

War and Peace

by Leo Tolstoy

Translated by

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“Shimmering. . . . [It] offers an opportunity to see this great classic afresh, to approach it not as a monument but rather as a deeply touching story about our contradictory human hearts.”

—Michael Dirda, *The Washington Post Book World*

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The introduction, questions, and suggestions for further reading that follow are designed to stimulate your group’s discussion of *War and Peace*. Richard Pevear calls *War and Peace* “the most daunting of Russian novels, as vast as Russia itself and as long to cross from one end to the other. Yet if one makes the journey, the sights seen and the people met on the way mark one’s life forever.” This guide is intended to help you and your reading group take this long and satisfying journey together. The guide is designed so that your group can divide your reading and discussion into four sessions, based on the four volumes of the novel. Each volume is roughly three hundred pages.

The translators have provided the following useful resources in this volume:

1. Richard Pevear’s introduction [pp. vii–xvi]
2. A chapter-by-chapter summary, which is helpful if anyone needs to skip sections, or has forgotten what happened earlier [pp. 1265–1273]
3. A historical index, which provides information about historical people and places mentioned in the text [pp. 1249–1264]
4. Numbered end notes, which provide explanations for historical events, phrases, people in the book, keyed to numbers in the text [pp. 1225–1247]
5. A list of major characters and family relations [pp. xvii–xviii]
6. English translations from the French (and occasionally German), provided at the bottom of pages where needed

ABOUT THIS BOOK

War and Peace, on which Tolstoy spent “five years of ceaseless and exclusive labor,” from 1863 to 1868, is generally acknowledged to be one of the greatest novels ever written. It centers broadly on the effects of Napoleon’s invasion of Russia in 1812 but begins seven years earlier with the Russian alliance with Austria against the French.

Three unforgettable characters are followed through the novel: Pierre Bezukhov, the illegitimate son of a dissolute but wealthy count, who yearns for spiritual fulfillment in his life; Prince Andrei Bolkonsky, a serious and highly intelligent aristocrat who leaves his wife and family to fight Napoleon; and Countess Natasha Rostov, the lively, musical daughter of a noble Moscow family who becomes attached to both Andrei and Pierre. The main movements of the plot concern these three characters and those close to them, while at the same time countless others—massive armies of Prussians, Austrians, French, and Russians—are caught up in the wave of destruction and change brought to Russia by Napoleon.

Volume I

The year is 1805. The social gatherings at the opening of the novel serve in part to introduce the major characters, Pierre Bezukhov, Prince Andrei Bolkonsky, Natasha Rostov, and their extended families, and to set the scene for the impending war in which Russia will join forces with Austria against Napoleon. Count Bezukhov dies and Pierre inherits a fortune; Prince Vassily wants Pierre to marry his daughter Hélène and Pierre acquiesces, believing himself to be in love. Prince Vassily also seeks a match between his son Anatole and Princess Marya Bolkonsky; this fails when Marya sees Anatole kissing Mlle Bourienne. War begins in Austria. Prince Andrei, discontented with his life, leaves his pregnant wife with his father and sister and goes to the front, where he serves as Kutuzov’s aide-de-camp. Nikolai Rostov is wounded and made an officer; Prince Andrei is badly wounded at Austerlitz and assumed dead.

FOR DISCUSSION

1. Richard Pevear suggests that, “The first thing a reader today must overcome is the notion of *War and Peace* as a classic, the greatest of novels, and the model of what a novel should be,” and focus on the immediate experience of reading it [p. x]. What is the experience of reading the first few chapters? What seems clear, and what is confusing? What do you think Tolstoy wants you to experience as the novel begins?
2. Tolstoy distinguishes between characters who have integrity and those who operate more superficially and with greater self-interest in the social worlds of Petersburg and Moscow. What do Prince Vassily’s remarks reveal about him and the way he feels about his children [pp. 6–7]? What do the conversations at these two parties tell us about the main concerns of the Russian aristocracy? Why is Pierre a disturbing presence at the soirée of Annette Scherer and a welcome presence at the Rostovs? What are the Rostovs like as a family?

