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A Mystery in Anna Karenina's Love—an Existential Analysis Approach

Abstract

The article aims to interpret Anna Karenina's love from the perspective of generally understood existential philosophy. The article's leitmotif is related to the sources of Anna's unhappiness within the role of a mistress. Her affection appears to be a puzzle, as the unhappy trait of her feeling is impossible to be explained with the mere help of a cliché: the lovers yearn to be together, but they are hampered by external circumstances. The unhappiness in Anna's love results from the internal, not external, reasons. Anna fears that she may lose the devotion of her Beloved, and that very fear shows itself as no less than an obscured existential anxiety. However much effort Anna makes to veil the anxiety felt with the love towards Count Vronsky, she cannot succeed, for she fails to realize that both phenomena, the love to Vronsky and the anxiety, are entangled in the question „who am I?” concerning the issue of personal identity. Anna does not understand that as long as she does not face the question, it will be difficult for her to release her mind from the distractive experience of the continual recurrence of the anxiety in the background of her love towards Vronsky.

Keywords: Anna Karenina, love, mystery, unhappiness, fear, anxiety, personal identity.