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The Tectonics of Love in Leo Tolstoy's *Resurrection*[1]

Anna Głąb

John Paul II Catholic University
of Lublin, Poland

e-mail: aniaglab@kul.pl

Abstract:
The text analyzes Leo Tolstoy's *Resurrection* focusing on the feelings expressed in the novel. It focuses on: (I) the ways in which the content of the novel is expressed through artistic means; (II) Tolstoy's anthropology; (III) the notion of love presented by Ronald de Sousa in his last book *Love. A Very Short Introduction*: the difference between love and mood or emotion; the classification of love (*philia*, *storge*, *agape*, *eros*); the distinction between love and lust; love as a reason-free desire; and the notion of the historicity of love.
Keywords: Love, Tolstoy, de Sousa, *Resurrection*, lust, target of love, altruism.

1.

In his lecture on Anton Chekhov's oeuvre, Vladimir Nabokov explains that literature is "beauty plus pity" [11, p.163]. Undoubtedly, a well-told story can trigger emotional reactions such as laughter, tears, terror, sympathy or disgust.[2] The analysis of their function in philosophy as well as in relation to other branches of science (psychology, neuroscience, literary theories, but also social and political sciences) shows a considerable potential of the phenomenon that is at present described as the affective turn.[3] One of the most acclaimed writers whose novels can generate a nuanced plethora of emotions is Leo Tolstoy. His Anna Karenina[4] became an integral part of readers' imagination and emotions, which prompted philosophers such as Colin Radford and Michael Weston in 1970s to discuss how the reader – moved by her situation – can shed tears and, at the same time, know she is a fictional character.[5] This problem – known as the paradox of fiction – is not central, however, to the following study.[6] Tolstoy's less popular, last novel is *Resurrection* (1899); its protagonist is prince Nekhludoff, who as a young man seduces an innocent maid, Katusha, and abandons her only to meet her again years later in a courtroom where she is being tried for the murder of a client (she became a prostitute and changed her name to Maslova). In my opinion this novel is an example of a sophisticated, artistic attempt at describing human emotional states, love included. Tolstoy's mastery of literary means he uses to represent love is undeniable. Though the way Tolstoy understands love may for many contemporary readers be incomprehensible for it stems from his theistic world view, *Resurrection* gives one an opportunity to scrutinize the tectonics of emotions that accompany love, and raises a few questions regarding love's ambivalence.

Firstly, this article analyzes how feelings are expressed in Tolstoy's novel. To this end (I) I will first analyse the way in which the message of the novel is expressed through artistic means. Subsequently, (II) I will focus on the main premises of Tolstoy's anthropology, necessary to understand his views on love. Finally, (III) I will analyse the concept of love presented in the novel. The analytic tool applied in the article is based on Ronald de Sousa's last book concerning the philosophy of love. I will discuss Tolstoy's idea of love through the prism of the following issues: the difference between a mood and an emotion; different ways of classifying love (*philia*, *storge*, *agape*, *eros*); the difference between love and lust; love as a reason-free desire; and the historicity of love.

2.

When Nabokov asserts in the above-mentioned *Lectures on Russian Literature*: "The word, the expression, the image is the true function of literature. *Not* ideas" [11, p. 108], he distinguishes two aspects of literature. The first one is affecting the reader by means of form, that is the magic of words, figures of rhetoric, narrative techniques, rhythmic organization – in the first place, literature is an aesthetic fact, evaluated according to its aesthetic values. The second aspect is a message, which can generate various reactions ranging from cognitive (e.g. judgements, also ethical) to emotional ones (such as empathy and sympathy), which also seem to have a cognitive dimension.[7] These two aspects of literature are discussed in a similar vein by the 2006 Nobel Prize winner, Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk. As Pamuk claims, writers may be divided into two groups: those who perceive thoughts and feelings of their protagonists as rooted in particular contexts (i.e. things and landscapes), and those who focus primarily on notions. This distinction is based on the difference between those who use visual imagination (i.e. images, landscapes, and things, which the reader accesses through smells, sounds, tastes, and touch and which bring the literary world to life) and those who use verbal imagination, analytical thinking, and ideas [15, p. 42]. In Pamuk's opinion, the first group – whom he calls visual writers – is represented by Leo Tolstoy, whereas the other – verbal writers – by Fiodor Dostoyevsky. This division is also confirmed by Nabokov, who believes that "a landscape of ideas, a moral landscape" [11, p. 71] is one of the most crucial aspects of Dostoyevsky's novels. While in Tolstoy's works, his art which is "so powerful, so tiger bright, so original and universal that it easily transcends the sermon" [11, p. 71] was more important than his ideology or message which – to his mind – was "… tame and … vague" [11, p. 92]. This message was grounded not only in an extreme form of theism[8] but also in a radical form of moralism, according to which art should be evaluated through the prism of its moral value and beauty should define what is spiritual and morally good.[9] In my opinion, both aspects of the impact of literary texts, especially in the case of Tolstoy, can be conjoined. Tolstoy's artistry lies in his ability to combine analytical thinking and – as I believe – not really vague ideas with a subtle description of the human lot; he simultaneously thinks with words and images, fluently shifting from one type of narrative to the other. The expression of emotions is characteristic especially of visual imagination. I believe this division to be parallel to the narrative of *Resurrection*.

