

## AVATAR: BEFORE THE INTERNET AND BEYOND

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### Abstract

*According to George Lakoff metaphor can be understood as an attribute of everyday language, and metaphor is used in the realm of conventional life. Developing this idea, we may take avatar, an Internet alter ego for a person, as an example of metaphor. However, the practice of communication gives the examples of making avatars much earlier than IT appeared in our life. The author of the article studies using metaphor as a “structural material” for avatar long before Internet – in the XVIII century, in the beginning and the middle of the XX century.*

**Key words:** *metaphor, avatar, Suvorov, story, culture, history, media, journalism, public, Toffler, image, Lakoff*

### WE ARE THE MEDIA, MY FRIEND

Living in contemporary world, we become the users of the abilities normally provided by media in our everyday practice. Nowadays it is rather difficult to meet a person who does not have his account in any social net, even more – only one channel of virtual communication cannot satisfy the majority of people, and we prefer to have different ways of representing ourselves in the community. Surprising though it is we all do in our social nets the similar things as the professional media workers do while producing the media. Opening any book for journalism training, we will definitely find there the statement about things needed for any media. In general, they are the following: the audience, the agenda, the news, and so on. However, modern journalism aimed to be more close to the personal interests of the people starts to refuse from the basic principles taken from a textbook. For example David Brewer, a well-known British journalist and media strategy consultant who has worked as a journalist and manager in print, broadcast and online, gives the advice to “leave the script behind and to retain an open mind”<sup>1</sup> while interviewing. It obviously means that the public is tired of standard media and needs something more close to the social nets where there is not so much formality in the content. In fact nowadays, we are facing the reality when the borders between the traditional and the professional media on the one side and the social or the grass-rooted journalism become more and more flexible. This process inflames a hardline discussion among the specialists who studies media system all around world and creates a great challenge for the professional journalists who are to look for the new ways of competition in order to safe their audience. In this complicated interaction, we cannot ignore the third side – the self-practice in media developing by the audience. Once again – each textbook telling us the history of mass media production would emphasize the link between the professional media and monetary interests of the people. Certainly, each country has its own experience in developing media system as well as in the progression of business. However, in general, we may be sure that practice of making and delivering news turned from the kind of personal creative activity into the regular one together with the public demand on it only under the influence of growing interaction in the field of economy. According to the widely spread view the formula is the following: money – news – money. Not going into details, we may give here just a single example. The English word “newspaper” in Russian translation sounds like “gazeta”, and as we know “gazzetta” was the small money in Italy of the XVI century usually given for the small news digest that contained brief news from political and merchant life. Of course, it would be strange to put into such a simple formula the modern media with their complicated system of working and interaction. Still we are to keep in our mind that as long as communication is getting systematical representation it goes together with business.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.mediahelpingmedia.org/training-resources/journalism-basics/629-how-to-resist-producing-make-believe-journalism>

Now let us turn to the communication in modern society and try to find out in brief what is similar and what is different between professional and non-professional media, and how they influence upon each other. First, let us look at the things, which normal mass media and “grass routed” media have in common. Both of them have the audience. The difference is that the team of a normal mass media has to do a lot in order to find out who is their audience. The audience of the person representing himself in a social media knows perfectly well – all they are the people invited by him as “friends”. As far as the agenda is concerned in the case of a normal media, the agenda highly depends upon the editorial policy. In social media, a person has his own will what to put “on the front page”. One thing here is also remarkable. All the people added as “friends” by somebody add some people to their audience as well. In this case, we may speak about an example of communication among the “home-made” media. The “sophisticated space”<sup>2</sup> what Alvin Toffler talked about in his book “Future Shock” made possible the appearance of the kind of people called by Toffler as “prosumers” – those who produce some of the goods and services entering their own consumption. At the first time, these people were making their own clothes, cooking their own food, rearing their own cars, and hanging their own wallpaper. Finally, we see the “prosumers” in media system; we mean the active users of the social nets. However, information differs from food, clothes or some other kind of simple goods. The process of production and the process of consumption are going together as far as information is concerned. That is why a “media prosumer” producing the information deals with business. Certainly, the scope may be very different. Still each user of a social net usually gives to public some information as far as his occupation is concerned. Thus, we see the example of making a media with a very personal “agenda” and personal audience as well. In this case, the Internet users definitely may say to each other, “We are the media, my friend!” and be very close to the truth.

