ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation:	ENGAGEMENTS WITH TOLSTOY: REPRESENTATIONS OF CRISIS IN NOVELS BY HEMINGWAY, WHARTON, PASTERNAK, AND GROSSMAN
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This project examines the problem of historical representation in literary fiction, taking as its subject the twentieth-century novel. As a project in comparative literature, it brings together literary works of American and Russian authors of the twentieth century with works of critical theory and philosophy to analyze artistic representations of crisis, understood as moments of social and cultural transition and change, across cultures. Looking at literary works from the USA and the Soviet Union reveals the points of contact between two countries that both presented claims for cultural domination at the beginning of the twentieth century. The representation of crisis in works of literature that have become canonical from both countries allows us to trace the rich cross-cultural exchange between them.

One way in which such cultural exchange was realized was through the cultural uses of Leo Tolstoy's nineteenth-century novel *War and Peace* (1869). This dissertation argues that Tolstoy's novel served as a model for twentieth-century writing in both countries. Through the close examination of two American novels, Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) and Edith Wharton's *The Age of*

Innocence (1920), and of two Russian novels, Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* (1957) and Vasily Grossman's *Life and Fate* (1959), this dissertation uncovers the specific Tolstoyan techniques that each of these authors appropriated and readapted for his or her own purposes.

The philosophical concept of the I-other relationship as elaborated by Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995) and the theories of the dialogic representation of reality in the novel by Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) are used as lenses for reading these literary texts. The dissertation argues that applying the Levinasian model of the I-other relationship to the above-mentioned works of fiction allows for a deconstruction of the totalizing vision of history, a feature which comes to define the historical writing in these major literary works in the twentieth century.

The novelty of the present work consists in asking the question of what can be learned about literary representations of crisis by looking at intertextual literary contacts between Russian and American literature from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. The Russian and American authors considered in this dissertation all seek to respond to their own historical moment and work out models of historical representation in the context of social change.

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by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2017

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank God for His constant help; I am grateful that during the years of my studies He revealed to me so many things about myself, awakened my dormant dreams, and open my eyes to visions which were closed to me before.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to all the members of my dissertation committee, Dr. Brian Richardson, Dr. Elizabeth Papazian, Dr. Sheila Jelen, and Dr. Peter Mallios, who stimulated my professional development and growth over the years that I was working on this project and under whose guidance I discovered my own voice. I am very grateful to my dissertation director, Dr. Brian Richardson, for his immense knowledge, for the hard questions that stimulated me to expand my research, and for his generosity with time. I am gratefully indebted to Dr. Elizabeth Papazian who co-directed this dissertation for the great ideas that were born in the course of our conversations, for her tireless work helping me to become a better writer, and for introducing me to and sometimes causing me to change my mind about some important concepts in literary analysis. My sincere gratitude goes to Dr. Sheila Jelen for her expert guidance and counsel throughout the time of my studies, as well as for her endless support that made the completion of this dissertation possible. I am very thankful to Dr. Peter Mallios for helping me to discover connections between the texts which seemed incomparable.

I give thanks to my parents, Dozyslav and Olha Kuryliak, for their unwavering support, love that never fails, and the example they set for me every day of my life. Many thanks go to my husband Andriy and my daughter Kateryna for their continuous understanding and for the much needed joyful encouragement. I want to thank my dear

friend Ivan Tymtsiv for all his support, and to his family for their kind encouragement and prayers.

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INTRODUCTION

Leo Tolstoy's renowned masterpiece W*ar and Peace,* which describes the Russian war with Napoleon's army, contains a curious episode. Count Pierre Bezukhov, a wealthy Russian aristocrat, thinks of assassinating Napoleon upon the latter's entrance into Moscow to end Napoleon's invasion of Russia. With this intention, Pierre remains in the city while all the inhabitants desert it, obtains a pistol, and stays in the house of his friend Osip Bazdeev. At that time Osip's mad and drunk brother Makar Alexeich takes possession of Pierre's pistol. As the French enter the house where Pierre stays, Makar Alexeich points the loaded pistol at the French officer and fires, while Pierre throws himself at the drunken man and prevents the shot from reaching its destination. The French officer Ramballe, grateful to Pierre for saving his life, refuses to believe that Pierre is not French, though Pierre assures him otherwise. Ramballe offers his hand as a sign of friendship to Pierre. This gesture of the Frenchman is so good-natured and simple that Pierre, "responding with an unconscious smile to the smile of the Frenchman, pressed the hand held out to him," forgetting both that Ramballe is his enemy and his earlier intention to assassinate the leader of the French army (Tolstoy Vol. III, 904). The above episode demonstrates various ways one may imagine and respond to "otherness": Pierre, who intended to kill the general of the hostile army, ends up saving the life of his enemy and joining him at the table for a wide-ranging conversation.

This moment of Pierre's recognition of the possibility of seeing Ramballe as a friend instead of an enemy represents one of the ways Tolstoy addresses and handles moments of extreme crisis. Moments of personal crisis oftentimes overlap with social and historical ones, and become the author's response to such larger crises within society.

The example of Pierre illustrates a fictional move which stands in opposition to what Paul Fussell refers to as "gross dichotomizing" in his book about the First World War, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975), a book which describes fictional representations of the First World War. By "gross dichotomizing" Fussell understands "a persisting imaginative habit of modern times, traceable, it would seem, to the actualities of the Great War. 'We' are all here on this side; 'the enemy' is over there. 'We' are individuals with names and personal identities; 'he' is a mere collective entity. We are visible; he is invisible. We are normal; he is grotesque" (75). Though Pierre is one of the main characters in *War and Peace*, Ramballe is not devoid of personal identity. This secondary character is not shown as a "collective entity": while talking with Pierre over dinner, the reader catches a glimpse of his character, as he, at Pierre's request, forgives Makar Alexeich for shooting at him. Such a response to a major historical crisis in society – the French invasion of Russia – goes against what Fussell sees as "a persisting imaginative habit of modern times" to imagine the enemy as de-individualized, abnormal and grotesque.

This dissertation argues that episodes similar to that just discussed, which seek to respond to massive crises on personal levels, make Tolstoy's *War and Peace* into an important model for representing crisis in the twentieth century, when the sense of social and historical crisis became particularly acute. *War and Peace* came to be read extensively in Russia, Tolstoy's homeland, and abroad at the beginning of the twentieth century. This dissertation looks at the engagements of Russian and American writers with Tolstoy's *War and Peace* as ways to address the crises of the twentieth century. Such writers as Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961), Edith Wharton (1862-1937), Boris Pasternak

(1890-1960), and Vasily Grossman (1905-1964) look at Tolstoy's novel in order to, paraphrasing Wharton, find a cure for the present evils in the examples of the past.

The authors' engagements with Tolstoy vary, ranging from the use of a Tolstoyan model of historical representation to address the crisis of the Second World War and post-war periods in the Soviet Union, as is the case in Grossman's extensive *Life and Fate* written in 1959, to an open polemics with Tolstoy, as visible in Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940). On the other hand, Pasternak's dialogue with Tolstoy in *Dotor Zhivago* (1957) can be explained through the comparison of the author's vision of the novel as medium for the fictional representation of history. Wharton highly praises Tolstoy's vision of "life as whole" in his novels; however, her *The Age of Innocence* (1920) reveals her disagreement with Tolstoy with regard to what constitutes historical progress. These writers are chosen for analysis in this dissertation because, at some point or another, they all refuse the vision of the other as a collective entity devoid of personal traits. The moments of historical crisis reflected in these works do not necessarily trigger what I call, following the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995), a totalizing vision of the other, but seek for broader representations of otherness, as is the case is the example drawn from *War and Peace*.

These attempts to imagine otherness and address it in moments of intense historical and social change resonate with the ethics of Emmanuel Levinas, which seeks to respond to the crisis of the twentieth-century associated with the two world wars and the emergence of authoritarian societies. Levinas's ethics of the I-other relationship postulates the primacy of the other and calls for the responsibility of the I towards the other as a way to maintain a relationship that leads to the peaceful existence between the

I and the one termed "other." In *War and Peace*, Pierre follows his basic instinct in saving the French officer, forgetting the "otherness" of the Frenchman; he fulfills his *responsibility towards the other* by saving him and, at the same time, allowing him to remain other. Levinas opposes what he calls the "totalizing" image of the other, where the other is reduced to only certain characteristics, and emphasizes that the other is never fully visible or known to the I.

The present project works out the mechanisms of the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, which can be referred to as the ethics of the I-other relationship, in order to critically analyze historical imagination in works of fiction. I argue that Levinas's ethics of the other is a productive lens for explaining the literary processes at work in novels which attempt to represent historical crises. Levinasian philosophy is developed as a response to the tragic events of the twentieth century, primarily to the World Wars and the emergence of totalitarian societies. The philosopher begins the Preface to his famous *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (1961) by describing war as the greatest of ordeals, which affects everyone on a personal level:

> Does not lucidity, the mind's openness upon the true, consist in catching sight of the permanent possibility of war? The state of war suspends morality; it divests the eternal institutions and obligations of their eternity and rescinds ad interim the unconditional imperatives. In advance its shadow falls over the actions of men. War is not only one of the ordeals – the greatest – of which morality lives; it renders morality derisory. (21)

Levinas sees war as inadvertently casting its shadow over many aspects of human functioning, depriving things of their meanings, as it "divests the eternal institutions and

obligations" and "renders morality derisory." It is precisely on this personal level, the level of personal morality, that Levinas recognizes the greatest crisis which proceeds from the ordeal of war. The scholar asserts that morality of people is so affected that their vision of the other, the one different from the I, becomes limited:

> But violence does not consist so much in injuring and annihilating persons as in interrupting their continuity, making them play roles in which they no longer recognize themselves, making them betray not only commitments but their own substance, making them carry out actions that will destroy every possibility for action. Not only modern war but every war employs arms that turn against those who wield them. It establishes an order from which no one can keep his distance; nothing henceforth is exterior. War does not manifest exteriority and the other as other; it destroys the identity of the same. (21)

The violence that is associated with every war, according to Levinas, positions one outside of the "role" he or she was committed to fulfilling and makes one "carry out actions" which do not correspond to one's personal "commitments" or to one's "own substance," forcing one to betray oneself. In this state, the I does not recognize the other as having an autonomous existence and having the right to be different, that is, to be "other" then the I. And in reducing this otherness of the other, one's own identity is destroyed.

Levinas's ethics in the twentieth century aims at de-centering the I from the position of primacy and opposes identification of the I with the other. It postulates the primacy of the other with regards to the I. The encounter between I and the other is envisioned as a "face-to-face" encounter, which always calls for a response from the I.

The I is bound to respond to the call of the other; and this response, Levinasian "responsibility," or the calling to respond to the other, comes prior to philosophy or any kind of knowledge. This response entails the recognition of the radical alterity of the other in relation to the I, the acceptance of this otherness without attempting to appropriate it or otherwise bring the other towards the same. Levinas asserts that the I is in the constant state of responsibility before the face of the other and is defined by the response to the other (*Totality* 43). Levinas is highly critical of the assimilation or appropriation of the other by the I. In the essay "Philosophy and the Idea of Infinity" (1957) he writes:

> Freedom, autonomy, the *reduction of the other to the same,* lead to this formula: the conquest of being by man over the course of history. This reduction does not represent some abstract schema; it is man's ego. The existence of an ego takes place as an identification of the diverse. So many events happen to it, so many years age it, and yet the ego remains the same! The ego, the oneself, the ipseity (as it is called in our time), does not remain invariable in the midst of change like a rock assailed by the waves (which is anything but invariable); the ego remains the same by making of disparate and diverse events a history — its history. And this is the original event of the identification of the same, prior to the identity of a rock, and a condition of that identity. (*Time* 48)

This process of identifying the other with the self is seen as a reduction of the other towards the categories of the "self" and is, in fact, an act of violence – "a conquest," a totalization which makes it impossible for the I to respond to the singularity of the other. This reduction of the other is akin to the appropriation which can be carried through on

the level of history: appropriating past experiences, the "events of history," makes the historical message into one's own narrative and totalizes the vision of the past. The ego of the self feeds on such appropriations. On the other hand, the ethical response to the other is the acceptance of the uniqueness of other; it is also abandoning of the ego and the impulse towards violence. This movement towards recognition of the right of the other to remain other is associated for Levinas with the idea of "infinity."

Richard Cohen, a contemporary Levinasian scholar, comments on the opposition between "totality" and "infinity" in Levinas's book of the same name, and recognizes this work as an important political gesture which responds to totalitarianism. Cohen writes:

> Levinas's opposition to this totalitarianism in all its dimensions, from the alleged serenity of contemplation (purchased at what cost!) to the outright violence, the concentration camps, the gulags, the thought-control of all real-politics, is perhaps the central philosophical and political teaching of *Totality and Infinity,* which is able to make good on this lesson precisely because it opposes *Infinity* to *Totality,* an *Infinity* that cannot — or rather that *ought* not — be totalized. (110)

By bringing up the opposition between totality and infinity as a way of understanding of the other, Levinas raises the question of the ethical relationships between people, associating totality with the violence of non-acceptance of the otherness of the other and infinity with the embrace of the uniqueness and singularity of any human being. According to Cohen, Levinas opposes totalitarianism as a larger societal phenomenon and on the level of the individual's relationship with the other by associating the acceptance of otherness with the idea of infinity, which is opposed to totality.

A similar rejection of totality on multiple levels can be observed in the theoretical works of the Russian literary theorist and philosopher of language Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975), who similarly responds to his historical moment. Bakhtin develops a dichotomy between the epic and the novel as genres which differ not only through formal characteristics, but primarily through the worldview which they represent. For Bakhtin, the characters of the epic are immutable, unable to change or break through their molds, and incapable of growth. This characteristic for Bakhtin signifies the "totality" of the characters of epic, which thus ensures the "absoluteness" of the past the epic characters dwell in (see Bakhtin "Epic"). The novel, on the other hand, is a genre characterized by its dynamic nature, openness to change, and inclusion of a multiplicity of voices. Bakhtin characterizes the characters of the novel as "unfinalizable" ("незавершенные") in his *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1963), which signals their constantly changing nature, a nature that is always in flux and in formation, as opposed to the closure of the epic. Based on the opposition of these genres, the philosopher sees the epic worldview as that of totality and monologism, resistant to change and progress; he privileges the worldview that the genre of the novel reflects, one which allows for observation of ideas in the process of their formation, where the characters are open to the possibility of change.

Though Bakhtin famously uses Dostoevsky's novels as examples of unfinalizability, and sometimes refers to Tolstoy's works as bearing traces of a monologic totalizing worldview, the episode of Pierre saving the French officer reveals a moment when Pierre as a character is open to change. Pierre's spontaneous, even involuntary attempt to save the French officer, while also putting his own life at risk, demonstrates the Levinas's ethical response to the other. On the other hand, Pierre's

refusal to define any individual French person through the totalizing label of an enemy, reveals Pierre as a Bakhtinian unfinalizable character. Levinas's ethics of the I-other relationship helps explain the non-totalizing element in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. This episode also calls to mind the consideration of the I-other relationship in Bakhtin's discussion of the dialogic character of Dostoevsky's prose. Bakhtin maintains that the I perceives everyone as the other, as already opposed to the I. However, the I only becomes fully visible in its relation to the other. Caryl Emerson, a Bakhtin scholar, writes that for Bakhtin "it is impossible to construct oneself out of a single consciousness. Painting one's self-portrait, looking in the mirror or at the photograph of oneself, is always somehow false" ("The Tolstoy Connection" 70). It is through the interaction between the I and the other that the I can maintain its individual identity.

The present dissertation brings together Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1869), Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* (1920), Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* (1957), Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), and Vasily Grossman's *Life and Fate* (1959) in order to look at the figure of the other as cultural and historical construct. It seeks to explain how these authors use this construct in their works to talk about their respective historical moments and construct their unique visions of history. At the same time, the current project looks at models of I-other relationships in these works as the authors' attempts to address the crises of their time and respond to their historical situations. The argument presented is that Tolstoy's model of historical imagination proves constructive for the development of the twentieth-century novel, and becomes visible in the formation of the figure of the other in the novels under consideration. Though these authors do not entirely eliminate the vision of totality in their works, they

attempt to create a model of historical representation that seeks to deconstruct the vision of the other as totality and embrace a democratic vision of the other.

The first chapter looks at the ways in which the Levinasian model of I-other relations can be applicable to the analysis of *War and Peace*. The chapter argues that this model allows for deconstruction of Tolstoy's monologic vision, as defined by Bakhtin. Though Bakhtin famously opposes Dostoevsky's dialogism to Tolstoy's "monolithic monologism," he still sees Tolstoy's works within the larger framework of polyphonic structures. In his *Discourse in the Novel* (1934-35) Bakhtin looks at the novel as incorporating a multiplicity of various, often opposing, voices, which is the main characteristic of the genre. Tolstoy's novels similarly incorporate this "polyglossia." Bakhtin insists that the I-other relationship is a necessary element of character development in a novel. The Bakhtin scholar Caryl Emerson comments on the necessity of the figure of the other for Bakhtin: "In this sense, one can speak of the absolute aesthetic need of one person for another, for the seeing, remembering, gathering, and unifying activity of the other, which alone can create his externally completed personality; this personality will not exist if the other does not create it" ("The Tolstoy Connection" 34). The complexity of Tolstoy's discourse, if we consider it in light of Bakhtin's thought, lies in his extensive employment of the figure of the other for the development of his characters. While some of the characters of Tolstoy recall those of the epic, as described by Bakhtin, oftentimes they are able to break through their molds through a crucial encounter with the other. Such vision is presented, for example, when Prince Andrei Bolkonsky, a proud and self-centered character, is able to sympathize with and weep for his enemy, Anatole Kuragin, who is suffering from injury. The discourse of

the other in Tolstoy's works disrupts the "single consciousness" or the single message that the author has in mind while constructing his characters. The revelations that the characters undergo in crucial moments of historical change allow Tolstoy to build a model of historical representation that is not closed into the monologic epic mold, but allows for critical rethinking and reevaluation of the social historical reality.

Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is discussed in the second chapter of this dissertation. Unlike Hemingway's earlier fiction, which has become known for presenting disillusionment with regards to war, the novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) recognizes the necessity of war and expresses this view through its main character Robert Jordan, an American fighting on Spanish territory against fascist forces. Jordan does not desert the battlefield when he finds a source of comfort in his love for Maria; he recognizes the necessity of fighting for his beliefs and, ultimately, gives his life for the advancement of the cause. Though the novel is driven by a strong sense of purpose for the war against fascism, it does not diminish the crimes committed on the other side, a fact that accounts for the unfavorable reception of the novel in the Soviet Union.

In this chapter I look at Hemingway's construction of the other through the character of Robert Jordan, who is initially perceived as the other among the Spanish guerrillas. Jordan's journey from otherness towards identification with the Spanish earth reveals Hemingway's political vision at the time, namely his recognition of the necessity of a unified front against fascism.

Hemingway famously imagines his encounter with Tolstoy as a boxing match, and the novel polemicizes with Tolstoy's historical vision that prioritizes national sentiment. At the same time, Hemingway, like Tolstoy, declares his dedication to tell the

truth when working on the novel. He writes to his Russian translator, Ivan Kashkin: "in stories about the [Spanish Civil] war I try to show all the different sides of it, taking it slowly and honestly and examining it from many sides... it is very complicated and difficult to write about truly..." (*Selected Letters* 480). Thus, the novel seeks to answer the question about how telling the truth is possible when stories are always told from a particular ideological standpoint, and answers it by offering various perspectives on the event and a sympathetic portrayal of the other.

The third chapter of this project focuses on Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*, a novel which in many ways mirrors Tolstoy's historical representations. The chapter maintains that Wharton, though insisting on the vision of totality in her works of criticism, reveals the impossibility of holding on to such a worldview at the end of the nineteenth century. Wharton deconstructs the vision of totality by introducing the character of Ellen Olenska into the New York society of the 1870s, a character who presents a challenge to the traditionalism of old New York.

Reading Wharton's novel alongside Tolstoy's *War and Peace* reveals that the difference in the historical visions of the authors consists in different understandings of and attitudes to the concept of progress in society. For Tolstoy, a return to the natural ways associated with Russian folk culture opens up a possibility for overcoming the conventionality associated with high society, which mirrors the French culture. Wharton, on the other hand, imagines a society that would rid itself from the burdens associated with old traditions, thus becoming more open towards otherness.

In Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*, discussed in the fourth chapter, the Levinasian model of the other is employed to create a sense of collectively shared history and

collective mourning of historical loss. Unlike the case with Tolstoy, Pasternak's characters are often not clearly differentiated through language, but are deliberately presented as a single voice of people who are unified through historical reality. However, like *War and Peace*, *Doctor Zhivago* is a work which reflects on the genre of the novel as a medium for historical imagination and, through its main character, who combines the identities of a doctor and a poet, explores the ways history is reflected in the consciousness of an artist. Historical events in *Doctor Zhivago* are often presented through extended metaphors, as, for example, those of sickness and madness, to reflect the post-revolutionary reality in Russia. The role of the main character Zhivago is dual in the novel. On the one hand, as a doctor, Zhivago is called to "diagnose" and possibly even find a "cure" for the existing "disease" of his age, while, as a poet, he attempts, through artistic inspiration, to give expression to the grief of the nation and create a possibility of collective mourning for the losses associated with the revolution and the subsequent civil war.

In this chapter I look at several instances of the construction of the other, most importantly at the confrontation of Yuri Zhivago, the novel's main character, with Pavel Antipov/Strelnikov. I argue that through the erasure or blurring of some of the distinct antagonistic qualities between these two characters at the end of the novel, Pasternak communicates a sense of collective mourning which does not divide people into "us" and "them." Such erasure of the barriers between the antagonistic characters appears to be symptomatic of the society's restrictions on certain visions of history, as well as on expression of emotions with regards to such visions. The erasure of oppositions between

the two characters thus elicits the author's view of the necessity for a collective mourning of the victims of the revolution.

The fifth and final chapter draws attention to the multiple common features that Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and Grossman's *Life and Fate* share. The contiguity between these works extends beyond these formal similarities: in his *Life and Fate* Grossman, a renowned Soviet Socialist Realist writer returns to Tolstoy's model to characterize and wage his criticism on post-World War II Soviet society. The work effectively de-aestheticizes and de-romanticizes the Soviet past and questions the Soviet project as a whole. In this chapter I look at how Grossman's construction of the other reflects his project of critically rethinking the reality of the Soviet Union. In particular, I look at the ways the figure of the other functions in the novel to break the myth of the Great Patriotic War which was perpetuated at the time.

The book overflows with scenes that bring together people of opposing ideologies. One of the most telling episodes in the novel takes place when a Russian soldier in a scene of intensive bombing is comforted by the presence of a German in the same trench where both of them hide. Blinded by the massive bombardment, the Russian does not realize that the hand he is holding belongs to his enemy until the bombing has ended. This moment which suggests a possibility of interaction between the I and the other where it is least expected reveal the Levinasian ethical relationship with the other as possible even in the most complex situations of historical crisis. Grossman's attempt at having the book published in the Soviet Union despite its strong deviation from the Socialist Realist canon reveals Grossman's attempt to change the official view of history in the Soviet Union.

Chapter I: The Face-to-Face Encounter in Tolstoy: Understanding Crisis in *War and Peace*

> *War and Peace* "is not a novel, still less is it a poem, still less a historical chronicle. It is what the writer wished and was able to express in the form in which it is expressed." Leo Tolstoy "Some Words on *War and Peace*" (1868)

Since the first publication of *War and Peace* in 1869, the question about the work's genre continues to fascinate critics and scholars. The work's deviations from some ideal novel form are well known: for example, the lack of unity and coherence, the inadequate beginning and ending, the presence of authorial language, and the lengthy digressions, often unrelated to the immediate events of the plot, to name but a few. Today, however, the view on *War and Peace* has changed. Since the time of the Second World War, to be precise, *War and Peace* has come to be seen as "the perfect embodiment of the tradition of the novel in general and of the historical novel in particular" (Morson *Hidden* 2).

If the overall aim of this study is to answer the questions of how *War and Peace* was used by several prominent Russian and American writers in the twentieth century, what made it so attractive for them, and what features contributed to its becoming a model for a war narrative, the genre discussion, especially of genre as mirroring the values inherently present in a society, becomes relevant. The discussion of the genre specificities in Tolstoy's novel allows us to see Tolstoy's form as reflective of his outlook on the society and on its values; it also reveals some tensions within this novel.

The genre characteristics of *War and Peace* acquired new interpretations in the first half of the twentieth century in the context of the discussion of Georg Lukacs (1885-1971), a Hungarian Marxist philosopher, and Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975), a Russian

literary critic and theorist. Both scholars (contrary to the Russian Formalists) viewed the genre of a literary work as a reflection of larger societal values and ascribed certain values to very specific genre characteristics. Both critics' interpretations of Tolstoy stem primarily from their understanding of genre as vehicle for particular societal values. In their understanding a genre constitutes "a concept one needs in order to approach the work of art as an expression of a particular outlook. Genre models the content of this outlook and selects those elements which can be translated into the language of the work of art" (Tihanov *The Master* 55). Lukacs views Tolstoy as a writer whose works reveal a longing for epic totality, while Bakhtin sees Tolstoy's novelistic discourse as monologic, which, according to Bakhtin, precludes the dynamic exchange of ideas within the novel.

The works of Mikhail Bakhtin and Georg Lukacs help account for the meaning of totality in Tolstoy's works and access its significance on the scope of literary and cultural traditions. Lukacs's genre criticism establishes the vision of literature as reflecting historical processes within society, while Bakhtin's genre analysis concentrates primarily on the philosophy of language. Each theorist draws attention to very specific instances of epic worldview in Tolstoy's works. But Tolstoy's vision in the novel can be given a quite different interpretation when viewed alongside the ethics of the French-Lithuanian philosopher Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995), who also uses the figure of totality to address the crisis of the first half of the twentieth century. Levinas's theories, particularly that of the I-other relationship, respond to historical crisis and attempt to work out models which explain it and point to possible ways to represent it. In his novel, Tolstoy seeks to respond to the very specific event of the Russian war against the Napoleonic army, a conflict on a massive scale that presents a challenge to artistic representation.

The subject matter of the novel establishes its specific relation to reality; the theories of Bakhtin and Lukacs can explain only a certain level of the novel's aesthetic choices, as they do not expose the work's relation to the historical phenomena it responds to. A theoretical lens which ties the literary work to the specific social phenomena it describes, precisely that of crisis, allows us to further situate the work within the specific context of war novels. Reading *War and Peace* through the lens of Levinas alongside the theories of Bakhtin and Lukacs helps to explain the durability of *War and Peace* as the epitome of the genre, as well as its role as the source of inspiration for other authors who represent various cultures and develop diverse visions of history, but who, like Tolstoy, seek to respond to the crises of their time.

The problem of responding to the context of crisis during the first half of the twentieth century, particularly to the violence of the Second World War, can be addressed through what Emmanuel Levinas has called the ethics of the relationship of the I and the other. In his book *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (1961) Levinas presents a view of the relationship between the I and the other as potentially violent. Levinas's ethics of the other, his concepts of totality, response, and responsibility are important for the analysis of Tolstoy's representation of the realities of war in his novel. Understanding the other as unknown and unknowable and asserting the primacy of the other in the I-other relationship constitute the key elements of Levinas's philosophy. These notions take on great importance in *War and Peace*: Tolstoy's vision of the unknown other deconstructs the totality of his authorial vision in many instances in the novel and establishes a particular understanding of the concept of otherness which similarly emphasizes the other's mysterious, unknowable nature.

The following episode from *War and Peace* illustrates the character's encounter with the mystery of the sky. In this episode, Prince Andrei Bolkonsky lies wounded after the Battle of Austerlitz:

> But [Prince Andrei] did not see anything. There was nothing over him now except the sky – the lofty sky, not clear, but still immeasurably lofty, with grey clouds slowly creeping across it. "How quiet, calm, and solemn, not all like when I was running," thought Prince Andrei, "not like when we were running, shouting, and fighting; not at all like when the Frenchmen and the artillerist, with angry and frightened faces, were pulling at the swab – it's quite different the way the clouds creep across this lofty, infinite sky. How is it I haven't seen this lofty sky before? And how happy I am that I've finally come to know it.
>
> Yes! Everything is empty, everything is a deception, except this infinite sky. There is nothing, nothing except that. But there is not even that, there is nothing except silence, tranquility. And thank God!...." (Tolstoy Vol. I, 281)

The scene, which can be read as an example of Tolstoy's uncompromising monologism, as the thoughts and feelings of the character are presented to the reader through the authorial vision, also illustrates the moment of the Levinasian encounter with mystery of the other discussed in *Time and the Other* (75-76). Prince Andrei's epiphany is presented as an unknowable experience which he first describes as the "lofty," "not clear," "infinite" sky. Andrei slowly loses even this image as he thinks "there is not even that, there is nothing except silence, tranquility." This encounter with the mystery of the "lofty," "infinite" sky changes Andrei's understanding of the world around him and his own place within this world. Presented up until this moment as a self-centered character,

he now sees his personal strivings, desires for glory and recognition through bravery in battles as petty and insignificant compared to the great mystery he witnesses. The encounter with the unknowable other is conceived of, in Levinas's philosophy, as a relationship with mystery, a relationship that has the potential to change the I. This moment of epiphany in the novel, when Andrei lies wounded and sees the world in a new light, remains short-lived, ephemeral, and unclear; its nature such that even the authorial voice cannot fully explain it.

This moment of Andrei's epiphany which cannot be retained beyond the moment of dying creates a tension in Tolstoy's novel from the perspective of form. Georg Lukacs views the very moment of revelation as a reflection of the novel's movement towards the epic form, or the novel's epic "foundations." An insight, which makes the character's life complete and meaningful, is the expression of Tolstoy's struggle for unity with nature, the perfect harmony available only in the epic, according to Lukacs. However, the fact that the epiphany does not last reveals for Lukacs the internal conflict within the novel form, as he writes in his book *The Theory of the Novel* (1916):

> Tolstoy, with the paradoxical ruthlessness of true genius, shows up the profoundly problematic nature of his form and its foundations: these crucial moments of bliss are the moments of dying – the experience of Andrey Bolkonsky lying mortally wounded on the field of Austerlitz, the scene of the unity of Karenin and Vronsky at Anna's deathbed – and it would be a true bliss to die now, to die like that. But Anna recovers and Andrey returns to life and the great moments vanish without trace. Life goes on in the world of convention, an aimless, inessential life. (149)

The tension between nature and culture is irreconcilable for Lukacs: Andrei who aspires to perfect unity with nature, feels so happy having finally reached unity, cannot hold on to it once immersed in culture, his life sinking into inessentiality and aimlessness. Tolstoy's novel is illustrative of such conflict for Lukacs precisely because of its struggle towards epic, revealed in "epic" moments of epiphany. Lukacs explains, "the overlapping into the epic only makes the novel form still more problematic, without coming concretely closer to the desired goal, the problem-free reality of the epic" (151). Tolstoy's novel in its very form reflects the impossibility of reaching the "desired goal," but still aspires to catch glimpses of the great epic. The unfulfilled longing for the reality of the epic, the tension between nature and culture remains problematic and cannot be easily resolved for Lukacs precisely because the contemporary society with class distinctions and class conflicts cannot give birth to the epic, a form which is a reflection of a world in perfect harmony with nature.

The genre question also becomes central in the literary theory of Mikhail Bakhtin, though his view on Tolstoy differs from that of Lukacs. Both Lukacs and Bakhtin view genre as a relatively stable element of the composition of the literary work. Galin Tihanov explains the scholars' approach to the question of genre in his book *The Master and the Slave: Lukacs, Bakhtin, and the Ideas of Their Time* (2000):

> […] literary genre does not change quickly nor easily because it serves to express ideas about the world which themselves only change slowly. Literary genre, for both Bakhtin and Lukacs, is a concept one needs in order to approach the work of art as the reflection of a particular outlook. Genre models the content of this

> outlook and selects those elements which can be translated into the language of the work of art. (55)

Lukacs and Bakhtin definitely agree that genre plays a decisive role in the expression of a particular outlook, social position, or belief. This fact makes the literary work expressive of the author's idiosyncratic worldview, but even more importantly, of the larger underlying vision of historical moment, thus situating the work of art firmly within its social historical context.

Lukacs's and Bakhtin's views, however, differ significantly when it comes to understanding of the role of art in society at the present moment. In the polemics stated in Lukacs's essay "Realism in the Balance" (1938) and Bakhtin's "Epic and Novel" (1941) the differences in their view become clearly exposed, which is significant for understanding their views of Tolstoy's novel. "Realism in the Balance" is a criticism of the avant-garde movements in literature, which Lukacs strictly opposes to realism. Lukacs states:

> But both emotionally and intellectually [avant-garde literary schools] remain frozen in their own immediacy; they fail to pierce the surface, to discover the underlying essence, i.e., the real factors that relate their experience to the hidden social forces that produce them. On the contrary, they all develop their own artistic styles – more or less consciously – as a spontaneous expression of their immediate experience. (36-37)

According to Lukacs, the non-realist modes of expression fail to represent the totality of life, as they do not consider the underlying structures of people's experiences, but present the immediately visible reality only. The representation of these underlying structures,

the relations established within the society which lie at the core of people's interactions expressed in literature, give totality to literary expression, which is the necessary condition for the literary reflection of reality. Realism, for Lukacs, can satisfy this condition: "Great realism, therefore, does not portray the immediately obvious aspects of reality but one which is permanent and objectively more significant, namely man in the whole range of his relations to the real world, above all those which outlast mere fashion" (48). Realism, in this interpretation, goes beyond the surface of the visible, as it seeks to represent the structures which underlie the immediate experiences. The "objectively more significant reality" necessarily supersedes the one that is visible and immediately attainable for the author, and realism reaches out for this underlying structure, the structure which allows seeing the "whole" picture of the real world in its totality.

Lukacs's much earlier work, *The Theory of the Novel* (1920), claims that only the epic can reflect the organic totality of life; Galin Tikanov explains this view stating that the novel for Lukacs can only make visible "the totality of contradictions between the atomised social agents within a society that breeds hostility and competition" (*Lukacs* 31). As Lukacs understands the novel as "the temporary suspension of the great epic tradition" (Tihanov *Lukacs* 31), it is not surprising that his example of the great realist novel, which at times comes close to and even overlaps with epic, is Tolstoy's novel. In Tolstoy's realistic novel the contradictions within the society are exposed and presented as a tension within the form. Prince Andrei's failure to retain the unity with nature beyond the moment of dying reveals the conditions of culture which preclude this organic unity, and make visible the collision between the totalizing epic worldview and the more fragmented novelistic one. Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, therefore, illustrates the

tension within the novelistic form, which lies primarily in its struggle to encompass totality, which can never be attained within the society of Tolstoy's time.

Though the question of genre is similarly central to Mikhail Bakhtin's literary theories, his view of the essence of the novel is quite different. Unlike Lukacs, Bakhtin doesn't see the novel as struggling towards the totality of representation. On the contrary, the novel is opposed to this totality as it opens up dialogue on multiple levels, that is, allows for the free exchange of ideas between the characters, the author and the character, the author and the reader, the author and the culture of the time, etc. The novel does not gravitate towards the epic, but encompasses the searching and dynamic quality characteristic of modernity. The novel genre becomes the defining genre of modernity with its characteristics influencing and molding other genres. In "Epic and Novel" Bakhtin talks about the "novelization" of other genres:

> [The genres] become more free and flexible [in comparison with epic or tragedy], their language renews itself by incorporating extraliterary heteroglossia and the "novelistic" layers of literary language, they become dialogized, permeated with laughter, irony, humor, elements of self-parody and finally – this is the most important thing – the novel inserts into these other genres an indeterminacy, a certain semantic openendedness, a living contact with unfinished, still-evolving contemporary reality (the openended present). (7)

Not only does the novel maintain "living contact" with the present in its content, but also impacts the dynamics of representation of the present through its influence upon other genres. The novel's indeterminacy or semantic openendedness are the features which define the nature of the novel as being constantly in transformation and flux, rather than

prove the novel to be a form that seeks totality. It is therefore not Lukacs's totality which is the ultimate goal of the novelistic expression, but dynamics and flux.

As an example of the dynamic and dialogic nature of the novel, Bakhtin famously uses the works of Dostoevsky, particularly in his book *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1963). Here Bakhtin sees Dostoevsky's novel as manifesting searching and dialogic qualities primarily through its treatment of the characters that are given a distinct voices and, therefore, discourses of their own: "The genuine life of the personality is made available only through a *dialogic* penetration of that personality, during which it freely and reciprocally reveals itself" (59). Due to such multiplicity of voices, i.e., the characters' voices, the narrator's voice, the author's voice, etc, the novel expresses an exchange of ideas, which makes the novel into a dialogic genre. The dialogue within the novel ensures its openendedness, as it presupposes polemics not only within the novel, but externally, such as, between the novel and the historical period or between the character and a certain philosophical thought, with ever new potential layers added to the dialogue. In *Problems* Bakhtin also introduces the concept of "unfinalizability" ("незавершенность") as a characteristic feature of Dostoevsky's novel, a notion closely linked to such feature as "unclosedness" (53). Caryl Emerson in *The First Hundred Years of Mikhail Bakhtin* (1997) explains "unfinalizability" in a following way: "In an unfinalized world, everything (even a bad thing) can change (even if only a little) – and in the process, it gives birth to something new" (37). In Dostoevsky's novel, according to Bakhtin, nothing is predetermined and devoid of the potential to change. The characters are similarly unfinalizable: the views they express are subject to change. Furthermore, the characters' voices may be in dialogue with the voice of the author himself; such

characters may even escape the total control of the author and acquire autonomy to express their own views in the novel.

Bakhtin contrasts these features of Dostoevsky's novelistic expression with the discourse in the works of Tolstoy:

> Tolstoy, for example, calmly introduces the final thoughts of his dying hero, the final flicker of consciousness with its final word, into the fabric of the story and straight from the author (as early as the "Sevastopol Stories," but it is especially evident in the later works, "The Death of Ivan Ilych," "Master and Man"). For Tolstoy the very problem does not even arise; he has no need to stipulate the fantastic nature of his device. Tolstoy's world is monolithically monologic; the hero's discourse is confined in the fixed framework of the author's discourse about him. Even the hero's final word is given in the shell of someone else's (the author's) word; the hero's self-consciousness is only one aspect of his fixed image and is in fact predetermined by that image, even where thematically consciousness undergoes a crisis and the most radical inner revolution (as in "Master and Man"). (*Problems* 56)

For Bakhtin, Tolstoy's authorial discourse overpowers and "confines" the "hero's discourse" in the novel, a feature which limits the dialogic expression of ideas within the novel and renders the characters finalizable. Tolstoy's outlook as expressed in his works is "monolithically monologic," as he clings to the authorial vision only. Dostoevsky's characters, in Bakhtin's view are "*free* people" (*Problems* 6), as they can express their own thoughts, feelings and aspirations that function independently of the authorial vision. Gary Saul Morson in his book *Hidden in Plain View* (1987) explains that for Bakhtin "To

represent a genuine freedom the author must narrate entirely from within the perspective of the characters and forever renounce the privileged position in his own work" (187). This type of narration, which allows for individual voices to be heard, creates the conditions for a dialogue within the novel.

In his analysis of Tolstoy's short story "Three Deaths" Bakhtin maintains that "a dialogic position with regard to his characters is quite foreign to Tolstoy" ("Tolstoy's *Three Deaths*" 390). Tolstoy's characters are not only denied voices of their own, but also the possibility of diverging from the predetermined plan, being "finalized" within the author's design. With regard to Tolstoy's characters, Bakhtin continues, "All of [the characters], with their fields of vision, with their quests and their controversies, are inscribed into the *monolithically monologic* whole of the novel that finalizes them all and that is never, in Tolstoy, the kind of "great dialogue" that we find in Dostoevsky" (391). This "finalized" quality also takes away the dynamic element of the novel. The "monologic" worldview of Tolstoy's characters and the monologism of the resulting discourse mean, for Bakhtin, the absence of the inner split and problematics of the characters. The reader sees the finalized version of the consciousness of each character, who does not espouse any idea of his own, but reflects ideas predetermined for him by the author.

In her article "The Tolstoy Connection in Bakhtin" (1985), Bakhtin scholar Caryl Emerson explains Bakhtin's concept of "monologism" as a "brand of idealism that insists on the unity of a single consciousness" (69). This "single consciousness" prevails in Tolstoy's worldview, which manifests itself in his novels where the characters' voices are presented through that of the author. "The final thoughts" of the dying Prince Andrei

Bolkonsky after the battle of Austerlitz are mediated through the author's voice and are, therefore, denied their own expression as an autonomous part of novelistic discourse. The scene of Andrei's encounter with the mysterious sky and the experience of unity reveal Tolstoy's monologic outlook, according to Bakhtin.

Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist note in their profound study of Bakhtin's life and thought, "Bakhtin erects a whole cultural anthropology on the basis of shifting relations among authorial and reported speech" (236). In his division of the novel into "monoglot," or monologic, and "heteroglot" Bakhtin reveals his partiality towards the latter, which allows for the dialogue to continue on multiple levels, ensuring the free exchange of ideas independent from the position of the author. Michael Holquist insists that for Bakhtin "Dialogism is a way of looking at things that always insists on the presence of the other, on the inescapable necessity of outsideness and unfinalizability" (*Dialogism* 190). This possibility of dialogism became for Bakhtin the defining feature of a novel.

In "Epic and Novel," Bakhtin effectively contrasts these eponymous genres, with the epic as expressive of the monologic outlook and the novel as embracing the dialogic perspective. Bakhtin associates the epic with a totalizing impulse in the representation of reality: **"**the great organic epics of the past – those of Aristotle, Horace, Boileau, – are permeated with a deep sense of wholeness of literature." And: **"**By its very nature the epic world of the absolute past is inaccessible to personal experience and does not permit any individual, personal point of view or evaluation" (322). The sense of the "wholeness of literature," according to Bakhtin, is alien to novelistic discourse, as this sense of totality prevents the personal and individual from penetrating the finished and the

absolute world of the literary work. Thus, the present has no voice in the totalizing world of the epic, which is always turned towards the past.

The heroes of the epic represent molds or types for Bakhtin, who are devoid of development: "There is nothing to seek for [the epic hero], nothing to guess at, he can neither be exposed nor provoked; he is all of a piece, he has no shell, there is no nucleus within. Furthermore, the epic hero lacks any ideological initiative (heroes and author alike lack it)" ("Epic" 35). The character of the epic does not change or evolve, he, similarly to the author remains unchanged throughout the work. The epic genre with its orientation towards the past and its characters, who appear as fully formed and lacking in any dynamic element, loses its relevance for the present moment. The novel is, therefore, a genre of the present – as it retains strong ties to the present – and also a genre which has the potential to continue into the future, owing to its dialogism and the ability to mix with or even appropriate other genres. In contrast to Lukacs, for Bakhtin the novel does not reflect inherent societal contradictions, but a multiplicity of various ideas which sometimes create tensions and sometimes work together to eliminate them, sometimes support each other and sometimes are mutually exclusive. Meaning for Bakhtin is revealed within this multiplicity of voices in the novel, which in turn intersect with the extraliterary social context, rather than in the exposure of the society's underlying structures. The novel, therefore, deconstructs the totality of representation, rather than revealing the struggle to recreate it.

Considered within its historical context, Bakhtin's discussion of the epic as contrasted to the novel can also be read as a critique of the Soviet approach to literature, as his view of the epic is reminiscent of the Soviet Socialist Realist novel, the state-

sponsored and state-imposed mode of artistic representation that favored semantic closure and authoritative discourse in fiction. Katerina Clark reads "Epic and Novel" as the criticism of constraints imposed on artistic representations in the Socialist Realist mode. Clark writes: "The epic is told as a legend; it is sacred and incontrovertible. Thus 'epic,' in the sense that Bakhtin uses it, bears comparison with one half of the Soviet novel's fatal split: depicting what 'ought to be'" (*The Soviet Novel* 38). Clark sees Bakhtin's discussion of the epic as a veiled critique of the Socialist Realist novel, with the epic as a metaphor for the urge to depict a perfected reality and the desired vision of history.

