

THE PASCHAL ARCHETYPE OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE AND THE STRUCTURE OF BORIS PASTERNAK'S NOVEL *DOCTOR ZHIVAGO*

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Abstract

Although Christian subtext of Russian literature has already been the subject of study but the problems of poetics of this literature have been inspected without any correlation with the most important structural particularities of orthodox liturgical annual cycle. Usually researches tend to work with nothing more but evangelical reminiscences, motives or the peculiarities of the plot buildings. The author of the article pays attention to the fact that the first original composition of Russian literature is Easter preaching of metropolitan Ilarion and the most favorite Gospel among people is the Gospel of John, the beginning of which they always read in the churches when it is the first day of the Easter. Taking this into account, the author of the article insists that the dominant of Russian Culture and Russian literature is the special Easter archetype. It is implied by this term, as distinct from K.-G. Jung's "archetype", not "the collective unconscious" but "the cultural unconscious". If the dominant of occidental cultural tradition is the Christmas archetype, then in Russian Orthodoxal tradition the dominant is Easter archetype. It is not the question of the opposition but the one of the different accents in Christian culture which is common for Orient and Occident; and these accents go back to the formation of oriental and occidental types of Christianity. The author of the article shows in what way exactly the Easter archetype determines the structure of the novel "Doctor Zhivago" written by Pasternak which begins with the scene of the burial and ends with the words about the resurrection and appear before God. So, we have the special Easter novel before us, the main hero of which has the name of "Zhivago" ("Alive") and it is the word we can hear while Eucharist is going on and it symbolizes the deep connection between the life of every human being and the way which Christ passed to the resurrection. Thus, the subject of the Pasternak's novel is the pilgrimage to Christ which is concealed in his poetics and which every reader of the novel makes, according to the author's idea.

THE MOST important events in the history of a national culture are always symbolic in their own special way, although their symbolism does not appear immediately but only down through the vast corridors of 'great time' (M.M. Bakhtin). The history of Russian literature begins with *The Sermon on the Law and Grace* of Metropolitan Hilarion.¹ Mediaevalists are not in agreement as to the precise year when this *Sermon* was delivered, although this is not the real crux of the matter: the words of this *Sermon* were heard either before the service on Paschal Morning or on the first day of Paschal.² Thus, this Paschal homily, apparently, *is at one and the same time the source of Russian literature* as such. This fact has not as yet been given enough thought and attention. Up to the present, in actual fact, it has not been the subject of any special scholarly investigation. However, when one tries to 'examine the Christian basis of Russian literature'³ it is necessary in one way or another to interpret the position of *The Sermon* of Metropolitan Hilarion with regard to the yearly Orthodox cycle.

Let us now turn our attention to a remarkable circumstance for our national literature: for Metropolitan Hilarion the central important opposition between the Law and Grace appeared in the first liturgy of Paschal not only because the first Gospel reading at the Paschal Vigil was the beginning of John's Gospel, but also because essentially that reading *culminates* precisely at verse seventeen where the Law of Moses and the Grace of Christ are juxtaposed. Thus, for the Orthodox world, there arose a kind of semantic unity of the Gospel text perceived by them, the boundaries of which were the first lines of John's Gospel 'Before the world was created, the Word already existed; He was with God, and He was the same as God' and verse seventeen 'God gave the law through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ'. This final highlighting of Christ at the Paschal celebration was an unquestionable fact in the awareness of every Orthodox believer.

It should not be forgotten that for many generations of Russians the basis of familiarisation with the texts of Holy Scripture was not through reading at home, but through the liturgical service.⁴ And so we will also observe that verse seventeen, which we quoted above, was additionally highlighted by the very order of the liturgy itself: 'when the seventeenth verse is proclaimed all the bells are rung and powerfully sound out'.⁵ The Lectionary Gospels and the Apostle, that is to say the texts selected for use during the liturgy, were divided into special sections (*Gospel units*—or the Latin '*incipit*'). This division does not correspond with the divisions into chapters. John's Gospel consists of 67 *Gospel units*. Each *Gospel unit* represents a whole and finished entity. The semantic item we examined above is also, in actual fact, one of those *Gospel units* and one which provides a special setting of expectation for Orthodox Christians since the moveable yearly Church cycle (*Sinaksariŭ*) begins on Paschal Day.

Unfortunately, in the course of research into Russian literature, it has been the custom to undervalue the following matter with regard to our national literature: in the Russian Orthodox tradition John's Gospel is not the 'fourth' Gospel but the 'first'. John's Gospel does not only open the Lectionary Gospel which was widespread throughout Russia (the famous Ostromir Gospel reveals this, as is well known, and it was the short Lectionary Gospel) but also, apparently, judging by the Life of Saint Cyril, this Slav evangelist actually began with John's Gospel.

I have written elsewhere about the special *Christocentricity* which is present not only in old Russian literature but also in Russian New Age literature.⁶ This Christocentricity brings about in turn its own paradox when in one and the same text a Gospel 'uncompromisingness' (which derives from the author's orientation towards the highest moral ideal which is Jesus Christ) is combined with a shortening of the distance between sinners and the righteous (since both are imperfect, not worthy of Christ but at one and the same time both deserve *equally* pity, love and concern—right to the point where, according to Orthodox tradition, the Fool for Christ can even become a Saint.)

