
Musical Metapoesis and Metaphysics in *War and Peace*

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Because of the apparent artlessness of Tolstoy's style, and also because he celebrated spontaneity in his work, he has sometimes been regarded as an author in whom instinct dominates over refinement of craft.¹ In tandem with this view arose the myth that there were "two Tolstoys," an artist and a thinker fundamentally at odds. The following discussion of meta-aesthetics in *War and Peace* joins recent criticism that challenges this myth and seeks to show the oneness of artist and thinker. As he focuses in *War and Peace* on two types of musical experience, one that gives rise to ecstasy, and another that prompts the listener to reflect on the dualism of the human condition, Tolstoy invites the reader to place aesthetic activity on a continuum with metaphysical and ethical striving. He represents musical art as revelatory not only of the deep charm of life in the here-and-now, but also of something eternal within it. Indeed, as depicted by Tolstoy, the experience of making and listening to music links the temporal sphere to that which remains beyond flux. As we will see, the author weaves together a Rousseauian understanding of music as a language of feeling that reveals what is most authentic in human beings and in life, and a classical understanding of musical art as the manifestation of moral and spiritual order.²

Like the novel as a whole, the passages on music confront the problems of ephemerality and materiality, making perceptible Tolstoy's understanding of art as a dialogue with contingency and death. Musical metapoesis guides the reader into viewing aesthetic experience as indissoluble from a larger effort to untie the "knot of life" (II.5.1; 487).³ In what follows, we will examine not only

Tolstoy's representations of musical performance, but also his broader use of musicality as a metaphor to characterize certain characters' understanding of life's underlying harmony.

Music as a Response to the Problem of Dualism

For Tolstoy's characters, untying life's knot involves coming to terms with the duality of the human condition as a consciousness that seems unbounded, yet is yoked to a body limited in space and time, bound for death. Andrei, Nikolai, and Pierre have difficulty in getting to the bottom of this dualism and in escaping the threat death presents to meaning, value, and belief. The knot loosens for them when they enter a kind of eternal present during which they discover consonance between their own youthful strength and hope, and a constant force in nature (Andrei at the window beholding the "succulent [*sochnoe*], moist, curling vegetation" in the moonlight that seems to have turned the Rostovs' garden into stone [II.3.2; 370]; Nikolai enchanted at Otradnoe, where, "instead of air, one seems to breathe in an eternally young strength and joy" [II.4.11; 469]; Pierre experiencing "joyful tenderness" as he gazes "at the high, starry sky, at the moon, at the comet, and at the light of the fire" as Moscow burns, and embracing the blessed sufficiency of the moment: "How good this is! What more could one need?" [III.3.29; 810]). And the problem of dualism lifts for them also when they imagine this world and its moments as partaking of infinitude and eternity (Andrei on the ferry letting go of skepticism and lifting his eyes to the sky [I.2.13; 340]; Pierre dreaming of the globe of life [IV.3.15; 941]). Above all, the "low, solid vault"—Andrei's metaphor for the sky that caps the earthly prison (III.1.8; 558)—expands when the characters intuit a link between self and all, between an inner yearning for beauty and harmony, and the harmony of the cosmos.

Whether the musical beings in *War and Peace* lead others into an ecstatic embrace of the present transfigured so as to encompass eternity, or into a less ecstatic, more intuitive grasp of all that eludes containment in the finite sphere, they instinctively know how to transfigure the material element so

that it yields a glimpse of the “real” (II.1.15; 298). Natasha possesses just this sort of “spiritual openness,” and with her expressive, “incoherent” speech (III.2.25; 692), her singing, and her dancing, she draws others into curiosity (II.1.15; 298; III.1.2; 370), forward movement, and an intuition of the form that gives structure to natural flux. Indeed, it is Natasha who leads Andrei into an unalienated perception of the natural cycle that marks a crucial step in his spiritual journey, as he experiences his unity with nature in a double encounter with an oak tree before and after it has acquired its spring leaves. The text makes clear that without the contact with Natasha and her instinctive artistry, Andrei would remain only half-alive, enclosed inside the falsely rational view that precludes belief in an atemporal essence.

The text lingers over the unstudied beauty of Natasha’s voice (II.1.15; 298) and the unspoiled grace of her dance (noted for instance at II.1.12; 291 and II.4.7; 453).⁴ Linking musicality and authenticity, Tolstoy draws on the Rousseauian idea that at their uncorrupted origins, human beings first spoke a musical language.⁵ Tolstoy follows Rousseau also in associating musicality with a natural gift for harmony, understood not only in esthetic, but also in ethical and metaphysical terms. Natasha resembles Rousseau’s *homme naturel* in that she readily loves and experiences pity.

Like Rousseau, though less overtly, Tolstoy connects spontaneous music and dance to the idea of a Golden Age. “That’s how they danced in our time, *ma chère*” (I.1.17; 60), declares Count Rostov after performing the Daniel Cooper. Denisov’s Polish mazurka, represented as more authentic than the one currently performed in Russian salons, elicits nostalgia in the observers who recall “the good old days” (II.1.12; 292). Tolstoy’s musically gifted beings keep alienation and conventionality at bay. Reflection does not interfere with immediacy of expression. Like the gypsy Steshka in *Two Hussars*, who “lived with her whole being entirely in the song she was singing” (*PSS* 3: 166), musical beings in *War and Peace* inhabit the dance and music undivided from

themselves. Indeed, the gap between idea and embodiment seems to disappear inside the present tense of the master-musician’s performance.⁶ Thus, Uncle feels that the balalaika player has not managed to “pour out” the music, and he himself takes up his guitar, running his fingers over the strings until something seems to snap (II.4.7; 453).⁷ Tolstoy implies here that the artist overcomes the materiality of the instrument, allowing the non-material contents to spill forth.

When she steps into the middle of the Rostov drawing room where there appears to be the greatest resonance and rises to her toes to begin singing, Natasha might be said to take up her place at the unchanging centre of life itself: “‘Here I am,’ she seemed to say, answering the ecstatic gaze of Denisov who was following her with his eyes” (I.2.15; 297). The ensuing passage describes the stretching-out of time and the intensification of present-tense experience, so that duration appears to overcome transience. Nikolai listens: “And suddenly the whole world centered for him on anticipation of the next note, the next phrase, and everything in the world was divided into three beats” (II.1.15; 298). In attending to the beat he rediscovers his anchor: “‘O mio crudele affetto. . . One, two, three. . . one, two. . . three. . . one. . . O mio crudele affetto. . . One, two, three, one. Ah, how stupid is our life!’ thought Nikolai. ‘All of this, unhappiness, money, Dolokhov, anger, honour—all of it’s nonsense. . . and here it is—the real [*vot ono—nastoiashchee*]. . . .’”