Understanding Bakhtin's discussion of the epic as a critique of the Soviet approach to literature helps explain a crucial difference in the views of Bakhtin and Lukacs, which consists in the approach to the genre as an expression of authorial vision as opposed to a larger societal values. For Lukacs, a Marxist critic, a genre reflects the inherent problems and conflicts within modern society, as shown in his analysis of Tolstoy's novel. The occasional overlap of *War and Peace* with the epic reveals the problematic nature of modern society, which makes it impossible to achieve the harmony of the epic. For Bakhtin, however, a genre not only mirrors society, but also bears the potential to project its influence onto society by opening (or denying) the dialogic flow of ideas. Reflecting on Bakhtin's vision of the genre, Tihanov writes: "Genres no longer *reflect* the world, rather, they *represent* and model it" (*The Master* 59). In Bakhtin's view, Tolstoy's novel, with its monologic core, would have less potential to "represent" and "model" the society than a more dialogic novel, such as that of Dostoevsky.

When Bakhtin's view of novelistic discourse and character is applied to *War and Peace*, Tolstoy's novel does reveal some features of Bakhtin's totalizing epic worldview. It is precisely this worldview and the existence of characters who represent types that allows *War and Peace* to be partially appropriated later by the Soviet authors and critics, whose Socialist Realist style is reminiscent of the Bakhtinian epic.[1] An analysis of the Soviet appropriation of *War and Peace* for the grade school and university students is presented by N. N. Shneidman in the article "Soviet Approaches to the Teaching of Literature. A Case Study: L. Tolstoy in Soviet Education" (1973). The scholar states that the interpretation of Tolstoy's works consisted in criticizing certain views of the author, as, for example, his insistence on a Christian approach to life, while stressing other aspects of his works. Shneidman insists that in the Soviet interpretation of the characters, "The unquestionable devotion to the Russian government […] is often identified in the Soviet school with the unquestionable dedication to the present Soviet state, and in such an analysis the character Rostov may serve as a valuable educational weapon" (340). The character of Nikolai Rostov, who at one point in *War and Peace* "falls in love" with the tsar and displays an unquestionable devotion to him, was used as a "positive hero" in the Soviet interpretation of the novel. Katerina Clark in her book *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (1981) insists on the necessity of "positive heroes" in the context of Soviet fiction, stating that such heroes served the educational purposes and represented "someone the reading public might be inspired to emulate"; "A novel's positive hero(es) stand primarily for 'what ought to be,' and it is left for lesser protagonists, or sometimes for 'negative characters,' to represent 'what is'" (46). The Soviet critics looked for the moments when the characters represented the devotion to their government or for the

[1] On Bakhtin's discussion of epic in the context of Socialist Realism see Chapter V.

times of the characters' unity with the common people; these moments had the potential to "inspire" and served as positive examples for the reading public. In other words, the critics used the elements most similar to Bakhtin's immutable and monologic qualities to align them with the task of educating the Soviet reader.

However, many of the characters resist such interpretations. In this respect, Soviet criticism did not fully agree with Tolstoy's portrayal of the character of Kutuzov, the Russian general, who greatly contributed to the defeat of the Napoleon's army. Shneidman states that, "the portrayal of Kutuzov as a passive old man who lets the things take their own course, minimizes the importance of the heroic figure, to the extent that he becomes a passive tool of a spontaneous movement of events" (341). The real problem that Soviet critics encountered with this character is his dialogic nature. The image of Kutuzov, though undoubtedly positive in *War and Peace* and associated with the great victory, is far from monologic. In the novel, Kutuzov is not a strong-headed leader of the masses, as Soviet criticism would like him to be. On the contrary, Kutuzov submits to the invisible forces of history, and "worthily fulfill[s] his role of seeming to command" (Tolstoy Vol. III 785). Kutuzov shows little to no interest in the preparation and planning of the battles, as he "despised the intelligence, the knowledge, and even the patriotic feeling showed by Denisov […]. He despised them with his old age, with his experience of life" (742). The character does manage to be a great leader due to his ability to understand the "spirit of the troops" and the soul of every Russian. On the one hand, Kutuzov's distrust for "intelligence" and "knowledge" aligns him with the simple Russian people, the masses, a characteristic which could be recognized and approved by the Soviet critics.

Furthermore, Prince Andrei realizes that Kutuzov's unique ability to rule the army stems from his Russianness: "And the main reason why one believes him […] is that he's Russian, despite the Genlis novel and the French proverbs" (745). Kutuzov's association with the whole nation constituted the necessary element for him to become a positive hero and a leader of the masses. On the other hand, however, his lack of conventional "patriotic feeling" and the zealous struggle for victory "minimizes the importance of the heroic figure" in the novel and turns Kutuzov into "a passive old man." A prominent example of such "minimizing" of his role in history happens when Kutuzov is spotted by Prince Andrei reading a French novel, *Les chevaliers de Cygne,* by Mme de Genlis on the eve of one of the most important battles, the Battle of Borodino (744). This fact reveals Kutuzov as a dialogic character whose patriotic feelings do not blind him to the cultural fashions of the time. Kutuzov's reading the French novel became also the reason why some of Napoleonic war veterans despised Tolstoy's portrayal of him in his own time. According to Dan Ungurianu in his book *Plotting History: The Russian Historical Novel in the Imperial Age* (2007), certain veterans who participated in the battle of Borodino were insulted by the previously mentioned episode, considering it "a totally improbable and inappropriate detail" (110). Avraam Norov, one of the participants in the battle, offers a legend to counter Tolstoy's description: on the day of the battle, an eagle flew over Kutuzov's head symbolizing the forthcoming victory of the Russian troops (117). The veterans viewed Tolstoy's Kutuzov as lacking in the qualities of patriotism. Similarly, the Soviet critics considered the depiction of Kutuzov as diminishing the significance of the historical figure and making him not so convincing in his role of a leader of the masses.

In his discussion of realism, Brian Richardson singles out the strength of this method; Richardson states: "Realism can refute a variety of dubious or inaccurate worldviews and ideologies, especially those based on some form of idealism" (3). The case of the war veterans rejecting Tolstoy's portrayal of some of the characters and scenes in *War and Peace* reveals their favoring of the previous romantic tradition (one of the veterans even quoted Pushkin's *The Captain's Daughter* (1836) as an effective example of a historical novel) (see Ungurianu 118). Tolstoy's realism demystified some of the myths associated with the war of 1812. The romantic tradition, which can be seen as grounded in idealism, favored the legends and somewhat idealized versions of the participants of the war and of the battle scenes, as attested by the legend that Norov offered as suitable for illuminating the character of Kutuzov. Soviet criticism similarly sought for the idealized versions of reality that could be aligned with the ideas of socialism and used for "educating" people. Tolstoy's portrayal of Kutuzov defies both the romantic and the Soviet models.

War and Peace, however, also offers characters who had the potential to be used and were used according to the purposes of Soviet criticism. A character who adequately fills his mold is the enemy Napoleon. As a literary character, he represents an immutable epic villain who does not progress or change throughout the novel. As at the beginning of the novel, when the reader sees Napoleon as self-centered and egotistical, so in the picture of the final retreat of the French, suffering from deprivation, hunger, and cold, Napoleon is similarly unshaken and unmoved by the sufferings of his soldiers. Tolstoy described the retreat in the following episode: "Their supreme leader put on his fur coat and, getting into a sledge, galloped off alone, abandoning his comrades" (Tolstoy Vol.

IV, 1069). Tolstoy repeats a similar idea in the next chapter, making the contrast between Napoleon and his men even more pronounced: "And Napoleon, in his warm fur coat, clearing off for home from his perishing men, who are not only comrades, but in his opinion, people he has brought there, feels *que c'est grand*, and his soul is at peace" (1070). Both quotations describe Napoleon's abandonment of his own people, emphasizing the physical comfort he experiences by drawing attention to his fur coat and a sledge, as contrasted with his "perishing men," whose retreat Tolstoy also compares to the struggle of a wounded animal. The soul of Napoleon is "at peace" as he leaves the other to suffer and to die; it is for this reason that this character is not presented here through either inner monologues or dialogues – he becomes a picture of an epic villain, the Bakhtinian immutable character, even despite his often caricaturized images.

In his book *Antinomies of Realism* (2013), Fredric Jameson, basing his thought on earlier scholarship, notes that some "powerful anti-war novels written at the wake of World War I to warn their readers occasionally had the opposite effect" (257). Unlike this effect at the beginning of the First World War, Soviet criticism strategically presented *War and Peace* as a text which emphasized patriotism at the time of the Second World War. A.N. Wilson describes the popularity of *War and Pease* at that time: "not only, by then, was Tolstoy the most published author in Russia (there were more of his works in print then there were those of Lenin) but also he was given the title the Great (*velikii*), an adjective at that time reserved, in all official publications, for Stalin himself" (235). Wilson shows that *War and Peace* was used as propaganda at the time of the Second World War in Russia and was used in the production of the "national myth" which emphasized patriotism.

Some of the characters in *War and Peace* can be seen as monologic in their unwavering association with the idea of the nation and Russianness, a vision which made it possible for Soviet criticism to embrace the novel. The example of such a character is Natasha, the young daughter of count Rostov. Though Natasha is born into the aristocracy, her association with the spirit of the Russian people is evident throughout the novel. The most prominent example of Natasha's closeness to the common people of Russia can be seen when she performs the Russian folk dance in the country house of her uncle. The peasant woman Anisya who observes Natasha dancing a Russian folk dance immediately recognizes a natural kinship with Natasha: "Anisya Fyodorovna […] wept through her laughter, looking at this slender graceful countess, brought up in silk and velvet, so foreign to her, who was able to understand everything that was in Anisya and in Anisya's father, and in her aunt, and in her mother, and in every Russian" (Tolstoy Vol. II, 512). Natasha's affinity for and even association with the common people, the peasants, constitutes one constant aspect of her character. This closeness to the simple people, the masses, was seen as a feature which allied Natasha with the agenda of Soviet fiction, an aspect that was emphasized in Soviet schools (see Shneidman 337).

Though Natasha can be seen within the framework of totality, or Bakhtinian finilizability, she does escape this structure through her association with both the aristocracy and the common people. Just as Natasha engages in the folk dance in her uncle's house, she is also charmed by St. Petersburg balls. At her first ball, she is described in the following way: "Natasha fell in love the moment she entered the ballroom. She was not in love with anyone in particular, but with everyone. She fell in love with whomever she looked at, the moment she looked at him" (Tolstoy Vol. II, 334).

Natasha feels enchanted by the atmosphere of the ball, while her ability to feel comfortable in the peasant's house and in the fashionable St. Petersburg ballroom make it impossible to see her association with the folk as the only dimension of her character. Natasha breaks conventions easily, as, for example, after singing a song after dinner, she asks Prince Andrei, who came to the Rostovs' as a guest, "how he liked her voice." The narrator explains that Natasha "asked this and became embarrassed just after she said it, realizing that it was not a question to be asked" (467). Breaking the convention and overstepping conventional social boundaries become characteristic features of Natasha; her ability to behave unpredictably and her often unexpected view of events make it similarly impossible to see this this character as the embodiment of totality.

The association of the characters with the image of the national can be seen as a feature associated with monologism, which makes their appropriation for educational purposes in the Soviet Union possible. In many cases, however, as for example, in the case with the character of Kutuzov, such appropriation becomes problematic. Therefore, calling *War and Peace* a novel which gravitates towards reflection of totality creates problems. First of all, Bakhtin attests that the characters who are not given their own voice, are not "free" characters, but "slaves" to the author's design (*Problems* 6). In this sense, the "free" characters have the possibility of escaping the author's design; they may reflect thoughts and ideas of their own in the novel. Though Prince Andrei is denied a voice of his own in one of the most crucial scenes in the novel, he does acquire a certain type of autonomy of his own: as attested by the earlier drafts of *War and Peace*, Tolstoy conceived of Prince Andrei as a short-lived character who would only live until he met the moment of glory in the battlefield (see Jespen). In the course of the novel's creation,

however, Andrei evolved into one of the most prominent characters, who lives through most of the novel and dies only toward its end. The character, therefore, disrupts the monologic design of the author, gaining a life of his own within it.

The view of Tolstoy's *War and Peace* as a novel which reveals a totalizing impulse in representation is changed when the thematic and the philosophical planes of the novel are taken into consideration. The contiguity of Tolstoy's ideas and those of Emmanuel Levinas allows us to see *War and Peace* as a novel which seeks to respond to the violence of war and deconstructs the totality in representation through its engagement with the concept of otherness. Levinas's ethics of the I-other relationship explains the other as a potential object of violence for the I. The prime violence is done to the other when the I approaches the other as known or knowable; this attempt to reduce the other to known concepts represents the impulse to see the other as totality for Levinas. This approach to the other is tantamount for Levinas to the metaphorical killing of the other. Levinas, therefore, postulates the Biblical command "You shall not kill" as the center of his philosophy, and sees this command as making an ethical relationship with the other possible (*Difficult Freedom* 8-10). In Levinas's book *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (1961), the concept of "totality," which consists in the totalizing vision of the other, is contrasted with the idea of "infinity," a vision opposed to "totality," which allows for the other to retain his infinite unknowable nature.

Emmanuel Levinas was born in 1906 in Kovno (Kaunas), Lithuania, a part of the Russian Empire at the time. His family later moved to Kharkov, Ukraine, which also belonged to the Empire. Having gained his secondary education in Kovna and Kharkov, Levinas was undoubtedly familiar with Russian nineteenth-century classics; he names the

death of Tolstoy as one of his earliest recollections (see Hand). In the concluding essay, "Signature," in his book *Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism* (1963) Levinas enumerates his early influences in the following way: "The Hebrew Bible from the childhood years in Lithuania, Pushkin and Tolstoy, the Russian Revolution of 1917 experienced at eleven years of age in the Ukraine" (291). Seán Hand states "the great Russians" constituted Levinas's early readings and insists that "It was the preoccupations of these Russian writers that led Levinas in 1923 to Strasbourg" where he began his study of philosophy (1). Levinas's familiarity with the works of Tolstoy, as well as with the general cultural milieu of the Russian Empire, both before and in the years following the 1917 Revolution, found reflection in his later works, which address the violence associated with the wars and revolutions of the first half of the twentieth century. Like Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Levinas's ethics seeks for spiritual solutions to the problems which arise as a result of profound conflict. Levinas's ethics of the I and other, when read alongside Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, helps uncover the ways in which both authors deconstruct the concept of totality, understood within the framework of relations of the I with the other, in Levinasian terms.

The monologism of Tolstoy's fiction, as understood by Bakhtin with regards to fiction, is a figure that can be compared to the Levinasian figure of totalization, which presupposes approaching the other as already known and knowable. Bakhtin sees this figure as limiting, to an extent, the relationship with the other in the novel. Totality, in Levinas, refers to assuming that the other, understood mostly as another person, is knowable and can be understood and categorized as a being distinct from the I (see Levinas *Totality*). Levinasian totalization reveals the tendency to assume the ability to

know the other when confronted with him. Reading Tolstoy through Levinas allows for a reevaluation of the Tolstoyan figure of totality with consideration of the I-other relationship.

Totalizing vision, undoubtedly a characteristic of Tolstoy's fiction to a certain extent, illustrates precisely Levinas's concept of the egocentric being. Looking at the figure of the other in *War and Peace* reveals the challenge presented to such egocentrism in the encounter with the other. A deconstruction of totality is possible and is attained in *War and Peace* through the encounter with the other – that is, in the sense of Levinasian concept of assuming responsibility for the other. Thus, one way that Tolstoy deconstructs the vision of totality in his characters is through their reevaluation of the relationship with the other, and through their acquisition of the vision of the other as unknowable. Tolstoy's own totalizing vision in the novel is deconstructed as a result of such confrontations of his characters with the unknowable other. Like the operation of the unknowable forces of history which Tolstoy describes in the second epilogue to *War and Peace*, his own totalizing vision is similarly dissolved, allowing room for the unknown and unknowable, which neither he nor his characters can conceive of or explain. The Levinasian ethics of the other allows for tracing this deconstruction of the totalizing impulse even within Tolstoy's authorial vision. The concept opposed to totality in Levinas's philosophy is that of infinity; it is connected with a vision that does not attempt to frame otherness in any way. In Tolstoy, the characters often gain a similar vision, which in *War and Peace* is associated with a moment that the characters experience in time of distress. The pursuit of such infinite vision, as Andrei obtains when wounded

after the battle of Austerlitz, constitutes one of the main goals of the characters of *War and Peace* and one of the main tasks of Levinas's I.

Several important aspects of Levinas's ethics of the other become particularly important in light of their applicability to the analysis of Tolstoy's vision in *War and Peace*. One of the most important elements in the I and other relationship, according to Levinas, is what the Levinas scholar Marina Riemslagh defines as "the ethical primacy of the other" (191). Levinas shifts the emphasis away from the individuality and egocentricity of the I cultivated by Western philosophy. In his *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (1961), Levinas sees the I as breaking from his totality through the encounter with the other. And it is through the encounter with the unknowable other, who retains his mysterious existence, that the I is transformed and comes into contact with infinity:

> To approach the Other in conversation is to welcome his expression, in which at each instant he overflows the idea a thought would carry away from it. It is therefore to receive from the Other beyond the capacity of the I, which means exactly: to have the idea of infinity. But this also means: to be taught. (*Totality* 51)

The encounter with the unknown and unknowable other, who threatens the I by his unknowable nature, creates the condition for breaking the totality which encloses the I and bringing in the qualitative change in the I. And it is in this encounter that the I is "taught" and transformed into a new being.

The Levinasian other is characterized by his unknowable nature, the feature which is central to most of Levinas's works. Considering this characteristic in his earlier work *Time and the Other* (1947), Levinas writes:

> To be sure, the other [*l'Autre*] [sic] that is announced does not possess this existing as the subject possesses it; its hold over my existing is mysterious. It is not unknown but unknowable, refractory to all light. […] The relationship with the other is a relationship with a Mystery. The other's entire being is constituted by its exteriority, or rather its alterity [….] (75-76)

Here the other is understood through his radical alterity in relation to the I. His existence, "refractory of all light," is ungraspable, and his alterity cannot be overcome. Thus, the "Mystery" that the other presents in the eyes of the I becomes a source of the fear that the I experiences when the I-other encounter takes place: "From its infancy, philosophy has been struck with the horror of the other that remains other – with an insurmountable allergy" (Levinas "Trace" 346). The other threatens the I as he possesses a mysterious "hold" over the I's existence, while being an entity that is entirely unknown to the I. The "horror" that the other imparts stems from the fact that the other retains his otherness even in the face of the I.

The unknowability of the other is one of the key concepts for understanding the dynamics of I-other relations, as it explains the roots of intolerance to or outward denial of otherness, which the Levinasian I displays. Levinas's approach explains why otherness has long been feared and not accepted in Western philosophy, which has privileged the egocentric approach to the I. The relationship with something that is inconceivable to the I, yet which still happens, is threatening to the I because of its mysterious nature. Levinas

recognizes the I-other relationship as possible in the crucial moments of the existence of the I, as he writes: "only a being whose solitude has reached a crispation through suffering, and in relation with death, takes its place on a ground where the relationship with the other becomes possible" (*Time* 76). For Levinas, the relationship with the other becomes possible after the I experiences "crispation through suffering"; suffering here is associated with a spasmodic contraction that shapes the I into a different being, making the I ready for the encounter with the other. It is thus through experiencing suffering and the proximity of death that the I approaches the mystery of the other, and gains understanding the other as one who resists categorization. This moment in Levinas's philosophy brings it close to Tolstoy's vision of I-other relations, as Tolstoy's characters often reach a new level of understanding of such relations in moments of proximity to death. Prince Andrei is able to reevaluate his vision of the world at the moment he lies wounded after the Battle Austerlitz; at this time he is no longer concerned with the worldly matters of pride, envy and desire for power, emotions which limit his view of others.

The Levinasian I is understood as primarily an egotistical being who views the world from the points of view of necessity and convenience. In Levinas's later works, *Totality and Infinity* (1961) and *Difficult Freedom* (1963), the I, understood as "the being whose existence consists in identifying itself; in recovering its identity through all that happened to it," lives in the world by feeding on its sensual experiences which become one with the I (*Totality* 36). The existence of the I is to a great extent determined by such appropriation, which Levinas also calls nourishment: "Nourishment, as a means of invigoration, is the transmutation of the other into the same, which is the essence of

enjoyment; an energy that is other, recognized as other, recognized ... as sustaining the very act that is directed upon it becomes, in enjoyment, my own energy, my strength, me" (*Totality* 111). Things like daily bread, sleep, work, shelter, etc. nourish the I and play a role in the identification of the I. The enjoyment derived from nourishment constitutes the egocentric existence of I, as this enjoyment is tantamount to "exploitation of the other" (*Totality* 115).

The progressive movement from the state of egotistic existence to that of the recognition of the absolute autonomy of the other can be traced in the example of Tolstoy's character of Prince Andrei Bolkonsky. At the beginning of *War and Peace* we encounter Prince Andrei as a character who already has established views and opinions. He despises the vain and manipulative ways of the St. Petersburg high society, which concerned primarily with its own interests. Yet even this positive character is revealed as harboring prideful ambitions of personal glory, and becomes an example of the Levinasian egotistical being. Prince Andrei's inner monologue on the eve of the battle of Austerlitz reveals a Levinasian objectification of the other, as Andrei contemplates his desire to gain glory in the eyes of others. Through victory on the battlefield, and the literal defeat of his personal hero and adversary of the Russian people, Napoleon, Andrei dreams of ensuring himself the love of others:

> "I don't know what will happen…I don't want to know and I can't know, but if I want this, want glory, want to be known by people, loved by them, it's not my fault that I want it, that it's the only thing I want, the only thing I live for. Yes, the only thing! I'll never tell it to anyone, but my God! What am I to do when if I love nothing except glory, except people's love? Death, wounds, loss of family,

> nothing frightens me. And however near and dear many people are to me – my father, my sister, my wife – the dearest people to me – but, however terrible and unnatural it seems, I'd given them all now for a moment of glory, for triumph over people, for love from people I don't know and never will know." (Tolstoy Vol. I, 264-65)

At this instance of the novel, Prince Andrei comes close to the Bakhtinian epic hero – that is, one who shows little potential for change. The emphasis on the necessity of personal glory brings this character particularly close to Homeric epic heroes, who sought no other reward in the battlefield than to make their own names glorious and immortal. Laura Jepsen suggests a parallel between him and Achilles, basing her vision on the earlier drafts of the novel: "Like Achilles, Andrei was first designed as a short-lived hero who would die gloriously, 'leaving manhood and youth,' according to the Homeric lament. As in the example of Achilles, Andrei's death is foretold following the battle of Austerlitz, though the rumor is false […]" (6). The character undoubtedly also reveals heroic features in the battle of Austerlitz, when he carries the banner and leads the charge. The proximity between the Bakhtinian vision of the epic hero and Prince Andrei highlights the heroic impulse of this character, characteristic of the egocentric orientation prevalent in the Western philosophy, with its roots in the epic that recalls of egotistical existence of the Levinasian I.

Andrei's longing demonstrates the "feeding on sensual experiences" described by Levinas in *Time and the Other*. The character reveals his desire for primacy, appropriating the way others think of and feel about him. The concepts of "glory" and "triumph over people" reflect the idea of the reduction of others to objects of

"nourishment" for Andrei's "I;" such objectification reveals Tolstoy's recognition of the prevalent societal values of his time and exposes them as detrimental to the relationship of the I and the other in the prevalent culture.

On the level of language, the pronoun "I" dominates the paragraph. The character's readiness to sacrifice even his closest family members indicates the egocentric impulse which becomes obvious even to him in this moment of excitement before the battle. In his reading of Andrei's struggle, Andrew D. Kauffman states: "What Prince Andrei seeks in this moment of the novel is an embodiment of what he seeks philosophically throughout the work: a sense of mastery over his environment […]. It is this need to mentally 'conquer' that motivates his aspiration to become, like Napoleon, real conqueror" (78). The literal act of conquest would gain for Andrei the glory in the eyes of others. At the same time, his striving to literally defeat Napoleon and his army serves as an illustration of the Levinasian "killing" of the other. Society, familiar to Prince Andrei, with its fear of Napoleon and veneration of him as a military genius, would similarly recognize Andrei were he to "triumph" over his adversary. In this sense, Andrei Bolkonsky's struggle for "triumph over people" becomes akin to that of the Levinasian "killing" of the other by literally adopting the image of Napoleon as his own.

The exploration of Andrei's deepest feelings about the other also reveals Tolstoy's critique of the prevalent relations which exist between I and the other, deeply rooted in people's frequent vision of the heroic triumph over the other, as well as in the necessity for vainglory. Like Levinas, who shifts the hierarchy towards the primacy of the other, Tolstoy illustrates that the established mechanism of relations is highly limiting. This type of relations precisely obstructs the vision of infinity that ultimately

serves as the core of happiness for every individual, and therefore, is the object of people's unrecognized longing.

The encounter with the other is a single radical event in the egotistic existence of the I which bears a transformational potential for the I, as the other is the only being that cannot be appropriated for the needs of the I. The encounter with the other, which in *Totality and Infinity* is seen as that of a face, that is, a person-to-person interaction, challenges the structure of the independent being of I. This moment comes to the I as it is confronted with something which it looks to appropriate for enjoyment, seeking to make the other a part of the self, yet cannot do so. From the very first encounter the other presents its call to the I, which is the Biblical command, "You shall not kill." Levinas writes: "The Other is the only being that one can be tempted to kill. This temptation to murder and the impossibility of murder constitute the very vision of the face. To see a face is already to hear 'You shall not kill'" (*Difficult Freedom* 8). Upon its appearance, the face of the other presents its unique alterity which threatens the I and provokes the desire to "kill" the other. "You shall not kill," for Levinas, signals a warning against the reduction of this radical alterity of the face to knowable concepts. Killing here signifies approaching the other as already known or even knowable; killing thus is "not real, but moral" (*Difficult Freedom* 10). Marina Riemslagh explains this concept as follows: "Speaking about the other and reducing him to my own categories of understanding, and reducing him to my own definitions, are forms of killing, broadly speaking. Understanding the other is in fact boxing him in" (193). To approach the other with certain conceptions about him constitutes the prime violence that the I may commit against the other, which for Levinas violates the Biblical command "You shall not kill"

and constitutes "totalization." This refusal to accept the other as other, reduction of otherness to known categories, appropriating the other with the ultimate goal of nourishment and enjoyment is something which brings about violence for Levinas.

In *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas conceives of the relationship to the other as bringing the I into contact with infinity:

> Infinity is produced by withstanding the invasion of a totality, in a contraction that leaves a place for the separate being. Thus relationships that open up a way outside of being take form. An infinity that does not close in upon itself in a circle but withdraws from the ontological extension so as to leave a place for a separate being exists divinely. (104)

Refusal to construct a totalizing picture of the other, but allowing space for the other to be a "separate being," not appropriated to the being of the I, enables the relationship with infinity, which is unknowable and divine. The contact with the other – unlike the contact with things that can be appropriated for enjoyment – makes the break from totality possible for Levinas, and thus allows for the fulfillment of the very aim of being of the I, which is to fulfill his responsibility before the other. The other does not complement the being of the I for Levinas, who insists on solitude as a definitive characteristic of the I; yet it is in the other and not "in opposition to the other" that the soul of the I becomes visible, and the I is revealed as a spiritual being. The encounter with the other does not mean the end of the solitude of the I; rather, it is because of the solitude that the "break-up" of totality may be accomplished: "The I is thus the mode in which the break-up of totality, which leads to the presence of the absolutely other, is concretely accomplished. It is solitude par excellence" (Levinas *Totality* 118). Solitude constitutes the existence of

the I which is not interrupted by the other. What really opens up the possibility of the relationship with the other is the experience of suffering, through which the I can overcome the impulse to approach the other as totality and can recognize the autonomy of the other (see Levinas *Time* 76).

Levinas theorizes his concept of responsibility for the other, which comes as the ability to respond to the needs of the other: "The face speaks. It speaks, it is in this that it renders possible and begins all discourse. [...] [I]t is discourse and, more exactly, response or responsibility which is this authentic relationship," says Levinas in a published interview of 1985 (*Ethics*, Ch. 7). The act of speech elicits the relationship between the I and the other, and calls the I to responsibility: "The first word of the face is the 'Thou shalt not kill.' It is an order" (*Ethics*, Ch. 7). In this act of speech, when the unknown other approaches the I, the I is endowed with the responsibility which lies in accepting and allowing for the otherness it encounters, thus responding to the other's call. Commenting on his own work *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* (1974) in the 1985 interview, Levinas explains the concept of responsibility: "I understand responsibility as responsibility for the other, thus as responsibility for what is not my deed, or for what does not even matter to me" (*Ethics*, Ch. 7). The ability to respond, or assume responsibility for the other, for the deed which does not constitute the identity of the I, defines the transformation that the encounter with the other produces, and constitutes one of the most important aspect of Levinas's understanding of the I-other relationship.

Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in many ways represents the Levinasian concept of not killing the other in the refusal to categorize the other or by exposing such categorization

as inevitably erroneous. Particularly in its treatment of the concept of not killing the other and assuming of responsibility for the other, *War and Peace* can be seen as illustrating particular aspects of Levinasian ethics. Tolstoy's world lacks the Bakhtinian dialogic split, that is, the characters do not recognize their own thoughts in the context of the others' speeches, nor do the characters voice each other's unuttered (and even unutterable) inner thoughts, as is the case in Dostoevsky's prose, according to Bakhtin. However, the totality of their inner monologues and thoughts, which appear to be full of authoritative totalizing vision, is deconstructed as the characters envision themselves in relation to others, and recognize the Levinasian idea of the impossibility of knowing the other, as well as the necessity to make room for the otherness of the other within their own monologic universes.

Prince Andrei gains his first glimpse of infinity as he lies wounded in the battlefield after the battle, contemplating the sky in the scene quoted at the beginning of this chapter. This experience is not a face-to-face encounter with the other, yet it illustrates the Levinasian concept of the encounter with a mystery as other. The mystery, for Levinas, helps comprehend the unknowable nature of the other, and therefore represents the other in Levinas's early works. The "lofty," "infinite" sky which Prince Andrei not only contemplates, but which retains its mysterious grip over his existence, reveals to his desires for glory and triumph as insignificant and trifling. His need to feed on the others' thoughts and opinions makes no sense compared to the new sensation of infinity he acquires. This episode of Andrei's epiphany reflects the Levinasian infinity, as Andrei recognizes and embraces the unknowable other in the figure of mystery.

However, Tolstoy's understanding of the vision of infinity cannot transcend the boundaries of the moment. The sensation of the infinite and the acceptance of the unknown that Prince Andrei experiences are impossible to maintain. Andrei's newly acquired happiness –"how happy I am that I've finally come to know it"– does not follow him into the future, as the experience dissolves almost immediately as Andrei loses his consciousness and, after regaining it, wonders, "'Where is it, that lofty sky, which I never knew until now and saw today?' was his first thought. 'And I never knew this suffering either […]'" (Tolstoy Vol. I, 290). Similarly to the Levinasian concept of suffering as key for obtaining a new vision of the other and gaining the ultimate acceptance of the difference or the "otherness" of the other, Tolstoy's character acquires this vision in the moments of suffering or proximity to death.

Fredric Jameson reads Prince Andrei's experiences as examples of affect in Tolstoy's novel. Jameson writes:

> What is thus crucial here is the changeability of the affects, which in turn provides the registering apparatus, the legibility of various states. For they can only be read distinctly against a constant variation: a single affective tonality, like a single note or pedal-point held without variation, becomes in the long run indistinct or imperceptible against its background, or else slowly takes on a pathological dimension which demands motivation in its own right. But what the chapter in question demonstrates is the ceaseless variability from elation to hostility, from sympathy to generosity and then to suspicion, and finally to disappointment and indifference: there are in principle in Tolstoy no moments in the narrative which

> lack their dimension of affect, to the point at which one is tempted to say that these movements and variations are themselves the narrative. (84-85)

These changes in the dynamics of character's inner world, the constant variability not only in his circumstances but in him, demonstrates the mechanism of Tolstoy's use of affect which becomes a driving force of the narrative. Though Prince Andrey moves quickly between the different emotional states, as Jameson describes, the vision of infinity that he gains after the Battle of Austerlitz is shown as that which is most authentic and natural.

Tolstoy does not allow Prince Andrei to hold on to the vision of infinity beyond the time on the battlefield. The vision he gets, though short lived, allows Andrei to temporarily transcend the division of people into friends and enemies, as he sees the Frenchmen approaching the dead and the wounded after the battle. Tolstoy describes Andrei's vision of the French in the following: "he was only glad that people had stopped over him and only wished that those people would help him and bring him back to life, which seemed so beautiful to him, because he now understood it so differently. He gathered all his strength in order to stir and to produce some sound" (Vol. I, 291). The sound that Andrei produces overcoming his weakness due to the extensive loss of blood is akin to Levinasian response to the other, no longer seeing the others as enemies, but as the ones of the same kind, capable of reaching out to him, as he reaches out to them. Now Andrei does not strive to triumph over Napoleon, his former enemy and hero, as this man no longer embodies either a threat or awe for him.

So much is Andrei's scale of values changed, that he can no longer recognize a heroic figure in Napoleon, at the same time as his acceptance of all otherness becomes

gradually decomposed. The character can no longer relate to the former vision of Napoleon and loses his understanding of his otherness: "To him at that moment all the interests which occupied Napoleon seemed so insignificant, his hero himself seemed so petty to him, with his petty vanity and joy in victory, compared with that lofty, just, and kindly sky […]" (Vol I, 292-93). At the short instance when lying helpless in the field, Andrei discerns Napoleon as one of the people who can help him; but this vision begins to change quickly. As the features which defined Napoleon for Prince Andrei, the "vanity" and "joy in victory," lost their significance, Napoleon himself becomes diminished in Andrei's eyes, and Andrei finds himself unable to respond to him. The vision of infinity he gained dissolves gradually, as Andrei finds himself in the camp. Here, the reader clearly discerns a contrast between Andrei's former acceptance of otherness and his vision of the vain Napoleon, who in the book begins to embody an impulse opposite to the one Andrei just witnessed. The author presents Prince Andrei's state in his delirious vision: "[Andrei] was already enjoying his happiness, when suddenly little Napoleon appeared with his indifferent, limited gaze, happy in the unhappiness of others, and doubts and torments set in, and only the sky promised tranquility" (293). Napoleon, "indifferent" to the suffering of others and "happy in the unhappiness of others," takes Andrei away from his happy vision of the infinite sky. The incapability of the acceptance of the other and impossibility of sympathy with the other become the features which define Napoleon, illustrating the egotistic impulse which precludes assuming responsibility for the other. With the picture of Napoleon recalling the Bakhtinian epic hero, Tolstoy deviates from the Levinasian vision of the other as

unknowable. The objectification of Napoleon in the novel reveals the monologic impulse to which both Bakhtin and Lukacs point in the novel.

Like Levinas's vision of infinity, which can only be reached as a momentary glimpse, Tolstoy denies his characters this view lasting longer than a brief moment of epiphany. Prince Andrei cannot carry his newfound wisdom into the life in St. Petersburg society, in which relations of rivalry, envy, and personal gain rule even to a greater extent than they do in the battlefield. Andrei returns to the world of convention that Lukacs talks about in *The Theory of the Novel*, when describing the conflict between nature and culture in Tolstoy (149). When Andrei returns from his travel to Europe, he finds out that his beloved Natasha nearly eloped with Anatole Kuragin, breaking off their engagement. Feeling betrayed and angered, Andrei reimagines his former beloved Natasha in the egotistical terms: '"I understood her,' thought Prince Andrei. 'I not only understood her but it was that inner force, that sincerity, that inner openness, that soul of hers, which was as if bound by her body, it was that soul that I loved … loved so strongly, so happily.' […] *He* [Anatole] didn't need any of that" (Tolstoy Vol. III, 777). Andrei reflects on "knowing," "understanding" Natasha by reducing her to his own categories of understanding. In his denial of autonomy to Natasha, Prince Andrei reflects Levinas's metaphorical "killing" of the other, approaching him as known or knowable. In this gesture, Andrei similarly objectifies Anatole Kuragin, now his enemy, by assuming that he himself was capable of understanding Natasha's inner aspirations, her soul, better than Anatole. Thus Andrei accuses Anatole of "killing" Natasha in the Levinasian sense by objectifying her, while he himself is also trying to reduce Natasha to his own categories of understanding. At this instance, the reader may agree with Prince Andrei, recognizing

that Anatole Kuragin viewed Natasha as an object of his personal manly victory. But at the same time, the reader also shares the broader author's vision, which allows seeing the same limitations of Prince Andrei's view of Natasha, as Andrei is not capable of truly understanding and forgiving her childish infatuation with Anatole at this moment. At this time in the novel, Andrei becomes a predictable character, and the reader is allowed to see his limitation trough Tolstoy's authorial vision. This character once again reflects the monologic view at this moment, as he is incapable of seeing beyond the scope of the immediately visible reality.

However, recognition of the Levinasian ethical primacy of the other becomes the sole purpose of Prince Andrei's life journey, as becomes obvious in the moment of his death. When mortally wounded in the operating tent, Andrei sees beside him the one whom he has considered his greatest enemy. Anatole Kuragin, who nearly eloped with Andrei's beloved Natasha, destroying Andrei's hope for family happiness, suffers greatly, as his leg has been amputated. Instead of enjoying the vision of his enemy defeated, Andrei experiences quite a different sensation which again allows transcending the division of people into enemies and friends, and see Anatole as another suffering human being:

> [Andrei] now remembered the connection between him and this man, who was looking at him dully through the tears that filled his swollen eyes. Prince Andrei remembered everything, and a rapturous pity and love for this man filled his happy heart.

> Prince Andrei could no longer restrain himself, and he wept tender, loving tears over people, over himself, over their and his own errors. (Tolstoy Vol. III, 814)

In Andrei's refusal to see a man in the opposing bed as an enemy, he accepts the otherness of his neighbor, fulfilling the commandment "You shall not kill." Not only does Andrei forget his former desire to avenge Anatole by killing him, he cries "over people, over himself, over their and his own errors," assuming responsibility for others as well. Though Andrei has spent much time trying to find and avenge Anatole, now he responds to Anatole's suffering with his own tears of sympathy. Unlike in the moment when Andrei assumed understanding of Anatole, asserting his own moral supremacy over him, Andrei denies any hierarchy that could obstruct his recognition of Anatole as the other in his own right. Such a moment of epiphany Levinas characterizes as one in which the I glimpses infinity.

But Tolstoy does not grant every individual in *War and Peace* a vision of infinity. Anatole, one of the most villainous characters in the novel, is looked at with compassion and acceptance as he goes through the suffering, which harbors the potential to open for him a vision similar to that of Prince Andrei's, though it is never shown in the novel. Napoleon, as was mentioned before, represents everything which denies the very possibility of face-to-face encounter. Throughout the novel Napoleon embodies the egotistic and self-centered impulse for Tolstoy, the very refusal of assuming responsibility for the other.

By leaving the remains of his troops to die in the cold, Napoleon is unable to respond even to his comrades, who are also more than comrades, "not only comrades,"

but those whose lives are directly in Napoleon's responsibility, as he "has brought them there." Napoleon's act of abandonment is the refusal of response, as well as the refusal to see the other face-to-face. This denial of the face-to-face encounter to Napoleon may be read as the author's inability to transcend his nationalistic vision, which results in the inconsistent application of his philosophy in the novel. The fact that one of the greatest villains in *War and Peace*, Anatole, gains the moment of acceptance while Napoleon remains a static character throughout the novel, is evidence of this reading.

However, Tolstoy grants the vision which is associated with Levinasian infinity to his characters who represent lower social ranks; these characters are able to see beyond the totalizing definitions of the national in the episode when the Russian and the French soldiers communicate with each other across the enemy lines. The character Dolokhov who knows French starts a conversation with the French. Other characters imitate the language without knowing it; the experience ends with jokes. Tolstoy describes the scene in the following:

> "Ho, ho, ho! Ha ha, ha, ha! Hoo, hoo!" Peals of such healthy and merry guffawing came from among the soldiers that it crossed the line and involuntarily infected the French, after which it seemed they ought quickly to unload their guns, blow up their munitions, and all quickly go back home.
>
> But the guns remained loaded, the loopholes in the house and fortifications looked out just as menacingly, and the unlimbered cannon remained turned against each other just as before. (Vol. I, 177)

The soldiers are able to communicate with each other and exchange jokes without language even though they are on different sides of the divide and are in a state of war

with each other. Being able to see the other beyond the borders which divide people constitutes a Levinasian moment in the book, as the soldiers do not define people on the other side through the totalizing definition of enemies. The fact that "the guns remained loaded" and "the unlimbered cannon remained turned against each other" is shown as unnatural after the good laughter that both the Russians and the French shared. It is also not the fault of the soldiers that "the guns remained loaded" but of forces which are beyond their grasp. The fact that the common soldiers, who are not trained in the ways of the high society, and do not, like Prince Andrei or Napoleon harbor prideful ambitions, do not totalize the other but gain the infinite vision of him reveals Tolstoy's view on nation and culture as concepts which are taught and acquired. For Prince Andrei it is necessary to abandon his prideful ambitions that are harbored while he belongs to the high society to be able to recognize the infinity of the sky and accept the otherness of the other.

Tolstoy's representation of historical crisis is closely linked to the depiction of the I-other encounters. Dolokhov and the Russian soldiers gain a brief vision of the French soldiers not as enemies but as human beings similar to them. Prince Andrei is able to reevaluate his views of life as a result of such encounter. The atmosphere of historical crisis for Tolstoy opens up a possibility for the characters to reevaluate their positions and to gain a different understanding of life. Pierre Bezukhov in the novel also undergoes spiritual change under the circumstances of crisis, when he finds himself in French captivity. Tolstoy describes Pierre's time in captivity and after it as follows:

> All Pierre's dreams were now turned to the time when he would be free. And yet afterwards and for the whole of his life Pierre thought and spoke with rupture of

> that month of captivity, of those irrevocable, strong, and joyful sensations, and above all, of that full peace of mind, that perfect inner freedom, which he experienced only in that time. (Vol. IV, 1013)

Paradoxically, Pierre experiences the "perfect inner freedom" while in captivity and enjoys "full peace of mind" when his life is threatened daily. While being captive, Pierre's desires are reduced to basic natural human needs. The state of profound crisis puts Pierre into a position which is closer to nature than life in high society. Pierre realizes that happiness is found in the simplest things, when basic human needs are satisfied. This realization sets him free and Pierre understands that happiness is possible even in the direst circumstances. At one point Pierre starts laughing to himself; the fact that he is held prisoner does not make sense to him because he realizes that his soul is free: "'Ha, ha, ha,'" laughed Pierre. And he said aloud to himself: "'The soldier won't let me go. They caught me, they locked me up. They are holding me prisoner. Who, me? Me? Me—my immortal soul! Ha, ha, ha!'" (Vol. IV 1020). It seems ridiculous to Pierre that someone keeps him as a prisoner, him, whose "immortal soul" is free.

The revelations that both Prince Andrei and Pierre gain in the moments of intense crisis are not the ones they can hold on to beyond the battlefield, as the final recognition of the vision of infinity for Tolstoy can be seen as, to a certain degree, incompatible with life and everyday challenges. Though trying hard, individuals in the novel cannot hold onto their revelations, which only sparkle in brief moments, often at the time between life and death. Just as Levinas concludes that only suffering and the proximity of death serves as a key to uncover the potential of full recognition of otherness, Tolstoy's characters, particularly, Prince Andrei, acquire such a vision only at the crucial moments between

life and death – after the Battle of Austerlitz and before his death from the wound he received in 1812. In his final conversation with Natasha, when she asks his forgiveness for her unfaithfulness, Prince Andrei responds to her, saying "'I love you more, better, than before,' said Prince Andrei raising his face with his hands so that he could see her eyes" (Tolstoy Vol. III, 922). Andrei's response illustrates his recognition of his responsibility towards her, the responsibility of responding to the plea of the other, which, in this case, implied forgiving her. Earlier in the novel, when Andrei learned of Natasha's near elopement with Anatole, he refused to hear about her and objectified her, assuming he knew and understood her. Andrei reacts quite differently in responding to Natasha now. Seeing her without false assumptions, Andrei is capable not only of responding but of loving Natasha in a new "better" way, a way which implies full acceptance of the otherness he now sees. Here Andrei does not assume that he "knows" or "understands" Natasha, instead he accepts her. The encounter with the other's face, which for Levinas constitutes a speech act in itself, necessitates a response, which Andrei is capable of giving. The moment of suffering for both Tolstoy and Levinas is one which allows uncovering the way to infinity. Through his own suffering, Andrei is able to respond to the other, to assume responsibility for the other, and to forgive. Similarly Natasha, who thoughtlessly and egotistically attempted to elope with Anatole, comes to recognize the primacy of the other and the necessity of responsibility towards him.

