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HISTORY AND MORALITY

VALUES AND TIME.
SUBJECTIVE FACTOR IN HISTORY



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CHAPTER I

OPENING REMARKS

First of all, it is worth saying about the purpose of writing this text, about its genre and content. It is dedicated to the very phenomenon of historical cognition and to the ways of comprehending the past, which, according to the author, are significant today.

It turns out that to answer a simple question: how to do the right thing, you need to write at least a book. However, here we also discuss what it means to “do the right thing” in general, and what does all this have to do with history. We will return to the summary answer to these questions at the end, but in the meantime it is worth mentioning the background of the text below.

My previous publications were related to the study and translations of essays on history and related disciplines. Reading the books of N. Machiavelli, F. Braudel, W. Pareto and the like gave birth to thoughts that could not always be expressed in the order of a comment, let alone brought to a certain order.

In this case, these thoughts are brought together and represent a certain mass of theses, often expressed in an aphoristic form, in the form of conclusions provided with relatively few examples and evidence. I was not faced with the task of analyzing and commenting on specific texts and studying the history of issues, such a task would be impossible on this scale. Rather,

well-known names serve as benchmarks to address the philosophical aspects of history.

History is not to be described by strict schemes, so the systematic presentation is reduced to a minimum here: there are largely observations and notes, brief definitions of some terms and concepts. The ambiguity in these definitions is explained by the internal contradictions of subjects. I tried to reduce repetitions, but they still remain, as thought goes in a circle. Specific citation notes have been kept to a minimum, but there are many references and hidden citations whose authorship is more or less obvious to the reader.

Meaning and Genre

About the genre. The starting point in this case is quite simple: the whole story can be presented as an interaction of two poles, a kind of dialogue between two sides – external circumstances, factors, needs, coercions – and the will of the subjects refracting them according to their virtual (artificial, secondary to sensual) models, built on the basis of the same external data.

Natural and cultural factors are the coercive ones towards humanity⁽¹⁾.

The proper human culture begins with that conditional moment when philosophers and in general people began to consider themselves as special animals, that is, separated themselves from animals. The history of human kind is the history of development of human subjectivity within those limits which are set by nature. In this case, we will talk about the mechanisms of this development, connected with the notion of “value” and derivative from it notion of “morality”.

(1) It is necessary to stipulate at once that everything perceived by the consciousness as an external object acts in some sense as a coercive factor. At the same time, everything that is identified with the “I” and with the possibility of choice is subjective. That is, all things in different aspects can be considered both as elements of the objective and as elements of the subjective principle. Culture is both a coercion and an expression of humanity’s subjectivity.

The purpose of this book is to show that there can be no values outside of time, values are born from the idea of flowing from the future to the past⁽²⁾, from the possibility of influencing this process by actions in the present. Therefore, values are transient, including the time itself – being as eternal is an unattainable value, but the point in time has in its own way also non-transient value, already because of its uniqueness, hence the importance and possibility of history. The main subject of the present reasoning is the role of values in life and history.

One of the main problems arising from the question of values and actions is the rationality of morality, the share of compatibility of moral choice with reasonableness, benefit, success, the result achieved. The other side is the pre-determination of actions, sanity, responsibility, historical necessity and freedom of choice.

The question of the subject and title. The use of the word “morality” in this case goes beyond the limits of a narrowly traditional understanding (as a set of generally accepted norms of behavior), since the circle of subject matter is much wider – it is “virtuality” in general, reflection, consciousness and evaluation. We mean evaluation as a generating, defining and at the same time subjective factor. Moral judgments are a special case of evaluation, but for history it is the most substantial.

This reservation is extremely important because the extension of the meaning of the word “morality” to all value relations applied here is a voluntary assumption, necessary due to the absence of more suitable words. The “scientific” view of morality itself does not imply recommendations or evaluation judgments, its subject can be defined both as morality and immorality, just as the discourse of knowledge is at the same time a discourse of ignorance.

(2) The future, that is, what hasn't happened yet, becomes the past. But to “ordinary consciousness” this process is presented first of all as formation of the future from the past, transition from the past, happened, to the future, what happens now or has not happened yet.

It can also be said that it is the idea of God⁽³⁾. As an idea, historically, God is morality in the ethical sense, and vice versa, morality is God, i.e. the idea of God is a value distracted from matter, a non-transient value, a value of being independent of time; it is the logical basis of religion, not directly related to cult.