In this passage, an expression of pain, “O mio crudele affetto,” becomes objectified and transformed into a stylized plaint with a formal structure that lifts the listener beyond particulars. At the same time, in connecting Nikolai to the real, the music invites immersion in the present-tense and thus also grounds him in the world of becoming. Tolstoy argued with Romanticism on many fronts, but in *War and Peace* he gave form to the paradoxical notion advanced in German Romantic aesthetic philosophy that art acts to detach the sensual world from materiality, while at the same time permitting the supra-sensuous element to unite with the real.⁸ This vision of art as a means of unifying those categories was elaborated in

different ways and with great complexity by Schelling and Hegel, but both broke with Kant's notion that there was a strong distinction between the noumenal and the phenomenal realms (Simpson xi): thus Schelling stated in *The Philosophy of Art* that in music, as in the other arts, the "infinite" informs the "finite," and the ideal exists within the real (116).⁹

As they overcome material obstacles while abstracting from particulars and transforming sounds into structured emotion, Tolstoy's musical beings perceive a non-contingent order inside the realm of flux. Nikolai becomes conscious of something which is best in his soul "independent of everything in the world and higher than everything in the world," undetermined by the necessity that expressed itself as chance during his loss to Dolokhov at cards. Drawn into unconsciously taking up the harmony, Nikolai replaces the idea of chance with the notion of good fortune, hence providence: "And, not noticing that he was singing, in order to strengthen this 'si,' he sung a second, a third below the high note. 'My God! How good! Was it really I who took that note? How fortunate [*kak schastlivo!*]," he thought (II.1.15; 299). The music bypasses conscious awareness to mediate a return to the tonic, a replacement of disharmony with consonance.¹⁰

At times, however, instead of instantaneously making possible the ecstatic merging with the "real," music leads the audience first into a more abstracted understanding of the dualism of the human condition, then beyond this into an intuition of an unchanging essence. Tolstoy shows that precisely because it is a temporal art, music might seem initially unable fully to convey that which resides beyond temporal flux. Indeed, he even depicts music as illuminating the inadequacy of immediate experience. The interplay in *War and Peace* between the ecstatic and the more philosophical types of musical experience reflects the larger dialectic Tolstoy establishes in the novel between two privileged modes of experiencing life at its truest, instinct and intuition. This dialectic emerges also in the tension between the approach to life embodied by the Rostovs and that embodied by the Bolkonskys. Following the

Rostov way, readers are reminded of the imperative to "seize the moments of happiness, make yourself be loved, love in turn!" (II.4.11; 288), while as they follow the Bolkonsky way, they learn to experience, together with Andrei, a "strange lightness of being" (IV.1.16; 868).

After the music-making at Otradnoe, what lingers is Uncle's voice, seemingly disembodied and existing only as a vessel for melody: "'Good-bye, my dear niece,' Uncle's voice called out of the darkness—not the voice Natasha had known previously, but the one that had sung 'As the evening snowfall came'" (II.4.7; 454). As night falls, forms seem to disappear, existing now only as sounds: "The night was dark and damp. They could not see the horses: they could only hear them splashing through the unseen mud" (454). Silence replaces sound ("they were silent for a long while"), and the narrator points to the problem of holding onto a stable essence amidst flux:

What was happening in this childlike sensitive soul, which was so greedily catching and internalizing all the most diverse impressions of life? How did all of this find its place in her? But she was happy. Already approaching the house, she suddenly began to sing the tune of the song, "As the evening snowfall came," a tune she had been trying to catch during the entire ride and which she had finally caught. (455)

Though its harmonious effects linger ("she was happy"), the memory of the performance begins to fade. Tolstoy represents the way Natasha must work to remember and "catch" the melody once Uncle's performance of the ballad has concluded.

The authorial narrator links the fading of the song to the fading of youth and happiness ("I know I shall never again be as happy and tranquil as I am now," declares Natasha as she and Nikolai ride home in the sleigh), a loss that the text implies can be partially mitigated as consciousness and memory attempt to distill what is most essential, just as Natasha distills the wordless melody from the song. The attempt to catch the music here is shown to emblemize the way the soul imposes order on its impressions and sensations: the elusiveness of the melody inside the mu-

sic—its vulnerability to temporality—embodies the elusiveness of form and portends the fragility of the order imposed on contingency by consciousness.

For Natasha, the wordless tune distills the feeling conveyed by Uncle's favorite hunting song and makes it possible for her to recapture the sensations and feelings elicited by that song. This valuation of melody may owe something to Rousseau's discussion in his *Dictionary of Music*, *Letter on French Music*, and *Essay on the Origins of Language*, of the priority and expressive superiority of melody, which he argues speaks to the soul, not the senses. As Neubauer writes, "[m]elodic imitations, like the outlines in drawing, were de-materialized for Rousseau"(99). Sounds of a melody are "signs of our emotions [*affections*], or our feelings" (*Essai* 126). These sounds are like "images" which affect the soul (118-19). According to Rousseau, melody makes of music an imitative art that "supplements the voice of nature," for musical imitations "transform the sounds and objects of the external world" (Neubauer 101). Moreover, music's temporality makes of it for Rousseau a "mnemonic sign" capable of blending past and present (Starobinski 89). It is for this reason that Rousseau imagines the harvesters singing old ballads at the grape-harvest celebration in *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (OC 2: 610; pt. 5, ltr. 7): music "introduces a new dimension: the past," and "adds profundity to the feast" (Starobinski 89).¹¹

The duality in Rousseau's idea of music displays a paradox that has been explored by Derrida in *Of Grammatology*.¹² In Rousseau's *Essai*, we witness an emphasis on two apparently contradictory sources of music's power: on the one hand, music is viewed as the language of feeling that connects listeners to nature, while on the other, music is seen as a transformation of and, inevitably, as an abstraction from nature. For Derrida, this instance of what he calls "*différance*" presents a problem for metaphysics, because even though essence is said to reside in nature, nature remains inaccessible and can be rejoined only metaphorically, by means of signs or "supplements." Tolstoy explores a similar

paradox. However, he shows that a confrontation with the inadequacy of the temporal, material form, far from undermining metaphysics, instead spurs on the quest to envision and touch an atemporal, non-material reality.

Kant regarded the temporality of music as a source of music's inferiority (sect. 53; 195), but Tolstoy would align himself here with Herder, who locates the emotional power of music "in the awakened associative memories and . . . in the anticipation and recognition of recurrent musical phrases" (Neubauer 192). Herder writes that the "very evanescence of notes makes their return delightful" (Herder 22:189; cited in Neubauer 192). Like Herder, Tolstoy notices that music, although a temporal art, actually invites listeners to revisit and reclaim lost moments.¹³ Thus repetition seems to hold time at bay: "Again, please again," said Natasha standing in the doorway, as soon as the balalaika grew silent. Mit'ka tuned his balalaika and again rang out "The Maiden," with trills and variations. Uncle sat and listened, inclining his head to the side with a barely perceptible smile. The refrain of "The Maiden" was repeated again a hundred times. A few times the balalaika was retuned, and again rang out the very same sounds, and the listeners did not grow bored, and only wanted again and again to hear this playing" (452). Musical "enchantment" [*prelest*'] depends in part on the avoidance of finitude: "Enchanting, enchanting, Uncle! More, more!" [*Prelest', prelest' diadushka! Eshche, eshche!*] (53).

