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METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL****MENTAL ENLIGHTENMENT SCIENTIFIC –  
METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL**<http://mentaljournal-jspu.uz/index.php/mesmj/index>**CLASSIFICATION OF THE CHARACTERS OF THE NOVEL  
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**Key words:** Jennie Gerhardt, American literature, Theodore Dreiser, character, generalization, concreteness, individuality, literary work.

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to study the work of Theodore Dreiser, one of the most famous writers of American prose of the 20th century, and the representative of the naturalistic movement. We analyze his mastery of character creation by his novel “Jennie Gerhardt” which was published in 1911. When Dreiser created his heroes, he based on his personal observations, his knowledge of life, and the fate of the people around him. Also, the similarities and differences of the characters of the work, Dreiser's leading characteristics in creating an artistic image are analyzed. According to the work of T. Boboyev, the following two leading features: generalization; concreteness/individuality are used to analyze the basis of portrayal of the characters of the classical works.

**INTRODUCTION**

Theodore Dreiser was an American prolific artist who worked as a panoramic and compassionate [1] novelist, publisher and editor. He was born in 1875 in Terre Haute, Indiana, USA, in a German-American family [2]. The family was extended; Theodore was the 12th of 13 children. As his father was religious [3], lived a modest life, and had to change his place of residence a lot, Theodore received his primary education quite late and in different schools. He had to earn money since his childhood.

Dreiser's life and work have been studied in Uzbekistan since the 60s and 70s of the 20th century. The reason for his popularity in the east was his passion for communist ideas. He is known in the East as a fierce critic of capitalism [4]. In the early stages of his work, through his stories, the fate of man, the weakness of man in front of nature and natural disasters'. It is obvious that many people in society live in poverty. And very few own great wealth, live a royal life, that wealth and poverty are passed from generation to generation. The fact that people living an ordinary life and trying to find their place do not have the right to make mistakes is skillfully described by the example of different human characters.

For example, in a story *The Men In Snow*, Dreiser depicts that people used to work a whole day in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to earn a few cents which were hardly enough to eat and drink. They stand in line for work in shabby clothes, they have to clean the city streets from snow, after the hard work they get their tops and shoes dirty in the evenings, and stand in line again for charity or a cheap bed. The people standing in line hoping to get a warm shelter in the morning are huddled together like a flock of sheep. And the dismemberment of the sick, the hatred of the mob towards the rich who is passing by in hot cars, is skillfully described. While reading this story in the hot summer it is natural that a reader feels the chill of winter and shivers from the cold [5].

The problem of women and society is complex and controversial, and it is one of the most researched issues of the 20th century. Representatives of all fields on these concepts; philosophers, historians and jurists conducted scientific research. By the 20th century, the image of a woman [6,7] began to be studied separately in fiction. The reason for this can be the activation of women in socio-economic and political spheres. At the beginning of the century, the role of women in society, their rights and freedoms, and their share in the development of society, is one of the main themes of American literature. In the 20th century, the rapid development of industry in Western countries increased the demand for labor. Now in the society, women are not considered as housewives, but as cheap labor force working in various aspects of life.

Theodore Dreiser gained writing experience by observing life, and the fact that he was inspired by the people around him to create the characters in many of his works. Some of the prototypes are even members of his family and it shows how observant and attentive he is. For example, the character of Caroline Meeber in the novel *Sister Carrie*, and the character of Genevieve in the novel *Jennie Gerhardt* were taken from the fate of her sisters. According to Sushkova, Dreiser based Carrie's character on the life of her sister Amma. When the works

became popular, the sisters resented Dreiser and stopped talking to him for revealing family secrets [8].

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This article explores T. Dreiser's skill in creating an artistic image based on the novel Jennie Gerhardt. As a research method, we use the method of image creation skill analysis in fiction. The concept of image can be found in the literature for the first time in the works of Aristotle, but he used the term "mimesis", i.e. "imitation" instead of image. According to Aristotle, the writer creates the hero of the work imitating life. According to T. Boboyev, the term "image" entered Uzbek literature in the 20-30s of the 20th century. Until then, expressions such as "symbol", "image", "copy" were used instead of the concept of image. According to T. Boboyev, the image is used in a narrow and broad sense. When used in a broad sense, the concept of image means landscape, details, objects, nature and animals in addition to human images. In a narrow sense, the image of a person is understood [9].

