

### ***The Red Pony: The Protagonist's Rites of Passage***

Steinbeck's novella *The Red Pony* belongs to the Bildungsroman genre. It is about a young character; Jody Tiflin's coming up age in his changing relationship with his father. Jody has a complex relationship with nature and basic human conditions and result will last. The novella which takes place on the Tiflin ranch in the Salinas Valley, California is composed of four short tales. Each of the individuals story is part of Jody's education. These stories present Jody's entrance into maturity through his encounters with life's harsh realities. They are the part of ongoing process of life. Birth and death are the major factors which break down Jody's childlike certitudes.

In the first story, "The Gift", Mr. Tiflin presents Jody with a red Pony. Jody is chocked with excitement and pride. He names Pony after the Gabilan Mountains near his house. Same day, he brings a gang of six boys to look at his Pony after his school. The Pony quickly becomes his chief joy and Jody becomes responsible person. Under Billy Buck's guidance, Jody starts to care Pony. Soonafter, he becomes responsible enough to care about Pony. Jody has good attachment to the horse. However unfolding event destroys Jody emotionally. Gabilan catches cold. Billy Buck promised to cure but fails. Jody kills one of buzzard which descends on Gabilan head out of frustration.

In the second part, Jody is lonely without Pony. He goes with slingshot and kills a little thrush. Jody is imaginatively and adventurous about the mountain wishing he could explore the mountains. Jody makes good relationship with Gitano, who has crossed the mountains. Gitano arouse Jody's curiosity and interest of unknown mystery about high mountains. In the third part, writer tries to bring Jody in the world of reality from the world of imagination giving him the responsibility of horse Nellie. Jody is promised to have a colt which Nellie is going to deliver. He becomes anxious

about Nellie and the colt. But Nellie should be killed to give life to colt. Jody tries to be glad because of colt, but suffer inwardly on the death of Nellie.

Final part of story begins that Jody's relationship with his grandfather is reverent and open whereas that with his father is colder and more distant. Jody is interested to hear his grandfather repetitive stories of his experiences as a wagon train leader. Jody realizes how the grandfather feels knowing himself to be deflated by Carl Tiflin. Grandfather talks with Jody about how he really feels wonders to cross the plain. Jody says that someday he will be a leader of people. At the end of the story Jody makes lemonade for his grandfather to console him. It indicates that Jody is matured enough to care for others.

*The Red Pony* is tied up with the theme of Jody's coming up age in his changing relationship with his father, Carl Tiflin. In the beginning we see Carl as a powerful man. Jody is afraid of his father. He cannot see his father face. He knows from the footsteps that Carl is coming. As Jody grows up he is forced to face his difference with his father. Jody begins to think of his imaginations which are more powerful than his father's. Jody being a child, his imagination is fairly straight forward. He hates things that remind of death. He loves those things that give him access to adventure.

Jody is very sensitive to nature and natural process. Jody's entrance into maturity is through his encounter with natural process and life's harsh realities. Gift by Carl, Pony and the birth of Colt brings happiness in Jody's life. Death of Pony and Nellie brings sadness and break down Jody's childlike certitudes. Jody ultimately realizes that life and death are the way of maturity. Steinbeck has celebrated the spirit and courageous of adolescence through Jody. Jody learns harsh lesson about life and death of living beings in the world. Life of colt is possible only through the death of

Nellie. To give birth to somebody there should be struggle between two opposite sex. The copulation is brutal and delivery process too difficult.

Since the publication of *The Red Pony*, it has been well received by many literary critics. Many critics have praised highly the artistic style of novella. They have presented their own views regarding the novella. Howard Levant in his book *The Journal of Narrative Technique* examined the novella as “John Steinbeck’s *The Red Pony*: A Study in Narrative Technique”. The novella is in third person narrative technique. The narrator is unknown and the main character Jody is the center of the whole novel. All the events happen in the novella revolve around Jody’s life’s activities. Levant writes:

Jody is the point of view we tend to accept his innocence as our own. The events are developed in that each episode is an objective record of Jody’s experience and deepening awareness. One episode flows in to the next and the last episode focuses with the first because it ends as the first begins, with . . . Jody’s innocent point of view.(77)

Jody is enough to care the horse eventhough; he is a small boy of ten. He makes lemonade to his grandfather. All four stories are narrated by third person narrator. Jody is the point of focalization. Levant means to say that the story is in the form of narratology. All these four stories in the novella are related to each other’s. There are connections between characters and events.