Indeed, for all its immediacy, to Tolstoy music seemed to portend something beyond itself; it evoked images and feelings similar to memories, but, as the narrator puts it in *Childhood*, "memories of what? It seemed like remembering something that had never been" (ch. 11; PSS 1: 31). Tolstoy used this concept of memory, as K. Lomunov has written, "to define the essence of the feeling called up not only by music, but by other types of art" (21). In positing a connection between music and memory, Tolstoy hints that both aesthetic feelings and memories draw one beyond temporal, physical limits.¹⁴

Ever the paradoxicalist, the author also comes close to implying that there is danger in the ec-

stasy aroused by art. Music leads Nikolai beyond alienation, yet his vision is tinged with amorality: “What are gambling losses, Dolokhovs, and one’s ‘honest word’! One might cut someone’s throat, steal, and yet still be happy. . . .” (II.1.15; 299), he thinks under the influence of Natasha’s velvety singing. In the scene at Otradnoe, as well, Tolstoy hints again at metaphysical and moral limitations of the immersion in present-tense experience that musical performance on one level emblemizes. Like his precursors in other works (Eroshka in *The Cossacks*, the elder Count Turbin in *Two Hussars*), the primordial figure of Uncle has espoused a philosophy and morality of “*carpe diem*” with an Epicurean cast (“Well here I am living out my time on earth. . . . One dies—that’s the way of it!—and nothing remains. So what does it mean to sin!”) (II.4.7; 451). Uncle seems to conceive of individual experience as a succession of moments to be fully enjoyed before death extinguishes consciousness, and he celebrates this experience in performances that express the oneness of his finite being with the passing minutes. However, the temporality of dance and music presents a problem for one who, like Tolstoy, seeks to tie art to the spiritual, moral realm, and so the author contradicts his character’s views. The text shows that music which rivets listeners in the present tense can also foster the intuition of a spiritual, moral “something” that makes them “less condemned to death and evil” (II.5.1; 478).

Music and Freedom

By means of his musical theme, therefore, Tolstoy alludes to the idea of “limitlessness within limits,” the subject of his early philosophical fragment of 1847-52 (*PSS* 1: 226) and an important motif in *War and Peace*.¹⁵ When Natasha sings, Prince Andrei wants to weep, out of a mixture of happiness and sadness: “The chief reason for his wanting to weep was a sudden vividly sensed terrible contrast between something infinitely great and illimitable [*neopredelimym*] existing within him and something narrow and material [*telesnym*] which he, and even she, was. The contrast op-

pressed and rejoiced him during her singing” (II.3.19; 411). Tolstoy here points to the Platonic and Neoplatonic notion that being cannot be contained within finitude, but that consciousness of limits must always be the point of departure. He implies that the incommensurability of mind and body is an insight best conveyed through the special language of art (here, music). For Prince Andrei, the duality of the human condition inspires both awe and something close to pity when embodied for him by Natasha’s singing. The passage implicitly suggests that art can strive against and thus in some measure seem to transcend finite life in the body. Throughout his novel Tolstoy implies that something in human experience resists the annihilation of significance. Natasha’s song is the metapoetic emblem of that lesson, conveying the idea that it is art which can make that “something” perceptible. Representing for Andrei and the reader spiritual striving within the limits of human frailty—and Tolstoy soon widens our understanding of frailty to include not only material, but also moral weakness—Natasha’s song begins to spur the empathy that Prince Andrei will soon experience as central to spiritual and moral growth.

The moment is of a piece with another passage in which Andrei remembers how Natasha had struggled to “turn inside out” her passionately poetic feeling while narrating a story. Her disconnected speech continually laments its own inadequacy, but it is precisely this humility of language that permits her “feeling” to come through: Andrei “really had understood all she wanted to say” (III.2.26; 692). That Natasha struggles with an imperfect medium (while telling of being lost in a forest, an image that readers might associate with Dante’s *selva oscura*, the site of fallenness and confusion) is what lends this picture depth and “perspective” lacking in previous illuminations about life as a being-for-death, which had recently appeared to Andrei in the “cold, white light” shed by reason, and which was “without shadows” (III.2.24; 685). Now Andrei dwells “joyfully and for a long time” on this “picture” that makes apparent that “soul of hers which her body seemed to bind. . . that soul I loved in her. .

. loved so strongly and happily. . . .” For a revelation such as this, Tolstoy appeals to another sister-art less bound than music to the corporeal element because less dependent on present-tense performance.

Prince Andrei’s response to Natasha’s singing invites the reader mimetically to experience a reaction similar to that undergone by Pierre when he feels sudden tears well up as he beholds Old Count Bezukhov’s “weak, suffering smile, which seemed to express mockery at his own helplessness” (I.1.20; 72), or by Princess Marya succumbing to sobs while witnessing her father’s struggle to express love and ask for forgiveness in language garbled from a stroke (III.2.8; 638). Their tears as they confront the way expression and communication strive against obstacles evoke Aristotelian catharsis, an emotional purification or an intellectual clarification that ensue from the “pity and fear” an audience experiences upon beholding the “suffering of a being like oneself” (*Poetics* 1449b)¹⁶.

The motif of compassion sounds more explicitly as Andrei recognizes Anatole Kuragin in the sobbing man whose leg has just been amputated in the medical tent, but the narrator emphasizes a joyously elevated dimension in the catharsis: “Prince Andrei remembered everything, and an ecstatic pity and love for this man filled his happy heart. Prince Andrei could no longer restrain himself, and wept tender loving tears for his fellow-men, for himself, and for their errors and his own” (III.2.37; 726). Here too, the confrontation with the limits he shares with all his fellow-beings paradoxically gives rise to the experience of a shared freedom in the face of material laws.

Musica humana: Platon Karataev

In the passages devoted to that “unfathomable, rounded, eternal personification of the spirit of simplicity and truth,” Platon Karataev, Tolstoy more explicitly presents the reader with an inhabitant of the present tense who in revealing a “seemliness” in life (the quality that Pierre calls *blagoobrazie*, a term that connotes a formal as well as an ethical beauty), also unveils its moral

and metaphysical essence (IV.1.13; 859, 861). Through Platon, Tolstoy develops and supplements the image of the naturally harmonious being that he represented in Uncle. In creating Platon, Tolstoy pursues the idea that an unchanging Idea becomes perceptible in art, although in this case Tolstoy does not focus on extended musical performances, but rather on a “musical,” hence harmonious, way of being in the world. Platon’s harmoniousness manifests itself in expressive discourse filled with proverbs, aphorisms, and spontaneous song, and in speaking, praying, and breathing that settles the listener’s soul.

