

Reviews

Л. Н. Толстой и Индия. Переписка. Сост., авт. введ. и примеч. Т. Н. Загородникова. Отв. ред. А. В. Бочковская. Москва: Наука–Восточная литература, 2013. ISBN: 978–5–02–036539–1.

In 2013 a long-awaited book compiled by Tatiana Zagorodnikova came out. It consists mainly of the exchange of correspondences between L. N. Tolstoy on India with Indians and with his compatriots as well as other Europeans. Zagorodnikova has brought together publications scattered in various books, articles and memoirs in different languages and in different countries from 1896 to 1910. The single most important contribution of this volume lies in compiling in one source letters that have never been previously published, annotated and commented upon.

This book has a hundred two documents of consisting of three parts: 1) correspondence of Tolstoy with Indians, 2) correspondence with Europeans on questions about India, and 3) correspondence with Russians on questions about India. They are compiled chronologically starting from 1896 with a letter from Vera Johnston, who sent Tolstoy her husband's translation of the *Upanishads*. This was followed by a letter from a physician in Cambridge, England, Dr. Upendra Krishna Datt, who sent Tolstoy the book by Swami Vivekananda, *Yoga Philosophy* which contained a series of lecture delivered in New York by Vivekananda and had been published in 1896. Dr. Datt sent it so that Tolstoy may find that his "doctrines are in perfect accord with the highest points of Indian philosophy" (p.12). This book was

well received and Tolstoy especially liked the concept and explanation of the real "self" in it. In 1898 Ella Ridsdale asked Tolstoy's permission to translate into Tamil his work "Where Love Is, God Is." This was followed by a few other requests from missionaries for support. Tolstoy did not reply to any of those letters individually but rather gave his permission to translate any of his work into any language in a newspaper announcement in 1894.

Beginning in 1901, with a letter from Mr. Ramaseshan, the editor of a monthly journal devoted to Aryan religion, science, philosophy and literature, Indian intellectuals began to have a lively conversation with Tolstoy on Eastern/Western religions, the role of missionaries in India, and requests for his support against western exploitation. A couple letters got a wider audience when they were published in the widely read newspaper *The Hindu*. A proponent of Islam, Muhammed Sadiq, began to send his journals "Reviews of Religions" from 1903–1910, which contained articles on Islam as propagated by a Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mizra Ghulam Ahmad. Tolstoy read them with interest and asked for materials on Bahai faith from Sadiq. There were other sporadic correspondences from many Indians on social issues and Hinduism.

The letter that he received from Baba Premananda Bharathi (1907), who was visiting the United States to lecture on Krishna, as the Lord of Love, came as a pamphlet on Lord Krishna, which Tolstoy evidently enjoyed; he planned to publish it

in Russian with some selected quotes and introduction.

The same year there was letter from the editor, Mr. Gopal Chetty, of a magazine called *New Reformer* that aimed at eradicating false and selfish desires in society and in their place establishing reason, justice and love. Tolstoy was pleased to receive the magazine from 1907 until his death and said that western readers would like read more on Indian religious teachings and philosophy. Gopal Chetty wrote the first biography in India of Tolstoy in 1909, and sent it for including in the publication commemorating Tolstoy's eightieth birthday. It was translated, abridged, and made available in its edited form here for the first time.

In the same year, 1907, Abdullah al-Ma'mun Suhrawardy sent Tolstoy the "Sayings of Muhammad" written by him and the journal *Light of the World*, which he edited. Tolstoy was happy to receive them and had some portions translated and published through Posrednik, the press he founded some years earlier. Later in 1909 Suhrawardy sent a small article on Tolstoy for the "International Almanac dedicated to L. N. Tolstoy" in which he said that he was a follower of Islam and a disciple of Tolstoy, whom he saw as the advocate of peace and non-resistance. Another interesting correspondence was from Professor Rama Deva, from 1907–1910. Rama Deva sent him regularly *The Vedic Magazine and Gurukula Samachar*, which Tolstoy valued for its articles on Hinduism and on the ancient Vedic institution of education called "Gurukula."

The letter sent by Taraknath Das with the booklet *Free Hindustan* in 1908 elicited the famous, monumental "A Letter to a Hindu" by Tolstoy in which Tolstoy discussed many of ancient Indian scriptures and put forth his firm belief in universal love and non-violence. Taraknath Das respectfully disagreed with Tolstoy on employing non-violence as the only means because he felt that in certain circumstances crimes could end up being so heinous, that it may be necessary to retaliate.

