
A Clash of Utopias: Tolstoy and Gorky¹

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Such is the ideal of Christ—the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth, an ideal foretold already by the prophets, that there will come a time when all people will be taught by God, will forge their swords into plowshares and their spears into sickles, the lion will lie down with the lamb, and all beings will be united in love.

TOLSTOY, AFTERWORD TO *THE KREUTZER SONATA*

Like most nineteenth-century Russian intellectuals, Tolstoy and Gorky were utopians. They looked around them and saw a deeply flawed society, a society obviously irrational, inefficient, and unjust, presided over by an inept and outmoded government, still dedicated to the absurd principle of autocracy, with all legislative, executive, and judicial authority theoretically concentrated in the hands of one person, and that person selected not by any demonstration of wisdom or capacity to rule, but by sheer accident of birth. It was a society deeply divided, between a small class of "haves"—landed gentry, capitalists, merchants, professionals, and civil servants on one side, and on the other a huge, benighted mass of "have-nots," consisting mostly of impoverished agricultural peasants, but with an increasing segment of these being transformed into an industrial working class, the latter toiling under the harsh conditions characteristic of the early phases of industrialization.

The country's system for educating this population was inadequate and grossly discriminatory. Opportunities for women to emerge from their traditional domestic roles were severely limited. (It

must be admitted, however, that feminine emancipation was not very high on Gorky's agenda and was not on Tolstoy's at all.) Both Great Russians, Tolstoy and Gorky concerned themselves mainly with *Russian* social ills, but both were nevertheless outraged by the oppression and discrimination visited by the Imperial government on ethnic and religious minorities, thinking especially of Jews and Poles. In short, Russian society was an appalling mess. Surely intelligent human beings could devise and implement a better way of organizing their common existence than Russia's ramshackle agglomeration of worn-out relics of its medieval past. Concerning the evils of their contemporary world Tolstoy and Gorky were in virtually total accord: it had to be changed, profoundly changed. But changed into what and how—on these questions there was ample room for disagreement.

The Tolstoyan utopia is not easy to reproduce. As Isaiah Berlin has demonstrated so eloquently,² Tolstoy's critical powers, his capacity for discerning flaws in the reasoning of others, were infinitely greater than his ability to construct positive systems of his own. We know much better what he disliked in his world than what he hoped would replace it. But let us try to piece together Tolstoy's image of mankind's ideal future.

The keystone of Tolstoy's doctrine is the formula "non-resistance to evil by violence," *neprotivlenie zlu nasiliem*, the wording derived from the well-known turn-the-other-cheek passage in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:39). This rule Tolstoy regarded as an absolute categorical imperative. Although Tolstoy did not acknowledge the divinity of Jesus or consider the Gospels as anything more than error-prone human artifacts (which he undertook to correct³), he nevertheless believed "resist not evil" (by violent means) to be divine law, implanted by God in every human heart.⁴ The epistemological basis for this belief is not entirely clear to me. It was apparently derived from introspection: Tolstoy found the law inscribed in his own heart and therefore concluded that it must be there in all of us. People for centuries and centuries had been deterred from observance of this innate divine law by contrary sinful impulses and by false doctrines propagated by various vested interests, notably the churches; but he, Tolstoy, had now stripped away the thick tissue of lies laid over

the law by such traducers as St. Paul.⁵ He had set forth his findings in a series of treatises that he apparently considered so reasonable and so persuasive that eventually humankind could not fail to be convinced by them. People would then abandon their irrational and violent ways, and utopia would ensue. Tolstoy insisted that persuasion was the only means permitted for bringing about this happy result; any use of coercion or force would only evoke counterforce, bloodshed, and evil. The most important work to be done was private and personal. People one after the other must change themselves, by hard and constant introspective labour, as Tolstoy himself had been trying to do all his life.⁶

There has always seemed to me to be a Manichaean element in Tolstoy's image of the human psyche. God has implanted a correct, non-violent moral core in every human heart, but there seems to be a plethora of other forces there, many of them evil, and it is hard to see how St. Paul and his successors can be blamed for all of them. Though Tolstoy would never admit it, it is hard to avoid seeing the hand of Satan also at work in us. What about the sex drive—does it not also come built into us? Yet Tolstoy wants us to spend our entire lives, at least after puberty, trying to root it out.⁷