3. Pierre was brought up abroad and has recently returned from Europe [pp. 9, 25]. We know very little about Pierre's upbringing except that he is the illegitimate son of a wealthy courtier from the time of Catherine the Great, Count Bezukhov [p. 9]. Why do you think Tolstoy chose not to fill in any details of Pierre's past? Why is his lack of familial ties and guidance an important element in Pierre's life?
4. The deathbed of Count Bezukhov is the scene of an urgent struggle for a share of the dying man's riches, with Anna Mikhailovna Drubetskoy and Prince Vassily as the main contenders. How does Pierre behave during these crucial scenes [pp. 76–87]? Why is he an easy target for those who seek to manipulate him for their own gains?
5. Prince Andrei admits to Pierre that he wants to go to the war because “this life I lead here, this life—is not for me!” [p. 25]. What does the scene between Andrei and his wife Lise reveal about him [pp. 25–28]? What does he demand of life? Why does he later ask Kutuzov to put him in a detachment of which only a tenth may return alive [p. 169], and how does he behave under fire?
6. Tolstoy describes the mental state of the men in the front line at Schönggraben: “Again, as on the Enns bridge, there was no one between the squadron and the enemy, and there lay between them, separating them, that same terrible line of the unknown and of fear, like the line separating the living from the dead. All the men sensed that line, and the question of whether they would or would not cross that line, and how they would cross it, troubled them” [p. 188]. He characterizes the actions of Tushin's artillerists as “merry and animated” [p. 192]. Nikolai's shifting thoughts are conveyed as he rushes into battle and is wounded [pp. 188–90]. What is Tolstoy like as a psychologist of men at war?

7. Prince Vassily has decided that his daughter Héléne should marry Pierre [pp. 201–214]. How does this come about for Pierre, who admits to himself that it is something which “was obviously not good and which he ought not to do” [p. 208]? He sees himself drawn into a “frightening abyss” [p. 209]. Is it purely sexual attraction that decides the question for him?
8. Tolstoy portrays the disastrous battle of Austerlitz on two levels: as a “world-historical” event and also as a series of devastating physical and psychological experiences for the individual people involved: “As in a clock the result of the complex movement of numberless wheels and pulleys is merely the slow and measured movement of the hands pointing to the time, so also the result of all the complex human movements of these hundred and sixty thousand Russians and French . . . was merely the loss of the battle of Austerlitz, the so-called battle of three emperors, that is, a slow movement of the world-historical hand on the clockface of human history” [p. 258]. With this metaphor in mind, think about how Tolstoy is intent on showing both vast and minute effects of this “mere” movement of history's clock, particularly through the experience of Prince Andrei.
9. Looking for his moment of heroism, Andrei finds it at Austerlitz, where he is gravely wounded [p. 280]. Discuss how Tolstoy handles the description of these scenes in order to produce a sense of estrangement. What does Andrei realize as he looks up at the sky [p. 281]? How does Napoleon come across as he surveys the battlefield and comes across Andrei lying on the field, and what does Andrei think of Napoleon now [pp. 290–93]?

Volume II

Nikolai Rostov returns home on leave with his friend Denisov to find his family's financial affairs in disarray; Count Rostov gives a ball at which Dolokhov insults Pierre by openly referring to his intimacy with Héléne; Pierre wounds Dolokhov in a duel and separates from Héléne, leaving her a fortune and the house in Moscow. Pierre, seeking spiritual direction, joins the Masons. Prince Andrei meets and falls in love with Natasha; they are secretly engaged while Andrei goes to Europe and spends a year there at his father's insistence. Natasha is seduced by Héléne's brother, Anatole Kuragin, who arranges to elope with her from a house in Moscow. The plan is discovered. Andrei, embittered, returns Natasha's letters and takes up residence at his country estate.

FOR DISCUSSION

1. After the duel, Pierre asks himself why he had allowed himself to tell Héléne he loved her, why he married her. What is Pierre now seeking to do with his life? How successful is he in finding a sense of direction?
2. Prince Andrei, assumed dead by his family, arrives home only hours before his wife dies in childbirth. This is one of the most emotionally charged episodes in the novel. What are the memorable images, actions, or words spoken during these events [pp. 320–28]? With which details does Tolstoy most forcefully convey tenderness, grief, or remorse?
3. Listening to Natasha sing, her brother Nikolai finds that her voice “touched . . . something that was best in [his] soul. And that something was independent of anything in the world and higher than anything in the world” [p. 343]. What is this “something” that Natasha is able to express? Does Natasha also have this effect on Pierre and Andrei?

