

Chapter 1 : Anna Karenina | W. W. Norton & Company

Russian author Leo Tolstoy wrote the acclaimed novels 'War and Peace,' 'Anna Karenina' and 'The Death of Ivan Ilyich,' and ranks among the world's top writers.

Leo Tolstoy was one of the great rebels of all time, a man who during a long and stormy life was at odds with Church, government, literary tradition, and his own family. Yet he was a conservative, obsessed by the idea of God in an age of scientific positivism. He brought the art of the realistic novel to its highest development. Yet the bustling spirit that animates his novels conveys perhaps more of life than life itself. Nikolay recouped his fortunes, however, by marrying Maria Volkonsky, bearer of a great name and heiress to a fortune that included serfs and the estate of Yasnaya Polyana in Tula Province, where Leo Lev Nikolayevich was born on Aug. Her religious fervor was an important early influence on Tolstoy. When she died in , the children were sent to Kazan to another sister of their father, Pelageya Yushkov. He was no prude, but he was awkward and proud, being known to his friends as the "Bear. He was not a particularly apt pupil, but he was good at games. In he entered Kazan University; planning on a diplomatic career, he entered the faculty of Oriental languages. Finding these studies too demanding, he switched 2 years later to the notoriously easygoing law faculty. The university, however, had too many second-rate foreigners on its faculty, and Tolstoy left in without taking his degree. Tolstoy returned to Yasnaya Polyana, determined to become a model farmer and a "father" to his serfs. During this time he first began making those amazingly honest and self-lacerating diary entries, a practice he maintained until his death. These entries provided much material for his fiction, and in a very real sense his whole oeuvre is one long autobiography. In Tolstoy attempted to take the law examination, this time in St. Petersburg , but after passing the first two parts he again became disenchanted, returning to the concerts and gambling halls of Moscow when not hunting and drinking at Yasnaya Polyana. Leo greatly loved his brother, and when he asked him to join him in the south, Tolstoy agreed. After a meandering journey, he reached the mountains of the Caucasus, where he sought to join the army as a Junker, or gentleman-volunteer. In the autumn he passed the necessary exams and was assigned to the 4th Battery of the 20th Artillery Brigade, serving on the Terek River against the rebellious mountaineers, Moslem irregulars who had declared a holy war against the encroaching Russians. During the long lulls he first began to write. In he sent the autobiographical sketch *Childhood* to the leading journal of the day, the *Contemporary*. Tolstoy now began *The Cossacks* finished in , a thinly veiled account of his life in the outpost. From November to August Tolstoy served in the battered fortress at Sevastopol. He had requested transfer to this area, where one of the bloodiest battles of the Crimean War was in process. As he directed fire from the 4th Bastion, the hottest area in the conflict for a long while, Tolstoy managed to write *Youth*, the second part of his autobiographical trilogy. Some of these stories were published while the battle they described still raged. When the city fell, Tolstoy was asked to make a study of the artillery action during the final assault and to report with it to the authorities in St. His reception in the capital was triumphal. Because of his name, he was welcomed into the most brilliant society. Because of his stories, he was lionized by the cream of literary society. He was not tall but very strong. During the same year Tolstoy visited Moscow, garnering there both success in society and esteem among authors. By the time he returned to St. Petersburg, he was beginning to tire of his new literary acquaintances. He felt that they were insincere talkers. He offended both camps of what soon became a war within the *Contemporary* group with the opposing points of view represented by the aristocratic Ivan Turgenev and the radical Nikolai Chernyshevsky. His lifelong friendship with the conservative poet A. Fet dated from this time. Tolstoy was never a "professional author"; he avoided literary gossip, and his independent wealth permitted him to remain aloof from the scramble of making a living. In the following year he made his first trip abroad. He did not like Western Europe , as his stories of this period, *Lucerne* and *Albert*, show. He was becoming increasingly interested in education, however, and he talked with experts in this field wherever he went. In the summer he returned to Yasnaya Polyana and set up a school for peasant children, where he began his pedagogic experiments. In Tolstoy went abroad again, seeking to learn more about education; he also gambled heavily. During this trip he witnessed the death of his brother Nikolay in the south

