

Transsociality as uncertainty or incertitude of the human condition

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ABSTRACT

Uncertainty, dynamism of transformations, liquid and incertitude are the leading features of the present age, through which time, society, and human situation are increasingly defined. This work examines the interrelationships between human position and social change in traditional, modern, and postmodern societies. The “social – personal” system is considered in the context of changes in the understanding of the humanistic attitude. Thus, the humanism of pre-modern society is particular, i.e. limited to belonging to a certain group, whose virtues are nurtured and formed through education. The sociality of traditional society is natural, rooted in the idea of the divine, and it aspires to the transcendent. In return, modern sociality is constructed around an exclusive humanism that excludes the transcendent, for which only the human matters are important. The sociality of postmodern society is correlated with the spread of antihumanism and transhumanism, both of which overcome the boundaries of the abstract idea of the universal human subject in different ways. One of them is focusing on the phenomena beyond the human nature, and the other one is oriented toward its improvement. The goal of the second approach is to use new technologies to overcome death, aging, and suffering which also applies to all living things beyond humanity.

In crisis periods of changes in the type of sociality, uncertainty and insecurity increase, which is analyzed in two paradigms. A resource-oriented view of the history of mankind shows the modern improvement of the human condition, focusing on the further development of the state’s human capital (plasticity, adaptability, stress resilience, creativity, cognitive and emotional abilities of individuals). The defined position of consideration differs from the consideration of a person in pre-modern and modern societies, when a person was a physical resource and social capital. A problem-oriented approach analyzes signs of crises and dangers, foresees possible options for the development of events, and warns of possible disasters in order to be protected from them. Thus, the analysis of the crisis of sociality indicates the emergence of its new multiple forms, which are formed both by dispersal and by going beyond the boundaries of human communities, which allows describing new forms of sociality through the concept of transsociality.

KEYWORDS

*sociality,
transsociality,
humanism,
transhumanism,
human condition,
modern society,
postmodern society,
changing times,
uncertainty*

Introduction

The articulation of the liquid of modern social existence, the systematization of facts that testify to the growing influence of conditions of uncertainty is beginning to dominate the philosophical discourse of the 21st century. Problem-oriented systems of analysis of the state and future prospects of humanity are developing at the intersection of meta-reflections of the information planes of sociology, economics, and psychology. Thus, in 2000, Zygmunt Bauman’s monograph “Liquid Modernity” was published (*Bauman, 2000*). 2007 was stirred up by the book “The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable” by Nassim Taleb (*Taleb, 2007*). A third aspect that adds contrast to the definition of uncertainty and (un)probability is outlined in 2011 by Daniel Kahneman, who looked into the psyche of a decision-maker

(*Kahneman, 2011*). A fluid portrait of an individualized society is drawn, the curvy roads of which hide the uncertainty of what waits around the corner, and complex problems of choice are mostly solved with the help of quick thinking formed in the online and offline worlds.

Almost at the same time, a group of historians, doctors, and psychologists formed a different perception of reality and defined such information planes that create a space for resource-oriented interpretations of the present, dynamics and direction of development. Yuval Noah Harari in “Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind” (2011), Steven Pinker in “Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress” (2018), Hans Rosling in “Factfulness: Ten Reasons We’re Wrong About the World – and Why Things Are Better Than You Think” (2018) analyze the modern dynamics of human develop-

ment, and the authors write about the unprecedentedly improved world in which we lived. They have become something like the voice of silence that preceded the beginning of a new stormy time. Thus, Covid-19 and the full-scale war in Ukraine in 2022 became a test of the strength, stability, certainty, and predictability of the improved world.

Each of the mentioned works in one way or another concern the topic of the human situation, society and sociality, their crises and transformations. Examining it with the help of “philosophical optics” will allow to find the necessary view of the current stage of their changes.

The purpose is to show that due to the change in the texture of the social (when it becomes rarefied, fragmented and unstable), the position of a person in this new reality also changes, the sense of uncertainty and ambivalence increases.

