

## Study Of The Plot And System Of Images Of The Novel Genre

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**Abstract.** The article discusses in detail the work of the writer Theodore Dreiser, his place in American literature. Also, the studies on the novel "American Tragedy", the plot and the system of images of the writer are comparatively studied, and general conclusions are drawn. In addition, the images of Clyde Griffiths, Hortense, Roberta, Sondra are analyzed.

**Keywords:** Novel genre, history of the novel, plot, system of images, artistic image, image and imagery.

### INTRODUCTION

Theodore Dreiser breathed new life into American literature. With his fierce and uncompromising struggle for the truth of life, Dreiser renewed 20th-century American literature. YNZasursky touched upon the significance of the contribution of the great American writer Theodore Dreiser to the development of US literature today. Theodore Dreiser, who opened the 20th century in American literature with "Unhappy Carrie", expanded the horizons of American realistic art, despite all the difficulties and obstacles that bourgeois America put in his way, and the threats that pursued him throughout his life. Perhaps there is no other writer in American literature who has encountered such opposition from the bourgeoisie in his literary career. But these difficulties were overcome by the struggling writer Theodore Dreiser with determination.

The writer was born on August 27, 1871. Dreiser's works reflect many of the best traditions of 19th-century American literature, the romantics Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and the tradition of the struggle for the liberation of blacks Henry David Thoreau and

Harriet Beecher Stowe. Dreiser's sharp rejection of the business world and detailed style of narration are considered to be his similarities with Cooper. Puritan bigotry and practicality, condemnation of selfishness and workaholism from a young age drew Dreiser's attention to one of his favorite writers, Hawthorne; it is not without reason that the American critic Danforth Ross compared Melville's story "Bartabi the Writer" with Dreiser's illustrations. The passionate pathos of exposing all manifestations of social injustice makes Dreiser similar to the abolitionists. The uncompromising asceticism of Walden, the anti-slavery struggler, is especially close to him. Thanks to his active anti-fascist journalistic work in the 1930s, Dreiser published the book "The Living Thoughts of Thoreau," a collection of selected works by this American writer and philosopher, and wrote a warm and sincere introduction to it. Mark Twain, a sharp critic of the Golden Age, and Walt Whitman, a poet of free labor and the human mind, were Dreiser's direct predecessors. The literary process in the United States is characterized by a somewhat later development than in the 19th century, the late flowering of the romantic school, and the later

development of realism than in most European countries. Theodore Dreiser's services in accelerating this development in the 20th century were especially great.

RRShafikova and RIS Amsitova's article "Legal Concepts in Theodore Dreiser's Novel "An American Tragedy""The article is devoted to a close analysis of the legal conceptual sphere of Theodore Dreiser's novel "An American Tragedy". The research task is to assess, study and systematize the concepts that make up the legal conceptual sphere of the work. Having thoroughly studied the concepts of "right", "law", "court", "justice", "murder", "truth", the authors came to the conclusion: the legal conceptual sphere of the novel plays an important role in this. It reveals the idea of the work. The question of the hero's crime remains controversial to this day. Having studied in detail the entire circle of the interrelation of the concepts of "law" and "crime", we came to the conclusion that Clyde Griffiths' guilt is clear both in a moral and practical sense. The article examines the main stages of the implementation of legal concepts in semantic groups, which in turn helps the reader to imagine and perceive the main idea, philosophy of the work in the broadest possible way.

Minenko NM, in the article "The functioning of procedural units with the meaning of relationships in the works of Fyodor Dostoevsky "Crime and Punishment" and Theodore Dreiser "American Tragedy", "firstly, Clyde and Roberta were different, the circumstances, although they were as poor as Sonechka and Raskolnikov, but they did not have to sacrifice their honor and conscience in order to have at least some means, they had hope for a better future, there was optimism. If we talk about the dynamics of the characters' relationships, it is impossible not to notice a sharp change in the relationship between Clyde and Roberta, who became pregnant and thus prevented her from arranging her life with the rich

Sondra. This change is so pronounced that he even decides to kill her".

