

The Image of Light in the Poetry of Olga Sedakova

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the features of the implementation of the image of light in the poetry of Olga Sedakova. The analysis is devoted to understanding of the lexeme “light” functioning in poetic texts and supported by the research on cognitive, semantic and cultural structures the image of light carries. The research carried out makes it possible to expand the understanding of Olga Sedakova’s work, supplement the existing materials on poetic paradigms, and continue researching the Russian poetic language based on formal signs and interlinks with European texts, in particular, with the metaphysical poetry and religious thought. The research offers insights on the unique style and imagery of Olga Sedakova which supports poetry as a transgression from the main, well-known specifics of light as a concept. As a result, the research is based on a generic philological, as well as interdisciplinary approach. The results of the study allow us to propose the solidity of the motive of light as semantically accented, used both as vision-derived experience and a sign requiring philosophical interpretations. Dialectics of dichotomies connected with Light in Olga Sedakova’s works show not only the interdependent dynamics, but also the endeavour for creating a liminal space out of oppositions’ confrontation. The nature of this synthesis allows us to connect the author’s poetic texts with the neo-baroque stylistics.

Keywords: linguopoetic analysis, image, image paradigm, aesthetic meaning, symbolic meaning.

1. Introduction

Light is noted by researchers as one of the fundamental concepts humanity uses to efficiently denote not only meanings connected with its physical nature but also meanings and helpful structures referring to complex subjects and themes. The starting points for forming an idea of the subject and the poet’s philosophy can be found in the analysis of lyrical passages that complement or expand the image of Light. Here, philosophical and religious reflections are brought to the forefront and expanded by reflection on the phenomenology of the image of Light constructed by a recipient using a visual channel. The same is true once we are dealing with metaphysical poetry. For the undertaken research, Olga Sedakova’s work has been taken as the main material to elaborate on the current state of poetry written by a woman and scholar.

2. Methods

The modern research of the light’s image presence in poetic texts using linguistic approaches (notably, semantic and cognitive approaches (Melnikova, 2013; Čulig, 2019;



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Erofeeva, et al., 2019)) is based on well-known works by G. Lakoff & M. Johnson. The analysis of basic cognitive structures has been present in the works of T. Reuven (1998), W. D. Reece (1989). Taking one of the main positions of our fundamental perception, light is studied in conceptology in connection with the concept of “Colour” (colouristics), it is also elevated to the opposition “Light” — “Dark” (‘Тьма’) (“darkness”; “shadow” as a transition category between light and darkness) as an archetypal conceptual opposition. Moreover, researchers are also guided by the mutual definition of lexemes “Light” and “Darkness” (Gigante, 2018; Melnikov, 2013), adding the opposition “Fire” (‘Огонь’) — “Cold” (‘Холод’) (Skorov 2005), explicating motives to oppositions “Day” (‘День’) — “Night” (‘Ночь’), “Life” (‘Жизнь’) — “Death” (‘Смерть’) (Danaher, 1995). Dichotomy ‘light — darkness’ is inevitably introduced on further stages of conceptualization, which results in everlasting confrontation and interdependence. At the same time, further research proposes the light’s image being studied with attention to its nature (origin or visual impression). Cold (for example, snow), as a natural phenomenon, is more associated with light than the opposite phenomenon of “Death”, including in the connotation of emotions (as pleasant freshness⁹⁴). A separate category is represented by the manifestation of reflected, weak light: in lexemes ‘блеск’ (“shine”), ‘мерцать’ (“to twinkle”), ‘луна’ (“moon”).

