

The Christian Precedent Phenomena in L. N. Tolstoy's Novel "Resurrection"

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Abstract

The paper aims to study the specificity of the precedent phenomena with the sphere-source "Christian religion" and their functioning in the novel "Resurrection" by L. N. Tolstoy. The Christian precedent phenomena are investigated within the framework of the linguo-cognitive theory of precedent phenomena. The article analyzes the principal types of precedent phenomena taking into account the possibilities of their transformations in the novel: the precedent names (Jesus Christ, Blessed Virgin Mary, etc.), the precedent utterances, the precedent texts (the Acts of the Apostles, the New Testament, etc.) and the precedent situations. The use of a large number of Christian precedent phenomena is explained by L. N. Tolstoy's religious and philosophical system built on the commandments of Jesus Christ written in the New Testament. The Christian precedent phenomena represent an orienting point for moral postulates included in the strands to the plot of the novel "Resurrection". L. N. Tolstoy did not transform the majority of the Christian precedent phenomena due to his devout attitude to the New Testament as a sacred source, each element of it needs to be reproduced exactly.

Keywords: L. N. Tolstoy, precedent phenomena, Christian, New Testament, Novel, Resurrection

1. Introduction

Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy was one of the greatest writers and thinkers in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. He created his religious and philosophical system, in the center of which, A. V. Potapenkov notes, there are some issues demanding serious philosophical thought: fundamental understanding of God, life purpose, the ratio of good and evil, freedom and the moral perfection of man, the principles of mutual understanding and love of people, nonresistance to evil by force (Potapenkov, 2011). According to A. A. Huseynov, L. N. Tolstoy's religious and moral doctrine reflects his original understanding of God. For L. N. Tolstoy God is uncertain divine start of Spirit who lives in everything and each man. It is God, The Master who orders to act morally, do good and back out of evil. L. N. Tolstoy perceived the teaching of Jesus Christ sincerely and considered Him as the Master, Teacher, Prophet of moral values which are necessary for attaining earthly blessedness. L. N. Tolstoy thought that the primary goal of man is to follow divine commandments, keeping them one can get the reason for being and find the way of true life (Huseynov, 2008). L. N. Tolstoy's religious and philosophical system turned into the direction of Russian thought called "the teachings of Tolstoyist" which had numerous followers in various strata of society in Russia and overseas (Raspaeva, 2013, p. 16). In 1990 there was the turning point in the development of national and foreign Tolstoyism. During this time L.

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N. Tolstoy's major religious and philosophical works were reissued stimulating numerous investigations in the diverse fields of L. N. Tolstoy's works aiming to analyze the life-purpose spiritual strivings of L. N. Tolstoy's literary characters, to study L. N. Tolstoy's religious system in relation to Christian concept of nonresistance to evil by force, L. N. Tolstoy's ideas of essence of good, evil and human freedom in the context of the author's life-purpose understanding and many other aspects of L. N. Tolstoy's religious system. However the existing linguistic researches in the sphere of the sacred, i. e. phenomena connected with religion, in L. N. Tolstoy's works are not numerous, it is not in congruence with the significance of religion in L. N. Tolstoy's works. The aim of the article is to analyze the precedent phenomena with the source-sphere "Christian religion" to be found in L. N. Tolstoy's novel "Resurrection".

2. Methodology

The research is based on the intertextuality theory stating that, according to N. Pierre-Gro, no text can be written regardless of what was written before it; any text carries with it, in a more or less visible form, the traces of a certain heritage and the memory of tradition (Pierre-Gro, 2008, p.48). Intertextuality, N. Pierre-Gro notes, "doesn't reveal a new phenomenon, but allows us to reinterpret and to master forms of explicit and implicit intersections of the two texts" (Pierre-Gro, 2008, p. 49). In this article intertextuality is understood by us as "a conscious authorial intertextuality generating the own text with the assertion of the creative personality, as we build a complex system of relationships with the texts of other authors" (Fateeva, 1998, p. 12). Besides, we also turn to the precedence theory worked out by D. B. Bagaeva, D. B. Gudkov, V. V. Krasnykh, et al. Precedent phenomena are defined from the perspective of the linguo-cognitive approach (Gudkov, 1997, p.82). All precedent phenomena can be verbal (texts in the broadest sense of the word) and nonverbal (painting, sculpture, architecture, musical creations, etc.) (Gudkov, 1997, p. 82-83). The verbal precedent phenomena include precedent name and precedent utterance, for verbalizing, i.e. amenable to verbalization, are the precedent situation and precedent text (Krasnykh, 2003, p. 171-172). So the units of the precedent phenomena found in the work of L. N. Tolstoy are precedent names, precedent utterances, precedent situations and precedent texts. The methods of cultural linguistics, cognitive linguistics, linguoconceptology have been applied, as well.