In any case, what would happen if people really obeyed the divine law inscribed in their hearts and stopped resisting evil by violence? First of all, the entire apparatus of the state would vanish, "wither away" in the parallel Marxist utopian formulation, as unwanted and unnecessary. No armed forces would be needed, because the country would not defend itself by force. If a foreign army were to invade it and met no resistance, the foreign soldiers would be morally overwhelmed by the spirit of brotherhood they encountered and would lay down their arms. At least this would seem to be the hoped-for result. In such works as *Ne ubii* ([Kill Not], 1900) and *Odu-maites'!* ([Bethink Yourselves!], 1904), Tolstoy as usual concentrates on negative formulations: war is murder, those who participate in it are murderers, those who pay taxes to support armies are guilty of complicity in murder. People are "hypnotized" by governments and patriotic propaganda. Tolstoy's

—and every Christian's—job is to bring people to their senses, repudiating the state's instruments of violence. But he never explicitly spells out what would happen if his prescriptions were actually followed and there were a foreign invasion. However, in a diary entry of 13 January 1910 Tolstoy says that he does not care whether the practice of his doctrines leads to anarchism or to [Russian] slavery under the yoke of the Germans or the Japanese (*PSS* 58: 295). Virtuous, non-violent slavery is far better than bloody resistance.

No law courts would be required in Tolstoy's utopia, because they too are ultimately based on coercion and violence. With regard to criminals, people have no right to judge and punish one another. "Vengeance is mine"—and mine alone—saith the Lord.⁸ Civil disputes could be settled easily by negotiation, especially since there would be no private ownership of land—on this point Tolstoy drew heavily on the American reformer Henry George—and people's holdings of other property would be about equal.⁹ Such necessary communal enterprises as operation of schools and building of roads would be arranged communally and locally. "Taxes" would be given voluntarily as people saw the value and necessity of communal projects; no coercion would be needed. It would be a stateless society, the "Kingdom of God on earth," as Tolstoy said in his 1906 article, "What Shall We Do?"¹⁰

The economics of Tolstoy's utopia are less clear. Essentially he advocated a return to a society of subsistence agriculture, where people would all live on the land and raise their own food. He acknowledged the need for some specialists such as blacksmiths, but he firmly rejected the idea that there should be some who worked only with their brains and others with their muscles.¹¹ All should do their share of farming: it is joyful, healthy work, good for body and soul. Cities would eventually disappear. Tolstoy viewed cities from the perspective of a "repentant nobleman" and former serf-owner: cities are places where useless government officials and equally useless, idle gentlefolk expend wealth extracted from the countryside on such excrescences as large houses staffed with multitudes of servants (former peasants) and on such

expensive and pernicious amusements as fancy restaurants and Wagnerian operas. In Tolstoy's utopia all these parasitic people—voluntarily, of course—will return to the land, get out their spades, and joyfully begin to dig. Their capacity for intellectual work will even be enhanced by the exercise.

What about the cities as centres of commerce and industry? Here Tolstoy seems genuinely puzzled and out of his depth. He would argue, I think, that with a greatly simplified economy there will be much less need for exchange of goods, and money may not be needed at all.¹² And as for manufacturing, Tolstoy seems to regard most factories as expendable. When listing their products, he always makes it appear as if most of what they turn out consists of luxury goods for the well-to-do, like the silk and satin produced in a sweatshop factory near Tolstoy's house at Khamovniki in Moscow. Peasants don't need satin (*Rabstvo nashego vremeni* [The Slavery of Our Time], Chapter II). If there is need for something to be made cooperatively, by many people working together, workers will organize such "factories" ad hoc. How such matters as capital, credit, distribution, and pricing would be organized in Tolstoy's ideal world is not clear to me. Though he regularly traveled by train between Tula and Moscow, Tolstoy—as far as I can see—simply refused to deal with the question of how such major enterprises as the railroad would in the future be financed, maintained, equipped, and managed. Despite all its convenience, the railroad remained for him the symbol of urban evil as he had depicted it in *Anna Karenina*, spreading its iron and death-dealing tentacles through the countryside. Tolstoy lived into the age of the electric light, telegraph, telephone, automobile, airplane, phonograph, and radio, but the advance of technology does not seem to have affected his economic thinking at all. For Tolstoy these were nothing but toys, and while playing with them human beings continue to evade their moral duties, fulfillment of which would solve their social problems.

