



## FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN JOHN STEINBECK'S NOVEL "EAST OF EDEN"

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### ABSTRACT

*In this article, family which is considered an integral part of the society in the novel is analyzed. The main idea of the novel "East of Eden" is the family, the author revealed in his work the level of influence of relations, conflicts, and problems in the family on the fate of a person, and the fact that good and evil are always side by side in life is depicted by the characters of the work.*

Every writer depicts social condition and problems of the period in his literary works. Realism began to develop at a turning point in the development of American literature, in a period of thirst for freedom, characterized by the manifestation of the stormy energy of the national character. Realism, especially naturalism, as a branch of realism, helped to expand the horizons of understanding of the individual, society, their nature and interaction, and served as a basis for the great works of great writers and the works of great writers with excitement and passion.

As one of the great realist writers, John Steinbeck made a great contribution to world literature and is considered one of the greatest writers of the 20th century, and he received the name "quintessential American writer". Steinbeck is one of the most famous American novelists. Despite the fact that his novels were published a long time ago, they remain popular to this day. His novels are filled with interesting characters and storylines that always attract readers. Not only that, but John Steinbeck used very vivid details to describe what happened in the story. The uniqueness of the details he used grabbed the reader's attention and helped them visualize where the story was taking place.

Although John Steinbeck's works have gained fame in American literature, at the same time, his works have been severely criticized. His ideas in the work caused misunderstandings, and he was not recognized by many critics as a master American writer. Many critics predicted that his status would decline after his death, but the fact that more than two million copies of Steinbeck's works are sold each year proves the critics wrong. Steinbeck tried to relate to his readers in his works. By choosing the right plot, emotion, character, and pace, she allowed her readers to become a part of her story. He once wrote: "I want the participation of my reader. I want him to be so involved that it will be his story." [ 1]



The novel "East of Eden" is a story about Americans, the events of which span the period from 1860 to 1918, describing the lives of three generations. "East of Eden" is a biographical work, in which the writer talked about the life of the families of Samuel Hamilton (maternal grandfather) and Adam Trask, and the fate of three generations. The novel "East of Eden" was the result of John Steinbeck's five years of tireless and painstaking work, which cemented his position as a true novelist [2]. The author expressed his philosophical attitude to life based on the experience he has accumulated over the years on the example of the fate of his characters in the novel. It was skillfully depicted that the human race is in the middle of the struggle between goodness and evil since the day it was created, and it is in his hands which path he chooses during his life and how he can find the strength to enter the right path. The fate of people who became victims of the irreconcilable conflict between good and evil, won, and were able to preserve their true human virtue, was embodied in the example of the Hamilton and Trask families. [3]

The main idea of the novel "East of Eden" is family and love, and it is a skillfully written work about family relations: marriage, conflicts between parents, children, and sibling rivalry. All these contradictions mainly lie in the unfair attitude of parents towards their children. Many plots in the novel involve parental love - children seek love from their parents, and parents seek love from their children. Charles is always angry that his father loves his brother Adam more than him. Charles loves his father very much and always tries hard to win his love, but Adam always wins his father's love and attention without any effort.

When the work begins to reflect on the Trask family, the author describes that Adam did not have love in his heart for his father. For example, "Sometimes he scared me. Sometimes—yes, sometimes I admired him, but most of the time I hated him". [4] Although Adam has a lot of hatred towards his father, the author somehow chooses him as his favorite son Cyrus, but portrays Charles as a child who needs love and attention from his father. This attitude is evident in various situations. When preparing a gift for Cyrus, Charles works very hard to make a knife to please his father, but Adam just He takes a stray dog and presents it to his father as a gift, which Cyrus likes very much. Surprisingly, Cyrus prefers the dog that Adam gave him to the knife, which is the result of Charles's hard work. Charles is very angry about this situation and has a big fight with Adam.

"You 're not clever. You don 't know what you want ... Does that answer your question? I love [Adam] better. I always have. This may be a bad thing to tell you, but it 's true." [4]

This clearly describes the difference in the father's attitude towards his sons. The basis of the main family problems in the Trask family was the fact that the father's love for Adam was more than for Charles and it was openly shown.

The environment he creates for Cyrus and his sons creates a sibling rivalry between Charles and Adam. "The torment and fighting that is often shrugged off as normal sibling rivalry may not always be so benign" [4]

During childhood, a person experiences various events that influence who he is and who he will be in the future. However, it is the family environment and family relationships that have the greatest impact on a person and have lasting impact. This is proven by the fate of Steinbeck's characters Charles and Adam and Caleb and Aaron, the children of their father Cyrus and Adam. The novel shows that sibling rivalry can repeat itself in the lives of



successive generations, because when one son learns this behavior, he continues it when he becomes a father.

In conclusion, it should be noted that although the work "East of Eden" was created more than half a century ago, it reveals the problems that exist in all societies today. John Steinbeck described in the novel "East of Eden" the disagreements between the father and the son, the conflicts between the brothers and the negative consequences that occurred in the lives of the characters. He intended it to be a work that serves as an instructive pandoma.

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