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**TOLSTOY AND CLIO:
AN EXPLORATION IN HISTORIOGRAPHY
THROUGH LITERATURE**

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores issues in historiography and history as reflected in some of the literary and didactic works of Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910). An artist of eternal merit, Tolstoy's creativity manifests his intense personal, artistic, and philosophical conflicts. In addressing the 'accursed questions' afflicting his times and society, Tolstoy became the muse of nineteenth-century Russia, but his works embody essential themes in historiography, literature, and history. Attempting to impose a unitary vision upon the rich diversity of reality, yet failing, in his literary works Tolstoy explores the inaccessibility and multiplicity of historical causation, and the dilemmas of freedom and necessity, along with their inherent interpretive difficulties. The role of the 'actor' in Tolstoy's view of history is delineated, along with an examination of historical progress as the embodiment of the collective will of the masses. Tolstoy's philosophies are depicted including his preferences for anarchism, pacifism, Christianity, and his anticipation of existentialism. The treatment of various historical problems of nineteenth-century Russian society in the works of the novelist is explored, including issues of gender, class, bureaucracy, and social revolution. Tolstoy's essential creative tension, in which detailed diversity prevents the imposition of a single vision, constitutes the genius of his art, and illustrates the moral and cognitive relativity of humankind. Tolstoy's novels refract, rather than reflect, the Russian history of his day. Tolstoy's artistry illustrates the folly of all attempts - historical, sociological, theological, and philosophical - to impose 'grand theory' upon reality. Tolstoy's philosophy of history, then, is not compelling, yet his artistic expression of eternal themes in the nature of human knowing and being remains sublime.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This paper seeks to explore, interpret, and assess the Tolstoyan view of history. Tolstoy's works have universal and artistic significance. Since he lived and wrote within a specific historical, geographical, and cultural milieu, that of the Russia of his times, an enquiry into his social attitudes and aspirations may further illuminate Tolstoy's historical approach, perception, and imagination.

Tolstoy inherited the Russian literary tradition of romantic realism, which he adopted and adapted as the basis for his inimitable masterpieces (Simmons, 1968). Gorky opined that Tolstoy was the incarnation of both the glories and the weaknesses of the Russian national spirit (Gorky, 1920). Tolstoy's didacticism, though interesting in itself, is rarely remembered these days, but his art remains eternal. His contemporaries claimed that the great novels such as War and Peace and Anna Karenin truly encapsulated the reality of Russian life and culture (Troyat, 1970). Thus as realist writings, their authentic artistry may guarantee a basic social verisimilitude, and they may yield an important reflection of a particular social and political environment (Lukacs, 1975; Wilson, 1988). Tolstoy's realism was probably the highest expression of the nineteenth century Russian literary tradition held in common with Gogol, Turgenev, and Dostoyevsky. Furthermore, with careful and critical analysis, Tolstoy's historical attitudes and assumptions may be detected in, through, and behind the novels. In 1852 the young Tolstoy had defined history as 'a collection of fables and useless trifles, cluttered up with a mass of unnecessary figures and proper names' (Berlin, 1967). Nevertheless, the mature Tolstoy's compelling combination of literary art, moral philosophy, and social reformism, turned him into the prominent conscience and historical Muse of pre-revolutionary Russia.

The tendency to artistic expression is inherently individualistic, and so a brief biographical sketch of Tolstoy may aid in the appreciation of his historical convictions and predilections. In his novel Resurrection Tolstoy indicated a view of the fluidity and diversity implicit within the individual personality (Tolstoy, 1976a, p.252). Simmons (1968) notes that Tolstoyan fiction is highly autobiographical: Tolstoy's art reflects his basic drive to artistic and philosophical simplification (Lavrin, 1968, p.153)

2.0 MAN AND ARTIST

Tolstoy's safe, secure, and stimulating childhood at the idyllic 'Yasnaya Polyana' family estate, with its constant quota of milling guests and visitors, made privacy impossible, and probably shaped his sense of the complex interaction and inter-relation of life in the real world (Troyat, 1970). From his earliest days Tolstoy imbibed the common Romantic yearning for global fraternal brotherhood. Tolstoy's early nickname 'Leo Cry-Baby', his infant grief at the destruction of a poor puppy, his sad youthful reflections upon the crucifixion, all reflect his nascent reserves of artistic and spiritual sensitivity. Gorky (1920) was later to remark on Tolstoy's incredible native intelligence. Furthermore, the young Tolstoy was not inhibited by any restraining sense of modesty or humility, but saw himself as a potential seer and prophet who would reveal 'new truths for the benefit of mankind' (Lavrin, 1968, p.53). Of course, Tolstoy's insights were hardly unique, for his final vision, that love should be the ultimate guide to personal and social relationships, has been shared by myriads of moral preceptors (Tolstoy, 1970). However, Tolstoy's experiences did influence his outlook, with

his treasured values of simplicity, anarchism, and pacificism (Woodcock, 1971). Tolstoy's inner conflicts and contradictions, the dynamic of his personal development, lay beneath his analytical and critical intensity. Tolstoy's duality, reflected in such combinations as individualist morbid moral introspection with collectivist messianic millennial concerns, was the product of the dichotomy between his perception of the real and his conception of the ideal (Berlin, 1967). Tolstoy's attempts to integrate these disparate elements generated his artistic and historical perspectives.

Tolstoy's specifically Russian environment must also be remembered in relation to his historical perception and appreciation. Indeed Wilson (1988) provides a useful chronology of Tolstoy's life and times. Berlin (1967) argues that the nineteenth century Russian intelligentsia were tormented by a number of 'accursed questions', such as 'Why are we here?', 'How should we live?', and of course, 'What is to be done?' Lenin argued, somewhat dubiously, that Tolstoy's attitudes reflected the peculiar social and economic condition of the country, but with the main issue being that of the rapidly increasing immiseration of the peasantry (1975, p.348). Tolstoy's world-view was quite Russocentric in that he saw the spreading secularisation of the West as an important indication of its imminent moral decay and decline. For example, in his 1856 tale Lucerne he sketched a scathing portrait of the shallow social sophistication of the materialistic West. In War and Peace Tolstoy made his protagonist Pierre Bezuhov express the typically Russian concern for the noble and spiritual, together with his personal renunciation of 'wealth and power and life' as goals in themselves (1974, p.1067). Tolstoy hoped to solve the basic political and economic, moral and social dilemmas of humanity, both Russian and universal, through a close and correct study of the past, and through the enunciation of sound principles of historical investigation and interpretation.