Reflecting on history, Tolstoy writes: "The totality of causes of phenomena is inaccessible to human mind" (Vol. IV, 987). Therefore, he offers to break down this totality which is unknowable to the smallest possible units: "Only by admitting an infinitesimal unit of observation—a differential of history, that is, the uniform strivings

of people—and attaining to the art of integrating them (taking the sum of these infinitesimal quantities) can we hope to comprehend the laws of history" (Vol. III, 822). The visions that the characters gain as a result of their encounters with the unknown other in situations of crisis help us to understand Tolstoy's larger vision of history. In his descriptions of the characters, Tolstoy pays particular attention to the moments of revelation that they experience that are usually very short in duration and sometimes fleeting. Such experiences often pass very soon, as is the case with Prince Andrei, Dolokhov and other characters. However, Tolstoy concentrates on them and explains them scrupulously and in much detail. Such moments for Tolstoy can be added up or "integrated" to define historical crisis. In the moments of crises many of the character who were perceived as monologic at one point or another become multidimensional and nonfinalizable due to the broad vision of otherness that they acquire and the subsequent reevaluation of their existential positions in life.

Another prominent character whom the reader perceives as monologic, who yet breaks through the mold of monologism, is Princess Lise Bolkonsky, or the little princess, the wife of Prince Andrei, who dies in childbirth The moment of crisis for Princess Lise is associated with childbirth. In the moment of intense crisis before her death she is shown as a multidimensional character. The initial monologism of Lise becomes visible through her association with the culture of high society, with the artificiality of social manners, and with everything French. Princess Lise is often described in French expressions, as, for example, when Prince Vassily Kuragin calls her: "Quelle delicieuse personne, que cette petite princesse!" [What a delightful person this little princess is!] (Vol. I, 9). The little princess speaks predominantly French and is

mostly addressed as Lise, in a French manner; Prince Vasily calling her "delicieuse," which can also be translated as "delicious," reflects high society's admiration for her, while also revealing the princess's association with coquettish and shallow social customs. Prince Andrei shares his intimate thoughts about Lise with his friend Pierre: "'My wife […] is a wonderful woman with whom one can be at ease regarding one's honor; but, my God, what wouldn't I give now not to be married!'" (28). Prince Andrei finds his marriage to Lise suffocating due to her inability to act beyond the norms of society and the artificiality associated with her manners, manners which in Russian society of the time emulate French ways. Princess Lise Bolkonsky is perceived as a perfect example of the character who follows a prescribed orbit, and can never deviate from her course and be open for a dialogic interpretation.

At the same time as Lise Bolkonsky embodies the qualities of artificiality and shallowness, she is also described as a product of the culture she has learned and absorbed further in the novel. Princess Marya characterizes Lise, saying, "She is a child, such a dear, merry child," and explains to her brother Prince Andrei why he should treat his wife with understanding: "But one must be indulgent towards little weaknesses – who doesn't have them, André! Don't forget that she grew up and was formed in society. And then, her position now isn't very rosy. One must enter into each person's position. *Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner*. [To understand all is to forgive all]" (105; 106). Princess Marya sees Lise as still a "child," who "grew up and was formed in society." In this respect, Lise's sometimes naïve and even infantile behavior, and her devotion to the ways of the society can be seen as a result of her training, and the character herself can be seen as a victim of such training. The vision of Lise as a product of the society reaffirms

her as a monologic character in Lukacs's sense. She becomes a visible manifestation of the flaws inherent in the society which molded her.

However, Princess Lise is shown in a very different light as she is close to her death during childbirth. When Andrei sees her, Lise's expression seems to him to be saying reproachful words about his inability to understand her: "I love you all, I did no harm to anyone, why am I suffering? Help me" (Vol. II, 327). Her expression is further described as "questioning […]" "with childlike reproach." Lise's reproach to Andrei is her rebellion against his objectification of her; in this sense it becomes a call that the other presents to the I. Andrei failed to recognize that Lise was and is much more than a product of society, and thus failed to respond to her and extend his love to her. It is ironic that Andrei, who saw his wife as incapable of thinking beyond the ways that society has taught her, fell victim to the same flaw, as he objectified his wife and was unable to recognize her potential. It is at the moment before the princess's death that Andrei calls Lise "darling" for the first time in his life, recognizing that her reproachful glance was not groundless. Here Lise becomes a Levinasian other who is denied the response of the I. Like Prince Andrei, the reader is able to see Lise Bolkonsky in a new light, not as a naïve and shallow princess, but as a suffering human being who had no ill intentions, and as a wife and potentially a mother who longed for love but was denied it. At this time in the novel, the moment of Levinasian responsibility is turned towards Prince Andrei and towards the reader, who both realize their unfairness towards the character of Lise. Prince Andrei now sees his wife as much more than a society coquette, unable to progress or change, but as a suffering person in need of help and compassion. The character of Lise is unexpectedly given a breadth which allows seeing her outside the totalizing frame in

which she was shown at the beginning of the novel. The reader, like Andrei, sees Lise as a multidimensional character, rather than as one who is reflective of totality.

The case of Lise Bolkonsky illustrates that Tolstoy's characters have a potential to overcome the monologic molds imposed on them by their social life, and the moments of crisis in the novel provide an opportunity to see these characters in a new light. Therefore, Lukacs's model of society and its structure as key to understanding the characters is denied. The Levinasian moment of recognition and responsibility is shown as that which helps deconstruct such vision. Lise becomes a Bakhtin's non-finalizable character, as she does not follow the path once chosen for her, but reveals her potential for change.

Bringing Tolstoy's figure of the other in *War and Peace* into the Bakhtinian discussion of the dialogue as an inevitable element of the novel allows recognizing dialogic elements in Tolstoy's novel. The encounter with the other and the ability to respond to the other's call is central to Tolstoy's vision in *War and Peace,* as it is central to Levinas's ethics of the other. Though in his novel Tolstoy does not rely on dialogues to the extent Dostoevsky does in Bakhtin's reading, his philosophy, with its emphasis on the primacy of the other, is dialogic. The face-to-face encounters, which for Levinas constitute speech acts in their own right, serve the same function in Tolstoy's scenes, where the characters come to recognize the ethical primacy of the other. The response to the call of the face of the other becomes a central motif in Tolstoy's novel, which allows breaking through the totality of the characters' monologic worlds. Prince Andrei Bolkonsky becomes a non-finalizable character, as through the book he progresses from an egotistical person with an ambition of becoming, like Napoleon, a conqueror, to

gaining a non-egotistical perspective of the other and recognition of his responsibility towards the other.

War and Peace does contain elements which are associated with the monologic worldview, oftentimes in relation to the characters' association with either the Russian or the foreign French culture. Through the aspect of belonging to a certain culture, some characters, such as Natasha, who is strongly associated with Russian culture, have the potential to be seen as monologic. However, a close reading of the novel reveals that Natasha has a much broader potential than that associated with Russian culture. Furthermore, the scene with the soldiers being able to communicate and even joke across the enemy lines clearly demonstrates that culture is treated in the novel as something which is taught and learned, rather than something which is inborn. Thus, Lise Bolkonsky can become a multidimensional character once she is seen outside the atmosphere of artificiality associated with the Russian high society and its foreign French ways.

The Levinasian moments where the characters embrace otherness and assume responsibility for the other reveal *War and Peace* as a novel which rejects the totalizing images of the characters. In his article "The Hedgehog and the Fox: an Essay on Tolstoy's View of History," Isaiah Berlin states that Tolstoy maintains the vision of a "fox" that is keen and sharp, knowledgeable of many things, and encompassing multiple and diverse aspects of life. Tolstoy's vision, according to Berlin, operates on the assumption that people need to see the coherent picture of life, which is why he tries to hide and mask his "fox"-like vision, creating the illusion of finality (see Berlin). Berlin's theory helps explain why the vision of totality can be seen as characteristic of Tolstoy's works.

Tolstoy's view on nation and culture as potentially defining the traits of his characters can be interpreted as an impulse to show them in a monologic light. However, the moments of Levinasian acceptance, when the characters are shown outside their learned cultural molds, and recognize the humanity and suffering of others, even of their own enemies, reveal that this cultural barrier can be overcome.

Though not all of the characters are shown in light of the Levinasian face-to-face encounter, it is through the recognition of the primacy of the other that Tolstoy deconstructs the totality of the vision he presents through his characters and criticizes the egotistical existence. Bringing Tolstoy's vision alongside that of Levinas can be also seen as one of the important twentieth-century uses of Tolstoy, particularly in light of the fact that Tolstoy is one of Levinas's early influences. Levinas's ethics, particularly as expressed in his *Totality and Infinity* can be understood as a response to the violence of the twentieth century world wars, as he seeks to theorize and explain the view of the other which diverges from that established in the Western philosophy, and postulates "You shall not kill" as the main principle of I-other relationships.

Chapter II: "*Inglés*" in Spain: Linguistic and Cultural Otherness in Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*

"I can write it like Tolstoi and make the book seem larger, wiser, and all the rest of it. But then I remember that was what I always skipped in Tolstoi…." Ernest Hemingway *Selected Letters 1917-1961,* "To Maxwell Perkins"

Ernest Hemingway claims he can write like Leo Tolstoy in the letter to his editor Maxwell Perkins in 1940, where he talks about the complete draft of his novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls (FWTBT),* commenting on some of his own writing choices. Putting together the puzzle of several of Hemingway's occasional statements on Tolstoy it is not difficult to understand what he thinks should be skipped in the writings of Tolstoy. The object of Hemingway's criticism was always what he considered Tolstoy's moralizing and the grand philosophical questions, as well as the speculations which Tolstoy engages in in his works, particularly in *War and Peace*. In his introduction to a massive anthology on war writings that he edited in 1942, Hemingway writes:

> I love *War and Peace* for the wonderful, penetrating and true descriptions of war and of people but I have never believed in the great Count's thinking. I wish there could have been someone in his confidence with authority to remove his heaviest and worst thinking and keep him simply inventing truly. He could invent more with more insight and truth than anyone who ever lived. (*Men at War* xviii)

Elsewhere, Hemingway remarked about the unnecessary "big Political Thought passages" in *War and Peace*, which Tolstoy "undoubtedly thought were the best things in his book when he wrote it" (in Meyers 134). The "great Count," according to Hemingway, could "invent truly," and this invention forms the gist of his writing, particularly of historical writing. Interestingly, Tolstoy himself is very likely to agree that

truthful depiction should be the core of any narrative, as he famously declares in his *Sevastopol Sketches* (1855-56): "the hero of my tale, the one I love with all the power of my soul, the one I have tried to reproduce in all its beauty, just as he has been, is, and always will be beautiful, is Truth" (110).

Their engagement with large social historical issues and the preoccupation with the necessity of writing about them bring the two authors together and generate the question of how each of them understood novelistic truth, a truth which needs to be transmitted by means of the language of the literary work. The question of interdependence of the form and the content of a literary work is discussed by Mikhail Bakhtin, who shows that the creation of the literary work is dependent on social factors. In his "Discourse in the Novel" Bakhtin writes: "Form and content in discourse are one, once we understand that verbal discourse is a social phenomenon – social throughout its entire range and in each and every of its factors, from the sound image to the furthest reaches of abstract meaning" (260). The novel, defined by the "diversity of social speech types, sometimes even diversity of languages and a diversity of individual voices" reveal the multiplicity of social issues that are brought together and juxtaposed within the novel. The way these issues are brought together and organized in the novel reveals an individual author's style, as well as his or her individual beliefs and convictions.

This chapter maintains that by expressing his mistrust of Tolstoy's "great political Thought," Hemingway showed his disapproval not only of lengthy political reflections (which are absent in Hemingway's own novels) but primarily of Tolstoy's attitude to presentation of social historical issues, which often involves their consideration in a certain light. What Bakhtin calls Tolstoy's "monologic" attitude to the presentation of

reality is most visible in the juxtaposition of the Russian and the French languages within the text of *War and Peace*, where French is often shown as a beautiful language of artificial expression and Russian is presented as a simple and truthful means of communication. By presenting the French language in this light, Tolstoy defines the status of the French culture as that of the other in the Russian society of the first half of the nineteenth century. Hemingway, who also uses two languages, English and Spanish, in his *FWTBT*, employs them for quite different purposes. The two languages in *FWTBT* serve the purpose of blending and even eliminating cultural differences between Hemingway's character Robert Jordan, an American who comes to fight in the Spanish Civil War, and the Spanish people he encounters. Tolstoy's ordered use of French, which is reserved for the depiction of specific scenes or constructing of specific dialogues, contrasts with Hemingway's somewhat desultory use of Spanish, which can often be interchangeable with the English version which precedes the Spanish. However, the textual evidence in both of the novels, as will be shown in this chapter, proves that the issue goes much deeper than the language competence of both of the authors, understood as Tolstoy's sophisticated French and Hemingway's "poor" Spanish. Looking at both novels through the lens of the Levinasian philosophy of the other allows us to compare different definitions and treatment of cultural otherness in both texts. When placed alongside Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Hemingway's novel negotiates the necessity of erasure of cultural otherness that separates Hemingway's American character from his Spanish friends. This necessity is reflected from the beginning of the novel, in the epigraph borrowed from the famous poem "No Man is An Island" (1624) by John Donne. The position with regards to cultural otherness advocated by Hemingway may also be

reflective of his political view, that is, his vision of the necessity of a unified front against Fascism. The present chapter looks at some of the usages of languages and imagery in Hemingway's *FWTBT*, placing them alongside outwardly similar phenomena in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, to trace the different attitudes towards cultural otherness that the two novels adopt.

Looking closer at the existing connection between the two novels helps define the dialogic relationship between them. Tolstoy's truthfulness of descriptions and the power of invention make him, in Hemingway's eyes, into his own lifelong rival. On multiple occasions Hemingway imagines the encounter between himself and Tolstoy in the format of a boxing match, as shown by Hugh McLean in his article "Hemingway and Tolstoy: A Pugilistic Encounter." However, it becomes obvious upon a closer look that these authors of massive historical novels on war had some similar experience, which was relevant to and preceded the writing of their historical novels. Both Tolstoy and Hemingway personally participated in battle and subsequently described their war experiences in writing. Tolstoy participated in the armed conflicts in the Caucasus and in the Crimean War. He wrote his *Sevastopol Sketches* (1855) describing the experience of the Sevastopol siege as an immediate response to what he witnessed in the Crimean War, while his short novel *The Cossacks* (1863) is partially based on his experience in the Caucasus.

Hemingway also had a rich personal experience of participating in wars and even being on the front lines prior to writing of his *FWTBT*, experience which he considered invaluable for a writer. During World War I, Hemingway became a volunteer Red Cross ambulance driver stationed in northern Italy. He briefly ran the mobile canteen there

before he was wounded. Upon his return, Hemingway wrote on political subjects related to World War I as a correspondent for the Kansas City Star (in *Hemingway on War* xxiii). He reported on the Greco-Turkish War. And as soon as the Spanish Civil War started, he was covering it for the North American Newspaper Alliance (NANA), an experience which made it possible for him to write his novel *FWTBT* about the Spanish Civil War (xxiii).

Hemingway considered the experience of war indispensable to the writer who intends to write about the subject; and Tolstoy, in Hemingway's view, was well equipped for writing on war. In the *Green Hills of Africa* (1935), he talks about Tolstoy's *Sevastopol Sketches*:

> Tolstoy's Sevastopol […] was a very young book and had one fine description of fighting in it, where the French take the redoubt and I thought about Tolstoi and about what a great advantage an experience of war was to a writer. It was one of the major subjects and certainly one of the hardest to write truly of and those writers who had not seen it were always very jealous and tried to make it seem unimportant, or abnormal, or a disease as a subject, while, really, it was just something quite irreplaceable that they had missed. (108)

In Hemingway's view, one has to be deeply familiar with his subject to be able to write truly about it; the writer needs the intimate, insider's knowledge before he can write, especially about a subject as complex as a war. Tolstoy, in Hemingway's opinion, possessed this knowledge and could "invent truly" about his subject. Tolstoy's novel *The Cossacks* also resonates with Hemingway's understanding of what it means to write truly: "In [*The Cossacks*] were the summer heat, the mosquitoes, the feel of the forest in

different seasons, and the river that the Tartars crossed, raiding, and I was living in that Russia again" (*Green Hills* 108). Hemingway's praise of Tolstoy's work tells us of some of the features he most valued in the writings of Tolstoy and in writing in general. Besides the compelling depiction of reality, the writer needs to create an atmosphere which immerses the reader into the situation described, just as Hemingway is able to experience living in "that Russia" that Tolstoy described.

Despite his criticism of Tolstoy's "huge" and "overwhelming" thought (*Men at War* xviii), Hemingway treated *War and Peace* as a great classic of war writing, as he mentions to his editor Maxwell Perkins in 1926: "After I read *War and Peace*, I decided there wasn't any need to write a war book and I'm still sticking to that" (*Selected Letters* 202). Later, he included three excerpts from *War and Peace,* "Bagration's Rearguard Action," "Borodino," and "The People's War," into the massive anthology *Men at War: The Best War Stories of All Time* (1942) , which he edited.[2]

There are several studies which suggest that Hemingway looked to Tolstoy in his own writing. The question of literary influence is discussed by Marina T. Naumann in her article. Naumann describes the similarities between Tolstoy's and Hemingway's beliefs with regards to war writing and offers insightful close readings of the episodes which are parallel in *War and Peace* and *FWTBT.* Also, the article provides a comparative study of the episodes from *War and Peace* and Chapter twenty-seven from *FWTBT*, "The Fight on the Hilltop," which Hemingway also included into the anthology *Men at War*. In a more recent article Dale E. Peterson finds parallels between Tolstoy's Olenin in *The Cossacks*

[2] A detailed analysis of Hemingway's treatment of the excerpts from *War and Peace* in the anthology *Men at War* can be found in McLean 1999.

and Hemingway's Robert Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls.* Peterson recognizes the commonalities between Hemingway's novel and Tolstoy's *War and Peace* as well:

> *For Whom the Bell Tolls* has much in common with *War and Peace*, especially in its plausible reproduction of live episodes in the chaos of actual warfare. We observe that same irresistible push toward battle and the same arbitrary acts of individuals which determine victory or defeat for whole armies. […] For Hemingway, as for Tolstoy, war is a messy, nasty business which follows no leader or plan. (34)

The features mentioned above undoubtedly point to the important characteristics that *War and Peace* and *FWTBT* share. There are also common features in the worldview of the authors and in their understanding of war and how it should be narrated, as pointed out by Peterson.

Hemingway built a reputation for himself as an anti-war writer who avoided political engagements prior to the publication of his *FWTBT*. His public speech in 1937 at the Writer's Congress, which was delivered after he spent two months on the Spanish front as a war correspondent, revealed his strong antifascist views, and is, therefore, regarded as marking the end of Hemingway's apolitical stance (Josephs *For Whom* 4). *FWTBT*, which appeared in the 1940, engages heavily with political issues. The nature of the book's engagement with politics, however, raised some questions among contemporaries. Carlos Baker in his article "The Spanish Tragedy" points to some of the extreme interpretations of the novel. According to the critic Edmund Wilson, Hemingway's book should be read as bearing a Stalinist sentiment (116). Hemingway responded to this statement denying any Stalinist sympathies. Hemingway also explicitly expresses his

position about the Spanish Civil War in his letter to the writer Harry Sylvester, where he states: "The Spanish war is a bad war, Harry, and nobody is right" (In Josephs *For Whom* 4). In accord with this statement, Baker, as well as most of the critics, suggests that the book is free of any political extremes, and Hemingway's main character, Robert Jordan, remains a "free man" who is not tempted by any of the ideologies.

The reception of the novel in the Soviet Union is also of interest. According to Stephen Jan Parker, Hemingway's book on the Spanish Civil War was eagerly awaited in the Soviet Union, where Hemingway was considered one of the friendly Western writers. Upon the appearance of the novel, however, it was considered "unsuitable for publication" in the Soviet Union and the author "was seldom mentioned in press for the next fifteen years" (178). Parker further explains the unfavorable reaction of the Soviets to the book:

> The disparaging remarks Hemingway made about the Comintern figures: André Marty and Passionara; his humane treatment of the Fascist officer Lieutenant Berrendo; his lengthy description of the brutal slaughter of fascists by the loyalists; and his persistent reiteration of the theme that no cause was ever worth taking the man's life were sufficient reasons to have prevented the book's publication. (178)

Though Hemingway's characters fight on the side of the Republic in the Spanish Civil War, his presentation of this side is far from an idealization, which accounts for the unfavorable evaluation of the novel in the Soviet Union. In his novel Hemingway includes passages which reveal crimes on both political sides.

Although the scholars such as Naumann and Peterson point to the parallels between *War and Peace* and *FWTBT*, as well as to the contiguity of certain aspects of the authors' worldviews, the specific uses of languages in the respective texts have never been a subject of close analysis. Though each of the novels is predominantly written in one language (Russian in *War and Peace* and English in *FWTBT*), the authors incorporate sentences or paragraphs which are written in French and Spanish respectively, with these secondary languages becoming indispensable formal elements and stylistic devices within both novels. About two percent of *War and Peace* is written in French (see Pevear xi), while *FWTBT* extensively incorporates Spanish phrases and sentences into the dialogues between the characters. Furthermore, scholarship has noted Hemingway's non-standard use of English in the novel (see Gladstein), which reveals the influence of the Spanish upon English in the text of *FWTBT*. To use Bakhtin's terminology, the internal dialogue of each of the novels becomes affected by the systems of the secondary languages, which disrupts the internal unity of the discourses and dialogize the units of language already on the formal level.

The literal existence of two different languages in the texts of the novels creates tensions in the composition of these works which call to mind the Bakhtinian analysis of the stylistics in novelistic discourse. In "Discourse in the Novel" Bakhtin writes:

> The social and historical voices populating language, all its words and all its forms, which provide language with its particular concrete conceptualizations, are organized in the novel into a structured stylistic system that expresses the differentiated socio-ideological position of the author amid the heteroglossia of his epoch. (300)

Bakhtin views discourse within the novel as reflective of the social aspects inherent in the historical period when the work was written, in the existing problems of a given society, as well as in the specific beliefs and convictions of the author, etc. Furthermore, novelistic discourse for Bakhtin establishes relations with all the discourses which preceded it or come after it. The specificity of the novelistic discourse is the unity of the form and the content in mirroring of the multiple aspects of the society, and this social aspect becomes crucial for understanding the internal discourse of the novel.

The coexistence of the two languages in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* brings up key questions. As a nineteenth-century Russian aristocrat, Tolstoy possessed an intimate knowledge of French, which was the language still used in aristocratic circles in his own time. Reflecting the high Russian society of the time which preceded his own, where French was the dominant language used for communication in high society, it appears logical for Tolstoy to use French in his novel to achieve verisimilitude in representing the Russian society of the early nineteenth century. However, over the years the scholars have noted that the function of French in the text is more complex than it first appears to be. Notably, the Russian Formalists commented on the special character of the French language within the text. In his 1928 book "Material and Style in Lev Tolstoy's Novel *War and Peace*" Viktor Shklovsky mentions that French in the novel becomes a stylistic device which is developed throughout the text (see Shklovskij).

Viktor Vinogradov, also a prominent figure associated with Russian Formalism, provides a detailed and extensive analysis of the stylistic implications of French in the text of *War and Peace*, referring to the novel as bilingual ("двуязычный"). Though Vinogradov notes that the use of French was necessitated by the demand for realistic portrayal of the

socio-linguistic situation in the early nineteenth century Russia, he states that the use of French "casts 'shadows' on the use of Russian" and should be studied in detail (123, translation mine). Vinogradov points out that the bilingualism in the text and the varying structures of the languages reflect the social-political uncertainty of the people in Russia at the time of the war with Napoleon (127). That is, with French being the language of the aristocratic society, its members found themselves torn between the traditional demand of their class to communicate in French and patriotic feelings which presupposed using the national language in the time of war. However, the most interesting use of French that Vinogradov notices is for the purposes of its juxtaposition to Russian. The language here becomes more than just the mode of transmission of information, but a vehicle of certain values ascribed to them by the social-political atmosphere of the depicted period in Russia, as well of the values that the author ascribes to them for the stylistic purposes. The contrast that Vinogradov sees between the languages lies in the qualities they represent in the novel. The specific qualities of each of the languages are put forth and emphasized: French, shown as naturally inclined towards theatricality and conventionalities, is juxtaposed to Russian, which is seen as "simple and honest, alien to anything conventional" (150, translation mine). The scholar also states that the French and the Russian language are juxtaposed as anti-national and national languages. The French in the novel is, according to Vinogradov, associated with beautiful expression, which can be empty and deceitful in its essence. Here the scholar quotes Tolstoy's use of the French word "grand" (English "great," "grand"), combining the honorable, even pompous sound of the word with a context which is far from honorable: Tolstoy's Napoleon is shown leaving the remnants of his defeated, dying army while feeling "que

c'est grand" (Tolstoy Vol. I, 151). The language characteristic of the majority of St. Petersburg's aristocracy serves to expose their deceitfulness masked under the beautiful rhetoric and expression. The Russian language, on the other hand, is associated with simplicity and truthfulness which contrasts with the artificial beauty of the French and calls to mind nationalistic elements within the culture. Thus, the speech of Pierre Bezukhov, one of the main and undoubtedly positive characters of the novel, is always rendered in Russian, though the reader is informed that Pierre speaks predominantly French due to his education abroad as a Russian aristocrat. Later in the novel, the reader learns that Pierre hardly speaks French after his return from French captivity (157).

Vinogradov's analysis proves useful for our study as it looks at the use of the languages as vehicles for the authorial imagination in the context of certain social-historical situations within the novel. The interrelation of the Russian and the French in *War and Peace* form the basis around which a certain aspect of the novel's internal dialogue is constructed. Mikhail Bakhtin in his analysis of novelistic discourse pays close attention to this phenomenon; he sees internal dialogism as what "[…] occurs in a monologic utterance as well as in a rejoinder), the dialogism that penetrates [the novel's] entire structure, all its semantic and expressive layers" ("Discourse" 279). This internal dialogue may encompass the views of the characters, which are juxtaposed, as well as those of the character and the author, or even a reader. The socio-cultural views which are in polemical relationships within the discourse of the novel are those which are characteristic of a given society at a particular historical moment; however, this discourse establishes relations with the ideas of the previous times. The novels of Dostoevsky, whose works Bakhtin most frequently uses to illustrate his own concepts, are marked by

such dialogic relations on multiple levels; Bakhtin calls the interaction of the characters in Dostoevsky's works "an arena of never-ending struggle with others' words," stating also that the internal conflicts within such works can never be resolved, despite the outward completion of the plot ("Discourse" 349).

The works of Tolstoy, in Bakhtin's view, project the internal dialogism differently. Bakhtin writes:

> Thus, discourse in Tolstoy is characterized by a sharp internal dialogism, and this discourse is moreover dialogized in the belief system of the reader - whose peculiar semantic and expressive characteristics Tolstoy acutely senses - as well as in the object. These two lines of dialogization (having in most cases polemical overtones) are tightly interwoven in his style: even in the most "lyrical" expressions and the most "epic" descriptions, Tolstoy's discourse harmonizes and disharmonizes (more often disharmonizes) with various aspects of the heteroglot socio-verbal consciousness ensnaring the object, while at the same time polemically invading the reader's belief and evaluative system, striving to stun and destroy the apperceptive background of the reader's active understanding. In this respect Tolstoy is an heir of the eighteenth century especially of Rousseau. This propagandizing impulse sometimes leads to a narrowing-down of heteroglot social consciousness (against which Tolstoy polemicizes) to the consciousness of his immediate contemporary, a contemporary of the day and not of the epoch; what follows from this is a radical concretization of dialogization (almost always undertaken in the service of a polemic) […] ("Discourse" 238).

The juxtaposition of the two languages and their relations in the text of the novel, as analyzed by Vinogradov, reveals these two lines of dialogization that Bakhtin describes, while also adding one more, the metalinguistic line, to the Bakhtinian understanding of the internal dialogue within the discourse of Tolstoy. When languages are seen as objects of depiction, the status of the French language as of the language of culture and erudition is undermined. The belief system of the reader, though the reader is Tolstoy's contemporary, is critically engaged, while the Russian language with its simplicity of expression is juxtaposed to empty and flowery expressions in French. Thus, the "propagandizing impulse" of which Bakhtin writes becomes visible in the author's use of the polemics of the two languages to ensure the reader sees the principles upon which the dichotomy operates, revealing the bias towards one of the languages.

However, the metalinguistic level – Tolstoy's use of the languages to picture them in a certain light – does add complexity to the mechanics and structure of the internal dialogue of the novel. Such juxtaposition serves the purpose of clearly showing the inner world of characters who are to be treated as suspicious, of lower moral standard, or even dangerous. This singling out of the cultural other within the novel helps divide the characters not by the principle of belonging to one of the nationalities: in the novel, it is not the French who are always rendered in French and not the Russians who are always rendered in Russian. The words of Pierre Bezukhov are rendered in Russian, though the reader knows he often speaks French in the novel.

Princess Bolkonskaya, or the little Princess, is characterized through French expressions: "la femme la plus seduisante de Petersbourg" ["the most seductive woman in Petersburg"] and "Quelle delicieuse personne, que cette petite princesse!" [What a

delightful person this little princess is!] (Tolstoy Vol. I, 8; 9). The French language used to describe her here adds some extra characteristics to the character of the little Princess, whom the reader recognizes as a beautiful but shallow character. Similarly, the reputation of Hélène is described as that of "une femme charmante, aussi spirituelle que belle" ["A charming woman, as witty as she is beautiful"] (Vol. II, 439), though Pierre, as well as the reader, eventually learns that this statement does not correspond to the truth, as Hélène is one of the most deceitful and intellectually short-sighted characters in the novel. Interesting in this respect is Nepoleon's comment on Hélène, when he sees her in the theatre in Erfurt: "C'est un superbe animal" [That is a superb animal]. Though this French comment is omitted from the 2008 Pevear and Volokhonsky translation of *War and Peace*, it provides an additional insight into Tolstoy's masterful use of the language to subtly present Hélène's vices. Though in the context, Napoleon's comment is meant as a compliment – Hélène's success as a charming woman in the high society is so big that even Napoleon notices her – the content of the phrase, calling Hélène "an animal," reveals the carnal association this character elicits, rather than the respect or admiration, more suited for the lady of her status. Here Napoleon's French "compliment" is meant to be a sarcastic statement which does reflect Hélène's personality.

Tolstoy's use of the two different languages complicates the internal dialogue of the novel; however, the author's purpose for bringing the two languages together remains monologic. The languages are juxtaposed for the specific purpose of highlighting the features which the author decides to ascribe to them. In addition to helping to develop and describe the characters, Russian and French acquire almost independent existence within the text, as they convey certain ideas about the social usages of languages as such

within the novel and convey the authorial vision of them. Thus the languages become stylistic tools which serve specific purposes within the text and also become into independent objects for description.

Despite several outward similarities, the characteristics and the purpose of Hemingway's bilingualism in *FWTBT* are quite different. Unlike Tolstoy, Hemingway did not possess a deep knowledge of Spanish, as he confesses: "I am not Spanish and I did not know the language. It took a while to learn even to speak it. You had to get rid of Italian, all of it. After I could talk, read, and understand it I still knew I did not know it."[3] Despite his limited knowledge of Spanish, Hemingway incorporates it into his novel obviously placing a significant value on it both as a means for communicating the content and as a stylistic device.

There have been several important attempts to account for Hemingway's use of the Spanish language alongside English in the novel over the years. The scholarship differs in its critical evaluation of the phenomenon of the two languages in the text. Some of the studies concentrate on the various possible stylistic implications of the bilingualism, while others point to the incorrect usages of the Spanish, and to strange non-standard English expressions which are frequent in the novel. Patrick O. Stephens sees the use of two languages in the text as a particular stylistic device. In his 1972 article, Stephens claims that the practice of languages creates a type of a mythic and symbolic medium in the novel which helps Robert Jordan as a character to create rather than to discover reality (152). Allen Josephs in his 1983 article "Hemingway's Poor Spanish: Chauvinism and Lack of Credibility in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*" is critical of

[3] The citation is a sentence taken from the early version of Hemingway's novel *Death in the Afternoon*. Later, Hemingway shortened the version of the novel, cutting the section which contained this sentence. See Beegel 57

Hemingway's use of Spanish and states that there are over sixty distinctive language use mistakes within the novel (see Josephs "Hemingway's Poor Spanish"). However, in his later 1994 book, *For Whom the Bell Tolls: Hemingway's Undiscovered Country*, Josephs dedicates an Appendix to Hemingway's language use, where he rethinks the meaning of the Spanish, conceding that the language use in the novel may have stylistic value. At the same time, Josephs points out: "how well this highly original style works depends on individual reader or critic's ear and knowledge or lack thereof, of Spanish (156). Carlos Baker, one of the early Hemingway critics, in his 1962 article, pays attention to one specific quality of Hemingway's use of language in the novel; he sees Hemingway's "intentionally heightened language," the frequent use of the archaic forms in *FWTBT*, as one of the means which help Hemingway create a contemporary epic (see Backer). Generally, contemporary studies tend to overlook the language inconsistencies within the novel. Mimi R. Gladstein in the article published in 2006 persuasively shows that Hemingway's usage of Spanish in *FWTBT* "has an appeal to a new generation of American readers, a generation more attuned to bilingualism, who may have lived on the border between the United States and Mexico" (83).

Diverse as the studies of Hemingway's bilingualism in *FWTBT* may be, none of them systematically brings in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* or Bakhtin's "Discourse in the Novel" as texts which help account for Hemingway's uses of languages. There are several stylistic functions that languages play within the novel. As in *War and Peace*, the languages serve to differentiate two distinct outlooks, that of Robert Jordan, an American in Spain, and the other characters he comes to know. Language remains the factor which marks Robert Jordan's status of an outsider. However, the frequent and persistent use of

Spanish sentences and phrases blended with English, signal the author's attempt to create a linguistic situation which is inclusive of otherness and eventually creates a cultural and linguistic space which does not differentiate or single out otherness. Thus the use of the two languages in the text of *FWTBT*, when seen alongside Tolstoy's bilingualism, reveals an impulse quite opposite to that found in Tolstoy. In his novel Hemingway does not juxtapose the languages to highlight the specific characteristics of each of them, but attempts to bring them together and blend them, in order to create a space where the various points of view can be considered and a multiplicity of perspectives can be exposed.

Initially, the language principle in the novel marks the difference of Robert Jordan, Hemingway's main character; it also reveals the process by which this character attempts to overcome his status of a foreigner. Robert Jordan, an American who comes to help fight fascism in Spain, encounters small guerilla units in the mountains, with whose help he carries off his task of blowing up the bridge. An American character, who willingly comes to fight in the Spanish Civil War, struggles to belong in Spain. Jordan's love for this country and its people and his desire to integrate function as metaphorical bridges which help connect him with the people he meets. The languages are put alongside each other not to create internal friction, as we consistently observe in *War and Peace*, but to build a platform for inclusion of a wider international perspective into the text of the novel. Robert Jordan, as a linguistic, ethnic, and cultural other, makes it possible for the author to bring up the question of otherness, revealing a specific attitude towards otherness in the text.

The language which the characters speak in Hemingway's novel does not always present a consistent blending of the two languages, but rather an inconsistent one. Professor John J. Allen suggests that though "the English of Hemingway's Spaniards is anything but an objectively accurate rendition of the original, it reflects dynamically the author's impression both of the people and of the language" (7). This observation suggests that Hemingway was trying to capture a certain impression of the Spanish language and transmit the "feeling" of this language into the English text. Fenimore further notes that the language patterns within the novel "play an immeasurable role in creating the direct and, in a sense, primitive atmosphere of language which, in the context of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is accepted as Spanish" (86). Hemingway's brief, abrupt sentences are called to transmit a certain "atmosphere of language," but in no case to provide the English translation for the Spanish expressions. We would like to further emphasize that, unlike the pattern of language use in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, the languages in Hemingway's novel are not juxtaposed and locked in polemics with regards to each other. Though the reader is made aware of Robert Jordan's status of a foreigner due to his national, linguistic, and cultural difference, the English and the Spanish are made to work together to create one language atmosphere in the novel which reflects the author's larger vision, as was mentioned before, and also to describes the process of acculturation of the character who is linguistically and culturally displaced.

The language which the characters in the novel speak is neither accurate English, nor Spanish accurately rendered in English, but it often presents a blending of the two. Robert Jordan addresses Maria in Renaissance English: "How art thou called?" (Hemingway *FWTBT* 14). This intentional choice of the question form which is

structurally closer to the Spanish "¿Cómo te llamas?" suggests this blending. Though Hemingway might not have known Spanish well, he surely knew standard contemporary English; he creates a new variant of the two languages, finding forms in English, which correspond to those existing in Spanish. The use of the archaic forms, or Elizabethan English, as Edward Fenimore calls them in one of the early studies of the novel (74), may add epic overtone to the given passage, as suggested by Baker, whose study was mentioned earlier. However, these forms are also taken from the sixteenth-century English to correspond to the contemporary Spanish forms: "tu" (Early Modern English: thou/thee) and the formal/polite form "Usted" (Early Modern English: ye; you). The pronoun forms which correspond to the now archaic English forms "thou" and formal "you" are used in Spanish today. Hemingway may have employed them deliberately to stress the distinction between "you" as an informal address and "you" as a polite or formal one to preserve the correspondence of his variant of the language with the Spanish. Therefore, Jordan addresses old Anselmo: "How are you called?", using "you" to correspond to the polite form of the pronoun, whereas in his address to Maria, Jordan uses the informal pronoun "thou": "How art thou called?" (Hemingway *FWTBT* 3; 14).

The bringing of the two languages together is suggested in many other instances of the novel. Notably, English text is populated by Spanish words or phrases to suggest the authenticity of the characters' language: *mujer* of Pablo, *guardia civil, Cabrones!, Camarada;* and exclamatory sentences, such as: "*Viva la Anarquia!*","*Viva la Libertad!",* etc. Also, there are many instances when Spanish colloquial words and phrases are meant to be organically integrated into the dialogues, without any extra emphasis. Such phrases are the often repeated "*qué va*" [come on; no way]; also, "*duesde*

luego" [of course], "*buen provecho*" [bon appetite], *hombre* [people; guys], *Hola* [Hello], *Salud* [greetings!], etc. The function of the Spanish language in the text is the opposite to that of the French language in *War and Peace*: the Spanish words or phrases integrated into the English text suggest the authenticity of the characters and of the conversations that are led. Unlike the French-speaking characters who are prone to theatricality, conventionality, and deceitfulness in *War and Peace*, the Spanish-speaking guerillas in *FWTBT* are truthful and dedicated to the cause they are fighting for. Furthermore, the blending of English and Spanish suggests that the position of Robert Jordan, the English-speaking character, coincides with that of other characters.

To suggest further blending of the languages, the sentences or phrases given in Spanish are preceded or followed by English versions. This strategy is widely used throughout the novel; for example: "'But since a long time he is *muy flojo*,' Anselmo said. 'He is very flaccid. […]'"; "'[…] Now he would like to retire like a *matador de toros*. Like a bullfighter'" (Hemingway *FWTBT* 15); "'What a fine town but how the *buena gente*, the good people of that town, have suffered in this war'" (74); "'Eight men and four horses. *Faltan caballos*,' he said. 'Lacks horses.'"; "'*Dentro de la gravedad*,' he said in Spanish. 'Within the limits of the danger.'"; "But I am also very delicate. *Soy muy delicada*"; "'*Pues me voy*,' Pilar said. 'Then I am going'"; etc. Such repetitions of the content in two languages suggests the conscious attempt to give the English "the feeling" of the Spanish and vice versa. Hemingway does not choose to write the sentences in Spanish and rely on footnotes for translation for the American reader. Instead, he brings together the two languages in the same text. The result of putting together the

interchangeable content is a curious stylistic device, which blends the distinctive boundaries between the languages.

The language principle in the novel becomes the main marker of Robert Jordan's otherness, which the character strives to overcome throughout the book. Jordan's status of a "foreigner" is secured through the nickname "*Inglés*" which he is given in the guerilla camp. Even Maria, his beloved, often refers to him by this name, as in the following dialogue:

> […] "Oh, *Inglés*," [Maria] said.
>
> "My name is Roberto."
>
> "Nay. But I call thee *Inglés* as Pilar does."
>
> "Still it is Roberto." "No," she told him. "Now for a whole day it is *Inglés*. And *Inglés*, can I help thee with thy work?" (Hemingway *FWTBT* 95)

Though Jordan insists on the name "Roberto," revealing his desire to assimilate, he is still called by the name of his native language. Interestingly, Jordan gets his nickname by the native language principle and not by the principle of origin or the place of birth, i.e.: "Americano"; his otherness becomes delineated primarily linguistically, and the native language becomes a crucial factor of the divide between Jordan and the Spanish guerillas.

Though Jordan loves the beautiful Spanish landscapes which he observes, and is willing to fight for the freedom of Spanish people, the reader is made conscious of the fact that Jordan does not fully belong to the place. The character's status as a foreigner in the text, his otherness with regards to the people he meets, as well as his desire to overcome this status, is stressed in multiple conversations he has. When talking to Pablo, Jordan states: "That I am a foreigner is not my fault. I would rather have been born here"

(Hemingway *FWTBT* 10). The tension created by the fact that Jordan comes from a different country and is not a native Spanish speaker is repeatedly brought up in the novel. On learning that Jordan teaches Spanish for living, Fernando finds it unusual that a "foreigner," that is, not a native language speaker, should teach Spanish, while Anselmo defends Jordan's case by saying "'He speaks Spanish as we do,' […] 'Why should he not teach Spanish?'" (115). On the same occasion Pedro calls Jordan "a false professor," revealing his distrust of Jordan and of his occupation (115). Though most of the times the partisans agree with Jordan and are ready to help him, his otherness is brought up regularly in the conversations and his status as that of the other is emphasized.

The linguistic difference becomes symptomatic of even further rift between the people Jordan encounters and himself. His belief system differs from their convictions. The guerillas are, for the most part, fervent believers in the Republic, while Jordan's beliefs are more complicated. This difference in understanding of reality and in the belief systems are exposed in the novel through Jordan's conversations with Pilar. Pilar confesses her very strong and ardent belief in the Republic to Jordan even though she knows of the crimes committed on the republican side, as she says: "I believe firmly in the Republic and I have faith" (50). When asked if he shares her beliefs, Jordan replies: "'Yes,' he said, hoping it was true," revealing the uncertainty which once again signals his own difference from those around him (51).

The rift between Jordan's political views was pointed out by Carlos Baker in his "The Spanish Tragedy": "Robert Jordan is with, but not of, the communists. […] Robert Jordan will remain as an essential nonconformist, a free man not taken it, though doing his part, in the perennial attempts which free men must make if the concept of freedom is

to last" (120). As a "free man," Jordan is not taken in by ideology, but retains the ability to recognize the crimes on both sides. He is shaken by the terrible crimes committed by fascists when Maria and Joaquin tell their tragic stories. And he is deeply shaken to hear Pilar's story of the terrifying massacre of the people in a small town who associated themselves with fascists by the supporters of the Republic. In his internal monologue, Jordan also reveals his disgust with the crimes of the Republicans in Spain, on whose side he fights:

> But you were always gone when it happened. The *partizans* did their damage and pulled out. The peasants stayed and took the punishment. I've always known about the other, he thought. What we did to them at the start I've always known it and hated it and I have heard it mentioned shamelessly and shamefully, bragged of, boasted of, defended, explained and denied. But that damned woman made me see it as though I had been there. (Hemingway *FWTBT* 75)

This consideration of the suffering of the other side, reflected in Jordan's complex thought process, supports Baker's vision of Robert Jordan as a "free man" who cannot be fully entrapped in one ideology. Remaining a "free man," Jordan cannot help but be skeptical of the values of the Republicans, as he recognizes their crimes. The internal thought process of Jordan is given in English, without Spanish interjections, signaling its belonging to Jordan's internal monologue, which is not to be shared with others. In this monologue, the very word "partisans" is spelled unconventionally as "partizans" and italicized for emphasis; here Jordan does not include himself as one of them, pointing out his unwillingness to be associated with the partisans' crimes. Further in the passage, however, Jordan admits his belonging to the Republicans by using the first person plural

pronoun "we": "What we did to them at the start […]," admitting that he hates these wrongdoings.