The story of Maslova and Nekhludoff is presented from three points of view: a dry third-person narrative and emotional retrospectives of both protagonists, where their feelings are expressed with precision, beauty, and clarity of details – elements that make images come to life in the reader's imagination. The third-person narrator delivers the story as if it were a prosecutor's testimony. The story of Maslova presented in such a way resembles a note in a prisoner's file which, in addition to being banal, is also ordinary. The narrator tells her story with reluctance or even disgust; yet, the story is still told objectively. At the end of his testimony, the narrator, far from understanding, passes unambiguous moral judgment on the life of Katusha. The reader feels that such an account is not enough to understand both Katusha's and Nekhludoff's motives. We learn that Katusha is one of the five surviving children of a farm girl who, not having a husband, each year gave birth to a child that she would not feed so it would die. Katusha survives because she is taken in by two old spinsters who make her their maid. One summer, Katusha's employers are

visited by their rich nephew, Dymitr Nekhludoff, and Katusha falls in love with him. Two years later, on his way to war, Dymitr returns and seduces the girl. A few months later Katusha realizes she is pregnant. Immediately after birth the child is given to the orphanage where it dies. This event marks the beginning of Katusha's moral decline. In search for employment (while still pregnant, she left her patrons), she is repeatedly sexually abused by men. Finally, she finds herself in a brothel where she lives for seven years, until she is accused of murdering a client. During her trial she is recognized by Nekhludoff, who serves as a member of the jury.

Nekhludoff's point of view combines the two types of narrative mentioned before. Having read Pamuk's account, one may consider Nekhludoff's narrative a visualization of the author's message, and, following T. S. Eliot's objective correlative, the reality depicted by the author may be seen as a reflection of the character's emotional states.[10] When Nekhludoff meets Katusha, he is in his third year of university. It is "that blissful state of existence when a young man for the first time…when he grasps the possibility of unlimited advance towards perfection for one's self and for all the world" [20, p. 69]. Nekhludoff's state correlates with the landscape. The rising sun, morning mist, swim in the river above the cliff, grass and flowers wet with dew, taste of coffee and sleepless nights become an artistic expression of Nekhludoff's feelings: innocence, joy of life, dreams about the world and openness to its surprises. It is in these circumstances, during a game of gorelki, that Nekhludoff meets Katusha. The description of freshly mown, aromatic meadow in front of the house, the rustle of Katusha's starched dress, Nekhludoff's large palm squeezed be Katusha's small, but rough and strong hand, her radiant smile and eyes shining like wet blackcurrants, the hideout behind the ditch overgrown with nettle wet with evening dew, and the first, innocent kiss behind the lilac bush – all these descriptions refer to visual imagination, that is "our ability to see things in our mind's eye and to turn words into mental pictures" [15, p. 43]. By using objective correlatives, Tolstoy describes feelings that originate in sensual experiences that involve the sense of sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell. Strong sensual impressions evoked by Tolstoy's prose make the reader believe that Nekhludoff's feeling for Katusha is more than an expression of the joy of life that he overflows with. When Nekhludoff returns to his aunts three years later, he is a different man.

Tolstoy writes:

> now he was depraved and selfish, and thought only of his own enjoyment... Then women seemed mysterious and charming… now the purpose of women… was a very definite one: women were the best means towards an already experienced enjoyment... Then he had looked on his spirit as the I; now it was his healthy strong animal I that he looked upon as himself [20, p. 75].

When Nekhludoff sees Katusha, who brings fresh towels and a soap to his room, old feelings return. The narrator describes Nekhludoff's feelings as an inner struggle between two persons: a spiritual man [*dukhovnoe ia*] caring about other people's happiness, and an animal-self [*zhivotnoe ia*] interested only in its own well-being. The climax takes place during the night of the Resurrection. Nekhludoff will remember the service as unique because of Katusha's presence: "She was the centre of all. For her the gold glittered round the icons; for her all these candles in candelabra and candlesticks were alight; for her were sung these joyful hymns" [20, p. 86-87]. Nekhludoff feels love for all creation – not only toward the beautiful, but also toward the beggar with whom Katusha exchanges Easter wishes. For Nekhludoff, Easter becomes the moment "when [his] love has reached its zenith – a moment when it is unconscious, unreasoning, and with nothing sensual about it" [20, p. 89]. Before he yields to an animal instinct that overshadows the feeling of pure love,

> [t]he voice of his real love for her, though feebly, [is] still speaking of her, her feelings, her life. Another voice [is] saying, 'Take care I don't let the opportunity for your own happiness, your own enjoyment, slip by!' [20, p. 93].

After the night with Katusha, Nekhludoff is torn between two feelings – a burning memory of animal love that did not bring what it seemed to offer, and an awareness that the deed was wrong and needs to be remedied, if not for her sake, then for his. He is dying of shame, but he is trying to convince himself that what he did is what everyone does and he seeks consolation in giving Katusha money before his departure, "not because she might need it, but because it [is] the thing to do" [20, p. 100]. He tries not to think of Katusha because the memory exposes him and proves that his pride in being a decent man is unwarranted because he treated a woman in such a despicable way.

During the trial, looking at Maslova's face, Nekhludoff recollects the events that took place ten years earlier; repulsion mixes with compassion; pangs of remorse come back and he cannot but feel anxious under the gaze of her dark eyes. Nekhludoff fights with his persistent feeling of remorse. After unfair sentencing (Katusha is sentenced to four years of penal servitude and hard labour), Nekhludoff feels responsible for Katusha's fate and attempts to revoke verdict. Tolstoy describes the moment Nekhludoff's conscience is resurrected as a "cleansing of the soul" [20, p. 156]. The experience of salvation – described by William James[11] – results in tangible actions. A few days later Nekhludoff visits Maslova in jail and asks her forgiveness. To delay the sentence he arranges for her to be moved to a hospital where she is to attend the sick. In the meantime, he gives all his lands and farms to peasants, and breaks all previous engagements (he was to be married with princess Missi); Katusha becomes his lodestar. Therefore, at this point it may be beneficial to focus on Katusha's point of view and analyze her moral evolution after meeting Nekhludoff.

