

SUMMARY
OF PART ONE OF THE BOOK BY L.E.GRININ
«SOCIAL FORMATIONS AND CIVILIZATIONS»,
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The book consists of three parts. The first part outlines philosophical and sociological foundations on which the author constructs his theory of historical process. The principal issues of this theory are substantiated in Part II. The stages of the world historical process are described in Part III. The problem of correlation between formations and civilizations provides an opportunity for the author to analyze the in-depth contradictions and the causes for the crisis of postsoviet and partially Western social science that unrightfully avoids large-scale generalizations. An important conclusion is drawn: without the revision of basic philosophical and sociological postulates it is impossible to solve any serious problem in the theory of historical process. Therefore the problem considered in the work is much broader than it follows from the title. The author attempts to show the ways of overcoming morbid discrepancy between theory and history that could not be achieved without understanding that the conclusions concerning all-human development should not be directly applied to any society, as such operation, besides taking the specific situation into consideration, requires application of complicated rules and procedures. Hence a special role of methodology emerges. The need for new approaches and ideas is extremely urgent but the search for ways of **integration** of various approaches is even more indispensable. There should be a methodology of synthesis of different views, which would allow to pass from some aspects and points of view to others in scientific analysis and backward, would more clearly specify the sphere and limits of this or that theory application, would free them from unnecessary claims and fruitless criticism.

Part one is divided into two sections: philosophical and sociological ones. In Chapter I the author analyzes two principal positions in understanding the category of «law». Are the laws existing objectively and are they immanently inherent in nature and society, and does our mind just reflect them (**classical** notion)? Or are they just subjective ideas of cause and consequence relationship of nature and society phenomena? The author attempts to integrate both judgements into one general conception and shows the whole system of consequences for social science ensuing

from the more precise view of the laws. Interpretation of laws as rigid and monovariant is not true to reality. As well as giving up this notion leads to destruction of historical process theory. There is more effective way: search for a broader and less strict interpretation of the notion of «law» and for distinct methodological procedures of applying the general assertions to special cases. If classical notion is left only for one type of laws, the problem of availability or absence of the laws in history could be considered from the point of view of defining the type of law and searching for adequate techniques of its investigation and application. Scientific law is inexact formulation of human mind and cannot be independent of consciousness. This generalized and formalized conclusion cannot be applied directly to specific case without complicated system of methodological rules. It is more correct to speak only of **scientific** laws. But as the notion of nature and society laws (as objective processes) has settled, we may mean by them a conditionally distinguished part, side, aspect of integral reality, which objects and phenomena within the given limits, possess certain properties. But marking out this part of reality would be subjective. Then, we can't do without the principle of relativism. Hence it is clear that reality cannot be covered by one or several main laws, and the law manifests itself vividly not in every case but only in some particular ones. It is especially true of social laws. The laws, repeating without essential changes (classical) are often observed in history as well (e.g., economy cycles). But they are not of great interest to history as a science concerned particularly with changes. Consequently, it is necessary to point out to other types of laws, including those of transition to the new, uniqueness, most important and less important (but only for a given situation), of whole and parts, even potential ones. And each type is characterized by significant peculiarities.

In Chapter 2 the author contends that without the developing of numerous models, algorithms, typologies, etc., for various levels and time periods philosophy of history and history would never get organically close to each other. Philosophy and methodology of history should unite these special theories and methods by general principles, ideas and conceptions. To do this it's necessary to step aside from the practice of searching for universal solutions good for all times. The laws should be formulated not as absolute conclusions but according to the rules accepted in other sciences. It is desirable to find such principles and techniques which without predetermining the results of specific research would play the role of: a) convenient and capacious concentration of

material; b) effective tool of cognition and «compass» in search of right solution. It is demonstrated on the example of classical themes in the philosophy of history.

