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Intermedial Performance

Staging Anna Karenina in Tolstoy's Novel and Wright's Film

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First and foremost, I want to dedicate this thesis to my parents, Elena and Sergey, who have passionately supported me for more than twenty-four years and who are absolute role models for me. I also want to dedicate this work to Andreas, the most loving and caring fiancé ever, and my grandfather, Anatoly, who is a constant inspiration to me.

Abstract

In the following thesis *Anna Karenina*, the novel by Lev Tolstoy and the literary film adaptation by Joe Wright, are discussed. The theatricalization of the upper class society in the novel was developed in the film narrative, and became a key for the analyses. The diegetic discourse of Wright's new film appeared as an inspiration to re-inverstigate Anna's character and her microcosm. As a result, my interpretation of Anna, different from the 'traditional' readings, is offered. I state that Anna is playing the role of a 'diva' within an artificial and staged society. The intermedial approach provided in this thesis involves visual, verbal and musical representations in the literary adaptation, which defines the relevancy of this thesis in both literary and film studies fields.

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1. Introduction

Anna Karenina is one of the few female characters in Russian literature of the Golden Age[1] that made their way to the literary Olympus and have won international acclaim along with Eugene Onegin, Grigoriy Pechorin, Pavel Chichikov, Rodion Raskolnikov and some other famous Russian characters.

Anna Karenina is the second novel created by Lev Tolstoy and was written between 1873 and 1877[2]. It is the tragic story of the adultery by a married woman of high society, Anna Karenina, and the officer Alexey Vronsky, which takes place while other characters, Kitty Shcherbatsky and Konstantin Levin, build their 'happily-ever-after' story. The novel about the life in imperial Russia, all-consuming passion, relationships and, of course, 'family idea' is a paradigmatic textbook compulsively studied in Russian schools and universities as a masterpiece of a national literature.

Tolstoy's novel has not been left in the historical records after it was created. With the cinema production gaining momentum, several film directors presented to the public their reading of the famous work. In total, there have been more than twenty-five film adaptations devoted to Anna Karenina's life[3]. The first one appeared back in 1911 in France directed by Maurice André Maître. Since then, *Anna Karenina* was adapted in several different countries and the title heroine was impersonated by the some of the world's most popular actresses, such as Greta Garbo[4], Vivien Leigh[5], Sophie Marceau[6] and Keira Knightley[7]. The Russian versions were directed by Alexander Zarkhi in 1967 (starring Tatiana Samoilova as Anna) and the 2008 version by Sergey Soloviev (starring Tatiana Drubich as Anna).

The majority of the above-mentioned adaptations are faithful to the source text. For me as a viewer, no matter how good these films are, they are plagiarisms, or even visual transliterations, of the well-known story. In Wagner's hierarchy of film adaptations, they belong to the transposition category, "in which a novel is given

[1] XIX century is commonly referred to as the Golden Age of Russian literature.
[2] He himself referred to Anna Karenina as a first novel in his literary career, while in fact it was War and Piece that was the first one. See R.F. Christian, *Tolstoy: An Introduction* (Cambridge 1969), p. 166.
[3] IMDB
[4] Anna Karenina (1935), US version, directed by Clarence Brown (IMDB)
[5] Anna Karenina (1948), UK version, directed by Julien Duvivier (IMDB)
[6] Anna Karenina (1997), US version, directed by Bernard Rose (IMDB)
[7] Anna Karenina (2012), UK version, directed by Joe Wright (IMDB)

directly on the screen with a minimum of apparent interference."[8] These films represent the 'traditional'[9] view on Anna's story, where Anna is a victim either of her husband, who is openly exposed to ridicule, or of vicious and judgmental society (or both), while I was longing for a slightly different vision with a variety of signs to decode and authorial hints to search for. Certainly, amongst the variety of adaptations generated by Tolstoy novels, there were attempts of alternative approaches to *Anna Karenina*. However, the directors addressed the interpretational component of adaptation only on the level of the details, and therefore brought nothing 'new' to the story as a whole. Like, for example, the version made by Sergey Soloviev, in which Anna's drug predilection is shown in a renewed perspective. This change of the detail still does not make the film stand out from all the other translations.

When the trailer for Joe Wright's new adaptation of Anna Karenina appeared, it immediately caught my attention, as according to it the film promised to be distinctive, eccentric and fresh. And, indeed, this version met my expectations. Preserving the so-called 'spirit of the novel'[10], Wright and his cinematic team created a diegetic discourse that previous Anna Karenina adaptations have not offered before. They relocated the setting from the Russian scenery into a theater, transforming the production into a sort of a performance, where the famous aphorism "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players"[11] is embodied. Such a novelty not only made a fuss in the Russian Internet community, it also confused the film critics' society that split down the middle on the issue[12]. Some, like Dmitry Bikov, were accusing Wright in mocking Russian culture:

> For Stoppard, Wright and many more representatives of British 'intelligentsia', Tolstoy's novel has become an epitome of a cliché of Russian culture, in other words of everything distasteful and ridiculous in local reality.[13]

[8] G. Wagner, *The Novel and the Cinema,* in B. McFarlane, *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation* (Oxford 1996), p. 10.
[9] Traditional view on Anna Karenina will be discussed in Chapter 3 (3.1).
[10] "The spirit of a verbal or a filmic text is a function of both its discourse (the mannerin which the narrator communicates to the reader or viewer) and its narrativity (the process through which the reader/viewer constructs the meaning of the text". See Orr in K. Elliot, "Literary Film Adaptation and the Form/Content Dilemma", in *Narrative Across Media*, Ed. Marie-Laure Ryan (Lincoln and London 2004), p. 223.
[11] Originally the phrase from William Shakespeare's comedy *As you like it*.
[12] Anna Karenina (2012) Film Reviews, Selection of the Related Articles (Kinopoisk)
[13] Bikov, Dmitry, "In the Genre of Shit" ("В жанре кала») (Openspace 9.01.2013).

While others, on the contrary, defended the singularity of design and emphasized the post-modern nature of the interpretation, like Anton Dolin in his article "Can it be her…":

> Realizing that it is impossible to show realistically the 'imperial Russia of 1874', the authors *(Wright and Stoppard)* proposed the audience to play a game. 'Everything here is not real – we *(the authors)* are the first to admit it. But we can bet that by the end of the film you'll forget about it and believe us?[14]

The debate around the latest Anna Karenina adaptation has not died even now, more than half a year after the world premiere. As for me, this film became an inspiration for a 'reinvestigation' of Anna's character, and the world she lives in, in the intermedial perspective. The empirical base of this study is presented by two Anna Karenina 'texts'[15], which I focus on: the novel written by Leo Tolstoy and the film directed by Joe Wright. However, I do not consider the juxtaposition of Anna, Tolstoy's character and Anna, Wright's character – I suggest seeing her in an intertextual pragmatics. The combination of literary and film standpoints will help me to understand Anna verbally and visually – and thus to make the analyses stronger.

The first reason that caused my interest in approaching *Anna* Karenina with 'intermedial glasses' on is the concept of theatricalization[16] of Russian high society stressed in the film adaptation. Wright presents the audience a new reading of Tolstoy's novel. He brings the action onto the theatre stage in order to show how unnatural and contrived the life of the representatives of the aristocracy appear to the onlookers. The representatives of upper class created a fictitious world where each and every one of them plays the assorted role that he or she chooses. This view of Russian aristocratic world as artificial is concordant with the worldview of Tolstoy himself. "A keen sense of contempt and hatred for 'the society', the denial of this callous and defiles world <...> were one of the basic and recurring themes of his (Tolstoy's) work"[17], states Leusheva. Using histrionics, Wright visually projects the

[14] Dolin, Anton, "Can it be her…" ("Ужель там самая") (Openspace, 10.01.2013).
[15] By 'text' I mean a semiotic text.
[16] By theatricalization I mean "the process of making theatrical; dramatization", as it is stated in the OED (*Oxford English Dictionary).*
[17] My translation. Original quote: "Острое чувство презрения и ненависти к «свету», отрицание этого бездушного и растленного мира … - это одна из основных и постоянных тем его многолетнего творческого труда". See S.I. Leusheva, "Lermontov I Tolstoy", in Tvorchestvo M.U. Lermontova: 150 let so dnia rozhdenia, 1814—1964 (Moscow 1964), p. 408.

novelistic diegesis and Tolstoy's worldview onto theatrical realia, which is thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2 of the thesis.

The second reason for the emergence of this study is a new perspective on Anna's character presented in the given adaptation. According to the traditional view on *Anna Karenina* that dominates teachings of the novel in Russian schools and universities Anna is a victim of the society – the oppressor. Christian mentions this tendency in his introduction to Tolstoy written in 1969: "It is fashionable nowadays to transfer the blame from Anna to society, and to attribute her tragedy to outmoded social conventions and antiquated divorce laws."[18] Wright challenged this traditional view making Anna an essential part of society's performance. In the modern version, Anna Karenina is no more depicted as a passive female suffering from the injustice of the world. On the contrary, she plays an active role of an egoistic female, potentially a drama queen, who is sure that the world should spin around her[19] - this presentation of Anna I am concerned with in the third and the fourth chapters of my research.

These two reasons became a foundation for my theses. I follow Wright in my attempt to examine the 'new' Anna Karenina - the character and her world from a perspective different from the 'majority reading'[20]. I will ignore the traditional Russian scholarly view on Anna as "a contemplative victim swallowed up by the elements"[21]; in my research I will follow such scholars as G.S. Morson and A. Mandelker and will develop their ideas concerning *Anna Karenina*. I claim that Tolstoy, being a realist, could not comminate the entire upper class leaving Anna, the classical representative of this group, aside. She is guilty on the same basis as Stiva, Betsy and many others who live in the world of illusions. I see the theatricalization of the film narrative as a key for my analyses, in which I will present the cases of theatricalization provided by Tolstoy in the novel and developed by Wright in the film. My goal is to show Anna focalized by the implied author, narrator, other characters and herself and, therefore, to prove the inconsistency and artificiality of her microcosm. It is my intermedial approach that supports the 'untraditional' perspective on Anna Karenina and involves visual, verbal and musical representations in the

[18] R.F. Christian, *Tolstoy: An Introduction* (Cambridge 1969) p. 174.
[19] In this study I will suggest a new categorization for such characters, which I will call 'diva'.
[20] I am adopting Morson's view on the 'majority reading' of Anna Karenina: "her tragedy results from the impossibility of transcending a culture of lies". See G.S. Morson, *Anna Karenina in Our Time* (Yale University Press 2007), p. 57.
[21] Dmitry Merezhkovsky in R.F. Christian, *Tolstoy: An Introduction* (Cambridge 1969), p. 204.

theatre diegesis created in the film, that defines the relevancy of this theses in both literary and film studies fields.

1.1. Previous studies

There is a vast amount of researches devoted to *Anna Karenina*, ranging from classical literary analyses by Vladimir Nabokov made during his lectures at Cornell University to the intertextual feminist approach conducted by Amy Mandelker. Different authors examine Anna Karenina from literary, cinematic, psychological, cultural, intertextual, anthropological and other perspectives. The interdisciplinary researches were made on the basis of adaptation produced before 2012. My analyses is constructed within the intermedial field and limited by Tolstoy's novel and Wright's film.

My 'anchor' reference is G.S. Morson and his two works – *Narrative and Freedom*[22] and *Anna Karenina in our Times*. Morson proposes a new reading of the novel when he openly states that Anna is not a fated woman – she only sees herself as one. He accuses Anna of being false and narcissistic, of placing herself in the center of all stories and criticizes her inability to take responsibility for her actions[23]. His hypothesis is that Anna's 'problem' is her fatalism – her belief in omens, dreams and that everything is predetermined. In his book *Anna Karenina in Our Time*, Morson writes:

> Tolstoy allows us to identify with the heroine, … a foredoomed tragic heroine. But the novel subjects that self-image to scrutiny and discovers in fatalism a self-indulgent and self-destructive choice.[24]

Here, Morson stresses that it is Anna, not Tolstoy, who chooses to fulfill the omen, developing this idea in the second book. He also rejects the readings, in which Anna "could not help what she did"[25] because of the passion that captured her. Instead, Morson describes the relationships between Tolstoy and his heroine elaborately identifying the narrative dispositions in the novel. A more detailed description and critique of Morson's view will be presented in Chapter III of this thesis.

[22] Subchapters on Anna Karenina in Chapter 3 (Foreshadowing).
[23] G.S. Morson, *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (Yale University Press, 1996), p. 71-79.
[24] Ibid., p. 76.
[25] G.S. Morson, *Anna Karenina in Our Time* (Yale University Press 2007), p. 64.

Two other readings, relevant for my study, are found in A. Mandelker's book *Framing Anna Karenina* and V. Alexandrov's *Limits to Interpretation*. In the work of the former, I am interested in the discourse of the artistic representation of novel's character and the tropological analyses of the text. Mandelker denies the view of Tolstoy being a misogynist and offers to read Anna Karenina as a novel "about the boundaries of vision and tragic narrative of beauty framed."[26] Though I do not agree with Alexandrov's theoretical ideology of minimizing the circularity of interpretation[27] I support a number of his 'insights' on the novel, including his analyses of Anna's character.

To my knowledge, there are no academic studies of the new adaptation of Anna Karenina. This fact, along with the recency of the film release, determines the novelty of my research.

1.2. Theoretical framework

In this section, I talk about different theories my approach to the novel and the film is based on. However, more detailed explanation of some terms and theoretical frames is given directly in the text, as they appear to be inseparable from the analyses I perform.

1.2.1. Intermediality and Adaptation Studies

Literal adaptations produce an interesting intermedia phenomenon because they gain success in 'plagiarizing' the already existing and sometimes well-known stories. However, I reject to refer to the adaptations as plagiarisms as well as evaluate them by the criteria of faithfulness to the source text. A film adaptation is an interpretation or a version of the literary work. Author's vision of the text is projected into the cinema screen – and from that moment one can start interpreting the work.

I agree with Cahir theory that claims, "studying the novel and the novel-based film hinged together, one to the other, allows for an illumination the sort of which

[26] A. Mandelker, *Framing "Anna Karenina": Tolstoy, the Woman Question and the Victorian Novel* (Ohio State University Press 1994), p.4.
[27] Alexandrov insists on the existence of a "specific range of divergent and even contradictory interpretations" (1600 in Anna Karenina). See V.E. Alexandrov, *Limits to Interpretation: The Meanings of Anna Karenina* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), p.3.

occurs in a diptych."[28] Therefore, in some chapters the analyses of the novel and the film will be bound together so that the reader has a precise idea of the diegesis the implied authors work with and the nature of their dialogue. Of course, the director has to be selective when he chooses the material from the novel to be presented on screen. Some narremes and scenes remain 'unmentioned', like, for example, Levin's ideology and heart-searching, Varenka and Koznishev characters, the living conditions of lower class of peasants. I will also avoid these topics in my thesis, as my aim is not the 'calculation' of the fidelity of this adaptation. Moreover, as the focus of my research is Anna, her character and her microcosm, I will not make a study of other characters, like Levin, Kitty, Dolly and so on. I am interested in them only in their relation to Anna or in terms of describing 'the society'.

Intermediality establishes a dialogue between different media theories. Therefore, I follow the current trend in intermediality of referring to differently mediated works as texts, and will use the term 'text' for both the novel and the film. In his *Palimpsets* when Genette talks about five variations of trantextual relations he mentions hypertextuality as one of them. Hypertextuality is "any relationship uniting text B (hypertext) to an earlier text A (hypotext)."[29] If we apply this notion of hypertextuality to the literal adaptation seeing the novel as a hypotext and a film as a hypertext[30] - then we will see that it works not only for the literary theory but it is as effective in intermediality[31].

I also insist on using a number of film theory terms in my study of adaptation. As the cinematic language and film devices are the tools that the director possesses, in the thesis, I will mention several of those, like camera movement or camera angle, for example. I use the following definition of camera shots – close-up ("the full human face, an entire small object, or part of an object"[32]), mid-shot ("the human body from the waist up, the full figure of a seated character, or the visual; equivalent of another

[28] L.C. Cahir, *Literature into Film: Theory And Practical Approaches* (McFarland & Company 2006), p. 8.
[29] G. Genette, *Palimpsests* (University of Nebraska Press 1997), p. 5.
[30] This idea is not new to the film theory. Jack Zipes states that "the hypotext is generally considered the pre-existing text upon which a film or hypertext is based". See J. Zipes, *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films* (Routledge, 2011), p.4.
[31] I develop this theory in my previous papers. See D. Chernysheva "Intermedial Narration in Memories of my Melancholy Whores: the Novella by G.G. Marquez and the Film Adaptation by H.Carlsen", 2012.
[32] L.C. Cahir, Literature into Film: Theory And Practical Approaches (McFarland & Company 2006), p. 64.

object"[33]) and full shot (the human body, head to toe, or the visual equivalent of another object"[34]), which I will call wide-shot[35]. However, I made an attempt to avoid wide usage of 'special' cinema terms in order to avoid the overlapping of literary and film terms in reader's mind.

1.2.2. Semiotics

"'Semiotics', or 'semiology', means the systematic study of signs"[36], states Eagleton. Being a study originated in linguistics semiotics found its way in other sign systems and, as Chandler claims, represents a range of studies in art, literature, anthropology and the mass media[37]. I use semiotics in order to draw a representational map of signs used in literary film adaptation. I make an attempt to explain what stands for what in the verbal sign system of Tolstoy's novel and, especially, in the visual sign system of Wright's film. As I use already established in semiotic patterns, I find it unnecessary to explain the signifier/signified dichotomy, icon/index/symbol.

Chandler states, "since the meaning of a sign depends on the code within which it is situated, codes provide a framework within which signs make sense."[38] Wright – the addresser encoded the meaning into the message by the means of connotative signifieds. My task within this study is to decode the meaning and to present my interpretation of it.