of France. More than all the grisly scenes of battle he had witnessed, this event brought home to Tolstoy the fact of death, the specter of which fascinated and terrified him throughout his long career. After the freeing of the serfs in 1861, Tolstoy became a mediator *posrednik*, an official who arbitrated land disputes between serfs and their former masters. In April he had a petty quarrel with Turgenev, actually challenging him to a duel. Turgenev declined, but the two men were on bad terms for years. In 1862 Tolstoy started a journal to propagate his pedagogical ideas, *Yasnaya Polyana*. These cures eventually became an almost annual event. Daughter of a prominent Moscow doctor, Bers was handsome, intelligent, and, as the years would show, strong-willed. The first decade of their marriage brought Tolstoy the greatest happiness; never before or after was his creative life so rich or his personal life so full. In June his wife had the first of their 13 children. Since he had been trying to write a historical novel about the Decembrist uprising of 1825, but the more he worked, the farther back in time he went. Tolstoy had been somewhat neglected by critics in the preceding few years because he had not participated in the bitter literary politics of the time. But his new novel created a fantastic outpouring of popular and critical reaction. He peopled his enormous canvas with almost everyone he had ever met, including all of his relations on both sides of his family. In so doing he celebrated a patriarchal way of life—rich in its country contentments and glittering in its city excitements. Balls and battles, birth and death, all were described in copious and minute detail. In this book the European realistic novel, with its attention to social matrix, exact description, and psychological rendering, found its most complete expression. His estate prospered, and he was deeply in love with his wife. She worshiped her husband, doing everything in her power to free him from all but his writing. Their son Ilya reported that she copied out the complete text of *War and Peace* seven times. The brilliant rhetoric of those passages in *War and Peace* in which Tolstoy argued for his own idiosyncratic theory of history foreshadowed the often crotchety tone of the later intransigent moralist. In the midst of all his happiness, in 1869, Tolstoy experienced a deep and mysterious personal trauma. Traveling to buy an estate in Penza Province, he stopped overnight in Arzamas. Awakened by a nightmare, he felt that he was dying. Once again, as when Nikolay had died, he was reminded of his mortality, and his so-called conversion of May, in a sense, be traced back to this experience. He published the *Primer* and the first four *Readers*, his attempts to appeal to an audience that would include children and the newly literate peasantry. From 1869 to 1877 he worked on the second of his masterworks, *Anna Karenina*, which also created a sensation upon its publication. The country was in a patriotic ferment. Katkov, editor of the journal in which *Anna Karenina* had been appearing serially, was afraid to print the final chapters, which contained an attack on war hysteria. Tolstoy, in a fury, took the text away from Katkov, and with the aid of N. Strakhov he published a separate edition that enjoyed huge sales. It again contained great chunks of disguised biography, especially in the scenes describing the courtship and marriage of Kitty and Levin. *Spiritual Crisis* The ethical quest that had begun when Tolstoy was a child and that had tormented him throughout his younger years now drove him to abandon all else in order to seek an ultimate meaning in life. But he found no answer. He began reading the Gospels, and he found the key to his own moral system in Matthew: From this point on his life was dominated by a burning desire to achieve social justice and a rationally acceptable ethic. He visited Optina again, this time disguised as a peasant, but his trip failed to bring him peace. In September the family moved to Moscow in order to further the education of the older sons. The following year Tolstoy participated in the census, visiting the worst slums of Moscow, where he was freshly appalled. Tolstoy had not gone out of his way to propagate his new convictions, but in 1876 he met V. In 6 years almost 20 million copies were distributed. Tolstoy had long been under surveillance by the secret police, and in 1876 copies of *What I Believe* were seized from the printer. He now took up cobbling and read deeply in Chinese philosophy. He abstained from cigarettes, meat, white bread, and hunting. The more of a saint he became in the eyes of the world, the more of a devil he seemed to his wife. He wanted to give his wealth away, but she would not hear of it. An unhappy compromise was reached in 1877, when Tolstoy assigned to his wife the copyright to all his works before 1877. In 1877 Tolstoy worked on what is possibly his most powerful story, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, and his drama of peasant life, *The Power of Darkness* which could not be produced until 1880. In 1878, when he was 60 years old, his thirteenth child was born. In the same year he finished his sweeping indictment of carnal love, *The Kreutzer Sonata*. Tolstoy was now perhaps the most famous man in the world; people came from all over the globe to *Yasnaya Polyana*. His

activity was unabated. In and in he organized famine relief in Ryazan Province.

Leo Tolstoy in his later years. Early 20th century. This is a list of works by Russian writer Leo Tolstoy (), including his novels, short stories, plays and non-fiction.

Yale University Press, Thereafter, although occasionally absent especially in the s for extended periods, he maintained the estate as his home. In he married Sofiya Andreevna Bers born , the daughter of a Moscow physician. Thirteen children were born of the marriage, ten of whom survived infancy. Tolstoi left Yasnaya Polyana for the last time in November He showed a gift for languages and a fondness for literature, including fairy tales, the poems of Pushkin, and the Bible, especially the Old Testament story of Joseph. In Tolstoi enrolled in the local university and began a notably unsuccessful career as a student. He did, however, develop a keen interest in moral philosophy. He steeped himself in the writings of Rousseau. He left the University in without a degree and settled at Yasnaya Polyana. In he went to the Caucasus to join his brother Nikolai who was serving there in the army. He became a commissioned officer himself in , serving first on the Danube and later in the Crimea. While in the army he began his literary career. His first published work, *Childhood*, appeared pseudonymously in *The Contemporary Russ. Sovremennik* in and was greeted by general acclaim. It was followed by a sequel, *Boyhood*, and a number of tales of military life. When, in , Tolstoi retired from the army and went [] to live in St. Petersburg, his reputation as a writer was already very considerable. He took an active part in literary circles and made the acquaintance of the leading writers and critics of the day. He was much in demand in the fashionable salons of the city. Stories of various types flowed from his pen. He soon discovered, however, that he got on badly with his fellow writers and disliked his life as a literary celebrity. In he made his first trip abroad, and by he had decided to abandon literature in favor of more "useful" pursuits. He returned to Yasnaya Polyana to devote himself to the management of his estate and to the education of the children of his serfs. He established a school at Yasnaya Polyana, and, in and , he traveled extensively in order to acquaint himself with European, especially German, educational theory and practice. He resumed teaching on his return, but in he handed the bulk of the classroom duties over to others. He took upon himself the writing and publication of a periodical describing his theory of education and the pedagogical practice of his school. Twelve issues of *Yasnaya Polyana* appeared in and After his marriage Tolstoi became increasingly preoccupied with estate management, bent on achieving the ideal of the well-regulated life of a prosperous country squire. He published *The Cossacks*, a novel on which he had been working at intervals for ten years, in order to pay his outstanding gambling debts and enable him to enter into married life with balanced account books. Shortly thereafter he began his first long novel, *War and Peace*, a work of colossal proportions which occupied him until In Tolstoi once again turned his back on literature and began a second period of preoccupation with pedagogical work. Over the next five years he wrote and compiled materials for a complete course of elementary education. He tested them in his school and revised them. His work on the later parts of the novel was disturbed by ever more frequent fits of emotional distress. This condition was brought on by his inability to find an acceptable answer to the question: By the mids Tolstoi was occasionally so depressed that he entertained thoughts of suicide. By , however, his "crisis" had culminated in what is customarily referred to as a "conversion" to the ideals of human life and conduct which he found in the teaching of Jesus. Tolstoi regarded *Confession* as his first step along a new road in life, one which he hoped was secure from the lurking menace of the power of death. To Tolstoi the crisis and conversion meant a break with his past, especially his literary past. The convention of dividing his career into two parts using as the year of demarcation has a definite basis in the facts of his life, at least as these were understood by Tolstoi himself. It should not be forgotten, however, that most of the preoccupations, themes, purposes, and style of the "old" Tolstoi are present with greater or lesser clarity already in the work of the "young" Tolstoi. *Confession* was, more specifically, the introduction to a group of three books on religion, written in the years to and thereafter considered by Tolstoi to be his most important work. The first volume, *A Study of Dogmatic Theology Issledovanie dogmatischeneskogo bogosloviya* , is a sustained polemic against the teachings of the established church. This heavily annotated work of [] exegesis demonstrates both his thorough acquaintance with the