The novel is full of affirmation of environment. The setting of the story is Salinas Valley of California. Steinbeck writes about the high mountains Gabilan Mountain, horses, Tiflin ranch, lifecycle of horse, and so on. Derek Gladwin reviews this novella as “The Steinbeck Land Ethic: Environmentalism and *The Red Pony*”. Gladwin writes:

An environmental explication of Jody's development in *The Red Pony* leads us to an understanding of him as a boy who is learning analyzing and reflecting upon his own biotic community. Recent scholarship has recognized Steinbeck as an author who “provides a fine description of ecological field biology” and whose “works speak strongly to biologists”.(65)

Steinbeck focuses on the ecological concept in biotic world. Jody gets maturity in his ranch. The setting of this novella is Steinbeck's childhood days. Jody, by seeing the birth and death of the horse he knows the meaning and life cycle of living beings. He knows the harsh realities of the life. He becomes happy with the birth of colt and upsets with the death of horse. Gladwin further writes:

*The Red Pony* brilliantly implements an ecological ethic in a seemingly simple story about a young boy's journey towards adulthood. The story leads towards a realization of the basis for ecological ethics, articulating holistic theories of environment that are consistent with those of Aldo Leopold. (76)

Steinbeck describes about landscape of the Gabilan Mountains, cows, cypress, and the house. All these things are the part of ecology. Living beings relies on the biotic community and even after its death it cannot escape from the biotic community. The birth of the colt and the death of Pony, Nellie and buzzard is in the same biotic community.

Throughout each story of novella, readers follow Jody's initiation in to adult life in which the pony of the title functions as a symbol of his innocence and maturation. R. Bairad Shuman reviews as "Initiation Rites in *The Red Pony*". Shuman in his review writes:

In nearly all cultures throughout the ages, the attainment of manhood has been marked by some form of initiation rites, some relatively simple, others remarkably complicated, but all bearing striking similarities to each other and all resulting in the symbolic death of the boy and his rebirth, around the age of puberty, as a man. (1252)

Like most of ten years old boys, Jody feels the urge for rebellion as well as the need to love. Jody begins to learn about adulthood- its pains, responsibilities and problems through the acceptance of his father's gift. Jody sees that life is brutal from its beginning. Nellie has to be killed in order to give birth to the colt.

The novella is of common manhood and is similar to his childhood. There is a good relationship between mother and son, grandfather and Jody. Melody Graulich writes:

I loved my deeply flawed grandfather who hiked the hills with me, dunked with me in horse troughs filled by windmills, pretended to hunt wild animals to the gunshot sounds our tires made as we crossed cattle guards, told me that while he never lied, it might be that he sometimes prevaricated. When I first saw it, I knew no metaphor could be so beautifully apt as the pastures of heaven, and I recognized my grandfather, after his death, in "The Leader of the People". (34)

Carl Tiflin hates grandfather but Jody loves him. Jody is eager to hear the story of grandfather. By hearing the story of grandfather, Jody hopes to be the leader of people in the future. He makes lemonade to his grandfather.

The above critical comments have shown that the style of *The Red Pony* is highly appreciated. Although *The Red Pony* has been read from different perspectives, it has not been analyzed from the perspective of Bildungsroman genre. The research is explored through the perspective of Bildungsroman genre. Steinbeck in the novella

writes about Jody's innocence at beginning. With the development of the plot, we know that Jody's entrance in to maturity passing his child hood innocent life. Jody faces the harsh realities of life and death of living beings.

The term Bildungsroman was coined in 1819 by German philologist Karl Morgenstern in his university lectures, and later famously reprised by Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1941), who legitimated it in 1870 and popularized it in 1906. The genre is further characterized by a number of formal, topical, and thematic features.

The birth of the Bildungsroman is normally dated to the publication of *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* by Johann Wolfgang Goethe. Although the Bildungsroman arose in Germany, it had extensive influence first in Europe and later throughout the world. Thomas Carlyle translated Goethe's novel into English. After its publication in 1824, many British authors wrote novels inspired by it. Bildungsroman becomes popular throughout the world. Many authors write childish novels focusing on their coming up age.

The genre Bildungsroman focuses on coming of ages and rites of passage of an adolescent and is recognized for how it educates its readers about personal growth and self-consciousness. These coming of qualities have become popularized on other genre that targets towards youth and adolescent readers. Books that revolve around the adolescent's coming of age can be argued as Bildungsroman genre. Bildungsroman genre is of how it educates teenagers with morals and important life lesson. Coming of age novels are known to educate its readers about personal growth and self-consciousness usually towards young adults. Bildungsroman genre allows individuals to understand the subject of rite of passage.

