
Tolstoy Scholarship in Russia and Abroad

Recent Publications and Annotated Bibliography, 1997–1999

Paul Haddock

University of Toronto

- Eaton, Marcia Muelder. "Kantian and Contextual Reality." *Journal of Aesthetic Art Criticism* 57.1 (1999): 11-15.

Kant claims that beauty is inherent in certain people and objects and has very little or no relationship with beliefs or moral judgments. In opposition to Kant, Tolstoy maintains in *What is Art?* that pleasure alone cannot be the sole reason for the importance of art and that its true value lies in its spiritual attributes. Eaton draws on references from modern culture to show the inconsistencies inherent in both views and, although she instinctively sides with Tolstoy, she finds it impossible to reject wholly Kant's beauty-for-beauty's sake approach.

- Frazier, Melissa. "De-familiarizing the Tolstoj of Formalism." *Russian Literature* XLIV. II (1998): 143-158.

The article addresses the underlying debt of the Formalists to Tolstoy in the development of several of their key concepts. The author shows how influential both Tolstoy's fictional and non-fictional writings were for the formulation of *ostranenie* and for the Formalist conception of literary history. Tolstoy's constant search for truth conflicts with the Formalists' rejection of the need for any ultimate meaning to such an extent that "the Tolstoj underlying Formalism is de-familiarized

as to be unrecognisable even to the Formalists themselves" (156).

- Gromova-Opul'skaia, A. L., and K. N. Lomonov, eds. *Iasnopolianskii sbornik 1998: Stat'i, materialy, publikatsii*. Tula: Iasnaia Poliana, 1999.

An impressive collection of essays by Russian and foreign scholars. The book is divided into seven sections which together address every aspect of Tolstoy studies. The first section focuses on Tolstoy's literary works and contains a total of nine essays. This is followed by sections of approximately equal length on "Remembrances, Letters and Books," "Tolstoy and his Contemporaries," and "The Iasnaia Poliana Library." Three shorter sections on "Tolstoy in Photographs," "From the History of Iasnia Poliana," and an obituary of departed relatives of Tolstoy and Tolstoy scholars round off the collection.

- Helle, Lillian J. "The Dream of a Wordless Paradise: On the Role of Contra-Semiosis in Tolstoj's *Voskresenie*." *Scando-Slavica* 43 (1997): 18-31.

Tolstoy, in opposition to such theorists as Bakhtin and de Saussure, adheres to the traditional belief that things are meaningful independently of, and prior to, linguistic signs. Inherent in such a belief is a chasm between the sign and thing, between the expression and content (*signans* and *signatum*), and for Tolstoy this chasm is made especially clear in aesthetic language: "the more sophisticated, refined and elegant the linguistic guise, the more problematic the connection between word and world becomes" (19). For this reason Tolstoy grew increasingly critical toward the cognitive function of literature and its role as a mediator of reality. His negative view of language intensified during his "anti-aesthetic period," beginning at the close of the 1870s. Tol-

stoy, like Rousseau, believed that man must rediscover the intuitive knowledge innate in every individual. Since this knowledge is pre-linguistic, language becomes irrelevant to the author's spiritual quest and becomes merely a channel for expressing conventional notions. The original, true Word present in our inner being can only be experienced once our linguistic signs have been set aside; truth for Tolstoy, as a result, is situated beyond the realm of language, in what Helle terms a "wordless paradise." The article focuses on Nekhliudov's journey to Siberia which the author believes represents a journey to the uncorrupted inner core of the protagonist, during which he gradually frees himself from corrupting linguistic patterns. In line with Tolstoy's contra-semiotic programme, spiritual emancipation can only be achieved in stillness and in silent communication, not in verbal dialogue. Helle devotes the rest of her article to an examination of how Tolstoy creates a paralanguage in *Voskresenie* that instead of reinforcing and complementing what is said does quite the reverse. Time and again in the novel the facial expressions and gestures of the characters are shown to be at odds with the words they speak. In this manner, conventional conversation loses its significance in the novel and all sincere communication takes place "beyond language."

- Helle, Lillian J. "Tolstoy and The Other. Some Comments on the Role of Dialogue in *Voskresenie*." *Life and Text. Essays in Honour of Geir Kjetsaa on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*. Eds. E. Egeberg, A. J. Morch, O. M. Selberg. A Special Issue of *Meddelelser* 79 (1997): 147-158.

