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A psychoanalytical analysis of Anton Chekhov's The Darling and Anyuta in the light of Karen Horney's theory of moving toward people [In English]

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ABSTRACT

Chekhov is known as a leading writer of short stories who depicted the reality of his society through details of certain behaviors. Blind compliance and obedience are among one of the characteristics he has portrayed in his stories. This article adopts Karen Horney's theory to analyze the characters of two obedient women in *The Darling* and *Anyuta*. Compliance is a type of neurosis about which psychoanalysts, such as Freud, Horney, and Fromm have proposed theories. This research used Horney's theory because it is well-suited for the stories analyzed and the method of characterization. Horney believed that many aspects of personality and neuroses may be determined by environmental and social contexts rather than a person's biological drives. She classified neurotics into three personality types, namely *moving toward* people, *moving against* people, and *moving away* from people. The present research mainly focuses on *moving toward* people with its components of affection, submissiveness, and the need for a dominant partner. The method of qualitative content analysis was used throughout the research. The analysis shows that the components of compliance are more prominent among women living in a patriarchal society, the consequences of which influenced the two female characters in *The Darling* and *Anyuta*.

Keywords: Anton Chekhov, The Darling, Anyuta, Karen Horney, Moving Toward People, Compliance, Discourse Analysis.

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Introduction

Humans seek to generate explanations for the actions they observe and to know the reasons hidden behind every behavior. "Being able to understand the behavior of others not only satisfies our curiosity but also gives us a greater sense of control over our lives and makes the world more predictable and less threatening."(Ryckman, 2008, 3). Most psychologists agree that the word 'personality' stems from the Latin word 'persona' referring to a theatrical mask worn by Roman performers to project different roles or disguise their identities. (Feist and Feist, 2008, 3) However, when used by psychologists, the term 'personality' suggests something beyond the role-play of performers: it refers to our external characteristics visible to other people. "Despite the many definitions of the term, investigators generally agree that personality is the dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviors in different situations." (Ryckman, 2008, 4) Originated from within the individual, personality is considered as a fairly persistent pattern of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that characterizes the uniqueness of the individual.

Depicting the social and psychological problems people were going through, Anton Pavlovich Chekhov skillfully managed to criticize the hideousness of the society he was living in. Chekhov may be considered a symbol of a new era in which short stories emerged and novels began to gradually disappear. At that time short stories were a quick reaction to the punctuated events that marked a Russian life. (Lipovetsky, 2011, 22) He took the lead in introducing several elements to the story, such as emphasizing on realism and prioritizing characters over plot, as successfully reflected in his close approach to character psychology.

The distinguished notables of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Russian fiction such as *Pushkin*, Gogol, Tolstoy, Turgenev, and Dostoyevsky were all born into noble families and enjoyed privileges and several benefits in addition to their artistic talent and writing skills. However, the difficulties of living in a serf family formed a view in Anton Chekhov that was different from those of many other popular writers of his time. In most of Chekhov's stories,

there is no trace of huge and beautiful palaces or characters who are among the best people on the earth with close or distant relations with governmental households. Chekhov lived through some of the most important historical events of the Russian Empire at the threshold of the twentieth century, nonetheless, his works depict the rural and static life of common people living according to the customs and traditions, a life in which the occurrence of a revolution seemed a remote idea.

In Chekhov's time, the majority of the Russians lived in the countryside, with peasants comprising 80 percent of the population. There is a biting satire directed at vile characteristics or a class of people in Chekhov's stories. Most of his characters are from the middle class, i.e., the petite bourgeoisie, who are not altogether poor, illiterate, or immoral but whose lifestyle had severely distressed Chekhov. Maxim Gorky, Chekhov's long-time friend and companion, wrote:

"No one understood as clearly and finely as Anton Chekhov, the tragedy of life's trivialities, and no one before him showed men with such merciless truth, the terrible and shameful picture of their life in the dim chaos of bourgeois every-day existence." (2011, 13)

Gorky assumed Chekhov as a great, wise, and observant man:

"With a sad smile, with a tone of gentle but deep reproach, with anguish in his face and in his heart, in a beautiful sincere voice, he said to them: you live badly, my friends. It is a shame to live like that." (Loehlin, 2010, 180)

Chekhov's stories generally are narrated from the viewpoint of a character alienated from normal life, whether good or bad, depicting real life without telling or presenting descriptions. Chekhov did not claim to have a religious message, nor did he know the solution to the people's issues; he believed that the responsibility of a writer is not to provide answers to such problems, but only to state them correctly. (Bruhford, 2002, 19) In his opinion, literature can be regarded as art when it provides a faithful and accurate depiction of life. (Loehlin, 2010, 19) so, everything in his genre of art had to be true in reality.

