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Philosophical studies of the future in the context of postmodern knowledge: theory, methodology

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Abstract: The purpose of the article is to highlight the prospects of philosophy in the context of the post-scientific dimension and the formation of new cognitive and value constants of the scientific worldview. The goals of scientific research are focused on reconciling anthropo-bio- and (recently) technocentric concepts in a single philosophical paradigm of ecocentric orientation. With the help of the methods of the analytical cluster, a number of priority areas of the philosophy of the future are formed, in which the roles of humans, nature, and technology are clearly distinguished. The philosophical and methodological approaches define two strategies of interrelations of the key components of the world picture: confrontation (dialectical) and interaction (synergistic). The results of the study point out the need for a philosophical understanding of the problem of “nature” in the context of new socio-cultural conditions associated with the establishment of a post-scientific worldview. The authors propose a new format of interaction between human and natural dimensions, which will be guided by the values of responsibility while ensuring an appropriate level of cognitive activity (with an obvious impact of human activity on the natural world).

An attempt to add an innovative technological element to the usual dichotomy of anthropocentrism and biocentrism should be considered a promising area of research into the post-scientific dimension of the philosophical worldview of the future. Thus, civilisational progress is expected to be characterised by transformational activity, which is intended to outline the guidelines for the coexistence of the main elements of the world order and to form an effective model of human-nature interaction. The philosophy of the future is associated with the ideological and mental support of civilisational progress and a picture of the world in which humans, nature, science, technology, religion, and other elements form a synergistic interaction of development and well-being.

Keywords: worldview, anthropocentrism, biocentrism, ecocentrism, technocentrism, synergetics, philosophical methodology of the future.

Introduction

Humans and nature have always been key factors in civilisational development. In different cultural and historical epochs, these two fundamental paradigms were supplemented by equivalent segments. In particular, in the Middle Ages, geocentrism became such a factor, and in the modern post-scientific era, technocentrism. Philosophy is a universal element in the study of the principles and specifics of the world order, determining its key worldview and existential characteristics. The periods when religion, humanism, science, or technology gained the dominant worldview status were characterised by significant risks of inhumane or unnatural nature. The modern socio-cultural space is marked by pluralistic universal principles, according to which no particular worldview element is expected to dominate. However, this does not reduce the mutual negative impact in relations at the human-nature level.

According to cultural and historical experience, it is easy to predict the emergence of a new dominant worldview in the future. The only question is whether this is a short-term or long-term perspective for civilisational development. It should be noted that the philosophical segment does not even attempt to predict which element (or set of elements) will take the dominant place in the world order paradigm. At the same time, the relevance of the problem is whether the individual will be prepared to (thanks to his mental, scientific, and technological potential) new cultural and historical challenges?

Research Problem

The research problem of the article defines the need for a new format of interaction between humans and nature. A person should reconsider his or her consumer attitude to natural resources, as there are at least several reasons for this: practical and subjective (exhaustibility of natural resources); value (natural elements play a fundamental role in human life); moral and ethical (a paradigm of world order that professes equality among living organisms of the ecosystem).


Research Focus


The focus of the study is on the feasibility of using new algorithms and mechanisms of cooperation between humans and nature. Philosophy, unlike socio-political activity, does not require declarative statements for its assertions, as it does not claim to be a leader of public opinion. At the same time, philosophical concepts form strategies for civilisational development, appearing later in the format of laws, norms, and rules. Therefore, the philosophy of nature plays a key role in prioritising threats to the global ecosystem of the future.

Research Aim and Research Questions

The purpose of scientific research is to clarify the philosophical understanding of future vectors of civilisation development. Philosophical studies of the future are a scientific and ideological crossroads of existential, epistemological, and axiological dimensions. Characterisation of the key elements of the world picture will require innovative algorithms, so science, religion, or philosophy will not be able to explain the essence and nature of things and ideas alone. The purpose of the article is to formulate unified and universal worldview guidelines that will meet the requirements and needs of the times. Such guidelines may include ideas and concepts based on the synergy of philosophical thinking, scientific knowledge, technological resources, understanding of nature, and moral and spiritual principles. This synergistic approach is the main research question of the current study.

Research hypotheses

 The readiness to include other elements in the classical philosophical and ideological dichotomy of “human-nature” that can radically change the usual algorithms of human activity. In the short term, the technological cluster should be considered the most anticipated element of the world picture, as its potential is rapidly expanding, affecting not only practical and everyday human activity, but also shaping worldview and mental beliefs.

