

# The Human Being in Contemporary Philosophical Conceptions





Under the Patronage of UNESCO

# The Human Being in Contemporary Philosophical Conceptions

Edited by

Nikolay Omelchenko

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P U B L I S H I N G

The Human Being in Contemporary Philosophical Conceptions, Edited by Nikolay Omelchenko

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# AN EXPERIENCE IN PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH OF THE HUMAN BEING

This book presents the results of the 4th International Conference “Human Being in Contemporary Philosophical Conceptions,” which was held under the patronage of UNESCO at Volgograd State University (Russia) on May 28–31, 2007. In the letter to the organizers, Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura wrote:

I should like to congratulate you on this important initiative to promote philosophical reflection, which is one of the central objectives of UNESCO’s Intersectoral Strategy on Philosophy.

Since 1998, the conference has become a regular academic forum attended by Russian and international scholars. This time the Organizing Committee has received about 500 papers from 77 Russian cities, and about 70 papers from 24 countries such as Armenia, Belarus, Botswana, China, Finland, France, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine and the United States of America.

First of all, it is important to note the high quality of the presented papers. Their humanistic and optimistic orientation demonstrates that many scholars from the different countries think of humanity in the terms of metaphysics of respect for human being. The 4th Conference proceedings were published in four volumes and presented to participants at registration. The format of the conference has also proved to be a success: daily plenary sessions in the morning, workshops in the afternoon. The simultaneous translation of plenary sessions into three languages—Russian, English and French—was provided.

As part of the recreation program, the conference participants toured the city’s historic landmarks, took a trip on the boat along the Volga River at night, attended a concert of the folk group “Stanitsa” and watched Cossack dances and songs.

Another important feature of the conference is a traditional friendly atmosphere contributing to the fruitful exchange of ideas, to free and peaceful discussions and creative mood. The conference has become a fiesta of philosophical paradigms and a meeting place for interesting

people. Perhaps the participants might want to say that the conference was an example of productive communication in the era of globalization.

The 4th Conference included two symposia: the first one, "Mythology and Human Images," was devoted to the centennial of the birth of the Romanian scholar Mircea Eliade; the second symposium, "Metaphysics and Anthropology of Simeon Frank," was devoted to the 130-year anniversary of the Russian thinker.

The 30 minute-long plenary papers enabled the authors to present their basic ideas. There have been 26 plenary presentations. The working program included 14 workshops, round tables, seminars and online sessions on the important issues of the philosophy of human being—a major focus of many disciplines. In fact, the conference has become interdisciplinary, ensuring its attractiveness and prospects.

The following workshops operated during the forum: 1) Metaphysics and Philosophical Anthropology, 2) Human Being in Social and Political Philosophy, 3) Philosophical and Social/Cultural Anthropologies, 4) Man in the Circle of Existentialism, 5) Phenomenology of Human Being, 6) Philosophical Anthropology, Psychology, Psychoanalysis, 7) Philosophy and Gender Research, 8) The Values of Modern Individuals, 9) Heuristic Possibilities of Philosophical and Religious Anthropology, 10) Philosophy of Human Being and Philosophy of Language, 11) Humans in the Communicative Environment, 12) Humankind, Information Society and High Technologies, 13) Globalization and the Human Prospects, 14) New Approaches and Ideas in Research of Human Being.

The conference included sessions organized by the editors of the journal *Philosophy and Society*, by the Presidium of the Russian Philosophical Society, and such round tables as *Human Being and the Philosophy of Diversity*, *Human Being, Sign and Machine*, and *Anthropological Prospects in the 21st Century*.

On the first day of the conference an international meeting of women philosophers was held in support of the famous UNESCO initiative; later the list of women philosophers was sent to the UNESCO office in Paris.

The Philosophical Studio of Oscar Brenifier (France) started its work on the third day of the conference. Its work continued even after the conference ended, as it turned out that many Russian teachers are interested in the French experience in practical philosophy and philosophical practice.

Two internet sessions have drawn much attention. For example, the conference participants who were in Romania and Botswana could present their papers and discuss them online (with the moderator being at the Internet-center of Volgograd State University).

Besides the conference participants attended the vernissage “Philosophy and Fractal Art” by the Romanian artist ViGuera, the Romanian photo exhibition “Life and Work of Mircea Eliade” and the book exhibition of the Oxford University Press (United Kingdom). Conference information can be accessed at <http://volgograd2007.goldenideashome.com>.