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Therefore, he could not and did not present a utopian future to his readers. The existing life he depicted was far from a utopia. At best, Chekhov could only hint at the possibility of such an improved future.

The analysis of Chekhov's *The Darling* and *Anyuta* indicates that one of the frequent and concerning personalities is the compliant personality which reflects one of the characteristics of people, particularly of women, at that time. Chekhov was keenly aware of the barriers to happiness posed by bourgeois marriage and its alternatives, while at the same time being attuned to the interior psychological traps women set for themselves in pursuing emotional satisfaction. In the period 1886–88, he wrote several studies of unhappy women, such as Anyuta, caught at impasses—mundane or catastrophic—in their relationships with men.

In Chekhov's time, Russia's society was patriarchal in more than one sense of the word: religion was under the control of the Patriarch of Moscow, the central figure of the Russian Orthodox Church, civil authority was in the hands of the Tsar, the autocratic leader of the country, and families were centered on the father. As a result, Russian culture came to have a peculiar feature regarding names: the patronymic. Russian names use a patronymic, a specific type of middle name derived from the father's first name, between the first and last names. For women, this middle name ends with the suffix -a. Thus, Chekhov, whose father's first name was Pavel, is Anton Pavlovich Chekhov, and his sister's name is Maria Pavlovna Chekhova.

(Калинин, 2009, 91)

Russia is mainly a large plain of forests within the north and steppe to the south. Most parts of the country have fertile agricultural land, supporting an economy that centers on wheat and other crops. Russia's difficult situation necessitated the use of considerable physical force, the employment of large groups of people, and the collective organization of labor. Therefore, the old Russian community was shaped based on the principle of collectivism. These societies greatly influenced the formation of Russia's economy, social consciousness, national mentality, as well as collective management, which was based on social contracts.

In other words, economic conditions necessitated the formation of collective life and thus a patriarchy, as the dominance of power relations in a patriarchal system provided suitable grounds for the realization of this lifestyle. Patrimonialism, inherently an important feature of Russian political culture, is the reason why Russia, unlike other European societies, is prone to having the most dictatorial political systems and has more or less retained this quality since the early eighteenth century as a result of the important modernization efforts of Peter the Great. The mentality of Russians has always led them to seek the support and defense of a just, strong and experienced ruler who cares for his people like a father and in turn imposes patterns of behavior on them. (Авраменко, 2010, 54)

Chekhov highlighted the submissive behavior he observed and later, in the late 19th century and 20th century, prominent psychoanalysts such as Freud, Horney and Fromm developed theories to discover the dark layers of the mind by looking into character and examining human relationships. In this regard, it is now necessary to discuss the root and cause of the formation of such a character type as well as its needs. In the present study, two short stories by Chekhov were selected to discover the possibilities of such a character formation based on the theories and views of Karen Horney who believed that culture and environment are among the most important character-forming factors. Characteristics such as weakness, lack of self-confidence, and instability in character are present in most women in Chekhov's stories, but in these two stories, all the characteristics of a compliant person as depicted by Karen Horney are more prominent.

Despite the 13-year gap between The Darling and Anyuta and the difference between their social statuses, it seems that there is no remarkable improvement in the moral codes of the people and the society. Some of the psychoanalysts attempt to diagnose a person's personality disorder by analyzing the problematic events that occurred in their childhood, but in these two stories, there is no detailed explanation about the childhood of these two characters. For this reason, based on the evidence presented and the actions of the characters in the stories, we try to infer the personality disorders of Olga and Anyuta and examine their possible causes. The motives

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behind both Olenka's excessive dependence on a man and her need for tenderness in The Darling and Anyuta's submissiveness and lack of identity are discussed in this study.

Karen Horney

Sigmund Freud took the earliest approach toward the formal study of personality in the closing years of the 19th century. Almost every theory of personality developed after Freud is indebted to his position by either building on it or opposing it. According to Freud's theory, personality is mostly established by the age of five. Early childhood experiences play a large role in personality development and continue to influence behaviors later in life. (Shultz and Shultz, 2015, 51)

Freud attracted many followers who have modified his ideas to develop their own unique theories and perspectives on personality. Some of these theorists generally agreed with Freud that childhood experiences matter, but they shifted the emphasis from sexual urges as a primary motivator towards social and cultural influences on behavior and personality. Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Erich Fromm, and Karen Horney were some of these notable thinkers. Karen Horney (born in 1885 Hamburg – died in 1952 New York) agreed with Freud on the impact of childhood in shaping adult personality but adopted a considerably more optimistic approach than Freud's to human nature. Actually, she stressed the view that psychoanalysis should move beyond instinct theory and emphasize the environmental and cultural influences as significant factors in the formation of personality.