The connotations of light also expand in cases of designation of its origin: artificial, solar, lunar, stellar light (Zavarkina, 2015), etc. The origin turns the connotations of light towards oppositions ‘true — untrue’. On the level of the most abstract symbols the role of the image of Light centres on the main cognition structures, enforcing Light as the source of widely accepted values, the conceptual metaphors *Knowledge is Light*, *Knowing is Seeing*, *God is Light*, *God is Knowledge* (Čulig, 2019: 319) and similar domains of meaning. The same function is found in Russian literature. Specific interest to *Light as Truth/Knowledge* has been developed in the texts of the Silver Age (see the famous A. Blok’s quote from the poem *Retribution*’s prologue: “Но ты, художник, твердо веруй // В начала и концы. <...> Познай, где свет – поймешь, где тьма” (“But you, the artist, firmly believe // In beginnings and ends”)) (Blok, 1999: 21). Of course, further connotations in the context of metaphysical poetry also include the Light of Truth, the Light of Reason. “Light” is defined as one of the fundamental concepts of religious consciousness (Erofeeva, et al., 2019; Kolmakov, 2016), is semantically analysed in classic literature texts, and in the Bible (Reece, 1989), recognized as a metaphysical metaphor along with darkness not being opposition to it fully (Calma, 2010: 99).

The image of light is being analysed from the literature perspective, where we discuss it in terms as a detail, motif, symbol, allegory and, broadly, as an image (Calma, 2010; Danaher, 1995; Gigante, 2018; Kolmakova, 2016; Leahy, 2018; Regan, 2016; Skorov, 2005; Zavarkina, 2015; Spivakova, 2020). The literary analysis offers deeper interpretation of a material, focusing on formal features of poetry, specific poetry visual narrative, the lyrical subject’s place and intent in it. On many occurrences in literary texts, layers of the dichotomy ‘light — darkness’ as ‘good — evil’ are altered by the arrival of the second nature of its semantics. Light, especially sunlight, can burn and leave behind deserted places. Darkness, and shadows as its part, becomes a mother’s womb (Regan, 2016: 322), or promising place

⁹⁴ For example, a cold, but bright sunny winter day.

for self-reflection and meditation.

It is noteworthy to use both linguistic and literary research and instruments to see the whole dynamic picture of Light in works of a particular author, their style, and world-view. In addition, the perception of a literary text in its givenness allows a recipient to establish new semantic connections by themselves, approaching communicative success due to the flexibility of the imagination. The message a recipient takes may be filled with abstract, philosophical assumptions or sensory, visual narrative. The latest is actual for the present readers who encounter complex metaphors and symbols hard to decipher in terms of semantics.

3. Results

To analyse the idiostyle of a specific author (Olga Sedakova), it is effective to start with focusing on the lexeme “light”, see its implementations, functioning in Russian language and see what paradigms of images (Pavlovich, 1991) it widens. The research contributes to the study of Olga Sedakova’s poetry and philosophy, as well as to the studies on the image of Light in literature and art.

For the first stage of our study, the definition of the paradigm of images is used, which is introduced by N.V. Pavlovich: “The paradigm of images is a stable semantic invariant, which is realized at the superficial linguistic level in some similar images”⁹⁵ (Pavlovich, 1991: 105).

The main material is Olga Sedakova’s collection of poems, *Poems* (1994)⁹⁶. The collection has been chosen because of the new material and because it contains poems from previous collections. The conducted research made it possible to compile a card index with 86 entries of the lexeme ‘свет’ (light (noun)) (including the one-root derivatives ‘светлый’ (light (adj.)), ‘световой’ (light (adj.)), ‘светить’ (to shine)).

The model of the lexeme “light” constructed based on dictionary data (dictionaries of V.I. Dal, D. N. Ushakov, I. S. Ozhegov, *Malyy akademicheskij slovar russkogo yazyka*) indicates the presence of three direct and nine figurative meanings. It is important to note that meaning is associated with vision, both in direct definition (energy perceived by the eye) and figuratively (glint of the eyes).

Indeed, light is the basis of colour perception. The light we study – the stream of particles (correspondingly to the wave-corpusecular theory of light) – makes it possible to cognize visual universals. Supporting this, we quote from an essay by Olga Sedakova about Rembrandt: “... прежде всех светотеней все видимое представляет собой свет. И что зрение – тоже световое устройство, освещающий прибор – кормится этим светом” (*Travelling with closed eyes. Letters about Rembrandt* (Sedakova & Krimmel’ n.d.)).⁹⁷ The quotation shows that considering Olga Sedakova’s metatexts, any qualitative or linguistic analysis has to be supported by an investigation into symbolic, poetic structures to reconstruct a systemized and contextualized writer’s view on the image of Light.