How was the Tolstoyan idyll to be attained? Here too its author is a bit hard to fathom. Tolstoy never tired of repeating that only persuasion was to be allowed; no one would be forced to join this

ideal world. Surely people would eventually see the light and carry out the program he had set forth so compellingly in his treatises. It might take some time—he never provided anything like a timetable—but it would happen. An added impetus would be the example of virtuous people living self-sufficient, non-violent lives. A nucleus of such people already existed in the form of the Tolstoyans and such peasant allies as the Dukhobors. If large numbers of young men would simply refuse to serve in the tsar's armies, as the Dukhobors did, how could there be wars?¹³ Nevertheless, Tolstoy never seems to have had much interest, or to have expended much effort, in organizing Tolstoyan missionaries. The work of persuasion should apparently be more spontaneous, the effect of living examples of people "witnessing."

Somewhat incidentally, the novel *Resurrection* strikes me as a powerful artistic refutation of the author's own theories. In that novel only one upper-class gentleman, the hero, Prince Nekhliudov, shows any signs of self-improvement to the point of divesting himself of his land holdings, and even he does not give up all of them, apparently retaining enough to provide him with a comfortable private income. Furthermore, he suffers from unique sexual guilt, added to the universal social guilt of the gentry, to motivate his self-denial. No other member of his class shows the slightest inclination toward repentance or self-improvement.¹⁴ It would seem from Tolstoy's own evidence that his utopia is a long, long way off.

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Gorky never produced a reasoned critique of Tolstoy's utopia, but it is clear from many passing remarks that he regarded it with deep skepticism; moreover, the requirement that it could be attained only by persuasion he considered actually harmful, since Tolstoyan non-resistance was hard to distinguish in practice from supine passivity in the face of evil. Russians, he thought, had been passive long enough; it was time for more direct and more promising forms of action. The most forthright statement of his criticisms we have is an "open letter" he wrote (but never sent) to Tolstoy in

March 1905, still furious and indignant over the senseless bloodshed he had witnessed in Petersburg on "Bloody Sunday," only a month before. Gorky's letter was written in response to Tolstoy's article "On the Social Movement in Russia" [*Ob obshchestvennom dvizhenii v Rossii*], which had itself been written as a response to inquiries from foreign journalists about his reaction to the political situation in Russia.¹⁵

Most of all Gorky takes issue with Tolstoy's doctrine that the only avenue of real progress is for people to devote themselves to self-improvement. "Can a man engage in perfecting morally his own personality on days when on the streets of our cities men and women are being shot and after the shooting for some time were not allowed to gather their wounded?" (SS 28: 360)¹⁶ Tolstoy, Gorky insisted, had no right to speak even for the peasants, let alone the workers, whom he did not know at all. The pacifistic peasants he idolized were anything but typical. (In the end Gorky decided that the tone of the letter was too harsh; moreover, he did not want to add his voice to attacks on Tolstoy from the Right.¹⁷) In the article "The Destruction of Personality" (1909) Gorky put his criticism even more strongly, lumping Tolstoy and Dostoevsky together as "the greatest geniuses of a land of slaves... With one voice they cried 'Endure' ... 'Resist not evil by violence.' I do not know in Russian history a more painful moment than this, I do not know a slogan more offensive to a person who has already proclaimed his capacity to resist evil and to fight for his goal" (SS 24: 53).

Though he was far from a lover of violence or warfare—Gorky was especially eloquent about the idiocy of World War I, when millions of Europe's ablest young men spent four years busily slaughtering each other¹⁸—Gorky was convinced that the tsarist regime could never be brought down by peaceful means, certainly not by masses of people trying to extirpate the aggressiveness from their own souls. As early as November 1904, he had proclaimed, "[W]e will not let ourselves be whipped or trampled on. We will have to use our revolvers, daggers and even our teeth in the struggle" (cited from Yedlin 47).

Gorky did not, of course, share Tolstoy's nega-

tion of cities and industry, nor did he condone Tolstoy's repudiation (in which Tolstoy included his own great novels) of the "elitist" culture built up over centuries by the intelligentsias of Russia and the world. On the contrary, Gorky regarded the intelligentsia as Russia's main bulwark against peasant "Asiatic" mindlessness and superstition. Perhaps these anti-Tolstoy views will be better explicated in the more positive form of an exposition of Gorky's own utopia.