Horney's theory was strongly influenced by her personal experiences in childhood and adolescence as well as by social and cultural forces different from those that had influenced Freud. Horney developed her theory in the United States with a culture radically different from that of Freud's Vienna. She found that her American patients were vastly different from her earlier German patients, both in their neuroses and in their normal personalities. She believed only the social forces they had been exposed to could account for such differences. Contrary to Freud's idea, she concluded that personality does not depend wholly on biological forces; otherwise, there would not be such major differences from one culture to another. (Shultz and Shultz. 2015, 136)

Horney believed that Freud's theory of psychosexual development was essentially invalid. In particular, she strongly criticized Freud's concepts of id, ego, superego, unconscious sexual motivation, Oedipus complex, penis envy and their role in the formation of the female character. (Ryckman, 2008, 156) Horney held that the pessimistic view of humanity, one which is based on inborn instincts and the rigidity of personality, is the ramification of Freud's ideas. This way people are doomed to repeat compulsively ways of behaving learned in childhood. (1939, 331)

According to Horney, "Man is ruled not by the pleasure principle alone but by two guiding principles: safety and satisfaction."(1939, 331) Similarly, she claimed that neuroses are not the result of instincts but rather of the individual's "attempt to find paths through a wilderness full of unknown dangers."(1939, 10) This wilderness is created by society and not by instincts or anatomy.

Assuming that neurotic needs are chiefly caused by a difficult childhood, Horney held that the child's dependence on such needs to gain feelings of safety reinforces neurotic needs. She notified that "the sum total of childhood experiences brings about a certain character structure, or rather, starts its development."(1939, 152) If the child's needs for safety and satisfaction are frustrated by the parents, neurotic behavior occurs. Commenting on Horney's ideas, Shultz & Shultz put that parents' behaviors undermining the child's security can cause hostility in the child who may need to repress it "for reasons of helplessness, fear of the parents, need for genuine love, or guilt feelings." (2015, 140)

Dysfunctional parenting behaviors and the failure to satisfy the child's needs for safety create a feeling of insecurity in children. This condition is called basic anxiety, described by Horney as "a feeling of being small, insignificant, helpless, deserted, endangered, in a world that is out to abuse, cheat, attack, humiliate and betray."(1999, 92) Basic anxiety itself is not a neurosis, but "it is the nutrition soil out of which a definite neurosis may develop at any time."(Horney, 1999, 92) Basic anxiety is unrelenting and diffuses through all relationships with others leading to unhealthy ways of trying to deal with people. Children often resort to defensive attitudes to cope with the feelings of

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anxiety, isolation, and hostility that accompany basic anxiety. Providing a temporary alleviation of pain and making children feel safe, (Horney, 1942, 45) such self-protective mechanisms are called neurotic needs. Due to the incompatibility among the needs, the neurotic often uses more than one of these defenses, which lays the groundwork for even further problems.

The followings are the ten neurotic needs:

(1) Affection and approval
(2) A dominant partner
(3) Power
(4) Exploitation
(5) Prestige
(6) Admiration
(7) Achievement or ambition
(8) Self-sufficiency
(9) Perfection
(10) Narrow limits to life (Feist and Feist, 2008, 170)

Having perceived certain similarities among the needs, Horney classified

them into three basic types and named them the neurotic trends:

- Moving toward people (the compliant personality)
- Moving against people (the aggressive personality)
- Moving away from people (the detached personality)

Table 1. Horney's classification of neurotic needs and trends:

Needs	Trends
Components of the compliant personality	*Moving toward* people (the compliant personality)
Affection and approval	
A dominant partner	
Components of the aggressive personality	*Moving against* people (the aggressive personality)
Power	
Exploitation	
Prestige	
Admiration	
Achievement	
Components of the detached personality	*Moving away* from people (the detached personality)
Self-sufficiency	
Perfection	
Narrow limits to life	

Of the three above trends, one is dominant in a neurotic person, whereas the other two and their associated needs are repressed even though they continue to exist. The tension created by the incompatibility of the trends and their associated needs constitutes the basic conflict of neurosis. In healthy children, these three drives are not necessarily incompatible. Horney believes that normal people, able to combine the three opportunely, can trust and love others, express themselves confidently, achieve goals, and enjoy occasional