Methodology

A comparative analysis and methodological strategy is used, which takes into account the context of evolutionary changes in the relationship in the “social – personal” system. Thanks to this, it has become possible to identify both relevant trends and transformations in human situation.

Results and Discussion

The contemporary state of a person, the problematic nature of which is pointed out by such researchers as Z. Bauman, U. Beck, E. Giddens, B. Latour, F. Fukuyama, is connected with the change of sociality. The incompatibility of the previous social experience, which presupposed mandatory belonging to a large real or imagined community, with the need for the current construction of one's own personality and personal lifestyle from the available modules of contrasting multiple identities in conditions of high dynamism and uncertainty of the future cause a crisis of sociality and pose a challenge of solving it to each person. On the other hand, a modern protean self, as Z. Bauman called them, has the opportunity to live more than one life, changing and testing oneself in different identities. This gives both freedom, curiosity and openness to the new, as well as anxiety, fear, loss of confidence and stability, which can remotely resemble depersonalization and derealization. As Z. Bauman wrote, “When Unsicherheit becomes permanent and is seen as such, plans for the future become transient and fickle. The less hold one has on the present, the less of the ‘future’ can be embraced in design – the stretches of time labelled ‘future’ get shorter, and the timespan of life as a whole is sliced into episodes faced and tackled ‘one at a time’ (...) In a life ruled by the precept of flexibility – life strategies, plans and desires can be but short-term” (Bauman, 2001: 113).

The processes of transformations of contemporary sociality are carried out both through dispersing the old modern sociality and through going beyond it, the phenomena of which can be described by the concept of transsociality which is revealed in this research. To understand the essence of these processes, it is important to follow the historical features of the relationship between personality and sociality. Thus, consideration of the unity of a human being and community through the prism of natural and divine laws was characteristic of pre-modern societies. The closeness of people to each other was determined through the understanding of common stories and ways of approaching God. The degree of

freedom of a person was correlated with the place in the fractal hierarchy of society, community, family and protection of person's rights by the community. Certain changes in the social structure were explained by the power of charisma, as a divine endowment that determined the possibility of social mobility in society.

The worldview change that preceded the first “deregulation-with-individualization” in the 17th century, as Z. Bauman defined, took place during the formation of modern societies (Bauman, 2007: 103). A human being had already taken the central and ubiquitous place in this system. At the same time, this did not mean that such societies became atheistic, but the process of secularization began in them, and humanism began to take the place of the dominant concept. After the period of the first crisis, during which there was a change in the social structure from a hierarchical-fractal one, rooted in the transcendent, with God at the top, a new hierarchy emerged. Conventionally, it can be called a Leviathan hierarchy with different properties, laws and standardized rules of regulation, maximization, unification, synchronization, specialization, segregation, concentration, inclusion and exclusion of people and communities. The war of all against all in an individualized society became the challenge in response to which various types of modern societies arose, with specific properties that grew out of the Project of humanism, united by the grand narrative of progress. An echo of the ideas of humanism and progress in the present is not only the concept of the rule of law, but also the institutionalization of individualism and sustainable development with their achievements and problems.

The humanistic project of the Human Being was implemented during the times of the “disenchantment of the world”, when people lost the transcendental influence of the “seamless robes” they received after being expelled from paradise. In this crisis period, the citizens of the shattered society were left without a common worldview that explained the events that were taking place. This place was occupied by a new “witchcraft” of the power of science, social engineering, which, according to Ch. Taylor, formed a dense shell around the individual (Taylor, 2007). Such a person no longer had a destiny predetermined by the fact of birth in one or another social group, and had to live the life according to the place occupied in the new matrix.