Morality is the rules and laws that govern the actions of an individual in the public interest. But the range of motives of an individual is much wider than morality in this narrow sense. For history and its understanding, all the motives that govern people, to a greater or lesser extent, are recognized by them, have more or less binding character, are accepted and rejected, felt as their own or as imposed, as an internal law or law acting from outside. The degree to which the external and internal coincidence and correlation may vary, but the whole history is made in this interaction, in the mass of decisions and in the evaluation of their results. This is what we are talking about in terms of the significance of morality to history.

It is also a kind of teaching about becoming, about the dynamics of history – about the connection between its basic, immobile or almost immobile laws (and rusty mechanisms) and the unsteady smooth of events – about how the eternal (ideas) refracts in time and is embodied in the flesh and blood of reality.

People always have an idea of what is right, how it should be, what to strive for and what can really come. History actually tells about what happens in the space between the right, the desired and the real, that is, where a person can make his will and effort. This is the space of activity and is the space of morality.

Time and Life

Time is the most important of the laws and coercive factors, the most important constant that opposes the man and is simul-

(3) With the uppercase God as a personalized entity, or a single god in a particular religion; with the lowercase god as a distracted idea, one of the many.

taneously used by him. The principle of organic development (beginning and end, birth, maturity and death, life of cells and organisms according to a given program), embedded in the living nature, combines necessity and reasonability, unconditional coercion and variability, hierarchy of goals and idea of value. The same elements retain their meaning in the history of human society, that is why they are directly related to the talk about morality as initial conditions for its coming into the world.

Value and time – this is how this text can be titled differently. Is there value beyond time, and isn't history the very idea of value in terms of the fluidity of things (i.e. time)? Time is synonymous with the constant transition from beginning to end, between which there is the supposed point of the present – the true being, the eternity, which may not exist outside time. This point is perceived by consciousness as a point in eternity, but real historical time we think of as a certain length with blurred edges-i.e. the point turns into a spot. This spot is a section of history that is constructed in thoughts as a supplement to reality. A segment of a certain constancy in a flow of changes. In this construction, by the way, there is both the sense of historical periodization, which provides a certain section in time space with constant properties, and the sense of history in general, which fixes an already existing, past as a kind of eternal, something that has become a pure idea.

Life and its experience in the description is nothing but the coordinates of space and time plus the direction vector of movement. Thus movement in space is active, and in time – it is passive. Time is the main coordinate of life and change; it does not depend on the subject's will. The essence of life is being between the past (former, absolutely true) and the future (nonexistent, probabilistically true). The moment "now" is the transition of the second to the first. Time is contradictory, because life and death, which deny each other, coincide in it. It has no integrity, because the point of the present as if does not exist – it is simultaneously with one foot in the past and the other in the future, these are two components of one point. This division of time into

two (or three) parts logically corresponds to the cyclic existence of things and the rhythm of the “space”. (It is also repeated in periodization). The mentioned rhythm is also expressed in such different and global things as breathing, sex and music. From the point of view of a non-moveable being, one can think dead or alive – it is the same. If time is removed, I am dead (immobile). Life is a movement, but also a constant change, inequality to itself, incompleteness. Values can be thought of outside of time as part of a tree or hierarchy, where something is above and something is below. But again, this is a spatial conception that we attach to time. Actually in time, the very value being, which as if is not there, is not in ideal, pure form, there is only fluidity to which we attribute conditional stability (in the form of spots, periods). The goal, the point to which we are moving, is ultimately unattainable (due to absolute fluidity). A living creature wants both preservation and change at the same time, “wants” is not quite the same word, because the desire follows from the given conditions. To stay in place, one has to move. We measure time, divide it into equal segments, plan by dates – this is all conditionality, a metaphor. The present is also the experience of the former – in everything, in life, in history, and in art.

Historical time exists only to the extent that reasonable activities are being carried out in it. In other words, history consists in (recording) the expedient activity of people, in recording actions. The ancients asked, while investigating the crimes, who benefits from them? But this is not a universal motive and key to understanding events. One has to ask: what is the goal, it will be more accurate. We’re talking, of course, about comprehensible actions, not pure accidents.

