A Superficial Society In The Death Of Ivan Ilyich

In 'The Death of Ivan Ilyich,' we can see that it was a superficial society, as the bourgeois was the most important class, and the lower class was less valued. Tolstoy conveys the negative aspects of Ivan Ilyich's attachment to duty, in a cold way, unwanted and wrong, according to him. An example of a statement is: 'When I was in law school, that was exactly what I had left for the rest of my life: a capable, cheerful, humorous, sociable, though strict, non-compliant man whom he considered was your duty: to consider the same.' He does not have his own opinion and lives his life according to social norms and expectations. For example, because he is not a practicing person, but marriage is the next step for him as a magistrate examiner.

Ivan Ilyich obsesses about outward appearances but lives his life in denial of reality. Have you ever imagine live in a society based on status, and money? The book The Death of Ivan Ilyich shows this with the characters, Ilyich marries Praskovya, but this is based on status, and nobody cares about him, even his family, At the start of Chapter 1, Tolstoy reveals what Ivan Ilyich’s friends think when they hear of his death. Then he focuses on the thoughts of Peter Ivanovich, one of Ivan Ilyich’s friends. The rest of the chapter is told from Peter Ivanovich’s point of view. The relationship between Peter Ivanovich and Ivan Ilyich was superficial because it was based on status, and on money. As for example, after Ivan's death, Peter was happy to be able to achieve his dream job. And he too was a capitalist bourgeois.“Each one thought or felt, 'Well, he's dead but I'm alive!' But the more intimate of Ivan Ilyich's acquaintances, his so-called friends, could not help thinking also that they would now have to fulfill the very tiresome demands of propriety by attending the funeral service and paying a visit of condolence to the widow. Fedor Vasilievich and Peter Ivanovich had been his nearest acquaintances.”. In this other example, we can see, how the persons who supposedly enjoy Ivan, felt obliged to attend the funeral contrary to what should be, go to prestige he. “

In Chapter 4, the reader learns how Praskovya Fedorovna feels about her husband’s temper and mood swings, having come to the conclusion that her husband had a dreadful temper and made her life miserable, she began to feel sorry for herself, and the more she pitied herself the more she hated her husband. She began to wish he would die, yet she did not want him to die because then his salary would cease. And this irritated her against him still more. She considered herself dreadfully unhappy just because not even his death could save her, and though she concealed her exasperation, that hidden exasperation of hers increased his irritation also. Praskovya Fedorovna's attitude to Ivan Ilyich's illness, as she expressed it both to others and to him, was that it was his own fault and was another of the annoyances he caused her. They don’t support each other, they discuss every and continue together to sustain her representation on society, only for the persons who don’t know they, thinking they are a perfect couple. “Praskovya Fedorovna's attitude to Ivan Ilyich's illness, as she expressed it both to others and to him, was that it was his own fault and was another of the annoyances he caused her.”.Praskovya doesn’t care about Ivan's illness more than someone, she doesn’t worry about anything besides her expensive style of life, financed for her husband who she doesn’t like. So, we can conclude, Praskovya and Ivan are marry, only for society, they don’t like each other and don’t support life together.

In contrast, we have Gerasim, who was a servant, ordinary, he doesn’t have status, money,

and was the only person who told to Ivan Ilyich that he will die, showing compassion, real human qualities, he was the only person who cares with Ivan. He was authentic, empathetic, purposeful, honest, doesn’t exploit others. A part of the text that supports this thesis is: “Gerasim with a firm light tread, his heavy boots emitting a pleasant smell of tar and fresh winter air, came in wearing a clean Hessian apron, the sleeves of his print shirt tucked up over his strong bare young arms, and refraining from looking at his sick master out of consideration for his feelings, and restraining the joy of life that beamed from his face, he went up to the commode. 'Gerasim!' said Ivan Ilyich in a weak voice. Gerasim started, evidently afraid he might have committed some blunder, and with a rapid movement turned his fresh, kind, simple young face which just showed the first downy signs of a beard. 'Yes, sir?' 'That must be very unpleasant for you. You must forgive me. I am helpless.' 'Oh, why, sir,' and Gerasim's eyes beamed and he showed his glistening white teeth, 'what's a little trouble? It's a case of illness with you, sir.'And his deft strong hands did their accustomed task, and he went out of the room stepping lightly. Five minutes later he as lightly returned. Ivan Ilyich was still sitting in the same position in the armchair.”

To conclude, we can see that society in the narration was superficial and thought only of the status and money of each. Ordinary society was the only one who felt empathy and compassion for others. Ivan Ilyich's family and friends were also like this, thinking of themselves and raising their status.