

I wanted to call my report “The Narrowness of Cosmopolitanism and the Vastness of Nationalism” or “The Chill of Cosmopolitanism and the Warmth of Nationalism”. In my understanding, nationalism does not mean a feeling of superiority over other people or scorn for the outsider, it means love for your own people. I wanted to make the title of my report sound more provocative or, at least, more paradoxical. Where is the paradox? It lies in the fact that we live in a global world today and it is strange to doubt the values of cosmopolitanism. Actually, it was as strange in the time of Tolstoy. Tolstoy is not only a Russian writer. While in the 18th century, Russian culture looked upon the European literature edifice with envy and, at the beginning of the 19th century, it only went to visit there, starting with the second half of the 19th century, Russian culture had acquired its own room in that edifice. Moreover, the edifice itself had changed. By the time of late Tolstoy and mature Chekhov, replacing national literatures, there begins to form the concept of World Literature. Tolstoy is one of the most outstanding representatives of world literature proper. His name is a world cultural brand.

The famous American writer John Updike once remarked that those who could never get interested in “War and Peace” should prepare themselves for a life of ignorance and unskilled labor.

Tolstoy wrote his novel in the second half of the 19th century, while he describes the very beginning of the 19th century. What kind of time was it for Russia in terms of culture, in terms of cosmopolitanism and nationalism issues? It was a time when the educated part of the Russian gentry could read the Bible only in French. The Holy Scripture was translated into Russian only in the 60s of the 19th century, while the Russian tsar Alexander I read the New Testament only in French and the common people did not read the Bible at all because they knew neither French nor old church Slavonic. It was the time when the Russian gentry spoke French better than their mother tongue. Let's look back to Pushkin's novel Eugene Onegin in which Tatyana, a provincial young girl, writes a letter to Eugene in French. When Pushkin got

married, he made a point of writing to his wife in Russian in order to wean her off using the ceremonial and dead rules of fashionable European etiquette. During the Napoleonic wars, the Russian rearguard and the French vanguard spoke French to each other, which is, in fact, reflected in the novel "War and Peace". Thus, for the educated layer of the Russian gentry, it was a time of Francomania or cosmopolitanism. As a matter of fact, "War and Peace" is intrinsically a EUROPEAN novel – the first sentences are written in French, and in general, there is a lot of French throughout the novel. In volume one, Russia is taking part in the European theatre of war operations. Alexander I and Napoleon are friends, they keep up a correspondence. The main characters are in love with Napoleon. Pierre is a Bonapartist, Andrei Bolkonsky also adores Napoleon. The personages fight duels, watch operas, live in houses built by European architects, travel in Europe – thus being part of the European cultural community.

Nevertheless, the national idea is present in the novel. What does it consist in? Or rather, what components does it consist of? To begin with, it is kinship to the common people, secondly, it is closeness to religion or just a religious feeling and thirdly, identifying oneself as a patriotic Russian.

Let me remind you that though the novel is big and complicated, the system of personages is quite simple. There are downright negative characters – dissolute and egoistic. They are the Kuragin family: Vasily, Helene and Anatole. There are characters whom Tolstoy treats with respect and even love but they don't always perceive life in the right way. They are Prince Andrei Bolkonsky and his father. But at the same time, there are characters who are really loved by Tolstoy: Natasha Rostova, Pierre Besukhov, Nikolai Rostov and Princess Maria. These characters are the main beneficiaries of happiness. They stay alive and set up families, they are in progress. I will speak about the historical personages – Napoleon and Kutuzov – separately.

Thus, the negative characters are in no way connected either with the people, or sincere religiousness, or, by any means, the patriotic upheaval. They like to have a good time, they love money and make use of the whole world as a resource for their entertainments. That is the Kuragin family.

Whereas the Rostov family feel themselves not only as part of the gentry but Russian as well.

Natasha threw off the shawl from her shoulders, ran forward to face "Uncle," and setting her arms akimbo also made a motion with her shoulders and struck an attitude. Where, how, and when had this young countess, educated by an emigree French governess, imbibed from the Russian air she breathed that spirit and obtained that manner which the *pas de chale** would, one would have supposed, long ago have effaced? But the spirit and the movements were those inimitable and unteachable Russian ones that "Uncle" had expected of her. (Book two Chapter VII, Translators Louise and Aylmer Maude) *The French shawl dance. падешаль (Па-де-Шаль), танец с шалью.

When after a failed elopement with Anatole Kuragin Natasha Rostova sinks into despair and depression, she goes to the church where she tries to apprehend the words of the prayer. It's a point of interest because it is not only Natasha who doesn't understand the meaning of the words, but it's also Tolstoy who doesn't understand it EITHER!!! It is commonly known that Tolstoy was against Christianity and was not too much interested in it. So this is what Natasha hears in the church:

"In peace let us pray unto the Lord." "As one community, without distinction of class, without enmity, united by brotherly love--let us pray!" thought Natasha. "For the peace that is from above, and for the salvation of our souls."

Actually, the expression 'In peace let us pray unto the Lord' means that the worshipper is serene and there is PEACE and calm in his heart. But that's not the issue albeit neither the author nor his hero are aware of it. Most significantly, is that Natasha is

in church and that the entire solemn service is described respectfully. It should also be recalled how mockingly Tolstoy shows everything concerning Freemasonry in his novel. Clearly, we cannot even imagine Helene Kuragina attending a church service. Similarly, it is almost impossible to imagine Anna Karenina (the heroine of another novel by Tolstoy) in church. When she feels very bad, she says to herself:

“My God! my God!” But neither “God” nor “my” carries any meaning to her. The idea of seeking help in her difficulty in religion was as remote from her as seeking help from Alexey Alexandrovitch himself (although she had never had doubts of the faith in which she had been brought up). (Tolstoy, Anna Karenina translated by Constance Garnett, Part 3 Chapter 15.)