The writer describes life events in his work based on his observations. In ancient times, natural phenomena, supernatural and magical forces, and later animals were depicted as the heroes of the work. By the 20th century, realism was leading in fiction, especially prose. Man began to be depicted as a hero of works. The writer uses the image of a person to convey his idea of life to the reader. Through the image of a person, one can get complete information about the specific period in which the events of the work are described. The followings are the two leading features are analyzed on the basis of portrayal of the characters of the classical work: 1) generalization; 2) concreteness, individuality [10].

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Generalization of the characters**

About generalization of the characters L.N. Tolstoy says that many people of a certain category in real life are observed. Their peculiarities and qualities are summarized in a character in the work. For example, T. Dreiser describes Jennie as a young, inexperienced, and shy eighteen-year-old girl. In this, the writer created a generalized character of the American youth of the 20th century. The main feature of Jennie is that she is not an independent person; she is subordinate to the authorities. In the continuation of the work, she first obeys her parents or her brother Sebastian, for a short time she follows Senator Brander, and after the death of the Senator, she follows Lester Kane. To illustrate her shyness and naive, Dreiser used an episode of Jennie's family's destitution and her search for work with her mother.

*Any one could see where the daughter behind her got the timidity and shamefacedness which now caused her to stand back and look indifferently away. She was a product of the fancy,*

*the feeling, the innate affection of the untutored but poetic mind of her mother combined with the gravity and poise which were characteristic of her father.* [11: 1].

In this episode, Jennie's inner world, character, traits inherited from her parents are revealed. Jennie is depicted as a typical representative of her time by obeying her parents, standing behind them as a sign of respect for adults, and consulting them on all matters. If we look at the American society of the 20th century, we can see that many families are religious, live on the basis of strict religious customs, and educate their children on the basis of religion. This process was not alien to the Gerhardt family either.

Father Gerhardt falls ill and loses his job. When the Gerhardt family is unable to pay the loan amount and interest from the bank, the youngest child Veronica gets measles. When she was gone for a few days, the mother ceases all her work and just prays beside her child with a smile. A compassionate doctor and a Lutheran priest kept up to visit the little girl free of charge. From these episodes, we can see that the Gerhardts are a righteous, honest and very pious family. We can give another example.

*This honesty, like his religious convictions, was wholly due to inheritance. He had never reasoned about it. Father and grandfather before him were sturdy German artisans, who had never cheated anybody out of a dollar, and this honesty of intention came into his veins undiminished* [11: 54].

Senator Brander, a character who left a remarkable mark on Jennie's life, was an elderly bachelor who fell in love with Jennie. He loved the girl and considered it his duty to look after her struggling family whenever he could. No matter how cordial their relationship, Jennie's arrival at the hotel room to take the Senator's clothes to be washed causes gossip among the hotel workers. The workers gossiped about the Senator and Jennie. Brander was very attached to the girl. He decides to go to the capital to get away from Jennie. But even this action does not help him. Back in Columbus, the Senator would often visit the Gerhardts or take Jennie out on the town. As a pure Christian, a religious man, father Gerhardt does not want neighbors to gossip and spread rumors about his young daughter and the old Senator.

Jennie is a daughter of a typical poor American family of the 20th century. She is a general character [12]. Her leading quality is her willingness to help everyone and to sacrifice herself for the well-being of her family members [1]. When her brother gets in jail, none of the family's acquaintances lend money to pay the 10 dollar fine. The father did not want his daughter to meet Brander, who insulted the Senator and almost drove him out, but Jennie asks the Senator for help to save her brother from prison.

*There had been a good deal of coal stealing during the past two years, but so long as it was confined to moderate quantities the railroad took no notice. When, however, customers of shippers complained that cars from the Pennsylvania fields lost thousands of pounds in transit to Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago, and other points, detectives were set to work. Gerhardt's children were not the only ones who preyed upon the railroad in this way. Other families in Columbus—many of them—were constantly doing the same thing, but Sebastian happened to be seized upon as the Columbus example. [11: 66].*

This passage describes how the Gerhardt family has cut back on all expenses. Sebastian throws coal from the wagon when his siblings struggle to collect coal from the platform. Then he is caught by a detective. The writer skillfully described the poverty of the family, the large number of such families, and stealing of coal by other families. Solving a family's lifelong hardship is a small task for Brander. He would do anything in the world for Jennie. In order for Sebastian's future not to be ruined, he writes a letter to the judge asking him to revoke the fine, goes personally to the jail and ask his friend, the sheriff, to release the boy then and there. In 15 minutes he solves the Gerhardt's problem. At this time, Jennie was waiting for him in his room. Hearing that he saved her brother from prison, Jennie devotes herself to Brander and spends the night with the Senator. Jennie believes Brander is a good man; now he is closer to her than ever. He assures her over and over of his marrying her. But the sudden death of the Senator puts Jennie in a difficult situation.

