

and the teaching of peasant children, his publication of the *Yasnaya Polyana* journal, his role in the Posrednik (Intermediary) publishing house, and his writing of *Stories for the People*. Donskov probes the role of the peasantry at large in the development of Tolstoy's philosophical views as representatives of the common people who symbolized the qualities of honesty, simplicity and naturalness which Tolstoy admired. The description of Tolstoy's involvement with Posrednik and the self-taught peasant writers it published—F. A. Zheltov, I. G. Zhuravov, V. F. Krasnov, V. S. Morozov, N. A. Polushin, F. F. Tishchenko, and others—is most instructive.

It is interesting to read about the origins of two representative groups of “spiritual Christians” (the Dukhobors and the Molokans), as well as the historical survey of the *raskol* (schism) within the Russian Orthodox Church, which burst onto the stage of history following the reforms instituted by Patriarch Nikon. There is a sensitive portrayal of the complexities of Tolstoy's attitude to the official church, the specific issues of faith which informed both his writing and his personal worldview, and the interrelationships between the religious perceptions of the upper and lower classes in Russian society of that period. There is no question that Tolstoy's spiritual seekings found expression in both his fiction and non-fiction writings.

The subdivisions of the introduction—“Leo Tolstoy and Timofej Bondarev,” “Brief Outline of the Molokans,” “Leo Tolstoy and Fedor Zheltov,” “Brief Outline of the Dukhobors,” “Leo Tolstoy and Petr V. Verigin,” and “Leo Tolstoy and Mikhail Novikov”—are most helpful, as is Zheltov's summary of Molokan beliefs outlined in his treatise “On Life as Faith in Christ,” reproduced in full in this volume.

The selections from Tolstoy's correspondence with these peasant writers are presented in the same professional literary style that characterizes the book as a whole. A word must also be said

about a few valuable ancillary features, such as the note on calendar dates, the index of Tolstoy titles, and the index of names. The extensive bibliography also deserves special mention as it covers a broad spectrum of scholarly literature on a variety of related topics: Tolstoy's communication (both personal and epistolary) with Bondarev, Zheltov, Verigin, and Novikov; the mutual influence among their worldviews; the pacifism, spiritual outlook, and lifestyle of the Molokans and Doukhobors; the history of Russian religious sects, Russian ethnography, Tolstoy's life and work, and his relationships with the peasantry.

I. I. Sizova

Russian Academy of Sciences,
Institute of World Literature, Moscow



Orwin, Donna Tussing. *Consequences of Consciousness: Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy*. Stanford University Press, 2007. xvi + 238 pages. ISBN: 9780804757034.

In the nineteenth century, westernized Russians “began to think about themselves” (181). Worried, perhaps, that they were off to a late start, they went about the business of thinking about themselves with a peculiar and distinctively modern intensity. One of the momentous consequences of this sudden and heightened self-consciousness was the flowering of mid-nineteenth-century Russian psychological prose, which examined the complex inner lives of relatively ordinary people with unprecedented boldness and depth. Donna Orwin, in this challenging and intricately argued new book, offers an extended meditation on the ways in which the three greatest representatives of Russian psychological prose variously defended, explored, and represented the rich “reality of subjectivity” (5).

Orwin's title is modest and open-ended. Working more in the spirit of Turgenev than Tolstoy, she places no definite article before “Con-

sequences” and eschews any claim to encyclopedic coverage or definitive answers. She gives extended attention to many shorter and less well known works by the three writers, but at the same time takes strategic and illuminating forays into the their long masterpieces as well. She manages throughout to strike an effective balance between broad generalizations (where I find her especially provocative and convincing) and close textual analysis (where I occasionally disagree with her).

The book consists of nine chapters plus an introduction and conclusion. In terms of sheer pages, Orwin devotes slightly less space to Tolstoy than to the other two authors: in the book’s subtitle he comes third in the triumvirate, and he plays a lead role in only three of the central chapters, while Turgenev and Dostoevsky each take center stage (or share the spotlight) in five. In pedantically spelling this out for the readers of *Tolstoy Studies* (a few of whom may even prefer their Tolstoy straight), I do not mean to imply that Tolstoy is in any way less important for her argument, or that she has less up her sleeve to say about him (we know well enough that this is not the case). Nor do I want to suggest that we cannot learn a good deal about Tolstoy from the several chapters that do not mention him at all; certainly one of the implicit purposes of the work is to underscore that we cannot adequately understand any of these authors in a vacuum.

Orwin’s approach is comparative throughout. In chapter one, she traces the “origins of self-consciousness as a national trait of the literary tradition” to Peter the Great’s radical denaturalization and fragmentation of Russian identity in the eighteenth century. Drawing on Karamzin, Pushkin, Lermontov, and Herzen (as well as her central trio), she shows how the newly neurotized educated class turned thirstily, but also ambivalently and ironically, to Western literature for models of behavior. While their self-conscious search for wholeness made them acutely aware of outward forms (they would try on European plots

and postures one after the other, like hats), it also spawned a rich and problematic inward turn.