There have been several studies of Theodore Dreiser's "An American Tragedy," which discuss the events and characters of the play, and compare it to several other works. For example, Richard Lehane's book "Dreiser's An American Tragedy A Critical Study" discusses the plot and main character of the play. The study initially focuses on the theme of the play, and explains that the word tragedy in the play's theme is not in the sense of the term "tragedy" used by Aristotle in his "Poetics," but rather in the modern sense. The study also discusses the relationship between the scene of the novel and the character's mental state, the meaning of one scene, and others. The main character of the work, Clyde Griffiths, is discussed, and his character is complex in social, economic, and moral aspects. He was born into a poor family and experienced material hardships from childhood. Due to his difficult life and low social status, Clyde aspires to a life of wealth and luxury. He imagines himself among richer and more successful people and is willing to abandon his spiritual principles to realize this dream. Clyde's main goal in life is to achieve a high social status and wealth. His desire for wealth and influence leads him to make selfish and irresponsible decisions. Although his relationship with Roberta Alden initially seems to be based on love, this relationship later becomes complicated due to Clyde's inner ambitions. There is not only a metaphorical equivalent between Clyde's mind and the scene of the novel, but the scene also provides Clyde with motives for action and psychological mood. The emphasis in An American Tragedy is, of course, on Clyde, but the only real difference between the lower-class characters is that some are more involved with wealth and luxury than others. Everything stems from the desire for the good life, and this leads to specific relationships. For example, Roberta is to

Clyde as Clyde is to Sondra; Roberta is to Clyde as Clyde is to Hortense Briggs (see p. 388). Dreiser reinforces the analogy by describing Clyde's meeting with Roberta in a similar way to Sondra's meeting with Clyde. One Sunday, while canoeing, Clyde sees Roberta and asks her to accompany him: 'Oh, please don't say no. Just come in' (p. 283). Later, while waiting in her chauffeured car, Sondra meets Clyde, and eventually Clyde asks Roberta to accompany her, as he had asked her: "Would you please come inside and let me take you where you are going. I wish it were so" (p. 331). The similarity of the scenes is not accidental; these scenes are the inner feelings of the characters, "It is shown to overcome social differences while giving character" (Richard Lehane, Dreiser's *An American Tragedy: A Critical Study*, 1963).

According to the above research, all the scenes related to the main character in the play are said to be related to each other. In fact, the events that happened in the life of Clyde Griffiths, his desire to rise above his social class, his inclination towards girls in his life, all these are connected to each other like a chain. The reason is that Clyde's short-term romantic adventures with Hortense ended unsuccessfully, which for the same reason negatively affected his relationship with his next lover Roberta. Why, Clyde, who could not achieve Hortense, now wanted to make Roberta his own as soon as possible.

"Dreiser wanted to call his novel *Mirage*, but that title would have made Clyde's visions too personal. Dreiser changed the title because Clyde Griffith's story is a kind of anecdote, a documentary story, which depicts a typical image of a person. The word "dream" is used more than a hundred times in the novel and indicates the reasons for many lives. Roberta Alden leaves Blitz in the hope of fulfilling her "dream" in *Lycurgus* (p. 269); Attorney Mason Clyde is poor and dreams of becoming a judge. (p. 591); even the arresting

officer, Svenk, is "burned with the desire to arrest and handcuff someone" and is drawn into "great dreams of catching the murderer" (p. 585)" (Richard Lehane, Dreiser's *An American Tragedy: A Critical Study*, 1963)

Moving along the plot line, the researcher does not ignore the image of Clyde and the animals, noting that the image of Clyde's arrest and trial is full of images of animals and persecution, that Clyde is described as a "hunted animal", "prey" and "desperate beast", and that Mason follows Clyde in the courtroom "like a wild bull", citing quotes from the work. In his subsequent remarks, the researcher shows the interconnectedness of the events of the novel. "If we compare Chapter 17 of Book I of *An American Tragedy*, the scene where the road trip begins, we first have a description of Kansas City, which is depicted as walls surrounding Clyde. Then we have a description of the people in the car, which specifically refers to Clyde moving outside his previously existing environment. Then Dreiser moves on to dialogue. We become Clyde, and the action of each scene, as in the novel, proceeds from the general to the particular. If we compare this with the scene in Book XI, Chapter 4 of *The Ambassadors* (New York edition), where Strether sees Mrs. Chad, we have here a constant and continuous relationship between perceiver and perceived, between the mind of the character and the object of his mind" ((Richard Lehane, Dreiser's *An American Tragedy: A Critical Study*, 1963)