The article begins with a discussion of Bakhtin's concept of "the other" as it applies to Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. Whereas for Dostoevsky orientation toward the other seems to be a primary imperative for the development of the individual, for Tolstoy it is, at best, a secondary consideration. Helle observes that Tolstoy sees the path toward spiritual growth as lying not in our attitude toward our neighbour, but in our attitude toward ourselves, in

which one must constantly strive toward self-perfection. In contrast to Dostoevsky, "the kingdom of God" for Tolstoy is "situated inside each and every human being and not between them" (148). Throughout the remainder of the article Helle examines how Nekhliudov in *Voskresenie* first loses contact with his innate inner core through contact with other human beings and then attains moral regeneration through a return to Nature and his emancipation from the speech, traditions, and society of others. By examining Nekhliudov's quest for change, Helle shows that although Tolstoy constantly emphasizes love of one's neighbour as a fundamental law of human life, this theme is subservient in the novel to the responsibility individuals have for their own self-perfection.

- Jackson, Robert Louis. "Anna Karenina's Return to St. Petersburg." *Life and Text. Essays in Honour of Geir Kjetsaa on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*. Eds. E. Egeberg, A. J. Morch, O. M. Selberg. A Special Issue of *Meddelelser* 79 (1997): 159-168.

Jackson examines in detail Anna's return journey to St. Petersburg. Through a close reading of the text he elucidates how Tolstoy reveals the journey to be a turning point in Anna's life, the moment when desire overcomes her moral resistance. Jackson also discusses how Tolstoy depicts Anna as a free, and therefore responsible, individual even at the moment of her strongest obsession with Vronsky. The essay concludes with an analysis of Anna's moral-psychological crisis and how it involves a divorce between ethical and aesthetic categories, between the good and the beautiful.

- Jurgenson, Luba. *Tolstoi*. Paris: Pygmalion / Gérard Watelet, 1998.

As part of the publisher's *Chemins d'éternité* series, this biography focuses on Tolstoy's spirituality and his search for truth. The book is divided into seven roughly chronological chapters and

presents a general overview of Tolstoy's life and works. The author, Luba Jurgenson, is a Russian native who has lived in France since 1975 and has previously translated Goncharov, Shalytkov-Shchedrin, and Nina Berberova, and has written several novels in addition to a book on Solzhenitsyn.

- Kaufman, Andrew D. "Microcosm and Macrocosm in *War and Peace*: The Interrelationship of Poetics and Metaphysics." *Slavic and East European Journal* 43.3 (1999): 495-510.

This article pays close attention to the aesthetic organisation of *War and Peace* in order to reveal the deep unifying principle of the novel. This principle is not solely a fact of Tolstoy's aesthetics, but is also central to his metaphysics, and to the metaphysics of his characters as well. The article focuses on the separate experiences of Prince Andrei and Pierre to show how "the fictional subjects and the authorial subject engage in a continual and simultaneous effort to create order out of chaos, and higher forms of meaning out of the prosaic facts of reality" (496). What Tolstoy offers his readers in *War and Peace* is neither a vision of pure metaphysical order nor some absolute Truth of life. Rather, Tolstoy emphasizes the means by which his characters continually strive for a vision of the ideal amidst the real and that the author himself enacts this process of striving in his aesthetic organisation of the novel.

- Kjetsaa, Geir. "Neizvestnie stranitsy *Voiny i mira* L. N. Tolstogo." *Scando-Slavica* 43 (1997): 108-116.

The first half of the article relates the history of a number of manuscript pages of *War and Peace* that found their way to the Royal Library in Copenhagen. The second half reproduces the contents of the pages which bear the title "From 1805 to 1814." Reproductions of Tolstoy's original manuscript pages are included at the end of the article.

- Kjetsaa, Geir. "Poseshchenie L. N. Tolstogo norvezhskim pisatelem Iakobom Khil'dichem v 1899 gody." *Scando-Slavica* 44 (1998): 49-56.

Kjetsaa recounts the history of the Norwegian writer Jacob Hilditch's visit to Tolstoy in 1899. Extensive quotations from the Hilditch's diary are used to convey the impressions of his visit with Tolstoy.