The destroyed close and not so plastic social ties of traditional society were replaced by newly constructed social relations of modern society, which with good intentions turned into an “iron cage” (M. Weber), “Panopticon” (J. Bentham, M. Foucault), a “melting pot”, in which man became a “screw”, “element”, “unit”. The type of family ties has also changed, when a nuclear family consisting of two parents and several children appears instead of an extended, stable, place-bound large family with several generations of relatives. For both liberal and totalitarian models of modern society, the nuclear family became the main form, which, thanks to its small number, could be mobile. The boundaries of such a family were more or less blurred and permeable to social institutions. There is an analogy with a nuclear reaction, when energy is released during the transformation of the nucleus. Thus, the breakup of families released the energy that the state and the market managed for the great modern construction of cities, plants and factories, as well as for revolutions and world wars. In totalitarian societies, nuclear families were

in a state of permanent interaction with disciplinary systems that locked up its members for a certain time or forever. In such societies, the education system fulfilled the state order for the production of citizens of the necessary quality who would be able to solve the task from the stage of development to the implementation of scientific and technical projects. Thus, it was in modern times that the spheres of science and technology were synthesized.

During the time of the second “deregulation-with-individualization”, the mechanized social ties of modern society (both communist, socialist and capitalist one) are being destroyed. The era of great narratives, the search for the only Truth, the “right” thought, the Hero’s journey and the Human Project is coming to an end. The idea of freedom is rising with renewed vigor in various incarnations from new liberalism to libertarianism. The only right path changes to the need to find one’s own way. The requirement to live life in accordance with the purpose that was determined by the grand narrative of society, a place in a social group, disappears, and the task of self-actualization appears. A postmodern society is emerging with a new network-fractal sociality with its challenges and expectations.

As already indirectly mentioned above, certain forms of sociality determine human development in different ways. Thus, one of the main purposes of social institutions is the socialization of its new members, the transfer and preservation of the necessary experience, stimulation of the development of those human traits and properties that are necessary for a society with a particular form of sociality. People constituted the type of capital which was rather a material resource of the community, sometimes its property (slavery, serfdom, etc.) in a traditional society. In pre-modern times, society’s power over a person was usually limited to collecting taxes and power over death (military conscription, capital punishment, etc.). Other aspects of life were determined by traditions and “common sense”. In such a society, power belonged to the minority, to those who were watched by the majority.

In contemporary society, people have become an industrial resource, a social capital that is used by society, the state, corporations, and other groups. Such societies have already been defined as disciplinary, and their influence has extended to the organization and administration of the entire human life, its rhythm, style, place, etc. Societies turned into J. Bentham’s Panopticon model, where the majority was watched by the minority. Due to the secrecy of the process itself, there was a feeling of continuity of supervision, which kept citizens in a regime of law-abiding and high work efficiency. The state determined at what age a person should come under the formative influence of these or other social institutions, which to a greater or lesser extent were, according to M. Foucault, disciplinary, closed systems. Monotonous multiple cells of sociality moved a person along the social conveyor belt, “rejecting” certain units to the penal systems of prisons, psychiatric hospitals, and concentration camps etc. Kindergartens, schools, higher education institutions, the army, factories and factories, hospitals and other systems turned a person into a form of capital that P. Bourdieu defined as “social”, when the object of attention is not so much a person as social relations, which it supports.

The next change in the understanding of a person as capital, which took place in postmodern society, is determined by the concept of “human capital” and the creative class (Florida, 2019). Personality today is considered

from the standpoint of talent, creativity, authenticity, and plasticity, and human capital is defined as an important factor in the country’s economic stability and growth. The main signs of the development of this indicator are universities, convenience in the service sector, openness and tolerance (Mellander, Florida, 2007). The value of diversity takes on a new meaning, the protection of human rights is not limited to natural rights, but extends to the international regulation of intellectual property rights. On the other hand, the information society is defined as a society of control according to the sphere of influence, when information is accumulated, and the world becomes constantly covered for the collection of personal data. A new information Panopticon is being formed, when the power belongs to both those who observe and those who are observed.