The protagonist in every novel/story departs their stage of being a youth and entering in to adulthood/maturity who is usually foolish and inexperienced at the beginning of the narrative. The story should typically center on the maturation process

of the single person-protagonist. The book does not allow readers to develop intellectually but socially as well. The protagonist finds his place in society by accepting its values and rules. The ending is not necessarily about closure. We often do not know what is going to happen to the hero. We/readers know that the protagonist has grown as a matured and he is equipped with knowledge to have chance in life. Here in the beginning of the novella, Jody is only of ten years old boy. Whole story is about the Jody Tiflin. He is the protagonist of the novella. He is innocence and immature boy at the beginning of the story. With the gift – Gabilan, the red pony- presented by Carl Tiflin Jody started to care the Pony. With the time passes he is matured enough to care the horse. He feels happy at the beginning when he kills buzzards but when he realizes that every creature has life he feels guilty on killing buzzard. Steinbeck, in the novella, shows Jody's maturity at the end of the novella. Jody makes lemonade to his grandfather to drink. Steinbeck does not give the novella a close ending. He makes curiosity on the readers' mind about the story what will happen next after.

Bildungsroman is a story of education. It is similar to coming-of-age stories; however, the characters of the Bildungsroman are more specific. In order for a novel to be considered a true Bildungsroman, the main character has to experience some form of moral development. In essence, they have to grow up. The focus of the character's growth is the main thrust of the narrative. In the novella, Jody is the center character. Whole story is focused on his coming-of-age. The protagonist Jody gets matured with the change of time. He knows the meaning of life death of living beings.

Bildungsroman was first applied to educational curricula and was later taken as the development of personality of an individual. In defining Bildungsroman, Wulf Koepke has argues

Preceded historically all institutional changes in Germany and elsewhere that based educational curricula and methods on its application. The Humboldtian model of university in particular, with its stated aim of independent learning and the development of the personality, cannot be projected back onto the idea of the Bildungsroman, although this is done often, explicitly or implicitly. *Bildung*, meaning 'formation', transferring the formation or external features to the features of personality as a whole. (130)

Bildungsroman was known as cultivation, education and refinement in a broad humanistic sense, certainly not merely education with all the current institutional connection of the world. Koepke has approved Bildungsroman as the development of a child from innocence to maturity. In the novella, *The Red Pony*, Steinbeck presents his protagonist, Jody as innocent small school boy of ten years old. But at the end of the story Jody is still child but he is matured with the human feelings and emotions.

Bildungsroman novels can be read as the narrative technique. Michael Beddow defines Bildungsroman in the concept of narrative technique. He writes as:

Such novels are highly stylized, symbolic works, and the expression and recommendation of a particular understanding of the nature of humanity through the more or less overtly factious narrative of the central character's development is . . . the most important feature which gives the novel on which study concentrates their peculiar generic identity. The feature, above all sets them apart from other works. (56)

Beddow argues that the novels are highly symbolic and the writer had understood about the nature. The novel is on the narrative technique, the protagonist is focused. The novella *The Red Pony* is on the narrative technique and the protagonist, Jody is the central character. All the stories are of Jody's harsh relations with self. Whole



stories are about the coming of age of the Jody who gets maturity at the end of the story. All the four episodes are interred connected with each other's. Each story begins with Jody's childish game. As the story develops it focuses on the maturation of Jody.

There is uneasy relationship between father and son which invites psychoanalysis. Regarding the psychoanalysis concept developed by Sigmund Freud, W. C. Hendley writes: "we often find the protagonist of the Bildungsroman in an uneasy relationship with his father or without a father at all" (89). Hendley means to say that psychological segment of this genre lets readers observe how the protagonist had walked out of their childhood and in to adulthood as well as the transition in between. By concentrating more on the character's psychological progression, Bildungsroman allows readers to examine the protagonist's emotions and his/her thought process of dealing with particular conflict. In the novella, Jody is close to his mother and he thinks his father as "disciplinarian." Jody becomes afraid even he hears the voice and footsteps of his father, Carl.

The journey of the protagonist will not be easy. There will be many failures along the way to test protagonist. He/she should survive the unwavering rules and limits of the society. Regarding this point J. Buckley in *Season of Youth: The Bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding* (1974) writes that "the Bildungsroman in its pure form has been defined as a "novel of all around development or self-culture" with a more or less conscious attempt on the part of hero to integrate his power to cultivate himself by his experience" (13). The protagonist gets maturity through his own experiences what he had seen and done. It allows the reader to analyze the protagonist's process to come across or to react the cultural forces.

Bildungsroman should be of moral issue. Readers get moral lesson after reading the novel. Regarding this issue, Fritz Martini writes in his *Bildungsroman--Terms and Theory*(1991) as:

The novel appears as a transitional form between reality, that is, “history” and poesies. It deceives through the impression of reality wrought by prose and, in fictive narration, weaves with . . . the prosaic mood in which people usually find themselves into an entertaining poetic work. Moreover, it encourages the cultivation of the reader more fully than any other types of novel. It presents material according to the laws of beauty, as an artwork and it communicates to serve a purpose, to teach, and to improve. (17-18)

Readers learn moral values through the connection they have with the protagonist, the book, and the author. If a reader builds a relationship with the main character or author, he/she will have some sense of reliability, familiarity and personal growth of a protagonist. Jody, in the novella, has good relationship with his grandfather and an old Paisano man, Gitano. But his father Carl has cold relationship with these two old men.