Karataev resembles Uncle in that for him as well, form and content are one. In his speech, we learn, the meaning inheres only within the individual speech-act:

Platon could never recall what he had said a moment before, just as he never could repeat to Pierre the words of his favorite song: “dear one, little birch tree, and my heart is sick” were there, but no meaning could be got out of the words alone. He did not understand and could not understand the meaning of words taken separately from the context in which they were spoken. (IV.1.13; 861)

For Pierre this detail is a sign not only of Karataev’s spontaneity, but also of Platon’s own indissolubility at every moment from the “all” that is life, that is, of the indissolubility of part and whole. In Platon’s discourse, non-material content appears to inhabit material form with no gap to divide them, and this seamlessness seems to bear witness to the possibility of a total fusion between the world (and words) of the flesh with a non-material metaphysical and ethical substance.¹⁷ Tolstoy returned to the idea that form and idea can merge in his famous statement describing *Anna Karenina* as a “labyrinth of linkages”:

every idea expressed separately in words loses its meaning and is terribly impoverished when taken by itself out of the linkage in which it occurs. The linkage itself is made up, I think, not by the idea, but by something else, and it is impossible to express the basis of this connection directly in

words. It can only be expressed indirectly—by words describing characters, actions, and situations. (*PSS* 62: 268-69)

Like the artistic statement in Tolstoy's later definition, Platon's special discourse manages to give form to a content which (like life in all its complexity) would be "terribly impoverished" if summarized discursively.

The figure of Platon Karataev can guide readers into grasping what is most central to Tolstoy's own aesthetic project and can be read as a metapoetic emblem of what Tolstoy himself aspired to do with language. In *War and Peace* Tolstoy continually makes room for the felt contingency of experience in the here-and-now of the phenomenal world, and yet all the while endeavors to depict a hidden order within the chaos of experience. Platon Karataev embodies Tolstoy's vision of a language uncodifiable enough to embody the living reality of present-tense experience, but that still serves as a vessel for universal truth. His unrepeatable aphorisms set forth in unstudied, melodious rhythms, his sayings, stories, and songs rich with context-bound meaning, and his prayers improvised within received forms achieve linguistic fidelity to present-tense experience, while never losing sight of an atemporal essence. The representation of Karataev's language continues Tolstoy's homage to ideas derived from Rousseau, Plato, and their successors in the Romantic tradition: like Rousseau's first language, Platon's words reach their listener without mediation, and like the Word as envisioned in Neoplatonic philosophy, they are transparent to an unchanging ideal.

Through Platon, Tolstoy alludes to the philosopher whose name the character bears, and by envisaging him as the incarnation of "roundness," he evokes the image of the round universe set forth by Plato in the *Timaeus* (*Tim.* 33b). Plato's *Timaeus* relates that this world (what he calls the "World-Soul") was created as a "single visible living thing, which contains within itself all the living things whose nature it is to share its kind," and inside which all these living things connect as in "a symphony of proportion" (*Tim.* 30-32e). The philosopher here extends Pythagoras's notion that

the universe exhibits a mathematical structure corresponding to musical intervals. The idea also appears in Plato's *Republic* through an allusion to the music of the spheres. In that dialogue, art supplements dialectic, and the question "why be good?" receives a mystical, poetic answer in the concluding story of Er.¹⁸ Granted a vision of the universe, Er returns to earth to recount that he beheld the Spindle of Necessity and the wheels that turn in concentric circles around this axis in the manner of a whorl (*Rep.* X. 616 b-e). The movement of the eight spheres is accompanied by music: "And on top of each circle stands a Siren, which is carried round with it and utters a note of constant pitch, and the eight notes together make up a single scale" (*Rep.* X. 617b). The three Fates join in to sing of the past, present, and future and help to spin the wheels. Plato returns in the *Timaeus* to the metaphor of the music of the spheres to talk about the correspondence between an inner "musical" order of the soul—what Renaissance theory came to call "*musica humana*"—and the order of the cosmos (*Tim.* 47d-e).¹⁹ In creating the character of Karataev, Tolstoy subtly takes up this idea, central to Western thought, of a correspondence between microcosmic man and the macrocosmic order of the universe.²⁰ In the episodes involving Karataev, it is not music-making *per se* that reveals this correspondence, but rather Platon's general harmoniousness revealed in musicalized speech, in the "seemliness" with which he invests his stories, and in the deft, "round" gestures he makes as he winds his leg-bands.

In prosaic counterpoint to Pierre's exalted search for meaning, Platon's snores obliquely conjure the *musica humana* as well: "For a long time Pierre did not sleep and with open eyes lay in the darkness in his place, listening to the regular snoring [*mernomu khrapen'iu*] of Platon who was lying near him, and he felt that the formerly ruined world now with new beauty, on some kind of new and unshakable foundations, was raising itself up in his soul" (IV.1.12; 859). For Pierre and for the reader, unconscious breathing—the most basic sign of life—becomes here evocative of the ordered cosmos. This humble instance of the microcosmic "music" that imitates the music

of the spheres helps Pierre apprehend the measured beauty and structure of the cosmos where he might never before have listened or looked. The episode resonates with Prince Andrei's earlier vision, during his delirium at Mytishchi, when he seems to apprehend a "strange, airy edifice" made of thin needles or glowing sticks [*luchiny*] that slowly rise and fall, then rise again "to the sound of whispered rhythmic music" (III.3.32; 818) and of "some sort of soft, whispering voice ceaselessly repeating in measured rhythm: I piti-piti-piti. . . ." (817); he feels that he must "balance carefully (though it was difficult)" to prevent the structure's collapse (817). Here, the architectural image combines with a more overt allusion to a measured music of the spheres to conjure the classical idea of a mathematically ordered universe. As Andrei accedes to a more authentic level of thinking and feeling, ordinary sounds become transformed and hint of regularity and pattern.²¹

In both scenes, Tolstoy obliquely refers to the classical paradigm to imply that the inner experience of order mimes the structure of the cosmos. He thereby invites the reader to understand aesthetics—the creation of beautiful form—as of a piece with the metaphysical striving to uncover order, and with the ethical striving to uncover an anchoring moral ideal. The whispered music Andrei hears at Mytishchi appears to consist not only of external sounds (the rustling cockroaches and buzzing, plopping fly) but also of his own rising and falling breath. As Andrei lives and breathes, he participates in a general music by means of which fragile human beings affirm the idea of structure.