Another strong anti-Tolstoyan impulse in Gorky stemmed from his personal encounters, not with Tolstoy himself, for whom Gorky continued to feel boundless admiration and fascination, despite their disagreements, but with certain Tolstoyans. As a young man Gorky had been snubbed and patronized by a sanctimonious Tolstoyan named Klobsky, and the image of this hypocrite haunted him for years, surfacing again as late as *My Universities* (1923).¹⁹ Gorky's disdain for Tolstoyans extended to the disciple-in-chief, Vladimir Chertkov. In response to Chertkov's book, *Ukhod Tolstogo* ([Tolstoy's Departure], 1922), which celebrated as a spiritual victory the eighty-two-year old author's nocturnal flight from his wife, home, and ancestral estate, Gorky wrote a vigorous defence of Countess Tolstaia, who for years had been Chertkov's rival in the struggle for Tolstoy's soul ("O S. A. Tolstoi").²⁰

Officially, Gorky's own utopia was the standard socialist one espoused by so many intellectuals in Russia and indeed all over the world. After all, Gorky was the author of *The Mother* ([*Mat*], 1906), the very model, the progenitor of what was much later dubbed "socialist realism," a socialist classic if there ever was one. But in fact socialisms came in many shapes and sizes, and Gorky's variant was very much his own.

First of all, Gorky never shared the narrow factionalism and sectarian antagonisms that so beset the socialist camp. He was essentially a reconciler, an includer, not a purist. He tended to look benignly and fraternally on the whole spectrum of radicals and reformers who were trying to pull the country out of its slough, and his reverence for culture and its all too sparse bearers was so great that he hated to see any intellectuals at bitter odds with one

another. The Russian veneer of high culture was far too thin to be squandered on squabbles.

However, Gorky had been radicalized by his experience on Bloody Sunday and subsequent brief imprisonment.²¹ Though soon released, he now wanted to fight tsarism as furiously as possible. He participated actively in the December 1905 armed uprising in Moscow, his apartment being used as an arms depot and bomb factory. After the collapse of the revolution he was forced to emigrate to prevent renewed arrest, and he was to remain abroad for eight years, until the amnesty of 1913. Though by his own admission he was never a very good Marxist,²² Gorky found the Bolshevik wing of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party most congenial to his mood and hopes, and he supported the party generously, both by substantial financial contributions and by organizing, at his home on Capri, a school for educating and training worker revolutionaries. It was during this period that Gorky formed with Lenin a relationship that by some definitions could be called a friendship.²³

However, Gorky's Bolshevism was from the beginning tainted by heresy, some overt, some more hidden. Overtly, Gorky for several years associated himself with the "God-building" enterprise within the party, led by Lunacharsky and Bogdanov and anathematized by Lenin. For Gorky, at least, God-building was little more than an effort to generate for the secular cause of socialism the same kind of passion and dedication that supernatural religions have aroused (Sesterhenn). He connected it with his own celebration of Man, with a capital M, i.e., our human species, which with no help from nature has accomplished such amazing feats in its journey from the jungle to the heights of European civilization.²⁴ The word "European" is of some significance here. At least consciously, Gorky vehemently insisted on "Europe" as the model of civilization and progress for Russia; "Asia" represented its bad, backward, stagnant, slothful side. In any case, the human species itself deserved to be an object of worship, but within it most venerable of all were those individuals who embodied its best qualities, its creative potential. And one of these Men, despite all their disagreements, was Lev Tolstoy.

Gorky's less overt heresy against Bolshevism became fully apparent only after 1917: it was his fear and even abhorrence of the Russian peasantry. Here Gorky was not only off the official Leninist line, which regarded the peasants as worthy junior partners of the workers, but even further from the peasantophile Tolstoy. Gorky just did not like peasants. Ever since his experience, related so vividly in *My Universities*, when peasants in a village where he was living with a Ukrainian populist named Romas deliberately set fire to Romas's house and store, putting Gorky's life at risk, Gorky's view of peasants remained jaundiced. Peasants were backward, ignorant, superstitious, anarchic, and potentially violent.²⁵ His aversion to the peasants was one reason why Gorky allied himself with the Social Democrats rather than the Socialist Revolutionaries: the Marxist SDs saw the industrial workers as the main revolutionary force, one which would pull the laggard peasants after them. The chief reason Gorky, in his *Untimely Thoughts*, written serially in 1917-18, took issue with the Bolshevik coup d'état was his conviction that the industrial working class and their Bolshevik leaders were too weak to hold onto power for long. They would be engulfed in the anarchic mass of the peasantry, and the country would descend into barbarism.²⁶ Much later, one of Gorky's most questionable accommodations to Stalinism was again partly motivated by his antagonism to the peasantry. The collectivization and de-kulakization campaign of 1929-32, brutal and murderous as it actually was, nevertheless evoked Gorky's enthusiastic approbation. It seemed to him a heroic effort to drag the benighted peasants forward into the modern world, a happily speeded up process he had thought would require generations.²⁷

