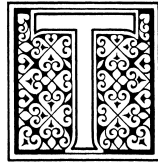


The Idea of the Family in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*: The Moral Hierarchy of Families

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The notion of family plays a significant role in the early works of Tolstoy (the trilogy *Childhood, Adolescence, and Youth*) and in the epic *War and Peace*. In *Anna Karenina* (1877), as well as in the earlier *Family Happiness* (1859), “the family idea” (*mysl' semeinaia*) becomes the dominant that determines and shapes the structure of the novel. How does Tolstoy understand the idea of family? What are the evaluating criteria for a “good” or “bad” family? What constitutes the family as a unit? These are questions that need to be answered, and the present work attempts to do so.

Both Tolstoy's own phrase about “the family idea,” the idea that guided him while writing *Anna Karenina*, and the very beginning of the novel draw our attention to the family and family problems. The novel opens with the famous Tolstoy aphorism: “Все счастливые семьи похожи друг на друга, каждая несчастливая семья несчастлива по своему” (5).¹ The opposition *vse* (plural) versus *kazhdaia* (singular) inclines the reader to think that an unhappy family is an exception, while happy families are the rule. But, as we shall see, the entire novel is about unhappy families. Among approximately twenty families described and twelve briefly mentioned in *Anna Karenina*, only two may be called truly “happy,” or, more precisely, “harmonious” (L'vov's and Parmenov's), and the number of pages devoted to them is minimal (five of 798 in the Khar'kov edition of 1998). Unhappy families remain Tolstoy's focus, and the novel in some ways is the author's expanded meditation on the reasons for this unhappiness and the search for apparently unattainable happiness. Therefore, after making his generalization, Tolstoy turns to the problems of one particular unhappy family: “Все смешалось в доме Облонских” (5).²

In her book *The Structure of Anna Karenina* Sydney Schultze lists all the happy and unhappy families shown in the novel. Despite the accuracy of her list of unhappy families, the arguments she gives

to indicate that a family is happy are, at best, dubious. Schultze writes:

On the whole, only those couples that remain close to traditional values have a happy marriage, but there are few examples:

L'vovs: They are good people; she "obeys" him.

Sviazhskys: They are affectionate; their traditional home life runs counter to his liberal philosophy.

Kitty and Levin: They are usually happy, although Levin doesn't confide in Kitty.

Scherbatskys: They are probably happy, although they disagree over the marriage of their daughters.

Wendens: He is offended when soldiers pester his pregnant wife. (102)

Obviously, Schultze equates "good" with "happy" families ("couples who remain close to *traditional values* have a *happy* marriage"). But is doing so valid? I would argue that in this list there actually is only one "happy" gentry family: the L'vovs. The reasons Schultze gives for their happiness (good people, Natalie "obeys" L'vov) are too general. First of all, Natalie does not "obey" her husband; on the contrary, she softly laughs at his obsession with children and their education. Secondly, if these two principles sufficed to define a "happy family," then Anna's marriage would also be happy. Both Anna and Karenin are "good people"; she also "obeys" him, but their marriage is, nevertheless, unhappy. The reasons for the L'vovs' happiness are different. They both came from good families; they dote on their children, who are well educated and show no signs of corruption (unlike, for example, Serezha or Dolly's children). Both spouses are obviously faithful to each other; within the family Natalie and L'vov work together, but have separate duties; and they live in Moscow, where the moral climate is purer than in Petersburg. As I shall show further, these are the principal criteria for the novel's classification of families.

The Sviazhskiis also are not a "happy" family in Tolstoy's scheme of things. At best, their family is not "good": they assume no duties other than having fun, and they are childless. Kitty and Levin have a "good" family, but they are not "usually happy," as Schultze states. Indeed, we are shown more scenes where they argue or are jealous of each other than those when they are truly happy.³ They are only *en route* toward a harmonious relationship. It seems likely that the

Kitty-Levin relationship will become “L’vovian” with time.

The Shcherbatskiis are definitely a “good” family, but is their marriage happy? As Schultze indicates, they constantly quarrel over Kitty’s future; the princess appears to be wrong in almost every argument. At the same time, they seem to have little in common. The prince at every step makes scenes with the princess for compromising Kitty. In general, there seems to be some discrepancy in Tolstoy’s treatment of the prince and the princess. Although the princess obviously loves her daughters, she is “blind” and unable to notice that Vronskii is not a good match for Kitty. Trying to arrange his marriage with Kitty, the princess makes the same mistake as she did earlier with Dolly. When Kitty falls ill, the princess does not recognize the true reason for her illness. The old prince, however, does. It is he who insists that Levin will be a good husband for Kitty. Actually, the Shcherbatskiis are a family with an understanding, “good” father and a vain, “not-good-enough” mother. A marriage where spouses are not equal partners or not equally “good” (an equality exemplified in the Levins’ or the L’vovs’ case) cannot be called “happy” or “harmonious.”

As for the Wendens, the reason Schultze gives for their happiness is also unpersuasive: “he is offended when soldiers pester his pregnant wife.” The fact that a husband is offended does not prove that the marriage is a “happy” one. Karenin, an offended husband himself, recollects among six other cuckolds the name of Dar’ialov, who had a duel because of his wife (280). Dar’ialov, obviously, was offended. However, this does not mean that his marriage was “happy.” M-me Wenden does not seem to discourage the officers: when passing by she at least turns to look at them, if not to laugh and to give them a nod. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the Wendens’ marriage differs from those of Baroness Shilton, Betsy Tverskoi, and the like (the fact that M-me Wenden is pregnant sets the family apart from these childless marriages). However, the Wendens’ marriage is still far from being “happy.”

Therefore, in the novel the only happy family in high society seems to be the L’vovs’. One of the reasons for this is the fact that both spouses are loyal to each other. From the very beginning the reader is plunged into the atmosphere of adultery, liaisons, and hidden debauchery that suffuses the entire novel. Thus, fidelity or infidelity to one’s spouse is one of the most important criteria, one of the cornerstones on which the Tolstoyan hierarchy of families is built. In *Anna Karenina* we see a whole gallery of adulterous relationships, starting

with Oblonskii.

I shall not dwell on this theme, since it is thoroughly treated in Schultze's book. It should be said, however, that Tolstoy's works from the period before *Confession* (1882) usually deal not in a set of oppositions, but, rather, with a gradation or range of phenomena. We usually forget that fact and pay attention only to the two extremes of the scale. It is misguided to single out one thought, concept, or moment and point to it as something fixed for Tolstoy, since the author's stream of consciousness incessantly flows between two opposite banks. Thus, in the novel we have a range of different families, from "very bad" through relatively "neutral"⁴ to "quite good." One of the main movements or plot developments in *Anna Karenina* is the development of Anna's family (or, more precisely, both of her families) from "rather good" to an absence of family. This shift is caused by Anna's unconscious or conscious unwillingness to follow the rules imposed on her as a female member of a family, imposed more by the author than by Anna's milieu.

The Tolstoyan principles or criteria for classification of families are the following:

1. Fidelity or infidelity to one's spouse;
2. Ancestors. Pedigree, lineage of the spouses: a) from a complete family as opposed to orphaned; b) of decent, as opposed to indecent, parents;
3. Descendants. Absence or presence of children, their role in the family; gradation from purity and naïveté to corruption as reflection of the parents' world;
4. Distribution of duties in the family, male-female relationships (female: mother vs. mistress, functionality vs. beauty; male: fatherhood vs. individualism);
5. Place of residence; gradation from worse to better: Petersburg – Moscow – county estate – village.

