

DERK BODDE

Tolstoy and China



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TOLSTOY AND CHINA

by Derk Bodde

WITH THE COLLABORATION OF
GALIA SPESHNEFF BODDE

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P R E F A C E

THIS study originated from a chance remark by my wife, Galia Speshneff Bodde, to the effect that she had once vaguely heard of the existence of a bust of the Chinese philosopher, Lao Tzu, in Tolstoy's study at Yasnaya Polyana. Though resulting investigation has revealed no trace of this bust, it has brought to light abundant evidence of Tolstoy's interest in China, most of which, to my knowledge, has never heretofore been presented. For the collecting of this evidence I owe a deep debt of gratitude to my wife. She it was who carefully examined the voluminous Russian sources and translated the pertinent data into English; without her painstaking work this book could never have been written.

All dates here given are in "old style" (i.e., for the nineteenth century, twelve days behind the Gregorian calendar), save for the events occurring outside of Russia which are mentioned on pp. 44-45. Chinese names, which often appear with confusing variations in different sources, are all romanized according to the Wade-Giles system, unless they occur spelled otherwise in the titles of books. Russian names are transcribed according to the system found in Ernest J. Simmons' *Leo Tolstoy* (item 5 in the Bibliography at the end of this book).

The fact that many of the most important Russian sources are unavailable in Philadelphia, where most of the research for this monograph has been conducted, has made its preparation a task of more than usual difficulty. Compensation has been provided, however, by the cooperation of several persons, to whom I am happy to express my hearty thanks. Mr. Elliott H. Morse and his colleagues, of

PREFACE

the Reference Department, University of Pennsylvania Library, kindly arranged for the interlibrary loan of numerous books from the Library of Congress and Harvard University. Mr. Avrahm Yarmolinsky, Chief of the Slavonic Division, New York Public Library, unfailingly answered several queries on bibliographical matters. Similar aid was given by Mr. Sergei Polevoy, of the Harvard-Yenching Institute, Cambridge, Mass., who has taken a personal interest in this study, he himself being the author of an unpublished study (in Russian) of the influence of Tolstoy in China. (The present study is devoted wholly to the influence of China on Tolstoy.) Further bibliographical information was supplied by Professor Ernest J. Simmons, Chairman of the Department of Slavic Languages, Columbia University; Mr. Fang Chao-ying, of the Chinese History Project, Columbia University; Mr. Constantine Kiriloff of Peiping; and Mr. Joseph Wang, of the Asiatic Division, Library of Congress. The help of other kind friends on specific points is acknowledged in the footnotes.

To the board of editors of the History of Ideas Monograph Series, especially Dr. Arthur O. Lovejoy, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, The Johns Hopkins University, I am deeply grateful for including this book among their monographs. I am likewise indebted to Mr. Owen Lattimore, Director of the Walter Hines Page School of International Relations, The Johns Hopkins University, for first bringing me in contact with Professor Lovejoy.

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*October 1, 1949
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TOLSTOY AND CHINA

CHAPTER I

CHINA, THE WEST, AND TOLSTOY

AMONG the countries of the Orient with which the Western world has at various times come in contact, China, though farthest removed, has seemed peculiarly capable of inspiring either ardent admiration or violent antipathy. As early as the thirteenth century, the fascination that Cathay then exercised upon Europeans is obvious to all who have read Marco Polo. Less well known, except to specialists, is the equally strong enthusiasm that held sway in several of the countries of Western Europe during much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In France, where this enthusiasm was highest, it is probable that during the first three quarters of the eighteenth century the cultural influence of China was more potent than that of any other non-European country.

Much of this Sinomania was as ephemeral and superficial as it was intense. Already strong in the seventeenth century, it became further stimulated in the eighteenth by that search for the exotic and the fanciful which generally characterized the rococo age, and was given impetus by the growing influx into Europe of such new Chinese products as tea, silk, porcelain, and lacquer ware. In the field of art it left its mark in the charming *chinoiseries* of the time. In the more purely intellectual sphere, however, the *goût chinois* was equally manifest and perhaps of more enduring significance. The Jesuit missionaries who then lived in Peking—some even as officials at the Chinese court—wrote lengthy accounts to their *confrères* at home, filled with