

[278]Chapter 12

Abstract Subjectivism in Morality

I

With Christianity, human consciousness reaches the historical stage at which the moral life is revealed to be a universal *task*, embracing everything. Before speaking of its formative historical conditions, we must dispel the view that, in principle, rejects morality as a historical task, as a concern of the collective human being, and instead reduces it entirely to the subjective, moral impulses of individual people. This view arbitrarily constrains the human moral good in a narrow way that it has never really known and does not now know.¹ Properly speaking, morality was never merely a matter of personal feeling or a rule concerning private behavior. In the gentile way of life, the moral demands of reverence, pity and shame were inseparably connected with the obligations of the members of a gens to the gentile unit. What was considered “moral” was indistinguishable from the “social,” the individual from the collective. If, in this way, morality turned out to be rather base and limited, it was not owing to the fact that morality was collective, but only to the generally low level and narrow limits of the given way of life, which expressed merely an elementary stage of historical development. It was base and limited only in comparison with further moral progress, but not in comparison with the morality of savages living in trees and in caves. In spite of the relative separation and isolation of domestic life, with the formation of the political state the interaction between individuals and the collective whole to which they belonged grew ever wider, more complex and came to determine morality in general. [279]It became impossible to be moral outside a definite and positive relationship to the state. Morality was, above all, a matter of civic virtue. If such *virtus antiqua* ultimately does not satisfy us, it certainly is not because it was a matter of a *civic* as opposed to a domestic virtue *alone*, but because such civic-mindedness was too far from the genuine social idea. It represented merely a transition from barbarianism

E] Most likely written at the end of 1896 or early 1897, this chapter is largely a reply to the views of L. Tolstoy and B. Chicherin.

¹ C] Before speaking of ... not now know.] *Absent in B.*

to a truly human culture. If morality valiantly serves the social whole, viz., the state, but the state itself rests on slavery, incessant war, etc., then what is to be condemned here is not the social character of morality, but the immoral character of society. Certainly, in the same way we rightfully condemn the morality of the medieval church not because it was the church's, but because at that time the church was far from the model of a truly moral organization and because along with the moral good it was responsible for evil—the terrible evil of religious persecutions and torture—thereby violating the unconditional principle of morality in its own, inner sphere.²

As the “gospel of the kingdom,”³ Christianity appears on the scene with an unconditionally high ideal, with a demand for an absolute morality. Should this morality be *merely subjective*, i.e., limited merely to the inner states and individual actions of the subject? The answer can already be found in the question itself. However, in order to present this issue clearly, let us recognize from the outset the truth in an exclusively⁴ subjective Christianity. Undoubtedly, a perfect, or absolute, moral state must be fully experienced, felt, and assimilated by the single individual inwardly. It must become *one's own* state, the content of one's own life. If perfect morality were recognized as being subjective in this sense, then any dispute concerning it could only be a matter of words. However, the issue here concerns another question: How do separate individuals attain moral perfection? Is it purely a matter of the individual's own, inner efforts to improve oneself and proclaim the results, or is it achieved *with the help of* a certain social process, which acts not only individually but also collectively? Those who support the first view, which reduces the entire issue to a matter of individual [280]moral work, certainly deny neither the existence of social life nor the possibility of morally improving its forms. However, they suppose that such improvement is merely the simple and inevitable result of personal moral achievements: The situation with the individual is just like that with society. If individuals would only understand and uncover their true essence and arouse morally good feelings in their own souls, a paradise would be established on Earth. It is indisputable that without such feelings and thoughts there can be neither personal nor social morality. It is also indisputable that *if* all individuals were morally good, society would also be so.⁵ However, to think that the actual virtue of a few good people alone is *enough* to morally regenerate all the others is to pass into a world⁶ where babies are born from rose bushes and beggars eat sweet cakes because there is no bread. Surely, the issue here is not only whether the individual's moral efforts

² C] Certainly, in the same ... own, inner sphere] *Absent in B.*

³ E] Cf. Matthew 24: 14—“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.”

⁴ C] an exclusively] *Absent in B.*

⁵ C] It is also ... also be so.] *Absent in B.*

⁶ C] the actual virtue ... pass into a world] a few kind words are enough to create a perfect social order is to pass into a world **B.**

are enough to make *oneself* perfect, but whether these individual efforts alone can possibly get *other* people, who make no moral efforts, to *start* doing them.⁷

The inadequacy of a subjective moral good and the need for it to be embodied in the collective is demonstrated quite clearly by the entire course of human history. I will limit myself to just a single vivid illustration.

