

have detected a number of superfluous, misplaced or ‘dangling’ inverted commas and brackets, and should certainly have corrected the confusion of Elbe with Elba (13) – a piquant toponymical solecism in a work so centrally concerned with the relationship between writing and place.

John McNair  
The University of Queensland

Jeff Love, *Tolstoy: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London and New York: Continuum, 2008), 178 pp.

To the extent that it might seem to promise some kind of ‘plain person’s guide’ to its subject, the title of Jeff Love’s book is misleading. In fact, it is one in a series which (to quote its publishers) aims to introduce students and readers to thinkers, writers and subjects they may find ‘especially challenging’ by ‘concentrating specifically on what it is that makes the subject difficult to grasp’. While it might seem perverse to imply that Tolstoy, a writer who aspired above all else to simplicity and lucidity, presents the same kind of challenges as Deleuze, Derrida, Existentialism or even Samuel Beckett (the subjects of other guides in the series), most readers would agree that he can be perplexing in ways that Love sums up in his final paragraphs:

Tolstoy is plurality, change and movement ... a questing, religious personality who combines authentic humility with an arrogance that mocks any notion of piety ... a supreme rationalist whom reason disappoints ... (151–2).

What makes Tolstoy difficult to grasp, as Love would have it, is the paradox at the heart of his life and work: the contradiction between his endless pursuit of truth and ‘his profound grasp of the power of the infinite to disrupt that pursuit’ (3).

The inconsistencies which defy attempts to place Tolstoy ‘safely in the wax museum of received ideas’ (1) are addressed in the most general terms in the Introduction (‘What is Truth?’): the craving for authority over the world and the rejection of it, the pursuit of truth and the perception that there is none, the struggle to overcome death and the apprehension that there is nothing else. The first chapter frames an equally fundamental question, Who am I?, assembling from

the evidence of biography, autobiography and the testimony of such witnesses as Gorky and Bunin a portrait of the author as ‘a creature of conflict’ and perpetual struggle (24–5). Possible answers to the question, albeit in themselves questions, provide the titles for the succeeding chapters – A Novelist? A Fabulist? A Prophet? A Philosopher? – in which Love applies his incisive analytical and interpretive skills to key works across a variety of genres.

Not surprisingly perhaps, it is Tolstoy the novelist who attracts the most detailed attention (60 of the 152 pages that constitute the text), with ‘case studies’ of the two major novels framed by analyses of two shorter works, *The Cossacks* and *Hadji Murat*. Essentially, Love takes issue with the received idea of Tolstoy’s ‘mastery of mimesis’ (88) by focussing on ‘the impossibility of the mimetic task Tolstoy’s fiction seems to set itself’ (29): to portray as complete and ‘immediate’ a world we can only know incompletely through the mediation of the imagination. Implicit in the endeavour is the conflict between contradictory conceptions of the world, one holistic, authoritative and finite, the other accepting its constant mutability, relativity and infinitude. The resulting tensions are explored through their varying ramifications in each of his selected texts: thus, *The Cossacks* reveals that the representation of unmediated experience of the natural world can itself only be a projection of the imagination. *Hadji Murat* in its representation of the world as montage in effect denies the possibility of any final pattern or structure. The discussion of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* is even more complex and subtle, centring the in the first case on the ‘constitutive opposition’ (43) between conflicting desires to impose structure (‘mastery’) on nature and seek reconciliation with it; and in the other on the ‘constitutive narrative trajectories’ (64) which contrast Anna’s rejection of reconciliation with Levin’s less-than-triumphant acceptance of it. Such a crude condensation of Love’s argumentation, however, does scant justice to his methodical and acute readings of the novels.

Tolstoy the fabulist is represented by four tales (*The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, *The Kreutzer Sonata*, ‘How Much Land Does a Man Need?’ and *Master and Man*) which probe the ‘decisive conditions of human life’ (90) – respectively death, sex, evil and inequality – and their importance in the pursuit of ‘the meanings of being’ (89; the phrase derives from Kundera). The following chapters (‘A Prophet?’ and ‘A Philosopher?’) consider the writer’s own quests for meaning in religion and rationalist philosophy, both equally fraught with ironies and contradictions for one at once in search of some refuge from death and nothingness and aware

that there can be none. Ultimately, as Love suggests in his Epilogue, there was no final answer, just as there is no definitive Tolstoy: yet his endless search and his 'inexhaustible multiplicity' (147) remain a legacy in themselves, a force whose influence extended beyond death to have its impact on writers, thinkers and philosophers as diverse as Hemingway, Gandhi and Heidegger.

Love engages his reader in a 'conceptual network' (31) that extends from Plato to Edgar Allan Poe and from Sophocles to Jorge Luis Borges; like Tolstoy, one might suggest, he seems ever conscious of challenging the authority of 'the ostensibly obvious, the stolidly self-evident' (1). The result is in itself a 'challenging' text, dense with ideas expressed in a style not always as limpid as one could wish. It is, however, a book to persevere with, although in the final analysis one as likely to create perplexity as to dispel it.

John McNair  
The University of Queensland

Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker, eds., *Turizm: The Russian and East European Tourist under Capitalism and Socialism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 313 pp.

*Turizm* constitutes the first book-length examination of leisure travel in Eastern Europe, Russia, and the Soviet Union. Five contributions investigate tourism in capitalist Russia and Eastern Europe, followed by nine studies dealing with the socialist era. The editors' well-crafted introduction provides the reader with all the necessary conceptual tools to help him or her navigate the individual chapters.

Despite the great geographical and temporal diversity covered in these pages, several unifying themes stand out. First and most importantly, the contributions reveal the innate historicity of tourism. Clearly, tourism is not to be conceived of as a timeless, monolithic concept but rather as occurring within a specific political and social context. The state's role in the emergence of mass tourism similarly needs to be emphasized. Whether capitalist or socialist, the state viewed leisure travel as a practical means to transform the citizen and to solidify his or her national allegiance. Considering that leisure travel has been closely associated with the rise of the bourgeoisie, the intimate connection of tourism and consumerism comes as no surprise. Again, what is illuminating in connection with