

# Humanity as a fundamental issue in human studies

Sukiasyan S.G.

Center for Psychosocial Recovery

Kh. Abovyan Armenian State Pedagogical University,  
Yerevan, Armenia

## Abstract

The article is devoted to the investigation of humanity as a key problem in contemporary human studies. The author analyzes the crisis of humanity under the conditions of technogenic civilization, examining it through the prism of philosophy, psychology, sociology, and genetics. Special attention is paid to the role of the biological heritage of ancient hominids in the formation of the behavioral and cognitive characteristics of modern man. An interdisciplinary approach is proposed for understanding humanity, including the analysis of indicators such as compassion, empathy, reflection, and moral norms. The article emphasizes the necessity of further research for the development of a universal theory of humanity.

**Key words:** humanity; human studies; consciousness; paleogenetics; archaic heritage; morality; interdisciplinarity; spirituality.

## Introduction

Modern society is experiencing a deep crisis, affecting not only the economic and political structures but the very foundation of human relations. One of the key manifestations of this crisis is the erosion of humanity—the capacity for empathy, altruism, and moral reflection. In the conditions of digitalization, social stratification, and global threats (ecology, wars, pandemics), the problem of humanity is becoming central to social psychology and philosophy.

### *Justification of the Topic and Subject of Research*

Interest in the problem of humanity today is increasing due to the fact that, for the first time in history, the question is being raised as to whether mankind will survive as a species under the ever-increasing pressure of modern technogenic civilization. A civilization that has given man unprecedented development opportunities, but, at the same time, has plunged man into a state of civilizational and humanistic crisis. Our time has become the apogee of everything negative that has happened to man during all the years of his existence on planet Earth. The most complex problems of a global order have become acute: problems of war and peace, the demilitarization of international relations, the prevention of ecological catastrophes, the overcoming of raw material, energy, and demographic crises, poverty, hunger, mass unemployment, and the consequences of unregulated migration processes. Problems of combating violence in all its forms are intensifying.

The changes occurring in the modern world are reflected in all aspects of human existence, but primarily in the consciousness of people and in spiritual life. Modern civilization has turned into a two-way street. On the one hand, the human being is recognized as the highest and absolute value, meaning it is assumed that he is the highest goal of all social development, and not its means or a by-product [29]. On the other hand, history testifies that man is being transformed into a means of achieving goals for those in power (no matter which kind); the human being is practically devalued, which leads to dehumanization, the eradication of the Human within man, and the disastrous degradation of man and all social institutions.

Mankind has encountered an alternative — the social or the neoliberal path of development for modern civilization. In this confrontation, the second path is gaining the upper hand: the liberalization of existence has been reflected globally in all aspects of modern life. By “modern civilization” (although it is quite diverse today—Western and Eastern, Christian and Muslim, etc.), we understand the neoliberal, global, post-industrial society of the late 20th and the first quarter of the 21st centuries. We define its state as a crisis in all respects, which aligns fully with the semantic meaning of this concept presented in the dictionary of the Russian language [37]: “a decision, a turning point, a revolution, a time of transition, a fracture, a state in which existing means of achieving goals become inadequate, resulting in unpredictable situations.” A crisis is that definition which most fully reflects the situation in the world: the existing models and means do not allow for the adequate resolution of existing problems today; the further reproduction of the entire social system on previous foundations becomes impossible, which means the risk of its complete destruction appears.

The crisis primarily concerns the question of the prospects for human existence. But the majority of research on the crisis touches only upon the manifestations of the crisis itself. Analyzing the social and geopolitical realities of modernity, G.V. Osipov notes that a new systemic crisis is rapidly approaching the world — ecological, demographic, financial-economic, and spiritual-moral; a crisis of the distributive system of capitalism [32]. At the

same time, there is no shortage of studies touching upon the essential aspect of the crisis, namely the crisis of modern civilization as a crisis of man and his essence [27, 28, 31]. Z.Kh. Kochesov speaks quite objectively and catastrophically about the crisis [21]; he notes that "the impending civilizational crisis in the duality of natural globalization and global fundamentalism brings humanity closer to a singular point of history (bifurcation), and it will proceed along a completely different path."

We view the crisis both as a consequence of the biological nature of man and as a result of his social development. In recent years, fundamental changes have been observed worldwide, manifesting in the lives of millions of people. However, at the level of perception, they are reflected by many people, yet only a small part of people realize fully where we are going and what this movement may lead us to. These fundamental changes began with the emergence of private property in ancient societies, with the division of labor into mental and physical, and with the appearance of classes and the state. Society began to develop through the enrichment of some and the impoverishment of other individuals within it. For many years, this model facilitated the development of society. However, in our time, it is precisely this model, which led to enormous technological and breakthrough achievements, that is experiencing an equally "breakthrough," deep humanitarian, social civilizational crisis [6, 18].

Such a social animal as man, who created this society in which he became \*Homo sapiens\*, increasingly feels his loneliness, isolation, alienation, and insignificance. His faith in the creation of a society aimed at the development of the personal potential of every member of society is fading. A life in the name of ideals and bright hopes has transformed into a life for the sake of mercantile goals. The contemporary society, especially the Western one, is becoming increasingly aggressive and even hostile toward those values, ideals, and traditions upon which modern civilization was built and developed. We have become witnesses to how the civilisation, with its liberal pseudo-slogans and pseudo-values, exerts increasing pressure not on society as a whole, but on each individual, destroying the personal potential, reducing the human being to the level of a non-thinking, subordinate, suggestible consumer. Modern neoliberalism, relying on the traditional understanding of social consciousness as a complex system of knowledge, feelings, traditions, views, ideas, theories, moral norms, etc., tries to disunite the characteristic feelings, views, and ideas for any social group or society as a whole to the maximum extent, and direct its development in the direction it requires. As a result, in his movement from hominid to Human, man is increasingly moving toward his beginning. The state of anomie and extreme instability in modern society leads to the accumulation of problems in the public consciousness, which V.O. Melnikov defines as an "ideological hodgepodge" [27].