Petya's Music: The Striving for Harmony

Connoting as it does a striving for harmony, music fits well with what Gustafson calls the novel's "paradigmatic action," the creation of harmony amidst confusion and chaos (41).²² It is because of a yearning for harmony, it would seem, that Nikolai whimsically reflects to Natasha that he would like to keep Uncle on hand all the time, "if not for hunting then for his harmony [*lady*]" (II.4.7; 455). While portraying the characters

striving for harmony, Tolstoy links them inside a harmonious structure of his own. The passage describing Petya's imaginary concert makes explicit this vision of art as the perception and creation of non-material order. Petya's music stands for the capacity to strive in the face of death and also for the will to discover consonance between the individual's requirement for happiness and meaning, and the structure of life itself.

Petya imagines both an instrumental fugue where a refrain travels from one instrument to another, and a chorus of voices, which "grew and grew in measured [*ravnomernym*] triumphal strength" (IV.3.10; 933). Tolstoy's double musical metaphor of fugue and chorus makes room for both the linear, horizontal nature of the verbal artwork playing variations on a central subject, and its vertical, harmonic structure that can be apprehended as a whole. The structure of the novel partakes of a redemptive symmetry and roundness, portraying the alternations of war and peace, life and death as both contrapuntal and cyclical. As in a fugue where a musical idea is envisioned as a conversation between several "voices" in the form of musical questions and answers, so in *War and Peace* separate instruments (the individual viewing consciousnesses) pose and, in counterpoint and harmony, directly or indirectly answer questions about life's design, meaning, and worth. Their asking and answering is a product of and an emblem of their freedom in the face of necessity.

Music here becomes Tolstoy's metaphor for a verbal art which invites readers to envision the prosaic contingencies of everyday life, exalted, transformed, and imbued with a type of permanence. Petya's music captures the seemingly random sounds of raindrops, a quiet conversation, neighing horses, someone's snoring, and the saber being sharpened. Similarly, Tolstoy was concerned to render the flux of life in all its manifold particularity, even as he sought to achieve universality in his representations. Moreover, Petya's creation of the fugue (which Petya refers to as "my music" [933]) on the eve of death symbolizes the process through which the artist makes accessible to others an apparently contingent subjectiv-

ity that would otherwise perish unshared. Petya “regretted that he had no one to whom he could communicate” his pleasure, but the author overrides the character’s isolation by tacitly acknowledging the presence of the reader made privy to this subjective experience.

A vision of cosmic order in which all parts join together inside a reconciling whole becomes perceptible again when Petya delightedly supplements the glorious fugue he weaves of ambient noises with the “sweet and solemn hymn” made up of the triumphantly rising voices (IV.3.10; 933). Once again, as with Andrei’s whispering music (and Platon’s snores), the sounds are on the scale of the human voice. As in the ancient model, the human soul patterns itself to reflect in a micro-cosmic *musica humana* the cosmic harmony that became known as *harmonia mundi*. The author hints that the music that arises of itself, unbidden like a dream, reflects something more than merely the individual’s desire to view all parts as belonging to a whole and to transform contingent appearances into essence. Through Petya’s reverie, the culmination of the novel’s musical theme, Tolstoy again subtly weaves in the Pythagorean idea of the music of the spheres, and again links aesthetic, ethical, and metaphysical harmony.²³

“Now, voices, join in,” orders Petya, turning the hiss of the saber (“ozhig-zhig-ozhig-zhig”) into an affirmation of an ethos of concord in the face of death (933).²⁴ Petya’s hymn is “sweet,” because, like his sister, he understands and conveys the “sweetness” of life, Tolstoy’s metaphor for a quality that is both deeply (and temptingly) sensuous, yet also has a moral dimension: “I’m used to something sweet. Excellent raisins, take them all” (IV.3.11; 935). Petya (like his creator) invites others into sharing in the tastiness and goodness of his offering and by these means, into experiencing a kind of grace. The voices sing together with “surpassing beauty” that Petya apprehends with fear and joy: the text suggests the enactment of a divine mystery (933).²⁵

In *What Is Art?*, Tolstoy went on to polemicize with Western aesthetics which takes beauty as an evaluative criterion, noting that in the Russian language, “the word and concept ‘good’

includes within itself the concept ‘beautiful,’ but not vice versa: the concept ‘beautiful’ does not cover the concept ‘good.’ If we say of an object valued for its appearance that it is ‘good,’ we are thereby saying that this object is also beautiful; but if we say it is ‘beautiful,’ that by no means implies that the object is good” (*PSS* 30: ch. 2: 38). But before he rejected a theory of art centred around beauty, Tolstoy stated that the

essence of life, that which makes us live, is the need for that which we incorrectly call the good. . . . For good and evil are essentially only the materials out of which beauty is formed—that is, that which we love without reason, without usefulness, without necessity. . . . But let reason touch what is only open to the feeling of beauty, let it make logical conclusions about how one should make sacrifices to Zeus, or serve him or imitate him, or how one should celebrate mass or confess, and there is no longer beauty nor a guide in the chaos of good and evil. (1873; *PSS* 62: 24-25)

Tolstoy’s conflation in *War and Peace* of beauty with a moral/spiritual ideal bespeaks an affinity for classical aesthetics, where *to kalon* signifies both “the beautiful” and “the good,” as Tolstoy himself later notes in *What Is Art?*: “the concept of beauty separate from the good, which constitutes the basis and aim of aesthetics in our time, did not exist among the ancients” (*PSS* 30: ch. 2: 41). Tolstoy creates the fugue as an emblem of the beauty of life that by acting on the aesthetic sense (“the feeling of beauty”) serves as guide through the “chaos of good and evil” and shows “what makes us live.”

Like Natasha’s, Petya’s musicality is both a moral and an aesthetic talent. Both characters awaken others to beauty and are themselves sensitive to it. Throughout the novel, beauty receives recognition in the characters’ exclamations of “*prelest*!” (translatable as “lovely” or “enchanted”), as here when Petya exclaims as he hears the sounds that flow together sweetly and triumphantly: “Ah, how lovely!” [*Akh, eto prelest’ chto takoe!*] (933). In an earlier passage where Natasha reacts to the “*prelest*” of the “most enchanting night that ever was” (II.3.2; 370), the

text emphasizes the irreducibility and mystery of the experience of beauty: "Ah, my God, my God! What is this!" [*Chto zh eto takoe!*] (371), exclaims Natasha. In the passage on the fugue, as well, the origin of the enchanting music remains mysterious; it is "unknown" and wafts in "as if from afar" (933). The call to ecstasy, together with a revelation of beauty, serves the idea Tolstoy held dear at the time he was working on this novel, and which he expressed in his well-known letter to Boborykin: "The goal of the artist is not to solve a question irrefutably, but to force people to love life in all its innumerable, inexhaustible manifestations" (July or August 1865; cited in Tolstoy *War and Peace*, "Backgrounds and Sources" 1084; *PSS* 61: 100).