In historical science, any fact is valuable also by itself. But it does not mean that it is simply collecting and describing facts; it and all its branches are not devoid of external purposes, in particular, the study of economic history is aimed at understanding the purpose of activity and actions of people of a certain epoch, not only to learn the number of cast iron produced per capita. In the same way today figures of statistics get sense only in a

context of movement of a society in some direction. Mathematics gives an objective external description of this movement, but without an internal structure (principle of action) it is senseless. As a description of a car movement only by external parameters, made by an observer from the outside: direction, speed, body color, etc.

Morality is not always implied here as universal rules, imperatives, choices sanctioned by them. It is more a question of willingness, will and opportunity, of the choices, their motives and reasons in general. We can also say that it is about freedom in terms of history. There is no freedom in the full and absolute sense of the word where there is a purpose, an assessment. Freedom consists first of all in the preferences which a person makes by means of conditional disposal of the time capital melting evenly. How do animals perceive time and do they feel it at all? Perhaps they perceive mainly the current moment, but they still feel that the situation is likely to develop – a forecast. Human notions of things, i.e. notions that are distracted from concrete things, are as if invariable and eternal, and at the same time allow us to grasp the idea of change. These are the frames, which a person chooses from available options. The very phenomenon of consciousness (desire) implies an aspiration to the future; consciousness is a projection of the present (of repeating, i.e. common) to the future, as well as to the past. It is a distraction of stable features from concrete objects. Therefore, consciousness aspires to the future, “I” expects the changes of fate, plans them and tries to influence them somehow. Viruses “know” what they want and do not want; perhaps, the same desire can be invested (and is invested) in robots. Historically, the paradigm of aspiration for the future grows and becomes dominant in New Times; the matrix of today’s life looks like a mechanism for producing the new, the idea of movement, dynamics, novelty reaches absurdity, which, however, is not yet perceived critically enough.

Evolution follows the line of virtual doubling of things and processes of their existence. Life is a form of adaptation (extension of being) with the help of memorization mechanisms. An-

imal life is the experience of moments already by comparing, confronting with the past imprinted in memory, not simply sensual perception. Life of the human being as a special kind is distinguished by the fact that he experiences it through a system of symbolic duplication. It is not an existence in itself, as the existence of material objects, not a direct reaction to situations like in animals, but a continuous search for meaning, that is, the purpose of action in each given moment within a common hierarchy of goals. This hierarchy is set from the outside and at the same time it is subjective. But the distraction of meaning from life itself is a kind of bifurcation. (Actually, the concept of meaning derives from the division of cause and effect, purpose and means, i.e. from the idea of a directed, controlled process). Word, language, texts and literature are the essence of manifestation of this bifurcation and search for consolidation of meaning.

Things may or may not be the same at the same time; we solve this contradiction by separating or clarifying concepts. For example, evolution, like progress, does not exist – in the sense that there is no monitoring center that gives the right direction. But there are natural processes that have the characteristics of regularity, that is, recurrence, and steadfast recurrence. In living nature, expediency is added to them, and in society – the activity according to the program consciously adopted (according to the mental model). Reasonable and conscious actions are based on evaluation, and consequently, in some (expansive sense) moral (or “immoral”).

Morality is a luxury that highly developed societies and species can afford. Although it is also a means of survival.

In culture, life and its meaning are transformed into a secondary reality (virtual), generated by a system of symbolic duplication of primary (physical) reality. Simply put, life is perceived as a text and “I” as a text, i.e. a record or a recording process. Movement/modification occurs in time; desire, possibility, must express the subject’s attitude to time; words extend moments and leave an immaterial cast of real moments. Words are immaterial, but they are therefore, in a way, eternal. Material things

are changeable, only memory remains of them. Just as human beings are not purely material and not purely spiritual, they use memory to extend their existence, their unique, though all repeated examples.

In life, therefore, there is nothing but morality in the broad sense, that is, the evaluation of the experienced situations, themselves and others within them. If we remove the evaluation, there will remain naked unreasonable existence, existence in the form of physically moving objects. Life is an experience of life as a transient value.