4. Pierre visits Andrei at his Bogucharovo estate, where they have an extensive conversation about God, life, and death. How do their positions differ? Andrei “saw that high, eternal sky he had seen as he lay on the battlefield, and something long asleep, something that was best in him, suddenly awakened joyful and young in his soul”; Andrei begins what “was in his inner world a new life” [p. 389]. What effect, if any, has Pierre had upon Andrei’s change of heart?

5. Nikolai Rostov, to ease his guilt over his gambling losses, resolves to “be a perfectly excellent comrade and officer, that is, a fine human being—which seemed so difficult in the world, but so possible in the regiment” [p. 396]. What is it about his character that makes him so contented as a military officer? Nikolai has been trying to intercede on Denisov’s behalf when he observes a meeting between the newly allied Napoleon and Czar Nicholas I. What effect do these events have upon him, and why [pp. 410–17]?

6. How is the bare oak that Andrei notices in the woods relevant to the scene in which he overhears Natasha as she leans from the window under the moonlight [pp. 419–23]? Tolstoy writes about Natasha at the ball, “She was in that highest degree of happiness when a person becomes perfectly kind and good, and does not believe in the possibility of evil, unhappiness, and grief” [p. 462]. What qualities make Natasha an extraordinary character? What is her effect upon Andrei, and how does she make him think differently about his life [p. 467]?

7. Tolstoy presents a series of hunting scenes at the Rostovs’ Otradnoe reserve, followed by an evening of singing and dancing at their uncle’s house in his village [pp. 495–514]. Dancing a Russian dance with her uncle, Natasha is “able to understand everything that was in Anisya, and in Anisya’s father, and in her aunt, and in her mother, and in

every Russian” [p. 512]. What do these scenes suggest about the essence of being Russian, for Tolstoy? Why is it important that the Rostovs, particularly Natasha and Nikolai, express this essential Russianness?

8. The engagement of Prince Andrei and Natasha goes on for a year during his absence: the delay is in deference to his father, who is against the marriage. Andrei’s absence causes anxiety and suffering for Natasha as well as her mother, who is fearful for her [p. 522]; the visit of Natasha and her father to the Bolkonsky’s house in Moscow is a disaster [pp. 554–57]. Why does Tolstoy make the marriage of Natasha and Andrei seem ill-fated? Are they not suited to each other?

9. Pierre feels lost after Natasha’s engagement, and finding himself again with Hélène as “the rich husband of an unfaithful wife” he wonders: “But I, what am I to do with myself?” [pp. 536–37]. Wrestling with “the tangled, terrible knot of life,” he says, “Nothing is either trivial or important, it’s all the same; only save yourself from it as best you can! Only not to see *it*, that dreadful *it!*” [p. 538]. What is *it*?

10. Several chapters are devoted to Anatole Karagin’s seduction of Natasha and its aftermath [pp. 557–600]. Natasha is first confused, then thinks herself in love, then is humiliated, then dangerously ill. Pierre comes to her defense [p. 593]; Andrei, proud and remote, releases Natasha from her engagement and returns her letters [p. 597]. It has been said that this episode of the novel is one of the most purely conventional: an innocent girl is seduced by a dissolute rake. Why might Tolstoy have included this twist in the story? What do you think of these events, and what do they contribute to your sense of the story and the characters involved?

11. What is the effect of the exchange between Natasha and Pierre that closes this volume [pp. 598–600] in which Pierre declares his love and devotion to her? Note that just as Volume I ended with Andrei looking up at the sky, Volume II ends with Pierre gazing up at “the huge, bright comet of the year 1812” [p. 600]. How does Pierre act upon the sense of “new life” that comes of these experiences?

Volume III

The year is 1812. War resumes as Napoleon advances to the Russian border. Prince Andrei returns to service, refusing a position with the Czar in order to serve in the army, leading a regiment of *chasseurs*. After massive losses at Borodino, the Russian army retreats, leaving the French to take Moscow. Having decided to observe the battle, Pierre carries ammunition for an artillery battalion and sees masses of men slaughtered around him. He makes a vague plan to assassinate Napoleon and is taken prisoner. The Rostovs leave their home, emptying carts of their furniture to take wounded Russian soldiers to safety. Prince Andrei, again gravely wounded at Borodino, is among the soldiers brought to the Rostovs’ mansion in Moscow and is taken care of by Natasha.