Neither the treatment of music, the philosophical passages, nor the treatment of quasi-mystical insights short-circuit or oversimplify the encounter with necessity and with the ephemeral body. In following the triumphal concert with Petya's death, the author makes use of irony that might lead readers to question the transcendent value of the delight Petya experienced as he hearkened to his music, and by analogy to discern the ephemerality and contingency of any transports they themselves had experienced in reading about such delight. The fugue's beauty, readers might feel under the pressure of Tolstoyan irony, portends nothing beyond itself: the vision of interwoven parts that merge with the whole is a structure of self-sufficient beauty, nothing more. A question therefore arises analogous to the one posed by Yeats in "Among School Children": "O body swayed to music, O brightening glance, / How can we know the dancer from the dance?" (214). Yet, as befits one whom Merezhkovsky called a "seer of the flesh," Tolstoy hints that when the dancer merges ecstatically with the dance (i.e., when the present-tense performance incarnates the idea or when, as in the novel's "labyrinth of linkages," form and idea exist together), the question of which is which becomes irrelevant. Petya's music is the emblem of that ecstasy and of an ecstatic dimension in Tolstoy's poetics. The merging of prosaic sounds with another type of music that seems to come from

afar, emblemizes Tolstoy's effort to depict and to achieve the fusion of the corporeal and the incorporeal spheres by means of language.²⁶

As we saw, however, the text acknowledges the fragility of structures that would bridge the gap between the material world and that which seems to lie beyond it. Once again the encounter with fragility becomes prerequisite to tears and to the reader's catharsis in imitation of the observer-character's grief: "I am used to something sweet. Excellent raisins. . . take them all!" he recalled Petya's words. And the Cossacks looked round in surprise at the sound, like the yelp of a dog, with which Denisov turned away, walked to the wattle fence, and seized hold of it" (IV.3.11; 935).

Conclusion

As Tolstoy told his secretary V. F. Bulgakov in April 1910: "I love music more than all the arts, and it would be harder for me to part with it than from all else, and to part from the feelings which it elicits in me"(175).²⁷ His son observed that "I have never met anyone in my life who was as sensitive to music as my father. . . . Sometimes music moved him against his will, even tormented him, and he would say: 'Que me veut cette musique?'" (S. L. Tolstoi 373). Music for Tolstoy was the "stenography of feelings" (*PSS* 55: 116), and sometimes he was troubled enough by the indefinability of those feelings to polemicize with musical art (most famously in *The Kreutzer Sonata*). Polemics aside, Tolstoy trusted feeling, and found music's "strength and significance" to turn on the fact that "[f]eelings that lend themselves with such difficulty to description in words are transmitted immediately in music" (cited in Gol'denveiser 160-61). In *War and Peace*, as he depicts the effects of successful performances, Tolstoy provides his reader with emblems of art that bypasses rational reason to act immediately on feeling.²⁸ "What in the world is this?" [*Chto zh eto takoe?*] Natasha marvels to herself, gazing upon a seemingly transformed Denisov with whom she has just danced an extraordinary mazurka in perfect sync (II.1.12; 292). Her question points ahead to the one Tolstoy posed years later in

calling his treatise on aesthetics "*What is Art?*" As we have seen, in elaborating his indirect answer to this question in *War and Peace*, Tolstoy engages not only with the Rousseauian ideas that nourished Romantic philosophy, but also with the Classical vision of art as an imitation of cosmic harmony.

War and Peace embodies its author's confrontation with limits on freedom. It is this confrontation with limits that unites the aesthetic problem of embodiment treated by means of the musical theme and the problem of freedom and necessity treated in the philosophical passages and the epilogue.²⁹ According to the argument Tolstoy makes perceptible throughout the novel, those who become aware of a lack of freedom become receptive to a vision of an infinite, eternal whole that contains the myriad parts, and which the old geography teacher in Pierre's dream calls "life" and "God" (IV.3.15; 941).³⁰ Thus, imprisoned by the French, Pierre laughs at the idea that someone could attempt to lock up his "immortal soul," which he regards as a boundless part of the infinite "all" (IV.2.14; 902). Tolstoy's argument in favor of reconceiving necessity and reenvisioning finitude runs parallel to the implicit argument in the musical passages for an art that erases the distinction between container and contained, thus accomplishing the fusion of part with whole. Uncle who strives to "pour out" something incorporeal that exceeds containing, Natasha who distills wordless melody from song, and Petya who hearkens to the world's music all seem to participate in revealing the essence that inheres in but also transcends the phenomenal realm. Tolstoy's representation of music and his philosophical views emerge from one desire, to imagine parts as belonging to a whole and thus, to imagine his way around death. The problem facing the musical artist—the necessity of using a transient vehicle, the performing body, to convey a non-material idea—is analogous to the question facing Nikolai, Andrei, Pierre, and Tolstoy himself, of how to situate finite life in the flesh in relation to something more permanent.

In the epilogue, when Tolstoy moves the reader and characters into a different, more "fin-

ished" kind of time where lives are envisioned as totalities rather than as processes, we find that Natasha has set aside her singing. Perhaps because she has reached fulfillment inside the novel's structure of "all's well that ends well," Natasha no longer needs to make the music that throughout the novel was the symbol of a way to live within time while also transcending it (Ep.1.10; 1020). The music that embodied the pull to cadence and resolution no longer resonates: Tolstoy takes the reader through a lesson of change and renunciation. However, through the metaphor of the "delightful music" [*chudnaia muzyka*] of the children's laughter (Ep.1.13; 1030), the author alludes to the continuation of the cycle whereby the next generation will pursue harmony with as much ardor as the last.

Because readers are led into sympathizing with and cheering on the characters' longing for a harmonizing vision of a non-contingent reality, *War and Peace* can be read as a kind of theodicy, in that the encounter with and the consciousness of randomness, suffering, and death do not preclude the embrace of God's world and the possibility of order. The characters' transformations of flux into a non-random pattern are metaphoric of the author's pattern-seeking and pattern-making activity, and their recuperation of meaning in the face of suffering and death mirrors the design of Tolstoy's theodicy. As we have seen, the musical analogy makes perceptible a movement from dissonance to consonance. The characters in *War and Peace*, like the readers of that novel, attend to the transformation of random sounds into form. However, this transformation is bound up with, even contingent upon, an awareness of limits. The consciousness of non-freedom, and, for the reader, of the aesthetic structure that mimes divine necessity, ensures a release from chaos.

Notes

1. I would like to thank my anonymous readers at this journal as well as Caryl Emerson and Donna Orwin for their comments on an earlier draft. A shorter version of this paper was delivered at Iasnaia Poliana during the

conference on "Tolstoy and World Literature," 22-26 August 2000.

2. For more on the role played by music in Tolstoy's life, art, and thought, consult Eiges; Gol'denveizer; Gusev; S. L. Tolstoi; and Paliukh and Prokhorov. Rischin's article on Tolstoy's response to Beethoven sheds light on the complexities of Tolstoy's attitude to music and discusses a musical dimension in his poetics.

