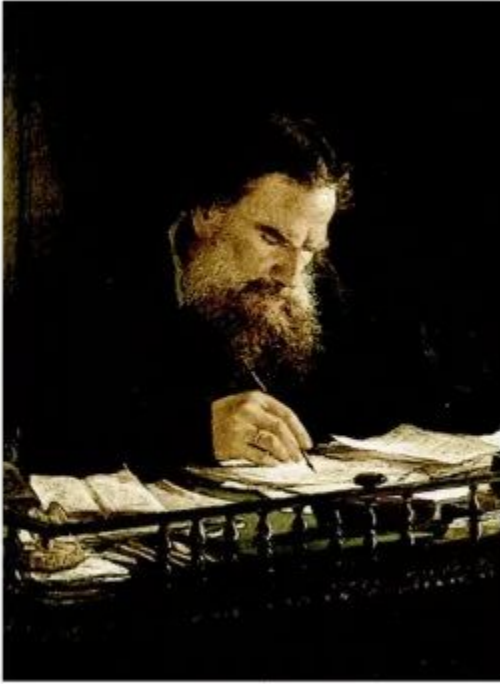


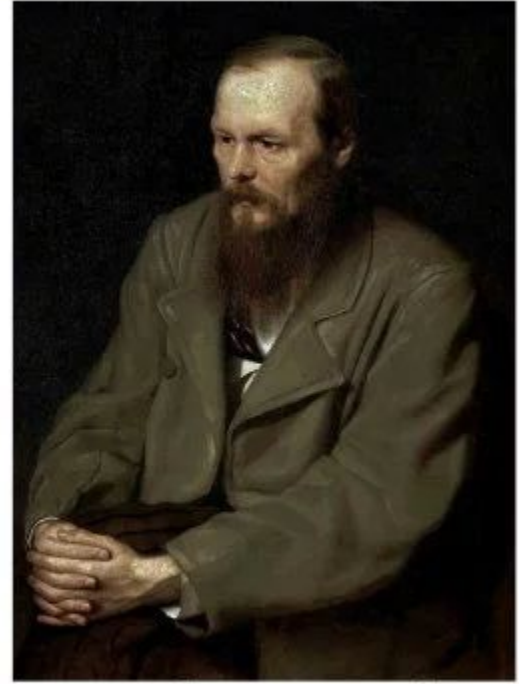
# THE GOLDEN AGE OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE



*Leo Tolstoy*



*Anton Chekhov*



*Fyodor Dostoevsky*



## Fyodor Dostoevsky

- At 28 sentenced to death for his part in a revolutionary movement
  - Blindfolded before a firing squad
    - Last second he was pardoned
    - 4 years hard labour in prison
      - Became committed to Christianity
        - Theme of his great works:
- 2 Most well known:
- *Crime and Punishment*
  - *The Brothers Karamazov*

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

DOSTOEVSKY  
CRIME AND PUNISHMENT



## *Crime and Punishment*

- Raskolnikov (central character)
  - Poor student
  - Believes his super intellect and vision sets him apart from society and its laws
  - Murders an old woman to prove he is worthy of a leadership role
  - He finds it does not lead to advancement, but rather a life of desperation and tragedy



PENGUIN CLASSICS

FYODOR DOSTOYEVSKY

*The Brothers Karamazov*

## *The Brothers Karamazov*

- 3 brothers: Ivan, Dimitri, and Alyosha take different paths
  - Ivan: European ideas
  - Dimitri: Personal wealth
  - Alyosha: Christianity (monk)
  - None of succeed
  - None provide hope for Russia
- Dostoyevsky is a strong pessimist
  - Chapter: *The Grand Inquisitor*
    - Christ has returned and is imprisoned
    - Modern church given up on love/goodness
    - Miracle-Mystery-Authority



## Anton Chekhov

- Russia's foremost playwright
- Explored the confrontation between old order and the new modern Russia
- *The Cherry Orchard*
  - Compares:
  - Madame Rarevskaya = the dying aristocracy
  - New wealth and energy of the bourgeoisie and industrialists
    - Rarevskaya will not change and faces complete ruin