French, German, English, and Russian biblical scholarship of the 19th century and his fluent command of New Testament Greek. Tolstoi devoted the remainder of his life to the propagation of his religious views in publicistic essays, works of fiction, and in personal contacts with visitors and through correspondence. He dealt with a variety of subjects in his essays. *On Life and Death*, offers the most extended discussion of that dualism of body the "animal life of man" and spirit the "true life" which is the philosophical heart of his teaching. *What Then Should We Do?* He advocates the abolition of the use of money in favor of the direct exchange of services and the disestablishment of private property rights. He condemns philanthropy as a symptom of "the willingness of the rich to do everything for the poor except to get off their backs. This work was among the several written by Tolstoi which had a profound influence on Mohandas Gandhi. *What Is Art?* He also wrote many briefer essays on such subjects as the nature of religion, vegetarianism, famine relief in which he took an active part in the early s , and on the evils of alcohol and tobacco, patriotism, military conscription, war, terrorism as practiced both by terrorists and by governments , and capital punishment. Tolstoi resumed literary activity in the mids with a series of stories written for the popular audience i. To facilitate the publication and distribution of the "Stories for the People" he and his friend and disciple V. Tolstoi also developed an interest in the drama and wrote his only major play, *The Power of Darkness*. He also wrote two more novels, *Resurrection* and *Hadji-Murad*, and more than a dozen short stories. He devoted such strength as remained to him chiefly to the compilation of vast compendia of morally and spiritually elevating extracts from the writings of sages of various epochs and cultures. Although not expressly so described by Tolstoi, the miscellanies represent his version of the "perennial philosophy," the concept of which had been central to his view of religion from the early s and even before. Tolstoi was the best-known Russian in the world during the last decade of his life. Tolstoian communities sprang up throughout Europe and in the United States. He was described in the newspapers as "the sage of Yasnaya Polyana" and "the conscience of humanity. He was a constant irritant to the authorities. Most of the works written after were either banned outright or mutilated by the censor. His public stature in Russia and abroad, however, was such that his person, even in times of vigorous repression, remained inviolable. At home he was the center of a distasteful competition between his disciples, led by Chertkov, and his family, mainly his wife. Sofiya Andreevna made frequent and covert nocturnal searches of his private papers. It was the experience of lying sleepless in his darkened bedroom listening to his wife rustling through his papers in his study next door that finally prompted him [] to leave Yasnaya Polyana for good and embark on the journey which ended in his death. Tolstoi was a multi-dimensional man. In his long career he had been a teacher and educational theorist, a philosopher and social critic, a successful farmer and paterfamilias, a soldier, and a prophet. Above all, however, he was a great artist, and it is on his fiction that his fame at present rests. The literary career of this "great writer of the Russian land" as his contemporary Turgenev called him may be divided into three parts: The works of the early period may be regarded as the "school" in which Tolstoi taught himself to write. He isolated the themes and developed the literary techniques which characterize his more mature writings. The spirit of trial and error is reflected in the journal which he began in and continued to keep, with greater or lesser regularity, throughout the remainder of his life. Written in , it was not submitted for publication, perhaps because its young author feared that its originality would occasion public rejection. The story is an account of the sequence of thoughts and feelings which pass through the mind of the protagonist in the course of a single day. The spontaneous impressions of the child as child alternate with the analysis of those impressions by the child grown up. The result is a combination of the lyrical representation of the memories of childhood typical of the genre and a detached, quasi-scientific investigation of the operations and growth of the conscious mind at various stages of its development. In the former he discovers philosophy, and considerable attention is given to the phenomenon of the paralysis of the will when it seeks to be guided by reason alone. Tolstoi reduced the conventional exciting plots of such stories to the level of mere incidents which he used as a framework to display his true interest, a neatly categorized series of psychological portraits of the Russian soldiers and officers and their opponents, the mountain tribesmen. The stories blend the traditional Caucasian military tale of the s with the strategies and devices characteristic of the Natural School of the s. They represent a blend of fiction and reportage with a startling admixture in "Sevastopol in December" of the stylistic conventions of a

tourist guidebook. They also especially "Sevastopol in May" make extended use of the narrative device of stream of consciousness "the dialectic of the soul" as it was called by the critic N. Chernyshevsky with which Tolstoi had first experimented in "The History of Yesterday. The loci classici are the account of Natasha at the opera in War and Peace, the description of the service in the prison church in Resurrection, and the ridiculing of the rehearsal of a Wagnerian opera in What Is Art? Finally, it was in "Sevastopol in May" that Tolstoi proclaimed that the "hero" of his fiction was not any of the characters who appeared in it but rather that which "I love with all the power of my soul" and which "has been, is, and will be beautiful," namely, The Truth. He had already touched upon death and various attitudes toward it in the Trilogy and the military tales. He devoted "Three Deaths" Tri smerti, exclusively to this subject. The story describes the pain and anxiety attendant on the death of a wealthy noblewoman, the patient and uncomplaining acceptance of his death by a poor coachman, and the death of a tree. Despite his physical suffering, the coachman dies with less anguish than the noblewoman. The death of the tree is the least painful, because the tree is unaware that it is dying. He describes incidents from the lives of two Hussar officers, father and son. The comparison is distinctly unflattering to the younger generation, as the "progressive" critics of the time were quick to note and regret. Tolstoi added offense to innuendo with two stories based upon the experiences of his first trip to Europe. Tolstoi worked on The Cossacks Kazaki, throughout the entire period of his literary apprenticeship, and it reflects the whole range of themes and stylistic techniques which then preoccupied him. The novel breaks new ground as well. More comprehensively and directly than in any other of his early works, Tolstoi here delves into the theme of the relationship between the individual and the group.

Chapter 3 : Leo Tolstoy timeline | Timetoast timelines

after a brief period at home, Tolstoy spent time living in Moscow looking back on this period with distain, Tolstoy confesses in his auto biography that his youth was squandered drinking, gambling and visiting brothels in his pursuit of pleasure.