- Lönnqvist, Barbara. "A Text within a Text: The Dream in *Anna Karenina*." *Scando-Slavica* 44 (1998): 75-83.

In her discussion of Anna's dream the author maintains that its semantic nucleus resonates throughout the entire novel. More specifically, certain objects such as Anna's handbag and the specific traits of speaking French and bending over which are present in her dream reappear in various combinations throughout the novel. An interpretation of the dream and an analysis of the reappearance of these objects and traits form the body of the essay. Anna's dream intensifies the process of interpretation by allowing the reader to probe deeper into the meanings of *realia* in Tolstoy's novel.

- Nikiforova, Tat'iana. "Chto mozhet byt' polezno liudiam. K istorii sobiraniia rukopisanogo naslediiia L. N. Tolstogo." *Oktiabr'* 11 (1997): 171-183.

The article relates the plans made by Tolstoy shortly before his death to entrust his manuscripts and diaries to V. G. Chertkov and the subsequent history of these materials until their arrival at The Tolstoy State Museum in Moscow in 1939. The concluding portion of the article reproduces some lesser known correspondence between V. V. Stasov and Tolstoy.

- Orwin, Donna. "The Return to Nature: Tolstoyan Echoes in *The Idiot*." *Russian Review* 58.1 (1999): 87-102.

Bringing together previous observations regarding the presence of Tolstoy in *The Idiot* with new insights of her own, the author presents these findings as pieces of a coherent pattern of response to Tolstoy on the part of Dostoevsky. In *The Idiot* Dostoevsky is working out his position on the relation between nature and morality and in so doing "crosses paths with his great Rousseauian contemporary and rival Tolstoy" (88). The article goes on to examine how a number of statements made by Prince Myshkin allude to articles and fictional writings of Tolstoy that were known to Dostoevsky. These connections allow for a more detailed discussion on the differing psychological approaches taken by the two authors when dealing with common themes and ideas. Dostoevsky's psychology is, on the whole, more radical than Tolstoy's in its rejection of the power of reason over man. Whereas Tolstoy calls for a moderation of the self and a reconciliation of happiness and virtue, Dostoevsky believes in self-affirmation by means of sacrificing natural happiness which is possible only through Christian love.

- Sendich, Munir. "Anna Karenina Tolstogo v angloiazыchnoi literaturnoi kritike: Obraz Anny." *Russian Language Journal* LII.171-173 (1998): 61-80.

This bibliographic essay focuses on the title character of Tolstoy's novel *Anna Karenina* in English language criticism. Apart from an introduction and a brief conclusion, the essay is separated into several sections which discuss the critical literature on Anna according to the following thematically identifiable groups: the steeplechase, the temptation scene, Anna's image in earlier versions of the novel, her double nature, her dreams and nightmares, her final day, her reception in feminist literature, and her symbolic image. A complete bibliography of the books and articles mentioned in the body of the text is found at the end of the essay.

- Shepley, John. "Sonata." *Salmagundi* 121-122 (Winter-Spring 1999): 192-199.

The author considers Tolstoy's treatment of Beethoven's *Kreutzer Sonata* and humorously imagines what would have transpired if Beethoven mysteriously found himself on Tolstoy's estate in Iasnaia Poliana and if Tolstoy were somehow transported back in time to Beethoven's Vienna.

- Tarasov, Boris. "Lev Tolstoi—Chitatel' Bleza Paskalia." *Voprosy literatury* (November-December 1997): 86-101.

Tarasov relies on Tolstoy's diaries and correspondence to recount the Russian author's interest in the French philosopher Blaise Pascal. The article investigates in detail Tolstoy's changing opinion of Pascal and draws the reader's attention to each and every reference made by Tolstoy concerning Pascal. Although he alludes to the influence of Pascal on Tolstoy in such works as *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, *A Confession*, *Anna Karenina*, and *Resurrection*, Tarasov limits himself to elucidating Tolstoy as a reader of Pascal.

- Taylor, Susan L. "The Gerasim Model of Caregiving: Reflections on Tolstoy's Novella *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*." *Death Studies* 21.3 (1997): 299-306.