Man, having achieved incredible successes in scientific and technological development, felt himself to be something more than just a man; he felt himself to be a superman (\*Übermensch\*). But, unfortunately, the power of his intellect was not matched and was not reinforced by the power of his spirituality, which would have allowed him to work for the benefit of all people. Mercantile interests took precedence over morality and moral principles, which lie at the basis of human interaction. Although Immanuel Kant, despite his skeptical attitude toward the evolutionary possibilities of man, saw the highest goal of people in their moral perfection. It is appropriate here to recall a fragment of Albert Schweitzer's Nobel speech: "Let us dare to look the truth in the eyes. In our century, man has gradually transformed into a creature endowed with superhuman power... But in this, he does not demonstrate super-reason... It becomes completely obvious what we have not wanted to admit until now: as the power of the superman grows, he turns into a miserable man... for, having become a superman, he ceases to be a human. Here, actually, is what we should have realized long ago!" [49]. K. Lorenz expressed himself with deep irony: "The missing link between animals and truly human people, which we have been looking for so long and cannot find—is us!" [24]. The main obstacle in man's movement toward the Human is his unquenchable instinct of aggression.

Modern society stands too far from harmony between the interests of the individual and the public, and, consequently, from universal happiness.

#### **Relevance.**

In the situation that has developed in modern civilization, alongside the problem of man, the problem of humanity \*in\* man is particularly actualized. The problem is not new, but as a holistic concept, "humanity" was born and found its reflection in philosophical and religious anthropology [35]. Philosophy considers the phenomenon of humanity in various forms of development aimed from natural humanity to the creative possibilities of creation; it opens man to the diversity of the whole world and the whole world to the limitless perspectives of man. It emphasizes the social essence of man, highlights various elements of humanity, theoretically synthesizes the conditions of the natural and social development of human life, and investigates the transformations of man in the course of social conflicts and catastrophes. The expansion of freedoms and the growth of opportunities elevate humanity, however, the world in which man lives is becoming increasingly fragile and vulnerable. Negative and destructive tendencies are growing in the life of society—catastrophes, extremism, aggression. As M.G. Kurbanov notes, the problem of inhumanity is becoming a civilizational problem of mankind [23].

Serious attempts to understand the problem of humanity are being made in psychology and sociology, as there is a social mandate from society to all sciences studying man to "return humanity to man," to "revive man" [3, 4]. In sociological science, the social aspects of man and humanity have not yet been studied sufficiently [2]. Man, as noted by R.B. Absattarov and I.A. Rau, is "a generation of culture since the time the latter appeared; [he] has the ability to pass from culture to culture. At the same time, he is a product of biological evolution..." [2]. Our animal ancestor therefore began to turn into a human because he began to create culture. Therefore, V.P. Danilenko calls culturogenesis anthropogenesis or hominization (humanization) [15]. Yes, undoubtedly, man is a product of evolution, including biological evolution, but it is inappropriate to deny that "humanity is not transmitted biologically from biological dad and mom," as noted by Absattarov R.B. and Rau I.A. [2]. Contemporary genetic and paleogenetic studies prove that man is the result not only of society and culture but also the product of "sleeping" genes of ancient hominids. Man is a carrier of up to 6% of the genes of ancient people (*Homo neanderthalensis*, *Homo altaiensis*, *Homo floresiensis*), which determine certain behavioral reactions in people [53, 54, 57, 58]. Therefore, the main question of modern "anthropology" (referring to the interdisciplinary approach of all sciences studying man) lies in the following: "will humanity be able to preserve humanity?" and thereby prevent the "end of history" [5]. The question arises: what is the role of humanity in the development of the crisis of humanity, in other words, of modern humanism, determined by the threats of modernism and, moreover, of neoliberal postmodernism, destroying everything human in man—from biology to culture. How dangerous is man to society and to himself? The danger lies in the fact that the crisis tendencies existing in modern society have not bypassed the moral foundations of the society. This manifests in the "erosion" of basic moral norms that have existed for about two thousand years and constituted the core of the moral codes of the past [11]. In order to be a human person, as E.K. Veselova notes [11], one must live in accordance with the natural moral law, "the core of which are the Ten Commandments of Moses." Man is not dangerous in himself, but a man to whom the highest human values are alien, the highest spiritual-moral values of humanity; a man who is emotionally deaf to others [17]. From the point of view of I.V. Stepanenko [40], the idea of humanity must transform from metaphysical into permanently reflexive and fundamentally discursive. As a result, the "humane human" gradually disappears from the historical arena.

It appears to us that humanity cannot be reduced to a single model, as it has genetic, cultural, and contextual roots. Humanity is the product of a complex interaction of biology (genes of ancient hominids and modern man) and the social environment (psycho- and culturogenesis). It is the evolutionary approach to man that explains demonstration of aggression, creativity, egoism, or altruism in different groups of people. Only the actualization of the integration of psychology with the results of genetics and paleogenetics, as well as with philosophical, anthropological, and social models of human development, will create a base for creating more accurate and adequate models of human behavior and motivation. The present study proposes to rethink the nature of humanity, combining classical psychology with revolutionary discoveries regarding our genetic heritage.