Probably even more than Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy has been praised as being the greatest novelist in world literature. The 19th-century English critic and poet Matthew Arnold famously expressed the commonest view in saying that a work by Tolstoy is not a piece of art. Early years The scion of prominent aristocrats, Tolstoy was born at the family estate, about miles kilometres south of Moscow , where he was to live the better part of his life and write his most-important works. His grandmother died 11 months later, and then his next guardian, his aunt Aleksandra, in Tolstoy and his four siblings were then transferred to the care of another aunt in Kazan, in western Russia. Despite the constant presence of death, Tolstoy remembered his childhood in idyllic terms. His first published work, *Detstvo ; Childhood* , was a fictionalized and nostalgic account of his early years. Interested in literature and ethics , he was drawn to the works of the English novelists Laurence Sterne and Charles Dickens and, especially, to the writings of the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau ; in place of a cross, he wore a medallion with a portrait of Rousseau. But he spent most of his time trying to be *comme il faut* socially correct , drinking, gambling, and engaging in debauchery. After leaving the university in without a degree, Tolstoy returned to Yasnaya Polyana, where he planned to educate himself, to manage his estate, and to improve the lot of his serfs. Despite frequent resolutions to change his ways, he continued his loose life during stays in Tula, Moscow, and St. In he joined his older brother Nikolay, an army officer, in the Caucasus and then entered the army himself. He took part in campaigns against the native peoples and, soon after, in the Crimean War . In Tolstoy began keeping a diary, which became his laboratory for experiments in self-analysis and, later, for his fiction. With some interruptions, Tolstoy kept his diaries throughout his life, and he is therefore one of the most copiously documented writers who ever lived. Reflecting the life he was leading, his first diary begins by confiding that he may have contracted a venereal disease. The early diaries record a fascination with rule-making, as Tolstoy composed rules for diverse aspects of social and moral behaviour. Nekrasov was enthusiastic, and the pseudonymously published work was widely praised. The first sketch, which deals with the courage of simple soldiers, was praised by the tsar. After the Crimean War Tolstoy resigned from the army and was at first hailed by the literary world of St. But his prickly vanity, his refusal to join any intellectual camp, and his insistence on his complete independence soon earned him the dislike of the radical intelligentsia. In Tolstoy traveled to Paris and returned after having gambled away his money. After his return to Russia, he decided that his real vocation was pedagogy , and so he organized a school for peasant children on his estate. Tolstoy married Sofya Sonya Andreyevna Bers, the daughter of a prominent Moscow physician, in and soon transferred all his energies to his marriage and the composition of *War and Peace*. Tolstoy and his wife had 13 children, of whom 10 survived infancy. The hero of this work, the dissolute and self-centred aristocrat Dmitry Olenin, enlists as a cadet to serve in the Caucasus. Living among the Cossacks, he comes to appreciate a life more in touch with natural and biological rhythms. The period of the great novels . Happily married and ensconced with his wife and family at Yasnaya Polyana, Tolstoy reached the height of his creative powers. He devoted the remaining years of the s to writing *War and Peace*. Then, after an interlude during which he considered writing a novel about Peter the Great and briefly returned to pedagogy bringing out reading primers that were widely used , Tolstoy wrote his other great novel, *Anna Karenina*. These two works share a vision of human experience rooted in an appreciation of everyday life and prosaic virtues. *War and Peace* *Voyna i mir* . *War and Peace* contains three kinds of material a historical account of the Napoleonic wars, the biographies of fictional characters, and a set of essays about the philosophy of history. Critics from the s to the present have wondered how these three parts cohere, and many have faulted Tolstoy for including the lengthy essays, but readers continue to respond to them with undiminished enthusiasm. Contrary to generally accepted views, Tolstoy portrays Napoleon as an ineffective, egomaniacal buffoon , Tsar Alexander I as a phrasemaker obsessed with how historians will describe him, and

the Russian general Mikhail Kutuzov previously disparaged as a patient old man who understands the limitations of human will and planning. In war as in life, no system or model can come close to accounting for the infinite complexity of human behaviour. Recognizing the artifice of high society, he joins the army to achieve glory, which he regards as truly meaningful. Badly wounded at Austerlitz, he comes to see glory and Napoleon as no less petty than the salons of St. As the novel progresses, Prince Andrey repeatedly discovers the emptiness of the activities to which he has devoted himself. When the book stops – it does not really end but just breaks off – Pierre seems to be forgetting this lesson in his enthusiasm for a new utopian plan. The essays in *War and Peace*, which begin in the second half of the book, satirize all attempts to formulate general laws of history and reject the ill-considered assumptions supporting all historical narratives. The causes of historical events are infinitely varied and forever unknowable, and so historical writing, which claims to explain the past, necessarily falsifies it. The shape of historical narratives reflects not the actual course of events but the essentially literary criteria established by earlier historical narratives. They presume that history is shaped by the plans and ideas of great men – whether generals or political leaders or intellectuals like themselves – and that its direction is determined at dramatic moments leading to major decisions. In fact, however, history is made by the sum total of an infinite number of small decisions taken by ordinary people, whose actions are too unremarkable to be documented. As Tolstoy explains, to presume that grand events make history is like concluding from a view of a distant region where only treetops are visible that the region contains nothing but trees. It remains one of the most-controversial aspects of his philosophy. The novel begins at the Oblonskys, where the long-suffering wife Dolly has discovered the infidelity of her genial and sybaritic husband Stiva. By contrast, Stiva, though never wishing ill, wastes resources, neglects his family, and regards pleasure as the purpose of life. The figure of Stiva is perhaps designed to suggest that evil, no less than good, ultimately derives from the small moral choices human beings make moment by moment. But Anna, who imagines herself the heroine of a romantic novel, allows herself to fall in love with an officer, Aleksey Vronsky. Schooling herself to see only the worst in her husband, she eventually leaves him and her son to live with Vronsky. Throughout the novel, Tolstoy indicates that the romantic idea of love, which most people identify with love itself, is entirely incompatible with the superior kind of love, the intimate love of good families. As the novel progresses, Anna, who suffers pangs of conscience for abandoning her husband and child, develops a habit of lying to herself until she reaches a state of near madness and total separation from reality. She at last commits suicide by throwing herself under a train. The realization that she may have been thinking about life incorrectly comes to her only when she is lying on the track, and it is too late to save herself. Their story focuses on courtship, marriage, and the ordinary incidents of family life, which, in spite of many difficulties, shape real happiness and a meaningful existence. Throughout the novel, Levin is tormented by philosophical questions about the meaning of life in the face of death. Although these questions are never answered, they vanish when Levin begins to live correctly by devoting himself to his family and to daily work. Both *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* advance the idea that ethics can never be a matter of timeless rules applied to particular situations. Rather, ethics depends on a sensitivity, developed over a lifetime, to particular people and specific situations. Conversion and religious beliefs Upon completing *Anna Karenina*, Tolstoy fell into a profound state of existential despair, which he describes in his *Ispoved ; My Confession*. All activity seemed utterly pointless in the face of death, and Tolstoy, impressed by the faith of the common people, turned to religion. Drawn at first to the Russian Orthodox church into which he had been born, he rapidly decided that it, and all other Christian churches, were corrupt institutions that had thoroughly falsified true Christianity. He was excommunicated from the Russian Orthodox church in 1881. In the early 1880s he wrote three closely related works, *Issledovaniye dogmaticheskogo bogosloviya* written ; *An Examination of Dogmatic Theology* , *Soyedineniye i perevod chetyrokh yevangeliy* written ; *Union and Translation of the Four Gospels* , and *V chyom moya vera?* In brief, Tolstoy rejected all the sacraments, all miracles, the Holy Trinity, the immortality of the soul, and many other tenets of traditional religion, all of which he regarded as obfuscations of the true Christian message contained, especially, in the *Sermon on the Mount*. Nonresistance to evil, the doctrine that inspired Gandhi, meant not that evil must be accepted but only that it cannot be fought with evil means, especially violence. Thus, Tolstoy became a pacifist. Because governments rely on the threat of