There is some kind of inciting incident that pushes the protagonist into their journey. It's usually something akin to a great emotional loss, like the death of a parent and their nearest and beloved. Regarding this view, J. Hardin in *Reflection and Action* (1991) describes:

Bildungsroman readily accommodated the concerns of a new middle-class reading public, willing to be absorbed by the history of an individual and gratified to see how its collective experience of social mobility might be rendered as the individual's pursuit of an ideal of self-development. (xxiv)

Based on the concept of Hardin's, we are able to study how the factors derived from protagonist's surrounding affect his/her growth and development. In the novella, Jody learns the harsh realities of death of the horses, Nellie and the Pony and the life on the birth of the colt. In comparison to the psychological and socio-cultural aspects; the historical doesn't focus upon the protagonist's emotional behaviors.

Bildungsroman genre is about the coming up age of the protagonist. The environment around the protagonist influenced protagonist to be mature. Regarding this Hardin writes:

Coming of ages novels presents more of the people and the surroundings influencing the protagonist and explaining to us the gradual formation of his inner self that is to be presented. Also, this types of novel shows more events and happenings with their emotional effects on the protagonist, whom we should see becoming through himself. (17)

To know/ learn something new some internal or external factors should influence the person. In this novella, surrounding influenced Jody to be matured. The Great Mountains in the west makes him curious to know about what on the other side of the mountain.

Based on coming of age, the protagonist searches the answers to the questions of his curiosity. In the beginning the protagonist is innocent but at the end of the novel the protagonist is seen with the matured boy. There are some kinds of inciting incidents that pushes the protagonist into their journey. It's usually something a kin to a great emotional loss like death of nearest one. The journey will not be easy. In fact the protagonist will face many difficulties and failures along the way. The hero will be tested and will fight to survive on the society. These coming of qualities have

become popularized in other book genres that targets towards youth and adolescent readers.

### **Child Psychology, Bildungsroman and *The Red Pony***

*The Red Pony*, Steinbeck had celebrated the spirit and courage of the adolescence boy named Jody. The novella takes place on the Tiflin ranch in Salinas Valley, California is composed of four parts. Salinas's valley serves as the best place for Jody to observe and experience life in ranch. Jody Tiflin is very sensitive towards nature and natural process. All the stories are connected by common characters, setting and themes. In each story, Jody learns an important moral lesson. Through each story, readers follow Jody's initiation into adulthood life. Jody begins to learn adulthood- its pains, responsibilities and problems- through the acceptance of his father's gift.

*The Red Pony* is full of the symbols of childhood and maturation. In each story Jody is initiated into the mysteries of life. Childhood days give way to the symbols of adulthood and old ages. Jody Tiflin's gradual emergence in to maturity is traced with affection, reserve, clarity and compassion. All four stories present Jody's entrance into maturity through encounters with life's harsh realities. Being a child, his understanding is fairly straight forward. Jody has more imagination than his father, Carl. He learns the life cycle of living beings. Life comes from death.

In the first episode of the novella, "The Gift", Jody Tiflin is only ten years old when the story begins. He is innocent immature school boy. Steinbeck describes Jody's physical features- "he was only a little boy, ten years old with hair like dusty yellow grass and with shy polite grey eyes and with a mouth that worked when he thought" (2). Bringing the reference of Beddow about the Bildungsroman, "the nature of humanity through the more or less overtly factious narrative of central character" (56). Steinbeck narrates the activities of the Jody. Through the narration we know the

habits of Jody and his childish behaviors. As other school children he is also silly and makes ridiculous strides. He does as other child do. Collecting small pebbles to hit birds or other objects that appears on the way is his activities. Steinbeck writes:

He filled his pockets with little piece of white quartz that lay on the roads, and every so often he took shot at a bird or at rabbit that had stayed sunning itself in the road too long. At the crossroads over the bridge he met two friends and three of them walked to school together, making ridiculous strides and being rather silly. (6)

All these activities show that Jody Tiflin is a small school boy who is immature and innocent. He just wants to play, makes ridiculous strides with friends. He cannot decide what to do and what not to do. He doesn't know the meaning about the life and death of the living beings. He is not old enough to care the things and the harsh realities of the life.

Every male child loves his mother and is close to her. He hates his father. Bringing the concept of child psychology developed by Sigmund Freud, Hendley writes: "we often find the protagonist of the Bildungsroman in an uneasy relationship with his father at all" (89). We see Jody is close to his mother and he is afraid to his father. He doesn't talks to his father. Steinbeck writes:

After supper, Jody sat by fireplace and his shy polite eyes sought the room corners, and he waited for his father to tell what it was he contained, for Jody knew he had news of some sort. But he was disappointed. His father pointed a stern finger at him.

