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## The cybernaut as a symbol of the global world

**Abstract.** *The author discusses anthropological aspects of modern globalization. He shows that comprehension of global processes requires analysis of the problems of human nature. An attempt is made at creating a generalized image of man that will be a symbol of the nascent world. On the other hand, the author criticizes the projects of deanthropologization, debiologization of man. Traditional questions of philosophical anthropology, such as «is man a creator or a creation?», «who or what is the demiurge of the modern world?», «is the human body really a basis for human identification?», «is human nature capable of extreme openness and infinite transformation?», prove to be topical again. The author uses the method of philosophical anthropology to analyze these problems. He shows that this philosophical trend, for the decades of its existence, has improved its approaches to the issues of philosophical comprehension of man and is based on these original traditions. The novelty of the approach is not related only to restoration of the mystical tradition of remaking man but also to critical consideration of the whole European experience of «reconstruction» of the personality. The article evaluates the technical project of «remaking man» from critical positions, sets forth arguments that permit to rationally approach the problem and its basic foundations.*

**Keywords:** *global world, man, cybernaut, identity, transformation, nature, genetics, philosophy, philosophical anthropology, symbol.*

### Creator or creation?

Mass information processes of the global world cannot be imagined without a comprehensive philosophical-anthropological theory. Speaking of the «global man», the problem of self-identification in the society of «real virtuality», we cannot construct only a logic of computerized technologies, an impersonal information environment. Discussing any problem of global transformations we continuously come across anthropological determinants. Traditional questions of philosophical anthropology: «is man a creator or a creation?», «who or what is the demiurge of the modern world?», «is the human body really the basic foundation of human identification?», «is human nature capable of extreme openness and perpetual transformations?» are topical again.

Some modern philosophers, among them V.A. Kutyrev, V.I. Samokhvalova, E.M. Spirova and others express their anxiety about the threat that hangs over mankind as a special kind of being. It is doomed to extinction. This process is especially tragic because human beings are hardly aware of it. Human transformation will occur unnoticed, as in anaesthesia. People

are involved in such processes that they have already lost their identity. Having lost his identity, a human being will become different before he knows it. Becoming a «cybernaut», he will painlessly and easily, as if having received a pain-killing injection, will cast off his human body together with that natural inheritance that has called him into existence. Vitality will die off as a relict, the earthly world will lose its tenderness, animatedness. Man-invented technology will celebrate its triumph. «There is no meaningful biopolitics and all processes develop spontaneously. Even cloning, which cancels gender and undermines the whole mechanism of man's development as a living being, has not caused really mass protests and creeps up from animals onto him. With such a reaction to the most impertinent encroachments on his nature we will not even know when we are no more»<sup>1</sup>.

This problem becomes especially dramatic because philosophical anthropology, to a known extent, cannot regard such a course of events as perversion,

<sup>1</sup> Kutyrev, V.A., 2010. *Filosofia transgumanizma* [The philosophy of transhumanism]. Nizhny Novgorod, Nizhny Novgorod University, p. 27.

deadlock, pathology in evolution of human nature. Mystical tradition already regarded a human being as a being not only capable of transformation but to a great extent even sentenced to it. Didn't ancient Gnostics believe man to be a supernatural subject, didn't they dream of his unthinkable transformation? Can't we feel this hardly hidden and inexorable desire to free ourselves from sinful flesh, from suppression of the natural world in mystical texts.

Adam Kadmon – «the original Adam», «the original man» is the initial spiritual form of being that consisted of light, was endowed with all wisdoms and lived with God in the garden of Eden or the heavenly earth above. This is a prototype of the spiritual world. The idea of Adam Kadmon correlates with the Gnostic Anthropos. Anthropos is man, in Gnostic understanding – the spiritual first man, the eternal element inherent in man. This conception received the greatest development in Kabbalistic mysticism, where Adam Kadmon was interpreted as a mediator between the quality-free and infinite God and his self-determination through the forms he takes. According to «Zohar», the image of man embraces the worlds above and below.

«Occult and mystical doctrines, – wrote N.A. Berdyaev, – have always taught about the multiple composition and complexity of man who embraces all cosmic planes, overcomes in himself the whole universe. The philosophy that sees man only as a particular phenomenon of the natural world, least of all sees him as a cosmos, a small universe. And only that philosophy is able to see cosmos in man, which sees that man exceeds all phenomena of the natural world and is the supreme centre of being. One almost cannot doubt that man carries hidden, occult cosmic forces, unknown to official science and routine, everyday consciousness of man»<sup>2</sup>. But aren't modern architects of man's future writing about the same hidden, occult cosmic forces? They create new metaphors, rituals and styles of life in the information universe. More and more people become fuzzy logic shamans and virtual space alchemists.

Mystics held that angels (as first images) are outside evolution. Man is another thing. He has to go a long and dramatic way of development. For mystics, «parting» with the body is not a strange and unexpected topic. According to Kabbalists, man should be identified only with spirit. The body is but clothes for spirit, by no means man himself. Mystics did not believe man

to be an ideal creation in general. They also talked of the defectiveness of human nature.

