

sian. Ideally, it should find its way onto shelves of every major research library in North America.

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**Donna Tussing Orwin, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Tolstoy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 271 pp (cloth).\***

The Cambridge Companion to Tolstoy is a very welcome development for teachers and students of Russian literature alike. The Cambridge Companions to Literature series is best known for providing multi-specialist guidance on genres such as English Renaissance Drama and Victorian Poetry. The series also features volumes devoted to major individual authors from the Anglo-American tradition as well as a few towering figures of world literature, among them Goethe, Kafka, Mann, and Proust. Russian literature has recently begun to take its place in the Cambridge canon, with volumes on Modern Russian Culture and The Classic Russian Novel published in 1998, a Companion to Chekhov in 2000, and Companions to both Dostoevsky and Tolstoy appearing in 2002. The Cambridge Companions make excellent resources for teaching, and, in treating authors rather than individual works, they complement the MLA Approaches to Teaching World Literature series and the Northwestern/AATSEEL Critical Companions to Russian Literature.

The Companion to Tolstoy features a distinguished list of contributors, most of them emeriti and senior scholars in the field of Russian literature, and provides a representative sampling of the best English-language scholarship on this master Russian realist. The Companion strives to emphasize areas “most accessible to the general reader,” while making “brief excursions into more remote

territory” (xii), and thus concentrates on fiction. Donna Orwin’s introduction “Tolstoy as Artist and Public Figure” sets the tone for the volume with an incisive, balanced account that draws parallels across periods in the author’s life and suggests thoughtful connections between his fictional and non-fictional writing. Orwin identifies Tolstoy’s view of the individual as a guiding theme of his life, responsible for the uniquely Tolstoyan poetics that appeal to the reader’s sense perceptions and memories.

Part 1 of the Companion is devoted to “The Three Novels” and includes essays by Gary Saul Morson on *War and Peace*, Barbara Lönnqvist on *Anna Karenina*, and Hugh McLean on *Resurrection*. Morson outlines six sample “fallacies” to which both historiography and fictional characters are subject, in contrast to the four central Tolstoyan precepts taught by the novel—contingency, the ordinary, “presentness,” and prosaic knowledge. Lönnqvist raises central preoccupations that have guided numerous studies of *Anna Karenina*, among them the family, the epigraph, irreducible linkages, and the realist details such as Anna’s red handbag that evolve into powerful symbols. Lönnqvist traces the larger patterns formed by several such details through the novel, providing a model for the attentive reader. McLean describes the inception and evolution of Tolstoy’s third novel, particularly emphasizing the contrast between eros and agape and the problem of the ending, characterized as “the novel’s fadeout in a long series of Gospel quotations” (109).

Part 2 of the Companion treats Tolstoyan “Genres.” Gary Jahn illuminates “Tolstoy as a Writer of Popular Literature” (*narodnaia literatura*) and characterizes these works in terms of their most prominent literary features. Jahn points to the “innovative and coherent writing style” of these stories, “with their absence of complex metaphorical language, maximally simplified syntax, syntactic inversion, peasant words and expressions, and the use of many devices and motifs from both folklore and Scripture” (119). Richard Freeborn discusses “The Long Short Story in Tolstoy’s Fiction,” namely “The Death of Ivan Ilych,” “The Kreutzer Sonata,” “Father Sergius,” and “Master

\*To avoid conflict of interest, this review has been solicited and edited by Amy Mandelker, a former editor of *Tolstoy Studies Journal*.

and Man." These works from the 1880s and 1890s "owe their power chiefly to the way they focus upon a single foreground figure and portray that figure's life as having meaning principally in the light of Tolstoy's ideas on death, sex, and spirituality" (127). W. Gareth Jones treats "Tolstoy Staged in Paris, Berlin, and London," most particularly in connection with what he calls "one of the most influential dramas of nineteenth-century theatre" (142), *The Power of Darkness*. Tolstoy's "peasant tragedy" was banned from the stage in Russia until 1895, but performed earlier in Paris and Berlin, and, after its Russian premiere, in London.