⁹⁵ Парадигма образов — есть устойчивый семантический инвариант, который реализуется на поверхностном языковом уровне в ряде сходных образов

⁹⁶ All the following collocations are from the mentioned edition, if not pointed otherwise.

⁹⁷ See the research on art history involving chiaroscuro in the article of J. Čulig: Čulig, J. (2019). Light as a visual source domain for the divine in the 17th century painting. *Jezikoslovlje*, 20(2), 303–324.

Olga Sedakova is no stranger to lexicographic interest. The poetess served as lexicographer when compiling materials for the dictionary *Czerkovnoslavyano-russkie paronimy* (Sedakova, 2005). The word-formative nest of ‘свет’ (“light”) includes ‘светило’ (“luminary”), ‘светло’ (“light” (adv.)), ‘светлость’ (“grace”), ‘светлый’ (“light” (adj.)). The closest nouns to light are also nouns denoting emanation of light: ‘сияние’ (“radiance”), ‘свечение’ (“luminescence”). “Luminary” is synonymous not only with celestial bodies, but also with objects (a torch, a lantern, a lamp, a candle). The lexeme “light” (adj.) includes such characteristics as ‘славный’ (“glorious”), ‘радостный’ (“joyful”), ‘веселый’ (“cheerful”), and also ‘громкий’ (“loud”) (Sedakova, 2005: 309). There are no highlighted examples of exploring more modern relations between natural and electric light as opposites in Olga Sedakova’s poetry, as we shall see below, which confirms the author’s focus on dialogue functioning within archetypal and religious ideas.

The emphasis on light as a motive in Olga Sedakova’s poetry emphasizes the definition of light given to it by her in non-fiction works before. “Я только в скобках замечаю: свет — // достаточно таинственный предмет, // чтоб говорить Бог ведает о чем, // чтоб речь, как пыль, пронзенная лучом, // крутилась мелко, путано, едва... // Но значила — прозрачность вещества” (“I notice only in parentheses: light is // a rather mysterious object // to speak only God knows about what // so that speech is like dust pierced by a ray, // spinning shallowly, confused, barely ... // But it means — the transparency of substance”) (Sedakova, 1994: 256). This exception of the author’s poetry emphasizes the connection of light and fire with vision, as well as with clarity, the ability to see through, with being in a situation where there is nothing to hide — that is, in a situation of light of understanding, of revelation.

To analyse the context of the meanings of light and derived words with slight changes in connotation (‘светлый’ — “light” (when referring to something bright) or ‘световой’ — “light”, ‘светить’ — “to shine”), the occurrences have been systemised. Analysis of syntactically related adjectives allows us to assemble a wide picture of the author’s approaches to the image of light: ‘белый’ (white) (2 entries), ‘чистый’ (clean), ‘ненастный’ (bleak), ‘сильный’ (strong), ‘глухонемой’ (deaf-mute), ‘тяжелый’ (heavy), ‘нерезкий’ (unsharp)0, ‘шаткий’ (wobbly), ‘двойной’ (double), ‘таинственный’ (mysterious), ‘неизвестный’ (unknown), ‘нежный’ (gentle), ‘вечерний’ (evening), ‘пристальный’ (intent), ‘подробный’ (detailed), ‘домашний’ (homely), ‘малый’ (small). The following adjectives require a special note: ‘нерезкий’, ‘ненастный’, ‘глухонемой’, ‘подробный’. They are used only by Sedakova and not found among the imagery of light in a corpus of Russian language⁹⁸. This qualitative method allows us to formulate the base of poetic paradigms expanded by Sedakova.