These categories, however, often seem to overlap.

Ancestors

A spouse's infidelity ruins the purity of pedigree, which plays a key role in Tolstoy's concept of the family. Tolstoy is, evidently, an adherent of the idea "like parents, like children," for the individual's character and potential are defined and determined by his or her ori-

gins. That is why it is so important for a child to have both parents and an honorable family. Levin's uneasy character may be explained by the fact that he is an orphan. His father died, as did his mother, when he was too young to remember her. Her image however, becomes sacred for Levin, so that he wants his future wife to resemble his mother (25), and, indeed, he finds a second family and a mother-figure(s) in the Shcherbatskii family:

. . . Константин Левин был влюблен именно в дом, в семью, в особенности в женскую половину семьи Щербацких. Сам Левин не помнил своей матери, и единственная сестра его была старше его, так что в доме Щербацких он в первый раз увидел ту самую среду старого дворянского, образованного и *честного*⁵ семейства, которой он был лишен смертью отца и матери. ⁶ (25)

Both the Levins' and the Shcherbatskiis' families belong to the old Moscow nobility (*starye dvorianskie moskovskie doma*). The use of two adjectives with the meaning "old, ancient" (*starye* and *moskovskie*, the latter implying that the history of both families reaches back to the pre-Petrine epoch)⁷ stresses the antiquity of the lineage. When Levin refuses to shake hands with the merchant Riabinin and when he makes his passionate speech about aristocratism, he articulates the principles of the purity of origins, and objects to the merging of classes as a destruction of this purity: "Кому приятно сливаться—на здоровье, а мне противно" (171).⁸ That is why he inwardly confesses that he cannot marry a peasant girl. Levin has a clear idea of what real aristocracy should be, and, according to him, it includes two principles: genealogy, that is, family tradition, and a good family name preserved through generations. Vronskii, on the other hand, has neither of these:

—Постой, постой,—заговорил он [Левин], перебивая Облонского,—ты говоришь: аристократизм. . . . Ты считаешь Вронского аристократом, но я нет. Человек, отец которого вылез из ничего пронырством, мать которого бог знает с кем не была в связи. . . . Нет, уж извини, но я считаю аристократом себя и людей, подобных

мне, которые в прошедшем могут указать на *три-четыре честные поколения семей*, . . . которые никогда ни перед кем не подличали, никогда ни в ком не нуждались, как жили *мой отец, мой дед*. . . Я дорожу *родовым* и *трудовым*. . . Мы аристократы, а не те, которые могут существовать только подачками от сильных мира сего и кого можно купить за двугривенный.⁹ (173)

Here Levin's conception of family (*tri-chetyre chestnye pokoleniia semei*) corresponds to the author's (*staroe dvorianskoe chestnoe semeistvo*).

Kitty's background and pedigree (both parents, an honorable family) are immaculate, and Levin falls in love with her as a representative of those family values he sees lacking in Vronskii's background. Kitty's parents are decent people, committed to family life, supportive, and morally responsible, as are both of her sisters. Natalie's marriage is one of the two happy marriages in the novel. Dolly's marriage, although not happy, presumably is harmonious until she discovers Stiva's infidelity. Stiva's continued infidelities after Dolly's forgiveness seem not to overly affect the Oblonskiis' family life, though any resemblance the family has to traditional structures stems from Dolly's efforts to fulfill both parental roles and Levin's help in acting as a surrogate for the permanently absent father.

Tolstoy shows that a happy marriage and a happy family are not the same thing. Marriage embraces only the relationship between husband and wife, while the notion of family is much broader. Dolly may be unhappy as a wife, but for the time being her family life runs quite smoothly. Dolly and her extended family strive to compensate for Stiva's omission and commission. On the other hand, an unhappy marriage often predicts the ruin of the family order, as happens with the Karenins.

Tolstoy, as Gary Morson writes, "had the special ability to create families that were not a mere collection of individuals but a sort of small cultural unit of their own" (7). There is something about Anna and Stiva's background ("cultural unit") that indicates a probability of infidelity. Although the Oblonskiis are direct descendants of Riurik (great pedigree!), Stiva, according to Levin, also belongs to the category of "those who can be bought for sixpence," that is, "not true aristocrats." If we take a closer look at Stiva and Anna's background, we notice that not only are they orphans, but that their living relatives

are far from honest and decent people. Anna was raised by her aunt, who manipulated Karenin into marrying her niece, making him feel that he had compromised Anna. Her other aunt, Princess Varvara, is described as a sponger and parasite, who has spent all her life as a poor relation at the houses of her rich relatives. Dolly, who is the bearer of moral values in the novel, despises her. Anna herself is embarrassed by the fact that Princess Varvara, who lives in Vronskii's house, is a complete stranger to her. Stiva's drunken uncle, "that professional procurer of unpayable loans, Piotr [sic] Oblonskii" (Morson 7), probably brought Stiva up, and Stiva apparently shares his sybaritic views on life. But, significantly, Tolstoy tells us nothing about Anna and Stiva's childhood and parents. Only at the novel's end, when Anna is about to throw herself under the wheels of a train, does she recall the bright moments of her childhood.

As Morson maintains, "the key to understanding Anna is that she is Stiva's sister, Anna Oblonskaia" (7). Hence, in the novel Tolstoy includes hints implying that Anna's background can later lead to her infidelity and the ruin of the family. Yet, the blame for the family's collapse is not hers alone. We know that Aleksei Karenin also grew up an orphan, that he does not remember his father, and that his mother died when he was ten years old. He, like Anna, was raised by a relative and had a brother who died soon after Karenin married. Tolstoy emphasizes Karenin's loneliness:

Не только в Петербурге у него не было ни одного человека, кому бы он мог высказать все, что испытывал, кто бы пожалел его не как высшего чиновника, ни как члена общества, но просто как страдающего человека; но и нигде не было у него такого человека. . . . Та привязанность, которую он испытывал к Анне, исключила в его душе последние потребности сердечных отношений к людям. И теперь изо всех знакомых у него не было *никого близкого*.¹⁰ (504)

At the same time, we are told that Karenin's uncle was a distinguished governmental official and at one time a favorite of the emperor. These facts resemble the situation with Vronskii's father, who received his titles and social recognition as "sops thrown to them by the mighty ones of this world," in Levin's words. But Tolstoy also

tells us that the Karenin brothers had a very small fortune and that, after graduating from school and university with distinction, Aleksei Karenin devoted himself entirely to a career in the civil service (504). It was an honorable and honest way of making a career by comparison with that of Vronskii's father. "Honor," as we remember, occupies a very high place in the author's hierarchy of values. Karenin married Anna because he thought it was his obligation, while Vronskii in similar circumstances betrays Kitty's hopes.

We know that neither of Aleksei Vronskii's parents died during his youth, yet he has no idea of what family life is like. Despite the presence of parents, Vronskii lived like an orphan, his only family a group of young officers:

Вронский *никогда не знал семейной жизни*. Мать его в молодости была блестящая светская женщина, имевшая во время замужества, и в особенности после, много романов, известных всему свету. Отца своего он почти не помнил и был воспитан в Пажеском корпусе.¹¹ (60)

As a child, Vronskii grew up in a military milieu, instead of a calm and loving family atmosphere.