Turgenev, who “so often articulates problems that the other two undertake to solve” (5), serves as the hinge for chapters two through six. Orwin skillfully probes the ways that Tolstoy and Dostoevsky learned from, resisted, and sometimes skewered the older writer, with whom each had a convoluted and strangely productive love-hate relationship.

Chapters two through four explore how the three writers grappled creatively with the vexed issue of authorial intrusiveness. If Dostoevsky “enjoyed hiding behind his characters” (“no doubt for personal reasons of his own,” into which Orwin declines to delve), Tolstoy “struggled with the problem of simultaneously revealing himself in his fiction as he wanted and needed to do, yet hiding himself so as to give it artistic credence” (69). She lays out in careful detail Tolstoy’s specific debts both to Plato, who taught him “how drama and the ‘real’ was a necessary supplement to analysis in the search for truth,” and to Turgenev, whose early works (in particular *Sportsman’s Sketches*) “helped free him from the tyranny of a single point of view” (70). Tolstoy certainly never renounced his right as an author to inject his own take on things—directly and sometimes with monologic certitude—into his works, but at the same time he learned (like Pierre at the end of *War and Peace*) to appreciate and even enjoy the messy plenitude of perspectives that makes up the human world, and to mix that plenitude skillfully into his art as essential leaven to the deadweight of his own dogmatism. “Instead of Turgenev’s emphasis on the unknowability of reality and especially of other people, Tolstoy focuses on the multiplicity and even irreconcilability of perspectives swarming in reality” (72). In this sense Tolstoy bears an underlying resemblance to Dostoevsky, whose characteristically cacophonous works “typically supply an abundance of evidence but no ultimate certainty about characters” (55).

Orwin shifts away from Tolstoy in chapter five, which features nuanced discussion of “romantic longing” in Turgenev’s “Andrei Kolosov” and *Sportsman’s Sketches*, and in chapter six, which describes Dostoevsky’s complex reaction to the older writer and his “eros for wholeness” (admiring early on, then slyly critical in *The Demons*). Chapter seven provides a penetrating account of the potentialities and limitations of “reflection as a tool for understanding” in Dostoevsky’s *Notes from the House of the Dead*. Chapters 8 and 9 return to Tolstoy. First Orwin traces the subtle influence that Tolstoy and Dostoevsky (who always maintained a respectful, almost courtly distance) exerted on each other in their treatment of childhood (here Dickens, instead of Turgenev is the hinge). Then she uncovers, with detective-like acuity, the “intense though hidden discussion” on “the psychological root of evil” (158) that the two writers conducted over a lengthy period of time and through a long series of works (including Tolstoy’s *Boyhood*, “The Woodcutting,” *Resurrection*, and *The Kreutzer Sonata*; and Dostoevsky’s *Notes from the House of the Dead* and *The Demons*).

Turgenev, speaking for himself and for educated Russians of his time, remarked memorably that “reflection is our strength and our weakness, our destruction and our salvation” (12). Probably nobody felt and embodied more fully the contradictory costs and benefits of this consciousness than did Tolstoy, who was both powerfully drawn to a utopian idea of a natural, Rosseauvian state of minimal (self-) consciousness, and yet at the same was possessed with an incredibly keen moral sensibility and an oversized and relentlessly deconstructive brain that tended always to work in overdrive. When Pierre Bezukhov says of Anatole, “Yes, there goes a true sage. He sees nothing beyond the enjoyment of the moment. Nothing worries him and so he is always cheerful, satisfied, and serene. What I wouldn’t give to be like him” (2: 5: 19), his envy is Tolstoy’s, and in some sense

is utterly genuine—yet we also know that neither Pierre nor Tolstoy really wants to be like Anatole.

Orwin always manages, with a certain serene, cerebral finesse, to do full justice to the complexity of Tolstoy’s artistic treatment of the consciousness-unconsciousness conundrum. Nowhere is this more evident than in her discussion of Stiva Oblonsky (66-69), the child-like adult whom we cannot help but like even as we tut-tut him, and who, in Orwin’s pithy formulation, “lives at the level of content that makes up existence, and ... declines to think about it” (66). Her analysis of his character—and of our reaction to him—is the most supple and astute that I have ever encountered, and in many ways encapsulates for me the virtues of the book as a whole. In a precise yet generous and open-ended way, Orwin is able throughout this volume to articulate why nineteenth-century Russian psychological prose, so far removed from us in time and space, still seems so familiar and pertinent, and still has such an enduring and powerful effect on us.

Thomas Newlin
Oberlin College



Ungurianu, Dan. *Plotting History: The Russian Historical Novel in the Imperial Age*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2007. i-xii, 335 pages. ISBN 9780299225001.

Dan Ungurianu’s book begins with a conundrum: “If one reads Pushkin’s *Captain’s Daughter* and Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*, it would appear that these works, separated by only three decades and written by men belonging to the same circles of the Russian aristocracy, were produced by inhabitants of different planets” (xi). Ungurianu’s purpose, as he puts it, is “to establish the poetics of the genre [in Russia] that arises at the intersection of fact and fiction” (5). Ungurianu argues that the ideas of history and fiction have undergone “drastic changes over the