3. This and all subsequent references to *War and Peace* follow the now-standard division into Book, Part, and Chapter numbers as used in Tolstoi, *Sobranie sochinenii* (20 vols.), but page numbers refer to the Maude translation in the Norton Critical Edition edited by Gibian. I have cited the Maudes' translation, sometimes amending it to conform more literally to the Russian original. References to Tolstoy's other writings will correspond to the *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (90 vols.) [PSS].

4. In his discussions of Tolstoyan metapoetics in *War and Peace*, Silbajoris focuses on Tolstoy's idealization of sincerity, spontaneity, and infectious communication (138-42), looking at Natasha in terms of Tolstoy's ideas on art (1991: 66, 84; 1995: 40-41). See also Jones, who writes of Natasha that she is "the typical, intuitively physical, 'chest singer'" with whom Tolstoy identified (72-73).

5. For more on this subject, see Knapp's discussions of Tolstoy's use of the *Essai* and of the Rousseauian dimension in Tolstoy's attitude to language and in his poetics (1998, 1999). Rischin also notes the relevance of Rousseau to Tolstoy's views on language and music. She makes the point that members of the Rostov family fulfill "the Rousseauian ideal of *l'homme naturel* as musician—the purity of the music-making of each is equivalent to the purity of soul. Each is an agent of good enchantment" (36).

6. Emerson (1996) observes that "[m]usic—and, one could argue, the temporal arts generally" govern "the healthy aesthetics of *War and Peace*, where life's 'rhythms' are sanctioned and blessed" (164). The present discussion supports her view that "Tolstoy's fascination and discomfort with the 'performative present' structured many aspects of his realism" (166). See also her observations about the performative present in her "*What Is Art? And the Anxiety of Music.*"

7. The metaphor of "pouring out" anticipates Tolstoy's diary entry of 1888: "Thought: in life we are frozen,

corked-up vessels, whose purpose it is to be uncorked and poured out, to establish communication with the past and the future, to become a channel and to share in the universal life" (PSS 48-49: 13).

8. See Lippman (1992) for an overview of the philosophical aesthetics of Schelling, Solger, Hegel, and Schopenhauer (203-38).

9. That Tolstoy, keeping his distance from the Hegelians, may not have been familiar with the central texts of German Romantic aesthetics before or while writing *War and Peace*, of course does not preclude his having reckoned with their central ideas. Orwin discusses parallels between the views of the German Idealists, and those of Tolstoy on metaphysics and nature (15-30, 53-61, 64-68, and *passim*). She argues that the Hegelian views Tolstoy encountered as he was embarking on his literary career undoubtedly contributed (even if only unconsciously) to inspiring Tolstoy's quest "to harmonize and unify the subjective and objective realms," and by so doing, to "make sense of freedom and necessity" (26).

10. Although Tolstoy probably had not yet read Schopenhauer at the time he wrote this passage, he could almost be illustrating Schopenhauer's notion that music provides an image of the strivings of the human heart, with musical consonance (the return to the key note) symbolizing the Will's satisfaction (Schopenhauer 243). But whereas the philosopher places the emphasis on the unquiet nature of the Will's striving (237), Tolstoy's vision remains more classical. That Nikolai unconsciously takes up the harmony suggests that he, like the singer, is in tune with the world's essential "music," that is, with its fundamental order.

11. Tolstoy had already begun to represent music in these terms in *The Cossacks* (1852-59). In that work, the musical Eroshka tells Olenin to put down his pen, for "when you're dead you won't hear any more songs. Make merry now!" (PSS 6: 108). But as it acts immediately on feelings, Eroshka's music also communicates a sense of loss. Especially affecting is his song's sad refrain that captures the sorrow of a youth who has returned to a devastated village and found "an empty space."

12. Thus Neubauer writes that Rousseau's understanding of music "illustrates Derrida's suggestion that Rousseau had . . . undermined the negative meaning he usually attached to supplements" (101).

13. Herder's ideas play an important role in anchoring Pierre's faith in immortality (I.2.12; 339), and they are relevant also to an understanding of the Rostov siblings' musicality. For Herder "every sound in nature is music": man is a "general participant" (Herder 22: 179-18) in "nature's creative concert" (Neubauer 162). Tolstoy hints through Petya's music that he would second Herder's view that "we live in an 'Odeum,' a hall of eternal harmonies" (22: 56).

14. In listening to music, says the narrator in a draft for *Childhood*, "my consciousness of my physical existence is destroyed, but I feel that I am living, living a full and agitated life" (PSS 1: 180). Orwin suggests that Tolstoy derived his ideas on the imitative nature of the arts and—most likely—his sense of a connection between music and memory, from Plato (504-05). Along with Carden, she notes that Tolstoy "makes use of the Platonic doctrine that knowledge is 'remembered' rather than acquired, and, like Plato, he deduces from it the existence of the soul" (505). Orwin's larger argument, also relevant here, is that Tolstoy's reading of Plato helped him to resolve a contradiction between a "deterministic psychology based on strict causation," and "a belief in moral freedom" (501). See also Sankovitch for a discussion of Tolstoy's linkage of music and memory. She views his interest in this question as part of his larger concern with the role of repetition in constituting the self (215-24), and thus also as involved with the question of creating order out of the apparently chaotic manifold impressions and experiences of life.

15. In the fragment, Tolstoy gives two formulations for this idea. The first version reads: "From the time that I remember my life, I always found in myself some kind of strength of truth, some kind of striving, which could not find satisfaction, everywhere contradictions, only insignificance [*nichtozhnost*']. The longer I lived, the more unbearable did it [*ona*] become for me." In the second version, Tolstoy sounds more optimistic: "From the time that I remember myself, I always found in myself some kind of striving, which could not find full satisfaction, only a satisfaction that I understood, if not clearly. I was conscious that I am limited in everything and yet understood limitlessness, even found it in myself. To reconcile this contradiction, I established rules, according to which was defined the appearance of the limitless within limits [*neogranichennogo v ogranichennom*]."

16. As a commentator remarks, "Aristotle recognizes that tragic pity can never be completely disinterested"

(Grube xxiv). As he defines it in the *Rhetoric*, pity is "the kind of pain we feel at the sight of a fatal or painful evil which we might expect to befall ourselves or one of those close to us and when it seems near. Clearly, to feel pity a person must think that he himself, or someone belonging to him, is liable to suffer" (2.8; cited by Grube xxiv).

17. Ovsianiko-Kulikovskii long ago drew attention to language as the unifying centre in Tolstoy's portrayal of Platon Karataev (92).

18. For another connection with the *Republic*, see Jackson, who links Pierre's meeting with Karataev in the shed to Plato's simile of the cave. In her reading of *The Kreutzer Sonata*, Knapp (1991) investigates a very different side of Tolstoy's response to Platonic conceptions of musical mimesis.