 The inclusion of synergetics as a fundamental methodological element, which will actualise the prospect of a new level of human interaction with nature, based on the principles of self-organisation, pluralism, and multidisciplinary. Such innovative philosophical and methodological approaches will contribute to the formation of responsibility in the global civilisation dimension.

Research Methodology

General Background

The methodological arsenal of the current scientific research is a combination of the general scientific and philosophical methodological cluster. The philosophical studies of the future will be formed in the context of postmodern knowledge when traditional rationalist or empirical methodological principles will lose their relevance in their usual manifestation.

The fundamental principles of anthropo-bio- and technocentrism are studied with the help of the analytical cluster of the general scientific methodological paradigm. However, for example, the isolated use of classical comparative analysis without taking into account the technological and digital resources that form relevant and comprehensive data for this analysis is practically impossible today, and in the short term, the relationship between methodology and technological support should become inseparable.

Ensuring the effectiveness of the methodological framework for conducting a philosophical study of a particular problem is possible if philosophical and scientific methodological approaches are used. One of these methodological priorities in the future will be synergetics, which is already quite successfully used in philosophical and scientific research. The synergetics allows to use of interdisciplinarity and self-organising principles, which is an obvious advantage for understanding the interaction of anthropological and natural components in the world picture.

Research Results

The current stage of coexistence of the anthropological and natural segments in the holistic picture of the world is characterised by a kind of calm, as human activity and responses to this impact from nature have not reached a critical level of existential threat to each other. Nevertheless, in the short

term, there is a possibility of aggravation between the key actors of the planetary existence. It is worth remembering that the potential destructive power of human or nature is enough to destroy life on the planet. Nuclear weapons or a global natural disaster can completely turn the Earth into a territory without civilisation and living organisms in general. The scientific, technological, or natural potential can acknowledge the existence of such a global threat, providing resources for its implementation. At the same time, philosophy views these processes not consequently, but much more broadly, considering the causes and interconnectedness of human and natural destructive power. The destructive power of human (and his derivatives - the state, the community) is mainly actualised in the context of the struggle for natural resources or for the desire for natural and biological domination. The reverse process involves nature's reaction to the negative impact of human activity on the planet, which actually violates its fundamental laws. Humanity has repeatedly shown concern about potential socio-environmental anthropogenic (Taylor et al., 2020) threats on a planetary scale, asserting the desire to harmonise relations at the human-nature level, updating the philosophical concepts of human respect for nature (Silva et al., 2019), the concept of environmental justice Wienhues (2020), and human interaction with the natural world (Fell et al., 2022).

MacClellan (2023) even states the "death of biocentrism". The beginning of the twenty-first century was marked by a real ecological boom and an intensification of the struggle for nature. However, it is worth noting that the positioning of nature should not be abstract but differentiated by specific clusters of natural life. This creates new levels of interaction: "human-plant life", "human-animal", "human-biosphere", etc. This identification allows us to avoid the declarative nature of calls for nature conservation and move on to practical steps of understanding between socio-cultural and natural spaces (e.g., achieving well-being for both humans and animals) (Veit & Browning, 2021).

Philosophy makes it possible to understand that change (Javanmardi et al., 2020) is an inherent process of civilisational existence and development. The question of the format of these changes remains open. It can be evolutionary (for example, the transformation of the Industrial Society from IS 1.0 to IS 4.0) or revolutionary (the scientific and technological revolution of the Modern Age). The changes under any circumstances form pluralistic guidelines. However, pluralism cannot exist for a long time, as it would interfere with the orderliness and integrity of the world picture. That is why the concept of critical pluralism is often used (Kish et al., 2021), which implies the existence of many ideas that gradually lose their relevance, leaving the dominant concept as the systemic one.

