



CONFLICT OF LOVE AND DUTY IN LEO TOLSTOY'S NOVEL "ANNA KARENINA"

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Abstract

Leo Tolstoy's novel "Anna Karenina" is the story of a silent apocalypse in the heart of a woman. Anna Karenina is torn between her duty to her husband, her son and her lover, and her heart's passion, leading to a tragic end. The hypocritical morality of the society excludes him from society, and the harmonious family model of Levin and Kitty represents the positive ideal of the author. The novel remains relevant today in the issues of female choice, motherhood and freedom. In this article, this conflict of love and duty is studied on the basis of comparative, psychological and sociological methods of analysis.

Keywords: Anna Karenina, love and duty, Tolstoy, moral conflict, hypocrisy of society, Vronsky, Levin.

Introduction

Leo Tolstoy's novel "Anna Karenina" is considered the pinnacle of the realist tradition of world literature. F.M. Dostoevsky called this work "a perfect work of art", V. Nabokov recognized Tolstoy as "the greatest writer of Russian prose". The novel covers not only the wide-ranging landscape of the Russian aristocracy



of the 19th century, but also the urgent moral problems for all humanity - love, marriage, betrayal, forgiveness, duty and freedom.

The work begins with the famous sentence “All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.” These words refer to the main idea of the novel: unhappiness in the family is new and unique every time. The fate of Anna Karenina is such a unique tragedy.

Literature Review

Until today, the image of Anna Karenina has attracted the attention of many researchers. Early Russian critics N. Strakhov and D. Pisarev interpreted the work as a “mirror of social disease”. Later, V. Rozanov and D. Merezhkovski interpreted Anna as a symbol of “religious and moral crisis”. The famous theorist of the 20th century M. Bakhtin emphasized the “polyphonic” nature of the novel and showed that the voice of the author has equal rights with the voice of the characters. The modern American researcher G. Morson explains Anna’s tragedy as an “inevitable conflict between freedom and responsibility.”

In Uzbek literary studies, the works devoted to Tolstoy’s work mainly consist of general reviews. The purpose of our choosing this topic is that the choice between love and duty comes sooner or later in everyone's life. In this work, the example of Anna shows how difficult and tragic this choice can be. Even today, women often have to choose between “maternal duty” and “personal happiness”. Therefore, the tragedy of Anna Karenina is relevant for our contemporaries.

In the research on the topic carried out to date, the following three shortcomings are clearly visible:

1. Most works focus only on Anna’s psychological portrait, but the difference between two forms of duty - duty to husband and duty to mother - is not sufficiently analyzed.
2. The novel’s second plot line (Levin-Kitty) is often considered only as a parallel story, but its contrast with Anna’s conflicting model as a harmonious model of love and duty has not been analyzed in depth.
3. The uniqueness of the concept of “duty” in Tolstoy’s philosophy - the combination of Christian forgiveness, obedience and personal responsibility - is often overlooked.



Objectives and Duties

It is to reveal the artistic, psychological and socio-philosophical mechanisms of the conflict between love and duty on the example of the novel Anna Karenina.

Duties:

Analyzing how duty is manifested in Anna's relationship between Karenin, Vronsky and her son Seryozha;

Identify the difference between Tolstoy's "false duty" (social decency) and "true duty" (conscience and compassion);

Reconstructing the author's positive ideal by comparing Levin and Kitty's family model with Anna's;

To justify the moral relevance of the novel for the modern reader.

Materials and Methods

The complete edition of Tolstoy's works in Russian was selected as the main material [1]. Also, Tolstoy's diaries and his "Confession" [11; p. 83.] is also included in the analysis. The works of M. Bakhtin, G. Morson, B. Heldt [2, 3, 4], as well as the works of Uzbek scientists I. Gafurov and B. Kasimov [7, 8] were used as scientific sources.

The article uses a comparative-typological method - by comparing the images of Anna and Levin;

Psychological analysis – to understand Anna's inner experiences, feelings of guilt and mental state;

A sociological approach to the study of gender roles and hypocrisy in 19th century Russian aristocratic society.

Results

Anna lived with her husband Alexei Alexandrovich Karenin for 8 years. Karenin is a statesman, cold, emotionless, but has a high reputation in society. Their marriage is based on social convenience and convention rather than love. Anna does not consider this marriage a "sin", but she lives in it "like a living corpse".

