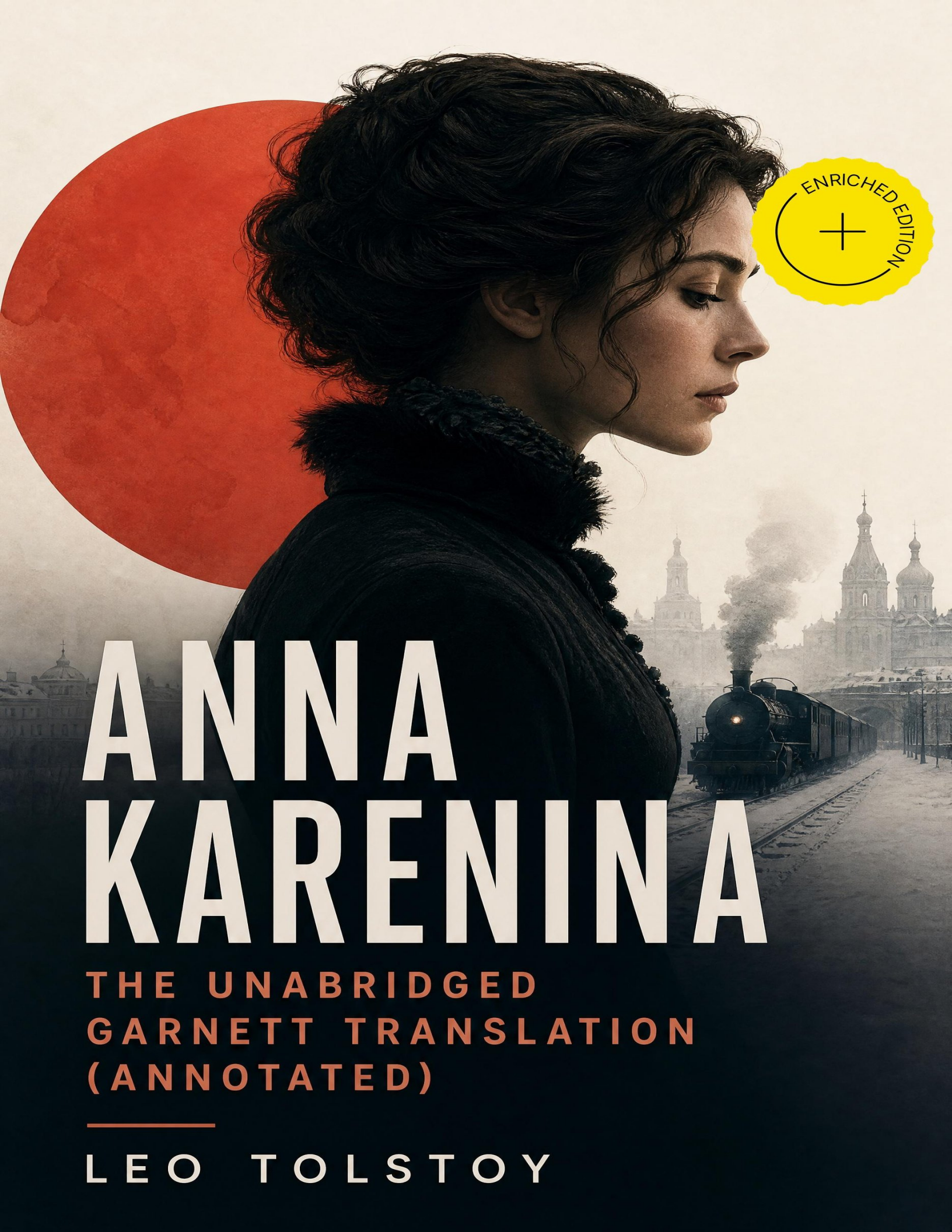




ANNA KARENINA

THE UNABRIDGED
GARNETT TRANSLATION
(ANNOTATED)

LEO TOLSTOY

Leo Tolstoy

Anna Karenina - The Unabridged Garnett Translation (Annotated)

**Enriched Edition. A Tragic Russian Marriage Drama of
Passion, Duty, and High Society Hypocrisy**

*In this **enriched edition**, we have carefully created added
value for your reading experience.*

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Reid Graybourne

Edited and published by e-artnow, 2021
EAN 4064066375003

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Synopsis](#)

[Historical Context](#)

[Author Biography](#)

[Anna Karenina - The Unabridged Garnett Translation](#)

[Analysis](#)

[Reflection](#)

[Memorable Quotes](#)

[Notes](#)

Introduction

[Table of Contents](#)

A single choice, made in the name of love and freedom, can send tremors through a whole world built on duty, reputation, and habit. That tension lies at the heart of *Anna Karenina*, Leo Tolstoy's vast and intimate novel of Russian society, private desire, marriage, family life, and moral struggle. Few works of fiction hold together such breadth and such psychological precision. In this unabridged Garnett translation, readers encounter a book that moves from drawing rooms and railway stations to fields and country estates, always returning to the difficult question of how a human being might live truthfully within the pressures of society and the claims of the heart.