II⁸

With apparent sympathy, we are told at the end of Homer's *Odyssey* how this typical Hellenic hero reestablished justice and order in his house and destroyed his rivals after his ultimate victory over the enmity of the gods and of men. With the help of his son, he executed the servants who in his absence of 20 years, when his fate was unknown and considered by all to be dead, did not oppose Penelope's suitors. These servants sided with the suitors, who made themselves at home in Odysseus's house:

Then when they had made the whole place quite clean and orderly, they took the women out and hemmed them in the narrow space between the wall of the domed room and that of the yard, so that they could not get away: and Telemachus said to the other two, "I shall not let these women die a clean death, for they were insolent to me and my mother, and used to sleep with the suitors."

So saying he made a ship's cable fast [281] to one of the bearing-posts that supported the roof of the domed room, and secured it all around the building, at a good height, lest any of the women's feet should touch the ground; and as thrushes or doves beat against a net that has been set for them in a thicket just as they were getting to their nest, and a terrible fate awaits them, even so did the women have to put their heads in nooses one after the other and die most miserably. Their feet moved convulsively for a while, but not for very long.

As for Melanthius, they took him through the cloister into the inner court. There they cut off his nose and his ears; they drew out his vitals and gave them to the dogs raw, and then in their fury they cut off his hands and his feet (*Odyssey*, XXII, 457–477).⁹

Not only were Odysseus and Telemachus no monsters, but on the contrary they represent the highest ideal of the Homeric era. Their personal morality was irproachable; they were full of piety, wisdom, justice and all family virtues. Moreover, in spite of his courage and steadfast nature in the face of disaster Odysseus had an extremely sensitive heart and wept at every appropriate occasion. He has this

⁷ C] Surely, is the issue ... doing them.] *Absent in B*.

⁸ C] *This designation of the start of a new section, §II, is absent in both Opravdanie 1914 and Opravdanie n.d. However, there is a clearly delineated start of §III in both editions.*

⁹ E] Finally, when the whole house ... his hands and feet.] Homer 1900: 297–298. Immediately after providing this long excerpt from Homer, Solov'ëv mentions in the body of his text that the translation is that by Zhukovskij and provides the reference, but no additional bibliographic information. Quite possibly, he used the translation in Zhukovskij 1894: 326–327.

characteristic and very remarkable trait throughout the entire poem. Since I have not found special references to this predominant trait of our Homeric hero in the literature, I will permit myself to go into some detail.¹⁰ Already with his first appearance in *The Odyssey*, our hero¹¹ is presented as crying.

but Ulysses was not within; he was on the sea-shore as usual, looking out upon the barren ocean with tears in his eyes, groaning and breaking his heart for sorrow. (V, 82–84; also 151, 152, 156–158)¹²

He himself recounts:

I stayed with Calypso seven years straight on end, and watered the good clothes she gave me with my tears during the whole time. (VII, 259–260)¹³

He cried at the thought of his far away land and family and also upon recalling his own exploits:

the muse inspired Demodocus to sing the feats of heroes, and ... [282]the quarrel between Ulysses and Achilles.... Thus sang the bard, but Ulysses drew his purple mantle over his head and covered his face, for he was ashamed to let the Phaeacians see that he was weeping. (VIII, 73, 75, 83–86)¹⁴

And more:

All this he told, but Ulysses was overcome as he heard him, and his cheeks were wet with tears. He wept as a woman weeps when she throws herself on the body of her husband who has fallen before his own city and people, fighting bravely in defense of his home and children. ... even so piteously did Ulysses weep.... (VIII, 521–525)¹⁵

He cried when he learned from Circe of his coming voyage, though quite safe, into the realm of Hades:

I was dismayed when I heard this. I sat up in bed and wept, and would gladly have lived no longer to see the light of the sun. (X, 496–499)¹⁶

It is no wonder that Odysseus cries when he sees his mother's shadow (XI, 87), but he is affected in the same way by the shadow of the worst and most licentious of his fellow combatants, who was ruined by an evil demon and the power of indescribable wine. (XI, 61)¹⁷

We had with us a certain youth named Elpenor, not very remarkable for sense or courage, who had gotten drunk and was lying on the house-top away from the rest of the men, to sleep off his liquor in the cool. When he heard the noise of the men bustling about, he

¹⁰ C] Since I have ... into some detail.] *Absent in B*.

