BIOGRAPHY OF IRVAN TURGENEV

Ivan Turgenev was born in Oryol (1818-1883), in the Ukraine region of Russia, into a wealthy family. His childhood was lonely. Especially he was afraid of his strict mother, who beat him constantly. He studied at St. Petersburg (1834-1837), Berlin Universities (1838-1841), and completed his master’s exam in Petersburg. At the age of 19 Ivan Turgenev, traveled to Germany. He was on a steamer when it caught fire and rumors spread in Russia that he had acted cowardly. This revealing experience, which followed the author throughout his life, formed later the basis for his story A Fire at Sea. In 1841 He started his career at the Russian civil service. For a short time, he worked for the Ministry of Interior (1843-1845). After the success of two of his story-poems, he devoted himself to literature, country pursuit, and travel. The rest of his life, he had a relationship with the opera singer Pulina Garcia Viardot, living near her or at times with her and her husband. In 1845-1846 and 1847-1850 he traveled to France with them. Following the thought of the influential critic Vissarison Belinsky, who defended sociological realism in literature, Turgenev abandoned Romantic idealism for a more realistic style. During the period of 1853-1862 he wrote some of his finest stories and novellas and the first four of his six novels: "Rudin" (1856), "Dvorianstvo Gneds" (1859), "Nakanune" (1860), "Clara Militch" (1897), "Phantoms" (1897), "Spirit" (1897) and "Ottsy i Deti" (1862). In these works central themes were the beauty of early love, failure to reach one’s dreams, and frustrated love, which partly reflected the author’s lifelong passion for Pauline. Another woman who deeply influenced Turgenev was his mother.