Light is characterized by the following active actions: the light ‘горит’ (is on), ‘говорит’ (talks) (2 entries), ‘стоит’ (stands) (2 entries), ‘еще не погас’ (has not yet gone out), ‘играет’ (plays), ‘кидает мяч’ (throws the ball), ‘пробегает’ (runs), ‘идет’ (walks), ‘скрипит по половицам’ (creaks on the floorboards), ‘ходит’ (walks), ‘проходит’ (passes), ‘благословляет’ (blesses), ‘вырисовывает’ (draws), ‘сбегается’ (comes running). Passive actions in relation to light are not so frequent: they “ищут и держат” (seek and hold) the

⁹⁸ The Russian National Corpus (<https://ruscorpora.ru/>) was used to return the number of each Adj.+ ‘light’ collocation, determining the ones not present in the corpus.

light, they “смотрят насквозь” — look through the light, they “светом задевают что-либо” (touch something with the light). Control constructions: “ветер качает свет” (the wind shakes the light), “воздух зажигает свет” (the air ignites the light), “камень раскидывает кусками” (the stone scatters the light in pieces). Special moments of the author’s implication of light are in the entries, where light is postulated as it is, adding space to its presence: “туда, откуда свет” (“to where the light comes from”), “Никого со мной нет, этот свет...” (“There is no one with me, this light...”) (Sedakova, 1994: 68), “это свет” (“this is light”), “и только свет вокруг” (“and only light is around”).

‘Глаза’ (eyes), ‘воздух’ (air), ‘одежда’ (clothing), ‘платье’ (a garment or a dress), ‘облако’ (a cloud) can be ‘светлый’ (light, bright) which invokes the direct meaning of light (Adj.) at the first glance. As noted above, the meanings of the word ‘light’ are supplemented by the definitions ‘радостный’ (joyful), ‘громкий’ (loud). Images such as “световая гроздь” (a bunch of light) and “световая картинка” (a little picture of light) are introduced and to be noted as lexeme variants.

“To shine” (‘светить’) is an active action performed by: ‘солнце’ (sun) (2 entries), ‘жизнь’ (life), ‘зрение’ (sight), ‘щель’ (crack), “нечто ослепнувшее” (something blinded), ‘безнадежность’ (hopelessness), ‘земля’ (earth), ‘факел’ (torch), ‘дом’ (house). These entries express the interdependent unified presence of light and negative entities (‘ослепнувшее’ and ‘безнадежность’) in one world-view. ‘Судьба’ (fate) is shined on.

The functioning of the image of light overlaps and expands the poetic paradigms established by N.V. Pavlovich in the *Dictionary of Poetic Images* (1991), which are categorized as following⁹⁹:

1. Divine light: “этот свет, принимающий схиму, и в образе ветхом // оживляющий кровь” (“this light that receives the schema, and in the old image // revitalizes the blood”) (Sedakova, 1994: 43), “И в ней огонь его горит. // И свет, как притча, говорит” (“And in her his fire burns. // And the light, like a parable, speaks”) (Sedakova, 1994: 15).

2. Light — water: “Так быстры эти воды, что свет в них не кажется светом” (“These waters are so fast that the light in them does not seem to be light”) (Sedakova, 1994: 43), “Это просто вода, это ветер, качающий свет” (“It is just water, it is the wind that swings the light”) (Sedakova, 1994: 68).

3. Light — matter: “Я кинула б все пред тобою, как штуку // материи, затканной светом” (“I would throw everything in front of you, like a piece // of matter woven with light”) (Sedakova, 1994: 54); a part of the body: “я звездного неба люблю колесницы, // возниц и драконов, везущих по спице // все волосы света и ока зеницы, // блистание нитки, летящей в иглу, // и посвист мышинный в запечном углу” (“I love the starry sky, the chariots, // charioteers and dragons carrying on the spoke // all the hairs of light and the pupils of the eyes, // shining of a thread flying into a needle, // and a mouse whistle in the furnace corner”) (Sedakova, 1994: 190).

4. Light — substance: “и передает // тяжелый факел темноты // туда, где свет, как кровь, идет” (“and transfers // a heavy torch of darkness // to where the light, like blood, goes”) (Sedakova, 1994: 85), “пробегает песком пересыпанный свет” (“the light strewn with sand runs through”) (Sedakova, 1994: 63), “и камень кусками раскидывал свет...”