Anna Karenina is regarded as a classic not only because of its scale or fame, but because it transformed what the novel could accomplish. Tolstoy joined social observation with penetrating inner life, giving readers characters whose thoughts, motives, contradictions, and moments of self-deception feel startlingly alive. The novel's architecture is expansive, yet its power often depends on minute emotional shifts and ordinary details. That combination of panoramic vision and close realism helped establish the modern psychological novel as a major artistic form. Its influence can be traced in later fiction concerned with marriage, consciousness, social performance, and the conflict between individual desire and collective expectation.

First published in serial form between 1875 and 1877, and then as a complete book in 1878, *Anna Karenina* belongs to the mature period of Tolstoy's career. By the time he wrote it, he had already achieved international prominence, yet

this novel showed a further deepening of his art. Set in nineteenth-century Russia, it reflects a society shaped by aristocratic codes, bureaucratic institutions, rural labor, and rapid cultural change. Tolstoy renders these worlds with exceptional authority, moving among urban and country settings without losing sight of the moral and emotional stakes that define the lives of his characters.

The central premise begins with the arrival of Anna Arkadyevna Karenina, a brilliant and admired woman whose presence affects every circle she enters. Around her, Tolstoy develops several intertwined stories involving marriage, courtship, family conflict, public standing, and the search for meaning. The novel is not driven by plot alone, but by the unfolding consequences of choices made under pressure. From its opening movements, readers are introduced to a society in which personal happiness and social legitimacy do not always coincide. Tolstoy's gift lies in showing how public forms and private longings become inseparable, shaping destinies in ways both subtle and profound.

One reason the novel endures is its refusal to simplify moral experience. Tolstoy does not divide his characters into the purely innocent and the plainly guilty. Instead, he presents men and women trying, failing, rationalizing, hoping, and suffering within institutions that often outlast their individual wishes. Marriage in this novel is at once legal arrangement, social performance, emotional refuge, and source of pain. Love appears not as a single feeling but as a force that can illuminate life, unsettle identity, and expose the limits of convention. Such complexity gives the book its unusual authority across generations of readers.

Tolstoy's realism is one of the foundations of the novel's classic status. He attends to gesture, rhythm, work, travel, conversation, domestic routine, and social ritual with

extraordinary care. Yet these details never remain merely decorative. They reveal class distinctions, emotional strain, and moral outlook, and they build a world that feels inhabited rather than arranged. In *Anna Karenina*, scenes of society and scenes of labor stand beside reflections on politics, faith, education, and the family. The result is a novel that seems to contain a whole civilization in motion, while remaining intensely focused on the private cost of living within it.

The book has also remained central because of its formal richness. Tolstoy balances multiple narrative lines, contrasting city and country, display and sincerity, impulse and discipline. The movement between these strands creates a deep conversation within the novel itself, as one set of lives throws another into sharper relief. This method broadens the emotional range of the work and prevents any single perspective from becoming absolute. Readers are asked not simply to judge events, but to consider how different ways of living may answer, or fail to answer, the same fundamental human needs for love, dignity, work, and moral coherence.

Constance Garnett's translation has long played a significant role in the English-language reception of Russian literature. Her versions of major Russian authors introduced generations of readers to works that became central to literary culture beyond Russia. The unabridged Garnett *Anna Karenina* is therefore part of an important history of transmission as well as a reading text in its own right. While later translations offer different tonal and stylistic choices, Garnett's version remains historically influential. It helped secure Tolstoy's place in English-speaking literary life and brought this novel's emotional force and intellectual seriousness to a wide international audience.

Later writers have learned from *Anna Karenina* in many ways: in the handling of consciousness, in the representation of social worlds, in the treatment of marriage and infidelity as literary subjects of the highest seriousness, and in the ability to place intimate feeling within broad historical reality. The novel demonstrated that domestic life could be epic without ceasing to be precise, and that everyday decision-making could carry the gravity of tragedy. Its legacy extends through realist, modernist, and contemporary fiction alike, wherever authors examine the relation between inner life and outer structure with honesty, sympathy, and formal ambition.