### **Concreteness, individuality of the characters**

When creating a character, a reader embodies a living person in front of his eyes by making it concrete, individualizing it. As T. Boboyev noted, a literary hero must be individualized. Through individualization, the writer gives vitality, aliveness, and naturalness to the character. In order for each character to be described as a living person, the writer must find and describe their characteristics, character, and distinguishing marks from others. Then the heroes of the work are embodied like living people, they seem believable to the reader. Just as two drops of water in life do not have the same appearance and characteristics, the heroes of the work should be depicted with different poles, different characteristics, and unique appearance. If the character's individual features and behavior are not clearly described, they will become lifeless and unreal. This makes the reader bored, reduces the readability and artistic value of the work.

When Theodore Dreiser depicts portraits of his characters, he describes them as real people. [13,14]. Each hero has his own world view, his own goal in life. Analyzing Brander's character, he is completely different from the negative characters in the work. Individual

mental symptoms that determine his behavior are expressed by the writer with high artistry. The Senator is an intelligent, kind, generous person who is not indifferent to the fate of others. Through Brander's state of mind, thoughts and personal feelings, the writer individualizes him. By individualizing the character, we cannot call it an artistic representation of a living person. It is not enough to describe the inner part of the character. In the transformation of the image into a character, its individuality is also important. When creating the image of the person he wants to portray, the writer should use many individual characteristics of the class or social group to which his character belongs, and create a generality of the hero belonging to a certain social class. If we talk about the generalization of Brander's character, he is not only a kind person, but also feels himself as a responsible person for Jennie and her family. He supports the girl and her poor family as much as he can. [15].

Senator is together with Jennie for a short time in her life. Lester is the second main character in the novel; he is with the girl for most of Jennie's life. Lester Kane's status in society is very high compared to Jennie's, and he is portrayed as the intelligent, energetic and diligent son of a wealthy manufacturer. When he sees a poor servant girl, he falls in love with her. The writer individualizes Jennie when he describes her through Lester's eyes. Jennie is different from wealthy women who are representatives of the noble class, and poor women who are children of workers and servants. She is the woman in Lester's heart - kind, generous, beautiful and young. All aspects of Jennie correspond to Lester's desires and tastes; Lester has not met the woman of his heart yet. Unlike Senator Brander, he thinks Jennie as an entertainment tool. His status and family members opposed his marriage to a girl from a poor and lower-class family. He didn't want to lose his freedom, and he didn't even think about marrying Jennie. In Lester's opinion, marrying Jennie was impossible, not even necessary.

*Marriage was not only impossible but unnecessary. He had only to say "Come" and she must obey; it was her destiny.* [11: 136].

The passage quoted above shows how Lester thinks about the poor.

In the novel, the image of Lester Kane, depicted in the second part of Jennie's life, rises to the level of a character. When he meets Jennie, Lester emerges as an individual character. His mental signs are: energetic, wealthy, enterprising, enterprising, a person who does not care about difficulties to achieve his goal. After falling in love with Jennie, he is ready to do anything to get her. Lester initially tries to win Jennie for fun. But after getting used to her, he cannot imagine his life without her. Even after finding out that Jennie has a daughter with Brander, he can't give her up. Despite the opposition of his family members, relatives, and the aristocracy, he is determined to marry the girl.



Lester, as a generalized character, provides material support for Jennie and her family. He is ready to do anything for the girl, he goes against his whole family, even his father's disinheritance will cannot force him to give up Jennie. The above traits of Lester reveal his positive character. At the same time, Kane is a general representative of the wealthy class of aristocracy of his time, who can easily achieve all their desires.

### CONCLUSION

While reading this work, anyone can be assured that Dreiser skillfully describes the daily lifestyle, dreams, and traditions of rich and poor families in the 19th century American society. Through the images of Jennie, Brander and Lester, the differences between the social classes of that time and people's thoughts are shown. Jennie is portrayed as a representative of the poor and lower class. Brander and Lester, representatives of the aristocracy class of society, use her to satisfy their desires. At some point in the novel, they are willing to do anything for Jennie, but in the end, Brander's sudden death destroys his desire to marry Jennie. At the beginning of the events of the novel, Kane is depicted as a short-tempered, monosyllabic person, without problems, but he also postpones his marriage proposal to Jennie. Saving Jennie from society's scorn does not sincerely attempt to bring her into upper class society. In conclusion, the class differences in the 19th century American society will always prevent Jennie from living a happy and fulfilling life and marrying her lover.

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