3.0 THE HEDGEHOG AND THE FOX

For Tolstoy, philosophical principles could only be tested and tried in the court of history itself (Berlin, 1967). Interestingly enough, Tolstoy's early examiners of 1845 noted his sporadic interest and 'total failure in history' (Troyat, 1970, p.71). Tolstoy's early attitude was also one of 'historical nihilism' (ibid, p.435). In Tolstoy's War and Peace, however, the concern with history became paramount, for here he explored the difficulties involved in the selection, organisation, and comprehension of historical data, and sought to solve the enigmatic question of historical truth (Berlin, 1967). Tolstoy compared his War and Peace with the epic Homeric tradition, a genre that included concern with both historical detail and cultural identity (Lukacs, 1975, p.292). And indeed War and Peace does contain much of historical interest, for while Tolstoy subordinated his historical materials to his pedagogical principles, the novel provides a panoramic overview of Russian life in this period, from the heights of the glittering aristocracy right down to the lower levels of the poor peasantry.

War and Peace had an uneven reception: the influence of Tolstoy's 'Jesuit-trained French governess' was detected by one; another criticised the novel for its patriotic propagandism, with its simplistic contrast between the forces of a bright, good, Russia and dark, evil France; yet another saw in Tolstoy's debunking of historical heroes the threat of 'literary materialism' (Troyat, 1970, p.420, p.433, p.419). But it is in

War and Peace that Tolstoy gives the fullest exposition of his historical viewpoint, for here the implicit values of the narrative are amplified in explicit discursive passages. In his famous essay on Tolstoy, (Berlin 1967) cites the traditional proverb, 'The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing', and proposes that literary artists may be categorised as either 'foxes' with a complex, pluralist world-view, or as 'hedgehogs', with a simple, monist conception of history. Thus in terms of this division - 'Tolstoy was by nature a fox, but believed in being a hedgehog' (ibid, p.11). Thus Tolstoy's experiential perceptions of life and history conflicted with his conceptual ideals of how they should be. Thus the doubts and fears of Pierre and Andrei in War and Peace mirror those of the author. These maddening contradictions constituted Tolstoy's essential creative tension.

4.0 TOLSTOY AND CAUSATION

In her introduction to Resurrection Rosemary Edmonds claims that Russians live on two distinct levels of reality, that of the material and 'temporal', and that of the spiritual and 'eternal' (Tolstoy, 1976a, p.15). Tolstoy's grasp of historical activity incorporated both these elements, with stress on the spiritual aspects. His vision of human progress encompassed a three stage development including an initial 'animal phase' of greedy individualism, a 'social phase' of increased human inter-dependence and co-operation, and a final stage of altruistic selflessness, involving the entire negation of individuality within the human collective (Lavrin, 1968, p.106).

Tolstoy portrayed the course of history as determined within the network of interacting multiple factor causation, and that history to be

the product of 'an infinite multitude of individual wills' (Tolstoy, 1974, p.975). Thus the 'inaccessibility and multiplicity' of initial causes are matched by the inherent limitations of the human mind, since, 'It is beyond the power of the human intellect to encompass all the causes of any phenomenon' (ibid, p.1168). However, Tolstoy seemed to lapse into the realms of philosophical fantasy with his proposition that historical laws could be developed by generalization (his 'art of integration') from the careful observation of the constant human elements (his 'differential of history') apparent in individuals or small groups (Tolstoy, 1974, p.975). In a passage prophetic of coming class warfare paradigms, Tolstoy asserts that the examination of kings and generals should be abandoned for the meticulous observation of the attitudes and actions of the masses (ibid, p.977). Tolstoy's depiction of herd instinct as the determinant of historical development was an 'anti-individualist' undertaking. Despite this Tolstoy had earlier claimed to harbour 'a hatred of the general tendency' (Lavrin, 1968, p.73, p.11). And indeed it is valid to observe that the individual protagonist is inextricably intertwined with the collective people as the historical drama unfolds. Though Tolstoy's interpretations may be dubious, he was right to look for truth amidst the action in the historical arena of events in time and space, the vibrant, pulsating realm of facts and acts (Chiaromonte, 1985, p.47).

5.0 FREE WILL AND DETERMINISM

In War and Peace Tolstoy addresses the basic historical and philosophical problem of free will and determinism. Tolstoy and his early friends argued the issue in terms of individual freedom and historical necessity. However, freedom and necessity may be considered on both the individual and historical levels. Inasmuch as history cannot

be reduced to a sociological science, it is clear that historical prediction and retrodiction remain problematic (Berlin, 1967). In War and Peace Tolstoy develops an abstract model of the dichotomy between an action perceived to be determined by absolute necessity, with perfect comprehension of an infinite chain of causation in time and space, and an action perceived to occur within a state of absolute freedom, with the individual agent completely independent of the constraints of space, time, or necessity (Tolstoy, 1974, p.1438). To Tolstoy each historical event contained some elements of both freedom and necessity. He principally argues that individual freedom is illusory, since humans are the unconscious tools of inevitable historical necessity (Berlin, 1967). In their social being, Tolstoy depicts individuals as a mere segment of the 'human swarm' (Tolstoy, 1974, p.718). Furthermore, Tolstoy claims that social power and prestige stand in inverse proportion to the degree of freedom that the individual may enjoy. Thus in consideration of the problem of free will, Tolstoy depicts individuals as units in the human collective, and denies the importance of innate individuality.

Tolstoy makes an acute and clever observation in War and Peace when he notes that the greater the time span between the historical event and the analysis of it, the more likely does it seem to be determined and inevitable (Tolstoy, 1974, p.1433). Conversely, from our point of view, living right amidst the sound and fury of current events, they are likely to seem to be the social product of free individual choice and action. Thus Tolstoy's own lively and vigorous characters enjoy at best only partial powers of free self-determination (Simmons, 1968, p.69). Similarly, in War and Peace human happiness is depicted as being mysterious, illusory, and enigmatic (Tolstoy, 1974, p.1255). Tolstoy

further argues that conscious consideration negates the possibility of free action, and that only unconscious behaviour can manifest an historical significance (Berlin, 1967). Thus Tolstoyan philosophy would indicate that humans are free but do not know what they are doing (Chiaromonte, 1985). Berlin (1967) accurately asserts that the heavy Tolstoyan emphasis on casual determinism, his dangerous and depressing conception of historical inevitability, itself constitutes an 'oppressive myth'. Though free will and determinism operate simultaneously in life and history, their respective influence upon any historical situation is open to endless debate.