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solitude. In fact, neurotic trends differ from healthy values in that the former occur compulsively, intensely, haphazardly, and unrealistically. "The difference is one between 'I wish to be, and enjoy being, loved,' and 'I must be loved at any cost'." (Horney, 1999, 99-100)

Feist and Feist state that isolation and helplessness, described by Horney as characteristic feelings of basic anxiety, lead to compulsive behavior on the part of children, which in turn makes one neurotic trend dominant. Indeed, children resort to just one neurotic trend to overcome the contradiction inherent in their multifarious attitudes toward people. Specifically, *moving toward* people by being compliant safeguards them against helplessness, *moving against* people by being aggressive helps them avoid the hostility of others, and *moving away* from people by being detached eases feelings of isolation.(2008,172) Considering the longing for affection as a frequent characteristic in the neurotic and a noticeable indicator of intense anxiety, Horney writes that "if one feels fundamentally helpless toward a world which is invariably menacing and hostile, then the search for affection would appear to be the most logical and direct way of reaching out for any kind of benevolence, help or appreciation."(1999, 105-106)

Difficulties experienced by residents learning dynamic psychiatry can be resolved with the help of short stories. In fact, using literature to address psychopathology has long been practiced by teachers of psychiatry. (Stone and Stone, 1962) In teaching psychiatry through literature, according to William Tucker:

"The short story is more accessible in content than the poem and in time than the novel or play. A short story takes only as long to read as does a case write-up and therefore fits nicely into the teaching schedule for case conferences. Great stories speak not only across generations, but also across cultures. Stories emphasize the commonality of human experience in a way that can help residents overcome deficiencies in cultural knowledge. Certain stories can break down cultural bias and stereotype." (1994)

With a background in medicine, Chekhov explored people's lives in streets, markets, and farms. He was able to describe different aspects of their personal lives by selecting meaningful details. In fact, considering the keen observation of people's behavior in his works, does not come as a surprise to learn that he believed he would have probably become a psychiatrist if he hadn't taken up writing. In his opinion, since no one can accurately and exactly know what goes on in the minds of others, writers ought to avoid describing their characters' mental states and focus instead on their actions.(Borny, 2006, 59)

In the second half of the 1880s, Chekhov was plagued by bouts of depression as a result of losing his direction in life. During this time, he began examining his society closely, which led to many of his late 1880s works being more focused on social concerns such as patriarchy. He believed that based on the principles of social Darwinism, changing the environment results in a change in the people and the society. (Borny, 2006, 25) Most of Chekhov's fame is indebted to his short stories. His stories deal with the entanglement of relationship, the hardship of struggling people, the helplessness of broken and downtrodden people and the loneliness of human beings among the crowd.

This paper deploys the theory of *moving toward* people to better understand Olenka's and Anyuta's behavior characterized by the neurotic needs of moving toward people which resulted in their submissiveness and over-reliance upon men.

Finally, it is concluded that the patriarchal society and the oppression and injustice to women at that time might have been responsible for their problems.

The Darling

The story of *The Darling* narrates the selfless devotion of an uncultured woman, named Olga Semyonova, to any man in her life. The book's title "Dushechka" and the nickname "Olenka" already mark the heroine as childish and endearing, since the nicknames sound somewhat ridiculous for an adult. Tolstoy and others may have liked Olenka and symbolized her as feminine and maternal love, but

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Chekhov did not. Nor, in the end, does he expect us to. In a way she resembles the embodiment of the middle-class evil who changes her surroundings until it reflects her soul. He had even more comic scorn for the men from whom she takes her existence at, ultimately, their expense. (Heldt, 1982) His chorus of approving neighbors are faceless every-bodies who lag behind the reader's awareness at the end: they will approve anything.

At the time when *The Darling* was written, many women in Russia and around the world followed the lead of their husbands and prioritized their husbands' ideas and opinions over their own. Chekhov was more likely to highlight the blind allegiance that many women had to their husbands rather than to show this as moral faithfulness. Chekhov portrays Olenka as a woman who feels insecure, fears loneliness, and lacks wholeness of herself without a man in her life. Chekhov tries to show what happens when a woman lives solely for her partner and nothing else. Olenka is compassionate, gentle, and sentimental. Unable to formulate an opinion of her own, she has a peculiar need to be emotionally dependent on a partner so she would mimic and repeat his ideas and opinions.

Why would Chekhov think of writing this travesty of the hallowed theme of woman's endurance through love? His correspondence and the memoirs of his friends give us no indication to the baseline of this story which is so different in tone from others of Chekhov's mature times. But while, perhaps, predictable according to the traditional view that women are supposed to live for love, her need to feed her emotions with some man, any man, makes us question the value of the emotion.