The described properties of sociality of traditional, modern and postmodern society are related to the dominant understanding of a human being, and, accordingly, humanism. For the first time, according to M. Heidegger, humanism under its name appears during the Roman Republic, when a homo humanus (a Roman who perfects and ennobles Roman virtue) is opposed to a homo barbarus (Heidegger, 1977). It is the result of the formation of a special form of sociality of a Roman person through the assimilation of “paidea”, which is translated through humanitas, that is, through upbringing, education, philosophy. Conventionally, such humanism can be called particular, which, having a connection with the sociality of the pre-modern period, is rooted in the idea of the divine and strives for the transcendent.

Modern sociality is connected with exclusionary humanism, as defined by C. Taylor, i.e. one for which only the human is important, which excludes the transcendental through the secularity. Such “self-sufficing humanism becomes a widely available option, which it never was in the ancient world, where only a small minority of the elite which was itself a minority espoused it” (Taylor, 2013, 1: 41). A person’s sense of one’s “self” and the place in the cosmos has changed from an open, “porous, vulnerable to a world of spirits and powers” to an “isolated” one, when a person has something like a protective shell that absorbs external influences (Taylor, 2013, 1: 52). The active construction and creation of the desired modern model of sociality in the place of a deregulated and individualized society was accompanied by changes in the criteria for expanding the framework of humanism, which sought to reach universality. Exclusionary humanism created the possibility of combining believers and non-believers through the search for completeness. However, at the same time, the process of depriving certain people and groups of their identity and human “essence” continued. Thanks to this policy, concentration camps and death machines were created. The closer humanism came to universality, the more terrible were the outbreaks of “correction”, isolation, or extermination of excluded “non-humans”, creating the situation of its dictatorship. After such tragic events, philosophers were faced with the question of whether humanism was possible, the answer to which was its denial and a new expansion of its vision, going beyond the previous limits.

Thus, in postmodern society with its network sociality, the types of which multiply in process of the interpenetration of the horizons of different realities, including the virtual one, the anti-humanist and transhumanist visions of a human being in the world intersect. On the one hand, anti-humanism is the gap that testified to the change of

sociality, the ethical basis of which was the universal human subject, and, on the other hand, it became only one of the socio-political discourses. A number of announced “deaths” also affected a person, which also indicated the need to change the order. Attempts were made to abandon the search for answers to questions about human nature and the human situation, the result of which was the spread of philosophical concepts without ideological components of humanism, in particular, positivism, structuralism, post-structuralism. The understanding of humanism and anti-humanism revealed in the works by C. Lévi-Strauss, Louis Althusser, M. Foucault, E. Levinas, and A. Badiou made it possible to reflect on humanism itself and the society formed around it, realizing both triumphs and defeats.

Unlike anti-humanism, which took imagined sociality out of the regime of structuring around the idea of a universal human subject, causing its dispersion, transsociality went beyond human nature, moving along the trajectory of transhumanism. The emergence of a new real and imagined sociality, which is in the dynamic process of changes in human nature and social relations in society, overcomes established boundaries and goes beyond the boundaries of humanity, absorbing both the information technology world and the world of nature. Working to improve the physical and mental capabilities of people, transhumanists strive to fulfill the mythological dreams of mankind and overcome suffering, aging and death.

The context of these changes was liquid, uncertainty, unpredictability and insecurity, which filled modernity and human life in the new reality. Historically, humanity has experienced when the sociality of traditional society defined a person and people's life. The result of the philosophical understanding of the possibility of utopias was the sociality of modern times, when people themselves shaped it. Today, people are confused and uncertain in the face of uncertainty, new challenges and the search for strategies to build multiple transsociality.

One of the theories, the conceptual apparatus of which can explain the formation of transsociality, is the actor-network theory. Thus, from the given position, actors in social relations can be both machinery, the latest technologies, and natural agents, from viruses and bacteria to animals and natural phenomena. One of the latest examples of social change due to the appearance of a new actor in the social system is the Covid-19 pandemic. B. Latour determined that “the position of the social is redefined at every moment by the connections between many actors, most of which do not have a human form” (Latour, 2020). While sociality is in a fluid state of constant change caused by so many actors, the nature of which we may not even know, a state of uncertainty is natural, the intensity and unpredictability of which increases with the complexity and multiplication of the world.