However, Christocentricity is also a most important feature of Christian culture as such. The yearly cycle of the Church is precisely focussed on the events of the Life of Christ. The most important of these are His Birth and His Resurrection. Correspondingly, the most important events of the liturgical cycle are the celebration of Christmas and Paschal. If, in Western tradition, one can observe the emphasis placed more on Christmas (and correspondingly one can speak of a Christmas archetype), then in the Eastern Church the celebration of the Resurrection is the main Festival not only at a confessional level,⁷ but at the general cultural level,⁸ and this allows us to come to the conclusion that there exists a special *Paschal archetype* which has a special significance for Russian culture.

In classical 19th century literature this archetype is the one which dominates, and, moreover this too in the works of writers who have completely different directions. It will be sufficient to recall, for example, the Paschal rejoicing in *The Brothers Karamazov*, the time coinciding with Paschal of Raskolnikov's rising from the dead⁹ and the final 'recovery of sight' and repentance of Porfiry Golovlev 24 hours before the Resurrection of Christ, among others.

However, in the works of Russian Symbolism one can observe a blending together of this liturgical emphasis, though slightly in favour of Christmas (a lesser attempt at such a combination can be observed in the poetics of the Russian Baroque of the 17th century), accompanied by other characteristic cultural transformations.¹⁰ In this sense, Symbolism represents an enormous 'revolution' as far as the existing cultural traditions are concerned; this is of especial interest because of the global mixture of aesthetic leitmotifs of Russian culture for which the crossing from the Paschal archetype to the Christmas

one is characteristic—when the emphasis is not placed upon the death and subsequent Resurrection of Christ but upon His coming into the world, upon His Birth, which gives hope for the ‘reconstruction’ of this earthly world. For example, it is not by chance that Alexander Blok is interpreted precisely as a ‘manifestation’ of Christmas in Pasternak’s novel.

Russian Futurism, albeit in a rather brutal way, nevertheless continues along the same ‘Christmas’ line as Symbolism. Also, in the aesthetics of Socialist Realism, one may also observe that, in a somewhat profane way, the Paschal archetype has been substituted by the Soviet variant of the Christmas archetype.

What kind of relationship does Pasternak’s novel have with these different directions of our cultural traditions? As far as the structure of the text is concerned, one may observe a return to a different and earlier version of Christocentricity than the one which Symbolism had tried to implement—one may observe a return to the Paschal version.

Doctor Zhivago does not begin with a death scene and it does not begin with the representation of death—and this is very important. It depicts the scene of a funeral; moreover, one must bear in mind that ‘The Eternal Memory’, according to the rites of Orthodox burial, is sung before the body is taken out of the church and also en route from the church to the cemetery. Thus, from the very outset, a special timeless perspective is created since not only human voices sing ‘The Eternal Memory’ but also ‘...the sound of their feet, the horses and the gusts of wind seemed to carry on their singing’ (I, I, 7). In this way it seemed as though the entire world was taking part in the funeral rites.¹¹ The start of the novel might correspond to the prayer of St John Chrysostom: ‘Oh Lord, grant me tears and remembrance of the dead and tenderness’.

Already in this singing there is in the first paragraph of the text the presence of a Paschal source: the transfer of events from the earthly sphere to a different measurement of time—eternity—as hierarchically more important. It must be noted that this and the theme of memory (one of the most important in the novel which is ‘declared right from the very first page by the name of the psalm which was being sung during the church funeral service’¹²) set a definite Christian perspective of expectation for the reader of the text.

In the second paragraph the Paschal theme appears in the words addressed to the recently deceased woman—*May she rest in peace*—and here too attention is again carried over into another sphere, that of a person’s heavenly existence after death. In this paragraph too for the first time the name Zhivago appears. Naturally this name appears at the outset and not in the later context of the ‘infinite variety of objects bore the name Zhivago...’ There were Zhivago factories, a Zhivago bank, Zhivago buildings, a Zhivago tie-pin, even

a round shaped cake . . .’ (1,3,9) and specifically in the context of a funeral and of heavenly existence after death. Here too, for the first time, the semantics of this surname are brought into play—the form of the genitive case of the Church Slavonic adjective ‘alive/living’ (*‘zhivij’*). ‘Why are you looking among the dead for one who is alive?’ (Luke 24:5)—thus the angels addressed the women who had come to the tomb of Christ. And so there is a graphic coincidence of the surname of Dr. Zhivago with one of the names of Christ which is also linked to a Paschal leitmotif.¹³ We also underline the most important liturgical aspect for the poetics of the novel of these names. The prayer of St John Chrysostom¹⁴ is heard during the liturgy of the faithful just before the Eucharist when this confession of faith, following the words of the celebrant, is repeated collectively by those who are going to receive communion, as they approach the sacrament. Thus, by the very naming of the protagonist one may detect the *liturgical implications* of his life in the same way as the liturgy is a symbolical description of the life and sacrifice (literally ‘feat’) of Christ, from His Birth to His Crucifixion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension. At one and the same time this liturgical context of the understanding of Pasternak’s novel allows us to be aware of not only the author’s initial conforming (*connection*) of the fate of Yury Zhivago to the way of Christ (imitation of Christ?) by means of the hidden mystery of the Eucharist which appears in his naming, but also all the imperfections (sinfulness) of the main character who was able to say completely about himself that of all those who have sinned ‘I am the first among them’, using the expression of St John Chrysostom.

The death of Yury Zhivago’s father in the materialistic context of the understanding of things can be fully explained by his psychic irresponsibility. But, it is typical that it was the ‘*expert in law*’, the lawyer Komarovsky, who proposed that explanation: ‘He was an alcoholic. What can you expect? A typical result of D.T.s’ (1,7,18). Within this chapter there is a correction which complicates the situation: ‘Each time that nervous wreck of a man calmed down, his lawyer and travelling companion had come from their first-class coach to fetch him to drink champagne . . . It was hard to escape the feeling that his client’s ceaseless agitation had been somehow to his advantage’ (1,7,19).

