

ПАСХАЛЬНЫЙ АРХЕТИП И МОДЕЛЬ КУЛЬТУРЫ В РОМАНАХ ДЖОНА СТЕЙНБЕКА

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John Steinbeck is one of the most interesting and difficult for understanding American authors of 20th century. Being both Pulitzer (1940) and Nobel (1962) Prize Winner he left great heritage that never stopped being questionable. This article discusses the cultural model J. Steinbeck presented in his major works based on the Easter archetype, deeply researched by Russian philologist I. A. Esaulov (See [2]).

Professor Esaulov argues, “Christcentrism is the most important attribute of Christian culture” [2, p. 12]. Yearly liturgical cycle is based on Christ’s life events. The greatest of them are His Christmas and the Resurrection. The accent on Christmas can be found in western tradition (so it can be called Christmas archetype), in the Eastern Church the celebration of the Resurrection is considered the most important from both confessional and cultural point of view. So researcher gets to conclusion that there are two main archetypes that can be associated with Eastern and Western cultures. Eastern culture represents the Easter archetype; western world can be expressed by Christmas archetype. The concept of the term by I. Esaulov is slightly different from Carl Gustav Jung’s meaning. Russian professor considers the archetypes as “collective representations” [2, p. 12] or collective unconscious that can be formed and defined in a specific culture. It is also the type of thinking that gives a birth to many cultural consequences including stereotypes of behaviour.

Major J. Steinbeck’s works represents author’s attachment with the Bible events, themes and morality. The Resurrection motif seems one of the most notable in Steinbeck’s prose and can be reconsidered from the angle of Easter archetype by I. Esaulov.

Let’s pay attention to the author’s most praised novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). At the first look many researches as D.J. Brash [3], L. Owens [5] identify the motif of The Exodus as central and the most evident in the novel. The number of family members of the Joads is twelve, the same as the number of Tribes of Israel: “Le’s see, now. There’s Grampa an’ Granma—that’s two. An’ me an’ John an’ Ma – that’s five. An’ Noah an’ Tommy an’ Al – that’s eight. Rosasharn an’ Connie is ten, an’ Ruthie an’ Winfiel’ is twelve. We got to take the dogs ‘cause what’ll we do else? Can’t shoot a good dog, an’ there ain’t nobody to give ‘em to. An’ that’s fourteen.” Winfiel’ is twelve” [6, p. 75–76]. At the same time twelve family members can be associated with twelve apostles, who are guided by one of the main characters ex-preacher Jim Casy. J. Steinbeck starts his New Testaments allusions with this protagonist graphically by using Jesus Christ initials (**Jim Casy – Jesus Christ**). Then the writer gives Jim iconic appearance: “It was a long head, bony; tight of skin, and set on a neck as stringy and muscular as a celery stalk. His eyeballs were heavy and protruding; the lids stretched to cover them, and the lids were raw and red. His cheeks were brown and shiny and hairless and his mouth full-humorous or sensual. The nose, beaked and hard, stretched the skin so tightly that the bridge showed white. There was no perspiration on the face, not even on the tall pale forehead. It was an abnormally high forehead, lined with delicate blue veins at the temples. Fully half of the face was above the eyes” [6, p. 13]. This portrait appeals to canonical Greek iconography. It gives the impression of holiness and separation of the world routine. At the moment of the meeting with other character he sings a popular American melody *Yes, Sir, That’s My Baby* (1925) but changing the lyrics, which has the biblical content:

Yes, sir, that’s my Saviour,
Je–sus is my Saviour,

The first appeal to God as a “Saviour” we can find in the Old Testament mostly in the Book of Isaiah, where the Saviour is God of Judas. For example: “Truly You are God, who hide Yourself, O God of Israel, the Savior!” (*Is 45:15*). From this point of view there is another word game by Steinbeck because Casy is a friend and a spiritual guide of the Joads. So another graphical allusion can be noticed here (**Joads – Judas**). In other words this family symbolizes Judas, which is an allegory of an American society. In the New Testament we can find this appeal starting with the Epistle to Timothy: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope” (*1 Ti 1:1*), and further in the Epistle to Titus (*Tit 1:3; Tit 1:4* etc.), in the Epistles to Peter (*2 Pet 1:1; 2 Pet 2:20* etc.). So in Casy as a protagonist two traditions are united as one. The Old Testament tradition connects mentioned allusions on prophet Isaiah to the New Testament tradition with the idea of hope and faith in the saviour mission of Jesus Christ both God and human on the earth. As Christ Jim is a messenger of new sense and the leader who came to help his people, he is the sacrifice whose innocent death means a new beginning of “life after life”. As Jesus, Casy leaves to wilderness to be tempted by his own doubts. Casy says: “Here’s me, been a-goin’ into the wilderness like Jesus to try find out somepin’ ” [6, p. 421]. As Jesus Christ, Casy feels responsibility for all people, takes Tom’s fault on his own shoulders, and voluntarily rejects his life (he goes to prison instead of Tom). J. Steinbeck repeats Casy’s death words three times: “You don’t know what you’re a-doin’ ” [6, p. 293]. These words quote the Gospel According to Luke (*Lk 23:34*). Jim Casy leaves the scene but his ideas and his new religion stays and spreads around his followers. The Resurrection motif becomes evident. Belarusian researcher Hanna Butyrchik defines the main statements of his of Casy’s religion as “a) the teaching of *oversoul* – there are no individual souls, but one great soul, b) the idea *to love all people*” [1, p. 27].

J. Steinbeck switches from Old Testament motif of Exodus and it’s meaning into the New Testament motif of the Resurrection, which seems the allegory of changes in the consciousness of American society. Another words he appeals to the Easter archetype with the idea to give a birth of new circumstances that can change in consciousness of an average American person, in Steinbeck’s terms to switch from “I” to “We”. Author wants such qualities as unity, solidarity, mutual aid, compassion, sympathy and love to all people to be the values of American culture. (Unfortunately many readers take this idea wrong by understanding it as the sympathy to Communist ideology, and its not).

Author’s final work, the novel *The Winter of Our Discontent* (1961) goes even deeper with the reconstruction of the Easter archetype, because all the drama happens to the main character Ethan Allen Hawley on Easter Eve. There are two fundamental motifs of the novel – the motif of death and the motif of the Resurrection. This resurrection isn’t literal, but moral. The first chapters of the novel recreate the events of death (Good Friday) and the Resurrection (Easter Sunday) of Jesus Christ. The second part of the novel happens on Independence Day the US. This composition makes it clear for the readers that the rebirth of Ethan (an average American) is an allegory of hope to revive the whole American society. This is sort of idea to come back to the basic principal of morality of founding fathers.

The novel starts on the day of Good Friday. At first Ethan’s wife Mary reminds her husband about it twice: “Do you remember it’s Good Friday?” [7, p. 3] And further: “Please don’t say swear words on Good Friday. I do love you” [7, p. 4].

Later Ethan Hawley questioning himself about it three times:

* “Why do they call it Good Friday? What’s good about it?”

* “Why do they call it Good Friday?”

“Spring,” she said from the stove.

“Spring Friday?”

“Spring fever”

* “Why do they call it Good Friday?”

“It’s from Latin,” said Joey. “Goodus, goodilius, goodum, meaning lousy” [7, p. 5].

J. Steinbeck pays our attention on some kind of oxymoron “spring Good Friday”. (In the most of mythologies spring is usually considered the symbol of Resurrections). Three times recurrence is not accidental. Jesus Christ was betrayed, handed to Sinedrion, then to Pontius Pilate and crucified. Ethan repeats biblical events but in the relation to himself, his conscious and moral views. He becomes a betrayal (Danny, Marullo) → hands (Marullo) to the court → crucifies his soul in the attempt to suicide. His soul experiences the fever of Good Friday. In this case the main character have to make free will decision whether to follow his moral laws from childhood or to step back from them. As Jesus Christ who went to Garden of Gethsemane to pray before death, Ethan goes to his secrete shelter, to cave, where he is making life worth decisions.