What gives the novel such persistent vitality is that its themes are not confined to nineteenth-century Russia. Social judgment, the wish to belong, the fear of exposure, the longing for authentic love, and the difficulty of reconciling personal freedom with responsibility remain recognizable in every age. Tolstoy's world contains specific customs and institutions, yet the emotional experiences it dramatizes are strikingly familiar. Readers still encounter the pressure to perform acceptable identities, the strain between private conviction and public role, and the search for a life that feels both meaningful and morally defensible under the scrutiny of others.

At the same time, *Anna Karenina* rewards attention not only as a social novel or a love story, but as a profound inquiry into how people justify themselves. Tolstoy is acutely interested in self-knowledge and in the many ways human beings evade it. His characters interpret their own conduct, revise their memories, defend their choices, and struggle to name what they truly want. That inward drama gives the novel its enduring freshness. Each return to the book can reveal a new emphasis: a sharper awareness of its ethical

debates, a deeper sympathy for its vulnerabilities, or a renewed admiration for its compositional mastery.

For contemporary readers, the lasting appeal of Anna Karenina lies in this union of immediacy and magnitude. It is a novel grounded in the particulars of its time, yet it speaks compellingly to modern questions about intimacy, identity, work, family, and the claims made upon us by society. Its classic status rests on more than reputation: it rests on an unmatched power to make readers feel the weight of choices and the cost of living divided between appearance and truth. In that power, sustained across cultures and generations, Tolstoy's masterpiece continues to find new readers and to deserve them.

Synopsis

[Table of Contents](#)

Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* opens in the midst of domestic disorder in the Moscow household of Stepan Arkadyevich Oblonsky, whose marital infidelity has thrown family life into confusion. His sister, Anna Karenina, travels from St. Petersburg to help restore peace between Oblonsky and his wife, Dolly. At the same time, the landowner Konstantin Levin arrives in Moscow with hopes of proposing to Kitty Shcherbatsky, Dolly's younger sister. From these intersecting situations, Tolstoy establishes the novel's main concerns: marriage and betrayal, social obligation and private feeling, and the uneasy balance between urban sophistication and rural sincerity in Russian high society.

In Moscow, Anna's grace and intelligence immediately impress those around her, but her presence also alters the emotional atmosphere of the social world she enters. Kitty, who has been courted by Levin, is increasingly drawn to the brilliant cavalry officer Count Vronsky, whose attention seems to promise a glamorous future. Levin, earnest and introspective, finds himself out of step with fashionable society and returns to the countryside disappointed. These early movements create a pattern that the novel sustains throughout: personal hopes are shaped by social codes, and apparently ordinary gatherings become decisive moments in the lives of Tolstoy's characters.

As Anna returns to St. Petersburg, her life with her husband, Alexei Karenin, is presented as orderly, respectable, and emotionally constrained. Her renewed encounters with Vronsky introduce a powerful disturbance into this carefully regulated existence. Tolstoy traces the growth of an

attachment that becomes increasingly difficult to contain within the conventions of elite society. Around Anna, drawing rooms, trains, and formal visits become settings where private emotion collides with public scrutiny. The novel does not rush these developments; instead, it shows how a change in feeling can gradually unsettle a household, a reputation, and a person's sense of self.

Parallel to Anna's story, Levin's life in the country offers another view of love, duty, and the search for meaning. He turns his attention to estate management, agricultural reform, and the practical rhythms of rural labor, trying to find solid ground after personal disappointment. Tolstoy uses Levin's experiences to explore tensions between intellectual theory and lived experience, between the values of the city and those of the countryside, and between individual aspiration and communal life. These sections broaden the novel beyond romance or scandal, placing intimate decisions within a larger reflection on work, class, faith, and the moral structure of everyday existence.

As Anna and Vronsky's relationship becomes more visible, the pressure exerted by social judgment intensifies. Karenin, a senior government official, responds less as a passionate husband than as a man formed by duty, decorum, and institutional logic. His concern for appearances and order contrasts with Anna's increasingly urgent need for emotional truth, while Vronsky must confront the difference between romantic pursuit and lasting commitment. Tolstoy presents these conflicts without simple moral sorting. Instead, he shows how every choice carries consequences shaped by family ties, gender expectations, legal constraints, and the unforgiving standards of aristocratic society.

Kitty's emotional setback and gradual recovery form another important strand of the narrative. Through illness, travel, and renewed self-understanding, she matures beyond the sheltered expectations that first guided her choices. Her eventual reconnection with Levin unfolds more quietly than the dramatic social tensions surrounding Anna, yet it is central to the novel's design. Their developing relationship allows Tolstoy to examine courtship, marriage, domestic adjustment, and the hope of mutual understanding. Even here, however, happiness is not treated as simple or fixed; it must be tested against insecurity, differing temperaments, and the practical realities of shared life.