However this situational complication of relations between the lawyer and his client is not the profound reason for the suicide. As we know, the prayer of Yury Zhivago to his Guardian Angel about his ‘as though newly canonised’ mother (1,6,15–16), but not about his ‘missing father’ (1,7,19), immediately precedes this episode compositionally:

Suddenly he remembered that he had not prayed for his missing father as Mariya Nikolaevna had taught him to do. But his fainting fit had left him

with such a sense of lightness and well-being that he was unwilling to risk losing it... And it occurred to him that nothing much would happen if he prayed for his father another time. "He can wait. He can be patient"... so he thought. (1,6,16)

However, exactly at this time ('at just after five') his tormented father 'rushed... and threw himself head first, out of the express on to the embankment' (1,5,14), just as though he were begging for mercy but not having received the help of the prayers of his son. Such a detailed time coordinate appears in the novel in another chapter, sharply contrasting with its general religious/philosophical content. Therefore the accuracy of the indication, which is completely unmotivated by the plot, can be interpreted by the mystical link between the unsaid prayer for the father and his suicide.

The word from the boy's prayer 'Mama was so good... Lord, have *mercy* on her' (1,6,15) and the word of the father 'Well I never, is the law as *merciful* as that' (1,7,19) come close together (spatially by the author's wishes, although 'unintentionally' for the characters, and they, that is, father and son, are thus brought close; this closeness is accompanied by the voice of the late mother of the main protagonist: 'Like an aural hallucination his mother's voice haunted him... as though she was calling him to her...'—1,6,15) so that in the end they do not join together. God's mercy and the hope of the more merciful law of Gordon than that proposed by Komarovskiy appear in different areas which do not intersect with each other.¹⁵ The despairing movement of the father corresponds to the words of his son 'He can wait. He can be patient' (1,6,16): 'At the end he had rushed into their compartment and had seized Grigory Osipovich by the hand, tried to tell him something but found he could not' (1,7,20). One might suppose that if Grigory Osipovich 'having run after that lunatic' (1,7,17) was not able to restrain Yury Zhivago's father, then the word of the prayer might have done that, such a word being truly 'restraining' but that word was not uttered.

The Orthodox Paschal cycle often appears as being definitive for the temporal organisation of the text. Thus, the very first mention of time in the novel is measured by the Orthodox Feast of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin: 'It was the Eve of the Feast of the Intercession' (1,2,8). On occasions, two temporal coordinates are given, one belonging to the world of nature and one to Christianity. For example: 'Winter was at its end. It was Holy Week, the end of Lent' (10,2,305); 'at the seventh hour by Church time, one in the morning by ordinary time' (10,3,305); 'it was the third day not of late Paschal and not of early Spring' (10,7,318). On other occasions, only an Orthodox time system of coordinates is present. For example: 'It was the night of Holy Thursday, the Day of the Twelve Gospels' (10,3,306); 'it was either Holy Tuesday or Wednesday' (13,17,407); 'the days after the Feast of the

Dormition' (6,5,183). In this way the Christian chronotope of the novel take part essentially in the reconstruction of an Orthodox picture of the world, overcoming the single measurement of linear time.

B.M. Gasparov, using a different scholarly approach, has written interesting material about this overcoming of time as 'the overcoming of death', highlighting the 'temporal counterpoint' as the principle which gives form to Pasternak's novel.¹⁶ However, Gasparov's attempt to limit himself in his interpretation only to the context of the 19th and 20th centuries, that is, to the 'times' of the author, although this is widely understood, nevertheless leads to the typical 'locking into the epoch' (M.M. Bakhtin).

As a result, the idea of overcoming death, as Gasparov suggests, is associated 'in a natural way' with the philosophical system of N.F. Fedorov,¹⁷ while, according to this approach, Pasternak's novel itself is an 'artistic equivalent of the mystical-philosophical "common cause"'.¹⁸ However, the already special richness of the text of *Doctor Zhivago* with its liturgical allusions allows us to see the work also within the 'great time' of Orthodox culture. When we adopt this research approach, the Paschal archetype of this culture is also apparent in the novel's idea of the overcoming of death, while the 'common cause', being a literal translation into Russian of the Ancient Greek 'literaia', already by this very fact brings up to date the centuries-old Christian tradition, just as the naming of Zhivago underlines its Slavonic Orthodox variant and Eucharistic idea. We note here, however, that Fedorov's philosophical system, to which often the works of the great Russian writers of the 20th century and also entire artistic movements are traced, with his idea of the common cause of the resurrection of the fathers, is one of the original philosophical versions of the Orthodox conciliar variants and of the Paschal archetype.

The Christmas archetype also appears in Pasternak's text—however in a very unique way. There is an entire Christmas section in the structure of the novel. We have in mind here the third part which is called 'The Christmas Tree at the Sventitskys'. Precisely at this part Yury Zhivago thinks of Blok as 'the phenomenon of Christmas in all areas of Russian life' (3,10,82). Essentially this is the continuation of the thought of the main hero. Instead of an article about Blok, Zhivago suggests that simply 'it is necessary to paint the Russian worship of the Magi' (3,10,82). But this 'worship' is precisely the Russian variation of the already existing type of painting—but in a non-Russian world: 'the Adoration of the Magi, like the Dutch have' (3,10,82). That last clarification is very significant; what is being talked about here is only the giving of local colour: 'with frost, wolves and a dark spruce forest' (3,10,82). This is not 'couleur locale' of a universal/ecumenical event but the local colouring of a European local cultural type: 'like the Dutch have'. Thus, Christmas here appears not through an Orthodox icon with the depiction of the Magi, but as an attribute of a world with a different culture, which must be adapted on to local soil.