Models of sociality united by the concept of “transsociality”, which are created and self-organized around new technologies of augmented reality, the World Wide Web, the Internet of Things, etc., are: virtual sociality, protosociality of virtual reality, sociality of virtual reality, sociality of real virtuality, postsociality in virtual reality. The specified models of sociality have gone beyond the biopsychosocial capabilities of a person. Thus, the number of friends and followers in social networks can significantly exceed Dunbar's number (up to 150 people), overcoming the natural limitations of our brain on information

processing and communication time. Now, not all users who follow each other need to know each other personally. Algorithms today recommend us people who may be of interest to us. Our activity on the Internet forms our personal information profile, according to which the news feed, professional content, virtual recreation areas, recommendations of friends and relationship partners are selected.

A variety of forms of social connections arise at the intersection of different types of transsociality. A large number of science-fiction works, dystopias, which highlight the advantages and risks of transhumanism and certain social transformations, appear in fiction and non-fiction literature, in cinema. In this way, humanity seems to test each of the models, bringing the risks to extremes. Ultimately, this gives hope for the possibility of avoiding such a course of events in reality.

In liquid times, the level of uncertainty rises to a point where it is difficult to have confidence even in one's own desires and needs, which is why the help of tools that shape these desires and ways out of the state of uncertainty is so necessary. Application of new technologies for human improvement, pharmacological drugs on the work of the human brain allows people to consciously create a psycho-emotional state in accordance with the situation which returns a feeling of imaginary temporal certainty without taking into account time.

Such a situation, by analogy with the previous historical experience, should awaken the “courage to be” and stimulate the search for one's own measure of response to the ontological questions of existential anxiety of fate and death, emptiness and loss of meaning, guilt and condemnation, as described by P. Tillich (Tillich, 2014). Instead, a modern person increasingly feels the “temptation to be” themselves, one of the sub-personalities or someone else. Thus, in recent decades, the demand and interest of specialists in systemic family therapy of sub-personalities has grown significantly, in which the human psyche is considered as a system, as a group of persons who fulfill their roles and are in certain relationships with each other (Schwartz, Sweezy, 2020). The phenomenon of the diversity of the inner world of a person, the separation of Persona, Shadow, Anima and Animus, Self, inner voices, dialogues between characters was studied and described by R. Assagioli, C. G. Jung, J. Hillman, H. Stone, S. Winkelman, S. Watanabe, F. Perls and others psychotherapists. This view of the human psyche corresponds to the spirit of a postmodern society with networked sociality, the main feature of which is diversity. The existence of new forms of sociality in virtual reality provide an opportunity for externalization and conditional legitimization of those sub-personalities that may not be very active in the real world. In the World Wide Web multiple identities and roles are implemented, which a person tries out in virtual sociality, being tempted to be or not to be, as well as to choose being authentic or similar to another person.

Conclusions

Thus, in the process of formation and development of the Western world, the polarity in the system of relations “society – personality” changes. While in the pre-modern period, a person's life was regulated by customs, tradition, religious precepts and the power of the suzerain, the era of Modernity, due to the formation of market capitalism, demanded economic initiative and activity from a

person. Accordingly, everything that interfered with this was subject to reevaluation, denial and transformation. As a result, such virtues of the previous age as loyalty to traditions, customary duties, a significant part of religious prescriptions, etc., were rejected. A new “society – personality” system emerges, in which both society and the individual appear as created constructs.

In the postmodern era, a variety of forms of social connections arise at the intersection of different types of transsociality. Accordingly, the degree of general uncertainty increases to a level in which it is difficult to have confidence even in one's own desires and needs. That is why the help of tools that shape these desires and offer simulacra to get out of the state of uncertainty is so desirable. The influence of new technologies of human improvement, the effect of pharmacological drugs on the work of the human brain allows people to consciously create a psycho-emotional state in accordance with the situation which returns a feeling of imaginary temporal certainty without taking into account time. The future becomes short-term, because a person cannot be sure that the state reached as certainty will last long in a world in which long-term prospects are uncertain.