3. Analysis

Identifying the specific use of the precedent phenomena related to Christianity in various works of L. N. Tolstoy and at various stages of his career, we found out that the appeal to the Christian precedent phenomena is the most frequent in the novel "Resurrection". This is due to the fact that this work was written in a crucial period of L. N. Tolstoy's creativity in 1880. In the novel L. N. Tolstoy put the most acute issues of Russian life in the last third of the 19th century. The radical change perpetrated in the mind of the writer, reflected primarily in the experience of the novel's characters, their spiritual insight, refracting their lives. The main character of the novel, Dmitry Nekhlyudov follows a path of moral purification, spiritual enlightenment by initiation to the precepts of the Christian teachings in the New Testament, comparing his life and actions with the gospel truths of Jesus Christ (Raspava, 2013, p. 77).

In this article we stick to the basic definition of precedent phenomena given by V. V. Krasnykh (2003) from the viewpoint of the linguo-cognitive approach: 1) well-known to all

representatives of national linguo-cultural communities ("having a superpersonal character"); 2) relevant in cognitive (cognitive and emotional) plan; 3) appeal which is constantly renewed in the speech of representatives of a particular national-linguistic-cultural community (p.170).

It should be noted that the Christian religion was based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ written in the New Testament. In this analysis we consider the Christian precedent phenomena referring to the New Testament as the Old Testament was not used by the author in the novel "Resurrection". In his work L. N. Tolstoy mentions religious movements and organizations: 1) Old Belief, which has two directions: *popovstvo* and *bezpopovtsy*; 2) Orthodox sect of neophytes; 3) Sabbatarians; 4) *Khlysty*; 5) *Molokans*; 6) *Skoptsy*.

The first type of precedent phenomena to be analyzed is precedent names which are defined by D. B. Gudkov (2003) as "an individual name associated or 1) with the well-known text, which, as a rule, precedent (e.g., *Oblomov*, *Taras Bulba*), or 2) a situation widely known to native speakers and serving as a precedent (e.g., *Ivan Susanin*, *Columbus*), the name is a symbol pointing to some reference set of specific qualities (*Mozart*, *Lomonosov*)" (p. 108).

The dominant precedent name is *Jesus Christ*, because Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of Christian doctrine consisting of precepts of the Savior, the interpretation of which formed the basis for Tolstoy's religious-ethical conception (Potapenkov, 2011):

"Beloved brothers and sisters, let us for moment consider what we are doing, how we are living, how we have offended against the all-loving Lord, how we make **Christ** suffer..." (Tolstoy, part 2, chapter 17).

This context emphasizes the full range of features that belong to *Jesus Christ*: His divine nature, His acts, who is glorified in the prayers at worship services:

Then he continued: "Of angel the Creator and Lord of powers, **Jesu** most wonderful, the angels' amazement, **Jesu** most powerful, of our forefathers the Redeemer. **Jesu** sweetest, of patriarchs the praise, **Jesu** most glorious, of kings the strength. **Jesu** most good, of prophets the fulfilment. **Jesu** most amazing, of martyrs the strength. **Jesu** most humble, of monks the joy. **Jesu** most merciful, of priests the sweetness. **Jesu** most charitable, of the fasting the continence. **Jesu** most sweet, of the just the joy. **Jesu** most pure, of the celibates the chastity. **Jesu** before all ages of sinners the salvation. **Jesu**, son of God, have mercy on me" (Tolstoy, part 1, chapter 39).

Jesus Christ was resurrected after being crucified on the cross. In honor of the resurrection of *Christ*, believers say the phrase "*Christ is Risen!*" during the celebration of this event:

Everything seemed festive, solemn, bright, and beautiful: the priest in his silver cloth vestiments with gold crosses; the deacon, the clerk and chanter in their silver and gold surplices; and the continual blessing of the people by the priests, who held candles decorated with flowers, and repeated the cry of "**Christ is risen! Christ is risen!**" (Tolstoy, part 1, chapter 15).

Jesus Christ is as the Son of God, the Martyr who sacrificed Himself for the salvation of people:

Yet there is a way to be saved. Here it is – a joyful, easy way. The salvation is the blood shed for us by **the only Son of God**, who gave himself up to torments for our sake. His sufferings, His blood will save us (Tolstoy, part 2, chapter 17).