The middle portions of the novel move among city society, country estates, and family interiors, showing how each setting generates distinct moral pressures. Public events, official duties, and social gatherings continue to shape the characters' fates, but Tolstoy remains equally attentive to private conversations, household routines, and solitary reflection. Anna's position grows more precarious as her personal desires and social standing come into sharper conflict. Meanwhile, Levin's path leads him through marriage, responsibility, and recurring spiritual unease. By arranging these stories in parallel, Tolstoy invites comparison between passion and companionship, appearance and authenticity, and external success and inner peace.

As the narrative advances, emotional strain deepens across the principal relationships. Anna seeks dignity and genuine feeling in circumstances that offer little security, while Karenin and Vronsky respond in ways that reveal their limits as well as their strengths. Levin, for his part, struggles not only with family responsibilities but also with questions about mortality, purpose, and belief. The novel's power lies

in this widening scope: what begins as a set of intertwined social and romantic entanglements becomes an inquiry into how human beings live under competing claims of love, conscience, convention, and self-knowledge. Tolstoy sustains tension by emphasizing process rather than spectacle.

Anna Karenina endures because it combines acute social observation with a searching account of inner life. Through its contrasting households and intertwined destinies, the novel examines marriage, desire, parenthood, labor, status, and the longing for moral clarity. Tolstoy's unabridged novel, here represented in Constance Garnett's well-known English translation, remains notable for its breadth of characterization and its refusal to reduce experience to easy judgments. Without resting on a single lesson, it leaves readers with a profound sense of how personal choices are shaped by the worlds people inhabit, and why the questions it raises about love, responsibility, and meaning continue to resonate.

Historical Context

[Table of Contents](#)

Anna Karenina is set in the Russian Empire in the 1870s, chiefly in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and the countryside of central Russia. Its world is framed by the institutions that governed imperial life: the autocratic state under Tsar Alexander II, the Orthodox Church, the hereditary nobility, and the family. Tolstoy places his characters within a society ordered by rank, service, and reputation, where government ministries, aristocratic salons, and landed estates shaped opportunities and conduct. The novel's movement between capitals and provinces reflects a real divide in Russian life between bureaucratic urban centers and agricultural estates that remained the basis of elite wealth and identity.

Leo Tolstoy wrote the novel during the 1870s and published it in serial form from 1875 to 1877, with the complete book appearing shortly afterward. By then he was already one of Russia's most prominent writers, having served in the army in the 1850s and gained fame through earlier fiction. His mature work increasingly engaged moral, social, and religious questions rooted in contemporary Russian life. Anna Karenina emerged after the great reform era of Alexander II had altered legal and economic structures but had not settled the direction of Russian society. The novel therefore belongs to a moment of transition rather than stability, examining institutions under strain.

One of the most important historical developments behind the novel is the emancipation of the serfs in 1861. Before that reform, millions of peasants had been legally tied to landlords' estates, providing labor and dues that sustained noble households. The reform ended serfdom but did not

produce social harmony: peasants often received limited land on difficult terms, and landowners had to adjust to wage labor, new management practices, and reduced authority. Anna Karenina repeatedly echoes this unsettled aftermath in its attention to estate administration, agricultural experiments, and the problem of how nobles should live after the old order had been legally transformed but not psychologically overcome.

The emancipation reform was followed by broader changes in local administration and law that also inform the novel's background. In 1864, the government created zemstvos, elected local councils with responsibilities for roads, schools, medicine, and other practical affairs, though voting remained weighted toward property. Judicial reforms in the same period introduced more public courts and legal procedures that differed from older arbitrary practices. Tolstoy does not turn these measures into direct political plot, yet the novel reflects a society discussing practical governance, public service, and the obligations of educated landowners. Characters debate work, reform, and usefulness in ways characteristic of Russia's post-1861 search for new civic forms.

The Russian aristocracy depicted in the novel was still socially dominant, but its position had become more uncertain by the 1870s. Noble status continued to confer prestige, connections, and access to court or state service, especially in St. Petersburg. Yet old assumptions about effortless authority were weakened by economic change, administrative reform, and a growing public sphere. Tolstoy renders this class with unusual precision: balls, dinners, visits, and official appointments are not mere decoration but mechanisms through which status is displayed and judged. The novel mirrors a society in which appearances remained

powerful even as the underlying foundations of noble life were being questioned by debt, reform, and moral unease.

The contrast between St. Petersburg and Moscow in *Anna Karenina* reflects real cultural distinctions within imperial Russia. St. Petersburg, founded in the early eighteenth century as a European-style capital, was the center of the court, high bureaucracy, and imperial display. Moscow, older and more associated with landed families and traditional sociability, retained a different tone even as it modernized. Tolstoy uses these settings to register differences in manners, values, and public scrutiny. The capitals were linked by rail and by the movement of families through seasonal social life, but they carried distinct symbolic weight: one tied to state and ceremony, the other to domestic networks and older Russian identity.

