

ABSTRACT

TOLSTOYISM AND THE PEASANT QUESTION

The writings of Leo Tolstoy, after his religious conversion of around 1880, differed from his artistic works. The novelist eschewed artistic endeavors, instead focusing on the major social, economic, and cultural problems of nineteenth century Russia. Scholars have attempted to find a connection between the works of Tolstoy's artistic phase and his later didactic writings. If Tolstoy's writings, as a whole, are considered as one of nineteenth century Russia's principal cultural responses to the Peasant Question (the umbrella term for the economic and social issues regarding the peasantry), then the dichotomy between his art and polemics is proved false. Using Tolstoy's writings as primary sources concerning the Peasant Question, analysis of the author's social, economic, and religious philosophies, or Tolstoyism, as well as examination of its relation with other major schools of thought of the *intelligentsia* yields a richer account of late-nineteenth century Russia's intellectual scene and Tolstoyan thought overall.

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