In conclusion, we wish to offer our thanks and acknowledgements. We emphasize an effective cooperation with the conference co-organizers: Professors Viorel and Emilia Guliciuc, representatives of “Stefan cel Mare” University of Suceava (Romania); Professor Vassily Friauf, Chair of the International Simeon Frank Philosophical Society (Saratov, Russia); Professor Alexander Chumakov, Vice-President of the Russian Philosophical Society.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, and his colleagues—especially Moufida Goucha and Pierre Sané—for their support of the forum.

Our special thanks for his consideration and help are extended to Mr. Grigory Ordzhonikidze, Executive Secretary of the National Commission for UNESCO at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

We greatly appreciate the contribution of Mr. Badarch Dendev, the Director of the UNESCO Moscow Office and Ms. Alla Ampar, Assistant to the Director for Social and Human Sciences. The Organizing Committee highly appreciates the financial support of the Russian Foundation for the Humanities and the Volgograd Region Administration.

Also, we wish to express our cordial gratitude to the people at Cambridge Scholars Publishing, especially Dr. Andy Nercessian, Carol Koulikourdi and Amanda Millar, for this valued opportunity to present our project.

Finally, we would like to thank all the conference participants: it is only due to their interesting papers and active participation that this forum became possible, allowing us to experience a real celebration of the philosophical mind.

Oleg Inshakov  
Rector of Volgograd State University  
Chair of the Conference Organizing Committee

Nikolay Omelchenko  
Dean of the School of Philosophy and Social Technologies  
Co-chair of the Conference Organizing Committee



CHAPTER ONE  
PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY IS A  
PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN BEING



# PHILOSOPHICAL GROUNDS FOR THE CONTEMPORARY CONCEPTION OF THE HUMAN BEING

IGOR LISEYEV

The problem of man is a fundamental philosophical problem, across all eras and for all peoples. But at the same time it is perpetually a fresh problem which reflects the level of self-knowledge of a culture at every concrete historical variant of philosophical thinking. Because of this, before speaking about various conceptions of the human being, it is worth lingering over the philosophical grounds that underlie an anthropological conception.

According to Helmuth Plessner, every period of history has its own cherished word. The terminology of the eighteenth century is expressed in the word “progress”; the terminology of the nineteenth century can be expressed with the word “development.” The twentieth century found a new symbolic expression—the notion of life. The founder of philosophical anthropology takes this notion as something incontestable, lying beyond any ideology, beyond God and State, beyond nature and history. Plessner believes that an era perceives in this word reverberations of its own strength, dynamism, excitement, demonic enjoyment in an unforeseeable future, but at the same time its own weakness, flimsiness, inability for self-abnegation and for life. Guided by this magic formula—the influence of which, according to Nietzsche, increases—the era follows and pursues itself. A well-known philosophy of life has emerged with the initial aim to capture a new generation.<sup>1</sup>

But when at the beginning of the twenty-first century the necessity emerged to write an article on “Life” for the Grand Russian Encyclopedia, which now is under way, a number of scientists elaborating on the problem of life offered their papers, with very diverse interpretations of the term. The way of life represented by previous philosophies of life no longer

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<sup>1</sup> Helmuth Plessner, *Stupeni organicheskogo i chelovek: Vvedenie v filosofskuyu antropologiyu* [The Stages of the Organic and Man: An Introduction to Philosophical Anthropology], trans. Alexander Gadzhikurbanov (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2004), 26.

work: they have crashed. We once more face the problem of a correlation between philosophy and science.

In fact, today there is no doubt as to the great significance that new discoveries in the areas of natural sciences and the humanities hold for the development of philosophy. Anyway, philosophy changes its form with every new significant discovery in science—if such changes do not take place, philosophy meets serious problems, as described by Albert Schweitzer when he wrote about the deep crisis of culture at the boundary between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

From his viewpoint, philosophy previously not only considered and treated the values of culture, but carried them as driving ideas into the public opinion. But in the twentieth century, having ceased to be a laborer toiling diligently at the formation of a universal vision of culture, philosophy transformed into a retiree rummaging in what is rescued, far away from the world. Philosophy became alien to reality. The vital problems interesting the people of the epoch did not influence philosophy: now the path of philosophy lay apart from the highway of universal spiritual life. Without getting any stimulus from the latter, philosophy itself gave nothing in return. It made Schweitzer pronounce a severe verdict: philosophy is guilty in the crisis of culture at the boundary of centuries. However, it was not the fault of philosophy that thought was unable to create an optimistic worldview and to find in it a footing for ideals, which compose the soul of a culture. Philosophy was guilty before our world because it did not reveal the mentioned fact: it remained overpowered with illusions.<sup>2</sup> All this is evidence of the importance, actuality and creative character of philosophy for the new orientations in science, culture, and life.