Undoubtedly, Katusha was in love with Nekhludoff. He was her first love. When shortly after his departure Nekhludoff is to return to Petersburg through his aunts' town, Katusha is waiting to meet him. She already knows she is expecting his child. When she learns that the prince will not visit his aunts but his train will pass through the village, she runs to the station. She sees Nekhludoff playing cards with other officers in the first-class carriage and knocks on the window, but he does not see her. When the train moves, Katusha starts running after it until the wind carries away her headscarf. She stops after a while, crying. She decides to throw herself under the next train:

> Up to that night she did not consider the child that lay beneath her heart a burden. But on that night everything changed, and the child became nothing but a weight… Wet, muddy, and quite exhausted, she returned, and from that day the change which brought her where she now was began to operate in her soul. Beginning from that dreadful night, she ceased believing in God and in goodness [20, pp. 198, 200].

She also ceases believing that other people believe in goodness. People she will soon meet will want to use her, and "the men… [will] look at her as on an object for pleasure" [20, p. 200]. That is why when Nekhludoff visits her in her cell asking for forgiveness,

> she remember[s] … dimly that new, wonderful world of feeling and of thought which … [was] opened to her by the charming young man who loved her and whom she loved, and then his incomprehensible cruelty and the whole string of humiliations and suffering which flowed from and followed that magic joy. This g[ives]… her pain, and, unable to understand it, she … [does] what she [is] … always in the habit of doing, she … [gets] rid of these memories by enveloping them in the mist of a depraved life [20, p. 225 – 226].

At first, she only wants to use him (for example by taking his money to buy alcohol that will allow her to survive the difficult life in prison), which makes Nekhludoff realize "to his horror … that Katusha exist[s] … no more, and there … [is] Maslova in her place" [20, p. 230]. And when Nekhludoff proposes to her and promises that even if she refuses, he will go after her to Siberia, she will not hear of it. Yet even though she tries to convince herself that she cannot forgive him and that she still hates him, in reality she loves him. She remains unwavering in her resolution. When on her way to Siberia, Nekhludoff informs her that she has been pardoned, she receives the message

calmly but refuses to accept the pardon. She decides to marry Simonson, a political prisoner who fell in love with her, but her decision is not caused by love but by a desire to free Nekhludoff. Nekhludoff understands that seeing her forlorn goodbye smile:

> She loved him, and thought that by uniting herself to him she would be spoiling his life. By going with Simonson she thought she would be setting Nekhludoff free, and felt glad that she had done what she meant to do, and yet she suffered at parting from him [20, p. 670].

3.

Before I turn to further analysis, it is crucial to discuss Tolstoy's idea of man from which stems Tolstoyan notion of love. Man, according to Tolstoy, has both animal and spiritual (rational) identity. The tiresome split between the two occurs only when the intellect is directed – to quote from Tolstoy's essay *On Life* – "to recognize as life nothing but his carnal personal existence, which cannot be life" [19, p. 269]. Therefore, human life is ruled by two laws: one that stems from his animal identity, and one (considered by Tolstoy to be superior) that originates in his rational consciousness. True human life is stored within man and is reborn as he matures: "our life is nothing but the birth of that invisible essence which is born in us, and so we can never see it" [19, p. 273].

Life, understood in such a way, consists of "the subjection of the animal personality to the law of reason, for the purpose of obtaining the good" [19, p. 276]. As a result, human life cannot be considered only from the point of matter and its organic structure; to investigate life in such a way "cannot give us the chief knowledge which we need, – the knowledge of the law to which our animal personality must be subjected for the sake of our good" [19, p. 281]. That is why

> no matter how well he [man] may know the law governing his animal personality, and the laws governing matter, these laws do not give him the least indications as to how he is to act with that piece of bread which he has in his hands, – whether to give it to his wife, a stranger, his dog, or eat it himself; whether to defend this piece, or give it to him who asks him for it. But the life of man consists only in the solution of these and similar questions [19, p. 282].

If, as stated by Tolstoy, "human life we cannot understand otherwise than as subjection of the animal personality to the law of reason" [19, p. 293], then how does Tolstoy define love?

Tolstoy does not claim that a man must renounce his biological life, for that would be similar to renouncing one's circulatory system, yet he believes that biology is neither the law nor the goal of life. People searching for individual good, the illusion of pleasure that leads to the loss of life, excess, suffering, despair, and death prove that biological life is not the main goal of existence. Tolstoy prefers a spiritual, altruistic understanding of love as this kind of love contributes to social harmony. If a man believes that the purpose of his life is other people's well-being, then he has a chance to see the world as something else: "by the side of the incidental phenomena of the struggle of the beings – a constant mutual service of these beings, a service without which the existence of the world is unthinkable" [19, p. 308]. That is why the only rational human action is love that "draws him [man] on to give his existence for the benefit of other beings" [19, p. 326]. If human life is merely animalistic, then love becomes lust. Love, then, becomes

> that feeling, according to which he who loves a woman suffers from this love and causes her to suffer, when he seduces her, or out of jealousy ruins himself and her; that feeling, which sometimes leads a man to rape a woman [19, p. 329].