#### **AVATAR: METAPHOR AS A MESSAGE**

Creating a “prosumer media”, the user of a social net chooses the way to represent himself for the audience. The very first step in this process is to create an avatar. Knowing the word “avatar” with the meaning of online computer identity, we are to keep in our mind that literally the Sanskrit word “avatar” means “descent”, an incarnation of God.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, we may start the discussion of metaphor as a tool for communication just from this point. According to “Yogic Encyclopedia”, Hindus believe an avatar to be a direct manifestation of God. This is comparable to the understanding that the image represented in Facebook or in any other social net is a direct personification of the one to whom this page belongs. The thesis from the first glance looks very simple. On the other hand, we cannot take such suggestion like a direct statement. The only thing we may emphasize definitely is the following. Choosing the image for representing themselves people try to match the information, which is the most important from their point of view. This way they create a message for their audience about the subjects they are interested most of all. On the other hand, the user of a social net may attract attention to the most positive aspects of his personality as well as conceal some “uncomfortable items” with help of avatar. In this case, we deal with mapping from the source domain to a target domain, according to “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor”<sup>4</sup> by George Lakoff. This way we are coming close to understanding of metaphor a little bit different than we traditionally used. Speaking about metaphorical expression of something, we normally understand it like a figure of language. Even more, we often leave metaphor outside everyday language practice. Saying the word “metaphor”, we would sooner link it with poetry or fiction. Certainly, it is utterly impossible to talk about a creation of literature without reminding metaphor as well as it would be hard to find any literature creation without a single metaphor. On the other hand, we cannot ignore the fact of crossing the borders of poetic and novelistic language in using metaphor. “The metaphor is not just a matter of language, but thought and reason. The language is secondary”<sup>5</sup>, states George Lakoff in his book. To our mind, it would be problematic to put language aside in this case, but it is reasonably to pay attention to the following thing. Lakoff emphasizes that metaphor does not come

<sup>2</sup> [http://royallib.com/read/Toffler\\_Alvin/Future\\_Shock.html#40960](http://royallib.com/read/Toffler_Alvin/Future_Shock.html#40960)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ananda.org/yogapedia/avatar/>

<sup>4</sup> Lakoff Goerge “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor”, Cambridge, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Lakoff Goerge “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor”, Cambridge, p. 6.

from some kind of inspiration; it comes from rational purpose of transferring information. How metaphor fulfil the task of transferring information? How a message being “packed” into metaphor reaches the audience? We would venture to suggest – any author of poetry or prose found himself in search of the best metaphor. The scale for evaluating the effect was the most complete and targeted transferring of the message put into this or that creation. Certainly, in this case a fiction author, especially in older times, would base upon his own view and choose the most convincing metaphor up to himself. The answer to the question whether the choice was true or wrong could come long after the author’s life from the further readers. Contemporary user of social net cannot wait so long and he would not. The result of his message will come very soon from his friends in the net. Toffler in his “Future Shock” dedicated a whole chapter to the analysis of the influence of virtual technologies on pace of human life. “We are, in fact, all citizens of the Age of Transience”<sup>6</sup>, Toffler says. Together with many other things, it means that people’s demands for speed of getting messages link with necessity of “high-speed understanding”. That is why people start seeking and using the new tools for communication, trying to transfer into every day context the most effective methods from very different fields. Therefore, we can hardly say nowadays that metaphor will stay just a tool for literature creation. Communicative abilities of metaphor have been checked for ages, and the most authentic proof is existence of literature and consistent request for it in the society. Lakoff, saying, “Metaphors are not mere words”<sup>7</sup>, evidently means that contemporary using metaphor as tool for communication in fact is wider than practice of literary creation. Lakoff speaks about “everyday metaphor” as a tool for transferring meanings and knowledge. This way metaphor becomes a part of communication, accumulates human experience. Modern communication theory, according to Lakoff, deals with philosophy, psychology, cognitive science and the other fields of knowledge. “The contemporary theory of metaphor is thus not only interesting for its own sake. It is especially interesting for the challenge it brings to other disciplines”<sup>8</sup>, resumes George Lakoff in his book. Therefore, we may try to study contemporary metaphor from the point of communication on the material of contemporary practice of communication. A significant element of modern practice in communication is avatar – the image for self-representation in the net. We may take avatar as a kind of contemporary metaphor adopted for the special conditions of use. In this case, to our mind, it will be permissible to take avatar wider than only picture put on the front page in the social net. We suggest understanding “avatar” as a complex image created by the user as a “metaphor of himself”.

