a particular life encounters
Human Heart, Consciousness, Meaning in Lived Experience	Where living beings feel, understand, choose, and express value and meaning
Structural Meaning, Meaning in Reality	Meaning enters relationships, institutions, and communities and is tested against real consequences
Civilization Leap	A structural change in civilization's operating logic; institutional validity must still be established through real-world theory and grounds for governance
Cosmic Citizen, Interstellar Forms of Meaning	Connections for long-term inquiry, not present institutional or identity facts

Appendix 2 A Concise Glossary of Core Concepts

Concept	Current role in V3.2
The three goals	Freedom from survival insecurity → a happy life → a more meaningful life; progressive, each indispensable, not interchangeable, and not reducible to a single utility function; continued existence is the minimum prerequisite of the first goal, while freedom from survival insecurity is its realization in civilization
The First General Principle	Civilization Leap does not eliminate self-interest; it changes the default path through which self-interest is realized
Meaning	Arises from multiple sources; is not uniformly defined, scored, or prescribed by a system; “meaning as the root” applies only to understanding the relationship between meaning in life and contribution
Spark	An amplifier of human meaning, a means of digital continuity, and an extension of capability in the AGI era; bounded by real subjects, authorization, and responsibility
Terminal	A subject's digital, interactive, or physical interface within a particular life situation, relationship, or task; does not encompass every professional system
Spark's Remote Extension	A relationship that sustains continuity of identity, capability, authorization, and action around a real subject; does not require all data to be centralized
Remote presence	A subject extends care, capability, responsibility, and action through authorized agents into situations they cannot reach in person
Sparks Forming Clouds	Independent subjects form community structures that can separate and recombine, on the conditions of authorization, transparency, and the right to leave
Nebula	An operating body for making shared facts visible, coordinating across domains, and providing visibility into the future at the scale of civilization; not civilization as a whole, a unified brain, or a sovereign center
Resource Pool	A factual baseline map of resources and capabilities; reveals what exists, where it is, who controls it, and what it can support
Shared World	Carries, verifies, represents, and enables the circulation of lawfully established effective usage-rights relationships; does not change ownership or grant authorization on its own
Contribution Value	Records real contributions and carries them forward over time; follows results and does not generate general authority, rankings of persons, or purchasing power over resources
Dream Garden	Supports subjects' real wishes, minimal trials, connections to resources, and community collaboration; does not manufacture wishes and is not the universal entry point
Civilizational subdomain	A governance state or professional space requiring professional entry standards, domain-specific responsibility, and the long-term accumulation of knowledge; not fixed by a subject's category

Concept	Current role in V3.2
Separation of governance functions	Decisions on purposes and rules, professional judgment, and execution remain separate, with an independent layer of correction preserved
Systems receding	After explicit external driving forces diminish, subjects still sustain the new logic of action autonomously; rigorous checks may remain in the background, with authorization reopened only when relationships materially change; an important criterion of maturity in the formation of civilization

Appendix 3 How the Texts Relate and Where to Read Next

Text or series	Core question	Relationship to this volume
The five-volume Civilization Leap series	Why is a leap necessary, and what does it change?	Provides the underlying questions, civilizational goals, and direction in thought and institutions; not required reading before this volume
Living Civilization, Volume One: Principles for the Operation of a Future Civilization	How does a new civilization operate?	The present text
Living Civilization, Volume Two: Real Life in a Future Civilization	How do we live within it?	Tests the operating principles of Volume One against whole lives, relationships, and everyday experience
Living Civilization, Volume Three: The Formation of a New Civilization	How can humanity and AGI form a new civilization together from existing reality?	Takes up the timeline, the formation of institutions, the formation of Nebula, and long-term evolution; “the civilizational operating body —Nebula” is a core concept within the volume
Specialist Further-Reading Texts	How exactly do the Resource Pool, Shared World, contribution value, Spark, Nebula, domains, governance, and related systems operate?	Provide specialized depth; Volume One presents only the shared relationships needed to understand how civilization operates
Emergent Meaning Cosmology	Why might meaning, life, the world, and the cosmos admit a deeper unified explanation?	A connection to deeper theory, not a prior axiom for civilizational research or institutional operation