History, in its broadest definition, deals with changes that occur over time. (Clearly, time and change are synonyms and static is the absence of change.) The phenomenon of living matter is the opposition of individual (concrete, material) to this law of inevitability of changes. The purpose of living matter – preservation of special, individual form of a given particle – is the principle of its action, as well as the principle of action of many other particles, it is in a way its “moral”. The human being as biological organism and social being is the product of development and complication of this principle. He acts under the influence of a multitude of objective coercive forces, including those of value, and under the influence of secondary coercive forces, cultural ones, created by him, often contradictory but ultimately ascending to the same principle of life – expediency and self-preservation. These secondary coercions, programs that exist in the consciousness along with biological ones, were created in the process of historical evolution, and are here conventionally called “morality”. With the same right, they can also be called culture, taken in its value aspect. The history of mankind represents the process of elaboration of value norms related to all situations of life, which, on the one hand, are determined by the laws of nature and, on the other hand, are opposed to them. Therefore, the significance of historical facts and what is called historical events is determined, from a universal point of view, by their role in this confrontation. Simply speaking, if people acted only mechanically, under the influence of natural laws,

history would lose its meaning, its subject is individual existence and individual actions. But also the most arbitrary and outwardly strange human acts cannot be described as absolutely free⁽⁴⁾, they are determined, and including – probably, first of all – by concepts of good and evil, correct and erroneous, acceptable and inadmissible. That is, history in this case is understood as a result of comprehensively conditioned, but conscious (more precisely, filtered by consciousness) activity of people.

Laws are the patterns of how things behave in time. Things with control and feedback, i.e. moving, have some degrees of freedom, so their specific trajectory cannot be predicted. But also random phenomena can only be predicted by probability. (Volcano eruptions, meteorological changes). The place and time of a disaster can only be predicted with probability. The place and time of planned events can only be predicted with certainty if one possesses “information”. General patterns (“as it happens”) are always different from what happens.

Predictability and expediency

The meaning of history is its unpredictability. Firstly, specific manifestations of natural laws are unpredictable (or only relatively predictable) in their individual characteristics: characteristics of terms, measures, quantitative values, probabilities. Secondly, people bring into history an element of comprehensible expediency, often acting across natural laws and their concrete manifestations – knowing both is tantamount to changing their action. To know the future means to get the possibility to change it, it is a paradox that explains the impossibility of “precise” prediction of the future (in terms of timing and personalities).

(4) Any definition is a statement of the given, i.e. already coercion and unfreedom. Every word acts in a dual capacity – as a metaphysical instrument of eternal immobility or infinite repeatability of parts, and as an instrument of transmission of the infinitely variable overall picture.

Determinism and freedom.

History can be approached from the “natural science” point of view – observing the state of the environment and the subjects acting in it, making generalizations based on these observations and the repeatability of their results⁽⁵⁾. But to understand history, without knowing that human subjects act with the help of special tools, with the help of culture, which determines certain degrees of freedom, is impossible or incorrect. Humans have some adaptive programs that define not only the choice of means to achieve the goals already set by nature, but also the change of goals themselves.

Hence the question of the degree of freedom available to people and the meaning of this concept. In nature there is a reasonable principle, from which follows the constancy of cause-

(5) For example, Fernand Braudel describes the events as external landmarks of internal processes, ripples on the water, to replace them with faceless mass of everyday life, the general, structures resembling metaphysical ideas, but in their multiple-concrete manifestation.

“All these frozen pictures of sedentary societies, bounded by insurmountable barriers of farms, centuries-old civilizations; all these permissible methods of immersing oneself in the depths of history represent, in my opinion, the most essential thing in the past of mankind, at least what we consider essential today, in 1966... Events are the ashes of history; they illuminate it like lightning flashes; barely shining, they sink in the pitch black, sometimes without trace”. Braudel F. *La Méditerranée et le Monde méditerranéen à l’époque de Philippe II*. 2 édition revue et augmentée, Paris, Librairie Armand Colin, 1966. Introduction à la part 3.

Braudel puts events in second place because they embody randomness, but he tries to draw conclusions from the analysis of a mass of facts, of which each of them is also random, there are just a lot of them, and statistically they show the necessity through probability. However, you don’t need to know all the facts that Braudel really wants as a historian. It is only necessary to know all the facts of the past, if nothing is absolutely inevitable or recurring.

We describe a moving object both from the outside, trying to understand the forces that push it, and from the inside, if it passes through its models, cultural filters, feedback, reaction to stimuli. From history we know only the consequences that are more or less obvious, the causes can only be judged by analogy and speculated on.

and-effect relations and the possibility of rationalization, i.e. the availability of choice. If there are no reasons, then there are no estimations, as well as no reasonable principle in general.