«People dissatisfied with themselves have always wanted to become more powerful and physically stronger, – writes V.A. Kutyrev, – to rise to bodiless spirit by throwing off «the old Adam» in various religious doctrines; the Enlightenment waited for a new individual; Marxism attempted to create him in practice»<sup>3</sup>.

These ideas, undoubtedly, are not alien to philosophical anthropology. At first A. Schopenhauer, then F. Nietzsche come to think about the strangeness of man as a living being. By purely philosophical speculation an idea is formulated that man, probably, falls out of the chain of natural creatures. He is eccentric as a special kind of being and does not make an impression of being the crown of creation. On the contrary, if we assume, conditionally speaking, that man is an already established animal, then nothing except for «slapdash work of nature», comes out of it. For the first time in the history of philosophy there appears an idea of human defectiveness. «I teach you the overman», – wrote F. Nietzsche. Comprehending the Nietzschean formula of man as an incomplete animal in a new way, M. Scheler and his colleagues presented a «thinking being» as free, open. Resting upon the Medieval tradition, on the views of agnostics, philosophical anthropologists approached the problem of weak human rootedness in nature from radically different positions.

They postulated defectiveness of a human being as a biological organism. In their opinion, having become a freedman of nature, man acquired a possibility of self-development, transformation. But nobody showed him a route of this movement. The very route of human development has turned out to be a pure adventure – Adam's offspring is in the process of formation, but without preset references. If evolution is a journey into the unknown, then to what extent our complaints about the present-day global transformation of man are justified. Abstracting from post-modernist philosophy, man really is on the threshold of inconceivable transformations today, since each variant of cultural being might lead to appearance of a new anthropological personage. «When man came to know that the fate of the world lies in himself, he decided that there opens limitless future before him, in which he would not be lost, and this initial reaction often carries him away to look for his completeness and isolation»<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Berdyaev, N.A., 1989. Smysl tvorchestva [The meaning of the creative act]. In: Berdyaev, N.A., 1989. *Filosofia svobody. Smysl tvorchestva* [The philosophy of freedom. The meaning of the creative act]. M., Pravda, p. 299.

<sup>3</sup> Kutyrev, V.A., 2010. *Bytie i nichto* [Being and nothing]. St.Petersburg, Aleteja, p. 178.

<sup>4</sup> Chardin, Pierre, 1987. *Fenomen cheloveka* [The phenomenon of man]. M., Nauka, p. 189.

But should we really, following Chardin, hominize death itself? Is it true that we stand on the threshold of global evolution? Is it true that human evolution is a human attempt to play dice with God? Let's clarify the point at last: not any adventure of transformation is inevitable from the viewpoint of philosophical anthropology. Man's development, his fate do not presuppose Brownian motion of human history, sudden rushes in various directions for the sake of the openness of human nature. What price human reasonableness, if it is not switched on in the tragic periods of human existence in order to understand «where the fate of events draws us?». And this is the idea that might turn out to be a reliable guide for us: «man is condemned to seek the human in himself...» Exactly: any progress is reactionary if it is not associated with search for the specifically human. And vice versa: deviation from human nature is fatal for the future.

If man is the image and likeness of God, then all attempts at distorting, perverting (or even improving) human nature seem sacrilegious. He is God's creation. E. Fromm wrote the book «You shall be as gods». But that does not mean «be gods». Man should remain within the framework of God's design. And then our attitude to reason, spirituality, creativity of man that have already shown their greatness in the powerful rise of human culture should be especially reverent.

However, a Renaissance philosopher Giovanni Mirandola believed that man is a creature of indeterminate image. That is how he sees God's precept to man: «Adam, we give you no fixed place to live, no form that is peculiar to you, nor any function that is yours alone. According to your desires and judgment, you will have and possess whatever place to live, whatever form, and whatever functions you yourself choose. All other things have a limited and fixed nature prescribed and bounded by our laws. You, with no limit or no bound, may choose for yourself the limits and bounds of your nature. We have placed you at the world's centre so that you may survey everything else in the world...»<sup>5</sup>.

So, man is not only a creation but he is also a creator. «Man is unique. He introduced into the world some element, alien to the animal world but it is not quite clear what this element is»<sup>6</sup>. Man has a predestination that depends on himself. But creating himself, man, it would appear, should remain human. Because it

is unlikely that God, if we follow the idea of G. Mirandola, meant in his design that man will become a machine, a centaur or a cybernaut.

From times immemorial, as K. Jaspers noted, freedom, reflection, spirit were considered to be man's inalienable qualities. The fate of an animal is entirely conditioned by laws of nature. A human being also depends on laws of nature but additionally he has a predestination, realization of which completely depends on himself. On the other hand, nowhere can we find a human being as a completely spiritual being; natural needs influence even the deepest strata of his spirit. «In earlier centuries, the imagination of man conceived of angels as pure intelligences. Man, however, is himself neither animal nor angel; he shares the condition of both but the existence of neither»<sup>7</sup>.