Using such categories as «**driving forces**» and «**progress**» may be successful if they are interpreted as social laws. But it is impossible to speak of the main driving force in connection with both history on the whole and its every episode. One may speak of the main forces only in conformity with volumes and systems of coordinates chosen. And the dilemma of combining pluralism and monism may be solved in the following way: while modelling historical process for particular periods some factors may be chosen as the leading ones, the weakening of ones and the strengthening of the others may be shown. It is incorrect to think the role of personality in history to be always the same, everybody exaggerates or underestimates it in like manner. This role may vary from very insignificant to enormous one depending on different conditions and circumstances, including peculiarities of the place, time and individual features of a personality. This idea allows to bring the different points of view together, but requires the whole system of various techniques. Diverse opinions may be united by localization of the sphere of their application and introducing the notion of «**factor of situation**», which systematizes important causes and circumstances (both subjective and objective). Though on the whole the factor of situation is underestimated, one of its aspects, the condition of society, is stressed by a number of researchers who point out two main features: 1) stability; 2) instability. It could be put in the following way: the role of personality is in backward proportion to stability and strength of society. However these ideas remain unsettled without their development, that includes, in particular, the analysis of changing the role of personality in connection with changing the phases of society development, and vice versa. The author illustrates this by the example of one of the possible models: stable society of a monarchy type - pre-revolutionary crisis - revolution - creating the new order.

The productive solution of the problem of **social progress** may be achieved by presenting it as a system of laws concerning historical development towards complication and growth. At that this wide scientific law is believed to be looked upon differently at various levels of generalization and scientific tasks. The progress of mankind looks more completed and systematic than the progress in separate societies. Since world progress is a complex system of progresses, regresses and stagnations of many societies. The most important characteristic of progress is

also that it cannot be total but there is always regress in something on the backside. The attempts of direct moral evaluations of progress are erroneous and not scientific. There could be common and strict **criterion of progress** if only quantitative progress existed. It is necessary to develop a system of interrelated criteria allowing to use them for various cases and to pass from one to another. Then the author suggests the following system. The criterion of historical process on the whole is the change of qualitative conditions of world productive forces. Criteria for great periods are singled out, as well as those allowing to compare societies synchronically, those close to «general line» of history and others.

In Section II the author proves the necessity of creating a special trend - **sociology of history**, which differs considerably from sociology in general by its subject of research, volume and methods. The latter studies living societies, and often their different aspects, and the sociology of history deals with historical societies the majority of which have never been scientifically observed, and their history is being reconstructed. Special theories and approaches are required for this. Otherwise minor problems in the overall historical development are passed for major ones, notions are mixed and extrapolated, which is inadmissible. The sociology of history should focus on finding common denominator in a variety of historical societies, on marking out similar elements, functions, subsystems, relationships for all societies of any period, and then on typologizing them according to stages and classes. On this basis the author carries out sociological- historical analysis of main social subsystems and shows the connection of civilizations as space-and-time groups, stable in cultural-religious aspect with these subsystems. It is important to take into account the differences between the sociology of history and the theory of historical process. The sociology of history is less concerned with relationship both to contemporaneity and the societies that had played an important role at some crucial points of world history. The theory of historical process attaches much greater importance to proximity of different societies to «the general line» of history.

Then the author shows what methods and why could be rightfully acknowledged as principal and specific for the sociology of history, and which ones could not. It is unproductive to use too small «elementary» units for analysis. Within the framework of sociology of history it is much easier to understand and individual from society than vice versa. To grasp the society as a whole larger units of analysis are necessary. The author systematizes and brings to a common denominator these

units of analysis. He considers a number of methods specific for the history of sociology (system, etc.) and shows why it's incorrect to analyze pre- and non-capitalist societies by methods of political economy. In the absolute majority of historical societies economic relations could not be separated from political, social and ideological ones, and this non- (or extra-) economical aspect might be regarded as the most essential and specific for the sociology of history. Special attention is paid to potentialities of the method of marking out the **relatively principal element** and presenting social system as consisted of a domineering part and dependent ones. It often gives a clue to understanding the system as a whole. But the idea of a common basis is presented as a principle which unites many variants. Within the framework of sociology of history the author points out nature and production as relatively principal and stable basis. But since at each particular moment the influence of other elements may be greater, they may be presented as variable bases. The techniques of passing from some systems and bases to others is presented.

