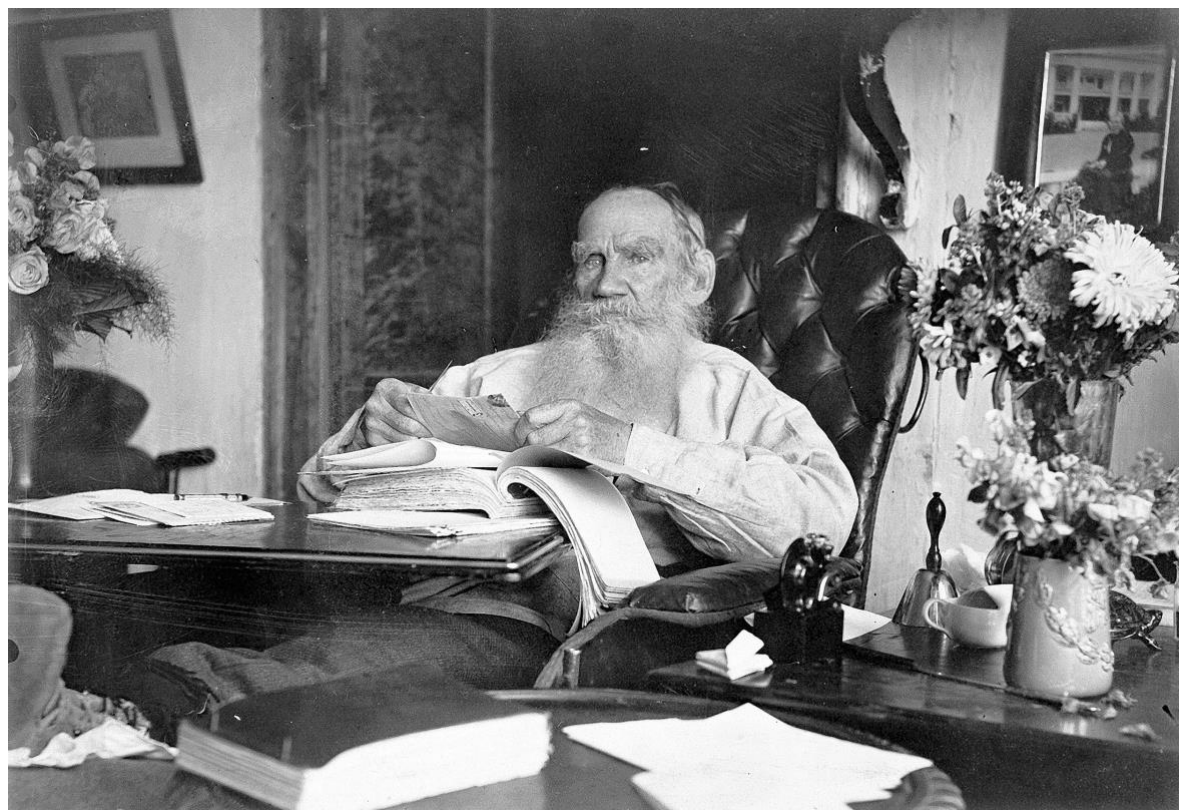


SL11: Topics in Nineteenth-Century Slavonic Literature and Culture: Tolstoy



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Introduction

This paper gives students the opportunity to delve deeply into the life and writings of one of Russia's greatest and most prolific writers, Lev Tolstoy (1828-1910). He not only changed the shape of Russian and world literature, but also impacted political and social movements across the globe. The bulk of the paper will focus on his masterpiece, *Voyna i mir* (1865-69), which in its scope and ambitions challenged all the reigning ideas of its time about how history is recorded, how novels are written, and about the individual's place in the world. Tolstoy's life was vast; he grew up in a serf-owning gentry family shortly after the Decembrist Revolt and died just years before the Bolshevik Revolution. During that time, he thought and wrote about all the burning questions of his day, so while this paper has a single-author focus, it also gives us the chance to consider most aspects of nineteenth-century Russian literature and culture.