violence to enforce their laws, Tolstoy also became a kind of anarchist. He enjoined his followers not only to refuse military service but also to abstain from voting or from having recourse to the courts. He therefore had to go through considerable inner conflict when it came time to make his will or to use royalties secured by copyright even for good works. In general, it may be said that Tolstoy was well aware that he did not succeed in living according to his teachings. Tolstoy based the prescription against oaths including promises on an idea adapted from his early work: The commandment against lust eventually led him to propose in his afterword to *Kreytserova sonata* [; *The Kreutzer Sonata*], a dark novella about a man who murders his wife total abstinence as an ideal. His wife, already concerned about their strained relations, objected. In defending his most-extreme ideas, Tolstoy compared Christianity to a lamp that is not stationary but is carried along by human beings; it lights up ever new moral realms and reveals ever higher ideals as mankind progresses spiritually. Regarded as a great holy man, Sergius comes to realize that his reputation is groundless; warned by a dream, he escapes incognito to seek out a simple and decent woman whom he had known as a child. At last he learns that not he but she is the saint, that sainthood cannot be achieved by imitating a model, and that true saints are ordinary people unaware of their own prosaic goodness. This story therefore seems to criticize the ideas Tolstoy espoused after his conversion from the perspective of his earlier great novels. After she is condemned to imprisonment in Siberia, he decides to follow her and, if she will agree, to marry her. She refuses to marry him, but, as the novel ends, Nekhlyudov achieves spiritual awakening when he at last understands Tolstoyan truths, especially the futility of judging others. Sometimes he expressed in more-extreme form ideas he had always held such as his dislike for imitation of fashionable schools , but at other times he endorsed ideas that were incompatible with his own earlier novels, which he rejected. In *Chto takoye iskusstvo?* Tolstoy further divides true art into good and bad, depending on the moral sensibility with which a given work infects its audience. His wife especially resented the constant presence of disciples , led by the dogmatic V. Chertkov, at *Yasnaya Polyana*. Their once happy life had turned into one of the most famous bad marriages in literary history. The story of his dogmatism and her penchant for scenes has excited numerous biographers to take one side or the other. Leo Tolstoy with his grandchildren, c. In spite of his stealth and desire for privacy, the international press was soon able to report on his movements. Within a few days, he contracted pneumonia and died of heart failure at the railroad station of *Astapovo*. Legacy In contrast to other psychological writers, such as *Dostoyevsky*, who specialized in unconscious processes, Tolstoy described conscious mental life with unparalleled mastery. His name has become synonymous with an appreciation of contingency and of the value of everyday activity. Oscillating between skepticism and dogmatism, Tolstoy explored the most-diverse approaches to human experience. Above all, his greatest works, *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*, endure as the summit of realist fiction.

Chapter 4 : Leo Tolstoy: Quotes, and a List of Books by Author Leo Tolstoy

Leo Tolstoy () was a Russian author who is best known for his novels War and Peace and Anna Karenina. His works falls into the realist fiction genre, looking at what it was like to live in the same surroundings as he did. He is widely considered to be one of the greatest novelists of all time.

