

The Contribution to the Prosperity of the Novella Genre in the Works of Sherwood Anderson and John Steinbeck in the United States

Boltayeva Dilduzaxon Shuxrat qizi

O'zbekiston Davlat Jahon Tillari Universiteti o'qituvchisi

e-mail dilduzaboltayeva92@gmail.com

Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqola Shervud Anderson va Jon Steynbekning novella janriga qo'shgan muhim hissalarini, ularning uslubiy yangiliklari va mavzuviy yo'nalishlarini o'rganadi. Psixologik realizm, modernistik parchalanganlik, ijtimoiy tanqid va ekologik ramziylikni birlashtirish orqali, ushbu mualliflar novella janrini inson va jamiyat murakkabliklarini o'rganish uchun kuchli adabiy vositaga aylantirdilar.

Abstract The 20th century witnessed the evolution and flourishing of various literary forms, including the novella, which became a significant medium for exploring complex themes within a compact structure. Sherwood Anderson and John Steinbeck, two prominent American writers, made remarkable contributions to the prosperity of the novella genre. This article examines their stylistic innovations, thematic focuses, and the socio-cultural contexts that shaped their works, highlighting their enduring impact on American literature.

Key words: Novella, psychological, realism, modernist, grotesque, ecological, symbolism, marginalization, legacy, storytelling.

The novella, a literary form situated between the short story and the novel, gained prominence in the 20th century as a versatile genre capable of balancing narrative depth with brevity. In the United States, Sherwood Anderson and John Steinbeck emerged as influential figures whose novellas redefined the boundaries of the genre.

Sherwood Anderson is widely regarded as a psychological realist whose contributions to the novella genre are most prominently displayed in *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919). This collection of interrelated novellas is an archetype of fragmented narrative structures, where individual stories coalesce into a cohesive portrayal of small-town American life. Scholars have noted that Anderson's technique reflects

the psychological fragmentation of his characters, a hallmark of modernist literature.¹ The “grotesque” archetype, a recurring motif in his work, symbolizes the psychological and emotional anomalies of individuals grappling with identity and purpose. These characters embody universal human struggles, making Anderson’s novellas enduringly relevant.

John Steinbeck’s contributions to the novella genre are equally transformative but distinct in their focus. His novellas, such as *Of Mice and Men* (1937) and *The Pearl* (1947), serve as incisive critiques of social and ecological issues. Steinbeck’s social commentary is particularly notable in *Of Mice and Men*, where the plight of itinerant workers during the Great Depression underscores broader themes of economic disparity and human dignity. Articles like “Steinbeck’s Social Critique in *Of Mice and Men*” by Mimi Reisel Gladstein emphasize how his novellas bring the struggles of marginalized communities into sharp relief. Meanwhile, *The Pearl* illustrates Steinbeck’s ecological awareness, exploring the destructive consequences of greed and humanity’s fraught relationship with nature. Steinbeck’s use of symbolism and allegory, such as the pearl itself representing both hope and corruption, deepens the philosophical dimensions of his narratives. Anderson and Steinbeck, while differing in their thematic emphases, share a profound dedication to the novella as a vehicle for character-driven storytelling. Anderson’s introspective focus on the inner lives of his characters complements Steinbeck’s outward exploration of societal and environmental contexts. Both writers demonstrate an economy of language, a hallmark of the novella form, crafting concise yet richly textured narratives.

The impact of Anderson and Steinbeck on the novella genre is immeasurable. Their works highlight the novella’s ability to navigate the intimate and the universal, making it a uniquely compelling genre in American literature. As contemporary literary critics have argued, the innovations of Anderson and Steinbeck not only shaped the 20th-century novella but also ensured its relevance in modern

¹ (see “Fragmentation and Unity in *Winesburg, Ohio*” by Donald Pizer)

storytelling.² Through their thematic explorations and stylistic advancements, Anderson and Steinbeck elevated the novella from a transitional form to a dynamic and independent genre.

Conclusion Sherwood Anderson and John Steinbeck's contributions to the novella genre exemplify the power of concise storytelling to explore profound human and societal themes. Anderson's fragmented narratives and psychological focus resonate as deeply introspective portraits of individual struggles, while Steinbeck's socially and ecologically charged novellas offer a window into broader societal dynamics. Through their stylistic innovations and thematic depth, these authors not only enriched the novella as a literary form but also ensured its place as a vital medium in American literature.

List of Sources

1. References Anderson, Sherwood. Winesburg, Ohio. New York 1919.
2. Steinbeck, John. Of Mice and Men. New York: Covici Friede, 1937.
3. Schorer, Mark. "Technique as Discovery: The Novellas of John Steinbeck." American Literature, vol. 20, no. 4, 1949, pp. 408-422.
4. Rideout, Walter B. Sherwood Anderson: A Writer in America. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006.
5. Umarova M. Author and hero's parallelism in English and Uzbek literature //Philology Matters. – 2021. – T. 2021. – №. 2. – C. 21-34.
6. Umarova M. The concept of “a literary hero” in English and Uzbek historical novels //Psychology and Education. [http://www. Psychology and education.net/pae/index. php/pae/article/view/2291](http://www.Psychology and education.net/pae/index.php/pae/article/view/2291). – 2021.
7. Pizer, Donald. "Fragmentation and Unity in Winesburg, Ohio." Modern Fiction Studies, vol. 5, no. 1, 1959, pp. 34-47.

² “The Legacy of the Novella in American Literature” by Linda Wells.