6.0 THE HERO IN HISTORY

Tolstoy's view of history, incorporating the limited importance of individual initiative, and the notion of the limited freedom of human action, was consistent with his abhorrence of the idea of historical heroism. Tolstoy's very first attempt at a novel dealt with the adventures of an heroic Russian family (Troyat, 1970). But Tolstoy was to reject the principle that 'great men', swayed by their fears and desires, vices and virtues, burdened by the responsibility of their enormous power, act freely and decisively and potently in the social sphere to construct history itself (Berlin, 1967). Thus Tolstoy's characters seem more concerned with direction and destination, than with questions of personal autonomy and identity (Simmons, 1968, p.3). Tolstoy complained that though theological and metaphysical principles had been largely abandoned by historians, two abiding prejudices which still obtained in modern histories included the dubious optimistic 'liberal' notion of human progress, as well as the old fascination with

'great man' concepts (Tolstoy, 1974, p. 1401). Throughout War and Peace the iconoclastic author smashes the reputations of the respected historical idols. Some of Tolstoy's discursive sections in War and Peace seem wildly outrageous: for example, Tolstoy claims that great historical actors 'are but labels serving to give a name to the event, and like labels they have the least possible connection with the event itself' (ibid, p.719). Similarly, Tolstoy implausibly asseverates of the French army at Borodino: 'Had Napoleon then forbidden them to fight the Russians, they would have killed him and fought with the Russians because they had to' (Tolstoy, 1974, p.932).

Tolstoy did not have access to the psychohistorical insights of modern historiography, and so he was probably justified in his somewhat simplistic attack on the historical writing which placed a naive precedence on the importance of the personal characteristics of the historical actor. In War and Peace Tolstoy pointed out that while the old ideas of divine right had faded, modern historical heroes still considered to rule the masses ranged from monarchs to journalists (ibid, p.1400). Tolstoy's own portraits of historical figures are singularly unconvincing. For example, he idealized the Russian general Kutuzov as the embodiment of the Russian masses, wisely not seeking to control events, but overseeing them with prescient dignity (ibid, p.956-7). Tolstoy's prejudiced portrait of Napoleon, that 'pampered person' does not impress the reader with any sense of historical objectivity (ibid, p.924). Tolstoy may have been right to question the tenuous proposition that the French failure at the battle of Borodino was wholly caused by Napoleon's cold in the head (ibid, p.931). But it would be wise to question the sweeping Tolstoyan statement that at Borodino, Napoleon's main contribution was not in terms of his military skill or strategy, but

rather consisted in the calm dignity with which he maintained 'his role of appearing to be in supreme control' (ibid, p.933). Thus to Tolstoy, the apparent leadership exercised by the historical hero was on the level of magic, the historical agent successful only so long as he did not fail. Tolstoy's view of history seems dubious in that it denies any place to the role of chance and contingency, and in that it absolutely rejects the importance of the intellect and intuition of historical actors.

Such a view of history seems fraught with inherent dangers, especially since it limits the sense of the individual's social and historical responsibility. In War and Peace Tolstoy argues that since Napoleon did not personally participate in the fighting, he was not responsible for any of the killing (Tolstoy, 1974, p.932). From an incorrigible moralist like Tolstoy, so concerned with individual vice and virtue, this seems rather inconsistent. In his works Tolstoy suggests that it is the little people, acting individually, who unconsciously control historical development. (Simmons, 1968, p.69; Troyat, 1970, p.512). Tolstoy's characters illuminate his own personality: who can doubt that the spiritual searches upon which Nekhlyudov, and Levin engage mirror those of Tolstoy himself? However, in the Tolstoyan scheme of things, this individual moral seeking and searching would be historically irrelevant, a mere exercise in exquisite introspection with no redeeming social value. Tolstoy's emphasis on individual moral regeneration reconciles poorly with his other conceptions of the absolute historical insignificance and irrelevance of the individual. Thus Tolstoy sought refuge in Karatayevian consciousness, a psychological configuration fundamentally antagonistic to his own infinitely more sophisticated and advanced intellect (Berlin, 1967). But Tolstoy was too innately 'foxy' to appropriate the hedgehog rationality, and so he remained dedicated, despite himself, to his ultimate historical goal of Truth.

7.0 PROGRESS AND POWER IN HISTORY

Tolstoy's historical insights and attitudes were based on his rather quaint notions about power, for him the motive force of historical progress, since he considered the basic problem of historical movement to be connected with the notion of power itself. Tolstoy rejected the principles of biographical historians who sought to reduce historical causation purely to the level of the personal psychology or predisposition of the historical protagonist, and pointed out that historians of this school tend to contradict one another according to their individual viewpoints (Tolstoy, 1974, p.1404-5). Chiaromonte (1985) notes that War and Peace contains close thematic similarities to The Iliad, in that the narratives of both pursue concerns of force and violence. According to Tolstoy's rather mysterious theory of power, intellectual activity plays no perceptible role in historical development, since the potent individual is merely a temporary incarnation of the unconscious drives and desires of the masses (Tolstoy, 1974, p.1425). Of course, this constitutes a strange disregard of the distinction between objective and subjective factors in daily life and in human history.

Tolstoy argues that power relations in society resemble a pyramid, with those at the top enjoying the illusion of power and prestige, but actually severely restricted in terms of their potential free action (Berlin, 1967, p.30). This seems dubious, for while it is true that the individual never confronts a future of pure possibility, of absolute

freedom, it seems plausible that historical actors high in the social sphere have the structural power to act with vast social significance. Chiaromonte (1985) posits that given the Tolstoyan view of historical development, the essential realm of investigation must concern the critical question of the motives for 'command or obedience'. In her introduction to War and Peace, Rosemary Edmonds observes the theme of power running through the epic, and sees the work as a triumphal hymn to spirituality and simplicity, goodness and truth, as expressed by the Russian nation, virtues ostensibly weak but effectively everlasting. Tolstoy's view of power seems distinctively Russian.

Power is the collective will of the masses, transferred by their expressed or tacit consent to their chosen rulers (Tolstoy, 1974, p.1411).

Here are reflected the social and political assumptions which underlay Czarist paternalistic autocracy, the ethos of the Russian intelligentsia who saw themselves as the informed conscience of the nation, as well as the roots of the Russian fascination with the ideological tutelage of the masses, to be most fully expressed in arrogant Leninist authoritarianism, vanguardism, and elitism. Furthermore, one may question the Tolstoyan thought that the social regeneration of the brave new Russian world would emerge as the results of the release of the latent energies and powers inherent in the peasant masses, generating an automatic historical progression to utopian and communistic forms of social organisation.

8.0 TOLSTOY THE ANARCHIST

One cannot evaluate the Tolstoyan view of history without a due consideration of his anarchist assumptions and aspirations. Stefan Zweig

labelled the old political prophet 'the most passionate anarchist and anti-collectivist of our times (cited in Woodcock, 1971, p.207).

Tolstoy adamantly rejected the false claims of the State, which he saw as the instrument of the domination and exploitation of the poor oppressed citizenry (Fulop-Miller, 1931, p.232). Thus on purely political and ideological grounds he objected to the parasitism and indolence of his own aristocratic life style, and believed that all of humanity should submit to the law of nature and sweat in physical labour to earn their daily bread, since otherwise either physical or mental deterioration must result (Tolstoy, 1942, p.312). Tolstoy believed that he articulated the anarchistic sentiments of the Russian peasants, when he urged the temporal and spiritual bureaucrats to 'leave us alone' (Tolstoy, 1970, p.36). Thus by force of custom and tradition, governments oppressed the masses with criminal violence. Indeed, to many Russians, governmental malevolence seemed to be an eternal, inevitable fact of life. Thus Tolstoy taught that true Christianity was essentially anarchistic (Tolstoy 1966a, p.162): government in no way derived from the divine, since one could never with justice determine whether to respect the political power of a Catherine or a Pugachev. In 1857 Tolstoy pontificated "All governments are in equal measure good and evil" (Woodcock, 1971, p.207). Here stands revealed the Russian absolutist mentality, which could only conceive in terms of dialectical opposites, and which did not embrace gradualist, democratic, or evolutionary approaches to political progress.