Her religious dedication was an important early influence on Tolstoy. When she died in , the children were sent to Kazan, Russia, to another sister of their father, Pelageya Yushkov. Tolstoy was educated at home by German and French tutors. He was not a particularly exceptional student but he was good at games. In he entered Kazan University. Planning on a diplomatic career, he entered the faculty of Oriental languages. Finding these studies too demanding, he switched two years later to studying law. Tolstoy left the university in without taking his degree. Tolstoy returned to Yasnaya Polyana, determined to become a model farmer and a "father" to his serfs unpaid farmhands. His charity failed because of his foolishness in dealing with the peasants poor, working class and because he spent too much time socializing in Tula and Moscow. During this time he first began making amazingly honest diary entries, a practice he maintained until his death. These entries provided much material for his fiction, and in a very real sense the collection is one long autobiography. Leo greatly loved his brother, and when he asked him to join him in the south, Tolstoy agreed. After a long journey, he reached the mountains of the Caucasus, where he sought to join the army as a Junker, or gentleman-volunteer. During the long lulls he first began to write. In he sent the autobiographical sketch Childhood to the leading journal of the day, the Contemporary. Nikolai Nekrasov, its Leo Tolstoy. Tolstoy then began writing The Cossacks finished in , an account of his life in the outpost. From November to August Tolstoy served in the battered fortress at Sevastopol in southern Ukraine. He had requested transfer to this area, a sight of one of the bloodiest battles of the Crimean War “; when Russia battled England and France over land. As he directed fire from the Fourth Bastion, the hottest area in the conflict for a long while, Tolstoy managed to write Youth, the second part of his autobiographical trilogy. When the city fell, Tolstoy was asked to make a study of the artillery action during the final assault and to report with it to the authorities in St. His reception in the capital was a triumphant success. Because of his name, he was welcomed into the most brilliant society. Because of his stories, he was treated as a celebrity by the cream of literary society. Daughter of a prominent Moscow doctor, Bers was beautiful, intelligent, and, as the years would show, strong-willed. The first decade of their marriage brought Tolstoy the greatest happiness; never before or after was his creative life so rich or his personal life so full. In June his wife had the first of their thirteen children. His new novel created a fantastic out-pouring of popular and critical reaction. His characters represent almost everyone he had ever met, including all of his relations on both sides of his family. Balls and battles, birth and death, all were described in amazing detail. In this book the European realistic novel, with its attention to social structures, exact description, and psychological rendering, found its most complete expression. From to Tolstoy worked on the second of his masterworks, Anna Karenina, which also created a sensation upon its publication. It again contained great chunks of disguised biography, especially in the scenes describing the courtship and marriage of Kitty and Levin. Spiritual crisis The ethical quest that had begun when Tolstoy was a child and that had tormented him throughout his younger years now drove him to abandon all else in order to seek an ultimate meaning in life. But he found no answer. In Tolstoy met V. In six years almost twenty million copies were distributed. Tolstoy had long been watched by the secret police, and in copies of What I Believe were seized from the printer. The more of a saint he became in the eyes of the world, the more of a devil he seemed to his wife. He wanted to give his wealth away, but she would not hear of it. An unhappy compromise was reached in , when Tolstoy assigned to his wife the copyright to all his works before The Holy Synod the church leaders excommunicated kicked him out him in Unable to endure the quarrels at home he set out on his last pilgrimage religious journey in October , accompanied by his youngest daughter, Alexandra, and his doctor. The trip proved too much, and he died in the home of the stationmaster of the small depot at Astapovo, Russia, on November 9, He was buried at Yasnaya Polyana. Tolstoy on the Couch: Misogyny, Masochism, and the Absent Mother. New York University Press, Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new

information about this topic:

Chapter 5 : Leo Tolstoy Biography - life, family, childhood, children, name, death, history, wife, mother

Leo Tolstoy was born to Count Nikolay Tolstoy and Princess Volkonskaya in Yasnaya Polyana, in the Tula Province of Russia. Youngest son of the family, Tolstoy experienced a lot of personal grief and sorrow at an early age.

During the first half of his long and active life, Tolstoy brought universal fame to Russian literature through his fiction. In later years, he achieved worldwide renown as a pacifist, social activist, and moralist. He is equally significant as a novelist and moral philosopher. Early Life Leo Tolstoy traces his aristocratic origins back to the founding of the Russian state in the ninth century. His ancestors, at times faithful servants, at times opponents of the Crown, amassed fame as well as respectable wealth over the centuries. Thus Tolstoy, though orphaned at age eight, grew up in comfort under the care of relatives at the various Tolstoy residences. He subsequently shaped a vague memory of his mother, who died when he was two, into an idealized portrait of the perfect woman and featured such a paragon in many of his major works. A flamboyant lifestyle, filled with carousing and gambling, prevented Tolstoy from completing university study, but he revealed an early talent for writing and meticulously recorded daily details, from purest thoughts to debauched acts, in his diaries. He continued keeping such journals until old age, providing future literary historians with rich source material for every stage of his life. His original and above all truthful accounts pleased a public that had grown tired of the prevailing vainglorious, deceitful war reports. His perceptions about the ineptitude of military commanders juxtaposed to the courage and common sense of foot soldiers resurface in his major work, *Voyna i mir* ; *War and Peace* , Moreover, his dispute with the authorities over his forthright reporting set the stage for a lifelong confrontation with the imperial autocracy. The labors of his younger years belong to the field of aesthetic literature, though he embarked on that course only after lengthy deliberation. When he returned to St. Petersburg in following military service, high society lionized the young hero and for a time drew him back into the swirl of its carefree amusements. His strong didactic bent and quarrelsome nature did not, however, endear him to the literary establishment. He soon antagonized writers on all sides of the social and political spectrum and in the end thought it best to develop his talents without the help of contemporaries. The deaths of two brothers and an execution witnessed in Paris in led him to approach life in a more serious vein. He opened and directed a school for peasant children on his estate, using pedagogical methods which he himself established, and entered into lively journalistic polemics with other educators over his scheme of placing moral teachings above the acquisition of knowledge. These and other controversial public exchanges brought renewed government interference which impelled Tolstoy to turn to less antagonistic activity. In , he married Sophia Behrs, sixteen years his junior, became a country gentleman, and settled down to a life of writing. The themes of these two major works are echoed in the many shorter pieces produced by the prolific Tolstoy during the same period. A drastic reorientation evolved from this period of introspection. No longer able to justify his considerable wealth in the face of millions of illiterate, destitute peasants and laborers, Tolstoy resolved to make amends by placing his talent and means at the disposal of the poor. After publication of the strongly anticlerical *Voskreseniye* ; *Resurrection* , , Tolstoy found himself excommunicated, an action he dismissed lightly, having over the years developed a personal Christianity which became the basis of much of his nonfictional writing. His spiritual anxieties and search for an acceptable faith are chronicled in *Ispoved* ; *A Confession* , The works became shorter, using more succinct and simpler language, and became decidedly more opinionated. Tolstoy justified the political nature of this type of fiction by challenging the very morality of aesthetic detachment. Since even his polemical commentaries adhered to respectable literary standards, he never lost his readership. On the contrary, people of all persuasions debated his works with interest, even fascination. For long years, the spouses battled over property and copyright privileges. These quarrels led Tolstoy to replace his earlier emphasis on family unity with issues of personal salvation and questions of ethics. He returned to the theme of family in one of his most controversial narratives, *Kreytserova sonata* ; *The Kreutzer Sonata* , In this work he denies that marriage is a valid social institution by defining its main purpose as the gratification of lust, detrimental to women and destructive of personal integrity. For example, his treatise *Chto takoye iskusstvo?* He dismisses most art, including his own earlier writings, as immoral and