The author examines the subsystems **«geographical surroundings and productive forces»** and proves that none of them may be considered the principal basis. Therefore having in mind their close unity and interrelation for the theory of history sociology, it is necessary to unite productive forces and geographical surroundings into one category in logical-methodological aspect. Then the author undertakes an original analysis of the productive forces structure, where the cultivated part of geographical surroundings is presented as their lower level. The notion of **«productive organization of society»** is also introduced and analyzed. It is one of those elements which constitute zones of integration between two and more subsystems, relating to all of them simultaneously. Productive organization is a zone of integration between productive forces and distributive relations, as any production is always the beginning of distribution.

In the complex of relations by which various shifts and transformations of wealth are carried out, the role of property has turned exaggerated. As a result a particular line of the world history connected with the development of private property was passed for the type of development of any society. Meanwhile within the framework of the sociology of history it is unrightful to believe that it always determines the property subsystem. Actually in most societies until relatively recently property relations were underdeveloped and/or were of minor importance. The weaker the goods-and-money relations are the more important other relations are: kinship, class and caste, military-political, administrative.

When it is necessary to show the reasons of transition to the new (e.g., capitalism), the situation is quite different. Here the role of private property may be very high, but it should be taken into account while analyzing the transition to the new, specificity is more important for us, and that what the private property was until two-three last centuries. Various relationships concerning belongings, including property, may pass into one another under certain circumstances. Therefore it should not be considered rightful to unite by the notion «property» all the others, the group of economical and belongings relationships and property are to be regarded as equal. Then they might be generalized into one common category, **distributive relationships** with the author (not to be mixed with distribution in the narrow sense). The notion of distributive relationships is wider than economical ones, because in every society not only produced wealth is distributed, but others as well (natural, war trophies, posts, rights, etc.) Sometimes distributive relationships are more tightly related to economical ones, if the main sphere of distribution is production connected with private property and money circulation. But more often distributive relationships showed up not as pure «economical» ones but closely tied to the others, being their economical «lining». The main link in the process of wealth distribution in each particular case may be found in production, or in change, as well as in taxes, in war robbery, or in other institutions. It depends on the peculiarities of the epoch and society, on the level of production development and many other factors. The most important in the sociology of history may be regarded: direct violence, property relationships, distribution with the help of State, incomes from productive and trade activity, and some others.

In Chapter 4 the author examines political, social, ethnic and spiritual subsystems. Methodological errors are shown that hamper adequate investigation of these objects. For example, State is often defined as organization, and classes and ethnic communities as groups of people. They are sure to have the features of both organizations and groups. But here the level of more narrow notions is skipped, which allows to define these terms more productively. These are correspondingly political, social and ethnic units.

Another extremely important problem is connected with underestimating the fact that there are differences in prospects of various lines of historical development. It is analyzed on the example of the notion of State. At a certain stage the political structure gets more complicated and new systems emerge. However State is just but one of the types of new political organizations. Others, though having similar functions,

differ significantly from it and should be considered **State** analogues. Meanwhile they are often referred to as pre-state stage, as no habitual attributes are found. Parallel processes are not seldom presented as consequential, and deadlock directions are thought to be regular stage of general development. Only later the State political system proved its advantages and became predominant. The approach suggested makes more adequate our notions about the types of political units and the ways of their evolution, and eliminates «inexplicability» of extremely high development of a number of «pre- State» societies. The processes of State formation may be different depending on geographical and political conditions, but they can't help going through violence, though not necessarily this might be the conquest of one people by the other. The connection between State and civilization is undoubtful, though their full coincidence in time and space is not even a rule but is a rarer phenomenon than all other combinations.