**Theoretical Basis.** Humanity has traditionally been studied within the framework of very different scientific directions: philosophical anthropology (Herder, Schweitzer), psychology (Fromm, Frankl, Maslow), sociology (Durkheim, Osipov). However, modern studies, primarily genetic and, especially, paleogenetic ones, show that humanity is not only a social construct, as classical theories claim (Fromm, Frankl), but also a biopsychosocial phenomenon dependent on genetic factors (heritage of Neanderthals and Denisovans), cultural norms, and social institutions (education, religion, mass media). These new data require a synthesis of approaches, which we propose in our study. We use an interdisciplinary analysis to identify contradictions between classical psychology and new genetic data—this will allow us to revise the very structure of humanity.

**Methodology.** The article uses an analysis of scientific psychological, sociological, and genetic literature; an interdisciplinary synthesis and conceptual modeling were conducted. The methodological basis of the present study is the explication of the phenomenon of humanity, which is considered in psychological, philosophical, and social discourse, but in an interdisciplinary context requires liberation from speculative interpretations. A wide range of sources served as a material for the study: the works of classics of psychology (Maslow, Frankl, Fromm, Freud, et al.), modern Russian authors, as well as a number of articles from the search systems PubMed, Google Scholar, and e-library, using the keywords "humanity," "nature of man," "humanity," "humanness," "humanism." An interdisciplinary approach was applied, aimed at understanding, interpreting, and analyzing literature to explain the variability of human behavior. Based on the definition of the subject of research, we strove to identify specific scientific directions and ideas in the diversity of psychological, philosophical, and sociological literature contributing to the understanding of the problem raised by us.

**Aim of the Research** – to analyze humanity as a complex phenomenon requiring an interdisciplinary approach, and to identify factors contributing to its preservation or destruction.

In accordance with the aim of the study, the method of explication will allow solving a number of tasks: 1) definition of abstract, at times undefined concepts characterizing the nature and essence of man, in the form of clear

logical and categorical concepts; 2) conceptualization of obtained results in the form of a holistic interdisciplinary system; 3) identification of hidden or non-obvious dependencies between various psychological, genetic, and social phenomena or concepts.

**Object of Research** is the category "humanity." The study puts forward the fundamental idea that the problem of the essence of the phenomenon of humanity is an interdisciplinary problem, a problem at the intersection of psychology, sociology, philosophy, genetics, and paleogenetics. The problem of humanity can be posed only within the framework of an ontology of integral human existence, presupposing the interconnection of its various sides: biological, psychological, and social.

**Results of the Research.** The question of the nature of man and humanity is not new and continues to interest researchers to this day. Some believed that man initially has a "good" nature and does evil exclusively under coercion. Others proceeded from the fact that man has an evil nature. Ancient philosophers assumed that there is "something" in man that constitutes his essence. This "something" is called "human nature." The specificity of "human nature" is explained by the anatomical structure of man and his physiology, and has its psychosomatic uniqueness in nature.

Who is right? Where is the truth? In this aspect, the psychological and cultural-historical concepts of humanity of Freud [45] and Frankl [44] are of significant interest; juxtaposing them, in our view, fully reveals the biopsychosocial essence and nature of man. On one hand, the dominance of animal instincts, the dictate of the subconscious; on the other — faith in the social essence of man, based on enormous personal experience. Undoubtedly, the human in man exists in each of us, since we all belong to the single genus *Homo sapiens*; each of us is a product of the human (social, cultural) environment based on our biological nature. Each of us comes into this world as a being that combines two principles — animal and human. We are a "potency" that becomes a human. Throughout the entire subsequent life, these principles are in a "struggle of unity and contradictions" within themselves. If the "struggle" is resolved in favor of humanity, then the "potency" becomes a Human. But waiting until the "human becomes greater in each of us individually and thereby our affairs go well" is at least naive, since the selection of *Homo sapiens* went in the direction of cultivating an "obedient majority," content with satisfying its biological and social needs (to the extent of the development of that society in which each individual resides). It is another matter that one should not hope for an increase in human potential, but distinguish people, at least, as "humane" and "not very." In other words, there are simply people in whom the evil of a passive-destructive character turns out to be stronger and preferable to the good, and there are people in whom the constructive principle (moral-ethical, creative, creative) dominates over the evil.