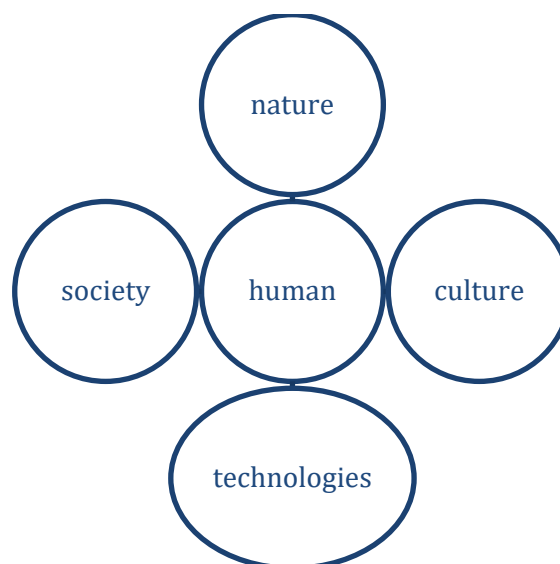
The philosophical studies of the future are shaped by contemporary philosophical trends. One of these trends is the dominance of the philosophy of process (Schwartz, 2022) over the philosophy of purpose. Such a functionalist approach is relevant for today's pragmatic society, but it generates many existential risks. In particular, the process of ecological degradation (Cafaro, 2022) is fully consistent with the realities of today's world and human activity. But in the value and purpose dimension, it has an unambiguously negative interpretation. At the same time, the functioning of an ecosystem is a process that involves functional failures or crises, which are commonplace (Lean, 2021). The task of the philosophy of the future is to develop algorithms for overcoming functional crises and preventing their transformation into an existential dimension.

The future picture of the world will not be devoid of negative aspects since existential characteristics have different value parameters. The idealisation of the living space does not correspond to the realities of the existence and activity of the basic elements of the world order. Philosophical studies of the future should take into account such guidelines and avoid utopian concepts that are fleetingly popular without having either a meaningful theoretical and ideological basis or the possibility of implementation in practical and everyday life.

Philosophy in the modern world is actually torn between the need to globalise key elements of civilisational development and preserve the identity of human existence (Bekh et al., 2020). The modern picture of the world is becoming more and more pluralistic both in terms of meaning and quantitative characteristics. When projecting the current vector of civilisation development, it is noted that this gap will only increase. The traditions of postmodernism (Bowden, 2019) actually tear apart the remnants of the post-scientific heritage at the cultural and mental level. Under such conditions, the relationship between a person and other elements of the world picture will be formed according to new rules. Philosophical concepts will be responsible for understanding the value aspects of these rules and norms. The cultural and historical experience shows that philosophy has already successfully fulfilled this role many times (in the post-religious period). Obviously, the philosophical potential will find the necessary solutions in the post-scientific stage of civilisation's development. Philosophy usually offers a variety of coexistence of elements of the world picture (see Fig. 1), but human retains a unique status and dominant position in relation to other components.

Figure 1

The diversity of human coexistence with other elements of the world order



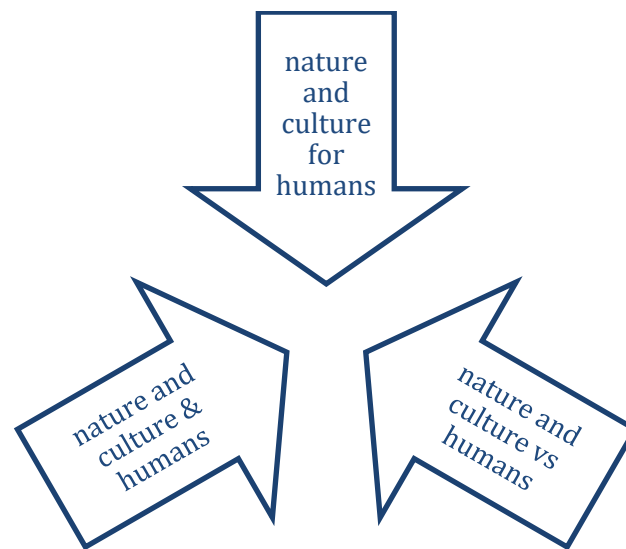
Source: author's own development

After the dominance of the religious (higher power, God) and naturalistic and rationalistic (nature) worldviews, man has taken a priority place in the world order system without any alternative. In the current picture of the world and in the short-term civilisational perspective, any interaction between the elements of the world order is impossible without humans. For example, the natural and technological segments do not have direct interconnections, and their interaction is possible only with the participation of humans.

Among the formats of interaction, one can distinguish both synergistic and dialectical philosophical and methodological approaches (see Fig. 2), which indicates the dynamism of human coexistence with other elements of civilisational progress.

Figure 2

Formats of anthropocentrism with bio-techno- and sociocentrism



Source: author's own development

Contemporary philosophy shapes the anthropocultural understanding of the era (Kremen & Ilin, 2021). In fact, this is considered to be the dominance of anthropocentrism in the worldview sense with significant progress in the scientific and technological practice-oriented dimension. Under such conditions, the anthropocultural priority reorients the natural world into the auxiliary world of the social order. Such priorities pose many threats to human life and activity. The short-term effect of material well-being should not overshadow the role of nature in human existence. The worldview and mental understanding of well-being should not focus on meeting the needs of humans alone. The traditional practical and consumerist nature of human existence is gradually becoming a problem for the human being himself, as the natural world does not have time to reproduce the resources used, which causes a planetary crisis for both nature and humans. Therefore, the philosophical studies of the future should include value and purpose dimensions that will allow for a balance between the fundamental elements of the world order.

