

UDC 141 + 167/168

DOI <https://doi.org/10.32837/apfs.v0i27.918>

V. V. Okorokova

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0661-4313>

Doctor of Philosophy, Associate Professor,

Associate Professor at the Department of World History and Methodology of Science

South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky

THE THEORETICAL ASPECT OF TRANSHUMANISM WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF HISTORIOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE

The rapid improvement of innovative technologies, which led to digitalization, virtualization of society, brings to the surface of the study those conceptual approaches that correspond to this process. Therefore, in modern philosophy, the term “trans-science” is increasingly used to denote various modern scientific fields. Considering the features of modern technologies in the field of trans-science, scientists conclude that we currently live in the development of NBIC-convergence (i.e. NanoBioInfoCogno), which is understood as a way to create a new civilization with its inherent new set of values and ideals. It is within this scientific field that the emergence of transhumanism can be noted. Having the character of an interdisciplinary theoretical scientific approach, transhumanism, since the 50s of the twentieth century, has covered scientists in many countries. There are currently two international transhumanist organizations: the Extropy Institute and the World Transhumanist Association.

The discourse of transhumanism covers a wide range of issues affecting the change in human nature under the influence of new technologies, among which ethical and value aspects occupy a special place. So, for example, one of the founders of this direction, J. Huxley, wrote that until now, human life in general has been, as described by T. Hobbes, “unpleasant, rude and short”. The human species can, if it wants to, overcome itself. We need, as Julian Huxley writes, a name for this new faith. It can be called transhumanism: man remained a man, but overcame himself, through the realization and for the realization of new opportunities of human nature [14, p. 17].

Another ardent supporter of transhumanism, Raymond Kurzweil, at the international congress “Global Future 2045” said that we will become more and more non-biological beings until we reach a state where the non-biological part will prevail, and the biological part will lose its meaning. In this case, the non-biological part will be so powerful that it will be able to fully simulate and understand the biological part [9].

And finally, the famous modern ideologist of this scientific direction Nick Bostrom [1] speaks of transhumanism as a radically new approach to

thinking about the future, based on the assumption that the human species is not the end of our evolution, but rather its beginning, and defines it in the following way:

- exploring the results, prospects and potential dangers of using science, technology, creativity and other ways to overcome the fundamental limits of human capabilities;

- a rational and cultural movement that affirms the possibility and desirability of fundamental changes in a person’s position through the achievements of reason, especially with the use of technology to eliminate aging and significantly enhance the mental, physical and psychological capabilities of a person [2].

A. Goryachkovskaya points out that the attractiveness of the ideas of transhumanism for the consumer consciousness is obvious. Rational egoism and utilitarian ethics of modern society have formed the necessary mood and a high level of receptivity to projects of this kind. At the same time, the scientist adds that the basis of the problem of transhumanism is the misconception that the fixation of life is life itself, while answering the following: “The achievements of science and technology should be correlated with the measure of a person, but not vice versa! Cognition should be carried out from the position of caring for what is cognized, and strive to maintain and develop it” [3].

A. Kriman draws attention to the fact that transhumanist projects to radically change human nature, on the one hand, inspire hope in the power of man, on the other hand, they frighten with their radicalism. First of all, because, despite the development of technology, the question of a person has not yet been resolved. The scientist notes that the preachers of transhumanism think they understand what a “good” person is, and they are happy to leave behind the limited, mortal, natural beings they see around them in favor of something better. And he asks the question: “But do they really understand what the highest human values are?” answering that in this context, despite the rapid development of technology, humanity still faces long-standing questions, primarily of an ethical sense: what is good and what is evil [8, p. 82].

A. Shcherbina calls transhumanism a utopia in a specific sense. This is a socio-anthropological practice, represented in the theoretical mind by the image of the future, and in practice – by the experimental present [15, p. 88]. The famous American philosopher F. Fukuyama generally calls transhumanism one of the most dangerous ideas floating around today. F. Fukuyama believes that the development of genetically modified people will mean the end of the liberal ideas of political equality of all people. Access to genetic modification technology will lead to the emergence of genetic castes and undermine our common humanity; the rich will be able to create designer children with abilities that exceed those of other, less wealthy masses [13].

The noted aspects of the relevance of this problem, its controversial nature, determine the purpose of this study – the explication of the theoretical foundations of transhumanism in the mainstream of historiosophical discourse.