**Threats to humanity in modern society: digital dehumanization, crisis of moral norms, social inequality.** With the development of information technologies, the institution of mass media (media) has become the most effective factor in shaping public consciousness. On the one hand, this is a cultural phenomenon of modernity, but on the other, it is a mechanism of psychological influence, pressure, and manipulation of society. A peculiarity of the modern digital society is that man is subjected by power, financial, and economic structures to simultaneous influence and manipulation using print, electronic media, radio, and television. As a result, these structures "impose" specific meanings, values, morals, and needs on society, thereby forming alien stereotypes of thinking and behavior that do not correspond to social expectations. Modern technologies, especially digital ones, quite aggressively not only adjust to us but also dictate us even what to feel. All that is based in man, is exposed: lies, brutal force, the perversion of the most intimate feelings and desires, stupidity. White becomes black; dry—wet; men and women turn into "it"; the motherland—into a habitat; family—into a gas station (stopped by, rested, refueled, and left). The paradox is that the more technocratic trends there are, the more man risks losing what makes him human—compassion, empathy, co-experiencing, spiritual communication. Technologies form a picture of the world for modern man. On one hand, there is the destruction of the spiritual, cultural, material, and ecological basis of the organization of human life, and on the other—political, economic, social chaos, exacerbation of international relations, stratification of society, growth of crime and civil disobedience, total crisis. The protracted and growing character of these processes has led to the so-called "global anomie": the rethinking of life goals, the collapse of established ideological, cultural, moral, religious norms, values, and ideas, the loss of perspective and hope, a state of instability and uncertainty, a sensation of emptiness and hopelessness. Man in this state does not know "What?", does not know "Where?", does not know "When?". The absence of the possibility of choice in this total cycle leads to moral degeneration, an existential vacuum, and the transformation of meaning. The result of this process is the devaluation of all values and, primarily, of man. As a result, the world is "populated" by a crowd of consumers of everything and everyone. This state is fraught with pathological manifestations at the level of the individual (neurotic, existential, post-traumatic disorders, decompensation, exacerbations), and at the level of society in the form of catastrophic and crisis excesses, the development of conformist and dictatorial tendencies. One cannot but agree with E. Fromm that negative tendencies in society, manifesting in wars, crimes, terrorism, and other types of

destructive and sadistic behavior, have phylogenetic roots. They are programmed in man, connected with an innate instinct that awaits its place and time and uses any pretext for its expression. Passions lead man through life. On one hand, the motivational sphere of man is based on such needs as love, tenderness, solidarity, freedom, preservation of honor and conscience. On the other, man is overcome and possessed by such passions as the thirst for power, submission and destruction, narcissism, greed, envy, and vanity [46]. Similar instincts exist in animals, especially primates. But there is a difference. Let us turn again to two great thinkers—Fromm (and many of his predecessors) and Freud (with many of his followers). The generally accepted opinion about the distinction of man from animal, which defines man, is consciousness. Freud was the first who did not agree with this and gave his interpretation. Consciousness is "a ray of light at the moment of the morning dawn, under which lies the abyss of darkness," which is the unconscious, and which controls human behavior. We outlined Fromm's point of view above. Undoubtedly, each of these authors has their own truth. All of this exists, but in balance, in peace. A disruption in the interaction between these two pillars of the human psyche (the conscious and the unconscious) allows the inner beast that lies deep within each of us to break free from the depths of the psyche, overcoming all obstacles and restraints. By the way, this inner beast is different in all people. In some, he is, figuratively speaking, a "herbivore," in others—a "predator," in thirds—a "primate," etc. However, some researchers exclude or minimize the animal nature of man, emphasizing his unique cultural, spiritual, or rational qualities (T. Aquinas, R. Descartes, I. Kant, G. Hegel, E. Husserl, J.-P. Sartre, K. Jaspers, E. Cassirer).

But the famous ethologist Konrad Lorenz sees in man an exclusively animal essence and instincts [24]. Lorenz's instinctivism, combining two propositions about the innate and reactive nature of aggression, reduces everything in man to his animal essence, denying the human in man, ignoring everything social in man. He sees the role of aggression (intraspecific) in that it contributes to the survival of the species. It is precisely in intraspecific aggression that he sees the most serious danger for man and humanity. Especially relevant is Lorenz's position in modern conditions of the development of civilization. He writes that "selection allows second-rate construction... and having lost its way, enters a fatal dead end" [24]. As a result of interspecific struggle, ancient hominids "grew" into humans. Their intellect defeated all competitors; he had no "worthy" competitors left for interspecific struggle. And when man sufficiently self-organized socially and protected himself from external dangers (hunger, cold, wild beasts), a "pathological" mechanism of intraspecific struggle was switched on—competition with his own kind began. Homo sapiens stood on a dead-end road into the future. The development of modern industrial society occurs exclusively at the expense of competition between people of one nationality, between different peoples, between states. The aggressive behavior of modern man has taken on ridiculous grotesque forms. Moreover, this aggression, as an evil heritage, sits in the blood of people [41].

To understand or somehow approach the solution of this dilemma, we must have a clear understanding of who or what is man? We mean a normal man, although we perfectly understand all the relativity of the concept of "norm." Is this a Human? Is this an animal? Is this God? Is this the King of nature? Or... Where and how is his normality demonstrated?

Although many aspects of human nature and behavior have analogies in the animal world, man stands out for a unique combination of properties and characteristics. Instead of a rigid boundary between "animal" and "human," it is more correct to speak of a gradual transition where evolution formed a unique degree of consciousness and sociality inherent in \*Homo sapiens\*, defined as humanity. The differences between man and animals are complex and affect biological, cognitive, social, and cultural aspects. Moreover, their combination and degree of development in man are unique, and do not manifest in animals in such a way. The question is not only in the relationships between consciousness and the unconscious. But first, let us consider how the very concept of humanity is defined, and then we will turn to all its aspects noted above.

**Indicators of humanity: empathy, capacity for self-sacrifice, reflection, and moral choice.** In our days, the objective conditions and factors of the existence of billions of people continue to change intensively. This is inevitably accompanied by serious changes both in material and social, as well as in the spiritual life of every person, which requires deep and comprehensive scientific analysis. One cannot disagree with M.A. Gafurov [12] that the phenomenon of humanity was brought to the fore by "socio-political transformations taking place in modern... society." Moreover, the phenomenon of humanity is an essential factor that "resists technocratic tendencies and the suppression of personality by the totalitarian spirit." And in this aspect, humanity is the only thing that allows us "not to depart" from man, to unite rather than disunite people when there is an acute shortage of kindness, wisdom, and justice in public relations [12]. Man is a carrier of "humanity" only if the moral, genuinely human purpose is present in him. Only in the abstract-logical, philosophical sense is humanity impeccable, ideally correct, equally acceptable for all cases and circumstances of life. But, raising humanity to the highest level in the assessment of man as a Human, we cannot but notice that not everyone and not even the majority of people correspond to that significance which we attach to humanity. Therefore, we are in full solidarity with J. Herder, who

asserts that "the majority of people are animals; they brought with them only the capacity for humanity, and it only needs to be educated, educated with diligence and hard work. And how few people there are in whom humanity is educated in a proper way!" [13].

