Note on Translation, Transliteration, and Dates

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All translations of the non-English quotes used in this book (as well as the poem that serves as the epigraph), unless otherwise noted, are my own. I have attempted to remain as literal as meaningful English permitted.

In transliterating names of Russian authors and fictional characters, I have used the Library of Congress system, except for those last names whose endings are typically rendered with a y in English-language publications, both male—Tolstoy and Vronsky, for example, instead of Tolstoi and Vronskii—and female—Tolstaya and Kovalevskaya instead of Tolstaia and Kovalevskaiia. In addition, in order to avoid the orthographical awkwardness of the apostrophe in the middle of Tolstoy’s wife’s first name—Sof’ia—I have spelled it Sofya. I have also used English spelling for the English nicknames—popular at the time—of Russian first names, so that Kiti, for example, is Kitty, and Dolli is Dolly.

In the original Quo Vadis Henryk Sienkiewicz rendered the ancient Roman names in Polish; thus, Petronius is Petroniusz, Vinicius Winicjusz, and so on. I have used the Latin spelling for easier readability in English, except for when it does not make a difference, mainly with Ligia, whom English translators tend to spell Lygia.

The prerevolutionary calendar in Russia was Julian or Old Style, and its dates remain as such in the official collected works of Tolstoy and in his secretary Gusev’s Annals of the Life and Work of Tolstoy. I have not changed them to Gregorian dates in my work, which means that they are 12 days (and from February 17, 1900, 13 days) behind the Gregorian calendar.

Finally, most novels discussed in the following pages were, as was typical in the nineteenth century, serialized in literary journals before becoming books, and I have strived to be clear about which of the two modes I refer to when listing their publication dates. When no explanation is given, the year listed refers to the book.
Adulterous Nations