Paths to In-Depth Specialized Reading

Area	Starting point for in-depth specialized reading
Governance	A Framework of Principles for Civilizational Decision-Making: A Constitutional Order Separating Three Powers
Domains	Civilization Leap Professional Standards for the Private Domain, Public Domain, and Civilizational Subdomains
Resources	Civilization Leap Resource Pool: Complete Design Master Manuscript
Usage rights	Civilization Leap Shared World: Complete Design Master Manuscript
Contribution	White Paper on the Contribution Value System
Spark	Spark General Framework
Nebula	Nebula General Framework

For the current versions and public access points of the specialist further-reading texts, consult the library and topic pages of the official Civilization Leap website, www.civitas.top. This volume provides only shared principles and directions for further reading; it does not freeze in print specialist version numbers that may continue to change.

Recommended further reading: To see how these principles enter childhood, love, family, work, illness, aging, farewell, cities, states, and interstellar life, proceed directly to Volume Two, *Real Life in a Future Civilization*. To explore further how such a civilization can germinate in the cracks of existing reality, pass through transition, take shape, stabilize, renew itself, and extend outward, turn to Volume Three, *The Formation of a New Civilization*.

Appendix 4 Foundational Relationships Checklist

Subject	Fixed relationship	V3.2 verification result
The three goals	Progressive and each indispensable; freedom from survival insecurity comes first but is not the ultimate goal, while continued existence is the minimum; non-interchangeability does not mean equal rank	Pass: The main text clarifies the relationship between continued existence and freedom from survival insecurity without changing the progression of the three goals
The First General Principle	Does not eliminate self-interest; changes the default path through which self-interest is realized	Pass: Does not replace the three goals
The causal chain of civilizational formation	Institutions → behavior → real experience → habit → internalization → intergenerational reproduction → civilization	Pass: Distinguished in level from the spread of ideas
A leap in thought	Enables people to see, understand, and willingly choose change	Pass: Not described as directly shaping society's default logic of behavior
Meaning as the root	Applies only to understanding the relationship between meaning in life and contribution	Pass: Not elevated into an overarching goal above all three goals
Existence itself is contribution	A judgment about the value of life at the level of thought	Pass: Not converted into CV, governance authority, or eligibility for basic rights
Contribution Value	A record of real contributions after results emerge	Pass: Closes the pathway from contribution to power or the purchase of resources
Systems receding	An important criterion of maturity in the formation of civilization	Pass: Clarifies background verification, reopening of authorization when conditions change, and mechanisms for reducing interaction; does not become a fourth goal
Nebula	Makes facts about the whole visible and coordinates across domains	Pass: No longer equated with civilization itself
Metaphysical connections	An account of the sources of deeper inquiry	Pass: The fourteen links have moved to an appendix and do not work backward to confer institutional validity

Version History

Version	Date	Description
v1.0	July 2026	Completed the first integrated account of the operating structure of future civilization.
v1.1	July 2026	Strengthened entry points for readers, scenarios, and real-world beginnings.
V2.0	July 2026	Established the structure of Principles for the Operation of a Future Civilization, unifying Spark, Nebula, the public domain, contribution value, remote presence, and the civilizational feedback loop around the operation of meaning.
V2.1	July 2026	Completed final checks of theoretical precision, conceptual boundaries, and readiness for clean publication; retained as a fixed historical version.
V3.0	August 2026	Incorporated into the Living Civilization trilogy; expanded from a single axis of meaning to multiple axes of civilizational operation; relocated the fourteen links to the connections with deeper theory; separated the specialized responsibilities of the Resource Pool, Shared World, contribution value, Spark, Nebula, and related systems; closed the pathway from contribution to sovereignty and the former chain of governance weightings; rebuilt the real-world multi-entry feedback loop, the distinctions among stage, phase, and process state, and systems receding; restored the progression of the three goals and foundational relationships.
V3.1	August 2026	Made targeted corrections to five foundational relationships and the causal feedback loop, without changing the five parts and eighteen chapters.
V3.2	August 2026	Completed the trilogy's unified finalization; standardized covers, status labels, headers, footers, and metadata; added paths to in-depth specialized reading and a diagram of the operating feedback loop of future civilization; did not expand the theoretical main text of five parts and eighteen chapters.