V.D. Shadrikov considers humanity as the main, special, essential, distinguishing quality of man, developing humanity, embodied in the individuality of a specific person; it is defined "as the path of development from the corporeal to the spiritual and further, to the divine," as a characteristic of man in his relations with other people [48]. Considering good and evil, love and hatred as the main characteristics of humanity, which testifies to the ambivalent nature of humanity, V.D. Shadrikov notes that a conscious struggle of two principles takes place in man: "good and evil, egoism and altruism" [48]. L.M. Popov et al. [34] note that humanity is an "orientation in deeds to a greater degree toward good (mercy, freedom, conscience, happiness, etc.) than toward evil (aggression, vanity, violence, rudeness, etc.)," "the degree of predominance of the constructive principle over the ethically destructive." Purely from philosophical positions, M.S. Fomin defines humanity as "feeling, experiencing, and empathizing into the sacred" [43].

The phenomenon of humanity is the only one that distinguishes man from animals, a phenomenon that has biological, cognitive, social, and cultural roots in the formation of man, in which the difference between them is demonstrated.

**Biological differences:** Man is the only species moving exclusively on two legs, which freed hands for manipulating objects. This became the key to the development of tool activity. The neocortex is strongly developed in man (for example, the ratio of brain mass to body in man is 1:50, in chimpanzees - 1:120). There are peculiarities in the structure of the larynx, which allows forming complex sounds [16, 26, 47].

**Cognitive differences:** Man possesses abstract thinking, which allows operating with concepts and symbols of time, mathematics, philosophy. Elements of logic appear in animals too, but their logic is devoid of abstraction. Man realizes himself as a person, capable of reflecting on his existence, death, and the meaning of life. Some animals (chimpanzees, elephants, magpies) recognize themselves in a mirror, but do not demonstrate reflection in the human understanding. Man is capable of building plans for the future; animals act instinctively [9, 47, 55].

**Social and cultural aspects:** Man passes knowledge to generations, develops technologies and science, creates complex systems of values, distinguishes good and evil, creates norms and laws. Animals learn through imitation, show rudiments of empathy (for example, elephants support sick relatives), but they do not have concepts of justice or duty [9, 10, 55, 56].

**Technological activity:** Man not only uses objects but also designs them for solving future tasks. A number of animals (chimpanzees, crows) have used stones and tree branches for thousands of years, but they have created nothing new. Man learned to use fire for his needs, which no animal did [9, 26].

**Language and communication:** Man uses speech and relies on grammar, syntax, and abstract concepts. Animals exchange signals (for example, bees), but their communication does not describe the past or hypothetical situations. Man created writing—the ability to fix concepts or ideas in texts. In this aspect, gorillas show results at the level of a 2-3-year-old child [9, 33]. By the way, in the Armenian language, the concepts of "human" and "animal" are defined as "asun" ("speaking") and "anasun" ("non-speaking").

**Spiritual and existential aspects:** Man creates ideas about the supernatural, conducts burial rites, which animals do not have. People ask questions about the essence and meaning of life, about good and evil. Even the smartest animals—dolphins and crows—do not demonstrate similar reflection [9, 10, 25, 47].

Not one of the listed traits in isolation makes man unique; they are observed in some animals too—crows use tools, empathy in elephants, rudiments of language, political intrigues in groups in chimpanzees; octopuses demonstrate amazing intellect. The uniqueness of man lies in the synergy of these traits. Instead of a rigid boundary between "animal" and "human," it is more correct to speak of a gradual transition where evolution formed a unique degree of consciousness and sociality inherent in \*Homo sapiens\*. It is precisely in the synergy of these unique abilities that the phenomenon of humanity lies. But here, too, one should decide through which prisms to view it—biological, cognitive, social, emotional, moral. For example, if looking at evolution, then the key aspects of humanity are the capacity for compassion, symbolic thinking, self-reflection, and moral choice. From the point of view of measurement, one can analyze levels of empathy, the capacity for abstract thinking, altruism, social cooperation, and even cultural manifestations such as art and rituals. The solution to the problem appears to us in the application of a synergetic approach, combining in one approach psychological, anthropological, philosophical, genetic, and, of course, psychopathological methods.

As a method it is quite ambitious, complex, but precisely the synergy between different disciplines allows seeing humanity not only in the context of the psyche but also as an evolutionary, social, and cultural phenomenon. Here it is necessary to determine the key parameters or indicators of humanity. From our point of view, among the important indicators of humanity, one can consider such phenomena of the psyche as compassion [14, 39],

self-sacrifice [36, 52], empathy and moral norms [1, 51], reflection and self-consciousness [8, 19, 30, 50], altruism [7], the capacity for symbolism [20], abstract thinking and planning [38, 42], fanaticism [22]. The evidential value of these indicators will be so significant, as much as they can be measured quantitatively; others may remain exclusively qualitative. The limited possibilities of the article do not allow us to consider these questions here. They will be presented in the articles to come.