It is within this section that Lara shoots Komarovsky, and also while the others are celebrating round the Christmas tree the invalid Anna Ivanovna dies from an attack of asthma. It is typical that during the Requiem in this same third part the narrator notes with regard to his main character: Yury 'felt that he was at one with the entire universe'; 'there was no kind of piety in his feelings' (3,15,89). Exactly here, incidentally, work with corpses in the mortuary is shown, although Zhivago completed his anatomy classes 'four years previously' (3,2,66).

One can, of course, respond that it is precisely in Part 3 that the separate lines from Yury Zhivago's poem 'A candle burned on the table' appear (3,10,82). However, we suggest that it is no accident that the hopes of the main character for a *natural* completion of the poem do not come true in the Christmas context of the novel. Yury Zhivago hopes that 'the continuation would take shape by itself' but 'that did not happen' (3,10,82). Thus the timeless plan of being, linked to the poems—even to those which have a Christmas theme—cannot be completed within the confines of the Christmas part of an Paschal novel¹⁹ and thus is completed, but based on other things, in different parts of the novel. It is not by chance that the third part concludes not with the reflections of the main protagonist about the manifestation of Christmas, but about *death* and art, which, as he thinks is about death—'(art) it is always meditating upon death and it is always thereby creating life' (3,19,92).

We notice that the thoughts of Yury Zhivago about the creative truth of the revolution and socialism (in which one can glimpse a hint of the Christmas 'direction' for the transformation of the world) also come to completion with *the failure of the main protagonist* (the failed encounter with Lara who leaves soon after this.) This precise speech by Yury Zhivago about the Revolution as the long-awaited flood and Russia as the kingdom of socialism are accompanied by a storm and are defined as 'empty words'²⁰: 'It seems that there has been a storm while we were throwing all these empty words about' said someone' (6,4,181). After other conversations about the 'earthly reconstruction of life and the great surgery which will cut out the ulcers of the past' (6,8,1930194) it is not by chance that the illness of Zhivago follows this and during this illness the final orientation of the novel towards the Paschal archetype takes place. The main hero daydreams that he is writing a poem about the days between the placing of the body in the tomb and the resurrection. 'It is necessary to awaken' is understood by him as 'it is necessary to rise from the dead' (6,15,206), that is to say, that we have here a kind of spiritual death which has already taken place and by no means a metaphorical one.

The new Zhivago can already declare to Liverius... 'whenever I hear people talking about reshaping life I lose control of myself... Life is never a material, a substance to be moulded...' (11,5,334). It is important to note

that on the earthly and pragmatic plane, Zhivago is mistaken and Liverius is correct: '... our setbacks are merely temporary, Kolchak is bound to lose in the end. You mark my words' (11,5,334). However the rightness or innocence displayed by Zhivago here is not related here to the functional aspect of the work but to the substantial one. The specific qualities of 'being a fool for Christ', which Zhivago shows at this point, have already been noted by scholars. But this phenomenon is typical precisely and only for Paschal Orthodox culture since, in a special way, it has nothing to do with the rules of the world order and, indeed, transfers this on to another level.²¹

Yury Zhivago's poetry also represents the translation of the prosaic level to the Paschal Christian dimension as a posthumous life continues and completes an earthly one. In this context of understanding one can interpret also the following numeration of the parts of the novel.²² The poems are at one and the same time the sublimation of the life of Yury Zhivago and the spiritual continuation of this life.

The first poem of the cycle is not about Christmas but about the Paschal sacrifice which was freely given. In the text itself one may observe the references to the Liturgy of Holy Week. On Holy Monday the fig tree which is barren is interpreted as the 'Jewish throng'²³ and this forms a parallel with the line from the poem 'I am alone: all drowns in the Pharisees' hypocrisy'; but even before this, at the matins of this same Liturgy the troparion is sung 'The Bridegroom will come at Midnight...'²⁴ and this line could well correspond to the first line of the poem 'Hamlet'. The door post, against which the actor (the Son) leans, who has been called to carry out the will of the Father, may be interpreted as the Cross (the stage boards may be compared to Golgotha since the supposed 'audience' of the drama is clearly hostile, having been clearly overcome by hypocrisy). Moreover, during matins of Holy Monday, the reading is precisely about the Wood of the Cross (cf. the door post): 'Christ... opened his arms [cf. 'leaned'] on the Cross to save mankind'.²⁵ In addition, apart from the association with the Cross, the door post in the context of the entire poetry cycle also brings out the apocalyptic semantics of *door*—in relation to Christ, which also, and not by chance, appears precisely at the beginning of Holy Week, again on Holy Monday when the words from Matthew's Gospel are heard: 'Lo, I stand at the door...' (Matthew 24:33).²⁶ The reading ends with the words: 'Heaven and earth will pass away but My Words will not pass away' (Matthew 24:34) and these words correspond to Pasternak's lines: 'My former voice foretold the future/It sounded, untouched by destruction' (17,14,525).