undemocratic, suggesting instead that all art forms be morally instructive and executed in simple, guileless fashion accessible to the multitudes. Throughout his long life, Tolstoy continued to espouse peaceful settlement of international conflicts. In time, his advocacy of nonresistance made him into a prominent spokesman against war and the death penalty. His regard for the impoverished masses and his many controversial stands brought him worldwide fame. His very renown prevented an angry czarist government from treating him harshly. To prevent the total dissolution of his domestic bonds, Tolstoy permitted the family to remain at the imposing country estate, but he himself withdrew to a humble corner of it to observe a rigorously modest life-style. At the age of eighty-two, he decided to cut even these ties and secretly left home to live henceforth entirely according to his convictions. He lies buried in a distant corner of his estate. His simple, unadorned grave and the mansion, converted into a Tolstoy museum after the Russian Revolution, are a favorite stop for countless visitors and tourists. His fictional works, especially his earlier ones, retain a charm that is proof of his enormous descriptive powers. Yet even these works express personal preferences and values, which the author elucidates at every opportunity. Thus it is, in the final analysis, Tolstoy the teacher, moralist, and public commentator who dominates. Through his doctrine of nonresistance, which he based on the words of Jesus and through which he resisted many inequities of the state, he set examples for similar movements in India under Mohandas Gandhi and the United States under Martin Luther King, Jr. While his pronouncements on behalf of the poor often assume an overly shrill tone, he backed these convictions with solid action. Not only did his income and efforts facilitate great humanitarian projects, from famine relief to resettlement of religious dissenters, but also he himself found no peace until he had adjusted his life-style to fit the humblest. His deliberations on death and ideas on how to cope with it cut through the stilted social conventions of his time to find universal appreciation and application in the twentieth century. In this, too, he anticipated certain twentieth century movements toward a personal fundamentalism. Tolstoy also generated opposition. His dogmatic and frequently cantankerous method of conveying his beliefs alienated many potential adherents. In the manner of all prophets, he brooked no contradiction of his scheme of universal ethical improvement. Even so, his many achievements and contributions as major writer, social activist, and moral philosopher remain universally acknowledged. Bibliography Benson, Ruth Crego. *The Ideal and the Erotic*. University of Illinois Press, Suggests that Tolstoy struggled most of his life with a dichotomous view of women, regarding them in strictly black-and-white terms, as saints or sinners. Analyzes the female characters in the major and several minor works in terms of such a double view. An interesting and provocative piece of feminist criticism. A collection of critical essays, encompassing the years The views expressed give a very good sampling of the wide range of opinions about Tolstoy prevalent among Western critics. Many of these critics assign a prominent place in literary history to Tolstoy, comparing him to, among others, Homer and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. De Courcel, Martine, *Tolstoy*: Translated by Peter Levi. A detailed biography, annotated with selected bibliography, which relies heavily on the notebooks and diaries of Tolstoy and those of his wife, Sophia. Posits the unique notion that Tolstoy left home at the end of his life in order to return to aesthetic literature. Greenwood detects a search for such a unified vision in most of the major writings. Excellent treatment of individual characters in the major novels. *The Diaries of Sophia Tolstoy*. Translated by Cathy Porter with an introduction by R. The diaries often portray Tolstoy in an unfavorable light, since the spouses were temperamentally incompatible, and she chafed under his domination. She collaborated closely with Tolstoy for many decades, however, and her notes give a fascinating and intimate view of the Tolstoy family and of the extent to which this family served as background for many of the literary episodes. A long but immensely readable biography, breezy, insightful, and opinionated, by a prolific and highly regarded British novelist.

Chapter 6 : 5 Things You May Not Know About Leo Tolstoy - HISTORY

Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy, more popularly known as the 19th and 20th-century Russian writer Leo Tolstoy, is regarded by many as one of the greatest novelists of all time. We take a look at his best works, from the epic novels and novellas that depict the Russian society in which he grew up to the non-fiction accounts of his spiritual crisis and subsequent reawakening.