McFarlane in his book *Novel to Film* compares two signifying systems – the source text and its adaptation - and proposes that "the difference between the two systems points to a major distinction between them: the verbal sign, with its low iconicity and high symbolic function, works conceptually, whereas the cinematic sign, with its high iconicity and uncertain symbolic function, works directly, sensuously, perceptually[39]. He argues that due to the multiplicity of signifiers film is a very complex representation. In order to read the film one must take in consideration all the codes it provides: language codes, visual codes, non-linguistic sound codes and

[33] L.C. Cahir, Literature into Film: Theory And Practical Approaches (McFarland & Company 2006), p. 64.
[34] L.C. Cahir, *Literature into Film: Theory And Practical Approaches* (McFarland & Company 2006), P.64.
[35] According to the television production tradition, which I am more used to.
[36] T. Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2008), p. 100.
[37] D. Chandler, *Semiotics for Beginner,* Introduction.
[38] D. Chandler, *Semiotics for Beginner,* Codes.
[39] B. McFarlane, *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation* (Oxford 1996), p. 26-27.

cultural codes[40]. Visual codes of Wright's film become the main concern of the Chapter 3, in which I make an attempt to decode Anna's representation in the new adaptation, using framing, while cultural codes are of great importance for the section on color that I present in the same chapter.

1.2.3. Narratology

In this study I am not concerned with architecture of a text and the dispositions of the characters. However, the difference between the narrator and the implied author needs to be distinguished. Implied author "refers to the author-image evoked by a work and constituted by the stylistic, ideological, and aesthetic properties for which indexical signs can be found in the text."[41] When I refer to Tolstoy or to Wright in my thesis I mean the implied authors of the given text.

Narrator, the one who tells the story, in Genette theory appear in several guises: extra- or intradiegetic by the narrative level, hetero- or homodiegetic by the relationship to the story. Heterodiegetic narrator is absent from the story told while homodiegetic - is the character in the story told[42]. Intradiegetic narrator is a part of diegesis, while extradiegetic – is not[43]. The concept of cinematic narrator was developed by S.Chatman who insists on the existence of both the narrator and the implied author in the film, identifying them as a 'presenter' and the 'inventor'[44] respectively. Though I agree with Chatman – I decided to follow the 'traditional' definitions in order to avoid confusion. The crucial part of Chatman's study is his view on cinematic narrator as "the composite of a large and complex variety of communicating devices"[45], which include camera movements and angles, types of editing, choosing of a mise-en-scene and lightning, scenery and actors, voiceover and soundtrack and the variety of other modes of cinematic narration.

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[40] B. McFarlane, *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation* (Oxford 1996), p. 29.
[41] W. Schmid, "Implied Author", The Living Handbook of Narratology (2013)
[42] G. Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (Cornell University Press 1980), p. 244-245.
[43] G. Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (Cornell University Press 1980), p. 248.
[44] Chatman's inventor is not as an implied «the original biographical person, but rather as the principle within the text to which we assign the inventional tasks». See S. Chatman, *Coming to Terms: Rhetoric of Narrative in Fiction and Film* (Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 133.
[45] S. Chatman, Coming to Terms: Rhetoric of Narrative in Fiction and Film (Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 134.

Focalization, the focus of the narration, "is the perspectival restriction and orientation of narrative information relative to somebody's (usually a character's) perception, imagination, knowledge or point of view."[46] Stories can be focalized internally and externally. For example, internal focalization in Tolstoy's novel can be observed in Chapter XXII, in which the viewer 'sees the ball with Kitty's eyes'. Such an effect corresponds with the method of 'ostranenie' or 'defamiliarization' discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis. The focalization in the cinema can be described by the simple question: "Who sees?" For viewer the 'eye line match' of seeing 'internally' is achieved by a montage technique of switching from one character's face to an object he sees. Therefore, the audience gets an impression of 'seeing the world with the character's eyes'.

[46] J. Manfred, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory* in S. Whatling, *Narrative Art in Northern Europe, c.1140-1300: A Narratological Re-appraisal;* PhD dissertation (University of London 2010), p. 48.

2. ‘False society’ versus ‘True nature’

In this chapter I will discuss the world that Anna exists in. Anna is a product of Russian upper-class society of XIX century. Her microcosm exists within the macrocosm of the society described by the implied author of the novel. In section 2.1., Tolstoy’s views on civilization and society are discussed. In section 2.2., I speak about how Wright develops Tolstoy’s worldview and translates it in adaptation using theatricalization as his main aesthetic device. Section 2.3. I make an attempt to demonstrate the artificiality of ‘the society’ with the example of the ‘broken’ communication between its representatives. My main purpose in the chapter is to show that the theatricalization in Wright’s film is an aesthetic device to present Tolstoy’s critique of the artificial lifestyle of the members of Russian high-class society of XIX century.

2.1. Tolstoy’s view on society

Lev Tolstoy is a specific figure in the history of Russian literature. Although he belonged to the aristocracy, he was not representative of Russian aristocracy of XIX century, as he was usually portrayed with a long beard and in a peasant shirt. Also, his worldview was quite different from the ones of the class he belonged. Leusheva writes:

> Tolstoy reached the acme in the development of Russian critical realism by relying on national beliefs in his search of the highest norms of human morality, as opposed to the parasitical existence of the upper classes that have lost their moral values, as well as working, honest, and moral lifestyle of the people, in the depths of which solid, strong characters are shaped and high features of the human spirit are preserved[47].

Despite that the description of Tolstoy’s metaphysics presented by Leusheva, in my opinion, is overfilled with emotional praising, it possesses a rational kernel. Indeed,

[47] My translation. Original quote: “Толстой достиг вершины в развитии русского критического реализма, опираясь в своих поисках высших норм общечеловеческой нравственности на народные воззрения, противопоставляя паразитарному существованию господствующих классов, утративших духовные ценности, трудовую, честную, нравственную жизнь народа, в недрах которого создаются цельные, сильные характеры и сохраняются высокие свойства человеческого духа”. See S.I. Leusheva, “Lermontov I Tolstoy”, in *Tvorchestvo M.U. Lermontova: 150 let so dnia rozhdenia, 1814—1964* (Moscow 1964), p. 412.

for Tolstoy high society was something artificial while the simple life of the people (народ) represents the core and the truth of human existence. As Leusheva also states, these ideas of "the harmful influence of 'the society' that deprave the person's moral sense"[48] are developed by Tolstoy in his *Boyhood* and *Youth.* I claim that Tolstoy's view on society is to high extent reflected in Anna Karenina.

Upper-class society in Tolstoy's novel is depicted as a 'false' category, where husbands and wives cheat and the morality is quite a loose concept. Betsy and Stiva represent the regular members of this group of hedonists and pretenders. In his book *Tolstoy: An Introdcution*, Christian states that indeed "there is a sense that society was a villain for Tolstoy"[49]. However, he explains this with Tolstoy's antagonism with the organized society, which will come to him in 80s and that already manifested itself as "a rooted dissatisfaction with society in the widest sense of the word"[50] in Anna Karenina.

Tolstoy presents the falseness of society and opposes it to the 'prosaic and undramatic'[51] life of Levin, whose worldview in many ways resembles Tolstoy's[52]. Thorbly describes Levin:

> He *(Levin)* is not concerned with social appearances or with career, the two dominant consideration in Anna's world, where typical scenes occur at the theatre and the races, which are essentially occasions of show and prestige[53].

Thorbly emphasizes the artificiality of "idle pursuits of the rich, and their salon-bred conversation"[54] in comparison to Levin's worldview. I support his view on the difference in Anna's values and Levin's. But I will take his interpretation one step further and in my analyses in the next section will juxtapose the lives of Levin and 'the society' (including Anna). Such a diptych[55] of lives is an aesthetical device used

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[48] My translation. Original quote: "пагубного влияния «света», растлевающего нравственное чувство человека». S.I. Leusheva, "Lermontov I Tolstoy", in *Tvorchestvo M.U. Lermontova: 150 let so dnia rozhdenia, 1814—1964* (Moscow 1964), p. 407.
[49] R.G. Christian, *Tolstoy: An Introduction* (Cambridge 1969), p. 175.
[50] R.G. Christian, *Tolstoy: An Introduction* (Cambridge 1969), p. 175.
[51] G.S. Morson, *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (Yale University Press, 1996), p. 72.
[52] D.S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature from Its Beginnings to 1900* (New York 1956), P. 274.
[53] A. Thorbly, *Leo Tolstoy: Anna Karenina* (Cambridge University Press 1987), p. 12.
[54] A. Thorbly, *Leo Tolstoy: Anna Karenina* (Cambridge University Press 1987), p. 12.
[55] As determined by Stenbock: two strongly contrasting situations with a common denominator and a few identical features. See E. Stenbock-Fermor, *The Architecture of Anna*

by Tolstoy in order to create a strong contrast between the life of illusion and the 'reality' (as it was perceived by Tolstoy).

2.2. Theatricalization of society

From the very beginning of Wright's film the viewer sees the theatre scenery. There is the auditorium, in which according to the camera movement presumably we are located, and the stage, where all the action takes place. At first, the farce of the scene where Stiva is shaved by a barber or a toreador, is obvious due its artificiality, incongruity and staged nature. However, in the course of the action the decorations are no longer perceived in such a grotesque manner and are seen in terms of an aesthetical choice of the director. Nonetheless, one might wonder what is the reasoning for bringing theatre into cinema in the case of Anna Karenina? What does Wright imply by using such a device?

I suggest that the Wright's theatricalization of the scenery in the given adaptation is the contextualization of Tolstoy's worldview. As it was discussed above, Tolstoy perceived high society as an artificial institution false from the outside as well as from the inside. The representatives of the society create their own microcosm with their own rules and regulations[56]. Wright chooses the allegory of a theatrical performance to portray and even exaggerate this artificiality. One would say that such a device can be correlated to the notion of "performance as a social behavior" mentioned by D.S. Madison and J. Hamera in *The SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies*. They state:

> In performance as behavior, social life is described through an organizing metaphor of dramatic action or what the social critic Kenneth Burke describes as 'situated modes of action'.[57]

Karenina: A history of its Writing, Structure and Message (B.R. Grüner Publishing Company 1975), P. 103.

[56] "I'd call on her if she'd only broken the law. But she broke the rules" as Princess Varvara states in Wright's film.

[57] D.S. Madison & J. Hamera, "Performance Studies at the Intersections", in The SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies, ed. D. Soyini Madison and Judith Hamera (SAGE Publications 2006), p. XV.

Indeed, for a human being, existing in the society, it is natural to perform. Wright stresses this performance activity bringing it to the aesthetical level of theatrical representation.

Theatre is not just our common view on it as 'a place to be at 19.00' – it is first and foremost the mimesis of life, the imitation of reality. A viewer's cultural repertoire reminds him or her that theatrical representation is a construction, in which different actors are assigned to a specific role. The communication in the theatrical production is pre-written in the script; the feelings, like love or hate, are unnatural as they are performed by actors (they may not feel the same way towards each other); and the spectacularity prevails. These features of a performance Wright projects on the characters of *Anna Karenina*. The fragment of Wright's communication with the film crew during the ball scene confirms the theatricalized nature of the film diegesis: "the glitzy high-society Ball has turned into a kind of Pandemonium – with diabolical figures laughing and pointing at Kitty and dancing like some crazy hellish devils."[58]

The theatricalization can be described as a kind of 'ostranenie' to Tolstoy's novel. The concept of 'ostranenie' or 'defamiliarization' was proposed by Victor Shklovsky in respect to Tolstoy's prose. Together with the schools of Russian Formalists, Shklovsky argued that the purpose of a literary work is to refresh the habitual responses[59] of everyday life:

> Habitualization devours works, clothes, furniture, one's wife, and the fera of war. "If the whole complex lives of many people go on unconsciously, then such lives are as if they had never been". And art exists that one may recover the sensation of life, to make the stone *stony*. The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make the objects 'unfamiliar'.[60]

In the film, seemingly familiar society is shown to the audience differently, thereby making it strange. For example, in the scene at the opera Wright uses the technique of a reversed stage – the change of the perspective as the camera 'looks' from the stage at Anna in the auditorium. The cultural repertoire tells the audience that this view is not traditionally imposed because all the gazes in theatre and opera are habitually pointed the other way – from the auditorium to the stage. By means of this device he

[58] My translation. Annakareninablogdrama. Anna Karenina: Blog Neizvestnoy Aktrisy.
[59] T. Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2008), p. 4.
[60] V. Shklovsky, *Art as a technique* in G.S. Morson, *Anna Karenina in Our Time* (Yale University Press 2007), p. 58-59.

shows the viewer that it is the audience at the opera that are real actors that stage themselves within their microcosm. This 'reversed stage' overturns the idea of the theatre by refocusing the gaze and thereby visually consolidating the metaphor. As well as Tolstoy in his novel, Wright also presents different spheres of social life, like verbal and non-verbal communication in 'a new light', which will be discussed more explicitly in Chapter 3.

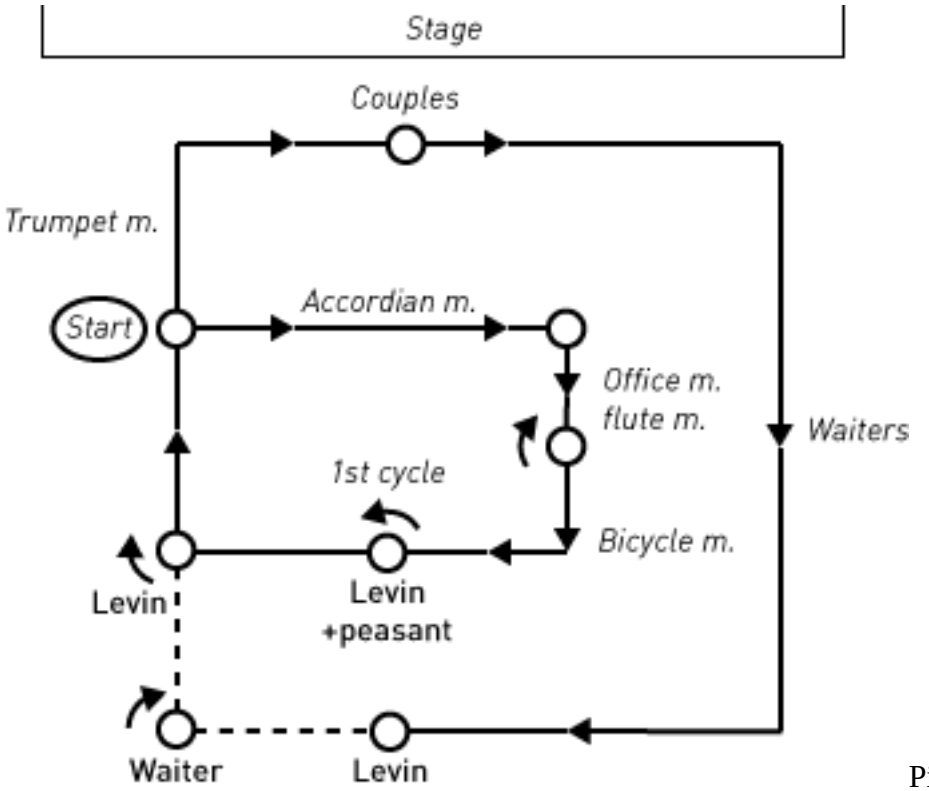
'Ostranenie' is applied not only to depict high society in general but also to the places the representatives of the society inhabit. To emphasize this artificial atmosphere of deception, Wright does not shoot actual sights of the cities – he prefers to use plain decorations where Moscow and St. Petersburg are just iconically signified with the paintings of St. Basil's Cathedral[61], a symbol that stands for Moscow, and The Bronze Horseman[62], a symbol that stands for St.Petersburg. These two-dimensional pictures also allegorically support the notion of performance and the theatricalization of events.

It is only Levin who at 00:24:25 breaks through the boundaries of the theatre, opens the doors and finds himself in the only 'free' place, the countryside. In the film, Wright echoes Toltoy's tendency of romanticizing the country. The 'village' scenes are amongst the few ones for which the crew got out of the theatre area and went to shoot in Russia. For the viewer it turns out to be the scenes with the vastest space expanses so crucial for Russian folk (the famous 'russkie prostori'). Wright denies the possibility of staging or performativity whenever showing Levin heading to his estate in Pokrovskoe, working in the fields or hunting together with Oblonsky. Suddenly, the naturalness in its blossom replaces the theatre; as well as the blowing wind, sunshine, and morning mist take over the costumes, jewelry and decorations.

The positioning of Levin in the movie is one of the most interesting. Given the role of an antagonist to the upper-class society, Levin in the film yields the position to the famous and dramatic love story. Yet, it only played into the hands of the character, as due to the time and scenes limit, the director made every Levin's appearing meaningful and significant for the purpose of contrasting the artificial society life. The first time we see Levin, when he comes to Oblonsky's office for an advice, becomes the first time we see 'Moscow' – the place that is alien to Levin. When he

[61] A church by Barma and Postnik Yakovlev in Red Square in Moscow.
[62] A statue of Peter the Great by the French sculptor E.M. Falconet in the centre of St.Petersburg

leaves the office[63], the life of the 'city' starts with the signal of a whistle. Since the space of the theatre house is limited, the territorial perspective depends on the camera movement – in this scene the stable camera in the center is moving on its axes showing the house all around. This technique, combined with the rambling movement of characters in different directions, creates an illusion of the dynamic and chaotic Moscow life. However, at the second gaze, it becomes obvious that the movements of the characters have a certain structure.