## SUVOROV – THE “OPEN” LIFESTORY

Turning to the theme of avatar as a subject we may find a very interesting example in the epoch when IT was too far from human understanding. It was the XVIII century when a widely known historical figure appeared to show the way of becoming a living metaphor. Famous Russian general Alexander Suvorov (1730-1800) told about himself: “My life story, being very well known and very open, will never be told wrongly by any author. The truthful evidences will be always found”<sup>9</sup>. Big amount of literature dedicated to this person definitely justifies his right to declare like this. However, was his life open and well known in fact or not? Can we now, after more than two centuries passed after his death say that we know the true person named Alexander Suvorov from the stories we read in literature? To our mind, these questions come very close to the contemporary problem of distance between the true person and his image. The other thing we are to mention here is that working on his avatar a person opens his life to the public. How to do it in correct way? Answer to this question in contemporary world is among the key problems for current practice in communication. Suvorov’s biography is a very special example of big popularity, “openness” of life, and consequences coming together with this. This subject is more interesting for it belongs to the time long before the technologies of public communication came

<sup>6</sup> [http://royallib.com/read/Toffler\\_Alvin/Future\\_Shock.html#61440](http://royallib.com/read/Toffler_Alvin/Future_Shock.html#61440)

<sup>7</sup> Lakoff George “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor”, Cambridge, p. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Lakoff George “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor”, Cambridge, p. 43.

<sup>9</sup> Here and further on the quotes from Russian language sources related to the XVIII-XIX centuries are translated by the author of the article. The references given at the end.

into our life. So let us see how the life of this person began to open systematically, and what the outcomes were.

Nikolay Grech (1787-1967), a well-known Russian journalist of the XIX century, being a child, became an evident of Suvorov's funeral ceremony in May of 1800. "Folks crowded the streets along which his body was carried, all the people contributed to the Great Russian genius", says Grech in his notes. The epitaph written on his tomb is very short and means a lot for everyone who is familiar with Russian history – "Here lies Suvorov". Even now, the name Suvorov in public opinion really looks like an avatar from Facebook!

One more thing is remarkable. Many authors dedicated their literary creations to Suvorov's life since his being on Earth ended. Russian state library fund contains hundreds of books dedicated to Suvorov's career, his practice as a landowner, his failed family life and his dramatic love to his daughter Nataly. Suvorov's experience in literature – from the well-known "Science of Victory" ("Наука побеждать"<sup>10</sup>) to his classic-styled lyrics – was not out of sight as well. Moreover, all these can be put into a following short quote from the book written by the Russian author Dmitry Ilovaisky (1832-1920): "Being a child Suvorov was too weak, so his farther wanted the son to dedicate his life to the civil career. However, the son was strongly interested in the military tactic, and the farther changed his opinion... Suvorov spend a long time on the low positions in his career for he had nobody to represent him for the authorities, so he had enough time to know and understand the folk, and this knowledge helped him later more and more... Becoming a remarkable figure Suvorov was known for his strange behavior – having a very special life-style, talking by jokes and puzzles he used to show the strict truth". Prose and poetry, and memories appeared during almost two centuries till the really "truthful evidences" were represented to the public. Only in 1986 were published the original letters left after Suvorov, almost two centuries after his death. The author of this article having read plenty of books dedicated to Suvorov before it happened opened the edition of the letters and discovered on its pages quite a different person named Alexander Suvorov.