1. As Volume III opens, Tolstoy expounds his view of the war of 1812, when Napoleon advanced upon Russia and occupied Moscow: “On the twelfth of June, the forces of western Europe crossed the borders of Russia, and war began—that is, an event took place contrary to human reason and to the whole of human nature” [p. 603]. Do you find Tolstoy’s view of this war convincing? What does he mean by “fatalism in history” [p. 605], and what role does human nature play in historical events? Consider how Prince Andrei’s experiences of accidental events in battle and the unpredictable actions of the enemy [p. 632] correspond with what Tolstoy has to say here.

2. Tolstoy presents Napoleon in a series of small scenes: he looks on at the Polish soldiers crossing the Niemen [pp. 607–12]; he is massaged and dressed by his valet and then presented with a portrait of his infant son just before the battle of Borodino [pp. 777–80]; he awaits the official surrender of the city of Moscow [pp. 873, 875]. How does Napoleon come across in these scenes? Why does the perspective on Napoleon become more negative as the novel proceeds?

3. Tolstoy introduces Part Two with a description of the events of 1812 that were to result in the destruction of Napoleon's army. Why are these events ironic, for Tolstoy? Everyone acted as they did "as a result of their personal qualities, habits, conditions, and aims" [p. 682]. Is there a quality of absurdity in history, as Tolstoy sees it? What does he see as the truth about the battle of Borodino, as opposed to the way historians have recounted it [pp. 756, 783–85]?

4. Experiencing his life as "nothing but meaningless phenomena, without any connection with each other," Andrei returns to military service. As the troops retreat from Smolensk, they pass near Andrei's family estate, Bald Hills. What does Andrei's way of seeing reveal about his state of mind [pp. 702–04]? Later, on the eve of the battle of Borodino, Andrei thinks of his past "in that cold, white daylight—the clear notion of death" [p. 769]. How does Andrei now think about his love for Natasha [pp. 770, 776–77]? Do such descriptions provoke your sympathy for Andrei as a romantic or doomed figure?

5. All her life, Princess Marya has suffered from her father's manipulative and often cruel treatment of her. Yet she forgives him, telling Andrei, "Grief is sent by [God], not by people. People are His instruments, they're not to blame" [p. 631]. Is Princess Marya a model character? What qualities does she

represent? Why does she suffer from her own conscience, both before and after the old prince's death [pp. 713–18, 729–30]? What effect does she have on Nikolai Rostov, who arrives in time to help her leave Bald Hills safely?

6. Kutuzov, the commander of the Russian forces, is the opposite of Napoleon in terms of his character as well as his strategic thinking. What are his personal qualities? What is the nature of Kutuzov's wisdom, as Tolstoy sees it [pp. 738–45, 808]?

7. Tolstoy makes the reader experience the battle of Borodino by using the perceptions of the naïve Pierre as well as those of Prince Andrei [pp. 795–98, 808–12]. What is the effect of reading the description of Prince Andrei's injury and his treatment in the field hospital where he witnesses the amputation of Anatole Kuragin's leg [pp. 813–14]? What aspects of Tolstoy's prose make these scenes feel so immediate and real?

8. Note how often Tolstoy includes details of Hélène's body and dress in his descriptions of her, for instance: "Hélène was wearing a white dress, transparent on the shoulders and breast" [p. 835]; on Hélène "there was already a sort of varnish from all the thousands of gazes that had passed over her body . . ." [p. 460]. Does sexuality seem to be connected, for Tolstoy, with moral corruption? Why does Hélène convert to Roman Catholicism and ask Pierre for a divorce? What does Hélène die of [pp. 936, 939]?

9. The reconciliation of Natasha and Andrei [pp. 918–22], and their time together until his death, are among the most moving scenes in the novel. How does their time together change Natasha?

10. Pierre has convinced himself through numerological calculations that he, "*Vrusse Besubof*" is destined to assassinate Napoleon [pp. 665–66]. But on the way to carry out this task, he rescues a little girl from the flames of the burning city, saves an Armenian woman from looting soldiers, and is captured by the French [pp. 928–32]. What is comical, even farcical, about Pierre's heroism, and what does the episode underscore about the way Pierre lives his life?

Volume IV and Epilogues

Nikolai meets Princess Marya again and realizes that he loves her; Pierre is among six prisoners sent for execution and is pardoned; he meets Platon Karataev, another prisoner marching with retreating French forces; Petya Rostov joins Denisov's party in a raid on a French camp and is killed; Prince Andrei dies; French troops, now a starving and diminished band of looters and thieves, retreat west as winter sets in. The Rostovs return to Moscow where Count Rostov dies. Pierre and Natasha marry, as do Nikolai and Princess Marya; the two families live happily with their children in the countryside. The story of these characters ends with Epilogue I. The second epilogue is a long treatise on Tolstoy's vision of history.