Picture 1

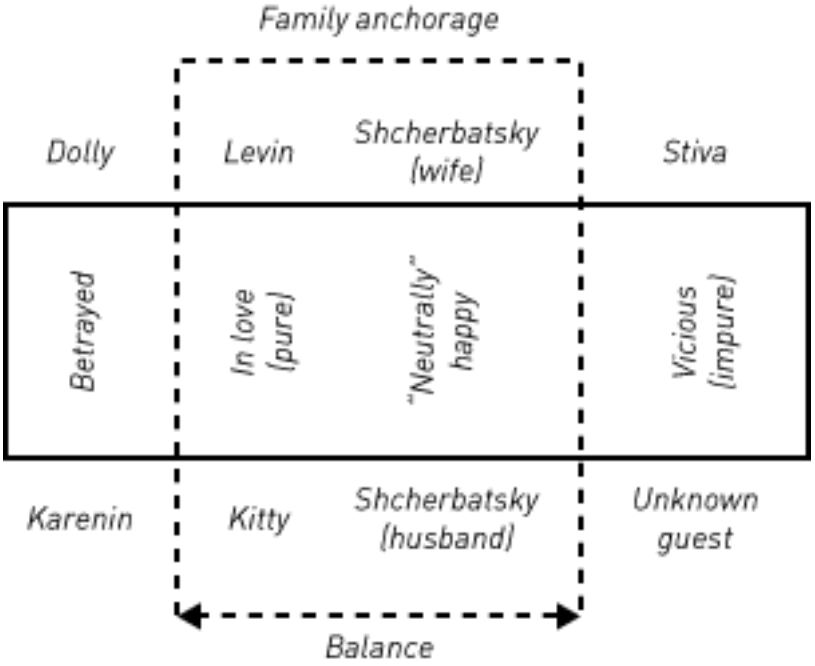
The camera is constantly moving around clockwise following the chain dynamics of the characters. It starts with the mime, with the accordion appearing from outside the frame space from the left, goes through the workers leaving the office to the other mime (playing the flute) that turns clockwise around his axis, then to the man on the one-wheeled circus bicycle and then to Levin. The camera focuses on Levin for a few seconds and then continues the movement. Levin turns around his axis counterclockwise and then starts following the clockwise path along with the peasant woman who is singing and then turns clockwise. The next one to take the baton is the mime blasting the trumpet – the second circle starts with him. Instead of the office

[63] 00:08:44

workers, one sees the couples from which the men leave to work waitressing. There is the repetition of the man with the flute and then the decorations of the restaurant appear with Levin entering the place, the waiter turning around his axis clockwise. It all ends with Stiva discarding the ash from his cigarette in the ashtray brought by the waiter. This 'circular' scene is done without montage – the director holds the attention of the audience with the help of chain movement that is constructed like a do-not-drop-the-ball-game. This scene is one of the most dynamic in the movie as well as one of the most multilayered for the analyses.

First and foremost, one must state the otherness of Levin in Moscow. Unlike the members of 'the society' that feel comfortable in this atmosphere Levin does not know where to go and how to move. The significant part of this scheme is the clockwise moving of all the characters except Levin. He is the one turning counterclockwise which metaphorical projection of his alienation. Being lost in this chaos Levin follows the crowd, even tries to turn clockwise with the others, and as it is shown on the scheme enters the restaurant in the same spot he entered the auditorium. This means that not knowing the city he went in circles making an unnecessary detour. Levin's clumsiness and inability to follow the chronotope of the city as well as his 'village' clothing in the beginning indicate the idea that this character does not belong here. Secondly, the director demonstrates to the audience the town Anna is about to arrive to – it is a complete farce. There are mimes with painted faces, masks, change of decorations in motion, disguise – everything is mixed up in this half-theatre, half-circus, half-city action.

Levin's alienated positioning in the society is determined not only by his otherness but his purity as well. In his protection of the character's purity Wright manages to surpass Tolstoy. The director hardly ever 'allows' his Levin to be close to the impure ones, as, for example, Stiva Oblonsky. Levin never sits next to hedonist Stiva – there is always something between them like vases, tables, divider, people, or simply space. In this sense the dispositions of the characters during dinner at Oblonsky's as depicted on Picture 2 is notable.



Picture 2

Here again Levin is separated from Stiva with Madame Shcherbatsky – so his purity is preserved. He is also sitting in front of Kitty, the woman he loves and who is in love with him, as well as the couple of Shcherbatsky next to them. Both couples form a base of 'happy' families mentioned by Tolstoy in the beginning of the novel. The other couple - Stiva and Dolly - are not seated in front of each other or even close to one another, which is an allegorical sign of their distance relationship and the lost of the connection. On the edges of the table the 'failed' characters are situated. It is Dolly and Karenin, betrayed and patient partners, who sit in front of each other forming a 'forgivness' union on one edge; sinful and careless Stiva and the lady who asks vulgar questions on the other. When Levin in response to one of those questions pronounces an eulogy to monogamy and pure love, the lady calls him an idealist – and there is only the right part of the table that laughs: Lady, Stiva and more or less Shcherbatskys (the representatives of 'the society') while the left wing remains silent in support of Levin's ideas. Thus, the disposition of each and every individual on this dining table becomes significant and helps the viewer to identify the characters' standpoint in the story.

2.3. The artificiality of communication

The specific way of communication is one of the most relevant markers for the unnatural state of the society in both Tolstoy's novel and Wright's film. The members of Russian upper society transform interaction, an essential part of the information exchange between humans, into a farce. All the characters, including Anna, Karenin, Vronsky, and even Levin, play the game of miscommunication and misinterpretation. In this subchapter the artificiality of existence and relationship will be discussed through the verbal and non-verbal communication represented in the novel and its adaptation.

In his book *Limits to Interpretation: The Meaning of Anna Karenina* Vladimir Alexandrov fairly observes that in the novel "… nonverbal communication proves to be far more effective than what characters say to each other"[64]. He also states that language in itself does not help the characters but only confuses them moving away from what is happening 'for real'. Undeniably, the communication in Anna Karenina is of particular interest for the thesis for a number of reasons. Firstly, as Christian states the "habitual gestures, movements of the hands, the eyes, the lips are given special prominence in Tolstoy …"[65] And indeed apart from the direct dialogues between characters there are several descriptions of the communication by means of gazes, gestures, mimics, body language and haptic communication as well as notes, letters that were translated from literary language into the cinematic one in the film *Anna Karenina*. The second reason for a particular attention to be paid to communication in both novel and film is that the characters do not seem to succeed in verbal communication whereas the non-verbal one usually works out for them (Anna and Vronsky dance, Levin second proposal). This could be interpreted in terms of unnaturality of the high-class life and the way they communicate among each other. Language, being a construction, in the mouths of the representatives of aristocracy becomes even more artificial. Their language is ambiguous and hypocritical – not only they replace signifiers, put special connotation and substitute concepts in words, but also they lie and understate. Tolstoy, who saw 'the truth' in the countryside life, could also be cynical about this way of verbal communication giving more credits to non-verbal one. As one understands from the novel the non-verbal communication is

[64] V.E. Alexandrov, *Limits to Interpretation: The Meanings of Anna Karenina* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), p. 107.
[65] R.G. Christian, *Tolstoy: An Introduction* (Cambridge 1969), p. 201.

the one that can be more or less trusted – and the key events are mostly accomplished through this kinds of interfering, which will bi explained hereafter.

Why does language appear to be powerless in conveying people's emotions? Why does language, created to facilitate the communication, only makes the case more complicated in *Anna Karenina*? Although characters talk, they do not understand each other. The failure in communication can be noticed in the relationship of Dolly and her husband Stiva. In the very beginning of the novel, Stiva dreams about everything being good in his family, however, does not know how to convince his own wife to forget him – he has to enlist the help of his sister. Stiva is also the one to butcher the famous sayings. As for instance his careless quoting of Pushkin lines during his dinner with Levin (and to Vronsky afterwards). The actual verse Oblonsky takes a quote from is:

Узнаю коней ретивых	Bold steed I can tell
По их выжженным таврам;	By their scorched marks;
...	…
Я любовников счастливых	Happy lovers -
Узнаю по их глазам.	By the look in their eyes.[66]

While he says it like "Bold steeds I can tell by their something-or-other things, and young men in love by the look in their eyes" ("Узнаю коней ретивых по каким-то их таврам, юношей влюбленных узнаю по их глазам").[67] He is twice mistaken in the quote and, moreover, he does not really mean it as he refers to Levin and later to Vronsky with the same saying. Such a reference does not feel as a natural expression of his feelings about the love life of other's – it is more like a performance. As well as her brother, Anna has problems with language. Since she met Vronsky she fails to deliver what she wants to say properly. After the ball, where Anna and Vronsky were the center of attention due to their inappropriate behavior, Anna tells Dolly that she is not the one to blame for what happened with Vronsky. She takes her usual position of a victim and a person, who cannot control her actions. However, she insists that she is not like Stiva:

[66] A.S. Pushkin *Iz Anakreona*. My translation.
[67] L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 36, 40.

> I'm telling you this because I don't allow myself to doubt myself even for a moment'. But the moment she uttered these words, she felt that they were wrong; she not only doubted herself, but felt excitement at the thought of Vronsky, and was leaving sooner than she had wanted only so as not to meet him any more.[68]

Then, at Betsy's dinner Anna makes a comment on the word 'love' Vronsky tell her:

> Remember, I forbade you to utter that word, that vile word', Anna said with a shudder; but she felt at once that by this one word 'forbade' she showed that she acknowledged having certain rights over him and was thereby encouraging him to speak of love.[69]

Anna, as well as other representatives of upper society, is 'lost' in words. She says one thing but means something else. Such an incongruity corresponds the role-playing adopted by 'the society'.

In the film more examples of verbal miscommunication can be spotted in the conversations between Anna and Vronsky and especially, Anna and Karenin. Karenin being a representative of governmental circles tends to speak bureaucratese language as he is simply used to at work, which is outspoken in the novel. When he speaks in society or at home one can find him boring or even ridiculous. In the film, Karenin uses the phrase "Time for bed" as a code to let Anna know that he intends to be intimate with her instead of just saying to his wife about his desire. However, the main failure of Karenin's attempt to talk to his wife is shown in the film in two paralleling scenes – at 00:47:15 and at 1:08:55. In the first scene, Anna returns from Betsy's dinner and she is irritated by Karenin's inability to express his thoughts: "I am not a committee. Please, say what you want to tell me" as an expression of her non-understanding as well as her unwillingness to understand his code. In the second scene the conversation is much shorter. All Karenin's thoughts and concerns are summed up here in one phrase "Tell me what did I do to deserve it?" Although, he directly asks her to talk to him, this powerful question does not get an answer from Anna. She never really talked to her husband as well as she did her best to prevent all his attempts to talk to her seriously. The scenery in this scene is full of hermeneutical codes. In only 15 seconds the viewer gets to know that Karenin gives up, he did all he could to communicate with his wife but now he understands the futility of these attempts. The indexes of this statement are the following:

[68] Ibid., p. 98.
[69] Ibid., p. 139.

- Karenin talks to Anna with his back turned to her which is a signifier of his despair towards her;
- Karenin sits on a chair while Anna stands, therefore, she seems taller than him. It is a signifier for her a dominant, in-control position and the belittled one – to Karenin.
- The similarity of Karenin's chair to a throne provides the viewer with the allusion to the traditional image of the king surrounded by a wife, the servants and the court people. However, as one sees the King alone it can be interpreted as a signifier for his loss of everything.

Both in the novel and film the only way acceptable for Karenin to express his feelings is his cracking his knuckles that irritates Anna so much. Being unable to raise his voice, shout, beat his wife or her lover, this act is the only weakness he allows himself. In the hypertext he does that when he is uncomfortable with the situation – like, for instance, when Anna tells him that she is pregnant from Vronsky, after childbirth when Anna is delirious, when Anna informs him that she does not wish to see Vrosnky to say goodbye. This kind of 'internal' communication does not prove itself to be an effective one. Instead of expressing his thoughts Karenin preserves them within himself. Nobody is able to recognize his knuckle cracking and Anna, who notices it, does not want to interpret it in accordance with her husband's temper.

Regarding other representatives of high society, their communication is not easier than the one of Anna and her husband. Furthermore, they are compounded by the usage of a number of languages in their speech – Russian, French, German and English. It is well known that Russians of XIX century were fluent in several languages and the nobility were mixing those in their everyday life, which has to do with the Europeanization of the country held by Peter the Great and the imitation of European (mainly, French) lifestyle. In the novel characters call each other 'mademoiselle', 'maman', 'mon ami', 'mon oncle', 'messieuers', use foreign names and phrases and even mangle Russian names into foreign ones completely breaking away from the 'reality' (the one Levin is existing in, f.ex.). This tradition became so rooted in the life of the high classes that even Anna's last thoughts before the suicide contain English sentence – when she tries to explain to herself the relationship with Vronsky the phrase "The zest is gone."[7071]

[70] Ibid., p. 763.

The grotesque appears when Stiva and Levin arrive at the restaurant. Firstly, because their discussion of Levin's pure love to Kitty is constantly interrupted by Stiva ordering the soup and other gastronomical delicacies. Secondly, the waiter in a restaurant in Moscow announces the courses in French: the cabbage soup, for instance, is called "Potage aux choux a la Russe". This is the case of Wright's irony (that he picked up from the same scene in Tolstoy's novel) in order to demonstrate Russian nobility's desperate desire to feel connected with other European aristocracy. The incongruity of the society's world is emphasised by their lack of identity – they are neither French nor truly Russian (like Levin, for example). Except for this example, the usage of foreign languages is in Wright's film smoothened to the maximum. It seems to be a reasonable decision as the movie is made in English about Russia and Russians. The involvement of several different languages would be confusing for a viewer, who is not familiar with Russian realia of XIX century. Also, the identification of the story with Russia is in risk of being lost in Babylonian speech.

Consequently, the inability of characters to express their thoughts truthfully and their failure to understand each other by the means of language may ruin human communication, leading some of the characters to the point of no return. Non-verbal communication, on the other hand, appears to be more effective and in some cases more informative than the verbal one.

The visualization of specific spatial aspects shall illustrate allegorical level of the film. Crucial here is the semantizations of the space 'high' and 'low' as well as the movement or positioning of 'upside' and 'down'. While traditionally, such a disposition signifies the hierarchical relations between people, in Wright's interpretation the power arrangements are overlapped with romantic discourse. In the *Anna Karenina* film, the one who has the upper position is not only in control of the other, who is in the lower position, but also he or she represents the higher extent of love towards the other. One can notice a number of discrepancies in character's vertical dispositions in the movie[72]:

[71] Moreover, when Anna hears the French phrase ("'Man has been given reason in order to rid himself of that which troubles him,' the lady said in French") she interprets it as an answer to all her questions. This factor, along with other more significant ones, could have played a role in Anna's suicide.

[72] As the lovers exchange gazes all the time and it is impossible to track all of them in terms of this thesis, I rely on a simple concept of 'who looked at whom first' in a particular scene.

00:19:43 – Anna (up) gazes at Vronsky (down) giving money to the family of the peasant man at the train station;
00:23:52 – Anna (up) gazes at Vronsky (down) when he visits Oblonsky's;
00:29:02 – Vronsky (up) gazes at Anna (down) from the balcony at the ball;
00:30:24 – Anna (up) gazes at Vronsky (down) when he lifts her during the dance;
00:37:43 – Vronsky (up) observes Anna (down) at the ice-skating area;
00:38:42 – Vronsky (up) observes Anna (down) at the private concert;
00:46:46 – Anna (up) gazes at Vronsky (down) after dinner at Betsy's;
01:03:12 – Anna (up) gazes at Vronsky (down) at the horse racing;
01:53:48 – Anna (up) gazes at Vronsky (down) when Sorokina visits.

There is a clear pattern in this character disposition. Being unable to copy the verbal descriptions of the inner feelings of the characters from the hypotext, due to the medium nature, Wright contemplates a game of 'levels' and gazes. The rules of this game claim that the one who looks from the higher perspective at another is in the state of love. Indeed, Anna gets interested in Vronsky's persona the first two times she sees him (gazes given from upstairs), while Vronsky is absolutely struck by her beauty and charm at the ball (gaze from the balcony). She repays him with the gaze from the upper level when they dance together. This is followed by a number of scenes of Vronsky chasing Anna, where he mostly observes her from a higher perspective. From this moment Anna gives up to Vronsky, she pronounces the famous phrase "I have nothing but you. Remember that". From the moment the actual game of gazes is over as Anna becomes devoted to Vronsky – her love has so much power, that from now on she is the only one who gazes at Vronsky from the upper level. Their communication is similar to the tag game, in which a player chases the other(s) in order to give a touch to an opponent and make him or her chase other players. This game is a popular amongst children but, roughly speaking, it is not appropriate for adults, like Anna and Vronsky, who connote it with a sexual undertone.

Special attention in the *Anna Karenina* film is paid to the dance scene at the ball. The dance is another example of the allegorical level of Wright's film. It is an allusion to the ballet and not an imitation of Russian XIX century ball dances[73]. The conversation of gazes and touches starts very carefully and apprehensively; however, towards the end, it does not only become faster but also more intense, confident, and

[73] The dance will be also discussed in Chapter 3 (Colors).

daring. The dance between Anna and Vronsky has a strong erotical connotation. This is confirmed by two following scenes – at 00:49:54 and at 01:43:46. The first one is the sex scene between Anna and Vronsky, where one notices the elements of the dance in the way Vronsky holds Anna's hands. The second scene presents Vronsky greeting Princess Sorokina at the theatre. When he kisses her hand, they make a reference to the dance as they make a turn. This is disturbing to Anna, since she, like no other, knows the connotation of this dance. Basing her apprehension on these moves, Anna concludes that Vronsky is cheating on her. She does not seem to believe him when he tries to convince her otherwise – words mean nothing to her. This misinterpretation of non-verbal communication leads to a gap in the characters' relationships.

Levin, however, also cannot escape being involved in the game of non-verbal interrelation. The brightest example of this is his second proposal to Kitty. Presented in the novel as a chalk 'conversation' on the cardboard and in the film as the manipulations with the children's cubes, this scene appears to become one of the most tensed and exciting in Kitty and Levin's relationship. During this word guessing game, the word 'marriage' has never been spelled or said, it is mostly called 'this' (это). However, the heterodiegetic narrator in the novel states in the end of the chapter: "In their conversation everything has been said – that she loves him, that she would tell her father and mother, that he would come tomorrow in the morning". This 'everything' is never mentioned directly in the novel; therefore, one assumes that this could only be 'said' non-verbally.

Regarding the usage of cubes instead of cardboard, there is a special meaning to this change. The toy cubes preserve the 'game' connotation of the situation but it projects a particular childhood innocence to the relationship between Kitty and Levin, unlike the cardboard, which in XXI century holds the association with the vicious and impure game. Also, in this scene Wright follows the given course on parallels in the film. The cubes that shape the future of Kitty and Levin are ironically the very same cubes that Anna compounded the name of Vronsky with (as Kitty's beau), thereby shaping her own future. Thus, the non-verbal communication becomes fundamental for Kitty and Levin's relationship. Even later on, Kitty's love for Levin will be expressed the best not in words, but in her drive to help Levin's brother and to take good care of her new relative.

3. The Readings of Anna's Character

In this Chapter, I want to answer the question: "Who is Anna if not a victim?" The interpretation of her character is 'fixed' by the 'traditional' readings of the novel. However, there is a number of Western specialists on Russian culture, like Morson and Mandelker that in their work re-investigated Anna. I mostly rely on Morson in my study of the concept of 'Anna being a fated woman'. Though, I disagree with him in details, I see his overall description of Anna's character as a foundation and inspiration for my reading of Anna.