¹¹ C] *The Odyssey*, our hero] it, he **B**.

¹² E] Homer 1900: 64; cf. Homer 1900: 65. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 74, also 76–77.

¹³ E] Homer 1900: 90. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 103.

¹⁴ E] Homer 1900: 95. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 66.

¹⁵ E] Homer 1900: 106. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 120.

¹⁶ E] Homer 1900: 136. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 152.

¹⁷ E] Since the Russian translation Solov'ëv provides differs somewhat from the English translation, I have translated the Russian translation. Cf. Homer 1900: 140: "it was all bad luck, and my own unspeakable drunkenness." For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 157.

jumped up on a sudden and forgot all about coming down by the main staircase, so he tumbled right off the roof and broke his neck, and his soul went down to the house of Hades. (X, 552–561)¹⁸

I was very sorry for him, and cried when I saw him. (XI, 55)¹⁹

[283]He cries at the sight of Agamemnon:

we two sat weeping and talking thus sadly with one another. (XI, 465–466)²⁰

Odysseus cries bitterly upon finally coming to his native Ithaca (XIII, 219–221) and even more intensely on first meeting his son:

They were both so much moved that they cried aloud like eagles or vultures with crooked talons that have been robbed of their half fledged young by peasants. Thus piteously did they weep.... (XVI, 215–220)²¹

Odysseus sheds a few tears on seeing his old dog Argus:

...he dashed a tear from his eye without away without Eumaeus seeing it.... (XVII, 304–305)²²

He cries before murdering his wife's suitors, and as he embraces the divine swine-herd Eumaeus and the god-like cowherd Philoetius (XXI, 225–227), and also cries after the savage massacre of the twelve maid-servants and the goatherd Melanthis:

It made him feel as if he should like to weep, for he remembered every one of them. (XXII, 500–501)²³

The last two cantos of the *Odyssey* are certainly not without abundant tears from our hero:

Then Ulysses in his turn melted, and wept as he clasped his dear and faithful wife to his bosom. (XXIII, 231–232)²⁴

And more:

When Ulysses saw him so worn, so old and full of sorrow, he stood still under a tall pear tree and began to weep. (XXIV, 233–235)²⁵

[284]As for his personal, subjective sensitivity, Odysseus obviously is in no way inferior to the most intellectually developed and highly-strung person of our day. In general, the Homeric heroes were as much capable of all the moral feelings and tender emotions as we are and not just in relation to their neighbors in the narrow sense

¹⁸ E] Homer 1900: 137. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 154.

¹⁹ E] Homer 1900: 140. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 156.

²⁰ E] Homer 1900: 150. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 168.

²¹ E] Homer 1900: 214. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 236.

²² E] Homer 1900: 228. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 252.

²³ E] Homer 1900: 299. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 327. In all editions consulted, the reference is incorrectly given as (XVII, 500–501).

²⁴ E] Homer 1900: 306. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 334.

²⁵ E] Homer 1900: 315. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 345.

of the word, i.e., to people with whom they shared immediate common interests, but also to strangers and people from distant lands. The Phaeacians were of such a sort to the shipwrecked Odysseus—and yet what gentle human relations grew between them! And if in spite of all this the best of the ancient heroes did things with a clear conscience that are now morally impossible for us, then this was surely not a result of a deficiency in their personal subjective morality. These people were, in any case, as capable of morally good human feelings towards their neighbors and strangers as we are.²⁶ Where is the difference, and how do we account for the change? Why did the virtuous, wise and *emotional* people of the Homeric era consider it permissible and commendable to hang thoughtless female servants as thrushes and to crush up unworthy male servants into fodder for the dogs when such behavior can now be done only by maniacs and born criminals? Reasoning abstractly, one could suppose that people of that long ago era did not consciously have morally good *principles* and rules, even though they had sincere, morally good feelings and impulses. This is why because of the simple factual character of one's morality, the absence of a formal criterion between what should be and what should not or of a clear awareness of the distinction between good and evil, even the best person can manifest fits of savage brutality unhindered along with the keenest moral affects. However, in fact, we do not find such a formal defect in the ancient worldview.