Before discussing the image given to Suvorov in literature from early lime until nowadays, I would like to make a small aside and to talk about one episode from Suvorov's everyday life. Suvorov's daughter Nataly, an alumna of Smolny Institute, the school for the girls from noble families, was invited as a maid of honor to the court of Katherine the Great (1729-1796), the ruler of the country. Nataly was 16, and her farther gave her advices how to behave in the society close to the imperator's court. One of the advices was very significant: "Please, be especially careful in communication with those who like to show off their humor. Most of such people are not honest". I venture to suggest, many our contemporaries no matter of their cultural belonging would agree with this statement according to their personal life experience. Still this thesis deals with the aspect of behavior culture, which creates a big difference between communicative traditions in Russia and all over the world. Well-known Russian saying sounds literally like: "Smiling without a reason you look like a fool". Professor Svetlana Ter-Minasova, contemporary Russian linguist, describes this phenomenon in her book dedicated to language and intercultural communication. According to Ter-Minasova, smiling in the process of communication in Russian culture traditionally belongs to more close type of communication; people liking to perform jokes in former time were not trusted, often looked suspicious. On the contrary, in many other cultures people smile to each other just for the sake of superficial politeness. Does it mean that the culture which prefer smile in superficial communication is more open that the culture which takes smile as an attribute of more close contact? To our mind, the answer is not so obvious as it could be expected.

Many decades passed, and "smile" as a communicative symbol came into our practice together with IT advantages. Attitude to smile in everyday life changed. However, the image of the person, whom Nikolay Grech called the Great Russian Genius, is quite the same as it was about three centuries ago. So let us now look how this "avatar" had been created and try to find out what is the secret of it's long life.

The basic elements were created by the poet Dmitry Hvostov (1757-1835), married to Suvorov's nephew Agraphena. Suvorov and Hvostov were close friends, and the last place of Suvorov's living was the

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<sup>10</sup> <http://e-libra.su/read/202312-nauka-pobezhdad.html>

apartment rented by Hvostov in Saint Petersburg. It was not prestigious district of the city; narrow streets along the channel flowing to Neva were the place where young Nikolay Grech watched standing in a crowd the last journey of the famous general. Four years later a literary magazine issued in Saint Petersburg published the ode by Hvostov: "I write poetry, being Suvorov's native, I strongly believe to share his glory..." Hvostov later on started to "open" Suvorov's life to the public telling legends about "paradoxes" in his behavior. Each story Hvostov represented like seen with his own eyes. Even more. In order to make himself popular Hvostov placed (and certainly paid for it!) his picture in the shops of the market place. Once his contemporary, a satiric poet Milonov, addressed to him the following:

"Stranger, this muzzle

Makes you to puzzle.

Cry, for I will tell you:

He is Suvorov's nephew!"

People laughed and read more and more stories published by Hvostov. However, it was the proof of the basic thesis in contemporary PR – publicity always brings results.

In 1805 Hvostov, exchanging letters with very famous Russian poet Gavriil Derzavin (1743-1816), got from him an advice to take as an example in poetry his verse: "The life will end, but endless is the fame. The hero is gone, but shines his name". Derzavin, being Suvorov's friend as well, was thinking about his significance for the future generations. "Sounds beautiful, but nothing happens after the life is ended", Hvostov answered. Being very pragmatic person he was sure that public interest cannot be wide without simple storytelling, and the subject of the stories should be clear for the wide range of people. For example, Hvostov tells how Suvorov, being very sick, was visited by an officer who dreamed to get from him congratulations for the awards he recently has. "Who is there? – asked Suvorov in a weak voice. - Me, there is a mission for you, - I replied. - Mission? I am ready! – said Suvorov with conviction". Such a fable does not make the audience to think too much analyzing complicated information. The message is very clear – Suvorov was a good person, kind to the other people, and sometimes his will to help everybody looked a little bit funny. Here we may add that nowadays public opinion still likes such "good guys" who always are helpful.

In 1897 in Saint Petersburg a Russian author, Michail Pilyaev (1842-1899) published his book "Life in the Old Times" ("Старое житье")<sup>11</sup> dedicated to Russian traditions in lifestyle. Two chapters of the book deal with Suvorov's personality. Turning to this material, we may see how the avatar of Suvorov was developing in the same logic as Hvostov started it. One chapter is entitled "One Day in the Life of General Suvorov" and contains the description of Suvorov's everyday life habits, which sometimes look a little bit strange but attractive for the wide audience. For example, Pilyaev tells us about Suvorov's liking birds and animals. In one room of his home, the general made an indoor garden just for the sake of saving small birds from winter cold. The next comes great belief in God, according to Pilyaev, very important for Suvorov. "He prayed very passionately, two times a day, in the morning and in the evening", Pilyaev says. Going along we find out that Suvorov was a very giving person. According to the story, Suvorov almost never had dinner alone; he used to give places at his table about twenty persons. As far as meal concerned, Pilyaev also tells us that Suvorov preferred to refuse to sweet dishes or deserts for to his opinion a right person should not be fond of pleasures. Finally, we get to know from Pilyaev's book that every morning Suvorov got ice-water douche in order to keep himself healthy and resistant to diseases. Putting all these together, we may have practically complete picture of a "good man" according to contemporary PR practice. Opening almost each book learning how to create positive image of a person we would get from it instructions that people will definitely like a man who truly believes in God, helps animals, shares his food with the others and keeps himself far from enjoyment. In addition, healthy way of life is a special point, which is a big demand in modern society. Certainly, we can hardly suggest that Pilyaev, being a historic novelist, could keep in his mind a task to create a special "luxury image" for Suvorov. Nevertheless, it happened so that Suvorov's personality in a strange way became a good material for image making long before such terminology and practice appeared in