**Weaknesses and limitations of the article.** Despite the depth of the theoretical analysis and the interdisciplinary ambition of the approach, the presented study has a number of conceptual and methodological limitations that must be taken into account when developing a universal theory of humanity. The work has a predominantly theoretical-review nature, based on the analysis of a multitude of theoretical sources; therefore, empirical and quantitative data are absent, which would noticeably increase its applied significance. The article covers a wide spectrum of disciplines (philosophy, psychology, sociology, genetics), which makes it rich in content but creates the impression of superficiality in the analysis of individual aspects due to insufficient depth in each of the areas. In particular, the concept of "humanity" remains broad and insufficiently operationalized. We did not burden the article with references to genetic data confirming the hypothesis put forward about the influence of genetic heritage on behavior, since they were presented in the previous article "Humanity in the Context of Biological and Psychological Heritage: From Maslow to Paleogenetics." Some of our conclusions, especially those concerning the crisis of humanity in modern society, reflect the author's point of view and may not be supported by other researchers. The study does not touch upon the comprehensiveness of the cultural and ethnic diversity of humanity. But at the beginning of the article, we noted that it focuses predominantly on the Western and Russian intellectual tradition, which may limit the universality of the conclusions. In the article, we posed the problem of potential indicators of humanity, but a strict definition and classification of the levels of manifestation of these indicators are absent. The solution to this task lies outside the framework of this article. The practical applicability of this analysis remains at the level of an idea. Raising important problems, we do not offer concrete recommendations or ways to overcome the crisis of humanity, since the analysis of these studies is not completed.

### **Conclusion and Findings**

Humanity is not a static phenomenon, but a dynamic process that depends on biological, psychological, and social factors, balancing between biological heritage and social challenges. The challenges of modern technological civilization (technologies, crises, neoliberalism) do not destroy this balance but transform it, exposing a paradox: the more instruments humanity creates for humanization, the thinner the boundary becomes between the human and the post-human. A situation that requires new models of study has developed. A promising direction is the synthesis of social psychology and genetics. The results of the study can be used in the development of certain psychological programs, in particular for the development of empathy, educational strategies, as well as social policy aimed at the humanization of society. From our point of view, without taking into account biological factors, social programs of humanization are doomed to failure.

Nevertheless, the data limitations open the way to new perspectives. Further development of the topic is possible in the following directions:

- development of an indicator model of humanity – with the isolation of measurable and observable parameters (empathy, altruism, moral reflection, spiritual sensitivity, etc.) suitable for application in sociological and psychological studies.
- comparative analysis of types of humanity – according to biogenetic, cultural-anthropological, and psychological criteria, with the possibility of verifying the author's typology ("teo" type or man-gods, "man-humans," and "animal type")<sup>1</sup>
- empirical study of destructive forms of inhumanity – at the intersection of psychopathology, social psychology, and political philosophy: aggression, fanaticism, moral deafness as markers of civilizational regression.
- study of the transformation of humanity in the digital era – analysis of the influence of media, algorithms, and virtual environments on the structure of the human psyche, forms of communication, empathy, and moral choice.
- creation of an interdisciplinary map of factors of humanity – combining data from developmental psychology, neurobiology, paleogenetics, culturology, and philosophical anthropology into a single analytical scheme.

Thus, further deepening of the topic requires a transition from a philosophical and diagnostic framework to a constructive and applied model of humanity. It is this, in our conviction, that can become the key to the restoration of the human in man – in conditions of technogenic and sociocultural pressure of modernity.