In a narrow sense of word social sphere is connected with this or that noticeable inequality. For its analysis rather great social units are necessary: elites, layers, estates, classes. The author shows possibilities and limitations of each approach, divides all societies into those where social characteristics are firmly attached and those where they are associated more with personal qualities and a person's wealth. The role of principal units in various societies and periods may be played by various kinds of social units. One may speak of classes in state-and-officials societies and in some other, but the more economical characteristics prevail the more important class division is. However there has never been purely economic predominance. The leading classes always have got certain political and legal advantages (for example, electoral qualification).

The author has attempted to show the reasons for erroneous approaches to defining the notions «ethnic communities, ethnicity» and others. Objectivism passes vivid cases for universality, and relativism puts in the fore border, unclear cases, obscures the fundamentality of ethnic characteristics. We are facing the attempts to move out the analysis of ethnic aspect from the system of society because of underestimating the fact that ethnicity is one of the sides of integral reality inseparable from others in practice, and not something existing by itself and unchangeable. It is more correct to attempt defining more exactly the correlation between ethnic and social phenomena. Within the framework of the theory of historical process it is possible to construct a general line of ethnic development which would be based on a well-known triad:

tribe - nationality - nation. But if it is necessary to single out general features of ethnic units in each formation, it is impossible to be limited by one line, so the author introduces the notion **formation type of ethnic organization of societies.** The definitions of ethnicity are tending either to subjectivism or objectivism. According to the author, this category describes the characteristic which facilitates the contacts of persons within a certain group and correspondingly hampers communication with nonmembers. But in contrast to other similar characteristics (professional, gender, caste, etc.), ethnicity is universal and non-specialized allowing to communicate at any level, and is a basis for other groupings. Consistently bringing apart the notions, the author combines die opposite points of view. Ethnicity may be considered a very ancient characteristic, but changing in the course of historical development Undifferentiated ethnic units have also existed since ancient times, but ethnos as specific ethnic unit has appeared later and its emergence and development is directly connecte to State. Ethnos undergoes two stages of development: nationality and nation. Relationship with State is particulHy well observed in nation. The author points out that only with the emergence of world religions the distinct separation of civilization per se from ethnicity has begun. From this point of view world religions raise a new level above civilization.

Conditional division of social system into social **being and social consciousness** may be fairly productive and provides an opportunity of establishing important correlations in it. In some cases, being is dominant, in other, consciousness. In sociology of history, where the basis level is society, being is prevailing. In such specific system as civilization consciousness is primary. But the thesis: «being determines consciousness» seems to be broader and more fundamental. The influence of being increases with the pace of its changing. The pace and time of corresponding changes in consciousness should be in proportion to pace and depth of changes in being, as well as to strength and stability of consciousness. And only the basic change in the way of life, especially transition to a higher level of development is capable of fixing innovations in consciousness for ever. The less connection of being and consciousness is felt in a society, the more stable both are, the more strict and monopolistic ideology is, the weaker is the influence of being and the more autonomous is consciousness. In situations of crucial social changes consciousness sort of parts away from being for a time, but in a while it gets adjusted to being. For the analysis of correlation between being and consciousness a notion of factor of situation might be intro-

duced. One of its aspects is considered - phases of correlation between being and consciousness, including more specific model (one of many possible): strict ideology - decline of its influence - crisis and struggle of ideas - overgrowing of the latter into fight for ideas by all means - victory of new reformed ideology - its strengthening. The prototype is the period of Reformation in Europe and some social-political revolutions. While analyzing the structure of social consciousness the author arrives at a conclusion that new layers of being should generate new forms of consciousness, permanent process of their ripening and growing is taking place. Consequently, the number and character of consciousness forms is not a constant value always and everywhere.

A number of layers might be singled out in social consciousness of civilization: lower (folk), estate (corporative) - the result of cultural activity of higher layers who canonize folk culture and religion, the layer of theology and philosophy, the higher layer of individual creative work.