## A cybernaut or a technoid

The word cybernaut was introduced to literature by Timothy Leary. He sees the future of man as a man-computer symbiotic relation. This, in his opinion, is «top-of-the-line model of the 21<sup>st</sup> century». He believes that cyber-clothes will become more habitual for him than usual ones<sup>8</sup>. It is a real reprogramming of the brain, unprecedented acceleration of mental processes.

Leary reminds us that the terms “cybernetic person” or “cybernaut” return us to the original meaning of the word “pilot” and put the self-reliant person back in the loop”. Digital reality is prone with many difficulties. Man acquires the ability to move inside information worlds. Construction of a new cyberspace subjectivity is conditioned, therefore, by thus narrated perception followed by kinesis. Such is a striking exposition of the development of subjectivity described in the phenomenology of M. Merleau-Ponty. «Being a continuation of the world, the body at the same time acts as a universal measure that supports harmony in the world»<sup>9</sup>. This is a process of physiognomic perception that places about the subject the world that tells him about it and gives his own thoughts their place in the world.

The architect of a «new man» is full of enthusiasm. He remarks that transformation of pre-hominid australopitelines into cro-magnons occurred approximately during the lifespan of fifteen thousand genera-

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 32–33.

<sup>8</sup> Leary, T., 2002. The seven tongues of God. K., Janus, M., Peresvet, p. 188.

<sup>9</sup> Vdovina, I.S., 2008. Merleau-Ponty Maurice. In: Blauberg, I.I. (edit.), 2008. *Filosofy Frantsii* [French philosophers]. Dictionary, M.: Gardariki, p. 216.

<sup>5</sup> Mirandola, Giovanni Pico della, 1981. Oration on the dignity of man. In: Shestakov, V.P. (comp.), 1981. *Estetika Renessansa* [Aesthetics of the Renaissance]. Vol. 1, p. 249.

<sup>6</sup> Jaspers, K., 1997. *General psychopathology*. M., Workshop, p. 32.

tions... For this relatively short period of the world history the family Hominidae underwent a radical change of form; indeed: the hominids turned out to be one of the groups of animals, who opened up their huge potential, and this potential began to realize itself with enormous intensity. Therefore, one could hardly hope that in the course of natural development this flow will dry up at homo sapiens recens. Man will not be able to remain as we know him now, a modern type of sapiens. Supposedly, in the near hundred thousand years he will significantly change physiologically and physically.

But what is at issue – «development of man» or creation of a new being? «At present, in the context of rapid development of new technologies, on the one hand, – writes V.I. Samokhvalova, – and impressive successes of neurobiology, genetics, bioengineering, etc., on the other, there are more and more attempts at predicting what the 21<sup>st</sup> century man will eventually be. Will it be a hybrid of man and machine, a cyborg? And perhaps it will be a neuroman or some kind of man's upgrade grown on genetic vaccines and selective mutations (with modelling of characteristics, according to modern eugenics, and super-development of required qualities)? Or, having a prospect of immortality due to growing his own clones and the possibility of replacing worn out organs, he will become a half-god?»<sup>10</sup>.

Creating man according to technological standards, enthusiasts of his radical remaking until a certain time still speak about Adam's descendant. T. Leary writes that, to all appearances, we have come to another genetic crossroads, – one of those that so often appeared on the historical route of the primates. Members of the human gene pool make symbiotic relationships with computers. There appear new associations of people connected by computer networks that ensure fast and free information exchange. A strike of a key switches on the mode of a new neurophysiological interaction. The interactive mode removes man's dependence on many bureaucrats, experts, professors, psychotherapists, librarians, managers, and trade unions that jealously monopolized the information stream in the industrial era.

To what extent, however, one can imagine development of man as a simple organ-projection of his human qualities? It is possible to preserve the integral image of man by transforming his brain, body, mind? T. Leary believes that it is. He writes that digital graphic devices develop partnership between the human brain

and the computer. Evolving toward greater and greater physiological complexity, our bodies have made a symbiosis with gut bacteria in order to survive. Similarly, our brains form neural-electronic symbiotic relations with computers. It is important to distinguish between dependence and symbiotic partnership. The body can passively get attached to certain molecules, for example, to molecules of narcotic drugs, and the brain can passively get attached to electronic signals, for instance, to TV signals. The body also needs symbiotic partnership with some unicellular organisms. At the modern stage of evolution, more and more people develop interdependent interactive relationships with their microsystems. The moment comes when an individual «swallows the bait» and cannot imagine his life without constant exchange of electronic signals between his brain and his PC. Computers are used to establish intensive interactive partnership with the other inhabitants of cyberspace.

Social practice, however, shows that such free experimenting with man causes unexpected difficulties and paradoxes. Man is not the likeness of a machine that has a set of varied properties and characteristics. There are existential contradictions in human being, because he is born in nature but lives in society. A human being has instincts but he also has mind. He is an animal and a non-animal. Adam's descendant is a natural being but he also has divine nature. Man, as E. Fromm defines him, is almost the most eccentric being of the universe.