The consideration of examples, emphasizing the differential features inherent to the considered precedent name, showed that the nature of the characteristic can be determined by context. The examples can be traced to the emotional coloring of L. N. Tolstoy's attitude to Jesus

Christ, delivered through the characters of the work. The appeal to the name Jesus Christ allows the writer more vividly to express the viewpoint to the events described in the works, to present the priorities in the lives of believers, guiding them to the source of faith and salvation to Christ (Raspaeva 2013, p. 119).

The precedent names *Blessed Virgin Mary, the Apostle Peter, Mary called Magdalene* are found in the novel for they have a direct connection with Jesus Christ. *Blessed Virgin Mary* was the mother of Jesus Christ, she represents a beautiful image of humility and meekness. *Mary* is venerated in the Orthodox Church and is gloried in church divine worship:

Now, to the blessed, most pure, and most holy Mother of God», the priest cried ... and the choir began solemnly to sing that it was very right to glorify the **Virgin Mary**, who had borne Christ without losing her virginity, and was therefore worthy of great honour than some kind of cherubim, and great glory than some kind of seraphim (Tolstoy, part 1, chapter 39).

The Apostle Peter was one of the disciples of Jesus Christ, he encapsulates “the rock” on which Christ built His church. He preached the teachings of Christ about forgiveness, based on the commandment: “love your neighbor as yourself” (The Bible, the New Testament, Luke, 10, 27).

The answer he could not find was the same that Christ gave to **Peter**. It was that we should forgive always an infinite number of times because there are no men who have not sinned themselves, and therefore none can punish or correct others (Tolstoy, part 3, chapter 28).

Mary Magdalene, out of whom Christ cast seven demons, was the witness of Jesus’ crucifixion and the first who saw the risen Jesus:

... it was said that Christ, having risen from the dead before flying up to heaven to sit down at His Father’s right hand, first showed Himself to **Mary Magdalene**, out of whom He had driven seven devils, and then to eleven of His disciples, and ordered them to preach the Gospel to the whole creation (Tolstoy, part 1, chapter 39).

The frequency of the use of the precedent names of the New Testament characters indicates the degree of their influence on the characters of Tolstoy's works, including the name of Jesus Christ as a leader, being the center of the Christian doctrine (Raspaeva, 2013, p. 97).

Now let us view another type of precedent phenomena – precedent utterances. Precedent utterance is defined as a reproducible product of a speech-cognitive activity; a complete and an all-sufficient unit that may or may not be predictable; a complex symbol where the sum total of its components is not equal to its meaning, the latter always surpassing the sum of the basic meanings; the cognitive basis includes the precedent utterance itself. Precedent utterances include quotations from various texts (Krasnykh, 2003, p. 172-173).

L. N. Tolstoy used many Christian precedent utterances in the epigraphs and in the text without any transformations, in the canonical form written in the New Testament:

(In the epigraphs) “*Then came Peter to Him, and, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?*” – *Matthew, c. XVIII; v. 21. “Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times: but until seventy times seven”* (v. 22) (Tolstoy, part 1, chapter 1).

“*And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye!*” (*Matthew, c. VII, v. 3*) (Tolstoy, part 1, chapter 1).

“*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her*”. – *John, c. VIII, v. 7* (Tolstoy, part 1, chapter 1).

"The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master" – Luke, c. VI, v. 40 (Tolstoy, part 1, chapter 1).

(In the text) "Seek ye first the Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Tolstoy, part 3, chapter 28).

Some precedent utterances are given in the transformed form to show the author's own peculiar understanding of the commandments of Christ, how people should live and act in daily life to achieve happiness:

The first (Matt. V. 21-26), that man should not only do no murder, but not even be angry with his brother, should not consider any one worthless: "Raca", and if he has quarreled with any one he should make it up with him before bringing his gift to God – i.e., before praying" (Tolstoy, part 3, chapter 28; the prototext: "You have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment". But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, "You fool!" shall be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison; truly, I say to you, you will never get out till you have paid the last penny (The Bible, the New Testament, Matthew, 5. 21-26).

The second (Matt. V. 27-32), that man should not only not commit adultery but should not even seek for enjoyment in a woman's beauty, and if he has once come together with a woman he should never be faithless to her (Tolstoy, part 3, chapter 28; the prototext: "You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery". But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell. "It was also said, "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce". But I say to you that every one who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery (The Bible, the New Testament, Matthew, 5. 27-32).

The third (Matt. 33-37), that man should never bind himself by oath (Tolstoy, part 3, chapter 28; the prototext: "Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn". But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair write or black. Let what you say be simply "Yes" or "No"; anything more than this comes from evil (The Bible, the New Testament, Matthew, 5. 33-37).