If Levin cannot imagine life and love without marriage and family, Vronskii cannot imagine family life (in the context of Tolstoy's views on the family, hardly a positive characterization). Vronskii's parents are indecent people. They also have no family history: the father made his career *pronyrstvom* (by worming his way into favor); his mother was a woman of easy virtue. Most of the main characters in the novel—Levin and his brothers, Karenin, Anna, and Stiva¹²—lost their parents in childhood. Levin, nonetheless, found the Shcherbatskiis as his second family. Anna and Karenin grew up with their relatives. Only Vronskii had no genuine family, thus has no model to follow, except for that of his mother. His elder, married brother is always drunk and has a lover. Vronskii himself, although in love with Anna, knows very well that in the eyes of high society "роль человека, приставшего к замужней женщине и во что бы то ни стало положившему свою жизнь на то, чтобы вовлечь ее в прелюбодеяние . . . имеет что-то красивое, величественное и никогда не может быть смешной" (130).¹³ In Vronskii's actions when he woos Anna, manifestations of love (for example, his ability

to sacrifice his career to this love) intertwine with the behavioral models he learned from his mother. Even when later he tries desperately to create his own family with Anna and their daughter, he fails, partly because of Anna's unwillingness to participate, partly because he does not know how to do it.

In the Stiva/Dolly household, the family is maintained by Dolly, who has a "good" background. By contrast, Anna's family is "predisposed" to ruin, since both partners lack a family tradition and, therefore, a solid basis for a new generation.

Vronskii ends up yielding his daughter to Karenin: that is, he refuses to have descendants, to have a family. Because he abrogates his parental rights, his kin will die with him (his daughter does not belong to his kin anymore; her last name is Karenina). Karenin, in contrast, keeps both children, and thus his line will continue.

Descendants. Presence or absence of children and their role in the family

Tolstoy's understanding of the role of children is quite clear: a child is "the moral compass" that shows adults the degree of their deviation from the "true path" (187). "The disposition to regard children as the representatives of innocence, naturalness, and purity," writes Gary Jahn, "is as obvious in *Anna Karenina* as it is everywhere else in Tolstoy" ("Images" 3). The attitude toward children and a particular character's ease with them largely define him or her as a "good" or "bad" person.

When Anna comes to Moscow, all her thoughts are about her son. Dolly meets her dryly, but Anna immediately conquers her heart by recalling the names, characters, birthdays, and illnesses of all the Oblonskii children. She plays with them; and the children, in their turn, feel the presence of a special charm in her. The fact that the children try to sit closer, to touch, or to kiss her shows that Anna is still "pure," that she is, first of all, a mother. After the ball, where Anna flirts with Vronskii, the shift in the children's attitude to Anna signals that she is out of her mother role, that she is not their aunt (*tetia*) any more:

Потому ли, что дети непостоянны или очень чутки и почувствовали, что Анна в этот день *совсем не такая*,¹⁴ как в тот, когда они так любили ее, что

уже не занята ими,—но только они вдруг прекратили свою игру с тетей и *любовь к ней*, и их совершенно не занимало то, что она уезжает.¹⁵
(100)

Anna becomes a stranger for them.

When Anna tells Dolly that she has decided not to have more children and uses contraception, she not only refuses to help Vronskii create his own lineage and thus continue family traditions, but also imperils her spiritual closeness to Dolly: “. . . узнав, что это возможно, она [Долли] *ужаснулась*. Она чувствовала, что это слишком простое решение слишком сложного вопроса” (629);¹⁶ or “Дарья Александровна не возражала. Она вдруг почувствовала, что стала уже так *далека* от Анны, что между ними существуют вопросы, в которых они никогда не сойдутся и о которых лучше не говорить” (630).¹⁷ Dolly also notices that Anna is *alien* in her daughter’s nursery. *Svoi* (one’s own) and *chuzhoi* (alien or stranger) are very important categories for the author. *Chuzhoi* means “not belonging to the family.” When Dolly tries to hurt Stiva, she calls him *chuzhoi*: “Вы мне мерзки, гадки, чужой, чужой!”—с болью и злобой произносила она это ужасное для себя слово *чужой*” (16; emphasis in original).¹⁸ Levin banishes Veslovskii from his house because Veslovskii is *chuzhoi*.¹⁹ At the same time, when Levin proposes to Kitty and her parents bless their marriage, Levin feels “новое чувство любви к этому прежде *чуждому* ему человеку, старому князю” (405; emphasis in original).²⁰ The old Prince is no longer a stranger because Levin has become a member of the family.

Anna gradually moves away from the world of both Dolly’s children and her own—the “positive pole” in the novel. As noted earlier, however, the novel deals more with the gradation of phenomena than with a set of oppositions, and it would be inaccurate to say that Anna does not love her children. But, step by step, she loses touch with them and severs those ties that connect her to Serezha and then to Annie: “И она навсегда не только физически, но и *духовно* была разъединена с ним [Сережей], и поправить этого нельзя было” (535).²¹ As for her daughter Annie, Anna probably sees her only as her own reflection (the same name), and the stronger her depression and self-hatred, the less she loves Annie. In Italy, during Anna and Vronskii’s “honeymoon,” Annie might have replaced Serezha: “Разлука с сыном, которого она любила, и та не мучала

ее первое время. Девочка, *его ребенок*, была так мила и так привязала к себе Анну с тех пор, как у нее осталась одна эта девочка, что Анна редко вспоминала о сыне” (462; emphasis in original).²² But Serezha, who so resembles Karenin, is a permanent reminder for Anna of her previous unhappy but decent family life. Annie, who resembles both Anna and Vronskii (black eyes and hair, *pukhlen'kaia*, etc.), is a reminder of lies, deceit, and adultery—all those things that Anna tries to bury and forget. Yet in the depth of her heart²³ Anna knows that what she is doing is wrong, and she cannot love Annie because she cannot forgive herself that the child is Vronskii's. Anna gave to her son all the energy of her unspent love; in her relations with Vronskii Anna expends all her love on him, and so cannot give Annie something she no longer possesses. She even tries to replace her daughter with another child, the English girl Hanna, but Vronskii ruins Anna's hopes, ridiculing her affection for the girl as “unnatural.” In the end, before her final trip to the railway station, Anna wants to see her son, who remains in her memory as something pure, but she finds only her daughter, who reminds her of Vronskii, of her shame and suffering on his account:

“Что ж, это не то, это *не он!* Где его голубые глаза, милая и робкая улыбка?”—была первая мысль ее, когда она увидела свою пухлую, румяную девочку с черными волосами, вместо Сережи, которого она, при запутанности своих мыслей, ожидала видеть в детской. . . . Но громкий, звонкий смех ребенка и движение, которое она сделала бровью, так живо ей [Анне] напомнили Вронского, что, удерживая рыдания, она поспешно встала и вышла.²⁴ (739-40)

As a compromise of sorts, Anna goes to Dolly, who, like the children, is a “moral compass” (Morson 6) in the novel. However, as Amy Mandelker has observed, “when Anna most needs her, Dolly lets her down, feeling it is more important to counsel Kitty about breast-feeding than to respond to Anna's obvious distress” (Mandelker 98). The observation is a little unfair (Dolly speaks to Anna and even persuades Kitty to greet their guest), since it is logical that breast-feeding and all problems concerning children be of primary importance for Dolly. Prosaics relegates drama and melodrama

to the periphery.