Comparing this Gospel with other New Testament texts,²⁷ we will find that on the lexical level how the anticipation of the final 'I will be the Judge' is the liturgical key to the leitmotif of the secret *knock* in the prose sections

of the novel.²⁸ Thus, the first two lines of 'Hamlet' one can anticipate as a secret crucifixion and as a subsequent resurrection since both will become clear as a means of relating this text to the Orthodox liturgical cycle. It might seem that in that last example we moved away somewhat from our stated methodology of analysis by referring to the text of the Apocalypse, which is never read during the Orthodox liturgy. However, we merely referred textually to the invariant 'I stand at the door and knock', that is to say, the posthumous appearance of Christ with all the definition with which this appearance is announced in the sequence of the liturgy. On Holy Thursday we hear, 'Father, if it is possible to take this cup from Me',²⁹ which corresponds to the famous lines of the same poem 'Hamlet'.

'Christmas Star', eighteenth in accordance with the order of the text, comes into this Paschal cycle preparing *the end of the way* which is announced in the poem 'Hamlet'. It is not by chance that 'the star of Christmas' is defined as a '*guest*' (17,18,532). The novel's pilgrimage towards Paschal is completed in the lines about the *willingly accepted sufferings* (the willingly accepted sacrifice), the tomb, the Resurrection and the Judgement of God.

In the last three poetic lines of the novel one can also note a kind of apocalyptic completion of the Paschal cycle, since the 'trial' of Christ, and the references to His Resurrection within the final verse, recall the 'Eschatological Day', as Pentecost is sometimes called. 'The centuries' at that time 'set sail out of darkness' (17,25,540) to be illuminated by the one Holy Spirit: in the kondak for Pentecost there is singing about the action of God which runs contrary to the divisions of Babylon. The liturgy itself for Pentecost recalls that of the Baptism of Christ: often, instead of singing the 'Thrice Holy', the Baptismal Canticle is sung from the Letter to the Galatians. Within this liturgical context of understanding the idea of the movement of past centuries is made clear, which 'like barges in convoy . . . sail out' (17,25,540). One cannot exclude the fact that the lines of the previous verse—'. . . the passage of the centuries is like a parable and catches fire on its way' (17,25,540)—are also connected in a certain way with Pentecost as a manifestation of *fire*, such as, for example, found in the words of Our Lord to Peter, one of the *apostles* ('You will see . . .'—17,25,540): tongues of fire appear over the apostles and they are the symbol of the action of the Holy Spirit on the fiftieth day after Paschal.³⁰

Thus, the structure of the novel is an artistically organised pilgrimage towards Paschal, towards a new life.³¹ Beginning with the funeral scene, this novel culminates in the words about the Resurrection and appearance before God. This is not only the life journey of Zhivago, but the limited collective journey we all make. And so the earthly confusion ('Yes, not him. Her.—It's all the same.'—1,1,7) has an important meaning only in a reduced worldly sense. God's Kingdom embraces equally 'him' and 'her', each of

the Living. [N.B. Here there is a play on the Russian word Zhivago: lit. "of the living"—Translator].

In addition, the structure of the novel, in its entire reproduction of the year's liturgical cycle, is also complicated by the *daily and circular round of things* and it is from here that such an important place in the poetic cycle is occupied by a whole series of artistic representatives of death (illness, unconsciousness, deathly fatigue, typhus, hallucinations, partings, wanderings) and the subsequent healing power of the Resurrection. Thus, every plot event of Pasternak's Paschal novel not only can be examined in the context of the Orthodox yearly cycle, but also, simultaneously, in the context of two other liturgical/temporal cycles, each one illuminating events in the novel but both fulfilling the same teleological task, that is, the overcoming of death by 'the power of the Resurrection' (17,25,513).

In this way we can understand the function of the numerous plot twists and turnings. The linear progression of events in the novel corresponds in its own way to the liturgical cycles, just as the 'passage of the centuries is like a parable' (17,25,540). And so Pasternak does not attempt to justify in any psychological way the action of his characters or to observe the rational/logical connections between and among events³²—in the final analysis these actions and events are connected with a different zone. However, this breaking through into a new zone signifies the special eschatology of Paschal, in other words, a rejection of 'profane' earthly time with all its worldly and chaotic events and circumstances, and yet not a frenzied departure from these things, but an *overcoming* of time which is brought about by Christ's Resurrection when it will be possible, living 'in this world', to partake of and to participate in this 'zone of the future' in the wholeness, joy and peace of the Holy Spirit.³³

As a conclusion, I should like to underline that the artistic assimilation by Russian literature of the true complexities and depths of the Orthodox worldview is, at the present time, only at the very initial stages of scholarly interpretation since such a worldview could hardly be adequately described by those who cannot claim any true knowledge of its fundamental values.³⁴

REFERENCES

¹ V.N. Toporov, *Saints and Sanctity in Russian Spiritual Culture*, Vol. 1, (Moscow: Gnozis – Jazyki russkoj kultury, 1995), p. 359.

² N.N. Rozov, *A Synodal List of the Works of Hilarion – A Russian Writer of the XI Century* (Slavia, Prague, 1963), Vol. 32, pp. 147–48; also A. N. Uzhankov, "When and Where

Hilarion's "The Sermon on Law and Grace" was Read" in *The Hermeneutics of Ancient Russian Literature* Vol. 7, Part 1 (Moscow: Nasledie, 1994), p. 102. For a different point of view, see A.A. Alexeev, "The Times of Metropolitan Hilarion's 'The Sermon on Law and Grace'", *TODRL*, Vol. 51 (St. Petersburg: Nauka, 1999), pp. 289–91.

³ M.M. Privshin, *Diaries Book 3, 1920–1922* (Moscow: Moskovskij rabochij, 1995), p. 129.