In the process of transition from traditional to modern and then to postmodern societies, interesting transformations have also been taking place in the field of humanistic ideas. In particular, while the humanism of the pre-modern society is particular, carried out within the limits of a certain group, and the exclusive humanism of the modern society takes into account exclusively human beings, in the postmodern society, there is a departure from the limits of the humanistic instruction through the articulation of anti-humanism and the formation of transhumanism. The latter overcome the limitations of the abstract idea of a universal human subject in different ways. Some of them focus on phenomena outside of human nature, others focus on the possibilities of its improvement. The authors highlight both the advantages and risks of transhumanism and certain social transformations.

Consequently, in crisis periods of changes in the type of sociality, deregulation and individualization increase, along with which situational uncertainty and suddenness. However, in the times of postmodern changes, they are not temporary, but permanent, in connection with which we can talk about the emergence of a new sociality - transsociality. Absorbing the information and technological world, it acquires new characteristics of multiplicity of identities, speed of changes, which makes the future short-term, and the position of a person uncertain. The modern social world is losing stable characteristics across the spectrum of possible clues for building long-term

plans. There are almost no foci of stability, and no known predetermined destinations. In the end, human life appears not as a task to be fulfilled (as it was during the Modern era), but as a game during which we must pass between the Scylla of despair from general uncertainty and the Charybdis of relentless search for one's chance for survival and success in this world.

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Трансоціальність як невизначеність, або непевність людського становища

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Невизначеність, динамічність трансформацій, плінність, непевність є провідною особливістю сучасності, через яку все частіше визначається час, суспільство та ситуація людини. У роботі досліджуються взаємозв'язки між

становищем людини та зміною соціальності в традиційному, модерному та постмодерному суспільствах. Система «соціальне-особисте» розглядається в контексті змін розуміння гуманізму. Так, гуманізм домодерного суспільства є партикулярним, обмеженим приналежністю до певної групи, чесноти якої виховуються, формуються через освіту, але його соціальність є природною, вкоріненою в ідеї божественного та прагне трансцендентного. Модерна соціальність конструювалась навколо виключального гуманізму, що виключає трансцендентне, для якого мало значення виключно людське. Соціальність постмодерного суспільства знаходиться в кореляції з поширенням антигуманізму та трансгуманізму, які по-різному долають границі організації навколо ідеї універсального людського суб'єкту, сконцентрувавшись на феноменах поза людською природою або на її покращенні. Метою останнього є використання нових технологій для подолання смерті, старіння та страждання (остання мета стосується усього живого, що виходить за межі людства).

У кризові періоди змін типу соціальності зростає невизначеність та непевність, що аналізується в двох парадигмах. Ресурсно-орієнтований погляд на історію людства свідчить про сучасне покращення ситуації людини, концентруючи увагу на подальшому розвитку державою людського капіталу (пластичності, адаптивності, стресостійкості, креативності, когнітивних та емоційних здібностей індивідів). Означена позиція розгляду відрізняється від розгляду людини в домодерних і модерних суспільствах, коли особа була фізичним ресурсом та соціальним капіталом. Проблемно-орієнтований підхід аналізує ознаки криз та небезпек, передбачає можливі варіанти розвитку подій, попереджаючи про можливі катастрофи з метою забезпечення від них. Так, аналіз кризи соціальності свідчить про появу її нових множинних форм, які формуються як шляхом розсіювання, так і виходу за межі людських спільнот, що дозволяє описати нові форми соціальності через поняття трансоціальності.

Ключові слова: соціальність, трансоціальність, гуманізм, трансгуманізм, модерне суспільство, постмодерне суспільство, плинні часи, невизначеність.

Received (Надійшла до редакції): 02.08.2022,
Accepted (Прийнята до друку): 23.08.2022
Available online (Опубліковано онлайн) 1 September 2022