The fourth (Matt. 38-42), that man should not only not demand an eye for an eye, but when struck on one cheek should hold out the other, should forgive an offence and bear it humbly, and never refuse the service others demand of him (Tolstoy, part 3, chapter 28; the prototext: "You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any one would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well; and if any one forces

you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to him who begs from you, and do not refuse him who would borrow from you (The Bible, the New Testament, Matthew, 5. 38-42).

The fifth (Matt. 43-48), that man should not only not hate his enemy and not fight him, but love him, help him, serve him (Tolstoy, part 3, chapter 28; the prototext: “You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy”. But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect (The Bible, the New Testament, Matthew, 5. 43-48).

The third type of the precedent phenomena used by L. N. Tolstoy is a precedent text, the actualization of precedent texts occurs through the name or the name of the author who wrote the text: *the Gospel of St. Mark, St. Matthew, the Acts of the Apostles, the New Testament, the Sermon on the Mount*. D. B. Gudkov (2003) defines a precedent text as a complete and self-sufficient product of speech-thinking activity, (poly)predicative unit, a complex symbol, the sum of the component values is not equal to its meaning. Precedent texts include works of fiction (“Eugeny Onegin”, “Borodin”), lyrics, advertising, political and journalistic texts, etc. (p. 106-107):

Besides this, several verses from **the Acts of the Apostles** were read by the deacon ... and then the priest read very distinctly a part of **the Gospel according to St. Mark**, in which it said that Christ, having risen from the dead before flying up to heaven to sit down at His Father’s right hand (Tolstoy, part 1, chapter 39).

He gave away two **Testaments** in the cell (Tolstoy, part 3, chapter 26).

When he had read **the Sermon on the Mount**, which had always touched him, he saw in it for the first time today ... simple, clear, practical laws (Tolstoy, part 3, chapter 28).

The precedent texts with the source-sphere “Christian religion” point to the sources of the philosophical views of L. N. Tolstoy’s characters.

The fourth group includes a precedent situation, which is a kind of “sample”, “ideal” situation with certain connotations, cognitive base includes a set of differential characteristics of the precedent situation (Gudkov, 2003, p. 107). The Christian precedent situations are associated with the life, activity, persecution, martyrdom of Jesus Christ and His disciples:

As they **persecuted Christ**, so they persecute me. They seize me, and take me before the courts and before the priests, the Scribes and the Pharisees ... I have no parents except God and the Mother Earth. God is my father (Tolstoy, part 3, chapter 21).

The next precedent situation represents the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ with the crown of thorns, put by the Roman soldiers upon the head of Christ during the crucifixion, it is a symbol of the Savior’s sufferings:

In the right corner hung a case, with an image of **Christ crowned with thorns** and beneath it stood a lectern, and on the same side the prosecuting attorney’s desk (Tolstoy, part 1, chapter 7).

Thus, the high frequency and diversity of the references to the Gospel belonging to the source-sphere “New Testament” confirms the thesis that the New Testament is the core in the religious and moral teachings, beliefs and works of L. N. Tolstoy. The use of the Christian

precedent phenomena promotes to incarnation of the writer's intentions, reflects his religious philosophical views and encourages the creation of vivid emotional images of the characters.

4. Conclusion

The conclusions of the research show that all types of the precedent phenomena with the source-sphere "Christian religion" are found in the novel "Resurrection" by L. N. Tolstoy: the precedent names (Jesus Christ, Blessed Virgin Mary, the Apostle Peter, St. Mark, St. Matthew, Mary Magdalene), the precedent utterances, the precedent situations related to Jesus Christ and His disciples, the precedent texts (the Acts of the Apostles, the New Testament, Gospel of Mark, John, Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount). The use of the Christian precedent phenomena is a characteristic feature of L. N. Tolstoy's writing. This is especially noticeable in the novel "Resurrection" written within the turning period of L. N. Tolstoy's creative work, during which the author took a new look at the importance of the Christian commandments of Christ, which, according to L. N. Tolstoy, are a perfect expression of moral compulsory standards in any society. L. N. Tolstoy formulated his own interpretation of understanding the reason for being, mission effectuation, the need for self-improvement, conformation unto Jesus Christ (Raspava 2013, p. 137). The Christian precedent phenomena found in the novel, are with close links to L. N. Tolstoy's religious and moral system, the heart of which is his nonresistance to evil by force formulated on the ground of the Christian religion. The best part of the Christian precedent phenomena in the novel are used in the form given in the New Testament by reason of L. N. Tolstoy's careful attitude to the truths of the gospel that are written without any changes. The Christian precedent phenomena reveal L. N. Tolstoy's conception of the Christian intention rendered by means of the narrative strands of the novel and the characters.

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