A full year devoted to Tolstoy will enable students to trace the evolution of his thought and writing from his early war stories and experiments in narration, through *Voyna i mir*, to the late novellas and non-fiction where he boldly proclaimed his new worldview arrived at after spiritual conversion. It will also offer the space to consider Tolstoy's legacy through different lenses, from a feminist approach to his writing on women, to a postcolonial examination of his writings about the Caucasus, to an ecocritical examination of his views on nature. For Tolstoy, all the big questions of life—how must I live? what must I do? what is the purpose of science and art? what is religion? how should society be structured?—were open and pressing. Engaging with Tolstoy on his own terms means wrestling with these burning questions anew.

Overview of Texts and Topics for 2023-24

Set Text:

Voyna i mir (1865-69)

Topics:

1. Early writings (pre-1860)
2. Late writings (1880-1910)

Teaching

Weekly lectures in Michaelmas and Lent, except Michaelmas week 5, which will be run as a seminar; weekly revision seminars in Easter.

Nine supervisions throughout the year held fortnightly (except Michaelmas week 5/6).

Lecture Schedule

Michaelmas

Week	Lecture	Supervision
1	Intro and Biography	Early war writings
2	Early war writings	
3	Narrating the self	Narrating the self
4	Diaries and Letters	
5	SEMINAR: preparation for <i>Voina i mir</i> – Tolstoy on his aims	Participation in seminar in place of a supervision
6	<i>Voina i mir</i>	
7	<i>Voina i mir</i>	<i>Voina i mir</i>
8	<i>Voina i mir</i>	

Lent

Week	Lecture	Supervision
1	<i>Voina i mir</i>	<i>Voina i mir</i>
2	<i>Voina i mir</i>	
3	<i>Voina i mir</i>	<i>Voina i mir</i>
4	Tolstoy's spiritual crisis: <i>Ispoved'</i> and <i>Zapiski sumasshedshchevo</i>	
5	Sex and Art: <i>Kreutzerova Sonata</i> and <i>Chto takoe iskusstvo?</i>	Post-conversion Tolstoy
6	Death: <i>Smert' Ivana Il'icha</i> and <i>Khoziain i rabotnik</i>	
7	Faith: <i>Otets Sergii</i> and late religious writings	Post-conversion Tolstoy
8	Returning to war: <i>Hadji Murad</i>	

Assessment

The exam consists of four sections: A, B, C, and D. Section A is comprised of commentary passages and essay prompts about the set text, *Voina i mir*. Section B is comprised of essay prompts about Topic 1, Tolstoy's pre-1860 writings. Section C is comprised of essay prompts about Topic 2, Tolstoy's post-1879 writings. Section D is comprised of essay prompts that can be responded to using *Voina i mir* in combination with any other works by Tolstoy.

All students answer three questions.

Students for Part IB (Options A & B) answer:

either 1 or 2 questions from Section A (if 2, one must be a commentary and one an essay question)

1 question from section B and/or one question from section C

If you choose to answer only one question in Section A, you may answer 1 question from section D in place of a question from B or C

Students for Part II answer:

1 question from Section A and

1 question each from any combination of B, C, or D

Candidates for this paper may not draw substantially on material from their dissertations or material which they have used or intend to use in another scheduled paper. Candidates may not draw substantially on the same material in more than one question on the same paper.

Preparatory Reading and General Background

Students are urged to buy and read the Set Text, *Voina i mir*, over the summer or during the year abroad. The following reading list serves as an introduction to the subject.

- Bartlett, Rosamund. *Tolstoy: A Russian Life*. London: Profile Books, 2010.
- Berman, Anna A. (Editor). *Tolstoy in Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.
- Gustafson, Richard. *Leo Tolstoy Resident and Stranger: A Study in Fiction and Theology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- Love, Jeff. *Tolstoy: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: Continuum, 2008.
- Morson, Gary Saul. *Hidden in Plain View: Narrative and Creative Potentials in 'War and Peace'*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987.
- Orwin, Donna Tussing (Editor). *The Cambridge Companion to Tolstoy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Wasiolek, Edward. *Tolstoy's Major Fiction*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

Reading Lists

Topics 1 and 2

Remember that you will be making *selections* from among the primary texts here; they are not all compulsory reading. Suggestions will be made in lectures about different routes through the material.