After Vronskii betrays her, Kitty confesses to Dolly that she feels good only with children and only at Dolly's house ("Только с детьми мне хорошо, только у тебя" [128]). She starts to recover by nursing Dolly's sick children, and by succoring them through their physical illness, Kitty overcomes her own spiritual malaise. With her own son she is a perfect mother: she can predict his needs even before he actually expresses his wishes. She recognizes him as a moral being (*nравственное существо* [767]) whereas Levin feels only fear (704). Kitty breast-feeds Dmitrii, something Anna does not do with her newborn. For Tolstoy's notion of the mother-child relationship, breast-feeding is crucial because it strengthens ties.²⁵

Levin also gets on well with children. When he meets Dolly at her county estate, he is immediately recognized as *svoi* by the children:

Дети знали Левина очень мало, . . . но не высказали в отношении к нему того странного чувства застенчивости и отвращения, которое испытывают дети так часто к взрослым притворяющимся людям . . . Притворство в чем бы то ни было может обмануть самого умного, проникательного человека; но самый ограниченный ребенок, как бы оно ни было искусно скрывается, узнает его и отвергается.²⁶ Какие бы ни были недостатки в Левине, притворства не было в нем и признака, и потому дети высказали ему дружелюбие такое же, какое они нашли на лице матери.²⁷ (268)

Later Levin will also teach Dolly's children, actually enacting the role of father to them, which their real father avoids.

Stiva, who is unable to remember that he is a married man and who, having six children, behaves like a bachelor, is shown with children in only two scenes: at the beginning of the novel and when he meets Karenin in Moscow. In the first scene Stiva asks Tania, his favorite daughter, whether her mother is cheerful. Tania immediately recognizes his dishonesty, because it is impossible for Dolly to be cheerful, and she feels shame for her father. Stiva acknowledges that he does not care as much for his son Grisha as for Tania, though he tries to treat both children identically. The boy feels that his father

does not love him (12). A possible explanation for Stiva's attitude could be that Tania, the first child, was born during the period when Stiva did not yet cheat on his wife and, therefore, his attitude towards Tania is free of guilt; Grisha might have been born when Stiva started philandering.²⁸

Favoring one child over another/others "brands" Stiva as a neglectful and irresponsible father and, consequently, as an immoral person. But even if he were to love all his children, Stiva would still be "bad," for, as Morson argues, it is not feeling (poetics) but deeds (prosaics) that matter.²⁹ Stiva spends his children's fortune on his own eating, drinking, and pleasures. He ends up begging Dolly to save his "honor" and to sell her (and her children's) estate to pay his debts (769).

Karenin also is shown as a "not good enough" father, cold with his son, who seems to be afraid of him; he does not understand Serezha's needs (523). However, during the crisis, when Anna is dying of puerperal fever, Karenin experiences the happiness of forgiving (*schast'e prosbcheniá*) and achieves a blissful state of soul (*blazhennoe sostoianie dushi*) (412). That state brings him closer to the children; he becomes more "pure," revealing his hidden "good" self:

Он жалел и сына больше, чем прежде, и упрекал себя теперь за то, что слишком мало занимался им. Но к новорожденной маленькой девочке он испытывал какое-то особенное чувство не только жалости, но и нежности. . . . Он по несколько раз в день ходил в детскую и подолгу сиживал там. . . . В такие минуты в особенности Алексей Александрович чувствовал себя совершенно спокойным и *согласным с собой*. . .³⁰ (418-19)

Karenin not only forgives Anna, but also treats her illegitimate daughter as his own; after Anna's death he takes care of little Annie, while her natural father leaves her for good. But, at the same time, the novel shows that, living without a mother, Serezha becomes increasingly corrupted, losing touch with the natural and pure sources of his soul that a mother should provide. A father, Tolstoy indicates, cannot fully replace a mother (and vice versa in the case of Dolly's children).

These two worlds—children's and adults'—should not lose

their defining differences. Both adults and children have their set roles and functions; switching them leads to pretense, unnaturalness, and corruption. Serezha tries to enter the world of adults by imitating his father's habits and pretending to be someone he is not (*kenizhnyi mal'chik* [522]).³¹ On Vronskii's estate, seeing Anna and others playing lawn tennis, Dolly senses the unnaturalness of grown-up people carrying on a children's game in the *absence of children* (626). On the other hand, Levin's carefree games with Dolly's children characterize him as a person who is close to their (the children's) pure world. Unnaturalness results only when adults play not to give pleasure to children, but to experience it themselves.

The fact that the entire novel contains no scene of Vronskii with children, not even with his own daughter, is very significant and says much about him. Anna constantly feels not only that Vronskii does not share her feelings for Serezha, but that he does not even understand them (disgust [*omerzhenie*] is what Vronskii experiences in Serezha's presence).³²

On the other hand, when Vronskii talks to Dolly in *Vozdvizhenskoe* about his future children (618), he seems to be sincere. When discussing the problem of Anna's refusal of divorce, however, he talks mostly of himself: "И завтра родится сын, мой сын, и он по закону—*Каренин*, он не наследник ни моего имени, ни моего состояния, и как бы мы счастливы ни были в семье и сколько бы ни было у нас детей, между мною и ими нет связи" (618),³³ or "Главное же то, что, работая, необходимо иметь убеждение, что дело моё не умрёт со мною, что у меня будут наследники" (619).³⁴ Obviously, Vronskii tries to create a lineage he lacks, that is, to establish family values, but he seems to care more about "winning" in his internal fight with Karenin³⁵ than about his child's future.

A significant fact is that, with the rare exception of Vronskii's brother's (not a convincing example because he drinks and cheats on his wife), Prince Chichenskii's (who has two families and takes his older son with him to visit the second family), and the Oblonskiis', there are no children in the families where the spouses are unfaithful to each other. Tolstoy tells us nothing about the possible children of Betsy Tverskaia, Lisa Merkalova, Safo Shtol'ts, or Baroness Shil'ton. In general, among so many various families and couples described and mentioned in the novel, even the supposedly "neutral" ones tend to have no children. Such are the Nordstons (there is no evidence of any adultery, but the Countess tries to dominate her husband), the

Sviiazhskiis (“жил с женой так, что все любовались их дружною *бездетною* жизнью” [328]),³⁶ the Miagkois, the Bohls, the Korsunskiis, and the Serpukhovskois (who seem childless). Lidiia Ivanovna, abandoned by her husband, also has no children. Madame Shtal’ gave birth to a baby after divorcing her husband (!), but the child died. She could have been Varen’ka’s surrogate mother, but, instead, she treats her like a servant.³⁷ Varen’ka herself, though virtuous, lacks femininity and, because she has no children, is (not unlike Sonia in *War and Peace*) *pus-totsvet* (a barren flower): “Она была похожа на прекрасный, хотя еще и полный лепестков, но уже отцветший, без запаха цветок” (216).³⁸ That is why the narrator calls her *sushchestvo* (creature), a word neuter in gender: “М-lle Варенька эта была . . . как бы *существо* без молодости” (216).³⁹

Not only do “good” families have more than one child (the fact that Anna after eight years of marriage has only a son implies some problems in the family), but the children there are also the center of attention. The Shcherbatskiis worry about all their daughters, especially Kitty, and are eager to do everything to help her. The L’vovs, the only truly happy family in high society, ironically admit that “родителей в чулан, а детей в бельэтаж. Родители уже не должны жить, а все для детей” (671).⁴⁰ In Levin’s family, little Dmitrii becomes the focus of everyone’s admiration and caresses.