Tolstoy, however, believes love to be the desire for good and "an activity which is directed upon the good of others" [19, p. 331]. "True love is the consequence of the renunciation of the good of personality" [19, p. 335], and it begins with the state of kindness toward all people. "Love is then only love when it is a self-sacrifice" [19, p. 339]. According to this definition, the relation between Katusha and Nekhludoff started as love, for at the beginning they both could – in spite of their natural inclinations – resist desire, and their love for each other included love for all people; what is more, they both regained that love when they met ten years later and renounced their own well-being for the well-being of the other person (Nekhludoff by leaving behind his old life and his dreams of having a family and children, and instead following Katusha to take care of her; Katusha by rejecting him and choosing Simonson to set Nekhludoff free).

4.

We may understand better the Tolstoy's view on love if we use de Sousa's distinction introduced by Ronald de Sousa in his last book on love, a distinction "between true love, which is 'higher', 'spiritual', and linked to our virtuous aspirations, and mere lust, which expresses 'lower' instincts we share with non-human animals" [1, p. 18]. Even though at first sight Katusha and Nekhludoff's love may be categorized as the first type of love, one can ask a few questions about its nature. Firstly, can love be seen as a feeling, a type of emotion? If not, then what is love? Or, if the love between the characters of *Resurrection* leads to putting the other person's interests first, can this love be described as *agape*? What elements make its tectonics: what are its reasons, and what is its object? If it is spiritual love, what is its object? What part does desire play in love? What does Nekhludoff want? Is Nekhludoff's love altruistic? What part does the story of their relationship play in identifying the reasons behind their love? Finally, what are the reasons for love?

Love as neither a mood nor an emotion

Even though Tolstoy repeatedly uses the term "feeling" to describe the relationship between his characters, it seems to be only one aspect of love defined as an expression of will. Tolstoy's descriptions of love distinguish it from moods that are independent of human will. Love, Tolstoy writes in *On Life*, "is a certain irregular, agonizing mood which impairs the regular current of life, – something like what must appear to an owl when the sun comes out" [19, p. 327]. Such love is accompanied by numerous feelings like those that permeate *Resurrection* from its very first pages; love can be manifested through sadness, guilt, remorse, anxiety, disgust, or shame. De Sousa also introduces the differentiation between love and mood, yet he notices certain similarities between them. According to him, these similarities stem from love and mood being rooted in an "emotional pseudoproposition" that has three distinctive features:

> it is difficult to pin down to falsifiable content; its truth is neither necessary nor sufficient for the persistence of the emotion; and it is not clearly related to those propositions that might, as a matter of fact, lead to a change of mind on the emotional level [2, p. 8].

On the other hand, de Sousa claims that contrary to mood, love "seems tied a priori to an object" [2, p. 8] (a thesis I will discuss later). At this point it needs stressing that Tolstoy would probably accept de Sousa's proposal to consider love "a condition that shapes and governs thoughts, desires, emotions, and behaviours around the focal person who is the 'beloved'. Like a kind of prism, it affects all sorts of experiences" [1, pp. 3 – 4].

By claiming that love is "a syndrome: not a kind of feeling, but an intricate pattern of potential thoughts, behaviours, and emotions that tend to 'run together'" [1, p. 4], de Sousa seems close (at least on a basic level) to Tolstoy's notion of love.

Philia, storge, agape or eros

What type of love do Katusha and Nekhludoff share? Certainly, it is not *philia*, which is a close friendship. Should it, then, be classified as *storge*, which "connotes caring in the sense of taking care of, implying concern for the beloved's interests and welfare" [1, p. 2]? It seems that Nekhludoff's love for Katusha (and later her love for him as well) concentrates on the beloved's well-being. However, *storge* does not exclude sexual desire, whereas the latter stage of Katusha and Nekhludoff's love is purely asexual. Should their love, then, be categorized as *agape*, that is "a sort of indiscriminate, universalized, and sexless *storge*" [1, p. 2]? At least three issues seem to contradict such an interpretation. Firstly, Nekhludoff's love, though inclusive of other people, even after his ethical transformation, clearly focuses on Katusha; Katusha remains in Nekhludoff's centre of attention – she is the reason he changes his life and follows her to Siberia. The first argument against classifying this love as *agape* is Nekhludoff's attitude: he favours Katusha, whereas *agape*, according to de Sousa, should be free of individual preferences for it "requires us to abstract from individual preferences" [1, p. 11]. Secondly, the reader may question Nekhludoff's motives. Is he entirely selfless or is he looking for his own peace of mind (trying to repent for his sin by following Katusha to Syberia), thus making his own well-being his main goal? *Agape*, best defined in the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, excludes self-seeking. Thirdly, *agape* "always trusts ... always perseveres" (1 Corinthians 13:7), whereas Nekhludoff's love for Maslova is shaken by mistrust when he learns about the reason Katusha was dismissed from her job at the hospital: an alleged affair with a doctor. Even though the rumours about the affair turn out to be false, Nekhludoff does not believe that Katusha cannot control her debauched nature. At least at first, mistrust, or even hostility toward her former lover may be noticed also in Katusha. Undoubtedly they both feel passion; moreover, hate can create a bond equally strong as love. Should we, then, classify their love as *eros*, or even – to use a term de Sousa borrows from an American psychologist Dorothy Tennov – *limerence*, that is *eros* "in its most extreme, obsessive, anxious, and passionate romantic form", or – to quote from George Bernard Shaw – "that most violent, most insane, most delusive, and most transient of passions" [1, p. 3]? Maybe what Tolstoy calls love is Nekhludoff's obsession, a projection of his desires, an illusion he created for himself? What contradicts this interpretation is the fact that the prince's love is not sudden; even though his friends believe it to be a temporary madness, Nekhludoff remains constant in his resolution to abandon his former life. The reader witnesses a positive change that takes place in Nekhludoff, therefore it seems impossible that his actions are a result of an illusion or blindness. What are, then, Nekhludoff's reasons for loving Katusha? The answer to that question is a prerequisite for determining the nature of his love.