The internal dialogism of the novel reflects the collisions of beliefs on several levels. On the one hand, Robert Jordan's skepticism is stressed. On the other hand, Jordan's recognition that fascism should be fought against is expressed, as he states: "'We cannot destroy [the fascists]. But we can educate the people so that they will fear fascism and recognize it as it appears and combat it.'" (Hemingway *FWTBT* 114). Hence comes Jordan's recognition of the necessity to do his duty, to bring his own contribution into this combat, as he tells it to Pilar (51), yet his knowledge about the crimes committed by his own side makes the whole idea of fighting hateful to him. Jordan wants to be one with the Spanish people, as he states, "I would have rather been born here" (10), but remains "*Inglés*" within the novel.

Jordan's presence and the difference in his beliefs from those of the guerillas bring out the aspects in the guerillas which would not otherwise become visible except through the contact with the outsider, the foreigner, who fights on the same side as they do, yet maintains his otherness and autonomous point of view. Pilar admits to Jordan: "I confess a sadness to you, but do not think I lack resolution" (Hemingway *FWTBT* 50). Anselmo, one of the guerillas, confesses to Robert Jordan that he is highly disturbed by killing that fighting for the Republic demands: "But of the killing of a man, who is a man as we are, there is nothing good that remains" (23). He later adds that he is "against all killing of men," which contrasts with the expectations that the others are placing on him as a guerilla (24).

Hemingway uses his characters to discuss various aspects of language, and its relation to conflict. He exposes the quality of language to create terms which divide people and preclude them from reaching agreement. The elderly Anselmo watches the fascists in the old windmill and concludes that the only distinctions between people are the ones that are artificially created by them:

> I have watched [the fascists] all day and they are the same men that we are. I believe that I could walk up to the mill and knock on the door and I would be welcome except that they have orders to challenge all travelers and ask to see their papers. It is only orders that come between us. Those men are not fascists. I call them so, but they are not. They are poor men as we are. They should never be fighting against us and I do not like to think of the killing. (Hemingway *FWTBT* 106)

The language expressed as "orders" becomes an instrument that is used to reflect the artificial divisions among the Spanish people, as people on both sides speak the same language. Anselmo realizes that the people he watches are not different from himself or his comrades, and it is only because of their belonging to the opposite political camp they have to maintain hostility.

The elderly Anselmo serves as an interesting point of comparison with Platon Karataev in *War and Peace*, as both of the characters make explicit statements about the nature of otherness, the necessity of peaceful coexistence, and the ethics of forgiveness. Pierre Bezukhov, one of the main characters in Tolstoy's novel, meets Platon Karataev in French captivity in 1813; Platon is a peasant soldier from the simple people whose gentleness and kindness singles him out among others. Platon in Tolstoy's novel is a

bearer of national wisdom; he is a representative of the people, and is able to restore spiritual strength to the young educated aristocrat, Pierre Bezukhov (see Grebenschikov). The ultimate message that Karataev leaves with Pierre is a story about the merchant that he tells to the captives. The merchant was falsely convicted of murder, and was condemned to many years of hard labor. One time, being an old man, the merchant tells his story to other convicts, among whom the real murderer happens to be present. Having recognized the merchant, the murderer confesses that it was he who committed the crime and put the blame on the merchant. As the convict asks for the merchant's forgiveness, the latter forgives him and dies soon afterwards without ever living to see his own rehabilitation. Karataev's "story within a story" builds strongly on Christian morality, stressing the necessity of forgiving and love for others, even in the situations which make these qualities particularly hard.

Anselmo in *FWTBT* is appalled by killing, as was mentioned previously. Unlike Platon, he is not at peace and does not have the reassuring words for others to share, yet he also expresses the simple wisdom of life. In his view, it is ultimately wrong to bring harm to any of the people; he also asserts the necessity of being forgiven for hurting others. Anselmo recognizes that the people he is fighting against are in fact not very different from himself. His position is expressed in the following:

> [Killing] must really be a great sin, he thought. […] All the other things are forgiven or one had a chance to atone for them by kindness or in some decent way. But I think this of the killing must be a very great sin and I would like to fix it up. Later on there may be certain days that one can work for the state or something that one can do that will remove it. (Hemingway *FWTBT* 109)

Both Tolstoy's Platon Karataev and Hemingway's Anselmo expressing wisdom and common sense with regards to people's treatment of each other in the times of conflict; they raise the questions of the moral dimension of human relations, especially in the situation of war. The philosophy expressed through these characters is that of the ethical treatment of the other regardless of circumstances. As is the case with Platon, Anselmo is a peasant and tends to look at people without discriminating among them. The crucial difference between him and Tolstoy's Platon, however, lies in Anselmo's inability to live up to his philosophy. It is only in his dreams of the future that Anselmo envisions a society which allows for atonement for one's sins and life in harmony with others.

Anselmo's language in the story is imbedded with simplicity and straightforward reasoning, as seen in the example, where he reflects on killing. This simplicity and truthfulness in language is contrasted with the artificiality of elevated language and political slogans in *FWTBT.* Similar to Tolstoy's dislike of the artificiality of beautiful expression, Hemingway is distrustful of the pathos present in loud phrases and slogans. In the famous battle on the hillside, when El Sordo's guerilla unit is trapped on the hillside and about to be destroyed by the plains, Joaquin, the youngest of the guerillas, starts quoting the famous communist slogan:

> "*Resistir y fortificar es vencer*." Joaquin said, his mouth stiff with the dryness of fear which surpassed the normal thirst of battle. It was one of the slogans of the Communist party and it meant, "Hold out and fortify, and you will win."

> Sordo looked away and down the slope at where a cavalryman was sniping from behind the boulder. He was very fond of this boy and he was in no mood for slogans. (Hemingway *FWTBT* 332)

The elder guerillas respond to Joaquin's rhetoric briefly: "*Mierda*" and "*Mierda* again," which is a vulgar expression meaning "crap." Joaquin quotes the famous Republican orator Passionaria in this passage, turning to elevated political rhetoric, yet unable to cope with the feeling of fear. The elder soldiers, unlike Joaquin, are able to recognize the uselessness of such slogans before he can. Joaquin refuses to believe that Passionaria's son stays hidden in Russia; when the others tell him of it, he denies this: "'It's a lie,' Joaquin said. 'She would not do such a thing as keep a son hidden in Russia out of the war'" (332). Here Hemingway demonstrates the firm roots of the loud political rhetoric in the mind of a young soldier. Yet, the uselessness of elevated political rhetoric in the time of realistic danger is exposed, as the slogans cannot sustain Joaquin in the time of closeness to death. Having started with the passionate slogan, Joaquin turns to prayer as the hill is bombed (332).

Here again language plays an important role in communicating the meaning of the passage. In a way similar to that of Tolstoy, Hemingway makes the reader suspicious of elevated rhetoric. For Tolstoy, French is used to expose and stress such an expression, whereas in the above episode of *FWTBT*, the original Spanish serves to emphasize such a quality of language. The communist slogan does not sustain young Joaquin in the time of danger and he turns to quoting the words of the prayer. "*Resistir y fortificar es vencer*" sounds loud and expressive in Spanish, the language in which it was first originally

spoken. Further on, the words of the prayer are offered in English, which sounds familiar and simple, compared to the loud expressiveness of the slogan.

Hemingway's specific literal use of the two languages, as well as the descriptions of various collisions of people within the novel, encompass and communicate these contradictions, revealing the hidden authorial intensions. In his analysis of novelistic discourse Bakhtin writes:

> As we have said above, the narrator's story or the story of the posited author is structured against the background of normal literary language, the expected literary horizon. Every moment of the story has a conscious relationship with this normal language and its belief system, is in fact set against them, and set against them dialogically: one point of view opposed to another, one evaluation opposed to another, one accent opposed to another (i.e., they are not contrasted as two abstractly linguistic phenomena). This interaction, this dialogic tension between two languages and two belief systems, permits authorial intentions to be realized in such a way that we can acutely sense their presence in every point in the work. The author is not to be found in the language of the narrator, not in the normal literary language to which the story opposes itself (although a given story may be closer to a given language) - but rather, the author utilizes now one language, now another, in order to avoid giving himself up wholly to either of them; he makes use of this verbal give-and-take, this dialogue of languages at every point in his work in order that he himself might remain as it were neutral with regard to language, a third party in a quarrel between two people (though he might be a *biased* third party). ("Discourse" 314)

Though Bakhtin speaks of the way one language within the novel may be stratified to reflect the oppositions of various beliefs, Hemingway's use of the two different languages to stress Robert Jordan's desire to overcome his otherness, at the same time as to outline his difference, becomes an interesting case of novelistic language use. As Bakhtin describes the authorial position within the novel, Hemingway as an author struggles "not to be found in the language of the narrator."

Baker stresses that "*For Whom the Bell Tolls* offers many examples of the author's determination to maintain that balance without which art may degenerate into propaganda. One of the most conspicuous is Pilar's account of the massacre of the leading citizens of a town near Avila by Pablo and his mob" (118). *FWTBT* carefully avoids what Bakhtin calls a "propagandizing impulse"; the languages are not divided by any definitive principle into "ours" or "theirs," but they work together in the novel to expose the contradictions which lead to division among people.

The novel's ultimate message about unity is reflected in Robert Jordan's struggle to overcome his otherness in Spain. It is possible that Hemingway is writing his own feelings about the country into the novel, as his love for Spain is well-known (see Ammary 55). The language of the novel emphasizes unity with the Spanish earth as a way to overcome the otherness associated with foreign status, native languages, and differences in cultural heritage. The descriptions of the beautiful Spanish landscape proliferate in *FWTBT*. The most interesting are the images which suggest Robert Jordan's acculturation and acceptance of Spain as his own land. The novel starts with the description of the landscape which Jordan observes:

> He lay flat on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and high overhead the wind blew in the tops of the pine trees. The mountainside sloped gently where he lay; but below it was steep and he could see the dark of the oiled road winding through the pass. There was a stream alongside the road and far down the pass he saw a mill beside the stream and the falling water of the dam, white in the summer sunlight. (Hemingway *FWTBT* 2)

The image of Robert Jordan lying "flat on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest," open to the beautiful view of the mountainside with the winding road, the stream, and the mill already suggests the character's physical unity with this beautiful earth. The view of the earth, described with the vivid colors of the forest green and the white of the snow, draws the readers' attention throughout the text. In her study Silvia Ammary notes that "The novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* probably exemplifies that sacredness of the Spanish earth the most, and the most admirable characters are the ones that are associated with it" (66). Jordan's physical closeness to this beautiful earth gains a symbolic meaning in the novel: though a foreigner, Jordan strives for the unity with this earth, as he is ready to give his life for it.

It is through Jordan's love for Maria, the girl he meets in the guerilla camp, that he can become closer to the Spanish earth, which Maria symbolically represents. Ammary states that Maria "is associated with Mother Earth in her innocence and her fragility." The scholar further argues that "Maria represents the abused earth, the Spanish earth that was raped and violated by the Fascists" (69). Maria was taken by the guerillas after she escaped from imprisonment after a train wreck. He body was severely violated

during her imprisonment. The language of the novel stresses Maria's innocence and beauty; it also abounds in imagery that makes Maria into a symbol of the Spanish earth.

The linguistic description of Maria's presence in the novel suggests her symbolic significance through the association with the earth. Ammary notices that "even if [Maria] appears very vulnerable or even not realistically depicted, it is because of her importance as a symbol" (69). First of all, it is important to point to the significance of Maria's nickname, which Jordan gives to her, "conjeho" (English: "rabbit"). For several generations scholars have pointed to the controversy of this nickname without consideration of the larger historical background to interpret it. Allen Josephs calls Hemingway's choice of the nickname "one 'error' which has been a critical bone of contention" (*For Whom* 156). Basing his comments on earlier critical works, Josephs explains that this nickname coincides with a vulgar expression associated with females. Josephs, however, agrees that Hemingway might not have been aware of this colloquial meaning, stating that the word can still be interpreted positively in the context of the novel. More recent scholarship offers a quite different interpretation of Maria's nickname which explains it in a larger context of Hemingway's intentions.

Douglass Edward LaPrade in his essay "Sources of Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*" builds on Hemingway's deeper knowledge of Spanish history, rather than on his ignorance. LaPrade states that by offering the nickname "conjeho" to Maria, Hemingway pays tribute to the historical name of the country. According to one of the theories of the etymology of the contemporary name Spain (Hispania), it was given by the Phoenician explorers, who first saw it as a land abundant in rabbits. LaPrade further

argues for the strong association of the character of Maria with Spain and points to many other historical references in *FWTBT* (see LaPrade).

The descriptive language of the novel supports this interpretation of the character. Maria is often associated with the natural world: "Her hair was a golden brown of the grain field that has been burned dark in the sun but it was cut short all over her head so that it was but little longer than the fur of the beaver pelt"; Maria's hair is further shown as "thick and short and rippling" "as a grain field in the wind on a hillside" (Hemingway *FWTBT* 25; 27). Looking at Joaquin and Maria, Jordan observes that: "the boy and the girl are like young trees" (75). He further notes that "The old trees are all cut down and the young trees are growing clean like that. In spite of what has happened to the two of them they look as fresh and clean and new and untouched as though they had never heard of misfortune" (75). Maria is associated with the beauty of the Spanish earth, with its golden fields of grain and trees. The capacity of the nature to renew itself after misfortune is also used to describe her. Jordan's love for Maria and his decision to marry her strengthen his association with Spain and its people.

In *War and Peace* it is Natasha who, like Maria, symbolically embodies the traits associated with her country. Nicholas O. Warner, in his study of Natasha states that "Of all the characters in *War and Peace*, Natasha is the one who combines a maximum of multilayered individuation with a maximum of symbolic value" (Warner 1015). Though Natasha as a character does present a "multilayered individuation" and cannot be reduced to only one interpretation, looking at this character alongside Maria, reveals parallel lines of symbolic meaning in them.

The critical interpretation of Natasha as a character follows several lines. Paul Romney argues that she represents "the Eternal Feminine: an essence varying in its manifestation, according to the male who is exposed to it, from good fairy or enchantress (Prince Andrei, Denisov) to jailbait (Anatole Kuragin)" (58). Natasha does reveal varying feminine qualities with regards to each male character she interacts with; however, her character preserves a certain consistency and unity throughout the book, which is associated with her spontaneity of emotional responses and gravitation towards everything natural and authentic. From the early chapters of the novel where the reader sees a thirteen-year-old Natasha who spies on her elder brother and her cousin in the conservatory to the much more mature woman at Prince Andrei's deathbed, she presents a captivating image of both authenticity of feeling and romantic longing. Andrew Kaufman, an American Tolstoy scholar, calls her "one of those 'broad Russian souls' with big heart and a childlike openness to the world" (38), capturing the essential traits of Natasha's character. It is through the association with the "broad Russian soul" that Tolstoy extends symbolic meaning to the character. Natasha, the true heroine of the book, in many ways incarnates the "broad Russian soul" and stands for everything natural and authentic which is hidden in the Russian character; in this sense, Natasha can be also seen as an embodiment of Russia itself in certain parts of the novel, where the fate of this character mirrors the fate of the land. This symbolic meaning of the leading female character is also present in Hemingway's image of Maria in *FWTBT*.

The language used in the descriptions of Maria clearly indicates her proximity to the Spanish earth, signaling Maria's embodiment of its innocence and trauma. In *War and Peace*, the character of Natasha in its embodiment of everything Russian differs

considerably from Maria's. The essence of Russia for Tolstoy is hidden in the authentic folk tradition. Natasha is shown in her beauty, her liveliness, her charm, in her family life, and also in her sadness and grief; whenever the reader encounters this character, she is endowed with a spirit of authenticity that alludes to the Russian folk tradition. Natasha's poor French is emphasized to strengthen her association with everything Russian. When Prince Andrei falls in love with Natasha, he notices her "mistakes in French" which, in his eyes, make her character stand out among other people in society and make him like her even more (Tolstoy Vol. II, 461). Natasha's name is almost never used in its French version in the novel (in contrast to the character of Hélène, who is mostly referred to as Hélène). And when Natasha is referred to as Natalie, it is by the negative characters as, for example, by her elder sister Vera, or in the situations when the character dislikes Natasha, as during Natasha's first meeting with Princess Marya. Therefore, Natasha contrasts with everything which is man-made and artificial in society, which also means French ways and the French language as the sources of artificiality, in Tolstoy's view.

The description of Natasha is important in terms of the culture that this character is called to represent, a culture which is authentically Russian, and which is in contrast to French influences. Rather early in the novel Tolstoy talks about Natasha's voice as genuine and authentic, which, though not devoid of flaws, brings joy to everyone who hears it:

> While this unpolished voice with its wrong breathing and strained transitions was singing, even the critical connoisseurs said nothing and merely enjoyed this unpolished voice, merely wanted to hear it again. Her voice had that virgin, intact

> quality, that unawareness of its strength, that unpolished velvetiness, which were so combined with the deficiency in the art of singing that it seemed impossible to change anything in this voice without spoiling it. (Tolstoy Vol. II, 342-43)

Natasha's voice is one not touched by the societal norms which define good singing, but is authentic and natural. This description to a great extent defines the character of Natasha. Throughout almost all of the novel she remains true to the instinctive responses characteristic of authentic feelings.

Natasha brings her "natural" grace to high society. This is how Tolstoy describes Prince Andrei's interest in Natasha: "Prince Andrei, like all people who have grown up in society, liked to encounter things in society that did not have the general society stamp on them. And Natasha was just that, with her astonishment, joy, and timidity, and even her mistakes in French" (Tolstoy Vol. II, 461). The "astonishment," "joy," and "timidity," authentic emotions, are contrasted with the artificiality of the manners accepted in society, where everyone is governed by prescribed rules. Natasha, in Prince Andrei's eyes, though being an aristocrat, does not "have the general society stamp" on her, but represents something authentic which the artificial society lacks. This authenticity makes Natasha's mistakes in French sound natural and attractive, as they further contrast her with the general and accepted culture of her time.

Natasha's closeness to the natural and to the folk tradition is emphasized throughout the novel. Despite being born and raised an aristocrat, Natasha is able to feel the joys of being connected to nature and is happy and content experiencing simple joys. Telling is the scene when Natasha accompanies her elder brother Nikolai on a hunt. Ilagin, Rostovs' hunting rival, says that the young countess Natasha "represented Diana

both in her passion for hunting and in her beauty, of which he had heard so much" (Tolstoy Vol. II, 504). She impresses everyone with her skill in horseback riding which is natural to her. Later, after the hunt, in the house of the neighbor referred to as "uncle" in the story, Natasha engages in a folk dance with him, similarly demonstrating a natural grace which surprises and impresses everyone who sees it:

> Where, how, and when had this little countess, brought up by an émigré Frenchwoman, sucked this spirit in from the Russian air she breathed, where had she gotten these ways, which should have been long supplanted by the *pas de châle*. Yet that spirit and these ways were those very inimitable, unstudied Russian ones which the uncle expected from her. As soon as she stood there, smiling triumphantly, proudly, and with sly merriment, the fear which had first seized Nikolai and all those present – that she would not do it right – went away and they began to admire her. (512)

Natasha embodies the very essence of the Russian "spirit" in this scene that sets everyone wondering "where" and "how" she was able to pick up the skills of the folk dancing. The culture she represents and stands for is presented in contrast to the French one, as the Russian dance is compared to the French shawl dance ("*pas de châle*"), which had to be taught to Natasha. The folk tradition, on the contrary, was picked up by the countess effortlessly, like breathing in the "Russian air." Natasha dances "proudly" and "triumphantly," setting everyone who watches and participates at ease, bringing joy to them and touching their hearts:

> She did it exactly right, and so precisely, so perfectly precisely, that Anisya Fyodorovna, who at once handed Natasha the kerchief she needed for it, wept

> through her laughter, looking at this slender graceful countess, brought up in silk and velvet, so foreign to her, who was able to understand everything that was in Anisya and in Anisya's father, and in her aunt, and in her mother, and in every Russian." (512)

Anisya, who lives among the peasants and initially perceives Natasha as someone "foreign" to herself, a countess raised "in silk and velvet," now recognizes the common culture shared by both of them. Natasha's dancing moves are "perfectly precise," and through them Anisya can see the depth of Natasha's understanding of the common life of Russian peasantry, a life which stands in harmony with the ways of nature. Reading the scenes of Natasha's dancing, John Hagan notes that "The artificial class barriers which have kept [Natasha] […]–separated from such a household as Uncle's fall away, and she achieves for the first time a profound instinctive rapport with a simple, natural, Russian life, to which she herself is so unconsciously akin" (239). This natural ability to understand the culture of the people, the "rapport" she feels with the "simple, natural, Russian life" makes up the symbolic level of Natasha's presence in the book, as she is identified with "every Russian."

Tolstoy contrasts the "natural" peasant life with that of the artificiality of high society, with Natasha bridging the two worlds effectively, yet staying true to her authentic natural ways. Already at the uncle's house in Mikhailovka, after hearing him sing, Natasha decides "she would no longer study the harp, but would only play the guitar. She took the uncle's guitar and at once found the chords for the song" (Tolstoy Vol. II, 513). Abandoning the harp for the guitar, an instrument closer to the simple Russian life, once again signals Natasha's kinship with the common natural life, yet her

aristocratic upbringing and the way of life make this character into an ideal representative of "every Russian."

In terms of language, Natasha is one of the most inarticulate characters in the novel. She struggles to articulate her vision of others: Natasha describes Boris, her childhood love, to her mother as "so narrow, like a dining-room clock… You understand? … Narrow, you know, gray, light grey…" (Tolstoy Vol. II, 452). Like Natasha's voice that is untrained but sounds beautiful and authentic, her language, though fragmented, reflects the truth as she sees it. Though Natasha clearly struggles to express her opinion in words, the reader does gain a sense of Boris being a narrow-minded character, a vision that is consistent throughout the novel. Natasha's movements, the sound of her voice, and her gestures are much more telling than her words. Natasha symbolically embodies everything natural and instinctive throughout the novel, features that further link her to the Russian culture that is associated with authenticity.

Through his presentation of this character, Tolstoy once again negotiates his opposition to the French culture as artificial and unnatural in the Russian milieu. In negotiating such vision, Tolstoy is also placing the two cultures in a distinct opposition, as he does with the two languages, constructing a vision of the folk Russian culture as more truthful and at the same time alluring, as is Natasha's beauty. The view offered does not presuppose the fruitful cross-pollination of the two cultures, or does not open the possibility of one culture learning from the other. Instead, everything pertaining to Russia appears as natural, while everything French appears as artificial. Though she has never been taught, Natasha is able to make all the folk dance moves "perfectly precisely,"

similarly, she can also play guitar without practicing; however, she makes mistakes in her French, though taught and forced to speak it constantly.

When viewed alongside Tolstoy's Natasha, Maria can be seen as the embodiment of the spirit of Spain, though through quite different associations. Maria is not associated with the folk and the traditional arts, as Natasha is. However, she becomes the broad embodiment of the Spanish earth, its nature and landscape, as well as its history and trauma. Maria's body, hurt and violated during the war, represents the earth "raped and violated by the Fascists" (Ammary 69). Maria bears the scars from the wounds on her body. Yet, like the earth, she is able to be revived, be happy, and bring happiness. Her love for Robert Jordan, a "foreigner," symbolically represents the embrace of an international perspective by Spain at the time of crisis.

Through his love for Maria, Robert Jordan is able to love Spain and to overcome his status of a foreigner. Alex Link in his article writes that the novel "is particularly insistent on combining romantic love with utopian idealism, implying that Jordan can love both Maria and, through her, a Republican Spain" (137). Jordan's romantic, idealized love once again suggests the image of unity that makes him one with the earth. Emphasizing this oneness, Maria says to Jordan: "Thou hast no heart but mine" and "And if thou dost not love me, I love thee enough for both" (Hemingway *FWTBT* 142; 146). As the two of them part, Robert Jordan tells Maria: "As long as there is one of us there is both of us. Do you understand?"; "If thou goest then I go, too. Do you not see how it is? Whichever one there is, is both"; "Now you go for us both. Truly. We both go in thee now"; "Thou art me too now. Thou art all there will be of me. Stand up" (247). In his last words to Maria, Jordan uses the pronouns "thee" and "you" freely and interchangeably,

which shows his creation of a language which successfully unites the features of both languages. Though Jordan cannot escape after blowing up the bridge because he is wounded, he reassures Maria of their connectedness and their oneness, which is confirmed in the language. After Maria leaves, he makes himself believe it is possible for him to join her. His love for Maria, the images of connection and unity of the two, suggest that Jordan can finally overcome his foreignness and become integrated into the land and culture he is fighting for.

The final scene of the novel shows Jordan in harmony with the Spanish earth: "He was completely integrated now and he took a good long look at everything. Then he looked up at the sky. There were big white clouds in it. He touched the palm of his hand against the pine needles where he lay and he touched the bark of the pine trunk that he lay behind" (Hemingway *FWTBT* 251). This scene bears comparison to the opening paragraph of the novel, where Jordan is also shown lying flat on the Spanish earth. Unlike in the opening scene, the image suggests completion of the full cycle: Jordan is "completely integrated" with the earth.

This image of integration is confirmed through the name used by Maria to address Robert Jordan. Frequently in the novel Maria addressed Jordan by the nickname *Inglés.* However, in the last scenes of the novel, Maria calls Robert Jordan "Roberto," the name he uses to introduce himself to her and other guerillas, and the name he insists on: "'Roberto," Maria turned and shouted. 'Let me stay! Let me stay!'" (Hemingway *FWTBT* 248). To this Jordan answers: "'I am with thee," Robert Jordan shouted. "I am with thee now. We are both there. Go!,'" emphasizing, once again, the unity which exists between them (248). Ironically, the moment of full integration is also the moment which precedes

Jordan's death, suggesting that unity is possible for a brief second, and the otherness can only be overcome when Jordan sacrifices his life for others. Here, the character of Jordan recalls Tolstoy's Prince Andrei who, being wounded after the Battle of Austerlitz, feels the unity with the sky and gains a vision of infinity at that moment.[4]

In her study Silvia Ammary suggests that "Throughout the novel, Jordan has become more and more *hispanized*, loving this land as Hemingway loved the simpler, earthier, more natural and traditional lifestyle that the Spanish had" (70). The images of Jordan's unity with the Spanish earth, which is constructed primarily through the symbolic role of Maria in the novel, suggest that this "hispanization" is completed towards the end of the novel. Though he remains a "free man," who dreams of returning to the United States, he still makes the choice of giving his life to help save the lives of his friends, and thus to protect what he loves in Spain.

Looking at the image of Jordan and his "hispanization,"which occurs as his language becomes affected by the Spanish and through the images of unity with Maria and with the Spanish earth, alongside the case of Natasha Rostova and Pierre Bezukhov, opens up a new vision of the latter couple. Through his communion with Natasha, Pierre also becomes integrated into the natural and "earthier" world of a family, which once again is contrasted with the ways of the high society. Though Natasha is depicted as having lost her charm after marriage, her ways have become attuned to the natural and traditional way of life. After marriage Natasha has abandoned most of the practices accepted and admired in society:

> Natasha took no trouble either about her manners, or about the delicacy of her speech, or about showing herself to her husband in the most advantageous poses,

[4] For a discussion of the character of Prince Andrei see Chapter I.

> or about her toilette, or about not hampering her husband with her demands. She did everything contrary to these rules. She felt that the charms which her instinct had taught her to make use of before would now only be ridiculous in the eyes of her husband, to whom, from the first moment, she had given herself entirely – that is, with her whole soul, leaving not leaving one little corner that was not open to him. (Tolstoy Epilogue, Part One, 1155)

It has become customary to look at Natasha as fully changed after her marriage to Pierre, and see her as one who has lost all her fire and loveliness afterwards. However, in acting contradictory to man-made societal rules, she, once again and finally, turns to a more natural way of living. Tolstoy further writes that "Natasha did not follow the golden rule preached by intelligent people, especially the French, according to which a girl, once married, should not let herself go, should not abandon her talents […]" (1154). Acting in a simpler, natural manner, without artificial behaviors, such as caring about manners, speech, toilette, etc., allows Natasha to come closer to the more simple folk Russian ways, which she has always had an affinity with. At the same time, Natasha is free from the perceived necessity of following the French rules of fashion and behavior.

Her husband Pierre finds a feeling of joy in the unity with his wife: "After seven years of married life, Pierre felt a joyful, firm consciousness that he was not a bad man, and he felt it because he saw himself reflected in his wife. […] But only what was truly good was reflected in his wife; all that was not entirely good was rejected" (Tolstoy Epilogue, Part One, 1157). Tolstoy stresses the good and positive side of Pierre's union with Natasha. Pierre accepts Natasha's simple natural ways and finds happiness with her. However, he does not reach the perfect state of completeness, as does Robert Jordan

through his unity with the Spanish earth in *FWTBT*. In the Epilogue, the reader learns of Pierre's political activity, as Pierre discusses it with Nikolai Rostov; Pierre talks about the "inevitable upheaval" and of the necessity for people to "join hands, as many and as closely as possible, to oppose the general catastrophe" (1169). Unlike his earlier engagements with the Masons, this time Pierre talks about action, and his "animated and rapturous figure" reveals how passionate he is about his engagement (1169). At the end of the novel, Pierre is still a seeker, unable to reach the state of "complete integration" achieved by Hemingway's Robert Jordan and Prince Andrei Bolkonsky, discussed in Chapter I of this dissertation.

As noted by Lukacs, Tolsoy's characters cannot carry their revelations beyond the moments they experience them and into the world they live in. In *The Theory of the Novel*, Lukacs writes that "At very rare, great moments—generally they are moments of death—a reality reveals itself to a man in which he suddenly glimpses and grasps the essence that rules over him and works within him, the meaning of life"; however, "these crucial moments of bill are the moments of dying" (149). Hemingway's Robert Jordan and Tolstoy's Prince Andrei experience these great near-death moments where they reach "complete integration." Yet such integration is denied to Pierre who continues to live and seek for the meaning of life.

Hemingway and Tolstoy reveal their preference for the simple and natural ways of life both through linguistic expression and the imagery used within the novels. However, the simple and the natural are understood quite differently in each novel. For Tolstoy, the Russian language and the Russian folk tradition stand for authenticity. Hemingway sees the natural in the integration of the otherness of his character into the

cultural atmosphere of Spain, and in Jordan's union with the Spanish earth. In the case of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, the French language is used to juxtapose the Russian and the French cultures, while also to oppose the culture of the high society with the one of the peasants who adhere to folk traditions. Tolstoy's rejection of the French language and culture as potentially productive forces within early nineteenth-century society reveal his monologic vision in the novel, especially taking into consideration the fact that Tolstoy as a writer remains highly influenced by French authors, particularly by Stendhal in his construction of war scenes and psychological aspect of character development in *War and Peace*.[5] Tolstoy's presentation of French culture as the other is largely motivated by his subject, which is the Russian war with Napoleon; and despite "the Count's great [political] thinking," which Hemingway criticized, the novels share a gravitation towards the images of natural and authentic, which are associated with the truthful depiction of reality.

When Hemingway's *FWTBT* is examined closely in relation to Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Hemingway's bilingualism, as well as his use of the imagery, reveals a different purpose. Hemingway uses the language factor to construct a story of the integration of his main character into Spanish Republican culture. While Robert Jordan remains linguistically and culturally different throughout a significant part of the novel, his otherness allows for opening up a discussion about various sides of the conflict in the novel; Jordan's difference reveals points of view which can only become visible in relation to his otherness. The English and the Spanish in *FWTBT* are not juxtaposed; the blending of these two languages creates a complex language atmosphere which makes room for inclusion of a multiplicity of perspectives. The acculturation and even

[5] Stendhal's influence on Tolstoy's writing is discussed by Buyniak.

"hispanization" of Robert Jordan, which may be reflective of Hemingway's political view of the necessity of the unified front, also constructs a culturally inclusive space, which is open to multicultural perspectives. Hemingway's rhetoric of self-sacrifice, undertaken by Robert Jordan at the end of the novel, as necessary for overcoming of otherness and protecting of the loved ones, further strengthens the author's emphasis on the necessity of unification and inclusion.

Though Tolstoy's treatment of language reveals his monologic vision, the novel also allows for an alternative interpretation when the Levinasian ethics of the I-other relationship is considered alongside *War and Peace*. As shown in Chapter I, the monologic vision, or the vision of totality, is deconstructed in *War and Peace* when the characters gain a different vision of the other, when they accept otherness and no longer objectify the other. Such a vision is open to Prince Andrei when he forgives his enemy Anatole Kuragin and learns to love Natasha in a new and selfless manner at the time before his death (Tolstoy Vol. III, 814; Vol. III, 922).[6] Andrei's experience is comparable to that of Robert Jordan, who similarly gains a new vision of Maria at the moment before his death. For the first time in the novel Jordan is "completely integrated" at the time before his death; like Prince Andrei, he also "looked up at the sky" acknowledging his new vision. Before his death, Prince Andrei says to Natasha: "'I love you more, better, than before'" (Vol. III, 922), words that also reflect the vision of Robert Jordan. Jordan's sacrifice to save the lives of Maria and other guerillas reveals the Levinasian vision of the primacy of the other that he gains. His love for Maria and for the Spanish earth is no longer tied to the visual images that we see throughout the novel, but is transformed into a larger realization of responsibility before the other. It is in fulfilling of his responsibility

[6] The examples mentioned here are discussed in detail in Chapter I.

before the other, which demands a sacrifice from him, that Jordan is able to finally feel "completely integrated" into the culture that was alien for him. Through these new visions, the characters of Prince Andrei and Robert Jordan overcome monologism but acquire a broader understanding of otherness.

Chapter III: Innocence before the Fall: the Decomposition of Totality in Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*

"[…] in a sympathetic study of the past might lie the secret of dealing with present evils." Edith Wharton *The Valley of Decision* (1902)

In her only collection of critical essays which were gathered and published as a separate book under the title *The Writing of Fiction* (1924), Edith Wharton, the Pulitzer Prize-winning American novelist, writes: "The artist of other races has always been not only permitted but enjoined to see life whole; and it is this, far more than any superiority of genius, that lifts Balzac, Stendhal and Tolstoy so high above even Thackeray when the universal values are to be appraised" (64). The vision of "life whole" is for Wharton a key feature the key feature that elevates such writers as Balzac, Stendhal and Tolstoy over writers who, in her view, lack such a perspective. Wharton persistently defends the necessity of holistic or total vision for a novelist in her critical works, which later leads to her conflict with modernist writers. Wharton is particularly fond of what she sees as Tolstoy's outstanding ability to set the stage for the key personages so that the totality, or a larger conflict of the novel, becomes visible in various scenes that Wharton describes from *War and Peace* (1869). As she explains, "The evening party with which 'War and Peace' begins is one of the most triumphant examples in fiction of the difficult art of 'situating' the chief actors in the opening chapter of what is to be an exceptionally crowded novel. […] Tolstoy with one mighty sweep gathers up all his principal characters and sets them before us in action" (99). Wharton's ambition to give a total picture of the "old New York" of a time before the First World War in her Pulitzer-Prize winning novel *The Age of Innocence* (1920) is what prompts her to look for examples in the works of authors who dealt with periods of profound social changes and crisis. In

particular, Tolstoy's examples in his novels *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* (1973-77) help Wharton to set the stage for the representation of a time of crisis in her novel.

While Wharton continues to defend the necessity of a vision of "life whole" in her theoretical writings, her novel *The Age of Innocence* reveals that holding on to such a vision becomes increasingly problematic at the turn of the century. Wharton's picture of "old New York," (which served as the first working title of the novel (see Lewis *Edith Wharton*)), reveals a society which imagines itself as a totality and struggles to preserve such a vision at a time when its views and values are challenged. Wharton attacks the traditionalism associated with the ways of New York society of the 1870s with the limitations it imposes on its members. The novel reveals Wharton's ambivalent attitude towards totality: she mourns the loss of it in the novel but conspicuously reveals its limitations, and recognizes the impossibility of holding on to such a vision beyond the pre-war "age of innocence." In this sense, *The Age of Innocence* becomes a commentary on a time of historical change, marking the transition from a society driven by nineteenth-century values to those of the twentieth century.

Though Wharton consistently advocates for the traditional realist novel form in her theoretical works, she introduces the elements of modernist aesthetics into her novel to show the disintegration of the traditional social mechanisms associated with old New York. Through the character of Ellen Olenska, who does not fit into the traditional ways of the society and eventually finds herself ostracized from it, Wharton explores modernist aesthetics and deconstructs the vision of totality in the novel.

The title of the novel, *The Age of Innocence*, calls attention to the novel's temporal setting – before the First World War – which by the time the novel is written in

1920 is already a site of history. The title makes a reference to the war as a crucial watershed that brought about significant social changes, causing the "age" to lose its "innocence." At the time she was working on *The Age of Innocence*, Wharton offered a comment on the post-war novel's relationship with history to art historian, Bernard Berenson:

> Before the war you could write fiction without indicating the period, the present being assumed. The war has put an end to that for a long time, and everything will soon have to be timed with reference to it. In other words, the historical novel with all its vices will be the only possible form of fiction. (In Lewis 425)

Wharton recognizes that all works of fiction appearing after the war are, to an extent, in dialogue with this event and posit it as a crucial point of reference. The war thus is seen as interrupting an organic continuity that was assumed to follow its natural course before the war. Wharton's article "Tendencies in Modern Fiction" (1934) opens with a statement which reveals her understanding of contemporary culture in the context of the post-war world: "The moral and intellectual destruction caused by the war, and by its far-reaching consequences, was shattering to traditional culture; and so far as the new novelists may be said to have any theory of their art, it seems to be that every new creation can issue only from the annihilation of what preceded it" (170). Wharton blames primarily the war for "shattering" the "traditional culture" and destroying the values of a generation.

Though Wharton sets her novel before the war, there are two distinct time periods, and two distinct chronotopes within the novel. The collision of the "old" and the "new" ways is presented in pictures of old New York of 1870s, when new ideas and new

aesthetic visions begin to penetrate and change society. Later, the novel also offers a brief glimpse of society approximately a quarter of a century later. This transition from the old to the new ways is marked by the painful decomposition of the old New York society's vision of itself as a totality. The novel details the less-than-harmonious coexistence of spaces in old New York: ballrooms, opera houses, lavish dining parlors, as well as the unfamiliar, "foreign," and modernist spaces, like Ellen Olenska's dwelling, to show the problematic integration of the elements of the new twentieth-century culture into the tradition-driven old New York. Wharton shows the worldview and aesthetic crisis associated with the transition towards twentieth-century values, a crisis which renders the view of "life whole" impossible. However, the world where this transition took place would soon be shattered; and whatever continuity it maintains with the old tradition it will be destroyed by the war, marking the end of the "age of innocence." Therefore, the definition of the "age of innocence" in the novel is not limited to the picture of old New York of the 1870s but extends towards the beginning of the twentieth century. Wharton's novel, written from a post-World War I perspective, therefore, is undertaking the task that Wharton declared should be done in her earlier historical novel *The Valley of Decision* (1902): it looks into the crisis of the past to find the "secret of dealing with present evils" (63).

Wharton witnessed the devastation and suffering brought by the war first-hand. She was deeply involved in the war relief efforts in Europe, and her contribution in this sphere is hard to underestimate. Her efforts during the war years are discussed by Alan Price in his study *The End of the Age of Innocence: Edith Wharton and the First World War* (1996), where the author offers a detailed account of Wharton's charity activities.

From the first months of the war Wharton got involved in charity works, joining the 25,000 women from America who volunteered for the relief efforts. She is credited with organizing and managing many civilian and war charities and establishing the American Hostels for Refugees with the help of her friends; these facilities provided the refugees with housing, employment, medical care, and even offered different levels of education. Wharton actively cooperated with the French Red Cross. In 1915, she established the Children of Flanders Rescue Committee, whose primary task was to "car[e] for six hundred and another two hundred aged and infirm Flemish refugees" from Belgium (Price ix). Together with the other Americans present in France at the time, Wharton got involved and became a vice president of the *Tuberculeux de la Guerre* organization, a charity committed to helping fight tuberculosis among civilians and soldiers, sanctioned by the French government. Wharton's relief effort included the publication of *The Book of the Homeless* (1916), an anthology of essays, poetry, art and musical works by renowned writers, artists, and composers of the time. The profit earned from the sales of the book was used for the benefit of war refugees. Being involved in multiple charitable organizations, Wharton went through periods of exhaustion, and was forced to take several-week breaks from her work with the charities. After periodic rest, she would return to carry on the fund-raising and other activities with the charities. Wharton's efforts during the war were recognized as she was awarded with The Legion of Honor by the French government and Queen Elizabeth's medal by the Belgian government (Price xxii).

Besides her charitable work, Wharton also addressed the war-related issue in writing. Her works which address the First World War are a series of essays describing

various aspects of life during the war; these essays were later published as a separate book entitled *Fighting France* (1915). Her war writing includes a brief novel *The Marne: A Tale of the War* (1918). Later, Wharton also wrote the novels *The Son at the Front* (1923) and *The Mother's Recompense* (1925), which also look back to the war experience. Wharton's war writing was given less consideration due to its portrayal of war as driven by a didactic purpose. One of the influential first critics of Wharton's war writings Blake Novius states that her works on war "add nothing to her laurels; on the contrary, it proves that a novelist whose detachment was always precariously maintained could, when confronted with reports of German atrocities, lose her head as easily as the average newspaper reader" (In Price xxii). The vision of Wharton's works as, in a sense, glorifying and elevating the purpose of fighting in the First World War prevailed in literary criticism for decades.

Contemporary critics, however, tend to see Wharton's war writing in the broader context of her ideas about the society and culture. They stress the element of shock that the war created, bringing massive casualties, wrecking people's lives, and destroying the familiar cultural landscape. Furthermore, the profound sense of crisis which followed the war contributed to Wharton's perception of reality and molded her literary response to the war. Considering Wharton's vision after the war as reflected in the aesthetics of her writing, Price comments:

> Wharton entered one type of world and witnessed the emergence of another after the First World War. Even though England and France won the war, the world Wharton valued was largely lost. It was obliterated by the mass world, a world without taste, a world without the aristocracy of intellect. Finally, the convergence

> of historical forces that transformed Wharton from the ironic social satirist into a partisan war reporter provides one of the few periods in her life when she was not in control of what happened. The war was not just a shock; it was a catastrophe that threatened one's ability to make a world. For a novelist who created fictional worlds and for a woman who created aesthetic spaces (her houses and their gardens), the loss of control was potentially devastating. The First World War ushered in the true end of the age of innocence. (Price xvii)

Price's comment sheds light on Wharton's perception of the world during and after the war. The senses of shock, catastrophe, and profound crisis defined Wharton's attitudes, dominating also her aesthetic visions. Ushering in the end of "the age of innocence," the war also destroyed the stable image of the world as Wharton knew it. Wharton's biographer Hermione Lee remarks, that "[Wharon's] war writing was felt to be embarrassing and sentimental, an aberration from the sharp satire and better social dramas she was known for" (Lee 45). However, the forces which "transformed" "the ironic social satirist," as Price notes, are closely related to the sense of crisis that "threatened one's ability to make a world." Viewed from such perspective Wharton's war-related writing seeks to compensate for loss through imagining the world as totality.

Wharton's vision of the necessity of giving completion to elements which seem incoherent in life echoes Georg Lukacs's critique of modernist trends precisely for their embrace of a fragmentary depiction of reality. Lukacs sees the novel as "seek[ing], by giving form, to uncover and construct the concealed totality of life" (*The Theory* 60). The constant "seeking" of epic unity is symptomatic of the twentieth-century crisis for Lukacs; in his view a thriving society must be able to present itself as a totality in art.

Tolstoy's novelistic form, in Lukacs's view, "overlaps to the maximum extent to the epic" (145). Similarly, Wharton praises the authors who seek out this unity in representation, singling out Balzac, Stendhal and Tolstoy as striving to represent "life whole"; this longing for totality in representation in art is seen not as a feature characteristic of a certain period in the development of society, but as a timeless and "universal" value, the greater purpose of art.

Lukacs envisions a novel as a form symptomatic of the present time; a novel, according to Lukacs, "is the epic of an age in which the extensive totality of life is not directly given, in which the immanence of meaning in life has become a problem, yet which still thinks in terms of totality" (*The Theory* 56). In this sense, the novel is constantly aspiring for the vision of totality which has been lost in the present age, but which should be pursued by the authors.

