

# Leo Tolstoy and Emerson's Scrupulous Values: A Moral Analysis

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## Abstract

“The recognition of the sanctity of the life of every man is the first and only basis of all morality” enunciates Leo Tolstoy. True to his valuable words, this paper aims to provide a form of discussion of concepts of values and ethical norms, exploring the complex interconnection between literature and values by including critical analysis of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and *The Three Questions*, while also providing numerous examples to illustrate the dissemination and negotiation of values in literature. Literature is an important means of making sense of our lives and of reflecting, reinforcing by also constructing the norms and values we live by. The present research paper explores the role of literature and values in the representation, dissemination and generation or construction of values. Literature, being one of the forms of culture, is the result of the author's creativity. Literary works are created to be enjoyed, understood, and utilized by community and the author himself is a social creation. ‘Moral values’ are a type of values that are individual-centric and society-centric as well. All over the world, there are different values in literature. The major values are “Peace, compassion, Humanism, initiative, Tolerance.” The moral values are what motivate our behaviour. They ground our judgements about what is good or bad, desirable or undesirable.

*I should not have believed anyone who told me that  
I was capable of such love* (WP 729)

**Keywords:** Tolstoy, Ethics, Morals, Humanism, Tolerance

Tolstoy illustrates the value of peace for the people talking about the emotions overwhelmed because of war. *During the war, people of the warring countries have to undergo a lot of hardships and sufferings* said Prince Andrew. It is not at all the same feeling that I knew in the past. The whole world is now for me divided into two halves; one half is she, and there all is joy, hope, light; the other half is everything where she is not, and there is all gloom and darkness. Internal disturbances have the same effect as wars. So peace is necessary for the happiness of all.

*“you are tired”, said the king,  
Let me take the spade and work a while for you”*

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Discoveries, imagination and invention have been at the root of human progress. Without them, our ancestors could not have come out of their primitive life style. “Three questions” explores the theme of wisdom, acceptance kindness and forgiveness. The story is about a king who wants to know the answer of the tree question so as to get enlightenment. The discoveries and inventions have depended only on their own intelligence. This story indicates the values of quest for knowledge, self confidence etc.

*“Here comes someone running”, said the hermit, “let us see who it is” (TQ)*

Self-esteem is essential for a man’s happiness; a man with self-esteem is full of self-confidence and ready for achievements in life. In order to run the kingdom in a proper way he must be acquainted with his countrymen for solutions. He disguised himself and they went on to find solutions to his answers. The Hermit tells the king that all the answers are within him.

*“I do not know you, and have nothing to forgive you for” (WP)*

A man with a healthy level of self-esteem believes in certain values and principles and the answers are ready to define or explain them. The first question is the most important time to do anything? And the answer is “Now” then the second question is the important person to refer to “the person with you”. And the third question, what is the most important job to do? The answer is “To do good to the person with you”. The Hermit said that the king already found his answers through his deeds.

When the king did not get any satisfying answer he decided to meet a wise Hermit to find out the answers for his questions.

*“For the last time, I pray you to answer my questions. Wise man” (TQ)*

Remember that there is only one important time and that is now. The present moment is the only time over which we have dominion. The most important person is always the person you are with who is right before you, for who knows if you will have dealings with any other person in the future. The most important pursuit is making the person standing at your side happy, that is the pursuit of life.

*The values of inspiration, self-confidence, spirit of inquiry.*

*“How can one be well.... When one suffers normally?” (WP)*

Gratitude is an important virtue for everyone. Internal disturbances have the same effect as wars. So peace is necessary for the happiness of all. Differences between individuals or group of people that arise how and then due to various reasons must be resolved in a peaceful way. Sometimes a few people make a big issue of such things and create problems for the society. It suffers normally.

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The main goal of the relationship between the moral values in literature. It is a truth universally acknowledged of course, that the relationship between the literature and value and the views that have been put forward about this topic, have themselves been subject to historical change.

Self-Reliance is one of the traits in carving our character. It is one of the indispensable factor to lead a successful life. It is delineated by Ralph Waldo Emerson in his prose, “Self-Reliance” as follows:

*“To believe our own thought, To believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men – that is genius” (ALAP 14)*

Ralph Waldo Emerson elucidates the Calibre for being a genius in the above-mentioned quotes, one has to believe in his/herself that the thoughts and feelings evokes from his heart is true and genuine and it must be agreeable to everyone. The eminence of Genius relies on that. Self-confidence is the most essential phase in achieving success. A man without a hope is like a boat without a paddle, he never reaches his destination. Confidence adds charisma to our inner soul. It generates positivity around us. Individuality is another trait, and it is portrayed again as follows:

*“There is a time in every man’s education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide” (ALAP 15)*

The actual goal of education is to understand the drastic effects of ignorance and imitation. Emerson accuses that one must not imitate others, and that is proportional to suicide and envy is an outcome of ignorance. If a man understands this, he is in a right phase of his education. Envy didn’t allow anyone to give genuine compliments to others. It creates a long-lasting yearning towards unattainable things. One cannot be happy with overwhelming envy in his heart. He could not do his duties properly. True and loyal emotions never appear in an envied heart. Individuality defines the purpose of human being. Human beings should vanish the situations which humiliate them to lose their identity.

*“Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events.”*

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