3.1. 'New' Anna

The 'traditional' view on Anna's tragedy is usually taught in Russian schools since the Soviet times and, therefore, got fixed in the Russian traditional perception of Anna. It consists of two positions. The first one is that "it was people, not God, who threw Anna under the train"[74], as Christian quotes Shklovsky. It is worth mentioning that during the Soviet era, it was a rule to blame aristocratic society for their elitist, capitalistic and pro-Western tendencies. The upper classes of imperial Russia had to be anathematized because of the contradictions of their ideology (and even their very existence) to the theory of Marxism–Leninism[75]. However, Anna was excluded from this critique[76], and this is the second standpoint of the 'traditional' view. Vladimir Nabokov, for example, in his lectures on Russian literature, presented Anna as "a young, handsome, and fundamentally good woman, and a fundamentally doomed woman."[77] He also defends her position as an outsider of the society she lives in:

> [Anna] is a woman with a full, compact, important moral nature: everything about her character is significant and striking, and this applied as well to her love. She cannot limit herself as another character in the book, Princess Betsy, does, to an undercover affair. Her truthful and passionate nature makes disguise and secrecy impossible.[78]

[74] R.G. Christian, *Tolstoy: An Introduction* (Cambridge 1969), p. 174.
[75] Such a propaganda is quite evident in the Soviet film *Anna Karenina* (1967) by A.Zarkhi.
[76] Soviet reading of Anna as a heroic rebel and a moral beacon against the norms of ninetieth century Russia, provided by I.N. Uspensky, in V.E. Alexandrov, *Limits to Interpretation: The Meanings of Anna Karenina* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), p. 322.
[77] V. Nabokov, *Lectures on Russian literature* (Harcourt 1981), p. 95.
[78] V. Nabokov, Lectures on Russian literature (Harcourt 1981), p. 95.

The ‘new’ Anna of Morson and Mandelker differs from the Soviet school in many respects. In *Framing Anna Karenina* Mandelker provides a quote from Evans, who sees Anna “as guilty in the wider sense of a person who was unable to control and discipline her passions and her inclinations.”[79] Mandelker sees this reading of Anna as oversimplified. She suggests that one should relate to Anna as a female representative of the category of superfluous men in Russian literature. Ellen Chances defines this character as:

> … an ineffectual aristocrat at odds with society … ‘dreamy, useless’… ‘an intellectual incapable of action’, an ‘ineffective idealist’, ‘a hero who is sensitive to social and ethical problems, but who fails to act, partly because of personal weakness, partly because of political and social restraints on his freedom of action’[80]

Basically, all these characteristics could be applied to Anna’s image. I cannot fully agree with the very first feature as applicable to her. My hypothesis is that Anna Karenina is a representative of 'the society'. She is 'one of them' in her desire to play a certain role and perform. I develop this idea further in the text. Nevertheless, Anna shares the class belonging with this type of literary figures, as well as their sense of exceptionalism. In Russian literature, one witnesses these features in such characters as Pechorin (*A Hero of Our Time* by Mikhail Lermontov) and Katerina (*The Storm* by Aleksandr Ostrovsky). These characters, that appeared before Anna, in one way or another, proved their belonging to the ‘diva’ type. The divas are protagonists that suffer from a terrible, usually contrived, situation. They possess a strong sense of having been chosen from all other people and, therefore, they are different and misunderstood. Also, they demand admiration and a priori believe that the world is spinning around them. Likewise to Anna, their morality was questioned, especially in the case of Katerina, Anna’s progenitress. Katerina, ‘a ray of light in the black kingdom’[81], was also unfaithful to her husband and could not live in the rotten society and therefore committed suicide – but all this ten years earlier than Anna. The public

[79] M. Evans, *Reflecting on Anna Karenina* in A. Mandelker, *Framing "Anna Karenina": Tolstoy, the Woman Question and the Victorian Novel* (Ohio State University Press 1994), p. 42.
[80] E. Chances, “Conformity’s Children”, Chances, Ellen, “The Superfluous Men in Russian Literature” in The Routledge Companion to Russian Literature, ed. Neil Cornwell (Routledge 2001), p. 112.
[81] Name of the article by N. Dobrolyubov devoted to A. Ostrovsky’s “The Storm”.

has always discredited these women, although literary critics not only justified their behavior but also praised them as the ones who could toss a challenge to the society.

According to the characteristics, 'diva' is close to the definition of 'prima donna', given in the Oxford English Dictionary[82]:

> 2. fig. and in extended use. A person who has the highest standing or who takes a leading role in a particular community or field. Also: a self-important or temperamental person.
> B. adj. (attrib.).
> Designating, resembling, or characteristic of a prima donna; temperamental, self-important.

Divas have no regard for the feelings of others, as they are only focused on themselves. Being 'attention vampires', these kind of characters are fared by the attention surrounding their personality, and therefore they oftentimes provoke the public by impulsive and unreasonable actions.

In *Anna Karenina in Our Times* Morson develops the concept of a 'new' Anna, which corresponds with my idea of referring to her as a 'diva'. He argues that Anna Karenina identifies herself with a heroine of a romantic melodramatic novel:

> For Anna, everything seems to fit a melodramatic plot centering on a grand passion; there are neither accidents nor choices. …. She lives a story whose shape is already given and for which not just anyone could have been destined.[83]

Morson talks about Anna's narcissistic tendencies, her passiveness and her persistent belief in fatalism. Anna places herself in the center of all stories, of which she always has to be the main character. I state that Morson's idea can be developed further - Anna can be read a diva, who chooses to live an artificial life of a performance. In order to achieve the theatrical authenticity, she herself constructs the reality around her, manipulates other characters and orchestrates the events. She lives the life of illusion, imagining herself an actress who is to play a certain role of a 'diva' – beautiful, bright and exceptional. Lev Tolstoy constructs the characterization of Anna as a dramatic persona and alludes to this fact in the novel.

1. Allusions to the theatre/drama talk. The first factor that strikes the eye of the reader is the way Anna talks, which could easily be referred to the drama or any other stage

[82] *OED (Oxford English Disctionary)*
[83] G.S. Morson, *Anna Karenina in Our Time* (Yale University Press 2007), p. 71-72.

talk: "I? You think so? I'm not strange, I'm bad. It happens with me"[84], she replies to Dolly's remark of Anna's strange behavior. Her internal monologue is also full of theatrical inflections: "I did a bad thing and therefore I do not want happiness, I do not want a divorce, and will suffer from my disgrace and my separation from my son."[85] Anna sees herself as a victimized figure, whose main specialty is suffering.

2. Allusions to the books and the world of illusions. The English book that Anna reads on the train becomes a sort of a 'trigger' for her. She desires to enter this fictitious world of the novel, become a heroine and live her life 'to the fullest'[86]. Mandelker emphasizes that, in this scene, Anna appears as a classical heroine - she falls under the influence of literature. The author also quotes Barthes, who noticed in S/Z: "This is a vast commonplace of literature: the Woman copies the Book. In other words, every body is a citation: of the 'already written'. The origin of desire is the statue, the painting, the book."[87] When Anna returns to her family after the trip to Moscow she confesses to herself: "And the son, just like the husband, produced in Anna a feeling akin to disappointment. She had imagined him better than he was in reality."[88] Anna has already entered the imagined world and, now, she experiences the incongruity of the two worlds: the illusionary microcosm created by her and the macrocosm of 'reality'.

3. Allusions to the roles and heroines. A number of times Tolstoy makes a direct reference to Anna playing a particular role in a certain time: "She remembered the partly sincere, though much exaggerated, role of the mother who lives for her son, which she had taken upon herself in recent years …"[89] Karenina does not think of herself as a mother, she only remembers the role of a mother she used to play recently. Her 'diva' nature imposes on her which role to play in a certain moment to ensure her positioning in the society. As Morson claims, "… Anna can at times even take pleasure at the loss of her son, for it fits the tragic plot."[90] People of the society

[84] L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 97.
[85] Ibid., p. 464.
[86] Ibid., p. 100.
[87] A. Mandelker, *Framing "Anna Karenina": Tolstoy, the Woman Question and the Victorian Novel* (Ohio State University Press 1994), p. 129.
[88] L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 107.
[89] Ibid., p. 289.
[90] G.S. Morson, *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (Yale University Press, 1996), p. 72.

echo Anna's performance - Lisa Merkalov, for example, with admiration calls Anna "a real heroine from a novel …"[91], while Dolly on her visit to Anna and Vronsky is more confused with such an act: "All that day she [Dolly] had a feeling that she was playing in the theatre with actors better than herself and that her poor playing spoiled the whole thing"[92]

These remarks by Tolstoy invite the reader to interpret Anna as an actress of the burned out theatre ('актриса погорелого театра') – the well-known Russian saying that refers to an unprofessional artist, who due to the lack of a 'stage' performs in real life. She talks like an actress, she behaves like an actress and she lives in illusion like an actress on the stage. Even the people who do not participate in the 'great affair', the representatives of the society, notice the exaggerated performativity constituting Anna's life.

In order to become the center of attention, Anna decided to transform her life into a novel or a play. The system of defining a performance, proposed by Burke[93], can be successfully applied to Anna Karenina. Anna is an *agent* of an *act* of fulfilling her 'diva' role in *the scene* of an artificial society of nineteenth century Russia. Her *purpose* is to gain the public's attention and to be the brightest and most talked about representative of the society; her *agency* is her knowledge about heroines and actresses and the implementation of drama into real life. And indeed, Anna plays the leading role in 'the melodramatic plot'[94], already mentioned by Morson. Everything is centered around Anna – all the omens are about her, the whole society is only against her, all women envy her. She is in the center of all stories, even the ones that do not involve her. She manages to find her way into the romance of Kitty and Vronsky, into the marriage of Dolly and Stiva, as well as Kitty and Levin's. On her way, Anna brings down all the people that try to steal the key part from her. She is an absolute opposite of Dolly who, in Cruise's words, "embodies the capacity for selfless love and self-sacrifice."[95]

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[91] L. Tolstoy, Anna Karenina, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 297.
[92] Ibid., p. 634.
[93] K. Burke. *A grammar of motives*, in Madison, D. Soyini & Hamera, Judith, "Performance Studies at the Intersections", in The SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies, ed. D. Soyini Madison and Judith Hamera (SAGE Publications 2006), p. XV.
[94] G.S. Morson, *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (Yale University Press, 1996), p. 71-72.
[95] Cruise, 200

Morson argues that Anna is a believer – she believes in fate: "Anna sees a world in which plots are already written from the future and in which responsibility has no meaning"[96], which fits the idea of 'world as a stage'. Anna is waiting for a 'solution', yet she is not taking any steps toward it. She enjoys the suffering and the uncertainty, as it, as well as the situation with her son, fits the tragic plot of the story she created around herself. She dramatizes the daily routine as, like Morson says, "… she can never adjust to daily routine without high drama, and so she is always manufacturing scenes, fabricating crises, sending urgent telegrams, and including in jealous fits in which she herself does not believe."[97] If at first Anna had control over her character and over her play, later she loses the grip of 'the reality' – she starts living the life of her character. All her thoughts are focused on how to achieve the stillness of beauty, how to make her story noticeable among dozens of other similar stories and how to make the other characters play along. Anna constructs her story and enjoys the performance. Was her happiness possible? The divorce could happen and the second marriage could happen, but Anna knows that happy stories 'do not sell'. The famous first sentence of the novel confirms that it is tragedy and drama that the audience discusses and remembers: "All happy families are alike; each happy family is unhappy in its own way."[98]

3.2. A game of omens and foreshadowing

Superstition has always been an essential part of Russian culture. It is reflected in Russian sayings, proverbs and beliefs as well as various folk material (songs, couplets, fairy tales, etc.). Many writers used the richness of folk magic, fate and unnatural powers in their works – take, for instance, Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Bulgakov. Therefore, Anna's interpretation of the watchman death as a bad omen and her explanation of the dream is not surprising for Russian reader. From the context point of view this belief in the unnatural powers appears to be seamless to Russian realia. But what is there behind this interpretation? How Tolstoy creates the architecture of *Anna Karenina* using the superstition?

[96] G.S. Morson, Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time (Yale University Press, 1996), p. 76.
[97] Ibid., p. 73.
[98] Tolstoy, Lev, Anna Karenina, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 1.

In this subchapter I will explain how Morson understands foreshadowing and omen, and how these devices, used by Tolstoy in *Anna Karenina,* contribute to the interpretation of Anna choosing a role of a 'diva' and playing along with it accepting her fate. In his book *Narrative and Freedom* Morson insists on the difference between the terms 'omen' and 'foreshadowing':

> For those who believe in omen, the future leaves its mark on the present …. If the event caused by the future is detectable only by the reader, we speak of foreshadowing. If it is recognized as a sign by the character, he will have discovered an omen.[99]

These definitions prove themselves to be useful in several scenes in *Anna Karenina* as the characters actually interpret something like the watchman death or the Frenchman Landau's prediction to be omens; while other hermeneutical codes are noticed only by the reader or the viewer and do not seem significant or meaningful in the characters 'eyes', like, for instance, Frou-Frou's death, which I will describe later on. Oftentimes, the reader does not know if the sign was decoded by the character since he or she does not reveal it, however, their behavior could be an index that holds the key to the question if the sign was understood consciously or not, like, for example, Anna's phrase from Wright's film "But I'm damned anyway" at 00:54:18. In this case the choice between foreshadowing and omen comes as a complicated one due to the ambiguity of the scene. Should it be interpreted as the implied author making a hint towards Anna's tragic fate or should it be interpreted as 'an unreliable character', 'predicting' her fate? In other words, the reader or viewer has to be aware that omens are not always true, as they can be just the 'unreliable character's' notions about their life and, in Anna's case, fate. Concerning the nature of 'true' omens Morson states that:

> A genuine omen, if there are any, is to be accounted for in terms of the event it foretells. It happens because the future event is going to happen: it results from backward causation or teleological pulling.[100]

[99] G.S. Morson, *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (Yale University Press, 1996), p. 63.
[100] G.S. Morson, Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time (Yale University Press, 1996), p. 62.

This type of an omen will make the reader not only suspect certain 'bad' events to happen but also go back and forth in the story in order to 'reveal' what the omen meant.

Foreshadowing, on the other hand, is a device used by the implied author in order to direct the implied reader's interpretation of the events in the story. Christian has described the beginning of *Anna Karenina* as a foreshadowing: Stiva's "adulterer foreshadows that of his sister (with whom there is a strong family likeness) and who is also to probe unfaithful to her marriage vows"[101]. He identifies Stiva's predicament as a structural tool that "allows Anna to be introduced as a mediator and to stress the irony of her position as one whose own marriage is to break down as an indirect result of trying to mend somebody else's."[102] Stating that foreshadowing is a compound and complicated method I disagree with Morson's argument that "foreshadowing … appears as the most artificial, and therefore most recognizable, of literary devices."[103] It is indeed artificial and sometimes even forced on the reader but I do not see the way of foreshadowing being 'the most recognizable of literary devices'. Like, for example, the episode in the novel where Oblonsky kids play with the toy railway. It does not give the reader any hint on what is going to happen until the second and third reading when it becomes clear that the narrator uses the railway in order to foreshadow Anna's death under the train.

Supporting Morson's arguments from *Narrative and Freedom* I contend that foreshadowing is an important aspect of *Anna Karenina*. As Anna lives in the imagined world, superstition and omens are an essential part of her life. And even the reader getting involved in this fictional game also searches for hints, foreshadows and signs in both novel and film. Karenina does present herself as the heroine of a novel with omens and foreshadowing but, in my view, so does the 'implied author'[104] in order to indirectly emphasize his character's belief in her exceptionality. As Tolstoy understands the artificiality of such a literary device he does not provide Natasha Rostova's or Andrey Bolkonsky's lives in *War and Peace* with it, but marionette existence of Anna Karenina. He uses the device of foreshadowing to trick the reader

[101] R.F. Christian, *Tolstoy: An Introduction* (Cambridge 1969), p. 193.
[102] Ibid., p. 193.
[103] G.S. Morson, *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (Yale University Press, 1996), p. 7.
[104] Here my views differ from Morson's in his second book where he states that Tolstoy just outlines the foreshadowing allegories. See G.S. Morson, *Anna Karenina in Our Time* (Yale University Press 2007), p. 123.

in believing Anna and her theory of predetermination. While Morson seems to identify a conflict between the implied author's foreshadowing and the character interpreting omens, I think these two narrative devices go hand in hand.

3.3. Anna as a fated/non-fated heroine

Can the difference between omens and foreshadowing be located in the media of film? As film is an intermedial product and means of communication it has a possibility to provide signs on at least three different levels: visual, verbal and musical. Opposite to the Morson theory of omens and fatalistic ideas being a part of Anna's consciousness, Wright uses the device of foreshadowing to a high extent. I see this as an attempt to dramatize Anna's image and to stress her more and more outspoken self-image of being an actress, like in the case of the scene of horseracing. In this subchapter, I will apply two concepts, provided by Morson, to both the novel and the film *Anna Karenina* and will compare the results in the end.

Races and horses

In numerous researches on Tolstoy's novel the horseracing scene is regarded as a projection of Anna and Vronsky relationship – it is the same obsession Vrosnky shows towards Anna and Frou-Frou, the same rebellion disobedience that Anna and Frou-Frou possess in the beginning of their relationship with Vrosnky, and more or less the same ending for both of them. However, in *Anna Karenina in Our Times* Morson insists on the differences in the relationship between Anna and Vronsky and Frou-Frou and Vronsky. One of his arguments is that in the former relationship Anna is in control while in the latter it is Vronsky. The last statement appears to be considerably vague. It is hard to agree with the fact that during the horse-riding man is in control of the horse, as Vronsky is of Frou-Frou according to Morson. Yet horse is an animal and the rider can only instruct it so it would follow his orders. Therefore, it is Frou-Frou who is really in control of the situation as well as it is Anna.