Secondary Readings

The suggestions for secondary reading represent a collection of resources and menus of possibilities: no one expects you to do all of the reading below! Your supervisor will help you to orientate yourself within the bibliography, and to use your time efficiently, by suggesting those texts which most closely relate to the themes and approaches that interest you. There are also MANY excellent books and articles not listed, so you are encouraged to do your own sleuthing.

Standard edition of Tolstoy's works

Tolstoy, Lev. *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (jubileinoe izdanie), 90 vols. Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo "Khudozhestvennaia literatura," 1928-59.
<https://tolstoy.ru/creativity/90-volume-collection-of-the-works/>

* Note: you will often see this abbreviated as PSS

Useful websites

Tolstoy Studies Journal (includes digital back issues, images, and links to resources including the PSS): <https://www.tolstoy-studies-journal.com/>

Слово Толстого (word search in all of Tolstoy's works): <https://slovotolstogo.ru/>

Biographies

- Bartlett, Rosamund. *Tolstoy: A Russian Life*. London: Profile Books, 2010.
- Basinskii, Pavel. *Leo Tolstoy: Flight from Paradise*. Trans. Huw Davies and Scott Moss. London: Glagoslav Publications, 2015.
- Chertkov, Vladimir. *The Last Days of Tolstoy*. London: Heinemann, 1922.

- Gusev, N. N. *Zhizn' L'va Nikolaevicha Tolstogo: Molodoi Tolstoi (1828-1862)*. Moskva: Izdanie Tolstovskogo muzeia, 1927.
- . *Zhizn' L'va Nikolaevicha Tolstogo: L.N. Tolstoi v rastsvete khudozhestvennogo geniia (1862-1877)*. Moskva: Izdanie Tolstovskogo muzeia, 1927.
- Maude, Aylmer. *The Life of Tolstoy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Nickell, William. *The Death of Tolstoy: Russia on the Eve, Astapovo Station, 1910*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010.
- Shklovskii, Viktor. *Lev Tolstoy*. Trans. O. Shartse. Moscow: Progress, 1978.
- Tolstoy, Alexandra. *The Tragedy of Tolstoy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1933.
- Troyat, Henri. *Tolstoy*. Trans. Nancy Amphoux. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967.
- Wilson, A. N. *Tolstoy*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1988.
- Zorin, Andrei. *Critical Lives: Leo Tolstoy*. London: Reaktion Books, 2020.

Historical Background

- Cavender, Mary W. *Nests of the Gentry: Family, Estate, and Local Loyalties in Provincial Russia*. Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 2007.
- Curtiss, John Shelton. *Russia's Crimean War*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979.
- Grigoryan, Bella. *Noble Subjects: The Russian Novel and the Gentry, 1762-1861*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2018.
- Hamburg, G. M. and Poole, Randall A., eds. *A History of Russian Philosophy, 1830-1930: Faith, Reason, and the Defense of Human Dignity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Lieven, Dominic, ed. *The Cambridge History of Russia. Volume 2: Imperial Russia, 1689 – 1917*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Lincoln, W. Bruce. *The Great Reforms: Autocracy, Bureaucracy, and the Politics of Change in Imperial Russia*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1990.
- Moon, David. *The Abolition of Serfdom in Russia, 1762-1907*. New York: Longman, 2001.
- Roosevelt, P.R. *Life on the Russian Country Estate: A Social and Cultural History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.
- Smith, Alison K. *For the Common Good and Their Own Well-Being: Social Estates in Imperial Russia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Todd, William Mills, ed. *Literature and Society in Imperial Russia, 1800-1914*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1978.
- Todes, Daniel P. *Darwin Without Malthus: The Struggle for Existence in Russian Evolutionary Thought*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Wager, William G. *Marriage, Property, and Law in Late Imperial Russia*. Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1994.

Introductory Tolstoy Readings

- Berman, Anna A. (Editor). *Tolstoy in Context*. Cambridge University Press, 2022.
- Christian, R. F. *Tolstoy: A Critical Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969.
- Eikhenbaum, Boris. *The Young Tolstoy*. Trans. G. Kern. Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1972.
- . *Tolstoy in the Sixties*. Trans. D. White. Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1982.
- . *Tolstoy in the Seventies*. Trans. A. Kaspin. Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1982.
- Knapp, Liza. *Leo Tolstoy: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Love, Jeff. *Tolstoy: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: Continuum, 2008.
- Orwin, Donna Tussing (Editor). *The Cambridge Companion to Tolstoy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Orwin, Donna Tussing. *Simply Tolstoy*. New York: Simply Charly, 2017.

