

Types of antique dream in Anna Karenina

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Abstract

The article deals with the analysis of dreams as a literary device in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*. Since antique literature, a dream as a literary device has passed its way of metamorphoses and has undergone different stages of development. There are many cases in post- antique literature that show some resemblance with the antique dream patterns. Among them is Lev Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, where some parallels of antique literary dream can be drawn, such as: a wish fulfillment dream, an allegory dream, a prophecy dream, a dream which is simultaneously dreamt by two different characters of the novel and has one and the same content. Besides, according to the article, the function of the dreams has also changed and it became oriented on expressing the main character's inner world and psychology.

Keywords: antique dream, study of dream, types of dream

Introduction

Dream is an unusual combination of common experiences. There is something mysterious in a dream, which, from time immemorial, bears a great impression on people and awakes curiosity. Every aspect connected to the study of dreams has always been and will always be a subject of study. There are books still written about the explanation of dreams, their meaning, concept and phenomenon. Among them is very actual the so-called study of a literary dream. Analysis of literary works in antique literature has shown that all fundamental (basic) genres applied dream and it was worked up according to genre specifications. In the epic poetry, literary dream is one of the defining elements of epic system, adequate to the genre and the author (Homer, Virgil, Ovid and Rhodes). Dream as a literary device was boldly expressed in Greek drama: tragedy and comedy (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Seneca, and Aristophanes); antique prose suggested different stages of literary dream metamorphoses corresponding to the social context of different epochs (historians, geographers, philosophers, antique novel).

Dream as a Literary Device

Since antique literature, a dream as a literary device has passed its way of metamorphoses and has undergone different stages of development. The Medieval literature is known by prophetic symbolic dreams. In the sixteenth century literary dreams were also prophetic, but with a sense of guilt. In the seventeenth century and in the epoch of Enlightenment dream as a literary device was rather declined, though it showed

its power in the nineteenth century, where the function of the dream was not only foreseeing the future, but it played an important role on psychological level. Since nineteenth century, in literature dream became more and more oriented on expressing main character's psychology and inner world, it did not play any role in the development of the plot any more (it should be noted that, the main characteristic of literary dream in antique literature was to develop the action of the plot) and its content became rather complex than before.

Dream as a literary device was also used in the works of Russian writers. Some parallels of antique literary dream can be found in Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*. There are three dreams represented in the novel which somehow show their resemblance to the types of dreams in the works of Greek and Roman writers. For example:

1) A dream of Stepan Arkadyevitch Oblonsky — Stiva in *Anna Karenina* - A dream of Sossia in *The Clouds* by Aristophanes.

2) A dream of Anna Karenina - A dream of Penelope in Homer's *Iliad* and a dream of *Daphnis* and *Chloe* in *Daphnis and Chloe* by Longus.

3) A dream of Anna Karenina - A dream of Dryas and Lamon in *Daphnis and Chloe* by Longus.

The first dream which we meet in Lev Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* is a dream of one of the main characters Stepan Arkadyevitch Oblonsky — Stiva. He recollects the dream in the following way: "Alabin was giving a dinner at Darmstadt; no, not at Darmstadt, but it was something American. Yes, but that Darmstadt was in America. Yes, Alabin was giving a dinner on glass tables, yes, and the tables sang '// mio Tesoro' /

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no, not '// mio tesoro,' but something better; and some little water-bottles, they were women! "Said he, continuing his recollections (Tolstoy translated by Dole, 1914, p. 34-40).

The dream of Stiva is allegorical. The main reason the dream within the story is not to continue the development of the plot of the novel. It does not have any influence over it, but it is rather interesting from another viewpoint: it is as joyful and full of movement as the character himself (singing and dancing tables, glasses and bottles - a kind of allegory which shows the real character of Stiva). The same happens with Stepan Arkadyevitch, he is a bohemian and leads the same life - full of adventure, women and amusement. Later, as we get to know Stepan Arkadyevitch closer and closer, we find out that the dream is a reflection of his soul and inner world. He really tries to be an attentive father and husband, but he never keeps in his mind that he has a wife and children. He has bachelor tastes, and it is in accordance with them that he shapes his life.

The same happens to the main character in *The Clouds* by Aristophanes. With the help of dream Aristophanes tries to mark a frivolous and thoughtless nature of Strepsiade, who (like Stepan Arkadyevitch) even in the dream does not forget about entertainment and relaxation. He dreams only about horses and pleasure of life and does not care about his debts (Aristophanes translated by Rogers, 1924, p.15-20). Stepan and Strepsiade are alike in some way - both characters see allegorical dreams, both think and do the same things; both dreams show the characters' aspirations. The second dream in the novel is that of Anna Karenina. According to the classification of antique dream suggested by Oppenheim (Oppenheim, 1956, p. 17-18) Anna's dream can be regarded as a wish fulfillment dream.