In his paper “Humans and History” (1926), Max Scheler wrote that if there is a philosophical problem which needs to be solved for our epoch with unprecedented urgency: this problem is the creation of philosophical anthropology. By this, he meant “a fundamental science about *essence* and the *essential structure of human being*,”<sup>3</sup> which could become the ultimate foundation and at the same time correctly define the research purposes of all human sciences.

However, this great synthesis of the various anthropologies has not held. During the twentieth century we have seen the impetuous differentiation and specialization of the sciences of man, and the rise of

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<sup>2</sup> Albert Schweitzer, *Blagovoeniye pered zhizn'yu* [Reverence for Life], ed. Abdusalam Guseinov (Moscow: Progress, 1992), 47.

<sup>3</sup> Max Scheler, “Chelovek i istoriya” [“Humans and History”], in *Selected Works*, ed. by Andrey Denezhkin (Moscow: Gnosis, 1994), 70.



new areas of scientific researches of the human being. An interdisciplinarity of anthropological research prevailed over complexity and the systematic character of research of man as one indivisible, multileveled, nonlinear, physically, psychologically and spiritually integral subject of cognition.

An integral philosophical reflection of the problem of essence and the nature of man in the form of philosophical anthropology was presented *de jure* but not *de facto*. It was represented by the archetypes of analytic, linear philosophical thought of the outgoing epoch.

As is well-known, “philosophy” means love of wisdom: but what is wisdom? Obviously, it is not only the ability to reflect on the ultimate principles of being and cognition, and it is usually understood as the main feature of philosophy. Additionally, it is the ability to value those ultimate principles from the viewpoint of self-awareness of culture in a concrete historical period. Philosophical knowledge has always had a historical and changeable character. Remember Hegel’s famous sentence: “Philosophy is an epoch captured in a thought.” When philosophers forget this historical character of philosophical consciousness, then philosophy breaks away from real life: it is not stimulated by it and gives nothing in return. This is what Schweitzer was writing of at the boundary between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when he put the main responsibility on philosophy for the decline of culture at that time.

Does not some analogy with our time suggest itself? Again, we live in a condition of deep system crisis. Again, all habitual civilizational trends and codes which have for a long time determined the norms of social development are crashing. And again, philosophy reacts languidly and inertly to the challenges of the time.

In the long list of the problems evoked by our times, at the fore are the questions that have emerged about the base of the development of scientific knowledge and, first of all, the knowledge obtained by science of life and man. It is worth mentioning that as far back as 1978 the first section at the World Congress of Philosophy in Düsseldorf, Germany, discussed the theme “Biology and its Challenge to Philosophy.” Thirty years have passed since this event, and the challenges coming from all the sciences of life have increased enormously. Now not only scientific literature but the mass media is dominated by discussions on cloning and euthanasia, manipulations of the human stem cells, and other such issues: philosophical knowledge does not have any actual replies to all these challenges. Obviously, the responses should not be only pragmatic but also profoundly philosophical, indicating how the actual ontological, cognitive and value philosophical sets can be modified in according to similar

challenges. In his book *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution* (2002), Francis Fukuyama notes that this revolution is not a simple break or acceleration of a regular course of life. It gives rise to a situation when the future of humankind proves to be open and non-predestined, depending essentially on our decisions and doings. These decisions and doings cannot be easily undertaken on the basis of existing archetypes of philosophical knowledge, which traditionally reflect the way of civilizational development and are not ready for innovative projects.

Therefore, one of the most urgent tasks for the philosophical comprehension of the living world is the creation of an integral image of humans in all their manifestations. By this, the philosophy of man cannot be presented as a preliminarily stored set of methodological problems or of methodological means of research. It should be made as a concrete historical formation dependable on currents both from above (from a level of the contemporary methodological culture) and from below (from contemporary knowledge of man). A contemporary philosophy considers its subject matter as not isolated from the concrete forms of cognition but as a result, an outcome of interaction between the subject and object of nature. Philosophy deals with “the second reality” created by science: in the case of study of the human being, with a new reality which undergoes changes according to the development of sciences of man.

