

Two Heroines – One Destiny: a Comparative Analysis of the Images of Anna Karenina and Emma Bovary

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Abstract. *This article examines the comparative analysis of the images of Anna Karenina and Emma Bovary. The main goal is to study and identify the similarities and differences of the characters and plots in both works.*

Key words: *Anna Karenina, Emma Bovary, L.N. Tolstoy.*

In the works of G. Flaubert and L. Tolstoy, French and Russian realism reach their peaks and reveal their national characteristics in their most manifest form. Russian realists used the experience of advanced European states and took into account the understanding of this experience by Western European realists, primarily French ones. Therefore, the realistic achievements of Russian literature contain in a transformed form many of the discoveries of O. de Balzac, G. Flaubert, E. Zola in the field of understanding the social mechanism of bourgeois society, bourgeois morals and psychology. But the Russian realists radically diverged from the French in their philosophical and historical understanding of the socio-psychological issues of modern society. The full depth of this divergence is revealed in the complex ideological and artistic relationship that in many ways brings together, but to an even greater extent separates, the novels *Madame Bovary* and *Anna Karenina*.

These works have many similar plots, equal in their artistic significance, written at the time of their authors' creative maturity and occupying the same place in the history of their literatures. The images of the main characters - Emma Bovary and Anna Karenina - reveal psychological, national, social and everyday differences. But, at the same time, the tragedy of the novels by L. Tolstoy and G. Flaubert is a unifying factor for both works. The love story of *Madame Bovary*, just like that of Anna Karenina, carries a huge ideological load. As a consequence, the tragedy of human life is revealed, the fatal discrepancy between its base reality and the high aspirations of the human spirit. But this is illuminated by G. Flaubert and L. Tolstoy from opposing not only philosophical but also social positions.

Two world-famous heroines of novels - Emma Bovary and Anna Karenina.

Two great writers - Leo Tolstoy and Gustav Flaubert, Tolstoy was 49, and Flaubert was 36 years old, when their main novels were published, which took 4 and 5 years to create, respectively. Flaubert's novel immediately caused a scandal and became the cause of a lawsuit.

The names of the main characters, Anna Karenina and Madame Bovary, gave the titles to the novels themselves. In both cases, Bovary and Karenina, the women bear the surnames of their husbands. It is easy to compare their fates - women who cheated on their husbands and committed suicide, as well as their names - Emma and Anna.

The well-known outstanding novel "Anna Karenina", written by Leo Tolstoy in 1873, is the most striking example of classicism. The plot of the novel is based on the tragic love of Anna Karenina to the officer Vronsky, while the girl was married to Alexei Karenin and had a son.

The novel "Madame Bovary" by Gustave Flaubert was first published in 1856. The work was written in the style of realism. Despite the banality of the plot, the basis of the novel is in the details and style of presentation of the written, because Flaubert always tried to bring his works to some kind of ideal, choosing the right words.

Both novels were subject to discussion. Critics in most cases responded negatively, citing

- "scandalous emptiness of content" and
- moral insult

The difference in the time of writing of the novels is relatively small - only 17 years.

Similarities

- Anna Karenina and Emma Bovary are two young heroines of novels by completely different writers. The girls are united by the fact that at the beginning of their works they appear before the reader in their pure form, benevolent and bright.
- There are common features in their character - strength and love of freedom.
- Both heroines are attractive and bright, but guilty and pathetic.
- Their husbands tried their best to save the marriage, forgave their wives more than once, which only caused even greater hatred from the heroines towards their spouses.

Both girls committed suicide.

- However, in Gustave Flaubert's novel, Emma's death is described more colorfully and in more detail, as this is one of the writer's features.
- Anna and Emma wanted to experience new emotions, which they lacked in their marriage. Because of the impossibility of satisfying their desires, they were bored and disgusted with their husbands. The real life of the heroines is not at all like what they dream of. Their family life is too far from ideal. In pursuit of passion and new sensations, the girls forget about their maternal duty, spend little time with their children, although they sincerely love them.
- Unfortunately, the heroines' life did not work out not only in marriage, but also in what they were striving for, that is, in their relationships with their lovers, everything turned out tragic.

Differences

The difference between these two girls is that Emma was married to a local doctor, who did not have a distinguished social status in his district. The family did not have a luxurious estate or significant connections. Due to this, Emma was not popular in her place of residence.

In contrast to her is Anna. The girl occupies a high position in society thanks to her husband. It is also worth noting that Madame Bovary has the ability to be hypocritical, while Anna lacks this skill.

Despite the fact that the heroines sincerely valued and loved their children, Emma spent a minimal amount of time with her daughter, giving her to a nanny to raise, unlike Anna. After Anna left the family home, she deeply missed her son Sergei. She was tormented by conflicting feelings. Emma rarely remembered her little daughter Berta, which speaks of her selfishness. And the fact that Emma committed suicide also symbolizes selfishness.

Spouses

- Emma Bovary openly showed her hostility and disgust towards her husband, without showing much interest in his life.

- Anna behaved more reservedly. She respected her husband, and yet she was tormented by painful doubts, and her conscience called for order when the girl began to distance herself from her husband, dating Alexei Vronsky.

Thus, Emma Bovary and Anna Karenina are heroines of different literary worlds, but united by a common tragedy. Their desire for love, freedom and emotional fulfillment leads not to liberation, but to death, becoming a symbol of the conflict between the inner world of man and the harsh social reality.

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