⁴ Cf. 'Domestic reading could not have been widespread – in all events it could not have posed a serious threat to the liturgical services. For the Orthodox faithful the basic presentation of the Sacred Scriptures occurred at the liturgical service... In all probability even wealthy believers would not have tried to purchase or acquire Bibles for domestic reading. During the time period being discussed the basic way of becoming acquainted with the Sacred Scriptures was listening to these being read in church. The term 'scripture' which contains an impression of reading and reader, in actual fact belonged to the times of manuscripts (obviously not only to manuscripts I.E.) which involved recitation and a listener' (A.A. Alekseev, *Textology of the Slavonic Bible* (St. Petersburg: Dmitrij Bulanin, 1999), pp. 25–26). See also M. M. Gromyko, "Orthodoxy and Russians: Problems of Ethnological Analysis" in *Orthodoxy and Russian National Culture, Book 6* (Moscow: Rossijskij etnograf, 1996), pp. 160–85. We note here that the famous episode in *Doctor Zhivago* with several variants of a prayer from Psalm 90 is very revealing. The changes and alterations 'which people bring to prayer gradually alter the original' (the text here and throughout the essay is cited from the following edition: B.L. Pasternak, *Collected Works*, V 5t, Vol. 3, (Moscow: 1990), with figures corresponding to *part, section and page number* of this edition) are only possible if the Psalm is not copied from the Church Slavonic text of the Psalter but is copied 'by

ear', recalling the sounds of the Psalm during the liturgy. Yet, on the other hand, in the 'people's' version the ancient tradition of copying out the sacred texts appears (... 'sections of the Church Slavonic text were copied into Russian letters'.) Then, as in the 'canonical' version ('in all its Slavonic originality') it is as though this text is already 'in a printed version'. B.M. Gasparov is correct when he comments upon this episode: '... all distortions lead back to the original thought in its profound meaning' (B.M. Gasparov, *Literary Leitmotifs: Sketches on Russian Literature of the 20th Century* [Moscow: Nauka, 1993], p. 268). We only note that the symbolism of fratricidal (suicidal) war is expressed not only in the contradictory sides of these prayers. In such conditions hope for miraculous results from the prayer was tempting. In the poem *Evil Days* mention is made of the temptation of Christ by Satan in the desert. The novel as a whole allows us to rethink both the hope of the Russian hero-antagonists in prayer dating from Psalm 90 and the fratricidal struggle: Satan suggests to Christ that He should throw Himself from the temple, citing at this point Psalm 90! (See Matthew, 4:6 and Luke 4:10–11). Thus in the artistic aim of the novel: the Christian 'original' meaning of this 90th Psalm complicates the motif of suicidal temptation which is realised in Pasternak's text; the prayer does not save the hero from death and it does not save the other from severe wounds.

⁵ *Triode of Colour* (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Moskovskoj Patriarhii, 1999), p.13.

⁶ I.A. Esaulov, *The Category of the Collective in Russian Literature* (Petrozavodsk: Izdatelstvo Petrozavodskogo Universiteta, 1995).

⁷ See S.N. Bulgakov, "The Feast of Easter is the Heart of Orthodoxy", in *Orthodoxy: Sketches of the Teachings of the Orthodox Church* (Moscow: Terra, 1991), p. 285.

⁸ See, for example, V.V. Rozanov's typical complaints about Holy Week in Rome: 'The Coliseum was dark and black. Finally

at a quarter to eleven music started to play; they played a march—maybe a Persian or an Italian one? And then, after short intervals, the music was played almost without ceasing—music from operas. There was the well-known Citizens' Chorus from *Faust* and then other well-known things from Italian opera in the Petersburg Conservatory Hall. "What's all this?" I was amazed. "Tomorrow is the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ, now it is Holy Saturday, the Eve of this Feast. What on earth is all this opera?" They played very well as they generally do everywhere in Italy but this was all so terribly out of place... There should have been a "Te Deum"... 10 to 15 people, in secluded prayerful niches, and a priest, without fail, a priest! There should have been mourning and a funeral service, "Rest in peace with all the saints!" It was, after all, Holy Saturday and there was only half an hour left before the great Easter Vigil... Here it was not a matter of the "filioque" added to the creed... The mass of the people hardly know about all that whether they are Catholic or Orthodox. But to me, as a person from the masses, who has a more general idea about the church but maybe not all the finer details, while I was walking about the streets of Rome, an inner voice kept on whispering "It's not that, definitely not that..." Give me the humble faith of Moscow, Kaluga, Zvenigorod, or my own Kostroma... As for the "filioque" it's not hard to agree or disagree with its addition. But how can you tear out from a Russian soul, from a Russian heart, from Russian customs, from a sobbing Orthodox soul: "Lord have mercy on me, a sinner", our Lent, and our "ephimons" and "Holiness of my stomach" and "Raise my hand, evening sacrifice" and "the standing" on Holy Thursday for the twelve Gospels and returning home after this with candles lit? (V.V. Rozanov, *Among Artists* [Moscow: Respublika, 1994], pp. 25–27). For Vyacheslav Ivanov 'the categorical

postulate of the Resurrection' is also a 'typical sign of our religiousness'; Ivanov saw especially in the Paschal hope, the nucleus of the specially *Russian idea* in 'its religious expression' as the 'collective inner experience of our people understands it' (V. Ivanov, *One's Own and The Universal*, [Moscow: Respublika, 1994], pp. 369–71.)