### **References:**

1. Abramova A.V. Empathy as the foundation of moral experience. *Izvestiya Tula State University. Humanitarian Sciences*. 2014. N 1. P. 3-11. (In Russian)
2. Absattarov R.B., Rau I.A. Man and humanity: social aspects. *Bulletin of Abai KazNPU. Series: Sociological and Political Sciences*. 2022. Vol 77, N 1. P. 48-66. (In Russian)
3. Averintsev S.S. Beauty as holiness. Anthology. "UNESCO Courier" for 30 years / Comp. I.N. Brychev et al. M.: Progress, 1990. P. 188-190. (In Russian)
4. Avtonomova N.S. *Reason, intellect, rationality*. M.: Nauka, 1988. 287 p. (In Russian)
5. Alekseev N.N. The idea of the "earthly city" in Christian doctrine. *Put': M.*, 1992. - Book I, P. 553-569. (In Russian)
6. Amin S. *The Virus of Liberalism: Permanent War and the Americanization of the World* / Transl. from English by Sh. Nagib, S. Kastal'skiy. M.: Europa, 2007. 168 p. (In Russian)
7. Andreev P.V. Development of ideas about altruism and mutual aid in foreign and domestic psychology. *Bulletin of KSU named after N.A. Nekrasov*. 2007. N 3. P. 9-12. (In Russian)
8. Artemova V.A. Self-consciousness and reflection as mechanisms of personality formation. // *In: Modern science: current issues, achievements and innovations / Collection of articles of the XI International Scientific-Practical Conference. 2020. Vol 1. P. 155-158*. (In Russian)
9. Waal F. *Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* M.: Alpina Non-fiction, 2017. 414 p. (In Russian)
10. Waal F. *The Bonobo and the Atheist: In Search of Humanism Among the Primates* / Transl. from French by N. Lesova. M.: Alpina Non-fiction, 2016. 376 p. (In Russian)
11. Veselova, E.K. Practical classes within the framework of programs of spiritual and moral education in higher education. Methodological materials. *Educational Technologies. Technologies and Practice of Teaching*, 2015. No. 1. 89–117. (In Russian)
12. Gafurov M.A. *Humanity as a sociocultural phenomenon*. Diss... Cand. Philos. Sciences: 09.00.11 - Social Philosophy. Ufa. 2010. 148 p. (In Russian)
13. Herder J.G. *Ideas for the Philosophy of the History of Humanity*. SPb.: Center for Humanitarian Initiatives, 2013. 760 p. (In Russian)
14. Golysheva N.V. Analysis of the concept of "compassion" in the domestic psychological tradition. / *Bulletin of DonNU. Ser. D: Philology and Psychology*. 2021. N 3. P. 98-102. (In Russian)
15. Danilenko V.P. *From Animal to Human. Introduction to Evolutionary Ethics*. St. Petersburg: Aletheia, 2015. 452 p. (In Russian)
16. Dawkins R. *The Selfish Gene* / Transl. from English by N. Fomina. M.: Corpus, 2013. 512 p. (In Russian)
17. Ilyin E.P. *Psychology of creativity, creativity, giftedness*. SPb.: Piter, 2009. 434 p. (In Russian)
18. Kagarlitsky B.Yu. *From Empires to Imperialism. The State and the Emergence of Bourgeois Civilization*. M.: HSE Publishing House, 2010. 680 p. (In Russian)
19. Kalashnikova N.A. Philosophical reflection and self-consciousness in the context of the theory of reflexive management. / *Bulletin of Volgograd State University. Series 7, Philosophy*. 2012. Vol 2. N 17. P. 97-102. (In Russian)
20. Koltunova E. Symbol and symbolization: similarity and difference of interpretations in the context of various psychological approaches. / *Russian Psychological Journal*. 2012. Vol 9. N 3. P. 72 -81. (In Russian)
21. Kochesov Z.Kh. The problem of modern civilizational crisis and social self-organization in conditions of globalization. / *Bulletin of Tambov University. Series: Humanitarian Sciences*. 2008. N 2. P. 307-311. (In Russian)
22. Krasnova A.G. *Sacrifice as a value in religious fanaticism: psychological aspect* / Prevention of religious extremism: value-worldview aspects. - Ed. by T.G. Chelovenko. Oryol, 2020. p. 123-130. (In Russian)
23. Kurbanov M.G. On the question of philosophical understanding of humanity. / *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Philosophy and Conflict Studies*. 2018. Vol 34. N 1. P. 37–45. <https://doi.org/10.21638/11701/spbu17.2018.104> (In Russian)
24. Lorenz K. *Aggression (so-called "evil")*. / Transl. from German. M.: Publishing group "Progress", "Univers", 1994. 272 p. (In Russian)
25. Markov A.V. Religion: useful adaptation, byproduct of evolution or "virus of the brain"? / *Historical Psychology and Sociology of History*. 2009. Vol, 2. N 1. P. 45-56. (In Russian)
26. Markov A.V. *The Birth of Complexity. Evolutionary Biology Today: Unexpected Discoveries and New Questions*. M.: Corpus, 2014. 528 p. (In Russian)