Living beings have a purpose – existence, the main value, in relation to which all aspects of their activity are means. This gives an element of rationality to all forms of life. In living nature, however, the manifestations of rationality are quite firmly deterministic. There is cooperation, but selfishness prevails. In human society, rationality is based on the accumulation of knowledge, on an understanding of the common, on empathy and compassion, on the creation of nonnatural values.

Freedom, mind and morality. The freedom of people is limited to reason and morality, which converge but not in everything. The law is a compromise between reality, morality and reason.

Freedom is fundamentally an extra-moral notion – physical. In the moral sense, freedom implies choice, but if a person is looking for the best way out, then his choice is always partly unfree. Everyone who adheres to a path, principle and purpose, is dependent on it. Only the one who has no goal, aspirations, desires is quite free. A reasonable act is unfree, but an “unreasonable” act is also unfree if it is done consciously against some criterion.

There is freedom of disposition (positive) and freedom of actions (negative) – real freedom, approaching to a total emptiness, total flexibility. Complete emptiness is an oxymoron, it is equal to perfect (absolute) fullness. The freedom of a man who has nothing is the complete possession of himself, that is, of nothing. Something equivalent to everything.

Life is a set of elections, this is the meaning of its freedom, but all elections are determined; any option is dictated by the world, circumstances, prehistory and so on. The mystical component is the anticipation of the “right”, i.e. inevitably coming event (Event is a fact having subjective meaning. Any fact, since it is a reality perceived by people, is subjective and is an event, even in visible neutrality, for example, a physical indication of the value of something at a given moment. The word “value”

already means subjective perception of an objective phenomenon). It is impossible to make an exact prediction, as events are not yet present. It is a fortune-telling, always based on probability. The freedom of the living subject is the possibility of choice; the freedom of the human being is the possibility to act according to the criteria chosen (and not according to the 100% set by his “nature”). Let’s say, love – in human society instincts (set goals) are passed through the filters of abstraction, negations – they are weighed on the scales of doubt. Action on the basis of moral criteria developed by culture historically, is an act of freedom, a manifestation of human freedom as a species. An action that denies these criteria is a manifestation of individual freedom, but negative for society, immoral.

Morality, therefore, is the rationality (or irrationality, accordingly) prompted by culture. This definition is broader than the traditional definition of morality, as it includes all the value aspects of consciousness and psyche. Immorality or antimorality, including its painful manifestations, is also included here because morality is an essential characteristic of the human being. A person who has lost everything human and even turned into a “plant” still remains an object, and to some extent a subject of moral (ethical, value-based, conditioned by human nature) judgment.

Morality and rationality converge in the sphere of objective bases of morality, the “nature” of man.

A human being cannot be quite reasonable or always rational. This would require that his thinking apparatus correspond to the universe, embracing it as a whole. Reason consists in distraction from private matters; human reasonableness also implies distraction from principles for the sake of solving private matters. The active human mind consciously neglects some theoretical possibilities for the sake of practical, maybe irrational solution. However, this is a special type of rationality.

Animals are also reasonable, but they are guided by the mind, which stands above them. They are evaluating on the same principle. *Homo sapiens* is a person who knows (and

this is a more accurate translation of the word sapiens, because people are not directly guided by reason and logic), he develops by his predecessors and himself the ways of action, knowledge and mind. But they also include expediency. Intellect is the ability to read between lines (inter-lego), or the ability to read out and read in meaning into phenomena. When thought is ahead of action, it can be difficult to decide on something. When the action is ahead of the thought, there is little choice.

Morality and rationality, their unity. Rationality consists in matching means and actions with goals, with the desired state at the end of the action. The goal is the state desired by the subject, but for subjects common goals are predetermined objectively (life, nutrition, etc.). Subjectivity consists in the possibility of choosing means and in the priorities of one or another goals. Morality is a common set of recipes for a given group by the priority of goals. Naturally, “efficiency” and “morality” are different things. However, from the point of view of the meaning of life, they converge, because the effectiveness of life is determined by the correspondence to its “higher” goals. If a goal is set for an individual from the outside, then a reasonable approach to life consists in following the main goal (“humanity”). What is the complexity of an individual’s choice? Not in the contradiction of morality and efficiency, or common and private interests, but in the discrepancy of the moral requirements to the reality itself. They are contrary to nature, because in nature full equality and immutability are impossible. Evil is objectively embedded in nature as life and death, renewal and aging, decay and recovery. Disease is evil, so the activity of the healer is moral, although it is aimed at “correcting” nature. But this from the point of view of species, and in particular cases or from the point of view of some codes of morality (fatalism, for example), the treatment can be immoral. The principle of nature is renewal, life of the species through a change of individuals; ageing of everything and revival of everything is in a new incarnation. This is the ‘moral’ of nature, dictated to all living things, including people.