"You'd better go to bed, Jody. I'm going to need you in the morning." That wasn't so bad. Jody liked to do thing . . . "But, Ruth, I didn't give much for him." (8)

When Carl says something kind to Jody, it thrills the boy in a way that show such praise is rare. Jody can see his father only as a powerful man, powerful distant object and disciplinarian. Carl Tiflin wants to raise his son right but doesn't like to show his emotion. Due to this reason, Jody becomes afraid of his father. Jody is afraid to ask his father where he is going as his father is "disciplinarian" for him –"Jody did not ask where his father and Billy Buck were riding that day, but he wished he might go along. His father was a disciplinarian" (3). Jody knows from the sound of footstep that his father is coming. He doesn't have to hear the voice nor to see him that Carl is coming. "His father and Billy Buck came in. Jody knew from the sound on the floor that both of them were wearing flat heeled shoes, but peered under the table to make sure" (9). All these events make thrill to a Jody so that he hates his father and loves his mother

Carl Tiflin gives a 'Pony' as a gift to Jody. As he is small and innocence boy he cannot believe it. There is a sense of hesitation and shyness in him when he sees the gift 'Pony':

Jody couldn't bear to look at the pony's eyes any more. He gazed down at his hands for a moment and he asked very shyly, "Mine?" No one answered him. He put his hand out toward the pony. Its grey nose came close, sniffing loudly, and then the lips drew back and the strong teeth closed on Jody's fingers. The pony shook its head . . . It was easier to talk to Billy Buck. Jody asked again –"Mine?" (11)

This shows the immaturity and shyness of Jody when he receives a gift presented by his father. He is chocked with excitement and pride. Jody names the Pony 'Gabilan' after the name of great mountains-"If he hasn't a name already, I think I'll call him Gabilan Mountain" (12). The gift symbolically indicates that Jody is ready for more responsibilities. He gets up early in the morning, dresses more quickly ever than

usual. He finds himself in a great hurry. Gift makes Jody to change daily routine.-

“Jody never waited for triangle to get him out of bed after the coming of the pony”

(15). His acceptance of getting up early in the morning and his responsibility signals are the sign of being maturity.

Jody brings a gang of six boys to look at his new Pony. His friends make him courage to ride the pony. “Why don’t you ride him?” (13). This makes Jody more courageous to ride horse. From that day Jody starts to give training to Pony with the help of Billy Buck. With the training given to Pony, Jody is also being similarly trained. Jody is taking step towards maturity. Jody notes things that he had never noticed before about horses. Jody occupies different roles in that training as a result Jody becomes matured enough to care and ride the horse in his very young age.

Billy Buck gave him riding instructions over and over. Now when you get up there, just grab tight with your knee and keep your hands away from the saddle, and if you get throwed, don’t let that stop you. No matter how good a man is, there’s always some . . . you no more, and pretty soon he *can’t* throw you no more. That’s the way to do it.” (23)

Jody obtains a higher level of spiritual awareness when he is able to care the horse and when he get gift- a ‘Pony’. He becomes spiritually as well as physically bigger by becoming a horse man. Jody’s dream of becoming horseman eventually is destroyed by the death of the Gabilan. Bringing the term coined by Buckley: “novel of all around development or self-culture” with a more or less conscious attempt on the part of hero to integrate his power to cultivate himself by his experiences”(13). Steinbeck writes about the maturity that Jody gets through his own efforts and experiences. When Billy promises Jody that it wouldn’t rain but Billy’s prediction is wrong. Gabilan get wet whole day out in the rain. At evening when the school is off, Jody hurries to home through dark rain. He sees Pony out in the rain. He takes Pony in the barn and makes

Pony warm-“Jody arrived running and threw open the barn door and led the wet pony in by his forelock. Then he found a gunny sack and rubbed the soaked hair and rubbed the legs and ankles.”(26-27). Up to this time, Jody is too much matured to care his horse. He can realize what to do and what not to do. He cannot bunk the school. Bunking the school is punishment for him both in school and at home. These events prove that Jody gets maturity through his own efforts and experiences.

When the Pony gets sick, he is more worried than other family members. He cares Pony more than other times. He sleeps in the barn to watch Pony at night. His mother gives him words not to worry. “Don’t worry about the pony, he’ll be all right. Billy’s as good as any horse doctor in the country” (29). Finally, the Pony dies. The death of Gabilan is actually an introduction of death in to Jody’s life. Jody also discovers his capacity to kill a vulture-“Jody brought up his knee and fell on the great bird. He held the neck to the ground with one hand while his other found a piece of sharp white quartz.”(43). Jody reaction towards the experience of first death in his life is very significant. He could only transfer his deep sorrow and anger by attacking the ‘buzzard’ which devours the carcass of the Pony. This significant of life death and human relationship teaches Jody a lot and makes a path way to maturity.