Gorky was not really very strongly anti-capitalist. He admired the vigour and creativity of the capitalist entrepreneurs, the primary accumulators, the organizers and builders of factories and industrial empires, and he portrayed them not unsympathetically in a number of novels and plays.²⁸ It was their children who tended to degenerate into feckless futility. Even stronger was his dedication to culture, whatever its source. People able to contribute to culture, as creators or students or perform-

ers, in science, art, music, or literature—such people were for Gorky heroes, to be cherished and nurtured. He never liked the Bolsheviks' harsh and punitive politicization of culture, and during the Civil War he used all his prestige and direct access to Lenin to save countless intellectuals and Kultur-träger from arrest or starvation.²⁹

To sum up: Gorky's utopia was an egalitarian society in which people, working cooperatively, would pursue in both agriculture and industry the basic task of exploiting the resources offered by nature to meet the fundamental human needs for food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and communication. Enough time and energy should be left so that all could pursue intellectual and cultural interests. The technicalities of economics, investment, resource allocation, central planning vs. local initiative—such questions interested Gorky very little. But of one principle he was sure: the ideal society should invest heavily in education and culture. Everyone should be enabled to absorb and enjoy as much of mankind's accumulated cultural heritage as possible. How this society was to be governed also did not seem to concern Gorky very much. It is striking that neither he nor Tolstoy showed the slightest satisfaction in the establishment of constitutional government in Russia after 1905 or showed any interest in the subsequent activities of the Duma and its struggles with the tsar. For both of them all that was irrelevant, *ne to*, not what was really needed. Utopia required much more profound changes.

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Tolstoy of course never specifically criticized Gorky's utopia as such; he hardly knew what it was. But Tolstoy in his late years *was* much concerned with the general topic of socialism. In fact, the very last article that Tolstoy produced, whose manuscript he asked for after his celebrated departure from Iasnaia Poliana, was entitled "On Socialism."³⁰ In this final statement, nominally addressed to Czech youth, Tolstoy with regard to economics reverts to the same epistemological nihilism he had applied to history in *War and Peace*. No one can predict the economic future of mankind, because to

do so one would have to know and predict the economic behaviour of every human individual. All those who claim to have discovered the "laws" of such behaviour, among them such socialists as Marx, Engels, and Bernstein, along with their predecessors Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen, are simply deluded. Unlike the heavenly bodies or biological organisms like plants, laws for whose behaviour human beings *have* really discovered, human economic behaviour is inherently unpredictable because we are creatures endowed with reason and free will. Moreover, the fact that the socialists cannot agree concerning these "laws" and are themselves divided into so many quarreling factions is sufficient evidence that the "laws" they claim to have discovered are not laws at all. The only valid law governing human life is the moral law articulated by the great religious thinkers of the past and implanted in every human heart: do not unto others what you would not have them do unto you. If people would observe *that* law, all economic, political, and social problems would be solved.

The socialist utopia is a mirage, and the effort to attain it, involving prescriptions about how *other* people should live, requires violation of the fundamental moral law against coercion. If socialists were to gain power, they would require and use the same instruments of coercion which the capitalists now use against them: prisons, executions, police, armies. The participants in this coercive force will have to be deceived and brainwashed, just as the participants in present-day armies and police forces are deceived. The only remedy is for each individual to refuse to take part in any form of coercion, or to pay taxes to support those who do. Governments and capitalists are far more afraid of this awakening moral consciousness than they are of all the schemes of the socialists. One person who refuses to participate in state-sponsored violence, Tolstoy asserts, is incomparably more powerful than the millions of people who will engage in torturing, imprisoning, and executing him.

Such was Tolstoy's parting shot against the socialists. But in the debate with Gorky we have tried to reconstruct here, Gorky had a supreme advantage: he lived for twenty-six years after Tolstoy lay silent in his grave. During that time,

among many other works, Gorky produced his remarkable memoir of Tolstoy, based on notes he had taken during their brief acquaintance back in 1901-1902 in the Crimea, to which he added an unfinished letter to Korolenko written after he received the news of Tolstoy's departure from Iasnaia Poliana and then death. That memoir is a generally acknowledged literary masterpiece. But in terms of the debate sketched here, Gorky carried out in the memoir a most insidious maneuver: he turned Tolstoy against Tolstoy. He pitted *his* Tolstoy, a magnificent, primeval creative giant, against the self-muzzled, doctrinaire Tolstoy of the treatises. Gorky's Tolstoy is not a Tolstoyan at all. He has a difficult, contentious relationship with God (the famous "two bears in one den") and has to feign admiration for an evasive, often deluded and unmasculine Jesus. *This* Tolstoy is sublimely distant from such unworkable principles as non-resistance to evil by violence. The Tolstoy of Gorky's memoir is a much bigger, more contradictory, elusive, creative, and powerful figure, a sort of primordial pagan deity and at the same time an exemplar of Man at his very best. He is, perhaps, not a utopian at all.