The principle of man and history – the reverse movement, the preservation of the “old”, the value of the former, is the moral of man.

Mind and rules. Rules are generally binding prescriptions, an artificial necessity that is a sufficient justification for actions. In society, it is fixed in law. This is a mere formality, the rationality of which is alienated, hidden, an abstraction that was actually embodied somewhere and some time ago. Rules must be more or less clear and known to their users. It's derived from some kind of rationality. Necessity is inevitability, lack of choice, or the only choice possible. Reasonable action, on the contrary, presupposes a choice that is determined by the goal set (and set from the outside). There are three degrees of coercion – inevitability (not tied to place and time at all), reasonableness – adaptation to the circumstances of place and time, the rule – the prescribed mode of action, restriction, prohibition of some actions.

People are able to adapt to everything – this is the imitation of nature and its diversity, which was explained at the time of Renaissance humanists. Biological species adapt to their habitat through evolution. Man shortens this path through the mind – the ability to assess goals and choose the shortest routes to them. There is also a kind of evolution⁽⁶⁾ – spontaneous stereo-

(6) The concept of evolution. It's a form of “progress”, that is, purposeful movement. In this sense, the rationality/expediency of the phenomenon of evolution is controversial because there is no need for so many species and so many ways to adapt to the environment. We do not see an obligation in the alternation of life forms – from the lowest to the highest. These very definitions /up and down/ are conditional and estimating, at least in the spatial and quantitative sense. Probably, there is an evolutionary complication – quantitative and qualitative accumulation of elements, but nobody laid it down specially, with a certain purpose. Development follows a possible path, even a reasonable path, because the cosmos consists of similar things and events are repeated – and this is the premise of reason. But expediency is a random variation on the subject of repetition – directed repetition.

The life of all kinds of living beings is complete in terms of its ideal foundations (the correlation of needs and possibilities of their satisfaction). And at the same time it represents the possibility of improvement, i.e., change in some direction.

Science shows the unobvious and creates new stereotypes (“obvious”). The

typical behavior of many people, their instinctive tendency to imitate others. But in the nature, or super nature (specific, cultural nature properly) of a human being, there is also a tendency to overcome instincts, or to be critical about goals and means based on instinct, to reflexive behavior. Curiosity gives birth to new knowledge (production of ideas). Mind and knowledge are the means of adapting to changing conditions. Those who are inflexible, unable to change are considered dumb. Mistake – is the inability to take into account the truth; stupidity, in general, – the inconsistency with reality (but there is also “smart stupidity” – folklore fools, Schweiks), embodying an unwillingness to follow the stupidity of the general rules.

Necessity and freedom, their relationship to rationality. Freedom and god. In short, moral behavior in society is more rational⁽⁷⁾ than immoral because it corresponds to the main goal of survival of both society and the individual. However, history shows a significant irrationality of actions and development of countries and peoples in general. In real history, the natural type of rationality, justified by the struggle for survival, prevails. Morality follows from necessity

most difficult thing is to see in the obvious something that has not been noticed before, something that lies on the surface, but is overlooked by everyone. There is something new in the familiar. It is much easier to look for the “unexplored”, mystical, paranormal, that explains everything through riddles. But it is more correct to look for a simpler and therefore more difficult way – as, for example, the way of man to create aircraft – not a direct imitation of nature. Compared to biological evolution, the path of consciousness is shorter and different.

The idea of evolution replaces the idea of presence of linear laws guiding all or a higher being. Evolution is not without reason, but at the same time it is spontaneous. Through evolution, the ‘trick of the mind’ is carried out, getting the prescribed results contrary to comprehensible goals, by manipulating the behavior of living organisms, so goes the process of ‘improving’ their communities. Biology, like history and all living sciences, shows exactly how this process goes. However, there is a share of descriptiveness in all sciences, including the ‘natural sciences’.