This letter from Tolstoy fell in the hands of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who was in London in 1909 and wanted to find out from Tolstoy himself if the copy he had was accurate and could be translated into Indian languages and distributed. Thus began the monumental correspondence between Gandhi and Tolstoy between October 1, 1909 to September 7, 1910. They had a robust exchange of letters in this short time reiterating their common belief in passive resistance and mutual understanding and admiration. These letters have been published and studied by scholars interested in Indo-Russian relationship ever since they appeared. In the last year of his life, Tolstoy continued to receive letters from Indian admirers, who would send him books and journals on Hindu philosophy. There were some well-known religious heads who were travelling in Europe wanted to visit Tolstoy, as by then Tolstoy was revered in India as a "Rishi," or sage.

The chronicling of the correspondence between Indian intellectuals, freedom fighters, journalists, and some Christian missionaries in India have all been brought together in one volume for the first time. The notes accompanying the letters help in establishing the correspondents where identifiable and explain the Indian words and expressions in their context. The flow of correspondence shows that Indians perceived Tolstoy as their ally, who could voice his opinion in support of India and convey to the world the humiliation it has had to endure under British colonialism. Indian spiritual heads were also eager to send Tolstoy materials on Hindu philosophy and religion, as they learned of Tolstoy's search for truth. Thus, Zagardnikova's book methodically reproduces the lively correspondence between Tolstoy and Indians during the last fourteen years of his life. This book is aimed at Russian readers and so only the English and French letters are translated into Russian. I wish that the letters written by Tolstoy in Russian had also been translated into English, thus making

it totally bi-lingual and useful for English speakers. I hope the second edition of the book, if it comes out, will incorporate the change. I congratulate the compiler, Tatyana Zagarnikova, for meticulously putting together a much-needed compilation of letters (some of which are available for the first time in print) from Tolstoy's life for future researchers on this topic.

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Булгаков, В. Ф. Как прожита жизнь.

Воспоминания последнего секретаря Л. Н. Толстого. Группа славянских исследователей при Оттавском ун-те; РГАЛИ; Гос. музей Л. Н. Толстого; Отв. ред. А. А. Донсков; Сост. Л. В. Гладкова, Дж. А. Вудсворт, А. А. Ключанский. Москва: Кучково поле, 2012. 864 с. ISBN: 978-5-9950-0273-4.

Valentin Fedorovich Bulgakov (1886–1966) is known mainly in his capacity as Lev Tolstoy's personal secretary in 1910, the last year of the writer's life. As such, Bulgakov was an eyewitness to the dramatic events of that year, culminating in Tolstoy's sudden departure from Yasnaya Polyana. After Tolstoy's death Bulgakov remained associated with both Tolstoy's family, including Sofia Andreyevna (Tolstoy's wife) and his close associates (including V. G. Chertkov, the chief disciple of the Tolstoy movement). Bulgakov remained in Russia until 1923, sometimes working formally within the confines of the efforts to memorialize Tolstoy and his works, but always advocating for the realization of Tolstoy's most cherished ideals. He spent many years abroad after 1923, and returned to Russia in 1948. He took up a position as collaborator at the Tolstoy Estate Museum at Yasnaya Polyana, where he served until his retirement in 1959. He remained in residence at Yasnaya Polyana until his death in 1966.

Bulgakov has long been known for two books which have been of great interest and available to students of Tolstoy's life, works, and ideas. He was also, indeed, closely involved in the selection and arrangement of materials for the last of Tolstoy's several compendious religio-philosophical anthologies, *The Pathway of Life (Путь жизни)*. Beyond that, however, in 1911 he published an overview of Tolstoy's teaching, *Tolstoy's Understanding of Life in the Letters of His Secretary (Жизнепонимание Л. Н. Толстого в письмах его секретаря)*, and, especially, an account of his year of service to Tolstoy as personal secretary, a work translated variously, e. g., *The Last Year of Leo Tolstoy* (trans. Ann Dunnigan, 1971) (*У Л. Н. Толстого в последний год его жизни*). The latter, especially, has long been a crucial support of the scholarship on the later Tolstoy, even though its tone of the disciple's veneration for his teacher is clearly to be felt.

Bulgakov's *magnum opus*, however, is undoubtedly the work reviewed here, the memoir of his long, eventful and well-travelled life. Entitled *How My Life Was Lived (Как прожита жизнь)*, it was composed on the basis of notes made throughout his life and put into the form of a consecutive narrative between 1946 and 1961. It provides an account of his childhood memories, his education at Moscow University, his acquaintance with and later his service to Tolstoy, and then the long chronology of his life and peregrinations following the death of his mentor. The work was completed only five years before his death, after he had retired from his duties at Yasnaya Polyana. The work as a whole is enormous, amounting to approximately six thousand printed pages, undoubtedly one of the reasons it has never before been published.

The volume under review represents a selection of chapters from this monumental work. Of the twenty-four chapters contained in the complete work, five are presented here, beginning with his university education and first acquaintance with