Love and lust

De Sousa claims that

> '[l]ove is the love of something.' Love is an *intentional* state. That term refers a state of mind that is *about* something… In this way love is unlike a mood, for a mood, though it affects how you feel about everything, isn't *about* anything specific. It is also not like a pain. A pain in itself isn't about anything else, and is no less a pain if you have no idea what caused it… Love involves desire of what one does not possess [1, p. 34].

If love affects emotions and behaviour, it must move us to desire. Even though the term is ambiguous, desire by definition leads to what does not yet exist [See 1, p. 35]. In addition to the desires one may feel toward one's friends, such as emotional resonance, trust, intimacy, concern for the other's welfare or companionship, erotic love is a desire for a moment of sexual pleasure. Desire may be seen as developing in the following manner: "desire motivates pursuit; successful pursuit secures its objects; securing the objects produces pleasure; and pleasure adds strength to the desire the next time around" [1, p. 38]. This cycle describes the first stage of Nekhludoff and Katusha's

relationship. Unfulfilled desire is painful. Pleasure that stems from fulfilling one's desire is temporary; its result may be disgust – "this occurs when the satisfaction of certain desires not in emotional contentment" [1, p. 39]. De Sousa describes this state as the "curse of satisfaction" [1, p. 39].[12] Nekhludoff experiences this state, yet his disgust is moral and is directed toward himself – he is aware that he used Katusha to satisfy his desire. The abuse affected Katusha as well, as she started perceiving herself as an object used to satisfy male desires. Katusha's and Nekhludoff's desires operate according to the same principle: "[w]hen the desire is itself painful, the desired consummation is an end in three senses at once: as a pleasure, as cessation of pain, and as termination. That fact may partly explain the popular association of love or sex with death" [1, p. 40]. Disappointment with sex and the realization that desire itself is a "highly undesirable condition" may be the reasons of Tolstoy's critical attitude to erotic love and his search for a more satisfying kind of love. Therefore, even though the theory of unfulfilled desire explains Nekhludoff's original feelings for Katusha, it does not account for the feelings that overwhelm him (and Katusha) ten years later.

Love as a reason-free desire

Let me turn to the analysis of spiritual love, since it is the one that Tolstoy put on a pedestal. Addressing the question of desires that spiritual love awakens in Nekhludoff and Katusha, Tolstoy answers: Nekhludoff desires Katusha's and Katusha Nekhludoff's well-being. To quote de Sousa, "they brim with altruistic benevolence: 'your will is mine'" [1, p. 42]. This approach, according to de Sousa, is treacherous, for it traps the beloved within a logical riddle: an altruists' dilemma. De Sousa explains:

> if each wants only to do the other's will, there is nothing either of them can do. They are even worse off than two purely selfish individuals, each of whom refuses to take account of the other's preferences. In a pair of egoists, each will have her own preference, and it might happen, if only by chance, that both want the same thing. What they do will then satisfy both. The two pure altruists, by contrast, cannot ground their action in any positive desire, until one of them admits to an independent preference [1, p. 42].

Is Nekhludoff an altruist? Is Katusha's will his will as well? At first, Nekhludoff's visit in prison makes Katusha nervous, but the spiritual change resurrects her love. This change is reflected in her behaviour, her trembling lips, her eyes, or her smile. In spite of how mixed the signals sent by Katusha are, Nekhludoff manages to decode the favourable ones. Although Katusha never admits that she still loves him, he can sense that she does. Her love is finally confirmed by her altruistic decision to marry another man. As far as Nekhludoff is concerned, Tolstoy provides a detailed description of his internal struggle (he wants to have a family and children). Even though at first Katusha openly demonstrates her hostility and her answer is clear, Nekhludoff decides to redefine his values and follow her to Siberia; by taking care of her, he wants to deserve her forgiveness. What are his reasons? One may claim that he follows Katusha because *he needs to* repent for the sins of his youth. His intentions are not clear. However, if spiritual love is the love that perseveres (even when the beloved's hostility makes one question the rightness of one's actions), then is not Nekhludoff's love exactly this kind of love?

I believe that to see Nekhludoff's decision as an obsession or a toxic desire to control Katusha with whom he had a passionate affair is a misunderstanding. If these were the reasons behind his actions, then Nekhludoff would not be able to accept Katusha's final decision. Finally, they both make altruistic decisions: she chooses Simonson, he accepts her choice. The only problem lays in whether Katusha does *what Nekhludoff wants her to do*. After all, he wants to be with her. It seems that using the altruist mantra "your will is my will" is misleading, for the goal of love is not to become the beloved's hostage.

Love's reasons should be analyzed from the point of view of an "objective observer" [1, p. 57]. In Tolstoy's novel such an external point of view is provided by the narrator who stresses that love's purpose is *the well-being of the other person*. The solution to the altruists' dilemma lays in substituting one's will with the well-being of the beloved. Katusha decides to make a decision that will best benefit Nekhludoff. He makes a similar choice when he decides to follow her to Siberia and then removes himself so that Simonson can take care of her. A distinction introduced by de Sousa sheds some light on the issue.

