

Title: Criticism of Doctrine through Cognitive and Linguistic Constructions in Tolstoy's "Kholstomer"

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Lidia Dmitrevna Opol'skaia notes that the opposition between Kholstomer and Serpukhovskoi (his former owner) grew and deepened between the early drafts and the version of the story that was published some twenty years later (265). There remains, however, at least one major untangled knot in the Kholstomer/Serpukhovskoi twine – the question of the passage about the fate of the bodies of horse and former owner. Myshkovskaia's work on the manuscripts tells us that this passage was composed just before publication and that this stage of work on the story came after Tolstoy's completion of "Исповедь" (Confession). This suggests that this passage has a "keystone" function that goes quite deep.

The passage contains a cognitive construction that provides another approach to Tolstoy's final vision of the story and to his thought in the 1880s. This self-assembling puzzle is located slightly "behind" the text proper, but is still entirely visible through the text. It is this passage that weaves together Tolstoy's thoughts on Orthodoxy, several specific rituals and doctrines of Orthodoxy, and some functions of language. In this way, it completes "Kholstomer" both in terms of composition and conception.

This paper explores the ramifications of the cognitive / linguistic constructions in this passage and proposes an interpretation. The results are shown as they stand on their own and in light of their relevance for Shklovsky's and Venclova's works on "Kholstomer."

Works Cited

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