Though I do agree with the Morson's overall point when he accents that Anna committed suicide while Frou-Frou was murdered because of her master's mistake.[105] Nevertheless, I cannot support his opinion stating that the cases of Frou-Frou - Vronsky and Anna - Vronsky are so different that they cannot be seen as mirroring

[105] G.S. Morson, Anna Karenina in Our Time (Yale University Press 2007), p. 123.

each other and as a result the former cannot foreshadow the latter. The power relations of these two pairs were discussed above and appeared to be quite similar; and the same can be referred to the suicide/murder dichotomy. Frou-Frou got her back broken literally, and Anna's – metaphorically. Vronsky, in Anna's mind, did create a situation in which she lost everything her life consisted of – the society, which gave her appreciation and occupied all her spare time, and the son, who was the only person she really 'loved' before Vronsky came around. When Anna lost it all, her back - the base of her body (existence) – got broken. She decided to commit suicide in order to "to avenge herself on Vronsky for what she believes she has suffered because of him"[106], as it was stressed by Alexandrov. Vronsky becomes the causation of the death of both – the horse and the woman. The moment he killed Frou-Frou he brought the relationship with Anna on to a new level: Anna saw how Vronsky treats someone he loves – and from now afraid of loosing him she becomes hysterical, nervous and tensed showing a different side of a 'diva' role.

In the film it appears that Joe Wright constructs the similar reading of this scene. Firstly, he changes the colour of the horse – from brown-black to white – in order to show how Anna's idea of Vronsky being 'a prince on the white horse'[107] is demolished and how different his real image is from the one she created in her head. Secondly, there are several scenes in the movie that illustrate the parallelism of Anna and Frou-Frou's 'fates'. The first reference is given at 00:54:26 when Anna asks Vronsky if he loves her only but Vronsky admits that it is Anna and Frou-Frou whom he loves. The second one is presented only visually at 1:37:26 when Anna choosing a present for Seryozha at the toyshop fixes her eyes on a toy white horse that is an iconic projection of Frou-Frou. Then the camera changes the focus from Anna's face to the toy horse thereby confirming the correlation on the cinematic language. Here Wright uses foreshadowing device not to 'predict' Anna's death but more in order to draw the analogy between the horse and the woman, both belonging to Vronsky, praised and adored by him. He does not see an actual difference between the two as Anna as well as Frou-Frou are objectified in Vronsky's mind.[108]

[106] V.E. Alexandrov, *Limits to Interpretation: The Meanings of Anna Karenina* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), p. 189.
[107] "Принц на белом коне"
[108] The scene where he pats a horse is visual reflection of the scene of the sex scene with Anna, in which he caresses her in nearly the same way.

Railway.

Due to her image, the monologue she pronounces before the suicide and especially to the way of execution Anna Karenina becomes one of the most famous self-murderers in literature. "Railway is a leitmotiv, 'protagonist'"[109] in Anna's life as the reader sees it. Indeed, it is very hard to ignore the railway and its role in *Anna Karenina*. As the reader already knows the key events in Anna's story happen on the train station. I start from the end and mention the catharsis of the novel – Anna's suicide.

Being a 'diva' Anna strongly believes that the suicide on the railway station is exactly what "she has to do" and that it was predetermined by her role of a tragic heroine:

> Tolstoy's Anna Karenina offers a psychologically complex exploration of belief in omens. … Anna Karenina believes in omens and indulges in fatalism. From the time she meets Vronsky and proclaims the death of the trainman 'an evil omen,' we see her thinking repeatedly in terms of living out stories that are already told, prepared in advance, and governed by an attractive if implacable fate. Her stories lead to catastrophe but ensure significance.[110]

This meeting with Vronsky is more stressed in the film where the bad omen seems to be even more 'fateful' as the train moves and runs into a watchman in the very same moment when Vronsky kisses Anna's hand for the first time. Such timing provides the scene with a magical aura and the dramatic effect is added with usage of different frame speeds. Thus, this enforcement of the omen leaves an imprint on Anna's mind and happens to become crucial for her.

Of course, there are more references to the railway that appear in the novel, that allow us to talk about repeated foreshadowing sign. Tolstoy provides a number of those - like the toy railway that Oblonsky children play in the beginning of the novel, Anna's accidental meeting of Vronsky's mother on the train to Moscow, the 'train' game Seryozha plays with his classmates as well as the scene at Bologoe railway station when Vronsky declares his love for Anna. In the film not only one sees Seryozha playing with the toy railway when Anna tells him that she has to leave for Moscow but it is also the ball scene that presents the allusion to the sign and indicates the foreshadowing as such. The vital dance of Anna and Vronsky on the ball is

[109] R.F. Christian, *Tolstoy: An Introduction* (Cambridge 1969), p. 207.
[110] G.S. Morson, *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (Yale University Press, 1996), p. 71.

accompanied by the soundtrack by Dario Marianelli and *Dance With Me* music piece in particular. Listening closely to the four and half minute diegetic sound composition one will notice its peculiar rhythm: starting from 00:30:50 the rhythm of the rattling train wheels created by a percussion instrument becomes more and more identifiable, as well as the tempo of the music speeds up. This transition from slow to fast stands for the tension of feelings between Anna and Vronsky and with its rhythm and tempo symbolizes the acceleration of the train. The scene ends with Anna looking at herself in the mirror terrified by her own actions and feelings – and the train moving on to her in the mirror. As the train could not be physically present in the ballroom and, therefore, actually seen by Anna - this sign can be interpreted as Wright's own case of foreshadowing, which he used to dramatically 'hypercharge' Anna's performance.

Words

There are several episodes both in the novel and film that present to the audience the case of broken communication or even 'overheard' speech. It is an interesting phenomenon as through these fragments the narrator gives a reader or a viewer an opportunity to fill the so-called 'gaps' in the narration. In chapter XXI of Part 1 when Kitty comes to greet Anna she overhears her saying "No, I won't cast a stone."[111] It is known that this passage mentions the Biblical quote "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8:7), refers to the "problem of adultery, guilt and condemnation."[112] Ironically, Anna speaks of adultery not knowing yet that this ball will become the beginning of such for her. The subject of the conversation between Anna and Countess Vronskaya in the hypertext is also unclear but not because one does not hear the whole dialogue but because of the manners that do not allow Anna to discuss what society gossips about and what is intimate to her newly met fellow traveller:

> - Was it love?
> - Always. My sons are ashamed of me. But I'd rather end up wishing I hadn't than end up wishing I had - wouldn't you?
> - I . . . I don't know . . .

[111] L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 79.
[112] C.J.G. Turner, *A Karenina Companion* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press 1993), p. 134.

Here again it seems ironical that Anna does not know the answer and even feels intimidated by Countess's question – whereas the viewer will get to know that when she meets 'her man' she barely has any moral doubt. Countess who is performing so liberal and modern talking to Anna later will become the one to condemn Anna and Vronsky relationship as being inappropriate in spite of their love, which can be interpreted in terms of special rules of the society and their dual morality.

The audience also becomes a witness to several conversations or lines between Anna and Vronsky that appear to become meaningful in terms of future. In the film when they see each other at Betsy's dinner Anna asks Vronsky for a cigarette, which is an inappropriate request for a woman of Anna's status at such a public event. While movie critics blame the director for such an inconsistency[113] – I will suggest analyzing the functions of this narreme. Firstly, one should not forget that it is an artificial Russia one is looking at, the events take place in the theatre – and the director does not try to hide it, on the contrary the performativity is demonstrated by all means. By its signified this scene is similar to the timely inaccurate costumes used in the film[114]. Both scenes are not constructing or mirroring the reality in a historically correct mimetic way. They are the cases of highlighting not only the artificiality of what is happening in the ninetieth century Russia but also on the cinema screen. The transparency of the abstract level of narrations is a marker for the viewer to not forget about the sham nature of the narration. Therefore, this 'cigarette case' can be seen as the breakthrough of the implied author who states that no matter how one changes the signifier of the novel (the frame) the signified (the performativity) will still remain the same. Secondly, Anna is a diva who has to stand out from the masses. Her smoking in public is a daring act that she knows will be discussed in the society (and the implied author knows that it will be discussed in the audience). Thirdly, the core of the scene is determined by Anna asking for a cigarette, a signifier for a 'forbidden fruit', taking one drag and starting coughing immediately. This could be interpreted as Wright's foreshadowing of Anna's reaction to her affair – being confident and in love in the beginning she becomes more and more tied with it and starts 'choking' without freedom, society and family.

[113] I. Bererzenko, *Joe Wright: Anna Karenina* (Yat, 3.01.2013).
[114] "I maybe overemphasized the 1950s details, especially on Anna's costumes because I wanted the audience to recognize we weren't necessarily doing an authentic period piece", says Jacqueline Durran, film's costume designer. See E. Wilson, *Hidden Passions, Visible in Clothes* (The New York Times, 26.12.2012).

In the same scene Vronsky tells Anna that there can be no piece for them – only misery or the greatest happiness ("And whether we will be the happiest or the unhappiest of people – is in your power"[115] in the hypotext). These words mentioned by Vronsky in surge of passion and desire to win Anna over will turn to be prophetic in the sense that in future Anna will make a choice. However, that choice will not be expected by her lover, which could be explained by Anna's 'diva' role and the desire to be original. If one assumes Anna's behavior to be adjusted right from the moment of the watchman death then the following verbal message can righteously be called omen. After the intimate scene between Anna and Vronsky in the novel, he feels himself as a murderer, while in the film it is Anna who calls Vronsky 'murderer'. Murderer is a word with a strong negative connotation, Anna, however, shouts it in the moment of pleasure during the first sexual intercourse with her lover. Due to the incongruity of verbal and visual connotations of the scene its signified appears to be fatidic. Anna is unable to enjoy this moment without dramatizing the situation and victimizing herself.

I state that both Tolstoy and Wright do not see foreshadowing as only a device to predict the future and structure the story. They offer their audience to play a game, the rules of which are simple: they create a certain myth around Anna[116] and let the audience decide what they read or see. The myth is created by means of all the allusions used in the hypo- and hypertext that has a potential to be interpreted as the foreshadowing. One can take a 'shortcut' and decide that Anna is fated and her suicide was predetermined. While others, will follow late Morson's views and state that all the allusions exist only in Anna's head. I would like to position my point of view in the middle of this discourse. I suggest understanding some of the allusions as the cases of foreshadowing and others (the majority) as the projection of Anna's 'inside' on 'the outside', of the ideas existing in her mind onto the narration. Both implied authors share Anna's focalization in a way that they help her to produce her microcosm onto the diegesis in order to let the audience decide if Anna is fated or not. Tolstoy saw a different way for Anna – in the novel he uses sideshadowing[117] to let

[115] L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 140.
[116] I use the definition of 'myth' proposed by Barthes.
[117] Levin, who also had suicidal ideas, makes his choice and Anna could have done this as well. Instead, she chooses to follow the path of the melodramatic heroine and fulfill the destiny.

Anna choose her path. Wright does not leave her with a real choice as his omens and foreshadowings, due to the nature of the medium he uses, are brighter and more memorable than the ones in the novel.

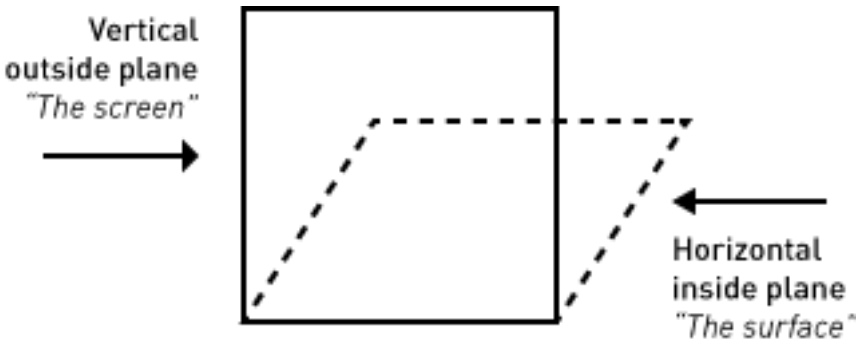
4. The Filmic Construction of Anna

As it was mentioned above Tolstoy in his novel outlines Anna's existence in the artificial society and her proximate belonging to this performance by acting the role of a 'diva'. Wright develops the metaphor and brings it to the new level directly presenting the viewer the theatre as scenery for *Anna Karenina*. I have already proved the coherence of such an aesthetical device with Tolstoy's worldview and novel's context. The next step for me is to prove that Joe Wright together with Tom Stoppard 'cracked' Anna's code and presented her as a 'diva' in the film. In this chapter I will discuss the cinematic devices Wright uses to underline Anna's narcissism and her staging.

4.1. Positioning

Wright's Anna seems to feel comfortable on the stage of the theater in clear opposition to Levin, for instance. She fits there seamlessly and is perceived accordingly. Since the majority of shootings, as it was already established, take place in one theatre sphere the special attention should be paid to the 'stage' dispositions, movements of characters and overall to its semiotic significance. First and foremost, it is the centralization of Anna that is worth mentioning. As a diva Anna always has to be in the center of attention. In this subchapter I will discuss her physical centralization in the film adaptation.

Visual arts establish certain rules in positioning the character. As the eye movement and the culture of attracting the gaze are of the importance for the image the attention should be consolidated in the center of the composition. The same goes for a film production – the main character is the one to be usually seen in the center of the screen. Anna Karenina by Joe Wright provides the audience with no exception to this rule: if one puts the dot in the center of the screen – Anna will be the character to surround and occupy the dot the most. However, this technique in no way delivers the effect of staging to the movie whereas the placing of the character in the central position of the other plane – horizontal one – does (Picture 3).



Picture 3

Depending on the perspective and the camera angle the characters might seem to be in the center of the action but in fact they are just in the center of the frame. It is the vertical 'outside' plane, which can be seen only by the viewer and that was discussed earlier as a central position of a main character in a composition. But there is another, horizontal 'inside' plane. It is the floor, the ground or any other surface the action takes place on. Here the characters are usually spread out (like during Levin and Kitty 'second proposal' meeting) but not Anna. She is repeatedly placed in the center of the surface, and, moreover, it is an emphasized by the 'ornament' in the center, as can be seen in Shot 1, Shot 2 and Shot 3.

Shot 1.

Shot 2.

Shot 3.

In the given shots one can notice the ‘geometrical’ positioning of Anna in the center of the circle figure on the floor or the circle figure of her dress. Such a concentration of attention on Anna is coherent with her narcissistic nature, discussed earlier. With this geometrical focusing Wright exaggeratedly shows Anna’s desire to be in the center of attention and to ‘act’ in the middle of the stage.

4.2. Framing

A frame can be explained as a boundary that separates different levels of existence from each other. Like, for example, the frame of the painting is an index that marks the line between the artistic world and the real world. This is affirmed by Whatling: “Common to all of the media is the convention of using some form of boundary marker to define the space occupied by an image or by separate narrative episodes.”[118]

[118] S. Whatling, *Narrative Art in Northern Europe, c.1140-1300: A Narratological Re-appraisal*; PhD dissertation (University of London 2010), Chapter 3.

In this thesis, 'framing' will be discussed as a transmedial device and will be approached in the broad sense - an emphasized and bounded context will be referred to as framed. Concerning the aim of framing it is helpful to quote Mandelker who states that, "the outer frame of the artwork demarcates an interior world separated from the external world and focuses our attention on the artistic status of what is enclosed."[119] Frames lead a reader or a viewer to a certain interpretation of a narreme. I state that the extensive application of framing made by Wright in the film adaptation is used to show how Anna presents herself and perceived by others[120] in a way that could be interpreted as the emphasis of her 'diva' nature.

Wright employment of the 'framing' in relation to *Anna* Karenina was not pioneering. Framing is already used by Tolstoy's in the novel. In the scene of the ball in Moscow Anna is presented as a still portrait:

> Anna stood there *surrounded by women and men* <…> Anna could not have been in lilac, … her loveliness consisted precisely in always *standing out from what she wore*, … what she wore was never seen on her. And the black dress with luxurious lace was not seen on her; it *was just a frame*, and only she was seen – simple, natural, graceful, and at the same time gay and animated[121].

From Tolstoy's description it becomes clear that Anna is not just one of the ladies on the ball – she is different in her appearance. This confirms the central idea of framing as a literary device "to delimit the depiction as an independent structure separated from the wall on which it is hanging, that is, to draw a line of demarcation between the observers' reality of physical objects and the picture's fictitious world creating an illusion."[122] And indeed, the narrative attention is drawn from the ball as a whole to the main character – the ball 'freezes' when the narrator describes Anna and her clothing in an iconic projection. Precise description of the dress as well as her looks is diversified with a number of hints objectifying Anna, like the transparency of all the

[119] A. Mandelker, F*raming "Anna Karenina": Tolstoy, the Woman Question and the Victorian Novel* (Ohio State University Press 1994), p. 15.
[120] In the film Anna is framed on several levels: implied author's, narrator's, characters' focalization and the cases of Anna framing herself. In this chapter if Anna is focalized and framed by the cinematic narrator I see no use in adverting to it as it is preassembled. However, all the other cases of framing (by Anna herself or by a character) will be mentioned.
[121] L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 79.
[122] H. Lund, *Text As Picture: Studies in the Literary Transformation of Pictures* (Edwin Mellen Press Limited 1992), p. 82.

material things that she wears and even the specific mentioning of the 'frame'. Being a luxurious and beautiful art object from the "other land" (St. Petersburg) Anna is surrounded by viewers and admirers. This invisible frame separating her from the others at first does not even 'allow' Vronsky to approach her. The reader can physically feel Anna's magnificence created by Tolstoy in this description – and that is how one will see Anna throughout the whole novel until her death, which brings the new framing to the heroine's image. It was already noticed by Amy Mandelker that the ultimate framing in the novel comes with the last accords:

> The action of severing the body from the head, the ornamental proclivities of a knotted rope or beading of blood, and, most important, the preservation of Anna's severe head from damage all suggests a form of framing – the heroine is transformed into a mute bust of immobile marble; she is ultimately see as an inanimate object d'art.[123]

In a film there are several ways to create the kind of a boundary between the particular character and the rest of the world. In the following subchapters I will explain how Anna is framed in *Anna Karenina* film by Joe Wright in terms of physical frames, immaterial frames and iconic projections. Also, I cannot help but discuss ekphrasis in the novel as the point that leads to the idea of objectifying Anna in the film.