For Gorky himself, those twenty-six years of survival were a moral catastrophe. In him eventually the craving for utopia proved stronger than the quest for truth and even the capacity for empathy with human suffering. As Pushkin once said, in a very different, fictional context: *T'my nizkikh istin mne dorozhe / Nas vozvyshaiushchii obman* ("Geroi," 1830) [Dearer to me than a multitude of base truths is the illusion that elevates us]. For Gorky the illusion that "elevated" him was the desperately clung-to belief that Stalin's Russia of the 1930s, with all its abominable cruelties, its atmosphere of rampant paranoia, its midnight arrests, rigged trials, wholesale executions, and immense concentration camps, including the one on Solovki, which Gorky visited and praised, was the embodiment of the socialist dream of his youth. So perhaps Tolstoy won the argument after all.

Notes

1. An early version of this paper was presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, November 2001. I greatly benefitted from the discussion there and especially from the astute comments of the official discussant, Donna Orwin. Subsequently I have been helped to improve the article by generous suggestions made by the anonymous reviewers for the *Journal*.
2. An essay of mine on Berlin's relationship to Tolstoy will appear in 2002 in a Festschrift in honour of Martin Malia, edited by Catherine Evtuhov.
3. In his *Soedinenie i perevod chetyrekh Evangelii* [Union and Translation of the Four Gospels], written 1880-84, published 1892-94. Tolstoy also wrote his own "Gospel," a condensation and purgation of the other four, *Kratkoe izlozhenie Evangelia* [A Brief Exposition of the Gospel]. Though it could not be published in Russian until 1899 (in Geneva), Tolstoy's Gospel was circulated widely in manuscript and lithographed copies as early as 1883 (*PSS* 26: 1002). An English translation under the title "The Spirit of Christ's Teaching (A Commentary of the Essence of the Gospel)" appeared in 1885 in a volume of Tolstoy's writings entitled *Christ's Christianity*.
4. This belief is spelled out in many of Tolstoy's treatises and essays written after his "conversion" of the late 1870s, most fully in *V chem moia vera* [What I Believe], written 1883-84, publication forbidden in Russia. French, German, and English translations appeared in 1885, but the full Russian text was not published until 1902, in England. The doctrine is also central in *Tsarstvo Bozhie vnutri vas* [The Kingdom of God is Within You], written 1890-93, published in 1894 in Germany. It may be of interest to note that *The Kingdom of God is Within You* was originally undertaken as a preface by Tolstoy to a Russian translation of *Christian Non-Resistance* (1846) by the American pacifist Akim Ballou. On Tolstoy's indebtedness to American pacifists see Sokolov and Roosevelt.
5. In the preface to his *Short Exposition of the Gospel* Tolstoy dates the long sequence of false or corrupted interpretations of Christ's message from St. Paul, who, "not fully comprehending Christ's teaching and not knowing it as it was later set forth in the Gospel of Matthew, connected it with doctrines in the Pharisaeic

tradition and with all the doctrines of the Old Testament. [...] This teaching concerning tradition, the connection of the Old Testament with the New, was introduced into Christianity by Paul, and it was this doctrine concerning tradition, the principle of tradition, that was the chief cause of the distortion of Christian teaching and the misunderstanding of it. From Paul's time begins the Christian Talmud called the church" (PSS 26: 808).

6. To be sure, besides being "persuaded" by Tolstoy's eloquent treatises (and other pacifist writings), people could, as Tolstoy asserts in *What Is Art?*, be "infected" by "good" art with kind, generous, non-violent feelings. Tolstoy's own efforts to "perfect" himself go back to the 1850s, when his diaries record, often in overwhelming daily detail, the multitude of his failings and sins and his plans for self-reform.

7. Of course, Tolstoy would never acknowledge any belief in a supernatural source of evil. However, one cannot avoid concluding from his writings that God's creation was fundamentally flawed. Humankind, Tolstoy believed, is in the process of evolving from a primitive, "animal" state into his non-violent utopia, true Christianity being a powerful progressive force propelling this development. The sex drive would seem to be a component of that "animal" state which we must outgrow. In one of the versions of his "Afterword" to *The Kreutzer Sonata* Tolstoy wrote, "Christ's teaching, expressed simply, says only that a Christian in order to fulfill the will of God must suppress in himself [Tolstoy always takes the male point of view] lust for a woman and enamoration [*vlublen'e*]. It is better not to marry, but if you cannot suppress your lust, then gratify it with one woman, and if you are married, do not part from your wife [...] Marriage is not and never was a Christian institution" (PSS 27: 423-24).