That is why remaking man by technological standards gives birth to a cadaver. Acquisition of new faculties turns out to be like the process of proliferation of tumour metastases. The body's loss of the rules of organic game leads to the situation when some cell set of another might express its uncontrollable and killing vitality, not obeying genetic commands, and proliferate without limits. And here an authoritative post-modernist J. Baudrillard becomes T. Leary's opponent. The computer engenders sensory environment of virtual reality. "Terminal penetration" concentrates on the cybernaut – the subject in cyberspace. Terminal culture could be defined as an era in which the digital has replaced the tactile, to use Baudrillard's terms. But in Baudrillard's interpretation, virtual reality constitutes a simulation of an embodied presence, and thus a deception that further separates the subject from the fields of control. J. Baudrillard interprets all these projects of transformation of man as continuation of the conception of the Canadian sociologist M. McLuhan. This author in his time held that it is man's development, projection of his sensory abilities that are at is-

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<sup>10</sup> Samokhvalova, V.I., 2009. K ponimaniyu cheloveka v ego chelovecheskoy identichnosti [On understanding of man in his human identity]. Polignosis, 2: 89.

sue. According to McLuhan, everything that is present in a human being – his biological, muscular, brain substance – is hovering over him in the form of mechanical or information prostheses. All this is presented in his works as positive expansion, as universalization of man through his mediated development.

In reality, instead of concentrically revolving around the body all these functions turned into satellites that are located in an eccentric order. They launched themselves into the orbit, and man immediately found himself in the state of excess and eccentricity with respect to his own technology. It is man with his planet Earth, with his territory, with his body who is now the satellite of those very satellites which he created and launched. Once transcendent he has become exorbitate<sup>11</sup>.

But not only the body becomes a satellite, whose functions, being launched into the orbit, force him to it. All functions of our society, in particular, supreme functions, are separated and go into the orbit. War, financial transactions, technosphere, communications become satellites in an inconceivable space, plunging all other things into desolation. Everything that does not reach orbital power is doomed to desolation, not subject to appeal from now on, because there is no resort in any superiority any more.

First of all, exorbitant «adiposity» of all modern systems is striking, this, as Susan Sontag talks of cancer, «demonic pregnancy». But it is exactly that which is inherent in our mechanisms of information, communication, memory, storage. We live in an excessive flow of information. There is a lot of it, but the meaning behind this information noise is often overlooked. So many signs and messages have been written and distributed that they will never be read.

### The human body

The body is the basis of a human being. The body knows what is satiation, anxiety, comfort, passion. First of all, a human being is an animal. He is an animal because he depends on the animal functioning of his body. Under normal relations, however, he hardly bears in mind that he is initially an animal. He understands that culture is dominated by ego-values, and that its organization is based on causal relationships. If he loses his animal nature, he becomes a machine. If he denies it, he becomes a bodiless spirit. If he perverts his nature, he becomes a demon. Corporeality is manifested in

characteristic body motions, postures, stance, breathing, rhythms, paces, temperature, degree of its «going», smelling and sounding.

Computer revolution is associated with an offensive on the human body. It turns out that the protein form of life is threatened because of mass introduction of machines and mechanisms. Future prospects of genetic engineering, improvement of techniques aimed at artificial reproduction, invention of drugs that alter personality, transplantation of organs, especially artificial ones – all this certainly destroys traditional understanding of the biological nature of man. And on the other hand, as never before, it shows an extreme complexity of man, his uniqueness as a natural phenomenon, fragility. Many researchers stress that a rapid onset of technogenic thinking contains a hidden necrophilic impulse. Some scientists make experiments, implanting various mechanisms into a biological organism.

Expressive techno-organic reconstructions of flesh are born. Initially, penetration of the human into technology was at issue. Now «terminal flesh» discloses the process of technology penetrating into a human being. There appears a bestiary of varied forms of the cyborg. The body often turns out to be the locus of exclusion or disappearance – the subject is eliminated, reproduced, re-equipped, genetically projected, unrolled and rolled up again. We already cannot think about man without machine.

We own the concept of «terminal flesh» in many respects to Georges Bataille. Naked as beasts, naked as worms – Bataille often applies such comparisons to his characters, with whom he communicates like with his others. In Bataille's artistic narration, the place of the subject, the narrator turns out to be suspended, and it can be in full measure discovered only in objects that are excessive with respect to writing itself, and with whom he identifies himself. These are empty spaces and ruptures that can be symbolized as female genitals, open mouth, a bleeding cut, an empty eye socket, anal orifice, volcano, town gates, open window, den, grave or, very often, starry sky... Accordingly, feelings that most often the lyrical hero has – it is vertigo as in falling into emptiness or severe drunkenness, or unaccountable horror at meeting with the other, the impossible, etc.