Family law and marriage customs are central to the novel because they were central to nineteenth-century Russian social order. Marriage among the upper classes involved not only personal attachment but legal status, inheritance, and public legitimacy. The Orthodox Church regulated marriage and divorce, and divorce was difficult to obtain, especially for women, requiring formal proof and ecclesiastical procedures. This rigidity helps explain the novel's intense concern with reputation, separation, and social exclusion. Tolstoy's portrayal of domestic conflict is historically grounded in a culture where private relationships were inseparable from public judgment, and where the law offered uneven possibilities to men and women facing marital breakdown.

The position of women in elite Russian society had begun to change by the mid to late nineteenth century, but change remained limited and contested. Noble women could exercise social influence in households and salons, and by

the 1860s and 1870s debates over women's education, work, and legal rights had become more visible. However, property rights, access to professions, and freedom in marriage still operated within strong patriarchal constraints. *Anna Karenina* reflects these realities by showing how severely society policed female conduct compared with male behavior. Tolstoy's treatment does not present a program of reform, but it exposes the imbalance between social codes and individual feeling that structured women's lives.

The novel also belongs to a period of intense debate about Russia's relation to Europe. Since the early nineteenth century, Russian thinkers had argued over whether the country should follow Western institutions or preserve a distinct path rooted in Orthodoxy, communal traditions, and national history. By Tolstoy's time these disputes had taken many forms, from liberal reformism to Slavophile criticism of Western imitation. In *Anna Karenina*, such questions appear less as abstract doctrine than as habits of speech, education, travel, and taste. French language, European fashions, and foreign ideas coexist with anxiety about authenticity, national purpose, and the moral costs of elite cosmopolitanism.

Agriculture is one of the novel's most historically specific concerns because Russia in the 1870s remained overwhelmingly rural. Even after emancipation, most of the population were peasants, and grain production, land use, and labor arrangements dominated economic life. Landowners experimented with new tools, crop systems, and business methods, often influenced by Western European models, while confronting peasant customs and local conditions. Tolstoy had practical experience managing estates, and the novel draws on real contemporary disputes about efficiency, stewardship, and rural justice. Its farming

scenes are therefore not pastoral digressions but part of a larger examination of how the old landed class might adapt, or fail to adapt, to a changing agrarian society.

Railways are one of the clearest technological markers of the world of Anna Karenina. Russia's railway network expanded rapidly from the mid nineteenth century, especially after the 1850s, linking major cities and altering travel, trade, and perceptions of distance. Lines between Moscow and St. Petersburg made movement faster and more regular, helping knit together elite social circuits while also introducing new kinds of public space and accident. Tolstoy uses the railway not just as background but as a sign of modernity's force: mechanical, impersonal, and transformative. The novel registers how new technology compressed time and unsettled established rhythms without necessarily producing greater moral clarity or social stability.

Urban life in the novel reflects the growth of bureaucratic and professional structures in imperial Russia. St. Petersburg was crowded with ministries, offices, and ranks inherited from the Table of Ranks established in the eighteenth century, through which service to the state shaped careers and honor. Even in the reform era, advancement often depended on official favor, etiquette, and networks as much as merit. Tolstoy's portrayal of administrators and public men captures a world of paperwork, committees, and formal obligations. He shows how bureaucratic life could appear orderly and rational while remaining entangled with vanity, hierarchy, and the distance between institutional language and lived human experience.

Religion in Anna Karenina is inseparable from the authority of the Russian Orthodox Church, which remained a central institution of imperial society. Orthodoxy shaped rites of

passage, family law, education, and official ideas of moral order, though actual belief and practice varied across classes. In the nineteenth century, the Church functioned closely with the state rather than as an independent political power. Tolstoy depicts religious forms with historical accuracy, including their role in marriage and social legitimacy, while also probing the gap between ritual observance and inner conviction. This tension anticipates his later, more explicit religious criticism, but here it remains embedded in the ordinary moral life of his characters.

The novel was written during a period when the Russian reading public was expanding and thick journals played a major role in intellectual life. Literature in nineteenth-century Russia was not only entertainment; it was a chief arena for social analysis, moral argument, and political implication under conditions of censorship. Tolstoy published *Anna Karenina* serially in *Russkii Vestnik*, an influential journal, and contemporary readers encountered it alongside debates about reform, education, war, and national identity. This context helps explain the novel's breadth. It addresses personal relations with the seriousness of public questions because Russian fiction of the era was expected to engage the fate of society through the details of everyday life.