Taking into account the multilateral character of the problem, we will outline only the main directions of its resolution. In my view, the responses of philosophy to challenges of contemporary sciences of life and man should be reflected in the transformation of the acting ontological, methodological, and axiological propositions.

In the *ontological* aspect, the special attention should be directed to research of ontological schemes represented both in the various sciences and in the different schools of a science. Today, natural sciences deal with a multitude of the pictures of nature and explanative schemes, often alternatives to each other. This leads to misunderstandings, to an incompatibility of the world pictures offered by the various fields of scientific knowledge. For example, in biology there is as yet no resolution to the gap between evolutionary, organizational and functional approaches to research of the living.

The task of transforming the ontological direction concerning the responses to challenges of biology is seen in the discovery of ontological models, which underlie various parts of the contemporary science of life and man. In the final analysis, this work should lead to a new understanding of nature, liberated from interpretations of nature as existing

outside and independently of man.

The ideas of global evolutionism, co-evolution, and the anthropological character of natural sciences can be considered as fundamental abstractions consolidating a new conception of the philosophy of nature. The philosophy of nature as a world scheme typical of natural philosophy is transformed into philosophical reflections of man, who exists in the natural environment and is involved in complicated correlations with nature. Nature is brought into a system of human activities and cannot be conceived out of these correlations, which is a historical sphere of culture.

In the *methodological* aspect, the transformation of philosophical knowledge under the pressure of real facts of sciences of man must contribute to awareness of how the new methodological constructs can lead to an innovative outcome beyond the limits of existing standards. As a rule, awareness and the formulation of the new methodological principles have always driven to establish a new picture of reality. It appeared brightly, affirming the new cognitive sets of integrity, organization, evolution and systemic character in sciences of life. Now we have an agenda affirmation of the new cognitive construct “co-evolution,” which reflects a mechanism of the conjunction of organization and evolution of living systems. The idea of co-evolution may become a new paradigmatic set of the twenty-first century culture. It may establish new perspectives for a synthesis of natural and social sciences, overcome the restricting character of naturalism, sociologism and historicism, and unite alternative strategies of elementarism and systematics, evolutionism and structuralism.

In my view, very important changes need to take place in the sphere of *axiology*. All the civilizational sets of technogenic society which are oriented to the idea of progress assume a factor of competition, contestation, mutual fighting, as a leading factor of progress, referring herein to Darwin’s thesis on struggle for existence. However, in biology an alternative of this position was proved long ago. For instance, the Russian scientists Karl Kessler (1815–1881), Peter Kropotkin (1842–1921) and others were the first ones to who have paid attention to the fact that very often it is not the physically stronger and more aggressive who turn out to be the most adapted, but those who unite with each other, who are better at cooperating and helping each other. This understanding gives rise to the conception of mutual help as a driving factor of evolution and an engine of progress. This position finds a support among such authors as Boris Astaurov, Vladimir Efroimson, Leonid Krushinsky, and others. The contemporary physiologist of bacteria, academician Georgy Zavarzin, who

criticizes the market conception of competition, asserts that the main postulate of an anti-market conception is that the fundamental position of an organism in the trophic system presupposes cooperation, but not competition.<sup>4</sup>

It is difficult to overestimate the significance of these ideas which were transferred from biology to sociology and fixed by well-reflected philosophical thought. All that has been said above instills the hope that with orientation to the new philosophical grounds of the conception of man, which is now in the process of formation, the new principles of the theory of man will be set. New synthetic motives may arise which will contribute, from the contemporary viewpoint, to an integral, systematic and nonlinear conception of the human being.

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<sup>4</sup> Georgy Zavarzin, “Antirynok v prirode (Razmyshleniya naturalista)” [“Anti-Market in Nature (Reflections of the Naturalist)”], in *The Higher Education in Russia* 4 (2007): 123–33.

# A HISTORICAL LOGIC OF THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL DISCOURSE BECOMING

MARINA SAVELIEVA

Philosophical reflection as a way of thinking about consciousness can be interpreted as a criterion for philosophical thought in general and as its absolute beginning and basis. *An anthropological discourse* of Modern Times became such a criterion for completeness of philosophical experience in consciousness.

However, someone is unlikely to argue that not every notion of man is a sign of the developed anthropological problem field. It is not enough to declare *homo mensuras est*; it is much more important at the same time to define the world where this *mensuras* (measure) could find its natural expression. In this regard, neither Antiquity nor the Middle Ages, nor even the Renaissance could create such a picture of the world, though it would seem that only in the epoch of the Renaissance did man finally receive an opportunity to define the limits of his autonomous will and to study himself. But, as this was possible only thanks to man's understanding of himself as "God's image and likeness," then only the "human discredit of himself," as Freud later remarked, could be the result of such representation.

