

remains the authoritative work on Tolstoy and Asian religions, even though the necessary Soviet biases somewhat blemish this fine scholarly study. In English we do have the still useful *Tolstoy and China* by Derk Bodde (Princeton, 1950). But on Buddhism, clearly the non-Christian "religious" worldview Tolstoy was most drawn to, there is no comprehensive study. Such a work would first of all trace Tolstoy's knowledge and interpretation of the Buddhist tradition. Here the issue of "influence" could be explored. It would also be most important to explore the context of Tolstoy's discovery of Buddhism, for unlike the Western scholars of his day, he lived in a country where Buddhism flourished among many of the non-Russian peoples, especially the Buryats and the Kalmyks. Many were educated in Russian universities, studied Buddhism in Mongolia and Tibet, and published books on the subject in Russian. (See John Snelling, *Buddhism in Russia*, Rockport, MA, 1993.) Leskov demonstrates his knowledge of this Buddhism in such a work as *Na kraiu sveta*. What did Tolstoy know of this? Finally it would be most interesting and revealing, I believe, to study the typological parallels between Tolstoy's Christianity and religious experience and the rich tradition of the many varieties of Buddhism. Such an approach would be most helpful to Western readers unfamiliar with this Asian tradition. What such a book would show, I believe, is that while Tolstoy believed Christianity to be the most important religion in the world, at least in his version of it, his version has in fact much in common with that ancient Asian religion which holds so much appeal to contemporary Europeans and North Americans.

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Lidiia D. Opul'skaia. *Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoi. Materialy k biografii s 1892 po 1899 god.* Moscow: Nasledie, 1998. Pp. 407.

Lidiia Dmitrievna Opul'skaia has long enjoyed a reputation, both at home and in the West, as the world's "dean" of Tolstoy studies. This book confirms yet again how well that reputation is deserved. There are no other scholars alive today, and precious few who ever lived, who have the exhaustive knowledge to comment authoritatively on the most minute details of Tolstoy's life.

During the period covered in the book, Tolstoy played an active role in public life. In his many pronouncements, he appealed, like many other contemporary writers, to people's self-awareness, to reason and the moral sense of the individual, to humanity's aspirations toward spiritual values. Russia was going through turbulent times: famines, so-called "cholera uprisings," growing labour unrest, the formation of Marxist circles, the setting up of a labour union in Moscow, the establishment of a "union for struggle for the liberation of the working class" in St. Petersburg (1894), the Doukhobors' burning of arms in the Caucasus (1895) and their refusal to do military service, student unrest (1896), and the resulting historic national student strike (1899), the persecution of Doukhobors and their mass exodus from Russia (1899), and the growth of other religious sects, likewise repressed by the authorities and the official church. Tolstoy responded to such calamities both as a writer and a human being. He not only penned articles, treatises, and countless letters on these issues, but also organized famine relief, food kitchens, and aid for the starving peasants of Tula Province; he appealed to those well off to follow his own example of contributing money toward the Doukhobor emigration. And all this despite serious personal problems: the evident deterioration of his health, the death of his favourite son, Vanechka, and increasing tensions in his marriage. (On 7 March 1895 Sofia Andreevna wrote to her sister: "Levochka [as she called her husband] is completely overwhelmed, he has aged, he walks around bright-eyed but sad, and it is apparent that the last bright ray of his old age

has been extinguished" [trans. V. Zhdanov, *Liubov' v zhizni L'va Tolstogo* (Moscow, 1993): 232].

Despite the distractions of private and public life, Tolstoy continued to write prodigiously. He completed the novel *Resurrection*, the extended short stories *Master and Man* and *Father Sergius*, and the play *And the Light Shineth in the Darkness*. He also worked on the short novel *Hadji Murat* and wrote many important non-fictional works, among them his treatise on aesthetics *What is Art?* and such treatises on religion as *The Kingdom of God is Within You* and *Christian Teaching*.

This new volume is the latest in a series of six (to date) biographical works on Tolstoy—four compiled by his personal secretary, Nikolai Nikolaevich Gusev, covering the period 1828 to 1885 (1954, 1957, 1963, 1970), and the fifth by Opul'skaia (published in 1979), covering the period 1886-1892. It comprises six chapters: (1) Tolstoy's completion of *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, (2) his article "Nedelanie" and his many diverse activities of 1894, (3) events of 1895, including the death of his youngest son and his return to writing, (4) his autobiographical drama *Christian Teaching* and the beginning of *Hadji Murat*, (5) events of 1897, including the writing of *What is Art?*, and (6) continuing progress on *Hadji Murat*, the Doukhobor emigration, and his work on *Resurrection*. As with her 1979 volume, Opul'skaia has based this new publication on a meticulous study of archival materials and a detailed comparison of the many variants (she is one of the few textologists capable of fluently reading Tolstoy's notoriously indecipherable handwriting), as well as Gusev's *Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva L'va Nikolaevicha Tolstogo* (Moscow, Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1958, 1960), of which she was the editor. She places special (and much deserved) emphasis on the interrelationship between Tolstoy's *life* (*biografiia*) and *works* (*tvorchestvo*)—see especially Chapters 2, 4, and 5. She makes frequent references to Tolstoy's *corrections* in various editions and drafts of his works, along with his letters and diaries, and in a number of instances corrects

Gusev's own chronology on Tolstoy's materials.

The book is a labour of love and a work of the most meticulous scholarship. Drawing on a lifetime of study as well as her connections with many people who actually knew Tolstoy, Opul'skaia creates a panorama of his private and public life against a backdrop of events taking place in Russia. Tolstoy appears as a living, breathing human being concerned not only with the world's deepest philosophical issues but also with the practical questions of being a husband, father, and citizen of the world, all of which help explain the many day-to-day changes in his moods. While Opul'skaia still shares to some extent the traditional scholarly idolization of Tolstoy as *kumir*, her treatment of the subject is remarkable for its objectivity and multifacetedness. Much like her beloved author, she herself is intent on the quest for "truth." She points out Tolstoy's weaknesses and contradictions in his pronouncements and actions: an example is Tolstoy's admission to influencing his nieces to lead a simple, peasant-like life, but later criticizing one of them for marrying a peasant (351-52). Similarly, she rejects the Soviet (and post-Soviet) penchant for blaming family tensions primarily on Sofia Andreevna, whom Opul'skaia treats as a well-rounded human being and an exemplary, extremely intelligent editor, wife, and mother. She shows Tolstoy as often taking his wife's side in confrontations with Vladimir Chertkov (e.g., over the editing of *The Kingdom of God is Within You* [5-7]). On these and many other similarly controversial issues, Opul'skaia provides commentary which, because of her depth of knowledge and her judgment, is uniquely valuable.

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