An example of the pursuit of such vision of totality as described by Lukacs can be found in Wharton's war writing, which has often been accused of unrealistic portrayal and glamorization of war. The hero of the novel *The Marne*, for example, is a young fifteen-year old boy, Troy Belknap, an American who together with his parents happens to vacation in France at the time the war breaks out. Finding himself unable to travel back to the United States due to the mother's sickness, Troy is forced to observe the destruction and devastation of France caused by the war. Troy and his family do return to the United States; for the three years that follow their return Troy reflects on the war and specifically on the glorious moment of the Battle of Marne, where the French were victorious. Having visited the grave of M. Grantier, the soldier who had fallen in the Battle of Marne, Troy is unable to stop thinking about the battle. Three years later,

having reached the age of eighteen, Troy returns to France to join the French troops as an ambulance driver. Eventually he participates in the battle that also happens to be on the River Marne in 1918. As the fighting goes on, Troy is wounded and wakes up in the hospital. All Troy recalls is a vision of M. Grantier who, so it appears to Troy, appears on the battlefield and comforts him. At the hospital Troy learns that his life was saved by an unidentified soldier who carried him away at the time of danger.

Undoubtedly, Troy represents the heroic and romanticized figure in the story; he is also a perfect character of the epic in Lukacs's sense. The vision of this character is narrowed down to a single preoccupation with war. The only desire Troy has is to join the lines of the French troops to defend the country of France which he has learned to love very much. In his description of an epic character, who presents the picture of the totality of life, Lukacs writes:

> The epic hero is, strictly speaking, never an individual. It is traditionally thought that one of the essential characteristics of an epic is the fact that its theme is not a personal destiny, but the destiny of a community. And rightly so, for the completeness, the roundness of the value system which determines the epic customs creates a whole which is too organic for any part of it to be so enclosed within itself, so dependent upon itself, as to find itself as interiority – e.g., to become a personality. (Lukacs *The Theory* 66)

Troy's life is so connected to the life of the "community" that in his fantasies it merges with the life of M. Grantier, who, it is assumed, comes to save Troy. Both of the characters become heroes of war, and their lives reflect nothing else but the identification with those fighting for the freedom of France. Wharton also chose the name for her

character which best reflects her vision of him. Through his name, Troy is immediately associated with the Trojan War, the war against the ancient city of Troy by Achaeans described in the *Iliad*.

The character of Troy can be compared to that of Petya Rostov, the young character in *War and Peace*, who is similarly too young to join the army. Petya, however, does join the army and takes part in a battle. He is so impatient and zealous to participate that he immediately throws himself into the most crowded and dangerous spot he sees: "When Peyta galloped up, the Frenchmen had already fallen. 'Late again,' flashed in Petya's head, and he rode to where he heard the sounds of rapid gunfire" (Tolstoy Vol. IV, 1057). Petya is shot in his very first battle he is shown participating and his figure becomes heroic in the novel. Both Troy and Petya are characters whose identities come to represent symbolic images; they reflect the "the completeness, the roundness of the value system" in the respective novels. In this sense they become elements which help construct a totalizing vision in the works.

Wharton becomes an advocate for such holistic vision as she criticizes the fragmentary nature of modernist fiction. In *The Writing of Fiction* she states:

> But there is another difference between the great novel and merely long one. Even the longest and most seemingly desultory novels of such writers as Balzac, Flaubert and Tolstoy follow a prescribed orbit; they are true to the eternal effort of art to complete what in life seems incoherent and fragmentary. This sense of a great theme sweeping around on its allotted track in the "most ancient heavens" is communicated on the first pages of such novels as "War and Peace" and

> "L'Education Sentimentale"; it is the lack of this intrinsic form that marks the other kind of long novel as merely long. (107)

Wharton praises authors who seek out this unity in representation, singling out Tolstoy and Gustave Flaubert, who manage to retain such a vision. In her war fiction, as shown above, Wharton aspires to such representation.

Wharton's *The Age of Innocence,* however, operates on somewhat different principles. Though the novel aspires to providing a coherent picture of an epoch and to a vision of totality of life, it ends up showing the problematic collision of various worldview systems and also aesthetic visions. This conflict of the "old" and the "new" is visible in Wharton's own polemics with the new tendencies in fiction writing, which reveal, on the one hand, her dedication to tradition, but her recognition of the necessity of change and progress, on the other. In the Pulitzer Prize-winning biography of Edith Wharton, R.W.B. Lewis explains that after the war, Wharton "was aware of the need to restore both continuity and rootedness of her existence" (419), which meant reconnecting with the previous artistic traditions. Wharton persistently criticizes the new tendencies which she associates with the loss of connection with tradition, as she states: "it seems to be that every new creation can issue only from the annihilation of what preceded it" ("Tendencies" 170). Wharton, therefore, looks for ways to connect the artistic tradition which preceded the war with what she sees at the moment.

This loss of continuity Wharton links to the loss of a moral vision in literature and the loss of an overall sense of purpose in writing. In her 1934 article with a telling title "Permanent Values in Fiction" Wharton defines a novel as "a work of fiction containing a good story about well-drawn characters" (175). She further accuses the contemporary

writers, specifically singling out Woolf and Joyce, of losing sight of the purpose of writing: "The modern writer with a purpose (no less a purpose because no longer a moral one) is unhampered by such restrictions." The novel, in the traditional understanding of it, is associated for Wharton with a moral vision that constitutes the novel's larger purpose. The moral vision in fiction constitutes one of the permanent values for Wharton, one that is closely linked to novelistic form. This vision, therefore, may potentially connect the post-war writing to the earlier tradition.

Despite her insistence on maintaining the connection with the earlier realist tradition, Wharton firmly believes in progress, which for her constitutes building something new based on the examples of the old: "Since the world began, and man pictured his first stories on the walls of pre-historic caves, forms have been unceasingly and irresistibly modified by having new life poured into them […]." Wharton affirms her belief in the "incessant renovation of old types by new creative action" and states that "There is no fear of monotony while the creative springs perpetually bubble up in new intelligences" ("Permanent Values" 176). Robin Peel in the study *Apart from Modernism* argues that "On the one hand [Wharton's] interrogation of early modernism is informed by an antipathy to change, but on the other it is informed by developed aesthetic recognition that all art, including literature, has evolved and must evolve, if it is to be vital and serious" (12). Wharton recognizes the potential in the constant development of art, as she sees that art forms "have been unceasingly and irresistibly modified by having new life poured into them." However, the change for Wharton should be based not on the rejection of the old, but on building on what has already been achieved.

Though Wharton's critique of modernism oftentimes echoes Lukacs's visions, her novel *The Age of Innocence* reveals an important disparity between her own views on what constitutes forward movement in the historical development of art as a reflection of society, and the views of Lukacs. For Lukacs, the desirable ideal state in the development of art is when it reflects the society as totality, with the epic as an example of such development. Though Wharton mourns the loss of such a totalizing vision in both her theoretical writings and in the novel, progress for her is never a return to the total epic vision; it is, instead, associated with gradual modification and change of the societal and artistic tradition, without detaching it from the fertile ground of previous artistic traditions. Therefore, her view does not create a framework for art, as Lukacs does, but allows for its evolutionary development. As *The Age of Innocence* reveals, tradition can be a double-edged sword in both society and art; it can either facilitate progress, or hinder and detain it. Progress is necessary and inevitable for Wharton on condition that what she calls the "permanent values" are preserved intact. Wharton's response to the crisis of the new age consists in reinstating the seemingly lost value of self-sacrifice as a way to preserve the order and the cultural heritage of the past but allows for evolutionary progress to take place both in society and in art.

Wharton's understanding of and belief in the historical development of society and art also mark the difference between her own historical imagination and that of Tolstoy. Wharton envisions and describes social change as an inevitable and natural transition from the state of closed totality to a more liberal state of inclusion. This transition occurs as the people overcome conventionality and learn to be accepting of otherness. For Tolstoy, conventionality cannot be overcome when a person is within

society, which operates according to its own conventions. Life free from convention can be achieved through a return to natural ways and through association with folk culture which is closer to nature than the culture of high society. As Lukacs points out, the characters achieve such freedom in near-death experiences when they no longer associate themselves with the vain values that operate in the society. Wharton, therefore, imagines a society that can be free from conventionality, while for Tolstoy, it is only the individual who distances him- or herself from the society who can achieve such freedom. Wharton's novel allows for a short glimpse into the new society at the end of the novel, where such freedom from convention is possible. For the author, the "age of innocence" extends to the period of the 1890s when the society has already evolved into a more inclusive space than it originally was. However, the novel also anticipates, through its title and through the time period it covers, that this "age of innocence" will end with the war, and the gradual evolutionary movement of the society and art will be disrupted.

Like her post-war critical writings, Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* responds to the crisis of the beginning of the twentieth century. Yet it also affirms the necessity and inevitability of social change. R.W.B. Lewis states that Wharton's object is ¨the world in which she has passed her adolescence and the first years of her womanhood – a safe, narrow, unintellectual, and hidebound world, but from the tremendous distance of time and history, an endearing and an honorable one" (424). On the one hand, Wharton does show the "safety" and comforting "narrowness" of this world; however, she also understands how limiting this "narrowness" is and recognizes the inevitability and the positive side of progress.

Many critics have pointed to Wharton's expert picture of the New York of her youth, which is filled with nostalgic longing. In his 1968 introduction to Wharton's *The Age of Innocence,* R.W.B. Lewis argues that the novel represents Wharton's "reminiscent and shrewdly ambivalent survey of her own old New York, and it is a novel in which perspective—the long gaze backward across the ruins of time—is everything" (9). A similar opinion is expressed in a more recent book, *Edith Wharton: Traveller in the Land of Letter* (1990) by Janet Beer Goodwyn, who states that "The New York [Wharton] sought to celebrate and memorialise in her formal autobiography is better served by *The Age of Innocence*: the city and its values are the only victors in this story, but their expectations are fulfilled here for the last time" (133). The scholars rightly point to the nostalgic element present in the depiction of the epoch that has already become history by the time Wharton writes about them.

The character who becomes most associated with the time as a product of old New York, is May Welland, the beautiful and innocent young woman, who becomes a wife of Newland Archer. At the beginning of the novel, Archer sees her as a sincere and graceful creature: "Miss Welland, evidently about to join the dancers, hung on the threshold, her lilies-of-the-valley in her hand (she carried no other bouquet), her face a little pale, her eyes burning with a candid excitement" (*The Age* 19). When Archer learns of the arrival of Ellen Olenska, May's cousin who escaped from her husband, he realizes that "He hated to think of May Welland's being exposed to the influence of a young woman so careless of the dictates of Taste" (*The Age* 12-13). May's innocence and beauty, as well as her need to be protected from bad influences, are stressed at the beginning of the novel. May is a perfect product of the society, like Princess Lise

Bolkonsky is in *War and Peace*. As the events of the novel progress, Wharton deconstructs this image of innocence that surrounds May, as well as the vision of the old New York society as a safe space. Wharton shows the historical moment when the society which envisions itself as totality and guards its own "purity," as Archer attempted to guard the purity of May, becomes vulnerable to outside influences and can barely hold the image of its own totality.

Aspiring to define the time of historical change in the *Age of Innocence*, as does Tolstoy in *War and Peace*, Wharton introduces the character of Ellen Olenska. This character challenges old New York's ways and represents the positive promise of the new age. The picture of Olenska in the novel further reveals Wharton's interest in the artistic representation of the foreign and "exotic" other. Corinne Viglietta suggests that "despite her criticism of American modernity and modernism, Wharton manages to endow her female protagonist with a 'modern' American sensibility" (Viglietta). In many ways, the character of Ellen is associated with the new aesthetics of the twentieth century; her aesthetic tastes present a challenge to the old New York society. At the same time, however, Ellen's choice to sacrifice her own happiness at the end of the novel reveals her commitment to some of the values of the past, values that Wharton considers to be permanent ones. Thus, *The Age of Innocence* seeks to reinstate certain values which were lost after the war, while at the same time to confirm a belief in progress of society associated with the twentieth century.

The novel concentrates on the appearance of Ellen Olenska in her native New York after years of living in Europe. Ellen, who was orphaned early in life, moved to Europe, where she married a rich Polish count. Her marriage proved unhappy, with

details never revealed but hinted at. Count Olenski, Ellen's possibly unfaithful and abusive husband, is described as an "angry blackguard," who brought immense suffering to his wife (*The Age* 83). Now Ellen returns to New York in search for a new home and support from her relatives, the Mingott and the Welland families. They are ready to extend their help, even presenting Ellen publically together with them, but only to the point where this support would not endanger their own reputation. Thus, they insist that Ellen should remain married; and Newland Archer, who happens to be a lawyer and is soon to marry May Welland from the family, undertakes the task of persuading her to do so. In the course of their interaction, Newland realizes the hypocrisy of the society he lives in. He and Ellen fall in love with each other, yet at the decisive moment Ellen leaves for Paris alone.

The Age of Innocence describes the clash of the old and the new values and aesthetic principles, and therefore combines the chronotopes associated with the best traditions of realist fiction and those which signal the crisis, the beginning of the new age. Wharton uses what Bakhtin calls the chronotope of "parlors and salons (in the broad sense of the word)," introduced by Stendhal and Balzac, and that of a "threshold," which Bakhtin defines as the chronotope of "*crisis* and *break* in life" ("Forms" 21). Chronotope is defined by Bakhtin as "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" (15). With chronotopes serving as "the organizing centers for the fundamental narrative events of the novel" (20), the co-existence of these two types of chronotopes in *The Age of Innocence* signals the manipulation of time and space in the novel to convey the clash between the two historical worldviews that Wharton addresses.

Similarly to the old masters of realist novel, Wharton opens up her novel with a scene at the opera, using the typical chronotope of the nineteenth-century realist novel. This opening reminds us of her commentary on the power of Tolstoy's introduction of characters and their stories in the opening scene of *War and Peace,* quoted earlier in this chapter. Wharton similarly gathers all of the main characters in the opening scene, allowing for the larger conflict to be visible.

The opening already suggests the vision of the society as a closed totality. Wharton's criticism of it becomes visible through a subtle but clear touch of irony, as she comments on the assembly of the New York society of the 1870s. Newland Archer arrives at the theatre late, for no other reason but due to his adherence to the fashion of the time: "But, in the first place, New York was a metropolis, and perfectly aware that in metropolises it was 'not the thing' to arrive early at the opera; and what was or was not 'the thing' played a part as important in Newland Archer's New York as the inscrutable totem terrors that had ruled the destinies of his forefathers thousands of years age" (*The Age* 4). Comparing the old New York traditions to the "totem terrors" and the keepers of these customs to people who lived "thousands of years ago" reveals Wharton's criticism of the useless and even ridiculous but firmly rooted traditions, which defined what it meant to be accepted by the society. Furthermore, the society is shown as a world with its own rules and regulations, a world that is closed in itself and impervious to change. This world calls to mind the picture of epic totality described by Bakhtin in his "Epic and Novel," a world that is perfectly immutable and finalized.[7] In his discussion of the epic hero Lukacs notes that "the epic hero, as bearer of his destiny is not lonely, for this destiny connects him by indissoluble threads to the community whose fate is crystallised

[7] On Bakhtin's "Epic and Novel" see Chapter 1

in his own" (*The Theory* 67). In picturing the collectively followed society rules, Wharton imparts a sense of a collective destiny, predictable and safe, that the members of the society share. Newland Archer at this point of the novel reflects the collective vision of the members of the society, whose behavior is linked to rituals that resemble those used in tribes. Therefore, the ironic stance that the author adopts in describing the society distances the representation from Lukacs's vision of totality, but reveals reality as more problematic than it appears at first glance.

Comparing this scene to the opera scene in *War and Peace*, which Viktor Shklovsky famously used in his essay "Art as Device," first published in 1925, as an example of defamiliarization in fiction, one can see a similar technique used in *The Age of Innocence,* as well as the similar emphasis on the artificiality of the traditional ways. Through his presentation of the atmosphere at the opera as false, Tolstoy wages his criticism on the society that places a big emphasis on outward appearances, creating the atmosphere of artificiality and falsehood. In Tolstoy's scene, Natasha, the innocent observer at the opera, finds it impossible to concentrate on the storyline of the opera, but perceives only the falsity of its production and is surprised at people's indifference to what she perceives to be a deceit. Tolstoy writes:

> […] she saw only painted cardboard and strangely dressed-up men and women, who moved, talked, and sang strangely in the bright light; she knew what it was all supposed to represent, but it was all so pretentiously false and unnatural that she first felt embarrassed for the performers, and then found them ridiculous. She looked around at the faces of the spectators, seeking in them the same feeling of mockery and perplexity that was in her; but all the faces were attentive to what

> was taking place on stage and expressed admiration – feigned, as it seemed to Natasha. (Tolstoy Vol. II, 561).

The feeling of "unnaturalness," pretense, and "falsehood" dominate Natasha's thoughts at the opera, where the important people of the Moscow society have gathered. Alienated from the man she is in love with, Natasha perceives the atmosphere at the opera quite differently from the people around her. Natasha's "embarrassment" and "perplexity" is not shared among the people who are so used to conventionality that find it impossible to see beyond it. Shklovsky describes Tolstoy's method, which the author uses in fiction as a way of "removal of [an] object from the sphere of automatized perception" in the following way:

> [Tolstoy] does not call a thing by its name, that is, he describes it as if it appears for the first time, while an incident is described as if it were happening for the first time. In addition he forgoes the conventional names of various parts of a thing, replacing them instead with the names of corresponding parts in other things. (Shklovsky 6)

Natasha's mind registers the "painted cardboard and strangely dressed-up men and women," instead of recognizing them as the stage set and the costumes used for the opera. Her vision calls attention to the element of pretense inevitably involved in theatrical productions, which reflects the general atmosphere of insincerity present in high society, the members of which become accomplices in this production. The example of estrangement in the opera illustrates for Shklovsky the elements which Tolstoy criticizes within the Russian society of the time, namely its hypocritical and deceitful

ways (8-9). Natasha here appears to be the lens through which the author shows things as he wants them to be perceived by the reader and how, according to him, they really are.

Just as Tolstoy presents the opera scene through Natasha's innocent gaze, Wharton offers her account of the opera scene through eyes which are similarly innocent. Young Newland Archer, preoccupied with his forthcoming engagement to May Welland, listens to *Faust* at the Old New York Academy. The descriptions of the actors in the opera impart the atmosphere of falsity similar to that found in the Moscow opera house:

> M'ama . . . non m'ama . . . " the prima donna sang, and "M'ama!", with a final burst of love triumphant, as she pressed the disheveled daisy to her lips and lifted her large eyes to the sophisticated countenance of the little brown Faust-Capoul, who was vainly trying, in a tight purple velvet doublet and plumed cap, to look as pure and true as his artless victim.

And further:

> In the centre of this enchanted garden Madame Nilsson, in white cashmere slashed with pale blue satin, a reticule dangling from a blue girdle, and large yellow braids carefully disposed on each side of her muslin chemisette, listened with downcast eyes to M. Capoul's impassioned wooing, and affected a guileless incomprehension of his designs whenever, by word or glance, he persuasively indicated the ground floor window of the neat brick villa projecting obliquely from the right wing. (*The Age* 6)

The singers, referred to by their real names and not by the names of the characters they represent, as is also the case in Tolstoy's scene, appear rather ridiculous trying to play their parts, overflowing with an excess of feigned emotions, which they try to convey in

an artless manner. The close attention to their clothes and movements reveals the artificiality of their intentions. Wharton estranges the experience of the opera that Newland observes to reveal the atmosphere prevalent in society, employing the strategy which Tolstoy used in his opera scene. The skills of the actors in themselves are not the objects which both authors criticize, but the atmosphere of deceit in which the spectators are immersed. Newland, who has always been a part of the society and is used to it, follows its ways blindly unaware of their "design"; the scene in the opera which he observes with an open mind foreshadows his awakening later in the novel.

The opera scenes in both novels symbolically stand for larger pictures of the societies of the early nineteenth-century Russia and New York of 1870s, criticizing their overreliance on outward appearances of propriety and good taste. Both works similarly deconstruct the visions of societies as closed worlds through the appearance of innocent observers who start seeing things as they really are. Natasha's and Archer's concentration on the mechanisms of opera production, rather than on the final product – the opera, is symbolic of their further realization of the mechanisms by means of which societies operate. Soon after the opera scene, Natasha nearly elopes with the dishonest and corrupt Anatole Kuragin, the experience which opens her eyes to the deceptions inherently present in the high society. Archer's marriage to May similarly awakens him to the mechanisms through which the society expels those who break its rules to preserve its image of totality.

Despite the obvious contiguity between the described opera scenes, the events that follow in the novels reveal the difference in the authors' visions of historical progress and development. Natasha and Newland Archer are able to gain visions of the world free

from conventionality through association with very different settings. Natasha in *War and Peace* is free from the conventions imposed by the high society through her association with nature. Her sense of freedom becomes obvious in the scene of hunting when Natasha lets out a scream that would have been inappropriate and embarrassing had it been heard in the society. When out hunting, accompanied by her brother and uncle, Natasha cannot hide the emotions which overwhelm her:

> At the same time, Natasha, without pausing for breath, let out a joyous and rapturous shriek, so shrill that it made their ears ring. With this shriek she expressed everything the other hunters had expressed with their simultaneous talk. And this shriek was so odd that she herself would have been embarrassed at such wild shrieking, and they all would have been surprised at it, if it had happened at any other time. (Tolstoy Vol. II, 507)

At this time of hunting Natasha is free from the conventionality which surrounds her in high society; she is close to nature and behaves according to her instincts. The excitement she feels as the dog chases and catches a hare is beyond words, but requires some other, extra-verbal means of expression. Natasha's shriek, which would have been weird and out of place anywhere else but in this wild setting, signals her ability to transcend conventionality and experience natural and authentic feelings. The escape from conventionality is possible for Natasha as she connects to the natural ways associated with the folk culture of the peasants. Natasha further performs a folk dance and plays the guitar, the instrument similarly associated with the folk tradition, both of which she does without prior training. These experiences show her connection to folk ways, revealing the authenticity of her character.

Conventionality in Tolstoy's novels can be overcome through near-death experiences that force the characters to recognize and accept otherness. Andrei, dying in the field after the Battle of Austerlitz in *War and Peace,* recognizes the vanity of his worldly pursuits and egotistical intentions.[8] Similarly, in *Anna Karenina* Vronsky and Karenin, who are enemies, are able to reconcile, knowing that Anna is near her death. Addressing these episodes in both novels, Lukacs writes that "[…] Anna recovers and Andrey returns to life, and the great moments vanish without trace. Life goes on in the world of convention, an aimless, inessential life" (Lukacs *The Theory* 149). Lukacs treats such moments in Tolstoy as

> […] factual assurance that an essential life really does exist beyond conventionality – a life which can be reached through the lived experiences of a full and genuine selfhood, the self-experience of the soul, but from which one must irremediably fall back into the world of convention. (147)

The "essential life" free from conventionality is indeed possible for Tolstoy, but the characters can only catch brief glimpses of it through connectedness with nature or through near-death experiences, which also force them to think in terms other than those dictated in society. Therefore, for Tolstoy authentic and genuine experience of life is not possible in high society. It is only in separating themselves from the high society that people overcome convention.

For Lukacs, such contrast between "nature" and "culture" reveals the problematic nature of the novel form, which reflects life as its problematic. In the society, according to Lukacs, which can imagine and express itself as totality in the form of an epic, such disparity would not exist. Lukacs states:

[8] For the discussion of Andrei's experience after the Battle of Austerlitz, see Chapter 1.

> The natural, organic world of old epics was, after all, a culture whose organic character was its specific quality, whereas the nature which Tolstoy posits as the ideal and which he has experienced as existent is, in its innermost essence, meant to be *nature* (and is, therefore, opposed, as such, to *culture*). (*The Theory* 146)

The epic, which reflects the "natural" and "organic" world, does not contain the opposition between nature and culture. For Lukacs, the epic is therefore the desirable form which reflects the world as totality and does not pose the ideal against the reality. In this sense, the form becomes a reflection of what Lukacs calls the "historico-philosophical substratum."

Wharton imagines quite a different picture of the historical progress of society and art. She envisions a society where conventionality can be overcome and genuine authenticity is possible. For Wharton, authenticity is reached when Archer recognizes the injustice with which the society treats Ellen who came to New York searching for help. Ellen asks Archer to teach her how to fit in when she arrives in New York. But it is in fact she who causes Archer to see things he never noticed before. Referring to the unjust means the society uses to preserve its traditional ways, Archer says to Ellen: "It's you who are telling me; opening my eyes to things I'd looked at so long that I'd ceased to see them" (*The Age* 63). Conventionality can be overcome for Wharton not just for a short moment but permanently through the acceptance of otherness which Archer does in the face of Ellen.

The possibility to overcome convention in society is associated with novelty and change. To introduce the notion of social change at the end of the nineteenth century, the novel repeatedly uses the image of the threshold in the important moments of the story,

signaling that such moments are the moments of crisis, of the crucial encounter of the old and the new ways. According to Bakhtin, "The word 'threshold' itself already has a metaphorical meaning in everyday usage (together with its literal meaning), and is connected with a breaking point of a life, the moment of crisis, the decision that changes a life (or the indecisiveness that fails to change a life, the fear to step over the threshold)" ("Forms" 21). The moments built around the chronotope of the threshold vary. May Welland waits on the threshold of the ballroom for the arrival of Newland Archer for him to announce their engagement. At this crucial moment of the story, Archer, who also finds himself on the threshold, distinctly feels that something is wrong with the old tradition which defines the way things, even the most intimate events, should be treated. Wharton writes:

> Archer paused a moment. It was at his express wish that the announcement had been made, and yet it was not thus that he would have wished to have his happiness known. To proclaim it in the heat and noise of a crowded ball-room was to rob it of the fine bloom of privacy which should belong to things nearest the heart. His joy was so deep that this blurring of the surface left its essence untouched; but he would have liked to keep the surface pure too. It was something of a satisfaction to find that May Welland shared this feeling. Her eyes fled to his beseechingly, and their look said: "Remember, we're doing this because it's right." (*The Age* 19-20)

The feeling of the need for privacy which overwhelms Newland Archer signifies the inner desire to live beyond conventionality dictated by tradition, which, in his eyes, "robs" him and his beloved of something intimate and very important. The very time and

space, “the heat and noise of a crowded ball-room,” which demands of the couple to follow a standard route making them go public with their private lives, becomes the object of criticism here. Though Archer and May do cross the threshold together, with Newland announcing their engagement, it only leads them to the “noisy” and “crowded” space; they do not break the traditional order of things and do not move beyond convention.

The tension between the “old” and the “new” is further shown as that between the conventional and traditional versus the unfamiliar, mysterious and even foreign. Wharton pays close attention to aesthetics of building and general scenery as representative of changing aesthetics. The members of old New York society sentimentally cling to their old Academy to listen to musical performances, as is shown in the novel:

> Though there was already talk of the erection, in remote metropolitan distances “above the Forties,” of a new Opera House which should compete in costliness and splendour with those of the great European capitals, the world of fashion was still content to reassemble every winter in the shabby red and gold boxes of the sociable old Academy. (*The Age* 3)

The picture of the old Academy with its “shabby red and gold boxes” becomes an element that is associated with a nostalgic vision of the past. The society adheres to the place, even though the new Opera House will compete with “those of the great European capitals.” However, the author further undermines the vision of the Academy as a treasured site of the past by explaining that society’s preference of the old Academy to the new Opera House is also dictated by rather selfish motives: “Conservatives cherished it for being small and inconvenient, and thus keeping out the ‘new people’ whom New

York was beginning to dread and yet be drawn to; and the sentimental clung to it for its historic associations, and the musical for its excellent acoustics, always so problematic a quality in halls built for the hearing of music" (*The Age* 3). The means by which the "new people," those who only recently gained their fortunes and settled in New York, were kept from entering the conservative society are shown as a part of the hypocritical ways which define this society. At the same time, the society is again shown as guarding its own closed ways and its totality not allowing alien elements to penetrate into their world. Wharton uses the classic realist chronotope of "parlors and salons" to present the atmosphere into which she introduces the elements that disrupt the custom-driven life of the society.

This chronotope, associated with conventionality, is contrasted with that which is new and unfamiliar. Further in the novel Archer stands on the threshold of Countess Olenska's dwelling place and is overcome with strong and unknown feelings: "As he stood on Madame Olenska's threshold curiosity was his uppermost feeling. He was puzzled by the tone in which she had summoned him; he concluded that she was less simple than she seemed" (*The Age* 58). The sensations evoked by "hot" and "crowded" ball-room, where everything happens according to the prescribed rules, are contrasted with "curiosity," "puzzlement" and mystery evoked by Olenska. Coming to visit her at her lodging, Archer arrives at his second threshold, which sparks his interest in the newcomer, May's mysterious cousin who has lived in Europe for most of her life and with whom he later falls in love. Here, on the threshold of Olenska's dwelling, Wharton presents the collision of the old and the new worldview and aesthetic systems.

May and Ellen are contrasted in the story as the old and the new ways. Susan Goodman in her book *Edith Wharton's Women: Friends and Rivals* (1990) suggests: "Again, the fair and the dark women make a perfect whole: May is as fresh and virginal and definitive as her name, and Ellen is as dramatic and passionate and mysterious as a 'hot-house exotic'" (96). Wharton uses the names in the novel symbolically to represent the larger concepts that she puts into her characters, as May is "fresh and virginal" as is suggested by her name, but the image of Ellen contains an element which threatens to the world of totality that May represents. The dichotomy of May's association with innocence and beauty and Ellen's with the dark sides of human nature is further complicated and questioned in the novel, as Ellen is further shown as a victim of society's prejudices that would not allow for her to be accepted into the family and society.

Ellen's otherness is further represented through the style of her lodging, in the scenes where Wharton presents the changing aesthetic tastes. In Archer's eyes, the rooms she lives in are strikingly unconventional. Through the style associated with Olenska, Wharton introduces the elements of modernist aesthetics which appear so foreign and even exotic to Archer's unaccustomed eye. The dim lighting and alien objects of decoration contribute to creation of a mysterious atmosphere, which further separates Ellen from the society she is in. As a designer and an aesthetician, who had published two books on decoration and design, *The Decoration of Houses* (1897) and *Italian Villas and Their Gardens* (1904), Wharton had a keen sense of changing tastes and styles. Olenska's room presents quite a distinct chronotope, where Archer is forced to recognize and reflect on the incoming change in aesthetic tastes:

> What [Archer] saw, meanwhile, with the help of the lamp, was the faded shadowy charm of a room unlike any room he had known. He knew that the Countess Olenska had brought some of her possessions with her - bits of wreckage, she called them - and these, he supposed, were represented by some small slender tables of dark wood, a delicate little Greek bronze on the chimneypiece, and a stretch of red damask nailed on the discoloured wallpaper behind a couple of Italian-looking pictures in old frames. (*The Age* 58-59)

Archer finds Olenska's room to be "unlike any room he had known"; the unusual decoration and lighting produce a strong effect upon him. A "delicate little Greek bronze" and "Italian-looking pictures," as well as the "stretch of red damask" which calls to mind oriental ornamentation, demonstrate the Countess's openness to international artistic styles. The casual mixture of styles associated with different time periods as well as with different parts of the world signals the transition towards the more liberal and less confining modernist style. As the new style both bewilders and fascinates Archer, it also promises a possibility of the new life, free from convention, possible for him.

Wharton pays particular attention to the way the room is perceived by Archer: "Newland Archer prided himself on his knowledge of Italian art. But these pictures bewildered him, for they were like nothing that he was accustomed to look at (and therefore able to see) when he travelled in Italy […]" (*The Age* 59). Archer's further observations shed light on Ellen's "foreignness" even further, stressing the elements of mystery and exotic allure that surround her:

> […] what struck [Archer] was the way in which Medora Manson's shabby hired house, with its blighted background of pampas grass and Rogers statuettes, had,

> by a turn of the hand, and the skillful use of a few properties, been transformed into something intimate, "foreign," subtly suggestive of old romantic scenes and sentiments. He tried to analyse the trick, to find a clue to it in the way the chairs and tables were grouped, in the fact that only two Jacqueminot roses (of which nobody ever bought less than a dozen) had been placed in the slender vase at his elbow, and in the vague pervading perfume that was not what one put on handkerchiefs, but rather like the scent of some far-off bazaar, a smell made up of Turkish coffee and ambergris and dried roses. (*The Age* 59-60)

Newland Archer is attracted to this mysterious "foreign" otherness; he is fascinated by how "shabby hired house, with its blighted background of pampas grass and Rogers statuettes," indicative of the older setting, "by a turn of the hand" has been made into a "foreign" site. The scents of the two roses in a vase, of "vague pervading perfume that was not what one put on handkerchiefs," Turkish coffee, and of a "far-off bazaar" are suggestive of unfamiliar places, associated with Ellen's personality, which add up to her description, making her into a foreign and exotic other.

Ellen's further association with the new aesthetics is strengthened when Archer realizes Ellen lives in "Bohemian" part of town: he remembers Olenska telling him that the family "objected to her living in a 'Bohemian' quarter given over to 'people who wrote.' It was not the peril but the poverty that her family disliked; but that shade escaped her, and she supposed they considered literature compromising" (*The Age* 87). Ellen's insistence on living in "Bohemian quarters," open to "people who wrote," further stress her "foreignness" in old New York society that is shown as provincial, and her firm connection modernist aesthetics. The books which Archer sees "scattered about her

drawing room" include "such new names as those of Paul Bourget, Huysmans, and the Goncourt brothers" (*The Age* 87-88), writers associated with French naturalism.

The picture of unconventional culture which surrounds Ellen allows Archer to see his own contemporary New York society in a new light. In this sense, Ellen's unconventionality deconstructs the image of totality that the New York society embodies in the eyes of Archer. He recognizes that May is a product of the totalizing vision that society had been instilling in women and men for generations. Archer thinks about May: "It would presently be his task to take the bandage from this young woman's eyes, and bid her look forth on the world. But how many generations of the women who had gone to her making had descended bandaged to the family vault?" (*The Age* 69). Archer imagines himself "educating" May to overcome the conventions of the society they both live in; here Archer imagines a companion who, similarly to him, would strive for authenticity and the genuine experience of life. Thinking of May, however, leads him to remember the case of "the Kentucky cave-fish," described in a recent science book, where the fish "had ceased to develop eyes because they had no use for them. What if, when he had bidden May Welland to open hers, they could only look out blankly at blankness?" (*The Age* 69). The blind adherence to convention is what constitutes the totality of the old New York society for Wharton. The people within this society, like "the Kentucky cave-fish," are unable to see beyond the image of totality constructed for them.

Ellen, through her looks alone, challenges the conventions and the totality associated with the society. She is perceived as distinctly other in the society from the very first day she appears there. The Countess's look immediately earns disapproval and

rejection from the refined and fashionable society present at the opera. Wharton makes it a point to describe the elements of Ellen's appearance to point out her lack of belonging. In the opera Archer sees her as:

> […] a slim young woman, a little less tall than May Welland, with brown hair growing in close curls about her temples are held in place by a narrow band of diamonds. The suggestion of this headdress, which gave her what was then called a "Josephine look," was carried out in the cut of the dark blue velvet gown rather theatrically caught up under her bosom by a girdle with a large old-fashioned clasp. (*The Age* 8)

Wharton continues her description with a note that "The wearer of this unusual dress, […] seemed quite unconscious of the attention it was attracting" (8). Ellen Olenska's style with its imitation of the earlier "Josephine look" appears old-fashioned in New York, a detail which seems ironic in light of the fact that Ellen is associated with the less constrained worldview and aesthetics of the twentieth century. Except for an old-fashioned dress, Ellen's look is not very unusual; however, Wharton draws attention to the way others react to her appearance. Ellen's status of a "black sheep" is confirmed when the theatre box waits "in suspense" for Mr. Sillerton Jackson, the recognized authority in family connections, character traits, and scandals in New York and beyond, to pronounce his judgement over Olenska, which the whole society is going to adopt. Mr. Jackson does it, declaring: "I didn't think that Mingotts would have tried it on," the phrase which signals his strong disapproval of Mingott's decision to welcome Ellen in public (*The Age* 9). Ellen's unawareness of the attention her appearance was stirring, as well as her unexpected old-fashioned look present a picture of her as of a somewhat

naïve newcomer, who is unaware of the rules of the society, and expects to be accepted as she is, the vision that presents a contrast with her association with mystery and exotic foreignness.

The scene elicits a parallel with the theater scene in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina,* the novel that is also set in the 1870s. Anna, the main character of the novel, though scandalously estranged from her husband, decides to appear publicly at the opera. Tolstoy describes Anna through the eyes of her lover Vronsky, who, like Archer, spots her at the opera. Anna, unlike Ellen, is perfectly conscious of society's hostility towards her; as the reader further finds out, Mrs. Kartasova, a lady from high society, has publically insulted Anna at the theater. Tolstoy describes Anna's situation in the following:

> Anyone who did not know her and her circle, who had not heard all the utterances of the women expressive of commiseration, indignation, and amazement, that she should show herself in society, and show herself so conspicuously with her lace and her beauty, would have admired the serenity and loveliness of this woman without a suspicion that she was undergoing the sensations of a man in the stocks. (Tolstoy *Anna Karenina* 640)

Anna challenges the traditional ways of the society with her non-conventional behavior that almost no one would dare. Her appearance at the opera "so conspicuously with her lace and her beauty" causes "commiseration, indignation, and amazement" in the audience, where she, like Ellen, becomes a center of attention. The parallel between Ellen and Anna is further stressed through their looks. Ellen is constantly presented as a "dark lady": "The light touched to russet the rings of dark hair escaping from her braids, and

made her pale face paler" (*The Age* 64). Ellen's dark hair bears resemblance to that of Anna; furthermore, Tolstoy often mentions the "straying lock" of Anna's hair that escapes her hairdo, symbolically representing Anna's moving astray from the traditions of the society she lives in. Ellen's "rings of dark hair" similarly escape her braids. The similarity in looks of Anna and Ellen draws attention to a larger similarity in the fates of these characters: Anna Karenina finds love outside her marriage and Ellen Olenska strives for freedom from her unfaithful and possibly abusive husband. The images of both women being observed and evaluated at the opera reveal the pictures of the societies at the time; and the fact that both novels are set in 1870s furthers the parallel. Unlike Anna, Ellen does not attempt to challenge society; neither does she abandon her husband for a lover. However, the society remains similarly blind to her needs.

Wharton, unlike Tolstoy, gives us a picture of society where there can be a space for Ellen, showing Ellen's later emigration to France, where she finds home. Ellen comes close to Wharton's idea of the "real Frenchwoman" that she describes in her book *French Ways and Their Meaning* (1919), where she describes French women as aspiring to and, to a great extent, benefiting from involvement in intellectual life and equality in their relationship with men (100-101). In *French Ways* Wharton emphasizes the backwardness of American customs compared to those in France, and Ellen embodies the qualities of a Frenchwoman that Wharton admires. Wharton stresses that although Ellen is perceived as a mysterious dark lady, her true identity is that of a simple and well-minding cousin. Ellen explains to Archer that she was not aware of the hostility the society felt towards her: "Yes. I was perfectly unconscious at first that people here were shy of me – that they thought I was a dreadful sort of person. It seems they had even refused to meet me at

dinner. I found that out afterward […]" (*The Age* 144-145). Ellen does not immediately see that her situation and status could cause her problems within the society. She is democratic in her choice of company and expects to be treated as equal in her interactions with men. Inviting Archer to her own lodging, Ellen sincerely seeks advice from him on how to win approval in the New York society: "But you'll explain these things to me – you'll tell me all I ought to know," – Ellen asks Archer (*The Age* 27). She openly meets male representatives of society without suspecting possible gossip shortly after her arrival, and expects true companionship. Ellen's association with Wharton's "real Frenchwoman" is stressed through her rejection of the conventionality of the society.

Under the totalizing gaze of the society, however, Ellen does not show much discretion in her choice of company, as she is seen with the "wrong" people, who are shunned by the members of New York society, as they threaten to break the traditional ways to which the society clings. Ellen "was seen walking up Fifth Avenue this afternoon with [Beaufort] by the whole of New York" (*The Age* 27), a fact which further emphasizes her status of the other in the novel. This association with a man of questionable reputation and even more mysterious past, a "newcomer" in New York whom people disliked, does not pass unnoticed and harms Ellen's reputation. Further in the story, Ellen becomes friendly with Mrs. Beaufort, supporting her after her husband's massive business failure accompanied by a scandal. When told that she should not visit Mrs. Beaufort because the latter is "a wife of a scoundrel," Ellen answers: "and so am I, and yet all my family want me to go back to him" (*The Age* 254). This character reveals democratic views, supporting those ostracized and disliked by the society; people around her do not understand this behavior, calling Ellen's kindness a "taste for peculiar people"

(*The Age* 268). It is therefore ironic that Ellen who expects to be taught by Archer turns out to be the one who is able to reveal to him the hypocrisy and the shortcomings of the traditional society.

In *French Ways and Their Meaning* Wharton famously pronounces that "like the men of her race, the Frenchwoman is *grown up*," emphasizing and presumably placing a value on the intellectual maturity of French women. Wharton continues, stating that "Compared with the *women* of France the average *American woman is still in the kindergarten*" (*French Ways* 177). Despite her somewhat naïve ignorance of the customs of New York society, Ellen represents this maturity in the novel, as she expects acceptance and more open and honest relationships between people in the society. Unlike May, who is compared to "the Kentucky cave-fish" that lost its ability to see, Ellen is able to discern many things that the society does not want to see, closed in its totality. She expects equality and friendship from males and is able to comfort Mrs. Beaufort after the downfall of her husband. Therefore, Ellen's vision is show as much broader than that of the people of the society; her intervention into the society deconstructs its totalizing image.

Furthermore, Ellen appears more mature than Archer when he offers her to run away together to another country where both of them can be free from constraints of the society. To this Ellen responds:

> "Oh, my dear - where is that country? Have you ever been there?" she asked; and as he remained sullenly dumb she went on: "I know so many who've tried to find it; and, believe me, they all got out by mistake at wayside stations: at places like Boulogne, or Pisa, or Monte Carlo - and it wasn't at all different from the old

world they'd left, but only rather smaller and dingier and more promiscuous." (*The Age* 244-45)

Thus Ellen does not repeat the mistake that Tolstoy's Anna Karenina does when she travels to Italy with her lover Vronsky, failing to find a space where both of them can live free from conventions. Archer's idealistic and romantic vision contrasts with Ellen's more pragmatic and down-to-earth view. Her response, though sympathetic, suggests a degree of maturity which involves both disillusionment with the romantic imagination and a sense of responsibility for others. Towards the end of the novel, Ellen leaves for Paris alone, sacrificing her happiness to preserve the family of May and Archer.

It has become customary to imagine the twentieth century as a time when the value of sacrifice is rejected, as shown by Renée D.N. van Riessen in his chapter "The Subject of Sacrifice: Levinas's Confusing Critique of Idealistic Subject Philosophy" in the extensive study *The Actuality of Sacrifice: Past and Present* (2014). Jürgen Habermas "regards the abolition of the morality of sacrifice as the essence of modern ethics" (305). Van Riessen further emphasizes that there appears a tendency to understand the notion of sacrifice in a different, "human" context, which simply means giving up one thing to obtain the other, as, for example, "sacrificing" socializing with friends to succeed in an exam or, in the context of war, giving one's life for the country (307). The scholar also names the philosophers Jacques Derrida and Luc Ferry as having complicated the relations between the religious and the ethical contexts of the notion of sacrifice, viewing it, however, with "apprehension."

Emmanuel Levinas embraces the notion of sacrifice and uses it in a positive sense; for Levinas, according to van Riessen, "freedom must be understood as based on

responsibility and substitution, and thus fundamentally connected with the notion of sacrifice" (320). The Levinasian vision of the responsibility towards the other inevitably involves a notion of sacrifice as a means through which the relationship with the other is realized. The other for Levinas is always primary in I-other relations, and it is I who bears the responsibility for the other and not otherwise. Tomáš Tartanský argues that Levinas's ethics "is not an ethics of sacrifice *in general*, but an ethics of exclusively and inalienably *my sacrifice*" (296). Tartanský proceeds to quote the statement of Levinas in *Ethics and Infinity* (1982), offering his own reading of it: "I am responsible for the Other – says Levinas – without waiting for reciprocity, were I to die for it. Reciprocity is *his* affair." Levinas's ethics reinstates the value of responsibility towards the other, even to the point of sacrificing oneself for the other. The attitude where the "I" takes responsibility and embraces the ethics of personal sacrifice builds the relationship of peace, as Levinas affirms in the conclusion of his *Totality and Infinity* (305-6).