Distinctive features of transhumanism as a philosophical theory are:

1) the desire to be included precisely in scientific discourse – in the language of science and in the rules of scientific reasoning, although apparently its thematic structure should have brought it closer to science fiction, the sphere of fiction;

2) the aggressive position of its supporters in matters of self-organization of the social movement and the implementation, already “here and now” of certain experiments on human nature. In a sense, transhumanism is a metaphor, as a metaphor is the most attractive concept of transhumanism in the thesaurus aspect – Immortality [11, p. 245].

The definition of transhumanism in our time causes numerous discussions, which give rise to certain approaches to its study, including the following:

– ideas of artificial (programmed) human selection with a focus on “quality”, “thoroughbred” (eugenics), improvement of the human race using all available in the arsenal of science tools and methods (technoeugenics);

– various kinds of intellectual currents, which are characterized by them, both elitist and mass in nature, according to which scientific dilettantism is read in various forms - from delight in the achievements of technical civilization to its demonization;

– more broadly, transhumanism is defined as an intellectual and cultural movement that confirms the possibility and feasibility of fundamental improvement of human living conditions through applied technologies;

– identification exclusively with the concept of human immortality (immortalism) [12, p. 170].

Based on the above definitions and other existing variants, B. Yudin gives a brief definition of it as a

philosophical concept, a system of views that fight for the need to use modern technology and advances in various sciences to improve the human body and mind; it is a product that is largely generated by human expectations [16, p. 16].

As I. Demin notes, transhumanism as a worldview is based on “post-metaphysical philosophy”. The meaning of the concept of “post-metaphysical philosophy” is clarified and crystallized in the course of discussions about the “end” of metaphysics and the “overcoming” of metaphysics, which occupy an important place in the spiritual space of our time [4, p. 212]. The essentialism of metaphysical philosophy is most clearly manifested in the question of man. Metaphysics sought to answer the question “What is a man?” and the answer to this question presupposed the search for such a trait or characteristic, without which a person ceases to be what he is, and which makes him what he is. Various metaphysical doctrines are united not by a common answer to this question, but by the recognition of the legitimacy of this question itself.

The scientist argues that transhumanism refuses to ask this question. The “essence” of a person is seen not in any of his qualities (language, consciousness, ability to work or play, etc.), but in a special way of his being. Human being is self-transcending, overcoming boundaries, including (and even above all) the boundaries of one’s own “nature. It is this understanding of the essence of man that underlies the transhumanistic project of overcoming the natural (biological) conditioning of the human being [4, p. 213].

The well-known critic of transhumanism V. Kutyrev draws attention to the fact that the deep philosophical foundation for the emergence of transhumanism is the transformation of the substantialist paradigm of attitudes towards the world into a functionalist one, then, which is very close, into a relativistic one, and then into a constructivist one. Rejection of metaphysics with its indispensable ontologism and, which began with Kant, the epistemologization of philosophy. Transhumanism is a constituent element, condition, result, of postmodernism. A consequence of it. Appearing in different guises, hiding behind good intentions and inventing some own values, postmodernism/transhumanism brings a conceptual and methodological foundation under the destruction of a person. On the one hand, the temptations of the “Brave New World” are cultivated, which now does not frighten, but enchants, on the other hand, fatalism: human transformation is still inevitable [10, p. 8].

In this sense, the scientist considers transhumanism as one of the manifestations of philosophical postmodernism, puts transhumanists (rationalists and scientists) on a par with anti-scientist and even anti-rationalistically oriented representatives of philosophical postmodernity

(Deleuze, Derrida) [10, p. 24]. According to I. Demin, a more significant similarity between transhumanism and postmodernism can be seen in the explication and interpretation of the phenomenon of transgression. Transgression is one of the key concepts of postmodernism, “fixing the phenomenon of crossing an impassable border, and above all, the border between the possible and the impossible” [4, p. 214].

We can say that transhumanism is a new system, and posthumanism is nothing more than a return to suggesting the idea of a human machine in a modern scientific and technical key. The transhumanist vision denies the classical perspective of human nature and fluctuates (like a pendulum) between the idea of a mechanical person and reducing it to the realization of how functionalist views on bioethics are formed, as well as the fact that a person can independently reason and decide. Thus, a person is seen as a constant self-construction, in this case through science and technology as allies.