⁹ Cf. V.N. Zakharov, "The Symbolism of the Christian Calendar in the Works of Dostoevsky", in *New Aspects in the Study of Dostoevsky* (Petrozavodsk: Izdatelstvo Petrozavodskogo Universiteta, 1994), pp. 37–49. We note too that Dostoevsky's favourite Gospel was John's which is read especially in Paschal Week and right up to Pentecost, but in it mention is not made of the birth of Christ.

¹⁰ For more details please see I.A. Esaulov, "Iluzionizm i ikonichnost': k probleme fluktuatsii "vizual'noj domimamty" national'noj kul'tury v russkoj slovesnosti XX veka", in *Russian Literature*, XLV-I (1999), pp. 23–34.

¹¹ Cf. the development of this same perspective in the 'Poems of Yury Zhivago': 'The forest is stripped bare/ And at the season of Christ's Passion/Its crowding pine trees stand/Like worshippers at a service.../Gardens burst through fences/The earth's foundations quake:/God is being buried' (17,3,512–13). This comparison is not our interpretative arbitrariness or Pasternak's 'new word'; each Orthodox funeral rite of burial is based on the invariant of Holy Week (see, for example, "The Orthodox Burial Rite and its Meaning" in N.F. Fedorov, *Collected Works in 4 Volumes* [Moscow: Progress, 1995], Vol. 2, pp. 64–65), and so the author follows the defined cultural tradition.

¹² Yu Bertnes, "The Christian Theme in Pasternak's Novel *Doctor Zhivago*", in *The Gospel Text in Russian Literature of the XVIII-XX Centuries*, Issue 1 (Petrozavodsk: Izdatelstvo Petrozavodskogo Universiteta, 1994),

p. 362. Cf. too the conceptual position which we are trying to develop in the present work: 'The Church position is constructed according to the principle of montage. The liturgical text presents a system of canons and dogma, in the highest degree traditional clichés which can renovate, modify themselves, and contain various biblical motifs. This principle of combination is typical not only for the Church texts which are quoted in the novel *Doctor Zhivago*. The novel itself is constructed to a significant degree on this principle' (*ibid.*, p. 368).

¹³ See Bertnes, *op.cit.*, pp. 368–69, and also A. Livingstone, "Allegory and Christianity in *Doctor Zhivago*", *Melbourne Slavonic Studies*, Vol. 1, 1967, pp. 24–33; Gasparov, *op. cit.*, p. 268; V.M. Borisov, "The Christian Name in Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago*", in *It is not Good to be Famous*, Pasternak Readings, Issue 1 (Moscow: Nasledie, 1992), pp. 104–106.

¹⁴ 'I believe, Oh Lord, and I confess that You are truly the Christ, the Son of the Living God, Who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. And I believe that this is truly Your own immaculate Body, and that this is truly Your own precious Blood. And so I pray You, have mercy on me and forgive my transgressions both voluntary and involuntary, of word and deed, of knowledge and of ignorance; and make me worthy to partake without condemnation of Your immaculate Mysteries, unto remission of my sins and unto life everlasting, Amen' (Divine Service Book [Moscow: Izdatelstvo Moskovskoj Patriarhii, 1996], pp. 151–52).

¹⁵ See I. Esaulov, "The categories of Law and Grace in Dostoevsky's Poetics", in *Dostoevsky and the Christian Tradition*, ed. George Pattison (Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 116–33.

¹⁶ Gasparov, *op.cit.*, pp. 241–73.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

¹⁹ Zhivago's point of view is not confirmed by this. The field of supremacy of the Russian Christmas in the poetic conception of Pasternak. (See G. Nival, "Les matins de Pasternak", in *Boris Pasternak 1890–1960* (Paris, 1979, Colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle, 11–14 septembre 1975, organised by Laboratoire de slavistique de l'Université de Paris I, Institut d'études slaves 1979), pp. 369–71.

²⁰ Cf. 'Influence time by a word, "to begin speaking", people try to do this like magicians as does the main character [Yury Zhivago]. The first group try to halt the course of history, to return humanity to Old Testament times... Zhivago... on the other hand, tries with the power of the word to resurrect Gospel times.'; the Gospel news was preferred to the 'deafening' Old Testament word; it become obvious to Pasternak's favourite characters that in their century the struggle between the Old Testament and the quiet Gospel word had risen up again and that the 'old' word bursts into life with all its 'deafening declamation' as though Christianity did not exist' (E.A. Takho-Godi, "And the Image of Peace Revealed in the Word", in *'The Word' in Pasternak's Novel Doctor Zhivago: Losevskii Readings. The Image of Peace – Structure and Whole* (Moskva: Logos, 1999), p. 103, 105). We only note that Yury Zhivago himself does not wholly conform to the 'quiet' Gospel word. In the plot dynamics of the novel, free from the 'noise' which is without grace, one can see the incarnation of Pasternak's idea, formulated in the letter to O.M. Freidenberg: 'In it I settle my accounts with the Jews, with all kinds of nationalism (and also internationalism), with all shades of anti-Christianity' (*Letters of Boris Pasternak* (Moscow: Chudozhestvennaja literatura, 1990), p. 224. The ethical teachings of G. Cohen with his understanding of humankind as a 'juridical entity' and regenerated entirely by the legal spirit, by the hope of state socialism, by the frenzied hostility of the

