



Adulterous Nations: Family Politics and National Anxiety in the European Novel

Tatiana Kuzmic

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In *Adulterous Nations*, Tatiana Kuzmic enlarges our perspective on the nineteenth-century novel of adultery, showing how it often served as a metaphor for relationships between the imperialistic and the colonized. In the context of the long-standing practice of gendering nations as female, the novels under discussion here—George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, Theodor Fontane's *Effi Briest*, and Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, along with August Šenoa's *The Goldsmith's Gold* and Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Quo Vadis*—can be understood as depicting international crises on the scale of the nuclear family. In each example, an outsider figure is responsible for the disruption experienced by the family. Kuzmic deftly argues that the hopes, anxieties, and interests of European nations during this period can be discerned in the destabilizing force of adultery. Reading the work of Šenoa and Sienkiewicz, from Croatia and Poland, respectively, Kuzmic illuminates the relationship between the literature of dominant nations and that of the semicolonized territories that posed a threat to them. Ultimately, Kuzmic's study enhances our understanding of not only these five novels but nineteenth-century European literature more generally.

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