Most scholars agree that the so-called “crisis of humanism” contributed to the formation of transhumanism. It is interesting that N. Bostrom describes it in this sense as a continuation of humanism. In this sense, the comparative analysis of these two conceptual systems, which was carried out by D. Kovba and E. Gribovod, is interesting. Scientists note that humanism usually means two different phenomena. Firstly, this is a movement that arose during the Renaissance, whose representatives were engaged in the study, commentary and translation of texts from the ancient period [7, p. 42]. Secondly, humanism is understood as a worldview, in the center of which is the human personality, recognized as the highest value; while all intangible and material resources are aimed at achieving its maximum well-being.

The peculiarity of the humanistic turn lies in the approval of the anthropocentric picture of the world as opposed to the cosmocentrism of the period of Antiquity and the medieval theocentrism. Man was no longer a combination of various essences (spiritual and bodily, divine and natural), but was thought of as a special substance, not reducible to any of them [7, p. 43]. Those it turns out that on the one hand, these concepts have gone beyond the theoretical and methodological boundaries of humanism and criticized a number of its provisions. On the other hand, it is transhumanism that can be viewed as a new direction in the development of the concept of humanism, that is, as its renewal.

In this sense, A. Krizan says that if earlier, in the era of humanism, man was considered “the measure of all things,” now he demands to expand the boundaries of his domination to cosmic proportions. He wants to go beyond the limits given to him by nature (not yet fully cognizing them), to conquer the

Cosmos (having a fatal effect on the Earth), to modify his genome (without decoding the consequences of his slightest changes), to improve (or better to abolish) the body (without understanding to the end of how the brain works) and, more incredibly, to conquer the most important material law – the onset of aging and death [8, p. 78].

All this suggests that transhumanism acts as a new global ideology that configures images of the social world that go back to archaic myths, with representations of the synthetic theory of evolution, techno-science, and social philosophy. It is adequate to the conditions that gave rise to it and to a new type of social subject: the weakening of nation-states and the formation of the informational contour of a global society, a new infrastructure of communication as a space of universal material and spiritual exchange, a new social subject “communities” mobilized to fight for personal rights and self-determination in anthropological sphere. The way of life constructed in an experimental mode is given normative significance. Transhumanism meets the imperative of globalization as a cultural ideology, since culture is interpreted by it as a universe of methods, means and technologies that allow a person to rationally influence him [15, p. 8].

The idea of P. Donets is of particular interest in this case. Studying the development of art in the mainstream of transhumanism, the scientist came to the conclusion that one of the most important characteristic features of transhumanist art is an interdisciplinary approach that combines traditional art forms with the latest, still undiscovered expressive forms. For example, one of its varieties – automorphism, seeks to express the perspectives of self-transformation through art, implying both the mind and the body, thus presenting the posthuman as a work of art. Among other subgenres, the so-called extraterrestrial art should be highlighted, personifying the fusion of art and the Universe [6, p. 131].

The person himself becomes the goal of planned transformations. The basis of the transhumanistic project is the knowledge of a person in accordance with the ideal of scientificity – in a rational, symbolic form, that is, it is a calculus that guarantees an accurate and universal result. The result is a cult of selfishness in the desire to avoid any “emotional bondage”. Tool scientific knowledge that seeks to reduce spiritual experiences to pure thought, where there is no place for spontaneity, love, faith, hope and morality [3].

In this case, there is a combination of elements of naturalistic and non-naturalistic discourses in the transhumanistic worldview, especially when it comes to a person. I. Demin sees a certain dissonance here. When transhumanists talk about a person in his present state, about the imperfection of the biological substrate of intellectual functions, about the

difference between modern man as a psychobiological being and the technological environment of his habitat, they proceed from a naturalistic attitude. At the same time, the very formulation and implementation of the super-task of overcoming the biological conditionality of a person (including the achievement of cybernetic immortality) is impossible within the framework of a naturalistic understanding of man and does not follow from it. Consequently, naturalism cannot act as an adequate conceptual basis for a transhumanist project [5].

The above approaches to designating the theoretical characteristics of transhumanism show that this scientific direction has its roots, which go back to the historiosophy of humanism, postmodernism. Naturally, there are differences between them, but the main thing here is that transhumanism has absorbed some of their properties, which gave it the opportunity to be realized at the trans-scientific level. Moreover, the presence of a considerable number of discussions in this area, once again proves the level of development and implementation of some theoretical provisions. We can also say that transhumanism has essentially become a conceptual embodiment of the rapid development and improvement of scientific technologies, especially in the field of NBICS technologies.

In addition, it should be noted that the theory of transhumanism is excellent for research that relate to futuristic predictions that are dedicated to solving the issues of global transformation. We saw that transhumanism covers almost all spheres of human life, as evidenced by the proclamation of the creation of a post-human, whose biological type will be different from the modern one.