Indeed, in dreams, when Anna had no control over her thoughts, her position presented itself to her in all its hideous nakedness and one dream haunted her almost every night: "She dreamed that both were her husbands at once, that both were lavishing caresses on her. Alexey Alexandrovitch was weeping, kissing her hands, and saying, "How happy we are now!" And Alexey Vronsky was there too, and he too was her husband. And she was marveling that it had once seemed impossible to her, was explaining to them, laughing, that this was ever so much simpler, and that now both of them were happy and contented. But this dream weighed on her like a nightmare, and she awoke from it in terror". The dream expresses Anna's inner world, her thoughts, emotions and experiences. The dream shows that subconsciously, somewhere in her heart Anna is satisfied that she has two husbands. In the company of two men (dream husbands) - Alexey Vronsky and Alexey Alexandrovitch she feels happy and free. In the dream Anna realizes that there is something unusual in this whole affair, but she is pleased by the fact and even does not care that her faith (Christianity) is against it. But, being awoken, she realizes there is evil in her dream that is why she is

troubled and terrified. The same happens in Anna's real life. She leaves town and goes abroad with Vronsky so that she is not divorced with Aleksey Alexandrovitch - though Anna has her own firm arguments for it.

What connection does Anna's dream have with the dream of Penelope and Daphnis and Chloe? The resemblance is only in the type - It is a wish fulfillment dream where all the characters dream of what they can never dream in reality. In the dreams their subconscious is revealed, their wishes satisfied, they are happy at least for several minutes.

a) (Penelope dreams that her beloved husband returned home and they were again happy together (Homer translated by Jackson, 2008, p. 57-60).

b) Daphnis and Chloe dream their amorous dreams (Longus translated by Reeve, 1982, p. .2,10).

The most important thing concerning the dream in literature is that all the dreams express the characters' hidden wishes and experiences. In dreams they totally reveal their inner world and think of those facts or do those things which they would have never done in their real lives. In the dreams, the characters are totally free, free of their duty, free of everything.

The third dream is a prophecy dream of one and the same content which Anna and Vronsky simultaneously see. The same happens with Dryas and Lammon (Longus translated by Reeve, 1982), who see the same type (prophecy) dream simultaneously. The difference between those two dreams is in their nature - the first one is positive in meaning and the second one bears a bad omen- the dream makes a great impression over Vronsky, he is terrified and when he wakes up he is totally trembling with terror. He asks himself the following questions: "What was it? What? What was the dreadful thing I dreamed? ... I think a little dirty man with a disheveled beard was stooping down doing something, and all of a sudden he began saying some strange words in French. Yes, there was nothing else in the dream" (Tolstoy translated by Dole, 1914, p. 18-22). Vronsky vividly recalled the peasant again and those incomprehensible French words the peasant had uttered, subconsciously he felt that there was some ill prophecy in the dream and a chill of horror ran down his spine.

The same thing happens with Anna. She tells the dream to Vronsky: "I dreamed that I ran into my bedroom that I had to get something there and in the bedroom, in the corner, stood something. And that something turned round, and I saw it was a peasant with a disheveled beard, little, and dreadful looking. I wanted to run away, but he bent down over a sack, and was fumbling there with his hands. He was fumbling and kept talking quickly, quickly in French, you know: *Il faut le battre, le fer, le brayer, le petrir....* And in my horror I tried to wake up, and woke up...but woke up in the dream. And I began asking myself what it meant. And Korney said to me: 'In childbirth you'll die, ma'am, you'll die....' And I woke up'(Tolstoy translated by Dole, 1914, p. 184-194).

Anna is so terrified by the dream that she is quite

sure soon all will be over, and they shall all, all be at peace, and suffer no more. While speaking with Vronsky (and of course after that) she knew for certain that she would die and release herself and Vronsky. The reason of Anna's behavior and thoughts were mostly conditioned by her dream. We can say that the use of dream as a literary device is a kind of prophecy that foreshadows Anna's eventual death, the death, which may come not as a punishment but as the only option for the desperate woman. Nabokov concludes that just before her suicide Anna finally recognizes that, what the horrible man is doing over the iron is what her sinful life has done to her soul (Nabokov, 1981, p. 175). Thus, we can conclude that Anna's dream is an allegory type of dream, which embodies Anna's sinful life. The vision of dream never leaves her mind and will again remind itself, when in the station she meets a person from the dream (a peasant who resembles to her dream figure). From that very moment Anna decides to commit a suicide. The dream directly or indirectly made an influence over Anna. Psychologically it had its influence over the major character. From the very beginning she was subconsciously sure that sooner or later she would die and the dream only helped her in committing a suicide.

Conclusion

Unlike the antique writers, the dreams in Tolstoy's novel do not come from Gods, but they are a representation of the characters' psychology and subconsciousness. Since antique times, dream as a literary device represented itself on different levels. In later literature it continues to fulfill the function of antique dream (a wish fulfillment dream, a character interpretation dream, a message from God dream, etc.). When the dream expresses the subconscious of the characters, it is often based on theoretical research of Freud, Jung and others. The function and the ways of interpreting of such dreams vary on different levels.

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