Thus, as soon as man appeared in the context of philosophical thinking, he immediately turned into "a problem" for himself. There was no place for him in the world which he won from God, since God as a foundation was no longer seen as the absolute. In other words, man could become "a problem" for himself only when he made God such "a problem." Therefore, *anthropological discourse arose as a natural and inevitable consequence of criticism (but was in no way a negation) of religious discourse* and became not only a substantial but also a formal completion of philosophical experience: if the consciousness as a form of the world is in a sense a starting point in the history of philosophy, then the consciousness objectively embodied in the world may be regarded as an ending-point there. Consequently, God as an absolute subject must sooner or later give place to man as a relative subject. However, as the history of philosophy shows, this transition could not be realized directly: there was a *Spirit* between God and man, a consciousness which did not entirely belong to God and at the same time did not entirely become the

human essence. This was that *free* Spirit which was once mentioned by the Apostle Paul and which should be thought of before thinking of the human essence: because with no initial setting for freedom, humans will always remain unknown to themselves.

As a result, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the forming anthropological discourse revealed two important specific features. The first one was *formal* and conditioned by the anthropological discourse of autonomy from the traditional religious-theological discourse. The process of becoming of the specific anthropological language and impossibility of completely excluding a religious experience (even having an atheistic vision) has led to the formation of *skepticism* as a methodological and substantial phenomenon (Descartes' doubt). The second specific feature was *substantial* and conditioned by the objective uncertainty of humans from the viewpoint of ontology and metaphysics.

That is why the early stage of the anthropological discourse becoming was rather inconsequential and did not quite inspire optimism. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the major position among the problems of knowledge was given to *nature*—not only as content but also as form: they not only thought of nature but also “*thought with nature*,” of course, in terms of objects. So, the main task of that period was to elaborate a universal method which could simultaneously be considered as a universal structure of thinking (that is, language: “science by means of the language of science,” “nature by means of the language of nature”—but philosophy and man, for some reason, also “by means of the language of science or nature”). At that time they could talk about humans in the tone of “black melancholy” like Pascal, or indifferently like Bacon, Descartes or Spinoza, which is not surprising: before acquiring the form of systematic philosophical thought, an anthropological discourse experienced, so to say, an “*apophatic*” period which was a starting point for its becoming: i.e., *the period when method (form) denied a system (content)*. And it is quite clear why that was so. In the seventeenth century, man could not be anything but “a negative object” for himself—a symbol manifesting itself through something like other. Therefore, it would be more productive to study not a form of a human attitude to the world but its content—not *how* humans regard the world, but *what precisely* they regard.

So when Bacon, Descartes or Spinoza argued the necessity of criticism of the doctrines of the Middle Ages, they did not quite want to attract attention to man as such. They were interested only in how to effectively fix the state of freedom of thinking and action, which appeared from heaven knows where. One may say that all of them were “servants of

Spirit” in spite of their methodological divergences. Bacon found nothing more persuasive than to declare knowledge as “force” and nature as the point of its application: Descartes went much further when he grounded the principle of autonomy of two substances, and Spinoza had to find a unity between their positions. But not one of them was interested in humanity *per se*, save, perhaps, Pascal, and then only in so far as he could state helplessness and impersonal character of humans in the world. Continuing Descartes’ thought of the dual essence of being, Pascal believed such idea to be the basis for defectiveness and imperfectness in all human actions, because two proclaimed substances could not be cognized mutually in virtue of their absolute mutual difference.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, man was aimless as “a function”: in the huge mechanism of the state he played out his necessary but meaningless function since he had no choice and no will to ground this choice. In their turn, the mechanisms created by human hands at that time proved to be aimless for humans: they did not make life easier, did not develop it, but only amazed and amused, thus alienating man and nature from each other and expanding more and more a vacuum of meaning which they were calling to fill in *ab origin*.

But in spite of all the limitations, the beginning of an anthropological discourse dates back to the beginning of Modern Times when the problems of ontology and metaphysics found a real (= practical) sense and character as they were researched in connection with the notions of the human place and role in the world. In the seventeenth century, the rationalistic *form* of philosophy slowly but inevitably brought to formation the anthropological *content* of philosophical system: in the eighteenth century, “consciousness” as a non-objective *basis* of the world temporarily pressed by man as an objective, physical *subject* of cognition.