Most noble families shown in the novel have no children because they appreciate values other than children’s upbringing and moral education (L’vov’s main concern). These families live for themselves and for pleasure: “Здесь понимали, что человек *обязан жить для себя*, как должен жить *образованный человек*” (714).⁴¹ This *education* is, obviously, not the education L’vov is trying to give his children. The notion that “детям всю роскошь жизни, а родителям одни труд и заботы”⁴² is considered wild (*dikoe*) by the *haut monde* (714). For Tolstoy, it seems, the main task of a family is to raise and bring up children. Levin, who, as well as Dolly, apparently is the bearer of the author’s ideas and whose opinion in most cases coincides with the author’s,⁴³ senses something peculiar about Sviiazhskii’s life. Levin cannot call this man a fool (*durak*) or a knave (*driian*), because Sviiazhskii never intentionally does anything bad, but at the same time Levin knows that a life such as Sviiazhskii’s is wrong: [Свияжский] устроил жизнь своей жены так, что она ничего не делала и не могла делать, кроме общей с мужем *заботы*, как получше и *повеселее* провести время” (328).⁴⁴ The oxymoronic formulation (*zabota*—

poveselee provedi vremia) indicates the author's irony and discredits a lifestyle that requires nothing but pleasure for spouses.

In *Anna Karenina*, as well as in Tolstoy's other works, children are sensitive, naïve, and timid; they live spiritual lives and are a moral yardstick for adults. But they are idealized only in the world of adults. In their own world they may be angry, violent, and, for Tolstoy, the most awful thing—they may be interested in sex. Dolly punishes Tania for something the girl does in the raspberry bushes. Although we do not know what exactly Tania has done, the fact that Dolly cannot even articulate “the crime” suggests that Tania probably “played doctor” or masturbated. For Tolstoy, this manifestation of sexuality in a child is disgusting. In 1878 in his diary he wrote: “Дети: Илья и Таня рассказывали свои секреты, влюблены. Как страшны, *скверны* [sic] и милы” (*Dnevnik* 70).⁴⁵ The word *strashny* is written over the word *gadk.*, that is, *gadki* (foul), which is crossed out. Tolstoy is ambivalent about children, who are simultaneously dear and foul. It is very significant that Tolstoy treats any hint of sexuality in a child, such as, for example, falling in love, as a sign of depravity. This is not so much bad (*gadki, skverny*), as frightening (*strashny*). Tolstoy fears an evident manifestation of sexuality in a child as much as he deplores it in a woman. Tania is “a bad girl” for the same reason that Anna is “a fallen woman.” A girl should be virginal, naïve, pure, and timid; she should live a spiritual life, the qualities ascribed to a child.⁴⁶ A woman should preserve naïveté and purity as long as possible: Dolly, we remember, was naïve and ignorant of her husband's previous affairs for nine years. An expression of female sexuality means a shift in a woman's role (from mother to mistress), which for Tolstoy leads to the ruin of the family as an institution. “Dangerous inclinations” must be suppressed. As long as Anna is able to hide and suppress her energy (sexuality), she remains a decent woman. While a child is not responsible for his or her “nasty” instincts and inclinations (and that is why Levin asks Dolly to forgive Tania, and the girl is not really punished), an adult woman is. Anna must be punished more severely.

Violence and unsuppressed sexuality signal problems in the family. The absence of a father, Tolstoy implies, partly explains why Grisha “с изуродованным злобой лицом” (272)⁴⁷ hits Tania and she does something “awful” in the bushes. Anna's suppressed energy tells us that her marriage is not happy, in at least one respect (Dolly recalls that she has always sensed something false in Anna's family situation). Anna experiences discontent with herself when she sees

Karenin as he meets her at the railway station: “Чувство то было давнишнее, знакомое чувство, похожее на *состояние притворства*, которое она испытывала в отношениях к мужу; но прежде она не замечала этого чувства, теперь она ясно и больно осознавала его” (106).⁴⁸

One of the major factors in the failure of marriages is a lack of personal honesty between spouses. Tolstoy considered it imperative that before getting married a man tell his wife-to-be about his previous life (a “girl,” however, must be pure and virginal, thus has nothing to tell).⁴⁹ Levin gives Kitty his diaries to read, trying to be honest with her from the very beginning. He is so worried about Kitty’s not being honest about her feeling for him that he even contemplates breaking off their engagement. In contrast, Dolly complains to Anna that Stiva, instead of showing her his diaries, concealed his past from her and thus deceived her and her trust (71). Anna’s marriage likewise began with deceit, when her aunt maneuvered Karenin into marrying Anna. Here we once again see the problem of spouses’ *honesty/dishonesty* with each other, which is a more general category subsuming the problem of *fidelity/infidelity*.

Role-distribution in the family: male-female relationships

I shall not elaborate on Tolstoy’s attitude toward feminism, since much has already been written on the topic.⁵⁰ In accordance with his views on the woman question and the feminist movement, Tolstoy may easily either be “branded” sexist for not allowing women any other but family-related activities, or be praised for recognizing the key importance of women’s role in the family. The truth, as usual, is in between. On the one hand, Tolstoy readily admits the primary importance of the woman in the family; on the other hand, precisely because the idea of family is so important to him, Tolstoy allots women only space to act within the boundaries of the family. In the novel, “right” or “wrong” roles are based on the opposition “utility” versus “ecstasy” for females (a female body should be functional rather than beautiful) and “fatherhood” versus “individualism” for males.

The narrator repeatedly describes Dolly as a prematurely aged woman, though she is only thirty-three and, as we learn, was once beautiful. Stiva cannot love her any more; Dolly herself admits that

she is ugly when pregnant (i.e., every year). At the same time, however, she now has another beauty, which pertains to her role as a mother:

Прежде она [Долли] одевалась для себя, чтобы быть красивой и нравиться; потом, чем больше она старалась, тем неприятнее ей становилось одеваться; она видела, как она *подурнела*. Теперь она одевалась не для себя, не для своей красоты, а для того, чтобы она, *как мать этих прелестей*, не испортила общего впечатления. Посмотревшись в зеркало в последний раз, она осталась собой довольна. Не так хороша, как она, бывало, хотела быть хороша на бале, но *хороша* для той цели, которую она теперь имела ввиду.⁵¹ (264)

Here the phrase “as the mother of those beautiful children” explains the author’s views on female beauty. Beauty by itself seems to be mere decoration. A mature, married woman’s beauty should be in her children. Kitty, who is certainly pretty, loses her good looks even before getting married, as if the very anticipation of future family life reduces her beauty. During the wedding ceremony the word *podurnela* (lost her good looks) in reference to Kitty occurs three times (445, 448, 458). Clearly, Kitty is preparing for her future role of mother.

Anna, on the other hand, when she comes on her peacemaking mission and even before she falls in love with Vronskii, is so radiant with health and happiness that Dolly envies her (70). There is something questionable about Anna’s beauty, as well as about her only child, as if her beauty betrays her status as a bad mother and foreshadows her later neglect of her daughter. When Anna becomes Vronskii’s mistress, “beautiful” turns into her fixed epithet. Brand new, luxurious, and beautiful things surround her in *Vozdvizhenskoe* (608-633), but something is missing in her appearance, and Anna’s beauty no longer excites Vronskii, as it did earlier. Dolly reasons that a woman cannot keep a man through her physical beauty because he will always find somebody more attractive. The author’s intention,⁵² probably, is to assert the *functionality* of a woman’s body over its *beauty*. If a woman has many children and takes care of them, as she is supposed to do, her beauty disappears, and vice versa: if a woman is beautiful it indicates that she does not properly fulfill her maternal role. The more

attention Anna pays to her physical beauty the farther she moves spiritually from her children.