De Sousa states:

> Some desires are grounded in one or more other desires. Call them *reason-based*. That sounds, well, reasonable; but in a certain sense it means you may not really desire what you have reason to desire. For what you want as a means to something else might not be desirable in itself. Wanting to get milk is a reason for going to the store. Getting to the store is a means. The milk, too, is a means; and you can list a train of reasons until you get to something you just want, and for which you can give no further reason. Call that a *reason-free* desire: for something you want for its own sake [1, p. 45].

Marriage seems determined by obligation, necessity, and commitment that should be viewed as love's reasons. According to de Sousa, however, "love moves us to act either without reason or from reason entirely different from those three" [1, p. 45].[13] Why does Nekhludoff follow Katusha? She is not his wife, so he is not obliged to go – Tolstoy stresses this lack of obligation by portraying other marriages where one spouse is sentenced to penal servitude, and the other follows while not serving a sentence (the case of Taras, Fiedosia's husband). Nekhludoff is not driven by necessity. He does not have to go to repent for his sin – he could have chosen a different penance (giving the land to peasants or helping the people for whom Katusha interceded were already forms of compensation). Is not this reason-free decision a confirmation of Nekhludoff's true love? Nekhludoff does not have irrefutable arguments to support his decision, and "only reasons justify" [1, p. 46]. Could this reason, however, be found in his beliefs that stemmed from his religion and moral views? When Nekhludoff asks Maslova's forgiveness, he says that he wants to expiate his sin and marry her. "What's that for?" she asks, and he replies: "I feel that it is my duty before God to do it" [20, p. 253]. Tolstoy seems to explain his protagonist's behaviour through the Biblical commandment to unconditionally "love your neighbour" and the fact that one owes this love to a person one wronged. How should one understand such a justification? The commandment seems to explain actions, but can love be something one is commanded to feel?

Even though de Sousa is not concerned with religious beliefs, he notices that

> in the case of belief, the explanation is that any belief – say, that 'the cat is on the mat' – is constituted essentially by the network of implications in which 'the cat is on the mat' is embedded… Your beliefs seem to be compelled by the facts of the world because most of them are held in place by your entire system of beliefs. You can't choose not to believe 'the cat is on the mat' when doing so would require you to reject innumerable other beliefs as well – that cats look like that, that you're not mad or dreaming, etc. [1, p. 47].

De Sousa assumes that certain beliefs are so obvious that they seem independent. One example is Cartesian *cogito*. My belief that I exist, when treated as a reason-free belief, may be seen as a counterpart of a reason-free desire.

> Your desire to caress, or to gaze at, or to take care of, or to spend the rest of your life with someone, might be more like the belief that you exist: you haven't chosen to feel it, and you haven't the option not to… more frequently love is like thirst: it gives you

> reasons to do things, but in itself seems not to need any reason at all. It is reason-free [1, p. 48].

Therefore, a commandment cannot be love's reason. Love may give one a reason to act in a particular way, but itself it does not need reason.[14]

Nekhludoff does not need to explain his love. This love, however, explains his actions. When Katusha appears in his life, at first he treats his feeling for her as an obligation (he proposes to her), but later it becomes a selfless gift that needs to be accepted unconditionally and results in a desire for her happiness. Nekhludoff's care for Katusha testifies to his responsibility, but due to the lack of obligation (they are not bound by any contract) Nekhludoff and Katusha's love becomes a free response to a gift; it becomes, to quote Raimond Gaita, a response to the "preciousness of human being" [4, p. 27]. Nekhludoff's feeling for Katusha is something

> he had never felt towards her or anyone else before. There was nothing personal in this feeling: he wanted nothing from her for himself, but only wished that she might not remain as she now was, that she might awaken and become again what she had been [20, p. 228].

Even though the notion of reason-free love seems to explain the case of the protagonists of *Resurrection*, there still remain a few questions that need addressing. If Katusha was no longer as she used to be, why did Nekhludoff still love her? What was the object of his love?

Target of love

De Sousa notices that „love requires an object" [1, p. 51]. What determines the identity of the object of love? What constitutes its essence? A closer look at Katusha and Nekhludoff's relation demonstrates that not only is it not static, but it also contributes to the protagonists' moral growth. The two young lovers from the beginning of the novel are different persons than the characters who meet ten years later. To his horror, Nekhludoff realizes that the woman he is talking to is no longer the same Katusha – she has turned into Maslova. Katusha, on the other hand, even though the prince at first reminds her of the young man she fell in love with, wants to see Nekhludoff as the man who once abandoned her. At this point the two meanings of the word "love," noticed by de Sousa, may prove useful.

> The first is that there are two ways of thinking of a person's identity: as just 'that person – whatever she may be like', or as a person of a certain kind... The second fact is that what we regard as an appropriate reason for love contributes to our understanding of the nature of love [1, p. 58].

It seems that Nekhludoff's love for Katusha is the love for "that person – whatever she may be." Nekhludoff's thoughts during the trial seem to corroborate that interpretation: he

> kept looking at her all the time. And his mind passed through those phases in which a face which we have not seen for many years first strikes us with the outward changes brought about during the time of separation, and then changes made by time seem to disappear, and before our spiritual eyes rises only the principal expression of one exceptional, unique individuality [20, p. 118].

One could claim, then, that the target of Nekhludoff's love is Katusha's "one exceptional, unique individuality."