On the contrary, Natasha Rostova seeks and finds help in religion.

However, the principal scene in which Natasha feels herself Russian is when she gives orders to hand over the carts to the wounded at the time when people are leaving Moscow. The Rostov family is trying to escape the Napoleon army and wants to take along all their valuables. However, Natasha sees that there are wounded soldiers left and hands the carts over to them thus **DEPRIVING HERSELF OF THE FUTURE DOWRY**. Commenting on the patriotic sentiments of his daughter her father Count Rostov says:

“Let him but say the word and we'll all go.... We're not Germans!”

It is interesting that with these words Count Ilya Rostov underlines the self-sacrifice and the unity of the Russian people who are ready to help their army.

Prince Andrei Bolkonsky, strange as it may at first appear, is also with his Russian ordinary people. He grants his peasants freedom, and then, in the rage of the Battle of Borodino we see that he is adored by his soldiers who call him **OUR PRINCE**.

Nikolai Rostov also comes closer to ordinary people and embraces simple and correct ethical values. He resigns from military service, engages in farming and then marries Princess Maria, a wonderful pious woman.

Pierre Bezukhov's way to the simple people is quite interesting. At the beginning of the novel, he is a debauchee of high social standing and a Bonapartist, then a mason and in the end, he turns into a man who helps soldiers in the Battle of Borodino. Here is a very important quotation.

"Thoughts cannot be united, but to harness all these thoughts together is what we need! Yes, one must harness them, must harness them!" he repeated to himself with inward rapture, feeling that these words and they alone expressed what he wanted to say and solved the question that tormented him. "Yes, one must harness, it is time to harness." "Time to harness, time to harness, your Excellency! Your Excellency!" some voice was repeating. "We must harness, it is time to harness...."

We all remember that after having been taken captive, Pierre meets a peasant philosopher Platon Karatayev and the two have long conversations.

And, certainly, we cannot but mention military commander Kutuzov who is depicted in the novel exactly as a Russian commander. To begin with, - and this is a historical fact – Kutuzov, at some point, took the place of the foreigner Barclay de Toli. But that is not all. According to Tolstoy, Kutuzov DOES NOT want to continue the war outside the boundaries of Russia, his task is to chase Napoleon off the Russian land. At the military council before the Battle of Borodino, a simple Russian peasant girl is looking at Kutuzov. She sympathizes with the "grandpa" and not the German generals whose plans of military actions are all wrong. Kutuzov believes in God and this also brings him closer to the national idea. (It goes without saying that Napoleon doesn't believe in anything). Here is another quotation:

“The crowd round the icon suddenly parted and pressed against Pierre. Someone, a very important personage judging by the haste with which way was made for him, was approaching the icon. It was Kutuzov, who had been riding round the position and on his way back to Tatarinova had stopped where the service was being held. Pierre recognized him at once by his peculiar figure, which distinguished him from everybody else. With a long overcoat on his exceedingly stout, round-shouldered body, with uncovered white head and puffy face showing the white ball of the eye he had lost, Kutuzov walked with plunging, swaying gait into the crowd and stopped behind the priest. He crossed himself with an accustomed movement, bent till he touched the ground with his hand, and bowed his white head with a deep sigh.”

The national idea is important not only at the level of man and his deeds, it is also important in terms of a historical event. Tolstoy depicts the victory over Napoleon as a national victory. And the war becomes patriotic. A people’s war. Sense bearing. Here is, I suppose, the most famous quotation from the novel “War and Peace”:

“Not that sort of victory which is defined by the capture of pieces of material fastened to sticks, called standards, and of the ground on which the troops had stood and were standing, but a moral victory that convinces the enemy of the moral superiority of his opponent and of his own impotence was gained by the Russians at Borodino. The French invaders, like an infuriated animal that has in its onslaught received a mortal wound, felt that they were perishing, but could not stop, any more than the Russian army, weaker by one half, could help swerving. By impetus gained, the French army was still able to roll forward to Moscow, but there, without further effort on the part of the Russians, it had to perish, bleeding from the mortal wound it had received at Borodino. The

direct consequence of the battle of Borodino was Napoleon's senseless flight from Moscow, his retreat along the old Smolensk road, the destruction of the invading army of five hundred thousand men, and the downfall of Napoleonic France, on which at Borodino for the first time the hand of an opponent of stronger spirit had been laid.

The novel begins at a fashionable soirée in an atmosphere of European cosmopolitanism and ends at war in which all Russian people partake.

Tolstoy's positive characters – Natasha, Pierre and Nikolai Rostov do make mistakes, but they are live human beings and they instinctively understand what life is about and how the world functions. Kutuzov conquers Napoleon's army not because he is smarter than the renowned French military commander but because he defends his motherland. It is the genial national cause, which is akin to the feeling of home, that invigorates Tolstoy's good people.

Tolstoy's novel marks the birth of a great indigenous myth, it is the main work of Russian literature. School-children know the history of the 1812 War thanks to that novel.

Tolstoy who knew many foreign languages can hardly be suspected of nationalism. His novel *War and Peace* is regarded as one of the central works of world literature. Incidentally, the recent British film version of the novel serves as a good confirmation of the above.

However, for a country to be attractive to the world its people have to love their motherland, their families and their culture. And this is exactly how Tolstoy and his characters act.