⁹⁹ Key words referring to each paradigm are highlighted in italics by the authors.

(“and the stone scattered the light in pieces...”) (Sedakova, 1994: 92).

5. Light — being: “как кидает свет, который не исчезнет, // золотой влюбленный мяч” (“as light that will not disappear, throws // an enamored golden ball”) (Sedakova, 1994: 59).

6. Light — feeling (a paradigm effectively expanded by Olga Sedakova): “ты мученья чистый свет // прочтешь по мне, как я по звездам!” (“you will read the pure light of torment // over me like I read from the stars!”) (Sedakova, 1994: 122), “И я не воск высокий покаянья, // не четверговую свечу, // но малый свет усилья и вниманья // несу туда, где быть хочу” (“And I carry not a wax of high repentance, // not a Thursday candle, // but a small light of effort and attention // to where I want to be”) (Sedakova, 1994: 18).

In our opinion, the entries associated with apophaticism deserve a separate mention. Apophaticism is realised on the syntax level once the image of Light is built as the following: “Нет, это не свет был, нет, это не свет, // не то, что я помню и думаю помнить” (“No, it was not light, no, this is not light, // not what I do remember and am thinking to remember.”) (Sedakova, 1994: 61), “С рассказами, с какими // обходят в Рождество — // про золото и жемчуг, // про свет из ничего” (“With stories, with which // they wait on Christmas — // about gold and pearls, // about light from nothing”) (Sedakova, 1994: 113). In these cases, the occurrences correlate with the syntactic postulation of light (N_i), as well as with the scheme $No N_i$. From a philosophical perspective, the definition of light by reverse is a special form of cognition, a refinement of experience.

Light arises in parallel with darkness, light intersects, interacts with it: “Я так любила этот лад, // этот свет, влюбленный в тьму” (“I loved this way of things so much, // this light, which in love with darkness”) (Sedakova, 1994: 105), “И, сколько сил хватило, // там этот свет еще горит, // и наших чувств темнеющую силу // он называет и благодарит” (“And, for as long as strength is there, // this light is still burning there, // and our feelings are as darkening strength // that he calls and thanks”) (Sedakova, 1994: 19), “Словно зренье, упавшее вместе с лучом, // наконец повзрослело, во тьме укрепясь, // и светясь // пробегает над древним письмом” (“As if the vision that fell with the ray, // have finally matured, strengthening in the darkness // and glowing, // runs over the ancient letter”) (Sedakova, 1994: 63), “и свет зажигает, где мрак несветим” (“and the light kindles where the darkness is unlit”) (Sedakova, 1994: 82), “И она лежит, как тихий вход // в темный сад, откуда свет идет” (“And it lies like a quiet entrance // into a dark garden, where the light comes from”) (Sedakova, 1994: 93), “И эту тень, как чашку с белым светом, возьми себе, и позабудь об этом” (“And this shadow, like a cup of white light, take for yourself, and forget about it”) (Sedakova, 1994: 185), “твою, о ночь, возлюбленную нами, // выжимают световую гроздь” (“they squeeze your, o night, beloved by us, // bunch of light”) (Sedakova, 1994: 309), “Когда на востоке вот-вот загорится глубина ночная, // земля начинает светиться” (“When the depth of the night is about to light up in the east, // the earth begins to glow”) (Sedakova, 1994: 314). In the above examples, a special author’s intention of cognition is noticeable, which often consists not in opposing light and darkness, but in their combination in space as a visual phenomenon (a bunch of light, a dark garden) and philosophical amalgam (a shadow is like a cup with white light; light in love with darkness; light thanking the darkening strength of feelings).