(7) The question of the ratio of moral and rational in the behavior of a social person and its separate aspects are considered in the collection: *Morals and rationality* / Edited by R.G.Apresyan. M., 1995. (*Мораль и рациональность* / Под ред. Р.Г.Апресяна. М., 1995).

(or human rationality – a form of awareness of necessity. Necessity is an automatic realization of cause-and-effect relation, rationality is the same realization passed through consciousness, through feedback, through control. It is necessity, which has lost a part of its indispensability, absoluteness. Conscious necessity is partly no longer that). An individual's freedom consists in choosing, opposing the law, but in the name of another, higher law. Absolute freedom is equal to its (freedom) absence or impossibility of choice (Buridan's ass)⁽⁸⁾. God is absolutely free because he does not want anything, but in this case he turns into nothing. Therefore, God must be un-free; if he is identical to the good, it is a good will that cannot do evil. Here already lies the paradox, because good cannot be thought without evil. (Hence the paradox of Goethe's Mephistopheles – "I am a part of that power that desires evil, but always does good", because evil turns into good, and vice versa.

Evaluation and physiology. In a human being there are two evaluative principles – rational and instinctive. The second acts apart from the will (more precisely, through blind, not reasoning will), similarly to a physiological mechanism as in animals. These two principles affect, for example, the attitude to pain and death. Their ratio – as in the Socrates horse and rider, or the will and intellect of the scholasts. Or "personality" and "essence"... Mind controls through comprehension, doubt, choice, consideration of contradictions, submission of one goal to another; instinct directly pushes to the goal through simpler mechanisms of attraction and repulsion, feelings, senses of pleasure and pain.

Moral stupidity, lack of sympathy for suffering (insensitivity) and even joy at the sight of the suffering of enemies (or sadism) are the result of certain value-centred egoistic attitudes. They stem from physiological mechanisms of evaluation, but still are not free from cultural colouring. There is a share of will and a share of intelligence.

When a person undermines his or her own or someone's common future well-being for the sake of his or her nearest self-inter-

(8) Since in reality an individual always has many options, he or she has to choose one and reject the other, so life is a story of lost opportunities.

est, it is foolishness. It is logically wrong to sacrifice the future for the present, but one has to weigh the values. You can sacrifice a lot of things tomorrow to save your life now.

Smart and stupid. There is also a difference between “internal” and “external” assessment – I think I’m acting smart, and it comes out stupid. The result is objectification of subjective, intentions, coincidence or mismatch of the ideal plan, model, understanding with reality. The notions of smart and stupid combine rational and moral plans. Understanding individual goals and, at the same time, taking into account their perception from the outside is the content of history. Otherwise history looks meaningless, without evaluation, as mechanical movements, although geometrically possible, and correct.

Value is the plan of an ideal, a model as it should be. But due is twofold: how the future is inevitable and how it is desirable. Truth and morality converge somewhere in infinity, truth is the objective basis of morality (the mind, universal, giving birth to a moral man as better than what is). But not every truth is moral, comforting, and morality can be irrational or stupid.

Material force can erase any moral pretensions – the result is irreversible. (That is, a purely physical picture is mechanistic, indifferent, faceless. This is a level outside of spirituality). Morality (evaluation) – superstructure over faceless dynamics, this is a personalized, directed appropriately force.

More about the subject and purpose of the book – moral factor and subjectivity (close, but not synonymous concepts) as the content of history. It is supposed that history consists of “events”, which are not reduced to a mechanical enumeration of “facts”, but are explained by certain aspirations of actors and assume their reaction.

Creativity and information. Here we are talking about the fact that history can and should study mostly the little that “depends on us”. Actually, people in their actions are not guided by the purely creative part of consciousness. (Although, for example, sweeping the street also has elements of creativity: evaluation of the volume, methods, quality). There are ready-made schemes,

ready-made templates for evaluating what is happening. The concept of “information” follows from the given schemes: changing the parameters entails a reaction of the system according to the rules established in advance. It does not provide the possibility of changing the rules, non-standard reaction. The information is tied to the momentary, to the given situation. The more extensive the conclusions, the less they can claim the title of “information”. History does not carry information (information is a means for it), because it does not imply practical conclusions, does not provide “despicable benefits” (Pushkin), as well as art. It tells about how it was, how it was supposed to be, how it could be and why it was not so. There is a kind of benefit in it, but it is not quantifiable.