The Death of Ivan Ilyich is examined from the perspective of a health care professional for its portrayal of a helping relationship between the protagonist and his servant, Gerasim. The author believes that the model of Gerasim would be of assistance to those who care for the terminally ill.

- *L. N. Tolstoi i A. P. Chekhov. Rasskazyvaiut sovremeniki, arkhivy, muzei.* Articles, preparation of the text, and notes by A. S. Melkova. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "Nasledie," 1998.

A rich collection of materials outlining the professional and personal relationship that developed

between Tolstoy and Chekhov. Contained within this book are letters, diary entries, chronologies, and informal lists which have been kept in the archives of the two writers. The majority of the entries are published here for the first time which makes this volume of particular interest to those researching one or both of these writers.

- Tolstoy, Leo. *Walk in the Light and Twenty-Three Tales*. Trans. Louise and Aylmer Maude. Farmington, PA and Robertsbridge, East Sussex, UK: The Plough Publishing House, 1998.

A reprinting of a collection of Tolstoy's stories first published by Oxford University Press in 1928. Only a few of the stories included in this volume were written prior to 1880 and the majority date from 1885 onwards. Plough Publishers is an inter-faith press and as such the stories selected for this collection highlight Tolstoy's religious convictions.

- Tolstoy, Leo. *Tolstoy as Teacher: Leo Tolstoy's Writings on Education*. Ed. Bob Blaisdell. Trans. Christopher Edgar. New York: Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 2000.

This new collection features the most important of Tolstoy's articles on teaching and education as well as two short stories by his students. In addition, *Tolstoy as Teacher* includes an introductory essay by Bob Blaisdell that examines the role of education in Tolstoy's life and work; a concluding essay that provides suggestions on how to use Tolstoy's fiction to inspire students to write creatively; and an annotated bibliography of translations of Tolstoy and of books in English on Tolstoy.

- Tunimanov, V. A. "Krotkaia Dostoevskogo i Kreutzerova sonata Tolstogo (Dve ispovedi)." *Russkaia literatura* 1 (1999): 53-88.

The superficial resemblances between Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata* and Dostoevsky's *A Gentle Creature* are used as a point of departure by the author to examine the differing artistic and psychological approaches utilized by the two authors. Much more than a mere comparison of the two stories, this article presents the reader with a sophisticated reading of both Dostoevsky's and Tolstoy's works which accentuates the individuality of each writer's creative process.

- Waleson, Heidi. "Electrifying Tolstoy's *Resurrection*." *The Wall Street Journal* 4 May 1999.

A review of Todd Machover's opera *Resurrection* which is based on Tolstoy's novel by the same name. Although Machover is known as a pioneer of electronic instruments and computer-enhanced music, *Resurrection* is reviewed as being one of the more traditional new operas to appear recently. It boasts an atonal-sounding score, unusually melodic writing for the voices, and a linear story line based closely on Tolstoy's novel. The opera premiered this past Spring at the Houston Grand Opera.

- Wertz, S. K. "Human Nature and Art: From Descartes and Hume to Tolstoy." *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 32.3 (1998): 75-81.

A short article which focuses upon Tolstoy's *What is Art?* as a theory of human nature. While neither Descartes nor Hume is mentioned in Tolstoy's essay, their theories are nonetheless central to his premises. Tolstoy continued to expand on the concept of art as a means for man to transmit his feelings that Hume had initiated in *A Treatise on Human Nature* in response to Descartes' *Discourse on Method*. The article concludes with a discussion of the pedagogical implications of Tolstoy's view of art as means to develop sympathy in human beings through the communication of sincere feeling.

- Wright, Colin A. "What is Art?: Tostoy's Criteria in Light of Works by Mikhail Bulgakov and Friedrich Dürrenmatt." *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 39.3-4 (1997): 385-406.

The theories presented in *What is Art?* are discussed in relation to the literary works of Mikhail Bulgakov and Friedrich Dürrenmatt. Wright begins by summarising Tolstoy's theory of art and proceeds to discuss Bulgakov's and Dürrenmatt's writings according to the criteria established by Tolstoy as to what art is not and what it is. Although Tolstoy has been criticized for his views on art, he is nonetheless helpful in enabling an individual to assess what he or she would personally deem art to be.