A separate manifestation of the philosophical understanding of the world picture is the aesthetic design (Wang, 2021) of civilisational space. Traditionally, people pay a lot of attention to the aesthetics of life. It is clear that the formation of an aesthetic space requires changes and transformations of the natural world, the creation of cultural heritage. For philosophy, this concept is not mainly associated with benchmarks of beauty but implies the observance of harmony in relations with nature and culture. Niang (2021) proposes to expand the parameters of the aesthetic world, which will allow for a variety of manifestations of naturalistic and humanistic harmony.

One of the ways of the synergy of the human, natural, and technological in the philosophical ideas of the future is the concept of biocyclic convergence (Peters et al., 2022), which will be expressed not only by interaction but also by the formation of systemic relationships between the elements of the world order, which is expressed in the following manifestations of practice-oriented sectoral activity (see Table 1):

Table 1*Innovative interconnections between the elements of the world order*

Innovative format of scientific and philosophical knowledge	Activity of an ideological and mental nature
bioeconomy (Heimann, 2020)	formation of a new type of socio-economic relations Uzunyayla (2020), which take into account the interests of society and the natural world and meet the ethical standards (Stahl, 2022) of civilisation
bioinformatics (Salter et al., 2016)	streamlining the technological and digital space and its impact on nature
eco-pedagogy (Peters et al., 2023)	introducing a joint biological and technological-digital dimension to the educational cluster in the format of “nano-bio-info-cogno” (Peters et al., 2023)
interdisciplinarity (Lampert, 2020)	a discourse in which all elements of the world order can be realised
transdisciplinary (Olmedo & Ceberio de León, 2022) deep ecology (Tresca, 2020)	a format of comprehensive theoretical, philosophical, and practical understanding between human and nature
ethical biocentrism (Yikunoamlak, 2023)	compliance with environmental standards (Osebor, 2020), adequate attitude to nature, preservation of animal rights
ecosocialism (Marosan, 2023)	dynamic balance in the world of living organisms, maximising biodiversity and potential for the entire ecosystem of the planet and minimising the suffering of living beings
the rights of the “non-human”	legal support in the ecosystem of people (Tanasescu, 2020) and other living organisms on the planet (Stucki, 2020)
biocentric freedom (Bendik-Keymer, 2022)	fair interspecies coexistence of living organisms on Earth.

Source: authors' own development

Posthumanist and transhumanist ideas attempt to transform the role of humans in their interaction with nature. The leitmotif of change is centred around the decentralisation of the human factor (Honnacker, 2020) in the world picture. In general, posthumanist philosophical concepts are marked by contradictions at the level of ethics-expediency when considering anthropological activity. These contradictions are actualised from the subjective dichotomy of human-animal Viviani (2023) to the global dichotomy of human-nature (Earth) (Pylypenko, 2021). The movement from humanism to posthumanism led to the dismantling of the individualistic and anthropocentric paradigm (Lloredo Alix, 2023), calling for a revision of the concept of rights (granting natural subjects the same rights as humans). This approach is quite promising, as human society has existed for a long time based on a system of rights and norms, regulating relations between them. In practice, it is worth trying to extrapolate the legal paradigm of public space to the natural world.

Discussion

The problem of human positioning in the world order system remains a controversial issue in forecasting the development of philosophical concepts of the future. The current status of human with virtually unlimited opportunities to use all available resources leads to negative consequences of such activity. Environmental degradation, uncertainty about the potential of technology (which can be

destructive for humans) - all this creates a need to rethink human activity and further prospects for civilisational progress.

Philosophy is always relevant in such periods of uncertainty in cultural and historical development, offering ways out of the crisis. Philosophical concepts are characterised by a systemic transformation of the worldview beliefs of the public consciousness. Philosophy transforms all the existing traditions of the socio-cultural space, ranging from the existential dimensions of life to the moral and spiritual elements of ethics. This allows humanity to renew and reboot, forming the basis for new ideas and concepts of development.

In the philosophical and ideological sense, humanity forms two models of existence:

- is a survival strategy typical of crisis periods of human existence (Nerubasska et al., 2020);
- is a strategy of well-being that falls on the epochs of development and progress of civilisation (Stech, 2023).