Consistent with his anarchist principles, Tolstoy had renounced his literary rights and income, and he wrote Resurrection in order to finance the emigration to America of the persecuted Dukhobor community, whose radical combination of Christian and anarchist ideals made them the

target of vicious Czarist attacks (Simmons, 1968, p.189). In Resurrection Tolstoy observes that intrinsically evil men cannot successfully reform or rehabilitate their fellows through institutional means (Tolstoy, 1976a, p.564). In this novel more than in any other, Tolstoy subjects the Russian State and church to a sustained anarchistic offensive. Thus Resurrection, though of lesser artistry than the earlier productions, not only reveals much about the developing attitudes of its author, but also yields a vivid picture of the reality of Russian life and society. Tolstoy's tremendous attack on officious government and official religion, written with such savage and sustained irony, renders the book a valuable historical source, despite its form as political polemics.

The implementation of Tolstoy's anarchistic nirvana depended upon the development of individual moral virtue, but Tolstoy was blessed to believe that over the last two millenia humanity has been progressing towards the moral development of the masses and the demoralization of governments (Simmons, 1968, p.211). Thus while Tolstoy rejected nineteenth century technological progress, he embraced the comfortable concept of inevitable moral progress. Lenin was to denounce the author for his apparent detachment from real life (Lenin, 1975, p.360). Though Tolstoy did hope for an imminent end to the oppressive conditions of Russian society, he yearned for social change by means of peaceful persuasion. Tolstoyan anarchism upheld the principle of non-violent non co-operation with evil, a tactic which tended to enrage extremists of both the conservative and revolutionary outlook (Tolstoy, 1970, p.54). Indeed passive resistance to evil could lead to intensified levels of domination and oppression. Tolstoy thought that an autocratic society, with its rules reinforced by tyranny and violence, would be likely to

disintegrate should the masses ever forget their habits of deferential resignation and obedience (Lavrin, 1968). Tolstoy considered that a clear Christian conscience compelled the citizen to render unto Caesar - nothing (Tolstoy, 1936, p.275-6). Thus Tolstoy looked not so much to an egalitarian brotherhood of political equality, to be achieved through class consciousness and social revolution, but rather to a utopian Christian fraternity to be implemented through individual moral regeneration and resultant social transformation. Tolstoy believed that the state and governmental institutions were destined to disappear in time. Thus for Tolstoy the basic anarchistic operational approach was the refusal to obey (Woodcock, 1971). Determined to eliminate violence, the state, and property, by means of the political persuasion of anarchistic example, Tolstoy hoped to inaugurate the Kingdom of God on Earth.

9.0 SAINT TOLSTOY

Tolstoy's view of history cannot be considered in isolation from the religious element which constituted such an important part of his thought. In Resurrection for example, we are confronted with a virtually autobiographical account of Tolstoy's own spiritual development (Simmons, 1968). Tolstoy's conversion and repentance of 1880-1 not only increased his religious disposition towards asceticism, but also gave him spiritual self confidence (for example Tolstoy, 1942). Resurrection raised an uproar in Russia, due to its general tone of disrespect for clerical and governmental institutions. Critics tend to contrast the early Tolstoy with the later preacher and prophet, however, Tolstoy spoke to the nineteenth century religious culture of Russia, which was more

than of 'transfiguration' than of 'revolution'. In Resurrection Nekhlyudov makes a pilgrim's progress through the ecclesiastical, political, and social corruption of Czarist Russia: thus Tolstoy's most religious work remains a more valuable source for information about the Russia of his day than his better known masterpieces.

Czarist Russia was possessed of a veritable nightmare of dead religious tradition, the results of the cultural hegemony of the Russian Orthodox Church. Tolstoy attacked this established religion on the basis of the distinction between the institutional church and true Christianity (Tolstoy, 1936). He particularly objected to the clerical claim of institutional infallibility, as well as to the hierarchial administration and authoritarian dogmatism of the church. Tolstoy claimed that the Russian Church had so sullied the pure gospel that Orthodoxy amounted to the grossest idolatry (Tolstoy, 1966a, p.163). In his view the problem with Russian religion was that the lower classes tended toward obscurantism or apathy, while the upper classes tended to agnosticism or atheism (Tolstoy, 1970). Tolstoy's own writings were not likely to foster faith, as witnessed by the satirical service in Resurrection (for example, Chapter 39, pp.180-1). Thus Tolstoy's 1901 excommunication from the official Russian church could hardly have surprised him.

Orthodoxy was clearly a religion of great social utility to the Czarist regime, for it formed a sort of sociological cement. For instance, Tolstoy's Karenin, a man generally untouched by religious feelings, finds personal comfort in the sense that his attitudes and actions toward Anna could be considered 'christian' (Tolstoy, 1976b, p.304-5). In Resurrection Tolstoy depicts the hypocritical priests who

benefit materially from their spiritual services (Tolstoy 1976a, p.50). Russian Orthodoxy had intimate links with the political autocracy, as could be seen in its application of temporal connections and resources to further its ecclesiastical ambitions and endeavours: a literary example occurs in Resurrection, where Toporov is an agnostic bureaucrat whose daily duty in secular life is to protect the interests of the sacred and spiritual sphere (ibid, pp.382-3). Thus Tolstoy claimed that weighed in the scriptural balances, both State and Church were found wanting.

Just as the Russian political autocracy was beginning to show signs of stress and strain, so with the theological and spiritual hegemony of Orthodoxy. In Anna Karenin, Karenin himself becomes a convert to the enthusiastic trend in religion (Tolstoy, 1976b, p.539). In Resurrection Tolstoy depicts this social and religious phenomenon in the character of the fire-breathing, tear-jerking Kieseletter (Tolstoy, 1976a, p.340): in the same novel Tolstoy notes the popularity of spiritualism, in that Nekhlyudov is present at the seance involving the spirit of no less than Joan of Arc (ibid, p.346). In War and Peace, Pierre's eschatological enthusiasm, the spiritual speculations of 'l'russe Besuhof', while amusing in themselves, also reveal the Russian predisposition to the apocalyptic style in religion, an indication of a social system in the process of decline (Tolstoy, 1974, p.789).