4.2.1. Physical frame

One of the first physical framings the viewer encounters in the film at 00:22:05, when on her visit to Oblonky's Anna is playing with her niece while sitting inside of a big dollhouse. Whereas she is too big to fit in the dollhouse (even smaller Kitty is placed outside the toy) Anna still gets into it in her unconscious desire to be framed as a heroine and the main character of a narrative. Being inside the house symbolizes not only her self-centralization but also her doll existence - being played with and commanded by someone. Anna is a real life doll – she is beautiful, she is admired.

She repeatedly confuses freedom with its constraint. In the episode where Anna confesses to Karenin in the carriage, the verges of a carriage frame her and her husband. They are stuck with each other, as to the fact that the literal frame of the

[123] A. Mandelker, *Framing "Anna Karenina": Tolstoy, the Woman Question and the Victorian Novel* (Ohio State University Press 1994), p. 94.

carriage, as well as the metaphorical frame of their marriage, limit them in their moves. Trying to instruct Anna and bring her back to the right path Karenin here represents more of a father figure than the one of a husband. Like a teenage rebel, unable to contradict Karenin, Anna breaks out of this frame leaving the carriage and escapes thinking that now she is free. She has no understanding of her position whatsoever, which is signified by her finding herself in a labyrinth as soon as she gets out of the carriage.

4.2.2. Mirrors and glass

One of the arguments Morson uses to prove Anna's narcissism is her repeated 'positioning' before the mirror.[124] Indeed, Anna takes a good care of herself and her looks constantly changing the clothing, ordering it and dressing for an occasion. It is impossible to deny her craving for admiration and enjoyment of herself. And as the reflection in a mirroring space becomes fatal in the original story of Narcissus – in a particular sense it also destroys Anna's world.

In a cultural context mirrors are seen as a symbol of distortion and fallacy. Mirror as an object possess quite a specific feature – it does not have its own look but it reflects the looks of other objects. The reflection of an object cannot reproduce the 'real' image of it as projected into the mirror glass it becomes a representation of an object. Mikhail Bakhtin also commented on the power of mirror:

> A very special case of seeing my exterior is looking at myself in a mirror. It would appear that in this case we see ourselves directly. But this is not so. We remain within ourselves and we see only our own reflection, which is not able of becoming an immediate moment in our seeing and experiencing of the world. We see the reflection of our exterior, but not ourselves in terms of our exterior. I am in front of the mirror and not in it. The mirror can do no more than provide the material for self-objectification, and even that not in its pure form.[125]

Therefore, a person cannot see him- or herself in a mirror as the mirror only reflects the 'exterior' not the interior (which is a real person). In short, what is seen in the mirror is not absolutely accurate to what is really happening. Therefore, Wright chooses mirrors and reflections to serve as the ultimate misrepresenational source in the artificial world of Russian nobility.

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[124] G.S. Morson, *Anna Karenina in Our Time* (Yale University Press 2007), p. 65.
[125] M. Bakhtin, Art and Answerability (University of Texas Press 1990), p. 32.

Heroes' reflections in the mirror or in any other specular surface can be seen as a special case of framing. Looking in the mirror the character can choose what to see depending on the angle one prefers, the mood or the image one wants to see. This frame has a powerful and magnetic nature – it encourages the beauty but distorts the reality. The other case of distortion is presented in the film with the glass. Not being able to possess such mystique as mirrors, glass still has its place in the narrative. It serves as another sort of deformation tool and aims to frame objects and people in a certain way. Both tools are used by Wright – often in rotation, sometimes admixed – in order to provide the viewer with this artificial aftertaste that appears after played out scenes or implausible situations. Hereafter I will give some examples.

In someone else's eyes Anna is repeatedly framed through the lense of the glass, especially in the eyes of her two husbands – Vronsky and Karenin. The first time the former one sees Anna at the exit of the wagon, he hardly notices her – it is her gaze he remembers. And then he examines her carefully through the window when she greets her brother. This scene becomes a marker for Vronsky's attitude towards Anna. He first saw a beautiful stranger, then framed her by the window glass, focusing only on the cheerful and attractive woman. Alexey Vronsky will continue framing Anna until he understands that she is not just a 'charming creature' - she is a person with her own thoughts, doubts and problems. This realization will make him reflect on the nature of his love as Anna's beauty soon becomes a burden for him: "His feeling for her now had nothing mysterious in it, and therefore her beauty, though it attracted him more strongly than before, at the same time offended him"[126]. However his officer's honor will not allow him to fundamentally change the situation. Regarding Karenin, he is wearing glasses in Wright's film, which, considering the attention given to glass and mirrors offers an aspect for interpretation. It has been established that Karenin is an officiary – he has neither time nor intention to analyze the feelings of his wife. Firstly, he claims that jealousy or suspicion is degrading for both husband and wife and does not understand why Anna behaves the way she does. One might think Karenin is blind not to see what all others – Kitty, society, the audience – see. But Karenin is not blind – he just sees Anna through the prism of his dignity. His glasses, being a sign of his purity and honesty, distort what happens

[126] L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 546.

around him; therefore, his view of the world becomes delusive. The glasses he frames Anna with are always with him as well as an illusion they create.

The only time Anna is seen before the mirror alone is during her nervous breakdowns – right after the ball and after the childbirth. Inner imperfections expressed in the dissatisfaction of the circumstances or herself drive Anna to look at herself and see if these frauds have revealed themselves on her face. In other scenes even though one sees a mirror in the frame – Anna does not look at it. This could be explained as marker for Anna's confidence in herself. She does not have to be constantly present in front of the mirror to make the audience understand that she is taking care of herself. The viewer just needs one look at how elaborately she is dressed and how every detail of her appearances is thought out.

According to Bakhtin, mirror and glass can be used as a device to demonstrate distorted relationships between people in the film. After the ball in Moscow Vronsky starts his love attack on Anna and follows her everywhere waiting for her to surrender to his feelings. A series of gazes exchange is to follow this 'hunt' but Anna remains cool until the scene in the theatre. Vronsky confesses to Betsy that he is becoming ridiculous in his attempts to win Anna and Anna is quite annoyed with a company of Lidya Ivanovna… At 00:40:26 Vronsky looks at Anna and she gives him a look back at 00:40:41 – and their 'eyes' meet. These gazes are performed through the opera glasses, which is an unusual way of communication of two lovers. Vronsky's framing focuses on Anna as the object of his hunt while Anna's projects a specific image on him. At first she saw Vronsky as an attractive officer but whereas his affection became stronger and his stalking did not end – Anna starts seeing him in a slightly different way. The moment she looks at him through the opera glasses she ceases to be a woman pleased with attention and transforms into a woman that creates the image of an ideal man with the help of projection. She sees a handsome military man, who is not giving up on her no matter how much she ignores him, and who could be her savior from Lidya Ivanovna's world. Next time, she frames Vronsky with opera glasses at 1:00:57 in the scene of horseracing. Now, after she told him she is pregnant she sees him as a father of her child and her 'new' husband - a man to save her from the 'cruel' Karenin and a man to devote her life to. Anna only focuses on a handsome man on a horse thinking that this is her prince on a white horse but she forgets the context of this image – the gaze through the glass takes away that it is the horseracing - not a celebration devoted to Anna - and that Vronsky is not here to protect her – he

is to win the competition and all his thoughts are there. Ironically, what brings Anna back to 'reality', or to false reality, is her mirror. She looks in the mirror – and when it has attested her beauty it suddenly shows Karenin in it. As the reader and the viewer know, Karenin came to the horseracing worried about his wife without any cruel intentions. But in Anna's mirror he appears as a horripilate stalker breathing down Anna's neck and watching her from the corner. For Anna, the mirror distorts the image of the concerned and caring but helpless Karenin. He appears in Anna's mirror unexpected and unwanted. Anna does not want to be bound to this man; however, the reflection in the mirror demonstrates and reminds her that she is. Karenin is Anna's husband - not Vronsky. Mirror reflects this fact – and Anna shuts it down. The difference of Anna's perception of two similar stalking cases – Vronsky's and Karenin's – is evident: one pleases her, while another terrifies for no reason. Interestingly, for Karenin the opera glasses become a kind of magnifying glass of truth. While his own glasses, as discussed above, exclude the things he does not want to see, another kind of glass, on the contrary, helps him to get hold of what is happening between his wife and Vronsky. Double glass or the imposition of one distorting glass onto another for Karenin results in a certain epiphany.

The most important men and rivals in Anna's life are also given a chance to frame each other. At 1:12:19 Vronsky and Karenin see each other through the glass doors of Karenin's house when the former is coming to see Anna and the latter is leaving the house. The framing here emphasizes the men in their respective roles - the husband sees nothing but insidious lover in Vrosky, and the lover sees nothing but a husband in Karenin. This dramatic scene of a lover and a husband stuck in a small entrance hall highlights the distortion of communication caused by Anna – the magnetic centre. The mirror and glass interior of the area provokes an association with the house of mirrors where people's reflections are distorted. The tension of this situation reverses the supposable connotation of a 'fun' room association transforming it into shameful and dramatic scenery. The stereotypical vision of each other was imposed on Vronsky and Karenin in the mirror and glass hall. When Anna is at the point of death, these men, seeing each other face to face, realize that their roles in her life are not that simple as stereotypical 'a husband' and 'a lover'. Karenin is blessed with forgiveness and decides that he has to take care of Anna no matter what; and ashamed Vronsky is positioned lower than Karenin, who at that moment is in control of the situation.

The last episodes of the film are the ones where Anna's performance reaches its peak. She is so frustrated and lost between her roles that her mind starts projecting her imagination onto reality – and the specular focus becomes companion in this mental journey. During their biggest quarrel Anna and Vronsky look at each other through the mirrors – the sign of distorted communication. At first it is only Anna, who's reflection in the mirror both Vronsky and Anna (as well as the viewer) see. Anna has lost the glamorous part of the diva role and is on the downward path according to her role of a tragic heroine. Her character is translocated into 'the world behind the looking-glass', the world of fiction. Her understanding of what is happening is lost while her focusing on 'love for the sake of love' is developing. Vronsky also does not recognize her, just as Karenin does not understand her behavior. Her mirror reflection is a signifier for the lost and artificial Anna – it is the last touch to the finalization of the heroine's image created by Anna. Although, from 1:55:57, Vronsky starts being reflected in the mirror as well. Anna's yet another comment on his faithfulness makes him loose his temper - he bangs the table with his fist and raises his tone. The reflections in the mirror indicate that this is a different Vronsky, a helpless and desperate man unable to cope with the woman he once loved. In the overall context of the scene, instead of two people quarrelling, there are four – real Anna (though it is not much of her left) and real Vronsky who still loves her, and fictitious, dramatic Anna, and Vronsky who is unsatisfied with the new Anna ('exteriors' in Bahtin terms). Vronsky rejects to play along with Anna's new character, which only develops her suspicions in him not loving her and cheating on her. These thoughts are projected onto the glass window of a train at 1:56:03. The deceiving material shows Anna the image of Vronsky having sex with Princess Sorokina, the scene that only exists in Anna's mind. Vronsky's affair, though not confirmed, is seen as a perfect dramatic climax for Anna's story. She decides that this scene has potential and that she will not only revenge everyone but also will fulfill the omen of the tragic heroine by committing suicide. The question is if Anna was searching for the cause to condemn Vronsky and commit suicide? And would she continue to accuse Vronsky even if she knew nothing happened between him and Sorokina just to fulfill her 'tragedy'?

4.2.3. Ekphrasis

Obviously, representing herself as an art object is not enough for Anna – the 'diva'. As all the beautiful and narcissistic characters, Anna ought to have a portrait of herself, the one that could freeze her beauty forever. The first portrait that belongs to Anna's past life with Karenin is described in Chapter XIV (Part 3) of the novel. It is an oval portrait in a gilt frame performed by a famous artist. Karenin sees her eyes, looking 'insolently and mockingly' at him, her beauty is 'insolent and defiant' to him, her whole image makes him 'brrr'.[127] When Anna has confessed her affair with Vronsky to him, he only sees in this portrait the repulsive image of the woman who betrayed him.

But it is the second portrait, the marker of the new life, that Anna is proud of and the omniscient narrator pays special attention to. Vronsky is unable to paint Anna's portrait during heir journey to Italy, so they turn to an emigrant painter from Russia - Mikhailov. He manages to find and to put on the canvas Anna's special beauty and, therefore, performs the portrait perfectly. However, the moment the artist enters Anna and Vronsky's home he feels the artificiality of the situation. Firstly, Anna observes that Mikhailov who likes to look at her never talks to her. The reason for such a behavior is that the artist sees her as nothing else but an art object without the life of her own – exactly what Anna sought after. Secondly, he compares Vronsky's art to a big wax doll a man caresses in front of people who are really in love[128]. Mikhailov's portrait is reminded to the reader in the scene where Levin comes to see Anna. His attention is drawn to Anna's portrait, on which he sees "a lovely living woman with dark, curly hair, bare shoulders and arms, and a pensive half smile on her lips, covered with tender down, looking at him triumphantly and tenderly with troubling eyes."[129] Of course, Levin is already allured by Anna even before seeing her – that is the effect of a portrait, which "lives and "stands out from its frame"[130], as it was noticed by Mack Smith. The dehumanization of Anna is finalized by Levin's though: "Only because she was not alive, she was more beautiful than a living can

[127] L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 284.
[128] Ibid., p. 479.
[129] Ibid., p. 696.
[130] A. Mandelker, *Framing "Anna Karenina": Tolstoy, the Woman Question and the Victorian Novel* (Ohio State University Press 1994), p. 108-109.

be."[131] With the help of the portrait Anna presents herself as an art object in order to emphasize her 'outside'. However, Levin sees the 'inside' of her being – that she is alive and, therefore, possess human features and behavior.

Finally, Anna enters the room and Levin again describes what he sees:

> … the woman of the portrait in a dark dress of various shades of blue, not in the same position, and not with the same expression, but at the same height of beauty that the artists had caught. She was less dazzling in reality, but in the living woman there was some new attractiveness that was not in the portrait."[132]

It is the comparison of the live version with a portrait one that Levin is engaged in. In both cases ekphrasis slows the narrative down and makes the reader reflect on Levin's vision of Anna, of her presentation of herself. This, as Mandelker claims, "establishes a tension between narrativity and statis: in the ekphrastic moment, the stilling of the narrative flow required for ekphrastic exposition is renarrativized in the course of the temporally elaborated descriptions of the visual work of art."[133]

The juxtaposition of the two portraits of Anna – still and alive – reveals that painted Anna's beauty is brighter and has more power to attract. Alive Anna, on the other hand, has, in Levin words, something that makes her attraction new, different from the one in the portrait. I would say that the features of an alive human being, that Anna tries to abolish in herself, make her appealing to men. The mistake made by Dorian Grey hunts Anna: she cannot break out from the frame surrounding her beauty. She, on the contrary, wants to become a 'portrait' so the perception of her as an art object will be finalized.

In the film neither of the portraits appear in the frame. The literary ekphrasis – the description of Anna's beauty – is replaced with a different kind of framing, namely, the intertextual quotation. As Cluver limits ekphrasis with the following definition: "the verbal representation of a real or fictitious text composed in a non-verbal sign system" – it becomes difficult to apply the term in any studies other than literary. However, I stand in line with the researches that try to broaden the term and use it in film studies, like D.L. Poulton and L.M. Sager, for instance. They claim that

[131] L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 696.
[132] Ibid., p. 697.
[133] A. Mandelker, *Framing "Anna Karenina": Tolstoy, the Woman Question and the Victorian Novel* (Ohio State University Press 1994), p. 102.

there is a number of types of ekphrasis and defend the existence of the cinematic one. Not going too far in the details in the study of this film, I will concentrate on the intertextual quotation of ekphrastic nature, or, in other worlds, on the visual references to cultural codes. Connection to paintings, based on similarity creates a special case of visual intertextuality, where references mixed with the frame create a synthesis that evokes a certain association or meaning in the mind of a viewer. Wright provides an iconic projection[134] of a number of paintings onto Anna's image in the film.

1. An allusion to *Medusa* by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1597).

Anna had certain powers over two men – Karenin and Vronsky. Like a Medusa she subjects them, but unlike the mythological character she does it with her beauty. In this scene the viewer sees Anna focalized by Karenin. He sees that her hair, the signifier of her beauty and her power is spread over the pillow in disorder like the snakes on Medusa's head. She is scared that after the childbirth her beauty is gone, which to her means death. And for Anna there is no life without beauty. Therefore, the signified for this scene is that for Karenin Anna, as Cravaggio's Medusa has lost her power, she is no more a woman that could hurt her husband – she is now helpless and destroyed.

[134] "The act of decoding a framed field of vision in the exterior concrete world of objects as if it were a picture is called iconic projection". See H. Lund, *Text As Picture: Studies in the Literary Transformation of Pictures* (Edwin Mellen Press Limited 1992), p. 73.

2. An allusion to the *Portrait of an Unknown Woman* by Ivan Kramskoi (1883).

The famous and beloved Russian painting of an unknown woman became some sort of a symbol of Russianness in the Western world. "Many people just think she's sort of like Anna Karenina. She has that kind of special feel, that special Russianness"[135], says Valerie Hillings, the curator at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. By the indexical connotation of her clothing the woman on a portrait belongs to an upper class. And it is the clothing in particular that brings these two images together. However, in this scene the cinematic omniscient narrator makes an attempt to frame Anna's 'inside', not her 'outside'. It is the inner world of the depicted woman that makes the viewer wonder about her connection and similarity to Anna. She is beautiful, feminine, sublime, and even a bit haughty. She intrigues the viewer with her gaze from above and her mysterious eyes. One can say that the woman is aware of her beauty and wants to demonstrate it in a best possible way, like Anna always does in the film. Her gaze is aking to the gaze of Karenina – it is enigmatic and incomprehensible. No matter how much the viewer wants to know what is on Anna's 'inside', he or she fails. While the facial expression of Kramskoy's heroine can be

[135] S. Benjamin, *Rethinking Russian Art* (CBS News, 11.02.2009)

interpreted, Anna does not allow anyone in her ‘inside’ world, which is signified by the veil covering her face. Anna got into the character and, therefore, nobody is to know what is happening in the inner world of a diva. Otherwise, the illusion will be destroyed.

3. An allusion to *Mariana* by John Everett Millais[136] (1851).

[136] Mentioned by Anton Dolin in a film review. See A. Dolin, *Can it be her…* (“Ужель там самая”) (Openspace, 10.01.2013).