A more immediate historical event touches the novel's closing movement: the Serbian and broader Balkan crisis of the mid-1870s, which stirred Pan-Slav sentiment in Russia. In 1876, as uprisings and Ottoman reprisals in the Balkans drew attention across Europe, Russian volunteers and public committees mobilized in support of Slavic Christians under Ottoman rule. This agitation fed into the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 to 1878. Tolstoy alludes to the enthusiasm surrounding the Serbian cause, but with notable reserve. His treatment reflects skepticism toward fashionable patriotism and public moral display, suggesting that national causes

could be embraced rhetorically without resolving the ethical failures closer to home.

Tolstoy's own position within this history matters. Born into the nobility in 1828, he inherited estates and knew both aristocratic privilege and the practical realities of rural management. His military service in the Caucasus and Crimea exposed him to state violence and patriotic rhetoric, experiences that shaped his distrust of official language and worldly ambition. By the 1870s he had become deeply concerned with moral self-examination, labor, family life, and the search for truthful living. *Anna Karenina* channels these concerns not through abstract autobiography but through historically grounded social observation, making private crisis inseparable from the institutional and economic world that produces it.

Taken together, *Anna Karenina* serves as both a mirror and a critique of Russia in the reform era of Alexander II. It mirrors the 1870s through its exact rendering of aristocratic custom, bureaucratic culture, rail travel, agricultural change, and the legal and religious constraints surrounding marriage and family. It critiques that world by exposing how institutions meant to sustain order often intensify hypocrisy, loneliness, and moral confusion. Without reducing characters to social types, Tolstoy shows a society suspended between old hierarchies and incomplete modernization. The novel endures partly because it captures a precise historical moment while revealing how public systems shape intimate life.

Author Biography

[Table of Contents](#)

Introduction

Leo Tolstoy was a Russian novelist, essayist, and moral thinker whose work stands at the center of world literature. Born in 1828 and active through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, he became famous for combining psychological depth, social observation, and large historical vision. His two most widely known novels, *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*, are often cited among the greatest achievements of fiction. Tolstoy also wrote short stories, autobiographical works, religious and philosophical essays, and later moral tales. His career traced a remarkable path from aristocratic landowner and celebrated novelist to radical critic of state power, violence, and organized religion.

Education and Literary Influences

Tolstoy was born at Yasnaya Polyana, the family estate south of Moscow, into the Russian nobility. He lost both parents in childhood and was raised by relatives, an experience that informed his recurring attention to memory, family life, and moral development. He received private tutoring in languages and standard subjects before entering Kazan University in the 1840s. There he studied Oriental languages and later law, but he did not complete a degree. Dissatisfied with formal study, he turned to independent reading, self-examination, and practical experiments in self-improvement, habits that shaped both his fiction and his later philosophical writing.

Among Tolstoy's early influences were Russian prose writers and European moralists whom he read widely in youth and adulthood. Scholars consistently note the importance of Jean-Jacques Rousseau to his ethical imagination and critique of civilization. The Bible, especially the Gospels, became central to his later thought, though he interpreted Christian teaching in his own way. His service in the Caucasus and during the Crimean War also profoundly influenced him, giving him direct knowledge of military life and exposing him to violence, hierarchy, and the unpredictability of human behavior. Those experiences deepened the realism and moral urgency that distinguish his mature work.

Literary Career

Tolstoy began publishing in the 1850s. His early autobiographical trilogy, *Childhood, Boyhood, and Youth*, introduced readers to his interest in consciousness, growth, and moral self-scrutiny. Service in the army supplied material for *The Cossacks* and the *Sevastopol Sketches*, works that brought him wider recognition. In these writings he resisted heroic simplifications of war and emphasized ordinary perception, fear, and confusion. Critics and readers quickly recognized an unusual descriptive power and honesty in his prose. Even at this stage, Tolstoy was already developing the qualities that would later define him: close observation, ethical seriousness, and a persistent testing of accepted ideas against lived experience.

After military service and travel in Europe, Tolstoy returned to Yasnaya Polyana and became involved in local educational work. He opened a school for peasant children and wrote essays on teaching, arguing for flexible methods rather than rigid discipline. This period of experimentation coincided with continued literary development. In the 1860s

he produced *War and Peace*, a vast novel set during the Napoleonic era that combines family history, battlefield scenes, and reflections on historical causation. Its scale and structural ambition were extraordinary, and its reputation grew steadily. The novel established Tolstoy as one of the leading writers of his age in Russia and beyond.

Tolstoy followed that achievement with *Anna Karenina*, published in the 1870s. While more concentrated in form than *War and Peace*, it displays the same mastery of social detail and interior life. The novel explores marriage, desire, family, labor, faith, and the pressures of public opinion within Russian society. It was widely admired for its psychological complexity and formal control. Alongside his major novels, Tolstoy wrote notable shorter fiction, including *Family Happiness*, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, *The Kreutzer Sonata*, *Master and Man*, *Hadji Murat*, and many stories for broad audiences. Across these works, he refined a prose style that appears transparent while carrying immense emotional and intellectual weight.