However, the presence of anthropological *problems* in philosophy is again not a criterion for an anthropological discourse as reflection of man in the function of basis. One may say, in general, up to the end of the eighteenth century, “nature” was *always* an object of philosophizing while “man” *occasionally* fell under the attention of philosophy since in fact he was not its subject of matter but only *wished* to be it.

In general, the “Philosophical Age” in the history of European philosophy became a rather remarkable period of “*philosophical uncertainty*” conditioned with intensive but far from consequent searches in the field of study of the human essence. Perhaps it would be strange to say, but after the apophatic beginning of the anthropological discourse in the history of philosophy, the “*dark age*” of its becoming has come, i.e., the Age of Enlightenment. By this, concerning the evaluation of this epoch

in the Western Europe, it was generally accepted to speak of “superficial interpretation” of the key philosophical concepts, and in Russia of “loan” and “imitation.” Therefore, the problem of the Enlightenment thought on the whole is to what extent has the undeveloped character of anthropological discourse influenced the becoming of philosophical experience? Accordingly, the problem of Enlightenment thought in Russia is in what sense one may discuss the beginning of philosophy in the full absence of an anthropological discourse?

One of the paradoxes of the Enlightenment thought in general is that an uncountable number of works were written at that time, the titles and contents of which contained or implied the word “human being.” In this case, the example of Russia is extremely interesting and demonstrative, since here “searches of man” were attributable not to professionals but to talented dilettantes, the so-called “noblemen-philosophers,” only some of whom had regular education. First of all, Alexander Radishchev (1749–1802) is remembered with his treatise *On the Human Being, Death and Immortality* (1792). Besides this, reflections on humanity were presented by Dmitry S. Anichkov (1733–1788), Andrey T. Bolotov (1738–ca. 1833), Grigory A. Glinka (1774–1818), Mikhail V. Danilov (1722–1790), Fyodor I. Dmitriyev-Mamonov (1727–1805), Vladimir T. Zolotnitsky (1743–1797), Ivan M. Kandorsky (1764–1838), Yakov B. Kniazhnin (1742–1791), Mikhail V. Lomonosov (1711–1765), Ivan V. Lopukhin (1756–1816), Peter A. Plavilshchikov (1760–1812), Peter V. Pobedonostsev (1771–1843), Mikhail M. Shcherbatov (1733–1790). Despite all this, the fact is that the theoretical level of their works rarely matched “European standards.” Simply put, the Age of Enlightenment on the whole—both in Europe and in Russia—could not form an adequate anthropological discourse with a correspondent methodology, since man is seen as “enlightened” and hence as “natural,” i.e., as deprived of essential specific characteristics in his abstract position. “The man enlightened” as an object of “the reason enlightened” is not a problem but an instrument for decisions of exclusively practical (= *useful*) problems.

That is why Kant—the single person to create a consequent philosophical anthropology conception at that time—did not admit the possibility of making anthropology a philosophical discipline (paradox!). And the fact is that to him contemporary philosophy already represented man as a means but not an aim. And if one may consider the Enlightened Age as a time of anonymity and authors’ atheistic tractates, it would be quite clear that philosophical thought in its aspiration to achieve the truth passed the measure of its own opportunities and beat out from under itself



an ontological foundation in order to make man as a basis. However, the argument was not strong enough to make him a real basis.

The above mentioned concerns Western Europe. As for Russia, which was the field of the objective embodiment of the European Enlightenment ideas, the philosophical principles of anthropology could not be developed there because the Russian people, after they got rid of the traditional religious images of man as such, had instead acquired a *real* understanding of the enlightened monarch as a single full-fledged acting personality and *utopian* imagination of an enlightened man as a citizen for education of which there were no grounds at all. From this viewpoint, an anthropological discourse could be realized as an interpretation of the essence and existence of the *single* man: i.e., of the enlightened monarch representing his state.