The second episode of the novella, “The Great Mountain”, concern with the curiosity of Jody's exploring what’s on the other side of the mountain. In Jody’s mind the range of Gabilan Mountain at the east represents the life, a sense of settled community, a concept of familiarity. Great Mountain at the west represents the mystery of the unknown, the looming fear of the dry and dark. Jody asks to Carl Tiflin about the ‘Great Mountain that is at the west. Carl tells him that it’s mostly unexplored territory.

“What’s on the other side?” he asked his father once.

“More mountains, I guess. Why?”



“And on the other side of them?”

“More mountains. Why?”

“More mountains on and on?” . . .

“It would be good to go.”

“What for? There is nothing there.” (48)

Jody doesn't get the suitable answers about the mountains. There arises more curiosity in the Jody's mind. He asks same question to his mother and Billy too. Jody wants to find the mysteries of 'Great Mountains' but he cannot. When Jody asks Billy about the possibilities of an ancient civilization living deep within the mountain, Billy responds that “It ain't likely,” Billy said “there'd be nothing to eat unless a kind of people that can eat rock live there” (49). The mountain symbolizes the decay of human civilization. Jody gets only little information about the mountain. The mysteries of the mountain makes terrible and great to the Jody. If somebody goes straight towards the mountain it indicates their death. Old Gitano riding an old horse Easter heading straight to the mountain indicates their death.

The climax of the episode is on the arrival and sudden departure of an old Paisano man, Gitano. Gitano arrives at the Tiflin ranch and insist on staying on the farm until he dies. Carl Tiflin refuses therequest of Gitano. He angrily said, “I don't need an old man. This isn't big ranch. I can't afford food and doctor bills for an old man” (54). At last Carl lets Gitano to stay for a night. Jody is sympathetic to an old man because Gitano represents the adventure that his father discount – Carl is interested in keeping in ranch in business not in exploring the mountain.

At night Jody talks with Gitano. Jody knows once Gitano has been to the Great Mountains. Jody asks him anxiously.

“Did you come out of the big mountains?”

Gitano shook his head slowly. “No, I worked down the Salinas Valley.”

The afternoon thought would not let Jody go. “Did you ever go into the big mountain back there?” The old dark eyes grew fixed, and their light turned . . . “I think it was quiet- I think it was nice.” (55-56)

Jody curiosity of searching for the knowledge of unknown place beyond the remote mountain which neither his father nor Bill Buck can explain him cannot be solved by Gitano also. The next side of the mountain still remains mystery for him as before.

Jody sees Gitano holding the sharp rapier in his hand. “Jody stood overwhelmed by the thing in Gitano’s hand, a lean and lovely rapier with a golden basket hilt. The blade was like a thin ray of dark light. The hilt was pierced and intricately carved” (62). Jody asks curiously “What is it?” (62) Gitano connects the rapier with the spirit of the heroes in the past.

Gitano comes to the ranch for meaningful way to close his life. He decides to end his life heroically by plunging into the wilderness with the horse and rapier. Gitano leaves at the dawn next morning with the old horse, Easter and a sharp rapier. He goes westward to the Great Mountains. Gitano’s westward journey to the Great Mountain implies his death. Jody senses the desperate yet peaceful and clam aspect of death of Gitano and Ester.

This episode signifies more on the philosophic and symbolic perspective of death. The departure of Gitano brings a strong sense of loss and nameless sorrow that are real and painful enough to initiate Jody to become matured. This story shows resolutely that Jody has more imagination than his father and more of an ability to connect with and revere the heroic ideal Gitano represents.

In the third episode, “The Promise”, Jody observes the wonder and pain of the reproductive cycle when he sees Nellie and a stud horse copulate violently and assist at the birth of Nellie’s colt and Nellie death.

Jody’s mother interrupts to tell him that his father wants to talk to him. Jody becomes nervous. He is afraid and in trouble to meet his father. When he meets his father talks about how well Jody took care of red pony-Gabilan. Jody senses he is not in trouble.