A spiritual crisis in the late 1870s and early 1880s marked a turning point in Tolstoy's career. He described this crisis in *A Confession*, where he examined despair, mortality, and the search for meaning. Thereafter, his literary and essayistic work became more directly didactic, though he never abandoned narrative art. *What Is Art?* set out his controversial aesthetic views, judging art by its moral and communicative power rather than elite taste. *Resurrection*, published near the end of the century, united fiction with social criticism and drew attention across Europe. By this stage Tolstoy was not only a novelist of immense stature but also an international public moralist.

Beliefs and Advocacy

Tolstoy's later thought centered on a radical reading of Christianity that rejected violence, coercion, and worldly authority. He opposed war, capital punishment, and compulsory state power, and he argued that genuine moral life begins with personal conscience and active love toward others. These convictions informed essays such as *The Kingdom of God Is Within You* and shaped many later stories and parables. He also criticized wealth, luxury, and the privileges of his own class, seeking a simpler mode of life and manual labor as ethical disciplines. His views drew followers in Russia and abroad and made him a powerful voice in debates about morality and social order.

His religious and social writings often placed him in conflict with established institutions. Tolstoy criticized the Russian Orthodox Church for what he saw as its alliance with state power and its departure from the ethical teachings of Jesus. In 1901 the Holy Synod formally excommunicated him, a widely documented event that increased public attention to his views. He also condemned legal punishment, private property in absolute terms, and forms of patriotism that encouraged violence between nations. Although not a systematic political theorist, he became associated with Christian anarchist and pacifist currents. His moral authority influenced reformers and nonviolent thinkers in several countries.

Tolstoy also addressed practical social questions, especially education, poverty, and the treatment of marginalized people. His concern for peasants was longstanding, rooted in his estate life and sharpened by observation of Russian inequality. During times of famine he participated in relief efforts, and in essays and letters he urged responsibility toward the poor. His fiction repeatedly tests moral claims against everyday suffering rather than abstract doctrine. Even when readers disagreed with his conclusions, they

often recognized the seriousness of his ethical engagement. The consistency between his public arguments and his continuing self-criticism helps explain why he remained a compelling, if controversial, figure far beyond literary circles.

Final Years & Legacy

In his final decades Tolstoy continued to write fiction, essays, letters, and religious reflections while living mostly at Yasnaya Polyana. Late works such as *Father Sergius*, *After the Ball*, and *Hadji Murat* show that his artistic power remained formidable, even when his public image was dominated by moral controversy. Visitors from Russia and abroad sought him out, and newspapers closely followed his statements. He became one of the most famous living writers in the world. Yet fame did not resolve the tensions between his ideals, his social position, and the demands placed on him by family, followers, and the reading public.

In 1910, late in life, Tolstoy left Yasnaya Polyana and fell ill during the journey. He died that year at the railway station of Astapovo, an event that was extensively reported and quickly entered literary history. He was buried at Yasnaya Polyana. Tolstoy's legacy rests not only on the immense achievement of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* but also on the breadth of his influence as a thinker. Novelists have learned from his handling of time, character, and moral choice, while activists and religious dissenters have drawn on his teachings about nonviolence, conscience, and the critique of power. His work remains central to global literary culture.

Anna Karenina - The Unabridged Garnett Translation

[Main Table of Contents](#)

[Anna Karenina](#)

[PART 1](#)

[PART 2](#)

[PART 3](#)

[PART 4](#)

[PART 5](#)

[PART 6](#)

[PART 7](#)

[PART 8](#)

polished calm of the club with the discomfort and uncertainty Levin feels once he leaves it.

[166](#) Delirium tremens is a severe alcohol-withdrawal syndrome marked by confusion, tremors, and sometimes hallucinations. In the novel, it signals that Vronsky's English trainer is not merely a drunkard but someone whose drinking has become medically dangerous.

[167](#) A treillage is a lattice or trellis-like decorative screen, often used in interior design. Here it helps create a partially hidden, intimate setting in which Anna's portrait and her living presence are introduced almost theatrically.

[168](#) "M." is the French abbreviation for monsieur, a common marker of polite foreign naming in Russian aristocratic circles. Vorkuev is a writer and publisher figure who represents the literary world Anna has been engaging with through her writing.

[169](#) A pince-nez is a type of eyeglasses that pinch the nose instead of using temples over the ears. Karenin's frequent use of it is a period detail that marks him as a bureaucratic, formal, and somewhat old-fashioned official.

