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## **Salem Press Announces a New Addition to the Critical Insights Series: *Critical Insights: Leo Tolstoy***

In line with the goals of the *Critical Insights series*, this volume provides an introduction to Tolstoy's life and work, intended for a nonspecialist audience. This volume contains a variety of material on Tolstoy's life, on his major works, themes, and philosophical inspirations, as well as on his own influence on all types of literature and philosophy all around the world.

Each essay is 2,500 to 5,000 words in length, and all essays conclude with a list of "Works Cited," along with endnotes. Finally, the volume's appendixes offer a section of useful reference resources:

- A chronology of the author's life
- A complete list of the author's works and their original dates of publication
- A general bibliography
- A detailed paragraph on the volume's editor
- Notes on the individual chapter authors
- A subject index

The **first four chapters** of the volume form the **Critical Contexts** section. These four chapters are designed to acquaint the reader with historical context, criticism, and comparison to serve as an introduction to nuanced chapters in the **Critical Readings** section. Kathleen Conti's "Not a Work of Art, But a Piece of Life': History and Realism in the Time of Tolstoy" is a perfect introduction, particularly for readers who may not be fully aware of the historical, social, political, and cultural contexts in which Tolstoy lived and wrote in Russia. Conti not only provides an historic overview, but also specific details about the nineteenth century that contributed specifically to Tolstoy's oeuvre. Tolstoy was heavily influenced by the world around him and his life experiences. It would be difficult to understand Tolstoy's work fully without understanding something about his life and the Russian nineteenth century.

The **Critical Readings** section contains **ten chapters**, each with its own approach to some aspect of Tolstoy's major works. The major works under discussion in this section are predominantly the novels *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, and *Resurrection*. Orel Beilinson's chapter, "Tolstoy and the Caucasus: Noble Savages and Imperial Identities," addresses more of Tolstoy's earlier works like *The Cossacks* and his *Sebastopol Tales*, in particular because of the subject matter, which focuses on Tolstoy's depiction of the Caucasus region.

Writing about Russian literature is not without its challenges, particularly when it comes to transliterating Cyrillic letters into Roman letters. The transliteration style used here is eclectic, meaning not all authors have used the same style, but we have tried to be uniform in the transliteration of names (e.g., *Tolstoy* and not *Tolstoi*) and places (e.g., Yasnaya Polyana).

Many volumes of collected scholarly work on Tolstoy have been published all around the world. The aim of *Critical Insights: Leo Tolstoy* is not to take away from the existing and voluminous work that already exists, but rather to contribute to that body of work. The goal of this volume is to make this collection of scholarship more widely accessible to audiences who have less scholarly acquaintance with or even general knowledge of Russian literature, Tolstoy, and his definitive works, to inspire greater interest in and appreciation of Tolstoy's achievements and uniqueness in Russian and world literature.

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*Critical Insights: Leo Tolstoy*

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