Tolstoy's basic religious tension between faith and doubt, similar to that of most of his educated Russian contemporaries, is reflected in the fluctuating faith of his character Levin (Tolstoy, 1976b, p.464). The nineteenth century concern with the scientific analysis and empirical exploration of the world left little room for theological or metaphysical explanations. But in 1880 Turgenev had noted Tolstoy's marked propensity

for religious fancies, and described how the author kept a trunk full of tracts and pamphlets 'full of these mystical ethics and pseudo-interpretations' (Lavrin, 1968, p.15). Tolstoy depicted faith as an inherent aspect of human existence: furthermore, he conceived faith to be a highly individualistic affair, which could take the personal form of icon, sacrament, personal deity, or whatever (Stilman, 1960, p.72). Undoubtedly Tolstoy was right to inform Gorky that 'Faith, like love, requires courage and daring' (Gorky, 1920, p.70).

Tolstoy created his own form of religion, which he thought suitable to Russian conditions. This notion of founding a new form of Christianity had excited Tolstoy right from his early years (Troyat, 1970, p.169). As recounted in his 'Letter to a Hindu', Tolstoy thought and taught that at its most profound level, human life was based on the universal and timeless spiritual source of love (Tolstoy 1966b, p.168). This sense of the divine pervaded daily life and included 'reality' in its naked simplicity. Thus Tolstoy sought to demythologise the Christ of official Christianity, purge Russian religion of its magical and miraculous elements, and so restore Christ's teachings to their original purity and clarity.

The gospel according to Saint Tolstoy depicted Christ as a moral mentor, from whose teaching could be derived sublime forms of ethical imperatives. Furthermore, Christian consciousness could liberate the love innate in all people, leading to individual moral conversion and to widespread social reform (Tolstoy, 1936; Berlin, 1967). Tolstoyan Christianity, though, did not include any comprehensive vision of salvation history. Furthermore, Tolstoy's artistic sensitivity conflicted with his religious consciousness, in his being concerned not so much with goodness as with truth.

10.0 TOLSTOY THE PACIFIST

Perhaps Tolstoy's greatest impact was in the world of ideas, particularly his profession of pacifist perspectives as part of his religious morality and historical approach. Tolstoy adopted Proudhon's pacifism as well as his title 'La guerre et la paix' for his own historical period piece (Woodcock, 1971, p.207). While historians often viewed war as heroic, Tolstoy comprehended it as inherently evil and distasteful. Tolstoy affirmed that for its first four centuries, Christianity had maintained non-violence as an integral aspect of its moral code (Tolstoy, 1970, p.50). Thus Christ himself had taught love and acceptance of the other, even of one's enemies. Similarly, Christianity was completely incompatible with soldiery. Armed force, as the guarantee of state security, was rejected by Tolstoy, since the Christian could not kill on command (ibid, p.49). Thus Tolstoy suggests that the principle purpose of standing armies is for the suppression of rebellion by the working masses (1966a, p.161). Participation in martial conflict is contiguous with the deadening of individual conscience. Furthermore, as shown in Resurrection the structural imperatives of military service tend to deprave and corrupt those involved (Tolstoy, 1976a, p.76-7). In War and Peace Tolstoy objects to the authoritarianism, indolence, ignorance, and dissipation of military life, and characterizes martial activity as 'the vilest thing in life' (Tolstoy, 1974, p.922). Tolstoy is famed for his artistic rendering of battle scenes, for he depicts them from a variety of viewpoints, from the necessarily limited perceptions of the participants themselves. Despite this attention to martial detail, Tolstoy suggests that the intangible factor in war is the 'spirit' of the army' which may negate technological or military superiority (Tolstoy, 1974, p.957). Similarly, the rise and

fall of states is not directly linked to their success or failure in battle (ibid, pp.1220-1). In Tolstoy's envisaged pacifist paradise, complete social reorganisation would be the necessary corollary of the true and universal application of Christianity, with its absolute rejection of all forms of authoritarian domination, and all would live in a non-coercive world of international prosperity and peace.

11.0 TOLSTOY THE EXISTENTIALIST

Despite Tolstoy's religious perceptions and attitudes, his writings often border on existentialist thought (Chiaromonte, 1985). Thus the author often approaches a view of life and history which explicitly developed only in the twentieth century. In his fiction Tolstoy contrasts the public and private spheres, but portrays 'inner life', the realm of individual thought and emotion, as being the true dimension of real life (Berlin, 1967, p.28). Thus once again appears the Tolstoyan dichotomy between the author's acute perception and portrayal of life and his inconsistent vision and values. Gorky claimed to detect despair in the depths of the great old author, a form of the 'deepest and most evil nihilism' (Gorky, 1920, p.39). While Tolstoy repressed his sense of existential awareness as antagonistic to his historical, religious, and philosophical presuppositions, his artistry and realism often forced it into overt expression in the novels. Tolstoy did confide his existential anguish to his diary, for here he noted that the sober sense of life as being without meaning or purpose can only be overcome if one is intoxicated with life (Lavrin, 1968, p.14).

Existentialist insights and attitudes reconcile poorly with Tolstoy's rejection of the 'liberal' historians for making history

dependent upon the role of chance and coincidence (Berlin, 1967, p.42). For example, in War and Peace Tolstoy's principal objection to the concept of free will in history is that if freedom reigned, then all history would be a series of disconnected accidents (Tolstoy, 1974, p.1426). Similarly, writing of Pierre at Borodino, Tolstoy argues that from the limited perception of the individual, life may appear as a 'succession of accidents' (Berlin, 1967). Pierre's modest vision, this inability to comprehend the overall historical process, is reflected in his sentiment:

All we can know is that we know nothing.
And that is the sum total of human wisdom
(Tolstoy, 1974, p.408)

Nevertheless in War and Peace, despite the professed perceptions of the author, an acute sense of existential absurdity often breaks through, as for example, in the scene where the enthusiastic Polish Uhlans senselessly suicide in fording the river, merely to demonstrate their devotion to the disdainful Napoleon (ibid, p.722). Similar insights appear in the domestic world of Anna Karenin. Despite the fulfilment of his relationship with Anna, Vronsky finds that his happiness is rather more modest than his expectations of it (Tolstoy, 1976b, p.490). And while Kitty and Levin represent Tolstoy's ideal of marital harmony and concord, Levin finds marriage to be rather problematical (ibid, p.506). In his short story The Death of Ivan Ilyich Tolstoy portrays the ultimate sense of existential anxiety which may confront the individual (Tolstoy, 1975). George Lukacs claims that Ivan Ilyich reflects the emptiness and futility of life in a capitalist society (Lukacs, 1975). However, the meaninglessness and horror of this life and death is much more universal,

for it is that of modern everyperson, isolated and alienated by modern social structures and formations. Thus in contrast to his collectivist ethos, Tolstoy depicts the basic condition of human existence, the essential loneliness of the individual in society (Tolstoy, 1975, p.152, p.154). Tolstoy thought it good to ponder upon one's personal insignificance amidst the billions of humanity. Like most existentialists, Tolstoy was also concerned with that ultimate condition of human non-being, oblivion, namely death. Death in the abstract, the concept that 'Caius is mortal' (ibid, p.137) is relatively easy for humans to manage. However, it is death and the prospect of personal demise which reduces human hopes to absurdity, and exposes their vanity and futility (Tolstoy, 1974, p.326). For Tolstoy as for Levin, death called into question the origin, meaning, and purpose of life (Tolstoy 1976b, p. 820, p.831). For Tolstoy, only life and love can negate the despair that the contemplation of death induces. But in the face of imminent inescapable death, with doubts still unresolved, the existential scream is entirely appropriate (Tolstoy, 1975, p.107, p.159). Thus the existentialist insights implicit in Tolstoyan fiction denote the artist's portrayal of the true texture of life, in opposition to his historical and literary representation of it.