FOR DISCUSSION

1. Nikolai, after helping Princess Marya to leave her home safely in the midst of invading French forces, finds that he is in love with her: "That pale, fine, sorrowful face, that luminous gaze, those quiet, graceful movements, and above all that deep and tender sorrow which showed in all her features, stirred him and called for his sympathy" [p. 955]. Why is Nikolai attracted to Marya's spirituality, a quality he did not like in her brother? Seeing Marya at prayer, Nikolai prays for release from Sonya. What do you think of Sonya, and of her sacrifice of her own wishes, as she releases Nikolai from their long-standing engagement at the request of Countess Rostov? Are Marya and Nikolai better suited to each other?

2. Pierre is saved from execution by a pardon and realizes that “his faith in the world’s good order, in humanity’s and his own soul, and in God, was destroyed. Pierre had experienced this state before, but never with such force as now. . . . He felt that to return to faith in life was not in his power” [pp. 968–69]. Why is it significant that he meets Platon Karataev at this moment in his life [pp. 972–74]?

3. From the time he is wounded at Borodino, Andrei questions the meanings of life, death, and love: “Why was I so sorry to part with life? There was something in this life that I didn’t and still don’t understand . . .” [p. 812]. Later, Marya and Natasha feel his alienation from the world of the living [p. 978]. What is the significance of his dream of the door [pp. 984–85]? What is your response to Andrei’s death, which Tolstoy calls “an awakening from life” [pp. 985–86]?

4. Pierre undergoes a transformation while a prisoner of the French. He has long been a seeker of peace and contentment with himself: “he had sought it in philanthropy, in Masonry, in the distractions of social life, in wine, in a heroic deed of self-sacrifice, in romantic love for Natasha; he had sought it by way of thought, and all this seeking and trying had disappointed him” [p. 1012]. What does he learn during this period that finally brings him peace? How does the scene in which Pierre laughs to himself, looking up at the stars, show how far he has come [p. 1020]?

5. In one of his many historical discourses, Tolstoy likens the conflict between the French and the Russians to “two men who came with swords to fight a duel by all the rules of the art of fencing” until one, knowing that his life is at stake, picks up a club instead [p. 1032]. Why does Tolstoy enjoy this idea of Napoleon complaining that “the war was being conducted against all the

rules” [pp. 1032–33]? What does Tolstoy find most interesting and admirable about the conduct of Kutuzov and the Russians?

6. What is the meaning of the tale Karataev tells Pierre when he himself is dying [pp. 1062–63]? How has Pierre’s sense of the relationship between God and life been changed by having known Karataev [p. 1064]?

7. Having to care for her mother upon the news of Petya’s death pulls Natasha out of her grief over Andrei: “She thought her life was over. But suddenly her love for her mother showed her that the essence of life—love—was still alive in her. Love awoke, and life awoke” [p. 1080]. How does this awakening prepare Natasha for the arrival of Pierre? Discuss the scene in which Pierre and Natasha meet again, when Pierre realizes “it was Natasha, and he loved her” [p. 1112].

8. Once married, Natasha focuses her energies solely on her husband and children: “In her face there was not, as formerly, that ceaselessly burning fire of animation that had constituted her charm. Now one often saw only her face and body, while her soul was not seen at all. One saw only a strong, beautiful, and fruitful female” [p. 1154]. Readers have understandably been disappointed by this seeming diminishment of Natasha’s vitality; Tolstoy explains that her family absorbed her “with her whole soul, with her whole being” [p. 1155]. Is this outcome to Natasha’s story disappointing? Why or why not?

9. Tolstoy’s early idea for this book was to write about a Decembrist on his return from Siberia in 1856 [pp. viii–ix]. The Decembrists were a group of young aristocrats and officers who, at the death of Alexander I in December 1825, rose up in the name of liberal reforms and constitutional monarchy, were arrested, and either executed or sent to

Siberia. Hints remain of this plan as Epilogue I closes with Andrei’s son Nikolenka and Pierre looking towards the future. What is the effect of the shift in focus at the end, to Nikolenka and his dream of Pierre and his father, and of doing “something that even [Prince Andrei] would be pleased with” [pp. 1177–78]?