J. Steinbeck creates the atmosphere of darkness and concentrated the attention of readers on Ethan’s “passion”: “At noon the sun will darken and a blackness will fall on the earth and you will be afraid” [7, p. 416]. This passage is the allusion on the Gospel According to Luke: “And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst” (*Luk 23:46*), as well as to the Gospel According to Mark: “...there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour” (*Mark 16:33*). A reader sees the passages full of biblical images, which are interrupted with ironical and sometimes sarcastic thoughts of Ethan. There are millions of voices in the mind of this character. In different life circumstances one of the voices is winning the right to dominate. At the first part of the novel these voices come from the Bible.

The day of Good Friday is divided on some time frames and parallels to gospels hours. At the third hour Jesus Christ was crucified: “And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him” (*Mark 16:26*). At the sixth hour it was darkness till the ninth hour, when Jesus died. The same happens in the novel. Suddenly it becomes dark in the shop. And the “dark” adjective becomes the most used in the chapter. Ethan’s thoughts about the events of Good Friday let him question Jesus’s words: “And every year, ever since I was a kid, only it gets worse because – may be because I know more it means, I heart hose lonely ‘lama sabachthani’ words” [7, p. 27]. These “lama sabachthani” mean, “Why you are leaving me?” and refer to the Gospel According to Mathew, “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with aloud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabach thani? That is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou for saken me?” (*Matt 27:46*). Ethan is just to make his choice and start his moral fall, where he betrays his friends one after another. And at this case he becomes more Judas to himself.

Fortunately, Ethan’s conscious has aunt Deborah’s voice. The Main character took her words as Golgotha events with the fact that Golgotha is Ethan himself: “That Deborah who sent me as a child to Golgotha was a precise machine with words. She took no nonsense from them nor permitted me a laxity. What power she had, that old woman! If she wanted immortality, she had it in my brain” [7, p. 202]. These moral roots of Ethan’s soul and consciousness let him find the way to revive him. He goes deeply to the hell of his soul to resurrect for the sake of his noble past, for the sake of his family and children’s moral and spiritual heritage.

In the final scene Ethan Allen Hawley is trying to suicide in the cave but stops when finds a family talisman that gives all kinds of lights and warmness. This light gives readers a hope too. The main hero morally dies and then resurrects for the sake of others. Ethan literally recreates Easter archetype and this recreation is connected with the revival of moral laws of American founding fathers, not accidently the second part of the novel happens in the Independence Day.

Knowing the cultural impact of *The Grapes of Wrath*, author’s intend in *The Winter of Our Discontent* is to change the norms, values and morality of American people, to show that material prosperity and financial success can lead American people to loose something, that is very important... By using the Easter archetype in both of his novel, J. Steinbeck not only creates the “heart” of his works but also forms an Easter cultural model for American society. This model based on classical American founding fathers’ ideas as well as the gospels truth.

The most interesting phenomenon is that we can’t find any Christmas theme in Steinbeck’s prose so popular among other American writers as H. P. Lovecraft, L. Frank Baum, L. M. Alcott, F. Scott Fitzgerald, H. Van Dyke, Pearl S. Buck, W. Irving, O. Henry and others! This unusual

fact is understood from the angle of Steinbeck's views on modern American Christmas traditions. He calls it two different types of Christmas. In his letter to Adlai Stevenson (1959) J. Steinbeck writes: "Adlai, do you remember two kinds of Christmases? There is one kind in a house where there is little and a present represents not only love but sacrifice. The one single package is opened with a kind of slow wonder, almost reverence» [8]. His second type is better to explain in authors words, «Then there is the other kind of Christmas with present piled high, the gifts of guilty parents as bribes because they have nothing else to give. The wrappings are ripped off and the presents thrown down and at the end the child says – «Is that all?» Well, it seems to me that America now is like that second kind of Christmas. Having too many THINGS they spend their hours and money on the couch searching for a soul <...> If I wanted to destroy a nation, I would give it too much and would have it on its knees, miserable, greedy and sick" [8].

It becomes evident that not knowing the concept about Christmas and Easter types cultures John Steinbeck could feel those tendencies in the middle of 20th century. From his point of view the tendency of materialization influence American culture in a very negative way. Using the Easter archetype in his mature works Steinbeck tried to show readers the power of truth, unity, honesty and love, which may be considered his immortal heritage.

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