A special place in Olga Sedakova’s poetry is reserved for the light on water (see the

“light — water» paradigm above). Light reflections on materials or water itself disperse light, making it scatter broken. As a candle in the darkness, those images lead to thinning of lines between light and darkness. The image visually correlated with the light as a straight line is of interest. This is a striving for the higher, as a candle flame, and a gap that denotes the ajar space, unknown horizon: “Если это скрип и это свет, понемногу восходящий кверху” (“If this is a creak and this is a light that gradually ascends upward”) (Sedakova, 1994: 93), “Как каждому в мире, // мне светит досель // под дверь закрытой // горящая щель” (“Like for everyone in the world, // a burning gap shines for me // under a closed door // hitherto”) (Sedakova, 1994: 125). As a mind of human, a candle flame, a vision towards skies, light has potential to go up vertically. As God’s light, it is bestowed as a blessing from up to down. This is a potential poetic paradigm which may also serve as an additional part of Light as a concept.

The motive of the double light is especially evident for Olga Sedakova: “Из подозренья, бормотанья, // из замиранья на лету // я слабое повествованье // зажгу, как свечку на свету” (“Out of suspicion, muttering, // out of faintness on the fly // I will light a weak narration // like a candle in the light”) (Sedakova, 1994: 39), “Но горе! наполняясь тенью, // любя без памяти, шагнуть — // и зренье оторвать от зренья, // и свет от света отвернуть!” (“But woe! filling with a shadow, // loving without memory, make a step — // and tear off vision from vision, // and turn away light from light!”) (Sedakova, 1994: 41), “Но свет, который мне светом был // и третий свет надо мной носил // в стране небытия” (“But the light that was my light // and carried the third light over me // in the land of nothingness”) (Sedakova, 1994: 102), “И никто бы его не видел, // только свет внутри и свет снаружи” (“And no one would have seen him, // only light inside and light outside”) (Sedakova, 1994: 140), “Свет двойной над ними вился, // расплетался, заплетался: // свет заката золотого // и золотого очара” (“Double light curled over them, // untwisted, braided: // the light of the golden sunset // and golden hearth”) (Sedakova, 1994: 219). A clue to a more in-depth understanding can be found in one of the poetess’s essays: “Свет, первое условие того, что видимое вообще существует, что зрение с чем-то встречается. Это физический свет. Но он образ того другого, что мы тоже называем светом, и чего наши физические глаза видеть неспособны. “Света от Света”” (*Silent Light. Notes on Yu. I. Holdin*) (Sedakova & Krimmel’ n.d.). Thus, the double vision of the light reminds of separation from the physical, mortal nature — a special light of the symbolic, higher nature arises. This light deserves both the perceptual attention of the recipient and the logical analysis of the mind as a reason for meeting the Other. There is quite a distinction between the True Light of another world and the ordinary light of ours. The last can be seen as a mirroring one or unreal, the one that bears only a glimpse of the True Light.

Once we refer to the origins of Neoplatonic philosophy, some ambiguous meanings of the texts become clear. The works of Plotin describe light and propose a system of its sources and differences. Light is already understood as the essence of vision since it enables vision itself. Furthermore, light is a derivative of fire (Mead, 1895: 110). It is already an ordinary metaphor in the Russian language (which is found in Sedakova’s texts as well): ‘свет горит’. Fire not only transfers heat between objects made of dark (matter) but also makes objects have colour. Fire is a form filled with colour (Mead, 1895: 45), which prompts us to interpret «материя, затканная светом» in Sedakova’s text as a colourful substance covering the

world. For a lyrical subject, it interconnects with the impression of a dazzling world.

Plotinus explains that there is a rational light within a man whose vision can be trained to see the most dazzling things in all their beauty, both in form and essence. The trained man himself becomes “a veritable light” (Mead, 1895: 54). The inner vision can only be a path leading to a particular type of presence. For Sedakova, it is closely related to a child’s ability to be surprised by a moment or thing. In accordance with Plotin’s remarks, we find Sedakova’s understanding of the vision’s growth. It is a long path that causes a traveller to pay more attention to the details on a way while forgetting the only goal a journey has: “Тот, кто ехал так долго и так вдалеке <...> Словно зренье, упавшее вместе с лучом, // наконец повзрослело, во тьме укрепясь” (Sedakova, 1994: 62–63).