Tolstogo v Khamovnikakh or - . is a historical building which used to belong to Tolstoy himself. The museum is notable for the fact that everything here is just the way it was when Tolstoy lived here from 1852. Whilst it is impossible to freeze time, the team of the L. Tolstoy museum in Khamovniki have practically made it happen. For all Russian history and literature lovers as well as for those who are interested in Russian culture, a visit to the museum in Khamovniki is a unique opportunity to get in touch with the epoch which gave rise to one of the greatest authors of the 19th century. However, Moscow was dear to his heart too. At first, during his short visits to the capital, he usually stayed in rented apartments or with his relatives. Thus, in 1857, Tolstoy bought a house in Khamovniki whilst it is now a prestigious central district, in his time it was an affordable industrial district of weavers and workmen. In those days, the house was on the outskirts of Moscow. Tolstoy lived far from the hustle and bustle of the city he did not like. He spent 19 winters from 1852 to 1871 in his Khamovniki house, leaving for Yasnaya Polyana in summertime. Here, he went through one of the most difficult periods of his life a time of spiritual crisis. They were deeply moved by the fact that the display conveyed the atmosphere of their family lifestyle and household, so dear and familiar to them: However, they would have hardly believed then that the museum team would be able to maintain the incredible atmosphere for many years to come. The glass in front of the flatware in the dining room marks the place where the master of the house used to sit, and a small tureen came into everyday use after Tolstoy became a vegetarian and often ate dishes which were cooked especially for him. On the first floor, next to his study, a pair of his high boots he made himself and his bike are kept. The study has a desk covered with dark green woolen cloth the very same one featured in the portraits of the writer by N. Repin famous Russian painters, and a chair beside it. The writer, who was a bit shortsighted, sawed a few centimetres off the legs of this chair so that he did not have to bend over his papers. It is a unique architectural monument, one of the few wooden buildings that survived the Fire of Moscow during the war between the Russian Empire and Napoleonic France on the territory of Russia in 1812. Set centrally on a large plot of land about one hectare in size, the house is not visible from the street; it is hidden from prying eyes by lush foliage and has a vast garden at the rear. The busiest place was the area in front of the house, where in summer games of croquet were played and in winter skating could be enjoyed. Along with the heritage of world-famous people and great museums, there are many attractions in Moscow, which are not so popular, but still very remarkable. Beautiful temples in the Orthodox style, the unusual architecture of the Russian Middle Ages or the recent Soviet era, ballet and drama theaters on our website you can learn more about Moscow sights. The main exhibition is displayed in the house, where authentic interiors in which the writer lived with his family are still intact. There are 16 rooms in total. The main entrance leads into a hall, followed by a long corridor which divides the house into two parts. Along with his creative work and receiving numerous visitors, Tolstoy assigned time for handicrafts and did a lot of work around the house: Krymskaya ploschad or and even from as far as the River Moskva Russian: Today the house in Khamovniki retains the air of hospitality and welcomes everyone who, just like a hundred years ago, wants to drop in for a visit with Leo Tolstoy.

Chapter 7 : Leo Tolstoy Biography - Childhood, Life Achievements & Timeline

Tolstoy Works Timeline What follows is a timeline of Tolstoy's major writings. Interwoven within the timeline are major events in Tolstoy's own life and Russian history to give you some sense of the time and events Tolstoy lived amidst.

After his parents died during his childhood, [14] Tolstoy and his siblings were brought up by relatives. His time there was not a success however, with teachers describing him as "both unable and unwilling to learn. Tolstoy served as a young artillery officer during the Crimean War and was in Sevastopol during the month-long siege of Sevastopol in 1855, [15] including the Battle of the Chernaya. During the war he was recognised for his bravery and courage and promoted to lieutenant. During his visit, Tolstoy witnessed a public execution in Paris, a traumatic experience that would mark the rest of his life. Writing in a letter to his friend Vasily Botkin: Henceforth, I shall never serve any government anywhere. However, as a direct forerunner to A. Personal life The death of his brother Nikolay in had an impact on Tolstoy, and led him to a desire to marry. She was called Sonya, the Russian diminutive of Sofia, by her family and friends. Sonya was copying and handwriting his epic works time after time. Tolstoy would continue editing War and Peace and had to have clean final drafts to be delivered to the publisher. Tolstoy as one of the unhappiest in literary history. This saw him seeking to reject his inherited and earned wealth, including the renunciation of the copyrights on his earlier works. Among them are Swedish jazz singer Viktoria Tolstoy and the Swedish landowner Christopher Paus, whose family owns the major estate Herresta outside Stockholm. They retain their relevance as accounts of the universal story of growing up. Tolstoy served as a second lieutenant in an artillery regiment during the Crimean War , recounted in his Sevastopol Sketches. His experiences in battle helped stir his subsequent pacifism and gave him material for realistic depiction of the horrors of war in his later work. Anna Karenina tells parallel stories of an adulterous woman trapped by the conventions and falsities of society and of a philosophical landowner much like Tolstoy , who works alongside the peasants in the fields and seeks to reform their lives. Tolstoy not only drew from his own life experiences but also created characters in his own image, such as Pierre Bezukhov and Prince Andrei in War and Peace, Levin in Anna Karenina and to some extent, Prince Nekhlyudov in Resurrection. Its vast canvas includes characters, many historical with others fictional. The story moves from family life to the headquarters of Napoleon , from the court of Alexander I of Russia to the battlefields of Austerlitz and Borodino. Somewhat surprisingly, Tolstoy did not consider War and Peace to be a novel nor did he consider many of the great Russian fictions written at that time to be novels. This view becomes less surprising if one considers that Tolstoy was a novelist of the realist school who considered the novel to be a framework for the examination of social and political issues in nineteenth-century life. Tolstoy thought that Anna Karenina was his first true novel. Tolstoy also explores and explains the economic philosophy of Georgism , of which he had become a very strong advocate towards the end of his life. Tolstoy also tried himself in poetry with several soldier songs written during his military service and fairy tales in verse such as Volga-bogatyr and Oaf stylized as national folk songs. They were written between and for his Russian Book for Reading, a collection of short stories in four volumes total of stories in various genres published along with the New Azbuka textbook and addressed to schoolchildren. Nevertheless, he was skeptical about poetry as a genre. As he famously said, "Writing poetry is like ploughing and dancing at the same time". According to Valentin Bulgakov , he criticised poets, including Alexander Pushkin , for their "false" epithets used "simply to make it rhyme". Fyodor Dostoyevsky thought him the greatest of all living novelists. Gustave Flaubert , on reading a translation of War and Peace, exclaimed, "What an artist and what a psychologist! What he does serves to justify all the hopes and aspirations invested in literature. Arthur Conan Doyle wrote "I am attracted by his earnestness and by his power of detail, but I am repelled by his looseness of construction and by his unreasonable and impracticable mysticism. Religious and political beliefs.

Chapter 8 : Leo Tolstoy Biography - www.nxgvision.com

DOWNLOAD PDF A CHRONOLOGY OF LEO TOLSTOY

In 1846, 13-year-old Tolstoy married 17-year-old Sophia Behrs, the daughter of a court physician, just weeks after the pair met. That same year, Tolstoy began work on what would become "War and Peace."

Chapter 9 : Order of Leo Tolstoy Books - www.nxgvision.com

Leo Tolstoy shows us the character of Napoleon and shows us the hope of near-repentance, and the devastatingly fearful return to a world of artificial phantoms. In Tolstoy, Napoleon stands apart from the many redeemed characters in the book—characters who come to know God and other people in.