It is worth noting the algorithms for actualising these formats: first, philosophical thought outlines the ways (Bhat & Kandasamy, 2023) of these strategies, which are implemented through science, technology, and social activity. Based on this sequence, there is a need for a holistic understanding of philosophy, rather than the actualisation of separate philosophical elements. Philosophy, from the status of a theoretical and worldview discipline, quickly acquires an educational and methodological role if necessary (Bekh et al., 2021).

Cultural and historical experience shows that periods of prosperity are characterised by a certain decline in philosophy, as other areas of sociocultural activity, mostly focused on practical activities, become more relevant. When there is a need to characterise incomprehensible or unknown phenomena and processes, then philosophical thought becomes a priority.

Achieving truth through scientific methodological dogmatism is virtually impossible in today's dynamic world (Holtz, 2020). Therefore, the epistemological cluster of philosophy will also undergo transformations in the future. A feature of these changes will be the reorientation of cognitive capabilities from natural human data to technological capabilities. Already now, Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality, and Big Data are essential for gaining knowledge. In the future, these innovative elements will likely become fundamental in the development of new things.

A characteristic feature of the post-scientific paradigm is philosophical attempts to position humans in new conditions and with a new status in the world picture. Metamodernism proposes to preserve the existing human potential in the face of "extremes of semantic poles without losing dignity and unique self-worth" (Shabanova, 2020). Of course, such a model has the right to live, as it promotes humanistic principles that emphasise the uniqueness of the human being. However, the philosophy of the future offers a more effective model of human existence, which is to eliminate the extremes associated with coexistence with nature.

It is worth noting that the new status of a person in the world order paradigm should be ensured by more effective means. Technological and digital support (Drotianko et al., 2020) is the innovative element that can meet the level of needs in the new post-scientific world. Dobronravova & Sidorenko (2022) even propose a new format of biotechnology that will manage the processes of reconciling human and natural activity.

Conclusions and Implications

Thus, the philosophical studies of the future will focus on the ordering of human, social, natural, and technological dimensions in a single civilisational context of development. The philosophy of the future is likely to become a relevant tool for interpreting and determining the role and status of each element of the world picture again, as science is gradually exhausting its potential for such activity, and the technological and digital world will not acquire such an ability. Given the uncertainty of the dominant worldview of the coming cultural and historical era, philosophy is once again called upon to regulate the relationship between humans and the natural and technological world:

- in the context of resources (inanimate nature, technology);
- moral and ethical standards (in relation to living organisms);
- cognitive activity (the limits of mutual influence: interaction and confrontation);
- existential conditions (coexistence in the planetary sense).

Suggestions for Future Research

A promising area of research in philosophical studies of the future will be the incorporation of the principles of technocentrism into the usual concepts of anthropocentrism and biocentrism. Technological and digital development is taking root in the world picture on a large scale and intensively. Under such conditions, technologies and the digital world will claim their niche among the fundamental elements of the world order. Two key trends have emerged in modern scientific thought regarding the prospects for technological and digital innovation:

- positive, which defines innovative technologies as a path to the development and progress of civilisation;
- negative, which indicates threats that could potentially lead to a crisis and even the decline of civilisation.

In this context, it is worth pointing out a specific philosophical characteristic of technocentrism and its prospects in the world picture. Innovative and technological progress can influence the traditional elements of the world order - human and nature - in several ways:

- measurement of the resource potential of technologies that can stop the depletion of natural resources and the exploitation of wildlife;
- measurement of the correlative role of technology in the process of understanding and harmonisation of relations between society and the natural world.

The technological and digital space in the practice-oriented dimension is intended to significantly increase the organisational and logistical level of society's development. Such activity will free up significant resources that will not be spent by humans in the future. Philosophical thinking's mission is to form guidelines for the effective utilisation of new opportunities in the public consciousness.

One of the promising areas of using the resource of technology is to reduce the consumer nature of human in relation to nature. Of course, it is too early to talk about the inviolability of nature, as the current state of human and societal well-being is completely dependent on natural resources, but regulating the impact on nature is a necessary constant in the picture of the world of the future.

The rapid development of scientific and technological progress is already outlining the prospects for replacing natural resources with artificial substitutes. Such innovations affect even the most basic characteristics of food (for example, the technological production of artificial meat), housing (the use of environmentally friendly materials), and household items (printing on a 3D printer).

Philosophy is able to actualise the need for such transformations and define the content and format of innovation activity not only in a practically oriented dimension but also in a worldview and mental understanding.

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Conflict of Interest

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