The question of “anthropological uncertainty” among the philosophical problems of the eighteenth century will probably be open for a long time. The complexity of its solving redoubled when philosophical anthropology was formed as an autonomous philosophical discipline at the end of the nineteenth century—something different from an anthropological discourse. Also, one should remember the well-known opinion of Claude Lévi-Strauss that Jean-Jacques Rousseau became “a father of anthropology” paying attention to the “human being” as a social goal and self-goal. At the same time, if you agree with Lévi-Strauss’s remark, it is incomprehensible to agree with Kant, who suggested the first methodologically consequential and complete anthropological conception and who became in some senses more perspicacious than the thinkers of subsequent centuries. Unlike Max Scheler, who declared the possibility and necessity of anthropological discourse in the possibility and necessity of the human definition by means of ontology and metaphysics, Kant held a different position. In his opinion, namely the principal impossibility of the human definition by means of available philosophical potential actualizes an anthropological discourse with the initial questions: “What can I know?”, “What should I do?”, “What do I dare to hope for?” and “What is man?” Kant’s position is not old-fashioned in comparison with Scheler’s, since the latter used the same means of philosophical discourse more than one hundred years later.

Obviously, the difference in positions of Kant and Scheler and results of their activities was conditioned with the difference in goals which were put forward by those philosophers. Kant (like Rousseau) wondered *how far can a philosophical experience be “humane” if it reflects a universal attitude to the world?* In other words, *to what extent is man as “a measure of things” able to argue himself in this quality? For that, he should be*

*able to argue the world as “humane.”* This is the essence and content of anthropological discourse.

On the contrary, Scheler consequently intended to show man by means of philosophical language, i.e., to make him an object for himself as a subject, but at the same time he did not define exactly the status of the subject. According to Scheler, man cognizes himself with no basis—just because he lives. In his turn, Kant had argued such a basis: this is an individual moral duty as an expression of the absolute freedom of humans. Here is a distinction of the anthropological discourse as a form of philosophizing from the philosophical anthropology as substantial (= educational) discipline.

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The reasoning given above enables us to understand better not only specific features of the development of European philosophy, but also clarifies some of the “dark places” of historical logic in the philosophical thought becoming in Russia: in particular the attempt to solve the problem of its “origins” in a different way. If an anthropological discourse is considered as a criterion of philosophical thought on the whole, then it is evident that up to the middle of the nineteenth century public thought in Russia was deprived of the possibility not only to “think in the humane way” but also to study man consequentially and, in this sense, could not be regarded as “philosophical.” From the second half of the sixteenth century, when Russia had realized its political independence, its public thought developed in two directions: in foreign policy (as a religious-theological grounding of the doctrine “Moscow is the Third Rome”) and in domestic policy (as the becoming of the doctrine of the absolute power and the status of the Great Tsar of All Russia as the higher Sovereign). In both directions there was no place for an anthropological dimension: in the first case, we are dealing with formation of Moscow as an ecumenical orthodox center and, in the second case, with the conception of the Tsar’s absolute power as a universal sense of social relations. Thereafter came the Time of Trouble, the scope of reforms of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, as a result of which the Russian spirituality got mixed up for a long time in its relation to religion, policy and Western European philosophy.

Only in the nineteenth century did Vladimir Soloviev (1853–1900) turn again to the religious content of the Russian public thought and thus restore the former authority of messianic views in the doctrine of God-humankind. By this, he not only managed to get rid the Russian idea of messianism of national-ethnic orientation but also to give a philosophical

form to public thought and thus to dignify it a status of the universal. Soloviev proved, firstly, that the Russian philosophy could not be anything else but just as religious one. Secondly, his experience evidences not only a *possibility of becoming* of anthropological discourse based on religious and theological foundation but also of a *real solution* to the problem about essence and predestination of man as a bearer of the Spirit within the framework of the religious-anthropological discourse.

Thereby, Soloviev had solved two problems at once: he grounded his own original philosophical idea and put it forward as a criterion of uniqueness and autonomy of philosophical thought in Russia. In other words, he found a place of philosophical thought in Russia in the boundless field of the world philosophical experience; he found its natural, meaningful and historical “niche.” In this context, the anthropological discourse developed as a meaningful criterion for distinguishing of philosophical experiences of European West and European East. In Western Europe, anthropological discourse manifested itself as a form of skepticism concerning the religious-theological discourse, and man in different times was represented as a rival or equal to the Most High. But Russian thought built up quite a contrary anthropological paradigm: God is not a field for intellectual discussions but *a perspective*, and so there is a sense to speak of human being. Man as “a measure of things” is able to ground himself in this quality only due to religious faith as a foundation for argumentation. This postulate, similar to Kant’s position, was formulated autonomously by Soloviev as a consequence of the personal rethinking of Russian history and personal experience in the history of the Russian mentality: so one may say that unlike Western European philosophy, which began to study the human being from an apophatic step, in Russia an experience in “*positive anthropology*” formed initially, where interference of God and man seemed cataphatic.