12.0 TOLSTOY AND THE BUREAUCRACY

Tolstoy's view of history was conditioned not only by his historical perceptions and philosophical values, but also by that Russian society in which he lived. A survey of Tolstoy's responses to various aspects of Russian reality may enhance the appreciation of his historical viewpoint. Tolstoy continued in the tradition begun by Gogol in The Nose and The Overcoat, with his savage attacks on the ossified bureaucracy of Russia's autocracy. In his tale The Death of Ivan Ilyich, Tolstoy depicts a typical bureaucrat of the period. Characteristically, Ivan is

the son of an official: as such he constituted part of the nepotistic bureaucratic network which administered pre-revolutionary Russia, another example of which is the figure of Oblonsky in Anna Karenin (Tolstoy, 1976b, p.27). Here is observed Tolstoy's denunciation of bureaucratic incompetence and indifference. Ivan Ilyich is very much a man of his times. He flirts with the idea of liberalism (Tolstoy, 1975, p.111). He is one of the first judges to operate the new legal code of 1864 (ibid, p.113). Only upon his deathbed can Ivan Ilyich recognise the emptiness and futility of his official life (ibid, p.153). As a bureaucrat, Ivan develops both a public and a private personality, and he oscillates between the two levels as appropriate. For Ivan, the delights of office include the consciousness of power, as well as the possibility of moderating its application so as to enhance his sense of personal benevolence. Tolstoy also depicts the legal mystification of Russian society in Resurrection, where the judge addresses the jury with a long dissertation as to how 'burglary was burglary' and 'theft was theft' (Tolstoy, 1976a, p.108). When Ivan's own doctor applies a similar professional indifference and unconcern, Ilyich is horrified at his own predicament (Tolstoy, 1975, p.127). Only in the face of death can Ivan question the values of the social system which dehumanizes and trivializes its victims.

13.0 CLASS STRUGGLE IN RUSSIA

Tolstoy's Russia was the scene of rapid economic change, with rising though uneven levels of capitalist development, some effects of which are illustrated in the novels (Lenin, 1975, p.357). The social decline of the traditional landowning aristocracy forms an integral part of the background to most of the novels. Lukacs defines Tolstoy's

approach as 'romantically imaginary or utopian reactionary' (Lukacs, 1975, p.341): similarly he remarks upon the 'Asiatic' character of this capitalist formation, and notes its tendency to augment the worst aspects of the Czarist system. In Anna Karenin, the character of Nikolai Levin reflects the disapproval amongst the Russian intelligentsia with the prevalent forms of industrial and agricultural organization, which were solely concerned with private profit irrespective of public consequences (Tolstoy, 1976b, p.102). Thus Tolstoy depicts money itself as an instrument of domination, in that man serves the interests of money (Simmons, 1968, p.102). Furthermore, Tolstoy fulminated against the essential slavery of the worker, in contrast to the leisured extravagance of the privileged minority class (Tolstoy, 1936, p.139). In Resurrection Tolstoy shows how the economic imperatives of an unjust social system generate hapless victims through the oppressive legal and penal apparatus, the socially outcast and oppressed (Tolstoy, 1976a, p.165). Tolstoy's works, though an artistic reflection of Russian life, do express some of the basic social and economic contradictions of that society.

Tolstoy's own background reflects aspects of the class structure of pre-revolutionary Russia, and his origins may have influenced his historical point of view. The early Tolstoy could tacitly tolerate slavery (Troyat, 1970, p.158): the mature Tolstoy taught that property was the real cause of social conflict and unrest (Tolstoy, 1942, p.337). Despite Tolstoy's radical and egalitarian professions, many viewed him as intrinsically aristocratic, though essentially benevolent. Lukacs (1975) claims that Tolstoy's view of the peasantry was shaped by his standpoint as part of the ruling class. Through his characters Pierre and Andrei in War and Peace, though, Tolstoy reflects his own rather ambivalent attitude to the peasantry, as well as his sporadic

attempts to improve their material conditions of life (Tolstoy, 1974, p.441, p.450). Tolstoy thought that the peasants, like landlords, were opposed to a purely mercenary approach to agriculture (Tolstoy, 1976b, p.689). Tolstoy was to become obsessed with the single tax theory of Henry George: He considered that peasants are innately hostile to the private ownership of land (Fulop-Miller, 1931, p.283). Despite his obvious social idealism, Tolstoy could not entirely escape from his aristocratic advantages and outlook. Nevertheless, Tolstoy did attempt to reject his own power, property, and prestige (Tolstoy, 1942, p.329). Tolstoy conceded his own character to be that of a 'spoilt good-for-nothing man' (ibid, p.309). Perhaps like his protagonist Nekhlyudov in Resurrection, Tolstoy not only gained material benefit, but also sought spiritual salvation through the common folk. Like Katusha Maslova, Tolstoy's own peasants objected to such treatment, for in his diary of 1908 he records a verbal peasant rebellion at Yasnaya Polyana:

... you bloodsucker! You ought to be done away with!

(Fulop-Miller, 1931, p.292).

From a purely personal perspective, Tolstoy was part of a social class that was to be hurled into the historical dustbin.

14.0 TOLSTOY AND THE PEASANTS

The peasant question reveals much about Tolstoy's historical viewpoint. Russian serfdom was eliminated in 1861 by decree of Alexander II, and the capitalist forms of production were rapidly penetrating the rural sector (Lenin, 1960). Thus the patron-client relationships which formed the dynamic of rural politics were being dissolved, as impersonal

'cash nexus' relations replaced the traditional patriarchal relationships involving mutual rights and responsibilities. Like his protagonist Levin, Tolstoy had mixed feelings about the peasantry (Tolstoy, 1976b, p.258). For example, when Levin seeks to introduce new agricultural techniques and technology, he finds his main problem to be the mistrust and misunderstanding of the peasantry (ibid, pp.364-5). Tolstoy's principal characters are drawn from the nobility, and the embodiment of his trend to peasant portrayal, Platon Karatayev, did not even appear in the first two drafts of War and Peace. In Karatayev, Tolstoy depicts the strong, sage, spontaneous peasant, the incarnation of the 'spirit of truth and simplicity' (Tolstoy, 1974, pp.1151-3). Similarly, in Resurrection 'man' is the personification of the Russian masses (Tolstoy, 1976, p.535). Tolstoy became obsessed with the artistic apotheosis of peasant consciousness and contentment: Lukacs (1975) makes the claim that this poetic identification with the omnipresent peasant revolt of 1861 to 1905 provides the sense of social realism in Tolstoyan fiction. Tolstoy's cult of the peasant is consistent with his diary confession at age twenty:

I will always assert that consciousness is the greatest evil that can befall a man

(Lavrin, 1968, p.72).