Several studies and articles have been written about the protagonist of the work, and if we look at the reflections on his mental state, Karzan Kavsin Babakir's article "A Psychoanalytic Study of Clyde's Character in *An American Tragedy*" is noteworthy. The study first reveals the character of Dreiser's hero. "Dreiser begins to present his hero as a character type who thinks differently and wants to do differently. Clyde can be considered a character type that transcends tradition due to his

desire to adapt to the latest cultural trends. He "becomes an example of a character type oriented in another direction, taking his advice from others and using his contemporaries as models to base his own personality on" (Spindler 66). Thus, Clyde becomes more open to the immediate social environment than to the past dictates of his parents in his head. As a result, his attitudes and desires, the new world, and acquaintances conspire to meet his demise" (Karzan Kawsin Babakir, A Psychoanalytic Study of Clyde's Character in An American Tragedy, Journal of University Raparin, 2021). After the thoughts on the character of the hero, the psychological analysis is moved on. He cites examples from the play to illustrate Clyde's fascination with events, and uses the views of psychologists to support his argument. Clyde's fascination includes the Green-Davidson Hotel and its lobby, or the first time he sees Sondra Finchley. "These fascinating events interest Clyde in another aspect of his surroundings, to which he then tries to adapt. From a psychological point of view, the primitive part of his personality prevails over his rationality, or from a Freudian point of view, it overcomes Clyde in his will and behavior. This aspect of Clyde's personality is evident in the more he sees, the more he wants (Lehan, 1963, p. 187). Desire and greed, and the need to fulfill them, are accepted as part of human nature.

Clyde's disdain for the homeless who regularly visit his parents' mission grows as he learns to look down on the speech and actions of the bellhops he works with. He sets out to make sure he can shake off his old self and embody his new self in a new group, and at each stage his psyche undergoes a transformation. The thoughts in his mind cannot help but affect his psyche. His desire to be rich overwhelms even the most refined of feelings. In Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*, desire is a dominant factor in Clyde Griffiths' personality and drives his behavior. Clyde, a man deprived of a

religious and practical family, is bewildered and increasingly intrigued when he encounters the other side of his world, something he despises and wants to avoid. The new environment, acquaintance with a group of young people, interests him excessively, leads him to cross forbidden social boundaries. Psychologically, the unconscious mind prevails over his attitude and behavior; as a result, desires lead him astray and change his fate" (Karzan Kawsin Babakir, A Psychoanalytic Study of Clyde's Character in An American Tragedy, Journal of University Raparin, 2021)

There have also been a number of comparative studies on "*An American Tragedy*," analyzing the typological characteristics associated with the work's plot, composition, and characters. Including Clare Virginia Eby "The Psychology of Desire: Veblen's Pecuniary Emulation" and Invidious Comparison in "*Sister Carrie*" and "*An American Tragedy*" ("Psychology of Desire: Veblen's Pecuniary Emulation" and Invidious Comparison in "*Sister Carrie*" and "*An American Tragedy*"), Olga Yurievna Antsyferova "Woody Allen and Theodor Dreiser: Paradoxes of Negated Affinity" ("Woody Allen and Theodor Dreiser: Paradoxes of Negated Affinity"), Habib El Baaj "Thomas Hardy and Theodor Dreiser A Comparative Study" ("Thomas Hardy and Theodor Dreiser comparative study"), Kian Pishkar "Fredrick Jameson and Dreiser's Antihero's Deterministic Situations, case study of *American Tragedy* and *Sister Carrie*"), Ina Colinciuc "The Problem of National, Ideological and Artistic Peculiarity of American Literature: the "American Dream" and "American Tragedy" ("The problem of national, ideological and artistic identity of American literature: on the example of the works "American Dream" and "American Tragedy"), Jimmie Jane Cook "Significant Parallels in Theodor Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* and Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*" ("Parallel points in Theodor Dreiser's "American Tragedy" and

Truman Capote's "In Cold Blood"), etc. Kian Pishkar "Fredrick Jameson and Dreiser's Antihero's Deterministic Situations, case study of American Tragedy and Sister Carrie" ("Fredrick Jameson and Dreiser's Antihero's Deterministic Situations, case study of American Tragedy and Sister Carrie") The research written for the PhD defense was defended at the Islamic Azad University in 2018, and in this scientific work the works of the two creators were studied comparatively. This study discusses the work "An American Tragedy" and also reflects on its protagonist, Clyde.

"Dreiser's largest novel, *An American Tragedy*, is often considered his masterpiece. It is divided into three books, the first of which foreshadows the events of the second, and the third describes Clyde's trial. The main character is Clyde Griffiths, the son of a street preacher. Those living in dire poverty. Thus Clyde grows up yearning for material things that he could never achieve except through his own hard work.

After a series of odd jobs, Clyde heads to Lyncurgus, New York, hoping to find a job in his uncle's thriving shirt factory. Soon, he becomes the supervisor of the stamping room, where he meets Roberta Alden, a hardworking, beautiful, and young woman whose interests coincide. After a few months of dating, the two fall in love and Roberta becomes pregnant. However, in the meantime, Clyde has met Sondra Finchley, a wealthy and socialite whose lifestyle represents everything he could have dreamed of. Infatuated with Sondra but pressured by Roberta (who has been unable to get an abortion) to marry him, Clyde feels trapped.

