Review of The Origins of Modernism in Russian Architecture by William C. Brumfield

Wendy Salmond
Chapman University, salmond@chapman.edu

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is called ethnography, will then take first place in the curriculum and, commensurate to their importance for a rational life, zoology, mathematics, physics, chemistry and other disciplines shall follow in their appropriate places.” Tolstoy the educator went to the peasantry a missionary and left converted, an ethnographer; he established himself as instructor and ended his life a Teacher.

The state of research on Tolstoy and education has been deplorable, but now Daniel Murphy of Trinity College, Dublin has done much to rectify the situation. He comes to the topic as a prominent historian of education and places Tolstoy’s efforts in the mosaic of European and American reform with precision and clarity. While he cannot devote ample space to locating Tolstoy in the context of Russian history, Russian peasant schooling studies are sufficiently advanced that Murphy’s accurate, comprehensive account of Tolstoy’s pedagogical thought and activities can easily be read against that detailed scholarly background. He captures the cross currents of Tolstoy’s struggle with the Enlightenment, fulfilling the promise of Boris Eikhenbaum’s and Sir Isaiah Berlin’s insights on that subject. Murphy understands that the central characteristic of Tolstoy’s philosophical procedure is “a Beckett-like process of ‘aporetic’ questioning” that withers reason under the lamp of constant, critical self-scrutiny. In perspective Tolstoy’s relentless attack on progress throughout his writings is precursor to Horkheimer and Adorno’s assault in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944), the cornerstone of contemporary critical hermeneutics.

If there is a drawback to this volume it lies in the enormous promise of the title relative to the numerous and more modest achievements of the book. “Tolstoy and Education” connotes a contribution to our general understanding of Tolstoy with an original view of how teaching shaped the man, based upon definitive reading of selected texts couched in the context of Tolstoy’s opus. But Murphy does not, for example, linger over the above mentioned essay on art and peasant learning long enough to discover and analyze the stories that Tolstoy and the children wrote together or the volume of narratives collected by Tolstoy’s student-teacher Alfonse Erlenevir; are they the basis for the popular lesson tales Tolstoy wrote twenty years later, such as “What Do People Live By?” One would also wish for an appreciation of the predicament Tolstoy’s confrontation of education brought about, the modernity it forced on Tolstoy, the nostalgia he felt for lost learning, all of these the true condition of Tolstoy’s contemporaries rather than the eccentricity biographers attribute to Tolstoy. Finally, one misses reflection on the relationship between learning and writing, a step toward reconstructing the cognitive continuum we are familiar with in other nineteenth century thinkers but have industriously destroyed in Tolstoy. Murphy addresses this issue at the level of Tolstoy’s thoughts on aesthetic education and aesthetics, but does not explore the matrices of Tolstoy’s philosophical and his artistic production.

These desiderata would not be exhausted by the study of Tolstoy and education but Murphy’s monograph is one of the first steps toward them in all the vast literature on Tolstoy, and suggests that other efforts, of the nature of “... and the Poor” (Richard Worpman’s analysis of Tolstoy’s *What Then Shall We Do?* provides the parameters for such an inquiry), “... Agriculture;” “... Politics;” “... the Church;” “... the State;” “... Religion” (Richard Gustafson’s synthesis sets a standard), “... and Society” (Peter Ulf Moller’s study of reader reception is exemplary in its unearthing of detail) will eventually overcome the inertia in Tolstoy studies.

Elliott Mossman
*University of Pennsylvania*

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In *The Origins of Modernism in Russian Architecture*, William Brumfield has produced a worthy successor to his earlier *Gold in Azure: One Thousand Years of Russian Architecture*
(1983). Moving from the vast scale of centuries to the concentrated focus of a few crucial decades, the author sets out to chronicle "the transformation of Russian architecture from the 1880s to the 1917 revolution," a period that witnessed the advent, in rapid succession, of the Russian Style, the style moderne (art nouveau) and neoclassicism.

This is not the first attempt to examine the development of modernism in Russian architecture. Evgenii Kirichenko's pioneering *Russkaia arkhitektura 1830–1910* (1978) dealt with the same chronological period and more recently a number of deluxe albums by Soviet scholars have appeared in English, devoted to aspects of Russian art nouveau and the search for a national style (Sterlin and Borisova, *Russian Art Nouveau*, 1990; Kirichenko, *Russian Design and the Fine Arts*, 1991). This book, however, is the first by a western scholar to examine thoroughly a period hitherto dominated by Soviet historians.

On the face of it, it is the visual aspects of this book that will perhaps attract the widest audience, for it is generously illustrated with both the author's own excellent photographs (40 of them in color) and with photographs from contemporary architectural periodicals (primarily *Ezhegodnik obschestva khudozhnikov-arhitekturov*). While many of the monuments illustrated have been reproduced before, in the work of Kirichenko, Borisova and Kazhdan, there are also fresh discoveries, notably in the section on neoclassicism. No other book in English offers such a well balanced and thorough visual survey of the search for an architectural style both modern and national in late Imperial Russia.

The accompanying text will appeal, first and foremost, to architectural historians. The author examines, not only the questions of style and technology and the interaction between them, but also grapples with the problem of "the meaning of style" as a question that was debated on the pages of Russian architectural journals. Such journals form the principal source material for the author's discussions and conclusions, so that the overall impression is of an objective, reportorial stance rather than the more ideological approaches of Soviet scholars. But the text's real strength lies in forging an essential link between the specific problems and developments of late Imperial Russian architecture and the broader context of European modernism—a context that has been conspicuously absent from the Soviet literature to date.

The result is an extremely useful source of reliable factual data on specific monuments discussed within the context of ideas that lie at the heart of European modernism. It would appeal most directly to the architectural historian and the specialist in European modernism, but also to all those interested in Russian cultural history.

**WENDY R. SALMOND**  
*Chapman University*

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Considering its origin in various Kennan Institute presentations over the course of two years, this collection of six articles by four well known Russian architectural historians gives a surprisingly coherent narrative. William Brumfield has done a skillful editing job in pulling together the varied interests of his colleagues.

Blair Ruble begins by describing the century-long retreat from public space in St. Petersburg which culminated in the alienating space of Leningrad’s Moscow Square. Then Brumfield demonstrates the consequence of the professionalization of Russia’s architects through an examination of the journal *Zodchii* and its fascination with American skyscraper technology. In another chapter, Brumfield concisely summarizes the work of the present generation of Soviet architectural historians who, over the last twenty years, have been patiently rehabilitating and re-absorbing (for themselves and young contemporary architects) the phenomenon of Moscow’s “modern” architectural aesthetic during the Silver Age. Ruble then shows us the later product of that mod-

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