[170](#) This refers to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, a major conflict of Tolstoy's era. Newspapers and telegrams about the war were part of everyday political conversation, even in scenes centered on domestic life.

[171](#) This French word means a position, basis, or financial footing. Karenin uses it in a technical, bookish way to argue that very high salaries show an unhealthy economic foundation in the state's finances.

[172](#) Tolstoy is pointing to a social nuance in Moscow speech, where "honest" could imply more than simple moral

uprightness. In context, it signals local assumptions about respectability and business conduct that Alexey Alexandrovitch does not fully catch.

[173](#) Rurik was the semi-legendary founder of the first ruling dynasty of Rus', from which many Russian noble families claimed descent. Stepan Arkadyevitch's thought reflects aristocratic pride in lineage and resentment at being kept waiting by a wealthy Jew.

[174](#) These were music halls or café-concerts, popular in 19th-century European cities for light entertainment, singing, and drinking. Their mention underscores the contrast Tolstoy draws between lively Petersburg nightlife and what Stepan considers the dullness of Moscow.

[175](#) Princess Myakaya is a society figure who speaks bluntly and gossipily, often cutting through pretension. Her opinions matter because she moves in the same elite circles as the main characters and often knows social developments before others do.

[176](#) This refers to Jules Landau, a supposedly clairvoyant or spiritual healer whom the characters treat as influential. His presence reflects the era's fascination with mysticism, quasi-religious guidance, and charismatic outsiders in upper-class society.

[177](#) This is a quotation from the Epistle of James in the New Testament, often used in Christian debates about belief versus outward action. In the scene, it becomes part of a religious argument between Stepan Arkadyevitch, Karenin, and Lidia Ivanovna about sincerity and moral life.

[178](#) Helsingfors is the Swedish name for Helsinki, the capital of Finland. In 19th-century Russian usage, the city was commonly referred to by this name, reflecting Finland's

status as the Grand Duchy of Finland under the Russian Empire.

[179](#) A French word meaning an arranged meeting or appointment, often with romantic overtones in 19th-century literature. Tolstoy uses the foreign term to signal the characters' educated, socially refined speech.

[180](#) French for "too bad for her" or "so much the worse for her." The phrase shows how Russian aristocrats in the novel mix French into conversation, and it underscores Vronsky's emotional detachment in the moment.

[181](#) Vozdvizhenskoe is an estate associated with Anna and Vronsky's plans during this period of the novel. Place names like this usually refer to country properties of the Russian nobility, important as settings for private family and social life.

[182](#) Obiralovka is the station where Anna's story reaches its tragic ending. The name was later changed to Zheleznodorozhny; in Tolstoy's time it referred to a railway stop outside Moscow, and its ordinary, real-world setting heightens the realism of the scene.

[183](#) This is Sergey Ivanovitch Koznischev's scholarly book, presented as the product of years of labor. Tolstoy uses its reception to satirize literary vanity and the way public attention can ignore even serious intellectual work.

[184](#) This is a fictional newspaper or journal title. The comic mention shows how satirical periodicals could dismiss a writer's work with a cutting aside rather than a full review.

[185](#) This refers to the Serbian-Turkish conflict of 1876, which drew strong pro-Slav sympathy in Russia. In the novel, the

war becomes a fashionable public cause and a test of patriotic feeling.

[186](#) This was the Russian imperial anthem. Its appearance at the station marks the patriotic fervor surrounding the volunteers and the public ceremony of sending men off to war.

[187](#) A transliteration of the Russian cheer “zdravstvuy,” meaning “long live” or “hurrah.” It was commonly shouted at patriotic gatherings, and here it reinforces the emotional crowd scene at the railway station.

[188](#) French for “it is not very well regarded in Petersburg.” French was widely used by the Russian upper classes, and the phrase suggests concern with court or elite opinion in the capital.

[189](#) This refers to Aleksey Khomyakov (1804–1860), a major Russian religious thinker associated with Slavophilism. His writings on the church influenced Levin’s thinking about faith, authority, and the limits of rational philosophy.

[190](#) Sergey Ivanovitch refers to Levin’s brother, Sergei Ivanovich Karenin, an intellectual and public figure in the novel. The children’s list of visitors reflects the household’s family connections and the social mixed company common in the Russian gentry.

[191](#) This refers to the 1876 conflict involving Serbia and the Ottoman Empire, part of the wider Balkan crisis that stirred strong sympathy in Russia. In Tolstoy’s time, many educated Russians debated whether private volunteers should join the struggle in support of Slavic and Orthodox Christians.

[192](#) This phrase alludes to reports of Ottoman reprisals against Bulgarians after the 1876 April Uprising, which