The present study, which presents the Levinasian concept of the ethical responsibility before the other as a response to the world wars of the twentieth century, allows for drawing a connection between his understanding of the other and that of Edith Wharton's novel, which is seen as a response to the crisis aesthetics of the pre-war period. Wharton's emphasis on the necessity of sacrifice towards the end of *The Age of Innocence*, when Ellen decides to leave New York and abandon any relationship with Archer, with whom she is in love, can be read as an answer to the time when the traditional values are lost, and the belief in the power of an individual to bring a change to the world is shattered.

The picture of the old New York society ends with the description of the farewell dinner scene, which is given in honor of Ellen after she decides to leave for Europe, where the vision of the society as totality is clearly presented. Ellen is once again shown as a threat to such totality; the triumph of the society's totalizing view over the "new" culture, however, is only temporary in the scene. As is the case at the beginning of the novel, Wharton returns to the traditional realist chronotope of dinner parties to comment on the hypocrisy of the old society and its inability to see beyond convention. The farewell dinner scene calls to mind Tolstoy's depictions of parties, where the peaceful atmosphere is often shown as a battle. Similarly, Wharton describes this dinner in honor of Ellen's departure with the help of military vocabulary. Archer "felt like a prisoner in the centre of an armed camp," as he perceives the "conspiracy" targeting Olenska and himself (*The Age* 282). He perceives that New York society assumes he is having an affair with Countess Olenska, but decides to cover it up and feign ignorance as long as Ellen leaves for Europe. Wharton describes the atmosphere of false kindness at the party:

> It was only at an entertainment ostensibly offered to a "foreign visitor" that Mrs. van der Luyden could suffer the diminution of being placed on her host's left. The fact of Madame Olenska's "foreignness" could hardly have been more adroitly emphasised than by this farewell tribute; and Mrs. van der Luyden accepted her displacement with an affability which left no doubt as to her approval. There were certain things that had to be done, and if done at all, done handsomely and thoroughly; and one of these, in the old New York code, was the tribal rally around a kinswoman about to be eliminated from the tribe. There was nothing on earth that the Wellands and Mingotts would not have done to proclaim their

> unalterable affection for the Countess Olenska now that her passage for Europe was engaged; and Archer, at the head of his table, sat marvelling at the silent untiring activity with which her popularity had been retrieved, grievances against her silenced, her past countenanced, and her present irradiated by the family approval. (*The Age* 281)

The open reference to Ellen as a "foreigner" now, when she is leaving, confirms her lack of belonging in the old New York society, whose ways are once again described as "tribal." Unlike at the beginning of the novel, when Newland sees the performance in the opera, now he understands that he has become an accomplice in a "play" of falsehood and presence. The exaggerated kindness of the family to Olenska confirms to Archer their decision not to have her in their company. The honorary guests, Mr. and Mrs. van der Luyden, even concede to and approve of being "displaced" to less honorary seats at the table for the sake of performing this necessary New York "ritual." The "tribal rally" gathered to pay the last tribute to "a kinswoman about to be eliminated from the tribe," reveals the superficial kindness and false attitudes for the sake of keeping their ways and preserving the order as they understand it. Archer feels "inexorableness of his captors" as they speak of Beaufort, who disgraced his family, the analogy which strikes Archer as meant for him and Olenska. As in the New York old Academy at the beginning of the novel, Archer observes a "ritual," which becomes a part of the chronotope and defines the totality to which the society clings. This time Archer is enlightened and understands all the hidden meanings of the "ritual"; he finds them false and oppressive. He is struck by society's desire not to accept the truth, as he is not guilty of adultery. The evening is

further described as May's "triumph," stressing once again that behind the peaceful scene a cruel action of expelling Ellen from the family circle is taking place.

War and Peace reveals a similar atmosphere of pretense throughout its storyline. The scene of a supper on Hélène's name day, which sealed the fate of Pierre and Hélène, is particularly telling in its presentation of societal ways observed by an innocent spectator. During the supper, Pierre becomes aware that the food, the anecdotes told, the people's laughter are all false, and the real purpose of the supper is in fact to look at him and Hélène with the expectation that they are getting engaged:

> Whatever the others said, however they laughed and joked together, whatever the appetite with which they savored the Rhein wine, the sauté, the ice cream, however they avoided glancing at this couple, however indifferent or inattentive to them they seemed, the feeling for some reason was, from the occasional glances cast at them, that the anecdote about Sergei Kuzmich, and the laughter, and the food were all a pretense, and all the power of attention of the entire company was directed only at this couple – Pierre and Hélène. (Vol. I, 210)

During the supper, amid of everything that is said and done, Pierre concentrates on the aspect of "pretense," the falsity of the anecdote and of laughter; he perceives that the real purpose of the event is not to celebrate Hélène's name day, but the day of Hélène's and his own engagement. This innocent at first glance curiosity of guests, however, puts pressure on Pierre, which is so subtle that he initially confuses it for the goodwill of others. He reflects on his perspective marriage to Hélène: "Now I know that, not for her alone, not for me alone, but for all of them, *this* inevitably had to come about. They all expect *this* so much, they are so certain it will be, that I simply cannot disappoint them"

(Vol. I, 211). This gentle "goodwill" leads Pierre to making the biggest mistake in his life, which is his marriage to Hélène. Hélène is described as a woman of "unquestionable and all too strong and triumphantly effective beauty" that Pierre observes with "enraptured, almost frightened eyes" (Vol. I, 12; 15). May's "triumph" at the farewell dinner in Wharton's novel recalls the "triumph" of Hélène and her kinsmen, which is achieved through pretense and falsehood. During the supper, Pierre recognized the atmosphere around him and watches with almost paralyzing helplessness as the society not only expects but pressures him to marry Hélène.

In *War and Peace* and in *The Age of Innocence* the high societies are presented as totalities which adhere to conventions and operate through deceitful mechanisms. Both novels, however, deconstruct the visions of totality through the innocent observers who, though appear victims of these societies, as Ellen, Archer, and Pierre are, acquire a vision that allows them to transcend conventionality and gain a fuller visions of life. In *The Age of Innocence*, it is through recognition and acceptance of otherness that moving beyond conventionality becomes possible.

Wharton gives her novel a traditional closure. Archer remains a good husband to May and learns to love and appreciate his life with her. Ellen is said to have left for Paris after having learned of May's pregnancy, and she never physically appears again. However, the character of Ellen does not remain entirely erased. Ellen finds a comfortable home in Paris, where the society has, in Wharton's understanding, to a large extent overcome conventionality. Wharton also gives us a glimpse of the society a quarter of a century later, where the society in New York no longer adheres to blinding convention. In one of the earlier scenes in the novel, one of the representatives of high

society points out that if the society does not guard its purity from people of questionable reputation, “we shall see our children fighting for invitations to swindlers' houses, and marrying Beaufort's bastards” (*The Age* 285). At the end of the novel, Archer’s son Dallas is soon to marry Beaufort’s illegitimate daughter Fanny Beaufort, and his choice is not questioned in society. The “triumph” of May and of the totalizing vision was therefore only temporary in the novel, as it ultimately gave way to a more open society.

The question that needs explanation is why Archer refuses to see Ellen in the final turn of events when he travels to Paris with his son more than twenty years after the events described in the main part of the novel. After May’s death, the meeting of the two would not be questioned. To explain this Wolff sees Archer’s choice as suggesting the “integrity of his life” by making this final gesture he remains true to the values he chose (in Goodman 103). On the other hand, Susan Goodman insists that Archer remains “myopic,” embracing the fantasy of Ellen instead of the real person, as he previously did in his relationship with May (103). For Wharton it is not May, who represents the “old” ways, and not Ellen, who is symbolic of “new” ideas and aesthetics who can offer an impartial vision of the two worlds. Wharton chooses Archer to pass the final comments on the changing society, and therefore he remains a mere spectator till the end of the novel. Wharton begins the novel by showing Archer as a spectator in the New York old Academy; and he remains in this role till the very last pages of the book. His vision of the past and of the present remains the most impartial in the novel. The character of Archer remains consistent throughout the novel, and through him Wharton gives to her novel a sense of closure.

Archer's reflections on the past and the present shed light on the novel's overall message and reveal Wharton's stance with regards to the changing traditions and values. Thinking of the past with May, Archer states: "Their long years together had shown him that it did not so much matter if marriage was a dull duty, as long as it kept the dignity of a duty: lapsing from that, it became a mere battle of ugly appetites. Looking about him, he honoured his own past, and mourned for it. After all, there was good in the old ways" (*The Age* 292), Archer sees value in the traditional structure of the family, sees the "dignity of the duty," which with time he learned to love. His recognition of the positive aspect of the traditional family confirms Wharton's often expressed ideas about morality.

Along with these ideas, Archer also speculates about the present. When looking at the pictures of his wife May and daughter Mary Chivers, he recognizes the fact that his daughter is able to lead a more fulfilling life than that her mother led, the difference between the two which is symbolically revealed in their appearances:

> Mary Chivers's mighty feats of athleticism could not have been performed with the twenty-inch waist that May Archer's azure sash so easily spanned. And the difference seemed symbolic; the mother's life had been as closely girt as her figure. Mary, who was no less conventional, and no more intelligent, yet led a larger life and held more tolerant views. There was good in the new order too. (*The Age* 293-94)

Archer recognizes that his daughter is able to lead a "larger," more fulfilling life than that of her mother. The "new order" allows for Mary to develop her natural talents, which was never an option in the society May lived in. Furthermore, Archer's son is engaged to

Fanny Beaufort, the daughter of a man who disgraced his family, and Archer does not see it as improper for the two to build their happiness together. Though he mourns the good of the old days, Archer also recognizes that the "new order" frees people from blinding conventionality and opens up a possibility of a fuller, more genuine and sincere existence.

Returning to Wharton's statement about the necessity of timing all the novels with regards to the First World War allows for imagining the novel as projected into the future. The war that will break out in Europe will inevitably disrupt the natural order of things and disconnect the pre- and post-war traditions. In the novel, it will influence the lives of Archer's children. The "old" moral values, as Wharton mentions in her critical articles, will be shattered. The pre-war time will become history and the "age of innocence" with no connection to the present. *The Age of Innocence*, therefore, shows that there is value in the time which preceded the war. Primarily, this value lies in the evolutionary progress of society and art; this movement, though not always smooth, was a forward movement, and the "new" was still connected to the "old." In this sense, *The Age of Innocence* attempts to show that bridges can be built across the rift that the war created, and the lessons from the "age of innocence" about the evolutionary development of society and art can be still useful after the war.

Chapter IV: A Shared Sense of History: Poetry, Surgery, and Revolution in Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*

Immediately after Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* (1957) was published in the West, the majority of the critics viewed the novel as a manifestation of the brave voice of the oppressed Russian people, an attempt to "rescue" the times from the official Soviet history, as Nicola Chiaromonte wrote in 1958, "Here is Russia, once again speaking out freely" (Pasternak 231). The history of the book's publication contributed to its popular status in the West. In 1956 Pasternak's novel was rejected for publication in the Soviet journal *Novy Mir* (*Новый мир*) where the author had submitted it. Pasternak, who did not lose hope of making the novel available to the public, passed it to the Italian publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, who had offered to have the novel published in Italy. Thus the novel, which was forbidden from publication in the Soviet Union, was translated into Italian and published in Italy in 1957, creating an international sensation, which led to Pasternak being awarded the Nobel Prize in 1958. The letter from the editors of *Novyi Mir*, which had rejected the novel in 1956, was published openly in the Soviet Union two years later in 1958 in the Soviet journal *Literaturaia Gazeta* (*Литературная газета*). It addresses the novel's unacceptable character: "The spirit of your novel is one of non-acceptance of the socialist revolution. The general tenor of your novel is that the October Revolution, the Civil War, and the social transformation involved did not give the people anything but suffering, and destroyed the Russian intelligentsia, either physically or morally" ("*Doctor Zhivago": Letter* 649). Pasternak was forced to refuse the Nobel Prize, which he did reluctantly. The novel was not published in the Soviet Union in

Pasternak's lifetime, and appeared there only in 1988, soon before the Soviet collapse (see Livingstone).

However, the novel stirred controversy right after its original publication in 1957 with regards to its involvement with history. Isaac Deutscher (1907-1967), a Polish political activist and writer who immigrated to the United Kingdom and is known for his biographies of Soviet leaders and comments on the Soviet Union, saw the novel as less of a declaration for the necessity of democratic changes and more as a nostalgic outcry for the previous tsarist Russia. Deutscher's primary criticism of the novel echoes his own sympathies with the revolution in Russia, the sympathies he does not see reflected in *Doctor Zhivago*. However, he is one of the first critics to bring forth a comparison between *Doctor Zhivago* and Tolstoy's *War and Peace* on the grounds of both works' engagement with history. Deutscher notes that Pasternak's novel, which was heralded as primarily a historical novel, does not describe the historical realities which it claims as its focus. Looking at the novel alongside Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Deutscher writes:

> Tolstoy takes the characters of *War and Peace* straight into the center of the great events of their time. He throws them right into the stream of history, which carries them until they are overwhelmed or come on top. Pasternak places his characters into backwoods and backwaters. They do not participate in any single important event; nor do they even witness any such event. Yet what would *War and Peace* have been without Austerlitz and Borodino, without the fire of Moscow, without the Czar's court and Kutuzov's headquarters, and without the retreat of the grand Armée, all reproduced by Tolstoy's epic genius? […] The drama of 1917-1921 was at least as great as that of 1812; and it is far more momentous in its

> consequences. Yet Pasternak never manages to give us a single glimpse of its main theme, of its central occurrences, and of its significant actors. (244-45)

Isaac Deutscher argues that the historical events are not described vividly and oftentimes are simply absent from the novel, claiming that it "runs away from history." The scholar places an emphasis on the descriptive language of Tolstoy, and asserts that Pasternak's novel lacks the "eye for the historic scene." Deutscher does praise Pasternak for his non-conformist attitudes in the Stalinist era; however, he sees Pasternak's role as that of "passive resistance" and does not recognize the novel as a genuine challenge to the Soviet society precisely because of its lack of direct engagement with history (see Deutscher 256-57).

Deutscher's views have been challenged and are still being challenged from several perspectives, which will be considered later in this chapter. It is worth mentioning that Deutscher's critique of Pasternak's method of depicting history appears similar to the criticism that the veterans of the 1812 Russian war with Napoleon's army waged against Tolstoy. The veterans were concerned with Tolstoy's inadequate picture of historic events. In particular Prince Pyotr Vyazemsky, a participant in many events described by Tolstoy, calls *War and Peace* a "protest against the year 1812" and considers Tolstoy to be a "killer of history" (in Ungurianu109). According to Dan Ungurianu, the veterans were primarily concerned with Tolstoy's "distorting [of] the truly heroic atmosphere of the Patriotic War in his disparaging and irrelevant tone as well as use of sensationalist details" (109). The veterans further refuted Tolstoy's blending of history and fiction, which, in their perspective, could mislead the readers into believing he or she is reading history and not a novel (118).

In light of the veterans' critique of Tolstoy's method of historical representation, Deutcher's claims about Pasternak's failure to engage "central occurrences" and "significant actors" to the extent to which they are engaged in *War and Peace* does not necessarily devalue *Doctor Zhivago* as a historical novel. In fact, such "absences" characterize Pasternak's unique vision of the times. Pasternak, though telling about the events in the stories which the characters narrate, often does not show or describe them with the precision which can be found in Tolstoy. Scenes of battles and bloodshed, the images of political turmoil, do not capture the "spirit" of these events for Pasternak. Historical transformation in the novel is shown through artistic metaphors and analogies which the author uses as symbolic representations of events. Therefore it is typical for his historical imagination to envision the initial excitement of the revolution in symbolic terms: "Stars and trees come together and converse, night flowers philosophize, and stone buildings hold meetings" (128). This unique attitude to history constitutes the main difference between Tolstoy's and Pasternak's *presentations* of history: the former recognizes the necessity to recreate events as reflected in many individual minds, and the latter attempts to convey them as symbolic reflections of history. In avoiding precision and rejecting what he himself calls "Tolstoy's unswerving faithfulness to the facts" (*Doctor Zhivago* 173), Pasternak pursues symbolic ways to represent the times.

The present chapter argues that Pasternak's philosophy of history is closely linked to his vision of art as a medium for communicating history. The novel presents art as a possibility of speaking historical truth. In *Doctor Zhivago,* the character Nicolai Vedeniapin refutes the claim of another character who states, "Russia needs schools and hospitals, not fauns and nenuphars," by claiming that art has been humanity's bare

necessity alongside all other things, as it opens up a possibility of telling "the unarmed truth" (70). History for Pasternak is a process, which is mysterious and impossible to detect: "[History] is not visible, just as it is impossible to see the grass grow" (405), but it is also a natural and organic process, as the analogy with the growing of plants shows. In demonstrating their unique approaches to history and methods of its artistic representation, both *War and Peace* and *Doctor Zhivago* become commentaries not only on the respective historical moment they engage with, but also on art, the process of creativity, and art's capacity as a medium for narrating history.

Irvine Howe responded to Deutcher's critique of Pasternak's presentation of history in his 1959 essay "Freedom and the Ashcan of History." Howe draws attention to Deutscher's claims that *Doctor Zhivago* is a "political act," and not a work of art. In fact, Howe argues that the novel should be seen as "anti-political," as "one that deals with the effort of man to survive in his own being at a time when the imperious demand of politics is total" (260-61). The critic asserts that the greatest value in the novel is placed on "independent consciousness": Pasternak values such independence and attempts to show that survival is contingent on the compromise of the independence of consciousness (261; 262).

A more recent study by Angela Livingstone argues that it does not do justice to the novel to reduce it to either philosophical, or political, or ethical messages. In her 1989 book Livingstone states that "It is symptomatic of Pasternak's method that both of the 1917 revolutions, which most Soviet novels present through crowd scenes with noise, speeches and collective excitement, are reflected by him in the response of one man hearing the news from afar" (69). For Livingstone Pasternak's filtration of history

through the single consciousness of the novel's protagonist Yuri Zhivago is not a sign of a lack of historical perspective, but a way to engage with a broader picture of the era and define the moment. As to the comparison with Tolstoy, Livingstone writes:

> One could never say of Pasternak's characters, as readers often claim of Tolstoy's, that one feels one has really met them, nor (as Bakhtin has shown of Dostoevsky's) that each one speaks from a separate and unique centre of consciousness. On the contrary, they tend to merge, overlap and add up to a single mind. Pasternak deliberately set out to oppose the realist tradition (6).

Livingstone further quotes Pasternak's letter to Stephen Spender, an English poet, in which Pasternak responds to criticism about the lack of character development in his novel: "more than to delineate [the characters] I tried to efface them" (in Livingstone 6). Livingstone makes it clear that neither the precision of historical thinking with concrete descriptions of the events, nor the development of individual characters, are objectives which Pasternak set for himself to accomplish in his work. On the other hand, Livingstone also notes that his work stands apart from the European modernist tradition in rejecting innovations of form. The scholar argues that the novel is unique in its form and in its content, and takes on "public moral responsibility when even [Pasternak], poet of gardens and weathers, singer of love and language, finally steps on to the public stage to record history, judge society, debate and define the nature of human being" (6). Livingstone's study outlines various aspects of Pasternak's vision in *Doctor Zhivago* in broader context of its time, viewing it primarily as a historical novel and as one which offers invaluable view on the nature of human being and society.

In his book *The Paradox of History* (1969), Nicola Chiaromonte compares the visions of history offered by Tolstoy and Pasternak in their respective historical masterpieces *War and Peace* and *Doctor Zhivago*. The scholar states:

> […] Pasternak, like Tolstoy, was determined to rescue a crucial epoch in the story of the Russian people from the falsehood of official history. Like Tolstoy, he was inspired by the conviction that history as we actually experience it is not a rational concatenation of events or the outcome of decisions in high places but a mass of infinitesimal accidents and unexpected incidents. (119)

Chiaromonte rightly sees the similar impulses in both novels, the impulses to define and to "rescue" histories which would otherwise be distorted, misrepresented, and misunderstood. Chiaromonte calls *Doctor Zhivago* "a modern sequel to *War and Peace*" in its attempt to define the epoch and to present the author's perspective on the unexplainable mechanisms of history. In this sense, Pasternak's novel calls for a comparison with *War and Peace*.

The nature of Pasternak's involvement with history has remained and, to an extent, still is a subject of discussion, as Isaac Deutscher argued. Pasternak, the "poet of gardens and weathers," as Livingstone called him, turns to a historical subject which immediately forces him to express political stance with regards to Russia's recent history, a move that came as a surprise to many. However, Pasternak's novel in many ways serves as a reflection of the author's own experience. Like many Russian intellectuals, the Pasternak family initially welcomed the Revolutions of the 1905 and 1917, as these events were connected with the hope for liberation from the tsarist autocratic rule and promised democratic transformations and social reforms. The belief that the liberation of

Russia from monarchism would bring in democratic changes and would "usher in an era of unparalleled creativity" was a common conception among the circles of the educated elite (Zubok 2). As his family immigrated to Germany in 1921, Pasternak, who initially joined them, later decided to return to Russia. Commenting on this choice to return, Algis Valiunas in the article "The Man who Dared" (2014) states that "At the time, Pasternak hoped that his singularity might find room for its free development within the brave new world of Soviet Man. In due course he would recognize that the obliteration of true individualism was essential to the survival of the new social organism, diseased and misshapen as it was from its conception" (Valiunas 46). In Russia Pasternak continued to write and publish his original and innovative poetry, simplifying the language of expression to make it more acceptable to various social groups of people. However, the persecutions of intellectuals and clergy that followed disillusioned many of the initial supporters of the social changes in Russia, including Pasternak.

The years of the Soviet Union's involvement in the Second World War unified the country, granting the people hope for a better life after the war. Renewed by this hope, Pasternak published his collection of poems *On Early Trains* (*На ранних поездах*, 1944). The Stalinist terror did not stop after the war, bringing disillusionment to those expecting peaceful life following the years of deprivation. Referring to the situation in the Soviet Union after the war, Pasternak later stated: "If, in a bad dream, we had seen all the horrors in store for us after the war, we should not have been sorry to see Stalin fall, together with Hitler. Then, an end to the war in favour of our allies, civilized countries with democratic traditions, would have meant a hundred times less suffering for our people than that which Stalin again inflicted on it after his victory" (in Ivinskaya 80) It is

in this atmosphere of constant disillusionment and suffering that Pasternak thought about the position of the poet in the society; his vision took form in his novel *Doctor Zhivago.*

Pasternak himself stressed the novel's involvement with history of the era; he considered his *Doctor Zhivago* to be a masterpiece and the summation of his life experiences precisely through its engagement with the time. In a letter to a friend Pasternak expressed his excitement about the work he had finished:

> You cannot imagine what I have achieved! I have found and given names to all that sorcery that has been the source of suffering, bafflement, and dispute for several decades. Everything is named in simple, transparent, and sad words. I also once again renewed and redefined the dearest and most important things: land and sky, great passion, creative spirit, life and death. (In Zubok 1)

It is the argument of this chapter that the "creative spirit," the nature and origin of artistic inspiration, and the role of art as means of historical description remain important subjects of Pasternak's pursuit in his *Doctor Zhivago*; and Pasternak's historical vision becomes visible and can be explained in relation to these themes. Pasternak attempts to tell the truth about the epoch in "simple, transparent, and sad words," yet his main focus always remains on the "creative spirit," which makes it possible to approach and to talk about the unknowable history.

Pasternak's vision of history is presented in Zhivago's silent monologue towards the end of the novel, as he experiences creative inspiration and attempts to define the movement and the course of history:

> [Zhivago] again thought that his notion of history, of what is known as the course of history, was not at all the same as the accepted one, and that he pictured it as

> similar to the life of the vegetable kingdom. In winter, under snow, the bare branches of the deciduous forest are as scraggly and pathetic as the hair on the old man's wart. In spring the forest is transformed in a few days, rises to the clouds; one can lose oneself, hide oneself in its leafy maze. This transformation is achieved by a movement that surpasses in speed the movement of animals, since animals do not grow as quickly as plants, and that can never be observed. A forest does not move; we cannot catch it, cannot surprise it changing place. We always find it immobile. And it is in the same immobility that we find the eternally growing, eternally changing life of society, history, in its unobservable transformations. (*Doctor Zhivago* 405)

Pasternak understands historical processes, the "course of history," as organic, natural processes which are invisible and therefore unknowable. "A forest does not move; we cannot catch it," Pasternak writes; yet the process of "growth" is constant and transformational. Fast, as the growth of plants, it changes lives of nations; and the "unobservable" processes transform societies. These processes, though unknowable, can be envisioned with the help of the metaphor of plant growth. In a moment of inspiration, Zhivago is able to describe, with the help of metaphorical expressions, the likeness of the processes in societies to those in nature. It is only by means of artistic expression that such a complex process as the "course of history" can be defined for Pasternak.

Pasternak's vision of history makes an interesting comparison with that of Tolstoy as expressed in his *War and Peace*, an approach which helps explain the theoretical lenses that both novels adopt in their presentation of events. Pasternak deliberately puts

his historical vision alongside that of Tolstoy, defining his own vision as a more elaborate expression of the view that Tolstoy attempted to convey:

> Tolstoy did not carry his thought through to the end when he denied the role of initiators to Napoleon, to rulers, to generals. He thought precisely the same, but he did not voice it with full clarity. No one makes history, it is not visible, just as it is impossible to see the grass grow. Wars, revolutions, tsars, Robespierres – these are its organic stimulants, its fermenting yeast. Revolutions are produced by men of action, one-sided fanatics, geniuses of self-limitation. In a few hours or days they overturn the old order. The upheavals last for weeks, for years at the most, and then for decades, for centuries, people bow down to the spirit of limitation that led to the upheavals as to something sacred. (*Doctor Zhivago* 405)

Pasternak views historical processes as unknowable and as that which cannot be controlled or even properly understood by men, as he claims that history "is not visible, just as it is impossible to see the grass grow." This view he shares with Tolstoy, who asserts at the beginning to his Second Epilogue to *War and Peace* that "The subject of history is the life of peoples and of mankind. To grasp directly and to embrace in words – to describe – the life not only of mankind, but of one people, appears impossible" (Epilogue, Part Two, 1179). However, Pasternak disagrees with Tolstoy as to the role of the "great men" in history; he sees them as organic "fermenting yeast" which reflects larger processes within the nation. Pasternak claims that Tolstoy "did not carry his thought through to the end when he denied the role of initiators to Napoleon, to rulers, to generals." Tolstoy, on the other hand, describes the flaws of historians who attempt to account for historical processes through the concept of power, leadership, and free will of

men; denounces these visions, claiming that "The life of peoples cannot be contained in the lives of several men, for the connection between these several men and the peoples has not been found" (1192). In Tolstoy's understanding of history, the laws which can define historical movement cannot be explained by the will of the leaders or through the concept of power. Chiaromonte asserts that "What [Tolstoy] attacked in his argument and deflated in his artistic representation was the dominant nineteenth-century idea that man could discover the true laws of history, thereby justifying his demiurgical claim that he could direct events and *make* history" (Chiaromonte "Paradox" 36)

Tolstoy denounces the concept of man's free will using the analogy between astronomy and history:

> As in the question of astronomy then, so now in the question of history, all the difference in views is based on the recognition or non-recognition of an absolute unit serving as a measure of visible phenomena. In astronomy this was the immobility of the earth; in history it is the independence of the person - freedom. [….]
>
> In the first case [the case in astronomy,] the need was to renounce the consciousness of a nonexistent immobility in space and recognize the movement we do not feel; in the present case, [the case in history,] it is just as necessary to renounce the nonexistent freedom and recognize a dependence we do not feel. (Epilogue Part Two 1214-15)

Tolstoy opposes the concept of the free will of man as capable of changing the course of history, but emphasizes time, chance, and foremost divine will in directing the lasting consequences of historical events. As in astronomy the vision of the immobility of the

earth obstructed for centuries the knowledge about the real locations and movements of stars, so in history, Tolstoy, asserts, the concepts of man making history and understanding its laws are illusory. For Tolstoy, historic events are subordinated to the higher divine order but are not the result of organic natural processes, as he writes: "Only the expression of the will of a divinity not dependent on time can pertain to a whole series of events that are to take place over several years or centuries, and only a divinity, without cause, by its will alone, can determine the direction of mankind's movement." (1195). For Tolstoy, it is divine will that directs "mankind's movement." For Pasternak, however, "the great men of history" do appear as an expression of the energy of nations and societies, the organic "yeast" which brings forth processes which are already taking shape within societies.

Though Pasternak and Tolstoy share the vision of history as unknowable, Pasternak attempts to capture the "spirit" of change through poetic language; the "movement of history" becomes visible for him in the glimpses of artistic inspiration that his character Yuri Zhivago experiences, and can only be addressed in terms of poetic metaphorical expression. Tolstoy, on the other hand, attempts to describe the events fully and clearly as they appear in people's individual consciousness; the author stresses that the laws by which history operates are not accessible to people. Tolstoy's character Kutuzov approaches an understanding of history by submitting to the invisible forces of history and to the unknowable divine will. Pasternak's character Doctor Zhivago is able to understand and envision the movement of history and respond to them only in the moment of artistic inspiration.

This vision of history reflects Pasternak's life-long interest in the nature of artistic creativity, expressed earlier in his philosophical and poetic works, as well as declared in his autobiographical *Safe Conduct*, where he writes "the world's best creations, those which tell of the most diverse things, in reality describe its own birth" (70). By calling attention to the artistic quality of language which is capable of addressing what is inaccessible and impossible to detect through other means, Pasternak creates a novel that is as much about history as it is about the process of creation and the nature of artistic inspiration.

At the beginning of the novel, Zhivago's uncle, Nikolai Nikolaievich Vedeniapin (uncle Kolya) has a passionate conversation with his guest, the minor character Vyvolochnov, who questions Vedeniapin's interest in arts, asserting that "Russia needs schools and hospitals, not fauns and nenuphars." Without denying this, Nikolai Nikolaievich engages into an extended explanation of his point of disagreement with these ideas:

> "[…] But the point is precisely this, that for centuries man has been raised above the animals and borne aloft not by the rod, but by music: the irresistibility of the unarmed truth, the attraction of its example. It has always been up to now that the most important thing in the Gospels is the moral pronouncements and rules, but for me the most important thing is that Christ speaks in parables from daily life, clarifying the truth with the light of everyday things. At the basis of this lies the thought that communion between mortals is immortal and that the whole of life is symbolic because it is meaningful." (37)

Given the fact that the characters in the novel are called to merge into a single voice, Nikolai Nikolaievich here expresses the main idea of the novel: art has an incredible capacity to bring forth "everyday" reality, to symbolically reflect the "unarmed truth" of life, and therefore of history. The "music" of art is of the same importance as schools, education and all the benefits of civilization, because it is what differentiates a man from an animal – the capacity to see the truth conveyed in a symbolic form which art provides.

Furthermore, Pasternak's idea of the "unarmed truth" presents a contrast to the vision of "truth" as it was presented in the official Soviet discourse. The truth, often referred to as "the Party's truth" or the higher order "Lenin's truth" in official Soviet discourse (see Clark *The Soviet Novel*), was always a concept that empowered an individual, we can even say "armed" him or her against the views and ideologies which did not correspond to those propagated by the Communist Party. Soviet education aimed to empower individuals by propagating the "true" ideas, the ideas of communism to people. This understanding of "truth" relates to the use of the term "enlightenment" in the official Soviet discourse. In her 2013 article Elizabeth Papazian states that this term was used in relation to Soviet education to bring out the association with the historical Enlightenment and the ideas of "free will and agency for an individual." Thus, the Soviet discourse reveals what Papazian calls "the paradox of the transformative impulse underlying Soviet propaganda: it aims to enlighten at the same time as it aims to control" (68). Therefore the official "truth" aimed to "enlighten" and simultaneously to control individuals, and it is this kind of truth that Pasternak rejects.

Bringing forth the idea of "unarmed truth," Pasternak opposes the vision of truth in the Soviet official discourse; the author presents art as a medium which has the

potential to convey such bare "truth" to people. Fascination with the potential of artistic expression and its power to speak the "unarmed truth" defines the novel's historical focus and constitutes the important theme of its own. Reflecting on art and the history of humanity, Pasternak leads his character Doctor Zhivago to "record history," "judge society" and "debate and define the nature of human beings." He goes through times of elevated excitement and bitter disappointments, always taking historical moments on a personal level and evaluating their potential to inspire creativity and art. Thus doctor-poet Zhivago reflects on the Russian Revolution of 1917 and its effect upon him in metaphorical terms. In his conversation with Lara, who is soon to become his beloved, Zhivago conveys the great excitement of the feeling of liberation from tsarist despotism which was associated with the revolution:

> "I watched a meeting last night. An extraordinary spectacle. Mother Russia has begun to move, she won't stay put, she walks and never tires of walking, she talks and can't talk enough. And it's not as if only people are talking. Stars and trees come together and converse, night flowers philosophize, and stone buildings hold meetings. Something gospel-like, isn't it? And in the days of the apostles. Remember, in Paul? 'Speak in tongues and prophesy. Pray for the gift of interpretation.'" (128-29)

Zhivago reflects Pasternak's own excitement when he saw the great potential of the revolution, which Russian intelligentsia shared, expecting the ending of censorship and welcoming the "era of unparalleled creativity," as Zubok points out. Immediately Lara echoes Zhivago's feeling, making both of them sound as one voice. She says: "About the meetings of trees and stars I understand. I know what you want to say. The same has

happened to me too" (129). The stars, trees, flowers and even buildings seem to be awakened by the incredible energy of the revolution and its promise of freedom. The voices of the characters merge into one as they discuss the promises of the revolution. The feelings they experienced can only be expressed with the help of metaphors, as the "meetings of trees and stars" and as the "movement" which encompasses the whole of Russia.

Zhivago heralds the revolution as an uplifting moment for a person's dignity in his description, which also relies heavily on poetic language:

> "Just think what a time it is now! And that you and I are living in these days! Only once in eternity do such unprecedented things happen. Think: the roof over the whole of Russia has been torn off, and we and all the people find ourselves under the open sky. And there's nobody to spy on us. Freedom! Real, not just in words and demands, but fallen from the sky, beyond all expectation. Freedom by inadvertence, by misunderstanding.
>
> "And how perplexedly enormous everyone is? As if each of them is crushed by himself, by the revelation of his own heroic might. (128)

Pasternak glorifies the sensation of freedom that the revolution has brought and the vision of an individual as enormous and grand, capable of bringing about this freedom. The time is described through metaphorical expression: "the roof over the whole of Russia has been torn off," signaling the unprecedented and spontaneous character of the historical change. People "find [them]selves under the open sky," overwhelmed by the enormous sensation of freedom which overtakes them.

Describing Pasternak's method of narrating history, Livingstone explains: "[Pasternak] says nothing about the monarchy, the Provisional Government, the Soviets, the violence in Petrograd, or conflicting ideologies. Instead, he talks of the change in the quality of existence, the sheer experience of what it feels like for an entire country to be altered by a political event" (Livingstone 69). The scenes of the violence happening in the streets of Petersburg or Moscow are deliberately not put into the main focus; they are often given in brief sentences, as, for example, when the patients in the hospital where Yuri Zhivago serves get excited and shout in brief incomplete sentences: "An event of extraordinary importance. Disorder in the streets of Petersburg. The troops of the Petersburg garrison have gone over to the side of the insurgents. Revolution" (114). Pasternak deliberately does not give realistic pictures of violence of the events, but attempts to convey the sensation of freedom that the intelligentsia experienced and contrast it to the later disappointment they experienced.

Zhivago frequently refers to the image of the sky: freedom is described as "fallen from the sky" and people find themselves "under the open sky." The references to the sky in the novel accompany the descriptions of the great excitement that Zhivago and, it is assumed, the whole Russia, go through associating the revolution with the great promise of democratic change in the country. Such moments recall the encounter with the sky that Prince Andrei experiences after the Battle of Austerlitz in Tolstoy's *War and Peace.* Doctor Zhivago, like Prince Andrei, cannot hold on to the sensation of freedom that he gains for just a brief period of time. Both character return to what Lukacs defines as the world of convention. Analyzing such moments of revelation in Tolstoy, Lukacs states that they are "a factual assurance that an essential life really does exist beyond

conventionality—a life which can be reached through the lived experiences of a full and genuine selfhood, the self-experience of the soul, but from which one must irremediably fall back into the world of convention" (*Theory* 147). Doctor Zhivago's experience is similar to that of Prince Andrei as neither of them can hold on to the sensation of the inner freedom that they gain. However, the genuine epiphany that Prince Andrei feels is associated with his closeness to nature in *War and Peace,* while the sensation of freedom in *Doctor Zhivago* is connected to the creativity and artistic inspiration.

Zhivago as a poet further describes the revolution as bearing an enormous potential for artistic creativity and originality. The revolution in Russia becomes a symbolic spiritual rebirth, which becomes an inspiration for artists, as Zhivago sees it:

> "[…] Everyone revived, was reborn, in everyone there are transformations, upheavals. You might say that everyone went through two revolutions, one his own, personal, the other general. It seems to me that socialism is a sea into which all these personal, separate revolutions should flow, the sea of life, the sea of originality. The sea of life, I said, the life that can be seen in paintings, life touched by genius, life creatively enriched. But now people have decided to test it, not in books, but in themselves, not in abstraction but in practice." (129)

As many representatives of Russian intellectuals at the time, Zhivago expects the "era of unparalleled creativity" to burst into being after the revolution reaches its goal of fighting the tsarist regime (Zubok 2). The revolution is not described in terms of its violent encounters, fighting, casualties, but as the "personal" revolution in mind that promised "the sea of life, the sea of originality." Pasternak describes the historical period in terms

of its relation to the artistic expression; he highlights the moments of artistic inspiration which helped construct the novel, illustrating also the process of artistic creation.

At this stage of his life Zhivago imagines the revolution as first and foremost a cultural phenomenon, as the transformation of personalities which leads to originality of expression. Zhivago tries to see it as something which has become a part of Russian culture, like "Pushkin's unconditional luminosity" and "Tolstoy's unswerving faithfulness to the facts" (114). A cultural phenomenon that, though happened unexpectedly, was somehow already foretold by the great poets and writers in Russia.

However, the association of the revolution with the "spirit" of creativity becomes more and more problematic as the novel progresses. Pasternak brings forth a metaphor of surgery to define and describe the revolution. When trying to explain and rationalize the revolution, Zhivago describes it as follows: "What magnificent surgery! To take and at one stroke artistically cut out the old, stinking sores! Simply, without beating around the bush, to sentence age-old injustice […]" (173). The "surgery" is described as "magnificent," however it is associated with blood and intervention into a human body, the images that no longer present a romantic image or inspire poetry. The image of Russia is associated with human body that tries to recover after the surgery.

The historic events soon lose their association with "honesty" and "productiveness"; they also lose their potential to inspire creativity. Zhivago tries desperately to hold on to the images of regrowth and "renewal," to the "spirit" of creativity and inspiration, as he thinks: "After the war, he wanted to go back to that spirit, to that renewal and continuation, just as he longed to be back home after his absence" (141). Zhivago longs for the promises of the revolution to be fulfilled, but now he is

burdened by the experience which throws ambiguity onto the promises of the revolution. He thinks of the "new" experiences that come to define the revolution:

> To this new belonged the war, its blood and horrors, its homelessness and savagery. To this new belonged the trials and the wisdom of life taught by the war. To this new belonged the remote towns the war brought you to and the people you ran into. To this new belonged the revolution, not as idealized by university intellectuals in 1905, but this present-day one, born of the war, bloody, a soldier's revolution, reckless of everything, led by connoisseurs of this element, the Bolsheviks. (141-42)

These later images of the period are not described in terms of extended metaphors as they lose their potential to inspire creative response. The "blood and horrors," "homelessness and savagery" are the things that contrast strongly with the spirit of "genius" and "originality" described previously, when Zhivago shared his hopes and expectations. Now, having served at the hospital during the war, Zhivago can no longer hold on to the "idealized" version of the revolution, but sees the "bloody" and "reckless" image of it; he is also tired and angered by the unrelenting pressure of the Bolsheviks, whom he calls the "connoisseurs" of war and destruction. The images of "blood," "recklessness," and "savagery" further the vision of the revolution as surgery "surgery."

Contrary to Zhivago's expectations, instead of bringing up the spirit of creative originality, the revolution seems to have effaced the personalities of his friends, making them sound as if they have lost their individual voices:

> In the course of the next few days it became clear how alone he was. […]

> His friends had become strangely dim and colorless. Not one of them had preserved his own outlook, his own world. They had been much more vivid in his memory. He must have overestimated them in the past. (154)

Zhivago even initially blames his friends for losing their "originality" due to the loss of their privileged status in the society. However, he becomes increasingly aware that the whole of his country has become "dim and colorless" as the promises of the revolution were never fulfilled. The impending threat to freedom of expression and even to life in the new society seems to efface the personality traits which used to define people.

Here Zhivago's profession of a doctor helps him to "diagnose" society; as a doctor, he is able to see that the "surgery" has failed. Excitement of the initial stage of the post-revolutionary period is change to the realization of the present-day hardships. Zhivago reflects: "People in the cities were helpless like children in the face of the approaching unknown […]" (163). The "helplessness" of the Russian people in the face of the unknown future becomes similar to a disease, the association that helps explain Zhivago's identity as a doctor. Pasternak writes: "But the doctor saw life unvarnished. Its condemnation could not be concealed from him. He considered himself and his milieu doomed. They faced ordeals, perhaps even death. The numbered days they had left melted away before his eyes" (163). Zhivago as a doctor who can diagnose sicknesses sees "life unvarnished" and realizes that the intelligentsia not only lost their spirit of creativity, but face the problem of survival in the new regime of persecutions and aggression to all associated with the former privileged classes.

Contrasting the high expectations that people had with the present state of the "unknown" and fear for life, Pasternak imparts a sense of the unknowablility of history

and the impossibility of prediction of its outcomes. Zhivago identifies the post-revolutionary life and the whole movement of history as defying the norms of logic and reason. Travelling in a train, he addresses the character Samdeviatov: "There, you see, you're a Bolshevik and you yourself don't deny that this isn't life, but something unprecedented, phantasmagorical, incongruous" (235). The subsequent Civil War that breaks out in Russia turns the message and promise of the revolution into violence. The revolution and its aftermath can only be describes as something "unprecedented, phantasmagorical, incongruous."

This understanding of historical events as irrational and ultimately unknowable is also characteristic of Tolstoy's vision. Unlike Pasternak, Tolstoy writes about historical events, defining their precise location and time, and describing the details of landscape, while Pasternak attempts to convey the general feeling of the event, as well as to draw attention to the importance of the artistic expression in conveying of this general sensation. Both authors attempt to picture historical events as incongruent and baffling. A moment which comes close to Tolstoy´s descriptions of war takes place in Pasternak´s novel when Yuri Zhivago participates in a battle after being forcibly conscripted as a doctor into a Red partisan unit during the Civil War. Here he unintentionally breaks the rule of the Red Cross International Convention, which proscribes medical workers´ participation in fighting, and takes part in the defense of the partisan unit. Zhivago, who has been taken to the Red partisan encampment against his will, sympathizes with the young boys who lead the attack upon his unit. However, he also feels compelled to support the defense of his unit and "to do what the others were doing" (300). Having submitted to the general chaos of the moment, Zhivago shoots a young White soldier.

Though the doctor has aimed at the tree, the confusion of the battle leaves no time for him to carefully wage his actions; full of pity Zhivago wonders: "Why did I kill him?" The war is shown as a site of extreme confusion, where Zhivago cannot understand the purpose of fighting and killing, yet cannot stay away from the environment which pushes him to take action.