The story begins with a melancholic scene depicting Olenka as she is sitting at the back doorstep of her house. The lonely girl who has lost all her beloved ones begins a casual acquaintance with the owner of the open-air theater, Ivan Petrovich Kukin. He complains to her about the rain and how it has hindered his business. He fears bankruptcy if the rain does not end. Olenka was unfortunate for the loss of everyone in her family and Kukin was ill-fated about the weather. Eventually their mutual understanding for each other and their acquaintance develop into affection for Kukin and the two marry.

Horney differentiates between love and the neurotic need for affection by emphasizing the primary status of affection in love and of reassurance against anxiety in the neurotic with the illusion of love as secondary, with this illusion being the result of attaching a great importance to the person who arouses some expectations in the neurotic followed by the neurotic's response.(1999, 109-110) The tragedy of losing her family and her sympathy for Kukin's misfortune in business made Olenka form an illusion of love in her mind. Being treated kindly by a person who is either powerful or seemingly independent might have led to such expectations. (Horney, 1999, 109) Her refuge to Kukin, who has a job of his own and is independent, could be justified because she was on her own with no financial and emotional support to carry on living.

Olenka and Kukin lead a comfortably happy life. By adopting all of Kukin's opinions, she becomes preoccupied with handling his business affairs, which gives her the feeling as if her life is full. To Olenka, there is nothing more important than her husband and the work with the theater. Erich Fromm believes there are certain ties in a person's life, such as property and social prestige, which guarantee their security against loneliness. (Fromm, 1941, 142) In societies where women are deprived of having a job or a job as prestigious as men's, they tend to rely on a man to fulfill their need. Olenka did not develop the wholeness within herself, but the thoughts taken away from her as a result of being attached to Kukin induced those feelings.

Moving toward people, as a neurotic trend, includes several strategies. Indeed, it is "a whole way of thinking, feeling, acting—a whole way of life."(Horney, 1943, 55)

For Horney, this trend is a philosophy of life which probably causes neurotics to conceive of themselves as loving, modest, and considerate. Tending to view other people as more dominant, they willingly put others above themselves in terms of appearance or intelligence and judge themselves according to what others think of them. Indeed, Olenka was a compassionate girl who shed tears upon hearing sad news of someone's misfortune. Her compliance and agreement with everyone made people grow fond of her and nickname her the darling.

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After Kukin's trip to Moscow to recruit a troupe for his theater, there remains no one for Olenka to be attached to. According to Horney, "a vague anxiety, a need for affection or, more accurately, a need for some human contact" (1999, 117) is the main factor causing such incapacity to be alone. In his absence, loneliness takes over Olenka and she begins to endure the feeling. Not being able to sleep, she would sit all night at her window, comparing herself to hens that are awake all night when the rooster is not in the hen house.

Anxiously awaiting Kukin's return, she receives a telegram that he has been detained and, after a short time, another one about his death. She attends his affairs, but it is not long before she develops another relationship that leads to marriage. This time it is Vasily Andreich Pustovalov, a lumber merchant. With Olenka soon becoming an expert on lumber, she not only assisted her husband with his business, but also promoted it and complained about the costs and taxes.

In short, Olenka once again absorbs her husband's thoughts and completely abandons the thoughts and opinions she once shared with Kukin. Olenka can only define herself through a man in her life and lacks an authentic identity of herself. When Pustovalov gets ill and dies after four months of suffering, Olenka becomes alone again. She is almost like an empty shell that is filled up by the partner she loves. When they pass away or even leave, the shell is emptied, ready to be filled again.

More reclusive after Pustovalov's death, Olenka shuts herself away to mourn in solitude for almost six months. Such neurotics are inhibited, and thus have trouble "making decisions, forming opinions, daring to express wishes which concern only their own benefit. Such wishes have to be concealed."(Horney, 1999, 36-37)The main reason for her grief is the lack of a coherent system of communication in her life; she has lost her language.

A while after, Olenka begins a friendly relationship with a military veterinary surgeon called Smirnin who is lodging in Olenka's house. Yet again, she starts to follow Smirnin's opinions obediently. Smirnin is married but estranged from his wife. As a result, Olenka's relationship with Smirnin does not flourish. It is assumed that Olenka

will repeat the pattern and approach her new husband with the same all-consuming love as the one she held for her previous husbands. However, the story undergoes a subtle turn at this point, and it is not because of Olenka's relationship with a married man, which is unlike her previous marriage. The neighbors do not condemn Olenka about anything; this time, it is the vet who reprimands Olenka for interfering with his profession "Volodichka, then what am I to talk about?"(Chekhov, 2003, 295). Smirnin eventually leaves for good.