19. Timaeus states in Plato's dialogue that harmony acts "as an ally in the fight to bring order to any orbit in our souls that has become unharmonized, and make it concordant with itself. Rhythm, too, has likewise been given us by the Muses for the same purpose, to assist us. For with most of us our condition is such that we have lost all sense of measure, and are lacking in grace" (47 d-e). Consult Lippman (1964) for an overview of musical thought in ancient Greece.

20. What one commentator terms the "doctrine of *ethos* in music" was elaborated by Plotinus who wrote of "man's ability to copy the Ideal" (Portnoy 42). Plotinus believed that the musician must possess a "natural tendency" that yearns for "measure and shapely pattern"; "he must be drawn by the tone, rhythm, and design in things of sense: he must learn to distinguish the material forms from the Authentic-Existent which is the source of all these correspondences and of the entire reasoned scheme in the work of art; he must be led to the Beauty that manifests itself through these forms" (Portnoy 42-43). Plotinus took the sympathetic vibrations of strings on a lyre to be a token of the "kinship" that governs the All, which, though made up of "unisons" and "contraries" is governed by one melodic system (Portnoy 43). In plucking the lyre, one imitates this cosmic harmony. Thus Renaissance theory came to hold that "microcosmic man, imitating in his *musica instrumentalis* or practical music the ideal order of the *harmonia mundi*, can regain in some small way the *musica humana*, the ordering of his being, that characterizes the music of the spheres and the prior good state of the soul" (Hollander 30-31). See also

Lippman (1992) for an account of how such views developed from Plato through the Renaissance. Neubauer notes the persistence of Pythagorean ideas in Romantic writings on music (197).

21. Tolstoy's Platonism in this episode has been analyzed by Weeks, who notes the allusion to the music of the spheres: "Andrei and Petya are about to die. They are, therefore, given dispensation to hear the music of the spheres. For Petya, it comes in the form of a dream about a heavenly orchestra. For Andrei, the music is more subdued; in fact, it is reduced to a 'whisper.' Yet whether the hymn swells to symphonic volume or subsides to a nocturne it is the same universal song" (79). (Tolstoy may be incorporating an allusion to the threads and weaving of the Fates into this episode by having Andrei behold a structure of thin needles or glowing sticks [*luchiny*]; the latter provided light in peasant dwellings for weavers as they worked.)

22. Gustafson writes that *War and Peace* as a whole is governed by a "paradigmatic action of the restoration of harmony," a pattern also perceptible in its parts, which also display a rhythm in which "the world of human relatedness is lost and then restored to a new maturity" (41).

23. In representing Petya's accession to a quintessence of life, Tolstoy reveals his affinity with Schopenhauer, who wrote that the "inner nature of the world" reveals itself in a musical language which man's "reason does not understand" (I: 336). For a comparison of Tolstoy's understanding of music with Schopenhauer's, see McLaughlin (233-38). Rischin also notes the parallel with Schopenhauer in this passage (40).

24. For a complementary interpretation of this harmony, see Orwin on Tolstoy's ideas on music (71-73). Orwin connects Tolstoy's presentation of melody as "transmitted through individual voices" to a "Goethean belief in the real existence of individuals," each one a microcosm of the universe and all participants in universal harmony" (72). The "culmination of the theme," she argues, occurs in *War and Peace*, on the "night before Petia is sacrificed" to the "laws of necessity by which God orders life" (ibid.): "Petia's death, heartrending though it may be, is part of a mysterious harmony or balance of human individuals in the universe. . . . It is no accident that it occurs during a raid in which another Peter, Peter Bezukhov, is rescued" (73). On *War and Peace* as a meditation on the interrelationships of component parts, see Bocharov (10) and Silbajoris 1995 (12).

25. Once again Tolstoy's embodied thinking on art shares something of the spirit of German Idealism. Tolstoy later explicitly rejected the views of art advanced by Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel as being "vague and mystical" (*What is Art?* ch. 3 PSS 30: 47), but his homage to beauty in *War and Peace* recalls the Idealists' notion that the "beautiful is the manifestation of the idea" (ibid.). Thus Hegel declares in his Introduction to *The Philosophy of Fine Art*: "Fine art is not real art till it is . . . free, and only achieves its highest task when it has taken its place in the same sphere with religion and philosophy, and has become simply a mode of revealing to consciousness and bringing to utterance the Divine Nature [*Das Göttliche*], the deepest interests of humanity, and the most comprehensive truths of the mind" (12-13). Art "represents even the highest ideas in sensuous forms, thereby bringing them nearer to the character of natural phenomena, to the senses, and to feeling" (13). Hegel understands art as that which mediates between "pure thought and what is external, sensuous, and transitory, between nature with its finite actuality and the infinite freedom of reason that comprehends" (13). He traces this vision of art to Schiller's *Lectures on Aesthetic Education* and to Schelling's philosophy of art: the "unity of the universal and particular, of freedom and necessity, of the spiritual and the natural, which Schiller grasped . . . as the principle and essence of art . . . was considered, by a further advance [in Schelling's system], as *the Idea itself* . . . the sole truth and reality" (119). In *War and Peace*, Tolstoy seems closest to these Idealists not only in the elevated role he implicitly gives to art, but also in his unwillingness to separate the spiritual-ethical realm from the idea of beauty.

26. Sémon calls the fugue a "symbol" (26), a "revelation of death by music," representing the emergence of another reality perceptible only to the spiritual ear (27). A symbol, like the Biblical Word, erases the distinction between the signifier and the signified, so that the incorporeal and corporeal elements exist as one entity. Gustafson (212), Mandelker (10, 58-80, 183n7), Orwin (194, 250n6), and Knapp 1995-96 (93-94) are among those who remark on the affinity between Tolstoy's poetics and those of Symbolism. The notion also informs Merezhkovsky's essay and Shestov's vision of Tolstoy's late work in "The Last Judgment" as a "revelation of death" (172).

27. Eiges and Lomunov (esp. 16-28) discuss the relationship between Tolstoy's attitude to music and his understanding of art in general.

28. Representations of dance and musical performance function as well as rhetorical set-pieces that invite the reader to participate in a reevaluation of temporality, slowing down the reader's perception of the action by means of the Sternean techniques Tolstoy adapted to his own purposes. As Gustafson has argued, the verbal performances insure the reader's co-experience of the represented actions (373-391).

29. Wasiolek makes the point that for Tolstoy in *War and Peace*, "[t]rue freedom is . . . not the power to initiate events abstractly, as if one were exempt from space and time and from preceding conditions, but the consciousness of reality. The fuller and richer the consciousness (*soznanie*), the freer one is" (125). And consciousness of reality includes consciousness of limits.

30. The vision of the globe of life recalls Plato's description in the *Timaeus* of the world-soul as a single living whole made up of parts "whose nature it is to share its kind" (*Tim.* 30c).

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