The ability to enjoy is a purely human need. But are communication machines capable of enjoying themselves? If we think of machines capable of enjoying themselves, they should be made in the image and likelihood of communicative machines. But, as witty remarks J. Baudrillard, such machines already exist:

<sup>11</sup> Baudrillard, J., 2006. The transparency of Evil. M., Dobrosvet, p. 46.

they are our own bodies. It is important for us to understand whether the human mind can be preserved in the form of digital, wave and binary codes on computer disks, beyond the bodily shell, into which we are put «in our lifetime»? How does organic carbon-containing caterpillar turn into a silicon butterfly?

The scheme of an integral organism now undergoes transformation. A traditional prosthesis, serving to restore functions of a damaged organ changes nothing in the general model of the body. But modelling at the mental level is something different. The body that is exposed to psychotropic substances is modelled from inside. This body has sensitivity, but it does not have perception. Such bodies, as states J. Baudrillard, are not capable of having any idea of themselves, nor of others. Transformation of a genetic formula or development of biochemical dependence have erased their essence and meaning. They are infinitely far from their revival.

### Broadening of consciousness

Man is not a programmed robot, who was placed onto out planet, given an identification number and put onto the conveyer «school, college, carrier, insurance, pension, funeral, farewell forever». T. Leary describes spiritual experience that man acquires as a result of the broadening of consciousness: «I have understood that the whole history of mankind is written in my body. I can experience and experimentally study every aspect of evolution. I can become Buddha, Einstein, Galileo. I should become Moses and develop my own ethical code. I should become bishop Berkley and find my solution to the problem of matter and consciousness. Instead of relying on canned, static, dead and senseless knowledge passed on from other symbol producers, live out every possibility of the human, prehuman and even subhuman life. I become less dependent on trivial external pastimes and this may be the natural solution to the problem of leisure. When all of the heavy work and mental drudgery are taken over by machines, what are we going to do? Build even bigger machines? Oh no, we are going to explore the infinity of inner space, the terror, adventure and ecstasy that lie within us all».

To be human means to be rational. Homo sapiens wants to cognize the world. To be. To know. The intellect should break away from the bondage of old neuroses, get free from egocentrism, from semantic conditionality. The mind awakened by meditation is ready to comprehend any conception. On the intellectual plane, the same problem always arises: to what extent can an intellectual game be structured? In the absence of structure, of goals and rules we shall obtain ever increasing

specialization, dispersion, break of communication, a cultural Babylon, which psychology demonstrates. In case of excessive structuring, we obtain dogmatism, conformism, an ever increasing triviality of reasoning, worship of virtuosic technologies to the detriment of understanding, which psychoanalysis demonstrates.

Each individual receives from an experience of the broadening of consciousness only what he introduces into it and what he is ready to receive. Each individual should realize that consciousness is a clue to human life, and instead of struggling for the territory and possession of a super-powerful weapon he should focus on consciousness, on the integral field of global consciousness, in the existence of which the great Jesuit philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin believed.

### Human identity

F. Nietzsche foresaw that the day is near when mankind will have to undergo a more severe trial than everything that it experienced earlier. The problem – «Who am I?» will rise in all its magnitude<sup>12</sup>. Perhaps, exactly now we are to separate the human from the «all too human»? This is an incredibly difficult task, since in our days the problem of human identity proves to be not only topical but also very difficult.

All being on the earth wants to be itself. A stone has no desire to become a plant. This is B. Spinoza's idea, though. A tiger dreams of remaining a tiger to the same extent as an ant wants to remain an ant. Naturally, this also refers to a human being. Here, however, a serious problem stands out. A human being due to his singularity in the natural realm is capable of dreaming about returning to nature, denying himself his consciousness, spirituality, uniqueness. And nevertheless, «this is a problem of identity and preservation of the stability of systems, which seems to bother mankind»<sup>13</sup>. In the past years, this theme has become very topical. Many philosophers turn to it, enlightening some aspects of this problem<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> Nietzsche, F., 1990. *Ecce Homo*. How one becomes what one is. In: Nietzsche, F., 1990. *Works in two vols*. M., Idea, p. 694.

<sup>13</sup> Kutyrev, V.A., 2009. *Chelovecheskoe i inoe. Bor'ba mirov* [The human and the other. The war of the world's]. St.Petersburg, Aleteja, p. 100.

<sup>14</sup> See: Savchenko, I.A., 2009. *Transformatsiya kul'turnoy identichnosti v multikulturnom soobshchestve* [Transformation of cultural identity in a multicultural community]. *Lichnost. Kultura. Obshchestvo*, 50: 430–438; Samokhvalova, V.I., 2009. *K ponimaniyu cheloveka v ego chelovecheskoy identichnosti* [On understanding of man in his human identity]. *Polignosis*, 2: 89–102.

«The cybernetic revolution, – writes J. Baudrillard, – in view of the equivalence of brain and computer, places humanity before the crucial question: am I a human or a machine? The genetic revolution that is taking place at the moment raises the question: am I a man or a potential clone? The sexual revolution, by liberating all the potentialities of desire, raises another fundamental: am I a man of a woman?»<sup>15</sup>.