General Tolstoy Readings

- Berlin, Isaiah. "The Hedgehog and the Fox." In *Russian Thinkers*. London: Penguin Books, 1994. 22–81.
- Bilinkis, Ia. *O Tvorchestve L.N. Tolstogo*. Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel', 1959.
- Bychkov, S. P. *L. N. Tolstoi v russkoi kritike: sbornik statei*. Moskva: Gosudarsvtvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1860.
- Ginzburg, Lydia. *On Psychological Prose*, translated and edited by Judson Rosengrant. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991 (Part II: Direct Discourse, pp. 271-304).
- Gustafson, Richard. *Leo Tolstoy Resident and Stranger: A Study in Fiction and Theology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- McLean, Hugh. *In Quest of Tolstoy*. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2008.
- Medzhibovskaya, Inessa (Editor). *Tolstoy and His Problems: Views from the Twenty-First Century*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2019.
- Merezhkovskii, D. S. *L. Tolstoi i Dostoevskii*. Moscow: Nauka, 2000.
- Orwin, Donna Tussing (Editor). *Anniversary Essays on Tolstoy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Orwin, Donna Tussing. *Tolstoy's Art and Thought, 1847-1880*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Rancour-Laferriere, Daniel. *Tolstoy on the Couch: Misogyny, Masochism and the Absent Mother*. New York: New York University Press, 1998.
- Steiner, George. *Tolstoy or Dostoevsky: An Essay in the Old Criticism*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996.
- Wasiolek, Edward. *Tolstoy's Major Fiction*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

Set Text

Война и мир (1865-69)

There are numerous editions of this book (of course). You are encouraged to buy both a Russian copy and an English one so that you can more easily take notes, mark passages, and keep track of where you are in the whole.

I do not expect anyone to read the whole of *Voina i mir* in Russian (!), but obviously everyone is expected to read the whole work in English. For English translations, I recommend either Pevear and Volokhonsky or the Oxford World's Classics Maude translation edited by Mandelker.

I am providing here a list of the sections that I think will be most important to read in Russian, based on three selection criteria: 1) most famous/significant passages, 2) passages with particular linguistic features that are lost in translation, 3) passages that represent characteristic features of Tolstoy's use of the Russian language. Part II students should try to read a substantial portion of these sections. For Part IB students I am providing a narrower selection ("focus on"). Chapters listed in bold are especially important to engage with in the original.

Том первый

Часть первая: I-XI, XVIII-XXI, XXV

Focus on: I-II, VIII-IX, XIX-XX

Часть вторая: VII, XV

Focus on: VII

Часть третья: I-II, VI-VIII, XII-XIII, XVI, XIX

Focus on: XVI, XIX

Том второй

Часть первая: I, IV-V, IX, XII-XVI

Focus on: IV-V

Часть вторая: III-IV, XI-XIII, XVIII

Focus on: XII

Часть третья: I-III, VIII-X, XVI-XVII, XIX-XX

In I-III pay attention to the old oak

Часть четвертая: V, VII, X-XII

Focus on: VII

Часть пятая: V, VIII-X, XIX-XXII

Focus on: VIII-X, XXII (esp. the comet)

Том третий

Часть первая: I-II, VI-VII, XV, XIX-XX

Focus on: I, XV

Часть вторая: VII-XI, XIX, XXI-XXV, XXVIII-XXIX, XXXI, XXXVII, XXXIX

Focus on: VIII, XXV, XXXI, XXXVII

Часть третья: IV, IX, XVI, XX, XXVIII-XXX, XXXII

Focus on: IV, IX, XXXII

Том четвертый

Часть первая: IV, X-XIII, XV-XVI

Focus on: X, XIII, XVI

Часть вторая: XIV, XIX

Часть третья: II, V-XI, XV

Focus on: X, XV

Часть четвертая: II-III, IX, XI, XV, XX

Focus on: IX

Эпилог

Часть первая: I, VIII-X, XVI

Часть вторая: I, VII, XI-XII

Secondary Sources

Bayley, John. *Tolstoy and the Novel*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Becker, David. "Tolstoy and Schopenhauer and *War and Peace*: Influence and Ambivalence." *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 48 (2014), 418–47.