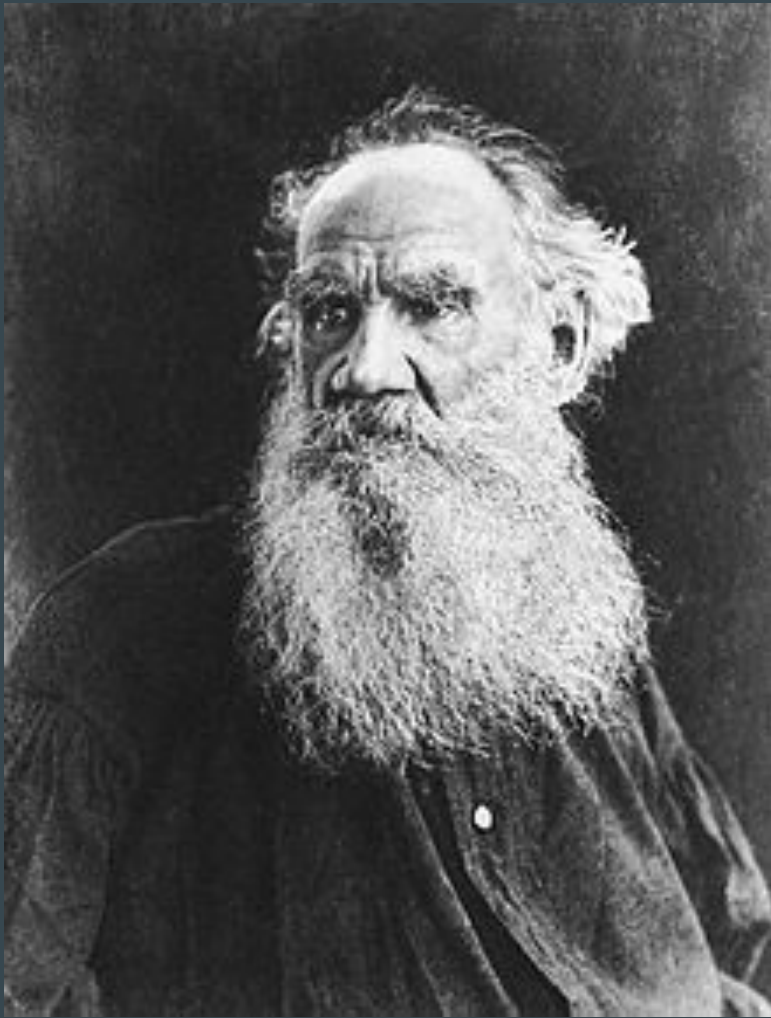
# The Cherry Orchard

by Anton Chekov

Translated by  
Tom Stoppard

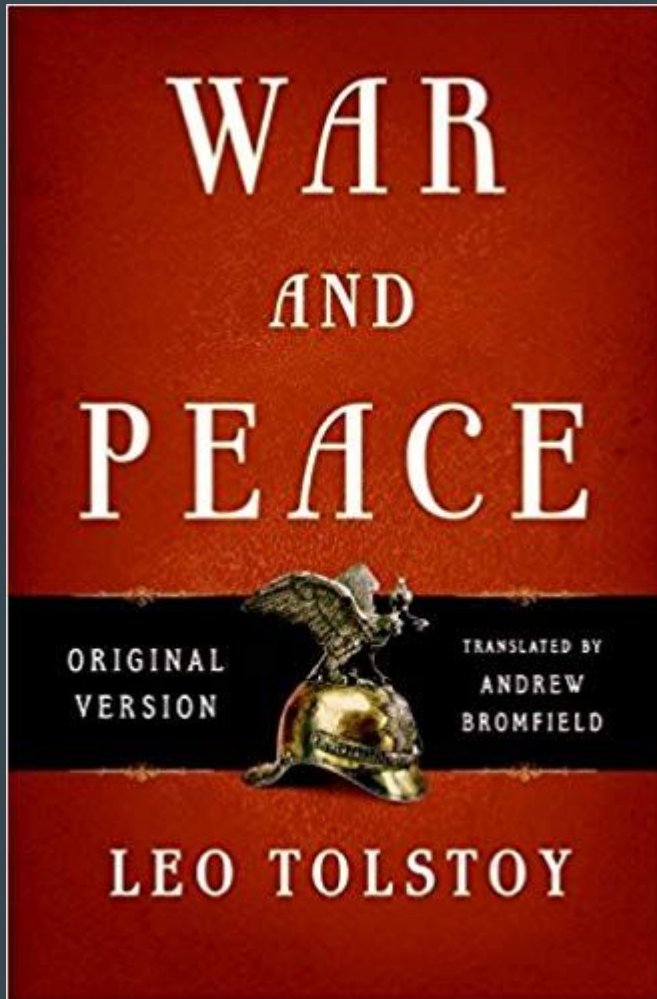
SAMUEL FRENCH

- Lapakhin, former servant who has gotten rich, offers her a way to save her home but at a steep price
  - Cut down the cherry orchard, parcel the land, and sell it to the bourgeoisie for summer homes
  - She refuses. Lapakhin buys the estate an orchard and destroys it for profit
    - They play illustrates the indecisiveness and complacency that ultimately destroyed Russian aristocracy