Am I a man? Am I a machine? Alas, now it is impossible to answer these questions. But since it is so, then we can speak about the end or decline of philosophical anthropology. It has been privatized by machines and top-of-the-line technologies. Machine relations improve, and human identities are destroyed. Am I a man? Am I a woman? What follows from difference between the sexes? These traditional questions of philosophical anthropology become pointless. Does a machine have gender? New technologies, new pictures, interactive screens do not alienate a human being. They become part of a human being.

J. Baudrillard calls video, TV, and the computer the contact lenses of communication. They are none other than transparent prostheses, which make a single whole with the body, until they become genetically its part, as a pacemaker. All this reasoning is indicative of the fact that improvement of mass-information processes necessitates placing traditional and very significant questions of philosophical anthropology in the foreground. It is impossible to make progress in new communications without answering the question what is man, what is human nature, what is human destiny. Fantastic success of artificial intelligence is due to the fact that it frees us from natural intelligence, from unsolvable tasks of the relationships that link a human being with the world around.

### Endangered species

Why is the human body endangered? Why, having initially lost the organs (post-modernist conception of the «body without organs»), did it mutate to the extent when there appeared the effect of deanthropologization of man. We continue to talk of a human being but he ceases to be perceived as some familiar human essence. Man has not only lost identity. He gradually fades away. He dies out as an anthropological entity. Everything about which philosophers have been writing for centuries, addressing knowledge of man, human nature, his integrity, self-identity, historicity, gradually becomes

pointless. «We should speak already not about a human being but about some humanoids, various forms and kinds of humanoid life, among which the habitual human being is but one of species, already disappearing. Human beings are an endangered species»<sup>16</sup>.

Disappearance on the Earth of some biological species or another is a little news in principle. But mammoths and troglodytes hardly foresaw such a happy perspective for themselves. Had they surmised their sad destiny, they would probably not be philosophizing on this theme. So, man becomes a subject of archaeology and ethnography, a certain symbol of the outdated forms of biological existence. Debiologization of man as a phenomenon is found not only in transmutation of the biological substrate proper, but also in the change of the bodily dimension of human existence into other, often simulated realities. Classical conclusions of philosophical anthropology for the past two centuries of its development undergo revision.

A stable human nature is immune to re-creations... What is the point, when not fantasists but scientists and biologists speak of reshaping human organic matter? Why are sexual and excretory functions in the human body performed by the same organs? Let's divide them. Let's put the genitals in the armpits and endow them with the ability to move in and out. Man, allegedly, due to evolution should have an elongated neck and long limbs. One eye, cyclopean and very small teeth. The all-seeing eye is, naturally, more preferable than wide-spaced eyes.

This refers to biological evolution. But it is replaced by genetic and technological construction. Then what have teeth and neck to do with it? A technoid might not possess human characteristics. He may have some kind of an apparatus. But who said that the human body should be taken as an example? At this, so far preliminary, stage the heart can be replaced by an ardent motor; and the extremities by steel arms-wings. The brain can be added by a system of chips, the nervous system can be made similar to thin fibre. But why should God's will be preserved? There are hundreds of such patterns in store that permit to forget Adam's rib.

Human integrity as some anthropological property? Out of date. Man (anthropoid, technoid, humanoid) due to the basic need for variety will agree to disintegration, which promises a hypertrophy of some quality. Man will turn into a detail of a constructed superorganism, like a beehive or an ant society.

A perspective of unique specialization of a human

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<sup>15</sup> Baudrillard, J., 2006. The transparency of Evil. M., Dobrosvet, p. 38.

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<sup>16</sup> Smirnov, S.S., 2003. Sovremennaya antropologia [Modern anthropology. An analytical review]. Chelovek, 5.

being is looming ahead. For example, among ants there are «cattle-breeders» that have learnt to «milk» aphids, obtaining from each aphid a drop of honeydew, there are «gardeners» that bring pieces of tree leaves to the ant-hill. Predator ants drag home meet food – insects crawling in grass or pieces of flesh of larger animal. «Harvester» ants are interested in collecting grains and seeds. And there are also communities of petty thieves living at the expense of robbing somebody else's hills<sup>17</sup>.

An American researcher Kevin Kelly in his book «Out of control» (2008) examines a bee swarm as an example of a «superorganism». But talking about the union of sun-fed life and oil-fed machinery, the author heads not so much for a new biological civilization, but new yet unrecognized forms of real and virtual life. Philosophical-anthropological literature turned out to be a hostage to the bulk of new subjects. Further evolution will go different ways. Not humans but human-look-likes. Investigation of stem cells and attempts at cloning. Study of the logic of bios and the machine brain<sup>18</sup>. Bioengineering and bionic convergence. Vivisystems and nanotechnologies. Swarm networks and disembodied intelligence. Classical anthropological themes disappear even as a basis for reflection about man.