Part 3 of the Companion offers a forum for "General Topics." In "The Development of Style and Theme in Tolstoy," Liza Knapp discusses "Childhood" and "Sevastopol Stories" as manifesting early techniques that Tolstoy would use throughout his career, among them defamiliarization, the "dialectics of the soul" (in Chernyshevsky's famous phrase), and specific narrative perspectives. Andrew Wachtel examines the notion of Tolstoyan "truth" as it applies to works of fiction in his "History and Autobiography in Tolstoy," exploring the tension between specificity (often identified with non-fictional genres such as autobiography, reportage, and history) and universality. Wachtel discusses *A Confession* in combination with *Anna Karenina*, proposing the former as a "partial intergeneric twin" of the latter (182), and emphasizing the doublings and incomplete overlap between the two texts as a function of intergeneric dialogue. Edwina Cruise examines female characters from *Family Happiness* to *Resurrection* in her "Women, Sexuality, and the Family in Tolstoy," as Tolstoy's charting of "a female quest that overcomes the entrenched barriers of gender conventions" (193). Katiusha in *Resurrection* thus embraces celibacy and frees herself from "the destructive influence of predatory male desire," but takes the quest to an "absurd extreme," since "the baby and the husband and the family all get thrown out with the bath water" (205). In "Tolstoy in the Twentieth Century," George Clay meditates on Tolstoy's literary unconventionality, which prefigures the Modernist literary sensibility of Joyce, Proust, Mann, Woolf, and Hemingway. Donna

Orwin treats "Courage in Tolstoy" in regard to his "military stories" and depictions of death. In Orwin's view, heroism for Tolstoy is synonymous with "right living," as he celebrates an "anti-romantic" ideal of heroism that is "in the service of the good of the community rather than the individual" (235). Orwin underscores the accompanying paradox that "in its emphasis on authenticity rather than rationality as the source of ultimate truths [Tolstoy's ideal of heroism] is individualist in the extreme." The volume concludes with Caryl Emerson's essay on "Tolstoy's Aesthetics," which argues for "a surprising toughness, subtlety, and integrity to many components of this vision, which Tolstoy's categorical tone often masks," despite the famously "eccentric and provocative judgments" expressed in *What is Art?* Emerson cautions against reducing Tolstoy's views on art to an ethics. Instead, she proposes Tolstoy's aesthetics as "closer to a psychology," since he is most interested in "the psychological effects of producing and receiving art."

The Companion to Tolstoy includes a detailed chronology to the author's life and works (that takes up approximately one-fifth of the volume), a Guide to Further Reading largely consisting of secondary works in English, and an Index to Tolstoy's Works and Characters in addition to the standard General Index.

Of course, it is impossible to cover everything in a single volume dedicated to this prolific and complex literary figure. A second volume of this sort on Tolstoy might thus take up biographical and cultural topics such as Tolstoy's anarchic Christianity, the diaries and letters, his literary relationship with his wife, his views on the Russian country estate as a cultural institution, and his political opposition to the Russian state. In terms of Tolstoy's own oeuvre, the Companion does an admirable job of treating the most important works, with the exception of *Hadji Murat*, which merits at least as much attention as the long short stories. (It might be recalled that in *The Western Canon*, Harold Bloom called *Hadji Murat* "my personal touchstone for the sublime of prose fiction, to me the best story in the world, or at least the best that I have ever read.")

Like the Norton editions of *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, and Tolstoy's *Short Fiction*, the Cambridge Companion makes outstanding critical work on Lev Nikolaevich available to a broad readership. This is a great service, as Tolstoy continues to be one of Russian literature's best exports, as

well as a subject of compelling interest to specialists. As Donald Barthelme wrote in his whimsical "At the Tolstoy Museum," "We considered the 640,086 pages (Jubilee Edition) of the author's published work. Some people wanted him to go away, but other people were glad we had him."

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