Tolstoy's anti-individualism, though, may reflect that of the monolithic Russian society, which largely discouraged individual self-expression. Tolstoy was able to portray the typical peasant with accuracy and sensitivity, and though heightened for artistic and literary effect, Tolstoy's models were drawn from history itself (Gorky, 1920; Grant, 1988). In Resurrection, Tolstoy notes that close peasant identification

with nature and the attitude of calm fatalism this induces (Tolstoy, 1976a, p.504). Like Levin, Tolstoy sought 'moments of oblivion' in peasant toil, as an escape from personal indolence (Tolstoy 1976b, p.273, p.297). Tolstoy sought to educate the peasants to improve their happiness, but he trusted peasant perception rather than sophisticated erudition. For example, Tolstoy believed that the peasants pretended to silliness in order to fully comprehend the ideas and motives of the other (Gorky, 1920, p.14-5). Thus Tolstoy asserted that intellectuals and academics should go to the people to learn true wisdom. In contrast, Tolstoy disparaged the efforts toward democratic self-determination organized by the All-Russian Peasants Union (Fulop-Miller, 1931, p.313). In Resurrection Tolstoy depicts not only peasants, but a wide variety of working people, perhaps an indication of the development of a more diverse Russian working class. In his portrayal of the peasantry one may, perhaps, detect the preconditions for rural revolt in Russia.

15.0 TOLSTOY AND POLITE SOCIETY

Tolstoy portrays Russian social life with perception throughout his writings. Lukacs notes that the Tolstoyan characters act in a world of historical authenticity (Lukacs, 1975, p.322). In these works, individual fate, like that of nations at war, is worked out in the field of seeming chance and contingency (Troyat, 1970, p.509). Nevertheless, the participants in the drama of social life perceive their own individual activity as important, as for example with Kitty in Anna Karenin, whose pre-party emotions resemble those of 'a young soldier ... before going into action'. While the mature Tolstoy rejected the false sophistication of polite society, as a vain young man Leo had been eager to develop a veneer of indifferent affectation (Troyat, 1970, p.63).

Tolstoy came to reject the artificiality of modern civilization. Anna Karenin was completed amidst Tolstoy's moral and spiritual crisis: The novel gives a clear picture of the Tolstoyan urban-rural dichotomy between the falsity of town existence with its tendencies toward evil and artificiality, and the authenticity of country life with its imperatives toward truth, sincerity, and harmony with nature (Woodcock, 1971, p.213). For instance, Anna finds that she must operate in three different social circles in the highly structured St Petersburg society (Tolstoy, 1976b, p.142). The figure of Oblonsky, who selects his social and political tendencies according to the prevailing fashion, illustrates both the philosophical variety and intellectual dilettantism of the times (ibid, p.19). In Resurrection the unregenerate Nekhlyudov exhibits a notable philosophical and moral flexibility in his seeking to gain the social world at the cost of his own integrity (Tolstoy, 1976a, p.74). Likewise, in Anna Karenin Vronsky despises the proclaimed values of the lower classes, such as fidelity, sincerity and probity (Tolstoy, 1976b, p.129). In such a false social world, Princess Myagky is able to pass for a woman of scintillating wit, merely by telling the truth (ibid, p.151). In the marriage of Ivan Ilyich, social considerations played a more important role than individual affection, a situation which may have been representative in this period (Tolstoy, 1975, p.114). In Anna Karenin Vronsky finds that his code of ethics, while fit for the normal exigencies of polite society, is inadequate to deal with the realities of his relationship with Anna: her unhappiness is caused through the veracity of her feelings, her refusal to dissemble in the approved manner of social convention. Thus through the novels one may gain a picture of Russian social life in this period. Through his protagonist Nekhlyudov in Resurrection, Tolstoy denounced the

exploitation and parasitism of Russian society: perhaps the author's own moral enthusiasm also resembled that of Nekhlyudov:

This idea ... made him feel very warm and tender towards himself ...
(Tolstoy, 1976a, p.159).

16.0 TOLSTOY AND FEMINISM

The 'woman' question was one which perplexed the Russia of Tolstoy's times. While numerically women constituted half of that human society and contributed their share to its history, Tolstoy's attitude to women was not progressive. In his diary the author confides that memories of his mother form his image of pure love (Lavrin, 1968, p.18). But later Tolstoy was to reject the idea of love itself, and postulate the essentially physical need for sexual expression (ibid, p.125). Thus Tolstoy oscillated between periods of celibacy and profligacy (Troyat, 1970, p.101). While Tolstoy attacked prostitution in Resurrection, he also argued that it was part of town life, which could even serve to protect the family institution (Fulop-Miller, 1931, p.250). Gorky (1920) thought Tolstoy's attitude to women to be one of concealed antagonism. For example, in War and Peace Andrei points out the constraints that marriage could place on male ambition (Tolstoy, 1974, pp.30-1). Tolstoy opposed feminism, especially female attempts to enter the workaday world of men, since he considered the only labour suitable to women to be that involved in childbirth (Tolstoy, 1942, p.355). The author saw women's roles only in terms of matrimony and maternity, and charitable domestic service. Tolstoy was not merely antifeminist: he wanted to abolish sexuality as well. He opined that

one of life's worst aspects was 'the tragedy of the bedroom' (Lukacs, 1975, p.312). Similarly, in Resurrection Tolstoy applauds the celibate Simonson as a 'phagocyte', one of a number of pure-minded, disinterested individuals who serve to strengthen the diseased body of humanity (Tolstoy, 1976a, pp.474-5). In The Kreutzer Sonata Tolstoy argues for sexual abstinence even within marriage. Thus Tolstoy's negative attitudes toward women in general and sexuality in particular, which if implemented would abolish human history altogether, reveal a nihilistic hostility to life itself, which may be interpreted as an indication of the general social dissatisfaction and dismay which obtained in the Russia of his day.