The readers feel the disruption in the pattern of Olenka's devotion and anticipate a downward spiral from this point on. After Smirnin's transfer to a far place by the military, Olenka, unable to maintain her own identity independently of a man, feels a void. Receiving less attention in the town, she becomes more and more isolated.

Horney explains that feelings of inferiority and inadequacy may unrealistically appear in some ways, "such as a conviction of incompetence, of stupidity, of unattractiveness.... Notions of their own stupidity may be found in persons who are unusually intelligent, or notions about their own unattractiveness in the most beautiful women."(1999, 36-37) Olenka was not an illiterate country girl with talents limited to doing the house chores. In fact, she was educated and could simply enjoy herself in the company of others. At school, she had loved her French master. She was a kind, warm, caring girl in good health.

Having reconciled with his wife, Smirnin returns to the town with his family. Olenka invites them to stay in her house in an attempt to reduce her isolation and loneliness. After some time, Smirnin's wife leaves for Kharkov forever, and Smirnin gets interested in the leisure activities going on in the town. Amid such changes, Olenka intends to help Sasha, Smirnin's son, who is now abandoned by his parents.

As Horney makes clear, the compulsive nature of the neurotic need for affection causes the loss of spontaneity and flexibility, which means that a neurotic's gaining affection is nothing but a sheer necessity. (1999, 36-37) Finding herself in a less typical relationship with another male, Olenka appears in the guise of a caring mother and immerses herself in Sasha's opinions about school though he shows less love for her.

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Finally, feeling suffocated by Olenka's attention, Sasha cries in protest at her sustained attention and love while he is asleep. Olenka's disregard of Sasha's needs and personality, hence her incapacity for love, can be explained by Horney's claim stressing the role of anxiety and hostility toward people in creating such a behavior in the neurotic and making him/her cling to others which might lead to some undesirable reactions despite the neurotic's desperate efforts to cover it up by becoming too considerate, sacrificing, or over-protective.(1999, 110-111) Olenka's pursuit for affection and a partner to help her stand securely on her feet is the reason for her movement toward people. When she fails in her marital and romantic love, she finds comfort in raising Sasha as her own son. In spite of the aggression of the boy, she continues to show him affection and probably turns to rationalization with the state of mind of being a self-sacrificing mother.

The story has an inconsistent narrator who offers readers various directions to take and whose voice can be regarded as humorous with sinister overtones. Our reaction, be it laughter, anger, or fear, depends on us and our judgement and commitment to the perception of female devotion. We could speculate on the reason why we are left to our reactions. The implausible structure and characterization of the protagonist is compensated by the humorous effect of Olenka's stock character. Simply put, we do not stop to rethink our stereotypical understanding of feminine behavior. Even so, the story is structured in a way that leads the readers to question Olenka's absolute devotion.

The comic effect, if so, is created by the frequency of her love and devotion as well as the subject of behavioral changes in the story. For most people, falling in love and getting married happen once or twice at most, not three or more times as we see in Olenka's case. Good things, if overdone, can leave a comic effect. Excessive repetition inevitably emphasizes the passion and draws the audience's attention away from its object. This comic effect is reinforced by the fact that Olenka completely forgets her previous husbands. In her world, the present is infused with intense emotions and the past is entirely irrelevant. The narrator, however, does not let us forget her past and

keeps reminding us that Olenka has a repeated pattern of mindless love.

Chekhov leaves us to our own just like the vet leaves Olenka to hers. We may content ourselves with our stereotypical understanding of feminine behavior and assume the story has nothing to offer us other than a good laugh. On a deeper level, we may notice the sexual politics at play and conclude that that women, using the capacity provided to them by the society, devote themselves to men in order to use them in a way that destroys the men's sense of self.

Women regard love as something they should assume, and not something they must feel. It is a customary acquisition, much like an item of clothing. (Heldt, 1982) On yet another level, Chekhov encourages us to analyze our emotions objectively. He leaves us with our preconceived notions of the female psyche and feminine behavior even as he leads us to question those same preconceptions.

Another suggestive reason is the role of society. If the society in which Olenka was living had provided opportunities for women as equally as it had for men and had not limited their identity to housekeeping and childbearing and did not outcast them for being alone and unmarried, she would have stopped her excessive selflessness to ingratiate herself as an escape from anxiety and begun developing her self-confidence and independent identity.