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The impossibility of the full value of anthropological discourse in the Age of Enlightenment can be explained with the fact that this discourse is not a classic one. In other words, it is impossible to find such sufficient grounds and express them with the language means even apophatically (a major requirement of the classic philosophy) for explanation of the human essence. Even Marx’s famous sentence “[the] human being is the human world, state, society” becomes an answer on the question “what is man?” only *to some extent*, since “the human world” cannot be limited with society and state. So an anthropological discourse may be realized only on

the basis of the *pluralistic* interpretation of the human essence (or interpretation of the human essence as a pluralistic foundation of the world), which demands not only philosophical but also specific scientific methods. This was understood even in the Age of Enlightenment. Kant was one of the first to put the question of logic correlation between metaphysics and specific sciences. In the nineteenth century, the process of movement of philosophy and science towards each other continued due to origination of the evolution theory and outstanding successes in archeology. Eventually, all the above gave birth to the formation of a full value anthropological discourse and the emergence of philosophical anthropology.

However, this is an objective process. Subjectively, we have another picture. Generally, despite the diversity of all the philosophical and scientific texts of the time, the thinkers were not sure in their understanding of humanity. It is a paradox, but the more knowledge they obtained the less they understood it. Freud's rationalistic psychoanalysis and Nietzsche's irrationalistic nihilism were logical ends of such a "misunderstanding understanding itself." That is why, apparently, the aim and sense of the philosophy and science convergence in the field of study of humankind were conditioned by an unconscious desire on the part of philosophers to rethink their notion of the one foundation of the human being and, respectively, to find a sense point of coincidence of classic and non-classic philosophical conceptions. Anthropological problems became a main reason for a historical and logical disintegration of the world picture. Now it was high time to restore it, and only man could represent himself as a *means* for reuniting the "detritus of being" and, in this sense, should be also *a purpose*. Thus, "man" remains *a form* of philosophical thinking, a key sense of philosophical research of the ultimate principles rather than a local problem of philosophy.

What is going on at the stage of becoming and functioning of a post-non-classic philosophical anthropology discourse? Unlike the classic world picture which uses suggested well-known things to create a notion of humanity, a post-non-classic world picture suggests that it already exists as something preliminary and unconditional, even very unclear—the definition of the human. Therefore, a contemporary task in studying of the human being lies in not only to clarifying potentially incomprehensible things but also making them functional according to specially matched and given characteristics.

In other words, a contemporary stage of philosophical development is characterized by *the efforts to create universal technologies for understanding and studying of humanity*, which in the process of

functioning will ensure one “humane” algorithms for the evaluation of world events and develop a single strategy for the progress of all humankind. In the post-non-classic methodology of cognition, the tendency of pluralistic approaches to philosophical researches continues not only to strengthen, but simultaneously began to “wash out” the criteria for the definition of the discourse frames. Post-non-classic philosophy suffers to a large extent from conventionality: any discourse may be considered or not as anthropological, ethical or any other depending on aims and tasks formulated for a researcher. A positive thing in this situation is that a substantial contradiction between separate philosophical disciplines disappears. A negative aspect remains in that any object of research becomes a “simulacrum.”

Man is quite able to be such simulacrum, although this does not mean that the contemporary methodology of research again returns man as its object to the level of “a means.” A specific characteristic of the contemporary situation of man is in that he is not able to identify a contradiction of his essence as a contradiction of aim and means: having changed the structure of production, forms of communication, appearance of nature and himself, man finally deprived his essence of certainty. In this connection, one may suggest that man of the classic epoch, somewhere at the end of the eighteenth century, felt himself much better, even being “a means,” since he had a more or less clear notion what and how he should fight for. Now he lacks such orientations and traditional notions of the meaning of life.

Thus, a present stage of the anthropological discourse development not only continues to demonstrate contradictions of human essence, but also manifests it as the ultimate contradiction of interrelation of humans and the world: on the one hand, the *pragmatism* of the aspiration to control the development process; on the other hand, the *utopianism* of the aspiration to embody the idea of unity at the scale of the planet—at this time, of an objective unity of thought and the way of life. And if today the most frequent question is what may oppose the *increasing pessimism of humankind* in relation to our own prospects *against a background of increasing material welfare*, there is obviously only one answer: a personal will of individuals, their personal efforts directed to maintain their own dignity, and continuous attempts for self-affirmation and self-development in any circumstances, in particular in those for whom a sense of existence seems to be lost irretrievably and forever.