The image is based on the character of Mariana from William Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. Mariana was to be married, but was rejected because of the circumstances; the painting depicts her waiting for her betrothed to arrive. Mariana is weary, exhausted of waiting, which seems like eternity. Her body position and her dressing indicate her willingness to receive the man however she is alone. For Victorian woman it is not only a man that she gets with marriage – it is her life, as before she did not have an opportunity to fulfill her womanhood – taking care of her family, bearing children, etc. The painting suggests a unique psychological state of a woman in expectation of her man, with whom her life will arrive. The very same scene is witnessed in *Anna Karenina* film when pregnant Anna expects Vronsky to visit her. She is tired of waiting and irritated by Vronsky: "No! I will not live like this! This waiting for hour after hour not knowing when I ever see you again." Karenina was waiting for her lover to come as it was her life he was bringing with him – she was just sitting in a chair doing nothing – just waiting. It is Vronsky, who frames Anna with this iconic projection. Due to the tone of the scene, he projects the image of a classical 'needy' woman on Anna.

4. An allusion to *The Swan Princess* by Mikhail Vrubel (1900).

Another famous Russian painting that has a strong iconic and symbolic connection to the film. *Anna Karenina* was not alien to Vrubel. Few years before creating the given painting he did an illustration for Tolstoy's novel. One cannot affirm that the Swan Princess on his painting is 'copied' from Anna's image; nevertheless, there are subtle features in the Princess that point to Tolstoy's Karenina, like a certain resemblance in appearance, some demonic fire in her eyes and, of course, a touch of mystery in the whole image. Wright's Karenina is dressed in a white dress, the model of which is similar to the garment of the Swan Princess – that is where the iconical projection takes place. Moreover, the symbolical meaning of Swan Princess in Russian culture alludes to inner similarities of two fictional characters. The Swan Princess is the heroine of Alexander Pushkin's *The Tales of Tsar Saltan*, inspired by the images of ancient Slavic myths. She is a creature of dual nature: she is a woman and a bird, she belongs to water and earth, she is light and dark – all of it at the same time. Anna with her beauty, duality and power over men resembles Pushkin's character and Vrubel's model. As it is said in the description of a painting: "In aesthetics of symbolism swan

symbolizes inspiration, which may elevate the soul and at the same time bring it to the knowledge of the dark, mysterious side of life."[137]

5. An allusion to *The Madonna.*

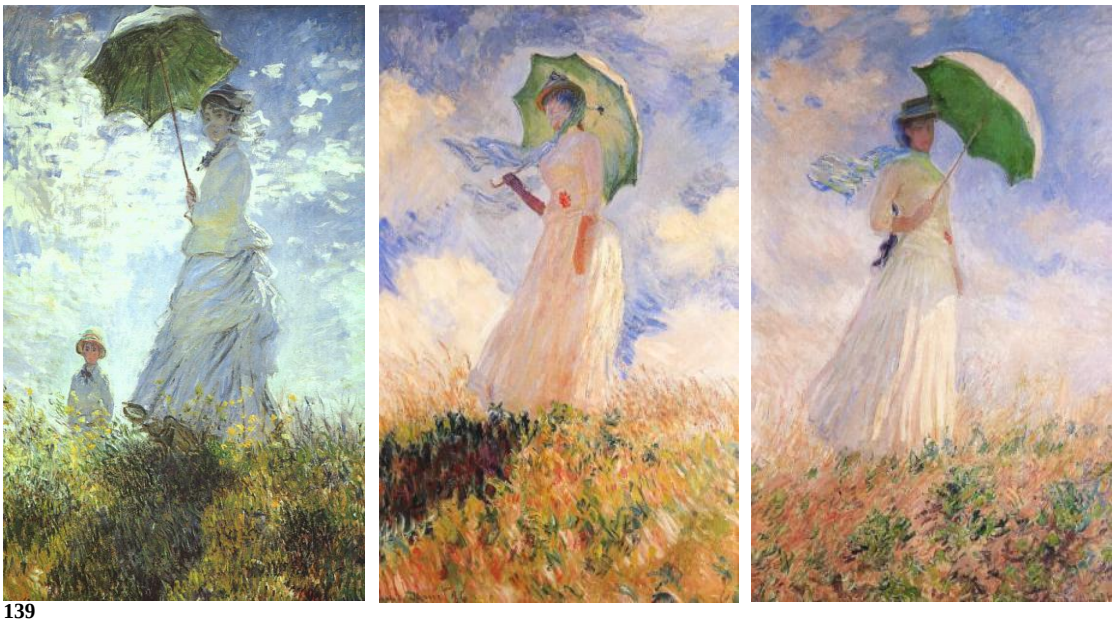
Madonna, the image of a woman holding a child, is a symbol of motherhood all over the world. There is not much to denote when one sees such an image, however, in Anna's case one can talk about her performing the famous 'mother' position in order to frame herself as a good mother. She did not think of her child when she left her

[137]Tretiakov Gallery Painting Description, *The Swan Princess* by Mikhail Vrubel.

husband and spent time travelling around Europe but when she sees him – being unfamiliar with his life and being ignorant of his feelings she does the only thing she is able to in such circumstances – she poses. This position is a part of a myth that Anna creates around herself. In this scene she frames herself using the visual stereotype of Madonna in order to resemble the 'good mother' image. She even makes Karenin believe this performance when he focalizes on this image for a moment. One can notice the suffering on his face[138] as this image made him doubt his decision to prohibit Anna to see her son.

The majority of these allusions quote mythological, fictional or Biblical characters. They were designed in order to demonstrate Anna's dehumanization and transformation into the heroine of the painting, novel or any other work of art. Anna strived to make everyone believe that she is a true 'prima donna', with the 'outside' prevailing over the 'inside' that other characters also start projecting images on her. Moreover, this dehumanization takes a mythological turnover as the narrator elevates her to the certain rang of characters – the ones that possess magical powers but situated the furthest as possible from the reality. As the Swan Princess or Medusa are the characters that never will cross the threshold of a story they belong to – Anna will never break free from the shackles of the frames she invented. However, it is not only Anna that is framed in terms of ekphrasis – it is also the world around her that incurs objectification:

[138] 1:39:06



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[139] "La Promenade, la femme à l'ombrelle" by Claude Monet (1875); "Essai de figure en plein air (vers la gauche)" by Claude Monet (1886); "Essai de figure en plein air (vers la droite)" by Claude Monet (1886).


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The cinematic narrator uses Monet and his series of paintings portraying people without faces dressed in white on a background of the nature of all shades of green. Monet's characters are usually engaged in their own life experiences and the nature serves as beautiful scenery able to emphasize their feelings, thoughts or emotions. It is life in itself that the artist depicts. Anna also assumes that when she is outside, in the nature, she is living life as well. However, the viewer with the help of the narrator and his quotations of Monet reveals that Anna still exists in the frame. Even when she thinks she escaped and that she is alone – it is just the illusion projected onto her. Karenina has already established herself as an object – and there is no way back for her.

4.2.4. Immaterial frame

In terms of physical frame, it is reasonable to discuss clothing. The costumier of *Anna Karenina* transformed Anna's wardrobe in a symphony of materials, textures and colors. Whether Tolstoy's Anna always protruded out of her dresses, Wright's Anna is framed by the beauty of her attires. The fur that always accompanies Anna's public appearances becomes not only a symbolical frame of death for Anna but also a stereotypical index of her Russianness. However, I state that Anna's dressings are more valuable in the field of hermeneutics and, therefore, I will discuss them later. In

[140] "Lady in the Garden" by Claude Monet (1867); "Women in the Garden" by Claude Monet (1866).

this subchapter it is the absentia of Anna's clothes, used as an immaterial frame, which is the issue on the agenda.

There is one detail in Anna's appearance that constantly becomes the focus of public attention – it is her deeply exposed shoulders. A number of times during her public appearances Anna wears dresses that reveal this, one would say, intimate part of a woman's body. The first time the exposed shoulders appear is in the scene of the ball in Moscow, where Anna appears escorted by her brother Stiva. This image alludes to the paintings of the most powerful women of Russia, like, for instance, Ekaterina the Great, who is usually portrayed with bare shoulders. This is a symbol of a woman's confidence and her power. Anna, belonging to an upper class and knowing that she is beautiful, deliberately bares her shoulders asserting her independence and permissiveness.

Throughout the narrative of the film the viewer catches the sight of the naked Anna a number of times. Nakedness as a visual sign decoded by the viewer due to a certain pattern of stripping that happens gradually:

	Scene	**Anna's nakedness**
1st denudation	Anna at Betsy's dinner	Bare shoulders
	Karenin warning after dinner	Naked to the waist
	Sex scene with Vronsky	Fully naked
2nd denudation	Anna confesses to Karenin	Dresses
	Anna leaves the carriage undressing	Bare shoulders
	Anna second confession to Karenin	Bare shoulders
	Anna and Vronsky on the bed	Fully naked
3rd denudation	Anna sees her son	Dresses
	Opera scene	Bare shoulders
	Sex scene with Vronsky	Fully naked

Anna's denudation in the film cannot only be seen as a denotative sign, since it has a strong connotative meaning. The metaphorical tool used here demonstrates the comparison of the physical stripping of a person with his or her mental stripping in front of other people. Anna's first stripping signifies her surrendering to Vronsky - she uncovered her feelings in front of him. Second denudation is 'in front of her

husband'. Immediately after she confessed her adultery, she starts stripping as a sign that her marital decency is gone. No matter how hard Anna tries to get back on a good wife track, she ends up naked in Vronsky's bed, preliminary notifying her husband that she cannot live without her lover. And the last naked confession Anna makes is to society, when she appears at the opera. Her naked shoulders do not affect people as her nakedness did before. And this sex scene after the opera is bitter, as Anna knows that her openness, metaphorical nakedness, in front of the society failed to deliver a positive result. Anna gets naked in three dimensions crucial to the narrative: lover – husband – society – and she comes clean to all three exposing her 'real' self.

4.3. Colors

As clothing is an essential part of 'diva' image construction, in this subchapter I will discuss how Anna is dressed in the novel and in the film. I will mainly focus on the colors scheme, which Tolstoy outlines and Wright develops, as this tool offers the viewer a number of codes to interpret.

One of the brightest scenes in Tolstoy's Anna Karenina where Anna appears at the ball in a black dress despite Kitty's expectations that Karenina would wear purple becomes a point of no return in reader's perception of colors. Starting from this narrative section in the novel one will never go back to viewing the colors mentioned by Tolstoy as denoted signs. As one reads, Kitty made it very clear that she imagines Anna on the ball in purple ('лиловый'):

> 'I imagine you in lilac at the ball.'
> 'Why must it be lilac? Anna asked, smiling.'[141]

Even knowing that Tolstoy is the master of details, one cannot say that this small passage sounds like a natural talk of two women. Its artificiality is determined not only by the differences in Anna's and Kitty's social status and by the fact that they saw each other for the first time but by its connotational richness as well. Kitty – a young beautiful girl – is confronted with the 'celebrity' of St. Petersburg society – a charming wife of a powerful and governmental man. She wants to secure her position

[141] L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 73.

of a 'beautiful blossoming flower' and the princess of the ball without someone like Anna stealing her thunder – that is why she offers her to wear purple. Kitty is both naïve and smart at the same time – she is confident in her beauty, drunk with success and spoiled by her parents – she thinks that her influence and charm can make other women (like Anna, f.ex.) follow her instructions. She understands that Anna is a beauty and that purple, being a color of appeasement and relaxation, will settle down Anna's 'brightness'. As well as a deeper significance of the purple as the color of attenuation[142] and anility[143], which Kitty intentionally wants to project on her 'competitress'. However, she is obviously intimidated by Anna in some mystical way ('…you're always the best of all.'[144]). That will reveal itself after the ball, when Kitty, as if she finally understood it, will tell herself that 'there's something alien, demonic and enchanting in her'[145]; but before – she could only guess or feel Anna's 'diva' nature on the unconscious level, which is confirmed by Tolstoy with this notorious purple – the color of magic, sorcery and enigma. Kitty being a little girl tries to extinguish Anna's 'fire' but intuitionally she feels that there is so much more to Anna's power than everybody thinks – that is the connotation of purple and Kitty's point of view.

When it comes to Anna's rebel – she ignores 'the purple suggestion' and wears black, the color chord that is simpler to denote (Anna's tendency to simplicity is revealed by Dolly in Chapter XVII). Black is an intensive color connected to the very same 'demonicity', noted by Kitty, as it is traditionally interpreted in terms of mystery and magic. Also, one would say that this color is not that popular for such celebrations like a ball because of its associations with death and grief (customarily worn to a funeral and by widows). Therefore, the question relevant to the color discussion concerns the role black plays in this particular narreme. It is safe to say that Anna, being 'an attention vampire', wore black in order to distinguish herself from the crowd and to catch the eye of Moscow society. 'Diva' always has to stand out, especially by the means of her 'outside' attributes. It is also very possible that the black dress is a foreshadowing sign used by Tolstoy to give the reader a hint that on

[142] V. Kandinsky, "O Duhovnom v Iskusstve" in *Colour Psychology* (Moscow 1996), p. 200 - 205.
[143] J.C. Cooper, *An illustrated Encyclopaedia of Traditional Symbols* (London 1978).
[144] L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 72.
[145] Ibid., p. 83.

the ball one is witnessing the metaphorical death of Anna's settled life and even the future literal death of the character.

In the movie Joe Wright follows Tolstoy's guidelines for the color schemes to stress their oppositional roles in the performance and goes further with the color game adding more emphasis to this tool while making it a structural phenomenon. Tolstoy describes Kitty being dressed in pink (with lots of laces, which can mean that her dress looked like a light pink one), which was usual for a woman of her age. However, Wright deviates from the Tolstoy's canon and dresses Kitty in white, which cannot be just a coincidence. With this move he emphasizes the contrast between two main female characters – Anna and Kitty. The oppositions between black and white come out as metonymical antithesis: Kitty dressed in white while Anna wearing the dress of the opposite color. The audience sees Kitty entering the ballroom at 00:23:28 dressed in white – the soul of innocence, young beauty and success, Anna - at 00:26:36 – personifies different qualities – she is confident as a lady of her age and status is supposed to be. Anna is entering the room together with Stiva, her brother, and both of them are wearing black, which may allude to their family 'black' soul tendency to lie and cheat. When Kitty sees Anna she asks Korsunsky to take her there - so he does a carry that at first glance may seem a strange move, especially for the dancing on the ball. One might notice that this carry is more suitable for a ballet performance – and that Kitty is wafted towards Anna on the shoulder of her partner. Then the plot develops when Vronsky stalks Anna for the whole evening, which results in their dance – that becomes, as one sees it through Kitty's eyes, the signifier for their passion for each other. Anna and Vronsky (as well as the others on the dance floor) move in a special manner that has a rather distant relation to the dancing on the balls in Russia of XIX century. This dance is staged in allusion to the ballet in order to stress the theatricalization. In the end of the scene one understands that Vronsky has changed towards Kitty and now he favors Anna. This story with its connection to ballet leads us directly to the famous Russian ballet *Swan Lake* (music by P.I. Tchaikovsky). Its fabula is based on a story of prince Siegfried who meets a good fairy and a white swan Odette and immediately falls in love with her. However, during the ball he is fascinated by Odile, the Black Swan, wherein he sees Odette. And now because of Siegfried unfaithfulness and the sorceries Odette will remain a swan forever. In the sjuzhet of the ballet there are a lot more plot twists, characters and magical spells but what interests us in Swan Lake is the scene on the ball, which

Wright links to the ball scene in Anna Karenina. The colors of the dresses are the first signifiers for Kitty identified with the White Swan and Anna – with the Black Swan (Anna is presented as an evil character 'stealing' Kitty's beau from her), Vronsky's behavior is similar to Siegfried's as both men favor one lady in the beginning and the other one in the end, and that is not mentioning the ballet moves. One will also notice that Siegfried (Vronsky) 'returns' to Odette (Kitty) in the dance but they dance at a distance from each other as both know that it is too late - the promise is already broken and the spell will remain forever.

However, the ball scene is not the only one where Wright uses the classical white - innocent and good – and black – wicked and bad – oppositions. Karenina is also dressed in black when she is going to see Vronsky privately for the first time (00:49:24). This could be explained by the tradition of wearing black for the funeral; and Anna with her tendency to dramatize presents her physical affair with Vrosnky as a downfall[146].

In the key episodes of narrative, the scene in the opera, Anna appears in a white dress. She has changed roles with Kitty as she wafts downstairs making her way through the crowd – one could easily mistake her for a White Swan, but the White Swan that goes down the social ladder judged and overlooked by the public of the opera. Anna's status in the opera is the opposite to the one on the ball – white and black colors respectively – she does not have either family or a husband, she is in the position of a jealous woman (towards Princess Sorokina) and 'she broke the rules' of the society. Therefore, the confident and powerful black is out of the question. In her attempt to attract attention and present herself as innocent, she mirrors Kitty's dressing at the ball wearing white, the color of purity. With reference to the Russian culture white color has an ambiguous meaning. One can denote Anna's white dress as a reference to a traditional bridal ritual of wearing white as a symbol of the bride's chasteness. As Vronsky and Anna did not have any wedding ceremony and they live together without any official rights to do so – it is possible that Anna with her first public appearance after her 'second marriage' wanted society to see her as a bride/wife, innocent and guiltless. Yet there is a second, hidden, level of connotation

[146] 'But the lowder he spoke, the lower she bent her once proud, gay, but now shame-stricken head, and she became all limp, falling from the divan where she had been sitting to the floor at his feet <…>'. See L. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Pinguin Books 2012), p. 149.

to the solemnity of the white dress that is linked to the white cerement (cerecloth). In Russia, the figurative mentioning of this element of burial clothes (белый саван) is more popular (snow that covered the ground looks like a cerement)[147] than the literal one[148]. As Ushakov states in his dictionary the cerement is a burial robe of white cloth for the dead.[149] Since Anna's visit to an opera became the moment of her social death - her white dress seems an appropriate clothes for this ritual. Anna is dead for the society and her white cerement is the symbol of it.