Since the man's functions in the family were discussed earlier, here I shall touch upon them only briefly. For Tolstoy, the role of husband and father is more important for a man than any other social role (military or government service, work in a bank, etc.). An ideal father and husband, L'vov leaves his career as a successful foreign diplomat and returns home because his children will not be able to receive a sound moral education abroad. Stiva is a philandering husband, but, what is worse, he is an absent father. He wants to be honest with himself ("Степан Аркадьевич был человек правдивый в отношении к самому" [7]), that is, he does not care how his "honesty" affects his family. Levin also does not want to lie to himself and tries to be honest with the priest about his lack of faith. As Gary Jahn notes:

Levin is brought short, however, when the priest suggests that an attitude of disdain will not suffice when his questions are asked by Levin's future children. The questions will be the same, but the context in which they are asked will be that of Levin's social obligations as a father rather than that of his obligations to himself as an individual ("Unity" 148).

Tolstoy allows a person some private space where he or she can be alone with personal experiences, but only so long as it does not affect the family. A family consists not only of the two individuals who live together (Betsy Tverskaia or Baroness Nordston's type of marriage), but, rather, is a union of two people whose main function is to raise their children and who work together to achieve that goal.

Place of Residence

The fifth criterion for my classification, place of residence, overlaps with the second, *pedigree*. A person or a family is defined from the standpoint of belonging to a certain place. Obviously, different loci have different degrees of moral value for Tolstoy, i.e., he moralizes space. Thus, he ascribes tremendous importance to a character's birthplace or residence. One of the reasons Tolstoy dislikes railroads

and trains is, probably, that they facilitate easy, quick, and *painless* transference from one locus to another. Speed and quick change of places nullify the idea of roots, habitual surroundings, and the stability of family life. A “wrong” place gives rise to and enables a person’s “bad” habits. Hence, abroad is a “wrong” place to live. Every member of society in the small German spa occupies a precise and *unchangeable* place according to his/her rank in the social hierarchy. Tolstoy uses the word crystallization (*krystalizatsiia* [215]) to stress the stagnant, dead character of that society. We see through Kitty’s eyes the ridiculousness and unpleasantness of this milieu: the Moscow colonel looks extravagantly funny without his uniform, Rtishcheva’s daughter and Nikolai Levin are unpleasant, Madame Shtal’ is both unpleasant and ridiculous, with her short legs and false religion. Even Princess Shcherbatskaia pretends that she is a European aristocrat, whereas she is a typical Russian lady (*russkaia barynia*) playing a part that is rather a strain. The old prince, in contrast, keeps to his Russian habits. Among the Russians who have been living abroad for a long time only Varen’ka is “pleasant,” and Tolstoy emphasizes several times that she is a Russian girl (*russkaia devushka* [216]). Another exception is Mikhailov, whom Tolstoy “forgives” for living in Italy, since he is an artist.

After “abroad,” Petersburg is the second-worst place in the hierarchy of loci. What can one say positive, after all, about a place where Betsy Tverskaia’s circle is regarded as the “cream of society” and Lidiia Ivanovna as a virtuous and pious woman, while her circle is called the conscience of Petersburg society?

Tolstoy establishes the opposition “Moscow versus Petersburg” very firmly, and for reasons that are all too clear. The historical birth of Petersburg put an end to traditional Russian values and stimulated a merger of classes that put an end to the “purity” of genealogy, and imported the “false” values of Europe into Russia.⁵³ Two passages in *Anna Karenina* show Petersburg through the eyes of people who have just come from Moscow. Here Tolstoy brilliantly employs his famous device of *ostranenie* (Shklovskii) to describe his system of moral values:

В его [Вронского] *петербургском* мире все люди разделялись на два совершенно противоположные сорта. Один низший сорт: пошлые, глупые, и главное, смешные люди, которые веруют в то, что

[1] одному мужу надо жить с одной женой, с которой он [2] обвенчан, что [3] девушке надо быть невинною, [4] женщине стыдливою, [5] мужчине мужественным, воздержанным и твердым, что [6] надо воспитывать детей, [7] зарабатывать свой хлеб, [8] платить долги,—и разные тому подобные глупости. . . . Но был другой сорт людей, настоящих, к которым они все принадлежали, в котором надо быть, главное, эlegantным, красивым, великодушным, смелым, веселым, *отдаваться всякой страсти не краснея* и над всем остальным *смеяться*. Вронский только первое время был ошеломлен после впечатлений *совсем другого мира*, привезенных им из *Москвы*.⁵⁴ (116-17; numbers added)

Once again Tolstoy opposes prosaic “functionality” to poetic “beauty,” as in the contrast between Dolly and Anna. Although Petersburg contains muscovite-type people, and Princess Miagkaia is probably the clearest representative of such a group, they do not determine the city’s moral atmosphere. Another passage describes Stiva’s feelings when, having lived in Moscow for a long time, he returns to Petersburg (714). As Tolstoy ironically notes, after a long stay in Moscow “он *доходил* до того, что начинал беспокоиться . . . упреками жены, здоровьем, воспитанием детей, *мелкими* интересами своей службы; *даже то*, что у него были долги, беспокоило его” (714).⁵⁵ Hence, the attributes of life in Moscow and in Petersburg are the following :

| | <i>Moscow</i> | <i>Petersburg</i> |
|------------------|--|--|
| <i>Lifestyle</i> | прозябать, падать духом московская затхлость, стоячее болото | Жить, освежиться, молодить, десять лет с костей Человек обязан жить для себя |
| <i>Service</i> | упорная безнадежная ляжка, которую тянули в Москве | Встреча, услуга, меткое слово, умение представлять в лицах шуточки—и человек вдруг делал карьеру |

| | | |
|-----------------|--|--|
| <i>Children</i> | <p>Не было этого дикого, распространяющегося в Москве—Львов, напри- мер,—понятия, что детям всю роскошь жизни, а родителям один труд и заботы.</p> | <p>Дети не мешали отцам. Дети воспитывались в заведениях</p> |
|-----------------|--|--|

(714-15)⁵⁶

With heavy irony Tolstoy uses the phrase “a decent man” (*poriadochnyi chelovek*), opposing the Moscow concept of *poriadochnost'* to that of Petersburg: “В Москве он [Стива] так *опускался*, что в самом деле, если пожить там долго, дошел бы, чего доброго, и *до спасения души*; в Петербурге же он чувствовал себя опять *порядочным* человеком” (716).⁵⁷ From “virtuous” Moscow, the city of *prosaics* (in Morson’s terms), Anna goes home to Petersburg, the kingdom of *poetics*, and toward her moral degradation. Levin also goes home, but to his country estate, where he will attain his life-affirming insight. Symbolically, different directions indicate different moral orientations.

On the one hand, Moscow is on a higher moral plane than Petersburg and the majority of “positive,” family-oriented characters either live or were born in Moscow: the Shcherbatskiis, Kitty, Dolly’s family, the Lvovs, who returned from *abroad* to give their *children* education. All adulterous families and couples, in contrast, live in Petersburg.

On the other hand, as the author shows in Levin’s case, to gain salvation is possible only away from cities. As Countess Nordston recollects, Levin used to call Moscow a second, dissolute Babylon (*razvratnyi Vavilon* [53]). After her wedding Kitty decides, to Levin’s surprise, that they should settle in at Pokrovskoe instead of staying in Moscow or going abroad. She intuitively knows that the moral atmosphere on the county estate will be the best for their family. When the Levins live in Moscow, Konstantin begins to behave like Stiva: he spends money, gets into debts, drinks, visits the English Club with Stiva and the old Prince Shcherbatskii, and ends up almost falling in love with Anna, whom he earlier would definitely have classified as a fallen woman. The conclusion the reader must draw is that urban life corrupts, whereas the closer one draws to peasant life, the better one becomes.