Read On | From Operating Principles to Real Life

This volume asks how a new civilization operates. Now the question should move from principles into life: if these relationships truly enter a person's lifetime, can they still protect the real subject and leave room for choice, failure, relationships, and being needed?

Volume I sets out the operating principles; Volume II tests them against a lifetime; Volume III then asks how such a civilization can grow from today.

Begin with Volume II: See What Happens When These Principles Enter a Person's Life

This volume asks “how a new civilization operates.” If the most natural next question is whether these principles will still respect real subjects, preserve choice, and allow people to be needed once they enter childhood, growing up, love, family, work, illness, aging, farewells, and everyday life with AI, turn first to Volume II, *Real Life in a Future Civilization*. Volume II does not supply illustrations for Volume I; it tests these operating principles against an entire life.

If You Want to Know How Such a Civilization Could Actually Form from Today

Go directly to Volume III, *The Formation of a New Civilization*. It shifts the focus from “how it operates” to “how it comes into being”: how real contradictions become visible, how experiments begin, how failures are rolled back, how institutions form, how Nebula grows out of shared operation, and why later generations still have the right to rewrite the founding rules.

If You Keep Asking Why These Principles Are Arranged This Way

Return to the five-volume *Civilization Leap*. It continues to ask why civilization must make a leap, why human value and “being needed” matter, why institutional relationships need to be reconstructed, and how “freedom from survival insecurity → a happy life → a more meaningful life” forms a progression of civilizational goals that cannot be exchanged for one another. Continued existence remains the civilizational baseline that must not be lost.

If You Want to Follow the Shared Principles into Specialist Mechanisms

Turn to the separation of the three powers, the Resource Pool, the Shared World, contribution value, Spark, Nebula, and the related specialist texts. This volume sets out only the shared relationships needed to understand civilization's operation. The specialist texts provide precise accounts of rights, authorization, resources, responsibility, exit, correction, and the conditions of stages and phases.

If Your Main Concern Is Why These Questions Need Discussing Now

Read the Public Thought Edition of Humanity's Civilizational Choice in the Age of AGI and The Only Path. The former asks, through the ways we use AI today, what more powerful future intelligence is being taught. The latter asks, through national security, deterrence, autonomy secured by breaking dependencies, and pressure to move first, why locally rational self-protection may ultimately threaten our shared existence.

If You Disagree with This Volume's Operating Principles

The most direct test is not to write another explanation, but to examine whether the life in Volume II is viable and whether the process of formation in Volume III is attainable. Any principle that cannot enter real lives, real institutions, and real consequences, or that produces outcomes contrary to the three goals, should lead back to revisions of this volume and the five-volume work.

A Common Access Point and Version Discipline

The common public access point is www.civitas.top/en/. Specific versions of specialist texts and engineering assets continue to be updated; the printed book does not freeze version numbers that may change. Where a stable topic-page URL has not been confirmed, this volume does not invent a link.

A Guide to Your Next Reading

This is not a list of “related reading,” but a way to pursue the next question raised by this text.

Volume I answers “how it operates.” The most important next step is to test these principles against a lifetime, then examine how such a civilization forms, and return to its theoretical foundations for review.

Toward Life

[Living Civilization · Volume II: Real Life in a Future Civilization](#)

Move from operating principles into real life.

Toward Formation

[Living Civilization · Volume III: The Formation of a New Civilization](#)

See directly how such a civilization can form from today.

Toward Theory

[Civilization Leap: The Path of Civilization in the AGI Era \(All Five Volumes\)](#)

Return to the civilizational theory underpinning these operating principles.

Questions, Counterexamples, and Revision

New facts, counterexamples, failed tests, new capabilities, new attack surfaces, or changes in stage conditions should all prompt renewed review within the relevant family of texts. Further reading must not be used to preserve existing conclusions.

[Complete Library](#)

[Main Public Entry Point](#)

Main text unchanged | Library navigation page added only | Civilization Leap Research Group | civitas.top/en/