As with us today, ancient peoples in fact not only had morally good and evil natural characteristics but also distinguished in principle the moral good from evil and recognized that the former should be unconditionally preferred over the latter. In the same Homeric poems, which sometimes strike us with their ethical barbarisms, the concept of moral duty appears perfectly clear. Certainly, Penelope's mode of thought and expression is not the same as Kant's. Nevertheless, we find in the following words [285] of Odysseus' wife a firm assertion that moral duty is an eternal, necessary and *universal* principle.

Men live but for a little season; if they are hard, and deal hardly, people wish them ill so long as they are alive, and speak contemptuously of them when they are dead, but he that is righteous and deals righteously, the people tell of his praise among all lands, and many shall call him blessed. (XIX, 328–334)²⁷

III

The *form* of moral awareness, that is, of the moral good as unconditionally obligatory and of evil as unconditionally impermissible, was in the mind of the ancients just as it is in our own. However, could it be that the important difference between them and us in evaluating the same actions arises from a change in the very *content* of the moral ideal? There is no doubt that it is thanks to the Gospels that our ideal of virtue and holiness is much higher and wider than that of Homer. However, it is also

²⁶ C] These people were ... as we are] The morality in them is, in essence, the same as in us. **B.**

²⁷ E] Homer 1900: 256. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 282.

indubitable that this perfect moral ideal, accepted only in the form of abstract theory and without objective embodiment, produces no change at all in either the lives of people or their actual moral awareness and does not raise in the least their practical *standard* for evaluating their own actions or those of others.

Is it again necessary to recall the representatives of medieval Christianity who, with a clear conscience and even an awareness of their moral obligation and service, treated the supposed enemies of their church with greater cruelty than did Odysseus the enemies of his family and did so at a time closer to us and more enlightened save perhaps²⁸ the American plantation owners who belonged to a Christian denomination and therefore stood under the banner of the unconditionally highest moral ideal? The latter, in fact, not only treated their black slaves generally no better than the pagan Odysseus did his unfaithful servants but also considered themselves (like Odysseus) *right* in doing so. As a result, not only their deeds but also their everyday consciousness remained [286]unaffected by the abstract, higher truth that they theoretically recognized.

In his "Sketches of the history of the Tambov region," I. I. Dubasov recounts the exploits of a Yelatma landowner, K-rov, who prospered in the 1840s. It was discovered that he tortured many peasants (particularly children) to death and that on K-rov's estate there was not a single peasant who had escaped a beating nor a single peasant girl who had not been violated. However, of particular importance were not these "abuses" but the relation of the general public to him. In the preliminary inquiry, the majority of the gentry of the Yelatma district said that K-rov was a "truly noble person." Others added that "K-rov is a true Christian and observed all the rites of the Christian Church." Additionally, the marshal of the nobility wrote to the provincial governor, "The entire district is alarmed by the *calamities* besetting Mr. K-rov." The matter was concluded. This "true Christian" was acquitted of criminal responsibility, and the Yelatma gentry were satisfied (*Sketches of the History of the Tambov Region*, I. I. Dubasov, vol. 1, Tambov 1890, pp. 162–167).²⁹ Another who enjoyed the same sympathy in his area was the even more notorious Tambov landowner Prince Ju. N. G-n of whom, however, not without reason, it was written to the chief of police: "Even animals ... on encountering Ju. N. instinctively take to hide somewhere" (*Ibid.*, p. 92).³⁰

Between the hero of Homer's account and those of Mr. Dubasov's, approximately 3000 years passed, but there was no essential and lasting change in the lives and moral awareness of people concerning the enslaved portion of the population.³¹ The same inhuman attitudes that the ancient Hellenes approved of in the Homeric era were regarded as permissible by both American and Russian slave-owners in the first half of the nineteenth century. If these attitudes now shock us, this rise in ethical standards came about not in the course of 3000 years, but only in the last

²⁸ C] Is it again ... enlightened save perhaps] *Absent in B*] E] Of course, in **B** this somewhat shortened sentence is declarative, and not an interrogative.

²⁹ E] For the quotation see Dubasov 1890: 166.

³⁰ E] Dubasov 1890: 92.

³¹ C] concerning the enslaved portion of the population] *Absent in B*.

three *decades* (for us and for the Americans, and for Western Europe a few decades earlier). What happened so recently? What change came about in so short a period that could not be accomplished in the long centuries of historical development? Did some new moral idea, some new higher moral ideal, arise in our day?