8. This is at least a plausible interpretation of the famous epigraph to *Anna Karenina*, based on the citation in Romans 12:19 of the original text in Deuteronomy 32:35, where St. Paul urges the faithful to "avenge not" themselves, but to leave that task to God. Tolstoy's repudiation of law and law courts is explicitly spelled out in *The Kingdom of God is Within You* and elsewhere; it provides the satirical force in *The Death of Ivan Il'ich* and also *Resurrection*.

9. Tolstoy wrote that George's *Progress and Poverty* had made a "tremendous" impression on him (letter to

V. G. Chertkov of 24 February, 1885 [PSS 35: 144]), and in a letter to his wife described it as "an important book. It is that important stage on the path of common life, like the liberation of the peasants—liberation from private property in land" (letter of February 22, 1885 [PSS 83: 480]).

10. "Chto zhe delat?"; 371. Tolstoy sometimes resisted the tainted word "anarchism," associated with bomb-throwing terrorists, but chapter after chapter of the major treatise *Tak chto zhe nam delat?* ([What Then Must We Do?], written 1882-85, Russian text not published in full until 1906) is devoted to demonstrating the harmfulness and immorality of all state activities. There is a trenchant analysis of Tolstoy's anarchism in Kline.

11. Tolstoy's rejection of the notion that people who do intellectual work should therefore be freed from the necessity of doing physical labour is set forth in *What Then Must We Do?*, Chapter XXVI and especially Chapter XXXII. The blacksmiths are discussed in Chapter XXXI.

12. Tolstoy's ideas on money are set forth in *What Then Must We Do?*, Chapters XVII, XVIII and XIX.

13. Chapter IX of *The Kingdom of God is Within You* sets forth in detail Tolstoy's view that ultimately governments are helpless to deal with those whose non-violent resistance, including refusal to serve in armed forces or to pay taxes to support them, rests on a firm moral and religious foundation.

14. To be sure, in *Resurrection* Tolstoy does represent with considerable sympathy revolutionary socialists of various stripes who are mostly of upper-class origin. However, since they are shown only as prisoners, victims of tsarist cruelty and oppression, he does not have to deal in any detail with the pernicious, violent aspect of their programs. He does, however, provide an example of the "Lenin" type of violence-prone, power-hungry, self-important socialist revolutionary in the character of Novodvorov, who says cynically that the people always worship power. "Now the government has power, and the people worship it. Tomorrow we will have power, and they will worship us" (*Resurrection* III, 14).

15. Tolstoy's article appeared in the *London Times* in February, 1905, and was later widely summarized in

the Russian press, though the censorship would not allow it to be published in full.

16. The letter was dated 5 (18) March 1905, but never sent to Tolstoy and apparently not published until 1954. The doctrine Gorky deplored is even more vividly and succinctly expressed in a telegram Tolstoy sent to the *Philadelphia North American Newspaper* on 18 November 1904: "True social amelioration can be attained only by religious moral perfectionment [*sic*] of all individuals. Political agitation putting before individuals pernicious illusion of social improvement by change of forms habitually stops the real progress as can be observed in constitutional countries France, England, America (*PSS* 36: 635).

17. From the unfinished letter to Korolenko that forms part of the great memoir, *Lev Tolstoi* (1919; *SS* 14: 279). The reasons for not sending or publishing the letter are also adumbrated in a letter to his ex-wife, E. P. Peshkova, of 12/13 March 1905 and in comments to the French writer Claude Anet. See the notes in *SS* 28: 554. The unsent letter to Tolstoy is in the same volume, 357-61.

18. Unlike such Marxists as Plekhanov, Gorky opposed World War I from the beginning, in 1914 anathematizing the "mad dogs of worldwide slaughter" who had plunged the world into war ("Nesvoevremennoe" [Untimely], *SS* 24:158). In June 1917, he wrote that "Three years of bloody nightmare have annihilated the flower of Europe's population; for three years all Europe, in bloody intoxication, has been destroying its healthiest and strongest sons" (*Untimely Thoughts*, 58). By the end of the war Gorky had adopted the official Leninist line, that the war had been fought entirely as a struggle for markets among capitalists. "Now," he wrote in November 1918, "when this accursed and most shameful war has revealed to the ultimate all the vileness and inhumanity, all the cynicism of the old order, showing its senselessness, its rottenness,—now the death sentence on capitalism has been confirmed" (*SS* 24:188).