Difference and primary motion have to come into existence simultaneously. It is through the light (shed on matter by the sun or reason) and other light the object starts to exist. As per the previous quotes mentioned, it is quite a familiar perspective that is implemented in the works of Olga Sedakova: the motive of double light is used to denote the origins of thought. It is also by seeking God in a creative act we form the understanding of the necessary Other. Such experience is required for a lyrical subject to train an inner eye to see.

One intriguing thing adds to the feelings of the lyrical subject in Olga Sedakova’s work. A strong feeling of revelation and wonder accompanies the subject’s encounters with the presence of light and surrounding scene. It proposes to prioritize empirical ways of interaction for a recipient over any first verbal interpretation. It actualizes the phenomenological nature of a poetic text imagery, making what seems rather devotional poetry into universal dialogue with the world, time, space. For Olga Sedakova, the memory of such a state goes back to her childhood, the time when non-essential things are cherished as little miracles. Therefore, her poetry does not require an answer from God or any in-dialogue resolution. It is the subject that goes through the dialectics of their cognition to discover new meanings within the world of many cultural traditions and find the eternal beauty of things while they exist. In that sense, Olga Sedakova’s poetry brings empathy and hope to a reader, and both are not ambiguous (as Tsur (1998, para. 2) offers) in delivering such a message. Moreover, for at least a moment, it takes a reader away from concentration on pure good or evil, or even the Christian paradox of suffering, to spaces between oppositions (Leahy, 2018: 136). It is a liminal space devoted to the meditation of a feeling of wonder, which may be understood as a gleam of God within a numinous experience. It also serves as a necessary pause, a quiet space for the recipient’s inner meditation.

4. Conclusions

As for a poet-metaphysician, the motive of Light is one of the fundamentals in the author’s artistic world, not only because of the role it plays in our lives. Its deployment reflects the special connotations of the symbol of Light, the author’s philosophical reflections on fundamental categories. To effectively analyse the implementation of Light in new poetic material of one author, it is necessary to bring the research done in linguistic and literary areas. The reason is a deep connection between the image of Light as a lexeme, a concept, and a philosophical and religious symbol.

Texts consist of the general linguistic meanings of the lexeme ‘свет’ (light), but, based

on statistics, in a significantly larger number of entries an additional context is developed, which indicates the active development of the creative image in the work of Olga Sedakova. Striking metaphors appeal to religious themes, which allows us to consider religious poetry as part of metaphysics, while fulfilling rational conclusions that are natural for the metaphysics.

Analysis of the closest compatibility of the lexeme, as well as its derivational variants with a minimum semantic deviation, makes it possible to clarify the following semantic signs of light, which are present in the previous paradigms of images: light is mobile, its degree varies from almost complete absence (extinguished light) to an ultra-high degree (heavy, bleak, etc.). Light is a part of the physical world, which realizes its direct meaning: it becomes an instrument (to light up the light), but it also begins to double, often at the moments when a special image, “the light of the upper world” appears. At the same time, it is a blessing, a discovery of the author and reader, a symbol of understanding, which expands the general linguistic figurative meanings with the author’s connotations, which can be observed in the systemic interaction of the author’s text with established poetic paradigms. Among them are the following: divine light; light — water; light — matter; light — substance; light — being; light — feeling; light — no light or wrong light; light — darkness; light — a straight line.

The semantic and frequency accentuation of the lexeme ‘svet’ (light) allows us to elaborate on the special place of this lexeme in the literary texts and metatext of Olga Sedakova — this is the motive that indicates the philosophical views of the poetess, symbolizing special times and states of interaction at moments when a reader has access to the experience of the metaphysical (for example, divine). The connections between the author’s world-view and the ideas of light among the Neoplatonists (Plotinus) can be elaborated on by the reader’s reception of images of light in Sedakova’s poetry.

The analysis of the origins of the author’s idiostyle, verbalized in their linguistic choices and shown in their potential inner dialogue with the tradition, makes a profound base for further interpretation bringing cultural and philosophical premises of a literary work of Olga Sedakova.

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