It is impossible for Zhivago to draw a distinct line between enemies and allies. Forced to defend his camp, Zhivago strongly empathizes with the White soldiers. Looking into their faces, he images that these are the faces of the people he knows or used to know:

> The doctor did not know any of them, but the faces of half of them seemed to him habitual, seen, familiar. They reminded him of his former schoolmates. Could this be that these were their younger brothers? Others he seemed to have met in street or theatre crowds in the years gone by. Their expressive, attractive physiognomies seemed close, kindred. (298-99)

This episode in the novel reflects Levinasian acceptance of the other, as Zhivago cannot label people on either side as his enemies. Zhivago is in the Red Army unit, however, he feels that it is only accidentally that he is found in the position of an enemy with regards to those young and innocent faces who fight on the other side. He compares them to the people he knew and imagines meeting those who are in the position of his enemies in casual everyday situations. These visions erase the presentation of the young soldiers as enemies and evoke sympathy for them.

Pasternak further confuses the distinction between the people on the battlefield and complicates the vision of them as enemies. While examining the bodies of the dead

telephonist who belonged to the partisan unit and the White soldier he has shot, Zhivago finds that both men kept the same Ninety-first Psalm hidden among their belonging. Though the psalms are written in different styles, the White soldier has it written in canonical Old Church Slavonic, while the telephonist has it in plain spoken Russian, the kinship between these two people is emphasized, as both of them share the same beliefs and both seek consolation in prayer. When Zhivogo discovers that the soldier he shot was just wounded, he secretly takes him to his unit's hospital and nurses him back to health despite the fact that "[the soldier] did not conceal from his saviors that he would return to the ranks of Kolchak's army and continue fighting the Reds" (302). The scene shows Zhivago as belonging simultaneously to both hostile encampments. Though serving as a doctor for the Red partisans whose unit is under attack, he feels that people on the White side are close to him in their education, morals, and upbringing. As a doctor, he also maintains the position in-between the enemy camps. Zhivago is in the unique position to observe that both, the partisan and the White soldier, say the same prayers, which makes the ideological distance between them not so radical. Despite the slight differences in expression, these people display the same need for comfort and alleviation of fear in times of trouble. Zhivago is compelled to help people on both sides, as he nurses the wounded soldier back to health. His position of being in-between the two camps also allows him to perceive the confusing atmosphere of the battle most poignantly. Livingstone notes that the "motif of the same poetic text being shared by very different people" is a unifying force of life (76). The shared text becomes symbolic of the shared history and destiny despite the differences in social standing and the political interests which divide people. The prayer that both soldiers share discovered by Zhivago becomes

symbolic of the acceptance of otherness in the novel: the two characters that imagined each other as enemies are shown as having more in common than they suspected. Zhivago's effort to save the young soldier and let him go demonstrates Levinas's responsibility towards the other and acceptance of otherness that becomes of importance at the moment of national crisis.

Though Livingstone rightly points to the importance of poetic expression in the novel, the mentioned scene also conveys a sense of unknowable but shared history, which remains invisible in the general confusion created by massive events, but can be approached in the moments when the enemies are forced to recognize commonality of attitudes or behaviors. In Pasternak's novel, this mutual sense is found in a prayer-song which unites the enemies. A similar scene can also be found in *War and Peace*; the characters here visibly share the mutual sense of confusion and fear. When Pierre observes the Battle of Borodino as a civilian, he cannot make sense of the happenings around him and in the confusion seizes a French officer and the officer also seizes Pierre. For a moment the two are unsure as to who is the captive and who is the captor: "For a few seconds the two men looked with frightened eyes into their mutually alien faces, and both were perplexed about what they had done and what they were to do. 'Am I taken prisoner, or have I taken him prisoner?' each of them thought" (Vol. III 797). The sense of mutual misunderstanding of the situation, as well as the erasure of the clear line between the enemies is characteristic of the historical visions of both authors.

The dramatic moment of Zhivago shooting the young White soldier is reminiscent of another moment in Tolstoy's novel, the death of young Petya Rostov who, having

entered battle with high expectations for glory, perishes in the dim and confused atmosphere of the battle.

> "Wait?... Hurra-a-ah!..." shouted Petya, and not losing a moment, he galloped towards the place from which the shots were coming and where the powder smoke was thickest. A volley of shots rang out, stray bullets whined and splatted into something. The Cossacks and Dolokhov galloped after Petya through the gates of the house. In the dense, undulating smoke some of the French dropped their weapons and ran out of the bushes towards the Cossacks, others ran down the hill to the pond. Petya galloped on his horse across the manor courtyard, and, instead of holding the reins, waved both arms somehow strangely and quickly, and kept slipping further and further to one side in the saddle. Running into the campfire smoldering in the morning light, the horse balked, and Petya fell heavily onto the wet ground. The Cossacks saw how his arms and legs jerked rapidly, though his head did not move. His head had been pierced by a bullet. (Vol. IV 1057-58)

In describing this scene, Tolstoy allows the readers to hear the ringing of shots, see the thick "powder smoke" and the light from the camp fire, as well as to feel the confusion of people running in the field. Petya's slightly strange behavior – "instead of holding the reins, [he] waved both arms somehow strangely and quickly, and kept slipping further and further to one side in the saddle" – is not immediately associated with death, but with the general atmosphere, where nothing is clear because of the shots, the smoke, and people's rapid movements.

This kind of description is not characteristic of Pasternak's narrative. Tolstoy goes into detail describing the impulses registered by human senses as the events are unfolding, while Pasternak narrates his scene from Zhivago's perspective, allowing us to see the confusion in Zhivago's desperate question "Why did I kill him?" Though the techniques that the authors use are quite different in both novels, the battle scenes remain visible only through glimpses of confusion and in their aftermath.

Pasternak continues to draw attention to artistic expression as a means which allows talking about history and transmitting the experience of it. The revolution in the novel is further described through the metaphors of "disease." Zhivago's role as a doctor is to try to make sense and possibly even find "cure" for the traumatic present that the county's sick body experiences after the revolution. Zhivago also becomes a poet and writes more and more as the novel progresses because the scientific approach associated with medicine fails to provide him with a vision necessary to find this "cure," which consists in finding the form to express the historical moment.

In the novel, Zhivago is constantly surrounded by the images of disease, deception, and chaos; these images become metaphors that help define the historical moment in the book. The most striking is an episode of Zhivago travelling with a young hunter, who introduces himself as Pogorevshikh and who, Zhivago finds out, is deaf but has learned to talk. Zhivago correctly guesses that this person must be the one who assisted in creation of the independent republic of Zybushino, where a small administrative unit declared independence from the whole country of Russia refusing to obey the Provisional Government of the time. Zhivago realizes that this youth has deceived the uneducated people of Zybushino by pretending to miraculously gain the

capacity of speech in the moments of inspiration, and thus manipulating people's decision to separate from the country (143-44). This episode stresses the general atmosphere of chaos in the country, where people, "helpless like children," can no longer distinguish between the truth and lies, and can be manipulated into senseless deeds.

The image of a deaf leader who deceives people in this episode contrasts with Tolstoy's symbolic use of the image of disability in his novel. Such characters as Pierre and Princess Marya Bolkonsky are shortsighted in the novel, however, they possess a vision that allows them to understand other people and situations better than other characters understand them. The character of Kutuzov is blind in one eye, yet he is able to command the lead the whole army, and under his leadership the army is victorious. These characters are not tied to their sensory experiences but gain a vision beyond such experience. In *War and Peace*, Prince Vasily mocks the fact that Kutuzov is appointed commander in chief of the Russian army, saying: "Is it possible to appoint as commander in chief a man who cannot mount a horse, who falls asleep at a council, a man of the lowest morals! […] but is it possible at such a moment to appoint a man who is decrepit and blind, plain blind? A fine thing to have a blind general!" (Vol. III 707). The character of Kutuzov helps Tolstoy to develop his idea about history as impossible to understand or grasp. Kutuzov, though he lacks sight, understands that history cannot be comprehended. He possesses a wisdom that is not accessible to people with a perfect sight who try to understand and control the course of history. Kutuzov leads the army to victory because he possesses a larger understanding that "great men" cannot make history.

The themes of chaos and madness are connected in *Doctor Zhivago* to the theme of people's misused talents, the spirit of mediocrity, or as Pasternak calls it, the "geniuses

of self-limitation" (405), which lead to the loss of historical opportunities. Pasternak mourns such loss of talent, originality and creativity. He explains people's submission to "revolutionary madness" by overreliance on rational and calculated thinking, and forgetting about the impulsive and spontaneous, which inspires creativity.

The prominent example of a person who becomes trapped in such "revolutionary madness" is the character of Antipov/Strelnikov. Antipov is trained as a historian, but abandoned this field and teaches himself mathematics. In the context of the novel, his choice to pursue mathematics can be seen as reflecting his desire to find a totalizing vision of the world, which he cannot find in history. Antipov's reliance on rigid logical thinking and categorization and an attempt to explain everything cannot save him from his limited vision and even obstructs his capacity to do good. In addition to medicine, Zhivago embraces poetry, which grants him a vision that is broad and complex, and enables him to understand and artistically recreate reality. In the novel Pasternak describes Antipov in the following way:

> But for the activity of a scientist laying new paths, his mind lacked the gift of unexpectedness, that power which, with unforeseen discoveries, disrupts the fruitless harmony of empty foresight.
>
> And for doing good, he, a man of principle, lacked the unprincipledness of the heart, which knows no general cases, but only a particular ones, and which is great in doing small things. (223-24)

Antipov, a kind and studious person, who "possessed a rare degree of moral purity and fairness," mistakenly sees the revolution as a path to fulfillment for all people. His lack of the "gift of unexpectedness" and the eye for "unforeseen discoveries" contrast him to

Zhivago, who combines the compassionate perspective and the diagnostic ability of a doctor with the spontaneous and original mind of a poet. Unlike Antipov who embraces logical and calculated understanding of the world, Zhivago can understand ambiguity. Though initially enchanted by the energy of the revolution, Zhivago preserves the capability to see life "unvarnished," while Antipov mistakenly envisions life "as enormous arena where people, honorably observing the rules, compete for perfection" (224). Antipov's marriage to Lara does not provide him with the fulfillment he expected from it; he also cannot find fulfillment in his profession, as he cannot move to teach to St. Petersburg due to the war. Antipov finds the escape from his unfulfilling marriage and profession by joining the army to fight against Bolsheviks, then later he secretly joins the Reds, having changed his name to Strelnikov. This character seeks self-assertion and fulfillment through acts of cruelty and violence. Having discovered that life is not as fair as he has imagined it, Antipov holds on to the offence and sees violence as a means of combating and avenging unfairness. "The gift of unexpectedness" and the power of "unforeseen discoveries" are qualities which poetry is capable of pursuing. Striving for perfection and always adhering to the rules, Antipov lacks these qualities; he also lacks the "heart," the creative approach, which can, at times, violate the principles which an individual has chosen for himself and achieve greatness by pursuing small good things, such as showing love and compassion towards others.

Pasternak emphasizes a "rare degree of moral purity" as Antipov's characteristic trait, which calls to mind the preoccupation of the leaders of the Communist Party with purges and creation of pure society, free from those who were seen as enemies of the people. Purity here can be also seen as opposed to diversity, as the state sought to create

the society where all individuals conformed to a certain standard. Antipov, through his limited vision, imagines all people as uniform and "compet[ing] for perfection." This character who seeks for a vision of the world as totality and lacks the breadth of poetic imagination cannot understand or tolerate the irrational, unexpected, and impure.

Antipov's mind is opposed to that of the poet, as it is associated with an unnatural, even mechanical worldview. Elliott Mossman draws attention to the fact that Pasternak turns to the mechanical metaphor to describe Antipov. Mossman states that "the mechanical image was a common one in the post-Symbolist search for metaphors to equal the wayward force and unpredictable path of the Revolution" (258). Zhivago, reflecting on his meeting with Antipov/Strelnikov, states that "The arbitrariness of the revolutionaries is terrible not because they are villains, but because it's a mechanism out of control, like a machine that's gone off the rails" (Pasternak *Doctor Zhivago* 266). Antipov, who lacks "heart," has become into a "machine" "gone off the rails" who settles his accounts with life for the suffering he went through. Antipov's adopted name, "Strelnikov" ("the shooter") supports the development of this mechanical metaphor. Pasternak adopts this metaphor to outline the limitation in the personality of Antipov: the self-destructive ambition of this character, his inability to extend love toward his neighbors, and accept his life as a sacrifice for the good of others. Through Antipov/Strelnikov, Pasternak is able to express his vision of historical transformation as a mechanistic process, which is opposed to natural development of society and which has gone out of control. As his name which includes the preposition "anti" indicates, Antipov is opposed to Zhivago, who combines the sensibility of the poet with the compassionate

but logical reasoning of a doctor and is able to both feel and comprehend historical processes.

During the final encounter of Antipov and Zhivago, when Antipov is persecuted by Bolsheviks who no longer need his services, he "was possessed by the same spirit of self-exposure, re-evaluated himself entirely" (408). Now Antipov, no longer needed by Bolsheviks, embodies an element that is different from the uniform vision that communism was trying to achieve, he becomes an "impurity" similar to that he was trying to eliminate while fighting with the Red Army. Listening to his feverish and desultory confessions, Zhivago is able to discern and give a "diagnosis" to the whole epoch:

> This was the sickness of the age, the revolutionary madness of the epoch. In thought everyone was different from his words and outward show. No one had a clear conscience. Each with good reason could feel himself guilty, a secret criminal, an unexposed deceiver. On the slightest pretext, a rage of self-castigating imagination would play itself out to the uttermost limits. People fantasized, denounced themselves, not only under the effect of fear, but also drawn on by a destructively morbid inclination, of their own free will, in a state of metaphysical trance and passion for self-condemnation that, once set loose, could not be stopped. (408)

Zhivago is able to sympathize with Antipov, who fell ill with the "sickness of the age," submitted to the "revolutionary madness of the epoch." The doctor realizes that "no one had a clear conscience. Each with good reason could feel himself guilty" for letting this madness thrive among them. The "morbid inclination" and "self-destructive" impulse

associate the age with sickness and madness. In his realization that no one's conscience is clear, Zhivago is able to sympathize with Antipov and the two are able to understand each other before Antipov commits suicide.

The moment when Zhivago is able to sympathize with Antipov demonstrates a clear Levinasian moment in the novel. Zhivago and Antipov are no longer opposed to each other. In the image of the other, whom Antipov represents, Zhivago is able to recognize himself and see his own "sickness," as well as the "sickness" of the whole epoch: this sickness is defined as the "revolutionary madness," of which everyone was guilty. The borders between I and the other are erased at this moment of unity, and the two characters, the representatives of different ideologies, are able to speak in one voice. The metaphorical image of sickness unites the two characters, who are able to reconcile towards the end of the novel.

The epoch of "sickness" and self-destructive impulses can no longer inspire creativity. At this time Zhivago finds his inspiration in his personal life, in his love for Lara. She is the one who encourages him to write and publish his works, and, as Adonica Sendelbach argues, becomes a co-creator of his poetry (see Sendelbach). Zhivago experiences a great outburst of creativity when he mourns his loss of Lara, after he himself convinces her to leave with Komarovsky for safety. Overcome by grief, Zhivago experiences inspiration as "a multitude of thoughts descended upon him while he worked, simultaneously and in passing" (*Doctor Zhivago* 405). Pasternak describes Zhivago's inspiration as follows: "With the lament for Lara, he also finished scribbling down his stuff from various periods about all sorts of things, about nature, about everyday life" (408). Through his mourning Zhivago is able to feel the pain of his people,

sympathize with them even more and artistically describe the history of his time which is also tragic. Zhivago feels that "what was visceral, still pulsing and warm, was forced out of the poems, and instead of the bleeding and noxious, a serene breadth appeared in [the poems], raising the particular case to the generality familiar to all" (408).

Thus, the poems that Zhivago writes at that time become a metaphorical "cure" for the nation, the cure he was looking for throughout the novel. The "bleeding and noxious" body is no longer visible, but the doctor's vison acquires "a serene breadth" which encompasses all nation. Through "generality" that he achieves in his writing, Zhivago is able to capture the tragedy of the whole nation; he achieves the impersonality of expression, where one voice is able to speak for all, in the language that is "familiar to all," where "what was visceral, still pulsing and warm" becomes artistically transformed, and reflects the shared history of the nation that everyone can identify with. Zhyvago's personal sorrow is elevated to the "generality" that now can encompass the disappointment and sorrow of the nation, creating a possibility for collective mourning over the hope and promise of the revolution which were lost.

As a doctor, Zhivago is able to see "life unvarnished," but the true understanding of people's suffering comes to him only at the time of inspiration; as a poet, he is able to express the "unarmed truth" about history and the suffering of the whole nation without dividing them into two opposing camps. Pasternak ascribes some of his own best poems to Zhivago; these poems are given as a supplement to the book and are meant to outlive Zhivago in the novel. At the moment of inspiration, Zhivago echoes the early statement of his uncle Nikolai Vedeniapin, when the latter talks about the significance of parables for conveying the truth through simple everyday examples (37). Using his own situation

of grieving, Zhivago is able to express the truth with the help of artistic expression in his poems; he reflects the tragedy of the nation whose early belief in the revolution is lost and whose hopes were turned into fear and "sickness."

In *War and Peace*, the character who comes closest to comprehension of history is the Russian general Mikhail Kutuzov who realizes that battles and great events of history are not "made" by men, but are governed by the higher power. Due to this realization, Kutuzov remains calm in all situations, submitting willingly to the events of history. In the novel this character does not look for the meanings of events but willingly submits to the course of history; he is the only one who realizes that history is ultimately unknowable and that humans are not in control of situations. Therefore Kutuzov is never interested in the planning of battles; in fact, he even falls asleep during the discussion of the forthcoming Battle of Borodino. He is not interested in the news and reports that are brought to him, yet he is still able to guide the troops and gain victories. Tolstoy describes this character's attitude in the following way:

> […] as he listened to the reports, it seemed that he was not interested in the meaning of the words being said to him, but that something else in the expression of the face, in the tone of the reporter's speech interested him. By many years of military experience he knew, and by his old man's mind he understood, that one man cannot lead hundreds of thousands of men struggling with death, and he knew that a fate of a battle is decided not by the commander in chief's instructions, not by position of the troops, not by the number of cannon or people killed, but by that elusive force known as the spirit of the troops, and he watched this force and guided it, as far as that lay in his power. (Tolstoy Vol III 805)

Prince Andrei, who observes Kutuzov, is always reassured by the old man's calm demeanor and gains a sense that in letting go of the attempt at total control of battles, Kutuzov is actually gaining a larger perspective of the events and is able to direct the "spirit of the troops." As Zhivago can connect with everyone by achieving a "generality familiar to all" in his poetry, so can Kutuzov reach the "soul of every Russian man" through his intuitive ability to connect with the "spirit of the troops."

Napoleon, on the other hand, attempts to retain total control over the situation and his people. Observing the Battle of Borodino, he tries to find a position that would allow for the clearest and most precise picture of the battle. He tries different locations to observe the battle. Tolstoy writes:

> Napoleon, standing on the barrow, looked through a field glass, and through the small circle of the field glass he saw smoke and people, sometimes his own, sometimes Russians, but when he looked again with the naked eye, he could not tell where what he had seen was. […]
>
> Not only from the place below, where he was standing, not only from the barrow where some of his generals now stood, but from the fléches themselves […], it was impossible to understand what was happening on that place. (Vol. III 799)

No matter where Napoleon stands, he fails to get a complete picture of the battle. There is no defect in Napoleon's eyesight and he also uses a field glass to see the situation on the battlefield better. However, he still cannot attain understanding of the situation on the field. Napoleon's adjuncts constantly bring him reports but "these reports were false," because the situation is difficult to understand and because it changes so quickly that the information that reaches Napoleon becomes incorrect (799). Therefore Napoleon's

instructions "either had been carried out before he even gave them or were not and could not be carried out" (800). Napoleon's vision operates on the assumption that he can understand and therefore control the forces of history, while, in reality, he cannot comprehend them, as he cannot understand the course of the battle.

Napoleon's vision is contrasted to that of Kutuzov. The "mysterious connection" with the troops that Kutuzov is able to achieve is described further in the novel:

> And by some incidental, mysterious connection, which maintains the same mood through the entire army, which is known as the spirit of the army, and constitutes the general nerve of war, Kutuzov's words, his order to fight the next day, were conveyed simultaneously to all ends of the army.
>
> It was far from the same words, the orders that passed through the last links of the chain. […] but the sense of these words communicated itself everywhere, because what Kutuzov had said came not from clever considerations, but from the feeling that was in the soul of the commander in chief, just as it was in the soul of every Russian man. (Tolstoy Vol. III 808)

The "mysterious connection" which Kutuzov maintains with the troops stems from his ability to understand "the soul of every Russian man," as well as his understanding that one person cannot make history. Kutuzov submits to the divine power and through his submission he is able to guide people and connect with them. Zhivago is able to approach understanding of history in the process of artistic creation; through this process of creation he is able to connect with his whole nation.

Both Pasternak and Tolstoy resist a mechanical vision of history. Tolstoy emphasizes that it is the invisible and intuitive soul-to-soul connection with other people and the realization of the unknowability of the rules of history that guide Kutuzov to victory. The scene of Zhivago's death from a heart attack, which happens in a tram while he tries to solve a mathematical problem, further confirms this view. Pasternak describes Zhivago's thoughts preceding his heart attack as follows:

> Yuri Andreevich recalled school problems on the calculation of the time and order of arrival of trains starting at different moments and moving at different speeds, and he wanted to recall the general method of solving them, but failed to do so and, without finishing, skipped from these memories to other, much more complicated reflections. (436)

Though it has become customary to associate the scene of Zhivago's death with that of the beginning of "political and cultural repression" which started in 1928 (Rylkova 151), this association can be further extended, and the scene can be interpreted as that of the poet's death in an atmosphere where the calculated and mechanistic attitude to history prevails. Zhivago realizes that there can be no "general method" for the solution of the multiple problems that his nation faced in the present and mathematical logic proves futile when faced with them. The Soviet five-year plans applied to all spheres of life from economics to culture, which proved themselves ineffective by the time Pasternak was writing and which he also criticizes in the novel, are an example of such mechanistic approach. There is no place for a poet, according to Pasternak, in an atmosphere where the "spirit of limitation" prevails, a spirit which does not recognize the significance of art as a medium for telling the truth and narrating history (405).

The image of Zhivago's heart attack in the streetcar contrasts with the vision of his coffin, surrounded by a "multitude of flowers," "whole bushes of white lilacs, rare at the season, cyclamens, cineraria in pots and baskets" (438). These living flowers are so multiple and blooming that they are said to even "block the light from the window." The vision of flowers which survive and bloom even though it is not the season for them, symbolize Zhivago's poems which are lovingly read by his friends after his death, and which are Zhivago's reflection of the era he lived through. Pasternak's vision of history remains strongly associated with artistic expression which gives form to his character's experiences and to unknowable history.

The purely scientific approach is opposed in the novel to the poet's creative vision, as the opposition between Zhivago and Antipov proves. The poet dies in an atmosphere where free thinking associated with creativity has no place. However, Zhivago's poems which contain the "unarmed truth" and are opposed to the "spirit of limitation" remain and are treasured by people; in these poems his vision continues to live. In the novel it is the creative vision which allows for Zhivago to gain a broad perspective on history and to understand people's suffering.

In Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Kutuzov, despite his disability, has a better understanding of situations than anyone else in the novel. Kutuzov's decisions are not based on pure logic but rather on intuition, and he does not strive for the total control as does Napoleon. Neither Napoleon's favorable location on the battlefield, nor the device he uses to see the events, cannot grant him a larger vision, the vision that help him understand the forces of history. Tolstoy strongly refutes the opinion that "great men" make history, and the character of Kutuzov knows that he is not in control of the events.

Pasternak, on the other hand, sees “great men” as capable of changing history, as people like Antipov who rely on mechanical thinking and logic and do not recognize the country as a living body come to power. Zhivago’s creative vision helps him understand that this mechanical approach cannot be applied to the living body. Though the people holding to the mechanical vision are triumphant at the time Zhivago lives, his poetry lasts even after he dies and thus has a potential to overcome the “spirit of limitation.”

Chapter V: The Construction of a Critical Reader in Vasily Grossman's Novel *Life and Fate*

Vasiliy Grossman's novel *Life and Fate*, which was written over the period starting 1950 till 1959, can be seen as a phenomenon of Khrushchev's Thaw, the time of a relative lessening of the political repressions and a less intense censorship in the Soviet Union. Katerina Clark in her study *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (1981) states that at that time the writers were encouraged "to be bolder in exposing […] the absurd and counterproductive extremes to which various key Stalinist values had been taken" (210). Lasting for approximately a decade, from the early fifties till early sixties, the Thaw period saw criticism of the previous Stalinist regime and of life in the Soviet Union in general. Grossman, an acclaimed Socialist Realist writer, who was nominated for a Stalin Prize, the highest award for literary achievements in the Soviet Union, three times, attempted to have his novel published in 1960 only to have the book banned (see Garrard and Garrard). Not only was the publication of the book refused, but even the manuscripts and the typewriter ribbons were confiscated in 1961. Having foreseen such possibility, the author gave a few manuscript copies of the book to his close friends, who saved it. Despite the strict ban, Grossman continued to fight for the publication of what he saw as the major work of his life. In his 1962 letter to Nikita Khrushchev, Grossman famously writes:

> I ask you to release my book from jail. I ask that my book be read and criticized and reviewed with me and editor, and not by officials of the KGB.
>
> There is no sense, no truth in the present situation, whereby I am physically free, but my book, to which I have given my life, remains in jail. After

> all, I wrote the book; I have not renounced it, and will never do so. Twelve years have passed since I began writing the book. I still think, as I did when I was writing it, that I spoke the truth. I wrote the book out of love and pity for ordinary people, out of my belief in them, I ask you to release my book. (In Garrard and Garrard 356-57)

Despite Grossman's passionate defense of his book, it was never published in his lifetime. In 1974 *Life and Fate* was smuggled abroad with the help of Grossman's friends; the full Russian version of the book was first published in 1980 in Switzerland (Ellis 17).

The novel's "dangerous" status was confirmed in the conversation that Grossman had with Mikhail Suslov, The Chief Ideologue of the Communist Party, where Grossman was given reasons why the book could not be published. This conversation, which took place in 1962, was retrospectively recorded by Grossman from memory. Suslov insisted that "[The] work is dangerous for the Soviet people. Its publication would bring harm not only to the Soviet people and the Soviet state, but also to all those who are struggling for communism beyond the borders of the Soviet Union [….]" (In Garrard and Garrard 357). The Chief Ideologue urged Grossman to write "what is needed and useful for society" and compared the book to "atomic bombs" prepared by the enemies to strike the Soviet Union (358). The vivid comparisons that Suslov utilized to illustrate his points about the dangerous status of the book confirm the book's serious ideological flaws; and his insistence that it could not be published clearly attests to the novel's deviation from the accepted Socialist Realist conventions.

The novel *Life and Fate* presents an interesting phenomenon in the fate of its author. Grossman was known in the Soviet Union for his fictional works, which adhered strictly to the conventions of Soviet Socialist Realism. Notably, he authored such novels as *Stepan Kol'chugin* (1937-40) and *For a Just Cause* (1952)[9], which, though not approved by everyone among the Soviet critics, were highly praised by many and nominated for a Stalin Prize, though failed to receive it. Grossman was also known as a World War II veteran who had worked as a correspondent for the war newspaper *Red Star* (*Krasnaya Zvezda*), a service which made his name into a household name in the Soviet Union (Ellis 5). Grossman received several awards for his efforts at the front, importantly, the award of the Orders of the Red Banner and Red Star.

Critics and scholars have wondered about the nature and the time of Grossman's transformation from the unwavering supporter of the Soviet cause to the harsh critic, who must have harbored ambition of a reformer. Most scholars support the conclusion of Shimin Markish who stated his belief that "the path towards the duel with Soviet power began for Grossman on 22 June 1941," the date when the Nazi German troops invaded the Soviet Union in the Second World War (In Ellis 21). The war, in which Grossman participated as a reporter and which he vividly described in his *Life and Fate*, undoubtedly played a crucial role in his life, influencing his worldview significantly. The novel's attempt at sincere portrayal of the multiple aspects of the life of people in the Soviet Union inevitably contained a harsh criticism of such reality. The writer obviously overestimated the extent to which the Soviet publishers and government officials would be tolerant and open to criticism of the authorities in the period of Khrushchev's Thaw

[9] The publication of *For a Just Cause* in 1952 was significantly delayed. *Life and Fate* continues the storyline of *For a Just Cause*, forming a sequel to it, yet altering the original ideological stance. See Garrard and Garrard 204; 227.

following Stalin's death. Grossman's repeated steps towards having the novel published, calling it the book to which he "[has] given [his] life," and refusal to ever denounce it, signal the great significance he himself placed on the book as a means of influencing the society he lived in. In its attempt to educate the public, the book calls to mind the conventions of Socialist Realism. On the other hand, its criticism of the Soviet reality questions some of the crucial characteristics that Socialist Realist fiction strongly adheres to, namely, the suppression of reader's critical response through the oversimplified treatment of those termed "others" or enemies.

This chapter argues that through his *Life and Fate* Grossman, the acclaimed Socialist Realist writer, reimagines the borders of the Soviet Socialist Realism as a mode of representation of Soviet reality. Certain formal features of the work set it apart from the established Socialist Realist conventions; yet the author's repeated steps to introduce this work to Soviet public signal his attempt to make the novel into a part of Socialist Realist canon. These features lie primarily in the novel's orientation towards presentation of any phenomenon in its dialogic relationship to material, historical reality, which also ties the work to the pre-Soviet tradition of the Russian historical novel, namely to the nineteenth- century masterpiece *War and Peace* (1869) by Leo Tolstoy, at the same time that it establishes a specific kind of relationship with Socialist Realism. In his attempt to change the society in the Soviet Union by envisioning a critical reader, Grossman challenges the existing conventions of Socialist Realism, attempting to make the Soviet Socialist Realist novel into a dialogic genre, open for a multiplicity of voices and perspectives.

Rather than asserting the truth as a given fact for the reader to be reminder of and educated by, as the Socialist Realist principles demanded, the novel invites analysis by giving the reader the possibility to see various perspectives on one and the same phenomenon. The novel explores multiple "truths" as they appear to multiple characters; instead of assertion of a particular idea, this structure invites doubt by creating uncertainty as to whose "truth" is the right one. It is not surprising then that after numerous attempts to have the book published, Grossman got the following response from a Party official: "why should we publish your book and begin a public discussion as to whether anyone needs the Soviet Union or not?" (Garrard and Garrard 359). Thus, through its literary form, the book calls for revision of the very norms and structures by means of which the ideology of the Soviet Union operated. This construction of a critically-minded doubtful reader is by no means new in Russian literature; Lev Tolstoy's *War and Peace* has sometimes been viewed as guilty of the same sin by its contemporaries (see Ungurianu 109-124). The construction of a critical reader is not the only connection between *War and Peace* and *Life and Fate*, a connection clearly announced in Grossman's title; the similarities between the two works extend towards formal, as well as narratological principles. In fact, one work can be seen as modeled upon the other. It is also true that Grossman's novel retains a strong contact with the present historical moment, and its characters obviously mirror Grossman's contemporaries who themselves went through the experience of the war. However, it is of interest that the acclaimed author of Socialist Realist fiction choses to turn to the nineteenth century realist novel *War and Peace* as the primary model for writing his account of the lives of people during the Second World War, rejecting his earlier loyalty

to the state-sponsored mode of artistic representation that is contemporary and prevalent in his lifetime.

The novel's adoption of a skeptical stance of both its characters and the readers towards material, historical reality problematizes its relationship with Socialist Realism as the only mode of representation of this reality accepted by the state. Soviet Socialist Realism declared as the mode of presentation of Soviet reality by the First Congress of Soviet Writer's Union offered a certain perspective for recreation/artistic construction of this reality by artistic means. However, with Socialist Realism as the only mode of representation of Soviet reality accepted at the time, there appeared a danger of a lack of a reader who would be able to take up a critical stance for evaluation of Soviet reality, as well as its representation in art. Grossman's novel opens up a possibility for such a reader to critically engage with Soviet reality by presenting many aspects of it as not yet definitive and thus allowing for critical intervention. Thus, the novel constructs a critical reader who has a skeptical attitude toward Soviet reality. Adoption of a critical stance towards its object of depiction diverges from the conventions of Soviet Socialist Realism to which Grossman's earlier works adhere. This feature necessarily problematizes the relationship between this novel as an ostensible Socialist Realist novel and the Socialist Realist canon, as will be discussed further. By introducing such a critical stance Grossman reimagines the Socialist Realist conventions by establishing a connection of Socialist Realist novel to the earlier Russian realist fiction and reestablishing the continuity of the literary tradition.

One way that the novel establishes its criticism of the material historical reality and manifests its divergence from the Soviet Socialist Realist canon is through its critical

reevaluation of the I-other relationship. The novel deconstructs the totalizing vision of the other by refusing to accept the one-dimensional picture of the other, promoted by the character-types in the Socialist Realist canon. It is of interest to look at the figure of an enemy (both, the enemy in the battlefield and the ideological enemy of the people in the Soviet Union) as the Levinasian other in the analysis of this novel. This approach exposes Grossman's questioning of the accepted Socialist Realist division of literary characters into "us" as ideologically correct ones and "them" as ideologically wrong ones without compromising the basic autonomy of "them" and "us." Grossman's work, contrary to the expectations of his contemporaries, does not intend to gratify its potential reader with showing "us" as always correct and rewarded, and "them" as always wrong and punished. In fact, the Soviet people, understood also as the novels' intended readers, are sometimes shown in the wrong and bearing the tragedy of their ideological blindness. With the artistic means *Life and Fate* exposes the totalizing vision of the other as limiting through problematizing the very idea of an enemy. This is very often done in the novel through deconstruction of the figure who would be a positive hero in the Socialist Realist novel and showing this hero-to-be as potentially harboring the ideologically "wrong" sentiments.

While oftentimes blending the line between "us" and the enemies/"others," the novel does not question the just cause of the war. Like Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, there is a historical necessity for the war as self-defense recognized in *Life and Fate*. As in *War and Peace* the concept of peace in a society where everyone is preoccupied with personal interests is questionable, so in *Life and Fate* the concept of war extends beyond the battlefield into the "peaceful life" where the ideology is handed down to people often

forcing them to make amoral choices. The characters of the novel are far from one-dimensional and the peace scenes are far from idyllic or even "peaceful" in the novel, which sets the work sharply apart from the norms expected from the Soviet novel.

The aspect of creation of a critical reader reveals the proximity of *Life and Fate* to Mikhail Bakhtin's vision of the function of a novel in the society. And the novel's constant inquiry into the established doctrines, ideologies and worldviews through the mode of dialogic confrontations echoes Mikhail Bakhin's juxtaposition of the genres of novel and epic. In his "Epic and Novel: Toward a Methodology for the Study of a Novel" Bakhtin views the novel as a dynamic and developing genre that calls for dialogue as a means of defining historical reality and a critical engagement with it. The epic, by contrast, is viewed as relying on static, closed and finalized descriptions that does not allow for interventions from inside or for further developments. Describing the characteristic features of the epic Bakhtin writes,

> In general, the world of high literature of the classical era was a world projected into the past, on to the distanced plane of memory, but not into a real relative past, tied to a present by uninterrupted temporal transitions; it was projected rather into a valorized past of the beginnings and peak times. This past is finished, distanced and closed like a circle. (19)

This turning to the past and precisely to the "valorized" moments within it, defines the principle that governs the epic worldview, according to Bakhtin. This principle lies in the vision of the world as static and utterly completed. The world of the past cannot be changed or challenged in any way; moreover, it cannot be re-evaluated or viewed from a

different angle. The epic is understood as "the world of 'beginners' and 'peak times,'" as that of "'firsts' and 'bests'" (13).

Therefore, following Bakhtin's train of thought, the epic worldview can be imagined as a storage place for valorized memories, a "closed chest" that is full of the stories from the past. The function of this "chest" is to present a model and inspire the coming generations, yet it cannot be supplemented or revised itself.

Katerina Clark views Bakhtin's "Epic and Novel" as providing a "theoretical framework" for the understanding of the development of the novel in Soviet times (*The Soviet Novel* 38). The epic orientation towards the finalized picture of the world is reminiscent of the Socialist Realist demand of presentation of a certain type of a hero in fiction and development of a certain types of themes. These themes were presented in the statutes of the Soviet Writer's Union of 1934:

> The victory of socialism, the rapid growth of productive forces unprecedented in the history of humanity, the burgeoning process of liquidation of classes, the elimination of all possibilities for exploitation of man by man and the elimination of the contrasts between the city and the countryside, and, finally, the progress of science and culture create limitless possibilities for a qualitative and quantitative increase in creative forces and for the expansion of all types of art and literature. (In Robin 11)

Thus the writers were called to recreate a specific aspect of the material, historical reality and view it at a very specific angle. The assertion of the "victory" of socialism, the "rapid growth" of "productive forces," and the "progress of science and culture" were to be seen as unquestioned facts, the "absolute truth" that could not be challenged. The list of

themes above was called to "create limitless possibilities for a qualitative and quantitative increase in creative forces and for the expansion of all types of art and literature." Thus, this list was seen as opening creative possibilities for the Soviet artists, rather than limiting them to adopt a specific view.

In an attempt to explain the characteristic features of Socialist Realism, Katerina Clark emphasizes that it evolved as a practice rather than a theory and even defines it as "a doctrine defined by its patristic texts" (*The Soviet Novel* 3). The scholar singles out certain characteristic features of the doctrine, such as, "optimism," "accessibility to masses," "party-mindedness," yet stresses that the evolution of the novelistic "master-plot" as the definitive characteristic of Socialist Realism (3-9). The master-plot, which "shape[s] the novel as a sort of parable for the working-out of Marxism-Leninism in history" (9), often worked as an element which explained and proved the legitimacy of the victory of communism on Soviet terrain, and expressed an unwavering hope in its ultimate victory, as well as in the attainment of the common good through such victory. The master-plot was derived from the pre-Revolutionary and later post-Revolutionary novels, which clearly displayed and propagated party-minded ideals. Such novels included Maksim Gorky's *Mother* (1906), Dmitry Furmanov's *Chapaev*, Fyodor Gladkov's *Cement* (1925), Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel was Tempered* (1936) and others (4). Over time, some of the characteristics of the master-plot were crystalized and became its defining features, like that of the narrative mirroring the stages of the Revolution. The other characteristics include the existence of the positive hero and the revolutionary elder, defined as "someone tested by revolutionary or enemy fire," who has the capability to instruct the younger generation in the positive values of loyalty to the

state and perseverance in the times of trouble (169). Though over time these set character-types might have undergone certain evolutions, their main functions of presenting a somewhat romanticized version of reality through the ideological perspective remained unchanged.

This attitude towards the artistic presentation of the material, historical reality echoes Bakhtin's discussion of the epic worldview, which can be seen as a metaphor for the Socialist Realist novel. In the epic, according to Bakhtin, it is "impossible to change, to re-think, to re-evaluate anything" because "it is completed, conclusive and immutable, as a fact, an idea and a value." ("Epic" 17) This immutability and conclusiveness eliminates the possibility of questioning or bringing in any critical stance for reevaluation of the given idea, fact or value. According to Clark, the task of literature was to encourage people to "look not alongside, to their 'brothers,' but upward to their 'fathers'" (*The Soviet Novel* 136), which fact indicates the overall obsession with the past rather than the present in the Soviet literature. The existence of the master-plot which included certain character-types call to mind the epic immutable character-molds discussed in "Epic and Novel." The carefully chosen historical material served as an important background in the Soviet novel and a certain positive hero reflected a very concrete set of ideological ideas. These features served the purpose of "educating" people, as mentioned in the statutes of the Writer's Union: "the veracity and the historically concrete aspect of the artistic representation of reality have to be allied to the task of ideological change and the education of workers in the spirit of socialism" (in Robin 11). The necessity to "ally" the work with the "spirit of socialism" that gave to the fiction of the period its static

dimension is also reminiscent of Bakhtin's epic, whose task is to concentrate on the heroic element of the past.

By contrast, Bakhtin understands a novel as a dynamic genre which allows for an un-finalized pictures of its subjects. In the novel, "authorial language lies on the same plane as the 'depicted' language of the hero, and may enter into dialogic relations and hybrid combinations with it" ("Epic" 27). Thus, the world of the novel is open, allowing for a constructive reevaluation of historical reality by consideration of a plurality of viewpoints. This dialogue of the author with the depicted subject is seen as impossible under the conditions of epic representation, where the "absolute past" cannot be entered, and therefore, challenged in any way. The definite and immutable picture of an epic hero was overcome, in Bakhtin's vision, when the novel became the dominant literary genre, allowing for representation of the characters and ideas that are in flux and existentially problematic within themselves.

It is significant that Grossman's legacy includes the examples of both worldviews. For example, the author's first novel, *Stepan Kol'chugin* (1937-40), mentioned earlier, was presented for the Stalin's Prize in literature as it clearly reflected the values of the state and corresponded to the structural demands of Soviet Socialist Realism. *Stepan Kol'chugin* follows the fate of a typical Soviet Socialist Realist hero. Stepan, as a representative of the working class, comes to the realize the "correctness" of the socialist views and the progressive and life-transforming role of the Communist Party in the lives of people, particularly in that of the workers. As an "industrial novel" of the 1930s, the novel which is centered on the lives of the workers at the factories, *Stepan Kol'chugin* describes a small mining town of Donbass region, Ukrainian Soviet Republic,

concentrating on the hard life and work conditions in the town. It can only be speculated why Stalin rejected this novel for the prize. It is possible that the reason for this was the novel's pronounced emphasis on the necessity to address the problems of the Donbass miners to improve their living conditions, instead of stressing the necessity of sacrificing everything for the cause of the world victory of the Revolution. Katerina Clark notices that Stepan, the main character of the novel, "conceives of the progress to communism in terms of building the city" ("Engineers" 258), which, though subtly, turns the reader to the necessities of the present moment, the very present which Bakhtin contrasts to the "absolute past" of the epic. The work was allegedly called a "'Menshevik' novel" by Stalin himself and the nomination withdrawn despite the novel's mirroring of the master-plot with the typical character-hero who comes to be an ardent believer in communist ideas, and the explicit unquestioned didactic message expressed in it (Shrayer 539).

Though Grossman's works which preceded the Second World War might have betrayed certain subtle sentiments which diverged from the officially propagated positions, as was likely the case with *Stepan Kol'chugin*, in their form these works remained faithful to Socialist Realist conventions, and in content attested to the deep belief in the glorious future of people under the leadership of the Party. Though not so well received, *Stepan Kol'chugin* does illustrate Grossman's early acceptance of the Soviet communist ideas, as well as his early attempt at writing within the Socialist Realist method. The idealistic character, Stepan, demonstrates some of the most pronounced characteristics of the positive hero in the novel. While being imprisoned, the "enlightened" Stepan reflects on freedom, allying his fate with the collective fate of his countrymen and all the people on earth:

— Воля, воля! — повторил несколько раз Степан.

[…]. Степан понял: что бы ни ждало его, он не свернет.

Он чувствовал, что свобода нужна не только ему одному, не только близким его, не только жившим в каторжных тюрьмах, в ссылке, в арестантских ротах, а всей огромной трудовой земле. (811)

["Freedom, freedom!" Stepan repeated several times.

[…]. Stepan understood that no matter what awaited him, he wouldn't turn back.

He felt that freedom was necessary not only for him alone, not only for his family and friends, not only for those who were in convict prisons, in exile, or in penal battalions: it was necessary for the whole wide toiling earth.] (Translation mine)

While suffering from adverse circumstances, Stepan realizes that he is not afraid of anything, even death upon which he also reflects, but he will stay loyal to his ideological convictions and "will not turn away" from the course of communism, which he recognizes as a way to freedom not only for himself and his loved ones, but for the whole humanity. This character, who becomes a mouthpiece for the communist ideology, comes to represent the Bakhtinian monologic character of the epic. The character of Stepan becomes important as it illustrates precisely the Socialist Realist character-type which becomes deconstructed later in Grossman's writing career, and whose one-dimensionality becomes problematized and complicated through the characters in *Life and Fate*.

As mentioned previously, the majority of Grossman scholars see the Second World War as a turning point in Grossman's worldview, which separate Grossman

conformist works from those that question and undermine the official position of the state. However, in his book *Vasily Grossman: The Genesis and Evolution of the Russian Heretic* Frank Ellis argues that Grossman's diversion from the dominating ideology of the state was a gradual process which was slowly taking root throughout most of Grossman's adult life. In particular, Ellis singles out "collectivization; industrialization; and 1937" (the year of purges and liquidation of kulaks) as the major events that led to the writer's reconsideration of his early views, and sees the Stalinist terror as a major "turning point" in Grossman's perception of the politics of the state (see Ellis 21-26). Grossman's failures to receive the Stalin Prize two more times after the rejection of his *Stepan Kol'chugin* can be seen as evidence in support of Ellis's theory of the more gradual ripening of the author's social position which manifested itself, though very lightly, in his pre-Second World War writings.