“I wanted to see you,” Carl said in the stern tone he reserved for children and animals. “Yes, sir,” said Jody guiltily. “Billy, here, says you took good for the pony before it died.” No punishment was in the air. Jody grew bolder. “Yes, sir, I did.” “Billy says you have a good patient hand with horses.” Jody felt a sudden warm friendliness for the ranch-hand. (71)

Carl gives him the responsibility of taking care of horse Nellie and he will get to raise her colt. Jody has to work for it. The responsibility for Jody is to care the horse from the beginning. Jody is force to see the violent copulation between Nellie and Stallion which is brutal. Steinbeck writes:

Nellie’s ears went back; she whirled and kicked at him as he went by. The stallion spun around and reared. He struck the mare with his front hoof, and while she staggered under the blow, his teeth raked her neck and drew an ooze of blood. Instantly Nellie’s mood changed. She became coquettishly feminine. She nibbled his arched neck with her lips. She edged around and rubbed her shoulder against his shoulder. (75-76)

This helps Jody to know about the process of reproduction and how brutality the copulating is. For Jody, the copulation between Nellie and Stallion becomes the

knowledge of birth process. He knows how the life begins from the very beginning. Jody starts to care Nellie during the pregnancy. Jody is eager to know the birthing process of a colt. Jody asks how Nellie gives birth to colt. Billy replies:

“Tell me how it’ll be.” “Why, you’ve seen the cows calving. It’s almost the same. The mare starts groaning and stretching, and then, if it’s a good right birth, the head and forefeet come out, and the front hoofs kick a hole just the way the calves do. And the colt starts to breathe. It’s good to be there, ’cause if its feet aren’t righty maybe he can’t break the sac, and then he might smother.”(80)

Jody becomes afraid about the Nellie because he had seen the death of Pony in the first episode that he cares too much. He doesn’t want Nellie to die as a Pony. Jody was tortured with the death of Pony- Gabilan so he asks “Billy, you won’t let anything happen to the colt: Will you?” (81) Billy promises to give a colt to Jody.

During the period of Nellie’s pregnancy, Billy has to kill Nellie in order to give birth to the Colt, he had promised to Jody. Billy seems too recent the moral burden placed upon him to pleased Jody. Billy couldn’t afford to lose his authentic image by breaking the promise once again. The killing of Nellie is most frightening and violent scene in the novella. Steinbeck writes:

Nellie chuckled shrilly. Jody looked back in time to see the hammer rise and fall again on the flat forehead. Then Nellie fell heavily to her side and quivered for a moment. Billy jumped to the swollen stomach; his big pocketknife was in his hand. He lifted the skin and drove the knife in. He sawed and ripped at the tough belly. The air filled with the sick odor of warm living entrails. The other horses reared back against their halter chains and squealed and kicked. (93-94)

Although colt is born, it is at a great cost. Billy lays the little black colt he has dug out from Nellie stomach at Jody's feet. Billy's "voice was gone; he spoke in a throaty whisper. "There's your colt. I promised. And there it is. I had to do it- had to." (94)

Here the idea coined by J. Hardin is enough sufficient to prove novella as Bildungsroman. Hardin writes: ". . . gratified to see how its collective experience of social mobility might be rendered as the individual's pursuit of an ideal self-development" (xxiv). Death of Nellie in this episode, presents the life cycle of living beings. Life comes after death. Here, the life of colt is possible only after the death of Nellie. The struggle, suffering and death of Nellie are the price of the new life of the colt. In the same way the death of Gabilan means life to Buzzards in 'The Gift'. Jody realizes the meaning of sacrifice that men have to make sacrifice to achieve their goal.

The last episode of the novella, "The Leader of the People" is about Jody's aims to be the leader of the people. It is also about Carl coldness with Jody's maternal grandfather. The sympathy of Jody for an old man shows what is lacking in his relationship with his father. Grandfather is an old dignitary and a respectful man who leads the western movement of the pioneers. He is proud of himself and loves to repeat his old heroic past history.

Carl Tiflin receives a letters of grandfather, saying that he is coming to visit. Jody becomes happy but Carl is upset and angry. He argues with his wife complaining that grandfather simply repeats his old stories about crossing the Great Plains as a leader of Wagon train. Steinbeck writes:

"It's just that he talks," Carl said lamely. "Just talks."

"Well, what of it? You talk yourself."

"Sure I do. But your father only talks about one thing."

"Indians!" Jody broke in excitedly. "Indians and crossing the plains!"

(101)

This shows Carl relationship with grandfather is colder. Grandfather is an old dignitary and a respectful man who leads the western movement of the pioneers and he is proud of himself and loves to repeat his old heroic past history. Jody's mother defends on Carl. She said quietly:

Look at it this way, Carl. That was the big thing in my father's life. He led a Wagon train clear across the plains to the coast, and when it was finished, his life was done. It was a big thing to do but it didn't last long enough. Look! It's as though he was born to do that and after he finished it, there . . . he had to stop. (102)

There is a cold relationship between Carl and grandfather as well as Carl with Jody.

Bringing the reference of Hendley: "we often find the protagonist of the

Bildungsroman in an uneasy relationship with father or without a father at all"

(89). Steinbeck again shows uneasy and cold relationship between Carl and Jody. Carl becomes angry with Jody and scolds him to get out. "You get out, Mr. Big-Britches! Go on, now! Get out!" (101)

Jody's curiosity of coming of his grandfather arises in his mind so he asks his mother, "Is he coming today?" (103). Jody goes to hill to receive his grandfather. Jody's relationship to his grandfather is reverent and open. He wants to hear the stories of his grandfather. But Carl's relationship is colder and distant. He doesn't want to hear any stories of grandfather: Steinbeck writes "As I was saying, "Grandfather began again, but Carl interrupted him. "You'd better eat some more meat. All the rest of us are ready for our pudding" (110).