Along with monochromatic color scale Wright dresses up Anna in other colors, the most notable of which are burgundy (wine red/bordeaux) and navy blue (dark blue). Burgundy is noticeable on Anna in two scenes – at princess Betsy's dinner (where Anna mentally surrenders to Vronsky) and at the train station before the suicide. Here Wrigth demonstrates the echoing of scenes with the help of the color – Anna gives up to Vronsky and Anna gives up to her melodramatic heroine role. She started the affair in burgundy and she ended it in the dress of the same color, thus, creating the circularity of the composition and intensifying the artificiality of her behavior. When Anna wears dark blue the viewer witnesses a strong discrepancy of form and content of the heroine's image. Whereas blue is the color of harmony and satisfaction for Anna it marks her two emotional crisis. She goes in for dramatics three times throughout the movie: for the first time on the horseracing and afterwards in the carriage with Karenin (blue dress), the second – when Vronsky is late to visit the pregnant Anna (blue dress) and for the third – when Anna and Vronsky quarrel before her suicide (blue walls). The contrast between the color's connotation and Anna's emotional state (her 'outside' and 'inside') serves to reveal the discrepancy of the 'real' and the 'virtual' worlds Anna exists in and her role-playing in general.

The colour atmosphere of furnishings should be discussed, especially when they complement the scenes where that are closely connected to the 'clothing' theme. The viewer sees Anna to get dressed twice. The first time - at the very beginning of the film (00:02:35) - Anna is calm and confident, her moves are smooth and flowing, even though she gets dressed by Annushka – she is in control of the situation. The heroine stands in the center of a light blue room full of light reminding the viewer of a

[147] "Ноябрь в исходе, земля на неоглядное пространство покрыта белым саваном."; *Господа Головлевы*, М.Е. Салтыков-Щедрин.
[148] "Видит труп оцепенелый; Прям, недвижим, посинелый, Длинным саваном обвит."; *Ludmila*, V.A. Zhukovky.
[149] D. Ushakov, *Tolkoviy Slovar Ushakova*.

goddess in the skies. She is framed by this image; and therefore is presented as a work of art the painter covers with colors and details. In the second scene (01:55:04), the interior has changed completely – it is a small dark room with the artificial light (blue) or no light at all. To narrow the room even more Wright uses close ups as opposed to wide and mid shots in the beginning. Here Anna barely moves; she completely looses hold of 'reality', and is no longer in control of the situation or even herself. However, this inertia is also a pert of her role as a diva, or its latest variant – the tragic heroine.

4.4. Soundtrack

I have already stated how Anna is staged visually with the help of positioning, intertextually by means of framing and hermeneutically by means of colours. In this subchapter I will discuss intermedial staging of Anna that is expressed through audio referentiality. Being a compound media film provides the viewer with both visual and audio hints. One of the most powerful and meaningful of those is a soundtrack.

I want to discuss two songs from Anna Karenina movie in this connection – a folk song *In The Meadow Stood a Little Birch Tree* ('Во поле береза стояла') and *Along the street the blizzard sweeps* ('Вдоль по улице метелица метет'). It is worth mentioning that both songs are performed in Russian whilst the movie is produced in English and targeted at Western audience. Due to this factor the sign encoded in the songs becomes multilayered. For the Western viewer these songs are nothing else than an allusion to the Russianness and a reminder of the chronotope of the film. Whereas the Russian audience reacts otherwise – for such a viewer there is a strong cultural code in each song. Unfortunately, in the film the privilege of decoding the meaning of the songs is granted only to Russian speaking viewers that are also familiar with Russian culture. I myself see the soundtrack as a crucial part of staging Anna in the 'centre' of the diegesis. Therefore, hereafter I will make an attempt to explain the connotative system of these two audio signs so it will become available to the Western audience.

The first Russian song, that appears in the film is *In The Meadow Stood a Little Birch Tree*, is a well-known folk song popular all over Russia. With its simple and memorable tune the story of a young Russian woman who loves a man other than her old husband:

Во поле береза стояла,
Во поле кудрявая стояла.
Люли, люли, стояла!
Люли, люли, стояла!

Некому березу заломати,
Некому кудряву заломати,
Люли, люли, заломати!
Люли, люли, заломати!

Я пойду погуляю,
Я пойду погуляю.
Люли, люли, погуляю!
Люли, люли, погуляю!

Белую березу заломаю,
Белую березу заломаю.
Люли, люли, заломаю!
Люли, люли, заломаю!

Срежу с березы три пруточка,
Срежу с березы три пруточка.
Люли, люли, три пруточка!
Люли, люли, три пруточка!

Сделаю три гудочка,
Сделаю три гудочка.
Люли, люли, три гудочка!
Люли, люли, три гудочка!
…

Вы, гудки, не гудите,
Вы, гудки, не гудите,
Люли, люли, не гудите!
Люли, люли, не гудите!

Стара мужа не будите,
Стара мужа не будите.
Люли, люли, не будите!
Люли, люли, не будите!

Старой спит со похмелья,
Старой спит со похмелья.
Люли, люли, со похмелья!
Люли, люли, со похмелья!
…

Встань, мой старой, пробудися!
Встань, мой старой, пробудися!
Люли, люли, пробудися!
Люли, люли, пробудися!

Во поле береза стояла,
Во поле кудрявая стояла.

On the field there stood a birch-tree,
On the field there stood the curly birch-tree,
Lyuli, Lyuli, there it stood!
Lyuli, Lyuli, there it stood!

Nobody shall break down the birch-tree,
Nobody shall tear out the curly birch-tree,
Lyuli, Lyuli, break down!
Lyuli, Lyuli, tear out!

I will go for a walk,
I will go for a walk.
Lyuli, Lyuli, I will go!
Lyuli, Lyuli, I will go!

I will break down the white birch tree,
I will tear out the white birch tree,
Lyuli, Lyuli, break down!
Lyuli, Lyuli, tear out!

I will cut off three little twigs from the birch-tree
and make three little pipes of them,
Lyuli, Lyuli, three little twigs!
Lyuli, Lyuli, three little pipes!

I will make three gudoks,
I will make three gudoks.
Lyuli, Lyuli, three gudoks!
Lyuli, Lyuli, three gudoks!

You, gudoks, don't tootle,
You, gudoks, don't tootle,
Lyuli, Lyuli, don't you tootle!
Lyuli, Lyuli, don't you tootle!

Don't wake the old husband up,
Don't wake the old husband up.
Lyuli, Lyuli, don't awake!
Lyuli, Lyuli, don't awake!

The old man is asleep with a hangover,
The old man is asleep with a hangover,
Lyuli, Lyuli, from a hangover!
Lyuli, Lyuli, from a hangover!

Get up, my old man, wake up!
Get up, my old man, wake up!
Lyuli, Lyuli, wake up!
Lyuli, Lyuli, wake up!

On the field there stood a birch-tree,
On the field there stood the curly birch-tree,

Люли, люли, стояла!	Lyuli, Lyuli, there it stood!
Люли, люли, стояла!	Lyuli, Lyuli, there it stood!
Некому березу заломати,	Nobody shall break down the birch-tree,
Некому кудряву заломати,	Nobody shall tear out the curly birch-tree
Люли, люли, заломати!	Lyuli, Lyuli, break down,
Люли, люли, заломати!	Lyuli, Lyuli, tear out.
Я пойду погуляю,	I will go for a walk,
Я пойду погуляю.	I will go for a walk.
Люли, люли, погуляю!	Lyuli, Lyuli, I will go!
Люли, люли, погуляю!	Lyuli, Lyuli, I will go!
Белую березу заломаю,	I will break down the white birch tree,
Белую березу заломаю.	I will tear out the white birch tree,
Люли, люли, заломаю!	Lyuli, Lyuli, break down!
Люли, люли, заломаю!	Lyuli, Lyuli, tear out!
Срежу с березы три пруточка,	I will cut off three little twigs from the birch-tree.
Срежу с березы три пруточка.	And make three little pipes of them.
Люли, люли, три пруточка!	Lyuli, Lyuli, three little twigs!
Люли, люли, три пруточка!	Lyuli, Lyuli, three little pipes!
Сделаю три гудочка,	I will make three gudoks,
Сделаю три гудочка.	I will make three gudoks.
Люли, люли, три гудочка!	Lyuli, Lyuli, three gudoks!
Люли, люли, три гудочка!	Lyuli, Lyuli, three gudoks!
…	
Вы гудки, загудите!	You, gudoks, tootle!
Вы, гудки, загудите!	You, gudoks, tootle!
Люли, люли, загудите!	Lyuli, Lyuli, tootle!
Люли, люли, загудите!	Lyuli, Lyuli, tootle!
Встань мой милый, пробудися!	Get up, my loved one, wake up!
Встань, мой милый, пробудися!	Get up, my loved one, wake up!
Люли люли, пробудися!	Lyuli, Lyuli, wake up!
Люли, люли, пробудися!	Lyuli, Lyuli, wake up!
…	
Войди в терем, веселися,	Enter into the house, rejoice,
Войди в терем, веселися!	Enter into the house, rejoice,
Люли, люли, веселися!	Lyuli, Lyuli, rejoice!
Люли, люли, веселися![150]	Lyuli, Lyuli, rejoice!

Due to its context the song seems to be a suitable ‘soundtrack’ for Anna’s part of the story – but Wright doesn’t use it in such a way. He transfers it into a non-diegetic narrative structural tool that is supposed to show the oppositional connections between Anna’s and Levin’s stories. The song appears at 1.09.11 when the narration

[150]Russkie Pesni, Ed. Ivan Rozanov (Moscow, 1952). My translation.

shifts from Anna's confession to Karenin to Levin's life in the country. On the one hand, being a traditional folk song it becomes a 'marker' used to show the transition from the city to the village, but on the other, – it becomes an interlink between Levin – for the scenes with whom this song is used – and Anna – who is experiencing the exact same situation that is described in it. Thus, the viewer gets the ides that there is no escape from Anna. No matter, which story the narrator tells – Anna will be in it. Like she is interfering in the relationships of all the couples in the film – Dolly and Stiva, Vronsky and Kitty, Levin and Kitty; she also is 'appears' in the part, where her presence seems impossible (Levin's estate in the country). Wright brings this audio tool so the viewer will never get away from Anna's story – as she is the main heroine of the diegesis, she is the 'diva'.

The other Russian song used in the Wright's film is *Along the street the blizzard sweeps* ("Вдоль по улице метелица метет") refers to a different type of a song – less folky and more classy one. There are no allusions to the countryside way of life or peasant traditions but direct narration of a love story. *Along the street the blizzard sweeps* is no exception – it is usually sung by a female (like the most famous version performed by Anna German) about a man in love who wants his beloved girl to let him look at her:

Вдоль по улице метелица метет, За метелицей мой миленький идет; Ты постой, постой, красавица моя, Дозволь наглядеться, радость, на тебя!	Along the street the blizzard sweeps, My beloved man follows the blizzard; Wait, wait, my beauty, Let me look at you, joy.
На твою ли на приятну красоту, На твоё лишь толь на белое лицо. Ты постой, постой, красавица моя, Дозволь наглядеться, радость, на тебя.	At your pleasant beauty, At your white-skin face. Wait, wait, my beauty, Let me look at you, joy.
Красота твоя с ума меня свела, Иссушила добра молодца, меня. Ты постой, постой, красавица моя, Дозволь наглядеться, радость, на тебя.[151] …	Your beauty drove me out of senses, Palsied me, a good fellow. Wait, wait, my beauty, Let me look at you, joy.

The first aspect to point out is the context of the song that reflects the first private meeting of Anna and Vronsky at Bologoe train station – it is a retrospective. As one remembers the strongest characteristics of this scene, depicted by both Tolstoy and

[151] Used at 00:56:14 and 01:37:20

Wright, is a massive blizzard, the 'objective correlative of Anna's 'inside', which is reminded to the viewer with the first lines of the song. Then the director brings to the screen the second part of the verse where man in love tries to stop the woman from going away ('постой') as he wants to spend time with her and to look at her. In the film Vronsky as well tries to convince Anna about his feelings for her but she escapes into the train wagon – and from that point for Vronsky she represents the concept of 'stealing beauty'. Not to mention the fact that Anna's charm indeed made Vronsky act 'crazy'. From these evidences the connections between the song and the first declaration of love between Anna and Vronsky is proven. Anna is obviously the heroine of this song, whose 'outside' the man – Vronsky - is admiring.

The second aspect of this particular soundtrack to be noticed is its placement within the overall structure of the film. For the first time it is used diegetically at 00:56:14 during the fest in the woods/barracks before Vronsky shows his brother the horse to be ridden during horseracing. The officers are singing in a usual drinking song manner, performing the male part of the story with a particular passion. This again, is a hint that Anna implicitly by the means of audio reference is a participant of the party she is not present at. The second time one can hear the song at 1:37:20 in the scenes where Anna picks the toys for Serioga's birthday (she also sees the white horse toy in the shop) and afterwards finds out that she is not allowed to see him.

In Wright's film adaptation Vronsky's mother, played by Olivia Williams, calls all the pretty women 'a wonderful creature'. Such dehumanisation of women characters seems typical for the society Anna exists in. When marriage is a business and girls belong to the mental 'sales catalogue' of Princess Myaghkaya the representation of women characters becomes framed. However, some characters tend to be limited with the frame in pursuit of the similarity with an art object. Anna with her narcissism[152] and her desire to be a heroine of a novel is one of those characters. With the help of cinematic language Wright tends to demonstrate how she is framed with iconic projections and colors, positioned in the center physically and musically – as a marker for her narcissism, egoism and role-playing – for her 'diva' nature. However, he states that it is not only Anna, who focalizes on these features, other characters being involved in this role-playing, also perceive her in such a way. In his

[152] G.S. Morson, *Anna Karenina in Our Time* (Yale University Press 2007), p. 67.

turn, implied author of the film also supports this image of Anna, offering the viewer a hint for a ‘new’ interpretation of the character.

5. Conclusion

Any literary film adaptation is a variation of the reading of a novel. No one can deny that the world can be perceived, similarly as literary works can be interpreted, in different ways. There is certainly 'your own' vision of Anna, 'your own' vision of Vronsky and 'your own' vision of Karenin. Some directors meet the expectation of the reader-viewer and present the version that is the closest for 'your own' perception. Therefore, some choose Sophie Marco or Keira Knightley as 'their' Anna, while others cannot picture anyone else than Tatiana Samoilova playing the role. The affection to a particular adaptation is just the matter of taste.

Nevertheless, taking into account the differences of the tastes of the audience, I believe that some adaptations are worth paying special attention to. There are film adaptations that have the potential to make the reader-viewer rethink his or her opinion of the source text. In my thesis, I state that *Anna Karenina* by Joe Wright is one of them.

The majority of readings of Anna Karenina are fixed (at least in Russia). The traditional view on Anna as a victim of the society is firmly lodged in the 'majority'[153] of minds. With the help of Wright's eccentric adaptation and Morson's research, I have reinvestigated Anna's character and presented a 'new' vision of her. My main points to prove in the thesis were:

1. The society Anna lives in is artificial and compared to a theatre play.
2. Anna is a product, as well as a member, of this theatricalized society.
3. As a result, Anna is also a performer, an active actress on the stage of the social theatre.

These two premises and the conclusion form a foundation of my work. I started with defining Tolstoy's view on society. His disapproval of the upper classes lifestyle and his perception of it as something artificial and hypocritical are reflected in the film. Wright uses the visual metaphor of the theatre to recreate Russian high-class society. Theatricalization is manifested in the performance, a certain type of Pandemonium, in which characters participate by choosing particular roles. Filmic reading highlights the certain aspects of the novel, like, for instance, the miscommunication on both verbal and non-verbal level. Anna, on her side, is involved in a certain myth creation,

[153] See G.S. Morson, Anna Karenina in Our Time (Yale University Press 2007), p. 57.

which she brings to life by staging herself. She is a 'diva'. I support Morson's presentation of Anna as a character who sees herself as a fated heroine, that exists in terms of her own microcosm. During the narration, Anna's 'inside' is blurred by her 'outside'. In the end she loses the grip of 'reality' and makes an orchestrated exit. "But Anna is not destroyed by others, and self-indulgence is not her fundamental flaw. Anna is not punished by Tolstoy for her sexual fulfillment. In a fuller-sense, Anna's story is a moral tragedy of self-enclosure"[154], states Gustafson quoted in Mandelker.

Wright attempts to apply this 'non-traditional' perspective on Anna in the film. Here, Anna's staging is an interesting phenomenon. It is not only Anna who desires to be perceived as an art object and a diva – it is also the implied author that is involved in this performance on the heterodiegetical level. Anna's myth is mediated and produced in terms of verbal, visual and musical aesthetics. The multimedia text underlines the author's intention for Anna to be perceived as being a part of a certain game. By using the devices of framing, positioning, the usage of certain colours and soundtracks, Wright produces Anna's microcosm onto the diegesis, thus providing the viewer with a riddle - 'guess what is real and what is not'.

Joe Wrigth generates the meaning by applying 'ostranenie' device onto Tolstoy's novel. Just as Tolstoy, he refuses to see the world as habitual and therefore invites the viewer to see the characters of the novel from the 'defamiliarized' perspective. The society is a farce, Anna's victimization is artificial – it is a product of her imagination. Moreover, Wright even mocks Anna with his choice of the actors. The implied author of the novel presents Karenin as a disgusting man, while in Wright's film he is played by Jude Law, which makes him appealing to the viewer. For the role of Anna's 'grand lover', Vronsky, he invites Aaron Taylor-Johnson, a young man with a cherub appearance. Anna is a fabricator of illusion and the constructor of her life – and that is how she is depicted in the new film.

In the end of Tolstoy's novel, when Anna Karenina rides in the carriage towards her death, she notices all kinds of people that she finds disgusting and hypocritical. Mandelker suggests that Anna goes through "an almost allegorical

[154] R.F. Gustafson, *Leo Tolstoy: Resident or Stranger* in A. Mandelker, *Framing "Anna Karenina": Tolstoy, the Woman Question and the Victorian Novel* (Ohio State University Press 1994), p. 42.

parade of the Vices."[155] Anna despises these people but she forgets one very important detail. Personifying of one of the vices - Vanity, Anna is an essential part of this society. She is no different or exceptional – she is just one of the 'active' marionettes that play a role in the theatre of Russian upper class of XIX century. With Wright's film coming out on the screens, it was high time to revise Anna and give people the possibility to reinvestigate her, which I did in my thesis.

[155] A. Mandelker, *Framing "Anna Karenina": Tolstoy, the Woman Question and the Victorian Novel* (Ohio State University Press 1994), p. 137.

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