Though the master-plot of the post-Second World War writings was expected to inherit most of its classic features, with a possible substitution of the Revolution by the new myth of the Great Patriotic War, Grossman's *Life and Fate* builds a picture of a totally new reality, rejecting most of the Soviet literary norms. It is very hard to draw a definitive line that marks the change in Grossman's ideological views which reflect his rejection of Soviet Socialist Realism. In fact, even Grossman's post-war novel *For a Just Cause*, the edition of 1952, to which *Life and Fate* is a sequel, was nominated for the Stalin's Prize by some of its reviewers, and is often seen as strictly adhering to the ideological and formal demands to the Soviet literature, as Robert Chandler, the translator of *Life and Fate* into English, notes in the Introduction to the novel.

Grossman's *Life and Fate* is remarkable in a sense that it creates tensions in the system of Socialist Realism by calling for a critical reader through presentation of multiple dialogic juxtapositions of various views and ideas and allowing the reader to choose whom he allies with. On the level of content the characters of the novel present the positions and express ideas which are juxtaposed to those of others. Ideas, which the novel develops and presents in lengthy scenes, are suddenly destroyed through their juxtaposition to other scenes. And finally, the novel reveals and exposes the inner split of the characters, the inner dialogs of separate individuals, showing personalities that are not static in their convictions. The presentation of a multiplicity of viewpoints and their consideration among various characters and within individual minds create a specific attitude that the reader develops to the text: the reader grows suspicious of the characters which represent a totalizing view towards an idea, anticipating that this view will be deconstructed later in the novel. In a similar way, the novel molds the reader who is suspicious of the totalizing vision of the other, allowing the reader to recognize the inner split within the characters, thus denying the novel its positive hero found in the Socialist Realist canon. Instead, the novel encourages the reader to constantly look for multiple angles under which a phenomenon can be evaluated and promotes questioning and reevaluation of the idea of the "other."

Life and Fate presents a great multiplicity of characters. Similar to Tolstoy's *War and Peace,* the actions are concentrated around two related families, that of the Shaposhnikovs and the Strums. There are also characters, who stand out alone, who are not apparently related or otherwise connected to either of the families, but are devoted much time to and considered in their dynamic development throughout the novel.

One of such characters is Mikhail Sidorovich Mostovskoy. The beginning pages of the novel build the picture of the German camp for "criminals who had not committed a crime" but had the potential to be do so as they were suspected of incorrect political beliefs (Grossman *Life* 21) Here the novel introduces Mostovskoy, a communist, who is devoted and strong in his convictions. Advanced in age, this character is akin to "revolutionary elder" in the Socialist Realist novels, fit to instruct the younger generation in the spirit of Communism. Mostovskoy believes in the absolute authority of the Communist party, in its potential to make all people happy and prosperous, as well as in its right to demand sacrifices for this just cause. At first sight this character, an inspiration for other communists also imprisoned in the camp, recalls the ideologically unshakable and loyal to the Party epic hero of the Socialist Realist fiction. Mostovskoy's longing for freedom echoes this same outcry of Stepan Kol'chugin from Grossman's early novel *Stepan Kol'chugin*, as Mostovskoy states "How could a man be unhappy outside the camp" (21). Stepan's dream of the necessity of freedom for the whole humanity is now literally placed within the multicultural environment of the camp, where Mostovskoy encounters not only the representatives of many European countries, but even a Persian and a Chinese, and where all people express the same longing for freedom. Mostovskoy, despite his age, believes in the correctness of Communist ideas possibly with the same fervor Stepan does, yet his position becomes deconstructed in the novel, turning the character from the positive hero or "revolutionary elder" to a complex multi-dimensional character.

The inner conflict of Mostovskoy becomes visible when he is called for interrogation by one of the high-ranking German officials, Liss, who suddenly expresses

the idea of the proximity and even the identity of the essential principles of Communism and National Socialism. In their conversation Liss makes a striking comparison: "your terror killed millions – and we Germans were the only ones who could understand, the only men in the world who thought: 'Yes, that's absolutely right, that's how it has to be'" (Grossman *Life* 399). This collision between the two characters is one of the typical moves that the book makes. The convictions of a person are suddenly shaken by a confrontation with a viewpoint that seems opposed to their convictions on the surface level, but which simultaneously appears to grow out of their own deep suspicions. The idea expressed by Liss undermines the authority of communist ideology as the one that aims at attaining freedom for humanity, thus positioning the early Stepan's (and possibly, Grossman's own) dream against the reality which became apparent in the reality of the war.

Mostovskoy is desperately trying to suppress and eliminate the burning thought about the proximity of his ideology and that of his enemy, but against the most stubborn efforts of his will, he starts to see more and more logic behind the idea. Liss's statement about both systems relying on violence as their means and his vision about both ideologies "gazing into a mirror" represent something that Mostovskoy's is already aware of, yet tries to silence. (Grossman *Life* 395).

Liss's views reveal a crucial split within Mostovskoy's own mind and challenge his own convictions. Therefore, the most important for the development of this character are not his dialogues with Liss, during which he tries to be silent, but his inner dialogues. Mostovskoy tries to deny the statements Liss made, not to Liss, but to himself. The inner dialogue he leads makes this split manifest to the reader, revealing the character as

problematic first of all from within: "What if [these] doubts were not just a sign of weakness, tiredness, impotence, lack of faith, contemptible shilly-shallying? What if these doubts represented what was most pure and honorable in him…?" (399). Mostovskoy goes even further in his realization that "All he had to do to defeat Liss, […] he had to condemn what he had always lived by. […] He would have to condemn Lenin…! This was the edge of the abyss" (399).

Thus, the inner world of the character opens up a space for the collision of the two conflicting worldviews; Mostovskoy strives to counteract Liss's statements and sees that in order to do so he needs to denounce all the convictions he holds on to. The dialogization of Mostovskoy's inner self reveals him as a character who is not completed, whose potential for change is not used up within the novel. Though at the beginning he is seen as a typical mouthpiece for the communist ideology; his inner dialogue makes him resistant to being typified. And though Mostovskoy is able to ward off the dangerous thought about the two ideologies "mirroring" each other at least for some time, the reader cannot do so when confronted with this character.

Not only is Mostovskoy in dialogue within himself, his whole situation remains in dialogue with the situations of other people in the novel. Mostovskoy denounces Liss's (and his own) suspicions and views, but there is a big plane in the novel that he is just not aware of as a character. At the time when Mostovskoy endures his interrogations, there are characters enduring the same hardships in a Soviet camp for the Soviet political prisoners, confirming Liss's statement about both systems relying on violence as their means. The character who appears parallel to Mostovskoy is Abarchuk. Abarchuk is one more devout communist-character in the novel. A similar split in his mind is negotiated

through the repeated phrase "despair of the camps" which overcomes him and never goes away. Abarchuk divorced his first wife as he thought she would fail to raise their son in the true spirit of socialism and communism. Abarchuk has been subjected to tortures and hard labor at the camp, but still dreams that his son will "grow up a good communist" (Grossman *Life* 178). He envisions that upon meeting his son he would tell him: "Remember, your father's fate doesn't matter. That's just a detail. But the cause of the Party is something holy" (178). This character views his fate as just a trifling element in the advance of a great cause and is ready to help his country with hard labor, if that is what the Party requires from him. He dreams about a happy future for all under communism, as he reveals it in his inner dreams directed to his son. The tragedy of this character lies in the fact that he has to denounce all the people whom he loves dearly to remain faithful to the idea. In the camp Abarchuk meets his teacher, Magar, who first taught him the ideas of communism. Magar admits to being mistaken in his overreliance on the Revolution a means for bringing happiness for people. Abarchuk renounces this person who for a long time had remained the only dear soul to him.

Both Mostovskoy and Abarchuk are faced with similar problems: Mostovskoy feels he has to renounce all his convictions to remain true to himself, and Abarchuk renounces everyone he loves to remain true to his convictions. The bitter irony that Abarchuk's situation uncovers is that in his striving to bring happiness for all, he has to make the people he loves unhappy. Moreover, his life, the life of a devout communist, is ruined by the labor camp and he finds no reward for his sacrifices but just the camp "despair." Though this character does not express doubts openly, he evokes pity and

skeptical evaluation of the reader, who discerns the senselessness of the ideals he is fighting for.

In one of the letters that Grossman received from Maxim Gorky, the celebrated writer in the Soviet Union, Gorky instructs the young writer in the attitude to the truth which needs to be adopted by the author of fiction. Gorky discusses the existence of "two truths" which inevitably appear in the work of fiction, one "truth" associated with the past and the other "truth" with the future. According to Elizabeth Papazian, Gorky's message asserts that "the truth of the past must be presented critically while the truth of the future is affirmed" (134). Gorky, therefore, advised to the young writer Grossman to present the reality as he envisions it in the future and to adopt a critical stance in representing the past, which would not obstruct or question the picture of the bright future. The affirmation of the strong belief in the bright future that waits ahead was a constant move in the Soviet fiction, which also mirrored the same element in the political discourse. Gorky's advice is certainly not followed in *Life and Fate*, where the author is in dialogue with both the past and present reality. Mostovskoy and Abarchuk represent the characters who want to believe in Gorky's statement about the future; Abarchuk sacrifices everything for his belief that in future things will be better for everyone. However, the situations of doubt and disappointment that the characters find themselves in in the present undermine their belief.

The problematics that both Mostovskoy and Abarchuk are engaged with makes them unsuitable for the role of positive heroes in the Socialist Realist novel. In her study of Soviet fiction Clark talks about the picture of Soviet positive hero as being in the process of formation through the whole Soviet period, as the "hero" needed to reflect the

changing attitudes to better serve as an educational model for every coming generation. For example, the "hero" of the beginning of the Revolution is often portrayed as a "static revolutionary martyr," whereas in the twenties this model is replaced by a "dynamic man of action" (*The Soviet Novel* 68) In spite of this variability, the function of the "positive hero" remained more or less static: "To be an emblem of Bolshevik virtue, someone the reading public might be inspired to emulate, and his life should be patterned to 'show the forward movement of history' in an allegorical representation of one stage in history's dialectical process" (46). Both Mostovskoy and Abarchuk present some of the characteristics of the revolutionary martyrs, enduring the hardships of the camp life, yet such portraits remains inconsistent since they are shown as sacrificing for the false convictions. The role of the man of action may be assigned to Mostovskoy, who regardless of his age gets involved in the prisoners' secret plan of rebellion. However, such a picture is equally inconsistent due to the doubts he suffers.

By the 1940s, there emerged a number of charismatic characters in the Soviet literature who represented the positive heroes that survived for years, appearing later in various interpretations. An example of such a character can be found in Dmitry Furmanov's novel *Chapaev* (1923). Furmanov's work successfully negotiates the romanticized revolutionary perspective and was reworked multiple times, most notably in the movie *Chapaev* of 1934. This process of production of the "emblematic" figures in fiction, who simultaneously inspire the "emulation" and call to mind the "glorious" historical past, remind of the Bakhtinian discussion of the epic worldview.

Grossman's characters refute this model. Mostovskoy's inner dialogues and doubts prevent him from entering the category, while the irony of Abarchuk's situation

does not allow him to enter it either. Both these characters are shown in the dynamic reevaluation of their life positions; their situations are not completed or positively resolved by the end of the work, revealing their potential as too great to be encompassed within the novel. Consideration of the existential situations of the above mentioned characters helps the reader to form a critical stance for evaluation of the historical reality that the novel describes.

The interactions of Grossman's characters illustrate particular relations with the other as shown in the example of Mostovskoy's conversation with Liss. The ideological and the military enemy and generally a negative character Liss is shown as in fact much closer to the positive character Mostovskoy then anyone could have suspected. The novel goes even further in its exploration of the portrayal of the other. One of the scenes pictures a Russian and a German soldier unknowingly holding hands in a trench. During one of the offensives launched by the Germans in Stalingrad, a Russian scout Klimov and his friend, the old soldier Polyakov, get into the trench to hide themselves from bombing. In the dark the scout Klimov grabs the hand of what he thinks is the old soldier, his companion. But when the bombing is over, and the soldiers try to get out of the trench the scout discovers it was a German soldier, who was also hiding in the same trench and whom he was holding by the hand throughout the whole time of danger. The episode following Klimov's revelation is worth being quoted at length:

> As Klimov staggered to his feet, he saw a German soldier lying beside him. Battered, covered in dust, he looked as though he had been chewed up by the war from the peak of his cap to the toes of his boots.

> Klimov had no fear of Germans; he had an unshakeable confidence in his own strength, his own miraculous ability to pull a trigger, throw a grenade, strike a blow with a knife or a rifle-butt a second earlier than his opponent. Now, though, he didn't know what to do. He was amazed at the thought that, blinded and deafened as he was, he had been comforted by the presence of this German, had mistaken his hand for Polyakov's. Klimov and the German looked at one another. Each had been crushed by the same terrible force, and each was equally helpless to struggle against it.
>
> They looked at one another in silence, two inhabitants of the war.
>
> The perfect, faultless, automatic reflex they both possessed – the instinct to kill – failed to function. (Grossman *Life* 436)

This scene of Klimov's recognition of the failure of his 'perfect" instinct – "the instinct to kill" – illustrates the Levinasian moment of the encounter with the face of the other. The literal enemies who unknowingly shared the hiding place at the time of mortal danger are forced to look at each other, recognizing each other's humanity. For Levinas "to see a face is already to hear 'You shall not kill,'" the call that demands a response from the "I" (Levinas *Difficult Freedom* 8). A response to this call is only possible for Levinas when the "I" does not assume the other to be a known or even knowable entity, that is, refuses the impulse of seeing the other as a totality. The moment of Levinasian recognition of the call of the other is presented through the confusion which Klimov, and most likely the German soldier as well, experience. Klimov, "amazed" by the encounter and the unexpected humanity of the other who is able to extend comfort and experience a similar need for it, surrenders his killing instinct to a new and unknown sensation which is the

recognition and the acceptance of otherness. After what has happened to him, Klimov no longer labels the German soldier with the totalizing term "an enemy." Instead, he is forced to recognize that the German looks "battered," "covered in dust" and "chewed up by the war." Such recognition, as well as the failure to kill the enemy here illustrates the Levinasian response to the other, which here becomes reciprocal. Though non-verbally, the soldiers of the opposite armies reach an agreement, as they assume responsibility for each others' lives. This episode also calls to mind the case of Tolstoy's character Andrei, who, seeing his long-time enemy Anatole, refuses to take delight in his misfortune but recognizes humanity of the other.

The characters of Grossman's novel are not typified and cannot be seen as mouthpieces for a particular idea or doctrine, they are not static but shown in the moment of change, in the process of "becoming," to use Bakhtin's term ("Epic" 5). However, to say that the novel does not in any way negotiate the concept of the heroic and glorious moments and individuals in history would be to miss one of its very important aspects. Thinking about an example of the character who represents these values, the portrait of Colonel Novikov, the commander of one of the four divisions that attacked the fascist troops near Stalingrad later in the novel, comes to mind. Novikov is a charismatic individual; he can be seen as a romantic hero, whose unhappy love story is described with tenderness. As is the case with many other characters, Novikov's personality becomes visible in a dialogic confrontation with the cunning Commissar Getmanov. Novikov shows great concern for human resources; for him human life is always the first priority. Getmanov is suspicious of Novikov's devotion to the cause of the Communist Party and constantly tests him, even on trifling occasions. Novikov, sensing the

Commissar's attitude, strives to remain true to his beliefs without compromising himself. When prompted to propose the first toast at some occasion, Novikov deliberately defers proposing it to Stalin's health, as the convention requires, and proposes it to "to men we're about to lead into battle. Here's hoping they don't shed too much blood!" (Grossman *Life* 218). Similarly, at the time of a crucial battle he defers the advance of the troops, disregarding Stalin's direct order but saving lives of the soldiers in his command. This character, modeled upon a historical prototype, comes close to the hero that was expected from the Socialist Realist novel. However, the scenes of confrontation with Getmanov, as well as the scenes of him disobeying the order, undermine his status as a character loyal to the Party cause. For Novikov, protecting human life presents the main priority and is superior to the commands of the Party; this character recognizes the importance of victory, however, he refuses to blindly follow the Party's instructions, especially when he sees flaws in them. Getmanov, who, according to Robert Chandler, was modeled on the historical character of Khrushchev whom Grossman came to know as a war commissar in Stalingrad (see Chandler), puts the orders of the Party prior to human lives and insists on the advance of the troops regardless of danger. In contrast to Novikov, who does not see the party authority as unquestioned, Getmanov comes off as a sly, self-centered character. Though Novikov comes close to representing the typical positive hero of the Soviet novel, the scenes of his overly liberal behavior make this character unfit for entering the Socialist Realist canon. Novikov cannot be turned into a romanticized hero as Grossman's Stepan Kol'chugin or Furmanov's Chapaev were, because his human factor is shown as ultimately stronger than his convictions.

The feature that also undermines Novikov's status as a strong heroic figure who keeps everything under control is his unhappy love for Yevgenia Shaposhnikova. When Yevgenia informs him about her decision to return to the man she was preciously in love with, Krymov, Novikov steps out of the role the reader expected him to play. This moment of weakness of spirit is sharply contrasted to the image of a strong and determined man that the reader saw before. This new feature of Novikov suggests that there is a dimension to this character that the reader is not yet familiar with, suggesting also that there may be more such invisible dimensions. Further, Novikov's fate is not revealed to the reader; he is left at the moment of grieving, rage, and self-pity. Novikov's story clearly reveals that there are dimensions to the characters which cannot be fully contained in the novel.

One more character who comes close but does not "fit" into the canon is General Grekov ("the house-manager") who, with only a few men repelled multiple German attacks, using the famous building 6/1 in Stalingrad as his base. Reckless in battles, a man of extraordinary leadership skills, he, however, allows questioning the usefulness of collectivization and other aspects of the politics of the Party. He also tries to seduce a young radio operator, Katia Vengrova, the fact that also renders him unsuitable as a model for emulation.

Both Novikov and Grekov are romanticized individuals, whom the reader learns to love and respect in the course of the novel. These characters obviously bear similarities to the positive heroes, the "dynamic men of action" expected from them by the Socialist Realist canon. The reason why they cannot reach the Socialist Realist ideal that the character of Stepan Kol'chugin attained is that they are too multidimensional to

be suitable for negotiation of a single idea. Their heroic aura is dimmed in this multi-directedness. Therefore, it is not surprising that they did not make it into the canon.

The same problem was noticed with the characters of *War and Peace* by the veterans of the Russian war with Napoleonic army in 1812. The veterans saw the heroism of the commanders and soldiers compromised in Tolstoy's work, which deprived the historic event of its status as cherished and glorious "national memory." Tolstoy was accused of using realism to unjust ends and even compromising history (see Ungurianu 109-124). One of the scenes in *War and Peace* that was interpreted as undermining the heroic ideal is the scene of General Kutuzov reading a cheap novel by a French author immediately before the battle.[10] This detail destroyed the overall picture of the General as a model of a true patriot. Therefore, one of the veterans proposed to supplement the portrait of Kutuzov by narrating an anecdote about an eagle flying over the General before the battle as an omen of great victory and a symbol of Kutuzov's power (see Ungurianu 116-17). Dan Ungurianu in his study of Russian historical novel explains the reasons why Tolstoy's heroes were not accepted at the time: "Tolstoy's realism challenged some core beliefs by the survivors of the Romantic age. Totally unpalatable to the old romantics was Tolstoy's philosophy of history, his scorn of the so-called great men and heroes" (Ungurianu 116). This insight reveals the split between the older generation which was still under the influence of the Romantic age and Tolstoy as a representative of a new realistic aesthetics. Romantic portrayal of war leaders as heroes was one of the key expectations at the time, and the one Tolstoy failed to meet. Divergence from these criteria was regarded as an intervention and distortion of historical "truth."

[10] For detailed analysis of the character of Kuyuzov see Chapter I.

The critique that Tolstoy's characters were subjected to could have been applicable to those of Grossman, had the work been published. This critique also illuminates one of the reasons why it was not published. Grossman's work did not make it to the readers of the time because it did not present any characters that could be regarded as unquestionable models according to Socialist Realist convention. Like Tolstoy's characters, who cannot be seen as mouthpieces for a particular concept, Grossman's characters resist as a one-dimensional perspective. As was mentioned earlier, the writers of the time were prompted to follow the master-plot, the purpose of which was to provide the examples which help to "educate" people "in the spirit of Socialism" (in Robin 11). This demand for "educating" people using the example of positive heroes reveals a certain degree of romantic aura that surrounded the heroes and helped "educate" the masses in the "right" way. The aura that surrounds Grossman's Grekov and Novikov, though also romantic, could not have served the "educational" purposes, as both of them are not idealized, as was shown earlier. In other words, the eagle that should have flown over Kutuzov's head, had to fly over that of Grekov's and Novikov's for them to be able to enter the cannon. That is, these characters would have to represent Bakhtinian immutable epic molds.

Grossman's presentation of history shares some important characteristics with that of Tolstoy. One of these is Tolstoy's "scorn of the so-called great men and heroes," as Ungurianu defined it (116). In his conversation with Grossman, Mikhail Suslov, the Chief Ideologue of the Communist Party, clearly noted this feature:

> Your book contains direct comparison between us and Nazi Germany. It contains a false and untrue picture of our people and communists. How could we have

> triumphed in the war with the kinds of people you describe? You speak favorably in your book about religion, about God, about Catholicism. You defend Trotsky. You often express serious doubts about our Soviet system. (In Garrard and Garrard 358)

Suslov accuses Grossman of the "untrue picture of the [Soviet] people" and asks "How could we have triumphed in the war with the kinds of people [Grossman] describe?" Like Tolstoy, Grossman is accused of distorting the picture of people who should appear as heroic and romanticized images that can be used in presentation of a certain picture of reality in the Soviet Union. Like Tolstoy, Grossman takes away the romantic aura from his characters, which makes them unsuitable for the purposes of the Soviet Socialist Realist novel.

Furthermore, Suslov points to the atmosphere of doubt that *Life and Fate* creates as to the feature that makes the book unacceptable for publication at the time. He repeatedly stresses this assertion throughout the conversation and concludes: "But your book *Life and Fate* is politically dangerous to us; it is full of question marks. You examine Soviet life from an absolutely non-Soviet viewpoint, you cast doubt upon everything" (In Garrard and Garrard 358). Interestingly, Gary Saul Morson, quoted in Ungurianu's study, views Tolstoy's engagement with history in *War and Peace* as adopting a profoundly skeptical attitude to the past: "Fiction [in *War and Peace*] is used to indicate the skepticism that should accompany all attempts to reconstruct the past (Morson *Hidden* 139; in Ungurianu 127). Grossman's "non-Soviet viewpoint," to which Suslov refers describing *Life and Fate,* is closer to Tolstoy's skepticism than to the Socialist Realist demand for glorification of the past. Grossman allows for the

discussions to be unfinished and for conflicts to remain unresolved, as is the case in the episode where Mostovskoy's conversation with Liss is described. Leaving the dispute unfinished, Grossman redirects the remaining questions to the reader, letting the reader decide whether the ideologies of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany are in fact similar. Grossman's *Life and Fate* creates an atmosphere that is "full of question marks" and does not provide a clear picture of reality, but expects and creates a reader who critically engages with the material historic reality.

Both Tolstoy and Grossman leave the questions in their novels open for the reader to draw his or her own conclusions; they also present the scenes without explaining their exact meanings. In this respect Tolstoy's scene of Tsar Alexander I throwing biscuits at the crowd of people as a sign of his kind generosity can be considered. Petya Rostov, the youngest of Rostov family, decides to see the tsar as the latter arrived in Moscow and ask for his permission to join the military despite his young age. As Petya arrives to the Kremlin, he sees a large crowd gathered to see the tsar; Petya nearly gets crushed in the crowd of people. Tolstoy describes the atmosphere of an overwhelming general excitement that borders on madness when the people see the tsar and especially when the throws the biscuits to people:

> Petya's eyes became bloodshot, the danger of being crushed aroused him still more, he rushed for the biscuits. He did not know why, but it was necessary to take a biscuit from the tsar's hands and necessary not to give it up. He rushed and tripled up a little old woman who was trying to catch a biscuit. (Tolstoy Vol. III, 675)

The atmosphere described by Tolstoy is that of a wild excitement; Petya sees the people's "wild faces" in the crowd (673); he does not understand the value of catching a biscuit from the tsar, but rushes to do so following the crowd and even carelessly "trips up" an old woman and ends up snatching a biscuit from her. Though Tolstoy describes Petya's excitement as genuine, the overall picture of people's adoration of the tsar leaves a negative impression on the reader.

Grossman describes the cult of personality in the Soviet Union in a similar manner. The character Getmanov, visiting a family of friends, encounters a picture of Stalin's portrait in family album and "Stalin's face in the portrait had been scrawled over in coloured pencil" (Grossman *Life* 110). Though the boy who colored Stalin's face is only four years old, Getmanov does not know how to react. The character remembers a similar instance when a young student was severely punished for a similar act that was meant as a joke, and feels compelled to react: "'It's not just a prank, it's malicious hooliganism," said Getmanov with an angry sigh" (110). Like Tolstoy, Grossman forces the reader to realize the negative effect of people's adoration of their political leaders; Getmanov, though realizing that it is ridiculous to blame a four-year-old boy for what he did, is still ready to equate the boy's drawing with a crime.

During his meeting with Grossman, Suslov reproached the author: "Remember how passionately Tolstoy expressed his hatred for tsarist autocracy. That is why Lenin called Tolstoy the 'mirror of the Russian Revolution'" (In Garrard and Garrard 358). Tolstoy in his *War and Peace* does not express his "hatred" for autocracy, but in subtle ways hints at its flaws. Failing to recognize Tolstoy's techniques, Suslov also fails to see the similarity between the techniques used by Tolstoy and Grossman. In the episode

described above, Grossman, like Tolstoy, allows the readers to critically evaluate the situation without presenting a definitive conclusion.

In his discussion of *War and Peace*, Ungurianu states that the novel marks a moment when "Literary fiction ceases being an antonym to nonfiction, turning into a something of a supportive discipline in the writer's comprehensive analysis of the world" (120). This qualitative change in fiction marks the transition from the romantic to realist tradition. Grossman's novel incorporates some important elements of Tolstoy's realist novel, primarily through its deconstruction of the heroic images of the characters and through adoption of a critical stance towards the described reality. Rather than provide a monologic picture of the world as can be found in Grossman's earlier novel *Stepan Kol'chugin*, *Life and Fate* works out tools for the "comprehensive analysis of the world" in the Soviet context.

Characters in *Life and Fate* often question or reevaluate their positions, step out of the expected roles, and become something different from what is expected from them; they reveal a dynamic element, which Bakhtin contrasts with the features of an epic. It is only in the novel that the author, according to Bakhtin, "appears in a new relationship with the depicted world. Both [the author and the world] find themselves now subjects to the same temporally valorized measurements" ("Epic" 27). The author of the epic could not intervene into the world he depicted, as he only transmitted the story of the past which already supplied its point of view. The author of the novel, however, is able to negotiate positions and evaluative judgments; he is able to offer statements that could bear more than one interpretation.

In fiction, following Bakhtin's view, one-dimensional presentation was overcome by the possibilities that the novel uncovered. These possibilities are inseparably connected to the development of dialogue, following the Socratic dialogues, which are also called "the novels of their time" in "Epic and Novel" (22). These dialogic relationships allow for juxtaposition of various opinions or views, often sharply opposed to each other, within one text of the novel. Moreover, they open a possibility for the reader to choose which of the opposed views he supports and which considers erroneous. Placing elements in dialogic relationship allows exposing the strengths and weaknesses of each of the elements, giving a reader the possibility to intervene into the novel with his own judgment, the maneuver which was impossible with epic genres, according to Bakhtin.

Grossman poses this invitation for critical intervention of the reader, creating a picture of a multiplicity of viewpoints and juxtapositions of ideas and views. Mostovskoy and Abarchuk, as well as Novikov and Grekov, and many other characters of the novel are not presented as fully-formed and definitive models. They do not know the right answers and ways out of their situations but are trying to find them alongside the novel's reader. Thus, the novel calls for the reader who can engage critically with the historical reality that the novel presents, seeing its positive and negative sides. It expects the reader who feels the necessity to reevaluate the historical reality, as the characters of the novel are trying to do. In the same way the novel invites the reader to engage with his own present moment and rethink it in light of the presented multiplicity of juxtaposed views. Instead of advancing of the "spirit of socialism" the novel calls for a critical reader of the Soviet reality, the feature that sets it apart from Socialist Realist mode of presentation.

Not only does *Life and Fate* step out against one-dimensional presentations of phenomena, it also redefines the Soviet attitude to sacrifice, as it was presented in the Socialist Realist novel. In Socialist Realist novel, according to Clark, "Ideally, […], the hero should make a supreme sacrifice of his life" in a fight for the victory of the communist views (*The Soviet Novel* 49). Grossman, however, rethinks the idea of sacrifice, presenting it not as a means for advancement of the Revolutionary ideas, but on the micro level of an individual life of a person. Addressing the Holocaust in his novel, Grossman presents the character of Sofya Osipovna Levinton, a Jewish doctor, who is taken to the concentration camp in August 1941. On her way to the camp, Sofya, who never had children of her own, meets a young boy David, who is left alone without any relatives to help or support him. Sofya takes care of David throughout the trip and in the camp. Standing in line to the gas chamber, Sofya purposefully misses the call for doctors to step out of the line and enters the chamber together with David, so that the small boy is not alone and can be comforted in the last moments of his life, her last thought being "'I've become a mother'" (554). Sofya assumes the role of a mother to the little boy, and regains the agency in the moment when the possibility of the expression of this agency seems to be impossible. Sofya's sacrifice becomes a powerful expression of protest against the inhumanity of the Holocaust. Through this example, Grossman reestablishes the value of self-sacrifice not as a means for furthering the ideas of communism, but as a way of bringing comfort to the life of one young boy. The act of sacrifice does not become a loud expression of political position, yet its meaning as a stance against inhumanity sounds much more powerfully then any expression of political rhetoric in the novel. Separating the notion of sacrifice from the context of Soviet rhetoric, Grossman

reinstates the value of sacrifice in Levinasian sense of it: the sense, which requires that the sacrifice should be "nothing but 'for the other,'" according to Denis King Keenan (6). Levinas places a great emphasis on the value of such sacrifice in the I-Other relationships. Grossman in his *Life and Fate* bring forth this notion and reestablished its value beyond the context of Soviet history, but in a broader sense, as a universal value.

Analyzing the period of Khrushchev's Thaw, the time when Grossman attempted the publication of his novel, Clark writes that though the period was met with high expectations for liberalization in literature, "A closer look at the actual substance of the changes reflected in fiction under Khrushchev reveals that they were often not as radical as the rhetoric has suggested" (*The Soviet Novel* 211). Clark further concludes that "The great traditions of Soviet Socialist Realism were largely intact" (212). Though the time under Khrushchev was marked by "destalinization," when the steps were taken to eradicate the existing cult of the personality of Stalin, the works of fiction did not radically deviate from the previous canon; with some minor adjustments to the master-plot, which were mostly limited to the declaration of faith in the new Party leadership, fiction literature remained faithful to its earlier goals. In light of Clark's observations, *Life and Fate* stands out as the work which persistently expands the boundaries of Socialist Realist novel by its insistence on radical reevaluation of the recent past.

Grossman addresses the period at the end of the War, maintaining that this time did not mark the transition to a happy life in the Soviet Union. The time is shown as filled with anxieties and unfair treatment of people on the part of the authorities. Grossman's character, Viktor Shtrum, who is Jewish suffers discrimination in the Institute where he works. In describing Viktor's troubles, Grossman can be partially

referring to his own experiences, when, for example, he was pressured to change the title of his novel from *Stalingrad* to *For a Just Cause,* because as a Jewish writer he could not be trusted with the task of writing "about one of the most glorious chapters of Russian history" even after his considerable writing achievements and his service at the front (Chandler ix).

Grossman's character Shtrum is a prominent scientist who makes a groundbreaking discovery in the area of nuclear physics; at first his achievement is recognized by his friends and colleagues. Later, however, as a wave of anti-Semitism starts in the Soviet Union, Viktor Shtrum becomes a "pariah" in the Institute, when even his friends avoid talking to him. Shortly, his work is declared contradictory to "the materialist view of the nature of matter" (Grossman *Life* 583); Viktor is harshly criticized for allegedly anti-Soviet views, a groundless accusation, which, however, could cost him his job or even freedom. Viktor is urged to write a letter of repentance and present it at the Institute meeting by his close friends; after a time of doubts and self-torment, Viktor takes the decision not to undertake the necessary act of public repentance. Shtrum is saved, however, by a call from Stalin himself, who, possibly recognizing some potential in Shtrum's work, not only allows him to carry on his research, but surrounds him with benefits. Recognizing the fact that he owes his now comfortable living to Stalin's whim and not to his own achievement, Shtrum reflects on a feeling of constant anxiety and fear that he is not able to ward off: "For a while after Stalin's telephone call, he had thought that he need never know fear again. But it was still there; only its outer trappings had changed. Now it was simply a more aristocratic fear, a fear that travelled by car and was allowed to use the Kremlin telephone switchboard" (829). Though Stalin's telephone call

changes Viktor's life and makes it much more comfortable in the material sense, Viktor does not feel safe or happy. He constantly feels the pressure of maintaining a certain image, as he worries if "He'd said the wrong thing then," or if "he'd laughed at the wrong moment" (829). In his presentation of the Soviet reality, Grossman not only criticizes the cult of personality of Stalin and the tremendous power he had in the Soviet Union, which was a customary move in the literature of Khruschev's Thaw, but presents the atmosphere in the Soviet Union as grim and oppressive, where even unique talents need to be subservient to the ideology of the dominating ideology, and where the development of virtually all of the spheres of life needs to be allied with the ideological demands of the Party. It is this fear that later prompts Shtrum to put his signature under a collective letter condemning the innocent doctors and writers who were arrested in the Soviet Union, the act for which he feels terrible remorse.

Thus, Shtrum's story does not end with the happy resolution of his conflicts, or the strong belief in the bright future, as the convention of the Socialist Realist novel demands, but with the promise Shtrum gives to himself: "Every hour, every day, year in, year out, he must struggle to be a man, struggle for his right to be pure and kind. He must do this with humility. And if it came to it, he mustn't be afraid even of death […]" (Grossman *Life* 841). Shtrum's realization that remaining true to his own beliefs requires a constant effort and struggle in the circumstances he lives in confirms the existence of a conflict between the State and an individual who struggles to maintain his integrity. The problems of functioning in the Soviet society with its demand for ideological conformity remain unresolved for Shtrum, who does not envision easy ways of aligning his views with those promoted by the Party. His resolution to remain true to his values even if it

means going against the Soviet ideology reminds of Grossman's own later decision to fight for the publication of *Life and Fate*.

In his *Life and Fate* Grossman reimagines the boundaries of the Soviet novel. The demand for a positive picture of historical reality and of the picture of socialism as a common good was not met in *Life and Fate*, which actually reveals the erroneousness of such an approach. The angle that Grossman's novel chooses in its treatment of either its characters or themes thus diverges from those expected from a Socialist Realist novel. *Life and Fate* works out particular means for a critical evaluation of historical reality, which it presents to the reader. These means lie in consideration of the multiplicity of views in their dialogic relationship to each other, and it is in consideration of the dynamic element in human nature that resists being understood as static and completed. In his essay Bakhtin views the novel as a means for negotiation of such dynamics and sees it as a "zone of maximal contact with the present (the contemporary reality) in all its openendedness" ("Epic" 11). In spite of the Socialist Realist demand to look "upward" "towards the 'fathers'" (*The Soviet Novel* 136), Grossman's novel flaunts its relationship to the present moment through its presentation of the characters that refuse to be typified and ideas that are in flux. The novel presents a call for critical reevaluation of the Socialist Realist character-types through the artistic exploration of the figure of the other in *Life and Fate.* Grossman not only rethinks the Socialist Realist conventions, but reestablishes the novel as a genre that opens up a new vision of the other in the Soviet Union, the vision which is akin to Levinasian ethics of the I-Other relationship. Thus, Grossman reestablishes the genre of a novel as necessary for the formation of a reader

who would adopt a critical stance for understanding of his historical reality and would have the potential to change it.

Conclusion: Historical Crisis and the Other

The engagements of the authors discussed in this dissertation with Tolstoy's *War and Peace* show that, like Tolstoy, the authors attempt to reimagine otherness in such terms as to make room for the Levinasian other within the cultures they describe. As all the literary works analyzed here describe historical moments of crisis with their inevitable collisions of worldviews and ideologies, the authors' engagement with otherness constitutes an important aspect of their historical imagination.

Looking at several episodes which deal with the authors' treatment of otherness in the contexts of crisis selected from the works discussed in the present dissertation illuminates this central theme and allow for its critical re-thinking and re-evaluation in light of cross-cultural communication and dialogue.

The central character of Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls,* Robert Jordan, talks to himself about killing others in an imaginary dialogue:

> But I won't keep a count of people I have killed as though it were a trophy record or a disgusting business like notches in a gun, he told himself. I have a right to not keep count and I have a right to forget them.
>
> No, himself said. You have no right to forget anything. You have no right to shut your eyes to any of it nor any right to forget any of it nor to soften it nor to change it. Shut up, he told himself. [...]
>
> Nor ever to deceive yourself about it, himself went on. (*FWTBT* 304)

Prior to this imaginary dialogue, Jordan assures himself that he is disgusted at killing others. He still emphasizes his right "not to keep count" and "to forget them." Jordan's imaginary self, however, contradicts him: "You have no right to shut your eyes to any of

it nor any right to forget any of it nor to soften it nor to change it." His imaginary self states that there is nothing that can justify wrongdoings against others and asserts that he has "no right" to "to shut [his] eyes to any of it" or "forget any of it." This insight reiterates the Levinasian idea about the other expressed in the Biblical command "You shall not kill." Forgetting the other or any of the offences done to the other is equated in the novel to "killing" the other. Hemingway's novel problematizes the idea of otherness as it details the process of cultural integration of its main character into the Spanish culture, and presents the political divisions between people as artificial. A relationship between the I and the other is one of the key elements of representation of crisis in Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Jordan as well as other characters in the novel are constantly reminded of people who fight on the other side and reflect on what it is that divides them and what the relationship with the other should be. The novel's treatment of the question of otherness constitutes its response to the historical crisis of the Spanish Civil War.

As is the case in Hemingway's novel, the emphasis of Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* is on the image of unity of the nation which, though torn by complex historical transformations, is united by a common history. Pasternak also stresses the necessity to accept otherness. His character Vedeniapin expresses this idea in the following way:

> […] [M]an does not live in nature but in history, and […] in present-day understanding it was founded by Christ, […] its foundation is the Gospel. And what is history? It is the setting in motion of centuries of work at the gradual unriddling of death and its eventual overcoming. Hence the discovery of mathematical infinity and electromagnetic waves, hence the writing of

> symphonies. It is impossible to move on in this direction without a certain uplift. These discoveries call for spiritual equipment. The grounds for it are contained in the Gospels. They are these. First, love of one's neighbor, that highest form of living energy, and the idea of life as sacrifice. Bear in mind that this is still extremely new. The ancients did not have history in this sense. Then there was the sanguinary swinishness of the cruel, pockmarked Caligulas, who did not suspect how all oppressors are. They had the boastful, dead eternity of bronze monuments and marble columns. (*Doctor Zhivago* 9)

The vision of history expressed in this quotation is closely linked to that of acceptance of otherness, as Pasternak emphasizes that the history of the "present day" starts with the basic idea of "love of one's neighbor." This central idea is a "spiritual equipment" that makes all the achievements, such as the "discovery of mathematical infinity and electromagnetic waves" and "writing of symphonies" meaningful and worthwhile.

Pasternak's opposition between ancient and modern times recalls the Bakhtinian opposition between the epic and the novel as genres that reflect the monologic and the dialogic worldviews respectively. Pasternak takes this dichotomy to define his historical vision. The achievements of ancient times are described as a boastful dead entity," incapable of progress or change, while "modern" times are associated with life and progress as it is grounded in the truth of the Gospels about the "love of one's neighbor" and "the idea of life as sacrifice" – ideas which reflect Levinasian vision of the other.

Pasternak states that history in its "present-day understanding" emerges when one recognizes the love of one's neighbor as a key principle in the relationship between people. The author voices this view on history while living in the totalitarian state where

the meaning of history consisted in building a uniform society and attaining a collective good. For Pasternak history starts on the level of individuals – with love of one's neighbor. Therefore, modern history is defined through relationships between individuals and the question of individual's relationship with the other becomes of primary importance. The moments of historical crises bring forth the confrontation of the I with the other and therefore allow for exploration of the I-other relationship as an element of historical novel.

Edith Wharton takes the discussion of otherness to the level of society in *The Age of Innocence*, stating that old New York society's attempt to close itself to the outer influences impoverishes the lives of both the society and those who are not accepted and othered. Wharton writes:

> [Newland Archer] knew that there were societies where painters and poets and novelists and men of science, and even great actors, were as sought after as Dukes; he had often pictured to himself what it would have been to live in the intimacy of drawing-rooms dominated by the talk of Merimee (whose "Lettres a une Inconnue" was one of his inseparables), of Thackeray, Browning or William Morris. But such things were inconceivable in New York, and unsettling to think of. [...] he always came away with the feeling that if his world was small, so was [the world of these people in letters and science], and that the only way to enlarge either was to reach a stage of manners where they would naturally merge. (*The Age* 87)

Newland Archer imagines a society that has reached such a level of its historical development that it is open to cultural otherness, and the "natural" alliance between the

"old" and the "new" ways is possible and beneficial to both. Archer is unsettled by the thought that even trying to talk about things that are of interest to him in New York society is "inconceivable" and will not be understood. Archer's vision, however, does not prompt him to take action and try to change anything either in society or in his own life.

Vasily Grossman in his *Life and Fate* sees the impulse to reduce the other as an act which contradicts nature. The novel presents its vision of otherness in the form of a dichotomy, as it compares the uniformity of the structure of the German camp for political prisoners to the uniqueness of people's dwellings:

> Then the fence of the camp appeared out of the mist: endless lines of wire strung between reinforced-concrete posts. The wooden barrack-huts stretched out in long broad streets. Their very uniformity was an expression of the inhuman character of this vast camp.
>
> Among a million Russian huts you will never find even two that are exactly the same. Everything that lives is unique. It is unimaginable that two people, or two briar- roses, should be identical... If you attempt to erase the peculiarities and individuality of life by violence, then life itself must suffocate. (*Life and Fate* 19)

The "uniformity" of the structure of the camp reveals its "inhuman character" for Grossman, as it does not allow for otherness and reduces everyone to the same. In Levinas's understanding, denying otherness to the other is violence against the other. Grossman asserts that everything that exists is unique and its uniqueness should be

preserved. Grossman raises the question of the acceptance of otherness in the context of the Second World War as a way to preserve life.

Consideration of the figure of the other as elaborated in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and in the ethics of Emmanuel Levinas helps us understand how the authors discussed here define the historical moments which their works describe. One feature that makes *War and Peace* into an important model for representing crisis for twentieth-century writers is its engagement of the figure of the other and elaboration of the model of the I-other relationship at the given historical moment. The twentieth-century novel that adopts a historical perspective also turns to the figure of the other and discusses various ways that one may respond to otherness in the context of crisis. The chronotopes of the novels discussed in this dissertation can be defined as the moments of historical crisis. The analysis of the figure of the other in these novels allows us to define and crystallize this concept as a twentieth-century construct that emerged as a response to crisis.

The concept of otherness as elaborated in Tolstoy's novel and found in the ethics of Levinas is essentially tied to the events that took place in Europe; the American authors adopt Tolstoyan vision to describe the historical situation in Europe, as is the case with Hemingway, and in the United States, as is the case in Wharton's novel. Engagements of these authors with Tolstoy reveal an important aspect of cross-cultural communication which allows for a broader perspective on otherness and consideration of it in multiple historical contexts.

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