As in Dreiser's previous novels, two events of fate influence his actions. The first is the news of a drowning, in which the body of a woman, not a man, is found. Not long after reading this, Clyde discovers a chain of secluded lakes north of the resort. The Finchleys have a summer home. Since Roberta does not know how to swim, he thinks that

an "accidental" drowning could be a way out of his predicament. Roberta proposes to him and, having planned a pre-wedding stroll on one of these lonely lakes, chooses a boat that easily capsizes. As Roberta tries to approach Clyde in the boat; she pushes him back, causing him to lose his balance and fall into the water. At this moment, Clyde's heart undergoes a rapid change. "He reaches out to save Roberta, causing the boat to tip over, hitting her head and knocking her unconscious. Although Clyde still pulls Roberta out of the water, a "voice" inside him tells him that fate has worked in his favor. So he lets her drown and goes back to Sondra," writes Kian Pishkar.

The researcher also reflected on the style of the writer Theodore Dreiser: the novel is divided into three books, the language in the first two books is simple, direct, natural and unadorned, showing the full scope of Clyde's life, and the third book represents the transition to the inner world of the main character, and the means used in Dreiser's style are analyzed. "Having examined the text and found linguistic features specific to Dreiser's style, we came to the conclusion that, using such writing techniques as symbolism, free indirect speech, contrast in colors, etc., Dreiser revealed the tensions that arise in the mind, opposing thoughts with the best simplicity. Through the frightening combination of bright and dark colors, Dreiser depicts the differences between different classes of society in 20th-century America. A master of the reporter's storytelling technique, Dreiser uses the power of detailed description to depict the contrast between the rich and poor neighborhoods of the city, as well as the hero's emotions through whose eyes this reality is perceived. To reveal this vast contrast, long sentences and many details are used, characteristic of Dreiser's narrative style" (Kian Pishkar "Fredrick Jameson and Dreiser's Antihero's Deterministic Situations, case study of American



Tragedy and Sister Carrie ", Islam Azad university, 2018)

Kian Pishkar discusses how Dreiser uses not only the power of emotion but also symbols to share his philosophical views on life and death, love and hate, and the pursuit of wealth and power. He discusses how all of the writer's works feature a battle between light and shadow, ugliness and beauty, desire and inability, black and red, how these colors become a dominant stylistic device, sometimes they are clearly different from each other, how poverty and happiness often come together in contrast, and how none of Dreiser's novels are entirely red or entirely black.

This study examines the issues of modern man and determinism in Dreiser's novels *An American Tragedy* and *Sister Carrie*. In addition, the modern theory of man and determinism in Dreiser's masterpieces use this concept to connect these novels, and what dimensions it reveals, self-exile, loneliness, social isolation and lack of communication, and other closely related concepts are also studied in detail. Dreiser's novels, including *An American Tragedy* and *Sister Carrie*, use the concepts of loneliness and misunderstanding in postmodern themes and styles, and also reflect on the repetition of modern and existentialist movements in his novels.

Habib El-Baaj's doctoral dissertation, titled "Thomas Hardy and Theodore Dreiser A Comparative Study," examined the similarities in the styles and works of Thomas Hardy and Theodore Dreiser, and included a chapter in the study on Dreiser's "An American Tragedy" and compared the works.

The study raises several issues, in particular, the fact that the style of Thomas Hardy is so clearly visible in Theodore Dreiser's works that Dreiser was not unaware of Hardy's novels, that Theodore Dreiser was inspired by or influenced by Thomas Hardy, the widespread pessimistic and

deterministic philosophy in the novels of both authors is discussed, that is, both of them read and were influenced by evolutionary theories that contradict accepted views of man, God, and the universe, and this can be felt in their works, the fact that the mental states of the characters in the works of the writers being comparatively studied are so close to each other, that the characters in Hardy's and Dreiser's novels rarely have a satisfactory attitude towards life, and other issues are considered.

