

Title: Tolstoy and the Translatability of Aesthetic Experience

Author: D. Brian Kim, University of Pennsylvania

In his treatise on aesthetics, *What Is Art?*, Tolstoy famously identifies the role of art as a means to directly communicate a genuinely felt emotion from one party to another. Amid his theorizing of the aesthetic experience as a mechanism akin to infection, Tolstoy also draws attention to the many ways in which “art” can be counterfeit, including such devices as imitation and borrowing that produce not true art, but only its impression. This paper situates translation in Tolstoy’s discussion of art and explores what place, if any, that translation has in the framework of Tolstoy’s aesthetics, which prioritizes intelligibility and universalism without necessarily making explicit the apparatus whereby art can transcend the boundaries between languages and cultures.