Dialogue. No matter what we discuss, the question of expediency always comes up – why it is done. Why do people write books?

A book is written first of all for oneself, but not for the one who writes, but for oneself as a mirror – who could read and understand the thoughts born in a dialogue with oneself, i.e. with a personality formed by a certain culture. Dialogue, like reading, is a process, it's like playing music with repeated emotions. But as a performance it needs a partner, evaluation, response and approval. I can play with pleasure for myself, but with even greater pleasure I will probably play in a group that perceives me, where I am charged with the special energy of “intellectual”, but rather emotional exchange. In addition, the texts are written for at least one more, but rather for many different – “reference” images, perhaps of specific people, Princess Maria Alexeevna (A.Griboedov. “Distress of cleverness”). Including the image of a critic who denies everything. This is a necessary condition for an internal dialogue in the course of which an idea emerges. The lack of ability to dialog is a kind of cultural schizophrenia, the inability to look at oneself from outside, to see the similarity of different points of view, their complementarity. There are several characters in a thinking person, but normally they are controlled by consciousness.

Flexibility, manic pursuit of one goal, obsession with one idea – at least stupidity, a break in communication.

Consciousness and action. Consciousness and perception themselves are arranged in such a way that they always reflect two or more competing points of view, the selection of options. A behavioral act in this sense has an artistic or playful side. There is always a scene, an actor, (perhaps there is also a director behind the scenes), a spectator. There is an internally accepted role, a scenario, defined by behavioral patterns and goals.

About the book and the life of the text. The choice of some subject for a book (research, speculative or experienced, from the head – “theoretical”, or based on literature and “sources”) always limits with respect to both the area of reasoning and techniques, genre, intentions. Binds. But alas, it is impossible to write about everything. Although the historian always writes about everything in part, that is, it is desirable for him to remember everything, because particularly reflect the whole and the study of the private makes sense in comparison with the rest.

The ideal of thought expression is a formula. But the formula needs explanation, deciphering of its components. There are also formulas in humanitarian works, they are symbolic concepts created by the authors. For example, in the book by J. Burkhardt – the very idea of the Renaissance, individualism, art in everything. One formula breaks down into several. Today, thanks to the Internet, the boundary between oral and written speech, between the flow of thoughts and impressions and the book is blurred. A book is a dead or born again life, a shadow of life, but now the shadow is becoming shorter and shorter.

What is the phenomenon of the book? The fact that the book is a complete text, a finished product of mental effort, labor, which has its own fate, but as a “message” is finished. Oral tradition seems to have gravitated towards completeness (for example, memorizing Homer’s poems and philosophers’ instructions), but suggested the possibility of variations. By the way, Socrates, who left no books, is an obvious denial of such completeness. The problem of process and result is

the problem of time, possibility and inevitability of constant changes, the final powerlessness to stop time. Written history is a stopped time, the immutability, although it is in our eyes (in the eyes of descendants) constantly changing. The Internet is a new, more dynamic way of presenting the results of textual efforts.

Reading already involves changing the text in the mind of the perceiver. The ability to read is qualitatively different for everyone. The written text is unchangeable and in this sense “objective” – but its perception can be infinitely diverse, and in this perception it lives. As for the reading of historians, professional “readers”, a historian as a professional reads in his professional blinders, with his purpose and task, he studies the text as a “source”, dissects it, imitates someone, etc. Texts give birth to new texts in geometric progression. Perhaps the perspective of science development is to change the attitude to texts and change their production. The computer and the Internet make texts even more accessible to the public than a printing press, and this may entail qualitative changes. The scientific apparatus initially assumed a kind of “hypertextuality”, as the existence of some kind of common cultural text that could be addressed and referred to. When I quote even myself, I remember that what was once said “flew out” like a sparrow and exists in a context that is generally independent of me, because a statement is a kind of act. Postmodernism tends to play with quotations in this general context or text. The characteristic feature of such a game is the absence of a single “discourse” or at least its implicitness, its multivariance. There is another tendency – to the text’s transience, as well as the experience of events. This tendency can be compared to the image of a disposable car, which serves for one trip. It can be called an “anti-historical turn” or a super-historical turn (historicism loses its stability, only its fluidity remains). Fluidity means that nothing equals nothing, everything repeats itself and nothing repeats itself. This paradox, like all the paradoxes of history, is related to the existence of time and its nature.