27. Melnikov V.O. Crisis of modern civilization: some manifestations. / *Social and Humanitarian Sciences: Theory and Practice*. 2020a. Vol 1. N4. P. 118-130. (In Russian)
28. Melnikov V.O. On two approaches to the analysis of socio-political movements as manifestations of the modern civilizational crisis. / *Bulletin of Perm University. Philosophy. Psychology. Sociology*. 2020b. Iss. 1. P. 42–54. (In Russian)
29. Migolatyev A.A. On man and humanity. / *Central Russian Bulletin of Social Sciences*. 2007. Vol. 2, N 3. P. 18-23. (In Russian)
30. Morosanova V.I., Aronova E.A. Self-regulation and self-consciousness of the subject. / *Psychological Journal*. 2008. Vol 29. N 1. P.14-22. (In Russian)
31. Musaelyan L.A. Crisis of modern civilization and its anthropological foundations. / *New Ideas in Philosophy*. 2014. Iss. 1(22), Vol. 1. P. 69-80. (In Russian)
32. Osipov G.V. Sociological understanding of new geopolitical and social realities in the XXI century. / *Bulletin of the Russian Philosophical Society*. 2005. N 5. P. 32-38. (In Russian)
33. Pinker S. *The Language Instinct* / Transl. from English; ed. by V.D. Mazo. M.: Editorial URSS, 2004. 456 p. (In Russian)
34. Popov L.M., Golubeva O.Yu., Ustin P.N. *Good and evil in ethical psychology of personality*. M.: Institute of Psychology RAS, 2008. 240 p. (In Russian)
35. Revich I.M. *Existential-creative content of the phenomenon of humanity*. Diss ... Doctor of Phil. Sciences. - Specialty: 09.00.13. Khabarovsk, 2002. 310 p. URL: <https://www.disscat.com/content/ekzistentsialno-kreativnoe-soderzhanie-fenomena-chelovechnosti> (accessed: 13.04.2025). (In Russian)
36. Sayfullin R.G. To the study of the phenomenon of self-sacrifice in the context of ensuring the security of Russia. / *Development of Territories*. 2022. Vol 1. N 27. P. 59-70. (In Russian)
37. Dictionary of the Russian Language: In 4 vols. // USSR Academy of Sciences. Institute of Russian Language / Ed. by A.P. Evgenyeva. 3rd ed., ster. 1985-1988. M.: Russian Language, Polygraphresources. 1986. Vol 2. P. 129. (In Russian)
38. Spirkin A.G. Formation of abstract thinking at early stages of human development. / *Questions of Philosophy*. 1954. N 5. p. 62-76. (In Russian)
39. Starostin V.P. *Compassion as a socio-philosophical phenomenon*: Abstract of diss. ... Cand. Philos. Sciences: 09.00.11. Yakutsk, 2008. 22 p. (In Russian)
40. Stepanenko I.V. Philosophy in defense of man. The idea of humanity in new humanism. / *ΣΟΦΙΑ. Pismo Filozofów Krajów Słowiańskich*. 2016. N 16, p. 11-128. DOI: 10.15584/sofia.2016.16.7 (In Russian)
41. Sukiasyan S.G. *Aggression: a social or biological phenomenon?* Yerevan, Asoghik Publ., 2002. 177 p. (In Russian)
42. Fomashin V.S. Thinking of the primitive individual: socio-philosophical analysis. / *KANT*. 2021. Vol 3. N 40. P.178-183. (In Russian)
43. Fomin M.S. Humanity: conceptualization of the concept through philosophical and pedagogical understanding of what is happening. / *Social and Humanitarian Knowledge*. 2022. N 6. P. 122-126. (In Russian)
44. Frankl V. *Say "Yes" to Life: Psychologist in a Concentration Camp*. / Ed. by D. Leontiev. M.: Alpina Non-fiction, 2021. 239 p. (In Russian)
45. Freud S. *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality. Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy*: Collection. M.: AST, 2009. P. 147–280. (In Russian)
46. Fromm E. *To Have or to Be?* // Voiskunskaya N., Kamenkovich I., Komarova E., Rudneva E., Sidorova V., Fedina E., Khorkov M. / Transl. from English – M.: AST Publ., 2000. (In Russian)
47. Harari Y.N. *Sapiens. A Brief History of Humankind*. M.: Sindbad Publ., 2021. 520 p. (In Russian)
48. Shadrikov V.D. *From individual to individuality. Introduction to psychology*. M.: Institute of Psychology RAS. 2009. 656 p. URL: <http://fictionbook.ru/static/trials/09/41/37/09413787.a6.pdf> p. 70 (In Russian)
49. Schweitzer A. *The problem of peace in the modern world*. / Transl. by H.A. Zakharchenko, E.E. Nechaeva-Grasse. Oslo November 4, 1954. URL: <https://www.rulit.me/books/lyudi-i-narody-dolzny-nauchitsya-myslit-po-novomu-nobelevskaya-rech-i-stat-i-raznyh-let-read-111949-1.html> (In Russian)
50. Shigabetdinova G.M. Phenomenon of reflection: boundaries of the concept. / *Bulletin of Lobachevsky State University of Nizhny Novgorod*. 2014. Vol 2. N 1. P. 415–422. (In Russian)
51. Yudina T.O. Empathy and morality: meeting place (review of foreign studies). / *Shagi/Steps*. 2017. Vol 3. N 1. P. 28-39. (In Russian)

52. Yuzhaninova E.A. Phenomenon of self-sacrifice within the framework of psychoanalytic discourse. URL: <https://www.b17.ru/article/4520/> (accessed: 20.04.2025). (In Russian)
53. Briggs A.W., Good J.M., Green R.E., Krause J., Maricic T., Stenzel U., Lalueza-Fox C., Rudan P., Brajković D., Kućan Z., Gušić I., Schmitz R., Doronichev V.B., Golovanova L.V., de la Rasilla M., Fortea J., Rosas A., Pääbo S. Targeted retrieval and analysis of five Neandertal mtDNA genomes. / *Science*. 2009. Vol. 325. N 5938. P 318–321. doi: 10.1126/science.1174462
54. Green R.E., Krause J., Ptak S.E., Briggs A.W., Ronan M.T., Simons J.F., Du L., Egholm M., Rothberg J.M., Paunovic M., Pääbo S. Analysis of one million base pairs of Neanderthal DNA. / *Nature*. 2006. Vol. 444. N 7117. P 330-336. doi: 10.1038/nature05336
55. Hare B., Woods V. *The Genius of Dogs: How Dogs Are Smarter than You Think*. Dutton, New York, 2013. 367 p. <https://lcn.loc.gov/2012033929>
56. Henrich J. *The Secret of Our Success: How Culture Is Driving Human Evolution, Domesticating Our Species, and Making Us Smarter*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400873296>
57. Pääbo S. The Human Genome and Our View of Ourselves. / *Science*. 2001. Vol. 291. P 1219-1220. doi:10.1126/science.1056972
58. Pääbo S., Poinar H., Serre D., Jaenicke-Després V., Hebler J., Rohland N., Kuch M., Krause J., Vigilant L., Hofreiter M. Genetic analyses from ancient DNA. / *Annu. Rev. Genet.* 2004. Vol. 38. N 1. P 645-679. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.genet.37.110801.143214>

<sup>1</sup> Sukiasyan S.G. Nature and psyche of man: psychiatrist's point of view. LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing RU, 2017. 157 p.

**Contribution of the author:** Sukiasyan S.G. - idea, collection of material, processing and analysis of material, writing an article, scientific editing of the text.

**Conflict of interest:** The author declare no conflict of interest.

**Ethics statement:** Statement of absence of need to comply with ethical standards: the research is purely theoretical, does not disclose personal data, closed public, state or other information, does not include any experiments, use of methods or pharmacological agents.

**Acknowledgements:** I would like to express my gratitude to my wife, who was understanding of my suffering the whole time I was working on this article.