Cooke, Brett (ed.). *Critical Insights: War and Peace*. Amenia, NY: Grey House Publishing, 2014.

Feuer, Kathryn. *Tolstoy and the Genesis of War and Peace*. Ed. Robin Feuer Miller and Donna Tussing Orwin. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1996.

Grenier, Svetlana Slavskaya. *Representing the Marginal Woman in Nineteenth-Century Russian Literature: Personalism, Feminism, and Polyphony*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001.

- Hruska, Anne. "Love and Slavery: Serfdom, Emancipation, and Family in Tolstoy's Fiction." *Russian Review* 66:4 (2007): 627-646.
- Kitzinger, Chloë. *Mimetic Lives: Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Character in the Novel*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2021 (Chapter 1. "Dinner at the English Club: Character on the Margins in *War and Peace*").
- Lehrman, Edgar. *A Guide to the Russian Text of Tolstoy's War and Peace*. Ann Arbor: Ardis Publishers, 1980.
- Love, Jeff. *The Overcoming of History in War and Peace*. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2004.
- McPeak, Rick and Orwin, Donna, eds. *Tolstoy on War: Narrative Art and Historical Truth in "War and Peace."* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012.
- Morson, Gary Saul. *Hidden in Plain View: Narrative and Creative Potentials in 'War and Peace'*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987.
- Moss, Anne Eakin. "Tolstoy's Politics of Love: 'That Passionate and Tender Friendship that Exists only Among Women.'" *Slavic and East European Journal* 53:4 (2009): 566-586.
- Newlin, Thomas. "Swarm Life and the Biology of *War and Peace*." *Slavic Review* 71:2 (2012), 359-84.
- Olson, Laura J. "Russianness, Femininity, and Romantic Aesthetics in *War and Peace*." *Russian Review* 56:4 (1997): 515-531.
- Rancour-Laferrriere, Daniel. *Tolstoy's Pierre Bezukhov: A Psychoanalytic Study*. London: Bristly Classical Press, 1993.
- Sankovitch, Natasha. *Creating and Recovering Experience: Repetition in Tolstoy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.
- Sherman, David J. "Philosophical Dialogue and Tolstoy's *War and Peace*." *Slavic and East European Journal* 24:1 (1980): 14-24.
- Walsh, Harry Hill. "Schopenhauer's 'On the Freedom of the Will' and the Epilogue to 'War and Peace.'" *The Slavonic and East European Review* 57:4 (1979), 572-75.

Topic 1: Pre-1860 writings

Primary Readings

Севастополь в декабре месяце (1855)

Севастополь в мае (1855)

Набег (1853)

Рубка леса (1855)

*История вчерашнего дня (1851)

Детство (1852)

Три смерти (1859)

Selections from Tolstoy's Diaries and Letters (English and Russian pp)

Diaries. 1847: pp. 4-18 [starts PSS 46:3]; 1863: pp. 174-83 [starts PSS 48:48]; 1895: pp. 398-400 [starts PSS 53:3]; 1908: pp. 596-97 [starts PSS 56:171] (page numbers for *Tolstoy's Diaries*, edited by R. F. Christian. New York: Scribner Press, 1985.)

Letters: 1849: pp. 4-8; 1856: pp. 78-87; 1857: pp. 95-96; 1885: pp. 393-99; 1887: pp. 432-35; 1909: p. 693; 1910: 706-11 (page numbers for *Tolstoy's Letters*, edited by R. F. Christian. New York: Scribner Press, 1987.) – I

recommend reading this edition because it includes incredibly helpful notes that explain Tolstoy's references.

*Everyone is required to read the short, unfinished «История вчерашнего дня» as a foundational text we will refer back to in thinking about how Tolstoy writes.