[287]There was not and could not have been anything of the kind. For it is impossible to conceive a higher ideal than that which was revealed eighteen centuries ago. This ideal was known to the “true Christians” of the American states and of the Russian provinces. In this respect, there could not be any new ideal to learn. However, they *experienced a new fact*. Embodied as a social force and a subject of a *common concern*, the idea was able to do in a few years what could not be done in the course of thousands of years when limited to the subjective sphere of personal morality. In both America and Russia, though under very different historical conditions, the organized social whole holding power decided to put an end to the gross violation of Christian justice, both Divine and human, in the social sphere. In America, this was achieved at the price of blood, i.e., through a terrible civil war; with us here in Russia it was done through an imperious³² governmental action.³³ Thanks to this alone, the fundamental demands for justice and *philanthropy* (presupposed by the highest ideal, though not exhausted by it) were transferred from the narrow and tottering limits of a subjective feeling to the wide and firm ground of objective reality and were transformed into a general and obligatory law of living. Here, we see that this external governmental action immediately lifted the level of our inner moral awareness, i.e., did what could not alone be done by thousands of years of moral preaching. Certainly, this social movement and this governmental action were conditioned by earlier preaching, but for the majority, for the social sphere as a whole, this preaching had an effect only when it was *embodied* in organized measures in an executive manner. Thanks to external constraint, beastly instincts lost the chance to be expressed. They had to pass into an inactive state, and were gradually *atrophied* owing to a lack of exercise. In the majority, these instincts disappeared and ceased to be transmitted to successive generations. Now, even those people who openly long for serfdom express *sincere* reservations concerning its “*abuses*,” whereas 40 years ago these very abuses were thought to be compatible with “true nobility” and even with “true Christianity.” Nevertheless, there is no reason to think that the fathers at the time were intrinsically worse than their sons today.

Let us suppose that Dubasov’s heroes, whom the Tambov gentry [288]defended simply out of class interest, actually stood below the average of the society around them. However, besides them there was a multitude of quite decent people who had not committed any outrages and who *conscientiously* believed they fully had a right to exercise the privileges of being a landowner and, for example, to trade serfs like cattle, wholesale and retail. If such things are now impossible even for scoundrels—however much they may want it—how can this objective success of the moral good, this real improvement in life, be ascribed to progress in personal morality?³⁴

³² C] imperious] peaceful **B**.

³³ E] Tsar Alexander II abolished serfdom in Russia in 1861.

³⁴ C] Let us suppose that ... personal morality?] *Absent in B*.

The intrinsic, subjective foundations of human moral nature are invariable. Likewise, the relative number of morally good and bad people has probably not changed. Hardly anyone would dare claim that there are now more people who are righteous than there were several centuries or millennia ago. Finally, there is no doubt that the highest moral ideas and ideals in themselves, i.e., taken abstractly, do not produce any lasting improvement in our lives and in our moral awareness. I have already mentioned an indisputable and firm historical fact, viz., the same and even worse atrocities as those that were committed by the virtuous pagan of Homer's poem with the approval of the social setting were committed thousands of years after it by adherents of the Christian faith, viz., by the Spanish inquisitors and Christian slave-owners.³⁵ They too acted with the approval of their social setting in spite of the rise in the meantime of a higher moral ideal for the individual. Today, only the explicitly insane and professional criminals³⁶ could possibly engage in such behavior. This sudden progress occurred only because moral demands inspired an organized social force, which transformed them into an objective law of life.

IV

The principle of the perfect³⁷ moral good, which was revealed in Christianity, does not abolish the objective structure of the human community but uses it as a form and as an instrument for the embodiment of its unconditional moral content. It demands that human society become an *organized* form of morality. Experience [289] quite obviously shows that when the social setting is not morally organized, the subjective demands of the moral good are inevitably lowered both in oneself and in others. This is why the question does not genuinely concern subjective or objective morality nor personal or social morality. Rather, it concerns only weak or strong morality, i.e., realized or unrealized morality. Every stage of moral awareness inevitably strives for personal and social realization. The difference between the highest and final stage from lower ones certainly does not consist in the fact that at the highest stage morality remains forever merely subjective, i.e., unrealized and powerless—such would be a strange advantage!—but in the fact that this realization must be complete, or³⁸ *all-embracing*. This realization, therefore, demands an incomparably more difficult, complex and protracted process than the previous collective embodiments of morality. The level of the moral good attained in gentile life is embodied easily and freely—without any *history*. Additionally, the formation of extensive national-political groups for the realization of a greater sum and a