<sup>11</sup> <http://e-libra.su/read/374285-staroe-zhit-e.html>

our everyday life. One more remarkable thing, also taken from Pilyaev. In 1898, the author published his very last book dedicated to the outstanding figures from Russian history who were “strange” or “too much original” according to public opinion. Big place in that stories the author again gives to Suvorov. “Great Suvorov, as we all know, used to be very strange in his behavior, so his contemporaries sometimes were in doubt about his mental health”, Pilyaev says. Among all Pilyaev tells the story which could be highly demanded by PR managers nowadays. Suvorov was a friend of a distinguished poet of that age Ermil Kostrov (1755-1796) who is known nowadays as the translator of ancient poetry into Russian language. According to the historical evidences, Kostrov lived very poor life; the publishers did not pay a lot for his works, appreciated by the readers many years later. Pilyaev in his book tells a story about Kostrov who once helped a poor young man with money, which he got from Suvorov as a return gift for the book of translations from ancient poetry. “Suvorov highly appreciated Kostrov, always kept with himself his translations from Ossian. Our contemporaries respect Kostrov for his merit for our literature; however, his work in literature did not enrich him. Kostrov was always in need of money and died being very poor, like Homer”, Pilyaev says. In this story, we may find many aspects of good image. First, we see Suvorov as a giving person, who helps people in need. Second, he appreciates creations of art, which are beyond common understanding in his time. Thus, we see the person who not simply feels sympathy for a person in need, but contributes into the future. Who knows, maybe the poet’s life would be shorter without this help, and he would not have enough time to do for developing our literature all what he did. As far as Suvorov’s “strange” behavior is concerned, we may add here one more remark. Public always likes a person who is able to understand things standing far from common worldview and therefore gains reputation of a “strange” man. Of course, we will not suspect that Suvorov performed all these things for the sake of his image. We will just resume that his biography gives an example of unique story absolutely fit to successful image making.

#### “MARS, SLEEPING ON HEY”

However, Suvorov himself was very ironical about his popularity. One of his biography authors, Suvorov’s headquarter secretary in 1799, Egor Fooks (1762-1829) became the author of the book dedicated to Suvorov’s life-story. The book published in 1811 gained a lot of popularity among the public and a lot of criticism among the professional history authors. Criticism did not stop the author who published one more book and made it more close to the wide community of readers. The author dedicated it especially to funny stories about Suvorov. In one of them Fooks quotes addressed to him the humorous lyrics by Suvorov:

“The triumph goes on,  
You are to be my horn”.

In the same book we may find serious Suvorov’s opinion concerning future evaluation of his deeds. “An employed author of history uses two mirrors, an enlarging one for his employers, and a minimizing one for us. However, the new generations will break into pieces both of them and take their own mirror, which will not show us like dwarfs”, quotes Fooks. According to this, we may conclude that Suvorov in his views was really far ahead of his contemporaries. Once he found himself being very popular, and his popularity, according to normal practice well known nowadays, often was going together with scandals. Suvorov found the style of behavior, which helped him to feel protected in this case, and systematically liked by the public. To our mind, here we may recall the special style of behavior defined by a contemporary Russian author Boris Uspensky as “anti-behavior”<sup>12</sup>. According to Uspensky, “anti-behavior” means that a person openly breaks the rules of behavior strictly adopted by the society. Uspensky also emphasizes remarkable place of “anti-behavior” in Russian culture, especially in Middle age time. Stories about Suvorov told by different authors give us many examples, to our opinion, fit to the conceptions of “anti-behavior”. Among them, we may remind the story, according to which Suvorov once, attending a ceremony at the emperor’s court, publically fall down on the floor. When the servants ran up to him, he quickly jumped up replying: “No-no, Suvorov goes up on his own, nobody helps him”.