Anyuta

Anyuta was written in 1886. Chekhov starts expressing his irony more subtly in this story, e.g., irony by analogy is a key tool used by Chekhov in Anyuta. Moreover, he begins making more frequent use of mythic and literary allusions in his stories: devices that help him achieve multi-levelled meanings, irony, satire, emotional depth, and pathos. The story opens with Stephen Klotchkov, a medical student, cramming for an anatomy exam. He is living with a twenty-five year old brown-haired woman called Anyuta. Klotchkov receives a small amount of money from his father every month. Despite his father's help, he is living in financial hardship. Anyuta helps him by doing embroidery work. They live together in sleazy, seedy furnished quarters.

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Working arduously on an embroidery order, Anyuta intends to finish it soon so that she can buy tea and tobacco for Klotchkov with the money. As Horney explains, such people make every effort to live up to others' expectations so that they can earn some approval. Therefore, terrified at any kind of criticism or rejection by others, "they will make the most pitiable efforts to win back the positive regard of the person threatening them."(1999, 97) Prioritizing others and their needs is a characteristic of compliant personality.

In a bid to help Stephen with his studies, Anyuta removes her blouse and allows him to observe and analyze her ribs. Meanwhile, she feels extremely cold but does not express it for fear that he might not succeed in studying and passing the exam. He becomes so absorbed in his work that he fails to notice Anyuta's fingertips, nose, and lips are turning blue with cold. As Horney puts, "in such cases the individual represses all demands of his own, represses criticism of others, is willing to let himself be abused without defending himself and is ready to be indiscriminately helpful to others."(1945, 54) Following the rule, she remains silent during the examination and avoids everything that might lead to some conflict or hindrance to the other person's aims.

Anyuta had lived with five other students prior to her affair with Klotchkov, all of whom had since moved on to respectable lives in a class she could never join, by using her in their studies, including rooming arrangements to perhaps even sex. Perhaps one of the many reasons she tolerated their offensive and cruel behaviors was to experience the ecstasy of having intercourse with them. Annie Reich believes that "intercourse is an experience of extraordinary intensity in these cases of extreme submissiveness in women" (1940) which should be considered in relation to the feelings of anxiety, despair, and helplessness they experience in the absence of love.

Thinking about her past, Anyuta comes to the understanding that Klotchkov would finally forget her as others have done. It is not clear whether she was once loved and then abandoned to justify her current life of moving in with students. In submissiveness, the impression is something like this: I am not asking for much and all I desire from people is kindness, advice and appreciation of the fact that I am a

poor, harmless lonely souls, anxious to please and careful not to hurt anyone's feelings. The neurotic does not understand how much his sensitivities, latent hostilities and exacting demands interfere with his own relationships; nor is he able to judge the impression he makes on others or their reaction to him. Consequently, the neurotic is at a loss to understand why his friendships, marriages, love affairs, professional relations are so often dissatisfactory. He tends to blame others for their inconsideration, disloyalty and abuse. Thus he keeps chasing the phantom of love. (Horney, 1999, 38)

It is possible that as the helpless girl needs a supporter to live with and a roof over her head, she allows herself to be treated however her supporter likes. She fears losing him and his support whether it is economical or emotional, thus she tries to satisfy his needs and desires like a slave or captive. "There are persons who can feel secure only by rigid submission. In them the anxiety is so great and the disbelief in affection so complete that the possibility of affection does not enter at all."(Horney, 1999, 97) The poor girl could be fooling herself with the fantasy of marrying one of the students and gaining the social prestige that was impossible to gain through her own efforts.

Additionally, society reacted badly toward unmarried women in their twenties and above by not receiving them warmly, which resulted in women settling for jobs that allowed for their abuse and working for people who abused them. While Anyuta is standing naked for Klotchkov's examination, an artist friend walks in and asks to borrow her as a model for a painting he is working on about Psyche. He speaks of Anyuta as if she is a bowl of fruit that can be returned or thrown away. "Neurotics often are incapable of defending themselves against attack, or of saying 'no' if they do not wish to comply with the wishes of others."(Horney, 1999, 38) She does not show a single sign of protest even when she is insulted since she fears losing the only people in her life. Anyuta sees others above herself, stronger than her, and thinks of herself as a weak and inferior individual. Such a submissive behavior is caused by hostility and anxiety which appear to have been formed in her by the society.