Interestingly enough, most principles and criteria on which my classification is built *cannot be applied to peasant families*. As Sydney

Schultze justly observes, “The disintegration of marriages does not extend to the lower classes, according to the narrator. He describes the contempt felt by the upper classes for the innocence and modesty of lower class women, and the manliness, self-control, strength, and fidelity of their men” (102). Peasants do not have strictly divided male-female duties. Wives do not have to stay at home; they work beside their husbands and share their interests. Peasant women may have children and not be exhausted, as Dolly is, but remain beautiful (327, 599). Even if Van’ka Parmenov and his wife do not have children (nor even intimacy during the first year of their marriage), it does not prevent them from being an ideal couple. Hard physical labor renders their lives difficult and demanding.

Peasant women may not only *not* have children, but also may be glad when their children die (!):

И ей [Долли] вспомнился разговор с молодойкой на постоялом дворе. На вопрос, есть ли у неё дети, красивая молодая весело отвечала:

—Была одна девочка, да развязал Бог, постом похоронила.

—Что ж, тебе очень жалко ее?—спросила Дарья Александровна.

—Чего жалеть? У старика внуков и так много. Только забота. Ни тебе *работать*, ни что. Только связя одна.

Ответ этот показался Дарье Александровне отвратителен, несмотря на добродушную милость молодойкой, но теперь она невольно вспомнила эти слова. В этих циничных словах была и доля правды.⁵⁸ (599)

Anna is portrayed as blameworthy for abandoning her children. Why is there such a striking discrepancy between the way Tolstoy treats Anna and the young peasant woman? Why is Anna “guilty”? The answer Tolstoy would probably give is that the reasons Anna abandons her children and a peasant woman is glad that hers died differ. Whereas Anna leaves Serezha for Vronskii, the peasant woman has to work *physically*, and a child in such circumstances is *sviaz’a*. At the same time, the death of a particular child does not disrupt a lineage, for an old man, as the *molodaika* says, has many grand-

children. Peasants' work differs from that of the upper class. They are closer to the "pulse of life"; hence, the principles of "goodness" imposed upon the upper class by Tolstoy are inapplicable to them.

Representatives of prosaics in high society are few: the Levins, Dolly, the Shcherbatskiis, and the L'vovs. Peasants, by contrast, actually embody prosaics. That is why Dolly so easily finds a common language with the peasant women; that is why Levin understands his peasants (only to some extent, but better than anybody else). The thoughts, background, and the kind of work they fulfill are different, but both Dolly and Levin have a common ground with peasants: everyday prosaic work. Peasant marriages are both "good" and "happy" because the spouses *work together*. That is why L'vov's marriage *is*, and Levin's *will* be, happy, too.

Notes

1. "All happy families are like one another; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way" (17).
Translated by David Magarshack. See Works Cited. Throughout, the page numbers reference Magarshack's translation.
2. "Everything was in confusion in the Oblonsky household" (17).
3. On the next page Schultze contradicts herself, asserting: "The picture of Levin and Kitty's ideal marriage is not quite convincing, however."
4. For instance, the Korsunskii family is not "bad." However, it is definitely not "good."
5. Here and elsewhere, emphasis mine, unless indicated otherwise in parentheses following cited passages.
6. "Konstantin Levin was definitely in love with the entire family, and especially the feminine half of it. Levin himself did not remember his mother, and his only sister was older than himself, so that in the house of the Shcherbatskys he found himself for the first time in the environment of a cultured and honorable old aristocratic family, of which he had been deprived by the death of his own father and mother" (37).
7. In Peter the Great's reign, non-noblemen in origin had the possibility of obtaining a title in exchange for military service. Thereafter the Russian nobility lost its "purity."
8. "Anyone who likes merging, let him merge, by all means. It sickens me" (182).
9. "Wait, wait," he began, interrupting Oblonsky. "You say he's such a perfect aristocrat. You consider Vronsky an aristocrat. I don't. A man whose father was a sycophant and timeserver, and whose mother has been the mistress of goodness knows how many men. . . . I'm very sorry, but I consider myself and people like me true aristocrats, people who can point back

- to three or four honorable generations, . . . who never fawned upon anyone, never depended upon anyone, who lived as my father and grandfather did. . . . I value what belongs to me either by birth or labor. We are the aristocrats, and not those who can only exist by the sops thrown to them by the mighty ones of this world and who can be bought for six-pence'” (184).
10. “It was not only in Petersburg that he had no one to whom he might unburden his mind, who would be sorry for him not as a high official and not as a member of high society, but simply as a suffering human being; but nowhere in the world had he such a friend. . . . His attachment to Anna made any close relationship with other people unnecessary. And now he had not a single intimate friend among all his acquaintances” (510).
 11. “Vronsky had never known what family life was like. In her youth his mother had been a great society beauty who, during her married life and particularly afterward, had many love affairs, which everyone knew about. He hardly remembered his father, and he had been educated in the College of Pages” (71).
 12. Significantly, there are *three* Shcherbatskii sisters and *three* brothers in Levin's family. Anna, Karenin, and Vronskii each has or had an elder brother. Probably, this implies that Levin has to follow the Shcherbatskii's family model.
 13. “. . . the role of a man pursuing a married woman, who had made it the purpose of his life to draw her into an adulterous association . . . has something grand and beautiful about it and could never be ridiculous” (141).
 14. The children intuitively sense the presence of *another* Anna, who will appear later.
 15. “Whether it was because the children were fickle or very sensitive and felt that Anna was not at all the same now as she had been the day they had grown so fond of her, and that she was no longer interested in them, they suddenly gave up their games with their aunt, were no longer in love with her, and showed no interest whatever in the fact that she was going away” (111).
 16. “[L]earning that it was possible, she was horrified. She felt that it was too simple a solution of too complicated a problem” (635).
 17. “Dolly didn't argue. She suddenly felt that the distance separating them had become very big and that there were questions on which they could never agree and about which it was better not to talk” (637).
 18. “I loathe you. I hate you. You're a stranger to me, yes, a perfect stranger!’ She pronounced the word ‘stranger,’ which was so dreadful to her, with pain and hatred” (28).
 19. Interestingly enough, Levin likes Veslovskii when they are hunting, i.e., are out of the house and far away from Levin's family. However, Levin hates Veslovskii when they are at home, where the latter can affect Levin's family life.

20. "a new feeling of affection for this man, the old prince, who had been a *stranger* to him before" (411).
21. "And she was forever separated from him, not only physically but spiritually, and there was nothing to be done about it" (540).
22. "The separation from her son, whom she loved, did not trouble her at first, either. The little girl, *his* child, was so sweet and Anna had grown so attached to her ever since she was all that was left to her, that she rarely thought of her son" (467).
23. For the significance of the idea of inner knowledge for Tolstoy see Turner, C. J. G. "Psychology, Rhetoric and Morality in *Anna Karenina*. At the Bottom Of Whose Heart?" *Slavic and East European Journal* 2, 1995, 261-68.
24. "'Good Lord, that's not him! Where are his blue eyes and his sweet, shy smile?' was the first thought on seeing her plump, rosy-cheeked little girl, with her black, curly hair instead of Seriozha, who, in the confusion of her mind, she had expected to see in the nursery. . . . But the child's loud, ringing laughter and a movement of her eyebrows reminded her so vividly of Vronsky that, holding back her sobs, she got up hastily and went out of the room" (746).
25. In her diary Sofia Tolstaia recalls that Tolstoy was very angry when she could not breast-feed their first son, Serezha, because of her *grudnitsa* (mastitis). That even affected their relations: "Это была эпоха моей страшной грудницы, болезни груди, я не могла кормить Сережу, и это его [Толстого] сердило" (1: 58; "it was the time I had terrible mastitis, I couldn't breast-feed Serezha, and it made him [Tolstoy] angry at me"). Also see her notes of August 3, 1863 (1: 59).
26. Here we see the repetition of the same idea: children as a moral compass for adults.
27. "The children did not know Levin very well, . . . but they did not show toward him any of that strange shyness and hostility children so often feel toward grownups who pretend to like them . . . Any kind of pretence may deceive the cleverest and most perspicuous of men; but the most backward child will recognize it, however skillfully it may be disguised, and be repelled by it. Whatever shortcomings Levin might have had, there was not a trace of pretence in him and that was why the children showed him the same friendliness that they saw in their mother's face" (276).
28. Tolstoy tells us that Stiva has been married for nine years and that he first cheated on his wife six years into the marriage. Tania is his first child. Dolly has given birth to seven children (two died). A simple arithmetical exercise (nine months, plus approximately a year of breast-feeding, when women do not become pregnant, plus nine months, once again, constitute approximately those three years when Stiva was faithful to his wife) shows that Grisha could have been born at the time when Stiva began cheating on Dolly (7).