<sup>12</sup> <http://ec-dejavu.ru/a/Antibehaviour.html>

Here we may see the clear message concerning a well-known fact from Suvorov's biography about slow developing of his career. We will never know definitely is this story true to facts or is it not, however, long life of this fable shows positive attitude to it from the public.

One more story can be more truthful, because it is reflected in Derzavin's poetry. Poet Derzavin as we already mentioned was Suvorov's trusted friend. Even one of the legends explaining the background of the epitaph on Suvorov's tomb says that the idea of the famous "Here lies Suvorov" belongs to Derzavin. The story we are going to turn to now took place in 1795. According to the order of Katherine the Great, one of the most fashionable palaces of Saint Petersburg was given to Suvorov as a residence. Being a strict antagonist of luxury, Suvorov demanded to bring for him his matrass filled with hey he usually used. Next day each noble citizen has to know how the famous general ridiculed the luxury apartment. Derzavin in his ode called Suvorov "Mars, sleeping on hey in a luxury house". If we look at this case from the contemporary point of view, we will definitely notice that a person who, being on high social position, openly despises wealthy life has all the chances to admire the public.

In the second half of the XX century, a Russian historian novelist Sergey Alekseev (1922-2008) published several books dedicated to Suvorov. Many stories the author tell us are about "strange" behavior of the famous Russian general. We will focus now on one of them. According to the fable, Suvorov highly appreciated smart people. Once he asked one of his soldiers how long would be the way from the Earth to the Moon. "Two Suvorov's marches" the soldier replied. This story told many times in different novels about Suvorov seems to course positive reaction forever, from any public. In addition, we can hardly imagine any contemporary kit for public communication without a story of such kind.

Russian historic author Sergey Grigoriev (1875-1953) published in 1939 his novel dedicated to Suvorov. Nowadays, the novel republished several times is among the popular novels about Suvorov. The novel contains a story called "a soldier's tale". According to the tale, Suvorov once bet with a younger general about who will eat up a pot of porridge faster. The younger general started to take very hot filling out from the pot, burned his mouth and burst into tears. Suvorov took the porridge out and put it on a wide plate. The porridge soon became chill, and Suvorov won. "The moral is: make your opponent to chill out, than eat him up with a big spoon", says the storyteller. This nice story with clear outcome would fit to any pubic, of any age, even of any country.

Summarizing what we already told, we may suggest that avatar of "Mars, sleeping on hey" is a universal image created gradually since early 1800<sup>th</sup> until now. It is a wonderful example of creating avatar long before PR technologies and IT advantages came to our everyday practice.

#### **"WORTH TO BE GLORIFIED BY HOMER"**

Suvorov's contemporary and friend poet Gavriil Derzavin dedicated to Suvorov a big number of odes. In one of them, the author speaks about his views towards attitude to Suvorov in future time. Derzavin makes two statements important for us now. The first is that Suvorov is great figure "worth to be glorified by Homer". According to the second Derzavin's statement, Suvorov will continue to be himself forever, in history like in real life. To our mind, both of the statements have a right to be exact.

We cannot stay definitely, what was Derzavin's idea as far as Homer is concerned. We may just remind that Russian readers of the XVIII century appreciated ancient Greek poetry. However, we may venture to suggest the following. Many centuries passed since Homer created his famous "The Iliad", and the gods and the heroes acting in this epic poem remained forever the same as the author created them. As we may see on the examples given here, the same happened in history to the Russian general Alexander Suvorov. Moreover, he really continued to be himself, self-made-man, whose life created his "avatar" loved by the public for ages.

For the conclusion, to our mind, it would be right to touch one more item. Our contemporaries are talking a lot about the "digital world" we all are facing now and emphasize the big changers the digital technologies bring to our life. In this article, we attempt to show how such things like avatar and image we normally take as attributes of contemporary world could exist and work long before, created in the

world with very different life style. In addition, it means that we should take from our past much more useful experience than we take, may be, expect.

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