Chekhov makes this allusion to the Greek myth of Cupid and Psyche to create capacity for irony. Psyche is a princess whose lover, Cupid, visits her every night but does not allow her to see him. One night, she uses a lamp to see him as he sleeps, and a drop of oil falls from the lamp on his shoulder and wakes him up as she is distracted by his beauty. Upon discovering what she has done, he is enraged and leaves her. The word 'psyche' is derived from the Greek word for 'soul'. (Lemieux, 1991, 25)Psyche means soul and by both their words and actions Klotchkov and Fetisov betray their lack of emotional depth and spirituality. The supreme irony of the story is that Fetisov wishes to portray Psyche without any true comprehension of the subject. Furthermore, all of the three main protagonists are oblivious to the fact that the real Psyche here is Anyuta. The irony here is double-layered and overt. However, a knowledge of the Greek myth is required in order to penetrate the two layers and lay bare the Klotchkov and Fetisov's spiritual-emotional degeneracy.

Chekhov uses irony by analogy through making an allusion to the myth, but he also changes some aspects of the myth. For example, Psyche's love for Cupid does not stop her curiosity and she ends up looking at him while he sleeps despite him not wanting her to, but Anyuta's devotion and love are unconditional and she does not give anything precedence over them. Anyuta's love and compliance is absolute and blind. The story contains a subtle play with the concept of blindness from beginning to the end: All of its protagonists are blind, each in their own way. The irony can be seen in the internal contradictions. On the surface level, Klotchkov's words and actions suggest that he thinks himself above Anyuta: she is an object that can be used for learning anatomical lessons or loaned to his friend as a model for his art project. (Lemieux, 1991, 28)

Yet another way in which Chekhov used myth to create irony is the contrast and parallel between the image of Psyche, a woman of exceptional beauty, and that of Anyuta, a thin, pale, young woman with brown hair and mild grey eyes. By doing this, Chekhov intends for the reader to do what Klotchkov and Fetisov failed to do and take heed of what goes on inside Anyuta's mind, not what can be seen in her body. This is irony of the 'pretended omission of censure' type. It

is also worth mentioning that in the myth, Cupid came to Psyche at night and left her in the morning, and in Chekhov's story, a similar pattern can be seen: every one of the students with whom Anyuta has lived in the past has left her as he was beginning his public life, and this is a pattern that is likely to be repeated with Klotchkov as well. (Lemieux, 1991, 28)

Although Anyuta may wish to have a future with Klotchkov, she knows the fact that all the other students have left and forgotten her and succeeded in life and career just like respectable people. Klotchkov does not consider Anyuta longing for a better life as he actively works in order to make a future and life for himself with a decent lady as his future wife. Therefore, he decides to split up with Anyuta after the artist is done with the painting. Anyuta's crying while packing her things slightly hurts Klotchkov and gets him to let her stay for one more week.

It is likely that at that time, the society did not acknowledge poor and lonely women. Such women were considered social misfits who had to serve superiors in order to provide their basic needs and perhaps have some identity. Moreover, these unfortunate women dreamed of marrying promising men to achieve their repressed desires and even primary needs as it was improbable for them to rise in social rank and gain social prestige.

Conclusion

Anton Chekhov's stories reflect the state of Russian society in the late nineteenth century. In his works, he presents honest and accurate images including details that are characteristic of realism. Most of Chekhov's short stories are about lonely characters living in culturally or economically poor and suffocating conditions. The contents of these stories include moral problems, degenerate culture, vulgarity, corruption, oppression, injustice, misconduct, unfaithfulness, and the lack of identity and direction, all of which are the result of the ineffective actions and reforms of the Russian tsarist government. These issues have been expressed in a simple language that is understandable for the masses, and the purpose of raising them is to inspire the community to reform and improve.

Chekhov, a social and medical writer who lived among the people, was aware of the effect of environment on his characters, just as Karen Horney, who sees characters formed by their environment. Accordingly, Horney's theory is compatible with the characters in Chekhov's fiction. Chekhov's takes a social approach to address these issues and criticizing the status quo of his time. It should be noted that due to political repression and severe censorship, writers and intellectuals could not express their criticism directly. As a result, Chekhov expressed his criticism indirectly, using humor and irony.

The study of Olenka's and Anyuta's behavioral traits reveals that both women moved toward people, complied with the wishes of others, and depended on a dominant partner to gain identity. In a patriarchal society, women become the first victims since they are deprived of many things such as an equal social status or even a job as prestigious as men's. Therefore, they become submissive to men by behaving affectionately in order to satisfy their desires, suppressed by society, and fill their empty identity through men.

The patriarchal system plays a crucial role in the character disorders of the two female characters, Olenka and Anyuta. In such an environment, most women seek a dominating partner and affection. They try to escape generalized anxiety by forgetting their real selves. In conclusion, in a way, these two characters symbolize some women witnessed by Chekhov, figures who suffered from character disorders and neuroticism caused by the social anomalies of the time.

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