³⁵ C] I have already ... Christian slave-owners.] The atrocities that the virtuous pagans of Homer's poem committed with the approval of his social setting were also committed thousands of years later by Christian slave-owners. **B.**

³⁶ C] the explicitly insane and professional criminals] the insane and criminals **B.**

³⁷ C] perfect] absolute **B.**

³⁸ C] complete, or] *Absent in B.*

higher stage of the moral good fills many centuries of history with its peripeteias. How much greater is today's moral task, which Christianity has bequeathed to us and which demands the formation of a proper setting for the real perception of the *unconditional and universal* moral good! The positive conception of this moral good includes the full scope of human relations. In terms of its content, a morally regenerated humanity cannot be poorer than natural humanity. Consequently, our task consists not in destroying existing social divisions but in setting them in their proper, good, or moral, relation to each other. When the cosmic process achieved the creation of higher life forms, the lower form—that of a *worm*—was not excluded as intrinsically unworthy, but given only a new and more appropriate position. The lower form ceased to be the sole and obvious foundation of life (for today). It was absorbed inside the higher life forms to serve, as part of the *digestive system*, as a secondary instrument and was concealed for the sake of beauty. Other forms, predominant at the lower stages, were preserved (not only materially but also formally) as constituent but subordinate parts and organs of a higher whole. Similarly, Christian humanity—the highest form of the collective spiritual life—is realized not in destroying historical social forms and divisions, but [290]in bringing them into a proper relation to itself and to each other in accordance with the unconditional principle of morality.

The demand for such agreement eliminates any justification from moral subjectivism, which rests on an incorrectly conceived interest of the autonomy of the will. The moral will³⁹ should be determined to act exclusively through⁴⁰ itself. Any subordination of it at all to some prescription or command coming *from without* violates its autonomy and must therefore be regarded as unworthy. This is the *true* principle of moral autonomy.⁴¹ However, the organization of the social setting in accordance with the principle of the *unconditional moral good* is not a limitation, but the *fulfillment* of the personal moral will. Such is the very thing that the will wants. I, as a moral being, *want* the moral good to reign on Earth. I *know* that alone I cannot achieve this, and I *see* a collective organization intended to achieve *my* goal. Clearly, this organization not only does not limit me, but, on the contrary, it removes my individual narrow-mindedness, enlarging and strengthening my moral will. Insofar as our own will is moral, each of us inwardly participates in this universal organization of morality, and it is clear that the relative⁴² external limitations on individuals that can follow from this are approved by our own better judgment. Consequently, such limitations can in no way violate our moral autonomy. For the morally inclined person, just one thing is important here, viz., that the collective organization of people⁴³ *actually* be subordinate to the *unconditional moral* principle, that social life *in fact* adhere to the norms of the moral good—justice and mercy—in all instances

³⁹ C] the autonomy of the will. The moral will] moral autonomy. The will **B**.

⁴⁰ C] through] from **B**.

⁴¹ C] This is the *true* principle of moral autonomy.] *Absent in B*.

⁴² C] relative] *Absent in B*.

⁴³ C] people] humanity **B**.

and in all interpersonal relations, and that⁴⁴ the personal social setting become *in its essence*⁴⁵ an *organized form of the moral good*. It is clear that in subordinating oneself to a social setting that is itself actually subordinate to the principle of the unconditional good and conforms to it in practice, the individual cannot lose anything. For the nature of *such* a social setting is, by its very essence, incompatible with any arbitrary limitation on personal rights, to say nothing of outright violence and torture. *The level of the subordination of a person to society should correspond to the level of the subordination of society itself to the moral good*. Without the latter, the social setting has no rights on the individual person. Its rights arise solely from the moral [291]satisfaction or fulfillment that it gives to *each person*. From this perspective, the truth of moral universalism discussed in this chapter receives further explanation and development in the next.

As for the autonomy of the *evil will*, no organization of the moral good can prevent deliberate villains from wanting evil for its own sake and from actively proceeding in this direction. The organization of the moral good, in this respect, has to do only with the external limitations on evil activity that necessarily follow from human nature and from the meaning of history. Concerning the objective limits to objective evil, which are necessarily presupposed by the organization of the moral good but which by no means exhaust it, we will speak later in the chapters on the penal question and on the relations between law and morality.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ C] social life *in fact* ... relations, and that] *Absent in B*.

⁴⁵ C] *in its essence*] *actually B*.

⁴⁶ C] It is clear that ... law and morality.] *Absent in B*.