19. It is a curious fact that this same Klobskii or Klop-skii (Ivan Mikhailovich, 1852-98) emigrated to the United States, but within two years was killed, like Berlioz in Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*, by being run over by a streetcar. See *PSS* 50:261.

20. Gorky felt particularly qualified to defend the Countess because he actually had never liked her and

felt that she did not like him. But he recognized that Tolstoy was "the most complicated person among the biggest [*krupneishikh*] people of the nineteenth century," and that to be the only intimate friend of such a person, his wife, mother of his numerous children, and mistress of his household, had been no easy task. She had performed it well until the last years, when fatigue, old age, and jealousy had sometimes pushed her over the edge. In any case, she deserved far more credit and sympathy than she had received.

21. See, e.g., Yedlin 49-52. The fiery declaration, "To All Russian Citizens and to the Public Opinion of European States," which after his arrest Gorky acknowledged writing, is in *SS* 23: 333-36. It concludes by accusing Nicholas II of the "murder of innocent people" and calls for "an immediate, determined, and collaborative struggle with the autocracy" (p. 336).

22. Lenin quotes Gorky as saying to him on Capri, "with an inimitable and disarming smile, 'I know that I am a poor Marxist'." Cited from Yedlin 115.

23. The complex, up-and-down relationship between Gorky and Lenin has been the subject of several studies which refute the official Soviet myth of an unbroken friendship marred only by occasional *oshibki* [mistakes] made by Gorky, such as "God-building" or disapproval of the coup d'état of October 1917, mistakes which had to be corrected by the all-wise Lenin, who never made mistakes. See, e.g., Wolfe. Gorky's own memoir on Lenin, originally published in *Russkii sovremennik* (1924), was later revised more than once under pressure from Soviet censors. The final version, stripped of the original's "mistakes," such as references to Kamenev and Trotsky and citation of Lenin's expression of nostalgic affection for the late Menshevik leader L. O. Martov, appeared in 1931. Perhaps the phrase that best sums up Gorky's feelings about Lenin is found in his letter to Romain Rolland of 3 March 1924: "I loved him with anger" (cited from Yedlin 163).

24. Gorky argued the Europe vs. Asia case most forcefully in "Dve dushi" [Two Souls; 1915], a work considered heretical in Soviet times and not reprinted until 1997 (Burlaka 95-106). The "two souls" of Russia are European and Asiatic; Gorky is of course passionately on the side of Europe—rational, creative, progressive. Later Kornei Chukovskii played effectively with Gorky's antithetical title, arguing that Gorky's own atavistic heart, from whence he drew his

most vivid representations, lay firmly on the side of "Asia"; his "European" allegiance was cerebral and sterile. See Chukovskii 1924.

25. *O russkom krest'ianstve*. This heretical essay also could never be reprinted in Russia in Soviet times.

26. Inveighing against the Bolsheviks' destruction of civil liberties, Gorky in January 1918 prophesied that "we shall have a lengthy and extremely cruel struggle of all democratic forces and the best part of the working class against that animal [or 'zoological'] anarchy which the leaders from Smolny [the Bolsheviks] are actively fostering" (*Untimely Thoughts*, 131-32).

27. Gorky accepted and supported with enthusiasm the whole collectivization project, including the bloody "liquidation" of the so-called "kulaks." From time immemorial, he wrote, the only ambition of the poor peasant has been to become a rich peasant, a kulak, until now, when the poor peasant has grasped the "great simple truth of Lenin": abolish private property in land and collectivize yourselves. See "Pis'mo sel'koru-kolkhozniku" (SS 25: 269).

28. E.g., Ignat Gordeev in *Foma Gordeev* (1899), Antipa Zykov in *Zykovy* ([The Zykovs], 1912-13), or Il'ia Artamonov in *Delo Artamonovykh* ([The Artamonov Business], 1924-25).

29. Gorky's indefatigable efforts both to rescue intellectuals from the clutches of the Cheka (secret police) and to feed and house them afterward are amply attested in memoirs of those close to him at that time. See, e.g., Khodasevich. Khodasevich himself benefited by Gorky's intervention to escape being drafted into the Red Army. The whole period is vividly described in Scherr.

30. "O sotsializme," written in reply to an invitation from the Prague newspaper *Mladé Proudy* to participate in a symposium on socialism. The article was not found until after Tolstoy's death and not published until the Jubilee Edition in 1936 (PSS 38: 426-35).

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