In a comparative analysis of the styles and works of both writers, the researcher first begins with the characters in the authors' works. The characters of Clyde, the hero of Dreiser's work, and Jude, the hero of Hardy's work, and the events related to them are revealed one after another. "While Jude from the very beginning strives for moral, religious, and intellectual goals, Clyde always wants material comfort, money, pleasure, and status. As an idealist, Jude's desire for spiritual and spiritual elevation is cruelly thwarted, his virtues have become a vice in the eyes of society. Clyde was on the opposite side of everything, he only wanted material satisfaction, but he, like Jude, naturally weakened. Thus, each is burdened with ambition, and each is determined by failure. Whether one is an idealist, the other a materialist, the fate of each hero is the same. Each person is offended by the forces of his nature, society, and circumstances" (Habib El-Baaj "Thomas Hardy and Theodor Dreiser A Comparative Study, Department of English Literature University of Glasgow, 1989). While analyzing the similarities between the family situations of the characters in the work, the researcher noted that both characters are seen as a product of heredity to a certain extent, that both come from poor families and have their own unique characteristics, that Jude, who is an orphan, is completely dissatisfied with his nature and goals, that his father treated Jude's mother so badly that

she drowned herself, and that Clyde also comes from a poor family, where parents do not understand children and each other properly, that Clyde's father has handed over the management of the family to his wife, and that his mother has steel-like endurance, but despite her love for humanity, she is very cold. Now the researcher focuses on the similarities in the characters' appearances: "Jude is a handsome, thoughtful, and serious young man" (Jude, 62-63), "dark-skinned, with black eyes, black curly hair, and a neatly trimmed black beard," and Clyde has "a straight, well-cut nose, a high white forehead, wavy, shiny, black hair, black eyes, and sometimes very sad" and similar allusions to both characters.

The researcher also compared the works of both authors, analyzing similarities in the chronotope of the city, the psyche of the characters, the plot, and the composition.

The difference in Dreiser's and Dostoevsky's approach to reality is easy to identify when comparing *Crime and Punishment* and *An American Tragedy*, Rodion Raskolnikov and Clyde Griffiths. The similarity of these works lies in the realistic interpretation of the reasons that prompted the heroes to commit murder. In this regard, *An American Tragedy* is often called the American *Crime and Punishment*. However, the similarities end there. Clyde is forced to commit murder by American bourgeois society and its individualistic ideology. Seeking to emphasize that Clyde is not only a criminal, but also a victim, Dreiser deepens the analysis of the reasons that prompted Clyde to commit a crime and enhances the pathos of anti-capitalist accusation in the novel. Dostoevsky, showing the true reasons that prompted Raskolnikov to commit murder, the poverty and hopelessness of his existence with all the logic of a realistic story, but seeks to link his crime to the influence of socialist ideas.

Speaking about Roberta's death, Dreiser emphasizes her moral purity, thereby more clearly revealing that the circumstances of her death are a terrible product of the entire American social system, emphasizing the worthlessness of Clyde, who raised his hand to her. In Dostoevsky, Raskolnikov kills an old woman who robbed the poor and unfortunate, and this crime initially seems justified to Raskolnikov.

In *An American Tragedy*, Dreiser denounces the unrealistic and lifeless ideas that his preacher parents try to instill in Clyde. Describing Clyde's doomed life, Dreiser speaks of the desire of the priest, Reverend Macmillan, to subjugate him to his influence. True to the truth of life, Dreiser describes the confused state of Clyde, who awaits death and is ready to do anything to save life. In such circumstances, he writes an appeal to young people, in which he declares his loyalty to Christ. It is these twists and turns before his death that "Clyde finally decides that he must not only find faith, but that he has already found it, and at the same time, complete and unshakable peace. In this case, at the request of his mother and Reverend Macmillan, who directly assisted him, gave instructions and immediately changed some of his phrases in his presence and with his consent, Clyde ... wrote a letter to the whole world, especially to the young people of his age ... "(VIII, 455). Dreiser psychologically convincingly depicts the priest's desire to influence the soul of a person who is desperate to save his life and clings to any, even apparent, opportunity to escape death.

"*American Tragedy*" is a significant achievement of American literature. In it, Dreiser managed to expose the leading theme of 20th-century American literature - the tragedy of American reality. It manifested itself in the works of Upton Sinclair and Sinclair Lewis, Sherwood Anderson and William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway and Francis Scott Fitzgerald, and

continued in the books of modern writers James Baldwin and Saul Bellow, Albert Maltz and John O. Killens. Each of them created his own “American Tragedy” and spoke in his own way about the tragic fate of Americans. In this sense, “American Tragedy” became the banner of critical realism in 20th-century American literature. It determined the main path for the further development of American literature. The emergence of “American Tragedy” is associated with the strengthening of critical realism in the United States. True, An American Tragedy could not escape the accusation that its style was heavy-handed, a standard part of American criticism hostile to Dreiser.

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