## Leo Tolstoy

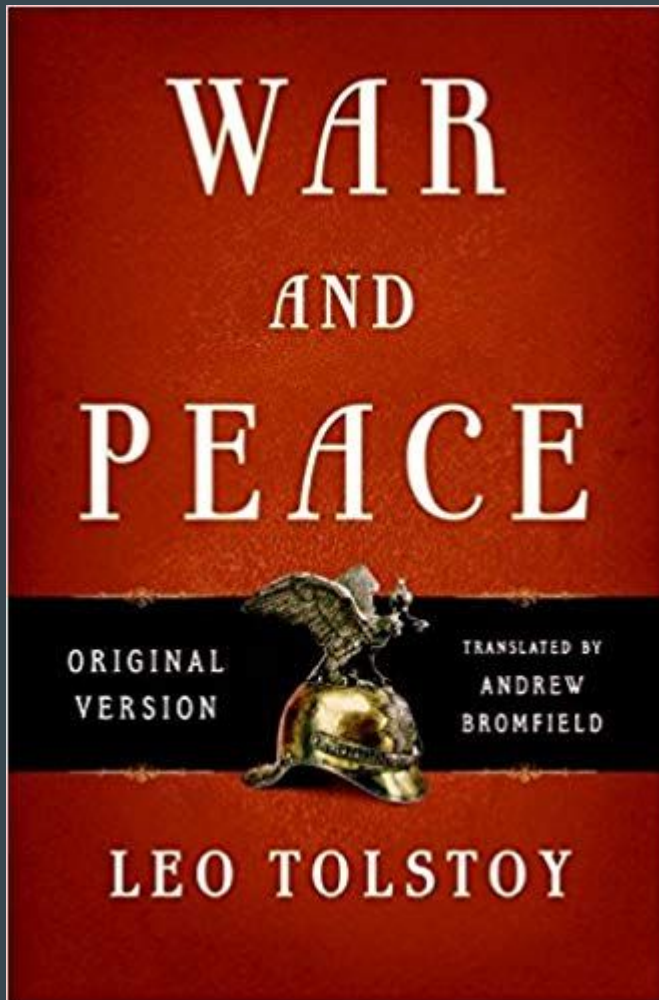
- Often considered Russia's greatest novelist
- Greatly despised the Romanov dynasty
- His novels *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* brilliantly capture the life and culture of the Russian elite
- He criticized tsarist institutions
  - They refused to recognize the discontent of the nation
    - Tsar no longer answers the needs of the people
- Let people express demands



## *War and Peace*

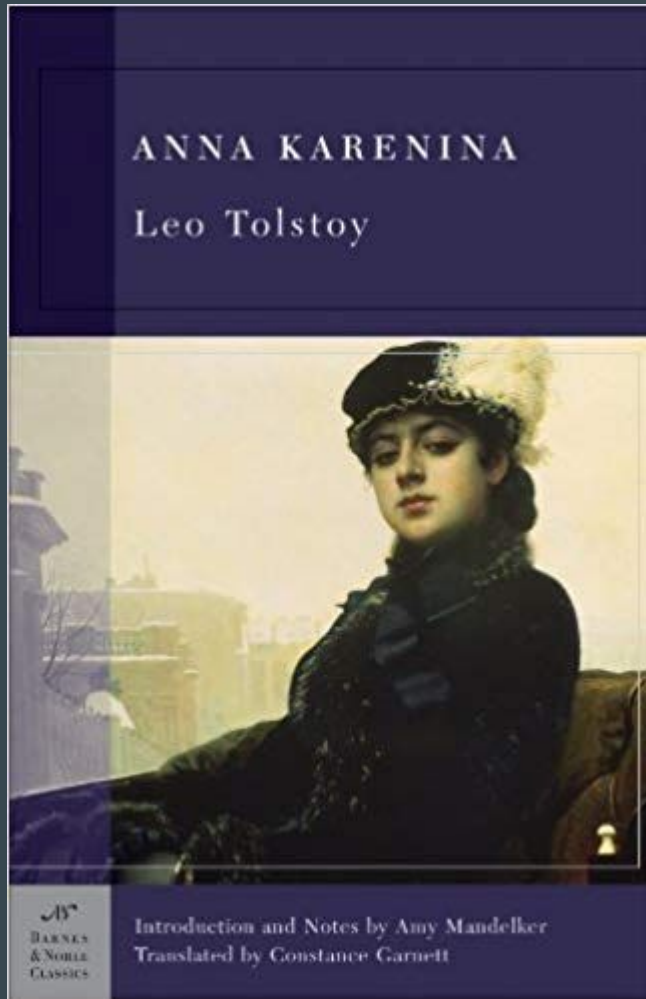
- Focuses on Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812
- 3 major characters
  - **Pierre Bezukhov**, the illegitimate son of a count fighting for his inheritance and yearning for spiritual fulfillment
  - **Prince Andrei Bolkonsky** leaves his family behind to fight in the war against Napoleon
  - **Natasha Rostov**, the beautiful young daughter of a nobleman who intrigues both men.





- Tolstoy brilliantly follows the characters from diverse backgrounds
  - peasants and nobility, civilians and soldiers
  - as they struggle with the problems unique to their era, their history, and their culture.
- Throughout the novel these characters transcend their backgrounds
- Becoming some of the most moving—and human—figures in world literature.

# *Anna Karenina*



- Tolstoy examines three relationships:
  - Dolly and Oblonsky
  - Kitty and Levin
  - Anna and Vronsky.
    - In all three of these relationships, jealousy plays a role that affects the success of the relationship.
  - In general, the less jealous a couple is, the more successful they will be