Identity as a way of preserving self-identity? Anachronism. Why should a technoid take pains to search the personality nucleus. Ability to transform, to lose centrality, the principal absence of the pivot that retains some likelihood. The adventure of perpetual transformation. Transition from somebody to something and vice versa. Something subject to dismantling and arbitrary assembling (Exactly like in a song: «I've made you from what there was...»). Conditional denomination termed the body, sentenced to perpetual disintegration, dismemberment, and arbitrary assemblage. Dehumanization of man. The absence of not only a measure of identity but also approximate self-determination.

A personage of history fallen out of its bosom, man ceases to be the creator of history. He does not participate in its battles in principle, since he lives in a conditional space and is indifferent to temporal shifts. Man has lost the dimension of a living body, since he has a possibility of existing in the role of a headless horseman, a horseman with many heads and even with some other crowning of his singular image.

But can we regard this situation as absolutely modern and earlier unknown to mankind? A.G. Dugin

does not think so. He proposes a new historiosophic scheme: the whole history is conditionally divided into three stages, to be more correct, the historical process can be divided into three parts. He calls the first part the premodern, then follows a traditional society (modern) and the postmodern. Each of these stages is characterized by many signs that are considerably transformed in any of these parts. The understanding of history, sacrality, of the modus of the world's existence, of man, reality or virtuality changes.

So, according to A.G. Dugin, man in the premodern is like a similar character in the postmodern. Man in religion (in other words, in the premodern), in his words, does not see himself a complete autonomous entity<sup>19</sup>. To some extent, it is true. Ancient mythology does not dismember the picture of the world: nature, man, deity are not «separated» there. The first steps of an individual's intellectual and cultural life can be imagined as some kind of mental adjustment to immediate surroundings. But as culture develops the opposite trend becomes evident. Human inquisitiveness begins to change its direction. It turns to man himself. This is found already in myths.

«Man is not an entity but a task, a person, a mask, – writes A.G. Dugin, – Personality is an artificial word, as the persona in Greek tragedies, – it is something put on something and worn by somebody. Substance, subject, supreme spirit, deity, soul – whichever instance we regard as of paramount importance, man will always be a wrapper»<sup>20</sup>. Not everything is correct here, in our opinion. Yes, man in mythology is not yet isolated, not designated as something autonomous. But still he is not devoid of corporeality. Moreover, it is the human body that acts as a cosmogonic measure. Indian Purusha has a task – to give his body in order to create the whole diversity of the universe. There is a task but at the same time there is an entity. A mask in ancient tragedies to a certain extent covers a hero or heroine. It embodies some virtue or a significant human quality. But Medea who covers the reality of her grief, horror and determination behind masks is, like it or not, a real human being capable of spiritual suffering and bodily sorrows.

Ancient mythology offers deep insights about man. But it really does not dismembers the picture of the world: nature, man, deity are unified there. The process of cognition from the very beginning is “burdened” by man's ability to evaluate reality as “human-

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<sup>17</sup> Peskov, V., 2008. Novoselye murashey [A new ant home]. *Komsomolskaya pravda*, 24–31 July: 65.

<sup>18</sup> See: Gurevich, P.S., 2008. Logika biosa i mozg mashiny [The logic of bios and the machine brain]. *Filosofia i kultura*, 8: 28–36.

<sup>19</sup> See: Dugin, A.G., 2007. Postgumanizm. Chelovek v mire postmoderna [Posthumanism. Man in the postmodern world]. *Vestnik analitiki*, 1: 132.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.



ized”, created to his measure. This finds reflection in anthropomorphism, i.e. unconscious perception of cosmos and deity as living beings similar to man itself. In ancient mythology and philosophy man appears as a minor world (microcosm) and a larger world (macrocosm). The idea of their parallelism and isomorphism is one of the most ancient natural philosophical conceptions, centred on the cosmogonic mythologem of the “universal man” (Purusha in the Indian Vedas, Ymir in the Scandinavian «Edda», Chinese Pangu).

Ancient cosmogonic myths, stories and legends, art and nascent philosophy – they all were imbued with the desire to solve or clear up the greatest mystery of life: how man appeared and why he exists under the vault of heaven illuminated by shining stars, sun and moon light; be man a lord of the earth and adornment of the universe or a toy of fate, slave to his own nature. And who said that mortification of the flesh is proclaimed in the pre-modern, as A.G. Dugin writes about it? Didn't the pagan Greece glorify the beauty of the human body, enjoy its beauty? Where, in what culture did minimization of the human element manifest itself, as A.G. Dugin holds? In what cultural cosmos a human being does not eat, drink, tries to shrink himself in order not to interfere with manifestation of supreme forces? In ancient mythology, man is not autonomous yet, but he does not shrink and sometimes even defies fate, fatal predestination. Being condemned to cruel trials and even to death, he does not lose the greatness of spirit. Is it not about this the ancient myths of Oedipus and Medea testify?