By stating that love is an intentional state, de Sousa claims that love is an attitude: "[a]n attitude can be more or less appropriate to its target. … is appropriate if the point of it is fulfilled …

The point of desire is to pursue something good" [1, p. 59]. The target's characteristic responsible for creating an attitude must be the "target's *focal property*, or simply *focus*" [1, p. 59]. What is, then, love's attitude? "To say love targets what is *lovable* is uninformative, but correct," de Sousa writes, "love is the attitude specifically appropriate to beauty" [1, p. 60]. To use de Sousa's terminology, Katusha is Nekhludoff's target for he loves her for her "exceptional, unique individuality" (the focal property, focus) which "underpins her being lovable (the point)" [1, p. 60] and is the cause of Nekhludoff's feelings. Katusha's "exceptional, unique individuality" is "an appropriate reason for love" [1, p. 62] if such an individuality is the point of love. The target of love-as-attitude cannot be abstract beauty but it must be a person whose focal property is an "exceptional, unique individuality." Tolstoy seems to corroborate this view when he notices:

> One of the most widespread superstitions is that every man has his own special, definite qualities; that a man is kind, cruel, wise, stupid, energetic, apathetic, etc. Men are not like that... Men are like rivers: the water is the same in each, and alike in all; but every river is narrow here, is more rapid there, here slower, there broader, now clear, now cold, now dull, now warm. It is the same with men. Every man carries in himself the germs of every human quality, and sometimes one manifests itself, sometimes another, and the man often becomes unlike himself, while still remaining the same man [20, p. 300].

Tolstoy claims that the man can have many features, but the one constant focal property makes him who he is.

Still, de Sousa complicates matters by discussing the case of Alcmene, the faithful wife of Amphitryon. Zeus, who fell in love with her, used many stratagems to seduce her; all in vain. Unable to charm her, he turned into Alcmene's husband, assuming all his focal properties – the reason she loved him. But, de Sousa notices, "[d]espite possessing the right focal properties, Zeus was not the target of Alcmene's love, so she … was raped despite her ostensible consent" [1, p. 63][15], and, consequently, gave birth to Hercules. While this example cannot account for how Zeus can be both himself and someone else,[16] it shows that "the target of love is a particular individual, not just whoever happens to have the right qualities…Targets of love are *non-fungible*" [1, p. 63]. Does it mean that love is motivated by this particular focal property that Tolstoy calls "being oneself"? It bears reminding that it is still a question of the reasons for love. David Vellman, mentioned by de Sosa, claims that this property remains constant:[17] "[i]t is none other than [Alcmene's]… autonomous rational will which, according to Immanuel Kant, is the essential core of every person" [1, p. 67]. But de Sousa believes that such a notion of love's reasons requires us "to distinguish true love not only from lust, but from those individual quirks, in both lover and beloved, that produce a rush of tenderness towards some and leave you indifferent to others" [1, p. 67]. Tolstoy wants to distinguish between true love and lust, which, according to de Sousa, would lead to making love independent of individual features of the beloved. Do phrases such as "being oneself" or "one exceptional, unique individuality" not stress the individual that is that which is a result of unique consciousness? Is this unique consciousness, expressed in unique behaviour (so different from our own), not the reason we love other people?

De Sousa is very critical of that thesis. According to him, the strategy that puts emphasis on "being oneself" as the reason for love stresses love's universal reasons. He claims that this stance is based on a thesis that

> *being oneself* is itself a property, called *ipseity*… Only Socrates is Socrates. Only you are you. On this view, each person is essentially different from every other not in virtue of any set of properties, but in being just this person and no other. Like the Kantian core, this property is universal; but unlike the rational self, which is the same in everyone, each ipseity is irreducibly different. Being-just-this-irreducible-self is the focal property that uniquely identifies the target of love [1, p. 69].

According to de Sousa, this view is "comically absurd… for to say that your ipseity differs from mine says nothing about what the difference amounts to" [1, p. 69]. That is why de Sousa proposes a different solution to the problem, one that can be applied to Tolstoy's *Resurrection*.

Historicity of love

De Sousa claims that "instead of fixed essential identities that each must learn to decode in the other, there will be a forging of a unique relationship of which is a part" [1, p. 69]. Therefore, a relation with its unique history becomes love's reason. The historicity of love consists of the unique path that the lovers follow or the paths that intertwine in the space and time they share. De Sousa states:

> The intertwining of two or more such paths constitutes the bond of love, as both its cause and its result. It causes the bond by providing shared memories, and it results from it because it motivates further shared projects. Instead of a crucial property that identifies each lover, there is a dynamic process involving both [1, p. 70].

Many elements contribute to the dynamics of Nekhludoff and Katusha's relation: first glances they catch of each other, the first kiss, the experience of Easter and love to the whole world cruelly destroyed by the night they spend together, and the child that dies prematurely. Nekhludoff's history consists of guilt, shame, and even disgust with himself for using Katusha and then leaving her; Katusha's story is the story of a broken heart she tries to mend by taking vengeance on herself and choosing the life that deprives her of her dignity. And finally, their story is the story of compensation, forgiveness, and resurrection. To quote de Sousa:

> It is unique, because it is practically (though not logically) impossible that a person's life should contain a sequence of events shared with A which exactly matches the sequence of events she shared with B. Something in the fine structure of their intertwined braids is bound to differentiate the two strands. Even if they were indistinguishable from an external point of view, their impact on the partners could not be the same, since for each, but not for both, one must have preceded the other [1, p. 70].