In the first part of the novel, Anna's words to her brother Stiva Oblonsky are noteworthy: *"I do not feel guilty. Should I feel guilty? He (Karenin) respects me even if he does not love me. And I value this respect."* [1; pp. 26-27] Here Anna



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understands duty as a social agreement rather than an emotional obligation. When the relationship with Vronsky begins, Anna's duty to her husband becomes two-fold: on the one hand, the feeling of guilt for her betrayal, on the other hand, the coldness of her husband and her desire to escape from her suffocating marriage. Karenin threatens to divorce her and take away her son. This threat becomes the most painful point for Anna. Anna loves her son Seryozha very much. The first scenes of the novel show him playing with Seryozha. After living with Vronsky, Anna loses the right to see Seryozha. She goes to her husband and asks permission to see their son - this is one of the most moving episodes in the novel.

Anna is torn between her love for Seryozha and her passion for Vronsky. If he chooses one, he loses the other. Motherhood torments her because she feels that she abandoned her son by her decision. Tolstoy describes this struggle very clearly in Anna's internal monologues: *"I am dead, I am dead! It is worse than dead. I am not dead yet, I cannot say that it is over; on the contrary, I feel that it is not over. I am like a taut wire that will break one day"* [1; pp 634-636.].

After living with Vronsky, Anna feels obliged to him. However, Vronsky slowly begins to cool off from her, returns to worldly life, gets tired of being with a woman all the time. And Anna, in the pain of jealousy and insecurity, tries to keep Vronsky attached to her. These three forms of duty are contradictory. When Anna does one of them, she breaks the other. His tragedy was that he could not reconcile his duties.

The most important social discovery of the novel is that the Russian aristocratic society of the 19th century distinguishes "duty" on the basis of gender. When a man (for example, Stiva Oblonsky or Vronsky himself) commits treason, there are no serious sanctions against him. When a woman (Anna) commits adultery, she is completely excluded from society. This is clearly shown by the theater episode in the third part. Anna comes to the theater with Vronsky, but all her acquaintances there turn away from her. No one but Countess Myagkaya greets him. Anna feels "alive in the grave". Tolstoy sharply criticizes this hypocrisy. Society condemns Anna as "immoral", but in that very society there are many beaten servants, corrupt officials, and hypocritical ladies. So, society's concept of "duty" is actually a tool of social control, not real morality.



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The second plot line of the novel - Konstantin Levin and Kitty Shcherbatskaya - is given as a complete antithesis to Anna's tragic path. Levin is a landowner who escaped from the city and lives in the countryside, works with farmers, and loves nature. He understands duty as the voice of inner conscience; he is not interested in external conventions. He intended to marry Kitty, but at first, he refused (Kitty loved Vronsky. - T.M.). Later, when Vronsky falls in love with Anna, Kitty comes to love Levin. Their marriage is a harmonious example of love, mutual respect and duty. Levin helps his wife with housework, participates in raising children, and Kitty is his spiritual support. They do not have jealousy and mistrust like Anna.

Discussion

The results show that the tragedy of Anna Karenina was caused not by a single but by a combination of several conflicts:

1. Anna chose her love, but society did not give her the right to make this choice;
2. Anna loved both Seryozha and Vronsky, but she could not hold both at once;
3. Tolstoy rejects the hypocritical "morality" of society, but he cannot completely exonerate Anna either, because Anna does not try to avoid the consequences of her choices;

The issues of Anna Karenina are still relevant today. Many women still have to choose between "being a mother or living their life". The "moral judgment" of people on social media reproduces Anna's exclusion from society in a new way. That is why this novel is rediscovered for each new generation.

The main idea of Tolstoy's Christian morality is forgiveness and self-blame. Karenin wants to forgive Anna, but this forgiveness is cold and formal. Anna herself admits her guilt, but is unable to apologize. Levin admits his shortcomings and learns to forgive others. True duty for Tolstoy is responsibility before God (epigraph: "Avenging me is mine, I will pay" - T.M.). That is, a person should not judge others. Therefore, the novel does not judge Anna, but shows her suffering.

Conclusion

Leo Tolstoy's novel "Anna Karenina" is one of the most profound artistic studies of the conflict between love and duty. Anna was condemned by society for her



passion, separated from her son and eventually committed suicide. His tragedy is that he followed the law of his heart, but this law collided with the law of the world. Tolstoy does not judge Anna, but feels sorry for her. At the same time, he offers an alternative model in the case of Levin and Kitty, in which love and duty can be combined - based on work, nature, family loyalty and inner conscience. The novel has not lost its relevance today. Every person, whether a woman or a man, faces such a question in his life: do I have the right to break the rules of society for my own happiness? What if this happiness causes pain to others? Anna Karenina does not give ready answers to these questions, but teaches them to ask.

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