Also, it must be said that transhumanism has broad historiosophical foundations, since it can be viewed both in the mainstream of the genesis of scientific thought, the history of science and technology, and from the position of philosophical knowledge of the world, identifying those issues that need to be paid close attention to in the process of studying being a person. On the other hand, this proves its interdisciplinary nature.

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Summary

Okorokova V. V. The theoretical aspect of transhumanism within the framework of historiosophical discourse. – Article.

The article is devoted to the consideration of theoretical aspects of transhumanism in the course of historiosophical discourse. Emphasis is placed on the digitalization of society, which feeds the main issues of transhumanism, especially in the anthropological sphere. In this sense, transhumanism is the theoretical approach that proposes a futurological digression into the future of man, so to speak, from the man of the present physical type to the posthuman. Man is understood here as an object of experimentation to apply to him innovative biotechnologies aimed at artificially improving his physical capabilities. It is about solving one of the main problems – immortalism (immortality).

The article presents the opinions of scientists from two poles of transhumanism research – positive and debatable. In particular, based on the works of well-known ideologues of this scientific trend (N. Bostrom, R. Kurzweil, J. Huxley) points to a pronounced projective feature of transhumanism, which in turn contributed to the debate among scientists about the impossibility or danger of implementing a transhumanist program of transformation.

The article reveals the origins of transhumanism, and most importantly the views of scholars on this issue.

There was some bipolarity in the study of transhumanism in relation to humanism and postmodernism. On the one hand, transhumanism is seen as the embodiment of some humanistic and postmodernist elements. On the other hand, there are fundamental differences, such as the understanding of the human race is not the end of our evolution, but its beginning. Hence such concepts as “transhuman” and “posthuman”, where the first type is understood as a transitional stage to the decisive stage – post-human. Anthropotechnological factor permeates transhumanism, creating a futurological program of transformation of all spheres of life, taking into account the cosmic level. The article notes that these theoretical characteristics of transhumanism lead some scholars (A. Shcherbina) to the idea of its propensity for utopia, and a utopia of global scale.

Key words: humanism, historiosophy, postmodernism, transhumanism, posthuman.

Анотація

Огорокова В. В. Теоретичний аспект трансгуманізму в межах історіософського дискурсу. – Стаття.

Стаття присвячена розгляду теоретичних аспектів трансгуманізму в напрямі історіософського дискурсу. Увага акцентується на цифровізації суспільства, що живить основні питання трансгуманізму, особливо стосовно антропологічної сфери. В цьому аспекті трансгуманізм виступає тим теоретичним підходом, який пропонує здійснити футурологічний експеримент у майбутнє людини, так би мовити, від людини нинішнього фізичного типу до постлюдини. Людина тут розуміється як об'єкт експерименту для застосування до неї

інноваційних біотехнологій, спрямованих на штучне удосконалення її фізичних можливостей. Йдеться про вирішення однієї з головних проблем, а саме іморталізму (безсмертя).

У статті наведено думки вчених двох полюсів дослідження трансгуманізму, а саме позитивні та дискусійні. Зокрема, на основі праць відомих ідеологів цієї наукової течії (Н. Бостром, Р. Курцвейл, Дж. Хакслі) вказується на ярко виражену проєктивну рису трансгуманізму, що сприяло поширенню дискусій серед учених про неможливість або небезпеку у реалізації трансгуманістичної програми перетворень.

У статті розкрито витoki трансгуманізму і, головне, погляди вчених стосовно цього питання. Виявлено певну біполярність у вивченні трансгуманізму у співвідношенні з гуманізмом та постмодернізмом. З одного боку, трансгуманізм розглядається як втілення деяких гуманістичних та постмодерністських елементів. З іншого боку, він має принципові відмінності, наприклад розуміння людського роду не кінцем нашої еволюції, а її початком. Звідси впливають такі поняття, як «транслюдина» та «постлюдина», де перший тип розуміється перехідним етапом до вирішальної стадії – пост-людини. Антропотехнологічний фактор пронизує трансгуманізм, створюючи футурологічну програму перетворень усіх сфер життя, враховуючи космічний рівень. У статті зазначено, що такі теоретичні характеристики трансгуманізму наводять деяких учених (А. Щербина) до думки про його схильність до утопії, причому утопії глобального масштабу.

Ключові слова: гуманізм, історіософія, постмодернізм, трансгуманізм, постлюдина.