For Alcmene, the past and dreams about the future she shared with her husband made him the target of her love. Even though Zeus assumed Amphitryon's qualities, he never became Alcmene's husband. Similarly, the object of Nekhludoff's love is Katusha, regardless of particular features that define her at different moments of her life. Nekhludoff and Katusha share a past and a future defined by their common goal: to help others. This love survives in spite of the characters' separation, their regret and despair, and their attempts at forgetting their relation; thanks to this love both Katusha and Nekhludoff can love other people by seeing that their lives and stories are priceless.

The term "historicity of love" was developed by Niko Kolodny.[18] Kolodny believes that love does not have only one target but it rather has two: the beloved and the relationship. De Sousa comments on Kolodny's thesis by stating that "[a] relationship is not just a sequence of facts and events; it is also a normative framework. As such, it engenders not merely reasons for love, but the duty to love in the way appropriate to the relationship in question" [1, p. 71].

Love cannot be separated from duty and responsibility. On the contrary, love gets strengthened "by the cultivation of habits of care and attention, by mutual openness to vulnerability, and by engagement in common projects" [1, p. 72]. However, the individual bond between the lovers is not the only element that ensures the historicity of love. According to de Sousa, historicity of love consists also of "the arbitrary constraints dictated by historically variable norms, gender

roles, and traditional taboos" [1, p. 73]. All these elements contribute to the description of love in *Resurrection*. Another important point is Tolstoy's theism. Because Nekhludoff and Katusha's love is rooted in Tolstoy's theism, it becomes altruistic. Contrary to de Sousa's thesis, altruistic love does not have to be based on illusory desires for another person but can be caused by an unconditional desire for the other person's well-being, regardless of the fact that "our desires are too messy … to hold in the real world…Myriad murky motivations muddle the decisions we allegedly make out of love" [1, p. 50].

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Notes

1. The text was written as part of the "Mistrz" grant entitled *Moderate Positions in Contemporary Philosophical Debates Between Theism and Atheism. Origins, Types and Consequences* and supervised by Professor Piotr Gutowski.
2. I write about it in: [5, p. 241nn].
3. See: [8, 12, 13, 14].
4. I discussed this issue in: [6, pp. 213-230].
5. E.g. Hamlet asked himself a similar question, seeing emotional reactions of one of the actors declaiming a poem about Hecuba: „What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba, That he should weep for her?" [16, II.ii].
6. See: [5, p. s. 255nn].
7. See: [5, p. 49nn].
8. Tolstoy was, first and foremost, fascinated with Christianity based on the evangelical Sermon on the Mount. He did not accept the dogmatic religion, sacraments, and religious rituals of the Russian Orthodox Church [see 7, p. 171; 17, p. 163]. The critique of religious orthodoxy was one of the themes in *Resurrection* [20, p. 202-211]. That is why, *Resurrection* was also the chief reason for excommunicating Tolstoy by the Russian Orthodox Church (the decision to do so was announced in 1901). In this context, his theism – which was not connected with a religious cult – was rather a form of skepticism, not radicalism. However, I regard this form theism as radical since – as it will become clear later, especially in the context of his anthropology – a relation with God or a lack of it is for Tolstoy a major criterion of evaluation and sense of human life. As M. Green claims, "…he created the religion he had been seeking in the Sermon on the Mount (and in Buddhist doctrine). This radical faith taught that evil… must not be resisted by force. The authoritarian state, like violent revolution, was unacceptable to a man of religion" [7, p 173]. His views in this respect were in accordance with the views of American abolitionists such as: William Lloyd Garrison, James Russell Lowell and Henry David Thoreau.
9. See: [21, p. 61nn].
10. T. S. Eliot claimed [see 3]: "The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative;' in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of the particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked".
11. According to W. James, people who have this experience are "twice born" (they die to the world of illusion, in order to be born to the real world). In their hearts, they carry the experience of deliverance, which results in certainty, sense, the triumph of good, the will to live. God becomes the force which helps man find a solution to the most desperate troubles and co-operates with man in building a better world. It is a state of saintliness. For James, it is the center of the religion [see 9, p.162; p. 254nn].
12. De Sousa exemplifies it with Shakespeare's Sonnet 129: "The expense of spirit in a waste of shame / In lust in action; and till action, lust / Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame, / Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust, / Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight, / Past reason hunted, and no sooner had / Past reason hated, as a swallow'd bait / On purpose laid to make the taker mad; / Mad in pursuit and in possession so; / Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme; / A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe; / Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream. / All this the world well knows; yet none knows well / To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell" [17, p. 166].
13. To describe love irrespective of these definitions seems unconvincing and does not apply to other types of love, for example parental love. If responsibility was not part of love, then how would one define parental love which assumes responsibility? It is difficult to imagine love that does not require responsibility.
14. The belief in God's existence seems to follow the same logic. A character from *Anna Karenina*, Konstantin Levin, discovers that the life of a man who believes in God may be a heroic life for it is devoted to God who is "something incomprehensible", or, to put it another way, to the idea that cannot be proven or justified. Living for God, we do not know *what we are living for*. It is a reason-free belief [See: 6, p. 228].
15. See also: [2, pp. 8-9].
16. The distinction between imagining oneself as being someone else with all the features of that other person and remaining oneself with all the features of the other person (being at the same time aware that these features belong to someone else) seems impossible to uphold. See: [23, p. 4].
17. See: [22, p. 346].
18. See: [10, p. 146]: "According to the relationship theory, love is a psychological state for which there are reasons, and these reasons are interpersonal relationships. More specifically, love is a kind of valuing. Valuing X, in general, involves (i) being vulnerable to certain emotions regarding X, and (ii) believing that one has reasons both for this vulnerability to X and for actions regarding X" (Ibidem, p. 150).