29. Also see Morson's other works on prosaics: "Prosaics: An Approach to the Humanities," *The American Scholar*, Autumn 1988: 515-28; *Hidden in Plain View: Narrative and Creative Potential in War and Peace*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1987.
30. "He pitied his son, too, more than he had in the past and reproached himself for having paid so little attention to him. But for the newborn little baby girl he had a sort of special feeling not only of pity but also of tenderness. . . . Several times a day he went to the nursery, and he used to sit there so long. . . . At such moments especially Karenin felt absolutely calm and at peace with himself. . . ." (425).
31. "that boy out of a book" (528).
32. However, it might be a result of suppressed guilt.
33. "Some day we may have a son, my son, and by law he will be a Karenin. He will not be heir to my name or to my property, and however happy we may be in our family life and however many children we may have, there will be no legal bond between them and me" (625).
34. "The main thing is that you must be convinced that the work you do will not die with you, that you will have heirs to carry on with your work" (626).
35. Significantly enough, before he escapes with his lover to Italy, Vronskii sees no way out for Anna and himself except a physical fight—a duel.
36. "he lived with his wife so happily that everyone admired their affectionate, childless life" (335).
37. The fact that Madame Shtal' treats Varen'ka not as a daughter but, rather, as a servant, supports the old prince's remarks about Shtal' being pretentious and false.
38. "She was like a beautiful flower which, though its petals had not yet begun to drop, was already faded and without fragrance" (225).
39. "she seemed to be a person who had never been youthful" (225).
40. "[T]he parents [live] in the lumber room and the children on the first floor. The parents, you see, have no right to live now. Everything is for the children" (678).
41. "Here they understood that a man ought to live for himself, as every civilized person should" (722).
42. "the children should have all the luxuries of life and the parents nothing but work and worry" (722).
43. Levin's prototype was Lev Tolstoy himself. See Tolstaia, 475.
44. "arranged his wife's life in such a way that she did nothing and could do nothing except share her husband's efforts to spend their time as gaily and happily as possible" (335).
45. "The children, Il'ia and Tania, told their secrets: they are in love. How frightening, nasty, and sweet they are" (my translation, OK).
46. As Sof'ia Andreevna indicates, in the letter where he made his declaration of love, Tolstoy wrote: "Мне казалось, что я могу любоваться *на вас*, как

- na demei*" ("I thought that I could feast my eyes upon you as I do upon children." [Tolstaia 489]).
47. "with his face distorted with rage" (280).
 48. "It was that old familiar feeling of discontent with herself which she experienced in her relations with her husband; but she had not been conscious of it before, while now she was clearly and painfully aware of it" (118).
 49. Tolstoy himself gave Sof'ia Andreevna his diaries to read. She found them terrible and remained distressed for a long time at his previous sexual experience.
 50. See the following feminist critics on *Anna Karenina*, and the bibliographies contained in their works: Mandelker, Amy. "Feminist Criticism and *Anna Karenina*." *Tolstoy Studies Journal* III (1990): 98-104 and her *Framing Anna Karenina*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1993; Armstrong, Judith. *The Unsaid Anna Karenina*. NY: St. Martin's Press, 1988; Benson, Ruth Grego. *Women in Tolstoy: The Ideal and the Erotic*. Urbana, Chicago, and London: U of Illinois P, 1973.
 51. "There was a time when she used to dress for her own sake to look beautiful and be admired; later the older she grew, the less and less pleasure she took in dressing up: she saw that she was losing her good looks. But now she was not dressing for her own sake, not to look beautiful, but so that, as a mother of those charming children, she should not spoil the general effect. And looking at herself for the last time in the glass she was satisfied with herself. She looked beautiful. Not as beautiful as she wished to look when going to a ball, but beautiful enough for the purpose she now had in mind" (272).
 52. It is a very complicated question, though. Tolstoy is all too aware of the power of beauty. Despite his obvious attempts to draw the reader's attention to Dolly, it is Anna who interests people more, precisely because of her energy and appeal. Dolly, no matter how virtuous, lacks Anna's vitality and thus seems to be a little boring.
 53. In the above-mentioned opposition, Moscow represents "national peculiarity" and tradition, while Petersburg is the symbol of Western values. This idea originated in eighteenth-century texts, then carrying a positive valence, and has a long history in the works of Pushkin (*The Bronze Horseman*), the Slavophiles, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, the Symbolists, etc.
 54. "In his Petersburg world all people were divided into two absolutely distinct and diametrically opposite sorts. One—the lower sort—vulgar, stupid, and above all, ridiculous people, who believed that a husband should live only with the woman he has married, that young girls should be chaste, women modest, men brave, self-controlled, and steadfast; that one should bring up one's children, earn one's living, and pay one's debts, and all sorts of other nonsense like that" (127).
 55. "reduced him [Stiva] to a state where he began to be upset with his wife's

ill-humor and her constant reproaches, by the health and education of his children, and the petty details of his work at the office; even the fact that he had debts troubled him" (721).

56.

| | <i>Moscow</i> | <i>Petersburg</i> |
|------------------|---|--|
| <i>Lifestyle</i> | <p>"After living in Moscow ... his spirits flagged" "Moscow was a stagnant swamp" "mustiness of Moscow"</p> | <p>"To refresh himself," "he felt alive again," "he felt ten years younger" "A man ought to live for himself"</p> |
| <i>Service</i> | <p>"that constant, hopeless drudgery"</p> | <p>"witty remarks" and "all sorts of amusing tricks" make man's career</p> |
| <i>Children</i> | <p>"Wild ... notions that children should have all luxuries of life and the parents nothing but work and worry"</p> | <p>"Children did not interfere with the life of their fathers" "Children were sent to boarding schools"</p> |

57. "In Moscow he let himself go to such an extent that if he went on living there a little longer, he might for all he knew have really got to the soul-saving stage; but in Petersburg he began to feel [a decent man] again" (723).

58. "And she recalled the talk she had had with a young peasant woman at the inn. In answer to her question whether she had any children, the good-looking woman replied:

'I had a little girl, but God has set me free. I buried her last Lent.'

'And did you grieve very much for her?'

'Why should I? The old man has lots of grandchildren as it is. They're only a lot of trouble. You can't work or do anything. Like a millstone round your neck.'

Dolly thought this answer horrible in spite of the young woman's good looks and her obvious good nature; but now she involuntarily remembered her words. There was certainly some truth in these cynical words" (605).

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