

GONGPHET TINIKUL : THE CITY IN THE WORKS OF CHARLES DICKENS
AND THEODORE DREISER. THESIS ADVISOR : DR. SANGUANSRI
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The purposes of this thesis are twofold. Firstly, the study aims to analyze the impact of the industrial revolution on the city, society, social values, and attitudes of people in England and in the United States of America. Secondly, the study attempts a comparative analysis of the theme of the city that appears in the works of the English novelist Charles Dickens and of the American novelist Theodore Dreiser.

In order to investigate the attitudes towards the city of these two novelists, I discuss six novels of Dickens and three novels and one collection of essays of Dreiser.

The vision of the city represented in the works of the two novelists is that of the business and industrial world. It is also a place rife with social problems and torn by division owing to its preoccupation with money and with property. A significant difference lies in the fact that in England, not only property but also family counts.

The results of this study show that the attitudes of the two novelists were on the whole different. Dickens, a sentimental man who excessively favoured the natural world, considered the city as a jail and a monster. As for Dreiser, he deplored conditions in the city where only the strong man could survive at the expense of those who are weaker. Yet, he accepted that city life is the business life, hence very competitive. Dreiser therefore believed that man living in the city should employ their experiences to their own advantage.

While the difference in the attitudes of these two novelists is for the most part superficial, it is clear that changes in social structure affect literature and certainly affect the works of Dickens and Dreiser.