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Richard Pevear writes about the unusual structure of this work, “*War and Peace* is a work of art, and if it succeeds, it cannot be in spite of its formal deficiencies, but only because Tolstoy created a new form that was adequate to his vision.” Tolstoy himself wrote, “It is not a novel, still less an epic poem, still less a historical chronicle. *War and Peace* is what the author wanted and was able to express, in the form in which it is expressed” [p. xi]. Does it matter that *War and Peace* is not the seamless fictional universe that novel readers expect? What is the effect of reading a book of this hybrid nature?

2. What are the human qualities that Tolstoy most highly values and which characters seem to exemplify them most fully? Which characters, and which forms of human behavior, particularly stir Tolstoy’s anger or contempt?

3. What answers does Tolstoy present, in the course of *War and Peace*, to the question, “How should I live my life?”

4. *War and Peace* has had an enormous influence on writers who came after Tolstoy. Read the three quotes below and discuss what, for Virginia Woolf, Isaiah Berlin, and Boris Pasternak, are the extraordinary aspects of Tolstoy’s vision. What, for you, are the things that make Tolstoy unlike other writers you’ve read?

Virginia Woolf:

“From his first words we can be sure of one thing at any rate—here is a man who sees what we see, who proceeds, too, as we are accustomed to proceed, not from the inside outwards, but from the outside inwards. . . . Nothing seems to escape him. Nothing glances off him unrecorded. . . . Even in a translation we feel that we have been set on a mountain-top and had a telescope put into our hands. Everything is astonishingly clear and absolutely sharp. Then, suddenly, just as we are exulting, breathing deep, feeling at once braced and purified, some detail—perhaps the head of a man—comes at us out of the picture in an alarming way, as if extruded by the very intensity of its life” (from her essay “The Russian Point of View” in *The Common Reader*).

Isaiah Berlin:

“No one has ever excelled Tolstoy in expressing the specific flavour, the exact quality of a feeling—the degree of its ‘oscillation’, the ebb and flow, the minute movements (which Turgenev mocked as a mere trick on his part)—the inner and outer texture and ‘feel’ of a look, a thought, a pang of sentiment, no less than of a specific situation, of an entire period, of the lives of individuals, families, communities, entire nations.” (from *The Hedgehog and the Fox: An Essay on Tolstoy’s View of History*)

Boris Pasternak:

“All his life, at every moment, he possessed the faculty of seeing phenomena in the detached finality of each separate instant, in perfectly distinct outline, as we see only on rare occasions, in childhood, or on the crest of an all-renewing happiness, or in the triumph of a great spiritual victory.” (quoted in Pevear’s introduction, p. ix)

SUGGESTED READING

Isaac Babel, *The Collected Stories of Isaac Babel*; Isaiah Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox: An Essay on Tolstoy’s View of History*; “Tolstoy and Enlightenment” in his book *Russian Thinkers*; Anton Chekhov, *The Stories of Anton Chekhov*; Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*; George Eliot, *Middlemarch*; Gustave Flaubert, *A Sentimental Education*; Nikolai Gogol, *Dead Souls*; Thomas Mann, *Buddenbrooks*; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*; Stendhal, *The Red and the Black*; Ivan Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons*; A. N. Wilson, *Tolstoy: A Biography*; Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*.

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**RICHARD PEVEAR AND
LARISSA VOLOKHONSKY**

Brigitte Lacombe

Richard Pevear has published translations of Alain, Yves Bonnefoy, Alberto Savinio, Pavel Florensky, and Henri Volokhonsky, as well as two books of poetry. He has received fellowships or grants for translation from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ingram Merrill Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the French Ministry of Culture. Larissa Volokhonsky was born in Leningrad. She has translated works by the prominent Orthodox theologians Alexander Schmemmann and John Meyendorff into Russian.

Together, Pevear and Volokhonsky have translated *Dead Souls* and *The Collected Tales* by Nikolai Gogol, *The Complete Short Novels of Chekhov*, and *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Notes from the Underground*, *Demons*, *The Idiot*, *The Adolescent*, and *The Double* and *The Gambler* by Fyodor Dostoevsky. They were twice awarded the PEN Book-of-the-Month Club Translation Prize (for their version of Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov* and for Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*), and their translation of Dostoevsky’s *Demons* was one of three nominees for the same prize. They are married and live in France.