There is easy and good relationship between Jody and grandfather. In reference to Martini: "the prosaic mood in which people usually finds themselves in to an entertaining poetic work. Moreover it encourages the cultivation of the readers more fully than any others types of novel" (17-18). Readers learn moral lesson from

the story of Jody. Jody respects his grandfather, loves him. Jody is eager to listen the stories of his grandfather's. Jody nervously asks his grandfather to tell more stories "Won't you tell me any more stories? I like to hear them, sir." (117) Grandfather narrates:

When we saw the mountains at last, we cried- all of us. But it wasn't getting here that mattered, it was movement and westering. "We carried life out here and set it down the way those ants carry eggs. I was the leader. The westering was as big as God, and the slow stepsthat made the movement piled up and piled up until the continent was crossed. "Then we came down to the sea, and it was done."(119)

By hearing the story of grandfather's, Jody is motivated by the spirit of group man which his grandfather represents. He anticipates a new hope to be a leader of the people in future. He says, "May be I could lead the people someday." (120)

This episode is also about Jody who is initiated into a thoughtful and responsible young man. He does his work properly. Steinbeck writes, "Jody ran to his chores. He dumped the grain to the chickens without chasing any of them. He gathered the eggs from the nest. He trotted into the house with the wood and interlaced it so carefully in the wood box that to armloads seemed to fill it to overflowing" (103). All these activities by Jody is a sign up to maturity. He does his works properly, without any difficulties and not in hurry. At the end of novella, Jody shows his heart full consideration to the sadness of his grandfather. He offers to make his grandfather 'lemonade'. "If you'd like a glass of lemonade I could make it for you" (120). Grandfather was about to refuse but he accepts with smile: "Yes, it would be nice to drink lemonade" (120). This conversation shows good relationship between Jody and grandfather. It gives moral lesson to the readers that we should loves and

respects our elders. They are the sources of knowledge and inspiration of our thinking and our works.

### ***The Red Pony: A Novel of Formation***

The Steinbeck's novella having four episodes is about the progression of the Jody's development from self-centeredness childhood to matured young man. Each of individual stories is a part of Jody's education in which Jody is a protagonist. Each episode are connected with each other conveys the universal experiences of human beings. At the beginning of the story, Jody is only ten years innocent and dependent child. He is eager to be mature and stepping his steps towards maturity. The story ends with Jody's maturity asking his mother for a lemon to make lemonade for his grandfather.

In the first episode "The Gift" Jody is innocent and immature young boy of ten years old. He is the owner of Pony. He is equally trained with Pony while giving training to the Pony. Jody is taking steps towards maturity. Being a child his understanding is fairly straight forward. He hates things that reminds of death, and loves that thing that gives him access to some sort of adventure. Death of Pony is actually an introduction of death in Jody's life. Jody becomes upset with the death of Pony. In the second episode "The Great Mountain", Jody realizes that old age is the tragic aspect of life. The mystery of the mountains makes him terrible and great. He becomes curious to know what on the other side of the mountain. Jody has more imaginations than his father. Jody makes good relationship with old Gitano. He knows little about the great mountain through Gitano. Jody imagines to connect with heroic ideal Gitano represents.

The third episode "The Promise" is about the life and death of a horse. He sees the brutal copulation between Nellie and Stallion for the reproduction. Jody knows the process of birth of colt from the very beginning. Jody realizes that life of colt is



possible only after the death of Nellie. Life comes after the death. Birth and death are the ongoing process of living beings. And the final episode “The Leader of the People” is about Jody’s relationship with his grandfather is reverent and open whereas that with his father is colder and more distant. Jody wants to lead the people in the future by hearing the story of his grandfather. Jody becomes a matured boy enough to make Lemonade to his grandfather. He does his work very carefully and without any mistakes.

All these four stories present a Jody’s entrance into maturity through his encounters with life harsh realities. Birth and death are the ongoing process of living beings. Jody is forced to face the death of Pony in part one, old man- Gitano and old horse- Easter in part two and Pregnant Nellie in part three. Jody has faced the difficulties of birthing of colt by pregnant Nellie. By seeing the birth and death of horses, he knows the meaning of life and death. Jody is stepping his steps towards maturity. All these four stories in the novella are about the maturation of Jody from innocent to maturity. Jody realizes that life holds both disappointment and promises. Jody searches the answer of his curiosity questions. He knows what on the other side of great mountains.

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