17.0 TOLSTOY AND REVOLUTION

Tolstoy approved not of collective revolutionary political action, but of individual evolutionary moral change. However, in Resurrection he portrayed the revolutionaries with sympathetic understanding (Lavrín, 1968, p.151). Among the prisoners is included a politicized working man who is poring over the economic mysteries of Marx's Capital. Tolstoy depicts the revolutionary ranks as attracting ambitious, opportunist politicoes, as well as sincere, altruistic idealists, as an intensified sample of the moral variety of humankind (Tolstoy, 1976a, p.480). While Tolstoy rejected Czarist oppression and violence, he also taught that the tactic of violent revolution was not only ineffective, but also counter productive in that any new government so constituted would tend to become oppressive as well. Tolstoy was disappointed that the masses did not reject the principle of violence: he declaimed that social engineering could only be successful if carried out with care - 'human beings cannot be handled without love' (ibid, p.450). Thus for Tolstoy the

justification of political violence tends to facilitate the development of other personality defects, such as arrogance and ambition (Tolstoy, 1970, p.92). Tolstoy draws attention to this darker side of the revolutionary ranks in the character of Novodvorov, the self-confident, dogmatic, revolutionary leader who is in many ways an archetype of Lenin (Tolstoy, 1976a, p.512). Tolstoy's idealist conception of history, with its stress on moral and religious factors, gives short shrift to the materialist models which emphasize economic determinism. In Anna Karenin Tolstoy points to a new generation of Russian 'sons', born and bred amidst the contemporary conceptions of nihilist negation, in contrast to their 'fathers', who had arrived at freethinking position only after extensive historical and philosophical investigation (1976b, pp.493-4). Tolstoy believed that only through the development of individual moral virtue could governmental oppression be destroyed (Tolstoy 1936). Despite his effective renunciation of politics, and in spite of his own sentiments, Tolstoy's art reflected the revolutionary currents in Czarist Russia, and his essentially seditious writings may have helped to weaken that tottering social system.

While Tolstoy represented the Russian revolutionary forces with some degree of sympathy in Resurrection, his own attitudes and assumptions made him something of a reactionary. Tolstoy was extremely suspicious of any notion of social progress in history (Woodcock, 1971, p.215). Thus the 'old troglodyte' Tolstoy was something of an obscurantist, and as Turgenev had noted, could exhibit a most 'buffalo-like obstinancy' (Simmons, 1968, p.25). While Tolstoy saw that the peasants could now enjoy better clothing, interior lighting, and rail transport, he questioned the benefits of these new advantages, opining

that 'technical improvements only increase our miseries' (Tolstoy, 1942, p.1970). Thus he spoke of the 'devils' of medicine, culture, education, philanthropy, socialism, as well as that of 'women's rights'. Tolstoy may be identified with the technological timidity exhibited by Dolly Oblonsky of Anna Karenin, whose sentimentality prevented a scientific world view.

She was suspicious of arguments about cows being milk-producing machines ... It all seemed to her much simpler ... give Spotty and Whiteflank more food and drink ... (Tolstoy, 1976b, pp.289-90).

Tolstoy wanted humanity to regress from complex civilization to simple tribalism, since he thought that human harmony and happiness could only be achieved within the group. However historical progress is inherently amoral, while containing good and evil possibilities. Tolstoy sought to reject the sophisticated and complicated diversity of the Russian world of the times. Nevertheless, Tolstoy's sweeping censure and criticism should not be underestimated, for he helped to set the scene for the social and political revolution which was to follow. Despite himself, Tolstoy not only interpreted the world, but also helped to change it.

18.0 CONCLUSION: TOLSTOY AND CLIO

Tolstoy hoped to produce a simple and sincere literature of service to humankind. He considered his epic War and Peace to be a new form of expression (Troyat, 1970, p.423). Apparently Tolstoy did not consider his unique view of history to be a critical part of the work, since in the 1873 edition the historical and philosophical passages were omitted (Lavrin, 1968, p.29). Literary critics attack War and Peace on many

grounds: for example, Tolstoy makes many minor slips, and textual inconsistencies abound (Berlin, 1967; Troyat, 1970). However, in War and Peace the monumental scope and sheer mass of detail give the work a ring of social verisimilitude. In the novels Anna Karenin and Resurrection Tolstoy's work took more the form of the contemporary European novel, perhaps a reflection of the increased western impact upon Russia. Stylistically, Tolstoy sought to write as a peasant would: thus masses of simple detail form the milieu in which the characters gradually reveal their personalities. According to some, Tolstoy adopted the very language of the Russian rustics, so as to achieve an art of intense social truth (Lavrin, 1968; Troyat, 1970).

The relationship between Tolstoy's art and Russian reality is difficult to determine. Tolstoy's writings were highly autobiographical and individualistic, since he took his subjects from life. Tolstoy considered that art should not be a mere diversion, but should have didactic function. As a moralist Tolstoy sought to inspire individual regeneration; as a pedagogue he sought to transmit knowledge; while as an artist he hoped to portray truth. Thus Tolstoy rejected the notion of art for its intrinsic value. According to Lavrin (1968) and Grant (1988) Tolstoy's work reflects much about Russian life, since he did not possess powers of pure invention. And in Tolstoy's art, social situation and historical happening do not constitute mere background, but form the focal point of the novel (Chiaromonte, 1985). Tolstoy's historical viewpoint remains problematical, since as an artist he was probably more concerned with the portrayal of the intricate detail of daily life than with the ultimate questions of historical dynamics and development.

Thus Tolstoy's distinctive view of history expressed in his artistic and didactic works, was the exciting attempt of an intelligent, educated, and cultured Russian aristocrat to impose a cogent historical order upon a world undergoing rapid, seemingly chaotic, social change. Such was his personal impact that he became known as the 'conscience of Europe'. The author also attracted a strong personal following, a band of disciples of uneven quality. Since these converts expected ideological consistency and moral perfection of their guru, the author had himself to become a 'Tolstoyan'. This Tolstoyan movement existed in Russia right into the nineteen-twenties when it was crushed by the Bolsheviks. While Tolstoy sought to unify all things according to a single vision, his artistic ability lay in his infinite power of detailed description of phenomena in their very diversity (Berlin, 1967). Thus this paper has examined Tolstoy's philosophical perceptions, social attitudes, and historical vision. Since, however, all things do not work for the Tolstoyan best in this world, the author was unable to reconcile his unitary vision with reality, and perhaps his perpetual contradictions also reflect those of his historical outlook. In spite of himself, Tolstoy tacitly accepted his own moral and cognitive relativity, and examined the seamless robe of history, explored the causal fabric in its continuity and diversity, contemplated the tensions between voluntarist freedom and determinist inevitability, and scrutinized the relationship of individual biography to collective history. Tolstoy's attempt to synthesize the disparate diversity of human history into a philosophical whole failed, but his artistic endeavours remain illuminating, and serve to reveal much both about Tolstoy and his times. Perhaps Tolstoy himself (Berlin, 1967) should have the last word, with his enigmatic proposition of 1908:

History would be an excellent thing if only it were true.

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