- transition to Christianity, were, apparently, the closest biographical context of this 'settling of accounts'. For a detailed study of the early Pasternak and the philosophy of G. Cohen and the 'Marburg Schools' see L. Fleishman, H.B. Harder, and S. Dorzweiler, "Unpublished Philosophical Notes of Boris Pasternak", *Stanford Slavic Studies*, Vol. 11, 1 (1996), pp. 85–119. It must be stressed that the polemical repulsion of Cohen's teachings in the novel *Doctor Zhivago* is scarcely mentioned in the above-noted works.
- ²¹ See I. Esaulov, "Two Facets of Comedic Space in Russian Literature of the Modern Period: Holy Foolishness and Buffoonery", in *Reflective Laughter: Aspects of Humour in Russian Culture*, ed. Lesley Milne (London: Anthem Press, 2004), pp. 73–84.
- ²² Cf. D. Obolensky, "The Poems of *Doctor Zhivago*", *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 1961, Vol. XL, No. 94, pp. 123–35. As far as we are aware, D. Obolensky's work is the first one where the novel's opposition of death and resurrection is interpreted not in a metaphysical way but in a liturgical way.
- ²³ *Lenten Triode*, Part 2 (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Moskovskoj Patriarhii, 1992), p. 397.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 396.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ One can note also a phonetic parallelism in the neighbourhood of the intonation pause marked by us. (Translator – this cannot be conveyed in English. The author compares the sounds of the Russian biblical texts mentioned in the article and words from Zhivago's poem "Hamlet".)
- ²⁷ See Mark's Gospel, 13:29: 'In the same way, when you see these things happening you will know the time is near.' See also James 5: 8–9, where various instructions are given about the second coming and the image of the door is present; also Revelation 3:20: 'Listen! I stand at the door and knock'.
- ²⁸ Gasparov, with great insight, defines the significance of the knock 'as the mystical signal and link with the theme of death' (Gasparov, *op.cit.*, p.255). See also P.A. Budin, "The Knock in Pasternak", in *Post-symbolism as a Cultural Phenomenon*, Issue 1 (Moscow: Rossijskij gosudarstvennyj gumanitarnyj universitet, 1995), pp. 43–48.
- ²⁹ *Lenten Triode*, Part 2, p. 427.
- ³⁰ We also note that on this day for the first time after Easter the prayer 'The True Light is Seen' is sung.
- ³¹ Note the first verb (and, at the same time, the first word of the novel) is 'they walked' and the last 'they sailed'. The vector of movement is made explicit in the 'To Me' which Our Lord says in Pasternak's novel.
- ³² Bertnes, *op.cit.*, p. 363.
- ³³ Aleksander Shmeman, Archpriest, *Introduction to the Liturgical Service* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1961), pp. 85–86. Thus, the second poem of the cycle *March* has been deliberately placed by Pasternak between two texts which exploit the Easter chronotope. However, its name also refers to the Church Calendar (Lent/Easter). Spring which is compared to 'a strapping dairymaid' (17,2,511) is not discredited by being compared to such an ordinary poetic image (cf. I.A. Esaulov, "The Venerable Seraphim of Sarov in Conversation with N. A. Motovilov and the Problem of the Boundaries between Heaven and Earth in Russian Culture", in *Materials of the Second and Third Scholarly/Practical Conferences on the Problems of History, Culture and Education*, Issue 2 [Sarov: Mysej Sarovskaja Pustyn', 1999], pp. 24–30). 'Manure' in this poetic world of Pasternak is not simply 'the culprit'; it is 'the life-giver' and so in the poem there is a smell of 'fresh air' (17,2,512). The stormy hollow of the first line of this text anticipates the those banks into which in the poem "In Holy Week" the water burrows. In the second poem the fact that 'everything is thrown open' (17,2,512) corresponds to the fact that in the third, there is the image of the opened ark. It would not be difficult to continue

finding parallels which support the transparency between the borders of heaven and earth. As Jean de Prouaire shows, 'nature appears in a truthful way in Pasternak...He transforms nature – at least her heavenly distances and trees, birches...into a 'righteous man, whose face is an icon; in Pasternak's universe...all of the created world plays the role of an icon.' – Jean de Prouaire "Face and Personality in the Works of Boris Pasternak", in *Pasternak Readings*, Issue 2 (Moscow: Nasledie, 1998), p. 51.

³⁴ Cf. the typical admission of a scholar: 'Hacker, working on *Doctor Zhivago*, can only count on a depressing limited result. We can be happy enough with it' (I.P. Smimov, *Doctor Zhivago – a Novel of Secrets* [Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 1996], p. 8). We must accept this view completely if, for example, Smimov finds meaning in 'Engraved Angel' in the fact that Leskov qualifies faith in the miracle-working icons as a 'pagan superstition' (*ibid.*, p. 31), which is really an Orthodox view of the world

appearing in Pasternak's novel and must seem 'closed information' (*ibid.*, p. 11) which he can only 'break open' with earlier satisfaction of this 'depressing and limited result'. Thus, supposing that *Doctor Zhivago* is situated within 'the tradition of great Christian narrative', Smimov is equally convinced that Dostoevsky founded this tradition in *The Brothers Karamazov* (*ibid.*, p. 154). However, it is completely clear that if one can speak of some sort of beginning of that tradition which has been inherited by Pasternak's text, then, as we have tried to show, this goes back to a much earlier period. Incidentally, in the same way, according to Hacker's views, we can also find in *The Brothers Karamazov* 'the principal lack of separation which Dostoevsky [so it seems] insisted upon between lies and truth' (*ibid.*, p. 160), and also the enormous importance for Zosima of Fichte's philosophy since, according to Smimov, 'Dostoevsky took the main stance in *The Brothers Karamazov* from Fichte' (*ibid.*, p. 181).