Christianity contains a fundamentally new turn in comprehension of man. This ancient teaching regards man as a temple, as a receptacle of richest feelings. Man carries on himself an imprint of the absolute personality of God. There appears the idea of the uniqueness of every human being. It was termed personalism from the word «person», meaning personality. Now man is interpreted as a peculiar sacred object. Personality acquires some value by itself. A real earthly human being in all the uniqueness of inherent characteristics is assessed as an intransient and indisputable value. Corporeality glorified by the ancient Hellenes is associated with spirituality in a Christian ideal.

A human being does not eat, does not drink, belittles his presence in this world. Perhaps, this refers to the Middle Ages? Yes, the Middle Ages did not have that cult of the human flesh which was characteristic of antiquity. On the contrary, the body lost its attractiveness. «When we look at church glass and medieval statues, on primitive painting, it seems to us that humankind has degenerated, and its blood is poor: consumptive saints, ugly martyrs, flat-breasted virgins with too long legs and

knotty hands, shrivelled and wizened helmets, pictures of Christ resembling crushed and bloody earthworms – processions of colourless sad personalities reflecting the whole ugliness of feebleness and depression.

Where did the human flesh, the beauty of the human body disappear? Medieval priests believed that the body is a dungeon where soul is locked up. But this is not what is now called the «death of man». Flesh is neglected but it still is, it has not been eliminated. The medieval man is still not an angel, not a disembodied spirit. In the Renaissance, Shakespeare's Hamlet doubts that one can have dreams in death when «we have shuffled off this mortal coin».

A.G. Dugin, developing his historiosophic conception underlies that the pre-modern radically differs from the modern. All that has been affirmed in the traditional society was refuted or modified in the modern. Everything underwent a fundamental paradigmatic shift. But transition from the modern to the postmodern also signifies an absolute transformation of values and practical attitudes. But the cunning of history is that return to some life attitudes of the pre-modern only seems to restore former views. In reality, there is a certain similarity, but there is no identity. Man again loses himself in the flow of the postmodern but he loses himself in a different way, not as in the pre-modern. Apparently, it is so. But this gives every reason to remark that in postmodernist philosophy man for the first time in history loses his corporeality as a basis of human identity.

### Radical transformation of man

But in this context, it would be rightful to put the question: to what extent are justified all kinds of conceptions referring to radical transformation of man. Is it possible to think about it? Is it not the task of responsible worldview philosophy to record not only civilizational shifts that occur almost spontaneously but also to raise its voice against the sociological Oedipus effect, when gloomy prognoses are realized unconsciously, due to involvement into the project? Is it not high time for humanistically oriented thought to lay obstacles to irresponsible postmodernist games aimed at full destruction of a human being as an anthropological entity? Is it not a philosophical duty of every responsible thinker to stop paranoid suicidal desires of the presumptuous lovers of wisdom?<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> See: Lektorskiy, V.A., 2004. Umer li chelovek [Is man dead]? In: Stepin, V.S. (edit.), 2004. Nauka, obshchestvo, chelovek. To the 75th anniversary of the birth of academician I.T. Frolov. M., Nauka; Kutyrev, V.A., 2006. Filosofskiy obraz nashogo vremeni [The philosophical image of our time (the lifeless worlds of post-humanity)]. Smolensk, Smolensk state University.

But before putting these questions, it is important to do some reflexive work. First of all, we should admit that the very question about transformation of man does not appear for the first time neither in the history of mankind nor in the history of philosophy. Earlier grandiose radical transformation of hominids is related to the process of transformation of animals into homo sapiens. Did not man come to this world with a ready set of humanness, reason and social qualities? This mystery of grandiose transformation that tortured, for instance, K. Jaspers, has not been developed by philosophical anthropology to full extent.

«The human being is not merely a kind of animal not is he any kind of purely spiritual creature, of which we have no knowledge and which in earlier times conceived to be angelic. Man is rather something unique. He partakes in the series of living things and in the series of angel, belonging to both and differing from both. He holds a special place which has been continually affirmed by theology and philosophy and denied only in the positivist period. The phenomena of his existence extend to animal level, the fundamentals of his nature extend to godhead, in the Transcendence

whereby he knows he is given to himself in freedom», – write K. Jaspers<sup>22</sup>.

We cannot but take into consideration one more philosophical insight of F. Nietzsche that man is still an incomplete animal, the idea that was given a detailed consideration in German philosophical anthropology at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Man is an open possibility; he is not complete and cannot be completed. Therefore, man is always bigger than what he has realized and is not identical to what he has realized. This idea of K. Jaspers consistently follows from works of philosophical anthropologists.

If we leave aside post-modernist philosophy, then man is really on the threshold of unbelievable transformations, since every variant of cultural being might lead to the appearance of a new anthropological personage.

The question remains open, if man strives to self-elimination. It cannot be ruled out that in every system, every individual there is a secret desire to rid oneself of the idea of his existence, of his essence in order to acquire possibility to propagate and extrapolate oneself in all directions.

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