Secondary Sources

- Allen, Elizabeth Cheresch, ed. *Before They Were Titans: Essays on the Early Works of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy*. Brighton, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2018.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, trans. Caryl Emerson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984. [pp. 69-73 on Tolstoy's "Three Deaths"]
- Chernyshevsky, N. G. "Tolstoy's Military Tales" in *Tolstoy's Short Fiction: A Norton Critical Edition* (Second Edition), ed. Michael Katz. 367-70.
- Eikhenbaum, Boris. *The Young Tolstoy*. Trans. G. Kern. Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1972.
- . "Sevastopol Stories," excerpt included in the Norton Critical Edition of *Tolstoy's Short Fiction*, ed. Michael Katz.
- Morson, Gary Saul. "The Reader as Voyeur: Tolstoy and the Poetics of Didactic Fiction." *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 12.4 (1978): 465-80.
- . "Tolstoy's Absolute Language." *Critical Inquiry* 7.4 (1981): 667-87.
- Orwin, Donna Tussing. "Courage in Tolstoy" in *The Cambridge Companion to Tolstoy*, 222-236.
- Paperno, Irina. *"Who, What Am I?": Tolstoy Struggles to Narrate the Self*. Cornell University Press, 2014.
- Wachtel, Andrew. *The Battle for Childhood: Creation of a Russian Myth*. Stanford, California: Stanford UP, 1990.
- Williams, Gareth. *Tolstoy's Childhood*. London: Bristol Classical Press, 1995.

There are also many excellent readings on specific texts included in *Tolstoy's Short Fiction* (Norton Critical Edition, trans. Michael Katz).

Topic 2: Post-1880 writings

Primary Readings

- Исповедь (1882)
- Записки сумасшедшего (1883)
- Крейцера соната (1889)
- Послесловие к «Крейцеровой сонате»
- Что такое искусство? (1898)
- Смерть Ивана Ильича (1889)
- Хозяин и работник (1895)
- Отец Сергей (1898)
- Царство божие внутри вас (1894)

Secondary Sources

- Alston, Charlotte. *Tolstoy and his Disciples: The History of a Radical International Movement*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2014.

- Barran, Thomas. "Rousseau's Political Vision and Tolstoy's *What is Art?*" *Tolstoy Studies Journal* 5 (1992): 1-13.
- Berman, Anna A. "Of Phagocytes and Men: Tolstoy's Response to Mechnikov and the Religious Purpose of Science." *Comparative Literature* 68:3 (2016), 296–311.
- Bloom, Harold. "Tolstoy and Heroism" in *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1994.
- Denner, Michael. "Tolstoyan Nonaction: The Advantage of Doing Nothing." *Tolstoy Studies Journal* 13 (2001), 8–22.
- Donskov, Andrew and John Woodsworth, eds. *Lev Tolstoy and the Concept of Brotherhood: Proceedings of a conference held at the University of Ottawa 22-24 February, 1996*. Legas: New York, 1996.
- Emerson, Caryl. "Tolstoy and Music" in *Anniversary Essays on Tolstoy*, edited by Donna Tussing Orwin, pp. 8-32. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- . "Tolstoy's Aesthetics" in *The Cambridge Companion to Tolstoy*, 237-251.
- Gustafson, Richard. "The Three Stages of Man." *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 12:4 (1978): 481-518.
- Herman, David. "Stricken by Infection: Art and Adultery in *Anna Karenina* and *Kreutzer Sonata*." *Slavic Review* 56:1 (Spring 1997), 15–36.
- Hooper, Cynthia. "Forms of Love: Vladimir Solov'ev and Lev Tolstoy on Eros and Ego." *Russian Review* 60:3 (2001): 360-380.
- Kliger, Ilya and Nasser Zakariya. "Poetics of Brotherhood: Organic and Mechanistic Narrative in Late Tolstoi." *Slavic Review* 70:4 (2011): 754-772.
- Medzhibovskaya, Inessa. *Tolstoy and the Religious Culture of His Time: A Biography of a Long Conversion, 1845-1887*. Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2008.
- Milivoyevic, Dragan. *Leo Tolstoy and the Oriental Religious Heritage*. Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1998.
- Sanborn, Josh. "Pacifist politics and peasant politics: Tolstoy and the Doukhobors, 1895-99." *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 27:3 (1995), 52–71.

There are also many excellent readings on specific texts included in *Tolstoy's Short Fiction* (Norton Critical Edition, trans. Michael Katz).